

## THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

### **Psalms: Living By Faith In God**

#### **VII. Handling Harmful Slander**

**(Psalm 7:1-17)**

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

We face a potentially very harmful form of slander, and we need to understand it in order to handle it well:

(1) In past sermons, we have mentioned the critical race theory (CRT), and many Americans have heard that it is being taught in our schools, but Thomas Ethier in his op-ed, "Column on CRT was misleading" (Republican-American, November 10, 2021), like many progressives, claimed the critical race theory is "not being taught in any secondary schools, nor is anyone proposing that it should be." (Letter by Michael McKeeman, Litchfield, *Ibid.*, November 17, 2021, p. 9A) Yet, even Mr. Ethier himself in his op-ed *did* acknowledge that "the U. S. Department of Education advocates and provides incentives for incorporating 'CRT themes' in public-school curricula." (*Ibid.*)

(2) Accordingly, we do well to understand CRT so as to know how to handle it, and "one of our nation's leading historians, Princeton University professor Allen C. Guelzo," explained in an interview with Marc Thiessen that it is a "pernicious," troubling ideology. (Marc Thiessen, "Why CRT is dangerous," *Ibid.*, November 15, 2021, p. 10A) Professor Guelzo claimed that CRT is "a subset of critical theory that began with Immanuel Kant in the 1790s" as a "rejection of . . . the Enlightenment and the Age of Reason . . . Kant believed 'reason was inadequate to give shape to our lives,' so he set about 'developing a theory of being critical of reason' . . . But the critique of reason ended up justifying 'ways of appealing to some very unreasonable things as explanations like race, nationality, class,'" helping to "spawn totalitarian ideologies . . . such as Marxism and Nazism which taught that all human relationships are relationships of power between an oppressor class and an oppressed class . . . In CRT, 'all white people are instinctively white supremacists,' Guelzo says, adding, 'I say 'instinctively' because this is not a function of reason.'" (*Ibid.*) Thus, critical race theory "rejects democracy as a 'relic of Enlightenment reason'" and "white people 'use tricks like democracy and the search for truth . . . to exploit and oppress and dominate people of color.'" (*Ibid.*)

"Because critical theory rejects reason, it cannot be questioned," so "if you question whether all white people are oppressors, 'the question itself is an example of how you're in on the oppression.'" (*Ibid.*)

In the end, CRT slanders all white people as being oppressive toward people of color regardless if the claim is not supported by way of human reason.

Professor Guelzo clarified why this slander is so potentially harmful (as follows): "By rejecting reason . . . critical race theory could provoke a backlash that drives others 'into equal, but opposite irrationality' . . . (a)t which point, then, the only solution becomes violence" between those who support CRT and those who oppose it. (*Ibid.*)

(3) The potentially very harmful application of the critical race theory is being made even by top government officials. President Biden's \$1.2 trillion infrastructure bill that was recently passed by the U. S. House contains "(a)ccusations, coming right from the top of the U. S. Department of Transportation, of past and current racism in highway development." ("Civil, not social, engineering," *Ibid.*, November 16, 2021, p. 8A) (a) "Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg cited the low bridges in New York's Depression-era parkway system as having been designed to prevent busing of African-American and Puerto Rican New Yorkers to tourist sites such as Jones Beach." (*Ibid.*) However, "The Washington Post and other media that reported Mr. Buttigieg's comments have conceded that the low-bridge designs resulted from cost considerations, not racism: and that the bridges' height served a secondary purpose of keeping commercial traffic -- including buses -- from using parkways reserved for automobile traffic." (*Ibid.*)

(b) In addition, "(o)fficials and activists have also claimed interstate highways were cut through urban areas with the express purpose of disrupting neighborhoods with minority populations," *Ibid.* The Republican-American editor suggested that "(m)ore likely, highway designers were lured to those neighborhoods by the relatively low cost of assembling property for rights-of-way -- compared with cutting through more affluent neighborhoods with high property values, or bearing the cost of building more miles of highway around developed areas." (*Ibid.*)

Need: *So, we ask, "If we face such great, potentially very harmful slander, how does God want us to handle it?!"*

- I. **The introductory notes of Psalm 7 comprise the first verse in the Hebrew text, so they are part of Scripture, and they reveal that David wrote Psalm 7 when he faced slander from Cush the Benjamite likely when David was persecuted by Saul. (Biblia Hebraica, p. 980; Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 796)**
- II. **David thus asked God to deliver him from Cush's slander because it had the capacity to destroy him by unjustly inciting other people to be so enraged at David that they would destroy him, Psalm 7:1-2:**

- A. David's Psalm 7:1 request that might God save him from his persecutors is followed by David's explanation that apart from God's deliverance, he would be destroyed with no one to deliver him, Psalm 7:2.
  - B. Psalm 7:3-4 explains David's concern, clarifying that Cush had charged David with mistreating people who were at peace with him by robbing them without cause. This slander was meant to infuriate people against David so that they would attack and destroy him in seeking what they thought was justice regarding him!
- III. David asked God to let his enemies destroy him if he indeed was guilty of Cush's charge, Psalm 7:3-5.**
- IV. However, being innocent in this matter, David instead asked God to punish his persecutors, Psalm 7:6-7.**
- V. Certain God would punish his foes and justify him, David claimed God would end the trouble of his foes, for God examined the heart and "reins" (KJV), the Hebrew term for "reins" being *kilyah*, "kidneys," figurative for "emotional structure," Psalm 7:8-9; B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 480.**
- VI. In Psalm 7:10-16, David expressed faith that God would punish his enemies if they did not repent, causing them to be harmed by their own slander like a man who digs a hole only to fall into it himself.**
- VII. Finally, David believed he would thank God for His righteousness in dealing with the injustice David faced, that he would rejoice in the name of the Lord, the Most High, Psalm 7:17.**

***Lesson:*** *Though facing unjust, inflammatory slander, David relied on God to make a thoroughly just judgment in the crisis and to protect and deliver him, the innocent man, while God punished his unrepentant, sinful foes.*

***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) In facing potentially very harmful slander, (a) may we trust God to make a just judgment in the matter, (b) to protect and deliver us and (c) to punish unrepentant, evil foes.*

**Conclusion:** (To illustrate the message . . .)

In facing the potentially harmful slander of the critical race theory, we can settle our own hearts as to how God will evaluate this matter by viewing Scripture's teaching on all the issues involved (as follows):

(1) As for Immanuel Kant's underlying philosophy to CRT, Romans 1:21 reveals unsaved man's mind is darkened, in need of God's Special Revelation of Scripture to know spiritual truth, Psalm 19:1-11; 2 Timothy 3:13-17.

(2) As for Immanuel Kant's belief that reason is inadequate to give shape to our lives, it is true that the Enlightenment's reliance on reason is inadequate to shape our lives, for man's reason cannot discover all truth since man has a limited access to knowledge (Job 38:1-3, 16-39:30), limiting how much man can shape of his life by use of his reason. Man needs God's Special Revelation of Scripture to know necessary spiritual truths, Psalm 19:1-11.

(3) Yet, Immanuel Kant's view that reason is to be critiqued and even opposed at points errs: 1 Corinthians 14:9, 15 explains that God has conveyed His Biblical truth through the avenue of reason to the human mind. Though man by use of his reason cannot discover all truth, what God has revealed to man of spiritual matters in Scripture always conforms to what is humanly reasonable, otherwise, Scripture revelation would be unknowable to man! (Clark H. Pinnock, A Defense of Biblical Infallibility, The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1967, p. 17. Pinnock asserts that "Biblical truth is cognitive [knowable] and rational [agreeable to reason] like all truth . . .")

(4) Contrary to Immanuel Kant's critical theory, human relationships are not to be marked by oppressors and the oppressed, for that is sin since all men (and women) are created in the image of God so that no human being should ever oppress any other human being. (Genesis 1:27 with Genesis 9:6)

(5) Contrary to the critical race theory that is a subset of Immanuel Kant's critical theory, not all white people are instinctively white supremacists, for in Christ, all people regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, language and culture are one in Christ (Galatians 3:28) and are obliged to use their spiritual gifts to edify every other believer in Christ (Ephesians 4:7-16). If a believer relies on the Holy Spirit, he functions without sin, and that includes white people (Galatians 5:16), so anyone who is controlled by the Holy Spirit cannot think or act like a racial supremacist!

(6) Contrary to claims by CRT promoters that white people use democracy and the search for truth as tricks to exploit, oppress and dominate people of color, secular historian Edward McNall Burns (Western Civilizations, 1963, p. 112) claimed, "a cardinal purpose of the Deuteronomic Code [of the Old Testament] was to infuse into Jewish society a more democratic and equalitarian character" than existed in other societies. The focus on truth and the value of individuals did **not** begin with white supremacists to oppress people of color -- it began with the **God** of the Hebrews who were Semites, not Caucasians! ***Scripture's God*** taught us the truth and the value of the individual!

**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 trust God to make a thoroughly just judgment in facing a crisis of potentially harmful slander, to protect and deliver us if we are innocent and to punish or relentlessly sinful foes.**