

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

KK. Responding Well To The Rejection Of The Bible

(2 Kings 23:36-24:7 with Jeremiah 36:1-32)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Though the middle word of our Church's name is "Bible," the Bible is often widely, strongly opposed today:

(1) Rene Pache's work, The Inspiration and Authority of Scripture, 1971, p. 273 reported, "All sorts of historical, philosophical, linguistic and literary reasons are advanced for the claim that the Bible itself cannot be the Word of God." Dr. Ryrie explained, noting, "The authority of [theological] liberalism resides in man himself and especially in his reasoning processes" so that "the Bible" is considered to be "entirely the product of human reasoning and thus contains only man's thoughts . . . It is" thus allegedly "the history of man's [evolutionary] development of his religious beliefs . . ." (Charles Caldwell Ryrie, A Survey Of Bible Doctrine, 1972, p. 7; brackets ours)

(2) Due to this view, various influential evolutionists strongly oppose the Bible's teaching on creation: (a) Bill Nye of Disney's former "Bill Nye the Science Guy" program claims "'creationist kids'" are "'compelled to suppress their common sense, to suppress their critical thinking skills at a time in human history when we need them more than ever.'" (Troy Lacey, "Answering Atheists," Answers, July-August 2019, p. 68-69) (b) Neil deGrasse Tyson who has a Ph. D. in astrophysics "claims that evolution is essential to basic science, while creation is merely religion" (Ibid., p. 69). (c) Richard Dawkins who "received his doctorate from Oxford" claimed in the New York Times Review of Books, April 9, 1989, "(I)f you meet somebody who claims not to believe in evolution, that person is ignorant, stupid, or insane (or wicked, but I'd rather not consider that)," Ibid., p. 70-71.

(3) The Bible is being resisted even in many realms in Christendom: (a) Ken Ham's article, "Lost the Book!" in his Answers In Genesis ministry's current circular Answers Insider, July 2019, p. 3, referring to the Bible, claimed, "Many churches really don't believe the book. Many Christian institutions have compromised the book."

(4) On the local level, a believer recently told me that a Christian pastor in another state has told his people that the Old Testament is no longer applicable for us Christians today, that pastors should no longer teach out of it!

Need: So, we ask, "Does viewing the entire Bible as true and applicable leave us suppressing critical thinking and becoming unscientific, ignorant, stupid, insane, wicked or errant as a number of critics claim?!"

- I. God tried to get Jehoiakim to respect Scripture and repent at its reading like his father Josiah had done:**
 - A. When Jehoiakim came to Judah's throne, he practiced idolatry like his ancestors did, 2 Kings 23:36-37; 21:2-9.
 - B. However, since Jehoiakim's immediate father Josiah had responded well to hearing Scripture read and had removed idols from Judah (2 Kings 22:8-23:25), God sought the same response from Jehoiakim (as follows):
 1. God wanted Jehoiakim to recall the ***precedent*** of his father's positive response to Scripture and to mimic it.
 2. God also wanted Jehoiakim to recall how his father's resulting reforms had ***fulfilled*** a distant ***prophecy*** that he would desecrate the syncretistic altar at Bethel (2 Kings 23:15-18; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to 1 Kings 13:2), that Jehoiakim might be motivated likewise to turn Judah from idolatry back to the Lord!
 3. God wanted Jehoiakim to interpret Scripture ***literally*** like his father did upon hearing it so he might repent.
 - C. The Lord thus had His prophet Jeremiah write out His warnings and have them read to all Judah, Jer. 36:1-7.
- II. However, when Jehoiakim heard Scripture's words read, he strongly rejected them, Jeremiah 36:22-26:**
 - A. As Jehoiakim's servant was reading the scroll to him, Jehoiakim used a knife to cut off what had been read to him and threw it into his winter fire, repeating the act until the whole scroll was destroyed, Jer. 36:22-23 ESV.
 - B. Jehoiakim ignored pleas from some of his servants not to burn the scroll and even ordered that Jeremiah and his scribe Baruch to whom he had dictated the words of the scroll be arrested, but God hid them, Jer. 36:24-26.
- III. God thus promised that Jehoiakim's dead body would be left unburied and that he would not have a dynasty. This latter prediction was fulfilled when Jehoiakim's son Jehoiachin ruled just 3 months before Babylon's king deposed him, ending Jehoiakim's dynasty, Jer. 36:30; Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1181.**
- IV. Babylon's king subjected Jehoiakim for 3 years, but Jehoiakim then rebelled against him, 2 Kings 24:1.**
- V. God thus sent bands of other Gentile nations against Judah to weaken it, 2 Kings 24:2-4 ESV.**
- VI. When Jehoiakim eventually died, 2 Kings 24:6 SIGNIFICANTLY does NOT MENTION his BURIAL, for Jehoiakim's body was drawn out like a dead donkey and left exposed to the elements in fulfillment of the Word of God that Jehoiakim had rejected and tried to destroy by his fire, Jer. 36:30; Jer. 22:18-19!**

VII. In contrast to Jehoiakim's fate, God's Scripture thrived: God had Jeremiah write in a second scroll the words Jehoiakim burned in the first one, and he added many more similar words to it, Jer. 36:27-28, 32!

Lesson: For strongly resisting Scripture versus what his father had done, Jehoiakim missed God's blessing and his body in death was mistreated like he had mistreated the scroll of Scripture. Yet, God's Word thrived as God had Jeremiah re-write what Jehoiakim destroyed and add more words to it that survive as the book of Jeremiah today!

Application: (1) May we trust in Christ for salvation, John 3:16. (2) Since God will one day judge all men in accord with what Scripture teaches (2 Timothy 4:1), may we heed Scripture regardless if many strongly reject it!

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

We apply the lesson of this message to the issues introduced in our sermon introduction (as follows):

(1) Just as God wanted Jehoiakim to recall the ***precedent*** of his father Josiah's positive response to the reading of Scripture, we can answer the criticisms of Bill Nye, Neil deGrasse Tyson and Richard Dawkins via ***precedents***:

(a) Bill Nye's charge that creationism threatens critical thinking is answered by noting the ***precedent*** that "(m)any disciplines in science have either been pioneered by people who believed in biblical creation or were heavily influenced by this view, such as Kepler, Newton, Boyle, Linnaeus, Euler, Faraday, Babbage, Joule, Pasteur, Lister, Maxwell and Lord Kelvin . . . (I)n every case they remarked how their Bible-based faith bolstered their desire to learn and seek out the mechanisms by which God's creation functioned." (Ibid., Lacey, p 69)

(b) Neil deGrasse Tyson's claim that creation is a religion is answered by the ***precedent*** of the U. S. Supreme Court's decision in *School District of Abington Township v. Schempp* that "officially recognized secular humanism," an ideology behind evolution, "as a religion that should not be afforded special protection in the classroom." (Ibid., p. 69-70) Both evolution and creation are based on presuppositions, so both are belief systems, Ibid., p. 71.

(c) Richard Dawkins' claim that non-evolutionists are ignorant, stupid, insane or wicked is answered by noting the ***precedent*** that no scientist has ever shown that natural selection and mutation, crucial parts of evolutionary theory, can explain molecules-to-man evolution, Ibid. It is thus rational and ethical for creationists not to accept evolution!

(2) However, as God also wanted Jehoiakim to recall how his father's response to Scripture led to his ***fulfilling prophecy*** in desecrating Bethel's false altar, the Bible's critics are also answered by noting ***fulfilled prophecy!*** 2 Peter 3:3b-4, written in A. D. 66 (Ibid., Ryrie Study Bible, p. 1765), predicted, "(T)here shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, 'Where is the promise of his [Christ's] coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.'" (KJV; brackets ours)

(a) The 2 Peter 3:3b phrases, "(T)here shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts and saying" were fulfilled beginning with Porphyry who critiqued Scripture around A. D. 250 (Z. P. E. B., v. One, p. 584; E. M. Burns, West. Civ., 6th ed., 1963, p. 239-240) and continued with the 17th century Enlightenment that led to rationalism, the "reliance on reason as the basis for establishment of religious truth." (Webster's Third Intl. Dict., s. v. "rationalism" as cited in Compton's Ency. Dict., 1971) Rationalism produced Liberal Theology that counters the divine inspiration of the whole Bible as we noted in the Charles Caldwell Ryrie quote in our sermon introduction.

(b) Then, the 2 Peter 3:4b phrase, "all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation" refers to "uniformitarianism" that rose via rationalism and led to evolution and Liberal Theology's Documentary Hypothesis that countered the divine inspiration of the Pentateuch (Ibid., B. K. C., N. T., p. 875; Ibid., Z. P. E. B., p. 584-589)

Thus, (i) scoffing rationalists (ii) who produced Liberal Theology (iii) that counters the divine inspiration of Scripture and (iv) scoffing rationalists who teach uniformitarianism (v) that led to evolution (vi) that opposes creation (vii) and advanced Liberal Theology were all predicted by 2 Peter 3:3b-4 to arise long before they existed. ***Thus, the very fulfillment of this 2 Peter 3:3b-4 prophecy about the Bible's critics themselves indicates it is divinely inspired!***

We do well, then, to heed the 2 Peter 3:8-14 (as follows): what seems to the Bible's critics to be a failure by God to fulfill His promise of returning is explained by God's longsuffering, not wanting any to perish but to repent. In the end, God will destroy the whole universe by fire, so we should live godly lives in view of that prediction!

(3) On the issue that many in Christendom do not believe the Bible or they compromise it, since 2 Peter 3:3b-4 has been ***fulfilled literally***, we should ***interpret*** and ***believe*** Scripture ***literally*** without compromising it!

(4) Similarly, on the issue of whether the Old Testament is for us Christians today, Romans 15:4 KJV of the New Testament ***literally*** claims, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." We Christians today then ***should certainly*** teach and apply the Old Testament in accord with the guidance of the apostolic writings of the New Testament!

May we trust in Christ for salvation. May we heed written Scripture like Josiah did for God's blessing!