***The Conflict of Desire and Duty, No. 2 - PH24-02

Advanced Bible Doctrine - Philippians 1:22-26***

We have been considering the conflict of desire and duty which confronted the apostle Paul. In Philippians 1:22-26, we find that Paul has a great desire and a great duty, and the two have come into conflict. Paul is in prison, and he has told us that if he is acquitted in his upcoming trial before Nero, that it would be his lot to live, and, consequently, to produce through his Christian service more divine good. Paul, however, is in a dilemma as he faces the alternatives of living or dying. To die means to be with the Lord which is far better of the two alternatives. To live, however is necessary for the sake of the Philippian Christians and for the Christians down through the centuries unto ourselves. For there is much of Scripture which has yet not been written by the apostle Paul, as of this point in his experience, which must yet be put into written form. This is doctrine which he knows which needs to be transferred on to us.

So Paul has a conflict between the desire to be with the Lord and the duty to continue in service. If it were up to him to choose, he says he doesn't really know which he would choose. However, Paul is certain that he will be permitted to live. The Lord apparently has made this clear to him. So he knows that this is going to result in further spiritual progress for the Philippian Christians. This will come from instruction in the Word of God. Paul anticipates greater glory coming to Jesus Christ because of his further ministry among the Philippians Christians. This is because of what he is going to be able to teach them concerning the Word of God. He is going to return to these Philippian Christians in his role as a HICEE communicator (Hermeneutics, Isagogics, Categories, Etymology, and Exegesis); that is, a communicator who brings the Word of God in an exegetical fashion. When a minister uses the exegetical method; that is, he is explaining from the original languages what the text says, he automatically tells the people of God what God thinks.

**The Importance of Bible Doctrine**

Whereas many a preacher picks a verse and then proceeds to give you a great deal of inspiration and of challenge and often very good ideas, but they are, after all is said and done, his ideas. Most people, if they would stop and be honest with themselves, would have to admit that they had spent their lives going to church where they have come to pretty well know what the preacher thinks, but they are not too sure that they know very much about what God thinks. That's why we do not stress without reason the HICEE technique of interpreting Scripture. It is the most important issue in the local church today. This is the only way that God's people will get His mind instead of the preacher's mind.

This is going to be face-to-face teaching, Paul says, as well as Scripture which he will write. It is his duty to communicate doctrine, and it is the greatest responsibility that God lays upon any human being. There is, of course, no responsibility that meets greater satanic pressure and greater temptation than that of being a communicator of doctrine. Satan knows that this point is where he must stop the movement of the work of the Lord among the people of God. If he can discourage ministers from being exegetical expositors of the Word, he has won. That's exactly the technique he plays.

The pastor-teacher's role consequently, is one that requires great discipline as well as great courage to execute consistently over the years. This is because it is the hardest kind of preparation for preaching, and it is the hardest kind of preaching to deliver. It takes a congregation that develops the ability to concentrate and to listen. When people move into the Christian life, they come in as animals. They have, up to that point, simply functioned on the animal level with a soul. Now they have a brand new human spirit. They're not quite sure how to operate with a human spirit. They've been born again. They have trusted Christ as savior. They've accepted God's declaration upon them that they are sinners, and that unless God steps in and does something for them, they're doomed. Therefore, they've accepted what he has done. They're completely used to an animal way of life, and they can continue in that animal way of life. People who don't go to church do exactly that. Do not kid yourself. You are still an animal, no matter how much money you have; how much culture you have; how good your clothes are; and, how fine a car you drive, you are still an animal. You just happen to be an animal that looks a little better than the other dudes out there.

However, God says, "I want you to move above that level. I want you to move above religion and devices and gimmicks." Therefore, He has given us the precious book, the Word of God, the written revelation. It is a great thing when a communicator can come to the end of his life and say what the apostle Paul could say, "I fought a good fight. I have run my course." Further, to add to that, that the blood of no man was upon his hands because he delivered to every person he spoke to, who was willing to listen to him, not just the gospel, which would have been valuable enough, but he said, "I gave you the full counsel of the Word of God." He said, "I taught you the Bible from cover to cover. I taught you every technique for living the Christian life. I taught you every basic issue, and to the extent that you went positive, you have stored for yourself rewards in heaven. I have fought a good fight," and that's a great thing to say. There is nothing in life which is more important to you as Christians than the communicating of Bible doctrine. Your eternal well-being is dependent upon it.

When Christians are denied this kind of instruction in the Word of God, they're at the mercy of their own opinions in spiritual things, and of the opinions of most people around them. What does the majority think? That's what I think in spiritual things. You know how much grotesque caricature there is concerning Christianity out in the world in which you move which is held by most people. God has given us the Bible in order to give us His mind. This Bible you should view as the manual from God on human life. I want to tell you right now that God holds everyone responsible for knowing the Bible from cover to cover. Don't give me that goofy stuff about the fact you think you know the Bible because you know there was a fellow named David one time who got in a fracas with a dude named Goliath; he knocked him off by picking five little smooth stones; he used one good aerodynamically-formed stone; he knocked this giant out; and, he cut his head off, so you think you know the Bible, don't you? You think you have spiritual insight. You have exactly zero.

I'm talking about Bible doctrine. If you don't know it, the Word of God says that God is going to hold you responsible for all eternity for this. In John 15:22, the Lord Jesus Christ, in speaking to a group of negative people, said, "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin. But now they have no cloak for their sin." Jesus Christ said, "If I had not come and delivered doctrine to these people, they might have an excuse. But now that I have spoken to them God's Word, they don't have a prayer to stand on." As long as God has given us the completed written Scriptures, you better believe it that you will have not a prayer to stand on before God when the time comes at the Judgment Seat of Christ for the evaluation of your life as a Christian.

God holds you responsible for knowing the contents of the Word of God. The gospel message is the starting point of knowing the Word of God. The unbeliever who rejects the gospel message (either through ignorance or through outright negative volition), will pay for that through all eternity in hell. For the Christian who leaves this life without knowing the Word of God and functioning on it from cover to cover, he will pay for it for all eternity in loss of fantastic rewards and loss of fantastic capacity to enter in to his spiritual heritage. You better believe it. You are leaving this life with spiritual assets or without them. That's why Paul could say, in his case, that for him, to die would be gain. For most people, it would not be gain to die. It could only be gain that they were going to go to heaven, but the rest of the way is downhill from there.

Those of you who have been around spiritual things all your life, you were the ones who are in the greatest hazard. You think that you can go long on yesterday's and last year's and two-years-ago instruction in the Word of God. You think you can ride upon your past spiritual experiences. I want to remind you that the manna of the Old Testament which represented the spiritual life of the believers of that day, the manna that was kept from one day to the next, when they woke up the next day and they looked at the manna, they found the manna looking back at them, and moving around just filled with worms. They couldn't eat it unless they really hard pressed for protein. You don't ride on yesterday's and last week's spiritual instruction.

Do you see how we commit ourselves to be animals while we walk around as self-satisfied human beings, maybe with prestige that we carry for one reason or another? But if you don't have the Word of God, you're nothing. That's why the role of the communicator is a role that bears heavily on his shoulders. He knows, if he's worth anything, what is at stake for the people of God. He knows how fantastic is the loss of God's people if he does not do his job. After he has done his job, then it's up to the people of God to either accept or reject.

You made the mistake of accessing this session of Bible study. Any other Bible study in town would have been better for you to have attended than this one. You made the worst mistake in your life by entering into this Bible study because the Bible says, "Here is a principle. Once you know something and then reject it, the discipline upon you is multiplied. It's press down, and it's added." So you're going to find here how important the Word of God is, and you're going to be in a lot of trouble if you go out of here and ignore what you have studied. You have potentially brought more grief and more troubled by accessing this Bible study than you have by anything else you've done. So, if you want to discontinue this Bible study, this is the time to do it.

**The Tabernacle**

Please take your Bibles and turn with me to Exodus 25:10-16 where the Old Testament tabernacle is described. One-third of it was separated by a heavy veil from the other two-thirds.

**The Holy Place**

There was a place in the tabernacle that was a place called the holy place. It was 30 feet long; 15 feet wide; and, 15 feet high.

**The Holy of Holies**

Behind the holy place in the tabernacle was a place called the holy of holies. It was 15 feet long; 15 feet wide; and, 15 feet high. It was a perfect cube. We also have described the elements which constituted the tabernacle of the Old Testament, the place of worship of the Jewish people.

**The Ark of the Covenant**

I want to direct your attention to one item in particular that was in the tabernacle (in the holy of holies). This item was known as the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark of the Covenant was simply a box. It was three-and-three-quarters feet long. It was two-and-a-quarter feet high, and two-and-a-quarter feet wide. This box was the most sacred object in all of the tabernacle and the worship of the Jews. This box was made of a special kind of wood. It was made of acacia wood. Acacia wood was a wood that represented the humanity of Jesus Christ. It grew out in the desert, and it was seen perhaps as a fitting symbol of Christ who grew up out of dry ground. This acacia wood represented the fact that Jesus Christ was 100% humanity. He was a person who had to grow up from infancy to adulthood. He grew tired; He slept; He ate; He drank; He laughed; He wept; He suffered; and, He felt pain. He was a true 100% human being. He was identical to ourselves in all respects except one. He did not have an old sin nature.

This box made of wood was covered over with pure gold. The pure gold also covered the inside of the box. So this box was covered with pure gold inside and out. Gold in Scripture represents the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ was not only pure humanity, but He was also the second person of the Trinity, and He always retained the essence of deity. So inside and out, the box was covered with gold. Colossians 2:9 speaks about Christ being the fullness of God. The fullness of God was found in Christ. This gold covering inside and out represented that fullness.

The wood was totally separate from the gold. The wood and the gold were not intermingled because the humanity and the deity of Jesus Christ were never intermingled. This ark pictured what we call the hypostatic union of the Lord Jesus Christ--very God of very God, and very man of very man. He was the God man. It was not just a wooden chest nor just a gold chest. It was both. This was an attempt on the part of God in symbolical form to convey an unfathomable mystery--how a human being could at the same time be 100% deity and 100% man. This was true in the person of Jesus Christ. Notice that the two natures are separated. Deity acts as deity; humanity acts as humanity; and, the two are never intermingled.

This box had on top of it a solid gold lid. This gold lid was called the mercy seat. It was viewed as the place where God sat--the throne of God. Out of one continuous piece with the lid, there were structured above this lid two cherubim with wings outstretched toward one another, and looking down upon the mercy seat. This solid gold lid and two cherubim were all of one piece of pure gold representing the pure 100% deity of Jesus Christ. This lid was called the mercy seat. It was the throne of God. It was the place from whence he spoke to the Jewish people. We read about this in Psalm 99:1 and in Exodus 25:22.

One of these cherubs represented the absolute righteousness of God which was required of anybody to go to heaven. The other cherub represented the justice of God--the fact that God must punish sin. Together these constituted the holiness of God. So that's why this represented the most sacred object within the tabernacle, and later the temple. It was here that the "Shekhinah" glory of God gathered above the mercy seat. It was from thence that God communed with the people. He spoke to them from this point--from the mercy seat.

Within this ark, there were certain very important items. The reason I'm doing this is because I want to alert you, first of all, to how important was the Ark of the Covenant in the eyes of God. This was because of what it represented--His son Jesus Christ in the hypostatic union. In Hebrews 9:4, we're told that there were three objects placed inside of this box.

**The Ten Commandments**

Number one were the tablets of stone. Deuteronomy 10:1-5 tell us how these tables of stone were put within this box. These tables of stone were the two tablets which were given by God to Moses on Mount Sinai, and upon which were written the Ten Commandments. The Lord Jesus Christ was represented in these tables as the absolute righteousness of God. It was to be found in him as the God man. The Ten Commandments represented the righteousness--the absolute standards of right--of the Lord God.

The Lord Jesus Christ was able to challenge anybody to prove him guilty of sin in John 8:46. In John 8:29, He said that he always pleased God the Father. Yet, the Jews accused Him of violating the traditions of the Jewish rabbis in Matthew 15:2. When they accused him of violating the traditions of the fathers, Jesus turned around in Matthew 15:3 and pointed out to them that they were violating the commandments of God as a result of keeping their traditions. They had converted their faith in God into a religion. Religion is the thing that God hates more than anything else. This is because religion brings people under Satan's control.

The Jews had developed a religious system of traditions that were more important to them than the actual commandments of God. They had so intermingled them that they lost track of what was religion (what was man's point of view) and what was the Word of God (what was divine viewpoint). Therefore, the wrong beliefs brought the Jews into conflict with God's ways, and yet they were so sure that they knew what God thought. Consequently, the Lord Jesus Christ came into collision with the Jewish leaders because He was violating their religious traditions and being obedient to the commandments as represented here in the ark. The law found a shrine, so to speak, in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. These tables of stone course also represented the sin of mankind, for these are the records of the violations of every human being.

**Manna**

There was a second thing in the ark. There was a pot which contained manna--that which had fed the Jews in their wilderness travels. Exodus 16:32-34 tell us about that pot being placed into this chest. This represents Jesus Christ as the bread of life (John 6:32-30:5). Manna also spoke of a man's sin in rejecting God's provision for sin. This is the manna that he had to gather day-by-day for his physical sustenance. It wouldn't last until morning. It turned into worms because spiritual sustenance has to be drawn daily. God has provided, therefore, Bible doctrine for our daily spiritual sustenance in one way or another.

God provided us with Bible doctrine, first of all, for face-to-face teaching. Please remember you are out of the will of God if you are not regularly in face-to-face teaching. Face-to-face teaching means to sit facing your communicator who is working in a HICEE expository technique of preaching. If you are not regularly in face-to-face teaching, you are sitting on an animal level. I don't care how long you go in life and how much you think you know about the Bible. If you are not in face-to-face teaching on the Lord's day, and other stated times of opportunity to learn on face-to-face teaching, you continue on an animal level. There is no way you can do anything else. You supplement that with other means such as books; audio recordings; radio; or, whatever means are available where something significant is being communicated of the Word of God. So this manna was in this chest to represent what Christ is to us (what God has provided in our spiritual sustenance), and man's sin (in the fact that man has rejected what God has provided).

**Aaron's Rod**

Then there was a third thing in the Ark. There was a rod (a stick). This rod was used by Aaron at the time when he was confronted with a rebellion and a challenge to his authority to be a priest of God. There was one rod taken from every tribe. God said, "I'm going to settle this debate, and I'm going to show you whom I have appointed to be priest." They put all these dead sticks out, and the next morning, one of them had budded. There was Aaron's rod come to life. This dead stick that was brought to life represented the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. However, it also spoke of man's rebellion against God's authority.

You remember the story of Dathan, Abiram, and Korah who were three leaders of Israel. Out in the wilderness, having come out of Egypt as ex-slaves, these three leaders challenged the spiritual authority of Moses and Aaron. 250 princes joined them in this rebellion. You read of this in Number 16:1-22. Incidentally, here's one way that God uses death, by the way. God deals with a rebellion by removing it, judging the rebellion with death.

The ground of this challenge was quite logical to Dathan and Abiram. They came from the tribe of Reuben. The tribe of Reuben was the first born. As the elders of the tribe of Reuben, they should have been the leaders of the nation of Israel. Instead, here was Moses from the tribe of Levi, and he was head of the nation. It was quite logical, and they had very good ground for going up to Moses and saying, "Just who do you think you are anyhow, Moses? You lorded over us. You take upon yourself too much authority." How many pastor-teachers have ever heard that statement, and how many times? "You take upon yourself too much authority. Who do you think you are?"

Korah, who joined them in this rebellion, was from the tribe of Levi. He challenged Aaron. He said, "What makes you think you're so hot, Aaron, that you should be high priest? What makes you think you're better than I am, Aaron? I'm from the tribe of Levi too. Who made you priest over us?" He wanted to intrude into the priesthood.

Well, God judged the rebels, the leaders, and their sympathizers with death in Numbers 16:23-50. You remember how they stood in front of their tents with their family, with their little ones and with their wives, and suddenly the earth opened up. There was a split in the earth. All of them fell screaming into the hole, and then the earth closed right up and the fracture in the earth sealed itself up with all these people down inside. Well, this scared the wits out of the rest of the Jews. They went running for the hills for fear that the same thing might happen and the earth might open up under them. In this way, God confirmed who was to lead--that Moses was His leader.

Then with this rod that budded, He confirmed the fact that the tribe of Levi was the tribe of the priesthood, and that God had chosen the line of Aaron to form the high priestly line (Numbers 17:1-10). The important issue in all of this was what God thought. The important issue was not the logic of Dathan and Abiram, that they were of the tribe of Reuben, and that the eldest should rule. It was not the logic of Korah. He was of the tribe of Levi. Therefore, he had a claim to be priest as much as Aaron. That didn't make any difference. It was what God thought, and what God thinks is doctrine. They were opposing God's doctrine (Numbers 16:11). All of these things were placed into the ark, and therefore it enhanced the sacredness and the importance of this object of furniture in the tabernacle.

**The Furniture in the Holy Place**

In the holy place, there were certain objects of furniture used in the process of worship. There was the altar of incense from which ascended the odor of incense; and, the smoke of the incense represented prayers of the saints. There was a table of shewbread--12 loaves representing the tribes of Israel. There was the lamp stand. The seven wicks of the lamps were burning, representing the perfection of spiritual enlightenment from God.

Behind the veil, in the holy of holies was one object only, and it was the Ark of the Covenant with the cherubs with their wings outstretched toward one another. This was placed in the holy of holies, the innermost recesses of the tabernacle. The holy of holies was separated from the holy place by this veil which represented the wall between God and man--that man by nature is separated from God. Only the priest came into the holy place. The people never came in there. Only the high priest went into the holy of holies; he went in there only once a year on the great day of atonement; and, he could not enter there except with the blood of an animal which had been sacrificed, which he then sprinkled on top of the mercy seat as a symbolic atonement for the people and for himself which Jesus Christ was ultimately to provide. This blood symbolized the spiritual death of Christ for the sins of the world.

When the cherub of righteousness looked down and saw the blood covering these objects representing man's sin in the ark, the righteousness of God was met, and man was declared absolutely as perfect as God. When the cherub of justice looked down and saw the sprinkling of the blood on the mercy seat, God was satisfied concerning the objects of sin represented therein. Therefore, God was propitiated, and man was declared righteous. All the symbolism of the ark and the ritual fulfilled the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, this thing was a supremely sacred object to the living God.

**Handling the Ark of the Covenant**

For this reason, the Jews received very special directions for handling this object. Who was going to touch this thing? Who was going to handle this thing in a fitting way as they moved through the wilderness so that it was compatible with what this represented of the second person of the Trinity; and that, in His hypostatic union, is the God man? Numbers 4:5-6 and 15 give us directions. Only the priests (the Levites) were to touch the ark in a certain way in preparation for its travel. They had it covered. Nobody was ever to see the ark. Only the high priest saw it. No one was to see it. No one was to touch it. If they did, Numbers 4 says they will die: "If you touch it, you'll die." This was the doctrine of the ark. It was clearly revealed by God so everyone knew His thinking in the matter.

Furthermore, in Numbers 4:15-20, Moses and Aaron are specifically warned to obey the doctrine of the regulations for the handling of the ark lest they cause someone to die. When the ark was covered, and all the preparation for its transfer was completed, then they called the Kohathites of the tribe of Levi who were designated for carrying the ark. They came in and picked it up. God said to Moses and Aaron, "You be sure you have it all covered and you have it all in order. Don't let those men come in there, and you cause them to die because they see or touch the Ark."

By the way, here is the way the ark was carried: There were two rings on each side of the ark, through which was put a long staff, a carrying pole. The polls were also gold. The only way that the ark could be transferred was by touching the pole. Only the Levitical priests could handle it, and they carried it on their shoulders. That's how the ark was to be transferred. This was the only way it was to be transferred.

The ark came into a very interesting history. The Jews crossed into the Promised Land, and they took the tabernacle with them. They set it up at a place called Shiloh. In the 10th century B.C., when Eli was high priest, the Israelites were at war with the Philistines. The Israelites were defeated in battle at a place called Ebenezer. You read of this in 1 Samuel 4:1-2. The leaders of Israel decided to bring the ark up from Shiloh, hoping that this would help them to bring victory over the Philistines (1 Samuel 4:3-5). Well, when the Philistines heard that the ark had come up from Shiloh and was there at the battlefield, it scared the life out of the Philistines. They said, "Now they brought their God among them. This is the God that defeated the pharaoh of Egypt." They all knew what had happened to the Egyptians, and the Ark of the Covenant was the epitome, even in the eyes of the heathen, of the presence of God with the people. However, the officers of the Philistines stood up and gave them a great challenge. They gave them a pep talk before the battle, and they said, "Men of Philistia, you show yourselves as men of courage in battle or you will become slaves of the Jews as the Israelites had been slaves to you."

So the result was that they went into battle, and the Philistines again defeated the Jews. Not only did they defeat the Jews, but the worst possible thing imaginable happened. They captured the Ark of the Covenant. This most sacred object was now in the hands, of all people, of the despicable, heathenish, bloodthirsty Philistines. Well, they rejoiced to have it. They set it up in their demon god's temple, the god named Dagon, the fish god. They had it for seven months, but the result of having that ark in their presence brought one disaster after another to the Philistines until they said, "This is not worth having. Their god is attacking us because we have the ark." Therefore, they said, "Let's get rid of it." Therefore, they built a cart; they hooked up two cows to it; they put the ark on it; they sent it up the road; and, they watched it go out of Philistia.

Notice they came up with a very logical way of transporting it. They didn't transport it the way God told them to. They just made a cart. What could be more logical? The just hooked up a couple of animals up to it and sent it on its way. Therefore, the ark went down the road and came to a place called Bethshemesh in the territory of the tribe of Judah. The Jews at Bethshemesh saw the ark and they rejoiced to see it. They were so happy that they ran up to it; they took the lid; and, they pushed it back? Why did they do that? They wanted to see what was inside it. The result was that death came to these men. They were struck with the plague. Why? It was because of violation of doctrine.

Can you imagine these men working out in the fields; suddenly the most sacred object of the Jews is seen coming up the road; and, the Bible tells us that the cows kept lowing all the time like they were signaling the approach of the ark? They said, "There's the ark of the Covenant. Praise God. Hallelujah. The Lord God of Israel has done it again." You can just imagine the rejoicing. They threw down their tools and ran out there. Why? Because they hated God? No. Because they wanted to do disrespect to the ark? No. It was because they wanted to honor God. It was because they esteemed the ark. It was because they esteemed it for what it stood for, though they did not understand the symbolism the way you and I can understand it today. They esteemed it for the beauties of what the ark represented. These men, with all their good intentions, ran up and they said, "Do you know what's in this?" "Yeah." "Let's look at it." It cost them their lives. Why? Because God had a doctrinal position, and their good intentions did not protect them.

That's the first thing to learn from this incident. If you do not know doctrine, you are violating God's plans for you constantly. If you do not know the principles and the guidelines of the Word of God, you're out of it. God doesn't cause you to drop dead, although you could even go that far under certain circumstances. However, the loss to you eternally is something you will pay forever, either in hell or in heaven. You will pay for it in one place or the other due to your ignorance of the guidelines of the Word of God.

Well, when this happened to these men, the ark was hastily transferred farther north to a place called Kirjathjearim into the house of Abinadab. It remained in the house of Abinadab for 70 years. Then, in 2 Samuel 6, we begin the story in the time of King David who had captured the city of the Jebusites on Mount Zion, and had established Mount Zion as the place of the capital city of all of Palestine called Jerusalem. David found it in his heart that he wanted to bring the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem. Therefore, he put up a tent, and undoubtedly probably formed it in the shape of the tabernacle with the two compartments as they knew it should be. The actual tabernacle itself was at Shiloh, and may have been destroyed by this time by the Philistines themselves.

However, David put up a tent and said, "Now we're going to bring the ark back." David takes a group of men to the house of Abinadab to bring the ark to Jerusalem. We read about this in 2 Samuel 6:1-2: "Again David gathered together all the chosen men of Israel, 30,000. David rose and went with all the people who were with him into Baale of Judah (which is another name for Kirjathjearim) to bring up from there the ark of God whose name is called by the name of the Lord of Hosts who dwells between the cherubim."

How is David going to do this? How is he going to bring the ark back to the city? Rightly it should be in Jerusalem. Here's what he does. Verse 3: "And they set the ark of God upon a new cart and brought it out of the house of Abinadab which was in Gibeah. And Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drove the new cart." Can you believe this? Here's the fantastic King David. This youngster from a child was devoted to the Word of God. This boy was a fan of doctrine from the word "go." He was not one of these rebel kids who scarred up and tore up his life, and then when he grew up finally came to be responsive to the Word of God. He knew it from the word "go," like Timothy did. He was a student of the word.

Now here's our student of the Word of God. Would you believe it? He's going to transfer the ark, and what does he do? He picks up an idea from the Philistines. They moved it on a cart. Very logical. We'll move it on a cart. What does doctrine say? Only a Levite will touch this box, and he will handle it when it is covered by the High Priest. He will handle it using these polls. That's how they will carry it. So look what happens.

They set the ark of God upon the cart, and they start out. Abinadab had two sons, Uzzah and Ahio. Uzzah walked along the side of the cart, and Ahio walked out in front leading the animals. Uzzah must have been very proud on this day because he was surrounded by a great deal of enthusiasm. It says in verse 5 that, "David and all the house of Israel played before the Lord on all manner of instruments made of fir wood, even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on coronets, and on cymbals."

David was a musician. He wrote many of the psalms (many of the songs) of the Jewish hymnal. David as a musician knew how to put together a festive occasion with music. That's exactly what he did. This was a wondrous momentous occasion, their bringing the most sacred object of the Jewish people back to Jerusalem. They are transporting it, and they're singing and they're praising the Lord. How do you think they felt? Very responsible. He's walking alongside the ark. He and his brother are in charge of directing this cart. He's praising the Lord, and he's so enthusiastic. What does he want to do? He has great reverence for this object, though he doesn't know all that it represents the way you do. However, his reverence is compatible with what God sees in this ark. He wants nothing but to honor God. That is his intention. However, notice what happens.

Verse 6 says, "When they came to Nathan's threshing floor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it for the oxen shook it." The oxen stumbled and the cart shook. Uzzah was walking alongside of the ark, and the ark bounces. He, in the moment, fears that's it's going to fall off, so he reaches over and he touches it to steady it with his hand. Doctrine was violated.

Verse 7: "And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah. God smote him there for his error, and there he died by the ark of God." This was the most sincere act a human being could have ever performed. If there's anything this man did not want to do, it was to see this sacred object in a heap on the ground because the oxen stumbled and the cart shook. There was nothing more logical than to reach out and steady the thing. Yet, God says that he died because God's anger was stirred against Uzzah "for his error" and the word "error" means "irreverence." How was he irreverent? Because he broke doctrine.

This set in motion a fantastic chain of events that revealed some fantastic qualities concerning how God operates. We're going to pick those up in the next session because the worst is yet to come. However, I wanted to show you how David, in all sincerity and in all dedication wanted to do a thing that was to God's honor. Certainly Uzzah did. Yet, he was ignorant of doctrine. Maybe he didn't know. Maybe he'd never read the Old Testament Scripture and knew how this thing was to be moved. Maybe he never knew that no one was ever to touch this ark. I suspect he did. The Jews were well-versed in the Scriptures. Nevertheless, in this moment, he went negative to doctrine. It made no difference whether he knew it or rejected it.

God says, "I have given you a book. In this book, I have told you, first of all, that you're a sinner; that you are condemned; if you close your eyes in death you will experience a second death which was to be a spiritual death which will be eternal separation from me; and, there will be no return. Therefore, I have sent my son the Lord Jesus Christ. For 3 hours in agonizing torment and pain (spiritual and physical) from 12:00 noon to 3:00 PM, He bore your sins on that cross. Consequently, all your sins have been covered. The angel of righteousness and the angel of justice have both been satisfied. Now all I ask of you is that you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ--that you accept the salvation which has been provided for you which was represented by this ark."

God looked upon this representation as the most sacred object in the tabernacle, which you view as sacred also. The God man was qualified to die for your sins. He died spiritually and He died physically. Now He's in heaven. The reason He's in heaven is to prove to all the world that because he was raised from the dead, it is possible for a human being to enter heaven. The Bible tells us that because He is there, we shall be there. If you have not received Him as your Savior, we urge you to accept Him.

Then God has said, "I have given you my full thinking and my complete mind relative to your needs in your earth experience. I hold you responsible for knowing doctrine, and I hold you responsible for acting upon it. If you are in ignorance of it, you will pay a price. You will pay a price now; your children will pay a price; and, you will pay for all eternity." Wait till you see what happens to people around the ark in the next session--to those who treat it by God's doctrinal guidance, and those who do not treat it accordingly. Don't miss it.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1973

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