

## THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

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

#### II. The Divided Kingdom, 1 Kings 12:1-22:53

##### A. God's Edifying Use Of Evil Disunity In Human Institutions

###### (1 Kings 12:1-24)

Introduction: (To show the need . . . )

We as social beings were created by God to fellowship with Him and each other, but we face a lot of disunity:

(1) Last Sunday following our morning worship service, one of our members expressed concern to me over the relentless opposition President Donald Trump faces. He acknowledged that the president has his flaws, but the member was troubled that many oppose the president at every possible turn even if doing so hurts the nation's welfare.

Many other citizens share this concern: for example, a letter by Tom Beaudin of New Hartford in the February 16, 2018 Republican-American (p. 6A) asserted: "As I watched President Trump's State of the union address Jan. 30, I suddenly was aware of the obvious . . . well-defined and segregated groups" in Congress that "opted to distinguish themselves from the main body by dress, custom, or location in order to protest Trump as being the great 'divider in chief'" when in reality they had "divided themselves from the main assembly so that they could claim the president had divided them . . . Why can't Congress . . . be one place where it is possible to recognize and cultivate unity?"

(2) Disunity occurs in many other human institutions, too: a letter by Judy Ball of Wolcott on the same page expressed concern over the nation's "weakened or non-existent family structure" and its "lack of moral teaching," showing disunity hurts family and church institutions that in turn produce social and moral ills. (Ibid.)

Need: *So, we ask, "Why do we face disunity in human institutions, and how does God want us to address it?!"*

- I. **On the surface, the reason Israel split into the Southern Kingdom of Judah and the Northern Kingdom of Israel was Jeroboam's unwise choice to oppress versus nurture his subjects, 1 Kings 12:1-14, 16-20:**
  - A. At Solomon's death, his foe Jeroboam who had fled from him into Egypt returned to Israel, and Jeroboam's supporters urged him to represent them in asking Rehoboam, Solomon's son, to lighten the yoke of slavery his father had levied on them as the condition for their submitting to Rehoboam as king, 1 Kings 12:1-4 ESV.
  - B. Rehoboam refused the advice of his father's advisers to heed this request and adopted the opposite advice of the counselors of his own generation to be much more oppressive than his father had been, 1 Kings 12:5-14.
  - C. Thus, ten northern tribes refused to accept Rehoboam's rule, and when he reacted by sending his official over the slave labor to make them submit, Jeroboam's supporters killed him, causing Rehoboam to flee back to Jerusalem. With Rehoboam having fled from them, the ten tribes chose Jeroboam as their king. This division of David's kingdom still exists (1 Kings 12:16-20) to will be healed only in Christ's Kingdom, Luke 22:29-30.
- II. **In reality, this division was of GOD not only to punish sin, but also to check its resulting ills on society:**
  - A. While Solomon was still alive, the prophet Ahijah had told Jeroboam God would give him ten tribes of Israel to rule to punish both Solomon's and the people's idolatry [that produced many social evils], 1 Kings 11:29-33:
    1. Both of the verbs "forsaken" (*'azabuni*) and "walked" (*halku*) in v. 33 are in the **3rd person plural** (from *'azab* and *halak*, Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 530; The Analy. Heb. & Chal. Lex. (Zon.), 1972, p. 593, 189), so not only Solomon, but also his **people**, the **3rd person plural** "they" in these verbs, became involved in **forsaking** God so as to **walk** in Solomon's syncretistic idolatry with its immorality and infant sacrifice!
    2. Such sins would diminish the value of human life and undermine family ties, producing many social evils!
    3. God thus removed most of the tribes from the king's influence for such harmful idolatry, 1 Kings 11:29-33.
  - B. God's punishment of dividing the nation was also necessary to curb the abuses of the people by Judah's king:
    1. Deuteronomy 17:18-20 had told the king that were he to read Scripture daily, his heart would not be lifted up above his people in pride so that he would not abuse them, but that he would respectfully nurture them.
    2. However, Solomon had not been reading Scripture, and as seen in Jeroboam's request for Rehoboam to lighten the yoke of slavery by his father (1 Kings 12:1-4), Solomon had greatly oppressed his subjects!
    3. Rehoboam had also not applied Deuteronomy 17:18-20, seen in his decision to heighten his subjects' oppression, so God arranged that he lose control of 10 of the tribes to curtail his oppressing them (since he could not force his own, fewer people to do all of the work), giving *all* the people relief from oppression!
  - C. So, not only did (1) Ahijah tell Jeroboam **God** would tear 10 tribes from Rehoboam, (2) the fact that **God** was behind this split is **repeated** by the author in 1 Kings 12:15 and (3) **again** by prophet Shemaiah in 1 Kings 12:22-24 when he told Rehoboam not to fight the Northern Kingdom because **God** had let the nation divide!

### III. This division of ancient Israel has application to the divisions we face in our human institutions today:

- A. The key division in our nation is between Marxist ideology and Bible-influenced Western Civilizations as seen in many news reports and editorials in light of the 1848 Communist Manifesto that called for the abolition of the family, nations, nationalities, religion, morality, private property ownership, individuality, personal freedom and that promoted a heavy, graduated income tax, centralization of businesses in the hands of the state and a revolt against all social and political order. ("Goals, 'Communist Manifesto,'" learn-usa.com)
- B. The force *behind* Marxist ideology that counters Bible-influenced Western Civilizations is **Satan** (as follows):
  1. Alice Bailey, who claimed she wrote "under the direction of a spirit guide," a "demon" as Howse asserted, 70 years ago foretold the "coming age" would be one where "the will of the individual will voluntarily be blended into group will" (Brannon Howse, Rel. Troj. Horse, 2012, p. 15-16, citing Alice Bailey, The Rays and the Initiations, 1934-1947, p. 109), that "'an Enlightened People will rule'" and "'not tolerate authoritarianism in any church" nor "accept or permit the rule of any body of men who undertake to tell them what they must believe in order to be saved"' (Ibid., Howse, p. 16, citing Alice Bailey, The Reappearance of the Christ, 1st ed., 1948, p. 164-165), adding, "(T)he orthodox Christian will at first reject the theories about Christ which occultism presents" but "find it increasingly difficult to induce the intelligent masses . . . to accept the . . . Deity and . . . Christ which historical Christianity has endorsed." (Ibid., Howse, p. 17-18, citing Alice Bailey, The Externalization of the Hierarchy, 1st ed., 1957, p. 589f)
  2. John C. Whitcomb, Jr. and Henry M. Morris in their landmark work, The Genesis Flood, 1978, p. 440-441, claimed that "atheistic communism" is among the many religions and philosophies that replace God with man as being his own god, what the Satan-empowered antichrist will claim of himself, 2 Thess. 2:3-9.
- C. Thus, the **division** between **Bible Christianity** and **Marxism** and its negative impacts on human institutions is **BOTH God's judgment on Satanic Marxism AND the Holy Spirit's restraining work** (2 Thess. 2:6) to **retard the growth of evil** and **give room for believers to live and disciple** akin to God's dividing the Davidic kingdom **both to judge sin and to free** her people of the king's oppression and idolatry with its social evils!
- D. Accordingly, in view of God's Revelation 3:21 prophecy of our era in Church History, **OUR RESPONSE** to the evils of divisions in human institutions and social evils we face today can be clarified as follows:
  1. We have before noted that the wording of Revelation 3:21 indicates that today's spiritual overcomer(s) will administer nurturing Bible exposition to people afflicted by oppressively evil rulers in human institutions!
  2. Thus, our part as believers is to heed Revelation 3:18-21 in abandoning false spiritualities by relying on the Holy Spirit to heed Scripture, what will involve parting from errant ideologies to live righteous lives.
  3. As God sends oppressed people to us, He will then use us to disciple them for their nurture to His glory!

***Lesson:*** *Though the dividing of the Davidic Kingdom on the surface rose from Rehoboam's choice to oppress his subjects more than his father had done, God had actually arranged for the split to occur to judge sin and retard its growth and its resulting oppression and social evils until Christ's Kingdom arrived.*

***Application:*** *If concerned about today's divisions in human institutions with their resulting evils, (1) may we trust in Christ for salvation from sin, John 3:16. (2) Then, may we (a) realize God lets divisions occur to judge sin and retard its growth and resulting social ills and give room for believers to live for and serve the Lord. (b) May we then busy ourselves in relying on the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:16-23) to heed God's assignments for us.*

**Conclusion:** (To illustrate the message . . . )

A great illustration on living uprightly and edifying others in the face of evil division is found in Genesis 21:22-34: from Genesis 21:25-26, we know the Philistines had forcibly seized a well Abraham had dug, but that he as a sojourner in Philistine land had felt it unwise to risk war with them over the matter, so he had done nothing about it.

However, God had since so blessed Abraham that the Philistine leaders felt it wise to make peace with versus risking war with him, Gen. 21:22-23. Abraham accepted their offer of peace without first mentioning the well issue to show his intent for peace was real (Gen. 21:24), but then he complained about the well seizure (Gen. 21:25). The Philistine ruler replied he had not known about the seizure, implying Abraham was at fault for not having told him of it before (Gen. 21:26). Abraham then graciously went the extra mile to provide the sacrificial animals for a covenant with the Philistines and "paid" their ruler seven ewe lambs to certify the well was his. (Gen. 21:27-31) The Philistines then left Abraham alone to live in peace for a long time in their land. (Gen. 21:32, 34). He was gracious in the face of unjust division by the Philistines, and relied on God's oversight to settle the unjust well issue in blessing! (Gen. 21:33)

**May we trust in Christ to be saved. May we then respond to divisions God allows by living uprightly.**