

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

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

XXX. Handling Overwhelming Threats To Our Welfare

(2 Chronicles 19:4-20:30)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Today, we face a variety of humanly overwhelming threats:

(1) We face it in regard to our health: Kathryn D. Malley, R. N. who works with COVID-19 patients in an op-ed, "Those on front lines see reality of COVID-19" (Republican-American, May 13, 2020, p. 13A) wrote, "We are seeing . . . people" who "are dying alone . . . in the fog of fever and hypoxia [lack of oxygen] . . . They are very frightened," and even "(s)urvivors" will see "their lungs, kidneys, livers, hearts and brains . . . left damaged."

(2) We face it in the shutdown: a letter to the Republican-American by John M. Joy of Oxford asserted, "(T)he damage done by the response to this virus threatens to eclipse the damage of the virus itself, in personal (untreated illnesses, increases in suicides and substance abuse, etc.) and economic spheres . . ." (Ibid., May 15, 2020, p. 10A)

(3) We face it in regard to finances: the editorial, "Another \$3 trillion?" (Ibid., May 18, 2020, p. 8A) noted, "An estimated 1,200 households are being served every day by Foodshare at Rentschler Field in East Hartford" and "Jason Jakubowski, president . . . of Foodshare, estimates 70% of those served are newly food-insecure. The \$2.2 trillion stimulus should have insured that every American man, woman and child had roofs over their heads and food in their bellies . . . Plainly, it did not." On top of it all, "(t)he . . . debts of the stimulus will crush future generations."

(4) We face it with our mental health: Brigitte Ruthman's story, "Crisis lines busy as the isolation lingers" (Ibid., p. 1A) told how "emergency phone lines . . . are now filling with voices of despair," and "Maria Coutant Skinner, director" of the McCall Foundation in Torrington said, "Many of those seeking help . . . are 'high functioning people who are surprised about how hard hit they are with anxiety and depression.'"

(5) We face it in the religious fear associated with the pandemic: a Church member recently emailed me about a view a relative holds that the last chapter of Revelation predicts the vaccine for coronavirus, that it will be the mark of the "beast," number 666, that the government is putting a microchip in the vaccine to track every move by everyone, and that Bill Gates who is alleged to be evil is involved! The member knew that the rapture of the Church will occur before the Great Tribulation, but she added in her email, "I look forward to your response Pastor Shell."

Need: *So we ask, "How can we handle the varied, humanly overwhelming threats we face to our welfare today?!"*

- I. After God saved Jehoshaphat from death in battle and sent His prophet Jehu to announce God's wrath on Jehoshaphat for his union with Ahab, Jehoshaphat led Judah to follow the Lord, 2 Chron. 19:4-11:**
- A. Jehoshaphat had allied himself with Israel's evil king Ahab, leading to his being deceived so that Jehoshaphat disobeyed the warning of God's prophet Micaiah and joined Ahab in fighting the Arameans, 2 Chron. 18:1-30.
 - B. In the battle, the Arameans had surrounded Jehoshaphat in order to kill him, but he had cried out for God's help, and the Lord had graciously caused the Arameans to withdraw from Jehoshaphat, 2 Chronicles 18:31-32.
 - C. Later, Jehu warned Jehoshaphat that God's wrath was against him due to his union with Ahab, 2 Chr. 19:1-3.
 - D. Thus, correcting his way, Jehoshaphat led Judah to follow God by organizing courts of justice throughout the land with a supreme court in Jerusalem to administer justice in accord with the Mosaic Law, 2 Chron. 19:4-11.
- II. God then expressed His wrath, letting a humanly overwhelming army invade Judah, but Jehoshaphat's work to get Judah to obey Scripture inclined Judah to trust in God, so He rescued them, 2 Chr. 20:1-30:**
- A. God's predicted wrath came in the form of a humanly overwhelming coalition of Ammonites, Moabites and Meunites from Edom to invade Judah, 2 Chronicles 20:1 ESV. (A. R. Hurst, Old Testament Translation Problems, 1960, p. 51; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to 2 Chronicles 19:2)
 - B. When Jehoshaphat heard about the invasion, the enemy was already in southern Judah (2 Chron. 20:2 ESV), so he was afraid, and chose to seek God's help by gathering the nation to pray in the temple, 2 Chron. 20:3-4.
 - C. Jehoshaphat recalled God's Abrahamic Covenant and asked God to deliver Judah from the men of Ammon, Moab and Edom who had refused to help Israel in her Exodus, asking for divine justice, 2 Chronicles 20:5-12.
 - D. Jehoshaphat was joined by Judah's men, women and children as they stood before the Lord, showing the effect of Jehoshaphat's work to influence them to trust God, so God's Spirit came on Jahaziel, a Levite, and he told Judah not to fear, that the battle belonged to God, 2 Chronicles 20:13, 14-15.
 - E. Jahaziel further announced that the next day, Judah's men were to go out against the invaders and meet them at a certain pass southeast of Jerusalem, 2 Chronicles 20:16; Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 634.

- F. Jahaziel added the heartening news that Judah would not need to fight, for God would fight for them, v. 17-19.
- G. Early the next morning, Jehoshaphat urged Judah's warriors to trust God's Word through His prophets, and he appointed singers to lead them in praise when they went out to meet the enemy, 2 Chronicles 20:20-21.
- H. As the singers began to lead Judah's army, singing and praising the Lord, God caused confusion and fear to rise in the minds of the invaders so that they attacked one another, leaving no survivors, 2 Chron. 20:22-24.
- I. Jehoshaphat and Judah's people took great spoils, using three days to carry it all, and on the fourth day, they assembled in the Valley of Berachah, the Valley of "blessing" to bless the Lord, 2 Chronicles 20:25-26.
- J. The people returned to Jerusalem full of rejoicing, and the fear of the Lord came upon all the nations around Judah when they heard what the Lord had done in delivering His people, 2 Chronicles 20:27-29.
- K. Consequently, the Lord gave Judah rest from war for the rest of Jehoshaphat's reign, 2 Chronicles 20:30.

Lesson: *When they faced humanly overwhelming invaders, Jehoshaphat and Judah with hearts prepared to heed God trusted in Him for deliverance, and God destroyed the enemy, giving Judah great spoil and lasting peace.*

Application: *(1) May we obey God by believing in Christ for salvation, Acts 17:30; John 3:16. (2) To handle overwhelming threats we face, (a) may we confess any sin we have committed to God (1 John 1:9) and (b) align our lives to heed Scripture (c) that our prayers for the Lord's deliverance may be heard, resulting in His blessing.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

If we have trusted in Christ for salvation and have confessed any post-salvation sins that block our rapport with God, we can align with God's Word regarding each issue mentioned in our introduction that our prayers for God's deliverance might be answered. We now show how to align with Scripture on those issues in the introduction:

(1) On the threat of COVID-19 itself, (a) for prevention, we again recall how 1 Timothy 5:23 tells us to use home remedies, and our best route is to support our immune systems by ingesting fresh cut vegetables, Vitamin C, Vitamin D and zinc, to gargle with salt in warm water at the first sign of a sore throat, to avoid ingesting starches, grains and sugars to keep our blood sugar low, to avoid stress, get rest, exercise and drink plenty of water, etc.

(b) If we contract COVID-19 with symptoms, (i) upon getting medical care, (ii) we can apply 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 by relying on the Lord for spiritual power amid physical weakness and (iii) heed Galatians 5:16-23 to rely on the Holy Spirit for controlled thinking and behavior. (iv) If suffering the illness in bed, we can apply Psalm 4:8 ESV that states: "In peace I will both lie down and sleep; for you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety."

(2) On the loss of a job in the shutdown, we need to apply James 4:13-17, trusting God to lead as to the job opening or a different job, and we need to be content with the best job we can land even if it is a menial one, for Proverbs 27:23-27 claims even a throne is sustained by use of basic income streams like hay fields and goats.

(3) On the government's mismanagement of money, 2 Thessalonians 3:10 calls us to work and not live off of unemployment, and 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12 and Hebrews 13:5-6 call us to work independently, to be content with what we possess and trust God to provide regardless what the government or anyone else does to affect our welfare.

(4) On the mental stress caused by crises, (a) Matthew 11:28-30 tells us to rely on Christ to find rest to our souls. Also, (b) Psalm 119:25-32 [Daleth] teaches us how to overcome depression (as follows): (i) depression results from adopting an errant view only to see that view in time disillusion us (v. 25a, 29a), (ii) so we must use Scripture to discern the right view that will not disappoint, and hold to that view to sustain good mental health, v. 30-32. (c) God in 1 Corinthians 10:13 also promises not to let us be tested above what we can bear, and that we look for His "door of escape" out of the trial's duress. (d) Psalm 119:105-112 [Nun] calls us to conserve our emotions by focusing on the next step in life that Scripture calls us to take versus thinking about the whole prolonged crisis. (e) Ephesians 5:18-22 shows how relying on the Holy Spirit equips us to avoid substance abuse, for the Spirit produces joy and peace in us!

(5) On the fear that Revelation 22 predicts a government coronavirus vaccine with a micro chip in it called the "beast" with its number 666 to track everyone's every move, a virus supposedly pushed by an alleged evil Bill Gates, (a) Revelation *nowhere* mentions a *vaccine!* Rather, 2 Thessalonians 2:1-14 with Revelation 13:1-18 claim the Church will be "raptured," taken to heaven by God, *before* the *Great Tribulation*, and that the "beast," the antichrist, with his number 666, will *NOT* be *revealed* to *BE* the *antichrist* until *AFTER* the *rapture!* 2 Thessalonians 2:15-17 thus calls us Christians to stay settled and comforted, serving the Lord! (b) However, we have repeatedly noted that Revelation 3:21 with 7:17 predicts a "mini-Great Tribulation" for our era with its oppressive leaders and intrigue, what we see today, but 2 Thessalonians 2:15-17 *still* calls *us today* to stay settled and comforted, serving the Lord!

May we trust in Christ for salvation. In facing overwhelming threats, may we confess any sin that blocks our rapport with God and align our ways with His Word. Then, may we pray for God's rich blessing.