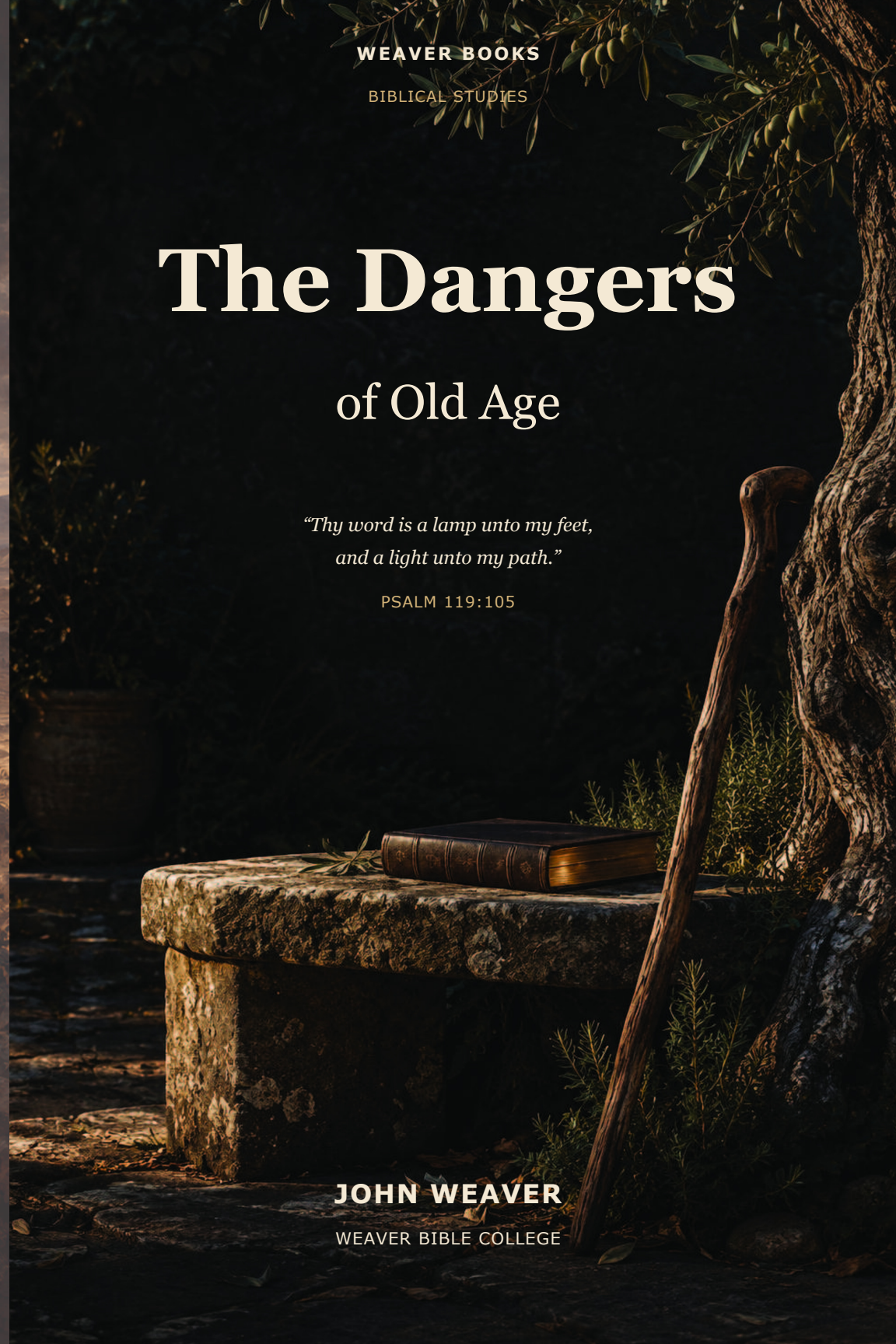
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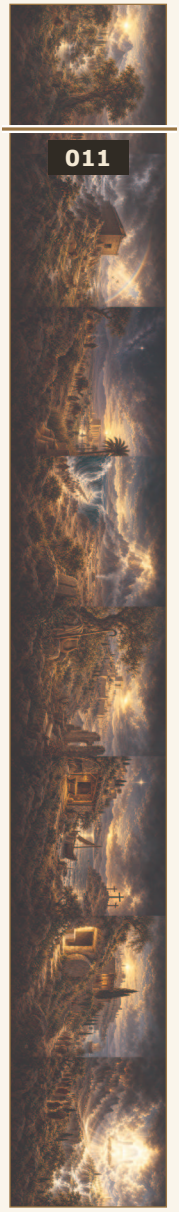
"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

PSALM 119:105



JOHN WEAVER

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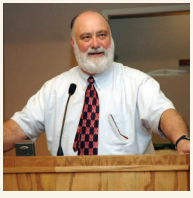
They shall still bring forth fruit in old age.

PSALM 92:14, EXCERPT

Age does not remove the need for spiritual vigilance. John Weaver considers the temptations and responsibilities of later life, asking how habits, desires, and confidence can affect faithful conduct. These messages encourage continued attention to Scripture and the perseverance required to finish one's course with humility and obedience.

“Lord, help us, teach us about the dangers of old age, and keep us on the path of righteousness, holiness, and obedience.”

JOHN WEAVER



John Weaver

John Weaver's sermons form the teaching collection presented by Weaver Bible College. This volume gathers his teaching from that collection.

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CHAPTER 1

The Dangers of Old Age

Part One

Introduction and Scripture Reading

"But King Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites, of the nations concerning which the Lord said unto the children of Israel, 'You shall not go into them, neither shall they come into you, for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods.' Solomon clave to these in love, and he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines, and his wives turned away his heart.

"For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father. So Solomon went after Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom, the abomination of the Ammonites. And Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord, and went not fully after the Lord as did David his father.

"Then did Solomon build a high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon. And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods. And the Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel, who had appeared unto him twice, and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods.

"But he kept not that which the Lord commanded. Wherefore the Lord said unto Solomon, 'Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it unto thy servant. Notwithstanding in thy days, I will not do it for David thy father's sake, but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom, but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen.'"

The Reality of Old Age and Forgetfulness

Old age is fraught with many dangers, especially in relationship to the mind. Many suffer from Alzheimer's, dementia, and simple forgetfulness, and they are just not able to think clearly. It is possible to lose both wisdom and the mind at the same time.

This does not even consider the question most frequently asked by older people: "Now why did I come into this room?" Or, "What was I looking for when I came into this room?" There is also what is known as simple forgetfulness. Since there is a tendency to forget, we often read of scams and schemes that target the elderly. In fact, I receive bills, statements, and invoices online for services I have never asked for and products I have never ordered. I do not even open them; I put them in spam and delete them.

If I answered them, they would know they had a real, active email address. But many people will simply open such messages and say, "Oh, I forgot I ordered this," and pay them. It is nothing but a scam.

But look at verse four. The Bible says, "For it came to pass when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other

gods and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father." The fall of Solomon took place when he was old. Yet old is, I think, a relative term.

Solomon's Age at His Fall

I happen to be eighty-one years of age. I believe I am older, but I do not really consider myself old. We have one fellow in our church, Dr. Bowen, who is ninety. I am sure he would probably consider me a young man, since he is about nine years older than I am. Age is a relative term.

I distinctly remember when I turned sixty-seven, many years back. It dawned on me that I could no longer do the things I used to do, although I am still very active. I have learned to appreciate the strength of younger men, and whenever they offer to help, I gladly accept it. Certainly, there are things that change with age.

The question to ask is this: How old was Solomon when his heart turned away from the Lord? No one can say exactly how old he was, but I believe it can be shown clearly that he was not old according to our estimation of old. I will read a verse and then give a couple of quotations. Listen carefully: 1 Kings chapter 3 and verse 7.

Solomon himself is praying, and he says, "And now, O Lord my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father, and I am but a little child, I know not how to go out or how to come in." So Solomon initially prayed as he was anointed king and said, "I am as a little child." Colin Dalich writes, "Solomon could not then be quite 20 years old as he was born after the Syro-Ammonite war, and calls himself at the commencement of his reign still," and here is the Hebrew, "Chotah Nahar."

The word Nahar may of itself denote not merely a boy, but also a grown youth, but here it is limited to the boy's age by the addition of the word warach. John Gill said it like this: "And David said Solomon my son is young and tender. Jarchi supposes he was about 12 years of age, though he observes at the same time the word is used of Joshua when Joshua was 42 years of age." He says it is possible that Solomon might then be about 20. Albert Barnes says, "The exact

age of Solomon at this time is uncertain, but it cannot have been more than 24 or 25. And it may have been as little as 14 or 15."

Now look in 1 Kings chapter 11 and verse 42: "And the time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was 40 years." We know, then, that Solomon reigned 40 years. Turn to 2 Chronicles chapter 12 and verse 13. Solomon had a son named Rehoboam, who followed him: "So Rehoboam strengthened himself in Jerusalem and reigned. For Rehoboam was one and forty years old when he began to reign. And he reigned 17 years in Jerusalem, the city which the Lord had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel to put his name there. And his mother's name was Naamah, an Ammonitess."

Rehoboam began to reign at 41 years of age, which means that he had to be born the year before Solomon was anointed king. Solomon therefore had a wife and was producing children before he became king. This fact does not give us his exact age, because kings and those in royal families usually married early. Since you are in 2 Chronicles, turn to chapter 24 and begin reading with verse 1.

Joash was seven years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem; therefore, he was dead at forty-seven. His mother was Zibiah of Beersheba. Jehoiada did that which was right in the sight of the Lord all his days, and Jehoiada took two wives for Joash, who began sons and daughters. Obviously, Jehoiada did not take wives for him when he was seven, or even eight or nine. He probably took those wives when Joash was a teenager.

Solomon, then, may also have been married and had children earlier. We are not specifically told at what age Solomon died, but in all probability it was anywhere from fifty to sixty-five years of age. That is not old in my book. Someone fifty to sixty-five, I would consider still a young man. However, it was probably Solomon's lifestyle that made him age very quickly. If you read Ecclesiastes, written by Solomon, you will discover that he gave his heart, mind, and life to many different things. He gave himself to wine, agriculture, and anything imaginable because he had more money and power than anyone in the world at that particular time. It could have been the old adage of wine, women, and song that basically got to him.

The Nature of Solomon's Marriages

Rushdoony pointed out many years ago, in what I think was his first Institute of Biblical Law book, that Solomon's seven hundred wives, who were princesses, were not necessarily wives in the sense in which we normally use the word. In those days, when you entered into a treaty or covenant with another nation, you normally married someone from that kingdom, especially from the royal family, to cement the treaty. The principle was simply this: you do not make war against your own family.

Thus, Rushdoony pointed out, many of these women were probably nothing more than ambassadors or diplomats in Solomon's kingdom and administration, looking after their own countries, just as a diplomat in any other country would do today. But how, then, could these wives turn his heart away? Out of seven hundred, there were many who were probably wives in the sense we understand, and that does not include the three hundred concubines. The wives did indeed influence him. The question, then, is why or how he allowed them to have this influence over him.

Sin is Gradual and Progressive

First of all, let me point out something in light of 1 Kings chapter 11: sin is always gradual and progressive. One sin leads to another. If nothing happens immediately when an individual sins, he thinks, “Well, it may be safe to progress and go just a little bit farther.” So he keeps doing that. Sin is gradual, it is progressive, and one sin adds to another.

If you look back in 1 Kings chapter 11 and verse 1, the Bible says: “But King Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites.” Obviously, Solomon did not marry all these women at one time. He married the Egyptian, which he should not have, but he had made affinity, which means he made a treaty with the king of Egypt, and the king of Egypt gave him his daughter to be his wife. That is how business was done back then. The Bible says that he loved many strange women, together with, and then identifies them.

But look in verse 2: “Of the nations concerning which the Lord said unto the children of Israel, ‘You shall not go into them, neither shall they come in unto you, for surely they will turn away your heart after other gods.’ Solomon clave to these in love.” See how Solomon blatantly disobeyed God. Exodus chapter 34, verses 11 through 16, says:

God's Clear Prohibition Against Intermarriage

“Observe thou that which I command thee this day: Behold, I drive out before thee the Amorite, and the Canaanite, the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite. Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee. But thou shalt destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves. For thou shalt worship no other god: for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God: lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice; and thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go a whoring after their gods, and make thy sons go a whoring after their gods.” So God has said, you do not intermarry.

You are not going to go with these heathen; that is all there is to it. The ultimate end will be that you will be turned away from me.

Deuteronomy chapter 7, beginning with verse 1, says: "When the Lord thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou; and when the Lord thy God shall deliver them before thee, thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them. Thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor show mercy unto them: neither shalt thou make marriages with them. Thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. They will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly."

"But thus shall you deal with them: you shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire. For thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God. The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself above all the people that are upon the face of the earth."

Here are two clear passages where God forbids Solomon to marry these strange women. The word strange in the Hebrew happens to be nakri, and it literally means a stranger, an alien, a foreigner, one that is outlandish, one that is unknown, and one that is unfamiliar. All of these women whom he married were strangers to Solomon's faith, to Solomon's culture, and to God's law. God warned Solomon about this numerous times in the Bible, and yet he disobeyed and married all of these women.

New Testament Warning Against Unequal Yokes

There are a lot of things like this going on today. There are Christians marrying unsaved people, which is plainly forbidden here and in the New Testament as well. Anytime a Christian marries an unsaved person, the thought is, "I'm going to change him" or "I'm going to change her." You will find that absolutely impossible, because change is brought by God and not by man. Clearly, if you want to read it, 2 Corinthians chapter 6, verses 14 through 18, tells us what God says.

"Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? Or what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God and God has said, I will dwell in them and walk in them and I will be their God and they shall be my people."

"Wherefore says God, come ye out from among them and be separate, saith the Lord, touch not the unclean thing and I will receive you and will be a father unto you and you shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." So many people today disobey just as Solomon did, bringing God's chastisement and

judgment upon themselves and their families through their disobedience.

We have seen that Solomon built temples or altars for Ashtoreth, for Milcom, who is Molech, and for Chemosh. Here is my question: Why did Solomon build these temples or altars to these false gods?

Why Solomon Built Altars to Specific Gods

You may say, "Well, his strange wives pressured him." That is probably true, but it is not the answer I am looking for. There is power and influence in a wife. Years ago, I preached a message entitled "The Power and the Influence of a Wife." Wives do have power and influence. It may be downplayed, but it is still true. Why, then, did specific wives want Solomon to build these altars and worship with them specifically at these altars? We know that Solomon did so. In verse 4, "For it came to pass when Solomon was old that his wives turned away his heart after other gods. And his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God as with the heart of David his father." His heart was not perfect; it turned after other gods.

Verse 5 says, "For Solomon went after Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom, the abomination of the Ammonites." The Bible says he went after. The Hebrew word went is yalach, meaning to go, to walk, to proceed, to move forward, to move toward, and simply to follow. Then verse 6 says, "And Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord." How did he do evil? By going after these other gods. "And went not fully after the Lord as did David his father." So he compromised.

Verse 10 gives the decisive charge against Solomon: “And had commanded him”—God had commanded him—“concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods.” But “he kept not that which the Lord commanded.” He did go after other gods. So the question must be: why?

Albert Barnes, commenting on Solomon’s compromise, or apostasy, says, “old, about 50 or 55.” From his age at his ascension, Solomon could not have been more than sixty at his death. The true nature of his idolatry was neither complete apostasy, from which

there could be no recovery, nor mere toleration. Solomon did not openly or wholly apostatize.

He continued attending the worship of Yahweh and punctually made his offerings three times a year in the temple, according to 1 Kings 9:25, but his heart was not perfect with God. The religious earnestness of his younger days was weakened by wealth, luxury, sensualism, and increasing worldliness, leading him to worldly policy and latitudinarianism—an openness arising from contact with all the manifold forms of human opinion. His lapse into deadly sin was no doubt gradual.

Partly from ostentation and partly from sensualism, the most common failing of oriental monarchs, he established a harem on a grand and extraordinary scale. To gratify strange women—that is, foreigners—admitted either from worldly policy or for variety's sake, he built magnificent temples to their false gods directly opposite Jerusalem, as manifest rivals to the Temple. Thus he became the author of a syncretism that sought to blend the worship of Yahweh with the worship of idols, a syncretism possessing fatal attraction for the Jewish nation. Not only did other kings follow him, but the nation itself followed him.

Finally, Solomon appears to have frequented the idol symbols himself and taken part in those fearful impurities that constituted the worst horror of the idolatrous systems, thus practically apostatizing, though theoretically he never ceased to hold that Yahweh was the true God. Latitudinarianism is nothing more than open-mindedness and toleration of that which is wicked, vile, and wrong. If someone says, "So-and-so just had an affair with two or three women," or, "This wife had an affair with two or three men," latitudinarianism says, "Well, that's okay."

It is going to tolerate it; they are not going to condemn it. Obviously, he had that attitude because he was marrying all of these people in contradiction to the plain commands of God. So the question I asked earlier is the question I want to answer today and next week: Why did he build these altars to these three specific false gods? Why were they chosen? Why did he build altars for Ashtoreth, for Milcom or Molech, and for Chemosh?

When you read about these in the Bible and in history, you find that these three were usually put together. We could call them the unholy trinity, because they were indeed together.

The Main Complaints of Old Age and Idolatry

Remember, Solomon's wives turned his heart away when he was old. What happens to be the main complaints of old age? The main complaints of old age are a loss of power, a loss of control, and a loss of ability. Solomon introduced all of these idolatries into the land when he was old. Other kings followed in Solomon's footsteps, and so did the people of the land.

The very first altar he built was for Ashtoreth: "For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians." Who in the world was Ashtoreth? She goes by many names in the Bible and in history: Astarte, Asherah, Aphrodite, Venus, Ishtar, and so on. She was the consort, or wife, of Baal, regarded then as the goddess of love and fertility. Religious historians also consider her the same as the Greek Aphrodite. The Masoretic text refers to her as Ashtoreth, probably a combination of Astarte and Bosheth. Bosheth is a Hebrew word meaning abomination or scandal. That name is applied to idols throughout the Old Testament because they were counted as shameful and abominable things.

Ashtoreth is depicted as the goddess of the moon—not only a sex goddess, but also a goddess of Venus, sexuality, sexual love, sensuality, fertility, and even war. She was a goddess of the Canaanites, considered Baal's wife, and was often presented as a nude female with rudely exaggerated organs. The name Ashtoreth was common in one form or another; her Greek name was Astarte. Among the Philistines, Ashtoreth was also considered a goddess of war.

The Identity and Worship of Ashtoreth

If you remember 1 Samuel chapter 31, when King Saul and his sons were killed on the battlefield, the Philistines came and got Saul's armor and put it in the temple of Ashtoreth. In other words, they gave her praise for defeating King Saul and the Israelites at that particular time. However, chiefly, Ashtoreth was a fertility goddess,

and the most prominent part of her worship consisted of sex orgies at the temple. There they would have male and female prostitutes.

Now, anytime you see the word grove or groves as you read the Bible, it does not refer to trees, with the exception of Genesis chapter 21 and verse 33, where Abraham planted a grove. He actually planted trees. If you see a pecan orchard, when I was a boy it was not called an orchard; it was called a pecan grove. Any vast number of trees of the same species, down south, we always called them a grove. It could be a peach orchard or a peach grove, or it could be a coconut orchard or a coconut grove. But Genesis 21 and verse 33 is the only time it refers to a plantation of trees. The rest of the time, the word grove refers to Asherah or Ashtoreth or Ishtar or Venus, because she was worshipped under a pole or under a tree.

Of course, I suppose you remember the Indians used to worship a totem pole. Let me show you what I am talking about. Turn in your Bibles to the book of Hosea chapter 4, beginning with verse 11. God says, “Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the heart.” Think about that: “Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the heart.”

To explain that, here it is: “My people ask counsel at their stock,” that is, at their trees, at their poles, “and their staff declareth unto them. For the spirit of whoredoms hath caused them to err, and they have gone a whoring from under their God. They sacrifice upon the tops of the mountains, and burn incense upon the hills, under oaks, and poplars, and elms, because the shadow thereof is good.”

He says, “Therefore, your daughters shall commit whoredom, and your spouses shall commit adultery.” In other words, you are committing spiritual whoredom and spiritual adultery, and the consequence is going to be physical adultery and physical whoredom as well.

In Judges 6, when God called Gideon, Gideon cut down the altar of Baal and the grove. Judges 6:25 says, "And it came to pass the same night that the Lord said unto him, 'Take thy father's young bullock, even the second bullock of seven years old, and throw down the altar of Baal that thy father hath, and cut down the grove that is by it, and build an altar unto the Lord thy God upon the top of this

rock in the ordered place, and take the second bullock and offer a burnt sacrifice with the wood of the grove which thou shalt cut down.'" Notice that the grove was a wooden pole, and it was used to start the fire. Verse 28 says, "And when the men of the city arose early in the morning, behold the altar of Baal was cast down, and the grove," that would be Asherah, Ashtoreth, "was cut down, it was by it, and the second bullock was offered upon the altar that was built."

In Judges 6:30, the men of the city said unto Joash, “Bring out thy son that he may die, because he hath cast down the altar of Baal, and because he had cut down the grove that was by it.” The grove was Ashtoreth, or Asherah, supposed to be the wife or consort of Baal.

Ashtoreth Worship in Israel's History

Consider not only how prominent this was, even in Israel, but how wicked and blasphemous it was. In 2 Kings 21, we see what Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, did. Hezekiah was a godly man, but Manasseh was exceedingly wicked and vile. The Bible says, “And he built altars in the house of the Lord, of which the Lord said, ‘In Jerusalem I will put my name.’ And he built altars for all the hosts of heaven in the two courts of the house of the Lord. And he made his son pass through the fire, and observed times, and used enchantments, and dealt with familiar spirits and wizards. He wrought much wickedness in the sight of the Lord to provoke him to anger.” Then it says, “And he set a graven image of the grove that he had made in the house of which the Lord said to David and to Solomon his son, ‘In this house and in Jerusalem, which I’ve chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, will I put my name forever.’” He even put an image of this grove in the house of God.

In 2 Kings 23, Josiah cut down all these idols. “And the king”—Josiah—“commanded Hilkiah the high priest and the priests of the second order and the keepers of the door to bring forth out of the temple of the Lord all the vessels that were made for Baal and for the grove and for all the hosts of heaven and he burned them without Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron and carried the ashes of them unto Bethel.” It was Josiah who put all of this down.

Asherah, or Ashtoreth, Ashtaroth, was known as the Queen of Heaven. She was worshipped not only by the heathen, but by the

Israelites. The people were really wicked, especially Judah and Jerusalem. God says in Jeremiah 7:16-18, "Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry or prayer for them, neither make intercession to me, for I will not hear thee. Seest thou not what they do in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem? The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger. Do they provoke me to anger, saith the Lord? Do they not provoke themselves to the confusion of their own faces?"

The children were gathering wood, the fathers kindling a fire, and the women kneading the dough and making cakes for the Queen of Heaven. The whole family was involved in the worship of the Queen of Heaven.

In Jeremiah 44, the people tell Jeremiah, "As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee." They were not going to listen or obey. Then they said, "But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out our drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we, and our fathers, our kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem. For then had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil. But since we left off to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the sword, and by the famine. And when we burned incense unto the queen of heaven, and poured out drink offerings unto her, did we make her cakes to worship her and pour out drink offerings unto her without our men?"

They claimed that their prosperity had come through worshipping the Queen of Heaven, and that their troubles began when they ceased doing so.

Everybody was involved in this. God had just judged these people, and now they were about to do something wicked and wrong, contrary to God. They said, “Look, when we were in our cities, we worshipped the Queen of Heaven. We had plenty; we did not have any problem.” This shows how people cannot think straight.

Jeremiah said, “Look, God was judging you and is judging you now for your sin, forgetting him, leaving him, and worshipping other gods.” Yet they said, “No, we are going to go back to the Queen of Heaven. We are going to worship her.”

Jeremiah 44:25 says, “Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, saying, ‘You and your wives have spoken with your mouths and fulfilled with your hands, saying, We will surely perform our vows that we have vowed to burn incense to the queen of heaven and to pour out drink offerings unto her. You will surely accomplish your vows and surely perform your vows.’” God said, “You are going to do it, but I am going to judge you for it. I am going to destroy you.”

Modern Parallels and Application

Now notice how ancient idolatry has become current and modern idolatry. Ashtoreth was known as the Moon Goddess; she was also known as the Queen of Heaven. Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance says, “Ashtoreth or Ashtaroth, the name of a Sidonian deity,” and identifies her as the Phoenician goddess of love. Webster’s New World College Dictionary calls Ashtoreth “a Semitic goddess of fertility and sexual love, worshipped by the Phoenicians and others,” and identifies her with Ishtar. It also describes her as the ancient Phoenician and Syrian goddess of love and fertility, and as the goddess of love, fertility, and war. Here’s the Encyclopedia Britannica.

"Astarte, Ashtoreth, is the Queen of Heaven, to whom the Canaanites had burned incense and poured out libations." The Soul Vision website states, "Known by many names across time and space, Lilith or Eve, Anat or Asherah, Astarte, the Queen of Heaven, the Shekinah, and the Matronit, no matter her name, she was loved." The same website says, "Asherah, the Hebrew goddess of the Kabbalah."

Encyclopedia Britannica says, "Ishtar is the Akkadian counterpart of the West Semitic goddess Astarte." It also states, "Through her identification with the Greek Aphrodite and the Roman Venus, Inanna Ishtar, the Queen of Heaven, still survives in Roman Catholic iconography as the Virgin Mary standing on the moon."

Dictionary of Phrase and Fable, 1894, says, "Queen of Heaven, with the ancient Venetians, was Astarte, with the Greeks as Hera, with the Romans Juno, Trivia, Hecate, Diana, the Egyptian Isis, were also called but with the Roman Catholics it is the Virgin Mary." Another statement says, "Diana was called the Mother Goddess and the Queen of Heaven just as Mary is called the Mother of God and the Queen of Heaven."

So where did all of this come from? It came from pure paganism.

Now let me make a statement and prove it from Scripture: Mary was not the mother of God. When people say "mother of God" and pray, "Mother of God, save us now in the hour of our need," they are wrong. Turn in your Bibles to Luke chapter one. Note carefully what is said to Mary. Then I will give you a good quotation. Begin with verse 26: Luke 1:26.

SCRIPTURE READING - Luke 1:26-35 (KJV)

"And in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, 'Hail, thou art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.' And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, 'Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.' Then said Mary unto the angel, 'How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?' Then the angel answered and said unto her, 'The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee. Therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible.'"

> Notice what the angel said: Mary was going to conceive and bear a son. In verse 35 he said, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee. Therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Mary was the mother of the physical body that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, assumed.
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> This is the Incarnation, and without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh. Our Lord assumed the body, and it was the Holy Thing that was formed in Mary. Our Lord is one person with two natures. He is not two persons with one nature. If you say that she actually was the mother of Jesus Christ in this sense, then he is going to have to be two persons.

John Gill explains this: “The human nature of Christ is here called a thing, for it was not a person. It never subsisted of itself, but was taken at once into union with the person of the Son of God. Otherwise, there would be two persons in Christ, whereas He is God and man in one person.

“And it is said to be holy, being free from that original pollution and sin, in which all that descended from Adam by ordinary generation are conceived and brought forth, and is moreover said to be born of a virgin, of thee, or out of thee. Christ’s flesh was formed out of a virgin’s. He took flesh of her. His body did not descend from heaven or pass through her as water through a pipe, as some heretics of old said, nor did his human nature, either as a soul or body, pre-exist his incarnation. In the fullness of time he was made of a woman and took a true body of her and a reasonable soul into union with his divine person, and therefore should be called the Son of God.

“Not that he was now to become the Son of God, for he was so before his incarnation, even from all eternity, but he was now to be manifested as such in human nature. Nor does the angel predict that he should, for this reason, be called the Son of God, for he never was on this account so called either by himself or others. The angel is not giving the reason why Christ should be the Son of God, but why he should be owned and acknowledged as such by his people, who would infer and conclude from this wonderful conception and birth

that he is the Immanuel, God with us—the child that was to be born, the son that was to be given, whose name should be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God.

“Moreover, the word ‘also’ is not to be overlooked. The sense is that, seeing that human nature, which should be born of the Virgin, would be united to the Son of God, it likewise should bear the same name, being in personal union with Him, who was so from all eternity.” So Jesus Christ is one person with two natures. He is not two different people.

As John Gill pointed out, the body never subsisted in and of itself or by itself in Mary. That which made it alive was the fact that Jesus Christ assumed that body. He was made flesh and dwelt among us. Mary is not the mother of God, and Mary is not a mediator. The Bible says in 1 Timothy chapter 2 and verse 5, "For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." It does no good to pray to Mary or to the saints. The only mediator that we have is the Lord Jesus Christ himself.

Why in the world did Solomon build an altar and a temple to Asherah? Let me answer by giving you some applications. You have to remember that the worship of Asherah, Ashtoreth, Ashtaroth, Venus, Ishtar—whatever you want to call her—was sensual, sexual, and promiscuous worship.

You say, "We don't have images like that today. We don't have Astarte. We don't have Asherah. We don't have Venus." Really? Have you considered the abundance of pornography and the people who are addicted to it? Porno is the Greek word for fornication. Graphé is the Greek word for writing. Pornography simply means fornication writing. Consider the pornography and porn sites available, and the adultery and fornication rampant today.

The worship of Astarte and Asherah is still going on. We may not call it that, but it is still the same thing: the worship of the flesh. This affects old men just as it does young men, and old women just as it does young women. It is amazing to me the extremes older people will go to in order to gratify and satisfy their lusts and try to revive themselves.

I've often laughed, and Alice and I have smiled, when I see an older woman—in her sixties or seventies—trying to dress like a teeny-bopper. Why would a seventy-year-old woman want to dress like a little teenager? I have been absolutely amazed at older and elderly people caught in adultery and fornication, with prostitutes, and even engaging in pedophilia. I want to tell you something. I've mentioned this before.

I am absolutely astounded at the pastors, youth pastors, and song leaders who are now being caught and convicted of all this crazy sexuality—pedophilia and everything. So let me give you an illustration.

Multiple years ago, I saw an old program of Hee Haw. Many of you will know that Hee Haw was an old country music show. Since Alice and I probably haven't had a television in thirty or thirty-five years, it was multiple years ago. Grandpa Jones, an older man, was alive and was part of that show. The scene was a cornfield, and all of a sudden, out of the cornfield, stepped this beautiful young woman in a pair of short shorts and a tight tank top. Grandpa Jones let out a humongous wolf whistle. When he did, someone stepped up beside him and said, "Why, Grandpa, you ought to be ashamed of yourself." Grandpa Jones looked at the fellow with a smile on his face and a twinkle in his eye and said, "Well, you know the old adage: you're never too old to yearn."

That was supposed to have been funny, but it was the truth. It was the truth. The fact of the matter is, yearning affects old people just like it affects young people. It affects middle-aged people. It affects men, and it affects women as well. So yearning and going down in your yearning is what is wicked and wrong.

Now let me stop and remind you of something. God made promises to Abraham and Sarah. Do you remember that Sarah had a child when she was ninety and Abraham was one hundred? What did God do for them? Something miraculous, because even after Sarah died, Abraham married again and had multiple children by his second wife. May I remind you that when Noah and his wife had no child, what did God do? God blessed them and God gave them Samson. Look at Zacharias and Elizabeth. They had no child, and God gave them John the Baptist.

The problem here is Solomon. Instead of seeking God to revive him and to help him, he now goes down to Asherah, hoping that somehow promiscuity, fornication, wickedness, and corruption will build him up and strengthen him. It is not going to do so. Here's what I'm going to tell you, and I really believe this with all my heart, and I tried to do it myself.

Every man, every woman, every boy, every girl ought to read Proverbs 5, 6, and 7 weekly until they are indelibly impressed upon your mind, until you can almost quote those chapters word by word. There are the warnings. We do not understand what went on in paganism. One of the greatest insults in the New Testament was to say that someone was acting like a Corinthian, because Corinth had three major seaports and a temple with a thousand prostitutes for the free use of any visitor.

It was a corrupt, perverted, wicked, vile place. When you called someone a Corinthian, it was an insult of the insult. The point is this: We still have paganism today without the graven images. That which Asherah, Astarte, Ashtoreth, Venus, and Ishtar represented is still strong today. We need to make sure that we never fall into the same sin that Solomon fell into. You are never going to build yourself up by going down. You are always going to incur and bring forth the chastisement and judgment of God.

What happened to Solomon? He basically lost his family. Rehoboam may have been his only son, but he was as stupid as the day is long. He lost his family, his kingdom, and his respect. Now he is known not just for being the wisest man upon the earth at one time, but as one of the most foolish men upon the earth. Whenever you begin to desire that which is contrary to God and in contradiction to His word, it is idolatry in and of itself.

You need to repent and seek the Lord and say, “Lord, I want You and Your power and Your ability.” He is the one who gives us everything we need to turn to Him.

Father, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we come to Thee. We thank You for Your word and Your truth. Lord, we pray with Jabez that You would bless us indeed, that Your hand would be upon us, that You would enlarge our coasts, and that You would keep us

from evil, that we might not grieve Thee. Help us, Lord, to honor Thee. In the name of Jesus Christ, we ask and pray. Amen.

CHAPTER 2

The Dangers of Old Age

Part Two

SCRIPTURE READING - 1 Kings 11:1-13 (KJV)

Introduction and Review

But King Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites, of the nations concerning which the Lord said unto the children of Israel, You shall not go into them, neither shall they come in unto you, for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods. Solomon clave unto these in love, and he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines, and his wives turned away his heart. For it came to pass when Solomon was old that his wives turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was not perfect with the Lord God, as was the heart of David his father.

For Solomon went after Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom, the abomination of the Ammonites. And Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord, and went not fully after the Lord, as did David his father. Then did

> Solomon build a high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon.
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> And likewise did he for his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods. And the Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel, who had appeared unto him twice, and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods. But he kept not that which the Lord commanded. Wherefore, the Lord said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. Notwithstanding, in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake, but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit, I will not rend away all the kingdom, but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen.

There are indeed dangers to old age according to the Scripture, and we need to be aware of those dangers. Solomon built altars to all these false gods that his wives worshiped, and he actually joined in the worship as well, according to 1 Kings chapter 11. I asked this last week: Why specifically are these three false gods mentioned in this passage?

Why Solomon Turned to Ashtoreth

We read about Ashtoreth, Milcom, and Chemosh. You have to remember that there were many, many false gods. 2 Kings chapter 17, verses 30 and 31, records: “And the men of Babylon made Succoth-benoth, and the men of Cuth made Nergal, and the men of Hamath made Ashima, and the Avites made Nibhaz and Tartak, and the Sepharvites burnt their children in the fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim.” So obviously there were plenty of false gods, and these were just some that happened to be mentioned. But out of all these false gods, these three are prominent: Ashtoreth, Moloch, and, of course, Chemosh. So why these three?

Last week I pointed out that Ashtoreth was known by many names. She was named and known by the names Ashtoreth, Ashtaroth, Ishtar, Venus, and Asherah, among many others. In fact, you will find that many of these same false gods were worshiped under different names. It is like my name being John, but if I were in Mexico, they would call me Juan, and if I happened to be in Greece, they would call me Ioannis. It is the same name, but pronounced differently by different ethnic groups. These false gods likewise went by many different names.

Ashtoreth, or Asherah, was known as the goddess of sex and fertility. She was also worshiped under the figure of a pole or tree. She was associated with the moon and was supposed to be the consort, or wife, of Baal. I must remind you that Solomon now had 700 wives who were princesses, and 300 concubines. He may have had others besides; I do not know. But I can assure you of one thing: by the time Solomon was 50 or 60, he was well, well spent. As I pointed out last week in discussing the age of Solomon, he could not have been any more than 65 when he died, and probably died even earlier than that.

The problem was that he began reaching downward to all these false gods—to the pit of hell, I would say—in order to revive and rejuvenate himself in his power and abilities. He did not seek after God. I pointed out last week how God restored the bodies of Abraham and Sarah. He also restored the bodies of Manoah and his wife, Zacharias and Elizabeth, and Hannah. There is a multitude whom God certainly restored.

What is happening today among many older and middle-aged people is exactly what happened with Solomon. They reach down to rejuvenate themselves through fornication, adultery, pedophilia, perversion, and all kinds of things instead of seeking the one true and living God. Obviously, it is idolatrous in nature. I have been absolutely shocked to see the pictures and names of older men, and sometimes older pastors, who have been caught engaging in prostitution, pedophilia, and other perversions. It is absolutely unreal. While one may not attend the worship of Asherah or Ashtoreth, when one pursues these perversions and that which God

has forbidden, it is still a form of idolatry, because one is placing one's will, desire, and way before God.

I encourage everyone to read Proverbs chapters 5, 6, and 7 until they are thoroughly and indelibly printed on the heart. Married couples should also read 1 Corinthians 7:1–5 regularly. Why in the world did Solomon turn to Milcom and Chemosh? We understand why he turned to Ashtoreth. The Bible calls Moloch here Milcom. Moloch is known by different names in the Bible: Moloch, Milcom, Melech, and even Malak. These are different names for the same god, just as there are different names for Ashtoreth. Ashtoreth was supposed to be the consort of Moloch and Baal. Moloch worship was a type of Baal worship, involving ritual prostitution and perversion. The name Moloch, or Milcom or Melech, is derived from the Hebrew word melech, meaning king, and the vowel bosheth, meaning shame.

As I pointed out last week, all the false gods and idols were known as shameful or abominable things as well. What are the complaints of old age? There is a loss of virility, but also a loss of power, control, and abilities.

When you stop and think about this, Solomon experienced power and control almost like no other human king ever experienced them. It seems as if Solomon was more concerned about losing control than anything else. Ecclesiastes 8:4, written by Solomon, says, "Where the word of a king is, there is power: and who may say unto him, What doest thou?" In other words, Solomon simply said, "Steve, you do this," and you did it. If you did not, you were dead. It was just that simple.

If you and I were able to speak to someone and control and dominate that person in this way, we would be exercising power over his life because we would be demanding submission and subjection of him on every hand, so to speak. The truth is that Solomon had been slipping in many ways, but this loss of power and control evidently bothered him greatly. Instead of going to the Lord, he went to the worship of Moloch.

Moloch Worship as a Political Power Religion

This truth still affects us today, because one of the complaints of older people is that they have lost control over their children. Their children are grown and are adults. Yet it is an absolutely frustrating thing, especially for a Christian parent who has a wayward child, a child who will not listen, or a child who is in sin and will not turn from it. The parent is absolutely helpless; he cannot do one thing. He understands that he has now lost control.

I never will forget that years ago I met a young man who had several young children. He was speaking to them, and they were obeying instantly. He looked at me and said, "I'm training my children to obey." I said, "I'm so glad of that, and I'm thankful for that. But let me caution you: wait until they're teenagers. Then you're going to find that they're developing a mind of their own, and they want to do what they want to do instead of what you tell them."

Solomon went after Moloch because Moloch worship is a political power religion. It is a religion of power politics in which everything is centered in the king. Since we do not supposedly have a king in this country, it is now centered in the state or in the federal government, so to speak.

The Greek word politikos is where we get our English word politics. Politikos literally means “of a citizen.” Politics therefore requires the involvement of citizens, and it ultimately involves their worship or homage, whether to the one true and living God or to the state or government, which would be a humanistic god. Here is a principle we must grasp: government is religious. There is no such thing as a non-religious government.

You cannot separate government and religion. You may separate government and churches, in the sense that we do not have to have a state church or a national church like England has the Anglican Church. Many people tend to think that because we do not have a state church or national church, we therefore have religious freedom in this country. But that is not necessarily true. Although we do not have to have a state church or national church, all government is still inherently religious.

Behind every law, rule, regulation, and statute is a determination of right and wrong, good and evil. Whoever makes that law determines right and wrong and good and evil based upon his own religion. It is therefore impossible to have a non-religious government. We may have a government bound to and following the Christian religion, following the principles and precepts of the Word of God; or we may have a government following its own rules and statutes, made up from the whims and desires of fallen men. In that case, we have a pagan, or simply a humanistic, government.

All government is religious in nature. The pagan religious idea of government is prevalent today. To understand that statement, we must understand the nature of Moloch worship. Moloch worship was a political power religion: the worship of the state, or of the king as God. To the extent that the king, or civil ruler, exercised total and absolute power, to that extent he was worshiped as God. In the pagan religion of Moloch worship, the king was the divine and human link between heaven and earth.

Pay attention as I describe this for those who cannot see and are just listening in. In order to understand Moloch worship and where we are today, you have to understand the philosophy of monism. Mono, of course, simply means one. So, here's what I want you to do: I want you to envision in your mind a pyramid, and I want you to start at the bottom of that pyramid and make horizontal lines across it. I am holding up a picture of this pyramid; if you see this picture, you will see the horizontal lines. On the very bottom line, I have written “dirt.” Then I put “plants.” The next line is “trees.” After that come “insects.” After that, “animals.” After that, “poor.” After that, “educated.” After that, “wealthy.” After that, “rulers.”

The Philosophy of Monism and the Divine Right of Kings

At the top there is a star, because monism is the philosophy that everything is one. Monism teaches that dirt, plants, trees, insects, animals, man, and the rulers are all made of one stuff, one ooze. The difference is that some have more stuff, or more ooze, than others. Everything is one, but some happen to have more stuff than others.

The pagans always use the pyramid to picture man ascending out of the earth and becoming God. This is why the king is at the top: he is the go-between, a mediator. Numerous words are used for this. He is sometimes called the Axis Mundi, the Cosmic Axis, the World Axis, the World Pillar, or the Center of the World. He is the one who goes between Heaven and Earth.

If you are wondering where the Divine Right of Kings and the philosopher kings originated, or why a ruling elite believes it has the right to rule everybody and dictate to everyone, this is where it comes from—from the philosophy of monism. They believe they have more stuff than anyone else and therefore have the absolute right to rule. Think of Bill Gates, George Soros, Klaus Schwab, Mark Zuckerberg, and the Clintons. They believe they have the absolute right to conform everything and everyone to their thinking.

The War of Northern Aggression actually began because of this philosophy. The New England states had rejected the Word of God and embraced rationalism and transcendentalism. They now thought they were smarter than everyone else and could remake everything according to their perception and imperfect reality. They tried to force this upon the South. There is a message on the great revival in the Southern armies, quoting many pastors alive at that time who spoke about the spiritual aspect of that war. Since the South lost, during Reconstruction they continued imposing their thoughts, will, and way upon the South.

Now, let me show you another picture. The pagans wanted to picture the gods coming down, joining or meeting those who were ascending out of the earth. You have the two pyramids meeting. Picture an hourglass. Right in the middle is the king or the ruling elite. You have the gods coming down, and man ascending up toward godhood, which is Mormonism. But notice, right in the middle was what we would call the axis mundi, or the mediator, or the go-between, which happened to be the king.

He was the one who held the universe together. He controlled social unrest, economics, and even salvation. I do not know if you remember this, but in 17 BC, Augustus Caesar had a decree sent out that said simply this: There is no other name under heaven given among men whereby you must be saved other than the name of

Augustus Caesar. So, when Luke wrote the book of Acts and Peter was preaching in Acts chapter 4 and verse 12, Peter said there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved other than the name of Jesus Christ.

He was declaring war upon the Roman Empire. He was declaring war and saying, No, Caesar is not Lord; Jesus Christ is Lord himself. So I want you to understand how this applies to us today. Do you understand what is happening with the digital ID and with the digital money? It will end up in basically absolute and total control. You cannot move without them knowing where you are.

Even that technology already exists in your cell phone. They can track you just a bit by your cell phone. But once you have digital money, they can cut you off anytime. They can control what you buy and whether or not you spend whatever. In fact, this whole attitude comes from ordinary people because, when you think about Moloch worship, it is really tyranny and totalitarianism. And so you hear people say, when something is not done the way they would think it should be done, they will come up with something like this.

"They ought to make a law about this," or "they ought to make a law against this." Well, who are the "they"? They are the ruling elite, the state, the government. In other words, I do not have to do anything about it; they ought to do something about it.

When you talk about monism, it is a philosophy that everything is made of one stuff, one ooze. Those who are highest have the most stuff, or the most ooze; therefore, they have a right to rule. So you come forth with the divine right of kings, the ruling elite, and the bureaucrats. Monism necessitates the concept of continuity. Everything is proceeding from the lowest to the greatest, but it is one continuous stuff, is what it amounts to.

The Bible teaches discontinuity. God may be seen in His creation, but God is not to be confused with His creation. He is transcendent. He is above and beyond His creation. Thus, we have discontinuity.

The Six-Pointed Star and Its Origin

When these two pyramids meet—one coming up and one coming down—and merge, you end up with the six-pointed star. Now, the

six-pointed star is known as the Star of David. David had absolutely nothing to do with this star. Nothing. It is not the Star of David, never has been, and never will be.

There is an excellent little book written by O. J. Graham titled The Six-Pointed Star. It is probably still available. If you would like to know more about the six-pointed star, I suggest that you read it. But if you do not have time, or cannot find the book, do not worry, because the Bible teaches and shows you exactly where that star came from. Look at Amos chapter 5, verse 26, and then Acts chapter 7; afterward, we will return to Amos.

This is a wonderful passage. In Amos 5, if you look at verse 21, God is really excoriating His people. He says, "I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols." In other words, everything in this passage God ordained. Now God says, "I hate it, I despise it, I will not have it." And here is why, in verse 24: "But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream."

They were not righteous, and they were certainly not just. Then He asks this question in verse 25: "Have ye offered unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?" No, they did not. Look what He says in verse 26: "But ye have borne the tabernacle of your Moloch and Chiun your images, the star of your god, which ye made to yourselves."

Now, if you turn over to Acts chapter 7, verse 43, we have it again. There is one word different, which I will explain: "Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, figures which ye made to worship them: and I will carry you away beyond Babylon." So He said they made this star in the wilderness. Here the difference is that He is called Remphan. He talked about Moloch, but then Remphan. If you go back now to Amos chapter 5 and verse 26, He says, "but ye have borne the tabernacle of your Moloch and Chiun your images." How in the world did it get changed to Remphan?

The answer is very simple: the Septuagint. The Septuagint is the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament. Chiun is translated as Remphan in the Septuagint, and that is what Luke is quoting. Notice that in Acts chapter 7 he says Remphan; now in Amos 5, verse 26, he says Chiun your god.

Solomon came to worship Moloch and his star when he was old. Why? Because of the loss of power, the loss of control, and the loss of ability, which certainly affects some people far more than others. Solomon experienced power like no other human had probably ever experienced in his entire life. When he began to lose power and control, instead of reaching up to heaven and asking God for grace, mercy, and help, he went down after Moloch, trying to exhibit absolute and total power at the expense of the one true and living God.

In Moloch worship, the state was viewed as the true and ultimate order. The king, or ruler, became God to the extent that he manifested absolute power. The power manifested in the political realm was considered the manifestation of divine power on the part of the king. Thus, the state, or civil ruler, demanded total sacrifice because he viewed himself as God.

In Moloch worship, as well as Chemosh worship, children were sacrificed unto Moloch. Moloch was a large brazen image with his arms extended. A fire was kindled below, and the brass was heated until it was raging red hot. They would take a little child and place it on his extended arms; the child would then roll down into the mouth of Moloch, into the belly where the fire was raging, and be consumed.

This was done in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, also called Tophet. You will find that in the Bible. The word Tophet means to roll as a drum. They would play drums to drown out the cries of the child as he was being burned alive. It amounted to total sacrifice. Not all children were burned alive. Some were simply passed over the fire in what was known as a lustration. That child was thereby dedicated to the service of the state.

In Moloch worship, the state, or the king, controlled everything: education, economics, and every area of life. Thus, you actually have

Moloch worship in Rome, although you did not necessarily have to have a statue of Moloch. Why? Because you had the emperor cult. In Rome, you could believe whatever you wanted to believe. If you wanted to worship Ashtoreth, have at it. If you wanted to worship Anuk, have at it. If you wanted to worship Chemosh, have at it. If you wanted to worship Jesus Christ, have at it. They cared little whom you worshiped, just so once a year you swore allegiance to the Caesar cult and said, "Caesar is Lord."

Christians were not put to death in the Roman Empire merely because they were Christians. They were put to death because they were considered traitors to the emperor cult. They refused to say that Caesar is Lord; they would say, "Jesus Christ is Lord." Thus they were counted as treasonous. The Roman emperor demanded total allegiance, total submission, and total control, even over religion. If you did not swear allegiance to him, you were killed.

Moloch Worship in Modern Government

Most of these Caesars, when they died, were supposedly made into gods. So you have Moloch worship there. When a government claims total jurisdiction, as the modern state does, it is claiming to be God, the total governor of man and the world. It either claims or acts as if it has total jurisdiction from the cradle to the grave, from the womb to the tomb, over all things. Since the state claims to be the true and ultimate order, it claims jurisdiction over welfare, farming, family, education, business, law, capital, labor, and every sphere of life.

Suppose, Lorraine, that you have a knack for cutting hair and are actually good at it. You decide to open a salon and see how many heads of hair you can cut and how many people appreciate your abilities. Try that without first getting a license or some type of certification, and once you open your little salon, you will be arrested, because the state claims total jurisdiction over that business just as it does over every other business. That is why you have to have a business license.

The definition of a license can be found in Black's Law Dictionary and Bouvier's Dictionary: permission from a competent authority to do that which otherwise would be unlawful to do. They are the competent ones because they are the philosopher-kings, the

bureaucrats, the ones who simply say, “We have to have total control.”

What we have is eminent domain in every area of life. Eminent domain usually applies only to property. But when you are playing God, you are trying to exercise absolute, total control. Moloch worship is nothing but tyranny and totalitarianism. The one-world government, the new world order, is nothing more than Moloch worship. It is like Klaus Schwab said: “You will have nothing and you will be happy.” That means we are going to control everything. And if you have nothing, someone else has everything. Moloch worship is a political power religion.

R. J. Rushdoony said, “The state claimed total jurisdiction over man. It was therefore entitled to total sacrifice. For a state to claim total jurisdiction, as a modern state does, is to claim to be as God, to be total governor of man and the world. The Moloch state is the product of apostasy. When a people reject God as their king and make man or the state their king, God declares the consequences.” Those consequences are not beautiful by any stretch of the imagination.

Henry L. Mencken wrote in 1926, “If the state has taken on a vast mass of new duties and responsibilities, it has spread out its powers until they penetrate to every act of the citizen, however secret. It has begun to throw around its operations the high dignity and impeccability of a state religion. Its agents become a separate and superior caste with authority to bind and loose and their thumbs in every pot.”

But it still remains, as it was in the beginning, the common enemy of all well-disposed, industrious, and decent men. Mencken’s reference to the state’s agents means bureaucrats: they become a separate and superior caste with authority to bind and loose. Years ago, our church was attacked by the state government. I had two state agents in my office. One was trying to oppress and entangle our church, and he had a witness. I had my men in the office as my witnesses. The state agent, the bureaucrat, said, “Pastor, I do not want to argue with you about religion or about the Bible. You know more about the Bible than I do.”

I agreed with him because I did. I said to him, “Look, I will make a deal with you. We have so many constitutional issues to discuss. I will be willing not to bring up religion if you will not bring up religion. But when you bring it up, I have the absolute right to bring it up as well.” He said, “That’s fine.” I said, “Well, let’s begin.”

I said, “Let me ask you one question.” I asked the question, and here was his response, the first part of it. I still have it on tape. His first response was this: “Well, pastor, you see. The state in its infinite wisdom…” When he said that, I slapped my desk as hard as I could. I said, “Stop, stop right there. You said you were not going to bring up religion. You just did. You just declared who your God was. Infinity does not belong to the state. It belongs to the one true and the living God.”

I said, “Here is the difference between us. You worship the state. I worship the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a religion. And the bureaucrats are a separate and superior caste to which we must bow. That is Moloch worship.” Moloch worship involved total sacrifice because it was a tyrannical, totalitarian, political power religion. It still demands child sacrifice in indoctrination in government schools, and it still demands total sacrifice, even in the loss of lives in wars for which we have no business fighting when those wars are over oil wells, money, or control of foreign countries. We do not have anything today other than a Moloch political power religion in our land.

The Bible says in the book of Psalm, Psalm 7 in verse 9, “Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just.” If we really want the wickedness to come to an end, we need to learn to pray against the Moloch mentality and ask the God of heaven and earth to establish the Lord Jesus Christ, his people, and his word, because he is the only just one. So we cannot go down; we must go up.

Chemosh Worship and the Desire for Conquest

The second thing is this: Solomon did not simply build an altar to Ashtoreth and Moloch; he also built one to Chemosh. Chemosh is known as the abomination of the children of Moab and was the god of Moab. He is associated with Moloch, and both are known for

receiving human sacrifices. Chemosh was the supreme deity of the Moabites, a people who lived east of the Dead Sea in ancient times. The name Chemosh means “destroyer” or “subduer.” He was sometimes associated with a fish god, but he also reflected a warlike nature and was viewed as a god of conquest. The Moabites held Chemosh as supreme and believed that his smile in battle assured victory, while his frown assured defeat. Chemosh is called the god of the Moabites in Numbers 21:29 and Jeremiah 48:7, 13, and 46. Scripture calls him, in 1 Kings 11:7, the abomination of Moab. Certainly, Chemosh worship was closely connected with Moloch worship.

Because Chemosh was involved in conquest, subjugation, and dominion, understand that conquest, subjugation, and dominion are not always linked to war. We naturally think about war when we think of conquest and dominion, but man is a fallen creature who was created with a dominion orientation. He was created with a desire to conquer and dominate. Adam was given dominion over all creation. We lost the right dominion in the fall, and we can have it now only in Jesus Christ, being regenerated and renewed.

Even fallen man still has a dominion orientation. He still wants to conquer and dominate. However, this is no longer domination or conquest from a biblical standpoint, but from a humanistic, fleshly, lustful, and wicked standpoint, because he is no longer interested in doing anything for God. He is interested in doing it for himself.

This is why older people often have what is known as bucket lists. A bucket list consists of things that a person wants to do before dying. It could be dangerous, exciting, or exhilarating—a desire to experience something spectacular, something never done before. This desire to conquer, dominate, and subjugate often leads older people to do not only stupid, but dangerous and crazy things. They do not necessarily have to be evil things, but what I would call crazy things.

Let me give you an illustration from the Chicago Tribune. Ottawa, Illinois: A 104-year-old Chicago woman hoped to be certified as the oldest person ever to skydive after leaving her walker on the ground and making a tandem jump in northern Illinois. “Age is just a number,” Dorothy Hoffner told the cheering crowd after touching

the ground at Skydive Chicago in Ottawa, about 85 miles southwest of Chicago. A 104-year-old woman skydiving—why? She wanted to be the oldest woman on record to skydive.

Before they could verify everything, she died a week later. But she did skydive at 104. I also read about an 80-year-old woman, a 100-year-old woman, and a 102-year-old woman who were skydiving. George Herbert Walker Bush skydived when he was 90 years of age.

Have you ever thought about what drives older people sometimes to do fantastic or crazy things? They still have a desire to conquer, to dominate, and to experience things they have never experienced before.

Consider how this plays out practically. Many acts of adultery, fornication, and rape do not derive from simple lusts, but from a desire to conquer, subjugate, and dominate. I have read about, and known, some who kept lists of their conquests. It meant nothing to them other than a number: “I’ve gotten 15. I’ve gotten 20.” That is with men and women—a perverted use of the dominion orientation with which God created man.

These false gods were worshiped in many fleshly and wicked ways, such as temple prostitution, perverted sex, and the infliction of pain. The impetus many times was simply conquest, subjection, and control. Solomon not only lost his wisdom; he lost his mind. He turned to Ashtoreth, Moloch, and Chemosh for virility, power, and conquest.

We shame him for those things, but many people do the same thing Solomon did. Instead of seeking God and asking Him for ability, strength, or virility, they go to that which is wicked and wrong—just like people going to horoscopes, tarot cards, Ouija boards, or whatever. It is simply, totally, and completely wicked and wrong.

The Powerlessness of Idols and the Sovereignty of God

Psalm 62:11 says, "God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God." There is no power except that

which is from God. These false gods are powerless. The sins are powerless. They do not empower; they ensnare, entrap, and destroy. They are destructive.

Psalm 115 is a very important passage. Verse 3 says, "But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased." This verse teaches God's absolute sovereignty. Only God can do as He pleases.

I have told you this before. I remember that, as a teenager and even as a young child, I had to work all the time. I am really thankful the Lord let me work most of the time. But I never will forget the fact that when I was sixteen or seventeen, I could not wait to get out from under my parents—not because they were mean or ugly. No, they were loving, kind, and took care of me. I had no problems with my parents whatsoever. I simply wanted to do what I wanted to do. At home, I had to do what my father told me and what my mother asked me to do. I did.

I could not wait to get married. When Alice and I married, I thought, Man, now I can do what I please. No, no, no. I found out that I had to do what I had to do. I did not have time to do what I pleased. Only God can do as He pleases; we have to do what we have to do.

Look again at Psalm 115:3: "But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased." Now look at verse 4: "Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands." They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not; they have ears, but they hear not; noses have they, but they smell not; they have hands, but they handle not; feet have they, but they walk not; neither speak they through their throat. "They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them." Those who make idols are dumb, and those who trust in them are dumb.

They're useless, they're worthless, they're idols, they're false gods. Why in the world would you waste your time going down when you could go up? Why would you waste your time over something that is false and useless when you could worship the one true and living God who holds all power and all authority in heaven and earth?

Applications and Warnings

There are dangers to old age. Elihu spoke the truth in Job 32:9 when he made this statement: “Great men are not always wise: neither do the aged understand judgment.” Just because someone happens to be great, or elderly and has tons of experience, does not mean that he has learned wisdom. Neither does it mean that he understands God's justice and judgment. Great men are not always wise, and neither do the aged always understand judgment. We have to seek, even in old age, for God to give us His wisdom still and His understanding, that we may understand His judgment and His justice.

It should be understood and evident that other cultures do have an impact upon the nation. Israel was in a covenant relationship with God. Although God told all Israel this truth, He specifically told Solomon: Do not marry these people. Do not engage with these people. Do not covenant with these people. Do not do this. He said, “They’ll turn away your heart after their gods.”

When you look at how Israel associated and affiliated with the pagans—and this is exactly what Solomon was doing in 1 Kings chapter 11—it changed the nation, and it changed Solomon. When a Christian hooks up with a pagan, with an unbeliever, it is not that the Christian pulls the unbeliever up; the unbeliever always pulls the Christian down. That is a fact.

Solomon lost his kingdom, lost his life, and probably lost a lot of his family because of his sins. You cannot sin against God and escape God’s chastisement and judgment. The same thing applies to us. Here is the third application: multiculturalism does have a price. It divides, weakens, and compromises. It leads to sensuality and idolatry.

I hope you can see what is going on in England, Minnesota, Michigan, and Texas. They have just built the largest Muslim complex in the state of Texas. I will quote next week or the week after Governor Abbott, who is now trying to extricate Texas from the hook of the Muslims, because Islam is rapidly encroaching on everything—even Sharia courts in Texas, as well as Minnesota, Michigan, and all over England.

Multiculturalism does have its price. We cannot, and we must not, try to absorb all those wicked and pagan cultures, syncretize them, and unite them somehow with Christianity. It does not work. It will destroy us, just as it destroyed Israel and Solomon.

Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we ask for Your grace, Your mercy, Your goodness, and Your kindness. Lord, help us, teach us about the dangers of old age, and keep us on the path of righteousness, holiness, and obedience. In the name of Jesus Christ we ask and pray. Amen.

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