

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Nehemiah: Pattern For Solutions In Spiritually Hard Times

N. Parting From Idolaters (Nehemiah 9:1-2; 10:28-30)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Today, July 4th, we face a big push by Marxists to adopt idolatrous Marxism that counters our nation's welfare and God. We need to do more than simply react to the issue -- we need to respond to it constructively. We explain:

(1) Marxism is a form of idolatry: Colossians 3:5 calls covetousness idolatry, and Karl Marx "argued that man's material needs for food, clothing, and shelter have largely determined his bodily activities, and behavior, and indeed, his thoughts." (The Volume Library, 1994, v. Two, p. 2033) The Communist Manifesto thus called for the covetous forced distribution of the wealth of the rich to others. (learn-usa.com; "Goals, 'Communist Manifesto'")

(2) Today, Marxism is being greatly pushed on our society especially in the form of the Critical Race Theory:

(a) A letter by Jane Bate of Cheshire to the Republican-American, June 23, 2021, p. 9A claimed, "(C)ritical race theory . . . is Marxism" that "is meant to divide us," and according to syndicated columnist George Will, it "increasingly pervades K-12 education nationwide." (Ibid., "Teacher stands against CRT," June 24, 2021, p. 8A)

(b) To explain this theory, "a June 8 YouTube video" of "Dana Stangel-Plowe" presented her as saying, "'Today, I am resigning from a job that I love,'" teaching English at New Jersey's private Dwight-Englewood School. She added that the school "has embraced an ideology . . . that requires students to see themselves not as individuals, but as representatives of either an oppressor or oppressed group," depending on one's race. (Ibid., Will)

(c) Jane Bate's letter illustrated how Marxism is behind this theory: she wrote of "Yeonmi Park, a 27-year-old defector from North Korea" who "compared life on the Columbia University campus to the life she had escaped in North Korea. 'Literally every professor was saying the problems that we have in today's world is because of white men (and) how they colonized Africa (and) Asia,' Park said. '. . . I couldn't believe it.' She compared U. S. university life to living under the communist Kim regime because of cancel culture and dividing people by race," Ibid., Bate.

(d) Remarkably, the deception and hypocrisy involved in this matter is enormous: "Critical race theory (CRT) has its roots in the 1920s and '30s, in Critical Theory written by Friedrich Nietzsche and Georg Friedrich Hegel -- whose best known disciple was Karl Marx. Critical theory promoted white supremacy, according to the Heritage Foundation. Fast forward to today. CRT claims America is systemically racist and American law is oppressive, resulting in an alliance between working-class whites and capitalists against minorities." (Letter by William R. Bellotti, Middlebury, Ibid., June 29, 2021, p. 8A) Thus, Karl Marx's forerunner promoted white supremacy in his Critical Theory, and Marxists now push the Critical Race Theory that blames white Americans for white supremacy!

(e) Meanwhile, the teaching of Critical Race Theory is producing unedifying results in our public schools: One area teacher reports that children exposed to this instruction are going home and crying, upset over thinking that they are without hope or that they are evil simply because they belong to a certain race!

(3) Accordingly, beyond just reacting to idolatrous Marxism, we need to take constructive action regarding it.

Need: *So, we ask, "What constructive response does God want us to have to the idolatrous Marxism that we face?"*

I. When the Hebrews learned from Scripture that the Babylonian Captivity resulted from their fathers' failure to part from idolaters and idolatry, they countered their fathers' sins, Neh. 8:13; 9:1-2; 10:28a:

- A. The reading of Scripture showed the Hebrews how not parting from idolaters had led to Israel's captivity:
1. In Deuteronomy 7:1-4, Israel's lawgiver Moses had warned the people of Israel not to associate with nor to intermarry with Canaan's idolatrous pagans lest doing so lead to the spread of idolatry in Israel itself.
 2. However, the people of Israel then failed to separate from the idolatrous pagans in Canaan, Judges 1:1-2:5.
 3. Accordingly, in time, the people of Israel not only practiced pagan idolatry, but even their Aaronic priests polluted God's temple with pagan idols and idol worship, 2 Chronicles 36:14-15.
 4. God finally punished Israel by allowing the Babylonians to conquer them, to destroy their city and temple and take them captive to Babylon for seventy years, 2 Chronicles 36:16-21.
- B. Thus, realizing from the reading of the Scripture record on these things (Neh. 8:1; 13-14) that their fathers' failure to separate from idolaters had led them into idolatry and God's resulting discipline of the Babylonian Captivity, the Hebrews of Nehemiah's era parted company with idolatrous pagans and idolatry!

II. The Hebrews then filled the void left by parting from idolaters and idolatry with CONSTRUCTIVELY heeding Scripture and fellowshiping with the Lord, Nehemiah 9:38-10:29.

III. This CONSTRUCTIVE action included agreeing to avoid intermarriage with pagan idolaters (Nehemiah 10:30), to observe the Sabbath (Nehemiah 10:31a) and land sabbaths and the timely release of slaves (Nehemiah 10:31b) and to support the temple ministry in fellowship with God (Nehemiah 10:32-39).

***Lesson:* Scripture's insight that their fathers' failure to part from idolaters eventually led to captivity, the Hebrews parted from idolaters and constructively filled the void with heeding Scripture and fellowshiping with the Lord.**

***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 Cor. 15:1-11. (2) May we turn from Marxist idolaters and idolatry and instead constructively heed Scripture and fellowship with the Lord for blessing.**

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

We apply this sermon's lesson to the issues presented in our sermon introduction (as follows):

(1) May we avoid the idol of materialism that is inherent in Marxism by heeding Colossians 3:1-5 to consider ourselves to be "dead" to relying on material possessions for fulfillment (Colossians 3:5) and instead live for those eternally valuable things in heaven above where Christ is seated at the Father's right hand, Colossians 3:1-4.

(2) Ezekiel 18:1-28 **counters** the Critical Race Theory view that people now are guilty of the racism by their ancestors, for **God holds each person responsible for his own sins**. May we then **reject** the Critical Race Theory.

(3) To fill the ideological vacuum left by rejecting the Critical Race Theory, may we **constructively adopt God's edifying view of each human being regardless of race, ethnicity and gender (as follows)**: (a) God made all men from Adam, and He calls all men to trust in Christ to be saved, Acts 17:24-31. (b) May we then love all men (Rom. 13:8) and (c) disciple all men for Christ, Matt. 28:19-20.

(5) May we **also constructively adopt God's edifying view of each BELIEVER regardless of race, ethnicity and gender (as follows)**: (a) God so values each believer that He put him in His eternal plan, Rom. 8:28-30. (b) Each believer is redeemed from sin's control so he is free to live for God, Gal. 5:1. (c) Each believer is reconciled to God to have peace with Him, 2 Cor. 5:20. (d) Each believer is related to God by the satisfaction of God's wrath by Christ's work on the cross so that he will escape God's future wrath, 1 John 2:2; 2 Thess. 2:10b-15; 1 Thess. 5:1-9. (e) Each believer is positionally forgiven all trespasses in Christ, Col. 2:13. (f) Each believer is joined to Christ for a new walk in separation from sin, Rom. 6:1-10. (g) Each believer is made free from the Mosaic Law's jurisdiction and thus to its resulting condemnation, Rom. 7:2-6. (h) Each believer is made a child of God, John 1:12-13. (i) Each believer is adopted by God as an adult son so God can take him to heaven, Rom. 8:23. (j) Each believer is made positionally acceptable to God by Christ, Eph. 1:6. (k) Each believer is pronounced righteous by God, Rom. 3:26. (l) Each believer has been made nigh to God for spiritual intimacy with Him, Eph. 2:13. (m) Each believer has been delivered from the power of Satan's darkness, Col. 1:13. (n) Each believer has been translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, so each believer is beloved by God, Col. 1:13. (o) Each believer has been placed on the Rock, Christ Jesus, for spiritual security, 1 Cor. 3:9-15. (p) Each believer is so valuable to God that he has been made a gift from God the Father to Christ, John 17:2, 6, 9, 11, 12, 24. (q) Each believer is spiritually circumcised in Christ so that he can live above the power of his own sin nature, Rom. 6:6; Col. 2:11. (r) Each believer is a partaker of a holy and a royal priesthood, 1 Pet. 2:5, 9; Rev. 1:6. (s) Each believer is part of a chosen generation, a holy nation and a peculiar people, 1 Pet. 2:9. (t) Each believer is a citizen of heaven, Phil. 3:20. (u) Each believer is a member of God's family and household, Eph. 2:19. (v) Each believer is in the spiritual fellowship of the saints, John 17:21-26. (w) Each believer has a heavenly association for service and destiny, 1 Cor. 15:51-58. (x) Each believer has access to God for prayer and fellowship, Rom. 5:2; Eph. 2:18. (y) Each believer is in the much more care of God as an object of His love, grace, power, faithfulness, peace, consolation and intercession, Rom. 8:32; 5:8. (z) Each believer is so valued by God that he himself is an inheritance of God the Father, Eph. 1:18. (aa) Each believer has been given a heavenly inheritance, 1 Peter 1:4. (bb) Each believer is made light in the Lord, one day to be glorified, Eph. 5:8; Dan. 12:2-3. (cc) Each believer is vitally united with the Trinity, Matt. 28:19-20. (dd) Each believer is blessed with the first-fruits of the Holy Spirit in God's promise of future glory, 2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13-14. (ee) Each believer is positionally glorified, Rom. 8:18, 30. (ff) Each believer is complete in Christ, Col. 2:9-10. (gg) Each believer positionally possesses every spiritual blessing in Christ so that he does not need another spiritual blessing, Eph. 1:3. (Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 1973, volume III, "Soteriology," p. 232-266)

May we trust in Christ Who died for us as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life. May we separate from all idolatry and idolaters and constructively heed Scripture and fellowship with God for blessing.