

## **Signposts Week 2 Discussion Guide**

### **Lesson Title: When the Glory Departs: From Ichabod to Ebenezer**

#### **Summary**

This week's reading led us from the dark days of the Judges into the bright but sobering beginnings of 1 Samuel. After reading Judges and Ruth, we now see the spiritual climate of Israel during the time of Eli, Hannah, and Samuel. The book of Ruth reminded us that even in chaos, God is writing redemptive stories. This week's focus shifts to 1 Samuel 1–7, where we see the transition from Eli's corrupt priesthood to Samuel's prophetic leadership. In chapters 4–7, Israel treats the Ark like a good luck charm rather than truly repenting. But in chapter 7, we finally witness true revival as Israel lays down their idols, returns to the Lord, and finds victory in Him. Samuel sets up a stone and names it Ebenezer—"Thus far the Lord has helped us." It's a call to remember that security isn't found in religious objects, but in the presence of God—and that presence only comes through repentance.

#### **Discussion Questions**

1. What stood out to you most in this week's reading of Judges, Ruth, and 1 Samuel 1–7?
2. Reflect on the spiritual environment of Israel at the beginning of 1 Samuel. What warnings can we draw from Eli's failure to restrain his sons?
  - How can honoring people above God lead to spiritual compromise?
  - In what ways might we be tempted to do the same today?
3. The Ark was treated like a good luck charm in 1 Samuel 4. In what ways do people today fall into similar thinking about religious traditions or symbols?
  - What does true trust in God's presence look like compared to superstitious faith?
4. In 1 Samuel 7, we see Israel truly repent. How does this chapter show us what genuine repentance looks like?
  - What steps did the people take to turn their hearts back to God?
  - Why is Samuel's role as intercessor important, and how does it point us to Jesus?
5. The naming of Ebenezer served as a reminder that 'thus far the Lord has helped us.'
  - Do you have an 'Ebenezer' moment in your life—a time you can point to and say, "God helped me there"?
  - How can remembering God's past faithfulness help us trust Him in the present?

#### **Group Prayer**

Spend time thanking God for His presence and faithfulness, even in seasons of discipline or silence. Pray for soft hearts that are quick to repent. Ask God to help you and your group remove any 'idols' or false hopes, and to anchor your security in Him alone.