

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

Y. Overcoming The Influence Of Harmful Worldly Ideologies

(2 Kings 15:32-38; 2 Chronicles 27:1-9)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

In today's world, we face the influence of harmful ideologies, especially that of Marxism:

(1) Clifford May's piece, "Socialist eras and errors" (Rep.-Amer., April 23, 2019, p. 6A) told of his youthful infatuation with Marxism until he became an exchange student to "the Soviet Union." Of the event he reports, "I soon comprehended what [Bernie] Sanders never has: Communism is toxic to freedom and prosperity." (brackets ours)

He added, "'Nowhere in Africa was the socialist experiment successful' . . . (i)n Latin America, too, socialism has led to dismal outcomes . . . China's socialist market economy' creates wealth . . . (b)ut . . . income equality . . . ? No . . . the International Monetary Fund" claims "China 'is one of the world's most unequal countries.'" Bernie Sanders touted Scandinavia as a model of socialist financial success, but in reaction, Denmark's Prime Minister told students at Harvard, "'Denmark is far from a socialist planned economy. Denmark is a market economy.'" (Ibid.)

(2) However, we face pressure to adopt Marxist ideology even from notable evangelicals: before 12,000 pastors at the April 2018 "Together for the Gospel" conference where Dr. John MacArthur participated, David Platt, host of the "Back to the Bible" radio broadcast, advertised Michael O. Emerson and Christian Smith's book, Divided by Faith: Evangelical Religion and the Problem of Race In America. (Brannon S. Howse, Marxianity, 2018, p. 104, 186-190) In a former book, Smith had endorsed Liberation Theology, the mixing of Marxism with Christianity (Ibid., Howse, p. 190), and the Emerson and Smith work David Platt recommended supports Marxist ideology and critiques premillennialists like us for claiming that the pretribulation rapture is reason not to strive for social renewal since we hold "'the present world is evil and will inevitably suffer moral decline until Christ comes again.'" (Ibid., p. 191, citing Emerson and Smith, Ibid., p. 47) Emerson and Smith hold that in positive contrast to premillennialists, "Progressives view humans as essentially good, provided they are released from social arrangements that prevent people from living happily, productively and equally." (Ibid., Howse, p. 192, citing Emerson and Smith, Ibid., p. 76)

Thus, addressing 12,000 evangelical pastors with Dr. John MacArthur participating in the conference, David Platt, host of the "Back to the Bible" radio broadcast, endorsed a book that counters original sin and premillennialism in favor of the idea that man is essentially good providing his social order can be redeemed in accord with Marxism.

Need: So we ask, "*How do we overcome the influence of harmful worldly ideologies we face such as Marxism?!*"

- I. **When Uzziah's son Jotham came to Judah's throne, though he initially did what was right before God like his father had done (2 Kings 15:32-34), a closer look at both kings reveals a failure in both men to counter the influence of harmful extrabiblical thinking, 2 Chronicles 27:1-2 with 2 Chronicles 26:16-21:**
- A. Jotham's father Uzziah had sinned greatly through yielding to harmful pagan thinking around him:
1. We before noted that king Uzziah had started out obeying the Lord so that God richly blessed him with might and fame both nationally and internationally, 2 Chronicles 26:1-15.
 2. However, when Uzziah grew strong, he became proud, and 2 Chronicles 26:16 relates how he as a non-priest then entered the Holy Place of the temple to burn incense on the altar of incense, capital sins in violation of the Mosaic Law. (cf. Exodus 30:7-9 and Numbers 3:10)
 3. Significantly, Uzziah's sin was the product of yielding to pagan thought: kings in Egypt and other nations often tried to make themselves their nation's high priest to become the supreme ruler in their nations. (Keil & Delitzsch, Com. on the O. T. as cited in studylight.org; 2 Chronicles 26:16) Uzziah's pride thus led him to adopt pagan values and thus try to assume the high priest's role for himself versus obeying God's Word!
- B. When Jotham began to rule, he like his father initially did what was right in God's eyes, 2 Chronicles 27:1-2a.
- C. However, he reacted to His father's experience in the temple by using extrabiblical thinking, 2 Chron. 27:2b:
1. Some commentators claim that the 2 Chronicles 27:2b clause about Jotham's not entering the temple like his father describes a **good** deed, that Jotham *rightly* did *not* enter the **Holy Place** reserved for the priests.
 2. However, the Hebrew adverb **raq** introduces the clause about Jotham (Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 1416), adding a **limitation** to the *previous* 2 Chronicles 27:2a *sentence*, B. D. B., A Heb. & Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 956.
 3. Thus, we must understand from 2 Chronicles 27:2a that Jotham did what was right like Uzziah did with the **exception** (due to **raq** that introduces 2 Chronicles 27:2b) that he **WRONGLY** did not enter the temple!

4. What Jotham then did **WRONG** in **not entering the temple** was that he **AVOIDED** the **WHOLE temple COMPLEX ALTOGETHER**, for the Law directed all Judah's men to enter that complex three times a year and each time to bring a gift to God in accord with His blessings! (Deuteronomy 16:16-17)
 5. Jotham may have been afraid to enter the temple courts over what happened to his father, or he may have been bitter about it, we are not told. Either way, he used extrabiblical thinking to avoid the temple area.
- D. Since Jotham as the example to the people never entered the temple complex, his subjects became lax in their responsibilities before the Lord, for 2 Chronicles 27:2c ESV claims that the people kept following corrupt practices. (J. Vernon McGee, Thru the Bible with J. Vernon McGee, Volume II, Joshua-Psalms, 1982, p. 457)
- II. Accordingly, Jotham's reign was partly blessed for his obedience to God, but it was also partly disciplined by the Lord for Jotham's sin and the sins of his subjects, 2 Kings 15:35-38:**
- A. The people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places (2 Kings 15:35a), though Jotham did achieve some notable improvements like building the gate on the north side of the temple (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to 2 Kings 15:35) and building up part of the old city of David (2 Chronicles 27:3), building cities in the Judean hills (2 Chronicles 27:4a) and constructing forts and towers in the wooded hills (2 Chronicles 27:4b ESV). Jotham also defeated and subjected the Ammonites to paying him tribute (2 Chronicles 27:5-6).
 - B. However, in Jotham's days, **the Lord** also began to **send** Rezin king of the Arameans and Pekah, the king of the Northern Kingdom of Israel against Judah (2 Kings 15:37) in fulfillment of the Mosaic Covenant at Deuteronomy 28:15, 25 where God promised to punish the sins of His people by use of invading enemies.

Lesson: *Where Uzziah yielded to pagan thinking above Scripture in trying to become Judah's high priest as well as its king only to suffer divine discipline, his son Jotham yielded to extrabiblical thinking above Scripture to avoid entering the temple complex altogether, leading to ongoing apostasy in his subjects and a loss of divine blessing.*

Application: *In facing harmful ideologies, (1) may we trust in Christ for salvation, John 3:16. (2) May we then overcome harmful worldly ideologies by avoiding Uzziah's and Jotham's errors through closely heeding Scripture.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

In our introduction, we noted we face the harmful ideology of Marxism and pressure to yield to it even from notable evangelicals. We thus need to apply our sermon lesson and **follow Scripture closely** for spiritual blessing:

(1) Opposite the Marxist-leaning book by Emerson and Smith that suggests humans are essentially good, Jeremiah 17:9 claims the human heart is "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Scripture paints human beings as depraved and in need of God's salvation of the soul, so trying to solve man's problems by redeeming his society as in Marxism is a futile exercise that only produces a dysfunctional society of still-depraved individuals!

(2) Opposite the Marxist-leaning book by Emerson and Smith that rejects dispensational theology with its premillennialism and pretribulationism, **Christ in His message to OUR era in Revelation 3:14a** claimed He was "the Amen," a term that occurs in 2 Corinthians 1:20 in the Greek text (U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 624). That verse claims godly believers say "the Amen" when Christ is preached as being the Fulfiller of all God's promises. These promises flow out of the Genesis 12:1-3 Abrahamic Covenant, and covenants are to be interpreted in their literal, grammatical and historical contexts, what leads to **historic dispensationalism** with its **premillennial, pretribulation rapture** beliefs. (J. Dwight Pentecost, Things To Come, 1972, p. 59-94; Charles C. Ryrie, Dispensationalism Today, 1970, p. 86-109) In addition, Jesus Himself exemplified interpreting all of Scripture in its literal, grammatical and historical contexts at Matthew 5:18 and at Mark 12:18-27. So, sticking **closely** to Scripture and handling it literally, grammatically and historically like Christ did, we arrive at **historic dispensationalism** with its **premillennial, pretribulation rapture** views. We also **counter pressures** to **yield** to **harmful, errant Marxist ideology!**

(3) **Note: we have long claimed that Christ's Revelation 3:14-22 message to the Laodiceans is for our era of Church History, so that prophecy at Revelation 3:14a directs us to counter harmful Marxist ideology that we face today since Marxism opposes dispensationalism. We are to do so by holding to the literal, grammatical, historical interpretation of the Abrahamic Covenant. As we then closely follow Christ's message to us in our era, God shields us from heeding harmful Marxist ideology that comes our way even from notable evangelical leaders!**

(4) As hope, if we **overcome** in this matter, Christ promises us **positive influence** in Revelation 3:21, a promise of divine blessing amid the negative challenges we face to the contrary! We should thus rest in the Lord!!

May we trust in Christ for salvation. May we then carefully follow Scripture, interpreting it in its literal, historical and grammatical contexts that produces belief in original sin and dispensationalism that guard us from Marxist ideology and other harmful ideologies.