

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

FF. Vigilantly Holding To The Divine Authority Of Scripture

(2 Kings 21:1-18)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

A shift is occurring in evangelical circles on the belief that Scripture itself objectively bears God's authority:

(1) Last Sunday, one of our members asked me about a statement in a recent book by evangelical leader Josh McDowell and his son Sean titled, The Beauty of Intolerance: Setting a Generation Free to Know Truth and Love, 2016. The statement appears on page 54 of the book and reads: "(T)he reason we have this concept that some things are morally right and others are wrong is not because a church propagates it or even that it is written in a book called the Bible. The moral authority isn't found in its commands and rules. The authority of scripture is derived directly from and founded in the very character and nature of God and represented in the flesh through Jesus Christ."

This statement closely reflects the neoorthodox view that God's authority is limited to His Persons, that it does not extend to Scripture. If that were so, we could not be sure we knew any special revelation about even God, for we would have no source about Him that bore His authority! (Charles C. Ryrie, A Survey of Bible Doctrine, 1978, p. 7)

(2) This issue becomes a crisis when applied to real life. For example, "Mark Dever . . . an annual speaker for John MacArthur's Shepherd's Conference," has endorsed "a cultural Marxist agenda that seeks to mainstream the radical LGBTQ agenda into mainstream evangelicalism." (Brannon S. Howse, Marxianity, 2018, p. 301) In time, then, "cultural Marxists are going to" try to "convince 'conservative evangelicals' that overt same-sex-attracted adults should be church leaders and have access to your children by 'sharing' them, and your church will not encourage them to change by the power of the gospel, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and biblical sanctification." (Ibid., p. 303)

If we then were to cease believing that written Scripture itself bears God's authority like the McDowell's book asserts, we would be left with no sure view of God's evaluation of LGBTQ morals, leaving us adrift in an amoral sea!

(3) John H. Armstrong sounded an alarm on this issue in 1996, noting: "Contemporary evangelicalism faces a serious crisis precisely because it has lost its way in this matter of *sola Scriptura*," that, among other things, involves belief that "*Scripture is authoritative*." (John H. Armstrong, gen. ed., The Coming Evangelical Crisis, 1996, p. 21, 22)

Need: So we ask, "In view of a shift in evangelicals on the issue, is written Scripture God's authoritative Word?!"

- I. **2 Kings 21:1-9 reports how Hezekiah's son king Manasseh practiced pagan idolatry to a greater extent than even the vile Canaanites whom God had displaced from the land to make room for His people:**
 - A. Manasseh practiced the idolatry of the Canaanites whom God had dispossessed from the land, 2 Kings 21:1-2.
 - B. This involved building high places his father had destroyed, building altars to Baal and his female consort Asherah, building altars to the stellar gods in the temple, practicing child sacrifice, using fortune-tellers and omens and dealing with mediums and wizards, angering the Lord, 2 Kings 21:3-6 ESV.
 - C. Manasseh even put a vile carved image of the Canaanite goddess Asherah in God's temple, 2 Kings 21:7a.
 - D. The author of 2 Kings 21 added that Manasseh did more evil than even the Canaanites had done, 2 Kings 21:9.
- II. **The author of 2 Kings EMPHASIZED how Manasseh had VIOLATED GOD'S WORD, 2 Kings 21:7b-8:**
 - A. The author of 2 Kings cited first person statements God had made to David and Solomon, applying these 250-year-old statements as *God's words for Judah's future kings like Manasseh!* (2 Kings 21:4b, 7b-8a; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, p. 2025-2026) These statements had likely already been written down by Manasseh's time, but even if not, they were still well known so that God expected him to obey them.
 - B. The author of 2 Kings also noted God held Manasseh accountable to heed His 700-year-old WRITTEN Law of Moses (2 Kings 21:8b; Deut. 31:24-26; Ibid., p. 2023-2025), *what he was to read daily*, Deut. 17:18-20.
- III. **God thus pronounced great punishment on Judah for Manasseh's sins, holding him and the nation accountable to have heeded His Word, including His WRITTEN Word, 2 Kings 21:10-18:**
 - A. The Lord announced by His prophets that since Manasseh had committed greater sins than had the Canaanites, leading Judah's people to sin with his idols, God was going to bring great judgment on the land, causing it to be invaded and the people taken captive as in the case of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, 2 Kings 21:10-15.
 - B. The author of 2 Kings 21 also added that Manasseh had filled Jerusalem with bloodshed, 2 Kings 21:16.
- IV. **2 Chronicles 33:9-11 reports God personally punished Manasseh by allowing the Assyrians to take him captive to Babylon bound with fetters and hooks.**

- V. Manasseh then repented, so God graciously restored him to his throne in Judah, 2 Chronicles 33:12-13.
- VI. When Manasseh then returned to Jerusalem, he strengthened the city's fortifications and instituted religious reforms, dismantling idolatrous altars and images in Judah, 2 Chronicles 33:14-16. The people still sacrificed in the high places, but at least they did so only to the Lord, 2 Chronicles 33:17.
- VII. However, the EFFECTS of Manasseh's wicked reign had pushed the nation so far toward apostasy, the Lord decided there was no recourse but eventually to send the nation into captivity! (2 Kings 21:10-15)

Lesson: *Since Manasseh failed to heed God's 250-year-old words to David and Solomon and the 700-year-old WRITTEN SCRIPTURE of the Law of Moses, sinning more than even the Canaanites God had dispossessed, the Lord held Manasseh and his sinful subjects ACCOUNTABLE for disobedience so as to PUNISH them.*

Application: (1) *May we trust in Christ for salvation, John 3:16.* (2) *May we heed written Scripture itself as God's authoritative rule for us, for He holds us as accountable to heed it like He held Manasseh accountable to heed it.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

The issues in our introduction can be handled in applying this sermon by relying on the Holy Spirit, Gal. 5:16:

(1) On written Scripture's authority in light of the statement from the McDowell's book, (a) 2 Timothy 3:16a KJV claims all Scripture is "given by inspiration of God," better, is "breathed out by God" (ESV), the translation of the adjective, *theopneustos*, U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 736. This word belongs to a "special class of adjectives, called verbal adjectives . . . formed by the suffix *-tos*. These either have the meaning of a perfect passive participle or express *possibility*." (Bruce M. Metzger, *Lexical Aids For Students Of New Testament Greek*, 1969, p. 44) Paul in the **context** of 2 Timothy 3:16a sought to affirm the divine inspiration and hence the usefulness of Scripture to Timothy in his pastoral ministry, so *theopneustos* carries the perfect passive participle force (*Zon. Pict. Ency. Bib.*, v. Three, p. 290) to mean "all Scripture is once-for-all-time-permanently God breathed!" **Written Scripture itself in its formation WAS God's Word, it IS now God's Word and it WILL always be God's Word!** (b) In addition, the word translated "Scripture" is *graphe*, what does **not** refer "simply to the divine meaning" of the Bible's statements, but to "the written words of Scripture" themselves. (*Ibid.*) The **written words of Scripture OBJECTIVELY** bear God's inspiration! (c) Then, 2 Timothy 3:16b claims this "God breathed" written Scripture is profitable for teaching, reproof, correction and training in righteousness, so *written Scripture itself objectively bears God's authority to disciple!* (d) Also, Psalm 138:2a ESV, speaking of God, claims, "(Y)ou have exalted above all things your name and your word." One's **name** in the Ancient Near East represented his character qualities (*Ibid.*, *Zon. Pict. Ency. Bib.*, v. Four, p. 364), *so God Himself wants us to view written Scripture itself as being just as authoritative as His Persons!*

(2) If we apply this information to the cultural Marxist LGBTQ agenda some promote in evangelicalism, we note (a) God's **authoritative, objective written Scripture** at 1 Corinthians 6:9 lists sinful sexual **orientations** (noun or substantive), **not just acts** (as some LGBTQ promoters say) from which some at Corinth were saved, 1 Corinthians 6:11. One such **orientation** in the Greek text is the substantive *malakoi* from the adjective *malakos*, meaning "soft," but as used of people is the term "catamite," a man or a boy who lets himself be misused homosexually [female role]. (Arndt & Gingrich, *A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T.*, 1967, p. 489-490) Another term in that verse is *arsenokoitai* from the root noun, *arsenokoites*, "a male homosexual, pederast, sodomite" (*Ibid.*, p. 109), an "active" homosexual [male role], *Ryrie Study Bible, KJV*, 1978, fn. to 1 Cor. 6:9. God's **authoritative Scripture** thus *denounces* both homosexual **acts** and **orientations**, and (b) Romans 1:26-27 denounces homosexuality in **both women and men**.

(c) Finally, God's **righteous** model for marriage in Genesis 2:24 is that a "man," who was created as such in Genesis 2:7, might leave his father and his mother and cleave to his "wife," who was created as such in Genesis 2:20-22, that they might become "one flesh." "Man" in the Hebrew text of Genesis 2:23-24 is *'ish* and "wife" in that passage is *'ishah* (*Ibid.*, Kittel, p. 3-4), and *'ish* and *'ishah* in Genesis 7:2 are *also* used of male and female pairs of animals that entered the ark (B. D. B., *A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T.*, p. 35-36, 61). These animal **pairs had** to be **heterosexual** and **mature enough** to be **capable** of **reproducing themselves** after the Genesis Flood, Genesis 7:3. Thus, *'ish* in Genesis 2:24 is a **male** "man" who was created as such and is capable of reproduction as an adult, and *'ishah* is a **female** "woman" who was created as such and is capable of reproduction as an adult. Accordingly, the model for marriage in God's **authoritative, objective written Scripture** is that one accept his or her birth gender, and as an adult capable of reproduction, enter a heterosexual, monogamous and permanent ("one flesh," Matt. 19:3-6) marital union. The LGBTQ orientations and agenda are wrong, but by faith in Christ, one in such a state can be graciously, wonderfully saved and transformed by God, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11.

May we trust in Christ for salvation. May we heed written Scripture as God's authoritative Word.