

# God's Word Cannot Be Domesticated

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[0:00] It's great to be together again this morning. Last week we talked about holding fast to the doctrine of inerrancy in our doctrine of Scripture! And the cost of compromising our view of Scripture.

This week we'll continue that theme. Continue thinking about our doctrine of Scripture, specifically the temptation to try to bring the Bible under our control.

To try to make it so that it works for our own benefit instead of submitting to it. Our passage this morning is 1 Kings chapter 13.

Would you turn there in your Bibles? 1 Kings chapter 13, if you're using a few Bible in front of you, 1 Kings chapter 13, that's page 346, I believe. 346.

This is a pretty long story. It's about 34 verses long. We're going to read some of it. We're going to summarize some of it. It's pretty long, so it would be helpful, I think, if you follow along.

[1:09] You can navigate there on your device. Let's open in prayer and ask for the Lord's help. Lord, we are grateful that you have spoken to us.

We don't take that for granted. You have not been a silent God who has left us to try to figure out your will and your values and your plans on our own, but you've given us your holy word.

And we know that this passage is an important part of what you've revealed to us. We pray for your help now to understand it. And not only to understand what it means, but what it means for us.

We pray in your name. Amen. I went to college in downtown Chicago at Moody Bible Institute.

And I enjoyed my time in the city. I was from a rural area and wasn't used to the big city, but it was pretty fun. A lot of great restaurants.

[2:13] I would go ice skating a lot down at Skate-On State, you know, by the Macy's down there, I think. Lots and lots to do. We have a fun rivalry with the Bears.

We like our neighbor to the south. But, you know, Chicago has a long history of corruption. Not long ago, I was reading about a law enforcement operation called Operation Grey Lord, which was a joint undercover operation by the FBI, the IRS, the Chicago Police Department, and even the post office.

All of these groups were working together in order to try and prosecute corruption in the Cook County courts. Over the course of almost four years, in the 1980s, the FBI set up, it was this elaborate scheme.

They set up fake court cases, fake attorneys. They managed to get a warrant to put the first listening device in a judge's chamber because that corruption went all the way to the top.

I mean, the ways that they were buying and selling justice. In the end, they indicted 92 public officials, including judges and cops and even a state representative, because officials were taking bribes to pervert the rule of law in murder cases, in sexual assault cases, in drug convictions, and even in things like child custody.

[3:50] There was all this legal corruption. I'm sure that's very common. I don't want to be naive. I'm sure that everywhere, powerful people are trying to corrupt the law to avoid convictions or weaponize the legal system to their own benefit in some way, or exploit loopholes in order to get out of trouble.

And I think we're tempted to do this, too, with Scripture. Like U.S. federal law or Illinois state law, the Word of God presents an objective standard by which to measure our actions and hold us accountable.

It indicts us for sin against God and other people. It holds us accountable with accompanying consequences. And like we talked about last week, we want knowledge.

We want the power and the benefit that comes from knowing things. We talked about that last week. But we also want to do what we want to do. And so ideally, we would love a word from the Lord that we can control.

We would love to have a word from God that tells us what we want to hear, that supports our own actions instead of critiquing us, that gives us a certain kind of power or influence over others or can be used in some way against our enemies.

[5:16] We could call that taming the Word of God or domesticating the Word of God. What are some other metaphors we could use? We could, you know, cutting the legs out from under it or removing its teeth, right?

I don't know what kind of metaphor we want to use. But this is related to the doctrine of inerrancy because as we saw last week in Deuteronomy 18, an errant word, a word that is filled with errors, lacks full divine authority.

An errant word is a tamed word. Its teeth have been removed. Because as we move away from the doctrine of inerrancy, we are left with a Bible that doesn't always get things right.

And so if it doesn't always get things right, then that means that on any given issue, we can question it and qualify it and challenge it for our own benefit.

And this issue of trying to tame or domesticate the Word of God is a subject of this really crazy story in 1 Kings chapter 13. And it is crazy, but it's also deadly serious.

[6:28] This is a story about the Word of the Lord. That phrase is repeated 10 times in these 30-some verses. 10 times it talks about the Word of the Lord.

That's what the story is about. And before we get into it, let's just sort of catch up here and recall where we are as we drop into the middle of 1 Kings. Israel has split into the northern kingdom and the southern kingdom.

There's been the secession and kind of a civil war between them. And in 1 Kings chapter 12, the passage right before ours, King Jeroboam, the ruler of the northern kingdom, is concerned that his people are going to travel south into Judah, down to Jerusalem, to worship at the temple and to make sacrifices there.

And that's a pretty good concern that he has because that's exactly what God has commanded them to do. God has commanded all the people of Israel to go to Jerusalem to worship. But Jeroboam is afraid that they are going to become disloyal over time, right?

Because they're going to worship somewhere else. And so what he does is he creates two calves of gold and he installs one in the very northern part of his country and one in the very southern part of his country at a city called Bethel.

[7:44] And he creates a new calendar of worship and it's an alternate worship, right? Don't go to Jerusalem, just stay here and worship my golden calves. And Bethel is an important site for worship because that's where the king has built an idol and that's where they're supposed to worship.

And he's worshipping, he's making these illegitimate sacrifices to these idolatrous calves that he's set up. And that brings us to our story. If you want to write this on your bulletin, it takes place in four scenes.

It is a long one, as I said. The first scene is in verses 1 through 10. 1 through 10. The second scene is verses 11 through 19. The third scene is verses 20 to 25.

And then the fourth scene is verses 26 to 32. And we'll look at each of these sections and then we'll put it all together at the end. Here's what it says at the beginning in verse 1. And behold, a man of God came out of Judah by the word of the Lord to Bethel.

And Jeroboam, the king, was standing by the altar to make offerings. And so right away at the beginning of our story, the Lord sends a man of God to confront King Jeroboam for his idolatry.

[8:57] And it says here that he's sent by the word of the Lord. That's the first of these occurrences of this expression, the word of the Lord. And there's no doubt about Jeroboam's guilt because he finds him in the act of making sacrifices on this illegitimate altar that he's constructed.

Now, why is he called here a man of God instead of the usual word that we would expect, which is a prophet? Well, this term man of God is used quite often in the Old Testament.

It's a label that is used for Moses and Samuel and Elijah and Elisha and David and a number of other people. And interestingly, whereas the word prophet can refer to a false prophet or a true prophet, the word man of God is always used of a true prophet of the Lord.

So I think that the reason it calls this person a man of God here is to distinguish him from a false prophet that we're going to meet later in verse 11.

This man of God is not named or identified in any way. And that's probably important because it doesn't matter who he is. It doesn't matter. He's there to deliver the powerful and the true word of the Lord.

[10:11] That is his task and his job. And he's there to confront the king. And we've got to give him some credit. That would take some guts. Because he's on the king's turf.

He is coming to confront the king at Bethel, the headquarters of the king's idolatry, right after one of the king's religious feasts, while the king is making a sacrifice.

This is a place of power. And now the man of God is coming there to confront him. And that's what we would expect because God's power confronts every human, every human power, religious, political, social.

God's word speaks against those things. And he proclaims God's word against the altar in verse 2. And he predicts three things, right? Verse 2. First, he predicts that a future king named Josiah will be born to the house of David.

Then number two, he predicts that Josiah will kill the idolatrous priest that the king Jeroboam has employed. And three, that Josiah will desecrate this altar.

[11:20] But he is predicting something 300 years in the future. So who is going to believe a thing like that, right? Just because the man of God says it. And so in verse 3, he announces a sign.

And a regular sign is just an indicator. It draws attention to something or it's a reminder of something. It serves as a promise of something. And often it isn't miraculous at all.

We have signs in the Old Testament like just a word, someone's word, or a rainbow in the sky, or a pile of stones is a sign of something. It can just be a reminder.

But the Hebrew word here for sign is a special word. And it would really be better to translate it as wonder or a miracle. This man of God is going to do something.

He's going to do a miraculous sign to prove the authenticity of his word against King Jeroboam. And so he says that the altar will split open and the ashes that have accumulated from sacrifices will spill out.

[12:26] And that demonstration of power now will validate the long-range prediction of King Josiah 300 years in the future. Right? When you see the miraculous altar split open now, you will know that God's word 300 years in the future will come true.

Now, in verse 4, when King Jeroboam hears this, his first response is to persecute the man of God. The word of God is a threat to him.

It's a threat to his program of idolatry and his power. And so when he hears the speech of the man of God, look what it says in verse 4, right in the middle. One translation says that his hand withered. Another translation says that it shriveled up. The king has been debilitated. Then, apparently at that same moment, if we look at verse 5, the altar splits open and the ashes pour out and now we have two acts of God's power.

The king's hand has shriveled up as a reaction to his attempted persecution and the altar has broken open as an immediate miraculous sign that confirms the prophetic word.

[13:46] And then in verse 6, the man of God restores the shriveled hand of the king and there's a third miracle. He heals him. And now there is no doubt at all that God's word is true and he cannot be resisted because there's been three miracles in about 10 minutes.

Well, it didn't work very well for the king to persecute the man of God. So in verse 7, he decides to take a different approach. He invites the man home for lunch.

He says, look at verse 7, he says, come home with me and refresh yourself and I will give you a reward. Well, that sounds pretty nice. I mean, now he's being invited to be a guest of the king in the palace.

I'm sure the man of God has had a long journey from Judah and he wouldn't mind some delicious food and a rest and a beautiful room and besides, the king says something about a reward.

Use your imagination. That sounds pretty good. But the man of God categorically refuses the offer and he says that God has forbidden him from going home with the king.

[15:02] Look what it says in verse 9. Well, that seems strange.

Those are strange instructions. First of all, why would the king invite the prophet home with him? And second, why would God specifically command the prophet not to go home with anyone and not to eat or drink with them?

It seems weird until we realize that this has attempted corruption. The king is saying, let's see if we can make a deal.

Why should we be enemies? He says to the man of God, come home. Let's talk this through. I'll feed you. I'll give you a reward. Let's see if we can work something out here. Eating and drinking together imply fellowship fellowship and fellowship implies corruption and God is prohibiting the man of God from eating or drinking with anyone or returning the way he came because he doesn't want any interference with the man of God's mission here.

Any attempted corruption. If the persecution doesn't work, then the king thinks to himself, well, I'll just kind of tame or domesticate God's word. I'll bring it into my own house.

[16:24] I'll bring God's word under my own authority. I'll control it for my own purposes. But the man of God says, no, I'm not going home with you. I'm going home a different way.

And look what it says in verse 10. So he went home another way and did not return by the way that he came to Bethel. Okay, so far so good. That's the end of scene one.

God's word confronts human powers, even the king and his government. God validates his word with three powerful miracles, including protecting his man of God, his prophet from persecution. And when the king tries to corrupt or domesticate God's word and bring it under his roof and under his authority, God says, no, we're not going to do that. His word has to remain free.

It has to be nonpartisan. It has to be independently authoritative. All right, scene two, verses 11 to 19. Verse 11.

[17:30] Now an old prophet lived in Bethel and his sons came and told him all that the man of God had done that day in Bethel. They also told their father the words that he had spoken to the king.

And so in the second scene, we're introduced to an old prophet who lived in Bethel, that same town, that same place of idolatry that the king had set up. This is the headquarters of the king's idolatry. And it does not say here that he's a true prophet of the Lord. Prophets were often sort of employed by the king to tell him what he wanted to hear.

But all it says is he's a prophet. He's supposedly someone who receives a message from the Lord and then delivers it. And when he hears about this confrontation that had taken place between the man of God and the king, he sets out to find this man of God.

And his sons saddle a donkey for him. And he gets on the donkey. And even though the man of God had obeyed the Lord by going home a different way back to Judah, he finds him.

[18:32] The old prophet finds him. And he rides up to him on his donkey. And he finds the man of God sitting under a tree. Obviously taking some sort of a rest, you know, on his long journey. And look at the middle of verse 14.

And the old prophet said to him, are you the man of God who came from Judah? And he said, I am. And then he said to him, come home with me and eat bread. I mean, what is it with these hospitable people?

They're so hospitable. See, the old prophet hears about the power of God's word. The power of God's word to make the king's hand shrivel up or to make the altar split open or to heal the king's hand.

And he wants some of that. He wants some of that power. And so now he tries to bring God's word under his roof. God's word represents influence and power.

And he thinks, come home with me. Let's talk this through. See if we can make some kind of a deal. Let's see if I can use God's word for my advantage and my personal status. And again, the man of God refuses.

[19:43] He repeats the instructions that were given to him by God in verse 16. And this is important. It's important because it tells us that the instructions were clear.

It tells us that there is no confusion in the mind of this man of God about exactly what he was supposed to do and not do. He knows what God has commanded.

Do not go home with anyone to eat or drink. And then, verse 18, the old prophet invents a prophetic word on the spot.

Remember we talked about this last week in Deuteronomy 18. What happens when a prophet says, hey, I just heard from the Lord and it's a lie. He invents it on the spot. Look what he says in verse 18.

I also am a prophet as you are. And an angel spoke to me by the word of the Lord saying, bring him back with you into your house that he may eat and eat bread and drink water.

[20:41] But he lied to him. The old prophet says to this man of God, hey, how would you like a second opinion? I'm also a prophet.

What a coincidence. And you may have heard from the Lord, but so did I. And he told me something different. He gave me a different word of the Lord.

And the old prophet makes an explicit claim to divine source and divine authority. He says, an angel spoke to me. Wow, that's impressive. And it was by the word of the Lord that this word came to me.

And he wants you to come home and eat and drink with me. He is by definition a false prophet.

Because he has spoken a word in the name of the Lord, but it is a lie.

It is a word that he has just invented and fabricated. And the man of God knows what God has commanded him. He has repeated the instructions twice in full.

[21:45] He has seen the word of God validated by three miracles. And now this false prophet directly contradicts what God had told him to do.

It should be obvious that this is a lie and it is not really from the Lord because God would never contradict himself that way. But he compromises. Look at verse 19.

So he went back with him and ate bread in his house and drank water. Maybe he thought, well, you know, I guess it's possible that God's original word was in error.

I suppose it's possible that God told me one thing but now it's been superseded and he's changed his mind. I suppose it's possible that this is a new and improved word of the Lord that we all like a little bit better.

It's more relevant. It's certainly easier to accept. It comes with concrete benefits. I wouldn't mind some lunch. I mean, does this sound familiar?

[22:51] Do we do this? We have been taught all our lives that the Bible is God's word and we believe that. And then we hear something that directly contradicts what God's word says.

Something from a friend or something from a book or someone that we respect. and it just sounds so attractive. It sounds so loving. It sounds more generous.

It sounds more open. It sounds more flexible. Surely that new word is what God really wants. Surely that new word is what God really thinks or at least what I wish he would think.

and we compromise. It says in verse 19 that the man of God went home with the old prophet and the word of God has now been domesticated and tamed.

Or has it? Let's look at verse 3. Scene 3. Scene 3, verses 20 to 25. The man of God and the old prophet are sitting at the table enjoying lunch in direct disobedience of God's word and suddenly the old prophet who we have been told is a false prophet speaks a true word that really is from God.

[24:13] This is when the story really goes crazy. Right? Suddenly the false prophet speaks a true word from the Lord. It's a big surprise but in some ways it shouldn't be because God is not limited.

We read in Numbers chapter 22 that God speaks through a donkey. We read in 1 Kings 19 that he speaks to Elijah in the sound of a low whisper.

We read in Daniel chapter 5 that God communicates to a king by writing on a wall. And here in 1 Kings chapter 13 he communicates through a false prophet.

Look at verse 21. He cried to the man of God who came from Judah. Thus says the Lord. Because you have disobeyed the word of the Lord and have not kept the command that the Lord your God commanded you but have come back and have 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 tomb of your fathers.

It was not that the man of God was confused about the contents of the word of God. He wasn't uncertain about what God had commanded him he just disregarded it.

[25:30] He compromised and he didn't have to do that. And as a result the old prophet predicts through the word of the Lord that the man of God will not be buried with his fathers.

Now there's no response from the man of God. He finishes his meal. He saddles the old prophet's donkey. And look at verse 24.

As he went away a lion met him on the road and killed him. And his body was thrown in the road and the donkey stood beside it and the lion also stood beside the body.

Wow. There's this sudden act of violence. The lion kills the man of God on the road. And that could be a coincidence. I mean we know that lions are very dangerous and they were dangerous in ancient Israel.

But what is weird and very unusual is that after killing the man of God the lion just stands there. He doesn't eat the corpse of the man.

[26:38] He doesn't eat the donkey. The lion is just standing there. It's weird, right? And it's so weird that it says that when people see this they go into the city and they start talking about it.

Hey, did you guys see what was on the road over there? But did you notice something? The lion doesn't eat. The man of God ate against the word of the Lord even though God had commanded him not to.

But the lion stands there on the side of the road as a symbol of the man of God's compromise and disobedience of the word of the Lord because even though it's a lion, even though it's just an animal, it doesn't eat.

And that's the end of scene three. All right, quickly, scene four, verses 26 to 32. When the old prophet, the false prophet, hears about the corpse of the man of God lying on the road and the lion and the donkey standing there next to it, he recognizes, wait a minute, that's the man of God that I just had over for lunch.

Look what he says at the end verse 26. It is the man of God who disobeyed the word of the Lord. Therefore, the Lord has given him to the lion which has torn him and killed him according to the word that the Lord spoke to him.

[27:59] Now, I'm guessing that this old false prophet has probably invented every prophetic word he has ever spoken. He is probably a serial liar.

It's probably his job to just make things up. But now that his own word has come true when he told the man of God, you will not be buried in the tomb of your fathers, he recognizes that the word of God is true.

And so once again in verse 27, he saddles a donkey and he goes to find the body and he finds the body of the man of God and look at the end of verse 28. The lion had not eaten the body or torn the donkey.

The narrator tells us again, he wants us to notice this. The lion did not eat. And the old prophet takes the corpse of the man of God and look at verses 30 and 31.

He laid the body in his own grave and they mourned over him saying, Alas, my brother! And after he had buried him, he said to his sons, When I die, bury me in the grave in which the man of God is buried and lay my bones beside his bones.

[29:09] So there's two things we need to notice here. First, the word of the Lord came true again. The man of God was not buried in his own family tomb. And second, God had told the man of God not to accept hospitality in Bethel.

And the irony is that not only has he come to the old prophet's house for lunch, but he is buried in the old prophet's tomb and he will remain in Bethel forever.

He will be a permanent resident in the place of the king's idolatry. That is ironic. And in verse 32, the old man concludes what all of us are supposed to conclude at the end of this wild story. Look at verse 32. For the saying that he called out by the word of the Lord against the altar in Bethel and against all the houses of the high places that are in the cities of Samaria shall surely come to pass.

The word of God cannot be stopped. It is true. It will come true. And when we look over in our Bibles at 2 Kings chapter 23, we find out that 300 years later, King Josiah did tear down that altar. [30:21] He did kill the idolatrous priest. He burned human bones on it to defile and desecrate it according to the word of the Lord. It came true. Everything has come full circle.

The word of the Lord against Jeroboam will come true. Well, there's a lot going on in this story. So let me summarize two points that lead us kind of toward the main theological point here.

First of all, the main conflict here is an attempt to domesticate or tame the word of God. First, the king invites the man of God to his house.

He's attempting corruption. He wants the word of God kind of off his case, get off my back. He wants to remove the pressure of conviction and condemnation. And then, the old prophet invites the man of God to his house.

He has a different motivation. He wants to harness that power to use it for himself. And I think this is why we keep hearing about donkeys.

[31:26] Doesn't it seem like there's a lot of donkeys in this story? The donkey takes the old prophet to find the man of God. It stands by the man of God when he's been killed. It carries the man of God's body to the tomb.

I think donkeys here are symbols of these compromises. Second, despite their attempts, actually, the word of God will not be domesticated.

It will not be tamed. Even though the man of God faces down the king of Israel in the epicenter of his system of idolatry, in all of his power and high position, the king's hand shrivels up, the altar splits open, the king's hand is healed, God is in total control of that situation.

And even though the man of God compromises and disobeys and goes home with the old prophet, God speaks through the old prophet. He's not limited.

It's not like God says, well, I had one true prophet and I've lost him so now there's no way I can communicate. No, then he just speaks through the false prophet.

[32:39] His word cannot be stopped. And when the old man is killed, I'm sorry, when the man of God is killed, the lion, a ferocious beast that usually probably can't control its appetite, does not eat.

And when the false prophet sees God's word come true, he realizes that what the man of God predicted about Jeroboam and his altar in the future will also come true.

The word of God, despite all these attempts, cannot be corrupted, it cannot be tamed, it cannot be domesticated, it speaks with absolute truth. And absolute authority to every human power.

Here I think is the big idea of this story. The word of God cannot be domesticated, it is true and authoritative.

That's our big idea. The word of God cannot be domesticated, it cannot be controlled, it cannot be tamed or leveraged or harnessed or corrupted, it is true and authoritative.

[33:47] But, the man of God compromised by assuming that God's word was in error, by assuming that God's word was open to debate and he ended up dead on the side of the road.

It's like we said last week, either God's word in scripture is a merely human text with some good ideas and some bad ideas, with some things that the authors got right and some things that they got wrong and if that's the case then we can just safely disregard it because it's just a couple of guys and what they think.

Or, the other option is that God's word in scripture in our Bibles is the independent, true, reliable authority to which we are all accountable.

And if that's true, then we must obey it and believe it. And those are really the only two options. When we compromise our doctrine of scripture, when we say that the Bible has errors and that it gets some things wrong, what we are saying is that at least to some extent it is a merely human

text.

We're trying to domesticate it. We're trying to tame it. We're trying to kind of knock off some of those sharp edges so it isn't as embarrassing or so that it fits our world view or our experience a little bit better or so that it isn't so offensive to people or so that other people will like it more.

[35:26] And like the man of God, we know that God's revelation has been validated by miracles and we know that this is the word of God that has been passed down to us through countless generations of the people of God and we know that this is the word that has been recognized by the people of God as inspired by the Holy Spirit and breathed out by him and we know what it says and we know what it claims but then like the old prophet someone with some other kind of authority comes along a scientist or a scholar or a politician or a celebrity or a good friend and they say well I'm not sure the Bible means it quite that way I'm sure that God is a little bit more flexible than that and then we say like the man of God okay let's have lunch at your house I can think of a couple of ways that we might be tempted to compromise our view of the Bible there are others but here's two one temptation is to compromise to protect the Bible from being offensive the good news of inerrancy the good news of the doctrine of inerrancy is that we don't have to pick and choose the whole Bible is important and nowhere in the Bible are there any false claims but of course that's also the bad news right inerrancy means that those passages in Scripture that seem embarrassing or are really out of step with our culture are the authoritative word of God and must be believed and accepted our culture is at the point now when the

Bible and the views that we hold from the Bible are viewed as evil sometimes the Bible has a sharp sharp contradiction with culture that everyone has a sin nature that Jesus is the only hope of salvation that marriage is between only one man and one woman that it is wrong and sinful to entertain ourselves with certain things that consumerism is a sin and spending all of our money on ourselves instead of submitting it to the Lord is a sin how do we respond to that temptation to kind of tame it so that it's less offensive we have to be we have to be determined to be loyal to God first and to make everything else secondary we have to cultivate a love for scripture even the moral laws we have to recognize that

God prohibits things because he loves us and he wants our good he knows that those sins will destroy us and they will destroy the people that we love the second temptation is to compromise our view of the Bible in order to excuse or allow for personal sin one time I heard a New Testament scholar say that many people compromise their view of scripture in college because they want to be sexually promiscuous we've heard these stories we've heard stories of people caught in adultery or moving toward adultery and then it's amazing suddenly they find out that scripture doesn't prohibit adultery people conveniently ignore what the what scripture says about the sin of divorce people ignore what scripture teaches about loving our enemies even our political enemies but what we need to do is follow scripture as the absolute guide to what

God wants from us confess repent do not put up with any hidden sin that will weaken you don't allow small compromises to grow and lead to bigger ones in C.S.

Lewis's book *The Silver Chair* Aslan who represents Jesus gives Eustace and Jill four signs that they must memorize and repeat in order to be successful on their adventurous journey and Aslan makes Jill repeat these four signs over and over until she has them memorized he warns her that once they get into Narnia and the adventure is confusing it will be easy to forget the signs and that she must repeat them every morning every afternoon and every evening so that nothing can make her forget them but then as the children are on their adventure they do forget the signs and it doesn't go well they run into all kinds of problems and danger and troubles because they have forgotten their instructions from Aslan the man of God in this story knew his instructions he knew what God had commanded him to do and he repeated those instructions but he compromised in a moment and it led to disaster what do we need to recite what have we been told about the nature of scripture what do we need to allow to sink deep down in our hearts in order to fortify and strengthen us for the difficult days to come

[41:24] I just want to end today by reciting a few key verses of scripture about scripture and these will be our signs that we recite and remember to strengthen our hearts to accept the truth and the authority of God's word numbers 23 19 God is not man that he should lie or a son of man that he should change his mind Psalm 19 7 the law of the Lord is perfect the testimony of the Lord is sure making wise the simple Psalm 119 89 forever O Lord your word is firmly fixed in the heavens Proverbs 30 verse 5 every word of God proves true Isaiah 40 verse 8 the grass withers the flower fades but the word of our God will stand forever

Matthew 5 18 for truly I say to you until heaven and earth pass away not an iota not a dot will pass from the law until everything is accomplished John 10 35 scripture cannot be broken John 17 17 your word is truth 2nd Timothy 3 16 all scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching for reproof for correction and for training in righteousness Titus 1 2 in hope of eternal life which God who never lies promised before the ages began Hebrews 6 18 it is impossible for God to lie 2nd Peter 1 21 for no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit Amen Let's pray Father you have given us your holy and authoritative word and it does not always match very well with the culture in which we swim with the values that are advanced around us with the way that our friends and neighbors view the world and their lives and us and so what we need is the renewing of our minds and we pray for that we pray that you would give us a rock steady confidence in the authority and the truth of your word so when the bumps come when when life gets confusing when we face situations that are new that we will know that we stand on your unchanging and unerring word we pray that you would convince us of this that your spirit would impress it on our hearts and that we would not compromise we pray this in your name amen