

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

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

XXI. Solomon's Temple: A Lesson In Sustained Divine Blessing

(2 Chronicles 3:1-7:22)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

On the first day of our vacation, two believers communicated with my wife or me about grave concerns they had regarding oppressive leaders. One mentioned Calvinists and how he had seen close up how badly their views had impacted believers he knew. The other was so troubled at secular leaders that he feared we might have erred in teaching that the rapture of the Church was pretribulational, that we might right now be in the Great Tribulation!

There were big reasons for their concerns, too. The late Dave Hunt in his work, What Love Is This warned of problems created by Calvinistic theology and fourteen evangelicals writing in the book, The Coming Evangelical Crisis, 1996 (John H. Armstrong, gen. ed.) warned of disturbing errors in Arminianism, the arch-rival of Calvinism.

As for secular leaders, presidential candidate Bernie Sanders' "religion is indistinguishable from the vision of solidarity undergirding his socialist politics" (Rich Lowry, "Champion of the nonbelievers," Republican-American, March 4, 2020, p. 10A), Russia is "targeting battleground states with divisive messaging" to "undermine public confidence in this year's election" (Amanda Setz and Barbara Octutary, "Russian social accounts show election discord, again," Ibid., March 6, 2020, p. 14A) and "U. S. Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., has threatened "Supreme Court Justices Neil M. Gorsuch and Brett M. Kavanaugh," saying, "You won't know what hit you if you go forward with these awful decisions." (Marc Thiessen, "Supreme Court is at stake," Ibid., March 7, 2020, p. 8A) Add to this reports about the coronavirus and the stock market crises and one has cause for real anxiety!

Need: *So we ask, "What would God direct regarding the unsettling leaders and issues we face in today's world?!"*

- I. When Solomon built and dedicated the temple, all Israel enjoyed God's rich blessing, 2 Chron. 3:1-7:11:**
- A. Solomon performed a great work in building the temple and God greatly approved of it, 2 Chronicles 3:1-5:14:
 - 1. Solomon built the temple where God had directed that it be built, 2 Chron. 3:1; 1 Chron. 21:18; 22:1.
 - 2. King Solomon built a magnificent building that had a larger floor plan than Moses' tabernacle and overlaid it's stone interior with pure gold, adorning that gold with precious jewels, 2 Chronicles 3:2-17.
 - 3. He built magnificent furnishings for the temple, enlarging their sizes in comparison to the furnishings of the tabernacle and multiplying the number of the candlesticks and tables of showbread, 2 Chron. 4:1-5:1.
 - 4. Solomon then brought the ark of the covenant into the temple with great fanfare, 2 Chronicles 5:2-12.
 - 5. God responded by giving His approval, filling the temple with His glorious cloud, 2 Chronicles 5:13-14.
 - B. Solomon spoke great words in dedicating the temple and the Lord greatly approved of it, 2 Chron. 6:1-7:11:
 - 1. Before the people of Israel, Solomon spoke of the history in the building of the temple, 2 Chron. 6:1-11.
 - 2. He then prayed a great dedicatory prayer to God before the people, 2 Chronicles 6:12-42.
 - 3. God responded by giving His approval, igniting Solomon's sacrifice with fire from heaven, 2 Chron. 7:1-3.
- II. Israel's people and Solomon then responded, worshiping God and joyfully celebrating, 2 Chron. 7:4-11.**
- III. Then, to SUSTAIN that blessing from God, Solomon was to maintain his OWN PERSONAL WALK:**
- A. After the dedication of the temple, God privately told Solomon that He accepted the temple, 2 Chron. 7:12-16.
 - B. However, God implied that Solomon had a *personal* duty to **sustain** that blessing *for Israel*, 2 Chron. 7:17-22:
 - 1. In 2 Chronicles 7:17a where the Lord began to speak of continuing to bless Solomon's reign were he to heed Him, an emphatic Hebrew pronoun appears in the second person masculine **singular** (*attah*, Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 1388; B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 61) to read: "As for **you** (Solomon) . . ."
 - 2. In **contrast**, in 2 Chronicles 7:19a where God began to warn of removing His blessing for disobeying His Word, another emphatic Hebrew pronoun appears in the second person masculine, but *this* time in the **plural** (*attem*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., B. D. B.) to read, "If **you** (Solomon and all Israel) turn aside . . ."
 - 3. This *change* in number of these emphatic pronouns in such a context implies that **God's blessing on ALL Israel DEPENDED ON** what *Solomon* did in his *own personal walk*, and we explain:
 - a. Prior to Israel's kings, "every man did that which was right in his own eyes," for "there was no king in Israel," leading to social decay, heinous sins and even civil war, Judges 17:6; 21:25 with 17:1-21:25. In a sense, then, the people of Israel were already hopelessly bent toward turning from the Lord to false gods.
 - b. Nevertheless, godly David's rise as Israel's king led to God's blessing **him, which personal blessing graciously spilled over positively to impact Israel's people under David**, 2 Samuel 8:1-18 with 8:6b, 14b.

- c. Deuteronomy 17:18-20 explains this: (i) Moses there charged Israel's king to write out a copy of the Law for his own daily reading, Deut. 17:18-19a. (ii) The king would thus learn to revere the Lord and heed His Word in his personal walk, Deut. 17:19b. (iii) This would lead him to view himself humbly, to heed Scripture exactly, leading to a long reign for himself and his sons and stability for Israel, Deut 17:20.
4. Thus, God's sustained blessings on the people of Israel were directly proportioned to the king's faithful reading, studying and heeding of Scripture in his *personal life*, for his *personal walk* by way of his office as a monarch had great ripple effects on everybody else around him in Israel!

Lesson: *Though Solomon rightly built and dedicated a magnificent temple for the Lord, God clarified that to sustain the Lord's blessing, Solomon himself had to read Scripture daily and to heed it in his own walk, what would lead to God's blessing not only him, but also blessing all the people in Israel.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ for salvation, John 3:16. (2) May we believers who are in oversight positions realize the HUGE responsibility we have PERSONALLY to read, study and obey Scripture not only for our OWN blessing, but ALSO to impact our subordinates and associates with God's spillover blessings for THEM.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

In preaching such a sermon, I am obliged to **apply** it before you for **your** blessing as a congregation. So, by way of personal my Bible study for many years, we address the concerns raised in our introduction (as follows):

(1) As for Calvinism and Arminianism, on our Church's home web page, we have provided extensive critiques of these errant theologies (as follows): (a) The work with the URL of "Making Sense of God's Election" addresses all the significant errant interpretations of Scripture Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek words and verses by these (and other) theological views. (b) The work with the URL of "Christ's Prophetic Message To Contemporary Evangelicals" gives a detailed exposition of the Revelation 3:14-22 Greek text on **our** Laodicean Church era where **Christ Himself** in 90 A. D. prophetically critiqued Calvinism and Arminianism and their false spiritualities, offering His solutions to them.

(2) Regarding troubling secular leaders in Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders, Russian leaders' efforts to create distrust in the credibility of our elections and Senator Charles Schumer's warning to Supreme Court Justices Gorsuch and Kavanaugh, we often teach that Revelation 3:21 implies by its allusion to Revelation 7:17 by way of the "in the throne" phrase, that God is letting a mini-Great Tribulation era occur in our era of Church History, an era of oppressive rulers full of intrigue, to create a thirst for Bible exposition in people oppressed by such rulers. Some of the oppressed folk will be driven to seek balm and will find it in churches that expound God's Word.

(3) As for the Biblical basis for the **pretribulation rapture** (belief in the rapture **before** the Great Tribulation), (a) we note (i) 2 Thessalonians 2:7-9 teaches a restraining entity is preventing the public revelation of the Antichrist who comes on the world scene endowed with Satan's powers. (ii) Since the Antichrist makes a seven-year treaty with Israel only to break it midway through the Great Tribulation Period of seven years (cf. Daniel 9:27 with 12:11), he is revealed to the world at the **START** of the Great Tribulation. (iii) The restraining entity must be stronger than Satan to be able to restrain a Satanically-empowered Antichrist, and only God is stronger than Satan, so the Restrainer is God. (iv) That Restrainer is mentioned in the Greek text in the **neuter** gender (**to katechon**) in 2 Thessalonians 2:6 but in the **masculine** gender (**ho katechon**) in 2 Thessalonians 2:7, what must be the Holy Spirit since He at times is mentioned elsewhere in the **neuter** to agree grammatically with the neuter word **pneuma** for "spirit" [as in John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13-14] and sometimes in the **masculine** to refer to the **Person** of the Holy Spirit. (**Bib. Know. Com., N. T.**, p. 719) (v) The Holy Spirit ceases to restrain at the rapture, for God uses Christians who are sealed with the Holy Spirit to restrain evil in the world, and they are removed at the rapture. (vi) Thus, the rapture is **pretribulation!**

(b) Also, 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12 claims God will send the world in the Great Tribulation a strong delusion that they might believe a lie in judgment for having rejected Christ's Gospel. No true Christian is guilty of such a sin since he has believed in Christ, so the rapture is **pretribulation**, removing all true Christians from that judgment!

(4) As for the crises of the coronavirus and the recent stock market drops, we must recall that the rapture will occur before the Great Tribulation starts like 2 Thessalonians 2:1-14 teaches. We must then trust God to restrain evil parties and not to level His judgments of Revelation 4-19 on the world before the Rapture, but to leave life still livable for us until the rapture as He promised in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-14, 15-17 NIV. Yet, we also need to take sensible steps to avoid illness (1 Timothy 6:22), prudently earn (Proverbs 27:23-27), save (2 Corinthians 12:14b) and invest some of our earnings boldly, long-term with diversification while consistently adding to them (Ecclesiastes 11:1-6).

May we trust in Christ for salvation. May we believers who are in oversight see our duty to keep on reading, studying and heeding Scripture in our own lives as it so greatly impacts our subordinates for blessing.