

## I. Introduction

- A. "But, my preacher says..."
1. How many Bible studies have ended with those tragic words?
  2. "Yes, I know that the Bible says this, but my preacher says that it does it really mean it, or God does not really care about it - and my preacher would never lie to me!"
  3. One of the toughest challenges that we face in reaching people with the Gospel message is convincing them that the word of God is more important than the word of men:
    - a. It is more important than what the preacher says.
    - b. It is more important than what my Mom and Dad believed.
    - c. It is more important than the way we have always done it!
  4. One of the greatest problems with Christianity today is the fact that people have become intellectually lazy in their approach to God.
    - a. We would rather:
      - (1) Sit back and allow the preacher to tell us what to believe than make effort to study ourselves.
      - (2) Rest upon years of tradition than open up the Bible and challenge ourselves with God's word.
    - b. While we might offer up any number of excuses for our actions, the reality is that we have rested our faith upon men.
    - c. The problem with this approach is that men can be wrong - yes, even preachers!
- B. This morning, I hope you will open your own Bibles as we study a powerful story in **1 Kings 13** about what happens when we listen to men instead of listening to God.

## II. The True Man of God

- A. *The true man of God was bold for the truth of God.*
- <sup>1</sup> And behold, a man of God went from Judah to Bethel by the word of the LORD, and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense. <sup>2</sup> Then he cried out against the altar by the word of the LORD, and said, "O altar, altar! Thus says the LORD: 'Behold, a child, Josiah by name, shall be born to the house of David; and on you he shall sacrifice the priests of the high places who burn incense on you, and men's bones shall be burned on you.'" <sup>3</sup> And he gave a sign the same day, saying, "This is the sign which the LORD has spoken: Surely the altar shall split apart, and the ashes on it shall be poured out." (**1 Kings 13:1-3 NKJV**)
1. The situation is that God has judged the wickedness of King Jeroboam.
    - a. Historically, we need to place this event in its context.
      - (1) Rehoboam (the son of Solomon) was the king of Israel.
      - (2) Because Rehoboam rejected the laws of God, God allowed Jeroboam to lead 10 of the tribes of Israel away from Judah - splitting the kingdom.
    - b. After receiving this kingdom from the hand of God, Jeroboam immediately turns the hearts of the people to idolatry.
      - (1) Jeroboam becomes afraid that the people might choose to reunite with Judah if they are allowed to continue to worship and sacrifice in Jerusalem.
      - (2) So, he sets up two golden calves in their own temples and proclaims to the people, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt!" (**1 Kings 12:28**).
      - (3) He then:
        - (a) Made shrines for the people to worship.

- (b) Set up his own priests from the various tribes.
  - (c) Proclaimed his own feast days to rival the feasts in Jerusalem.
  - (d) He personally took a lead in making offerings on the altars to the false gods.
  - (4) Not only did Jeroboam sin by turning his own heart to idolatry, but he intentionally turned the hearts of the Israelites to idol worship as well.
2. So, God sends someone to pronounce judgement against Jeroboam.
- a. That someone is only called “the man of God.”
  - b. Notice just what the man of God does:
    - (1) He approaches King Jeroboam while he is in the very act of offering a false sacrifice.
    - (2) At the command of God, he condemns the altar that Jeroboam has made.
    - (3) He prophesies that a king from the house of David (“**Josiah by name**”) is coming who will use the altar to:
      - (a) Sacrifice the priests of the false gods.
      - (b) Burn the bones of those men who were “**holy men**” in the worship of false gods.
    - (4) Then he promises that, as a sign that these things will come true, the altar would split in half, and the ashes would pour out of it.
3. The man of God shows courage in the face of danger.
- a. He walks into the stronghold of the enemy of God.
  - b. He catches him in blatant sin against the laws of God.
  - c. Even though the enemy of God is actually the king of Israel, he openly condemns his actions.

- B. *The true man of God knew the power of God.*
- <sup>4</sup> So it came to pass when King Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, who cried out against the altar in Bethel, that he stretched out his hand from the altar, saying, “Arrest him!” Then his hand, which he stretched out toward him, withered, so that he could not pull it back to himself. <sup>5</sup> The altar also was split apart, 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. <sup>6</sup> Then the king answered and said to the man of God, “Please entreat the favor of the LORD your God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored to me.” So the man of God entreated the LORD, and the king's hand was restored to him, and became as before.
- (1 Kings 13:4-6 NKJV)
- 1. Jeroboam acts with extreme anger.
    - a. He has just been insulted.
    - b. He has been called down in front of his nation.
    - c. So, he immediately reacts by raising his hand and demanding that the man of God be arrested.
  - 2. At that moment, two things happen:
    - a. The king's hand withers up, so that he cannot pull it back.
    - b. The altar (as prophesied) splits in half - and the ashes dump out.
  - 3. Jeroboam immediately calls out to the man of God, asking him to restore his hand.
    - a. So, the man of God prays that God will restore Jeroboam's hand.
    - b. At his request, God restores Jeroboam's hand.
  - 4. What I want you to see that the man of God knew the power of God.
    - a. He saw the miracles that God was able to perform.
    - b. He knew and believed in God's power.

C. *The true man of God was able to resist temptation.*

<sup>7</sup> Then the king said to the man of God, "Come home with me and refresh yourself, and I will give you a reward." <sup>8</sup> But the man of God said to the king, "If you were to give me half your house, I would not go in with you; nor would I eat bread nor drink water in this place. <sup>9</sup> For so it was commanded me by the word of the LORD, saying, 'You shall not eat bread, nor drink water, nor return by the same way you came.'" <sup>10</sup> So he went another way and did not return by the way he came to Bethel.

(1 Kings 13:7-10 NKJV)

1. Jeroboam (the king himself) invites the man of God to come to his home and receive a reward.
2. Notice, the man of God is not phased by the king's offer.
  - a. He says, "Even if you offered to give me half of your house, I would not go into it with you."
  - b. "I would not even eat or drink in your house, because God has commanded me not do it."
3. The man of God is able to resist temptation.
  - a. He does not give in to the pressure of the king.
    - (1) He is not intimidated by the power or position of the king.
    - (2) He is not dazzled by the wealth of the king.
  - b. He does not allow the king to lure him away from the command of God with promises of a reward.
  - c. The man of God holds strong - and resists the temptation to sin against God.

III. **The False Prophet of God**

A. *The false prophet deliberately seeks to tempt the man of God.*

<sup>11</sup> Now an old prophet dwelt in Bethel, and his sons came and told him all the works that the man of God had done that day in Bethel; they also told their father the words which he had spoken to the king. <sup>12</sup> And their father said to them, "Which way did he go?" For his sons had seen which way

the man of God went who came from Judah. <sup>13</sup> Then he said to his sons, "Saddle the donkey for me." So they saddled the donkey for him; and he rode on it, <sup>14</sup> and went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak. Then he said to him, "Are you the man of God who came from Judah?" And he said, "I am." <sup>15</sup> Then he said to him, "Come home with me and eat bread." <sup>16</sup> And he said, "I cannot return with you nor go in with you; neither can I eat bread nor drink water with you in this place. <sup>17</sup> For I have been told by the word of the LORD, 'You shall not eat bread nor drink water there, nor return by going the way you came.'" (1 Kings 13:11-17 NKJV)

1. The false prophet knows that the man of God cannot come in and eat with him.
  - a. His sons have seen what has happened at the altar of Jeroboam.
    - (1) They have seen the signs.
    - (2) They have heard how the man of God refused the offer to go into the house of the king.
    - (3) They know the man of God's message - and his reasons for refusing.
  - b. So, they report all that they have seen and heard to their father - who is just called the "old prophet."
  - c. So, the false prophet knows:
    - (1) The man of God has shown signs that he is from God.
    - (2) The man of God has been forbidden to eat in the land.
2. Yet, the false prophet intentionally seeks out the man of God.
  - a. Knowing that the man of God is not allowed to come into his house, he searches for him and invites him to eat anyway.

- b. For whatever reason, the false prophet intentionally tries to make the man of God stumble in sin.
    - (1) Maybe he was jealous of the man of God.
    - (2) Maybe he just wanted to test the man of God to see if he was really from God.
    - (3) Maybe he was just mean-spirited and wanted to make the man of God stumble.
  - c. Whatever his reason, the false prophet clearly wanted to make the man of God stumble.
3. Again, notice the resolve of man of God.
- a. He once again says that he cannot eat with the man.
  - b. God has told him not too, so he refuses.

B. *The false prophet lies to the man of God to get him to stumble.*

<sup>18</sup> He said to him, "I too am a prophet as you are, and an angel spoke to me by the word of the LORD, saying, 'Bring him back with you to your house, that he may eat bread and drink water.'" (He was lying to him.)

<sup>19</sup> So he went back with him, and ate bread in his house, and drank water. (1 Kings 13:18-19 NKJV)

- 1. The false prophet blatantly lies.
  - a. He tells the man of God:
    - (1) I am a prophet as well.
    - (2) An angel from God has appeared to me and told me to bring you back to my house to eat and drink.
  - b. The text tells us that the false prophet is lying.
    - (1) Paul warned Timothy in 1 Timothy 4:2 that there are some who will lie to us, so that they might deceive us.
    - (2) This is exactly what the false prophet does.
      - (a) He lies to the man of God.
      - (b) He chooses a lie that he knows will be difficult for the man of God to refuse.
      - (c) God has told me to do this!

- 2. So, the man of God gives in and goes to eat with the false prophet.

IV. **The Great Judgement of God**

A. *God announces his judgement against the man of God.*

<sup>20</sup> Now it happened, as they sat at the table, that the word of the LORD came to the prophet who had brought him back; <sup>21</sup> and he cried out to the man of God who came from Judah, saying, "Thus says the LORD: 'Because you have disobeyed the word of the LORD, and have not kept the commandment which the LORD your God commanded you, <sup>22</sup> but you came back, ate bread, and drank water in the place of which the LORD said to you, "Eat no bread and drink no water," your corpse shall not come to the tomb of your fathers.'" (1 Kings 13:20-22 NKJV)

- 1. While they are still eating, the word of God comes to the false prophet, saying, "Because you have disobeyed God's command, your body will not make it back to your home to be buried with your fathers."
  - a. Because the man of God did not leave the land when God commanded him, he would not leave it all.
  - b. He had disobeyed God's instructions.
  - c. He would pay the price.
- 2. You might say, "But he was deceived!"
  - a. The false prophet lied to him.
    - (1) He thought that God wanted him to go and eat with the false prophet.
    - (2) He did not know that he was lying.
  - b. The deception does not matter.
    - (1) God gave him a command.
    - (2) He knew the command - he had quoted it twice when offered food and rest.
    - (3) He knew God's command, and he disobeyed it.
      - (a) It was his choice to go back with the prophet.

- i) Did he consult God?
- ii) Did he pray to God for guidance?
- (b) No.
  - i) He trusted a man, rather than God.
  - ii) Paul told the Galatians, “<sup>8</sup> But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. <sup>9</sup> As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.”  
(Galatians 1:8-9 NKJV)
    - a) Even if an angel from heaven preaches any other message than what you have received, you are to reject it.
    - b) Paul is so emphatic about his point that he actually repeats himself!
- (4) Notice the tragic lesson that we learn from this:  
*Even if you are deceived by a false prophet, you will still be held accountable for your own actions!*
  - (a) You may be lied to by religious leaders.
  - (b) You may be told that what you are doing is okay by your friends, family, or the local preacher.
  - (c) If it goes against the will of God, then you will be held accountable for it!
    - i) I can promise you that I will do everything that I can to preach the full truth from this pulpit.
    - ii) But, in the end, I can still be wrong.
      - a) I can teach something that is false.
      - b) If I do, and you follow my command, then you will be held accountable for it.

- c) You had better be sure that you are studying the word of God yourself to be sure that you are living according to God's commands.
- B. *God enacts his judgement.*
- <sup>23</sup> So it was, after he had eaten bread and after he had drunk, that he saddled the donkey for him, the prophet whom he had brought back.
- <sup>24</sup> When he was gone, a lion met him on the road and killed him. And his corpse was thrown on the road, and the donkey stood by it. The lion also stood by the corpse. <sup>25</sup> And there, men passed by and saw the corpse thrown on the road, and the lion standing by the corpse. Then they went and told it in the city where the old prophet dwelt. <sup>26</sup> Now when the prophet who had brought him back from the way heard it, he said, “It is the man of God who was disobedient to the word of the LORD. Therefore the LORD has delivered him to the lion, which has torn him and killed him, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke to him.”  
(1 Kings 13:23-26 NKJV)
- 1. The man of God was judged for his disobedience.
    - a. While he was on his way home, he was attacked and killed by a lion.
    - b. To make sure that everyone knew that this was the judgement of God, the lion does not eat the man of God.
    - c. Rather, he stands beside the corpse, so that people can walk by and see what had happened.
    - d. He was punished for his sin.
  - 2. What I want you to notice is that the man of God's past life did not matter.
    - a. It did not matter that he had been a man of God.
      - (1) It did not matter that he had stood up to the king himself.
      - (2) It did not matter that he had refused to eat with the king.

Deceived by Man, but Judged by God

1 Kings 13

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- (3) It did not matter that he had refused the false prophet the first time he was asked.
- b. What mattered is that he disobeyed God - and he was destroyed for it.
  - (1) It does not matter how many good things that you do in life.
  - (2) It does not matter how well you live your life.
  - (3) If you do not finish the race faithfully, then you will still be destroyed!
  - (4) To be faithful in the eyes of God, you must remain faithful throughout your life!
    - (a) You may say, "God won't punish me for just one sin."
    - (b) Ask the man of God that question.
      - i) Look at all that he did right.
      - ii) Yet, he was punished for what he did wrong!
    - (c) We must finish the race that we have begun!