

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

The Books Of Kings: The Kings Of Israel And Judah From Solomon To The Babylonian Captivity

I. The United Kingdom, 1 Kings 1:1-11:43

D. Solomon's Long, Slippery Slope Of Destructive Compromise (1 Kings 4:1-34 et al.)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

We face the tendency to compromise basic laws and principles in various realms today:

(1) The United States Code, Title 36, Subtitle I, Part A, chapter 3, Paragraph 301 on the national anthem states that "(b) During a rendition of the national anthem (1) when the flag is displayed . . . (c) all . . . [non-military] persons should face the flag and stand at attention with their right hand over their heart . . ." (law.cornell.edu)

However, When President Donald Trump suggested that National Football League players who "kneel during the national anthem" to express social protest should be fired, "more than 130 players" responded by sitting, kneeling or raising their fists in defiance of the President's remark. (Arnie Stapleton, "Players won't stand for it," Republican-American, September 25, 2017, p. 1A)

(2) The tendency to compromise occurs in religious realms: on July 27, 2012, former talk show personality, Glen Beck, a Mormon, met in a gathering in Arlington, Texas with Roman Catholic, Word of Faith, pro-family, neo-evangelical and "conservative Bible teachers, such as Tony Evans, David Jeremiah, and Ravi Zacharias" to show their solidarity in "reclaiming America." (Brannon Howse, The Coming Religious Reich, 2015, p. 16-17, 23)

However, for "conservative Bible teachers" to join ranks in solidarity with many who hold a false gospel of salvation by faith plus works makes them violate Galatians 1:8-9 that forbids fellowship with those of another gospel!

Need: *So, we ask, "If compromise on basic laws or principles is common today, what does God want us to do?!"*

- I. Due to great blessings, Solomon and Israel were vulnerable to spiritual slackness, 1 Kings 4:1-25, 27-34:**
- A. God's gift of wisdom to Solomon caused him to delegate responsibility to other capable men in his realm:
 - 1. The Lord had promised to grant Solomon the wisdom he desired (1 Kings 3:9-12) along with riches and honor (1 Kings 3:13) in reward for requesting wisdom in ruling God's people Israel.
 - 2. That wisdom included the capacity for Solomon to understand his need to delegate authority to run his expansive empire, so he assigned 11 capable men for key duties: he appointed 3 key priests to run Israel's worship functions (1 Kings 4:1-2, 4b), 2 secretaries (v. 3a), 1 historical recorder (v. 3b), a commander over the army (v. 4), a man over his 12 district officers (v. 5a) a priest as a personal adviser (v. 5b), a man in charge of the palace (v. 6a) and a man over the monarchy's forced labor (v. 6b).
 - 3. Solomon divided Israel's territory into 12 districts with each district being responsible to supply livelihood provisions for one month during the year for all of his officials throughout his empire, and he put an official over each territory to oversee the smooth flow of these provisions, 1 Kings 4:7-19.
 - B. The people multiplied greatly in number and enjoyed bountiful livelihood provisions and joy, 1 Kings 4:20.
 - C. Solomon's rule dominated Gentile nations all of the way from the Euphrates to the far north to Egypt in the far south, and all of these nations gave him tribute and served Solomon all during his life, 1 Kings 4:21.
 - D. To feed all his officials throughout his expanded empire, Solomon acquired each day 185 bushels of fine flour, 375 bushels of meal, 10 stall-fattened cattle, 20 pasture-fed cattle, 100 sheep and goats besides wild deer, gazelles, roebucks and fowl, 1 Kings 4:22-24a; Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 497.
 - E. Israel thus enjoyed peace on all sides throughout Solomon's reign (1 Kings 4:24b-25), with the 12 districts providing for the livelihood needs of not only Solomon's officers, but also his animals, 1 Kings 4:27-28.
 - F. As for Solomon himself, he blossomed in God's blessing, becoming wiser than any other man in the nations during his time so that people came from many other countries to hear his wisdom, 1 Kings 4:29-34.
 - G. Amid all this blessing, it would have been easy to become spiritually lax regarding heeding Scripture!
- II. Nevertheless, in time, Solomon compromised his obedience to God's Word by amassing a large chariot army, a sin that went unchallenged as all Israel was too busy enjoying life to be concerned, 1 Kings 4:26:**
- A. Solomon built 4,000 stalls for the 12,000 chariot horses he accumulated (NIV; Ibid.; the KJV reading of 40,000 stalls was likely a scribal error, cf. 2 Chronicles 9:25), a clear violation of Deuteronomy 17:16a.
 - B. However, "no one seemed to be concerned that Solomon was disobeying God," and there is no hint in the context of 1 Kings 4 that anyone even complained about it, Ryrie St. Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to 1 Kings 4:26.
- III. Yet, Solomon's Scripture violation was part of a long, slippery slope into destructive compromise:**

- A. Solomon's acquisition of his chariot horses arose out of a series of Scripture compromises:
 1. When Solomon married Pharaoh's daughter, he violated Deuteronomy 7:1-4 and Deuteronomy 17:17a that forbade the marriage of people in Israel to pagans lest such spouses lead God's people into idolatry.
 2. However, being married to Pharaoh's daughter gave Solomon closer ties with Pharaoh, what led Solomon to trade with Egypt and elsewhere for horses (2 Chronicles 1:16) in violation of Deuteronomy 17:16a,b that prohibited Israel's kings from acquiring war horses specifically from Egypt.
 3. This trade proved to be lucrative: Solomon sold the horses at a big profit to other nations to become very rich (2 Chronicles 1:17a), violating Deuteronomy 17:17b that forbade him from amassing silver and gold.
 4. Selling many horses to Hittites and Arameans (2 Chronicles 1:17b), people who could become Israel's enemies, would have left Solomon concerned to keep enough horses he acquired from Egypt to guard his own nation, so he violated Deuteronomy 17:16a,b by developing his own chariot army force, 1 Kings 4:26.
- B. However, Solomon's compromise of God's Word eventually led to the division of his great kingdom:
 1. In compromising Scripture by marrying Pharaoh's daughter and then making more compromises, Solomon found it easy to love and marry many pagan women and acquire many pagan mistresses, 1 Kings 11:2-3.
 2. Exposure to so many pagan women led Solomon to turn from God unto false gods, 1 Kings 11:4-8.
 3. For this sin, God promised to punish Solomon by tearing most of Israel away from his son (1 Kings 11:9-13), producing the divided kingdom that has yet to be restored under Israel's coming Messiah, Jesus Christ.

Lesson: *When Solomon and Israel enjoyed God's blessings in his reign, he become spiritually negligent, compromising God's Word on one issue, what led to more compromises that produced the division of his kingdom.*

Application: *In facing the tendency to compromise obeying basic laws and principles today, may we (1) trust in Christ and be saved by God's grace, John 3:16; Ephesians 2:8-9. (2) As a believer, may we (a) not love the world and its lusts (1 John 2:15-16) that we (b) avoid compromising Scripture, (c) knowing that even one compromise leads down a long, slippery slope into many more such compromises that result in destruction!*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

This message has great relevancy even locally, a fact we illustrate as follows:

(1) A missionary we know was trained as a counselor under Dr. Larry Crabb, who in the 1980s claimed to use "only the biblically sound ideas from psychology . . . (a)nd, he criticize[d] those who would use solely the Scriptures as 'nothing buttery.'" (Martin and Deidre Bobgan, PsychoHeresy, 1987, p. 75, citing Larry Crabb, Effective Biblical Counseling, 1977, p. 37)

Dr. Crabb then praised secular psychologist Erich Fromm's "'helpful' insights on people's need for love," a problem even then, for Fromm believes "man is intrinsically good" and "refutes God's diagnosis of sin as the basic problem with mankind. Fromm's underlying philosophy and system of understanding of the human condition is in opposition to the Bible" (Ibid., Bobgan, p. 76), leaving his insights spiritually suspect to say the least.

Dr. Crabb then also "highly" regarded secular psychologist "Carl Rogers's contributions to the importance of counseling (even though Rogers repudiated Christianity and turned to the occult)." (Ibid., citing Crabb, Effective Biblical Counseling, 1977, p. 44 and William Kirk Kilpatrick, The Emperor's New Clothes, 1985) How can a man who repudiated Christianity and turned to the occult make contributions to counseling of any credible spiritual value?

(2) However, Dr. Crabb's willingness to borrow what he thought was biblically sound from ungodly psychologists in the 1980s to use along with Scripture has now developed into another, deeper compromise of Scripture since he has written the book, The Papa Prayer, promoting mystical contemplative prayer. Such prayer is purely experiential apart from Scripture, a practice begun by Medieval Roman Catholic mystics (Ibid., Crabb, p. 9 as cited in thebereancall.org, "Larry Crabb to Join Richard Foster's Renovare Contemplative Conference," April 9, 2014)

(3) The missionary we know adopted Dr. Crabb's viewpoint by using secular psychological techniques to where she asserts she does not use Scripture in counseling, what we might expect from one who was trained by a man who criticizes "those who would use solely the Scriptures as 'nothing buttery,'" Ibid., Bobgan, p. 75. What is of greater concern is her mentor's late shift into contemplative prayer, and how that example may affect the missionary!

Accordingly, as it was in Solomon's era, so it is today: there is a long, slippery slope toward apostasy that occurs by opting to sidestep Scripture on one thing that leads to deeper compromises of God's Word. Isaiah 8:20 comments in this regard that unless we say essentially "let's get back to the Bible," we have no light of dawn in us!

May we trust in Christ for salvation. Then, may we learn the lesson of Solomon's reign not to tolerate any even seemingly small compromise of Scripture, that we escape its long, slippery slope into destruction.