

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

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

III. The Latter Era Of The Divided Kingdom, 2 Kings 2:1-27:41

R. Effective Godly Influence Amid Great Evil Opposition

(2 Kings 11:1-12:16; 2 Chronicles 24:14b-16)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Last Sunday after our morning sermon on trusting God when all hope for relief seems futile, three men told of the timeliness of the message in their lives. As a follow-up, it would be good to study how God wants us to have an effective, godly influence to combat the spiritual opposition we face, which opposition is great as we can illustrate:

(1) Ben Shapiro's column, "The GOP's pouncing problem" (Republican-American, February 15, 2019, p. 6A) noted how we face it in the government and media, for "prominent" elected officials "have endorsed infanticide; admitted to dressing in blackface; called for an end to fossil fuels, airplanes . . . and trafficked in open anti-Semitism. None of this is a problem for many in the news media" since "a huge swath" if it "is inseparable from" such officials.

(2) We face it in society in the form of fatherlessness: David Blankenhorn's article, "Life Without Father" (USA WEEKEND, February 24-26, 1995, p. 4) twenty-four years ago claimed that "(f)atherlessness is the most harmful demographic trend of this generation . . . It is . . . the engine driving our most urgent social problems, from crime to adolescent pregnancy to domestic violence."

As a pastor, I see that fatherlessness has since then mutated into widespread, general dysfunctional fatherhood issues that now affect many people in the church in the form of abusive behaviors or even tendencies for immorality.

Need: *So, we ask, "How can we have an effective, godly influence amid great evil darkness we face?!"*

I. Judah's High Priest Jehoiada faced a great crisis of evil opposition, 2 Kings 11:1:

- A. When Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, learned that her son Judah's king Ahaziah had been slain by Jehu (2 Kings 9:27), she tried to destroy all the Davidic princes so she could seize the throne, 2 Kings 11:1.
- B. With a vacuum of male leadership on the Davidic throne, queen Athaliah built a temple to Baal in opposition to Judah's true God and His temple where Jehoiada was High Priest (cf. 2 Kings 11:18), and her sons broke into God's temple, looting its furnishings for use in Baal's temple (2 Chronicles 24:7), and God's temple deteriorated and went unrepaired (cf. 2 Kings 12:1-5).
- C. Athaliah's rule was thus very wicked and oppressive to the people, a fact seen in the nation's relief when she was finally removed from power and executed, 2 Kings 11:20.

II. However, Jehoiada responded to this great crisis with effective godly influence, 2 Kings 11:2-12:16:

- A. Jehoiada used the opportunity God granted to him to minister, 2 Kings 11:4; Bib. Know. Com., O. T., p. 560:
 - 1. A small baby boy in the Davidic royal line had been spared Athaliah's purge by Jehoiada's wife Jehosheba, and she hid him in a storage room in the temple under Jehoiada's oversight, 2 Chronicles 22:10-12.
 - 2. Jehoiada realized the importance of this boy's existence toward returning a male king to the Davidic throne in accord with God's will and the hope that this gave to removing Athaliah from office, so he dedicated himself toward the protection and nurture of this child toward toppling Athaliah, 2 Kings 11:4.
- B. Jehoiada then adopted a workable plan of action to replace Athaliah with the Davidic king, 2 Kings 11:4-10:
 - 1. Since Athaliah's reign was so oppressively evil and hard on the nation, Jehoiada did not want to wait too long to coronate the boy lest Athaliah ruin the spirit of the people and destroy the nation's moral fiber, but neither could he coronate a child who had not matured enough to function as a king.
 - 2. Accordingly, Jehoiada waited seven years until the young prince could interact with Jehoiada and follow his instructions on the throne before planning to topple queen Athaliah, 2 Kings 11:4a.
 - 3. Jehoiada's plan was designed to incorporate a loyal force of soldiers (2 Kings 11:4b) placed at key strategic locations to insure the boy prince's security (2 Kings 11:5-9) and use of king David's weapons that had been stored in the temple (2 Kings 11:10) so as not to spread news among the army of the boy prince's existence lest Athaliah hear of it and execute the prince.
- C. Jehoiada honored the Lord in his methods, directing that Athaliah not be slain on the temple grounds as it was a place of worship, but that she be arrested there and led away for execution, 2 Kings 11:11-16; Ibid., p. 561.
- D. Jehoiada sought a unified commitment from the people to obey the Lord, 2 Kings 11:17.
- E. Jehoiada carefully implemented each part of his plan to provide security for the king, 2 Kings 11:18-20.
- F. Jehoiada put progress of God's program ahead of his own personal pride, 2 Kings 12:1-8:

1. When Joash came to the throne, he tried to get the Aaronic priests to use the moneys collected from the people for the census, vow and free-will offerings to repair the temple of the Lord, directing the priests who collected these offerings to direct these moneys for the repair work, 2 Kings 12:1-5; Ibid.
 2. However, 23 years into Joash's reign, the repair work had not been done, for the priests who controlled the collections likely thought the money being donated was insufficient to meet their living needs and to pay for the temple repair, so they did not set the money aside for the repairs, 2 Kings 12:6; Ibid., p. 561-562.
 3. King Joash then ordered Jehoiada and the other priests to deliver the collections directly over to the repairmen so the repairs on the temple could be performed, 2 Kings 12:7.
 4. Instead of resisting the king's charge out of pride since the offerings were Biblically intended for the priests, Jehoiada put progress of God's program ahead of personal pride to obey the king, 2 Kings 12:8.
- G. Jehoiada then improvised a solution to the problem that promoted unity and progress for all, 2 Kings 12:9-16:
1. He took a chest and bored a hole in its lid, making it into a lockbox of sorts, and set it beside the altar so that all the money that entered the temple would be put into it for the repair work, 2 Kings 12:9.
 2. Whenever the chest filled up, the collection was handed over to the repairmen so they could purchase the hardware needed for the repairs and take care of their own livelihood needs on the job, 2 Kings 12:10-14.
 3. The repairmen worked with integrity, so no accounting was ever made of the offerings, 2 Kings 12:15, and the trespass offering money and sin offering money was given to the priests, not put in the chest, v. 16.

III. Jehoiada was thus greatly rewarded in the end by both man and God, 2 Chronicles 24:14b-16:

- A. Jehoiada influenced king Joash whom he had raised to guide the nation of Judah to follow the Lord. As long as Jehoiada lived, he influenced king Joash and Judah to follow the Lord, 2 Chronicles 24:14b.
- B. In reward for his godly deeds, God gave Jehoiada a long life of 130 years, 2 Chron. 24:15; Psalm 91:14-16.
- C. When Jehoiada died, though he was a high priest and not a king, the people of Judah buried him in honor with Judah's kings because of all the good he had done for the Lord and for His temple, 2 Chronicles 24:16.

Lesson: *When facing a great crisis of evil opposition in Athaliah's reign, Jehoiada (1) used the opportunity God gave him to minister, (2) he adopted a reasonable plan of action to promote righteousness, (3) he honored the Lord in his methods, (4) he sought a unified commitment from God's people to obey the Lord, (5) he implemented his plan of action with care to provide stability, (6) he put the progress of God's program ahead of his personal pride and (7) he improvised a solution to a problem to unify God's people and cause the Lord's work to progress.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ to be saved, John 3:16. (2) If facing great, evil opposition, may we (a) rely on the Holy Spirit for the power to (b) follow Jehoiada's example to have great, godly influence for the Lord.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

Jehoiada's efforts to counter the great evil caused by Athaliah and her spiritually and socially dysfunctional reign is like the challenge we in the church face today in countering the effects of dysfunctional fatherhood issues in the church, the problem mentioned in our introduction that has long existed in society. Jehoiada was effective in influencing his generation in Judah for God amid the vacuum of a king of God's choosing during Athaliah's oppressive and dysfunctional reign, so heeding Jehoiada's example, I wish to implement a workable plan for our need.

To that end, we note that all true Biblical "fatherhood" **actually originates with GOD Himself:** the Scripture writer confessed, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon the earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever," Psalm 73:25-26 KJV. If **God** was the strength of heart and portion of the Scripture writer, He is the **real spiritual** "Father" of **all** believers.

This truth fits human history: when God created man, Adam had no earthly father but his Creator God, and the Lord would fellowship with Adam in the Garden of Eden, in reality fathering him, cf. Genesis 2:7; 3:8-9.

Also, God is **perfectly** and **consistently GOOD** (Romans 2:4), **RIGHTEOUS** (Deuteronomy 32:4) and **LOVING** (1 John 4:8-10) unlike sinful, mortal fathers who are imperfect and inconsistent in their attributes. Thus, ***we leaders in the church must ALWAYS TESTIFY of the ALL-SUFFICIENCY of GOD that EVERYONE, ESPECIALLY those with dysfunctional fatherhood backgrounds who suffer the effects of such issues, might find security and emotional stability in GOD as their FATHER! Yes, we church leaders and family men are to EXAMPLE God's goodness, righteousness and love, but NOT let others make us into FALSE IDOLS that REPLACE the LORD Who ALONE is PERFECTLY and CONSISTENTLY GOOD, RIGHTEOUS and LOVING!***

May we trust in Christ for salvation. In facing great, evil opposition, may we rely on the Holy Spirit for the power to follow godly Jehoiada's example to have great, godly influence for the Lord.