

## WHAT NEW DOCTRINE?

The next election of the president of the United States will take place eight months from now, and Donald Trump may very well be elected. If he is elected, some so-called prophets will insist that they have been vindicated. Before the last election, a number of these prophets prophesied that Trump would be elected to a second term, but, when Joe Biden became president, these prophets had to account for their prophecies. When Jeremiah Johnson publicly apologized for his error, people threatened to kill him, and called him a coward, a sellout, and a traitor to the Holy Spirit. Other prophets refused to concede. Michael Brown, a Jewish Charismatic Christian, and a supporter of Donald Trump, has criticized these false prophets. On the Crossmap Podcast, Brown said:

There's no question that the most prominent prophetic voices speaking out – especially in America, but other nations as well – universally predicted four more years of Donald Trump. Now, some have said, 'We were right. He did win the election, but the election was stolen.' I find that to be a complete bogus cop-out. Because what's the use of that prophecy if he doesn't end up as president? No one was asking, 'Who's gonna win the vote count really, but not be in the White House?' The only thing that meant to everyone who heard it and to the prophets was Donald Trump will be in the White House. If you had said to those prophets, 'So you're telling me Donald Trump will have eight consecutive years?' — every one of them would have said, 'Yes.' None of them were talking about 2024. None of them were saying, 'He's going to be elected, but the election will be stolen.'

Brown says that people have responded to him the same way they responded to Johnson. He said, "I've been called the servant of Satan and spawn of Baal because I caved and am not standing with the prophets. I've been called Deep State and that I'm a Mossad agent." Because of these false prophecies, eighty-five Christian leaders produced 'Prophetic Standards,' the purpose of which is "to help provide scriptural guidelines for the operation of the gift of prophecy and the functioning of the ministry of the prophet, while at the same time affirming the importance of these gifts and ministries." One of the standards is the following:

While we believe in holding prophets accountable for their words, in accordance with the Scriptures, we do not believe that a sincere prophet who delivers an inaccurate message is therefore a false prophet. Instead, as Jesus explained, and as the Old Testament emphasized, false prophets are wolves in sheep's clothing, in contrast to true believers who might speak inaccurately (see Matt. 7:15–20; Jer. 23:9–40; Ezek. 13:23). Thus a false prophet is someone who operates under a false spirit masquerading as the Holy Spirit. We therefore recognize distinctions between a believer who gives an inaccurate prophecy (in which case they should acknowledge their error), a believer who consistently prophesies inaccurately (in which case we recognize that this person is not a prophet and we urge them to stop prophesying), and a false prophet (whom we recognize as a false believer, a lost soul, calling them to repent and be saved).

Also included is this enigmatic standard: "Those wanting to use Old Testament prophetic texts to exercise influence or authority over their followers should remember that inaccurate prophecy under that same Old Testament standard was punishable by death." These Christians, however sincere they may be, are blind guides,

and not to be trusted. How different is Jesus, the great prophet, who is truth itself. He is trustworthy, and all men must trust Him, and obey.

When God would deliver Israel from bondage in Egypt, He called Moses to lead them out. God appeared to Moses in a burning bush, and, When Moses asked God His name, God answered, "I AM THAT I AM: Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." (Exodus 3:14) God revealed Himself to Moses as the One who exists in Himself. The One who depends upon nothing, and upon whom all things depend. He is the God that sent Moses to lead the people out of Egypt. When Moses told Pharaoh to let God's people go, Pharaoh refused, and treated the Israelites worse than before. The people complained to Moses, and Moses complained to God. God said to Moses, "I am the LORD: And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them." (Exodus 6:2, 3) God reminded Moses that He had revealed Himself to Moses as the great I AM, and He told Moses that he was privileged, for God had not revealed Himself in this way even to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

When the Israelites were gathered at Mount Sinai, God descended upon the mountain in fire and smoke, and earthquake, and would speak to the people, but they were too afraid, and they asked Moses to speak to God for them. So, Moses did speak to the Lord, and, the Scriptures say, "The LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend." (Exodus 33:11) Moses did not see God, for no man can see God and live; yet God spoke to Moses, as one man speaks to another. (compare Exodus 34:20) Later, when Moses asked God to reveal to him His glory, God agreed to do it. He passed by Moses and said to Him:

The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear *the guilty*; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth *generation*. (Exodus 34:6, 7)

God revealed Himself to Moses as one who punishes guilty sinners, yes, but as one who is slow to punish, and quick to forgive. When Moses married an Ethiopian woman, Aaron, his brother, and Miriam, his sister, both of whom were prophets, complained against Moses that he did not first consult them. God said to Aaron and Miriam:

Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses? (Numbers 12:6–8)

Aaron and Miriam were prophets, and there were others besides. Yet, to them God revealed Himself in visions and dreams, in enigmas. To Moses, however, God spoke not his way, but directly and clearly. Concerning the death of Moses, the Scriptures say:

And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face. In all the signs and the wonders, which the LORD sent him to do in the land of Egypt to Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all his land, And in all that mighty hand, and in all the great terror which Moses shewed in the sight of all Israel. (Deuteronomy 34:10–12)

Moses was the greatest of all prophets, not only because of all the mighty works God did through him, but because God spoke directly to him.

When the people, who in the wilderness so often complained against Moses, complained against him that they had no water, and he became angry with them, and did not speak to the rock, as God had commanded, but rather struck it with his staff, then God became angry with Him, and forbade him enter the promised land. So, when the people would enter into the land, they would not have Moses to lead them, but Joshua instead would lead them. Joshua would be great, but not as great as Moses, and after Joshua there would be none like him. The people would be tempted for guidance to turn to divination and witchcraft. So, Moses forbade them to do such things. Such things the pagan nations did, and for this reason God would have the Israelites drive them out of the land. Then Moses said to them:

The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the LORD said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him. But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. (Deuteronomy 18:15–20)

God would raise up from His people a prophet for them. He would be like Moses, and the people must listen to Him. When the people were at Mount Sinai, they did not wish for God directly to speak to them, for they were too afraid. So, God told Moses He would give the people a prophet like them. God would tell this prophet what to say, and the prophet would be faithful to say it. If anyone would not listen to this prophet, then God would punish that one for his rebellion. If any man should claim to be a prophet, and to speak for God, and speak what God has not commanded, or to speak in the name of other gods, then that man is not a prophet of God, but rather a false prophet who should be put to death for his audacity.

Then Moses said:

And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him. (Deuteronomy 18:21, 22)

The question naturally arises how the people of God may know if a man has spoken for God, or not. The answer is simple: if a prophet speaks concerning the future, and then what he has spoken does not come to pass, then his prophecy is false. That prophet has spoken falsely and insolently, and he deserves to die. In such a case, the people should not heed him, or fear any of his threats. Moses is, of course, the greatest example, but Samuel is a great example. Concerning his prophetic ministry, the Scriptures say, “The LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground.” (1 Samuel 3:19) Samuel told the people everything God said, and God was faithful to bring it all to pass. Hannaniah is an example of a false prophet. When Jehoiachim was king of

Judah, Jeremiah the prophet prophesied that, because of the people's sins against God, God would cause the Kingdom of Babylon to conquer them and to rule them for seventy years. The priest and the prophets opposed Jeremiah, and said that he should be executed for speaking against God's holy city of Jerusalem. Of course, it happened as Jeremiah the prophet said. Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, carried away Jehoiachin in chains to Babylon, and he took with him the sacred vessels of Jerusalem. The same happened to Jehoichain, who succeeded his father. Zedekiah succeeded Jehoiachin, and rebelled against the king of Babylon. Jeremiah prophesied to Zedekiah that, if he did not submit to the king of Babylon, then he, and his city, would be destroyed. He warned the priests, and the people, not to listen to false prophets who prophesied that Judah would soon be free from Babylon, and the vessels of the Lord returned to Jerusalem. Hannaniah prophesied that Judah would be restored in two years' time. Jeremiah replied that he wished it would be so, but that God had spoken otherwise. Moreover, Hannaniah would die because he was a false prophet, Hannaniah prophesied peace and prosperity; Jeremiah and the prophets before him death and destruction. Only time would tell. The event would prove the prophet. Of course, it happened as Jeremiah said. Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem and carried the people, and the vessels away into Babylon, and Hannaniah was killed. (2 Chronicles 36:15–21; Jeremiah 29:17) Hannaniah was a false prophet, and Jeremiah a true one. Moses told the people that God would one day send them a prophet, like him, who would speak only truth, and nothing false, and that they must listen to Him.

Of course, Jesus of Nazareth is the prophet of whom Moses spoke. When priests and Levites from Jerusalem asked John the Baptist if he was that prophet, he answered that he was not, but that he prepared the way for the Christ, the Son of God, whom he later identified as Jesus. (John 1:21–34) Early in Jesus's earthly ministry, after He called His disciples to follow Him, He went to Capernaum, and there He entered into a synagogue to teach. Concerning the response of the people, Saint Mark recorded, "They were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes." (Mark 1:22) The scribes simply expounded the opinions of earlier rabbis, but Jesus taught, not as one giving the opinion of another man, or even of Himself as a man, but rather as the infallible Son of God. So, in the antitheses of His Sermon on the Mount, He said, "You have heard it said..., but I say unto you," thereby setting His own authoritative teaching against the tentative teachings of the scribes and Pharisees. Saint Matthew recorded the result: "And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." (Matthew 7:28, 29) In the synagogue where Jesus taught was a man possessed by an evil spirit, and the spirit through the man cried out, "Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God." (Mark 1:24) The evil spirit told Jesus to leave him alone, that what he did was no business of Jesus. He, an unclean spirit, recognized Jesus as God's holy One, and he feared that Christ had come to destroy him. Jesus rebuked the spirit, and commanded him to be silent, and to come out of the man. The evil spirit, having sent the man into convulsions, and shrieking, came out of the man. The people were amazed, and asked each other, "What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him." (Mark 1:27) Soon after this, Jesus's fame spread throughout the region of Galilee. If the demons are compelled to obey the commands of Jesus, surely men, who have a choice, ought to choose to obey Him. The Jewish exorcists had no authority in themselves to cast out demons; they cast out demons by invoking the name of God. Jesus cast them out on His own authority. This was a new idea for the Jews. Never before had any man cast out a demon on command.

The church at Corinth asked Saint Paul for his apostolic counsel on the matter of eating food sacrificed to idols. According to Moses, the great prophet, those who sacrifice to idols sacrifice to demons. (Deuteronomy 32:17) Of course, Saint Paul agreed with this. (1 Corinthians 10:20) Jesus, the greatest prophet, taught that what

a man puts in his mouth does not make him unclean, but what comes out his mouth does, because it comes from the heart. (Mark 7:18–23) Of course, Saint Paul agreed with this. The Corinthians already knew these things; yet, Saint Paul taught them an important principle drawn from the life and teachings of Jesus: knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. Knowledge inflates with proud insistence on rights, but love builds up with humble waiving of rights. The apostle explained that, if a man thinks he understands, he does not fully understand. If a man loves God, then that man is known by God. It is good for a man to love God, and so be acknowledged by God. A man may know great mysteries concerning God, but not love God, and so not be acknowledged by Him. To such a man Jesus will say, “I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” (Matthew 7:23)

Saint Paul wrote:

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 none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. (1 Corinthians 8:4–6)

Jeremiah the prophet said the same of idols. He said:

But the LORD is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation. Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion. When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures. Every man is brutish in his knowledge: every founder is confounded by the graven image: for his molten image is falsehood, and there is no breath in them. They are vanity, and the work of errors: in the time of their visitation they shall perish. (Jeremiah 10:10–15)

The heathen had no proper knowledge of idols. They believe, not only that an idol represents their gods, but that by their idols they can communicate with their gods. The Corinthians knew better. They understood that an idol is nothing. It is a block of wood, or of stone. It is not sentient. They understood that there is only one true God. There are so-called gods, but these are simply angelic beings that were created by God and are subject to Him. The Christian understands that there is only one true God, the almighty, creator of heaven and earth, and he made man for His glory. He understands that there is only one Lord Jesus Christ, who created all things, and who recreated the Christian.

Saint Paul continued:

Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled. But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse. But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak. For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which

are offered to idols; And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ. Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend. (1 Corinthians 8:7–13)

In ancient Rome, pagans would offer food to their idols, and then sell that food in the marketplace. The Corinthians knew that, as an idol is nothing, sacrificing food to an idol does nothing; the food is not defiled. Some Christians did not have this knowledge. To their weak consciences, this food was ritually unclean; it was defiled, and they would defile themselves if they ate it. Although it was not a sin in itself to eat it, yet, if the Christian ate it thinking it was a sin, then he did what he thought was wrong and so sinned in doing it. For the Christians who understood, eating food sacrificed to idols is neither here nor there; it is a matter of indifference. The Christian knows that he is free to eat such food. Yet, the knowledge a Christian has can become a cause of sin in the Christian who does not have that same knowledge, and so a Christian who knows can lead into temptation, and so on to sin, a Christian who does not know. If a Christian, knowing that an idol is nothing, were to exercise his liberty by eating in an idol's temple, and the weak Christian observed him there, then the conscience of the weak Christian would be built up to do that which he did not believe he was free to do, and so he would be ruined. The knowledgeable Christian would, by the use of his liberty, lead a weaker brother, for whom Christ died, to sin against his conscience and so condemn himself. In such a case, not only does the weak Christian sin against Christ by doing what he believed to be sinful, but the knowledgeable Christian, too, sins against Christ by leading his weaker brother into temptation. So, in respect of Christian liberty, Saint Paul's method was that, if eating a certain kind of food would cause a Christian to sin, then he would never eat meat again, so as to protect the conscience of his Christian brother. The principle is simple: the surrender of rights for the good of others. This is the very thing the Son of God did: He laid aside his rights as Son of God, and lived as a man so that he might redeem men. Jesus teaches His people, not only by His precepts, but by His example.

Let us understand that Moses told the people of God that a great prophet would follow Him. Let us believe that Jesus of Nazareth is that great prophet who taught with His own authority. Let us follow, not only the doctrine of Jesus, but also His perfect example.

Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever. Amen.