

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

V. To Compromise Or Not To Compromise: Answering The Question

(1 Kings 22:1-40)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

(1) Many seminaries have been pressured to adopt contemplative spirituality, the emptying of the mind of one's thoughts allegedly to interact with God as promoted by the Spiritual Formation movement: the Association of Theological Schools requires seminaries to include "Spiritual Formation" in their curriculum to be accredited, and the ATS gives accreditation to my alma mater Dallas Theological Seminary along with Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Moody Theological Seminary & Graduate School, Multnomah Biblical Seminary and many other seminaries. ("What is contemplative spirituality?", gotquestions.org; "An Epidemic of Apostasy -- Christian Seminaries Must Incorporate 'Spiritual Formation' to Become Accredited," lighthouse trails research.com/blog, November 15, 2010)

Dallas Theological Seminary sent a letter to alumni dated August 31, 2017 that stated, "Most students are required to be part of a spiritual formation small group . . ." (Ibid., "Letter from Dallas Theological Seminary to Lighthouse Trails Reader Reveals 'Required Spiritual Formation,'" September 20, 2017), and in her blog "Soul Noticing 101," Dallas Theological Seminary professor Gail Seidel "enthusiastically" cited contemplative spirituality notable Henry Nouwen in his work, The Way of the Heart, p. 81 as follows: "'The quiet repetition of a single word can help us descend with the mind into the heart . . . This way of simple prayer . . . opens us to God's active presence.'" (Ibid., "Dallas Theological Seminary Not Contemplative? -- New Evidence Shows Otherwise," July 17, 2017)

(2) However, 2 Timothy 3:16-17 claims that *Scripture* is divinely inspired and *thoroughly* equips believers for *every* good work, meaning alleged spiritual fulfillment by contemplative prayer is an erroneous, extrabiblical entity!

(3) On the other hand, earlier this year after I expressed concern that Christian psychologist Larry Crabb now promotes contemplative prayer, a long-term missionary defended him, responding, "A lot of people practice it today!"

Need: *So we ask, "Must we always closely heed Scripture, or is there room to compromise it as do many others?!"*

I. 1 Kings 22:1-18 presents various men who practiced varying degrees of compromising Scripture:

- A. King Ahab of Israel (1 Kings 22:1-2) practiced great wickedness: he was influenced by his wicked pagan wife Jezebel to worship the gods of the Canaanites whom God had dispossessed from the land, 1 Kings 21:25-26.
- B. King Jehoshaphat of Judah was a good king who worshiped the Lord, but he compromised his fellowship by joining wicked king Ahab to go into battle at Ramoth-Gilead, 1 Kings 22:2-4; 2 Chronicles 17:1-5:
 1. Jehoshaphat sought the God of his forefather king David instead of the false Baal gods so that God blessed him, strongly establishing his leadership and giving him honor and wealth, 2 Chronicles 17:1-5.
 2. However, he compromised his associations by fellowshiping with wicked king Ahab, 1 Kings 22:2-4.
 3. God later sent a prophet to Jehoshaphat to critique and punish him for his union with Ahab, 2 Chr. 19:1-3.
- C. King Ahab's 400 prophets greatly compromised Bible truth with pagan beliefs, 1 Kings 22:5-6 with 12:28-33:
 1. When Jehoshaphat asked Ahab for a prophet of "**Jahweh**" to give them His Word on their plans to fight at Ramoth-Gilead (1 Kings 22:3-5), Ahab gathered 400 prophets, 1 Kings 22:6a; Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 553.
 2. When he asked them, all 400 claimed that "**Adonai**" would give them victory, 1 Kings 22:6b; Ibid., Kittel.
 3. The term "**Adonai**" is the **general** term "lord" used *of men or various deities depending on the context*, **not "Jahweh"** that was **exclusively** the name of **Israel's covenant-keeping Lord** that **Jehoshaphat** had asked to consult! (H. A. W., T. W. O. T., 1980, vol. I, p. 12-13) [The companion passage of 2 Chronicles 18:5 uses "**Elohim**," *another generic title for any deity depending on the context*; Ibid., Kittel, p. 1401.]
 4. The explanation for this generic term for deity is found in recalling Jeroboam's syncretism of 1 Kings 12:28-33: Jeroboam had mixed a golden calf with the worship of "**Jahweh**" in pagan syncretism, so these 400 "prophets" were highly compromised in their theology and **really did not fellowship with "Jahweh!"**
- D. The prophet Micaiah, like Elijah and Elisha, stood wholeheartedly for God's Scripture truth, 1 Kings 22:7-18:
 1. Realizing by their words that the 400 prophets were ungodly, Jehoshaphat asked Ahab for a prophet of "**Jahweh**," and Ahab said he knew one, but that he hated him since he always spoke bad of Ahab, v. 7-8a.
 2. At Jehoshaphat's insistence, Ahab called for godly Micaiah to come and give his prophecy, v. 8b-9).
 3. The messenger sent to call Micaiah urged him to prophesy in agreement with the 400 other prophets, v. 13.
 4. Micaiah replied that only what "**Jahweh**" said, that would he tell Ahab, 1 Kings 21:14; Ibid., Kittel, p. 554.

5. When Micaiah met Ahab, a tense conversation occurred between Ahab and Micaiah in which the prophet claimed that God said that Ahab would be slain in battle at Ramoth-Gilead, 1 Kings 22:15-18.
- II. However, an angelic conflict raged behind these various men, affecting their actions, 1 King 22:19-23:**
- A. Micaiah said that in a prophetic vision he saw God in heaven let a demon become a lying spirit in the mouths of Ahab's 400 prophets to get him to go to Ramoth-Gilead that he might die there, 1 Kings 21:19-23.
 - B. The 400 prophets were thus influenced by a demonic spirit while Micaiah was telling the truth by God's Spirit.
- III. The spiritual war behind all of these men led to conflicts between them, and SHORT-TERM, Micaiah who adhered unwaveringly to Scripture truth, suffered on the personal level, 1 Kings 22:24-28:**
- A. One of the 400 prophets reacted to Micaiah's message by publicly challenging his authority: he slapped Micaiah in the face and asked which way the Spirit of the Lord had left him to speak through Micaiah, v. 24.
 - B. Micaiah replied that the prophet who slapped him would know the day he fled and hid for his life since his prophecy would be seen by all to be false since Ahab had died in battle at Ramoth-Gilead, 1 Kings 22:25.
 - C. Ahab then directed that Micaiah be imprisoned and fed sparingly until Ahab returned from the battle to punish him. Micaiah countered that if Ahab returned alive that he, Micaiah, had not spoken God's Word, and he warned all the other people who were listening to their conversation to heed his claim, 1 Kings 22:26-28.
- IV. Nevertheless, LONG-TERM, there were HUGE, CONTRASTING results based on the DEGREES of faithfulness to Scripture's truth and God and the DEGREES the characters compromised Biblical truth:**
- A. Good but relationally compromising Jehoshaphat was terrified and nearly slain in the battle, 1 Kings 22:29-33.
 - B. Ahab was slain and his body dishonored due to his great wickedness, 1 Kings 22:34-40 with 1 Kings 21:19.
 - C. Ahab's 400 highly compromised prophets were terrified and fled to hide for their lives since their prophecy that Ahab would win had proved them to be false prophets, deserving to die, 1 Kings 22:24-25; Deut. 13:1-4.
 - D. Micaiah was publicly vindicated, his prophecy proving to be true, and he gained great eternal reward for his temporary sufferings of having been mocked, slapped and imprisoned for the truth, Matthew 5:10-12.

Lesson: *Though holding unwaveringly to Biblical truth led to short-term costs for godly prophet Micaiah, to the degree that others around him compromised Scriptural truth did they suffer destructive consequences, for compromise gave room for defeat in the angelic conflict with its great, devastating effects.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ for salvation from sin, John 3:16. (2) May we heed Micaiah's example to heed God and His Word without compromise to AVOID opening the door for great defeat in the angelic conflict.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

In our introduction, we noted that one might consider practicing contemplative spirituality, compromising his obedience to 2 Timothy 3:16-17, but in view of the **angelic conflict**, such **compromise** only leads to **huge problems**:

(1) Contemplative prayer mirrors the practice of the Roman Catholic Desert Fathers, what also appears in Transcendental Meditation, the secular counterpart to contemplative spirituality. This practice actually originated in pagan Hinduism. ("Contemplative Prayer," bereanresearch.org) To validate this claim, we note that "(i)n Rick Warren's Purpose-Driven Life, on Day Eleven, he encourages people to practice 'breath prayers' by repeating words and phrases over and over in mantra-style prayer, a practice used centuries ago by a group of mystical monks known as the Desert Fathers. This so-called 'prayer' is **identical** to that found in **Hindu yoga** and Zen Buddhism . . ." (Chris Lawson, "Do Leaders Understand The Contemplative Prayer Movement?"; spiritual-research-network.com, citing Lighthouse Press release, "Evangelical Leaders Promote New Age And Eastern Spiritual Practices"; emphases ours)

(3) However, in a letter to the editor of Lighthouse Trails Research, a former Hindu from India who was converted to Christ testified that "**Yog**" means "**union**" in the **Hindu religion**, and "**Yoga**" is **complete union between the spirit of god and man** so that "**when you do Yoga, you are focusing on uniting with some spirit. We know it is not the Spirit of the Lord.**" (Ibid., lighthouse Trails research.com, "Letter to the Editor from Man from India: Yoga is a Doctrine of Demons," November 1, 2016; emphases ours)

Contemplative spirituality is thus a pathway to demonism! When we read in Revelation 18:2 ESV of the great worldwide false religion of the end times known as "Babylon the Great" as having become the "haunt for every unclean spirit," we see the opening for this demonic infusion into Christendom on a wide scale through entities like contemplative spirituality! We must thus NOT compromise 2 Timothy 3:16-17, but obey it *PRECISELY* for the Lord's protection and blessing! [This also means that we must test believers today who come out of even formerly reputable theological schools to see if they are completely true to God's Word!]

May we trust in Christ for salvation. May we then *NOT IN ANY WAY* compromise Scripture!