

PRECEPTS FOR LIFE

a Production of

Precept Ministries International

P.O. Box 182218, Chattanooga, TN 37422-7218

1-800-763-1990/ www.precept.org

The following is an actual transcript of the PRECEPTS FOR LIFE Broadcast. For the purpose of filling transcript requests quickly, they have received only light editing. If you have questions concerning the material covered in this broadcast, Kay has published a number of books explaining the Scripture in depth. These books may be ordered by contacting the telephone number or address printed above.

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

THURSDAY

OPEN

Did you ever hear that song, I Don't Care If It Rains or Freezes, as Long as I Have My Plastic Jesus Sitting on the Dashboard of My Car? Can you imagine writing a song like that? I don't care if it rains or freezes as long as I have my plastic Jesus. You know, that's what Jesus is to a lot of us, a plastic Jesus, an icon instead of a reality. We're going to talk about it today as we look at 1 Samuel, chapter 4.

PART ONE

Where do you go beloved when you're in trouble? What do you grab, what do you hang on to? What do you hold in your hand? What do you feel in your pocket? What do you have on the dashboard of your car? In other words, is there some sort of a holy rabbits foot that you feel is going to protect you, that is going to keep you? And if you can just get a hold of that icon, if you can get a hold of that crucifix, if you can put that cross around your neck, you're sure you're going to be all right. Well beloved, this is

what the Jews thought; this is what the nation of Israel thought when they were getting ready to go into battle. If they could just have the ark of the covenant they would be all right. Well, does it work? That's what we want to find out as we start in 1 Samuel, chapter 4 today. Now in 1 Samuel, chapter 4 it opens with, "Thus the word of Samuel came to all Israel. Now Israel went out to meet the Philistines in battle and camped beside Ebenezer while the Philistines camped in Aphek." (1 Samuel 4:1) Now what I want you to do is make sure that you're following these events and seeing where these cities are. This is so important because you need to get as many mental pictures as you can. You need to realize that the events that we are reading about and the events that we are studying are not fairy tales. They're not something that people sat around a camp fire and came up with a good yarn and spinned it well. No. These are true events that happened in true places at a specific time in history. So what I want to do is I want to stop for a minute, since I opened up with that song that I'm sure that many of you have never heard, that you don't care if it rains or freezes as long as I have my plastic Jesus sitting on the dashboard of my car. I want to talk about Jesus. I want to talk about Him for a minute because I want to make sure that as we look at the scriptures that we don't miss what Jesus showed us in Luke, chapter 24. Remember Jesus was resurrected from the dead. He was walking on the road to Emmaus. And as He walked on the road to Emmaus He met some men that were very downcast because they thought that Jesus was the Messiah, but then Jesus had died. They had heard that He had been raised from the dead, but they really weren't sure. And Jesus turned to them in Luke 24, verse 25 and he said, "... 'O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!'" (Luke 24:25b) Now one of things that we have just heard and seen in 1 Samuel, chapter 3 is there's a prophet on the scene. And the prophet is Samuel. And it says in Luke 24, verse 26: "Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory? Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures." (24:26-27) Well as we look at Samuel, we see that the word of the Lord, is coming to all Israel, and

it's coming through Samuel because Samuel is a prophet. And yet in our last program, I stopped and I had you look at Deuteronomy, chapter 18. And in Deuteronomy 18, as we were studying about prophets, the true and the false, I stopped and I showed you that there's a prophecy about Jesus and that He is the true Prophet. And so in Deuteronomy, chapter 18 in verse 15, Moses is speaking and he says, "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him."(18:15) And we come down to verse 18. And, "The Lord said to me, 'They have spoken well.'"(18:17) And the Lord's speaking now: "I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen ...," like you Moses, "...and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. [And] It shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he will speak in My name, I Myself will require it of him."(18:18-19) Well, I want us to go and I want us to see that Jesus is not a plastic Jesus that sits on the dashboard of your car, that's like a talisman or a lucky icon, or a rabbits foot, but Jesus is the Son of God. And in John, chapter 1, when Jesus comes on the scene we have, at the beginning of that gospel, which was written to show us that Jesus is God, we have the people coming to John the Baptist who's the forerunner of Jesus and they ask him in verse 21: Are you the Christ? And he says no I'm not the Christ. And they ask well, "...What then? Are you Elijah? And he said, 'I am not.' Are you the prophet, the prophet? And he answered, 'No.'"(John 1:21) Now who was the prophet? The prophet, the spokesman for God was Jesus Christ. As a matter of fact, if you look at Hebrews, chapter 1: Hebrews is such an awesome, awesome book to study. You know it's different than the other New Testament epistles. It's really awesome. In Hebrews, chapter 1 it says in verse 1: "God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets...", and Samuel's one of them, "...in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He [Jesus] is the radiance of His glory [of God's glory] and the exact representation of His nature...",(Hebrews 1:1-3a) of God's nature. So He's not a plastic Jesus

sitting on the dashboard of our car, but, "...He is the radiance of God's glory...the exact representation of His nature."(1:3a) In other words, when Philip said to Jesus, "...Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us..."(John 14:8) He says, ["If you've seen Me you've seen the Father."](John 14:9b) Why? Because He was the exact representation of the nature of God. And then it says, "...When He had made purification of sins..."(Hebrews 1:3b) In other words, when He died on the cross and was made sin for us, when He was buried and resurrected from the dead, He paid for our sins in full. Then, "...He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high..."(Hebrews 1:3c) And so that's where He's sitting. He says, "...having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they."(1:4) In other words don't look to angels for your help. You look to the Son of God. You look to the One that is the radiance of God's glory. You look to the One, now listen carefully; through whom God has spoken in these last days. So what we have in the Bible is we have the complete revelation of God. We have the words of Jesus recorded for us in the same divine way that we had the Old Testament recorded for us. Holy men of God spoke or wrote as they were moved by the Spirit of God. All scripture, Old Testament, New Testament are given by inspiration of God. Now in that context in 2 Timothy it's referring to the Old Testament. So you and I, as we study the book of Samuel, we're looking at one of the prophets through whom God spoke. When we get to the New Testament we're looking at the Prophet with a capital P. We're looking at the final revelation of God and that came through His Son. So everything that's in the Word of God is there complete for you and me so that we might be thoroughly furnished for every good work of life. So as we look at 1 Samuel I want you to know that Samuel was a prophet and as chapter 4, verse 1 says, it says, "Thus the word of Samuel came to all Israel..."(1Samuel 4:1a) God was speaking through Samuel. Now God has spoken to us in these last days through His Son and Hebrews, chapter 2 tells us, ["that since God has spoken in these last days, through His Son, then we better pay attention to Him."](Hebrews 2:1) We better understand what God is saying. In chapter 2 of Hebrews, in verse 1 it

says, “For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it.”(2:1) So we’re to pay attention to what God has said. In verse 2 it says, “For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, how [shall] we escape if we neglect so great a salvation...?”(2:2-3a) That salvation that was brought to us through the Lord Jesus Christ. Saved by grace, through faith, and when we believe and receive the Lord Jesus Christ, then we have the gift of eternal life. Now, do you have your study guide on 1 Samuel? If not you need to go to preceptsforlife.com and download that because I want you studying with me. All right, so we have Israel, they’re going out to meet the Philistines in battle. And we are introduced here to the Philistines as a major enemy of Israel. I mean they were like a dog, always yapping at their heels, always giving them grief. And we find them in a battle. And when they go out to battle, of all things verse 2 tells us that [“Israel is defeated before the Philistines who killed about four thousand people on the battle field.”](1Samuel 4:2) So what do they do? They run to get in a sense, what they consider and what the song is all about a plastic Jesus. They go to get the ark of God because they think that it’s the ark of God that’s going to deliver them. And what they miss it’s not the ark of God, but it’s the God of the ark that will deliver them. And that’s what we’ll talk about right after this break.

PART TWO

Welcome back beloved. Do you know that you really are beloved to me? As a matter of fact, as I sit here in this radio studio and do these programs, I mean the guys on the other side of this glass would tell you that my hands are going here and there and I’m all intent, because in my minds eye, I can see you and I am so proud of you. And I can see you with that study guide that you downloaded from preceptsforlife.com in front of you, the text and marking the text. So I would suggest that maybe you might want to pick a color or a diagram for the Philistines. I put red around it like a cloud and

then colored it black because they are an enemy against Israel. Well let's look at it and then we'll go a little bit deeper. 1 Samuel, chapter 4, verse 1: "Thus the word of Samuel came to all Israel. Now Israel went out to meet the Philistines in battle and they camped beside Ebenezer..." (1 Samuel 4:1a) I want you to remember Ebenezer, cause we're going to look at that and the significance of that name later; "...while the Philistines camped in Aphek. The Philistines drew up in battle array to meet Israel. When the battle spread, Israel was defeated before the Philistines who killed about four thousand men on the battlefield." (1 Samuel 4:1b-2) And you're saying wait a minute, wait a minute. These are God's people. Where was God? Where's this one that they're calling Jehovah-Sabaoth, the Lord of hosts, that's in charge of all the hosts, all the armies of the earth and all the angelic armies? Where is He? Where is He? Is He asleep? Is He out to lunch? What is happening? Is He a plastic Jesus sitting on the dashboard of a car that has eyes that cannot see, ears that cannot hear, mouth that cannot speak like other idols? Oh no, Oh no. Watch what happens: "When the people came into the camp, the elders of Israel said, 'Why has the Lord defeated us today before the Philistines? Let us take to ourselves from Shiloh the ark of the covenant of the Lord, that it may come among us and deliver us from the power of our enemies.'" (4:3) We forgot to take, now watch, our holy rabbits foot, so to speak. We need the Ark of the Covenant there. If we had the Ark of the Covenant there then we would be all right. Now what you're going to do, or what I suggest that you do in your study guide that you downloaded, that you mark every reference to the ark of the covenant, because this is of all the pieces of furniture in the tabernacle, in the tent that Moses was instructed to build, all the furniture, nothing was more significant, or more important than the ark of the covenant. And what they're thinking is okay; we were defeated by our enemies. That's because we didn't have the Ark of the Covenant with us. Now watch. Let me go on and read a little bit, and then we're going to look at the Ark of the Covenant. So it says, "So the people sent to Shiloh, and from there they carried the ark of the covenant..." now watch, "...of the Lord of hosts..." there's that name for

God, Jehovah-Sabaoth, "...who sits above the cherubim; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God."(4:4) All right, let's just stop. If you have your study guide on 1 Samuel, if you downloaded that from our website, from preceptsforlife.com, then you have a picture of the ark of the covenant. And it was a box and it was made of acacia wood and it was overlaid with gold and it had a lid on it that was called the mercy seat and on top of that lid there were two cherubim and those two cherubim hovered over the top of the ark of the covenant and that was called the mercy seat. And once a year the high priest would go into the holy of holies, the only time he ever went into the holy of holies. It was on what we call Yom Kippur. It was called the Day of Atonement and you can read about it in Leviticus, chapter 16. But the priest would go in there once a year. He would go two times on that day, first with the blood of a sacrifice for his sins, and then second with the blood of a sacrifice for the people's sin. And that's the only time that he would go into the holy of holies. All right, now there was only one piece of furniture there in the holy of holies and that was the ark of the covenant. Now the ark of the covenant was a picture of the very throne of God. And in that diagram that we have of the tabernacle in your study guide, you would see a cloud above the holy of holies. That cloud was called the shekinah. Now that's not the way the Jews pronounce, but that's the way we say it. It's the shekinah or we call it the glory. It was the very presence of the Lord in that cloud, or in that pillar of fire, which was there by night. All right, so this was the most holy piece in all the tabernacle. Now the people want to go to Shiloh, and remember that's where the tabernacle is, that's where the tent is, that's where Eli has been ministering, and that's where Elkanah and his two wives, Peninnah and Hannah went yearly to make their sacrifices as they were required to do. They were required to go three times a year and celebrate these three feasts. And one of those, the Feast of Tabernacles included the Day of Atonement. So they say hey, go get the ark of the covenant of the Lord and bring it with us into battle. Verse 5: "As the Ark of the Covenant came into the camp, all Israel shouted with a great shout, so that the earth resounded."(4:5) In other

words, the earth was shaking and bouncing that noise off of it; they were so jubilant. And it's in a sense, and let me go back to that crazy song, I don't care it rains or shines as long as I have my plastic Jesus sitting on the dashboard of my chariot, so to speak. All right, in other words, the ark of the covenant is here and it doesn't matter if it rains. It doesn't matter if it shines; finally the ark of the covenant is with us, and because we have the ark of the covenant with us, we are going to win. We are going to defeat the enemy. Now watch what it says. "When the Philistines heard [this] noise of the shout, they said, 'What does the noise of this great shout in the camp of the Hebrews mean?' Then they understood that the ark of the Lord had come into the camp. [And] The Philistines were afraid, for they said, 'God has come into the camp....'"(4:6-7a) In other words, they understood hey, that's the symbol of their God. "...And they said, 'Woe to us! For nothing like this has happened before. Woe to us! Who [will] deliver us [from the hands of these might,] from the hand of these mighty gods? These are the gods who smote the Egyptians with all kinds of plagues in the wilderness. Take courage and be men, O Philistines, or you will become slaves to the Hebrews, as they have been slaves to you; therefore, be men and fight.' So the Philistines fought..."(4:7b-10a) and of course Israel won. I mean didn't they have their ark of the covenant? Didn't they have the presence of God with them? Well listen to what happens, "So the Philistines fought and Israel was defeated, and every man fled to his tent; and the slaughter was very great, for there fell of Israel thirty thousand foot soldiers. And the ark of God was taken..."(4:10-11a) It's like this person that wrote the song about the plastic Jesus. It's like the plastic Jesus falls off the dashboard of the car. And you wonder, hey, I have no more protection. You know where Israel missed it? They forgot there was a God behind that furniture and it was that God that they had displeased. O we have so much to learn, but we'll have to do it tomorrow.