

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

TUESDAY

OPEN

Have you ever noticed beloved, the difference between those that are totally consecrated to God? You look at their lives and you sense you know, all they want to do is be found pleasing in God's eyes, to minister to the Lord. And yet you find others who say that they are ministers of God and yet there's something in their life and you know that their heart's not in it. What's the difference between these two kinds of people? We'll talk about it today.

PART ONE

Well beloved in our last program we finished with Hannah's song, with her prayer to the Lord, her exaltation to God, her heart jumping for joy, exalting in the Lord, her strength being exalted in the Lord, and her mouth speaking boldly against her enemies because she was rejoicing in God's salvation. Well, now Elkanah and his wife Hannah have left their son Samuel and they have returned to Ramah. And so the scene shifts now in 1 Samuel, chapter 2

to Eli, who was the priest and his two sons. Let's start in 1 Samuel 2:11 and then move into verse 12. "Then Elkanah went to his home at Ramah. But the boy..." and the boy of course is Samuel, "...ministered to the Lord before Eli the priest. Now the sons of Eli were worthless men; they did not know the Lord..." (1 Samuel 2:11-12) "they did not know the Lord and the custom of the priests with the people. [And] When any [one] was offering a sacrifice, the priest's servant would come while the meat was boiling with a three-pronged fork in his hand." (2:12-13) And you girls that have cooked can just picture this. "Then he would thrust it into the pan, or [the] kettle, or [the] cauldron, or [the] pot; all that the fork brought up the priest would take for himself. Thus they did in Shiloh to all the Israelites who came there. Also, before they burned the fat, the priest's servant would come and say to the man who was sacrificing, 'Give the priest [the] meat for roasting, as he will not take boiled meat from you, only raw.' [And] If the man said to him, 'They must surely burn the fat first, and then take as much as you desire,' then he [the servant] would say, 'No, but you shall give it to me now; and if not I will take it by force.'" (2:14-16) Now watch God's commentary on this action. In verse 17 it says, "Thus the sin of the young men was very great before the LORD, for the men despised the offering of the Lord." (2:17) Now I just want to read verse 18 and show you the contrast. In verse 18 it says, "Now Samuel was ministering before the Lord, as a boy wearing [the] linen ephod." (2:18) And so God is making a contrast here. And as He makes that contrast you and I need to sit up. We need to pay attention and we need to say O God, what do you want me to see? What do you want me to learn here? Well, I think that one of things that God wants us to see is this: that everyone that does the work of the Lord is not necessarily a man or a woman who has a heart for God. Sometimes there are people that do the work of the Lord that really, in a sense, despise, as it says here, the offering of the Lord, or despise the work of the Lord. Now does that mean they're standing up there saying I hate to do this, I really hate to do this? This is a bore; this is terrible. I wish I weren't this. No, no, it means that they're not worshipping God, God's way. And this is what I want you to see today, that

when we minister to the Lord we must minister God's way. We must do it according to the Book. And that's why you and I are studying the Word of God precept upon precept. That's why we're going through the Bible verse by verse. That's why we're marking the text and observing it and seeing what God has to say. So I hope right now that you have your study guide in front of you. If you don't have your study guide in front of you or if you haven't gotten it yet, listen you can download it. All you have to do is go to preceptsforlife.com and you can download this study guide. You say, but Kay, I don't know what to do because I don't have a computer. Well, then this is what you need to do: call 1-800-763-1990. That's 1-800-763-1990, and tell them that you have no means for downloading this and then we'll help you. So go to our website, that's preceptsforlife.com, okay. Now, if you have your study guide, and if not, get a pencil and a paper and let's write down some cross-references. The best interpreter of scripture is scripture and you want to remember that. The best interpreter of scripture is scripture. And I'm going to keep teaching you these principles of inductive Bible study. So we look at what's happening and as we read the text we can begin to see hey, there's something that is causing this man that is bringing his sacrifice to question what the servant of the priests is doing. And that's right, because remember in verse 16 the man said, "... [but] 'They must surely burn the fat first...', (2:16a) So let's go back to the Word of God and we're going to go back to the Torah. We're going to go back to the first five books of the Bible. The first five books of the Bible are extremely important. It starts with creation. It starts with the beginning. It starts in Genesis 12 with God forming a nation and that nation is the nation of Israel. And then what God does is he lays out the statutes and the regulations; listen to me carefully, for the children of Israel as they live under the rule of God, as they live under a theocracy where God Himself directs the people through the prophets as to what to do and through the leaders that He raises up, such as Moses and Aaron and Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, etc. All right now, let's write down Deuteronomy, chapter 18 and we want to look at verses 3 through 5, Deuteronomy, chapter 18, verses 3 through 5. In Deuteronomy, chapter 18 in

verse 3 he's saying, "Now this shall be the priests' due from the people, from those who offer a sacrifice, either an ox or a sheep, of which they [will] give to the priest the shoulder and the two cheeks and the stomach. You shall give him [the Levite] the first fruits of your grain, your new wine...your oil, and the first shearing of your sheep." (Deuteronomy 18:3-4) Now the Levites were like the pastors are to the church. And they were there to serve the people. And the Levites lived where the tabernacle was, but they also lived in many other cities. And we see this because in verse 6 it says, "Now if a Levite comes from any of your towns throughout Israel where he resides, and comes wherever he desires to the place which the Lord chooses, then he shall serve in the name of the Lord his God, like all [the] fellow Levites who stand there before the Lord. They shall eat equal portions, except what they receive from the sale of their father's estates." (18:6-8) In other words, the priests and this is not just the house of Aaron, but this is the Kohathites and the others. They were responsible for the worship and the service of God. And because they were responsible for that they didn't own land and they didn't farm land and they didn't raise their grain. So when any of the sacrifices were brought and they were made then the priests were given a portion of that. They were also given the tithes. The tithes were so that the priests could live, so that the Levites could continue to serve the Lord. So we see here that it was the priests' due from the people to get a sacrifice. But what's the problem here? Well, if you really want to understand the problem and I think it's important for us to do this, we need to go to Leviticus, chapter 7, verse 29. So we're going back to the giving of the Law. And Leviticus covers one month's period of time, when they're at the foot of Mt. Sinai where God gave them the Ten Commandments. And as you look at this book you find in Leviticus the instructions about the sacrifices that the people were to bring. You find instructions about the priests. You find the laying down basically of the Law. Now the theme of Leviticus is this: Be ye holy, even as I am holy. And the way that people were made holy was by approaching God according to God's statutes, according to God's ordinances, according to God's regulations. So in

Leviticus, chapter 7 we want to look at verse 29. And it says, “Speak to the sons of Israel saying, ‘He who offers the sacrifice of his peace offerings to the Lord shall bring his offering to the Lord from the sacrifice of his peace offerings. His own hands are to bring offerings by fire to the Lord. He shall bring the fat with the breast, that the breast may be presented as a wave offering before the Lord. [And] The priest shall offer up the fat in smoke on the altar, but the breast shall belong to [now watch] Aaron and his sons.’” (Leviticus 7:29-31) In other words the fat is to be burned and the breast, which doesn’t have a lot of fat on it, is going to go to Aaron and his sons. And it says, “[And] You shall give the right thigh to the priest as a contribution from the sacrifices of your peace offerings.” (7:32) Now I want to ask you a question. Last night I fixed my husband a round steak, just ground round. And he said, O this is so good. And I said, you know why, don’t you. It’s because this time I bought it with more fat in it. Why? The fat makes it taste better. Okay, we’ll talk about that right after this break.

PART TWO

Welcome back beloved. Well we left you talking about the fat. And I was telling you about cooking my husband dinner and, and we’re trying of course, to be healthy and not to eat a lot of fat and so when I got him some meat with a little bit more fat in it, it tasted better. And that’s why Eli’s sons, these worthless men wanted that fat. And they were taking that fat and instead of burning it, they were saying no, give it to me now and if not I’m going to take it by force. And when you read this you can’t stop there. You have to go to 1 Samuel 2:17 where it says: “Thus the sin of the young men was very great before the Lord, for the men despised the offering of the Lord.” (1 Samuel 2:17) Now they despised this because they were not doing what God told them to do. In essence what they were saying was this: I’ll serve God my way. Now listen, this is what we see today. We see a lot of people that are serving God their way. They say oh it’s all right. You know, it’s all right for two people to live together you know, as long as they love

one another. It, it's all right for a man to sleep with a man as long as they love one another and they come into the church and the church accepts that and if they don't accept it, then they're accused of not being loving. But what we have to understand is God is God and He has a way to be worshiped, and when we don't obey Him, then what we are doing is we are despising the Lord. In other words, when we have a religion of our own. Well, let's go back to Leviticus, chapter 7 because I left you floating there before the break. We're looking at Leviticus 7:29-36. And what I wanted you to see was part of the offering was to go to the priests, but not any fat and not any blood. Look at verse 33. "The one among the sons of Aaron who offers the blood of the peace offerings and the fat, the right thigh shall be his as his portion. For I have taken the breast of the wave offering...the thigh of the contribution from the sons of Israel from the sacrifices of their peace offerings, and have given them to Aaron the priest and to his sons as their due forever from the sons of Israel...that which is consecrated to Aaron and that which is consecrated to his sons from the offerings by fire to the Lord, in that day when he presented them to serve as priests to the Lord." (Leviticus 7:33-35) So he's laying down the way that they are to do it. And he summarizes in verse 37 and 38 and he says, "[now] This is the law of the burnt offering, the grain offering, [etc.,]... which the Lord commanded Moses at Mount Sinai in the day that He commanded the sons of Israel to present their offerings to the Lord." (7:37-38) You say, but what about the fat? Well you come back up to Leviticus 7 in verse 22 to 25 and you find out that the fat belongs to the Lord and that "...whoever eats the fat of the animal from which an offering by fire is offered to the Lord, even the person who eats that shall be cut off from his people." (7:25) And then he goes on to say in verse 26 and 27 and ["you're not to have any blood in there because the blood is to be drained from the animal."] (7:26) Now why is this important? It's important because he's saying listen, if you're doing this you're to be cut off from the people. So the priests, Eli's two sons Hophni and Phinehas were doing this. Rightly, they should have been kicked out of the priesthood. They should have been told, I'm sorry; you cannot do this.

You cannot go against God's law and continue to serve the Lord. The two don't go together. You must obey. You must worship God God's way. In Leviticus, chapter 10 we have an account of two of Aaron's sons that come before the Lord and they offer strange fire on the altar of incense. In other words, they don't put the kind of incense on the altar that the Lord tells them to do and so it says, "Now Nadab..." and I'm in Leviticus 10 and you want to get this down, verses 1-3. "Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron took their respective firepans, and after putting fire in them, placed incense on it and offered strange fire before the Lord..." and this is what I want you to get, "...which He [God] had not commanded them. And the fire came from the presence of the Lord and consumed them, and they died before the Lord. Then Moses said to Aaron, [This] is what the Lord spoke saying, 'By those who come near Me I will be treated as holy, And before all the people I will be honored.'" (10:1-3b) Now what I want you to see is God gives us a picture of handling disobedience here. I mean these men were wiped out. I mean it wasn't a problem of whether they were going to serve God anymore or not, because God killed them. But God killed them because He wanted us to understand something. He wanted us to understand that He is holy and He is to be treated as holy. He is to be respected as God. And anytime, precious one, and you remember this; this is your lesson for today: Anytime you find someone who is trying to take the scriptures and twist them or distort them from the clear plain meaning of the text in order to get the scriptures to conform to their desires so that they can worship God their way, then they are despising the offering of the Lord and they are displeasing to God. Now wait until you see tomorrow, what is going to happen as a result of this. But I want you to see how important it is that we worship God, God's way. You can watch people and you can see people that have a delight in the Lord and that minister to God and you just know that you look at them and they're doing it God's way. And then you see others and there's just kind of an arrogance about them and they want to do it their way. Well when I think about verse 17 of 1 Samuel 2 where it says, "Thus the sin of the young men was very great before the Lord, for the men despised the offering of the

Lord...,” (1 Samuel 2:17) my mind goes back to the first example, which is in Genesis, chapter 4 where you have Cain and Abel bringing offerings to the Lord. Abel brings a blood sacrifice. Cain brings the fruit of the ground as his offering to the Lord, and God’s accepts Abel’s sacrifice, but He does not accept Cain’s sacrifice and Cain’s very angry because of this. And it says, “...Cain became very angry and his countenance fell. [And] Then the Lord said to Cain, ‘Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well...,” listen, ““...sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.”” (Genesis 4:5b-7) Beloved, listen, anytime you start to veer away from the Word of God, you are despising the Word of God. Sin is crouching at the door and it just wants to grab hold of you and take you farther and farther away from God. Oh, don’t be a person who despises the Word of God. Continue to study. I’m so proud of you for studying the Word of God with me. And remember that God is to be worshipped His way. We see that in Samuel. He’s our example. He was ministering to God. He was going to be God’s man in the middle of all this perversion in the priesthood and you’re to be God’s man, you’re to be God’s woman in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.