

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

E. Heeding Scripture Above All Other Interests

(1 Kings 5:1-7:51)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Many people are influenced to act out of interests that have little if anything to do with obeying Scripture:

(1) It happens in society: Linda L. Demeir's letter to the Republican-American, January 5, 2018, p. 7A, told how she recently saw a man enter a store and ask for "a refill on coffee. It was apparent that this . . . was the only thing he would have all day. He . . . was refused, and . . . a woman dressed to the hilt" told "him off for asking."

Upset at the woman's action, Linda asked her, "'Lady, do you go to church?'" (Ibid.) When the lady answered, "'As a matter of fact, I don't!'" Linda replied, "'It shows.'" (Ibid.)

Linda admitted, "I later regretted this: it was not my place to ask," Ibid. Yet, the scene she witnessed we often see played out in the public arena where heeding Scripture seems to be the least of some party's concerns!

(2) It occurs with believers: Dr. Robert D. Culver, long-time professor at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, in his book, A Wake Up Call, 1993, p. 73, lamented that "(p)astors" today, "however much they wish it were not so, are under constraints to conform to the spirit of the age and go easy on doctrinal precision" from the pulpit.

Need: *So, we ask, "With all our interests in life, where does heeding Scripture fit into God's priorities, and why?!"*

I. Amid Solomon's extensive interests and massive efforts extended in building the temple and his palace grounds, God overlooked all such interests and efforts to focus on Solomon's need to obey His Word:

- A. 1 Kings 5:1-7:51 presents extensive details on Solomon's big preparations to build the temple (1 Kings 5:1-18), the building effort itself (1 Kings 6:1-10, 15-38), the massive construction of his palace (1 Kings 7:1-12) and how Solomon extensively furnished the completed temple complex, 1 Kings 7:13-51.
- B. Yet, amid all of these descriptions of Solomon's great effort, only at 1 Kings 6:11-13 did God address Solomon, and when He did, the **LORD** made **NO COMMENT** about Solomon's **GREAT EFFORT**, but only that Solomon **OBEY** His **WORD FULLY** as the basis of God's fulfilling His promise to David's seed to dwell among His people and not to forsake them, 1 Kings 6:12b, 13a,b.

II. God's EMPHASIS on OBEYING SCRIPTURE WITHOUT ACKNOWLEDGING Solomon's GREAT EFFORT demands an EXPLANATION, and the EXTENDED CONTEXT reveals SOLOMON was ALREADY DISOBEYING SCRIPTURE on FIVE COUNTS, an OBVIOUS CONCERN to the LORD:

- A. Solomon was *already violating Scripture* relative to *marriage to a pagan woman and building her a palace:*
 - 1. Deuteronomy 17:17a (with 7:3-4) called for Israel's kings to avoid marrying pagan woman lest they turn the hearts of these kings away from following the Lord to go after false gods.
 - 2. However, 1 Kings 3:1 reports that Solomon had already made a treaty with Egypt's ruler Pharaoh by marrying his daughter, that Solomon was keeping her in the fortress of the City of David until he had built his own palace, the temple of the Lord and had built up the city walls around the whole city of Jerusalem!
 - 3. Part of Solomon's extensive palace structure was the building for Pharaoh's daughter (1 Kings 7:8b), so even in constructing his own palace grounds, Solomon was already out of alignment with God's Word!
- B. Solomon was *already disobeying Scripture* on *greatly multiplying wealth to himself:*
 - 1. Deuteronomy 17:17b forbade Israel's kings from greatly multiplying wealth to themselves.
 - 2. However, Solomon was violating this command in regards to the construction of his own palace grounds:
 - a. 2 Samuel 5:11 informs us that Tyre's king Hiram had already sent messengers, cedar trees, carpenters and stone masons to build Solomon's father king David a palace in his era as king.
 - b. From Solomon's compliment of Hiram's workmen and materials in 1 Kings 5:6-10, we know the palace that Hiram had built for his father David would have been a quality structure, not in need of improvement.
 - c. Nevertheless, Solomon had married Pharaoh's daughter, and she likely desired a much grander structure like she had known in Egypt in her father's palace, so Solomon was under pressure to build an impressive palace structure for her! Thus, his palace grounds, complete with his dwelling, the dwelling of Pharaoh's daughter and his administrative hall ended up being four times larger than the temple of the Lord! (1 Kings 7:2; 6:2-3; Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 501-502)
- C. Solomon was *already disobeying Scripture* relative to *having his heart be lifted up above his countrymen:*

1. Deuteronomy 17:20a NIV forbade Israel's king from letting his heart be lifted up above his countrymen in viewing himself as more important than they were so as to take advantage of them with his power as king.
 2. However, in drafting the forced labor of 30,000 men in Israel to work on the temple (1 Kings 5:13), though Solomon sent 10,000 men a month in shifts to Lebanon while giving them two months leave per shift, the palace grounds he built after finishing the temple took 13 **more** years of forced labor, all to construct a new palace instead of being content with the palace he had inherited from David, 1 Kings 6:38b; 7:1; 9:10.
 3. This extensive labor proved to be burdensome for Israel's forced laborers, too: 1 Kings 12:1-4 later records Jeroboam asking Solomon's son Rehoboam to lessen the forced labor yoke that his father Solomon had placed upon them, that the men of Israel would then willingly serve Rehoboam.
 4. Thus, Solomon put his selfish interests above the welfare of his subordinates, letting his heart be lifted up above them rather than humbly doing his best to edify his subjects!
- D. Solomon was ***already disobeying Scripture*** relative to ***multiplying horses unto himself***: Deuteronomy 17:16a forbade Israel's kings from multiplying horses to themselves, but Solomon's ties with Pharaoh through his marriage to Pharaoh's daughter led to a lucrative trade with Egypt for horses (1 Kings 10:28) and his building of thousands of horse stalls for his horses. (1 Kings 4:26; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to 1 Kings 4:26).
- E. Solomon was ***already disobeying Scripture*** relative to his ***neglecting his daily personal reading of Scripture***: Deuteronomy 17:18-20 directed Israel's kings to make their own copy of the Law and to read from it daily that they might heed Scripture exactly for God's blessing. However, Solomon's clear failure to heed Scripture exactly at even this early point in his reign meant he was already adrift from reading daily from God's Word!
- III. Since GOD'S BLESSING of Israel's king was DIRECTLY related to HOW WELL he OBEYED GOD'S WORD (Deuteronomy 17:14-20a, 20b), Solomon's MULTI-FACETED DISOBEDIENCE ALREADY HURT HIM, so GOD FOCUSED on his need to HEED SCRIPTURE versus addressing his WORK!**

Lesson: *Solomon's impressive efforts to construct God's temple and his own palace grounds was already spiritually sabotaged by his disobedience to Scripture, so God called him back to his duty to heed God's Word!*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ for salvation, John 3:16. (2) May we then realize that God views obedience to Scripture as more important than any other interest we have, for only as we obey Him will He bless us!*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

While preparing this message, the Lord brought to mind many realms in which we believers tend to overlook what Scripture teaches because of some other competing interest, and we address ***some*** of them here (as follows):

(1) I recently heard a believer claim we must pray for God to make us patient with a difficult person. Actually, that is not correct: Galatians 5:22-23 ESV claims "patience" is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, and Galatians 5:16 directs that if we walk by the Spirit, we will not gratify the lusts of the sin nature and thus avoid being impatient! We do not need to pray for patience. Instead, we need to obey Scripture at Galatians 5:16 and rely on the Holy Spirit!

(2) Many believers, myself included, long for "self-control" in either overcoming a bad habit or in sticking to a correct diet, etc. Praying about this need is not the correct route to take, either, for "self-control" is another fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23 ESV). We must thus rely on the Holy Spirit for the self-control we need to avoid bad practices and do what is right! Self-control for us is a matter of obedience to the Word of God!

(3) Some believers claim we can pray to the Holy Spirit or to Jesus. However, Scripture teaches us to pray to the Father in Jesus' name in the power of the Holy Spirit, John 14:13-14; Jude 20. This is a matter of obedience.

(4) On another example, 2 Thessalonians 3:14 directs that if any believer does not heed Paul's instruction in the 2 Thessalonians epistle, other believers are not to associate with him to warn him to repent! This is known as "second degree separation," but often believers do not heed this! Yet, it is a matter of obedience to the Word of God!

(5) Also, after critiquing how the people of Israel were seeking advice from spirit guides in Isaiah 8:19, Isaiah 8:20 ESV directs, "'To the teaching and to the testimony!' If they will not speak according to this word, it is because they have no dawn." In other words, we must heed Scripture as the final basis of our thinking or we function in utter spiritual darkness. However, many believers heed counsel or advice from sources other than Scripture, be they counselors or even Reiki healing practitioners who open the door for outright demonism! It is a matter of obedience!

(6) 2 Timothy 4:1-4 calls pastors to expound Scripture as their foremost ministry priority, for their hearers would eventually not tolerate the Word, but replace it with other pursuits. I see this shift occur in the increase of church program that competes against Scripture exposition in the church. It is a matter of obedience to God's Word!

May we trust in Christ for salvation from sin. May we then heed Scripture as our greatest priority!