***Lights in the World - PH42-02

Advanced Bible Doctrine - Philippians 2:14-15***

Please turn with me in your Bibles to Exodus 20 as we look at verses 4-6. We are studying Philippians 2:14-16 via Exodus 20:4-6. This is another increment in our series of studies on advanced Bible doctrines through the book of Philippians.

We have found in our studies thus far of the Ten Commandments that nations survive as free people because God keeps them in existence. We have only to look at the Jewish people to see how they have been preserved by God for centuries in spite of the most diabolical efforts to destroy them and to exterminate them. We see that world powers have come and have gone. They have been preserved for a while and then they have been removed. The trail of history is littered with nations which once existed and which now are no longer in existence. All of this is because God makes nations and He removes nations.

It is very important to recognize that God is sovereign. While Satan is the God of this age, and while he has controls over nations, his controls are within the limitations of the sovereignty of God. Any nation which has been obedient to God's moral outlook and to the biblical principles of life that the Bible lays out for us is a nation which has been both preserved and blessed by God.

Every time the United States Supreme Court goes into official session, the court crier stands up and he sounds forth, before the court begins, the words, "God save the United States and this honorable court." This is an expression indicating that even our government does, as it should, recognize that its very existence and continuance is dependent upon the favor; the care; the love; the sympathy; and, the approval of God.

Over 200 years ago, the delegates from the now united 13 colonies, following the war for independence, gathered to rewrite a government for those colonies, as they were seeking to write the constitution under which we operate today. They found a great deal of conflict. They found a great deal of difference of opinion, and they found themselves unable to resolve the fears that those men had from experience and from history. Remember that they were an extremely educated lot of men, and they knew the tyranny of governmental powers. So they were trying to find a system of government where government could do nothing except certain specified things that they laid out for them. However, they were not able to get an agreement.

Finally, the senior statesman of the group, Benjamin Franklin, stood up and made a very astute observation. I'd like to quote it for you. Dr. Franklin said, "How has it happened, sir, that we have not hitherto once thought of humbly praying to the Father of lights to illuminate our understandings? I have lived, sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth: that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid? We have been assured, sir, in the sacred writings, that except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. I firmly believe this. And I also believe that without His recurring aid, we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel."

Well, history tells us that the delegates responded to Dr. Franklin's advice. They did pause for prayer, and that from that moment on, the constitutional convention began to click. Things began to fall together, and in 17 weeks' time, these men invented the most fabulous and the most fantastic nation that has ever existed on the face of the earth.

The third verse of our national anthem recognizes the fact that God is the preserver of nations. That third verse says, "O! Thus be it ever, when free men shall stand between their loved homes and the war's desolation! Blest with victory and peace, may the heaven rescued land praise the Power that hath made and preserved us a nation. Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just, and this be our motto: 'In God is our trust.'"

The survival of societies is governed by their conformity to the character of God. That is a matter of ethics. That's why we're studying the Ten Commandments. This study clarifies for us the essence of God in its day-by-day expression, upon which our survival as a nation and our personal freedom and happiness is based. Freedom and divine preservation is a matter of morality. The Ten Commandments summarize God's divine viewpoint on the matters of right and wrong. This is applicable to all of humanity. It is the key to freedom and to national survival. For this reason, our nation is in very grave trouble. This is because the principles of morality are everywhere violated, and it is now accepted that violation is justified.

We have studied thus far the first of these principles. The first commandment forbids our having any other God except the only and true God, Jehovah Elohim. This is the case because there is nothing beyond Jehovah Elohim. All the gods beyond him are human inventions. Therefore, our soul is to have no other focus of love and no other focus of devotion except this true God. Idolatry, we saw, had many expressions today: gods which hold our supreme devotion.

**The Second Commandment**

We will now look at the second commandment in Exodus 20:4: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any carved image or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth." This commandment declares to us that not only as the first said: will we not worship any other God except Jehovah Elohim (any false god). It also declares to us that we shall not make any objects to assist us in our worship. There shall be no images of any kind made which we shall include in the process of seeking to worship Jehovah Elohim.

The words "Thou shalt not make" is the Hebrew word "asah." "Asah" is an interesting word because it means to make something out of existing materials. It is to make something out of something which is already in existence. Idols are not supernaturally brought into existence, but they are constructed by people out of natural materials which already exist. They are not in the tradition and in the doctrinal truth of the living and true God who had no beginning and who had no end. It is in the Hebrew "Qal" stem. The "Qal" stand is a simple statement of fact. It is an active voice expression. It is in the imperfect which means that it is referring to the future, a continuing thing, which is here, negatively, not to be done at any time in the future. So it adds the little absolute negative, the Hebrew word "lo" which means "on no occasion in the future" are you to create some kind of image for worship.

The nature of the images is specifically spelled out as being carved images. The Hebrew word is "pesel." "Pesel" comes from another Hebrew word, the verb "pasal." "Pasal" means to carve wood or to hew stone. This is used in Judges 17:3 and the verses which follow about an idol which was carved out and which was an idol representing the true God, Jehovah. It is used of the figures of heathen deities in 2 Kings 21:7. All of these are idols which have been carved out or hewn out of stone, made out of something which already exists.

Furthermore, it spells out in this commandment that the nature of these idols is not to be in the form of any likeness. The word "likeness" is used because this is what human beings do when they make an idol. They have to imagine some form for the god. So the usual thing is to make it in a likeness. The word "likeness" is "temunah." "Temunah" simply means something that man builds from something he sees in nature. We have this described in Deuteronomy 4:12-15: "And the Lord spoke unto you out of the midst of the fire. You heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude. Only he heard a voice." They heard the voice of God, but they never saw God in any form. Therefore, if they are going to make an idol, how will they represent Him? There is no way. There is no information by which to create an image of God.

Verse 15 says, "Take you, therefore, good heed unto yourselves; for you saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spoke to you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire." Deuteronomy 4:15 shows that this prohibition refers to a construction of anything that we have seen in the world of nature, and saying, "This is God." So don't therefore try to create a god in the likeness of anything.

Deuteronomy 4:14: "Lest you corrupt yourselves, and make you a carved image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female, the likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flies in the air, the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the waters beneath the earth. And lest you lift up your eyes unto heaven, and when you see the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven, should be driven to worship them, and serve them, which the Lord your God has divided unto all nations under the whole heaven."

All of these things that are described here from the world of nature; in the animal life; and, in outer space have, at one time or another, been used by human beings as representatives of God. This is what this commandment is telling us that we are not to do. Violation of this commandment will result in the loss of freedom.

In Deuteronomy 4:23-28, this is clearly declared to the Jewish people that their freedom is dependent on obedience to this principle: Moses says, "Take heed unto yourselves, lest you forget the covenant of the Lord your God which He made with you, and make you a carved image, or the likeness of anything which the Lord thy God has forbidden you. For the Lord your God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God. When you shall beget children and children's children, you shall have remained long in the land, and shall corrupt yourselves, and make a carved image or the likeness of anything, and shall do evil in the sight of the Lord your God to provoke Him to anger. I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that you shall soon utterly perish (notice: soon utterly perish) from off the land where unto you go over the Jordan to possess it. You shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed."

Moses said: "The time will come when children will be born and their children will be born. You will have generations which have moved down from these dramatic times in which we have lived of coming from slavery into Egypt; crossing the Red Sea; and, now you are about to cross the Jordan. I'm telling you," Moses said, "that you will go into the land and your descendants will return to idolatry. They will put up images again, and they will start worshiping before images. When that happens, you will be utterly destroyed from off the land. You will lose your freedom, and you will lose the possession of your country."

Verse 27: "And the Lord shall scatter you among the nations, and you shall be left few in number among the nations where the Lord shall leave you. And there you shall serve gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor here, nor eat, nor smell." What a fantastic, horrible judgment upon these people because they could not obey this commandment to resist the temptation to put up an image. The Jews were constantly plagued with this.

As you know, Moses found the Jews doing this very thing when he came down off of the mountain with this very code of morality. He found that they had decided that he wasn't going to return, so they had talked his brother Aaron into making the golden calf, and they gave the brother the gold. He did exactly what this verse says not to do. He carved out this image. Then as if that wasn't bad enough, please remember that as you read this incident in Exodus 32:1-8, that when they brought the calf to him, he said, "This is Jehovah." He wasn't telling them, "Here is some false God that we have seen worshipped in Egypt." He said, "This calf is a representation of Jehovah, our God. He used even the most sacred name.

Exodus 32:4-5: "And he (that is, Aaron) received them at their hand (that is, the gold), and fashioned it with an engraving tool, after he had made it a melted calf. They said, 'These are your gods (and that's the Hebrew word Elohim), O, Israel, which brought you up out of the land of Egypt.'" Then verse 5: "When Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it. Aaron made proclamation and said, 'Tomorrow is a feast of the Lord.'" Notice in your English Bibles, it's LORD with all capital letters. This is showing you that the Hebrew is the word "Jehovah," the supreme name of God. And Aaron says, "Here are our gods. Tomorrow is a feast day in honor of this God Jehovah." He called the golden calf Jehovah.

Well, God responded with thunderous wrath against these people, as you can read in Exodus 32:7-10. He brought immediate judgment upon them. As a matter of fact, this thing that they did of calling this calf by His name, His sacred name of Jehovah, was so blasphemous that God was going to go through, and he was going to destroy every Jew. He was going to wipe out the whole bunch of them. It was only Moses yelling and screaming and shouting, "Dear God, no, no, don't do this. What will the Egyptians think? What will the nations think? They've heard what you do. Don't do this." God said, "I'm getting rid of them. Moses, you and I are going to start again, and I'm going to make a people out of you." So if you think that this is a small and light thing, just remember that incident. Had it not been for the intercession of Moses appealing to God on His promises of what He had promised to do for His people, He would have rubbed every one of them out of existence for having created this image and then worshipped before it.

You might breathe a sigh of relief and say, "I'm glad I don't have anything I worship." How about that fancy new car you just bought. Do you ever go down the street and see somebody with a brand new car? That sticker on the side, you know, showing what all the stuff costs is not even torn out. It has a dealer's tag on it. They're driving along really slow. They turn around, and they don't want to do anything to it. I always have a feeling when I see that: I want to come up real close and put a scratch on the right rear fender--not bad--just enough to just scratch it a little bit so that they can enjoy their car now. But until they can bang it up a little bit, they can't drive it down with ease and relaxed because it has become a god, and they must take care of their god. We have many idols that we treat in just that way. Then God has a way of coming along and knocking your idols to pieces.

I remember I was surprised one time when I had a seminary student who borrowed my car to make a trip to the east. He decided to drive late. He fell asleep at the wheel. In fact, it was early morning, and he had been driving all night, and he was really tired. I had a new car, and he fell asleep at the wheel. He didn't wake up until he found himself off the road and he'd hit a rock in the ground. When he heard that rock on the bottom of the car, he woke up and found himself there driving off on the median.

Well, fortunately, he hadn't plowed into anything. So he woke up. He had ripped the gas tank open, which made it harder to travel after that. And there was damage to a couple of other things. So he got himself towed in and got it repaired. He came back and he told me about it. He said, "We got the tank replaced." I said, "OK, we'll check on the insurance, and it will probably cover it." Later, he said, "I was just amazed the way you took that. You just said, 'Yeah. OK. You got the tank replaced? OK'" I thought afterwards, "I wonder what he thought I was going to do. Was I going to tell him, 'I just loved that old gas tank? I just feel terrible that you slashed it into two pieces.'"

This is the God that we have. If we aren't careful, there's something that's just so precious and wonderful to us, and we are worshiping that thing. Why? Because it is the focus of our attention; of our love; and, of our devotion. When these people did it, God was ready to destroy them for it. So slavery begins with negative opposition to the Word of God. And that's what these people were. They were soul slaves. They were slaves in their souls to these gods. Consequently, they were slaves in their actions.

Later on, in their history, as you know, they again became slaves to false gods. Indeed, what Moses told that was going to happen to them did happen. They were taken out of their land, and to this day, they are scattered among the nations of the earth because they made themselves images of gods to worship.

What is it that's excluded? Any kind of an object that you use as a means to worship is forbidden in the Word of God. I care not whether it is a crucifix or whether it is a Christ upon a cross that you pray to. Don't give me this stuff, as Roman Catholics like to do, that because they bow down and cross themselves and burn candles in front of images of the saints, or images of Christ on a cross, that they're not worshiping that Christ on the cross. For the average person, and the more primitive the society, the more this is true: that image that he sees on the cross is what he envisions as God. When he looks to that saint, and he may use the word "veneration," his veneration is, in practical effect, a worship of that idol God.

Now, as you know, the heathen obviously did this for centuries. Then when Constantine, the Roman emperor, took over the Roman Empire and made Christianity the Department of Religion, it was the easiest thing in the world for the heathen to simply bring their gods with them that they'd always worshipped. They only had to do one thing. They had to quit calling these guys by their old names. They no longer could call it Venus. They had to call it Mary. They could no longer call the god Tammuz. They had to call it Jesus Christ. They had to name all of their different gods with the names of biblical characters. They had to call them by different names entirely. And then they could go right on doing like they'd always done.

This is what this commandment says: if you do this, you will destroy yourself as a nation. The Roman Empire did this when it became dominated by Christianity--the perverted Babylonian Christianity of Roman Catholicism--and the Roman Empire went out of existence. The things that are forbidden here are the worship of the sun; the moon; the stars; the birds; anything in the heavens; things on the earth; animals; trees; mountains; insects; humans; snakes; and, the things that are in the waters of the areas of the earth--the marine life. None of these are to be objects for worship.

Remember the Philistines, the arch enemies of the Jews, who lived up there along the Mediterranean coast. They worshipped the god Dagon, who was in the form of a fish. He was the fish God. And Dagon the fish god had come down as an image on the ring of the pope--the ring that the princes of the church kneel for, and they kiss this ring on the pope's hand. It has the image of the fish God. It's descended from the fish god Dagon. All of these are the things that this commandment says that you will not do as a means; as an avenue; or, as a vehicle for worship. There is no use of images in worship.

In Exodus 20:5, Moses says, "Thou shalt not bow down yourself to them nor serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me." "Thou shalt not bow down" is the Hebrew word "shachah." "Shachah" means simply to bow yourself down, to prostrate yourself, to the ground in an act of worship. It's to honor somebody; to pray to a deity; or, to submit yourself.

In the Hebrew, it is in what is called the "hiphil" stem. That is an intensive reflexive. That means it's a strong word, and it is reflexive. That is, this is something that you will not do to yourself. This is a strong prohibition of something that you will not do to yourself. Any time the "hiphil" is used, it means that God is saying specifically that you won't do this to yourself. You will not bow down to any kind of an object or an image for worship. It is imperfect which means anytime in the future. It forbids an act of worship before any idol image representing God, and that includes Christ on the cross, or any images of that nature.

"Thou shalt not bow down yourself under any condition to them (the images from nature which represent God) nor serve them. The Hebrew word for "serve them" is "abath." (The letter "b" in Hebrew is pronounced as a "v." This is in the "hophal" stem. The "hophal" is causative, and it is passive. This is an expression of somebody causing you to do this. You will not passively be caused by someone to do this sort of thing. It means "to worship by means of sacrifices and ceremonies," and you will not be made to worship these gods by someone else or by the persuasion of others.

You may sometimes find yourself in a church service where you are asked to worship God in some form such that you are going to passively go along with something that is very loathsome and very insulting and very degrading to you as a Christian in the form of an expression of worship. There are times when maybe you won't go along with it. Church services are famous for asking people to do something that is not honoring to the Lord. This verse is talking about that kind of thing--that you should just be carried along by something that is going on around you. It means passively going along with human viewpoint that worships and honors idols. It is imperfect again which means you are never to do this in the future.

The issue here is images which are constructed for the purpose of worship. These do not forbid objects of art, statues, pictures, and engravings. In times past, that's where this commandment led people. It led them to be antagonistic to any forms of art; the making of statues; or, the drawing of pictures. There were times in history where Christianity dominated certain places with its perverted legalistic views, and this commandment was used to destroy many valuable expressions and works of art. This is not what is meant by this.

We know this from the fact that in the worship ceremonies of the Jewish people, which God directed them to do, the high priests and the priests wore garments which carried on them pictures of pomegranates (Exodus 28:33-34, Exodus 39,24). Also, we know that the mercy seat was the most sacred object in the temple and in the tabernacle. It was the place from which God communed with the high priest. The mercy seat had a statue of an angel at each end of this box. The mercy seat was simply a platform (a lid) of a box called the Ark of the Covenant. At each end was a carved cherubim angel with their wings outstretched, looking down upon the lid of the mercy seat, and each facing each other from each end of the box on the lid. This again indicates that there is nothing wrong with making statues. Exodus 25:18-22 and Exodus 37:7 describe the cherubim on the mercy seat. What this is referring to is taking those cherubim and using them as objects of worship.

**Relics**

There came a time in the Jewish history when the Jews were so in love with idol worship that maybe that's why God caused these sacred objects to be lost and to be destroyed in time, so that they did not have them so they could not use them as relics. That's the next thing Satan did under Roman Catholicism. He created the idea of relics that there were sacred objects.

When I was a boy, somebody gave me a crucifix. I opened the back and there was a little chunk of dirt at the bottom of the cross and it was reddish in color. There was a little label in there that said, "This dirt contains the blood of Christ from the cross." It was fantastic. I was the only kid in Chicago, I thought, that had a cross that had part of the dirt with the blood of Christ dripped into it. There it set, just as big as life. Some faithful Catholic had bought this at a Catholic store, and somehow I had gotten hold of it.

That's the kind of thing that this is talking about: using relics for worship. If you had a crucifix that had the blood of Christ in it, certainly that would give you access to God like anything, wouldn't it? This is the type of superstitious, delusion, and madness that comes upon us when we violate this second commandment.

The Old Testament tabernacle, it is clear, was very richly ornamented. This forbids helps to worship as a means of approaching God. God is to be worshipped, John 4:24 says, "In spirit and in truth." Jehovah Elohim does not reveal himself in visible form (John 1:18).

You might say, "Well, what's the real danger of this worship of idols?" That's the thing that concerns us. Why is God so adamant about this that He was ready to destroy all the Israelites that He had brought out of Egypt? Why would He react so strongly to the worship of a dumb idol? God makes it very clear that there's nothing to an idol. It's just a piece of wood. It's just a piece of metal. It's meaningless. There's nothing to it. Why get so excited over it?

**Demons**

Well, it is because you must remember that an idol made by a person, while it is not anything in itself (as 1 Corinthians 8:4 tells us), an idol is the form of access to demon worship. That is the issue. Behind every idol, there is a demon god. When you come to the idol, when the people of the Orient and of Africa and every place in the earth come to their idols and perform their acts of worship and expressions of respect before that idol, they are worshiping the demon who has taken that idol as his representative.

In 1 Corinthians 8:4, Paul says. "As concerning, therefore, the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other God but one."

But notice that in 1 Corinthians 10:19, Paul says, "What say I then? That the idol is anything, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is anything?" The question here was about eating meat that was now at the butcher shop in downtown Corinth, which once had lay as a sacrifice (an offering) on an altar of an idol god. There was nothing wrong with the meat, but it had once been used for this purpose.

Paul says in verse 20, "But I say that these things which the gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God, and I would not that you should have fellowship with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot be partaker of the Lord's table and at the table of demons." Satan has a communion table. Every idol is his communion table. Any act of sacrifice to an idol is an act of communion with a demon god. Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He? A lot of Jews who had just come into freedom from Egypt found that they were not stronger than God, and that it is a very dangerous thing to provoke a God who is jealous. That is, a God who esteems His own, and will not abide by any other intruder into their affections. So what Paul is saying here is that these gods, these idols, represent demon gods.

The Septuagint was the translation of the Old Testament Hebrew into Greek. It is represented by these Roman letters LXX for 70. There were purportedly 70 translators who worked on it. The Septuagint translators recognized the relationship between idols and demons. The Hebrew word for idols is "elilim." When they came to this Hebrew word in Psalm 96:5, they were going to translate this into Greek. When they came to this word for "idols," the word that they used to translate it into Greek was "diamonia." "Diamonia" stands for "demon." In other words, when they came to the Hebrew word for "idols," they recognized that they could translate it by the word "demon." This is because this is what people were worshiping when they worshipped an idol.

They were worshiping a demon. Demons are behind every idol worship. Natural gods are all demon gods. So when you worship an idol, while the idol in itself is nothing, the worship is very significant because behind that idol is a very important something. That is one of Satan's demon angels. This is part of the angelic warfare. This is part of the nature of the angelic conflict, so idol worship is demon worship. It is not an irrational act, as it might appear to us, to worship an idol, because people do receive benefits. The demons come to work. The demons prosper. The demons have great power to answer the prayers of its worshipers, and they do.

The judgment of the first born upon Egypt was a blow against the demon gods of Egypt, as well as the families themselves (Numbers 33:4). It was to demonstrate how weak, ineffective, and incapable these gods were. Who was it that God was showing was incapable of peace? A piece of word? Some metal that had been formed into a god? No. God was showing them that the demons behind those idols that those idols represented were not capable of stopping the death angel from moving through Egypt that night. So it was a blow against these demon gods. They were helpless before Jehovah Elohim. Leviticus 17:4 has the Hebrew word "sair" which means "hairy ones." They are also gods. Here again, the Septuagint translators used the Greek word for "demon" ("diamonia") in order to describe the "sair," or "the hairy ones"--these who are half gods and half men, and who represent the depth of unrestrained sexual perversion. Gods of mythology are all gods who express demon worship, as were the "sair."

So these demon spirits lead the idol worshipers into a high pitch of emotional worship: sex orgies; child burning, as to bail; and, self-mutilation. These idols give communications. They were referred to in the ancient world as the oracles. We read of this in Zachariah 10:2. They are the communications which come from the demon gods.

There is going to be one great final expression of idolatry, of course, in the world, as you know. That is to come. That will be after we have been removed from this earth as believers, and the tribulation phase of the dispensation of the Jews begins. After the first three-and-a-half years in the middle of that seven-year period, the false prophet will set up the great final idol God of all times. It will be an image of the antichrist. The antichrist who, because of the destruction of Russia at the middle of the tribulation period, has become the world ruler. So Western Europe dominates the whole known earth. All nations are under the antichrist's control. Then it will seem fitting that he should place himself as the god, and we are right back again to the ancient Roman system, where the emperor was viewed as deity. To be a patriotic Roman was to worship the image of the emperor.

In Revelation 13:14-15, we read, "And deceives them that dwell on earth (that is, the false prophet) by means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast, saying to them that dwell on the earth that they should make an image to the beast that had the wound by a sword and did live. He has power to give life (that is, to give breath) under the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed."

This will be the final violation of this second commandment. Of course, Satan is constantly trying to get people to violate this, the second commandment. When man invents his own approach to God, he ends up by expressing the lusts of his old sin nature and establishing himself as God. That's why the worship of idol gods is really a worship of man himself. That's why it is such a perverted practice in full operation. Idol gods degrade humanity. Romans 1:18-25 will give you some very shocking historical information on how man became degraded when he began worshiping idol gods.

As you know, the kindness of the American people has sent billions of dollars' worth of grain to India. You may also know that the Indians worship rats as sacred, as well as cows. Therefore, there are in India millions of rats, and they cannot be killed because they are viewed as deity. In violation of this second commandment, they have turned themselves into animals. I read recently where the amount of grain that the United States sends to India for the starving Indians, which are dying like flies: that grain equals the amount that has been calculated that the rats eat around the countryside. There is a temple in India to the rats, and the rats have this beautiful temple that they run in. And American grain is put in those temples in order to feed their gods.

Idolatry debases a human being till it is inconceivable what he would do. It is the result of emotions dominating the soul rather than the mentality being governed by God's divine viewpoint. God has designed our minds to control our souls, not our emotions to dominate so that we become attached to idols, to that kind of insanity that leads us into degradation, where we become animals ourselves, worshiping images of animals.

So I'm calling upon you to beware of those who would lead you into idolatry in our day of a subtle kind. The emotional domination of the soul is one of the key ways to do this. There are some Christians who become warm and oozy over the idea of sharing with one another. They love to go to meetings where they share their experiences with one another. Because these sharing experiences are not governed by the Word of God and by doctrine, they become emotional orgies. In a subtle way, a new god is worshipped. The god of the emotion is the god that they are bowing down to. They walk out of their church services and they walk out of their campus groups of meetings of one kind or another on college campuses and high school campuses, and they feel that they've had a wonderful time with God.

What they've had a wonderful time doing is exactly the thrill that the people of Philistia and the Jews themselves experienced when they could hear the screams of people going out of their minds under the emotional orgy of the moment. The ultimate sexual expression was to hear the screams of your infant children as they were thrown into the furnace of Moloch. That was a gratifying experience, and they all went home and felt that they'd had a wonderful meeting of worshiping their gods.

You might say, "Well, we don't go to that extreme." You will. All you need is the chance. That is because worshiping an idol that you have created, material or immaterial, is the result of emotions controlling the mentality. God says, "Grow in the knowledge and in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Then, with doctrine dominating the mind, there will be no desire to go beyond Jehovah Elohim, and to create God's, real or otherwise, for us to have an emotional jag with, rather than the deep-seated thrill and experience of knowing the real and the living God.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1973

[**Back to the Advanced Bible Doctrine (Philippians) index**](http://www.christiandataresources.com/philippiansdanish.htm)

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