

King James Bible Study Correspondence Course

An Outreach of Highway Evangelistic Ministries
5311 Windridge lane ~ Lockhart, Florida 32810 ~ USA

The Book of First Samuel - Lesson 4
"The Deterioration of the Priesthood"

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In this lesson, we are going to be in 1 Samuel chapter 2, verses 12-17, and we will be looking at Eli the Priest, his sons, and the deterioration of the priesthood, which led to the rise of Samuel.

In 1 Samuel 2:25, Eli makes this statement, *If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the LORD, who shall intreat for him?* The first part of this verse is pretty self-explanatory. If I have sinned against God...Almighty God, who can I get to speak for me in the presence of God? Certainly not another man.

Eli puts forth this question to his sons, "Boys, you are sinning against God. Who is going to plead for you when you stand before Him? What a blessing it is for us to know that we have an advocate, Jesus Christ (1 John 2:1). Eli and his sons did not have anyone.

1 Samuel 2:12 *Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; they knew not the LORD.* "Belial" is the term for an Old Testament pagan god or false god. By the time you get to the New Testament, it becomes an identifying term for Satan and his children. In this verse we learn that God considered Eli's sons to be children of Satan! If you read the verses that follow, 13-17, you will see that they did not follow God's instructions to the letter of the law. Just like the devil; he always leaves something out or adds something that does not belong to what God said.

God laid down in His law a prescription for the provision of the priests. Their support was not entirely financial, it was also material. When people would come with an animal to offer sacrifice, the priest would cut up the offering to prepare it to be burned unto the Lord. Certain portions of the animal were to be given to the priests for their food supply. Eli's sons were not satisfied with God's provisions. They wanted more, so they took out portions of the sacrifice that belonged to God. They were stealing from God.

We do not want to get too far off track in our lesson, but this must be said – If you do not tithe on the monies that God has entrusted to you each month, then you are stealing from God. You are no better than Eli's sons.

1 Samuel 2:15 *Also before they burnt the fat, the priest's servant came, and said to the man that sacrificed, Give flesh to roast for the priest; for he will not have sodden flesh of thee, but raw.* We read here *Also before...* They put themselves before the service of God. They put themselves before the offerings unto the Lord. They did not want the leftovers.

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Make a promise to yourself to always put God first, because when you are in prayer for a deep need, you will want Him to put you first, right? Never be haughty when it comes to the things of God. He does not owe us anything, and we do not deserve anything. What He has given us, He has given because He loves us.

1 Samuel 2:16 *And if any man said unto him, Let them not fail to burn the fat presently, and then take as much as thy soul desireth; then he would answer him, Nay; but thou shalt give it me now: and if not, I will take it by force.* To explain what this verse is saying, we will use the analogy of someone who is not following the order of scripture. When confronted, this person would say, "Mind your own business. I do not want to hear what the Bible says. I am doing it the way I think it should be done. Why are you judging me?" That is what Eli's sons, the sons of Belial, did. They did not want to do things God's way. God says He wants things done decently and in order. Follow God's instructions completely; that is His way. 1 Corinthians 14:40

1 Samuel 2:17 *Wherefore the sin of the young men was very great before the LORD: for men abhorred the offering of the LORD.* A common excuse used by most people as to why they do not go to church is that all the church wants is their money. In far too many churches nowadays that statement is very true. I have been in some churches where I feel like they are turning me upside down, trying to shake the change out of my pockets before I leave. Some churches have individual piggy bank collections, faith promise collections, Sunday school collections, junior church collections, the "thermometer on the wall" collections, etc. I've even been in churches where they send the children out amongst the congregation to get people's loose change in order to fill the bottle in the front of the church for missions. The world is not wrong when they say that some church leaders are con men in suits.

The Bible says it is a wonderful thing to cheerfully give unto the Lord. (Acts 20:35; 2 Corinthians 9:7) It is one of the greatest joys, one of the greatest blessings of the Christian life to be able to contribute to the work of God...to hear a letter read when someone has been saved overseas and know you had a part of that...to hear some missionary offer thanks for a church that was established and know you had some part in that also. But the ministry of our day with its false and ungodly emphasis on money has made it so people *abhorred the offering of the LORD*. It should not have to be that way.

The Bible says "*for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.*" (Matthew 12:34; Luke 6:45) When a preacher starts hitting you up for money after you have been sitting in church for less than ten minutes, or when the TV preacher wants you to buy his book or sermons during the first commercial, you know what's in his heart. Giving to God's work is an honour

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for us. Conning people out of their money is a blatant sin against God and His people. This is the example of Eli's sons.

1 Samuel 2:22 *Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did unto all Israel; and how they lay with the women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.* Here is another example that the Bible is not outdated. Sexually immorality among ministers with women in the church is something that goes on in the 21st century.

If you witness for the Lord, you will hear this excuse now and then, "I would not go to church because I heard that the preacher ran off with the piano player." Sexual misconduct in churches is nothing new, and, no, we are not in the last days because your pastor divorced his wife to marry a younger woman. 2 Timothy 3:13 *But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.*

In Eli's day, as it is today, women would come to the church house to pray and be in the presence of the priest of the temple. Then the wicked minister would prey on the feelings of the women to manipulate his sole desire. He is a child of the devil. He is the most wicked snake that has ever walked the face of this earth. To put on the garb of a man of God and put the title of a minister in front of one's name, and then use that position of authority to manipulate and destroy women who are seeking spiritual help is devilish. Let's look back in Exodus to see why these women were assembling in front of the tabernacle. Exodus 38:8 *And he made the laver of brass, and the foot of it of brass, of the lookingglasses of the women assembling, which assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.* This here is the beginning of revival in the congregation. They had an offering box there at the door of the tabernacle. When the women came in, they would give up their mirrors as an act of sacrifice to the Lord. Look at the verse again, *And he made the laver of brass, and the foot of it of brass, of the lookingglasses of the women assembling, which assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.* If in your church you get the ladies to give up their mirrors and put God's work ahead of their appearance, you have the beginning of revival.

Picture the ladies standing around in front of the tabernacle, chatting like they normally do, and up walks the priest. The priest has no business in the front of the tabernacle chatting with the ladies. He is supposed to be in the back, praying and getting ready for his message. Most would say that the women were as guilty as the priest, yet that is not entirely true. God made the woman a weaker vessel, and she seeks for strength from the stronger vessel. (1 Peter 3:7)

1 Samuel 2:23-24 *And he said unto them, Why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil dealings by all this people. Nay, my sons; for it is no good report that I hear: ye make the LORD's people to transgress.* Eli spoke out against the

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behavior of his sons, but he did not have the courage or backbone to do anything about it. He just let it continue until the Lord stepped in and took action. (1 Samuel 2:34; 1 Samuel 4:11)

There is a valuable lesson to be learned from Eli's mistake as a father. Turn to Proverbs 29:17-18 *Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul. 18 Where there is no vision, the people perish:* Instead of Eli's children bringing him delight, they ended up dead.

The ruin of America has nothing to do with who sits in leadership. It has to do with men in the pulpits that see the evil, the wickedness in their very own churches, and won't do anything about it. That's why the Lord says that judgment begins in the house of God. 1 Peter 4:17 *For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?*

Read Numbers 25:1-5 and see what the proper response was to people who disobeyed the word of God. God killed them right there on the spot. The ones God didn't kill, were to be executed by Moses according to God's instruction. Read Numbers 25:6-9, 11, 12. God killed all of these people for the sin of fornication. Here came a man that had the nerve to walk right up in the middle of all that. Taking a woman, he hauled her right through the middle of their weeping and sorrow and headed to his tent. He could have cared less about the judgment of God. His lust was aroused, and he was determined to fulfill the desires of his flesh. Let's see what happened to this man. Numbers 25:7-8 *And when Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose up from among the congregation, and took a javelin in his hand; And he went after the man of Israel into the tent, and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman through her belly. So the plague was stayed from the children of Israel.* As you read on in verses 11-12, you will see that God is pleased with this action of destroying the wickedness.

God said not to partake in sexual activity outside of marriage because it will hurt you. God does not want to hurt you. He is not cruel. He pleads with you, saying, "Follow my instructions, or it will hurt you."

Look at God's principle in the New Testament, 1 Corinthians 5:1-10 *It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, In the name of Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, To deliver such an Lord Jesus. Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as*

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*ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolators; for then must ye needs go out of the world. Since we all have to live in this world, we will undoubtedly be around people who are ungodly and immoral, whether it's at the grocery store, on the job, etc. God knows this, but when they are evident in the Church, then He wants them out, not just out of the church but out of our lives. 1 Corinthians 5:11-12 **But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?***

This is serious! Some day we will stand alone before God in judgment, and His word will judge us for why and how we did what we did in the flesh, and whether we knew it was right or wrong (John 12:47-48). Psalm 7:9 *Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins.* James 4:17 *Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.* This is the only disadvantage (if your desire is to sin) in learning the Bible, because if you learn that something is wrong, and do not stop doing it, then you are sinning and breaking the sweet fellowship you have with the Lord. As we learned in the Discipleship Class number 6, if we want our prayers answered, then we are not to be insensitive to the word of God Proverbs 28:9. We are commanded to study God's word (2 Timothy 2:15). Through doing so, we learn what God says; and if He is obeyed, we will be rewarded. If we choose not to do what God says, then reaping is the result, now and in the future. Proverbs 13:15b *...but the way of transgressors is hard.* Galatians 6:7 *Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*

Eli was responsible for allowing his sons to continue in their sin, and their outcome was hell. Make sure you follow God's instructions in raising your own children and in your own life.

Notes

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Name _____

Note: (*) An asterisk indicates must include scripture with your answers.

1. Did Eli do right when it came to his sons sin? *
2. What did God do in OT times when someone disobeyed what He said, concerning fornication? *
3. What was the purpose of this lesson?
4. Why is it important to tithe?
5. Why is it so important to do what God says? *
6. What was wrong with the way Eli's sons approached the women in the Temple? *
7. Explain James 4:17.

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8. What were the lookingglasses? *
9. Who is our advocate? *
10. Why do people use money as an excuse for not going to church?
11. How can you tell what a minister's first intension is? *
12. What did Eli's sons do with the sacrifices to God? *
13. What happens when the minister misuses the tithe given to the Lord? *

True/false

- A divorced leader in the church is OK with God, as long as they have a good testimony.
- You can still have a good life even if you do not do what God says.
- God commands us to study His word.
- Tithing is a blessing for us.

**Scripture memorization**

James 4:17; 1 Corinthians 5:11; 2 Timothy 3:13

Write out these verses on the back on this page: (must be in KJV)

any questions?