

**YEAR 1, PROPER 7, WEDNESDAY:
MORNING PRAYER**

The First Lesson. The Reader begins

A Reading from the First Book of Samuel

From the day that the ark was lodged at Kir'iath-je'arim, a long time passed, some twenty years, and all the house of Israel lamented after the LORD. Then Samuel said to all the house of Israel, "If you are returning to the LORD with all your heart, then put away the foreign gods and the Ash'taroth from among you, and direct your heart to the LORD, and serve him only, and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines." So Israel put away the Ba'als and the Ash'taroth, and they served the LORD only. Then Samuel said, "Gather all Israel at Mizpah, and I will pray to the LORD for you." So they gathered at Mizpah, and drew water and poured it out before the LORD, and fasted on that day, and said there, "We have sinned against the LORD." And Samuel judged the people of Israel at Mizpah. Now when the Philistines heard that the people of Israel had gathered at Mizpah, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the people of Israel heard of it they were afraid of the Philistines. And the people of Israel

said to Samuel, “Do not cease to cry to the LORD our God for us, that he may save us from the hand of the Philistines.” So Samuel took a sucking lamb and offered it as a whole burnt offering to the LORD; and Samuel cried to the LORD for Israel, and the LORD answered him. As Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to attack Israel; but the LORD thundered with a mighty voice that day against the Philistines and threw them into confusion; and they were routed before Israel. And the men of Israel went out of Mizpah and pursued the Philistines, and smote them, as far as below Beth-car. Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Jeshah'nah, and called its name Ebene'zer; for he said, “Hitherto the LORD has helped us.” So the Philistines were subdued and did not again enter the territory of Israel. And the hand of the LORD was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel. The cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron to Gath; and Israel rescued their territory from the hand of the Philistines. There was peace also between Israel and the Amorites. Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. And he went on a circuit year by year to Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah; and he judged Israel in all these places. Then he would come back to Ra'mah, for his home was there, and

there also he administered justice to Israel. And he built there an altar to the LORD.

The Reader concludes The Word of the Lord.

The Second Lesson. The Reader begins

A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists murmured against the Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. And the twelve summoned the body of the disciples and said, “It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brethren, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” And what they said pleased the whole multitude, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Proch'orus, and Nica'nor, and Ti'mon, and Par'menas, and Nicola'us, a proselyte of Antioch. These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands upon them. And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were

obedient to the faith. And Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people. Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), and of the Cyre'nians, and of the Alexandrians, and of those from Cili'cia and Asia, arose and disputed with Stephen. But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke. Then they secretly instigated men, who said, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God." And they stirred up the people and the elders and the scribes, and they came upon him and seized him and brought him before the council, and set up false witnesses who said, "This man never ceases to speak words against this holy place and the law; for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place, and will change the customs which Moses delivered to us." And gazing at him, all who sat in the council saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

The Reader concludes The Word of the Lord.