

THAT THEY MAY EAT THEIR OWN DUNG

2 KINGS 18:1 – 37

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~ In any sincere and systematic study of the Word of God, it would be impossible to avoid certain controversial issues and heated discussions concerning subjects that can be interpreted different ways. As our Spiritual Safari progresses through the entire Bible, it becomes necessary to touch all the bases. That necessarily requires me to express a viewpoint and take a stand on many subjects on which good, honest saved men and women differ. We must discuss theology centered around the crucified and risen Christ; which is a rare occasion anymore – and the neglect of which is responsible for the divisions in the church. If I were a politician running for office, and if I wanted your vote to elect me to something, I would detour around *many* passages in the Bible – like the one we are coming to in this report. There are many of you who think I teach with no love in my heart, and others who think that I think I am a know-it-all. Well, if you're one of those people, then here is my suggestion: don't read my reports.

If all you are concerned with are the sins of the Moabites and the Ammonites – but not your own sins – then I promise you this safari will not be well received by you. I don't comfort the saints by watering roses with sunshine drenched water, friends. I teach the whole council of God to the whole world from Genesis to Revelation; and I am going to teach the Bible by allowing the Holy Spirit to speak through me – and the chips will have to fall where they may. I realize I step on many toes around this forum on which I teach; but, friends, many people around the world are actually learning the Word of God in an educated, sincere, systematic, Spirit-filled and Spirit-led way. I hope you can rejoice in that with me.

The Spiritual Safari makes no claim over a monopoly on truth. I have never insisted I am correct. I do not speak Ex cathedra; and I do not attempt to give the impression I reside on some superior spiritual plane. I do not claim to have enlightenment that anyone else cannot have – *if* they would simply take the time to learn the Bible properly, correctly and completely. After twenty plus years studying the Word of God, I am more amazed at my

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ignorance of Scripture as opposed to what I have learned and can remember. I suppose I will grow in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ until the day I physically die in this world. As long as I breathe in the air of this earthly planet I will know I have not arrived at some lofty platitude of understanding.

Truly, I regret that not everyone agrees with my theology. However, those of you who disagree have a right to be wrong if you want to – I teach the Bible according to the light I have been given. I have a *deep*, profound and unchangeable conviction about what I teach and the method I choose to do so. I am extremely dogmatic about most subjects. Even so, I do not break fellowship with any believer who accepts the essentials of Holy Writ as being the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. If we meet around Him crucified, we can disagree on *almost* all other doctrine. See, we Christians are an extreme minority. Today, we need to make a unified stand for the truths found only in the Word of God. The world, the flesh and the devil himself become giddy when we divide and split over insignificant and incidental issues. There is no need to fall apart and hate each other over every petty disagreement.

In this report, we come out of some very dry ground; which we have plowed for the last several reports. This is extremely remarkable because this chapter's content is recorded again in second Chronicles *AND* in the prophecy of Isaiah. See, directly in the center of Isaiah, there is a historical interlude. When we get to that prophecy, we're going to spend quite a bit of type and space there. Here, in second Kings, we're going to hit the high points and emphasize only certain aspects. In Chronicles, we will expound and emphasize the spiritual truths and, likewise, in Isaiah we'll bring it all together. There will be some degree of duplication – but that's okay – because I have all the type and space I need to complete this curriculum. The children of Israel passed over the Red Sea; but we're not passing over a Scriptural account of this magnitude – and that means teaching it three times.

Alright, in our last report, the northern kingdom was taken away captive by Assyria, and God was clear about why He permitted it to happen. Two of those three reasons were *DISOBEDIENCE* and *UNBELIEF*! The Lord testified

against Israel and against Judah by myriad prophets He had sent to warn them of their wrongful ways. God told His people – through the prophets – to keep His commandments; but they didn't! Further, they doubted God, and they simply refused to hear what He had to say. They hardened their necks as their fathers had done so long ago.

They also defied God by refusing to observe the Sabbatic year for four hundred ninety years; all the while rejecting ALL of His statutes, precepts and the covenant He had made with them. God cites all of these reasons as He testifies against them – I say that again because, candidly, it should scare the living hell out of us, my friends:

2 Chronicles 36:21 To fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept Sabbath, to fulfill threescore and ten years ~

So, disobeying God, doubting God and defying God by refusing to keep the Sabbath were the three reasons given why God sent Israel into captivity. It was during that period in the southern kingdom of Judah that a most outstanding king took the throne. In fact, this man, Hezekiah, was the best king to reign in Judah after David. None other can compare to this king; not even Solomon. Interestingly, this is the son of Ahaz – a very wicked and evil king....

1 Now it came to pass in the third year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, that Hezekiah the son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign.

2 Twenty and five years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Abi, the daughter of Zachariah.

~ For the third time, we need to note that mom is always mentioned with the kings of Judah. Irrespective of whether he was a good or bad king; she takes the blame for the bad and the credit for the good. I think it is amazing how and why the Word of God calls attention to the mothers of these kings. Well, Hezekiah was on par with King David. The next two verses contain wording that we have not heard in reference to any other king.

Hezekiah will lead in the greatest revival of them all, too – and we'll read about that in Chronicles....

3 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that David his father did.

4 He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brasen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan.

~ Moses had made a brasen serpent in the wilderness; when the mixed multitude murmured against him, and the fiery serpents came and were killing them. The people could look to the brasen serpent and be saved. Well, they had, obviously, kept it as a national heirloom; and it was placed in the temple Solomon built. Then came the day when the children of Israel started worshipping it. Instead of identifying with it in faith – as they had been instructed to do – they made it one of their gods. This brasen serpent pointed to Christ; and the Lord Jesus said, *“as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness even so must the Son of Man be lifted up!”* Naturally, that was fulfilled in Christ; but at this time, Israel had turned that around and worshiped the object itself.

Now, a cursory research of the seven churches in Revelation will reveal that in the city of Pergamos – Pergamum as it was called then – they worshipped the serpent. We're going to receive traumatizing lessons about this from the Lord later in Scripture; but here, we see the same behavior as the children of Israel worship the serpent and are burning incense to it. That's when good King Hezekiah decided the time had come to stamp all of that out and rid Israel of their national-archive-turned-idol.

Another outstanding spiritual lesson is presented in this complicated section of Scripture, too. There are certain organizations, methods and movements God has used in the past which have been wonderfully blessed. However, said organizations refuse to recognize when God is through with them, and they refuse to disband. I am confident God raised them up, and I know they served a great purpose and accomplished many wonderful

things for the Lord – but they went their own way and did their own thing in time. Because they were so wonderfully blessed of God, they grew into powerful entities. Well, now these organizations have moved very far from God, but certain men have very good paying jobs they cannot – *WILL* not – relinquish. Some of the organizations I am speaking of exist for no other reason than perpetuating jobs for a very few individuals.

There are methods that can fall into this rut, also. See, there's no monotony with God nor with the proper, correct and complete teaching of His Word. One example is the altar call. Today, it seems like every preacher and evangelist I hear speak is compelled to give an altar call. It has now become a stumbling block for the church, as members come again week after week after week – but experience no change in their hearts or lives. I am *CERTAIN* that one of the things that has killed evangelism in our day – and evangelism is dead, friends, don't kid yourself – is because of the invitation to come forward at an altar call! God led Moody to do it; but He probably hasn't led *YOU* to!

I'm sure the finest converts never responded to an altar call. In fact, the best converts have probably come from a small Bible study group where no invitation was ever given at all. Oh, I know many of you will disagree with me now – but it happens to be true. It's easy to begin to worship a brasen serpent and call it Nehushtan today without even realizing what we're doing! I think we need to be very, *very* careful about that. I'm sure many of the sour pickle long faced saints criticized Hezekiah when he broke this thing in pieces. Well, thank God Hezekiah had the intestinal fortitude to do this; and if you have some little idols lying around the house – or if you have some particular rule or regulation you're trusting in – I suggest *YOU* get rid of them, too....

5 He trusted in the LORD God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him.

~ If there were none before Hezekiah, and none after him who were like him – that means he stands alone. That is the reason his life is recorded and spoken of *three* times in the Old Testament. He was also a very courageous king. Not only did he get rid of false worship, he held onto the Word of God

as closely as he could; while keeping the Lord's commandments. As a result, the nation was prosperous and defeated the Philistines. That's a remarkable mouthful....

6 For he clave to the LORD, and departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses.

7 And the LORD was with him; and he prospered whithersoever he went forth: and he rebelled against the king of Assyria, and served him not.

8 He smote the Philistines, even unto Gaza, and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.

9 And it came to pass in the fourth year of King Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, that Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria, and besieged it.

10 And at the end of three years they took it: even in the sixth year of Hezekiah, that is the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria was taken.

11 And the king of Assyria did carry away Israel unto Assyria, and put them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes:

12 Because they obeyed not the voice of the LORD their God, but transgressed his covenant, and all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded, and would not hear them, nor do them.

13 Now in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah did Sennacherib king of Assyria come up against all the fenced cities of Judah, and took them.

14 And Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria to Lachish, saying, I have offended; return from me: that which thou putttest on me will I bear. And the king of Assyria appointed unto Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold.

15 And Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house.

16 At that time did Hezekiah cut off the gold from the doors of the temple of the LORD, and from the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Assyria.

17 And the king of Assyria sent Tartan and Rabsaris and Rabshakeh from Lachish to King Hezekiah with a great host against Jerusalem. And they went up and came to Jerusalem. And when they were come up, they came and stood by the conduit of the upper pool, which is in the highway of the fuller's field.

18 And when they had called to the king, there came out to them Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, which was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder.

19 And Rabshakeh said unto them, Speak ye now to Hezekiah, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, What confidence is this wherein thou trustest?

20 Thou sayest, (but they are but vain words) I have counsel and strength for the war. Now on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against me?

21 Now, behold, thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed, even upon Egypt, on which if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh king of Egypt unto all that trust on him.

22 But if ye say unto me, We trust in the LORD our God: is not that he, whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and hath said to Judah and Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem?

23 Now therefore, I pray thee, give pledges to my lord the king of Assyria, and I will deliver thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them.

24 How then wilt thou turn away the face of one captain of the least of my master's servants, and put thy trust on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen?

25 Am I now come up without the LORD against this place to destroy it? The LORD said to me, Go up against this land, and destroy it.

26 Then said Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, and Shebna, and Joah, unto Rabshakeh, Speak, I pray thee, to thy servants in the Syrian language; for we understand it: and talk not with us in the Jews' language in the ears of the people that are on the wall.

27 But Rabshakeh said unto them, Hath my master sent me to thy master, and to thee, to speak these words? hath he not sent me to the men which sit on the wall, that they may eat their own dung, and drink their own piss with you?

28 Then Rabshakeh stood and cried with a loud voice in the Jews' language, and spake, saying, Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria:

29 Thus saith the king, Let not Hezekiah deceive you: for he shall not be able to deliver you out of his hand:

30 Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, The LORD will surely deliver us, and this city shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria.

31 Harken not to Hezekiah: for thus saith the king of Assyria, Make an agreement with me by a present, and come out to me, and then eat ye every man of his own vine, and every one of his fig tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his cistern:

32 Until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of oil olive and of

honey, that ye may live, and not die: and hearken not unto Hezekiah, when he persuadeth you, saying, The LORD will deliver us.

33 Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered at all his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria?

34 Where are the gods of Hamath, and of Arpad? where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah? have they delivered Samaria out of mine hand?

35 Who are they among all the gods of the countries, that have delivered their country out of mine hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of mine hand?

36 But the people held their peace, and answered him not a word: for the king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not.

37 Then came Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, which was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder, to Hezekiah with their clothes rent, and told him the words of Rabshakeh.

~ See, when Hezekiah broke down the high places, the king of Assyria thought Hezekiah had thrown out the True and Living God. That's when Sennacherib sent Rabshakeh to really terrorize the people! The things he said he would do to them if they didn't surrender were not nice. The people were being brainwashed; and the king of Assyria got the propaganda message out effectively. The public mob is easily manipulated, friends. Any two-bit politician knows this.

Rabshakeh reveals he is a pessimistic punk with that filthy mouth, and he demands surrender. He was right saying the other gods had not been able to deliver any nation from the king of Assyria – but Rabshakeh was dead wrong saying the True and Living God couldn't deliver Judah out of his hand. The next leg of our Spiritual Safari will see more insults by this profane man from Assyria; and his attempt to seriously frighten Hezekiah is successful – Hezekiah WAS frightened! We're going to see Hezekiah put on sackcloth and ashes and go into the house of the Lord to pray. At the same

time, he sends a message to Isaiah the prophet urging him to come prophesy. Well, Isaiah returns an encouraging message. Then, Rabshakeh becomes very bold and challenges God with an insulting letter – and we'll see God's great deliverance in response. It is a profound picture we'll see as we move forward from here ~