



LESSON NINE

Spiritual Principles, Life Lessons, And Holy Warnings Concerning The Enjoyment Of The Good Land Seen With Major Figures In 1 And 2 Samuel

Scripture Reading:

Section 1 & 2

1 Samuel 2:12-17; Revelation 3:14-22

- 2:12 Now the sons of Eli were worthless men; they did not know Jehovah,
2:13 Nor did they regard the priests' rightful due with the people. When any man offered a sacrifice, the priest's attendant would come with a three-pronged fork in his hand while the flesh was boiling,
2:14 And he would thrust it into the pan or kettle or cauldron or pot; all that the fork brought up, the priest took with it. Thus they did in Shiloh to all the Israelites who came there.
2:15 Indeed before they burned the fat, the priest's attendant would come and say to the man sacrificing, Give some flesh to roast for the priest, for he will not accept boiled flesh from you, but only raw.
2:16 And if the man said to him, Let them burn up the fat first, then take as much as your soul desires; he would say, No, but you shall give it now; otherwise, I will take it by force.
2:17 And the sin of the young men was very great before Jehovah, for the men despised the offering of Jehovah.

Revelation 3:14-22

- 3:14 And to the messenger of the church in Laodicea write: These things says the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the beginning of the creation of God:
3:15 I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot.
3:16 So, because you are lukewarm and neither hot nor cold, I am about to spew you out of My mouth.
3:17 Because you say, I am wealthy and have become rich and have need of nothing, and do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked,
3:18 I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined by fire that you may be rich, and white garments that you may be clothed and that the shame of your nakedness may not be manifested, and eyesalve to anoint your eyes that you may see.
3:19 As many as I love I reprove and discipline; be zealous therefore and repent.
3:20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, then I will come in to him and dine with him and he with Me.
3:21 He who overcomes, to him I will give to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat with My Father on His throne.
3:22 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Section 3

1 Samuel 3:9-10, 20-21; Luke 10:38-42; 1 Samuel 8:1-7

- 3:9 And Eli said to Samuel, Go and lie down, and if He calls you, you shall say, Speak, O Jehovah; for Your servant is listening. And Samuel went and lay down in his place.
3:10 Then Jehovah came and stood by and called as at the other times, Samuel! Samuel! And Samuel said, Speak, for Your servant is listening.
3:20 And all Israel, from Dan to Beer-sheba, knew that Samuel had been established as a prophet of Jehovah.
3:21 And Jehovah continued to appear in Shiloh, for Jehovah revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of Jehovah.

Luke 10:38-42

10:38 Now as they went, He entered into a certain village, and a certain woman named Martha received Him into her home.

10:39 And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at the Lord's feet and was listening to His word.

10:40 But Martha was being drawn about with much serving, and she came up to Him and said, Lord, does it not matter to You that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to do her part with me.

10:41 But the Lord answered and said to her, Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things;

10:42 But there is need of one thing, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

1 Samuel 8:1-7

8:1 Now when Samuel was old, he made his sons judges over Israel.

8:2 And the name of his firstborn son was Joel, and the name of his second was Abijah; they were judges in Beer-sheba.

8:3 But his sons did not follow in his ways, but turned aside after unjust gain and took bribes and perverted justice.

8:4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah.

8:5 And they said to him, You are now old, and your sons do not follow in your ways. Appoint now for us a king to judge us like all the nations.

8:6 But the matter displeased Samuel when they said, Give us a king to judge us. Then Samuel prayed to Jehovah.

8:7 And Jehovah said to Samuel, Listen to the voice of the people according to all that they have said to you; for it is not you whom they have rejected, but they have rejected Me from being King over them.

QUESTIONS:**Section 1:**

1. How can we avoid of "becoming stale" in the church meetings?
2. Who is the source of newness? How can we enjoy this newness?
3. According to Revelation chapter 3, what is the price we need to pay to avoid becoming lukewarm? What does these prices signify?

Section 2:

1. According to Exodus, how does the Lord speak to the priest? How does this correspond to the New Testament?
2. How can we obtain what the Lord has bequeathed to us in the Bible? How does this relate to our private time with the Lord?
3. What should our attitude be in every meeting and every personal time with the Lord? How does this relate to our speaking for and forth the Lord?

Section 3:

1. What is a Nazarite? What is the contrast between Eli and Samuel that "qualifies" Samuel to be a Nazarite?
2. What are the four things we could learn from Mary sitting at the Lord's feet? How can this be applicable to us?

----- [INTRODUCTION] -----

The title of this concluding message is “Spiritual Principles, Life Lessons, and Holy Warnings concerning the Enjoyment of the Good Land Seen with Major Figures in 1 and 2 Samuel.” We will see that these major figures encapsulate 1 and 2 Samuel in a very good way. Both 1 and 2 Samuel are books of history, and these books reveal the particular and full way for us to enjoy Christ for the carrying out of God’s eternal economy. We are looking at 1 and 2 Samuel through the “glasses” of God’s eternal economy, which must always be our focus.

----- [SECTION 1] -----

I. UNDER ELI THE OLD AARONIC PRIESTHOOD HAVING BECOME STALE AND WANING, AND GOD DESIRING TO HAVE A NEW BEGINNING FOR THE ACCOMPLISHING OF HIS ECONOMY

Matthew 9:17 mentions the new wine. Of course, Christ is the reality of the new wine. The word new in this verse means “new in time, recent, newly possessed.” Footnote 1 says that the new wine “signifies Christ as the new life, full of vigor, stirring people to excitement.” This is the right kind of excitement, the genuine excitement that is actually the Lord Himself. It is not a kind of strange fire (Lev. 10:1-11). When we were regenerated, the Lord gave us a new heart and a new spirit (Ezek. 36:26). He gave us a new spirit to contact Him and a new heart to love Him. Romans 6:4 charges us to walk in newness of life, and Romans 7:6 charges us to serve in newness of spirit. This means that we should live, move, and have our being in newness of life and serve in newness of spirit. We are in the process of becoming as new as the New Jerusalem. Only God is new; besides Him, there is no newness in the universe. Hence, the more we gain of God, the newer we become. Practically speaking, everything that comes out of our spirit is new. This is why we need to exercise our spirit.

The word stale means “a loss of freshness and vigor.” We never want to become stale, which is a terrible condition. Once, Brother Lee shared something concerning the church meeting. He said, “I am a little bit concerned because the church meeting has become somewhat of a form.” I said, “Brother Lee, what can we do? What should we do about it?” He said to me, “Anything without the exercise of the spirit is a

form.” This simple word from Brother Lee was very helpful to me. If we exercise our spirit, we will be full of divine and mystical vigor.

In Acts 3 Peter told the people, “Repent therefore and turn, that your sins may be wiped away, so that seasons of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord” (vv. 19-20). Whenever we have the presence of the Lord, we are refreshed. Although, strictly speaking, these verses refer to the millennial kingdom, they also refer to our present experience. When in our experience we are in the Lord’s presence, we are refreshed. Refreshing here means “cooling, reviving, relieving”; this brings in true joy and rest.

Concerning the matter of being fresh rather than stale, we should remember that when the children of Israel celebrated the Passover, their calendar was changed. It was the seventh month according to their civil calendar, but it was changed to the first month in their sacred calendar (Exo. 12:2, footnote 1). That new first month was the month of Abib, which means “sprouting, budding” (13:4, footnote 1). Something fresh is sprouting in us and budding out of us. When we first enjoyed Christ as our Passover, our calendar was changed. We had one calendar according to the flesh, but we now have a new calendar according to the spirit. Our birthday is Abib. At that time Christ Himself began to sprout and bud in us. We need to take Christ as our Abib every morning, especially so that we can have a new beginning every day. We do not want to be stale and waning; that is a terrible condition. I am so thankful that every day we can take Christ as our new beginning.

We can have three hundred sixty-five new beginnings every year. We can also have a new beginning every moment. We can always forget the things that are behind and stretch forward to the new, fresh, and now Christ who is before us.

A. All Needing to Reject Anything of Staleness, Oldness, Lukewarmness, and Pride and Keep Ourselves Empty, Open, Fresh, New, Living, and Young with the Lord; Needing to Be One with His Desire for Us to Be One with Christ, Filled with Christ, and Occupied by Christ to Live Christ for the Organic Building Up of the Body of Christ

We should consider the Lord’s speaking to the church in Laodicea in Revelation 3:14-22. The

seven churches in Asia were actual local churches, but we know that they also signify prophetically the progressive stages in the history of the church. In both a historical and experiential sense, when Philadelphia becomes degraded, it is Laodicea. Hence, we need to always be on guard. I believe that the epistle to Laodicea is something that needs to be before us all the time. Because those in the church in Laodicea were lukewarm, the Lord was about to spew them out of His mouth (v. 16). He counseled them to buy from Him gold, white garments, and eyesalve (v. 18). Gold signifies God the Father in His divine nature. White garments signify God the Son as our subjective, lived-out righteousness. Eyesalve signifies the anointing Spirit to anoint the eyes of our heart so that we may see something new of Christ as the centrality and universality of God's economy day by day. These are the marvelous provisions of the Triune God. We need to pay the price to gain the processed Triune God every day.

The Lord told the church in Laodicea to "be zealous therefore and repent" (v. 19). The Greek word for zealous literally means "boiling." The temperature of the Christian life should be boiling; it should not be merely 37° C. We should be boiling.

In Luke 18:17 the Lord said, "Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a little child shall by no means enter into it." A little child is not preoccupied with old concepts and opinions but is always able to receive a new thought.

In Philippians 3:7-14 we see that Paul was the antithesis of a contented Christian. Even many years after his conversion, he still wanted to know Christ. He wanted to gain Christ. I like this expression to know Him (v. 10). . . . to know Him in the three stages of His full ministry—the stages of incarnation, inclusion, and intensification. These three stages cover the whole span of God's New Testament economy, which is God's eternal economy. Every day we need a new vista of who Christ is in His full ministry.

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B. In the Days of Eli the Word of God Being Rare; God's Speaking Being Almost Lost; in the Priesthood the First Thing That a Priest Should Do Being to Speak for God; a Priest Having to Be a Person Who Is Intimate with God, Who Is One with God, Who Knows the Heart of God, and Who Speaks Forth the Unique and Healthy Teaching of God's Eternal Economy

By the Lord's mercy, the word of God is not rare in His recovery today. It is because of His mercy that we are standing on the ground of the church. It is on the ground of genuine oneness that we receive the Lord's fresh speaking.

Exodus 28:30 indicates that the Lord spoke to the priests through the breastplate with the Urim and the Thummim. This is very mysterious. Urim means "lights, illuminators." The Urim was an illuminator inserted into the breastplate. Thummim means "perfecters, completers." There are twenty-two letters in the Hebrew alphabet. The names of the twelve tribes were on the twelve precious stones on the breastplate, but these names contain only eighteen of the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The remaining four letters were put on the Thummim. Hence, the Thummim completed the alphabet on the breastplate. We may think that the Lord spoke by lighting up the stones on the breastplate. But, the stones were already lit, and God spoke through stones that became dark. Our experience confirms that this is true. Consider Paul's first Epistle to the church in Corinth. There were certain problems in the church there, indicating that certain stones had been darkened. Based on his ability to read the breastplate, Paul shared with the church in Corinth twenty fresh aspects of Christ so that all their problems could be solved by the enjoyment of Christ.

We can pray, "Lord, I want to be a person who is intimate with You and one with You, a person who knows Your heart. I want to speak forth only the unique and healthy teaching of God's eternal economy." I always feel that God is very happy when He hears a prayer like this. How many Christians in the world pray such prayers?

The Bible is our will, our testament. Everything in the Bible has been bequeathed to us. How do we receive these bequests? If we have a trillion dollars in our bank account and yet we walk

around like we are poor, we need someone to remind us that we are rich. We have all the riches of Christ, including Christ as the mystery of God and the church as the mystery of Christ. When we pray the bequests in the Bible back to the Lord, the Spirit of reality guides us into all the reality of these bequests. This is marvelous.

The way we appropriate these bequests is to pray them back to the Lord. This is a great secret that God brought to us. We need personal, affectionate, private, and spiritual times with the Lord. During these private times we can have our personal pray-reading with the Lord, where we take the words in the Bible and make them part of our prayer. We can personalize God's words. For example, in 2 Corinthians 2:10 Paul says that he forgave someone "in the person of Christ." Here the word person refers to the part around the eyes, the index of a person's inward thoughts and feelings. When we pray this back to the Lord, we can say, "Lord, I would like to do everything in the index of Your eyes, in Your very person." The Lord will say, "Amen, let it be so." This is how we appropriate the bequests in the Bible.

In 1 Timothy 1:3-4 Paul speaks about the teaching of God's eternal economy. Then in 6:3 he speaks about the teaching which is according to godliness; this is the teaching of God's economy.

C. Eli Teaching Samuel to Say to the Lord, "Speak, O Jehovah; for Your Servant Is Listening"

In order to speak for the Lord and be one with Him to carry out His eternal economy, we must first treasure and listen attentively to His speaking so that we may know His desire and preference (1 Sam. 3:9-10, 21; Isa. 50:4-5). In this statement we see one positive thing about Eli: he taught Samuel to listen to God's speaking. This attentive listening to His speaking would govern Samuel's life and service for the rest of his days. When the Lord called to Samuel in his youth, Samuel initially thought that it was Eli who was calling him. Once Eli recognized that God was calling Samuel, he said to Samuel, "Go and lie down, and if He calls you, you shall say, Speak, O Jehovah; for Your servant is listening" (1 Sam. 3:9). This should be our attitude in every church meeting, ministry meeting, group meeting, and home meeting and in every personal time we have with the Lord.

We should pray, "Speak, O Lord; Your servant is listening." We may remember that when Gabriel visited Mary and told her that she was going to bring forth a child, she responded by saying, "May it happen to me according to your word" (Luke 1:38). We need to pray like this as well.

After Samuel said, "Speak, for Your servant is listening" (1 Sam. 3:10), Jehovah spoke to him some very serious things concerning Eli, the house of Eli with his two sons, and God's coming judgment upon Eli and his two sons (vv. 11-14). When morning came, Samuel opened the doors of the house of Jehovah but was afraid to tell the vision to Eli (v. 15). Then Eli called Samuel and said to him, "What was the word that He spoke to you? Do not hide it from me" (v. 17). Then Samuel told Eli everything, and Eli said, "He is Jehovah; let Him do what is good in His sight" (v. 18). If I had been Eli, I would have fallen on my face and fasted and prayed for three days. I would have said, "Lord, what did I do wrong? I repent. I want to get right with You." But Eli did not do this. This is sad. When we read 1 and 2 Samuel, we see a lot of tragic things that make us sad. We also have seen similarly tragic things in our history in the Lord's recovery. We want to stay in God's economy until we meet the Lord.

All of us should speak for the Lord and speak forth the Lord. Whether we are serving the young people, serving the community, preaching the gospel, or meeting with another brother or sister, we always want our speaking to be the Lord's speaking. If our speaking is going to be the Lord's speaking, we need to first hear the Lord's voice. In this meeting, like in every meeting, we want to hear what the Spirit says to the churches. All we care about in this meeting is what the Spirit is speaking.

Isaiah 50:4 concerns the Lord's human living. This verse says, "The Lord Jehovah has given me / The tongue of the instructed, / That I should know how to sustain the weary with a word. / He awakens me morning by morning; / He awakens my ear / To hear as an instructed one." I like that it says, "He awakens me morning by morning." This is the real morning revival. We need to ask the Lord to wake us up tomorrow morning. This will make a difference.

**D. Eli Disregarding the Priesthood
in His Loose Disciplining of His Two Evil
Sons; This Causing the Tragedy of the
Ending of His History,
the Termination of His Enjoyment of the
Good Land, and the Fading of the
Priesthood in the Divine Revelation,
That Is, in the Speaking for God;
Today Our Needing to Learn of Eli to Have a
High Regard for What God Has Given Us in
His Recovery**

It is hard even to speak of the things that Eli's sons, Hophni and Phinehas, did, because they were so wicked. We need to pray, "Lord, I desire to have a high regard for what You have given us in Your recovery."

A Nazarite is a person who is full of submission with "a submissive spirit, standing, atmosphere, and intention. If you are such a person, there will be a great blessing for you and for your future". May we all aspire to be an overcoming Nazarite, even in the midst of our God-ordained limitations. As time goes on, we are increasingly limited and restricted by the Lord. We cannot do what we used to do. But it is like what the Lord said of Mary: "She has done what she could" (Mark 14:8). We should do what we can. As footnote on having "a little power" in Revelation 3:8, "What pleases the Lord is not our doing much for Him but our doing our best for Him with what we have."

As we go on with the Lord, when we call on Him, it becomes very precious to us. When we are so weak and powerless, perhaps all we can do is say, "O Lord." Although we are weak and limited, we can say, "O Lord Jesus, I love You. I need You, Lord. I can't do anything apart from You." When we say, "Lord Jesus," we are in the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:3). This is one of the bequests in God's Word.

In 1 Samuel 2 Jehovah asked Eli why he honored his sons more than Him (v. 29). This convicted me very much because we should not honor anyone above the Lord. If we do, we do the person we are honoring a disservice. By honoring the Lord above others, we actually honor others more. Tragically, Eli did not do this.

**II. SAMUEL BEING FAITHFUL TO GOD
IN ALL HIS GOD-GIVEN STATUSES AND
OFFICES**

**A. As a Levite, His Serving God His Whole
Life; as a Nazarite, His Keeping His
Consecration without Failure;
as a Priest-prophet, His Speaking for God
Honestly and Initiating the Prophethood to
Replace the Fading Priesthood
in the Divine Revelation; as a Judge, His
Being Faithful to God and Just to the People,
Terminating the Judgeship
and Bringing In the Kingship in Order to
Change the Age for the Fulfillment of God's
Economy**

We need to keep our consecration up to date with the Lord. Surely, we have consecrated ourselves in the past, but is our consecration fresh today? ... a day without consecration is a wasted day.

We do not want to have a day without consecration. We are on the earth to change the age. This is a new revival, not like the old revivals in Christianity. We believe that we are at a point in the history of the church where the Lord's coming is at hand. Hence, what the Lord needs today is a corporate dispensational instrument to turn this age and bring Him back as the King of glory to set up His kingdom on this earth (Psa. 24). The great human image in Daniel 2 signifies the totality of human government on this earth. This great human image will be struck by a stone cut out without hands, which signifies Christ as the leading Overcomer with all His overcomers (Rev. 19). This corporate smiting stone will strike the image at its feet and crush it. The image will become like chaff from the summer threshing floors, and no trace of it will be found. Then the stone will become a great mountain, which will fill the whole earth (Dan. 2:34-35). This great mountain is the millennial kingdom, which will lead into eternity. We will be the bride of Christ for a thousand years, and then we will be the wife of Christ for eternity.

As one who worked together with God for the carrying out of His economy (John 5:17; 2 Cor. 6:1a), Samuel was established as a prophet of Jehovah to speak for Him by listening to His word (1 Sam. 3:9-10, 20-21); we need to continually exercise ourselves to have an ear to "hear what the Spirit says to the churches" (Rev. 2:7); furthermore, we need to follow the pattern

of Mary, who “sat at the Lord’s feet and was listening to His word” (Luke 10:38-42). May we be those like Mary, who “sat at the Lord’s feet and was listening to His word.” This is priceless.

B. Mary Sitting at the Feet of the Lord Jesus

Mary sat at the feet of the Lord Jesus and not at the feet of anyone else; no method is better than coming to Him moment by moment, loving Him, worshipping Him, and unceasingly fellowshiping with Him and remaining in His presence.

Mary sat at the feet of the Lord; she put herself in a humble position in order to hear the Lord’s speaking and receive His blessing; humility is not belittling ourselves; humility is ignoring ourselves, negating ourselves, and considering ourselves as nothing. Galatians 6:3 says, “If anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.” We do not want to think we are something when we are nothing. We are nothing because we want Christ to be everything in us.

She was sitting down; those who are busy to the point of being distracted from the Lord’s presence have a wandering mind and vacillating thoughts; they must stop themselves in order to spend personal time with the Lord on a daily basis. Sometimes our phones can contribute to our having a wandering mind and vacillating thoughts. I get concerned when I see others being distracted by their phones in the meetings. If the Lord was physically in these meetings, we surely would not do this. We need to realize that the Lord is present and speaking to us in the meetings.

She was listening to the Lord’s word; the words that the Lord speaks to us are spirit and life (John 6:63); her listening to the Lord’s word afforded the Lord the opportunity to communicate Himself to her and to dispense Himself into her so that she could gain the Lord Himself. This may seem simplistic, but it is fresh to me that the words themselves are spirit and life. It is not that the words give spirit and life; they are spirit and life. This is marvelous.

C. Samuel Enjoying His Portion of the Good Land to the Fullest for His Whole Life

Samuel enjoyed his portion of the good land to the fullest for his whole life; thus, in a New

Testament sense, we can say that there was no defect in his enjoyment of Christ; the only defect in Samuel’s history was that he appointed his two sons as judges among the children of Israel (1 Sam. 8:1-3). We will see that Samuel made a mistake by appointing his two sons as judges. ... the only perfect saint is the Lord Jesus.

D. The Unjust Ways of Samuel’s Sons Being Contrary to Their Father’s Pure and Just Way in His Whole Life

The unjust ways of Samuel’s sons were contrary to their father’s pure and just way in his whole life (12:3-5, 23) and gave the people of Israel cause to ask Samuel to appoint a king to judge them like all the nations (8:1-7); hence, the sons of Samuel should not be reckoned judges among the people of Israel (Acts 13:20), and their father Samuel should be considered the last judge.

Humanly, Samuel made a mistake in this matter, but this mistake helped God to manage the situation among His people by bringing in the kingship for the fulfillment of His economy. Under God’s sovereignty, Samuel’s mistake eventually helped to bring in David as king. David typifies Christ as the real King to bring in the kingship. Furthermore, Matthew 1:1 indicates that Christ is the son of David because He comes from the lineage of David.