

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
Psalms: Living By Faith In God
XXIX. Replacing The Idol Of Man With God
(Psalm 29:1-11)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

A recent editorial in The Wall Street Journal claimed, “One hallmark of our era is the collapse of public trust in government and experts of all kinds” because “so many experts and their policies have failed in such spectacular fashion.” (“How did the left get so smug?” Republican-American editorial, June 17, 2022, p. 8A, citing a June 2 editorial in The Wall Street Journal) This claim is readily validated by the evidence (as follows):

(1) Amazingly, “17 Nobel Prize-winning economists, representing institutions such as Yale and Harvard universities . . . signed an open letter last year supporting President Biden’s economic agenda,” so “even the most accomplished economic experts cannot be trusted to make correct economic predictions.” (Ibid.)

(2) Indeed, as Richard Hanania, founder of the Center for the Study of Partisanship and Ideology wrote last year, “We have more criminologists and more crime, more psychologists and more mental-health issues, more education spending and stagnant or worse outcomes.” (Ibid.)

(3) When Governor Ned Lamont went to New London on June 10, 2022 to sign legislation that established Connecticut’s Juneteenth holiday to celebrate the end of slavery in Texas, “within a few hours on either side of the ceremony, there were the usual fatal shootings in Hartford and Bridgeport, while in New Haven, a 16-year-old boy was wounded in a drive-by shooting but survived,” events where “most Connecticut residents who are descendants of slaves kidnapped from Africa live.” (Chris Powell, “Holiday’s don’t fix racial problems,” Ibid.) These cities “seem to have worsened in important respects in recent years, despite the huge amounts that have been spent in the name of improvement,” for such problems are due mainly to “(c)hronic student absenteeism and lack of parenting.”

(4) Many religious leaders have failed: At the recent meeting of the largest Protestant denomination in America, the Southern Baptist Convention, issues hotly debated were “sex abuse reforms” besides “liberal trends and ‘wokeness’” and whether Pastor Rick Warren’s Church could “remain in the convention despite ordaining women pastors” in violation of a rule of the denomination. (Deepa Bharath and Peter Smith, “New Southern Baptist president vows to push sex abuse reforms,” Ibid., p. 3B)

Need: *So, we ask, “Why is God letting the failures of ‘all kinds of’ leaders become so evident?!”*

- I. All non-Biblical philosophies and religions, both ancient and contemporary, sinfully exalt man over God:**
- A. John C. Whitcomb, Jr. and Henry M. Morris’ landmark book, The Genesis Flood, 1978, p. 440, claims: “There are really only *two* basic philosophies or religions . . . The one is oriented primarily with respect to God” where “(m)an is . . . utterly dependent upon and responsible to Him.”
 - B. “The other . . . is oriented primarily with respect to man” and “supposes that man is . . . capable of acquiring by his own efforts all he needs . . . And the underlying dynamic of this philosophy is the concept of evolution. The idea of development . . . of progress . . . finds abundant manifestation in all the many religions and . . . ancient idolatries or primitive animism or modern existentialism or atheistic communism.” (Ibid., p. 440-441)
 - C. Thus, ancient Baalism, like Liberal Theology and Marxist ideology that we predominantly face in today’s world, was based on the concept of evolution, and was oriented primarily with respect to man, idolizing man!
- II. Thus, in Psalm 29:1-11 where David depicted the supremacy of Scripture’s God over the false Canaanite god Baal, by way of application, he exposed the futility of ALL man-oriented philosophies and religions:**
- A. Baal was the pagan Canaanite god of storms and fertility, Zon. Pict. Ency. Bib., vol. One, p. 432.
 - B. David critiqued this god, describing the supremacy of Scripture’s God over Baal and so over all man-oriented philosophies and religions by describing a great thunderstorm that moved across the land of the Canaanites, devastating it, and he credited the storm to Scripture’s God, not Baal, Psalm 29:1-11 (B. K. C., O. T., p. 815):
 - 1. David called on God’s angelic beings (“mighty ones” NIV) to acknowledge God’s glory and strength, to give Him the glory due Him in the beauty of “holiness,” that is, separation from sin, Psalm 29:1-2; Ibid.
 - 2. The glory due to God is described in His “omnipotent control of nature in a terrifying storm,” Ibid., p. 816:
 - a. Likening the sound of thunder to God’s voice, David lauded God’s “voice” as full of majesty, Psa. 29:3-4.
 - b. David then described how the Lord moved the storm inland from the Mediterranean Sea, breaking the great cedars of Lebanon, rumbling over the mountains, and scattering forked lightening in the skies, for “Lebanon (v. 6) and Sirion” in the text “are mountains in the Anti-Lebanon range,” Ibid.; Psalm 29:5-7.

- c. When the storm moved further inland, the voice of the Lord shook even the Desert of Kadesh, a town about 75 miles north of Damascus, Ibid.; Psalm 29:8. Out of fear of the great thunderstorm, the deer prematurely calved, the forest trees were stripped of their leaves and the “creatures” of God’s temple, likely a reference to the angels addressed in Psalm 29:1, shouted praises to God, Psalm 29:9.
- d. In conclusion, David asserted that the Lord “sat enthroned” (past tense, NIV margin, Ibid.) over the universal Noahic Flood, so He was still sitting enthroned over the power of the waters in the recent thunderstorm, and He would continue to sit enthroned over nature forever, Psalm 29:10; Ibid.
- e. In applying this psalm to the people of his era, at Psalm 29:11, David claimed that God would give of His great strength that had been displayed both at the Noahic Flood and in this recent thunderstorm to His people, that He would use His strength to bless His people and bring them peace, Ibid. [The power of the God of Scripture was revealed in Jesus’ calming the storm on the Sea of Galilee in Mark 4:37-39, Ibid.]

Lesson: *Since David’s critique of Canaanite Baalism in showing God’s supremacy in ruling the thunderstorm that pagans attributed to Baal critiques all religions that idolize man today, God is letting the great failure of leaders in all realms become evident to critique the idolatry of man that people might stop worshiping man and worship God.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God’s gift of eternal life, John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. (2) In view of the exposure of the futility of human leaders in all realms today, may we cease looking to man as a god and look to Scripture’s God as the only true God for blessing.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

In viewing the Creator God of the Bible as the only true God, we find in His directives in Scripture solutions to all of the human leadership failures mentioned in our sermon introduction (as follows):

(1) On the failure of 17 Nobel Prize-winning economists who supported President Biden’s failed economic agenda, Ecclesiastes 11:1-6 **four times** asserted, “you do not know” about future economic circumstances due to the unforeseen events of the future and of the works of God Himself! Nobel Prize-winning economists need to read Ecclesiastes 11:1-6 and humbly admit that they cannot predict the economy and markets as they are affected by the unseen, inexplicable workings of God Himself!! Thus, in view of our ignorance, **God** in that passage **advises us** to invest (a) boldly, (b) for the long-term, with (c) proper diversification, and (d) to keep adding to each investment!

(2) On the failure of controlling crime, Romans 13:1-4 states that God has given human governments the right to bear arms to enforce the law and to punish criminals. Instead of “defunding the police,” God would call for adequate funding and arming of law enforcement officials and the prosecution of criminals in accord with the law.

(3) On the failure of psychologists and psychology to treat the afflicted, aside from actual physical causes for behavioral problems, all other disorders result from sin that is checked by (a) salvation by faith in Christ (John 3:16) followed by (b) reliance on the indwelling Holy Spirit of God for thought and behavioral control (Galatians 5:16-23).

(4) On the failure in education and racial disparities, issues that are interrelated, (a) God holds parents responsible to rear their children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord, Ephesians 6:1-4. This requires active involvement by the parent in the education of his child, what every good schoolteacher heartily supports! The consistent application of this Ephesians 6:1-4 passage clears up absenteeism and enhances learning for all involved.

(5) On the failure of religious leaders as reported in the Southern Baptist Convention, (a) sex abuse is countered by (i) relying on the Holy Spirit to boycott the sin nature (Galatians 5:16-23), (ii) the meeting of sexual needs in marriage and (iii) church discipline for immorality (1 Corinthians 5:1-13). (b) Trends toward Liberal Theology are corrected by heeding 2 Timothy 3:13-4:2 and 2 Peter 1:20-21 on the divine inspiration and authority, the sufficiency and the preaching and teaching of Scripture. (c) Trends toward “wokeness,” i. e., Marxism, are offset by heeding Exodus 20:17, 15 that opposes covetousness and stealing, Marxism’s key vices, and applying the Ten Commandments of Exodus 20:1-17 (except for the Sabbath, Colossians 2:16-17) for social order versus Marxists’ efforts to destroy social order. (“Goals, ‘Communist Manifesto,’” learn-usa.com/transformation_process/hdn003.htm, citing p. 116 of Marx & Engels’ The Communist Manifesto) (d) On the ordaining of women as pastors in Rick Warren’s Church, 1 Timothy 2:12-15 directs that a woman must not exercise authority over a man or teach him, for God created the man first and then the woman. Since male men and female women are still Biblically identified as men and women as to physical gender in this life, they must function in God’s creative order where men lead women.

May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God’s gift of eternal life. May we respond to the unsettling exposure of the futility of human leadership in all realms by ceasing to rely on man as a god and instead relate to Scripture’s God as the only true God for blessing.