***Jeroboam  
  
The Conflict of Desire and Duty, No. 6 - PH26-02  
  
Advanced Bible Doctrine - Philippians 1:22-26***

We are still talking about the conflict of the apostle Paul between a desire that he had to be with the Lord in heaven and the duty that he had to instruct believers in doctrine. This is segment number six, and we have been drawing this out of Philippians 1:22-26 where Paul expressed this conflict that he was faced with. However, he places in this passage the highest importance on his ministry of teaching Bible doctrine to believers.

Today Satan is promoting in subtle ways a major campaign that belittles the need to know doctrine. The reason he does this is to enable the demon spirit world to control Christians through unguided emotions which they will have, and through deceptive experiences which he will provide. For this reason, white magic is very extensive through the Christian world today, and it is eating away as a deadly cancer. White magic is the performance of demon activity which is performing good, but which is attributed to God.

Somebody gave me a missionary brochure this past week in which I read about demonic activity in Brazil. Activity is being performed actually within a church, purportedly set up as a church to worship God. The people of that congregation explained to the visitor that there are demons who are bad that are under Satan's authority, and they do bad things. However, they said, "We reject the evil demons, but there are also good demons; and, it is the good demons that we accept and that we appeal to."

They are exactly right. There are demons that create the loathsome, disgusting, revolting, obscene practices, images, and concepts such as are portrayed in the book The Exorcist. However, you also have demons who are the most noble; the most inspiring; the most challenging; and, the most creative for good of anything that you could ask for.

So these people in Brazil have learned a very important point. There are demons who are loathsomely evil, and there are demons who are attractively good. They haven't learned something else, and that is that God rejects both types. A lot of people in the United States have not learned that, and they are being caught up in the white magic of demons who perform good. Religious leaders in our day are passing this off as being divine good, which it is not.

We have been calling your attention to the fact that the Bible records some classic examples of tragedies that have resulted for believers who were indifferent to doctrine. We looked at the case of Uzzah in 2 Samuel 6:1-23 in the transporting of the ark back to Jerusalem. Uzzah, who violated doctrine by touching the ark, in all sincerity and all dedication and the fullness of love toward God, died on the spot because he violated doctrine. We looked at the case of King Saul in 1 Samuel 15 who enthusiastically told Samuel, "Yes, I have obeyed all that the Lord said relative to the Amalekites. I have destroyed everything." Samuel pointed out to him, "But I hear the animals lowing, and I can see that you have not destroyed all." The result was the separation of Saul from any further communication with God, and the loss of his rule.

**1 Kings 13**

Today I want to look at another example with you if you'll turn with me to 1 Kings 13. This one is a rather fascinating example because it deals with preachers only. This is the example of the case of the man of God. We have had the case of Uzzah; the case of King Saul; and, now the case of the man of God in 1 Kings 13.

The first 10 verses of this chapter describe to us the false worship which King Jeroboam set up. Jeroboam was the man who became king of the ten northern tribes of Israel when the Jews split off into ten tribes in the north and two tribes in the south after the death of Solomon. The people rebelled against the rule of Solomon's son, Rehoboam, which was an oppressive rule, and promised to be even worse than that which had burdened them under Solomon. When the two kingdoms split, Jeroboam of the north was faced with a problem. He envisioned that his people in the north would be going back down there to Jerusalem and Judah to worship God according to the prescribed order at the only center of worship that was authorized by God; and, he was afraid that their devotion and attachment to the house of David might be rekindled, and they would in turn rebel against him.

So Jeroboam came up with the idea that the way he would keep people from realigning themselves with the south, and from restoring their allegiance to the Davidic line, would be to set up his own centers of worship. So, he set one up at Bethel, slightly north of Jerusalem; and, he set one way up at the top of the land in the city of Dan. He set this worship up in the form of two golden calves that he had built. He put one in each place as the representation of the God whom they would worship. He brought his own priests in, but he did not bother bringing priests from the only authorized tribe of priesthood which was the Levite tribe. Instead, he just brought anybody from the common people; he took anybody that he thought could make a good priest; and, he set up his own priests. He set up his own special days, different from the ones in the south.

In every way, he violated doctrine on every account. If there was anything he could have done worse to bring the judgment of God upon him and upon the northern kingdom, I don't know what it was. On every account he violated the Word of God in setting up this false religious system. You can read about this in 1 Kings 12:26-33 (the incidents preceding the chapter in which we are reading here), and all of this was done just to hold on to the people. It was a system that was designed under human viewpoint religion; it was a false worship of Jehovah Elohim; and, it was an offense to the Lord God.

With this situation existing, God in His mercy, sent one of his prophets to pronounce judgment upon Jeroboam and upon his religious system, thereby to warn both Jeroboam to cease and desist what he was doing, and also to warn the people that if they came to Bethel and to Dan to worship, they were not worshiping the true God. They were going through all the forms; through all the ceremonies; and, through the identical thing they did down at Jerusalem, but, this was contrary to doctrine, and it was false. So God raises up a young prophet, whom the Scriptures referred to as "the man of God," and he sends this man of God to Jeroboam to bring this warning.

So, 1 Kings 13:1 says, "And behold there came a man of God out of Judah by the Word of the Lord unto Bethel, and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense." I point out to you that this man came by the Word of the Lord. That is another term in Scripture for Bible doctrine. This is another term for divine viewpoint. This prophet was acting under divine instruction and according to the Word of God. He went to the altar which had been set up at Bethel, and when he approached, there was King Jeroboam right in front of the altar offering incense going through one of the ceremonies.

Verse 2: "And he cried against the altar in the Word of the Lord and said, 'O, altar, altar, thus saith the Lord. Behold, a child shall be born into the house of David (Josiah, by name), and upon you shall he offer the priests of the high places who burn incense upon you, and men's bones shall be burned upon you.'" As he approached Jeroboam, he spoke to the altar, and in the presence of the king predicted that, from the Davidic line, a child (a king) would be born who would be named Josiah. Also, King Josiah, in his day, 300 years later from this point in time, would actually sacrifice human bones upon this altar.

In the Jewish system, a dead body was an unclean thing. Dead bones were a vile offensive thing. You could hardly think of a more insulting degrading thing than to put a dead body upon an altar that was for sacrifice to God--to put dead human bones upon an altar that was supposed to worship God. This was a travesty in the ultimate sense.

**2 Kings 23:15-20**

So this struck Jeroboam very forcibly. In 2 Kings 23:15-20, we have one of those evidences in Scripture of the fact that the Bible did not come simply by human invention, but it is a book which was produced by God the Holy Spirit using men to write what He revealed. I want to read to you what happened 300 years later. You've got the picture. Jeroboam is offering his incense up at the altar. The priests are mumbling through their ritual. Along comes the man of God, and he talks to the altar in the presence of Jeroboam, and he declares that this altar is going to end up as a place where dead bones are going to be sacrificed. 300 years later, Josiah has been born. The man of God predicted that this man would be born. Now Josiah has been born. Josiah is king.

2 Kings 23:15: "Moreover, the altar that was at Bethel and the high place which Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin had made, both that altar and the high place he broke down, and burned the high place and stamped it small to powder, and burned the idol. Josiah was a godly king, and he went through the land and he tore down these places of false worship and places of worship to idols.

Verse 16: "And as Josiah turned himself, he spied the sepulchres that were there in the mount, and sent and took the bones out of the sepulchres and burnt them upon the altar, and polluted it according to the Word of the Lord which the man of God proclaimed who proclaimed these words. As Josiah was having the altar destroyed, he observed that there were some tombs close by, and he sent some men and he said, "Go into those tombs and drag out some of those bones, and we're going to sacrifice them here and burn them on this altar." The altar was polluted beyond imagination by such an act. That's just what they did. 300 years before God said, "I'm going to send a king; he's going to be My man; his name is going to be Josiah; and, he's going to put dead bones upon your altar, Jeroboam. How do you like them bananas?"

Verse 17: "Then he said, 'What marker is that that I see?' The men of the city told him, 'It is the sepulchre of the man of God who came from Judah.'" (This is the same man that we are reading about now.) "'And proclaimed these things that you have done against the altar of Bethel.' And he said, 'Let him alone. Let no man move his bones.' So they let his bones alone with the bones of the prophet who came out of Samaria." The man of God, as we're going to find, was buried in the grave site of an older prophet. The older prophet had been buried on top of him. Josiah said, "Here's a grave marker. Whose grave is this?" They told him, "It's that man of God 300 years before who predicted your coming and who warned Jeroboam of the very thing that you have now fulfilled on this altar." Josiah said, "Do not disturb that grave."

And all the houses also of the high places that were in the city of Samaria which the kings of Israel had made to provoke the Lord to anger, Josiah took away, and did to them according to all the acts that he had done in Bethel. And he slew all the priests of the high places who were there upon the altars, and burned men's bones upon them and returned to Jerusalem.

Josiah made a clean sweep. He just polluted these false altars everywhere he found them by burning human bones upon them. Now we are reading 300 years from the time of the fulfillment of that which is being predicted here in this very passage in 1 Kings 13. The prophet, the man of God, that we are listening to is just exactly that. He is a man of God. He is God's representative. He is speaking under the spirit of God. He is telling the truth. I want to make that very clear. This is a really godly preacher. He's on the ball, and he's delivering the message of God in all fullness of truth.

1 Kings 13:3: "And he gave a sign the same day saying, 'This is the sign which the Lord has spoken. Behold, the altar shall be torn down, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out.'" The man of God says, "I'll give you a sign now, Jeroboam, to show that what I am predicting will come indeed to pass. The altar upon which you are now sacrificing is going to be split in two, and all of those sacred ashes of sacrifice that are on it are going to be thrown into the dirt." That is not a way to ingratiate yourself with the king--to be coming around and making remarks like that when he's there at the high point of his burning incense. So the king was infuriated very naturally, and his response was the angry response of deciding to take care of the man of God in a hurry. So, he pointed his arm out toward him, and he told his guards, "Seize him." But something happened that startled the king right to the end of his crown.

Verse 4: "And it came to pass when King Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God who had cried against the altar in Bethel, that he put forth his hand from the altar saying, 'Lay hold on him.' And his hand which he put forth against him dried up (was paralyzed), so that he could not pull it in again to him." The hand that he pointed toward the man of God to be taken simply was paralyzed, and he couldn't pull the hand back. That really scared him. It was significant that he was not dealing with the issues. Jeroboam, like anybody who is negative to the Word of God, usually does not say, "Well, now let's see, man of God, are you telling me the truth, or are you telling me a falsehood? You're telling me that I'm practicing white magic. You know very well that this also is dedicated to Jehovah Elohim. You know very well that we are following the prescribed Mosaic order at this altar. You're telling me I'm practicing white magic, and that demons are behind us, and that we are giving God the credit." He didn't discuss that. He didn't say, "Well, let's look in the Word of God." Instead he did as people do today. They get the guy who's giving you the information, and shut him up. If somebody is giving you misery in your spiritual life, and you want to be negative in your misery and defend that which God condemns, then start attacking the communicator. That's exactly what Jeroboam tried to do to the man of God, but God stepped in, as always He does.

It was bad enough that the king's arm was paralyzed, but the moment was heightened by the fact that what the man of God had predicted concerning the altar was then before the king's eyes fulfilled. Verse 5: "And the altar also was torn down. (That is, it split in two.) And the ashes poured out from the altar according to the sign which the man of God had given by the Word of the Lord."

Verse 6: "And the King answered and said unto the man of God, 'Intreat now the face of the Lord your God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored to me again.' And the man of God besought the Lord, and the king's hand was restored to him again, and it became as it was before." Jeroboam was so startled to see the altar break apart right before him that he turned to the man of God with his arm sticking out, and he said, "O, man of God, I ask you pray to God that my arm will be released and will be healed." So the man of God prays, and the king is able to return his arm.

The people have seen all this. Obviously they are standing in the presence of a man who is delivering God's message. If they needed any miracles, they've had their miracles, and they've had their confirmation. What is Jeroboam going to do in a situation like that? Well, the king decides that if you can't whip them, join them. So he expresses a conciliatory invitation to the man of God. He invites him to dinner, and he promises to reward him. He's probably wanting to do this in order to establish association with this prophet in the eyes of the people in order somehow to still recoup devotion to this false religious worship that he has set up.

Verse 7: "And the king said unto the man of God, 'Come home with me and refresh yourself, and I will give you a reward.'" That was an attractive invitation because this man had been traveling. He had arrived on the scene; he has gone through this; and, he has a long journey back. This would be a welcome invitation. But the man of God refuses. The reason he refuses is because he is acting on doctrine. He has had instruction from the Lord as to what to do in this situation. So, he takes Bible doctrine and he acts upon it.

And the man of God said unto the king, "If you will give me half of your house, I will not go in with you. Neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place. For so was it charged me by the Word of the Lord saying, 'Eat no bread nor drink water nor turn again by the same way that you came.'" He is acting upon the Word of the Lord--upon doctrine. He is not to eat. He is not to drink with the king. He is not even to return to Judah via the same way that he came to Bethel, probably in order to avoid attacks upon himself and protection from the king's agents.

His action of refusal indicated that he was not condoning the negative doctrine that Jeroboam was practicing. This is the same principle that you have in the New Testament. We have several places in the Word of God that tell us, "Do not follow a course of action that condones negative volition on the part of other people when you run into it." This is a sin that Christians are very frequently guilty of. Christians know they are dealing with people who are negative to the Word of God and who have rejected the Word of God, perhaps in the very place that they are and where they are accepting the Word of God. People have gone out in negative rebellion against that Word, and yet they will socialize with them. Yet, they will carry on camaraderie relationships with them. They will not withdraw themselves and refuse to do that which commends and condones a negative response.

The Bible and the New Testament is very clear that that is condemned by God. And it was condemned in the Old Testament. And the man of God here beautifully exemplified it when he said, "I can't do it. If I go home and sit down to eat with you, Jeroboam, do you know what that's going to imply? That is going to apply to all these people that you are not that bad, Jeroboam. It will imply that what you are doing in this false worship is really not all that bad. It will imply that you are getting to heaven and to the true Jehovah just like we are down in Jerusalem, and we're all going up the mountain by different routes to the top, and all that baloney."

Do you understand? Association in social relationships with people who have rejected the Word of God means that you are condoning what they are doing, even if you yourself say, "I don't hold your viewpoint. I don't agree with your rejection."

It was reported to me this morning that the Kathryn Kuhlman television program featured Hal Lindsey as the guest, and that Hal Lindsey was talking about the occult world. Katherine Kuhlman, in her own inimitable way, was aghast at every word as he related it. Here is the issue that we're talking about. Kathryn Kuhlman is a medium who's practicing white magic. And Lindsey knows a great deal about the occult. Isn't it fantastic that the man who is viewed as "Mr. Occult" himself nowadays in knowing about these things is on a program of a woman who is a prime practitioner in deluded sincerity of the occult? And what happened to Kathryn Kuhlman and all the other charismatics? They were dignified by the presence of Lindsey as not being instruments of Satan and as not practicing white magic--that the healings that are taking place in Kathryn's meetings are of the Lord Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit.

That's what people who saw the program this morning must conclude. There is no way they could conclude anything else by Mr. Lindsey's presence, who is obviously an antagonist of the devil and a person who understands the workings of the occult. He would not be on a program that was commending and promoting the occult, would he? But he was. That's what the Word of God means, and that's what this man of God was trying to demonstrate: "If you are in error according to doctrine, then I do not do anything that gives in any way the idea that I condone what you do." Socializing is the biggest way to condone false doctrine.

So, 1 Corinthians 5:11 says, "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 idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a one, no not to eat.

2 Thessalonians 3:6: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that you withdraw yourselves from every brother that walks disorderly and not after the tradition which he received of us." The tradition which he received of us is Bible doctrine as delivered by the apostolic group. We are to withdraw ourselves from those who do not conform (who are not positive) toward doctrine.

2 Thessalonians 3:14: "If any man obey not our Word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed." We find people who are negative to the Word, and what do we do? We invite them over for dinner. We invite them over for a party. We invite them to a social event. You better wake up to what the Word of God says because every time you've done that, you have hurt yourself, and a little bit of eternal reward has slipped through your fingers, and that's a very expensive price to pay.

One more: 2 John 10: "If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house. Neither bid him Godspeed. For he that bids him Godspeed is partaker of his evil deeds."

The other day, two of the Jehovah's Witnesses came to our door. Mrs. Danish spoke to the two ladies for a little bit. And Mrs. Danish said as they left, "Well I wish I could bid you Godspeed. However, because of the false doctrine that you believe and which you are promoting, I cannot." That's what the Word of God is talking about. We do not condone that which is evil. You are your own priest. I would suggest that you think through what the Word of God says concerning people who go out negative toward the Word of God in some aspect of teacher, teaching, or technique. Don't let yourself be trapped by other believers who do not understand this truth, and who therefore condone negative doctrine by what they do, and perhaps rope you into their error and to their own discipline.

Well the man of God declares to the king that he'll have none of it. So, verse 10 says, "So he went another way, and returned not the way that he came to Bethel." He moved on his way. Beginning at verse 11, the story takes a tragic turn. This man of God has been right on the beam every step of the way. For every temptation, he has responded with sound doctrine. Suddenly, beginning at verse 11, this very man goes negative to the Word of God. He's a preacher. Why does he go negative? I want you to notice it is because of another preacher's advice. It is because of another preacher's thinking that causes him to go negative, and the results are disastrous. Instead of returning to Jerusalem with God's great blessing; with rejoicing in the Lord's welcome; and, the welcoming of his associates because of the job that he performed and standing forth and delivering God's viewpoint, he never gets back to Jerusalem alive.

Verse 11: "Now there dwelt an old prophet in Bethel, and his sons came and told him all the works that the man of God had done that day in Bethel, and the words which he had spoken unto the king. Them they told also to their father." The old prophet living in Bethel has some sons. The sons have been witnesses to this confrontation between the king and the younger man of God. They rush home and tell their father what had happened. I want to be sure that you understand at this point that this older prophet is not a false prophet. This is a genuine true preacher. He too is a man of God. The older prophet sends his sons to get his transportation ready. He goes chasing after the younger prophet.

Verse 12: "And their father said unto them, 'What way did he go?' For his sons had seen what way the man of God went who came from Judah, and he said unto his sons, 'Saddle me the ass.' So they saddled him the ass, and he rode on it and went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak. He said unto him, 'Are you the man of God who came from Judah?' He said, 'I am.' Then he said unto him, 'Come home with me and eat bread.'"

Here is one preacher inviting another preacher to dinner. And the man of God said, "Negative. I have a doctrinal direction from Jehovah Elohim, and I cannot eat with you and I cannot drink with you in this place." In this place, indicated, "I can't even have a picnic with you under this tree." Again, I want to remind you that by this time the man was probably hungry. He was very tired, and this hospitality would have been quite welcomed. This refreshment before the long journey back to Jerusalem would have indeed been a welcomed refreshing interlude for him in this expedition that he was on. So, he refused on all specifics.

Verse 16: "He said, 'I may not return with you nor go in with you. Neither will I eat bread nor drink water with you in this place, for it was said to me by the Word of the Lord (Bible doctrine), you shall eat no bread nor drink water there nor turn again to go by the way that you came.'" He is acting on the Word of the Lord. Emotionally, he would have enjoyed this experience of hospitality, but his emotions are governed by doctrine. Therefore, what he felt was controlled by the Word. So, what he expressed in his feelings was correct with the mind of God. Emotions are always to be controlled by the mind which is oriented to doctrine, so that the experience can be evaluated in the light of the mind of Christ, which you can only get through the Word of God.

So, he rejects the offer. At this point, the older prophet proceeds to deceive the younger prophet. Verse 18: "He said to him, 'I am a prophet also as you are. (We are both in the professional ministry.) And an angel spoke unto me by the Word of the Lord, saying bring him back with you into your house that he may eat bread and drink water.' But he lied unto him."

For some reason, the older prophet tells the younger prophet that he has new orders for him. The older prophet said, "I've just had an experience. An angel appeared to me, and he told me to bring you back and to feed you before you go on your way." The old prophet is a genuine prophet. He is lying at this point to the younger prophet. He may be doing it deliberately. I'm not so sure that he is. I suspect that perhaps he is doing it in all sincerity. For some reason, he wants the association of this younger man. He has no doubt been impressed by the confrontation with Jeroboam. He perhaps has a little guilt feeling over the fact that he as the older prophet should have exercised that confrontation himself. He should have been standing against the king in this false worship. But whatever the reason was, he wanted an association with this younger man, and perhaps he did have a vision. I don't think we can discount the fact that an angel appeared and gave him this instruction. This is because 2 Corinthians 11 gives us the principle on which that works.

2 Corinthians 11:13 says, "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore, it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as ministers of righteousness whose end shall be according to their works." So, the older prophet may indeed have had a vision from an angel, but not an angel of light. He thought it was an angel of light because obviously this man is disoriented to doctrine. Otherwise, he would have been bucking the king. So he may have come in all sincerity and said, "I've had this vision. God has told me this, and I have new orders for you."

The man of God has to make a decision. He has to look at this older prophet, another professional in the business with him, and say, "You are delivering to me a message. On the basis of your testimony, I either have to accept that God has given me some new orders through you, or else I have to stick to the doctrine that I know that I got from the Word of the Lord. I have to judge your experience of having had a vision of an angel with a message over against what the Word of God told me, and I have to make my decision now.

He should have gone with doctrine. He should have gone with what the Word of the Lord had clearly declared to him. Until God Himself countered that Word, he should not have changed it. But, sadly enough, verse 19 says, "So he went back with him, and did eat bread in his house, and drank water. He returns to Bethel with the older prophet. The younger man of God is acting in full sincerity with all good intentions of serving the Lord. Undoubtedly, as he moved along on that road back home, he was rejoicing with the wonderful marvelous testimony that God had enabled him to make to this king which was leading people into white magic worship.

The problem was that he believed false doctrine, and that's the issue of life that I'm trying to get across to you. Anybody who belittles doctrine and comes at you with emotion and experience proof is an older false prophet. And I mean a prophet--a born again person. I am not suggesting that the people like Oral Roberts and Kathryn Kuhlman are not born again people. But they are identical in their roles to this older prophet. They have been deluded by emotion, and by their experience, so that they have slipped off into mediumship, and people are destroyed through it.

The younger man was violating the principle of Galatians 1:8-9 that says, "But though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel to you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so say I now. If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that you have received, let him be accursed." Paul said, "Even if *I* were to come along and give you some other gospel, let alone an angel from heaven, and tell you there's a different way to get to heaven, may God bring a curse down upon us, for we would be false. You have heard the true gospel. Let no one dissuade you from it."

The younger prophet had heard the true Word of God. None should have dissuaded him from it. Well, beginning at verse 20, we have the discipline of God upon his younger prophet: "And it came to pass as they sat at the table that the Word of the Lord came unto the prophet who brought him back." Notice God is going to speak through the older prophet to the younger prophet. Isn't that a kick in the head? God is going to speak to the younger prophet who has gone negative, and he's going to deliver a message through the older prophet who was instrumental in causing him to go negative. I cannot stress enough to you that this older prophet was a true prophet. He was a communicator of God's viewpoint.

Verse 21: "And he cried into the man of God who came from Judah saying, 'Thus says the Lord, for as much as you have disobeyed the mouth of the Lord and have not kept the commandment which the Lord your God commanded you, but you came back and have eaten bread and drunk water in the place of which the Lord did say to you, eat no bread, drink no water, your carcass shall not come unto the sepulchre of your Fathers.'"

The older prophet declares to the man of God that he will not return to Judah. He declares to him, in other words, that he will not come to the sepulchre of his fathers means he's going to die before he gets back. The misconception of the older prophet had been accepted by the man of God. The misconceptions of the older prophet bore a certain penalty if you believed it. The younger prophet is now going to experience that penalty. The truth which the older prophet declared also bears a blessing. The truth that is believed brings blessing. The falsehood that is believed from the same prophet brings discipline.

Now I want you to notice that, because it is true that the charismatic leaders deliver truth as well as that which is false. They deliver that which is truth which brings blessing. You realize that if the devil himself were to preach the gospel to somebody, that that person could take that information and believe it and be saved. The truth has nothing to do with the communicator. The communicator is absolutely nothing. There is no communicator anywhere on any face, including the ministry, which is good. Only what God produces through His Word has any merit and value. That's all to His credit.

So, the communicator does not affect the genuineness of doctrine. So, here you have a situation where you have opinions of the communicator which led to the destruction of the younger man, and now he is not delivering opinions. He is delivering true doctrine. The trouble is that Satan takes what is false and it gives him a chance to neutralize the Word of God that is true. That's the problem. Satan is able to take the person who gives a false communication, and he is thereby able to neutralize all the true communication that that individual gives in the lives of people. There is nothing more destructive upon the lives of believers today than the cancerous growth worldwide of the charismatic movement simply because preachers are not sounding off and saying, "Look. Doctrine condemns this on every point." The Christians who are bucking that and resisting it have not themselves searched into doctrine and said, "Well, let me see. Does the Word of God clearly declare what tongues were like so that I can tell whether that's what's happening today? Does it declare that it is to cease so I can tell whether it could possibly be here or not?"

So, verse 23 says, "And it came to pass after he had eaten bread and after he had drunk that he saddled for him the ass (that is for the prophet) whom he had brought back. The prophet gets on his way. Verse 24 says, "And when he was gone, a lion met him by the way and slew him, and his carcass was cast in the way, and the ass stood by it. The lion also stood by the carcass." The discipline upon the man of God was that he was killed by a lion on the road. But that this was not an ordinary accident of a lion who finds a traveler along the road, was indicated to us by the fact that the lion did not eat the man, and secondly, by the fact that it did not attack the donkey. Instead, the donkey, the lion, and the corpse all stayed there together on the road.

Verse 25: "And, behold, men passed by and saw the carcass cast in the way, and the lion standing by the carcass. And they came and told it in the city where the old prophet dwelt. And when the prophet who brought him back from the way heard of it, he said, "It is the man of God who was disobedient unto the Word of God." Do you see that? This true prophet knows that he was disobedient, and he was the reason this man was disobedient. That is rough. It is a man of God who was disobedient unto the Word of God. "Therefore, the Lord has delivered him unto the lion which has torn him and slain him according to the Word of the Lord which he spoke unto him.

"And he spoke to his son saying, 'Saddle me the ass,' and they saddled the ass. And he went and found his carcass cast in the way, and the ass and the lion standing by the carcass. The lion had not eaten the carcass nor torn the ass. And the prophet took up the carcass of the man of God, laid it upon the ass, and brought it back. And the old prophet came to the city to mourn and to bury him. And he laid his carcass in his own grave, and they mourned over him saying, 'Alas, my brother.' And it came to pass after he buried him that he spoke to his son saying, 'When I am dead, then bury me in a sepulchre in which the man of God is buried. Lay my bones beside his bones, for the saying which he cried by the Word of the Lord against the altar in Bethel, and against all the houses of the high places which are in the cities of Samaria shall surely come to pass.'"

The old prophet recognizes what had happened to the younger prophet. He brings them back in great respect knowing that he was a prophet, a communicator of true doctrine. He puts him into his own grave, and then he mourns over him. Fat comfort that. Had he not deceived this younger man, he'd be alive now. So he puts him in his own grave site. He tells his sons that when he dies, they should bury him on top of the man of God. Of course, we've already read in 2 Kings 23:15-20 how, indeed, that was exactly what was done.

Also the older prophet said, "Everything this young man said is going to come to pass against this false worship system that Jeroboam had set up." Here was a man who was a right communicator of the Word of God. He was dissuaded from his message and from his views by other communicators and by reasonable appeals. This is just like a preacher today can have pressures put upon him when people say, "I don't want you to say those things publicly. I don't want you to sound those warnings about these people who are practicing white magic and deceiving believers, because they're so sincere, and we should be more loving. Besides I know someone who does it, and it makes me nervous to think that that's what he's in.

Well, you would think that Jeroboam, after all this would, have learned his lesson. Verses 33-34 indicate that he did not. Well, Jeroboam sealed the doom of his own posterity and his own royal line by his negative rejection.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1973

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