

“Consorting with the Enemy”
2 Kings 16
(Preached at Trinity, July 17, 2022)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. The author continues to alternate back and forth between the Northern and Southern Kingdoms of Israel. **Verse 1** begins, “In the seventeenth year of Pekah the son of Remaliah, Ahaz the son of Jotham, king of Judah, became king.”
 - A. The previous chapter quickly covered thirty years as Israel continued towards their demise. Pekah was second to the last of Israel's kings. This verse tells us that during the last three years of his reign Ahaz became the king of Judah.
 - B. Ahaz was the son of King Jotham. Jotham was the son of Uzziah. He served as vice regent when Uzziah was smitten with leprosy and then upon Uzziah's death he became king. We read of his reign:
2 Kings 15:34 NAU - "He did what was right in the sight of the LORD; he did according to all that his father Uzziah had done."
 - C. Jotham reigned for sixteen years and God blessed his faithfulness.
2 Chronicles 27:6 NAU - "So Jotham became mighty because he ordered his ways before the LORD his God."
 - D. Perhaps there was some degree of weakness in his ability to be a strong leader. We read of the corruption of the people, even during the righteous reign of their king.
2 Chronicles 27:2 NAU - "He did right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Uzziah had done; however he did not enter the temple of the LORD. But the people continued acting corruptly."
Matthew Henry wrote: “Men may be very good themselves, and yet not have courage and zeal to do what they might do towards the reforming of others.”¹
2. This was also sadly true with his son. In this chapter we find that his son acted corruptly, following the wickedness of his generation. Ahaz came to the throne after the death of his father, Jotham. He was twenty years old when he became king. He is the only king of Judah to receive the evaluation: "he did not do what was right in the sight of the LORD his God"
 - A. He had every benefit a son could have. He inherited a kingdom that was enjoying the prosperity that came from the reigns of Uzziah and Jotham. Most important, he had the benefit of the righteous examples of his father and grandfather.
 - B. As Matthew Henry reminds us: “He had had a good education given him and a good example set him: but parents cannot give grace to their children.”²

¹ Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 603.

² *Ibid.*, 603.

3. Ahaz followed in the path of Israel's wicked kings. He followed the wicked idolatrous practices of the pagan nations - "according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD had driven out from before the sons of Israel." (verse 3).
He even offered up his son as a sacrifice to Moloch.
 4. God delivered him into the hand of his enemies. The Arameans fought against him as well as Israel under King Pekah and Jerusalem came under siege. What was he to do? Wicked men seldom turn to God for their defense. Instead, Ahaz made an alliance with the king of the Assyrians. We can't forget that the Assyrians would soon destroy the Northern Kingdom. The ten tribes of Israel were Ahaz's kinsmen but they had long forgotten their covenant relationship and God's covenant promises.
 5. Ahaz made friends with the enemy. Worse, he became one with the enemy.
2 Kings 16:7 NAU - "Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, saying, "I am your servant and your son"
 6. This has been a danger from the beginning. God commands His people,
2 Corinthians 6:17-18 KJV - "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you, ¹⁸ And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."
 7. Ahaz cared more about being united with the king of Assyria. The implications are huge. We need to take heed.
- I. Trusting in this world is to deny God
Ahaz trusted himself into the hand of the Assyrian king
2 Kings 16:7 NAU - "So Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, saying, "I am your servant and your son; come up and deliver me from the hand of the king of Aram and from the hand of the king of Israel, who are rising up against me."
- A. Ahaz was in a desperate situation
 1. Such times demand resting fully upon the power of God.
Psalms 18:2-3 NAU - "The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. ³ I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised, And I am saved from my enemies."
 2. This wasn't the heart of Ahaz and it wasn't his response. He put all of his trust into the power of the Assyrians.
 - B. By trusting in the Assyrians Ahaz was rejecting God's Covenant.
 1. God promised David that the Davidic kings would be His sons.
2 Samuel 7:14 NAU - "I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me; when he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men,"
 2. Ahaz basically declared, "I don't want to be God's son." Ahaz declared himself to be the son of "Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria." He was enslaving himself to a pagan king.
 3. He not only rejected his covenant relationship with God, he forsook God himself. This is in spite of God's precious promises.
God had sent Isaiah with a wonderful promise – **Isaiah 7:1-14**

- C. The people of this world put all of their trust upon the resources of this world
1. They trust in the care of their doctors.
 2. They trust in the financial strength of the stock market
 3. They trust in the present power structure of politics – whichever party is in office.
 4. Such trust will fail. Our first and primary trust must be in God.
Proverbs 3:5-6 KJV - "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. ⁶ In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

II. Trusting in this world is to despise the holy things of God

Ahaz easily disposed of the treasures of the Temple.

2 Kings 16:8 NAU - "Ahaz took the silver and gold that was found in the house of the LORD and in the treasuries of the king's house, and sent a present to the king of Assyria."

- A. Ahaz had the privilege of being Israel's king.
1. He had direct access to the Temple and to the priesthood.
 2. Notice it was by his authority that the wealth of the Temple be turned over to the Assyrians – **Verse 8**
 3. And notice the influence Ahaz had over Urijah the priest – **Verse 11**.
- B. Ahaz had no respect for the holy.
1. He was raised in privilege and was plagued by a familiarity with the holy.
 2. This has been the repeated problem for those acquainted with the holy things pertaining to God
 - a. Nadab and Abihu became so familiar with the holy service of God they thought they had liberty to be creative. Apparently they had become dissatisfied with God's ordained way of worshipping Him. **Leviticus 10:1-2 NAU** – "Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took their respective firepans, and after putting fire in them, placed incense on it and offered strange fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them. ² And fire came out from the presence of the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD."
 - b. Eli's sons, Hophni and Phinehas abused their position – considered it a small thing to treat holy things common – and God killed them
 - c. Uzza also failed to recognize the awesome presence of God. **1 Chronicles 13:9-10 NAU** - "When they came to the threshing floor of Chidon, Uzza put out his hand to hold the ark, because the oxen nearly upset it. ¹⁰ The anger of the LORD burned against Uzza, so He struck him down because he put out his hand to the ark; and he died there before God."
 3. All of these were blind to God's great and terrible majesty.
 - a. They had all grown up around the things of God
 - b. It had all become too familiar to them – they brought upon themselves the wrath of God

4. The greatest warning to Ahaz should have been his own grandfather.
2 Chronicles 26:16 NAU - "But when he became strong, his heart was so proud that he acted corruptly, and he was unfaithful to the LORD his God, for he entered the temple of the LORD to burn incense on the altar of incense."
2 Chronicles 26:19 NAU - "But Uzziah, with a censer in his hand for burning incense, was enraged; and while he was enraged with the priests, the leprosy broke out on his forehead before the priests in the house of the LORD, beside the altar of incense."
- C. We must never lose our holy awe of God.
1. For too many, coming into the presence of God does not inspire awe – they are indifferent to His majesty – they have become familiar with the sacred
 2. Do you ever come into worship without a sense of awe – is it because you have become accustomed to the sacred? We must repent of such sin.

III. Trusting in this world is to deny the heritage of the saints.

Ahaz delivered the tribes of the north into the hand of the Assyrians. His actions began the process of the destruction of Israel.

2 Kings 17:5-6 NAU - "Then the king of Assyria invaded the whole land and went up to Samaria and besieged it three years. ⁶ In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria captured Samaria and carried Israel away into exile"

- A. God made a covenant with Abraham promising him a great nation.
1. He promised him a posterity that was beyond counting and the blessings of being God's covenant people.
Leviticus 26:12 NAU - "I will also walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people."
 2. Even during egregious times of sin, Israel saw themselves as a united house—God's chosen people.
Judges 21:3 NAU - "Why, O LORD, God of Israel, has this come about in Israel, so that one tribe should be *missing* today in Israel?"
 3. After the death of Solomon, Israel became a divided nation with ten tribes becoming the Northern Kingdom and two tribes being the Southern Kingdom. This began a long history of conflict.
 4. They ceased seeing themselves as one people.
 Ahaz is now paying the Assyrians to attack Israel, his covenant brothers.
- B. Worldliness weakens the church
1. We will fail to see ourselves as one body in Christ.
 2. Too often we find the cancel culture inflicting its evil mark upon the church. The church must always stand against sin, but many find it far too easy to attack those who don't agree with them on every minor point. Who would have ever thought that churches would divide over masks and vaccines? The pandemic exposed fractures that were already there.
 3. Pastor and Professor Voddie Baucham has written a book titled "Fault Lines" where he describes the fracture in the church over issues of social justice and CRT."³

³ Voddie T. Baucham Jr., *Fault Lines* (Washington D.C.: Salem Books, 2021).

IV. Trusting this world will consume us in its corruption

A. Ahaz became enamored by the worship of the pagans.

1. He was impressed with an altar he saw in Damascus
2 Kings 16:10 NAU - "Now King Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and saw the altar which was at Damascus; and King Ahaz sent to Urijah the priest the pattern of the altar and its model, according to all its workmanship."
2. He couldn't wait to get back home and have an altar built to match it
2 Kings 16:12-13 NAU - "When the king came from Damascus, the king saw the altar; then the king approached the altar and went up to it, ¹³ and burned his burnt offering and his meal offering, and poured his drink offering and sprinkled the blood of his peace offerings on the altar."
3. The powers of paganism made their mark upon Ahaz. He even offered up his own son as a human sacrifice.

B. The power of this world will consume us

1. We are warned over and over
Romans 12:2 NAU - "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."
1 John 2:15-17 NAU - "Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. ¹⁷ The world is passing away, and *also* its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever."
2. Ahaz followed the pattern of paganism.
 We must follow after the pattern of Godliness
Philippians 3:17-20 NAU - "Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us. ¹⁸ For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* enemies of the cross of Christ, ¹⁹ whose end is destruction, whose god is *their* appetite, and *whose* glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things. ²⁰ For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ"

Conclusion:

1. We must never forget what we are, where we are, and what we must be doing. Far too many are content with American religion. Christianity is bold living. Christians are bold warriors. We are witness for Christ in a barren land. We are surrounded by multitudes who hate God, but who desperately need Christ.
2. This present world must always be seen as our enemy. It will rob us of our consecration and turn our hearts away from Christ. Jesus described it as soul choking.
Matthew 13:22 NAU - "And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful."
3. We are in this world, but we must not trust in it. We are in this world, but we must not become like it. We are the people of God. We need to remain united with one goal serving one Master to His glory.