

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

U. Overcoming Spiritual Overreach

(2 Kings 14:1-22)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

The news of late has been full of reports about people who overreach proper boundaries and get into trouble:

(1) Alanna Durkin Richer and Collin Binkley's story, "College bribery scam busted; Hollywood stars among accused" (Republican-American, March 13, 2019, p. 1A) reported, "Fifty people, including Hollywood stars Felicity Huffman and Lori Loughlin, were charged Tuesday in a scheme in which wealthy parents allegedly bribed college coaches and other insiders to get their children into some of the nation's most selective schools."

However, Erica Komisar's op-ed, "The Sickness Behind the College Scandal" in The Wall Street Journal, March 18, 2019, p. A17, explained how this often leads to trouble for such students, for "(s)ome of the kids who get into these top universities find they can't handle the academic pressure and break down."

(2) It occurs in politics, too: a cartoon in the March 15, 2019 Republican-American, p. 6A, shows U. S. Senator Elizabeth Warren, Democrat from New York, who got into law school claiming she was of Native American descent, and she is reading about the college admissions scandal from The New York Times while sitting in a college admissions office sipping a cup of coffee, and she is saying, "They should've just claimed to be native Americans."

Senator Warren's overreach in how she got admitted into law school undermines her credibility as a politician.

(3) Overreach affects religious realms: Brannon Howse in his book, Religious Trojan Horse, 2012, p. 16, claims, "Numerous members of the New Religious Right refuse to [sic] publicly refute the false Jesus and false gospel of Mormonism and the Catholic Church because to do so would cost them financial contributions and destroy their political coalitions." By unbiblically overreaching for money, such evangelicals are helping to promote apostasy!

Need: *"With harmful 'overreach' occurring on so many levels today, HOW does God call us to overcome it?!"*

I. When Amaziah first came to Judah's throne, he obeyed Scripture, so God blessed him, 2 Kings 14:1-7:

- A. Amaziah began to rule Judah by practicing righteousness like his father Joash had first done, though not as well as ancestor David in that Amaziah's subjects still sacrificed in unbiblical high places, 2 Kings 14:1-4.
- B. Nevertheless, unlike pagan Ancient Near Eastern kings, Amaziah executed only those men who had assassinated his father Joash without also executing their children, for Amaziah sought to heed Deuteronomy 24:16. (2 Kings 14:5-6) [This passages has an important quote from Deuteronomy in support of our Christian faith: the Documentary Hypothesis, a key part of Liberal Theology, holds that Deuteronomy was written after Amaziah's time when the book was first found and used by Josiah in 2 Kings 22:1-20. (Gleason L. Archer, A Survey of O. T. Intro., 1972, p. 74) Amaziah's obedience to Deuteronomy 24:16 170+ years before Josiah's finding of the scroll of the Law in the temple (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, p. 582, 598) thus discredits a major tenant of Liberal Theology, countering Liberal Theology's denial of Scripture's divine inspiration!]
- C. For trusting God to keep the children of the men he had executed from making trouble for himself, Amaziah saw God give him a great victory over Edom, 2 Kings 14:7: he slew 10,000 Edomites in the "valley of salt" south of the Dead Sea (Ibid., fn. to 2 Kings 14:7) and captured Petra, renaming it Joktheel, 2 Kings 14:7; Ibid.

II. However, gaining a false confidence in his own prowess by this victory, Amaziah initiated a war against Israel in violation of Scripture, an OVERREACH that led to his decline, 2 Kings 14:8-22:

- A. 2 Kings 14:8 begins with the adverb '*az*, "thereupon, then" (Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 582; B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 23) to indicate that what occurred in 2 Kings 14:8 is based on 2 Kings 14:7.
- B. Thus, emboldened by his 2 Kings 14:7 great victory over Edom, Amaziah challenged Jehoash, the king of Israel, to "look one another in the face," a challenge to war in 2 Kings 14:8. (Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 565)
- C. Amaziah was the unbiblical aggressor in this case, so he sinned against God by instigating such a war:
 1. God had told Solomon that He would rend the Northern Kingdom of Israel away from the Southern Kingdom of Judah in judgment for Solomon's apostasy against the Lord, 1 Kings 11:9-13.
 2. When that prediction was fulfilled in the reign of Solomon's son Rehoboam, and Rehoboam tried to regain control over the Northern Kingdom of Israel by war, God sent the prophet Shemaiah to warn Rehoboam not to fight against Israel, for the split of Solomon's kingdom was God's intended will, 1 Kings 12:16-24a.
 3. Amaziah thus disobeyed God's word through Shemaiah by waging war against Israel in sinful **overreach!**

- D. Israel's king Jehoash replied to Amaziah's challenge by teaching him a proverb that indicated Amaziah should be content with the victory he had gained over Edom lest Israel hurt him and defeat Judah, 2 Kings 14:9-10.
- E. Amaziah did not heed Jehoash's warning, so the armies of Israel and Judah faced each other to fight at Bethshemesh in Judah (2 Kings 14:11), and Israel soundly defeated Judah, 2 Kings 14:12. Jehoash captured Amaziah, and Joash came to Jerusalem, broke down four hundred cubits of the city wall, leaving its defenses weakened, and he took all of the gold and silver in the temple and Amaziah's palace along with hostages from the city and returned to his capital in Samaria, 2 Kings 14:13-14.
- F. When Jehoash died, Amaziah was freed and returned to rule Judah as co-regent with his son for fifteen years until some conspirators rose against him and pursued him to Lachish where they killed him, and Amaziah's body was returned to Jerusalem and buried, 1 Kings 14:15-22; Ibid., Bible Know. Com., O. T.
- G. Thus, Amaziah's overreach in ceasing to heed Scripture when he chose to wage war on Israel was the point in his life when he turned from enjoying God's blessing to facing a prolonged, painful, humiliating decline.

Lesson: *When Amaziah began to reign by heeding Scripture and trusting God to hold his enemies in check, God richly enabled him to defeat the Edomites, but when Amaziah OVERREACHED in pride to disobey Scripture and wage war against Israel, God's blessing left him, and he suffered a long, painful, humiliating decline.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ for salvation from sin, John 3:16. (2) May we overcome the temptation to overreach by (a) realizing that GOD has an agenda FOR our lives, that (b) we must thus submit to His calling and obey Scripture to function within God's assignment for us in order to enjoy His blessing.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

The sermon lesson is applicable to the two major issues we noted in our introduction:

(1) To avoid the problem of overreach regarding admission to college, (a) a believer starting out in life should focus on doing well in grade school and high school in order to prepare himself academically for higher education. (b) When he starts to think about what he will do after graduating from high school, he should seek God's guidance on **whether** he should go to a college or trade school or join the military, etc., and **what** institution to attend. (c) If he does not yet know what his occupation in life will be, he should start going in that direction that best provides him the widest possible options for the future, giving himself more time to discern God's will for his future.

(d) If admission to a top tier university will produce too much debt, one can consider entering a state community college for his basics and then transferring to a state university to finish his undergraduate education. That way he can still end up getting a relatively good education and land a decent job, and he can later further his education by doing graduate work at a top tier institution when he more likely has the financial means to afford it.

(e) Above all, one should follow God's leading no matter what we face. To illustrate, (i) when I had to attend the Multnomah School of the Bible in Portland, Oregon instead going to my first choice for college in Wheaton College, Illinois, MSB provided the best undergraduate Bible training available -- 52 semester hours, or a double major in Bible. God wanted me to be a Bible expositor one day, what I as yet did not know, and a double major in Bible right out of high school was the best educational foundation I could obtain!

Then, (ii) when I first applied to my first choice for seminary, Dallas Theological Seminary, I was rejected. Disappointed, I then attended the San Francisco Baptist Theological Seminary. However, SFBTS clarified my belief in the crucial doctrine of dispensationalism more than DTS did although DTS was known for this view, and while heeding a SFBTS assignment to serve the Lord in a Bay Area church, I met my future wife! A week after our first date, DTS accepted me as a transfer student! God thus routed me from Portland, Oregon through San Francisco before getting me to Dallas and sent my future wife from Chicago out to San Francisco so we could meet! The great lengths, literally, to which God went so she and I could meet convinces me even today that God wanted us to marry.

So, in having to go to MSB versus Wheaton College and in having to go first to SFBTS before DTS, I experienced great discouragement, but in time, both events proved to be far better than what I had willed! The lesson is that we should follow the Lord and not rely on our own understanding regardless what we face! (Proverbs 3:5-6)

(2) On the issue of Church income, unlike a number of evangelicals today, we need to rely on God to meet our needs versus compromising our beliefs and associations for more money! Missionary to China Hudson Taylor said that God's work done in God's way would not lack God's support, and the Lord promises to provide for us as we heed Him, Hebrews 13:5-6. God has kept our Church financially solvent for 50 years, so we best keep on trusting Him!

May we trust in Christ for salvation. Then, may we overcome the temptation to fall for "overreach" by realizing that God has a plan for our lives, that we best submit to His Biblical leading regardless what we face.