

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

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

III. The Latter Era Of The Divided Kingdom, 2 Kings 2:1-27:41

K. Trusting God Versus All Other Gods For Our Material Needs

(2 Kings 6:24-7:20)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

(1) Many people, including even many believers in Christ, have great material needs today:

(a) The November 19, 2018 Republican-American lead editorial, "Pay heed to UTC news," p. 6A, told how "the Connecticut Mirror carried" the "ominous story" that "Farmington-based United Technologies Corp. (UTC) . . . board member Harold 'Terry' McGraw told dining companions in Greenwich that UTC would move out of Connecticut in the event of a Lamont victory," and Ned Lamont won in the election! The editorial added that "(a)n exit by UTC would be devastating for Connecticut," that the state's economy was already "in trouble," Ibid.

(b) This is a national issue, too: Derek Thompson ("What on Earth Is Wrong With Connecticut?" July 5, 2017; theatlantic.com) wrote, "Connecticut's recent rise and fall reflects the history of the entire United States -- its industrial changes, the hollowing out of the middle class, the . . . reshuffling [of] the U. S. population." (brackets ours)

(c) In addition, the Social Security "program will run through its excess cash by 2034 [16 years], at which time a benefit cut of up to 21 percent may be needed to sustain payouts." (Sean Williams, "Here's how much interest income Congress owes Social Security over the next decade," November 18, 2018; usatoday.com)

(2) However, how to address such needs is itself a big issue even among evangelicals: Brannon Howse's recent e-mail circular told of the influx of Marxist ideology into evangelical circles to form what he terms "Marxianity," and he reported: "The proponents of Marxianity are co-opting Christianity . . . to turn churches into community organizations . . . to create a 'just' society that eliminates poverty and injustice and creates the kingdom of God on earth through collective salvation." ("Brannon Howse" noreply@worldviewweekend.com, November 19, 2018)

Marxism holds that the collective institutions of government, church, etc. should redistribute wealth from the rich to the poor, so many evangelicals are promoting "Marxianity" in churches to try to eradicate poverty.

Need: *So we ask, "How should we handle the material needs that we or others we know face today?!"*

I. Due to its sin, the Arameans besieged Samaria so that it suffered a traumatic famine, 2 Kings 6:24-30:

- A. God had promised to meet the nation Israel's food needs if she obeyed His Word (Deuteronomy 28:1, 4-5) but let her suffer food shortages if she disobeyed the Lord (Deuteronomy 28:15, 17-18).
- B. For Israel's holding to Jeroboam's syncretistic mixture of belief in God and paganism (1 Kings 12:25-30), God thus let the Arameans besiege Samaria, cutting off its food supply so that it faced famine, 2 Kings 6:24-25.
- C. The famine became so severe that two women actually practiced cannibalism, what Deuteronomy 28:52-53 predicted would occur due to extensive sin in Israel, 2 Kings 6:26-30.

II. When Israel's king heard of the cannibalism, he blamed Elisha for it, and pledged to kill him, v. 31.

III. God revealed to Elisha the king's plan against him, so when the king and his messenger arrived at Elisha's house to arrest him, Elisha told them that the next day, good food would be sold in Samaria for modest prices due to the abundance of God's coming provision, 2 Kings 6:32-7:1.

IV. A royal official steeped in pagan Baalism questioned God's ability to fulfill this promise, 2 Kings 7:2a,b:

- A. Reacting to Elisha's prophecy of God's food provision, a royal official claimed if the Lord should make "windows in heaven," how could Elisha's prediction possibly be fulfilled, 2 Kings 7:2a,b KJV.
- B. To understand his point, we note that the phrase "windows [of/in] heaven," *'arubbah [ha/ba] shamayim* in the Hebrew Scriptures always refers to a great rain from God. (B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 70)
- C. Baal was the rain god whose work yielded crops (Z. P. E. B., v. One, p. 431-433), so this official, engrained in Baal theology, asked that even if God were to send a torrential downpour, there would not be enough time for the rain to improve crop production to save Samaria's people from death by famine! He was limiting God to Baal's powers, not believing the supernatural power of the true God! (2 Kings 7:2 ftn.; bible.org/netbible)

V. Elisha pronounced God's judgment on this official for his unbelief that was steeped in Baalism: he said the official would see the Lord's food provision, but not partake of it, 2 Kings 7:2c.

VI. The Lord fulfilled Elisha's prophecy, revealing His vast superiority to the false god Baal, 2 Kings 7:3-20:

- A. Four lepers outside the city gate decided to surrender to the Arameans, reasonably thinking that their chances of being fed by the enemy were better than staying and facing sure starvation at the city gate, 2 Kings. 7:3-4.

- B. When the lepers thus came to the enemy camp, they saw no men, for God had caused the Arameans to hear a sound of an approaching, large army and think Israel had hired the Hittites and Egyptians to fight them, v. 5-6.
- C. The Arameans had quickly fled on foot for their lives, leaving what they possessed behind, so the four lepers began to eat and drink of the Aramean bounty and take material spoil and hide it, 2 Kings 7:7-8.
- D. Finally, the lepers decided it to share news of the bounty with Samaria, so they returned to report what they saw. Israel's king sent out scouts to see if the Arameans were trying to lure his soldiers away from Samaria to be ambushed, but the scouts found that the Arameans had fled 25 miles east to the Jordan River, littering the whole way with goods flung away in terror, 2 Kings 7:9-15; The MacMillan Bible Atlas, 1968, p. 100.
- E. Thus, the people of Samaria went out and spoiled the tents of the Aramean army, fulfilling Elisha's prophecy made the previous day that good food would be sold in Samaria at modest prices, 2 Kings 7:16.
- F. In addition, the official who had doubted God's ability to provide so much good food so quickly also saw the provision but did not partake of it as Elisha predicted: the king appointed the official to oversee the traffic at the city gate, but he was trampled to death there by the people who rushed out to take spoil, 2 Kings 7:17-20.

VII. Remarkably, the ROOTS of the errant official's BAAL beliefs are the SAME as that of the MARXISM that we noted in our sermon introduction is invading many evangelical churches today:

- A. The Canaanite Baal and Ashtoreth deities were local forms of the ancient Babylonian Semiramis-Tammuz mother-child cult. (Ibid., Z. P. E. B., v. One, p. 358; Harry A. Ironside, "Babylonian Religion," Idolphin.org).
- B. That ancient Babylonian cult also circuitously spawned the ideology of Marxism (as follows):
 1. The Semiramis-Tammuz cult entered the Church in Constantine's era, promoting Mary and the sacraments for salvation, D. Hunt, A Wom. Rides the Beast, 1994, p. 157f, 203f, citing W. Durant, The Story of Civ., 1950, v. IV, p. 75; v. III, p. 657; Ibid., Ironside; W. Walker, A His. of the Christ. Chch., 1959, p. 102, 105.
 2. Pagan ascetics in the Church then idealized Jesus' poverty and errantly interpreted Acts 2:42-47 and 4:32 to mean that the Early Church abolished private property and was communistic. (Ibid., Walker, p. 125; "What are the origins of monasticism?" aleteia.org) [Actually, the Early Church was **not** communistic, for Peter in Acts 5:4a taught personal property ownership! Early Church believers **donated** to others in need!]
 3. The "'Society of Jesus'" order (Jesuits) in the Roman Catholic Church thus came to hold to "'common poverty which forbids the possession of assured incomes,'" newadvent.org/cathen/12324a.htm as cited in "Karl Marx, Social Justice and Communism are all Catholic monastic/Jesuit creations," reddit.com.
 4. Marx's term "social justice" was coined by Jesuit Luigi Taparelli and used by Marx who was influenced by Jesuits to write The Communist Manifesto (Brannon Howse, The Coming Religious Reich, 2015, p. 185)

VIII. In addition, God ALSO utilized UPRIGHT FREE ENTERPRISE, NOT MARXISM, to end the famine:

- A. Instead of waiting for a handout, God led the lepers to take individual initiative!
- B. Instead of waiting for a handout, God led the lepers to plan to use reasonable risk to go over to the Arameans!
- C. Instead of waiting for a handout, God led the lepers opportunistically to go over to the Aramean camp!
- D. Instead of waiting for a handout, God led the lepers to work to pick up and hide some of the booty!
- E. Instead of hoarding the goods to themselves, God led the lepers to tell others in need of the bounty!

Lesson: (1) *Though Samaria forsook God so that He punished her with a famine, God supplied the city abundant food in a day, and the official with Baal theology who doubted God missed His blessing. (2) We must similarly trust God versus the false god of Marxist ideology to meet our material needs. (3) Notably, as He did with the lepers of Samaria, God wants us to apply principles of free enterprise in appropriating His provisions for us.*

Application: (1) *May we trust in Christ for salvation, John 3:16. (2) May we trust in Scripture's true God for the meeting of material needs versus relying on and applying any other false "god" like Marxist ideology to that end.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

- (1) For our material needs, Hebrews 13:5-6 and Philippians 4:19 promises God will meet them for us today!
- (2) In meeting such needs, God expects **us** like the lepers of Samaria (a) **not** to wait for a handout, (b) but rather personally, opportunistically to take the initiative (c) to exercise reasonable risk (d) in working, earning and investing for what we need (e) while being ethical and upright to help others in need.

We must heed Elisha's directive to trust in Scripture's God for our material needs versus any "false god," be it ancient Baal or Marxist ideology that both sprouted from the ancient Semiramis-Tammuz cult that will form the basis to the future Revelation 17-18 Babylon the Great. God is our *true* Provider -- no other god!

May we trust in Christ to be saved, and may we trust Him versus any other god for our material needs.