

PRECEPTS FOR LIFE

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SERIES: 1 Samuel, Part 2 (Who Are You Most Like – Saul or David?)

TITLE: Program 30 – Divination

FRIDAY

OPEN

When things aren't happening the way you think they ought to happen, when they're not going according to what you want or you desire from God, are you tempted to break rules? Do you think that you can break those rules Beloved, and get away with it? If God is God, O my friend, don't be foolish. There are lessons for life we need to learn today, lessons that will keep you on that straight and narrow path, despite the circumstances.

PART ONE

We are studying such an awesome awesome man. I just pray Beloved, that you are learning along with me and that God is speaking to your heart, and that as you contrast the life of David with the life of Saul, which is what God is showing us in this portion of 1 Samuel. He's showing us a man after His own heart, walking in the Spirit and He's showing us a man Saul, who has turned away from God and who is walking according to the flesh. And as we

look at them we have to ask ourselves: Am I more like David or am I more like Saul? And when you give yourself an honest look, then if you're more like Saul than you're more like David, then for heaven's sake, for heaven's sake, for the kingdom of heaven's sake get on the right side of the fence and live the way that you're supposed to live. And I'm saying the same thing to me also, because as I study the Word of God I see so many times you know, that I am tempted, I am tempted to take things in my own hand. I'm tempted to think I can break the rules. You cannot break the rules. You can't break them and get away with it. God is God and He has a reward for those who diligently seek Him and who obey him. And so obedience, as we saw, is much better than sacrifice. Well what we find is we find David still in the wilderness, but now he's living in the area of the Philistines. He's living in the area of the Philistines, and yet this man, in the midst of the world, so to speak, the world of the Philistines, he is living for God. He is doing and completing the job that God called His people to do. I love it. He's hiding from Saul. He's gone over to the Philistine area because he knows that as long as he stays in Judah that Saul is going to continue to pursue him and he is exactly right, because when Saul hears that he's gone over to the Philistines he says, "Okay, I might as well not seek him anymore." And Saul stops seeking him, but David does not stop obeying the Lord. He's living in Philistine territory. He has been given the city of Ziklag by Achish the king of Gath. And **"...David and his men [are going up and raiding] the Geshurites, the Girzites, and the Amalekites; for they were the inhabitants of the land from ancient times, as you come to Shur even as far as the land of Egypt."** (1 Samuel 27:8) In other words, if you follow the coastline, the Mediterranean coastline right on down from Israel to Egypt, that's the way of Shur. And that's where David is making these raids. Now I want us to continue to look at some scriptures as to why David is doing this. And I gave you Deuteronomy, chapter 7, verses 1 to 6 that tells that when they go into the land, that all the inhabitants of the land that God

is giving to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob have to be destroyed. They have to be utterly destroyed. They have to be wiped out. There is to be no allegiance to them, no alliance with them, not driving them out. (Paraphrased) In fact, in the days of Judges the reason they got in trouble was because they did not drive out the enemy completely. When you go to Joshua chapter 13, and I would put these scriptures down. In Joshua 13 you find out that all the land was not taken under the days of Joshua. Remember Joshua is the one that crosses over the Jordan River that goes in and destroys of all of Jericho, everything in Jericho, and then proceeds to conquer the land. They go in in a three-prong attack, directly and then splinter to the north and they splinter to the south. And yet in chapter 13 of Joshua, verse 1 it says, **“Now Joshua was old and advanced in years when the Lord said to him, ‘You are old and advanced in years, and very much of the land remains [yet] to be possessed. This is the land that remains....” (Joshua 13:1-2a)** Now listen carefully, this is very interesting. It’s so wonderful. You know I get so excited because you study the Word of God and you move through it precept upon precept and you start in Genesis and Exodus and Leviticus and Numbers and Deuteronomy and you go all the way through and He builds precept upon precept and precept upon precept and you become so rich in your knowledge of the Lord and of His ways and then you see how the Scripture goes together and how it intertwines and all fits together. Do you love the Word of God? If you don’t love the Word of God, if you’re not drawn to the Word of God, if the Word of God doesn’t speak to you when you open it, then I would check out my salvation. Because if Christ is in you then He puts inside of you a hunger and a thirst for righteousness, a desire to know God. That’s a gift from God when the Holy Spirit moves inside of you. So if there’s no hunger then God has brought you to this program in order to create that hunger, in order to get you to know Jesus Christ, in order to get you into the Word, so that you might have the precepts for life that you need for living. Verse 2, He says, **“This is the land that remains....”**

This is when I got all excited. **“...All the regions of the Philistines...”** That land remains. **“...And all of those of the Geshurites.” (Joshua 13:2)** And this part of the people that David was attacking when he was living in the land of the Philistines. Now the land of Philistines, and I’m telling you in modern day Gaza, that belongs to Israel. I mean Israel may get out of there, and Israel may relocate their people but according to God’s Word they are wrong; they are wrong. All of that belongs to God’s people. And I know that the people living in the land say, “No, it belongs to me. We bought it.” But you know you aren’t going back far enough. You’re not going back to the Word of God. You’re not seeing what God says. And we have to stand for the Word of God, no matter what kind of a Christian we are, if we’re a Christian, we’re a Christian first. We’re not an Arab Christian; we’re a Christian Arab. Do you understand? In other words, our Christianity comes before our nationality. Well this is what He says, “[So they,] **all the regions of the Philistines....**” That would be Gath and Ekron and all those Philistine cities, those Philistine cities belong to Israel, **“and those of the Geshurites.” (Joshua 13:2)** So he goes on to say, **“From the Shihor which is east of Egypt, even as far as the border of Ekron to the north....”** And Ekron is a Philistine city. **“...(It is counted as Canaanite); the five lords of the Philistines: the Gazite, the Ashdodite, the Ashkelonite, the Gittite, the Ekronite; and the Avvite.” (13:3)** All of that belongs to Israel. All right, but they hadn’t possessed it yet. So what is David doing? Is David out of the will of the Lord being in the land of the Philistines? I don’t think so. I think that he’s there doing God’s business. I think he’s there obeying God. So I gave you Deuteronomy 7:1-6. I gave you Deuteronomy in the last program, 20:16-18. We’ve looked at Joshua 13:1-3. Now I want us to go to Deuteronomy chapter 25, verse 17, Deuteronomy chapter 25, and verse 17. Now this is God’s command to the children of Israel when they’re east of the Jordan getting ready to cross the Jordan and go in and possess the land that God gave to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as an everlasting covenant. And

this is what God is saying. This is God speaking. **“Remember...,”** verse 17, **“...what Amalek did to you along the way when you came...from Egypt.” (Deuteronomy 25:17)** And Amalek was at their heels, and Amalek was fighting them. And you would read about that in Exodus chapter 17. This is when Joshua goes down to fight the enemy and Moses goes up on the hill, and Aaron and Hur are up there holding up his hands, and as long as his hands are held up with the staff of God in his hands Joshua wins, but when Moses gets tired and his arms come down because it’s a long battle, then the enemy, the Amalekites start to prevail. And so that’s why Aaron and Hur sit Moses on a rock and hold up his hands with the staff in his hand. He says, **“[Do you remember] how he met you along the way and attacked you among all the stragglers at your rear when you were faint and weary; and he did not fear God?” (Deuteronomy 25:18)** Reminds me of my son’s dog. My son has Bashan, and it’s just like a fluffy little poodle, only fluffier and when any dog comes into that yard, I mean, that little Bashan goes for it. And that Bashan goes not for the front of the animal, but from the rear of the animal. And so he goes to the rear and I mean he just grabs a hold of that rear and won’t let go. Man he’s right after that dog until he’s chasing him out there. Well, now they’ve got a little bulldog. A bulldog was trained to hold bulls in check so that they could kill a bull. So a bulldog would run and grab a bull right on his nose and his mouth and he’d just clamp on and hang on. Well, the other day a dog came into the yard and the Bashan came from the rear and the bulldog came from the front, and I mean that poor dog didn’t know what hit him. The bulldog had him on the front and the little Bashan had him on the rear. The Bashan’s like the Amalekites. And he said, **“How he met you along the way and attacked you among all your stragglers at the rear when you were faint and weary; and [they] did not fear God. Therefore it shall come about when the Lord your God has given you rest from all your surrounding enemies, in the land which the Lord ... gives you as an inheritance to possess, you shall blot out the**

memory of Amalek from under heaven; you must not forget.”

(Deuteronomy 25:19) Well that’s what they were to do, and who was to do this? Well, go to 1 Samuel chapter 15 and you’ll remember. In 1 Samuel chapter 15 the Lord speaks to Samuel and He gives these instructions for him to give to Saul. We’ll look at it right after the break.

PART TWO

God had told the children of Israel in Deuteronomy that they were to destroy Amalek. Now the time has come in 1 Samuel chapter 15, which is the last scripture I want you to look at in relationship to this. So in 1 Samuel chapter 15 Saul is the one who is to destroy Amalek. This is what the Lord says through Samuel, in verse 2. **“Thus says the Lord of hosts, ‘I will punish Amalek for what he did to Israel, how he set himself against him on the way while he was coming...from Egypt. Now go and strike Amalek and utterly destroy all that he has, ...do not spare him; but put to death both man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.’”** (1 Samuel 15:2-3) So this was God’s command. But you know the story. You know that Saul did not obey God. You know that God turned around and said to him, **“Has the Lord as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams.”** (15:22) And He says, **“...Rebellion is as the sin of divination....”** (15:23a) Now remember that: **“...Rebellion is as the sin of divination, and insubordination is iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the...Lord, [the Lord] has...rejected you from being king.”** (15:23) Now watch the contrast, watch. You see David here in 1 Samuel obeying God. You see David carrying out the rest of the work of clearing the land and getting everyone taken care of, putting everyone to death. Now when you contrast this with what we just read in 1 Samuel, that rebellion, disobedience is as the sin divination, watch what is about to happen. Watch the way all of this is laid

out before you. You say, “You know this is not terribly practical.” You know what? You need knowledge because everything that we do is based on knowledge. And what you need to understand is that God is God and God is to be obeyed. “[Obedience] **is better than sacrifice...rebellion is as the sin of divination....**” (15:22b, 23a) So here is David. He’s in the area of the Philistines. He is not sitting back and saying you know, “Saul has been pursuing me and I have a right just to take it easy and just to pull up my men and sit here and just wait out the death of Saul” No, he is going to pursue God. He is going to do the work of God. He’s going to be obedient. He’s going to finish cleaning up the land. It’s in his heart, and he knows God’s commission on his life. So when we come back to verse 9 of 1 Samuel 27 it says, [And] **“David attacked the land and did not leave a man or a woman alive....”** He’s doing what Saul did not do. And God wants you to see the contrast. He says, **“...And he took away the sheep, the cattle, the donkeys, the camels, ...the clothing. Then he returned [home] and came to Achish. [And] now Achish said, ‘Where have you made a raid today?....’”** (1 Samuel 27:9b-10a) ‘Cause he’s bringing him some of the spoil apparently. **“...And David said, ‘Against the Negev of the Judah and against the Negev....,’”** the Negev was the south country, **“...of the Jerahmeelites and against the Negev of the Kenites.” “David did not leave a man or a woman alive to bring to Gath, saying, ‘Otherwise they will tell about us, saying, “So has David done and so has been his practice all the time [since] he...lived in the country of the Philistines.””**” (27:10b-11) All the time he’s been living there, according to verse 7, one year and four months, and that whole time he’s been in an act of obedience to God. In that whole time it says, that this has been his practice since he lived in the land of the Philistines. He is still serving God even in these difficult circumstances. He’s going to be obedient? Are you going to be obedient Beloved? You’re in difficulties, you’re in a wilderness situation, you’re living where you don’t want to live, you’re living in the midst of the

world, you're living in the midst of sin and corruption, but will you be like a light in the midst of that crooked and perverse generation? Will you live in such a way as to hold forth the word of life? Will you be used of God to carry out God's purposes? Now watch the contrast because God is doing a definite thing when He lays out the Scriptures before us. Remember, **"...Rebellion is as the sin of divination...."** (1 Samuel 15:23a) All right, so now we come to chapter 28. **"Now it came about in those days that the Philistines gathered their armed camps for war, to fight against Israel. And Achish said to David, 'Know assuredly that you will go out with me in the camp, you and your men.'" (1 Samuel 28:1)** "We're going to fight Israel and you're going to come with me." Whew! **"David said to Achish, 'Very well, you...know what your servant can do.' So Achish said to David, 'Very well, I will make you my bodyguard for life.' Now Samuel was dead...."** (28:2-3a) Now remember the Bible's an oral book and everybody wasn't sitting there like you're able to sit there and follow me along in the Scriptures. So He wants to show you something. Samuel was dead. We already know Samuel's dead. He's already told us that. We've already known that he's been buried at Ramah. And it says, **"...And all Israel...lamented him and buried him in Ramah, his own city. And Saul had removed from the land those who were mediums and spiritists."** (28:3b) And, mediums and spiritists are involved in divination. And remember [rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft or divination]. (1 Samuel 15:23a) And it says, **"So the Philistines gathered together and came and camped in Shunem; and Saul gathered all Israel together and they camped in Gilboa."** (28:4) Remember where they are camping. They're camping in Gilboa. There are mountains of Gilboa, behind them beautiful beautiful mountains, right on the plain of Jezreel. And it says, **"When Saul saw the camp of the Philistines, he was afraid and his heart trembled greatly."** (28:5) Isn't that something! David's living among them and he's not afraid because he's walking in obedience to the Lord. Saul sees them and

Saul is afraid and his heart is trembling. Why? Because he's living in disobedience to the Lord. **"When Saul inquired of the Lord, the Lord did not answer... either by dreams or by Urim or by [the] prophets."** (28:6) Now He didn't answer by dreams. God's not speaking to Saul right now. And He didn't answer by the Urim. Remember it was Saul that killed the priests at Nob and remember it was Abiathar that took the ephod. But they had another ephod and God wasn't speaking to him that way. And He didn't speak to him by the prophets. Well he didn't want anything to do with Samuel. He didn't listen to Samuel anyway. So why should God give him revelation when all this time he has walked in partial obedience, which really is disobedience, when he didn't put to death Amalek, when he didn't wait to offer the sacrifice? So watch. **"Then Saul said to his servants, 'Seek for me a woman who is a medium...and inquire of her.' And his servants said..., 'Behold, there is a woman who is a medium at En-dor.'" (28:7)** He is going to go to the witch, to the medium of En-dor. Do you see what God is showing us? God is showing us that **"...rebellion is as the sin of divination...."** (1 Samuel 15:23a) He has gone from rebellion and not obeying God and not putting the enemy to death, now to divination. He's the one that drove out the mediums and the spiritists. He's the one that said, "They're not allowed in the land because that's what the book of Deuteronomy said." But now he's in a difficult situation and what is he going to do? He's going to compromise the Word of God. O Beloved, listen: God requires obedience.