



LESSON 2

# Catharsis & Ebenezer Prayers

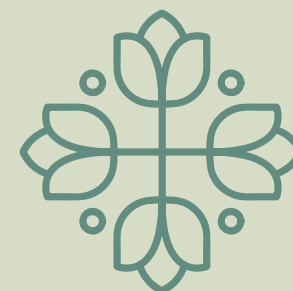


**Let us look  
at our  
objectives  
together.**

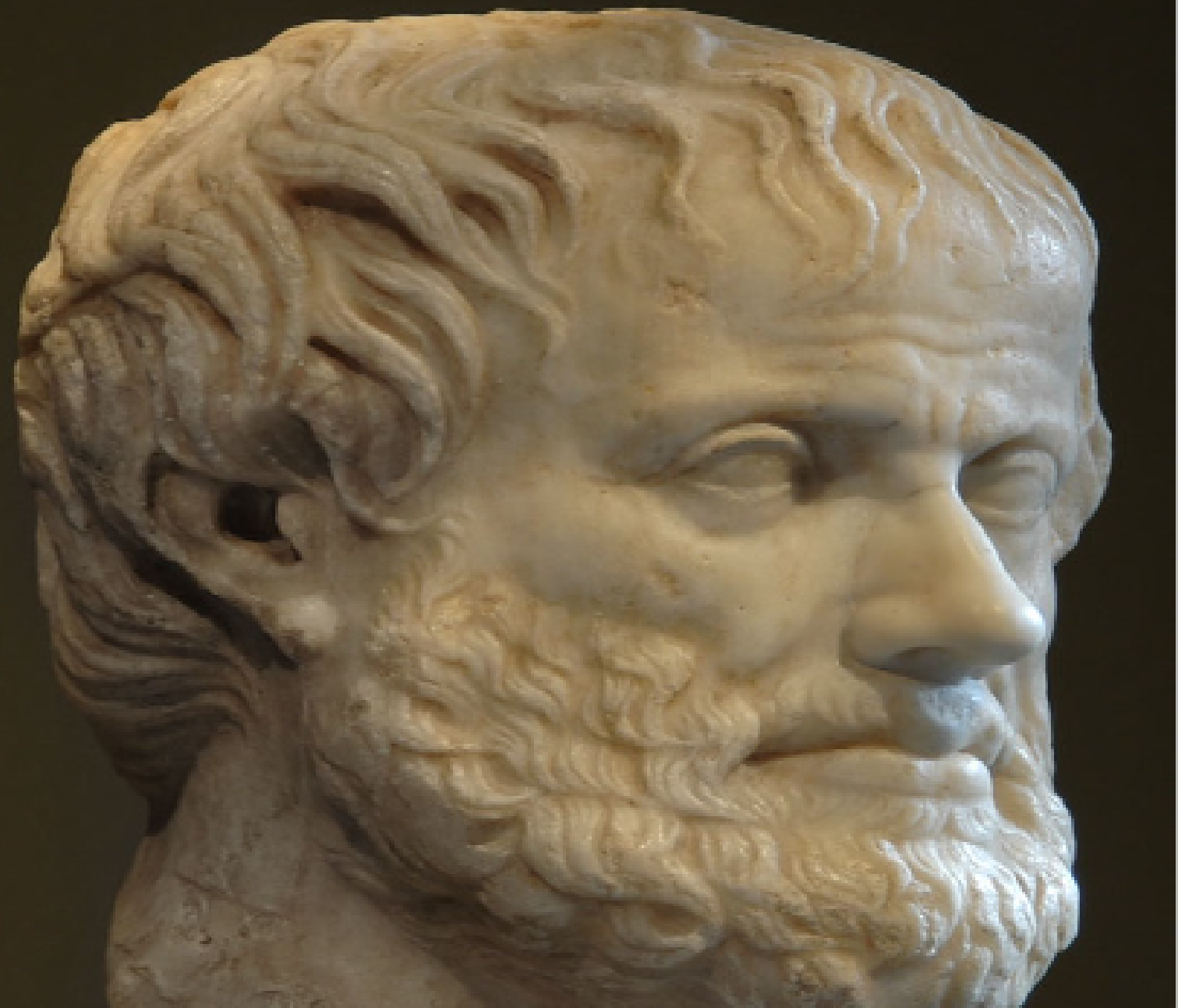


At the end of this lesson, you should be able to:

1. Use prayers to commemorate milestone achievements made possible for us through Christ.
2. Demonstrate increased proficiency in the practice of prayer for cathartic benefits.
3. Understand that if we pattern good scriptural examples, we can achieve similar results.







# Cathartic Prayer

Greek philosopher, Plato evolved a verbal catharsis for disease of the soul. His protégé, Aristotle developed a catharsis of passions through tragic drama. Cultures throughout centuries since then have recognized contexts in which emotions were evoked, heightened in intensity, and ultimately released or discharged.

Emotional outbursts directed at others can be harmful to them and possibly catastrophic for us. If our turbulent emotions are turned inward, we can hurt ourselves with destructive thoughts and actions, (Breslin and Lewis, 2008).



Don't give in to anger, it only leads to trouble .  
Psalm 37:8



It is chaotic to even attempt to process complex thoughts and feelings in a heightened state of anger, fear, or sadness. We 'gush' then, the emotional turbulence in prayer to God and experience emotional cleansing, reduction of stress level in the body, and renewed strength to carry out our tasks, even if they appear daunting.

Consider the following:

Have mercy on me, Lord, for I am faint, heal me Lord, for my bones are in agony. My soul is in deep anguish. How long, Lord, how long? Turn, Lord, and deliver me; save me because of your unfailing love.

Psalm 6:2-4

This is the prayer of a king (David) who gives us an idea that even with great power and authority, life can become overwhelmingly sad. We can become “faint, bones in agony, soul in deep anguish”. Notice to whom King David ‘gushes his anguish... – the Lord – who is merciful, able to deliver and capable of saving him because His love for us is inexhaustible.

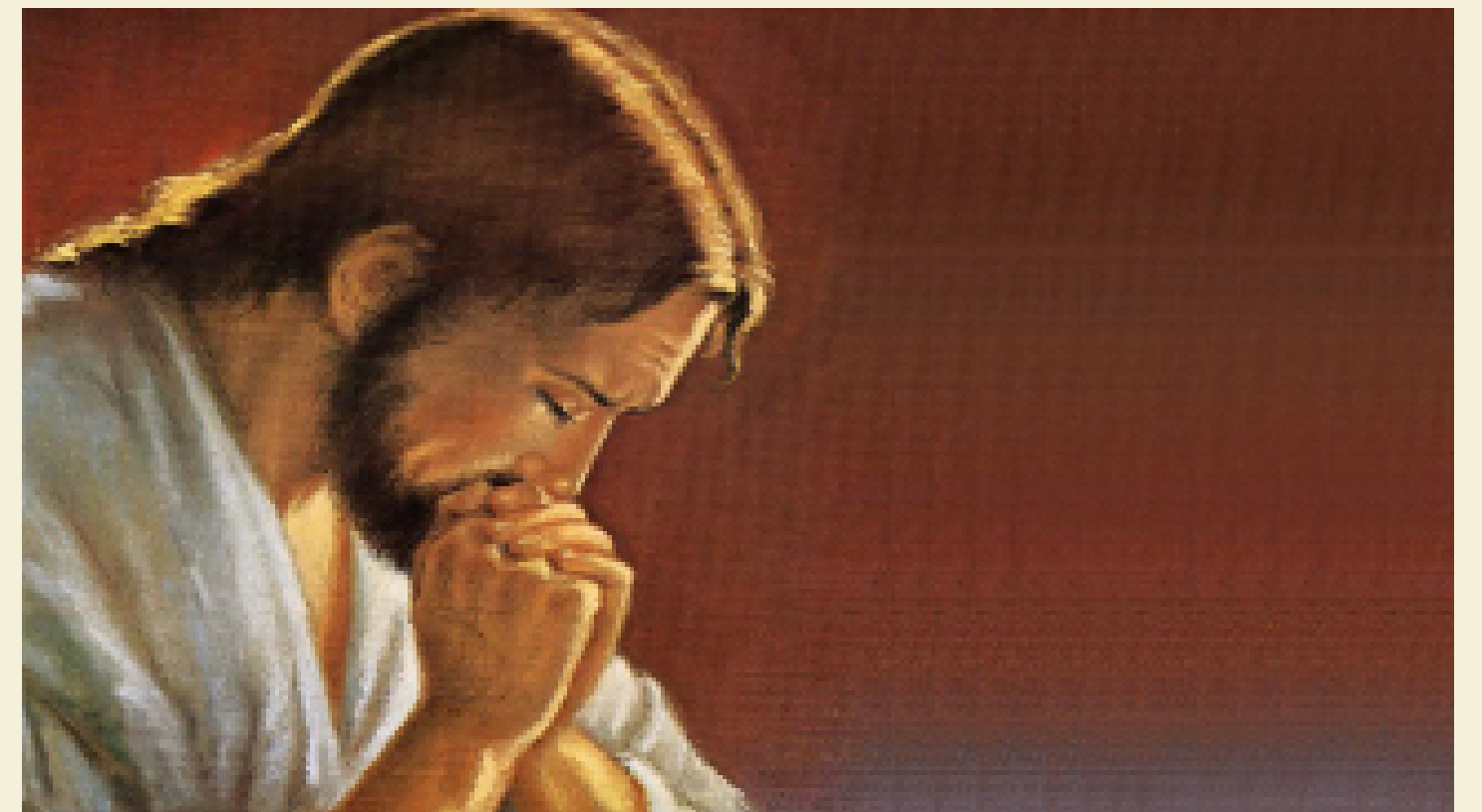
In Matthew 26:38 – 44 Jesus, the greater David, ‘gushes out’ his agony to the Father when His soul becomes sorrowful to death. Jesus knew His earthly journey would result in his going to the Cross. Jesus knows that after 33 years of being robed in flesh, the cross is his transcendental point (the finished work of Gen.3:15 and a gateway to dwell in the hearts of those who follow Him). let us take a look : And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.” (Genesis 3:15). The striking of one’s heel, even on a literal level, connotes pain.

Jesus knows the pain of the cross pales in comparison to the glory of His resurrection, and what it means for His chosen. Yet, faced with the reality of going, His “soul becomes very sorrowful, even to death” and He “falls on His face and prays”.

Although He is committing to 'nevertheless', the sadness and loneliness associated with what must be done, saw Him gushing the same concern 3 times:

"My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as You will."

(Matthew 26:39,42,44) before rising to face the inevitable, initiated by meeting a known betrayer.

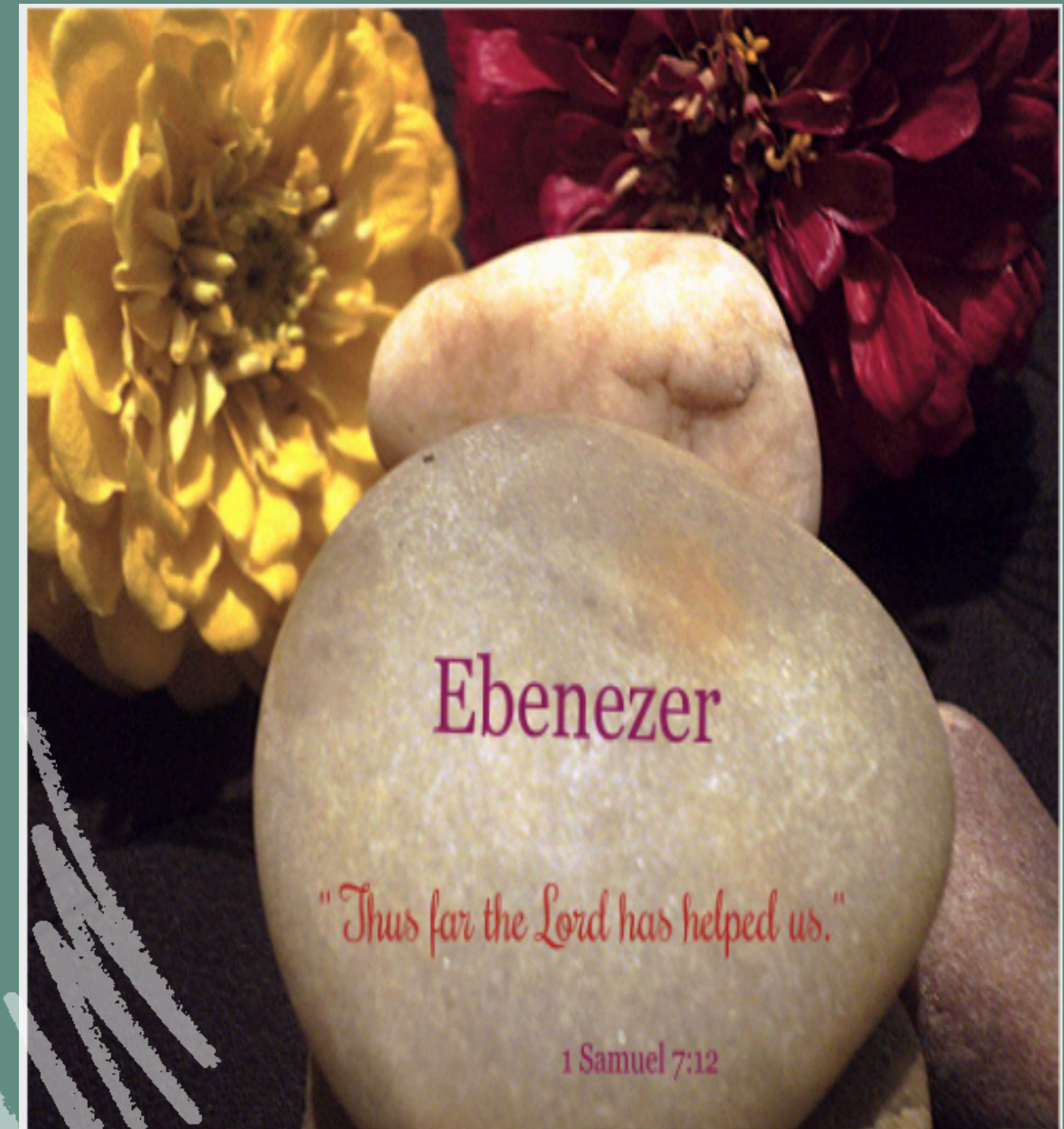




In Coleshill, Birmingham, UK, a great architectural structure, made of 1 million bricks, stands. It is called the Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer. It is visible from approximately 6 miles away and seen by over 500,000 trains, airplanes, and motor vehicle travelers weekly. It is a symbol of hope, for those who 'journey' to the site find themselves interacting with in scripted testimonies that Christ does answer the prayers of those who pursue and petition Him for help. This Ebenezer concept has its root in I Samuel 7:2-12.

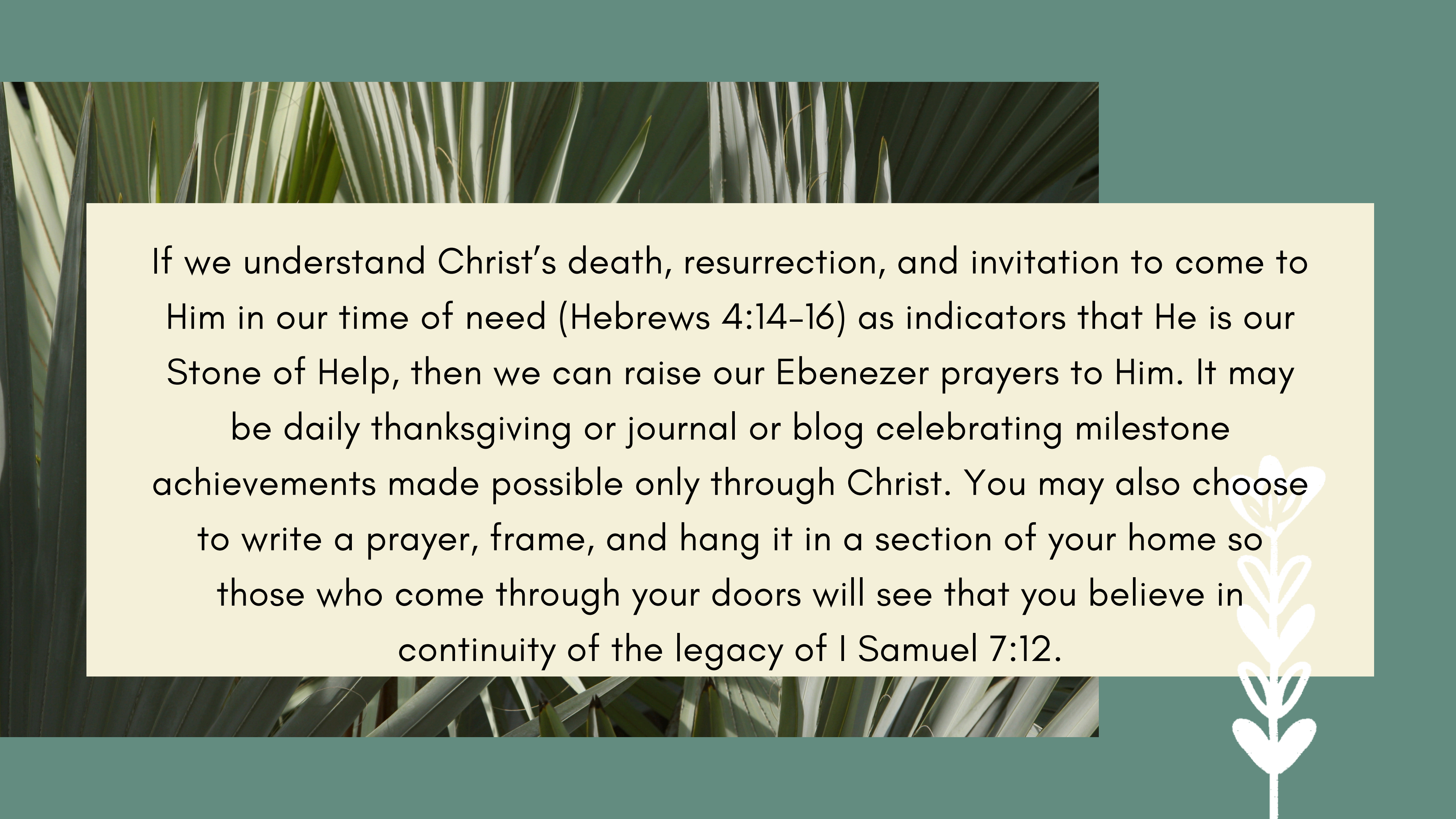
After defeating their Philistine enemies at Mizpah, Samuel wanted the followers of God to have a generational memory of how God comes to the rescue of those who humble themselves before Him and petition Him for help. In verse 12, Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shem and named the stone 'Ebenezer,' noting "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us".

## EBENEZER PRAYER



If we remember Israel's history, some 20 years before, the priests of the Lord, Hophni and Phineas were killed, the ark of the Lord was taken, and the Philistines triumphed. To have this very place mark Israel's defeat of the Philistines forced them to reflect on several things. No doubt they would recall that the historic loss was due to their disobedience to God and the pursuit of their own desires. God abandoned those who lacked the spirit of dependency on His Sovereign authority and wisdom. They would also be mindful that their present victory by contrast, came as a result of their humility and dependence on God. The erection of the monument would serve as a reminder of how to lose to and win against our enemies.





If we understand Christ's death, resurrection, and invitation to come to Him in our time of need (Hebrews 4:14-16) as indicators that He is our Stone of Help, then we can raise our Ebenezer prayers to Him. It may be daily thanksgiving or journal or blog celebrating milestone achievements made possible only through Christ. You may also choose to write a prayer, frame, and hang it in a section of your home so those who come through your doors will see that you believe in continuity of the legacy of 1 Samuel 7:12.



## Lesson 2 ( Download, Print and Complete)

The Puzzle below is designed to see how much you remember on Cathartic Prayer, Use the hints to help you find the answers.

E	O	C	H	A	O	T	I	C	S	U	M	O	S
L	C	B	I	R	D	E	X	D	E	A	A	H	T
T	L	A	S	I	A	K	E	E	D	S	T	A	R
O	E	G	T	S	R	S	X	A	N	O	T	O	E
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O	Z	J	D	U	Y	H	E	A	R	T	E	R	C
P	O	L	E	V	I	T	C	U	R	T	S	E	D

1. Relief of suffering through watching tragic plays
2. Another name for catharsis
3. Emotions heightened in intensity, turned inward.
4. Attempt to process complex feelings and thoughts can be \_\_\_\_\_
5. Can be reduced by prayers.
6. Renewed to carry out tasks after cathartic prayer.
7. Bones can experience this when we are very sad.
8. Deep anguish is felt here when we are overwhelmed.
9. Book of the Bible recounting Jesus' cathartic prayer.
10. Transcendental point for Jesus and His followers.
11. A soul can become sorrowful to \_\_\_\_ when distressed.
12. Getting to this point does not result in automatic relief of burden.