

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

The Books Of The Chronicles: God's Preservation Of His Davidic And Levitical Covenants

XXXVIII. Overcoming Proud Overreach

(2 Chronicles 26:1-23)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Proud overreach is a great crisis in today's world, a fact we can readily illustrate:

(1) Proud overreach afflicts the secular world: Rep. John K. Hampton, D-Simsbury, in a July 1 interview with the Hartford Courant on the 2020-21 raises for most unionized state employees from the 2017 SEBAC deal said, "It is reckless . . . and tone-deaf to our constituents who are driving to Rentschler Field for food. People are calling me, saying, 'Are you kidding me? People are getting raises?'" ("Quotable," Republican-American, July 11, 2020, p. 10A)

While many taxpayers are driving to Rentschler Field for food because they lack the money to buy it, the state has let the raises for many unionized state employees be enacted unabated to the added cost of those very taxpayers.

(2) Proud overreach occurs in the Roman Catholic Church: "The U. S. Roman Catholic Church used a special and unprecedented exemption from federal rules to amass at least \$1.4 billion in taxpayer-backed coronavirus aid, with many millions going to dioceses that have paid huge settlements or sought bankruptcy protection because of clergy abuse cover-ups." (Reese Dunklin and Michael Rezendes, "Church reaped COVID windfall," *Ibid.*, p. 1A)

So, American taxpayers are funding much of the Catholic Church's payments for its clergy abuse cover-ups.

(3) Proud overreach exists in evangelical circles: "Jerry Falwell," fearing "Liberty University . . . was slipping into bankruptcy . . . made an unannounced trip to South Korea in January 1994" for "help from Unification representatives . . . (M)onths later, Moon's organization funneled \$3.5 million to Liberty University through . . . one of Moon's front groups, the Women's Federation for World Peace." (Brannon Howse, The Coming Rel. Reich, 2015, p. 373, citing Robert Parry, "The GOP's Own Asian Connection: Rev. Moon," Los Angeles Times, Nov. 16, 1997)

Thus, Jerry Falwell kept Liberty University financially afloat with money from cult leader Rev. Sun Myung Moon of the Moonies who "taught his followers to hate the cross and the blood of Jesus," and "(m)any believe" Moon got his "millions upon millions of dollars" by "brainwashing young people and stealing from their families" and making these followers work "18-hour days selling flowers and trinkets in the streets," *Ibid.*, Howse, p. 376-377.

(4) The mainstream media operates by proud overreach: concerned over the threat to free speech, "Harper's magazine printed an open letter affirming (after some anti-Trump throat clearing) free expression, signed by more than 150 writers of varying views." (Michael Barone, "Media's breathtaking dishonesty," *Ibid.*, July 13, 2020, p. 8A),

However, "Thomas Chatterton Williams, one of the signatories of the . . . letter, tweeted about 'the climate of fear that led many people you know and admire to tell us in confidence that they agreed but were afraid to sign.'" Thus, the climate of fear produced by political correctness is actually inhibiting free speech in many reputable writers.

(5) Proud overreach marks some evangelical teachings: Southern Baptist ladies Bible study teacher Beth Moore, referring to Matthew 17:20-21 said: "'When He [Jesus] spoke the worlds into existence . . . He set a precedent, and He's saying to us, 'My words are omnipotent, but your words are potent!' You stir up the faith within you, you look at that mountain, and you say, Move it!'" (Brannon Howse, Religious Trojan Horse, 2012, p. 382)

Mr. Howse added, "God speaking the world into existence is not a precedent for *us*. God can create with His words, but we cannot. Standard Word of Faith heresy teaches that man's words can create. That is not only heresy, it is shamanism; it is pagan; it is taught within the occult," *Ibid.*

Need: *So, we ask, "In view of the great crisis of proud overreach today, what should we do?!"*

I. God initially greatly blessed Uzziah's reign because he followed the Lord, 2 Chronicles 26:1-5:

- A. When Uzziah became king, he followed the Lord, so God made him prosper, 2 Chronicles 26:1, 3-5.
- B. That prosperity was indeed abundant in a variety of pursuits, 2 Chronicles 26:2, 6-15 ESV (as follows):
 1. Uzziah built Elath, "a valuable port on the Gulf of Aqaba" for lucrative trade with nations to Judah's South and East, 2 Chronicles 26:2; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to 2 Chronicles 26:2.
 2. He subdued the Ammonites, Meunites, Philistines and Arabs generally southward to expand his control of that area, and his fame spread as far as Egypt, 2 Chr. 26:6-8; Zon. Pict. Ency. Bib., vol. Five, p. 855-856.
 3. Uzziah built defense towers in Jerusalem and in Judaea, he made cisterns in the lowlands for his herds and he had many farmers and vinedressers in the countryside since he loved farming, 2 Chronicles 26:9-10.
 4. He had a powerful army that could wage great war with shields, spears, helmets, coats of mail, bows, stones for slinging and catapults on towers for shooting arrows and large stones, 2 Chron. 26:11-15a ESV.

5. Uzziah's fame spread far, for God greatly helped him so that he became strong, 2 Chronicles 26:15b.
- II. However, Uzziah reacted to God's blessing by becoming proud and overreaching his role, 2 Chr. 26:16:**
- A. Uzziah responded to God's blessing by turning proud and overreaching his role as king, 2 Chronicles 26:16a.
 - B. Specifically, Uzziah arrogantly entered the temple of God to burn incense on the altar of incense, committing a capital crime by functioning in the role of an Aaronic priest, 2 Chronicles 26:16b; Numbers 3:10.
- III. The Lord thus severely punished Uzziah, leading him to a dishonorable end, 2 Chronicles 26:17-23:**
- A. Azariah the high priest with 80 other brave priests entered the temple to confront the powerful king Uzziah, charging that it was not his role to burn the incense, but the role of the priests, 2 Chronicles 26:17-18a.
 - B. They urged Uzziah to leave the sanctuary, that he had done wrong and that the Lord would not honor him for what he had done, the honor Uzziah was apparently seeking from God, 2 Chronicles 26:18b.
 - C. Uzziah was furious at the priests for their criticism, so he erupted in anger at them, 2 Chronicles 26:19a.
 - D. However, while he raged, the priestly censor in his hand, the Lord also raged at Uzziah, and instantly struck him with the dreaded disease of leprosy on his forehead for all to see, 2 Chronicles 26:19b.
 - E. Azariah and the other priests reacted by rushing to get Uzziah quickly out of the temple, and he lived in a quarantined house as a leper to the day of his death, his son Jotham ruling in his place, 2 Chronicles 26:20-22.
 - F. Since Uzziah died as a leper, he was buried in the field belonging to the kings, but not with the kings themselves, a dishonorable burial since his disease was God's punishment for sin, 2 Chronicles 26:23.

Lesson: *Though God greatly blessed Uzziah for following Him, when Uzziah became proud because of those blessings and overreached his role to function as a priest, God punished him so that his life ended in dishonor.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ for salvation from sin, John 3:16. (2) May we obey the Lord for blessing, but then respond to His blessing NOT by turning proud, but by humbly staying within God's assigned roles for us.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

We apply this sermon's lesson to each of the issues of concern in our introduction (as follows):

(1) On the problem of overreach with money in the secular world, Colossians 3:5-6 reveals that greed is rampant in the world, so we should heed 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12 and function independently of others in earning a living that we avoid being needlessly exposed to abusive greed in the world and that we not lack any material need.

(2) On the problem of overreach with money in Catholic and evangelical realms, (a) 3 John 6-7 reveals the church should not receive donations from unbelievers, so we do not obtain government loans or seek money from the unsaved. (b) Also, 2 Corinthians 9:6-10 directs that donors not be pressured to give, so we trust God to move His people to give freewill offerings. (c) On Christian colleges and seminaries, 1 Timothy 3:15b NIV in its context claims the **local** church is the pillar and foundation of the truth in the current dispensation of the Church. Thus, only as Christian schools enhance the local church's hold of and proclamation of Biblical truth will they enjoy God's blessing. However, many schools today face pressures from accrediting associations, academic peers, donors, etc. to compromise Biblical stands, so we warn trainees for the ministry that likely every school will have something notably unbiblical about it! (d) God called me to pastor this local church, and 1 Timothy 4:12-16 and 2 Timothy 2:4 direct pastors to focus on their pastoral work, so I will **not** minister in any school since I serve in this Church as a pastor.

(3) On the overreach in limiting free speech in the media, Romans 3:4a claims God is true while every man is a liar, so we should rely on Scripture, not any other human writer(s), as our final source of truth, 2 Timothy 3:13-17!

(4) On the issue of Beth Moore's commentary on Matthew 17:20-21, (a) though that passage teaches that faith as small as a grain of mustard seed is all that we need to move mountains, God's will governs all such acts, 1 John 5:14-15; 3:22. God will **not** honor our exercise of faith to achieve a result that is unbiblical, for He is holy, 1 Peter 1:15-16. (b) Mr. Howse correctly critiqued Beth Moore's teaching by writing that God can create with His words, but we cannot! Belief in altering one's experience by willing, thinking or speaking a certain way (as in Positive Thinking, Possibility Thinking, Visualization, etc.), what occurs in the Word of Faith movement, actually dabbles in pagan shamanism and the occult, what Deuteronomy 18:9-14 calls an abomination. (Ibid., Howse, Religious Trojan Horse)

(5) In **positive summary**, Romans 12:3-8 ESV directs us "not to think of" ourselves "more highly than" we "ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned" us. Each believer has an important, supernatural spiritual enabling from God that Scripture calls a "spiritual gift" that God wants him to use in serving the Lord. We must not overreach our calling by dabbling in something outside of God's calling, but stay within His assignment for us. In so doing, we will enjoy God's rich blessing and avoid overreach!

May we trust in Christ for salvation. May we humbly serve God in His assigned role for great blessing.