

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

The Books Of Kings: The Kings Of Israel And Judah From Solomon To The Babylonian Captivity

II. The Divided Kingdom, 1 Kings 12:1-22:53

F. Relying On God To Stay Vigilantly Upright On Key Moral Issues

(1 Kings 15:1-8 et al.)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

We need to be vigilant to stay upright on key moral issues we in our Church are facing right now, for failure here can only lead to apostasy especially for our children and grandchildren in the long-term:

(1) We face it on the issue of forgiveness: Focus on the Family's Q&A section on its web site ("Forgiving the Unrepentant," focusonthefamily.com) at one point addresses the question, "How can I forgive someone who isn't sorry for what he's done?" The answer the web site gives, a view held by many believers we know and likely some of us, is this: "You really have no choice. Either you forgive or you slowly poison your mind and heart" with "unresolved bitterness" that "will destroy you." Alluding to Matthew 6:14-15 where we are to forgive others if we want God to forgive us, the Focus on the Family web site adds: "(T)here's an important difference between the unconditional forgiveness Christ expects us to extend to those who have offended us . . . and the forgiveness we receive from God by . . . repenting of our sins." (Ibid.)

However, if we fully apply this view, it actually leads to the undermining of law and order in society: if a victim must unconditionally forgive his offender, society in time must do the same, what leaves no just cause to arrest the criminal for his criminal activity, what in turn leaves him free to repeat his criminal acts on countless other victims who are expected unconditionally to forgive him each time they are wronged by him!

(2) We face it on the issue of Scripture's sufficiency to counsel: many Christian psychologists and counselors, some of whom we know, claim we must use Scripture **and** elements of secular psychology to disciple, but "(n)obelist Richard Feynman, in considering the scientific status of psychotherapy, says that 'psycho-analysis is not a science' and that it is 'perhaps even more like witch-doctoring'" (Martin & Deidre Bobgan, PsychoHeresy, 1987, p. 18, citing Feynman et al., The Feynman Lectures on Physics, V. I (1963), p. 3-8), so how can psychology be good in discipling?

Need: *Accordingly, we ask, "What can we do to stay vigilantly upright on key moral issues we face today?!"*

I. As noted in 1 Kings, David's descendants did not stay vigilantly upright on key moral issues:

- A. The reign of David's great grandson, Abijam, was marked by his following in the idolatrous ways of his father Rehoboam, David's grandson, not fully following the Lord as David had done before them, 1 Kings 15:1-2a, 3.
- B. However, since David was upright, God let Abijam rule in honor of his great grandfather, 1 Kings 15:4-5a.

II. Yet, the author of 1 Kings mentioned an exception in David's otherwise "good" reign where he himself failed to follow God wholeheartedly -- "the matter of Uriah the Hittite" (1 Kings 15:5b), and that and other exceptions to David's otherwise "good" reign led to long-term problems that fueled Abijam's failure:

- A. Abijam's mother Maacah II was Absalom's (Abishalom is a variant form) **granddaughter** (1 K. 15:2b NIV; B. K. C., O. T., p. 518), so Abijam's story starts with his great-grandfather David's marriage to pagan Maacah I in violation of Deuteronomy 7:3-4 to bolster his political power versus trusting God; 2 Sam. 3:3b; Ibid., p. 459.
- B. David then sinned in "the matter of Uriah the Hittite:" he stayed home when he should have been at war, what led to his immorality with Uriah's wife, Bathsheba that resulted in her being with his child followed by David's arranging for Uriah to be slain in war so David could marry Bathsheba in a cover-up, 2 Samuel 11:1-27.
- C. God predicted that though He had forgiven a repentant David of his adultery with Bathsheba and his murder of her husband Uriah, his sins would result in the sword not departing from his house, 2 Samuel 12:1-13.
- D. That prediction was fulfilled when David's beautiful daughter Tamar I by his pagan wife Maacah I was assaulted by her half-brother Amnon and David failed to punish Amnon so that Tamar I's full brother, Absalom, another offspring of Maacah I, slew Amnon in revenge for violating his sister Tamar I only to flee for asylum from David to his pagan relatives in Geshur on his mother Maacah I's side, 2 Sam. 13:1-38; 3:3b.
- E. After Absalom's death in the civil war that erupted between David's and Absalom's followers respectively, since Absalom had no **surviving** male heirs (2 Sam. 18:18), his beautiful daughter Tamar II (2 Sam. 14:27 ESV) wed Uriel of Gibeah in the nearby tribal territory of Benjamin and gave birth to a daughter, Maacah II (Michaiah is a variant form of Maacah), naming her infant daughter after Tamar II's pagan great grandmother, Maacah I, 2 Chron. 13:2; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to 1 Kings 15:1-2. Tamar II appreciated her pagan relatives' protection of her grandfather Absalom when he fled to them for asylum from David after

Absalom had avenged her aunt Tamar I of Amnon's assault, what likely led Tamar II to favor the idolatrous heritage of her grandmother Maacah I and influence her daughter Maacah II toward idolatry, 1 Kings 15:13.

- F. Thus, when David's grandson Rehoboam wed Maacah II and she gave birth to a son named Abijam who ruled Judah after Rehoboam, a long series of cause-effect issues in the family's history fueled by (1) David's lapse in marrying pagan Maacah I, (2) his lapse from sticking to God's calling that got him into adultery and murder, what led to Amnon's assault of Maacah I's daughter Tamar and (3) David's lapse in not punishing Amnon for his assault (4) all in time left Abijam vulnerable to being idolatrous and not whole-heartedly devoted to God!

III. **The SOLUTION to David's tendency to LAPSE from following the Lord is given in his confession of his adultery and murder in "the matter of Uriah the Hittite" in Psalm 51:10b (as follows):**

- A. While confessing his sins of adultery and murder in Psalm 51 (cf. the psalm's introductory notes), David asked God to "renew a right spirit within me," Psalm 51:10b KJV.
- B. The KJV word "right" there translates the Hebrew verb *kun* that exists in the niphil passive stem (*nakun*) and means in that stem, "fixed aright, steadfast" (B. D. B., *A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T.*, p. 465-467).
- C. David thus saw his need to address his errant bent to depart from God's calling for him as a soldier and to take an unwarranted leave to be home that led him into temptation and sin, and he turned to God for help about it!
- D. Thus, what is needed to avoid spiritually lapsing from righteousness that lead one into a full departure from the Lord is **relying on GOD to KEEP a STEADFAST SPIRIT within him so that he STAYS UPRIGHT!**

Lesson: (1) *By failing to rely on God to establish his throne in marrying a pagan wife, by failing to rely on God to keep him steadfast in his calling as a soldier and by failing to punish a sinful son Amnon, David set in motion events that three generations later influenced his great-grandson not to follow God as David had done. (2) David's Psalm 51 confession acknowledged his need to rely on God to keep him steadfast in living for the Lord.*

Application: (1) *May we trust in Christ for salvation and eternal life, John 3:16. (2) Then, may we (a) realize that the steps we take today either in faithfulness to the Lord or in lapses from Him lead to huge consequences in time that we (b) rely on the Spirit of God to keep us "fixed aright, steadfast" for Him! (Galatians 5:16)*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

While studying Scripture for this sermon and feeling very burdened about the issues noted in our introduction, I revisited John C. Whitcomb and Henry M. Morris' landmark book, *The Genesis Flood*, 1978, and was moved by their words on page 453 on our **accountability to God to heed Scripture NOW** in view of **His future judgment of us!**

They noted how 2 Peter 3:3-10 predicted the rise of uniformitarianism that undergirds the theory of evolution and how that passage also claimed the Creation and Genesis Flood testify God will hold all men accountable to heed His Word in the future judgment. Scientific evidences that these events really occurred are abundant: Creation is "attested to not only by Scripture but by the two great laws of thermodynamics" (as is clarified in the book) and the Flood is "indelibly recorded in human histories and in the rocks of the earth" (as is also clarified in the book), *Ibid*.

I knew that Scripture addressed the moral issues of concern mentioned in our introduction, so I also realized my duty before God to share that information with you due to the accountability of us **all** to heed Scripture as follows:

(1) On the moral issue of forgiveness, in Luke 17:3b,c KJV, Jesus said: "If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him." Though many evangelicals claim we must forgive those who wrong us even if they have not repented, though Jesus taught us to be **willing** to forgive and **not to hate** anyone (Matthew 5:38-42; 6:14-15), we are to **forgive only** those who **repent!** This enables us to uphold law and order in society by holding wrongdoers accountable to the authorities to repent of their waywardness and cease wronging others!

(2) On the moral issue of the sufficiency of Scripture in counseling, 2 Timothy 3:17-4:2 claims Scripture fully equips believers to do every good work until at least Christ's return. So, to say a believer must use secular psychology with Scripture better to disciple others than using Scripture alone is to treat 2 Timothy 3:17-4:2 as false, inadvertently undermining the divine inspiration of Scripture at that verse! If we treat that passage as false, then Paul did not write inerrant Scripture, making Peter's 2 Peter 3:15-16 claim that he did do so false, what in turn makes Jesus Christ Himself speak a falsehood when He implied the truthfulness of Peter's Scripture words in John 17:20! That in turn leaves Jesus as sinning by speaking a lie, thus disqualifying Him to die on the cross as an efficacious sacrifice for our sin, and that in turn undermines the Christian faith! ***We must thus use Scripture alone to disciple, holding 2 Timothy 3:17-4:2 to be God's authoritative, innerant Word as we also uphold the Christian faith!***

May we trust in Christ for salvation. Then, may we rely on the Holy Spirit for the will and the power to keep heeding His Scripture truths in our day, knowing we will eventually give an account to Him for doing so!