

The Fear of God Part 14

Wrong Vows

“21 When thou shalt vow a vow unto the LORD thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it: for the LORD thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee 22 But if thou shalt forbear to vow, it shall be no sin in thee.” (Deuteronomy 23:21-22 KJV)

We had expounded previously about the importance of fulfilling the vow, and that needed to be done under the knowledge and in the presence of God’s people, His church. As well as we had described the authority of the church in auditing and supervising the fulfilling of the vows, and further we expounded the authority inside the family that will be working with the authority of the church to supervise the fulfilling of the vows within the life of the family.

Now the value of such auditing authorities of the church and the family is a quality control over the church people, the community of the believers and inside their families. The value of that as we had said is to avoid delaying in fulfilling vows. Other aspect is to identify certain wrong vows that if would be fulfilled will bring harm to the person, the family and even the church. The Bible speaks about certain vows that if you analyze them you would find them non Biblical and even some of them are sinful. The following are examples of such faulty vows:-

A. The Vow of Jephthah: “30 And Jephthah vowed a vow unto the LORD, and said, If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands, 31 Then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the LORD’S, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering. 32 So Jephthah passed over unto the children of Ammon to fight against them; and the LORD delivered them into his hands. 33 And he smote them from Aroer, even till thou come to Minnith, even twenty cities, and unto the plain of the vineyards, with a very great slaughter. Thus the children of Ammon were subdued before the children of Israel. 34 And Jephthah came to Mizpeh unto his house, and, behold, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances: and she was his only child; beside her he had neither son nor daughter. 35 And it came to pass, when he saw her, that he rent his clothes, and said, Alas, my daughter! thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me: for I have opened my mouth unto the LORD, and I cannot go back. 36 And she said unto him, My father, if thou hast opened thy mouth unto the LORD, do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth; forasmuch as the LORD hath taken vengeance for thee of thine enemies, even of the children of Ammon. 37 And she said unto her father, Let this thing be done for me: let me alone two months, that I may go up and down upon the mountains, and bewail my virginity, I and my fellows. 38 And he said, Go. And he sent her away for two months: and she went with her companions, and bewailed her virginity upon the mountains. 39 And it came to pass at the end of two months, that she returned unto her father, who did with her according to his vow which he had vowed: and she knew no man. And it was a custom in Israel, 40 That the daughters of Israel went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in a year.” (Judges 11:30-40) Jephthah with His vow to the Lord if he would follow the order that we outlined in fulfilling the vow, his daughter would not be need to be sacrificed. Let us explain it. Yes he was the father and has the authority over his family, and he was even the leader of the people of God. Truly he could not go back with what he vowed because he himself was the one who vowed it. So he needed

to fulfill it. But according to the Word of God in *Deuteronomy 12:11*, ***“11 Then there shall be a place which the LORD your God shall choose to cause his name to dwell there; thither shall ye bring all that I command you; your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heave offering of your hand, and all your choice vows which ye vow unto the LORD:”*** According to that, Jephthah needed to bring his daughter to the tent of meeting to offer her as a burnt offering to the Lord. Jephthah if he had brought his daughter to the tent of meeting, then the priest who was there will not approve his vow because there is nothing in the Law of Moses that someone can offer his daughter or son as a burnt offering. Then the priest will guide Jephthah of what he needed to do according to God’s Word as we read here in this Scripture: ***“1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When a man shall make a singular vow, the persons shall be for the LORD by thy estimation. 3 And thy estimation shall be of the male from twenty years old even unto sixty years old, even thy estimation shall be fifty shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary. 4 And if it be a female, then thy estimation shall be thirty shekels.” (Leviticus 27:1-4 KJV)*** So in such the priest who has the authority from God over the life of Jephthah he would have the power to break the vow of Jephthah and would set his daughter free from being burnt, and Jephthah can still do right of what he vowed by doing the other solution, that he can redeem his daughter by paying thirty shekels to God by giving them to the priest on duty in the tent of meeting. Jephthah had no authority to do that, but the priest who represent the authority to put into practice the Word of God, would abolish that burning part of the vow because it is non Scriptural, and would direct Jephthah to pay thirty shekels and go home happy with his daughter. In this way the daughter of Jephthah would be set free, Jephthah would be set free from the burning part of his vow and the priest would be doing his duty well. But since there was no proper government for the church at that time, then that tragedy of Jephthah’s daughter took place. **** The same here today for the church; the church should know of what is going on in the life of the members and the families of the church; every valuable decision about issues of life should be passed through the church to be examined if it is Biblical and based on Scripture. * The church has the authority to disapprove wrong plans and wrong decisions including finances that are based on emotion, pride or ambition, or the work of the flesh; and instead direct them with God’s Word to do what is right and correct that goes along the good plan that God had for each and every member of the church. * Each and every family in the church is a congregation in the Church of God, therefore the church should know and be aware of what is going on to protect the family members and to keep them to be in the right way of life.*** I have seen people who have vowed to give to God their firstfruit, their first month’s income but don’t have enough to sustain them for a living. I counsel them that first, they need to work for some time, give their tithes, spend wisely, save part of their income and then give their firstfruit when there is plenty to fall back on. ***People’s lives and their contributions must be transparent for effective ministry. We really need to verify the people’s lives and the source of money before we receive because we are accountable before God for the lives of the people that He is sending to us.***

B. The vow of Absalom: “1 And it came to pass after this, that Absalom prepared him chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him. 2 And Absalom rose up early, and stood beside the way of the gate: and it was so, that when any man that had a controversy came to the king for judgment, then Absalom called unto him, and said, Of what city art thou? And he said, Thy servant is of one of the tribes of Israel. 3 And Absalom said unto him, See, thy matters are good and right; but there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee. 4 Absalom said moreover, Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man which

hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice! 5 And it was so, that when any man came nigh to him to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took him, and kissed him. 6 And on this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment: so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel. 7 And it came to pass after forty years, that Absalom said unto the king, I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed unto the LORD, in Hebron. 8 For thy servant vowed a vow while I abode at Geshur in Syria, saying, If the LORD shall bring me again indeed to Jerusalem, then I will serve the LORD. 9 And the king said unto him, Go in peace. So he arose, and went to Hebron. 10 But Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, As soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet, then ye shall say, Absalom reigneth in Hebron. 11 And with Absalom went two hundred men out of Jerusalem, that were called; and they went in their simplicity, and they knew not any thing. 12 And Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counsellor, from his city, even from Giloh, while he offered sacrifices. And the conspiracy was strong; for the people increased continually with Absalom.” (2 Samuel 15:1-12 KJV)

Absalom when he vowed to serve the Lord, he did not need to go to Hebron, because Hebron was not the place where the ark was located. The ark was located in Jerusalem and if he needed to fulfill his vow to God then he needed to do it at Jerusalem where the Ark was located. David should not be given permission to Absalom to go ahead to Hebron to do his own destructive will.

Many like Absalom, they use the name of the Lord to do their own will, they deceive those who trained them and cared for them, causing division and grievances inside the church. Hebron was a city for the Levites and a city of refuge, but even so, it was not the ordained place that God had located for someone to fulfill his vow. **What I want to say here is that if someone really is interested to serve God, then he should not move outside the frame of God's laws and ordinances.** We need to be careful and discern the motive of the people and their real reason for their offer to fulfill their vows. Like what Absalom did with David, others who join our ministries may do the same. **Therefore we need to be careful of those who come and offer their service and money to God because some of their ulterior motives may be to kill, steal, and destroy.**

I have had bitter experiences with such people who had entered our gates and offered finances and other sacrifices and offered themselves to serve God, but later on proved to be a malicious virus using their wrong vows, had infect the church, to fulfill their own plans.

C. The vow of the prostitute: “6 For at the window of my house I looked through my casement, 7 And beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a young man void of understanding, 8 Passing through the street near her corner; and he went the way to her house, 9 In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night: 10 And, behold, there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot, and subtil of heart. 11 (She is loud and stubborn; her feet abide not in her house: 12 Now is she without, now in the streets, and lieth in wait at every corner.) 13 So she caught him, and kissed him, and with an impudent face said unto him, 14 I have peace offerings with me; this day have I payed my vows. 15 Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face, and I have found thee. 16 I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved works, with fine linen of Egypt. 17 I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon. 18 Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning: let us solace ourselves with loves. 19 For the goodman is not at home, he is gone a long journey: 20 He hath taken a bag of money with him, and will

come home at the day appointed. 21 With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him. 22 He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks; 23 Till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life.” (Proverbs 7:6-23 KJV)

Here in this Scripture this married woman early in the day went to the temple and gave her peace offering to pay her vows to God, but later on in the evening she went out to prostitute herself with one of the youth. **Men or women because of love they vow and promise and they will fall in immorality, therefore we need to be discerning and not to allow men and women to meet alone with no other person with them. The sin of immorality has great destructive effects among the life of the married, in the life of the families and single people, therefore we need to be careful and work out circumstances to avoid such to take place, and as we read this warning here: “24 Hearken unto me now therefore, O ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth. 25 Let not thine heart decline to her ways, go not astray in her paths. 26 For she hath cast down many wounded: yea, many strong men have been slain by her. 27 Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.” (Proverbs 7:24-27 KJV)**

D. The vow of the women at the time of Jeremiah to sacrifice to the queen of heaven: “1 The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the Jews which dwell in the land of Egypt, which dwell at Migdol, and at Tahpanhes, and at Noph, and in the country of Pathros, saying, 2 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Ye have seen all the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, and upon all the cities of Judah; and, behold, this day they are a desolation, and no man dwelleth therein, 3 Because of their wickedness which they have committed to provoke me to anger, in that they went to burn incense, and to serve other gods, whom they knew not, neither they, ye, nor your fathers. 4 Howbeit I sent unto you all my servants the prophets, rising early and sending them, saying, Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate. 5 But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear to turn from their wickedness, to burn no incense unto other gods. 6 Wherefore my fury and mine anger was poured forth, and was kindled in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem; and they are wasted and desolate, as at this day. 7 Therefore now thus saith the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel; Wherefore commit ye this great evil against your souls, to cut off from you man and woman, child and suckling, out of Judah, to leave you none to remain; 8 In that ye provoke me unto wrath with the works of your hands, burning incense unto other gods in the land of Egypt, whither ye be gone to dwell, that ye might cut yourselves off, and that ye might be a curse and a reproach among all the nations of the earth? 9 Have ye forgotten the wickedness of your fathers, and the wickedness of the kings of Judah, and the wickedness of their wives, and your own wickedness, and the wickedness of your wives, which they have committed in the land of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem? 10 They are not humbled even unto this day, neither have they feared, nor walked in my law, nor in my statutes, that I set before you and before your fathers. 11 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will set my face against you for evil, and to cut off all Judah. 12 And I will take the remnant of Judah, that have set their faces to go into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, and they shall all be consumed, and fall in the land of Egypt; they shall even be consumed by the sword and by the famine: they shall die, from the least even unto the greatest, by the sword and by the famine: and they shall be an execration, and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach. 13 For I will punish them that dwell in the land of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence: 14 So that none of the remnant of Judah, which are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall escape or remain, that they should return into the land of Judah, to the which

they have a desire to return to dwell there: for none shall return but such as shall escape. 15 Then all the men which knew that their wives had burned incense unto other gods, and all the women that stood by, a great multitude, even all the people that dwelt in the land of Egypt, in Pathros, answered Jeremiah, saying, 16 As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the LORD, we will not hearken unto thee. 17 But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we, and our fathers, our kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: for then had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil. 18 But since we left off to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine. 19 And when we burned incense to the queen of heaven, and poured out drink offerings unto her, did we make her cakes to worship her, and pour out drink offerings unto her, without our men? 20 Then Jeremiah said unto all the people, to the men, and to the women, and to all the people which had given him that answer*, saying, 21 The incense that ye burned in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, ye, and your fathers, your kings, and your princes, and the people of the land, did not the LORD remember them, and came it not into his mind? 22 So that the LORD could no longer bear, because of the evil of your doings, and because of the abominations which ye have committed; therefore is your land a desolation, and an astonishment, and a curse, without an inhabitant, as at this day. 23 Because ye have burned incense, and because ye have sinned against the LORD, and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD, nor walked in his law, nor in his statutes, nor in his testimonies; therefore this evil is happened unto you, as at this day. 24 Moreover Jeremiah said unto all the people, and to all the women, Hear the word of the LORD, all Judah that are in the land of Egypt: 25 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying; Ye and your wives have both spoken with your mouths, and fulfilled with your hand, saying, We will surely perform our vows that we have vowed, to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her: ye will surely accomplish your vows, and surely perform your vows. 26 Therefore hear ye the word of the LORD, all Judah that dwell in the land of Egypt; Behold, I have sworn by my great name, saith the LORD, that my name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt, saying, The Lord GOD liveth. 27 Behold, I will watch over them for evil, and not for good: and all the men of Judah that are in the land of Egypt shall be consumed by the sword and by the famine, until there be an end of them. 28 Yet a small number that escape the sword shall return out of the land of Egypt into the land of Judah, and all the remnant of Judah, that are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall know whose words shall stand, mine, or theirs. 29 And this shall be a sign unto you, saith the LORD, that I will punish you in this place, that ye may know that my words shall surely stand against you for evil: 30 Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will give Pharaohhophra king of Egypt into the hand of his enemies, and into the hand of them that seek his life; as I gave Zedekiah king of Judah into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, his enemy, and that sought his life.” (Jeremiah 44:1-30 KJV) The women here vowed to give their offerings to the queen of heaven, which was an idol, and their husbands condoned them and promoted them to do it. That was wrong vow and the men should disapprove that. But they failed God and instead supported their wives to do wrong. However Jeremiah stood valiantly, rebuked them, and nullified what they vowed and declared to them that what they were about to do was sinful and will bring the wrath of God on them.

Church leaders should be firm to put the people in the right place. A church leader has been given authority from God. Therefore, when he doesn't compromise he is actually protecting the people and showing them the right way to live for God and serve His purpose. When church leaders compromise, they are pushing the people deeper into the miry clay by encouraging them to do what is sinful.

My dear and beloved: “17 Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them. 18 For, behold, I have made thee this day a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brasen walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land. 19 And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the LORD, to deliver thee.” (Jeremiah 1: 17-19 KJV) We need to be firm in asserting our leadership over our families, our wives, and children, and as leaders in the church and the ministry that we are placed in. We don't give in and give way to people who are deceivers and are in sin. We ought to use our authority that is from God to ensure that our families and the members of our ministries live in holiness. We should not be deceived or enticed by resources from wrong sources and invite trouble into our lives, the lives of our families, and ministries.

Be firm in your leadership over your family, your wife and children, and in your leadership in the church and the ministry that you are placed in. Don't give in and give way to people who are deceived and are in sin. Use your authority that is from God to cleanse your family and the members of your ministry and the Church of God.

Let us pray

My Prayer: Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus, who died on the cross for my sins and rose from the dead to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for your Word that opened my mind to the truth and clarified things to me.

Confess and renounce all your sins and trespasses. Renounce your doing your own will and plan. Renounce bypassing the church and executing your plans without coming and opening up to the church. Renounce your sin of church division. Renounce your sin of immorality and the idol worship. Renounce your compromises and your fear of man. Lord forgive me, I renounce the following sins: _____.

Lord I commit myself today to stand firm and do the needful in my family and in the life of the ministry and your church. Lord I commit myself to nullify the following situation _____.

Lord I commit myself not to approve the following people in doing their own will_____. Lord strengthen me, protect me and go before me so that your will be done.

Lord I pray for my Brothers and Sisters who repented of their sins, and willing to come back to you and commit their lives to do your will. Lord cleanse them and set them free from their wrong vows. Lord strengthen them and upholds them with your grace and mercy, and provides

their needs so they will continue to serve you and live their lives for you and accomplish your will in the lives of their families.

Lord bless us as your church and uphold us with your grace and mercy so that we will continue serve you. Give us discernment to direct our families, children and disciples with your will and the plan that you have for each and every one of them. Lord we commit ourselves to stand firm to disapprove wrong plans and wrong decisions in order to correct your people and rebuke and deal with those who do wrong and persist in their sins. Lord refill us once again with the Holy Spirit and give us the spiritual gifts that we need in our lives to go on and serve you, to evangelize, to reach new people with the gospel of Jesus and to make new disciples, and train new workers to plant new Bible studies and congregations for the church. Lord fulfill the vision of the church, 'Multiplication in peace with implementing the whole will of God.' Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus name, Amen.

The Fear of God Part 14. Wrong Vows. Deuteronomy 23:21-22. Judges 11:30-40. Deuteronomy 12:11. Leviticus 27:1-4. 2 Samuel 15:1-12. Proverbs 7:6-27. Jeremiah 44:1-30. Jeremiah 1: 17-19.

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