

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

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

XXXVII. Overcoming The Decline Into Spiritual Catastrophe

(2 Chronicles 25:1-28)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Much of today's world is in a state of upheaval, and we need to know why and how to respond to it all:

(1) Much of the secular realm is in upheaval: Heather MacDonald's article, "Breakdown" in the Manhattan Institute City Journal, July 1 as cited in "Quotable," Republican-American, July 6, 2020, p. 8A, claimed, "(Today's rising crime rates) are no longer the warning signs of a possible breakdown of civilized life. That breakdown is upon us. If local and national leaders are unable to summon the will to defend our most basic institutions from false and inflammatory charges of racism, they have forfeited their right to govern. Unless new leaders come forth who understand their duty to maintain the rule of law, the country will not pull back from disaster."

(2) Much of the evangelical realm is in upheaval, creating unsettling concerns and questions for Christians:

(a) Evangelical pastor Bill Hybels has "signed the Yale document stating that Muslims and Christians worship the same God." (Brannon Howse, Religious Trojan Horse, 2012, p. 3) Evangelical Christians may then wonder if they should pray to the Muslim god Allah for peace in their hearts in this troubled era!

(b) Father Edmund Nadolny is running an ad on several Connecticut radio stations where he says the Roman Catholic "Hail Mary" prayer to settle listeners in this turbulent era. It goes like this: "Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now, and in the hour of our death. Amen." (Loraine Boettner, Roman Catholicism, 1978, p. 141) Since Evangelical leader Chuck Colson led other evangelicals to sign the "Evangelicals and Catholics Together" document declaring Catholics and Protestants are both Christians so evangelicals should not try to convert Catholics (Ibid., Howse, p. 478), should evangelicals say the Catholic "Hail Mary" for peace today?

(c) Evangelical pastor "Rick Warren . . . sits on the advisory board of the Tony Blair Foundation, which seeks to bring the religions of the world together." (Ibid., p. 4) Should evangelical Christians then pray to the deity of any reputable religious entity in today's world to gain peace and stability in their hearts?

Need: *So we ask, "Why is much of today's world in upheaval, and what would God have us do in response?!"*

- I. When Amaziah came to the throne, he initially obeyed Scripture with God's blessing, 2 Chron. 25:1, 3-4:**
- A. After being firmly established as king, Amaziah executed the men who had assassinated his father king Joash, putting them to death for murder as Genesis 9:6 and Numbers 35:33 commanded. (2 Chronicles 25:1, 3)
 - B. However, opposite what kings in his era often did, Amaziah did not execute the sons of these murders, but heeded Scripture's Deuteronomy 24:16 prohibition against executing the innocent sons. (2 Chronicles 25:4)
 - C. This obedience would have elicited God's approval and His resulting blessing, cf. Deuteronomy 28:1-14.
- II. However, Amaziah did not wholeheartedly do what was upright (2 Chronicles 25:2), and such half-hearted commitment to Scripture eventually blossomed into great evil and a terrible end, 2 Chr. 25:5-28:**
- A. Amaziah ceased closely heeding Scripture simply to overlook it, thus doing what was wrong, 2 Chron. 25:5:
 - 1. He failed to heed God's Deuteronomy 20:1 promise that he as Judah's king was not to fear facing a larger, better equipped army in battle since the Lord Who had saved Israel from Egypt's chariot army at the Red Sea without Israel even having to wield a sword was with him to give him victory. (cf. Exodus 14:1-31)
 - 2. Amaziah instead organized and numbered his men, sinning like David, 2 Chron. 25:5a; 1 Chron. 21:1-8.
 - B. Amaziah shifted from overlooking Scripture to violating it openly, producing trouble, 2 Chron. 25:6-9, 10, 13:
 - 1. He hired idolatrous mercenaries from the Northern Kingdom of Israel to help his army, 2 Chron. 25:6.
 - 2. This action was met by God sending His prophet to warn Amaziah that He would not bless his war effort since God was not helping the sinful men of Israel, 2 Chronicles 25:6-8 NIV.
 - 3. When Amaziah asked what he would do about the 100,000 silver talents he had spent hiring these men, God's messenger told him the Lord could provide him much more than that [in booty], 2 Chronicles 25:9.
 - 4. Amaziah then dismissed the hired soldiers from Israel, angering them because they would miss out on war booty, 2 Chron. 25:10. This led to trouble for Judah, for as these mercenaries went home, they killed 3,000 people in Judah and took their spoil to compensate for the spoil they missed in battle, 2 Chr. 25:13.
 - C. Amaziah then went from openly violating Scripture to practicing vile idolatry, 2 Chronicles 25:14-15:
 - 1. After defeating Edom, Amaziah took its pagan gods back to Judah to worship them, 2 Chron. 25:14.

2. This sin angered the Lord, so He sent His prophet to ask why Amaziah would illogically worship the gods of Edom who could not deliver their own people from him in battle, 2 Chronicles 25:15.
- D. Amaziah also brutally violated Scripture, 2 Chronicles 25:11-12:
1. Deuteronomy 20:10-11 directed that if Israel waged war against a nation like Edom that was outside of the land of Canaan, Israel was to ask the enemy first to surrender, and if it did so, Israel was not to kill anyone, but subject that nation to Israel that it should serve her and pay monetary tribute to her.
 2. However, if the enemy did not surrender, then Israel was to kill all the enemy warriors with the sword, but save the rest of the people, animals and spoils of war alive for themselves, Deuteronomy 20:12-15.
 3. Regardless, Amaziah brutally disobeyed this directive, slaying those Edomites who opposed them but then taking those who surrendered and throwing them off a stone cliff to their horrible deaths, 2 Chr. 25:11-12.
- E. Amaziah then insubordinately repudiated God's messenger who critiqued him for his sin, 2 Chronicles 25:16:
1. When God's prophet began to critique Amaziah for idolatry, he insubordinately interrupted the prophet and scornfully asked if they had made him a royal counselor, threatening to kill him, 2 Chronicles 25:16a ESV.
 2. The prophet replied that God would destroy Amaziah for idolatry and for not heeding his counsel, v. 16b.
- F. God thus caused Amaziah to lose a battle against Israel, to lose his wealth and honor by having Israel invade Jerusalem for booty and to lose his life at the hands of his own countrymen, 2 Chronicles 25:17-28.

Lesson: *For obeying God's Word half-heartedly, Amaziah went from initially obeying the Lord eventually to fall into sin that was so great that his life ended in a complete catastrophe.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ for salvation, John 3:16. (2) As catastrophic upheaval is the result of half-hearted obedience to God that eventually grows into great sin, may we always wholeheartedly obey God's Word.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

For answers to the issues in our introduction, we apply this sermon, closely, wholeheartedly heeding Scripture:

(1) On upheaval in the secular realm, Chris Powell's piece, "Slavery's taint has long reach" (Ibid., Republican-American, July 3, 2020, p. 8A) rightly observed, "Today's protesters seem to . . . think . . . their protests are sharing a revelation. But their revelation is only a matter of their own ignorance . . . since for decades American education has been less interested in history than in social promotion . . . In the last century, churches were still teaching . . . the fall of man and original sin . . . from . . . Adam's and Eve's disobedience to God. Today, it might be enough if this . . . were understood to mean simply that no individual or nation is perfect," and so diffuse much of the rioting. Mr. Powell is right: the Biblical truth that all have sinned keeps people from overreacting to evil deeds they witness and leads mankind to see his need to trust in Christ for salvation, to get a new heart and a transformed behavior.

(2) On upheaval in religious realms, (a) contrary to evangelical pastor Bill Hybels' claim, Islam's god Allah is **not** the Christian God, for Sura 9:30 of Islam's holy book the Qur'an claims "those who consider Jesus to be the Son of God are under the 'curse of Allah'" (Robert Spencer, The Truth About Muhammad, 2006, p. 37-38), and 1 John 4:1-3 teaches this denial of Christ's deity by Allah means Allah is **not** Scripture's God. (b) Also, Will Durant in "The Story of Civilization," IV:160-161, wrote, "'Within the Kaaba in pre-Muslim days, were several idols representing gods. One was called Allah . . . three others were Allah's daughters . . . The Quraish [Muhammad's tribe controlling Mecca] paved the way for monotheism by worshiping Allah as chief god.'" (cited in Dave Hunt, The Berean Call, Feb. 2000, p. 3-4) Allah was reinvented as a monotheistic deity out of ancient polytheism, so he is a false god.

(b) On saying the "Hail Mary," (i) Mary is **not** the "Mother of God," but the mother of Jesus' humanity, for Christ is Eternal Creator God with no beginning, John 1:1-3, 14. (ii) Mary is **not** "Holy Mary" who prays "for us sinners," for she sinned in Mark 3:21, 31 when she with Jesus' earthly brothers came to gain custody of Jesus, thinking in unbelief that He was insane! (B. K. C., N. T., p. 117-118) Also, there is one Mediator between God and man, Jesus, not Mary (1 Timothy 2:5), so we do not go to God through Mary. (iii) Finally, Mary does not pray for us "in the hour of our death," for prayers do not save, but God saves those who trust in Christ before they die, Ephesians 2:8-9; John 3:16; Hebrews 9:27. We should **not** say the "Hail Mary," but pray our own prayers to God.

(c) On bringing the world's religions together as the goal of the Tony Blair Foundation of which evangelical pastor Rick Warren is an adviser, in Isaiah 45:22, the God of the Bible said, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else." Jesus Himself in John 14:6 said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." We are to worship the God Who is revealed in the Bible.

May we trust in Christ for salvation. May we realize that the turmoil in the world is the result of half-hearted obedience to Scripture gone full cycle into apostasy, and always wholeheartedly heed God's Word.