

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

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

XXXII. Responding To A Troubled Society

(2 Chronicles 21:1-20)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Wherever we turn today, we see a troubled society and world:

(1) The video of handcuffed black man George Floyd as he lay dying on his stomach "gasping for breath while" a white "officer kneeled on his neck for almost eight minutes" appalled the whole world (Tim Sullivan and Amy Forliti, "Minneapolis torn by more unrest," Republican-American, May 29, 2020, p. 1A) "What may be most painful about this tragedy is the absence of . . . humanity . . . (N)o officer intervened and no witnesses dared get in the officers' faces as Mr. Floyd's life ebbed away." ("Thoughts on a senseless death," Ibid., May 30, 2020, p. 10A)

(2) However, many reactions to this tragedy were also unsettling: demonstrations often turning violent sprang up in cities across the country with innocent people being hurt and numerous businesses being trashed and looted and the President threatened to send in the nation's military to restore order. (Jonathan Lemire, Jill Culvin and Alan Sunderman, "Trump vows use of force," Ibid., June 2, 2020, p. 1A)

(3) Yet, this problem is global, too: "As demonstrations escalated worldwide, solidarity with U. S. protesters increasingly mixed with local worries" as seen in the words by "Paris protester Xavier Dintimille" who asserted, "This [tragedy of Mr. Floyd's death] happened in the United States, but it happens in France, it happens everywhere . . . All blacks live this to a degree." ("Riots in France among protests on world stage," Ibid., June 3, 2020, p. 10A)

Need: *So we ask, "How would God have us respond to today's unnerving, troubled society and world?!"*

- I. Jehoram's reign produced social decay because he replaced God with Canaanite deities, 2 Chron. 21:1-6:**
 - A. 2 Chronicles 21:5-6 claims that when Jehoram came to power, he replaced his father's God for the Canaanite gods of his wife Athaliah, Ahab and Jezebel's daughter. (1 Kings 16:30-33; 22:51-53; B. K. C., O. T., p. 633)
 - B. Jehoram then inhumanely murdered all of his brothers and other princes to solidify his power over Judah in violation of the God of Scripture that his father Jehoshaphat had followed, 2 Chronicles 21:1-4; Exodus 20:13.
 - C. To explain, Jehoram's beliefs led him to practice crass immorality and cruelty: the "Canaanite cultic practice" he adopted "was barbarous and thoroughly licentious," having "a most serious retarding and debilitating effect on every phase of . . . cultural and community life." (Merrill F. Unger, Arch. and the O. T., 1973, p. 175)
- II. Yet, God in grace kept His Davidic Covenant and let Jehoram as David's descendant rule, 2 Chr. 21: 7.**
- III. However, the Lord punished Judah and Jehoram for turning from Him to false gods, 2 Chron. 21:8-11:**
 - A. Jehoram not only worshiped Canaanite gods, but he also led his subjects to worship them, 2 Chronicles 21:11.
 - B. God thus punished Jehoram and Judah for this apostasy by letting the nation of Edom and Judah's city of Libnah successfully rebel against Jehoram's rule, 2 Chronicles 21:8-10.
- IV. God's prophet Elijah sent word to Jehoram, denouncing his sins and predicting punishment, v. 12-15:**
 - A. Elijah condemned Jehoram's exchange of Scripture's God that his Davidic ancestors worshiped for the idols of Ahab's house and Jehoram's murder of his brothers who were better than he was, 2 Chronicles 21:12-13.
 - B. Thus, Elijah prophesied that God would bring a great plague on Jehoram's people, his children, his wives and all his possessions, and that he would suffer a terrible disease in his intestines, 2 Chronicles 21:14-15.
- V. All of these predictions about Jehoram by the prophet Elijah were then fulfilled, 2 Chronicles 21:16-19a:**
 - A. The Philistines and Arabians living near the Ethiopians invaded Judah and carried away all of Jehoram's possessions, all of his wives and all of his sons except his youngest, 2 Chronicles 21:16-17.
 - B. God struck Jehoram with a grave disease so that he died in agony as his intestines came out, 2 Chr. 21:18-19a.
- VI. Jehoram passed with no one's regret: the people of Judah made no bonfire for him as they did for his forefathers, and he was buried in the city of David, but not in the tombs of the kings, 2 Chron. 21:19b-20.**

Lesson: *According to God's prophet Elijah, Jehoram's departure from Scripture's God for vile Canaanite gods opened the door for immorality and brutality that hurt his country's society and led to God's severe punishment.*

Application: (1) *May we obey God's Acts 17:30 command to believe in Christ for salvation of the soul, John 3:16.*
(2) *Then, to respond to today's troubled society, may we heed Bible prophecy for our era as in Elijah's prophetic message to Jehoram in his era that explains what is occurring, why, and how God wants us to think and function.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

(1) First, Bible prophecy explains **WHAT** is occurring in today's troubled society and world, and **WHY SO:**

(a) Daniel 2:41-43 ESV predicted the rise of the latter day "feet," the Revived Roman Empire, that will be as iron mixed with clay, (i) being ideologically, politically divided (v. 41a), (ii) partly strong and partly weak militarily and socially (v. 41b-42) and (iii) a mix of different people groups who will not unite (v. 43). The kingdom will continue into the Great Tribulation that follows the rapture of the Church when the kingdom will first consist of the feet's "ten toes," that is, 10 kings (Dan. 2:42-44 with Rev. 17:12), who will give their power to antichrist (Rev. 17:13).

This prophecy is about Europe, but since the United States is composed mainly of European peoples, I hold that the ideological divide is belief in a republic form of government versus belief in Marxism, producing strength along with weakness militarily and socially while the nations involved are inflamed with racism via Marxist influence. In support of this view, we cite former FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover in his statement to Congress in 1967 (as follows): "Communists seek to advance the cause of communism by injecting themselves into racial situations and exploiting them, one, to intensify the frictions between blacks and whites, to prove that discrimination against minorities is an inherent defect of the capitalist system; two, to foster domestic disunity by dividing blacks and whites into antagonistic, warring factions; three, undermine and destroy established authority; four, to incite black hostility toward law and order; five, to encourage and foment racial strife and riotous activity; number six, to portray the communist movement as the champion of social protest and the only force capable of ameliorating [improving] the conditions of the black and oppressed . . . (A)lmost 50 years of Communist Party activity in the United States . . . has contributed to disrupting race relations in this country." (Brannon S. Howse, Marxianity, 2018, p. 178-179, citing Testimony, J. Edgar Hoover, House Appropriations, Subcommittee, February 16, 1967, p. 619)

(b) Also, as we have often noted in past messages, Revelation 3:21 with 7:17 foretold a mini-Great Tribulation era in Church History **just before** the future Great Tribulation, that it will be a time of God's punishment of sin in the Church and world, an era marked by oppressive leaders, intrigue, conflicts and various calamities that unsettle people.

(c) As we have learned in our studies of the Laodicean Church of Revelation 3:14-22, what predicts our era of Church History, Revelation 3:17 notes that God intends to discipline what many evangelical Christians do, for many (i) function by means by their sin natures, (ii) many are worldly, gratifying the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of this earthly life, (iii) many do not live by faith in God for life and ministry, (iv) many are spiritually blind (v) and many compromise godly ministries with error for the sake of money [and/or worldly fame].

Revelation 3:17 also critiques Calvinism and Arminianism, beliefs that produce the errant spiritualities above.

(d) The growing troubles in society testify to the theological error of amillennial and posttribulation reconstructionists who try to reform society through the Church! Society is not getting better, it is getting worse!

(2) Second, Scripture then directs us **HOW** to **THINK** and to **FUNCTION** for God's blessing (as follows):

(a) We should apply God's call for those who will live in the future Great Tribulation in Isaiah 26:20-21 when God expresses His wrath to the full, that we like those believers might "hide" until God's fury is past. The verb "hide" is **habah**, "withdraw into privacy; hide oneself" (B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 285), and Jesus spoke of practicing this type of behavior overtly in the future Great Tribulation in Matthew 24:16-21 when he warned future Hebrews to flee quickly from antichrist when he breaks his treaty with Israel halfway through the Great Tribulation.

Applied to our mini-Great Tribulation era today, Philippians 4:5 calls us to let our "moderation" (KJV) be known unto all men, the Greek term being **epieikes**, a "forbearing, nonretaliatory" spirit (Ibid., Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 663). Since the ungodly are aggressively irritable over their current trials and thus potentially harmful as God expresses His own anger in allowing the trials to arise, we must avoid conflicts with irritable, carnal leaders in society and the government and people of similar attitudes by being cautious, humble, kind, peaceable, and God-fearing!

(b) We believers must also heed God's directives on the issues He critiqued of evangelicals in Revelation 3:17: namely, (i) We must rely on the Holy Spirit, not our sin natures, for life and ministry (Galatians 5:16, 22-23). (ii) We must not love the world and its lusts (1 John 2:15-17). (iii) We must live by faith in God, not faith in evangelicalism (Proverbs 3:5-6). (iv) We must heed Scripture instead of evangelicalism itself for discernment (Psalm 119:105) and (v) we must not compromise with error in evangelicalism or in other religious circles, 1 Timothy 4:16.

(c) Since the rapture of the Church occurs before the Great Tribulation, our task as believers today is to disciple individuals while anticipating the rapture and Christ's Second Coming to judge the world and set up His Kingdom. (2 Thessalonians 2:1-17; Revelation 19:1-20:6) We are to serve God with our spiritual gifts (Romans 12:3-8), doing our part to contribute to the discipling of the troubled, spiritually needy people the Lord brings our way!

(e) In handling anxiety that we ourselves might face, Philippians 4:6-9 calls us to (i) unload our fears to God in prayer, (ii) to focus on edifying truths and (iii) heed Scripture (iv) to enjoy the presence of the God of peace!

May we trust in Christ for salvation. May we follow God, heeding His Word for blessing in our time!