

**THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION**  
**Psalms: Living By Faith In God**  
**XL. Handling The Widespread Failure Of Leaders**  
**(Psalm 40:1-17)**

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

We are living in an unsettling era marked by a widespread failure of leaders:

(1) It is occurring with world leaders: (a) Britain recently “installed its fourth Conservative Party prime minister in 12 years. David Cameron resigned after Britain rejected his advice and voted for Brexit in 2016, Theresa May was ousted in 2019 after failing to implement Brexit, Boris Johnson got Brexit done but was ousted for ethics violations this summer and his successor Liz Truss could lose a general election which must be held by January 2025.” (Michael Barone, “Outdated ‘expert’ theories lead to failure,” Republican-American, September 12, 2022, p. 8A) (b) “France’s allegedly Jupiterian President Emmanuel Macron was reelected in April, but in June voters installed a solid anti-Macron majority in Parliament,” Ibid. (c) “Angela Merkel, . . . German chancellor from 2005 to 2021, has seen her policies repudiated by events. Reliance on Russian natural gas and (in cloudy and not especially windy northern Europe) on wind and solar energy and closure of nuclear plants has left Germans scarfing up firewood to get through the winter. Merkel’s appeasement of Russia was followed by its invasion of Ukraine, and her low military budgets have left Germany unable to provide much help to the Ukrainians,” Ibid. (d) “Vladimir Putin’s demoralized troops have failed to conquer Ukraine; his aggression has pushed Finland and Sweden into applying to join NATO . . . his economy has taken a hit and may stagger more in years to come,” Ibid. (e) “His pal Xi Jinping may get another 10-year term as Chinese leader, but China’s economy, with a decline in working-age population and stringent COVID-19 lockdowns, is no longer growing rapidly – or maybe at all. Xi’s China has crushed Hong Kong’s liberties, but has made enemies of all of China’s neighbors,” Ibid. (f) In the U. S., “(a)ny positive trends under Joe Biden have been overwhelmed by chaotic results plausibly flowing from his party’s policies: out-of-control inflation, out-of-control illegal immigration, out-of-control violent crime. The economy hasn’t snapped back to pre-pandemic conditions, and school lockdowns have left many children . . . behind,” Ibid.

(2) Leaders are failing at lower institutional levels also: A major “cause” for the failure of government officials to handle the COVID-19 pandemic well has been “an overreliance on the prescriptions of supposed experts, from economists to epidemiologists . . . Some studies indicate that lockdowns prompted by epidemiologists’ models, based on deadlier diseases, produced minimal reductions in deaths but imposed high ancillary [additional] health, economic and educational costs. Similarly, economists recommended pumping large sums of money into the economy, though it has been damaged in ways far different from how it was in 20<sup>th</sup> century recessions. Their prescriptions have failed to restore pre-pandemic workforce levels and have produced unpredicted inflation,” Ibid.

(3) Leadership failure occurs in evangelicalism: Believers who were recently exposed to ministries elsewhere tell us of a lack of true Bible teaching there. It fits a report by radio Bible teacher Dr. John G. Mitchell who 45 years ago said, “I receive stacks of letters. They tell me, ‘If it were not for your program, I do not know where I would be fed the Word of God.’ That’s tragic . . . (W)hy aren’t these people being shepherded by their pastors?” (John G. Mitchell as told to Dick Bohrer, “The vanishing art of expository preaching,” Moody, November 1977, p. 41)

**Need: So, we ask, “Why is there an extensive failure by leaders in many realms, and how should we respond?!”**

- I. In contrast to today’s widespread failure by many leaders, Israel’s king David became a great success:**
- A. When David came to the throne, Israel had just suffered a crushing defeat by the Philistines, 2 Samuel 1:1-5:3.
  - B. Yet, due to his 40-year reign (2 Samuel 5:4-5), Israel became a mighty, wealthy nation, 1 Kings 2:1-10:29.
- II. The reason for David’s success was his obedience to Deuteronomy 17:14-20 as revealed in Psalm 40:1-17:**
- A. God had directed Israel’s kings to obey Deuteronomy 17:14-20 in order to enjoy His blessing on their reigns.
  - B. Evidence that David had heeded Deuteronomy 17:14-20 is given in Psalm 40:1-17 (as follows):
    - 1. In Psalm 40:1-5, David told of God’s past deliverances of him from trials when he had trusted in the Lord.
    - 2. Significantly, in Psalm 40:6-10, David explained **why** God had saved him from those trials (as follows):
      - a. God had not preferred sacrifices and offerings from David, but He had “dug [out] the cavity of [David’s] ear” (*barah*, B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 500) as if the Lord was figuratively digging out a well, doing so when God prepared a body for David that he might hear God’s Word and obey it, v. 6!
      - b. David had then heard and obeyed God’s Word, testifying to others that he had done so in Psalm 40:7-10.
      - c. **Significantly, Deuteronomy 17:18-20 stressed the need for Israel’s kings to read and apply Scripture!**

3. Consequently, Psalm 40:11-17 shows David pleading for the Lord's deliverance from current trials he faced due to God's discipline for his sins in line with the Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel 7:14) in Scripture.
4. In other words, David had learned to **continue staying aligned with Scripture** though he at times strayed from it, for God would graciously discipline David to correct him that God might keep on blessing him!

**III. By way of Revelation 3:21, we can apply the spiritual truths of Deuteronomy 17:14-20 for God's blessing to fill the vacuum of good leaders that we face amid today's widespread failure of all sorts of leaders:**

- A. We have learned in past studies that Christ's Revelation 3:14-22 message to the Laodicean Church applies to believers in our era of Church History. (See "SundaySermon20171126.htm" on our Church's web site)
- B. We have also found that Revelation 3:21 in light of Revelation 7:17 predicts that we will face a "mini-Great Tribulation" where troublesome leaders will oppress their subjects, a situation that God will allow in order to drive people to churches that expound Scripture so they might be saved and obtain spiritual balm and nurture.
- C. In this era, Revelation 3:21 with 7:17 also indicates that God will raise up an "overcomer" [or "overcomers"?] to have great impact **figuratively** "in" Christ's *earthly Davidic* "throne" as they expound Scripture to others.
- D. If God promised literal Davidic kings success for heeding Deuteronomy 17:14-20, we can apply the spiritual truths of that passage to succeed as "overcomers" while we figuratively minister "in" Christ's throne today!

***Lesson:*** *David became a great success as king by heeding God's Deuteronomy 17:14-20 directives for Israel's kings as seen by his words in Psalm 40:1-17. Thus, by way of Revelation 3:21 with 7:17 that applies to our era, we can heed the spiritual truths of Deuteronomy 17:14-20 to fill today's widespread vacuum of good leaders.*

***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 heed the spiritual truths of Deuteronomy 17:14-20 [as explained in the Conclusion section below] to be used of God to offset today's widespread lack of good leaders!*

**Conclusion:** (To illustrate the message and provide additional guidance . . .)

We view God's directives regarding Israel's kings in Deuteronomy 17:14-20 that spiritually apply to effective leadership that we might apply them to be used of God to be a blessing and fill today's vacuum of good leaders:

(1) Where today's failed leaders often are detached from their subjects and do not understand their needs, we must interact with regular people to understand them and meet their needs, Deuteronomy 17:15. This verse required that Israel's kings come from the people they were to lead that they might understand them and address their needs.

(2) Where today's failed leaders often resort to manipulation to try to retain power, Deuteronomy 17:16, 17b with Isaiah 31:1 teach that God calls us "overcomers" to rely on Him and not on man's methods or assets to succeed!

(3) Where today's failed leaders often adopt elitist, unbiblical ideologies like catastrophic climate change, Marxist income redistribution, globalism, and the mixing of religions, corporations, and governments into one unholy conglomerate (Brannon Howse, The Coming Religious Reich, 2015, p. 192; Brannon S. Howse, Marxianity, 2018, p. 93-95), etc., Deuteronomy 17:17a called Israel's kings not to marry foreign, pagan women lest they influence the kings toward idolatry. We must thus avoid ungodly associations that can lead us to sin (2 John 9-10; 2 Thessalonians 3:6) and instead fellowship with godly people for God to use us as "clean," effective "vessels," 2 Timothy 2:20-22.

(4) Where today's failed leaders often neglect Bible truth for errant ideas, God calls us to expose our minds and hearts to the daily intake of Scripture, Deut. 17:18-20a. This involves (a) acquiring a Bible [and essential quality Bible study tools] (Deut. 17:18) to (b) study Scripture daily (Deut. 17:19a) that will result in our (+) revering the Lord (Deut. 17:19b), and (+) obeying all of His Word (Deut. 17:19c). (+) These actions in turn will keep us humble in relating to others that we might effectively influence them (Deut. 17:20a) and (+) keep us from turning aside from Scripture's truth (Deut. 17:20b). [Applied especially to pastors and Bible teachers, the overflow of Scripture's intake and application in our lives will readily equip us effectively to teach others like 1 Timothy 4:12-16 and 2 Timothy 4:1-2 reveal. In accord with this truth, Dr. Mitchell said, "If a pastor loves his flock, he'll feed it. But he cannot feed a flock if he's not feeding himself. He must be a man of the Book [Bible]." (Ibid., Mitchell as told to Bohrer, p. 42)]

(5) As the result of heeding all of these directives, God will (a) prolong our influence (Deut. 17:20c) (b) with our families (Deut. 17:20d, e) and thereby (c) with other people in ever widening circles of contact so that we affect our community, nation, and the world (implied, Deut. 17:20d, e) for righteousness. The rise of many such holy influencers, the "overcomers" of Revelation 3:21, in widening circles of contact, will fill the vacuum of good leaders!

**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 heed the applicable spiritual truths of Deuteronomy 17:14-20 to be used of God to be a great blessing in filling the void left by today's widespread failure of leaders!**