

## ***PRECEPTS FOR LIFE***

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**SERIES: I Samuel, Part 1 (The Heart of a Leader)**

### **THURSDAY**

#### **OPEN**

O, Beloved, do you realize that when you honor God, when you give Him the rightful place in your life, which is number one, when you respect Him, when you trust Him, when you obey His commandments, then God is right there and because you have honored Him He wants to honor you. This is what we're going to see as we continue this awesome study of 1 Samuel.

#### **PART ONE**

I'm so glad that you're with me today and as we hang on 1 Samuel, chapter 2 what I want you to see is once again he's giving us this contrast. He'll just throw in a sentence about Samuel and then he'll tell us about the sons of Eli. Then he throws in another sentence about Samuel and he tells us about the sons of Eli. And the thing that he keeps telling us about Samuel is that Samuel is ministering to the Lord. In verse 18 of 1 Samuel 2 it says, "Now Samuel was ministering before the Lord, as a boy wearing a linen ephod." (1 Samuel 2:18) And then he tells us about Eli talking to his wicked sons who

are despising God. And then as this comes to a close, once again in verse 26 God wants us to make sure that we see the contrast. So in 1 Samuel 2:26 it says: “Now the boy Samuel was growing in stature and in favor both with the Lord and with men.”(2:26) Now, have you ever heard that phrase before? Yes you have. And let’s go and look at Luke, chapter 2, verse 52. And in Luke, chapter 2, verse 52 it’s a statement about Jesus. And it says: “And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.”(Luke 2:52) Now we know that this is written after He is 12 years old, because according to verse 42 of Luke, chapter 2, when He’s 12 He goes up to Jerusalem with His parents, like they did yearly, just like Elkanah and Hannah went up to Shiloh every year to keep the Feast, so His parents went up, and that’s when they lose Him for three days and can’t find Him and then they go back and He is sitting in the temple and He is listening to these men and asking them questions and everybody’s amazed at Him. And then we come to verse 52. “...Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and men.” And this is what Samuel was doing. Now Eli’s sons, they just kept going deeper and deeper into sin. And so you have the contrasts here. And God wants us to see. The Bible is full of contrasts. And it’s full of contrasts because there’s a way that seems right unto man, but the end thereof is the way of death. It’s full of contrasts because the prince of this world is the ruler of this world and he rules over the sons of disobedience, but you and I, having come to know Jesus Christ, have come out of his kingdom of darkness, into God’s kingdom of light. We’ve come out from in under the power of Satan; we’ve come into the kingdom of God. So there’s always this contrast. This is what you see in Matthew, chapter 7 that there are two ways; there’s a broad way that leads to destruction and there’s a narrow way that leads to life. Well, we see Eli’s sons on this broad road to destruction and we see Samuel walking in the way of the Lord. Now verse 27 of 1 Samuel, chapter 2: “Then a man of God came to Eli and said to him...,” (1 Samuel 2:27a) Now this term a man of God is used very often for a prophet. A prophet was a man that was sent from God to speak for God, to bring God’s Word to people and this is what

this man of God has come to Eli to do. And what is God going to say to him? He says, “Thus says the Lord, ‘Did I not indeed reveal Myself to the house of your father when they were in Egypt in bondage to Pharaoh’s house?’”(2:27b) Now who is Eli’s father? I mean if you trace Eli’s genealogy all the way back, you’re going to find that his father was Aaron. And so God revealed Himself to Aaron who was in the bloodline of Eli, or Eli was in the bloodline of Aaron. So He says okay, number one: Did I not reveal myself to the house of your father when they were in Egypt in bondage to Pharaoh’s house? And number two: Did I not choose them from all the tribes of Israel to be My priests, to go up to My altar, to burn incense, to carry an ephod before Me? And number three: Did I not give to the house of your father all the fire offerings of the sons of Israel? He says isn’t this what you were supposed to do as a priest? You are to go up to My altar. You are to burn incense there. You are to carry the ephod before Me. Now remember when we looked at the ephod that you have to go back to Exodus, chapter 28. And, as a matter of fact, I think that we just better go back there for a minute. Now, as we do this, and as we keep running backwards I want to ask you a question: Do you see the benefit of studying the Bible, starting where the Bible starts, and that’s in the book of Genesis and moving through the Bible book-by-book? Because as you move through the Bible book-by-book then what happens is you see truth building upon one another. Now what are we doing? We’re making cross-references. So when we go back to Exodus, chapter 28 in verse one it says, “Then bring near to yourself Aaron your brother...,” He’s talking to Moses “...and his sons with him, from among the sons of Israel, to minister as priests to Me...,”(Exodus 28:1a) Now that’s what we see Samuel doing. It says that Samuel ministered to the Lord as a boy. We see it used more than once and we’re going to see that as we go along. And then He says, “...-Aaron, Nadab,...Abihu, Eleazar,...Ithamar, Aaron’s sons. “[And] You shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty.”(28:1b-2) And then it says in verse 4: “[And] These are the garments which they shall make: a breast piece and an ephod and a robe...” Now that robe was the robe of the ephod, “...and a tunic of

checkered work, a turban and a sash.”(28:4a) These are the holy garments. Then in verse 6 he says, “...[You] shall...make the ephod of gold, of blue...purple and scarlet material and...twisted linen, the work of [a] skilful workman. It shall have two shoulder pieces joined to its...ends, that it may be joined...[in a]...skillfully woven band...,”(28:6-8a) Verse 9: “You shall take two onyx stones...engrave on them the names of the sons of Israel.”(28:9) Now all of this is important. It may sound a little boring honey, but right now it’s important because they’re going to inquire of the Lord and you’re going to see in the book of Samuel, you’re going to see them inquiring of the Lord. Well when they inquired of the Lord they were inquiring by using the ephod. And so this ephod that he’s talking about here has two onyx stones. It has the names of the sons of Israel engraved on them, [“six names on one stone and the names of the remaining six on the other stone.”] (28:10) And then it says in verse 11 that, “As a jeweler engraves a signet, you shall engrave the two stones according to the names of the sons of Israel; you shall set them in filigree settings of gold. You shall put the two stones on the shoulder pieces of the ephod, as stones of memorial for the sons of Israel, and Aaron shall bear their names before the Lord on [the] two shoulders for a memorial.”(28:11-12) Verse 15: “You shall make a breast piece of judgment, the work of a skillful workman; like the work of [an] ephod you shall make it...”(28:15a) And then He tells how he’s going to make this breast piece and how it’s going to have all these stones on the front of it. And then in verse 25 it says, “You shall put...them on the shoulder pieces of the ephod, at the front of it.”(28:25b) Now if you have an Inductive Study Bible you can look at that and you can see a drawing of the ephod and you can see the breast piece and then it’s attached to the ephod. And then he goes in before the Lord and carries the sons of Israel on this breast piece. All right also, there was the Urim and the Thummim. And the Urim is the word plural of lights, and it was brilliancy of the figures in the breast piece of the high priest. The Thummim was the plural of perfections. It’s the word perfect, but it’s an i-m ending and so then it’s a plural. And so what they believe is when they inquired of the Lord that these lights would

come and go on the breast piece and with those names of the tribes, then they would spell out the answers. Also the stones were tucked into this breast piece. All right now, so there's that ephod, but then there's the robe of the ephod, verse 31: "[And] You shall make the robe of the ephod all of blue." (28:31) And then it talks about that robe and it talks about the pomegranates on the bottom of that robe so that as they go before the Lord and as they minister, it says in verse 35: "[And] It shall be on Aaron when he ministers; and it's tinkling..." the tinkling of these little bells, "...[may] be heard when he enters and leaves the holy place before the Lord...that he [may] not die." (28:35) So this is a very complicated system that you need to know and understand. And so you find Samuel, as a boy, wearing the linen ephod, not the one with the breast piece. But now he's saying, this man of God is coming to Eli in verse 28 of 1 Samuel 2 and he's saying: Did I not choose them? And then He says among those things, to carry the ephod before Me. And what are the consequences of not carrying it properly? We'll talk about it when we come back.

## **PART TWO**

Welcome beloved. Remember now, because we're talking so much about the ephod that we're in the middle of the prophecy from this man of God as he speaks to Eli. Remember also, we're looking at the fact that when we honor God, God honors us. And you're going to see in just a moment, where I got that from. I didn't pull it out of the air; I pulled it out of the Word of God. And when you pull it out of the Word of God, you're on solid ground. Well, the man of God is still talking to Eli and he says in verse 29: "Why do you kick at My sacrifice and...My offering which I have commanded in My dwelling, and honor your sons above Me, by making yourselves..." now he doesn't say by making them, but: "...by making yourselves fat with the choicest of every offering of My people Israel?" (1 Samuel 2:29) I want to stop here for a minute, because what I want you to see is I believe that when we look at verse 29, you're seeing that Eli is profiting from the sins of his

sons. And I think that you see it because I think the scripture's very careful in picking the words. God says ["every word of God is pure. It's purified as silver in a furnace of fire seven times."] (Psalm 12:6) That's in Psalm 12. And so He's chosen His words carefully. And what this man of God is saying to Eli, you have honored your sons above Me. You've kicked at My sacrifice and My offering, which I've commanded in My dwelling. And Eli could say O; no, no, no, it's my sons that have done it. But watch now, how he points the finger. "...and [you] honor your sons above Me, by making yourselves fat with the choicest of every offering of My people Israel." (1 Samuel 2:29b) In other words, you're eating the sacrifices, Eli. You're getting that fat Eli. Now, just remember that. I do not want to take away your joy of discovery, but when we get to chapter 4 this is all going to connect. So what are you going to do? I hope you're going to read chapter 4 before tomorrow. So what are you going to do? I hope you're going to read chapter 4 before tomorrow so you'll see, hey I know where she's going. And that's good; I love to have you go ahead of me and find out where I'm going. That's what inductive study is all about; you can discover truth for yourself. All right now, the man of God is still speaking. He says, "Therefore...", [because you have kicked at My sacrifice and My offering, because you have honored your sons above Me, because you are participating in their sin by making yourself fat with the choicest of every offering, therefore, the Lord God of Israel declares,] and this is what He says: "...I...indeed say that your house and the house of your father should walk before Me forever; but now the Lord declares, 'Far be it from Me-for those who honor Me I will honor, and those who despise Me will be lightly esteemed.'" (2:30) In other words, if you had honored Me, I would have honored you. But because you've despised Me, you're going to be lightly esteemed. In other words, I'm not going to give much attention to you. I'm not going to honor you the way that you could have been honored if you just would have honored Me. We need to pause there for a minute, don't we? We need to pause and we need to say O God, O Father, show me, am I honoring You? Lord, am I honoring You? Does my life bring You honor or do I in a sense, demean

You and despise You because of the way that I am living, because I'm not putting You first, because I'm not treating You as You should be treated, because I'm not glorifying You, I'm not giving a correct or true opinion or estimate of who You are because I'm not living in a way that shows that. O Father, I pray that You would speak to our hearts. I know it's not to condemn us. I know it's to turn us around. I know that it's to make us be everything that we should be. So cleanse us with the washing of the water of Your Word, Father, even as the priests stopped at the brazen altar and washed their hands and feet before they ministered to You, I'm coming with my precious listener to wash our hands and feet in the Word of God so that we can be clean and honor You. In Jesus Name, amen. All right now, let's go on. He says in verse 31, "Behold, the days are coming when I will break your strength and the strength of your father's house so that there will not be an old man in your house." (2:31) In other words, strength means it keeps on going and it lasts into old age. But He says I'm going to break the strength or the arm of your father's house and there's not going to be an old man in your house. They're not going to live that long. "[And] You [Eli] will see the distress of My dwelling..." (2:32a) Now what is God's dwelling? Well God's dwelling is that tent, that tabernacle there in Shiloh. This is where the Shekinah glory, the cloud of His presence, the fire at night hovered above the holy place, above the holy of holies, above the Ark of the Covenant. And so he's saying to them, you are going to see the distress of My dwelling. The place that you have ministered, the place that you have dedicated your life to, the place that you have worshipped Me because of your sin and because you honored your sons above honoring Me, you are going to see the distress of this dwelling. In other words, you are going to be the cause of what happens in this dwelling. And you know when we get into these church fights, and quarrels and stuff and we get nasty and we aren't walking according to the Word of God in gentleness and kindness and we're sitting and we're judging and we're condemning and we're not handling things properly, we bring distress on God's dwelling and we bring shame to God's name. Now watch what He says, verse 33: "Yet I will not cut off every man

of yours from My altar that your eyes [may] fail from weeping and your soul grieve, and all the increase of your house will die in the prime of life.”(28:33) Now watch what He’s saying. Let me read that again. ““Yet I will not cut off every man of yours from My altar...that your eyes may fail from weeping and your soul grieve, and all the increase of your house will die in the prime of life.”(28:33) Remember they’re not going to come to an old man. “[And] This will be the sign to you which [shall] come concerning your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas...:” Finally He’s named them again, ““...on the same day both of them will die.”(28:34) I’m bringing judgment. I’m bringing judgment to you, to your house, to your sons. And I’m doing it because you did not honor Me, because you despised Me, because you would not correct your sons. Now God has more to say about this and we’re going to see this as we get into 1 Samuel, chapter 3. But I just want you to see and understand one thing today, Beloved, and that is God honors those who honor Him. And those who despise Him by not walking in total obedience to God, by, they’re despising Him by despising the sacrifices, by their immorality. And I will tell you today that if you are in immorality you are despising God and God is going to judge you. God has to judge sin because God is God. So Beloved, make your decision today, that you are going to honor God, that He is going to have priority and that He is going to have first place even above your family because He’s God and He’ll honor you.