

## THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

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

#### LII. Heeding God's Authoritative Word

##### (2 Chronicles 36:11-21)

Introduction: (To show the need . . . )

Many people today lack a sense of accountability to an absolute authority, and with it comes a lot of unrest:

(1) It occurs in society in general: Daniel Henninger's column, "Amy Coney Barrett's Religiosity" (The Wall Street Journal, October 15, 2020, cited in "Quotable," Republican-American, October 16, 2020, p. 10) claimed that the decline "of an actively practiced religion's self-organizing and self-disciplining function in American life has" led to "a sustained social disaster . . . The decline was less noticeable so long as public-school teachers still conveyed the basic ABCs of right and wrong. But they stopped doing that which left . . . nothing. The result is on America's streets -- an increasingly absurd, often destructive chaos of half-formed personal civic sentiments . . ."

(2) It occurs in Congress: Wall Street Journal columnist Kimberley A. Strassel in her October 16, 2020 piece, "A Justice Is Worth 1,000 Tweets" (Ibid., "Quotable," October 19, 2020, p. 8A) claimed, ". . . (T)he (Amy Coney Barrett) hearings" revealed one political party "wants judges to follow the law, and" the other "wants a judiciary that does what political overseers tell it to do."

(3) It occurs in the Roman Catholic Church: a church member called me last Thursday expressing shock over news that Pope Francis had condoned same-sex civil unions! Nicole Winfield's report, "Plot thickens over origins of pope's civil union comments," Ibid., Republican-American, October 23, 2020, p. 8A, added that the pope's remarks conflict with a "2003 document from the Vatican's doctrine office" that "stated the church's respect for gay people 'cannot lead in any way to approval of homosexual behavior or to legal recognition of homosexual unions.'" Furthermore, The New American Bible For Catholics, 1986 that has the September 18, 1970 papal blessing of Pope Paul VI, at Leviticus 18:22 states: "You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; such a thing is an abomination."

(4) It occurs in evangelicalism: theologians "Rice and Pinnock see . . . an impossible contradiction between any affirmation of God's sovereign foreordination and an affirmation of man's true freedom," what "echoes the concern that has been the driving motivation of modern atheism, whether in Ludwig Feuerback (who influenced Karl Marx so strongly)" or in others. (Robert B. Strimple, "What Does God Know?" in John H. Armstrong, gen. ed., The Coming Evangelical Crisis, 1996, p. 142) "Modern atheism answers" the tension "by declaring God does not exist" while evangelicals "Rice and Pinnock . . . present a reduced or 'limited' removal of God from the picture." (Ibid.) Accordingly, some evangelicals desire a new theology where "God's wrath, newly defined, 'never means sending people to an eternal hell.'" (R. Albert Mohler, Jr. "'Evangelical': What's In A Name?," Ibid., Armstrong, p. 34)

Thus, reactions to the Calvinistic view that God sovereignly chose who would trust in Christ that leaves no room for human free will has led to the atheism of Marxism and extreme contemporary Arminianism that elevates man's will to the point that God is left never sending anyone to an eternal hell -- both very unbiblical views!

Need: *So, we ask, "If many lack a sense of accountability to absolute authority, yielding unrest, what must I do?!"*

#### **I. Judah's king Zedekiah, his officials and people did not heed God's Word as if it were not authoritative:**

- A. When Zedekiah came to Judah's throne, he did what was evil in God's estimation, 2 Chronicles 36:11-12a.
- B. Indeed, he, his officials and Judah's people treated God's call to repent as if His Word were not authoritative:
  1. Zedekiah did not humble himself before the Word of God spoken by the prophet Jeremiah that called him to submit to Babylon's king, but he rebelled against him and against the Lord, violating his initial oath in God's name to submit to Babylon's king Nebuchadnezzar, 2 Chronicles 36:12b-13; Jeremiah 21:1-10.
  2. The chief priests and the people practiced rampant idolatry in rebellion against the Lord, 2 Chron. 36:14.
  3. God graciously repeatedly sent His prophets to call Judah to repent, but the nation **mocked** His messengers, **despised** His Word through them and **scoffed** at them, 2 Chronicles 36:15-16a ESV. The Hebrew verbs for "mock," "despise" and "scoff" here are all [active] participles in the Hebrew text, indicating repeat or habitual action. (Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 1434; B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 541, 102, 1073; Analyt. Grk. Lex. (Zon.), 1972, p. 71; Allen P. Ross; A Heb. Hndbk., 1975, p. 36)

#### **II. However, God's Word IS authoritative, so His punishment fell EXACTLY as Scripture had predicted:**

- A. God's wrath was so aroused against Judah that He sent the Babylonians invade her, slay her people and take all the holy vessels of the temple and treasures of the king and his princes to Babylon, 2 Chron., 36:16b, 17-18.
- B. The Babylonians burned the temple, destroyed the city walls and burned its palaces and their valuables, v. 19.

- C. Babylon's king took surviving Hebrews to Babylon where they served him until the reign of the king of Persia. This captivity fulfilled the Jeremiah 29:10 prophecy that Israel would be help captive for 70 years until the land had enjoyed its every-seventh-year land Sabbaths that Israel had not kept for 490 years, 2 Chr. 36:20-21.
- D. Jeremiah's prediction in turn fulfilled Moses' centuries-old Leviticus 26:33-35 prophecy that if God sent Israel into captivity for her sin, the land would catch up on its missed land Sabbaths that Israel had failed to observe!

***Lesson: Though Zedekiah, his officials and Judah's people treated God's Word as if it were not authoritative, it WAS authoritative, so God fulfilled it EXACTLY as His prophets Jeremiah and Moses had predicted.***

***Application: (1) May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life, John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. (2) May we view Scripture as God's inspired, authoritative Word, (3) and thus study it to understand its message and align our lives in accord with its teaching for God's blessing.***

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . . )

We apply God's authoritative Word to address issues of concern we noted in our introduction (as follows):

(1) On the lack of a sense of accountability to absolute authority in society and officials, we heed 1 Peter 2:13 and obey every ordinance of man, the exceptions being that we obey Scripture over man's laws if they differ (Acts 5:29) and if man's laws contradict one another and we must use common sense and good judgment. (Proverbs 20:12)

(2) On the pope's support for same-sex civil unions, Leviticus 18:22 in the **Hebrew** text reads: "'You shall not lie, sexually cohabit with' (*tishkab*, second person imperfect **masculine** singular from *shakab*, 'lie;'" Kittel, *Biblia Hebraica*, p. 172; *The Analyt. Heb. and Chaldee Lex.* (Zon.), 1972, p. 779; B. D. B., *A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T.*, p. 1011-1012) a 'male' (*zakar*, Ibid., p. 271) as in lying with a 'woman, female' (*'ishah*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 61); it [the act] (emphatic pronoun *hu'*) is an abomination (*to'ebah*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 1072-1073) We thus hold that the only upright sexual union that exists for humans involves a man and a woman in marriage.

(3) On the debate over election and predestination, (a) the trouble began in the fifth century A. D. when British monk Pelagius adopted pagan Stoic belief to hold, "'If I ought, I can"' be a Christian by contributing to his salvation. (A. Williston Walker, *A Hist. of the Christ. Chch.*, 1959, p. 168) Bishop Augustine of North Africa opposed Pelagius' view, claiming salvation is so fully the work of God that God authors even one's faith in Christ. (B. B. Warfield, *Calvin and Augustine*, 1974, p. 378) However, Augustine was affected by pagan Neo-platonism, an errant pantheistic view that held man was an extension of God, leading Augustine to conclude that God authored man's faith. (Ibid., p. 375, 395-396; Gorton Carruth, ed. in chief, *The Vol. Library*, 2994, v.22, p. 2025-2026) The Church has thus long battled over Stoic-laced Pelagian error and Neo-platonic-laced Augustinian error on election and predestination until **today**, Stoic-laced Pelagian **Arminianism** and Neo-platonic-laced Augustinian **Calvinism** oppose one another.

(b) We thus expound Scripture **free** of **both** Stoicism **and** Neo-platonism, and find that Scripture perfectly harmonizes God's and man's wills (as follows): (i) On man's will, John 3:16 KJV claims God so "loved" the "world," that He gave His only, unique Son that "whosoever believeth" in Him might not perish, but have eternal life. (+) The "world" here cannot be "world of the elect who will believe" as some Calvinists teach, for then Jesus would have said that not all of the elect will be saved as only "whosoever believeth" of that "world" will be saved when all the elect in reality **will** be saved! (+) Thus, all human beings worldwide must have free will to believe in Christ. (ii) As for God's sovereignty in salvation, Ephesians 2:8-9 claims salvation is by grace through faith apart from human works. The Pelagian view of a self-help contribution to one's salvation counters this Biblical claim, so Pelagianism greatly errs. The work of saving the soul is entirely the work of a sovereign God performed in His infinite grace.

(c) In our lessons with the URL "Making Sense of God's Election" on our Church web site's home page, we show that election involves God's choosing those from eternity past whom He foreknew would trust in Christ unto blessings that follow justification, and His predestination works to make the saved participate in those blessings. Man freely decides to believe in Christ, and God in grace sovereignly saves him as a gift to the one who thus believes.

(d) Many Bible verses are "battlegrounds" in the Calvinist-Arminian debate, and we cover each one in our lessons cited above. However, Acts 13:48b is likely the "biggest" one, and in the KJV it reads, ". . . (A)s many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Our lessons cited above show how this verse was mistranslated, that it **should** read, ". . . (A)s many 'had marshaled themselves on the side of' (middle perfect participle of the Greek verb *tasso*) eternal life believed." The perfect **middle** and perfect **passive** participle in New Testament Greek are spelled the same way. **Calvinists** have read it as a **passive** where we show in our lessons that the **context** reveals it is a **middle!**

**May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life. May we then view Scripture as God's authoritative Word and heed its truth for blessing.**