

## THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

### The Books Of The Chronicles: God's Preservation Of His Davidic And Levitical Covenants

#### VI. Overcoming Spiritual Blindness

##### (1 Chronicles 13:1-14)

Introduction: (To show the need . . . )

Spiritual blindness, the lack of discerning truth from error or right from wrong, affects many people today:

(1) Dr. Georgia Purdom's article, "The Biology of Gender" (Answers, September-October 2019, p. 60) reports "a blog on Tumblr" claims "there are 112 genders, including . . . apconsugender" where "you know what it isn't, but not what it is" as "the gender is hiding itself from you" and "verangender" that "seems to shift" when it "is identified."

Dr. Purdom summed, "(P)eople are very confused and very much in need of the truth . . ." (Ibid.)

(2) It occurs in religious realms: Nicole Winfield's story, "Synod to debate married priests" (Republican-American, October 4, 2019, p. 6C) cited "Cardinal Lorenzo Baldiseri" who testified that "the lack of access to the sacraments for the faithful due to the priest shortage was gravely harming the [Roman Catholic] church's ministry in the Amazon. 'The Eucharist builds the church,' he said, quoting St. John Paul II." (brackets ours)

Pope Francis has called for a synod to consider ordaining married men to fill the shortage of priests so laymen might possess salvation by receiving the Eucharist. However, marriage for priests contradicts that Church's long-held stand that its priests be celibate (Ibid.), so many of the devout wonder what is right and wrong on this issue.

(3) Many evangelicals face spiritual blindness, too: as typical of a number of cases we have known over the decades, an evangelical church may start to develop many ministries such as a bus ministry, a sports ministry, a music ministry, a youth ministry, a Men's or a Women's discipling ministry, etc., what attracts many people to the church so that the church launches a building program. Then a church leader suddenly, catastrophically falls into deep sin and must be removed from office. Hurt, confusion, disillusionment and shock abound, and in some cases the church may even split or disband, with everyone involved asking, "How could it all have happened? What ever went wrong?!"

Need: So, we ask, "*What is God's answer to the spiritual blindness we face today?!*"

- I. Regardless of the best of intentions in transporting the ark of God from Kiriath-Jearim to Jerusalem, David witnessed a sudden, shocking outpouring of God's anger that cost a man his life, 1 Chron. 13:1-10:**
  - A. David consulted with all of his military officials about transporting the ark to Jerusalem, 1 Chronicles 13:1.
  - B. He then requested the nation's view of moving the ark to their capitol city of Jerusalem, 1 Chronicles 13:2-3.
  - C. Having gained everyone's consent, David started to move the ark amid fanfare and heartfelt worship, v. 4-8.
  - D. However, when the oxen that were pulling the new cart on which the ark had been placed stumbled, and Uzza who was helping to drive the cart reached out his hand to steady the ark, God struck him dead, 1 Chr. 13:9-10.
- II. David reacted in defensive shock at Uzzah's tragic death wrought by God's anger, 1 Chron. 13:11-13:**
  - A. Reacting in anger, fear and confusion, David asked, "How can I bring the ark of God home to me?" (v. 11-12)
  - B. Afraid to move it any further, David left the ark at the nearby home of Obed-edom, 1 Chronicles 13:13.
- III. However, while the ark was in Obed-edom's home, God richly blessed him, indicating the Lord was not an impulsively angry deity, but that He opposed HOW the ark had been HANDLED, 1 Chronicles 13:14.**
- IV. Scripture clarifies how God wanted the ark handled, exposing David's spiritual blindness on the matter:**
  - A. First, Numbers 4:5, 19-20 claimed the priests were to cover the ark before it was moved lest anyone but the priests look on it and die! If David did not cover the ark, only by God's grace did many onlookers stay alive!
  - B. Second, Exodus 25:14 directed that the ark was to be carried by porters holding poles that had been run through the rings on the side of ark. Heeding this directive instead of transporting the ark on a cart drawn by oxen would have avoided the incident that risked the ark's being toppled and that led to Uzza's death!
  - C. Third, Numbers 4:15b required that only men in the Kohathite clan of the tribe of Levi could carry the ark.
  - D. Fourth, Num. 4:15c allowed no one, including the Kohathite porters, to touch the ark itself lest God slay him. Uzza's reaching out his hand to steady the ark was thus a capital offense, explaining why God killed him.
  - E. In addition, Deuteronomy 17:18-20 required Israel's kings like David to read from Scripture every day to know how to obey God and be blessed by Him. David had clearly failed to do this, resulting in Uzza's death!
  - F. Also, David and his counselors had used human reasoning on how to move the ark, but even with the best of intent, David's action inadvertently used a practice that was begun in pagan divination that God condemned:
    1. The Philistines had seized the ark in war, but God plagued them until they sought counsel by divination to see if God was angry that they had not returned it, 1 Sam. 4:10-11; 6:1-2; Bib. Know. Com., O. T., p. 437.

2. To determine if God wanted the ark returned to Israel, the Philistines put it on a new cart with which the animals pulling it had no familiarity and hitched two milking cows to it, keeping their calves at home, to see if the cows would abnormally leave their calves behind and go to Israel by God's power, 1 Sam. 6:3-9.
  3. The test showed God **did** want the ark returned: the cows went straight on the road all 8 miles from Ekron in Philistia to Beth-shemesh in Israel, lowing in objection to God's forcing them to go when they strongly desired to return to their calves, 1 Sam. 5:10-6:12; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to 1 Sam. 6:12.
  4. David and his counselors had thus reasoned that if God had before demonstrated His will to the Philistines by forcibly moving His ark from Philistine territory to Israel on a new cart, then using a new cart drawn by oxen to move the ark from Kiriath-Jearim to Jerusalem should please the Lord!
  5. However, in using such human reasoning even with all good intent, David and all Israel inadvertently employed a practice of pagan Philistine divination in clear violation of Scripture at Deuteronomy 18:10!
- G. To explain why God let the Philistines use a new cart in divination but objected to David's way of handling the ark, we note the Philistines lacked the Scriptures and so knew no other way but divination to discern a deity's will. The principle of Luke 12:47-48 applies, that God did not hold the Philistines as accountable as David!

***Lesson:*** *For failing to consult Scripture as his ultimate source of truth, though he moved the ark with all good intent with extensive human counsel and reasoning coupled with honorable fanfare and heartfelt worship, David inadvertently used even a practice of unscriptural pagan divination, and it all resulted in Uzza's tragic death!*

***Application:*** *(1) May we trust in Christ for salvation from sin, John 3:16. (2) May we realize from Isaiah 8:20 that unless we say, "Let's go back to the Bible," we function in spiritual darkness, and thus stay focused on Scripture!*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . . )

We apply written Scripture to clarify the truth on the issues of spiritual blindness noted in our introduction:

(1) On the issue of genders, Genesis 1:27 claims God made man in two sexes, "male" (**zakar**, B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 271) and "female" (**neqevah**, Ibid., p. 666), and in Genesis 2:23 these beings in these two sexes are respectively called "man" (**'ish**, Kittel, Biblia Hebraica, p. 3; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 35-36) and "woman" (**'ishah**, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 61) There are thus two genders, one for each of the two biological sexes.

(2) On the issue of the Eucharist in the Roman Catholic Church that it teaches is necessary for salvation, the mystery religions held that sharing a meal with a god made one a partaker of the god's divine nature. This belief was imported into Christendom in the form of the doctrine of transubstantiation, that the communion elements are mystically turned into Christ's blood and body so that ingesting them makes one ingest Christ, saving his soul. (W. Walker, A Hist. of the Christ. Ch., 1959, p. 90-91) Yet, Ephesians 2:8-9 claims salvation is by faith and not works.

(2) On the issue of the special class of priesthood, 1 Peter 2:5, 9 claims all believers in Christ are priests.

(3) On John Paul II being called "Saint," 1 Corinthians 1:2 claims all believers in Christ are "saints," and Ephesians 1:1 with 4:30 shows that even such "saints" are still "saints" even if they "grieve" (present imperative **lupeite**, U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 673) the Holy Spirit by whom they are unconditionally sealed with the Holy Spirit, preserving their salvation until the rapture of the Church! There is thus no special infallibility in any "saint"!

(4) On Pope John Paul II having papal infallibility, Galatians 2:11-14 reveals Paul publically critiqued Peter for error in his ministry, and Peter was the alleged first pope! Infallibility applies only to Scripture, 2 Timothy 3:16.

(5) On married men serving as church leaders, 1 Corinthians 9:5 reveals most of the Apostles, including Peter, were married and had the right to marry, and elders in the Church could be married providing they did not have a history of divorce, 1 Timothy 3:2. A church leader may be celibate, but that is his own choice, 1 Corinthians 7:1-9.

(6) On the issue of spiritual blindness in evangelical churches relative to ministry and catastrophic sin by church leaders, 1 Timothy 3:15 NIV claims the local church is the "pillar and foundation" of the **truth**, and Psalm 119:11 claims that by **treasuring** God's Word in one's heart, he avoids sinning against God. (Ibid., Ryrie, fn. to Psalm 119:11) The church's **focus** should then be the **truth** of the **Scripture** the church is to proclaim, 2 Timothy 4:1-2. However, many evangelical church leaders have their **focus** on **Scripture compromised** by undue attention they must give to the **many other ministries** in the church, ministries not even mentioned in the Pastoral Epistles of 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus. Distracted from God's Word, a church leader can easily fail to treasure its truth in his heart, and like Psalm 119:11 implies, become vulnerable for falling for powerful temptation and committing catastrophic sin!

As in David's era, we church leaders must keep focused on Scripture and treasure it in our hearts! Indeed, may all of us in the congregation keep focused on and treasure Scripture in our hearts to avoid falling into catastrophic sin!

**May we trust in Christ for salvation. May we make Scripture our focus to avoid spiritual blindness!**