

“--- AND AN ANGEL SPOKE TO ME BY THE WORD OF THE LORD---”

*and similar claims. We've all heard them, but how
can we be sure they're from God?*

I have a question for you.

IS GOD REQUIRED TO REAFFIRM HIS WORD IF DISPUTED?

I Kings 13 tells the tragic story of how an obedient man of God was deceived into disobedience by another prophet of God. We learn from this that deception can sometimes come even from those we should be able to trust the most.

Our story begins with a review of some serious mistakes made by the wisest man who ever lived, King Solomon. In disobedience to God, he married many women from pagan nations. His many wives and concubines turned his heart away from God. Can you imagine, a man who had been given so much from God was now acknowledging and honoring other gods? One of which was Ashtoreth, today we call it Easter. Note that his wives did not convert to his God but rather converted him to their gods, “and Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord.” What a terrible conclusion to the life of a man of such wisdom.

Solomon's Error

Solomon polluted the nation of Israel with places of worship to false gods. No doubt Israel felt they were being very politically correct. Evil has a far-reaching influence; these high places were still there 340 years later when King Josiah finally destroyed them.

Because of Solomon's disobedience, God determined to split the kingdom and give ten tribes to Jeroboam, which became the nation of Israel. The remaining two tribes then became the nation of Judah under leadership of Rehoboam. But out of respect for the memory of King David it did not happen until King Solomon died. (I Kings 11:11-13).

Rehoboam's Error

Rehoboam made the mistake of taking the advice of his young friends rather than Solomon's older, wiser advisers. This bad advice precipitated the split as prophesied, and the ten tribes (Israel) remains separated from Judah to this day.

Jeroboam's Error

Jeroboam was given a promise by God that if he would follow God as David did, he would be blessed as David was and become a great King. But in spite of all that God had already done for him, he didn't believe God. Jeroboam feared his subjects would rebel and go back to

Judah. Therefore, he “ordained” a feast a month later than God’s appointed feast, now there would be no need for the Israelites to travel to Jerusalem. He gave them a religion of convenience and compromise, one that God hated (Amos 5:21).

Further, he erected idols (calves of gold) in Bethel and in Dan to symbolize their God that brought them out of Egypt. Supposedly the same God, but a so-called “improved” way of worship. Since many of the Levites had moved south to Judah, he made priests of the lowest of the people, and Jeroboam himself made offerings and burnt incense on the altar he had made.

The result: in Amos 5:2 we read, “The virgin of Israel is fallen; she shall *no more* rise: she is forsaken upon her land; there is *none* to raise her up.”

In verses 4 and 5 we read, “For thus saith the LORD unto the house of Israel, Seek ye me, and ye shall live: 5 But seek not Bethel, nor enter into Gilgal, and pass not to Beer-sheba: for Gilgal shall surely go into captivity, and Bethel shall come to nought.” *These are the very cities where the idols were set up and serviced by false priests chosen by Jeroboam.*

What were the feast days that God hated?

Now let's look at verse 21, "I hate, I despise *your* feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies."

God calls them your feasts, not His. These feasts are a counterfeit of God's commanded assemblies. Sort-of makes one wonder about so called "Christian holidays."

Let's continue our study in I Kings 13 NAS.

Enter the man of God, the gist of our story

1 "Now behold, there came a man of God from Judah to Bethel by the word of the LORD, while Jeroboam was standing by the altar to burn incense." *Defying God's instructions, he is in the very act of worshiping God in a way of his own devising on an altar of his own design. Deuteronomy 12:30 clearly illustrates how not to worship God.*

2 "He (*the man of God*) cried against the altar by the word of the LORD, and said, "O altar, altar, thus says the LORD, 'Behold, a son shall be born to the house of David, Josiah by name; and on you he shall sacrifice the priests of the high places who burn incense on you, and human bones shall be burned on you.'" *This was fulfilled 340 years later, II Kings 23:17-18.*

3 "Then he gave a sign the same day, saying, "This is the sign which the LORD has spoken, 'Behold, the altar shall be split apart and the ashes which are on it shall be poured out.'"

4 “Now when the king heard the saying of the man of God, which he cried against the altar in Bethel, Jeroboam stretched out his hand from the altar, saying, ‘Seize him.’ But his hand, which he stretched out against him dried up, so that he could not draw it back to himself.

5 “The altar also was split apart and the ashes were poured out from the altar, according to the sign, which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD.”” *Thus verifying the truth of God’s word and His utter contempt for the altar and their way of worship.*

6 “The king said to the man of God, ‘Please entreat 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 it became as it was before.”” *An excellent example of the power of the prayer of a righteous man. (James 5:16).*

7 “Then the king said to the man of God, ‘Come home with me and refresh yourself, and I will give you a reward.”” *Notice, he acknowledged the instrument of God but not God.*

8 “But the man of God said to the king, ‘If you were to give me half your house I would not go with you, nor would I eat bread or drink water in this place.

9 “For so it was commanded me by the word of the LORD, saying, 'You shall eat no bread, nor drink water, nor return by the way which you came.'”

Partaking of anything in that land could be taken as tacit approval of the abominations taking place there.

The man of God passed his first test

10 “So he went another way and did not return by the way which he came to Bethel.

11 “Now an old prophet was living in Bethel; and his sons came and told him all the deeds which the man of God had done that day in Bethel; the words which he had spoken to the king, these also they related to their father.

12 “Their father said to them, ‘Which way did he go?’ Now his sons had seen the way which the man of God who came from Judah had gone.

13 “Then he said to his sons, ‘Saddle the donkey for me.’ So they saddled the donkey for him and he rode away on it.

14 “So he went after the man of God and found him sitting under an oak; and he said to him, ‘Are you the man of God who came from Judah?’ ‘And he said, ‘I am.’

15 “Then he said to him, ‘Come home with me and eat bread.’

16 “He said, ‘I cannot return with you, nor go with you, nor will I eat bread or drink water with you in this place.

17 “For a command came to me by the word of the LORD, 'You shall eat no bread, nor drink water there; do not return by going the way which you came.'

The man of God lied

18 “He said to him, ‘I also am a prophet like you, 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.' But he lied to him.

19 “So he went back with him, and ate bread in his house and drank water.””

Why would a person believe man over God, but yet we so often do? God's instructions were clear and well understood. Is God required to reiterate his command just because it has been disputed, challenged or changed by any individual or entity claiming authority to do so?

20 “Now it came about, as they were sitting down at the table, that the word of the LORD came to the prophet who had brought him back (*and this time the Lord did speak to him*).

21 “And he cried to the man of God who came from Judah, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD, 'because you have disobeyed the command of the LORD, and have not

observed the commandment which the LORD your God commanded you,

22 "But have returned and eaten bread and drunk water in the place of which He said to you, "Eat no bread and drink no water"; your body shall not come to the grave of your fathers."

23 "It came about after he had eaten bread and after he had drunk, that he saddled the donkey for him, for the prophet whom he had brought back.

24 "Now when he had gone, a lion met him on the way and killed him, and his body was thrown on the road, with the donkey standing beside it; the lion also was standing beside the body.

25 "And behold, men passed by and saw the body thrown on the road, and the lion standing beside the body; so they came and told it in the city where the old prophet lived.

Can't you imagine how the news of this entire event spread throughout the kingdom?

26 "Now when the prophet who brought him back from the way heard it, he said, 'It is the man of God, who *disobeyed* the command of the LORD; therefore the LORD has given him to the lion, which has torn him and killed him, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke to him.'"

27 “Then he spoke to his sons, saying, “Saddle the donkey for me.” And they saddled it.

28 “He went and found his body thrown on the road with the donkey and the lion standing beside the body; the lion had not eaten the body nor torn the donkey.

29 “So the prophet took up the body of the man of God and laid it on the donkey and brought it back, and he came to the city of the old prophet to mourn and to bury him.

30 “He laid his body in his own grave, and they mourned over him, saying, ‘Alas, my brother!’

31 “After he had buried him, he spoke to his sons, saying, ‘When I die, bury me in the grave in which the man of God is buried; lay my bones beside his bones.

32 ‘For the thing shall surely come to pass 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’ (II Kings 23:17-18).

33 “After this event Jeroboam did not turn from his evil way, but again he made priests of the high places from among all the people; any who would, he ordained, to be priests of the high places.

34 “This event became sin to the house of Jeroboam, even to blot it out and destroy it from off the face of the earth.”

So, what have we learned?

Some of the things we can be sure of are.

1. Anyone, even a man of God, can be deceived.
2. A prophet can deliberately lie, read Isaiah 8:20. It is our responsibility to search the scriptures; consider those of Berea (Acts 17:11-12).
3. It is not left up to man to choose how to worship God, He will not accept a mongrelized worship (Deut.12:30).
4. Godly people will be tested and frequently offered an easier, more attractive, alternative
5. If you are deceived into disobedience, the consequences are still yours.
6. Sin, once tolerated, will have a long lasting effect on you as well as others.
7. Even the land becomes polluted when evil reigns.
8. Amos 5:5-6 is not referring to God's Feasts. **God does not hate His feasts.**
9. There are some people who will never repent.
10. God's prophecies are sure.

11. Absence of a restatement of a directive from God is not nullification.

Our question is answered; obviously, God was not required to remind the man of God of His command even though it was disputed.

Is there a warning for us in this story?

It is commonly stated that the 4th commandment is never repeated in the New Testament, therefore it is not meant for Christians. If God has not plainly stated that he has changed a law why should we believe He has? If anyone tells you that God has changed any of His ten commandments because we are now under the New Covenant, bear in mind what happened to the man of God in I Kings 13.

“To the law and to the testimony ...”

(testimony of His saints)

"if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. 8:20). The lord did not change, nullify, or nail the law to the cross; He magnified it (Isa. 42:21; Matt. 5) and placed it into man's mind and his heart (Heb. 8:7-10). The only thing that was changed concerning the law in the New Covenant was where God placed it.

“...all his commandments are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever...” (Ps. 111:7-8). 

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Note: the law God placed in man's heart should not be confused with the law of the Levitical Priesthood. As explained in Hebrews 7, that earthly priesthood could not obtain perfection for us and was replaced at the coming of Christ. Our perfection is obtained through the Melchisedec Priesthood of Jesus Christ.

Other study guides of interest.

**AND YE SHALL BE AS GOD'S
ANSWERS TO THOSE WHO HAVE CREPT IN UNAWARES
OLD AND WORN OUT EXCUSES AGAINST GOD'S SABBATH
TAKE HEED THAT NO MAN DECEIVE YOU
THE PROTECTING WALL
THE BEGINING OF ERROR
THE NUMBER SEVEN AND GOD'S SABBATH**

*“But be ye doers of the word, and not
hearers only, deceiving your own selves.”*
(James 1:22)