

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 2:1-25:30

NN. Thriving In An Era Of Traumatic Atrocities

(2 Kings 25:1-30 et al.)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Following the mass shootings in El Paso, Texas and Dayton, Ohio, several news outlets ran the story of how law enforcement officials had thwarted three more potential shootings in Ohio, Florida and right here in Connecticut. Fittingly, the Boston Sunday Globe ("Blame Game," August 11, 2019, p. B10) noted, "The trauma[s] (sic) of our times have us all searching for answers." Indeed, whenever such atrocities occur, newspaper editors, letter writers and columnists react by trying to explain them, often naming the typical scapegoat of guns, racism or "mental illness"

Christine Flowers' column, "The mantra of guns, racism" (Republican-American, August 14, 2019, p. 7A), has a wider view, claiming, "(T)he real problem in society is a complete abandonment of clear moral standards, and our increasing disrespect for human life." She adds that other issues are "a part of the conversation," including guns, racism, "mental illness," abortion, euthanasia, sexual anarchy, family breakdown, personal excess, political hatreds, intellectual dishonesty and perverted freedoms Americans have systematically created over the last half-century. (Ibid.) Julie Bosman, Kate Taylor and Tim Arango's article, "Common warning sign in gunmen: hating women" (Ibid., Boston Sunday Globe, p. A4) assert that a "hatred of women is frequent among suspects of mass shootings" who want "punish women for rejecting" them.

One might argue that Marxism is behind it all, for "The Communist Manifesto" called for the upheaval of the social order and abolition of moral and religious absolutes, and Brannon S. Howse's work, Marxianity, 2018, 336 pp., documented how Marxism has led to moral and theological upheaval and decay in secular and religious institutions.

However, at the root of all these problems is man's sin coupled with Satan's activity: Alice Bailey's writings that she claimed were directed by her "spirit guide" [demon] over 70 years ago forecast the era of Marxist-collectivist ideology that directly opposed even basic Bible truth. (Brannon Howse, Religious Trojan Horse, 2012, p. 15-18)

Need: *Accordingly, we ask, "How can we thrive in our traumatic era that is fueled by such great evil?!"*

- I. Judah's departure from God ended in national judgment and traumatic atrocities, 2 Kings 25:1-26:**
 - A. The writer of 2 Kings 24:20 reveals that due to Judah's sin, God severely punished the nation.
 - B. That punishment is described in 2 Kings 25:1-26 as Judah's traumatic plunge into destruction:
 1. First, Babylon's army besieged and invaded Jerusalem, the army captured and abused Judah's king, slew his sons, burned down the city's dwellings and temple and toppled the city walls, 2 Kings 25:1-10.
 2. Babylon's king Nebuchadnezzar then deported all of Judah but left the poor of the land to work the fields, he took all the temple valuables and slew the leaders of the city who had opposed him, 2 Kings 25:11-21.
 3. Nebuchadnezzar then made Gedaliah governor over the remaining Hebrews, but Ishmael of the royal seed assassinated him, so the Hebrews who had been under Gedaliah fled to Egypt in violation of Deuteronomy 17:16 out of fear that Nebuchadnezzar might retaliate against them for Gedaliah's death, 2 Kings 25:22-26.
- II. Scripture indicates that Satan fueled much of the evil behind these events: Genesis 3:1-7 tells of Satan's tempting Adam and Eve to fall into sin, 1 Peter 5:8 claims Satan opposes believers to destroy them and Revelation 12:9-10 explains how Satan accuses God's people of sin that God might have to destroy them.**
- III. However, in CONTRAST to this, 2 Kings 25:27-30 tells of Babylon's amazing elevation of Jehoiachin:**
 - A. Jehoiachin had surrendered to Babylon's king in 2 Kings 24:10-12, and Nebuchadnezzar had put him in prison.
 - B. Though Jehoiachin was a vile man who we before learned from Ezekiel 19:6-7 killed men and physically abused their widows, terrorizing the couple's townspeople into abandoning their town, a later Babylonian king elevated Jehoiachin up out of prison, treated him well and gave him an allowance for life, 2 Kings 25:27-30.
- IV. The reason for this kindness to evil Jehoiachin was God's literal fulfillment of His Davidic Covenant:**
 - A. Since Jehoiachin is called by the alias "Jechonias" in Joseph's lineage in Matthew 1:11-12 KJV (Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 18), Jehoiachin became an ancestor to Joseph, the husband of Mary who gave birth to Jesus.
 - B. Joseph was thus in line for the Davidic throne through Jehoiachin, but wicked Jehoiachin's line had been cursed by God never to have a man from his line prosper in sitting on David's throne, Jeremiah 22:28-30.
 - C. In contrast, Mary's genealogy is given in Luke 3:23-38 (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to Lk. 3:23), and it traces her *uncursed* line through David's younger son Nathan (Lk. 3:31), but Nathan was not the crown prince.

- D. So, by Jesus' virgin birth to Mary, He fulfilled Messianic prophecy to be of David's seed via Nathan, avoiding Jehoiachin's curse, but by the marriage of Jesus' mother to Joseph, Jesus gained legal right to David's throne!
- E. By having Babylon's king elevate Jehoiachin, **God** showed He was *still at work* to *preserve* His Davidic Covenant for Christ *literally* to fulfill it in spite of great sin and its disastrous results! (B. K. C., O. T., p. 588)

Lesson: Regardless of Judah's great spiritual failure fueled by Satan's activity and its catastrophic results for Judah's people, God was still at work literally fulfilling His unconditional Davidic Covenant in Scripture.

Application: (1) May we trust in Christ for salvation from sin, John 3:16. (2) Since God works to fulfill His Word literally even in traumatic times of man's sin and Satan's activity, may we in our traumatic era literally interpret, believe and apply Scripture for blessing. [(3) 1 John 2:14 shows using Scripture also gives us victory over Satan.]

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

We thus *literally* interpret and apply Scripture to handle **each** issue of concern in our introduction (as follows):

(1) On the threat of mass shootings, (a) unless God guards us, all human protection is in vain, Psalm 127:1-2. Also, (b) Rev. 1:18 reveals Christ controls who dies, and when and where the soul goes at death. (c) We must thus trust in Christ as Savior from sin that God might take our souls to heaven if we are ever slain in a shooting, John 3:16; 2 Cor. 5:1-8. (d) As a believer, God wants us to live for Him (2 Cor. 5:15), using our spiritual gift to minister in the local church (Rom. 12:1-8). (e) We should then try to avoid harmful people (Acts 14:5-6) but trust God to rescue us in a crisis if our work for Him is not done (2 Cor. 1:8-10), for we are immune to death until we finish His work for us.

(2) On our moral standard for today, since 2 Timothy 4:1-2 directs that God holds all people accountable to have obeyed Scripture at Christ's return, we rely on written Scripture as our moral standard on all matters.

(3) On the value of human life, Genesis 9:6 calls for the death penalty of anyone who murders another human being, for all people are created in the image of God. We must thus value human life as a reflection of God Himself.

(4) On lethal weapons, Romans 13:1-4 claims human government wields the lethal weapon of the sword as God's agent to punish evildoers. There is thus nothing wrong with any lethal weapon itself, but only with the one who uses the weapon unlawfully, and the government must punish anyone who uses a weapon to harm another unlawfully.

(5) On racism (and also nationalism and immigration), (a) Acts 17:24-27 explains that God has made of one blood all of the nations on the earth (v. 26a), so racism is unbiblical evil. (b) However, God has established national boundaries between people groups (v. 26b), and Genesis 11:1-9 explains that God divided the world into separate nations to slow the development of sin. We must thus respect national boundaries and heed immigration laws.

(6) On "mental illness," Galatians 5:16, 22-23 reveals that relying on God the Holy Spirit who indwells believers unconditionally produces God's character in them, so, apart from physical causes, "mental illness" is a result of sin, to be handled by faith in Christ and the believer's reliance on the Holy Spirit. [Also, psychiatrist Dr. Frank B. Minirth, You Can Measure Your Mental Health, Baker Book House, 1980, p. 14, claims psychological tests found that believers who spent time daily in Scripture experienced "no significant pathology," no so-called "mental illness"!]

(7) On abortion, we before noted that Exodus 21:22-23 teaches abortion at any trimester kills a human being.

(8) On euthanasia, as with suicide, Genesis 9:6 with Exodus 20:13 opposes it as murder.

(9) On sexuality, we before noted Exodus 20:14 with Genesis 2:20-24 show sexual expression is to be limited to a naturally-born, mature male with a naturally, born mature female in marital union for life.

(10) On family breakdown, Genesis 2:24 with Exodus 20:12 sanctions the traditional family format, that one must honor his father and his mother, and that a man leaves such parents to form a new home with his own spouse.

(11) On intellectual dishonesty, 2 Timothy 3:13, 14-17 predicted deceivers would go from bad to worse in the latter days, that we must then heed what godly believers teach and hold to Scripture as our final authority for truth.

(12) On personal excess, Ephesians 5:18 condemns it as sin, to be overcome by relying on the Holy Spirit.

(13) On political hatred, Matthew 22:37-40 calls us to love God with all our being and our neighbor as ourself.

(14) On perverted freedoms, Galatians 5:13-16 teaches us not to use our liberties as a means of selfishly indulging our lusts, what has occurred over the last 50 years in our nation and in other parts of the world, but to use our liberties as a means of serving the needs of one another under the influence of the indwelling God the Holy Spirit.

(15) On the hatred some men have for women for being rejected by them, leading the men to commit mass shootings, men become unattractive to women when their normally attractive masculinity is distorted by sin. So, all men like Isaac must *first* heed God's will to overcome sin in their personal lives [see (1-14) above with Gen. 24:63] to function in normal masculinity and *then* trust God to match them with the right woman for marriage, Gen. 24:1-67.

May we trust in Christ to be saved. May we interpret and heed Scripture literally for blessing today.