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

THURSDAY

OPEN

It's one thing to know what's wrong and what needs fixing and it's another thing, isn't it to do it. I mean you know that exercise is good, but then doing it, disciplining yourself, that's another thing. And although you know something is good, if you don't do it you're not going to reap the benefits of it. Well this is what we are going to see as we look at 1 Samuel chapter 7, as we talk about deliverance; how does it come?

PART ONE

As we looked at 1 Samuel chapter 7 in our last program we saw that the children of Israel had finally come to the point where they were lamenting for the Lord. Finally they had felt that void in their life. Finally they were willing to turn from what appears to be a worldly sorrow to a godly sorrow. And so after 20 years of the ark being at Kiriath-jearim then, as they lamented for the Lord, sensitive Samuel spoke to all the house of Israel and he brought them this message: "If you will return to the Lord with all your heart, if you will remove the foreign gods and the Ashtaroth from among

you and direct your hearts to the Lord and serve Him alone, and He will deliver you from the hands of the Philistines.” (1 Samuel 7:3) There it was; this is how deliverance was to come. But now they had to act on what they heard. So the first thing that they do is they remove the Baals and the Ashtaroath, and then they serve the Lord alone. And when Samuel sees that godly sorrow that leads to repentance, then he’s willing to take them farther. He’s willing to take them and gather them at Mizpah. Now before we look at Mizpah I want to go with you to 2 Corinthians chapter 7. And in 2 Corinthians chapter 7 you’ll see where I got this phrase from about a godly sorrow and a worldly sorrow. In 2 Corinthians, chapter 7 he wrote them a letter. And he wrote them a letter that needed writing. And it needed writing because they were not doing what they should have done. And so he had to reprove them. And so he says in verse 8: “And though I caused you sorrow by my letter, I don’t regret it. Though I did regret it, I caused you sorrow....” And I don’t regret it now, but I’ve got to admit that I had some regrets, should I have ever written the letter. But now he has no regrets because he sees that the letter “...caused you sorrow, though only for a while. I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to the point of repentance; for you were made sorrowful according to the will of God, in order that you might not suffer loss in anything through us.” So he said I am so thankful that I did what I did because I saw that the sorrow that you had was a sorrow that was a godly sorrow. It was according to the will of God. And he says in verse 10: “For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret....” In other words, a changing of the mind, a turning around and you don’t even regret what you have done, because you know it’s God. It leads to salvation. It’s not talking about salvation of your eternal soul. It means salvation from the circumstances, from the sin that you were in, from the bondage that you were in. Then he goes on to compare it. “...But the sorrow of the world...,” and that’s where I got this worldly sorrow, “...produces death.” Now watch what he says. “For behold what earnestness this very thing, this godly sorrow, has produced in you: what vindication of yourselves...,” you’re going to make it right, “...what indignation.” You were indignant that you had behaved this way, that this had gone on. “What fear...,” what respect

and trust of God, "...what longing....," a longing for God, "...what zeal, what avenging of wrong!" You're going to take what was wrong and you're going to avenge it. You're going to do what is right. He says, "In everything you demonstrated yourselves to be innocent in the matter. So although I wrote to you, it was not for the sake of the offender, nor for the sake of the one offended, but that your earnestness on our behalf might be made known to you in the sight of God." And he says, "And for this reason we have been comforted." I'm sure that Samuel felt great comfort when he saw the children of Israel hear his advice and act on it. Verse 4, I would put a cloud, as we mark the text, as we study the Bible inductively, you want to look for terms of conclusion, and here's a conclusion, "So the sons of Israel removed the Baals...." They were told to, and they did it, and the Ashtaroah and they served God alone. They put away everything else and said God, You are the only One. "Then Samuel said, 'Gather all Israel to Mizpah and I will pray to the Lord for you. And they gathered to Mizpah, and they drew water and they poured it out before the Lord, and they fasted on that day, and said there, 'We have sinned against the Lord.' And Samuel judged the sons of Israel at Mizpah." Now first of all, let's find Mizpah. Let's go to our map and find Mizpah. Mizpah is between Bethel and Gilgal. So go over the Jordan River, go a little bit north up above Jerusalem and go to the Jordan River and you'll see Gilgal, closest to the Jordan River. And then going more west, you'll see Mizpah, and then Bethel. Now why did he say let's go to Mizpah? Well it was a gathering place during the days of Judges. Let's look at Judges chapter 10 and we want to look at verse 17. It says, "Then the sons of Ammon were summoned and they camped in Gilead. And the sons of Israel gathered together and camped in Mizpah." So here they are; it's a gathering place. And they all know where to go. I also want you to go to chapter 20, verse 1 and this is the days of Judges. And remember Samuel is a continuation of the days of Judges. You're going to see something very interesting at the end of chapter 7, and you've probably already seen it because you're good students and you're reading ahead and you're marking the text and you're following the study guide. You've downloaded it. And if you haven't go to preceptsforlife.com and download that study guide and grow with me and make this more than just a, a listening program. Make it

an interactive program. In Judges, chapter 20, verse 1: “Then all the sons of Israel from Dan to Beersheba...,” that’s from the north to the south, “...including the land of Gilead...,” and that’s to the east of the Jordan River, “...came out, and the congregation assembled as one man to the Lord at Mizpah.” So he’s saying okay, gather at Mizpah and I’m going to pray for you. And they gathered at Mizpah and they drew water and poured it out. Now what I want to show you is, we saw what Samuel told them to do. Now we need to see how they’re carrying on. We need to see when I need deliverance, I need to not only know that I’m to return to the Lord and I’m to remove foreign gods, but I’m to do it. And so number one, we saw in verse four that they removed their idols. Number two: they were prayed for; Samuel prayed for them. Prayer is so important, and I just ask you to pray for me. Pray for me that I will be a better teacher. Pray for me that I will excel as a communicator, for the sake of the kingdom. Pray for me that I will be a godly woman. In Philippians chapter 1, and that’s one of Paul’s prison epistles, and he’s in prison for the sake of the gospel. And he says, in verse 19, “For I know [if you pray] I know that this shall turn out for my deliverance through your prayers, and the provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, according to my earnest expectation and hope....” This is a verse you can give to me, “...That I shall not be put to shame in anything, but that with all boldness Christ shall even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or death. For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” (Philippians 1:19-21) Now he says I’m in prison, but I want one thing; I want Christ to be exalted in my body whether by life or death. And to do that I need two things: I have the provision of the Holy Spirit, but I need your prayers. And this is what Samuel is doing. Remember Samuel is a man of God. Samuel has come to the kingdom for such a time as this. I know that that’s a verse that belongs to Esther, but you’re going to see just how important Samuel is in the history of Israel. It’s just incredible, and I don’t want to take away your joy of discovery so we’re going to discover it as we move through the book chapter-by-chapter, verse-by-verse, historical event through historical event, because I want you to remember that these people are moving through history. And that’s why when I’m teaching a New Testament epistle I’m going to look at the thing as a whole and going to

analyze it and then we're going to take it apart. But not in a historical book. Why? Because these people didn't look: they couldn't see the end of life. So they had to take it one day at a time. So that's what we're doing as we move through here. So he prayed for them. The third thing that happened, and by the way, mark pray. Always mark pray in your Bible and then you'll see what you learn about prayer. The third thing was they drew water. And they "...poured it out before the Lord." (1 Samuel 7:6) "Before the Lord" is the key. Because you say, what are they doing? Well this is a ritual that shows your contrition. This is a ritual that shows what do you need to get clean, besides soap? You've got to have water. Now you are made clean through the washing of the water of the Word. So this pouring out of this water is an act of contrition. It's an act of saying hey I need cleansing. And so it's a ritual that they go through. You'll see this in other portions of the Bible. And then it says, "and they fasted on that day." Now Isaiah 58 is the passage that talks to us about fasting. And Isaiah 58, I guess of all the chapters in the Bible, or all the teachings in the Bible on fasting, it's Isaiah 58, that summarizes it the best. And we're going to look at it in just a minute right after this break. But I just want to urge you, Beloved, I want to urge you to make sure you download this study and you study along with us.

PART TWO

Welcome back. Did you grab something to eat while we're getting ready to talk about fasting? This is the first time that fasted is used in Samuel, and it's a word that you want to mark throughout your Bible. And you want to mark it because it is a discipline. That is very important because it shows God just how serious you are about seeking Him. When you go to Isaiah chapter 58 in verse 6, he says, "Is this not the fast which I choose, to loosen the bonds of wickedness, to undo the bands of the yoke..." In other words, maybe you're yoked in something and you need deliverance from that. Maybe it's drugs, maybe it's alcohol, maybe it's pornography. But if you want to break the power then this is what you do: you fast, and it loosens the bonds of wickedness. It undoes the bands of the yoke and it lets the oppressed go free and it breaks every yoke. But it's not only just with you, but it has to do with

your relationships with others. And so he says, “Is it not to divide your bread with the hungry, to bring the homeless poor into the house? When you see the naked to cover him and to not hide yourself from your own flesh? Then your light will break out like the dawn....” In other words, fasting is not just an exercise that you do and nothing happens as a result of it, but it’s an exercise that you are going through. It is an abstaining from food or abstaining from drink, and there’s all different kinds of fasting. And we have a 40-minute study coming out on that and you can learn even more. But what I want you to see is when you fast, there are changes that come as a result of that fast, because you’re seeking God and God is meeting with you. And it says in verse 8, “Then your light will break out like the dawn and your recovery will speedily spring forth; and your righteousness will go before you.” Why? Because you’ve broken the bands of wickedness, because you’ve broken the yoke, and you’re righteousness will go before you, and I loved this, “the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard.” In other words, here you are living in such a way as to give a true estimate of what God intends for man, and so that’s your rear guard. “Then you will call, and the Lord will answer. You will cry, and He will say, ‘Here I am.’ If you remove the yoke from your midst, the pointing of the finger...,” in other words, looking at everybody else and accusing them, “...and speaking wickedness, and if you give yourself to the hungry....” In other words, you see somebody’s hungry and so you’re going to help them. “...And satisfy the desire of the afflicted....” You see somebody that is hurting and you’re going to help them and bring them out of that hurt. “...Then your light will rise in darkness and your gloom will become like midday. And the Lord will continually guide you and satisfy your desire in scorched places and give strength to your bones and you will be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water whose waters do not fail.” In other words, you know there’s going to an abundance here; there’s going to be a flowing of this water. There’s going to be this harvest, this fruit, this manifestation of this righteousness. “And those from among you will rebuild the ancient ruins; You will raise up the age-old foundations. You will be called the repairer of the breach, and the restorer of the streets in which to dwell.” In other words when you seek Me in fasting then these things are going to take place in you

and through you as a result. So these people needed deliverance. Samuel told them what to do. He saw them doing it. He gathers them at Mizpah. He prays for them. They pour out this water, a sign of their contrition and their cleansing, and they fast. And they're fasting because they want to break the bands of wickedness. And so the next thing they do, the fifth thing that happens is they confessed: We have sinned against the Lord. We are so busy, Beloved, that so many times we do not have enough time to let God search our heart and show us if there be any wicked way in us, any way of pain. And because we don't do that then we continue and the yoke gets heavier and the wickedness gets greater and that we feel the chains of bondage and deliverance doesn't come, because we haven't sat down to be quiet before the Lord, to confess our sins, to fast, to pray, to see what we need to do and then to confess them. And then it says this; it's very interesting in verse 6 (1 Samuel). "...And Samuel judged the sons of Israel at Mizpah." Now Samuel could sit there and he could pronounce blessing for obedience. He could look at what they did and understanding what they did and seeing the sincerity of the heart, he could judge that and say you're absolved. Now watch what happens. It says, "Now when the Philistines heard that the sons of Israel had gathered to Mizpah, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel..." So here they say, Oh, they're all there. I mean, they're all gathered together. We can wipe them out. "And when the sons of Israel heard it, they were afraid of the Philistines. Then the sons of Israel said to Samuel, 'Do not cease to cry to the Lord our God for us, that He may save us from the hands of the Philistines.'" Now look at the change in them. When they were afraid, instead of running and getting the ark, as they did before when they lost the ark, and trusting in their religious object, they trust God. They get Samuel to cry to God immediately. Now don't you know that the Philistines were a test in all this? Because see, it said in verse 3, if you will do these things he will deliver you from the hands of the Philistines. Now the Philistines are coming against them; they're afraid. Who's going to deliver them? God is going to deliver them and they are on deliverance ground so to speak. They are on deliverance ground because they have done what they should. Beloved, you want deliverance. Are you on deliverance ground? Are you on deliverance ground? Watch what they

did. Number one: They removed the idols. Number two: They asked to be prayed for, which is a humbling act in itself. Number three: They went through the ritual of contrition; they showed by their actions that they wanted cleansing. Number four: They fasted. Number five: They confessed. Number six: They had Samuel judge them and say okay, you're right, you've done this or if he hadn't, then he would have said but you still haven't done this. So they were open to judgment. And then, number seven: When they were afraid they knew where their help came from and they asked Samuel to cry to God. And number eight, what did they do? "Samuel took a suckling lamb and offered it for a whole burnt offering to the Lord." (7:9a) He offered a burnt offering. A burnt offering is a voluntary sacrifice. It's a sacrifice of love. And it all goes to God. And so here was this burnt offering. A burnt offering is like consecration. It's like Romans, chapter 12, verse 1 and 2, "presenting your body as a living sacrifice." "And then Samuel cried to the Lord for Israel..." listen, "...and the Lord answered him." O Beloved, remember several programs ago I talked about going from Ichabod to Ebenezer, from the glory of God departing to thus far the Lord has helped us. Well you've seen how that happens and that's what we're going to talk about on the next program, so that you can set up an Ebenezer stone and you can remember the deliverance that the Lord has brought to you. And He's brought it because you've sought Him earnestly, because you've sought Him the proper way, because you have desired to serve God and serve God alone, because you have lamented for the Lord, because you have missed Him and because you want His presence in your life. I'm so proud of you Beloved.