

The Biblical Examiner

Seeking first the Kingdom of God and its Advancement

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Holding to the 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith

THE GREAT OVERTURNING

*Ezekiel 21: 25 "And thou prince of Israel polluted, and wicked, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end,
26 Thus saith the Lord God, I will take away the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall be no more the same: I will exalt the humble, and will abase him that is high.
27 I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, and it shall be no more until he come, whose right it is, and I will give it him."*

I would love to do an extended series on just the prophetic verses in the Old Testament concerning the coming of the Christ Child, which would take many months.

The current very unstable world situation calls for a good prophetic message. We could call this a message concerning the Overturner. The prophecy which we want to consider is found in,

Hebrews 12: 25 "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: 26 Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. 27 And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: 29 For our God is a consuming fire."

• HEBREWS 12 MENTIONS 3 SHAKINGS:

The key to this passage in Hebrews, as is the key to every New Testament passage, lies in the Old. The apostle quotes Haggai 2:7 *"For thus saith the Lord of hosts, Yet a little while, and I will shake the heavens and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land: 8 And I will move all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this House with glory, saith the Lord of hosts."*

Haggai's prophecy 2:3-9 is directed to the Zerubbabel of Ezra-Nehemiah who with Jeshua, the high-priest,

had led a band of captives from Babylon to Jerusalem where they began to rebuild the Temple.

The situation which Haggai was speaking to was one of great depression for the people of God. The glory of Solomon's temple had been totally destroyed. The people had been carried away into Babylon. Babylon had been overthrown by the Medes and Persians. Then under Cyrus, the Israelites had been permitted to return

to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple and the City. Haggai is speaking during the reign of Darius.

As we read the Book

of Haggai, we find that the people who returned to Jerusalem were more concerned about their own welfare and homes than they were about the house of God. Haggai delivers the word of God to them, telling them that they need to get to work on the house of God. Haggai also points out to the returned captives the results of their indifference to the work of God.

Those results were not nice, so when the people heard Haggai's warning, they acted: they laid aside their indifference toward the work of the Lord and went to work.

In Haggai chapter 2 we see a problem with the people: when the elderly ones who could remember the glory of Solomon's Temple 70 years previously looked at the one that they were now building, the comparison was very depressing. The present one was little more than a hut compared to the former. It didn't help when they compared this "hut" to the splendor of the heathen temples, including the ones in Babylon.

The returned captives looked at their horribly depressed condition as compared to the worldly splendor around them, and they were depressed and discouraged. Evidently in Haggai 1, they had been trying to personally keep up with the world at the

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expense of the work of the Lord.

Haggai's prophecy in chapter 2 is to encourage the people to look past what they see on the surface to the future glory and victory of the Kingdom of God over the kingdom of men.

2:6, 7, Haggai's prophecy tells of a great shaking of all nations on the earth that was about to come to pass.

Haggai's prophecy tells of God's protection of His people when He brings about the great shaking. The shaking which Haggai prophesies represents the great political convulsions by which the power of the Gentiles was to be broken, their pride humbled, and by humbling them they were to be made capable of receiving salvation.

Haggai spoke of the smaller shaking of the world powers under the Old Testament economy at the giving of the law on the Mount. Haggai also speaks of the greater shaking of the world powers under the New Testament economy at the giving of the Saviour. In the Saviour's case, both heaven and earth are shaken and will continue to be shaken until all opposition to the King and His Kingdom is overturned.

• **THE MAIN IDEA IN HAGGAI INCLUDES SEVERAL THINGS.**

1) God's loving care of His people in the midst of all the great social and economic change which He was about to bring to pass in the world.

2) The changes which the Lord was about to bring to pass were not accidental. They were under complete control of the Divine providence of God.

3) The purpose of the changes were for the elevation of His people and kingdom; therefore, the changes and shakings could not possibly injure them.

4) The purpose of the prophecy was to prepare His people so that they might look in peace and comfort upon the destruction and dissolution which were taking place on the earth, convinced that they were only the throes of a better world.

Contained in this prophecy is the "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." This prophecy also contains the promise that the gates of hell will not prevail against His church.

This shaking speaks of violent agitation which is strong enough to overthrow the thrones of even the strongest kingdoms, Haggai 2:22, 23. It speaks of the breaking up of the very foundations of the all the kingdoms of men that are in opposition to the kingdom of God.

David speaks of this violent overthrow of the wicked in Psalms 18:7 in the term of an earthquake, "Then

the earth shook and trembled; the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken, because he was wrath." Notice the reason that he gives for this shaking, "because he was wrath."

Everything in the Old Testament looked forward to the coming day when God would overturn the ungodly kings and kingdoms of this world.

Haggai's prophecy is an obscure prophecy, which is overlooked today. In the last 50 years, we have seen a shift in the emphasis of the Christmas time of the year which celebrates the coming of the Lord to this earth: The incarnation of Christ as the Son of God and King of kings to institute His everlasting kingdom is not even mentioned, while the stress is on some kind of man-defined peace on earth and good will toward men.

However, Handel's Messiah is very popular during this time. The gospel of the kingdom of Christ cannot be more clearly proclaimed publicly.

Haggai clearly tells us that the purpose of Christ's coming was to overturn the kingdoms of this world which were and are in opposition to King Jesus and His Kingdom. The prophetic element of the birth of Christ is emphasized very little, if at all.

The supernatural accomplishment of the overturning of the ungodly kingdoms is avoided even though it is one of the most prevalent aspect of the prophecies in Scripture concerning Christ's birth, Isaiah 11:1-5.

There are a great many prophecies which tell of Christ's coming to earth, but few more appropriate for our day and time than the one in Ezekiel 21:25-27.

Obviously, this prophecy concerning the coming of the Lord is almost totally overlooked in our day. Fallen man is hostile toward this supernatural coming of the Lord which tells of His overturning of their kingdoms, so they try to cut out passages like this from the Christmas story.

Not only does this prophecy concerning the coming Son of God speak in supernatural tones, but it is also a grim prophecy. In our day, people desire a story with a good ending which is easily accomplished. We want a costless victory, which actually is a 'fairy tale' religion with no sacrifice and where everyone lives happily ever after.

Men of all ages, and especially today, desire a man named Jesus who is stripped of all supernatural aspects. Fallen man refuses to admit to or submit to a king who will smite the earth with the rod of His mouth (Isaiah 11:4).

This time of the year celebrates the birth of THE

KING of the whole earth, the King Who is the total subject of all the word of God. He stepped out of eternity and into time as a baby, and He will overturn, overturn, overturn the kingdoms of men that are in rebellion against Him and His kingdom.

The supernatural birth of this Divine King proves that His kingdom will prevail, and “of its increase there shall be no end.” Those who have not been born again, are the ones who will be overturned by this King and His kingdom.

This kingdom of this King will prevail by overturning the kingdoms of this world. This overturning will be accomplished by the word of His mouth, or more commonly known as the Word of God.

Now, let’s look a little at this prophecy in Ezekiel which spoke of this first Christmas day 2000 years ago.

First, it speaks to a Hebrew king, Zedekiah, the last king of Judah. Shortly after this prophecy was given, the city of Jerusalem fell (the falling of which Isaiah spoke of) to Babylon (70 years later Haggai gives his prophecy). King Zedekiah was taken captive to Babylon where his sons were killed before his eyes, and then his eyes were put out. The Babylonians treated Zedekiah as a traitor for having violated their treaty (Ezekiel 17:13-15, 2 Kings 24:17-20).

In Ezekiel 21:25, the Lord calls Zedekiah a profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day of judgment had come. Two things are removed as judgment against Zedekiah’s sin: the diadem and the crown and all of Zedekiah’s mighty men were abased, v. 26.

The crown.. belonged to King Zedekiah.

The diadem.. belonged to the high priest.

Both were removed by God by His army, Babylon.

The crown represented the royal power which was removed from the Hebrews and the line of David, and the diadem represented the high priest and the forgiveness of sins which was the foundation of God’s blessings.

Thus, Israel was abandoned by God for her apostasy and sin. This casting off by God of Israel would remain in effect until the arrival of the Great King whose right it was to rule as King (wear the crown), and whose right it was to pardon sin as the High Priest (wear the diadem), v. 27.

In the meantime, between this destruction by Babylon when the crown and diadem was removed, and the coming of the One whose right it was to wear them, would be a total revolution: absolutely everything would be overturned to where nothing would remain

the same. V. 27 could read “A ruin, ruin, ruin, I will make it. There shall not even be a trace of it (the old throne of Israel) until He comes whose it is, and to Him will I give it.”

Overturn, overturn, overturn, or Ruin, ruin, ruin – Three is an interesting number. Three stands for that which is solid, real, substantial, complete, and entire. All things that are especially complete are stamped with this number three.

The reference here in Ezekiel and in Haggai is to a total turning of things upside down; the exalted ungodly would be humbled, and the humble godly would be exalted, Luke 3:5 “Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth;”

To use modern terms, both the church and state would be overturned to make room for the rightful and true Civil Ruler and High Priest, Jesus Christ.

Ezekiel 21:27, “right”. The word right means more than simply a right to something. It means right in the terms of JUSTICE. Christ is Justice incarnate in the flesh. He represents justice. He brings justice and will enforce justice as we saw in Isaiah 11:1-5.

It is a word used here in contrast to the wicked rulers who had previously worn the crown of the throne of David; it is used here in contrast to the wicked men who had worn the diadem of the high priest. It especially refers to wicked Zedekiah.

The Messiah is presented in Ezekiel 21:25-27 as the Great Restorer of God’s rule and kingdom. He is the Prince of Peace. He renews the relationship between covenant man and his covenant-God. The Spirit of Christ draws individuals to God and gives them the desire to please Him that they might inherit the blessings of the Covenant-keeping God.

Thus, the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is presented as the great reversal of history. According to Isaiah 11, His coming destroyed the hold of the curse of sin and renewed the fellowship Adam lost in the fall. What is prophesied here by Ezekiel and others, Isaiah especially, is essential in understanding the Lord’s birth.

His coming reversed history from its downward path toward total destruction. If we do not recognize that Christ came to reverse history, we are in danger of reducing the birth of Christ to no more than a nice pretty event, pleasing to the eyes, rather than the earth-shattering event that it was.

Christ’s mother, Mary, understood exactly what took

place with the birth of her Son, Jesus. She knew that her Son would upset, change and reverse the history of fallen man.

[Luke 1:46-55 V. 48 she makes mention of the exalting of the low. Vs. 51, 52 she tells of this great overturning of the Lord against the wicked as He brings down the exalted. V. 50. Nor did she restrict this to Israel. The promise of this overturning is for all who fear Him and against all who are proudly against Him. V. 53 she tells of the reversal of the rich and poor.]

Accordingly, we see that the purpose of His coming involved exalting the low and putting down the high, Ezekiel 21:26 “Thus saith the Lord GOD; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high.” (See 1 Corinthians 1:27-2:5.)

In the past history of the Church, the rulers of this earth have forbidden the use of Mary’s song because they correctly saw it as a revolutionary song. By banning Mary’s song which celebrated the overthrow of the mighty of this earth, they were able to change the emphasis of Christmas from a time of celebration of the coming of the King of kings who would conquer all kingdoms of men in due time, to a sentimental emphasis on worldly peace and good will.

It is impossible to have peace and good will until sin is judged and dealt with, which only King Jesus can do.

We find out how the Apostles felt about this from Hebrews 12:25-29. Here we are told that from the time of Sinai and the giving of the law, through Bethlehem and the giving of the King, to the fall of Jerusalem in the Roman-Jewish war of 66-70 AD, there was a great shaking of men and nations. All of the great powers of the past were brought down by this shaking by the God of heaven.

The author of Hebrews 12, goes on to say that the second and final shaking is now under way. It started with the birth of Christ and will continue until all men and nations that are against the kingdom of God are brought down. As our Lord said in Matthew 7, only that which is built upon the rock will stand. We live in a very tumultuous day of shaking, the purpose of that shaking is to bring down all that is opposed to the Law-Word and Kingdom of God.

The supernatural coming of our Lord promises us that His Birth, life, death and resurrection require the overturning, the shaking and the destruction of all things

made by man; that is, the shaking of all things that can be shaken, because they are not established upon the Word of God, Jesus Christ. What God establishes cannot be shaken, whether nations, churches, families, communities, societies, &c.

• **OBSERVE:**

1. The prophet Haggai spoke that in spite of the apparent downtrodden condition of the church, the coming King would subdue the whole earth to Himself through a series of “earthquakes”.

2. History is shown to be as a continual earthquake. And the name of this earthquake is Jesus Christ Who invaded this world 2000 years ago. Everything that is outside of Him will be brought down and shattered.

3. Isaiah 60:6-10, 61:6, tells us that the wealth of the nations and all their glory will, in God’s time, be brought into Christ’s kingdom. Our God is a consuming fire, and will destroy the false structures of history and make the whole earth His kingdom.

4. The joy of our Lord’s birth is the knowledge that God has invaded history in the person of His Son. His army, called the Church, is on the march world-wide proclaiming the Prince of Peace, His atonement, His Kingdom and His law.

Joy to the world is proclaimed because the Lord has come, and He shall overturn, overturn, overturn all the works of the enemy in the kingdom of men, and King Jesus shall prevail.

His people must see history as Christ’s march to victory which started 2000 years ago in the most humble of manners in a manger.

5. Our Lord is declared to be the One “*whose right it is*”. His justice is on the march.

Based upon the promises of men and men’s laws, the world is a place of bitter, cruel injustice, masquerading as justice and right. The promises of men are only empty words because man has no means to accomplish his promises. All of their cry of peace and good will is only hot air as bondage and hatred continues to grow without Christ.

Hebrews 7:2 tells us that Christ alone is the Prince of Peace, He alone can bring peace and justice to the world of men.

In Acts 3:15, Peter identifies Jesus as the Prince of Life, who is now reclaiming what Adam gave to the prince of death. Christ’s reclaiming started in the manger and continues on with the earthquakes. These

WHEN THY JUDGMENTS ARE IN THE EARTH,
THE INHABITANTS OF THE WORLD WILL
LEARN RIGHTOUSNESS. ISA. 26:9

earthquakes, or judgments, allow no peace to fallen man no matter how hard he tries to put the pieces back together without Christ.

Earthquakes are in individual lives, and in the nations of the world. The songs that we sing at this time of the year speak of the joy and peace that only Christ can bring, e.g., *Joy to the world*.

History shows us that when one side in a war realizes that it is facing defeat, they enter into their most bitter conflict. Revelation 12:12 tells us that the devil knows that his time is short; therefore, the battle that is being waged by the enemy is the “hottest” since his defeat by the conquering King.

Colossians 2:15 “*And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*”

“*He whose right it is*”, who is Justice incarnate in the flesh, will make right all wrong and bring history to its God-appointed purpose and conclusion. We are told of this great conclusion of history in Revelation 21:3, 4. [Read and note that the tabernacle of God is identified as He, i.e., Jesus.]

Is it any wonder that the angels who knew these things openly rejoiced with singing... “*Glory to God in the highest...*”, or that the shepherds returned from Bethlehem glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen?

The first church was a persecuted church, an “illegal” church which had its members being hauled off to be killed in the sports arenas, and it was encouraging its members to give to one another and to the needy. How could they do this in the face of death? Because they saw themselves through the victory of the Great Overturner. They saw themselves as kings, priests and prophets in Jesus Christ. In anticipation of that victory, they were to recognize their calling to manifest the royal virtue to be generous. The example of giving was the giving of the Son of God to an undeserving people.

The confidence in the Son of God, the conquering King of kings gave the feeling of such great wealth, even in poverty, that they gave readily to others in need and for the advancement of the kingdom of God.

Even though the birth of Christ is celebrated without a command from Scriptures, it was seen by the early church as the day that ruled over all the seasons, because without the birth of Christ, there was no Resurrection (Easter), or ascension into the heavens to be at the right hand of God.

Even the most hardened sinner must follow the time

that is governed by His coming so many years ago. History moves toward His ordained conclusion. We are in Him who is King of kings and Lord of lords, called to be kings, priests and prophets in His kingdom. We do indeed have great tidings of comfort and joy to sing about. Not only to sing about, but to tell the world about.

My, how we need the confidence of the early Church which was persecuted and slaughtered like sheep all the day long. It was an illegal and underground organization, yet they rejoiced so much in their calling in the victory in the Great overcomer, Christ, that they celebrated His day with the giving of gifts to the needy and to one another. They shared what they had with those around them.

Do we?

THE YEAR ONE

(From the U.S. News & World Report, Jan. 8, 2001)

Two thousand years ago this week, the Year One arrived. But no one knew it, either then or for several centuries thereafter. The 12 months we call A.D. 1 came and went as just another year. To the Romans who ruled what was considered the civilized world—and whose civilization would one day be the basis for our own—the year was 754 A. U. C. (ab urbe condita—“from the foundation of the city”)-754 being the number of years since Romulus and Remus, the legendary orphans suckled by a she-wolf, were said to have founded Rome. Among Rome’s Greek subjects, who marked time in four-year units between Olympic Games, the year was merely the first quarter of the 195th Olympiad. Meanwhile, the Chinese saw it as nothing more than the second year of the reign of P’ing-ti, a boy emperor who would die five years later at the age of 13. But to a sixth century monk in Rome, the year ranked as one of the greatest in all history.

Ronald Reagan would never have made it in politics. Romans ranked actors on a level with prostitutes. Nor would Al Gore have won support by kissing Tipper. Men in love were considered laughable, so much so that one senator was stripped of his seat for embracing his wife in public. But George W. Bush would have stood tall. In Rome, every “young nobleman” was duty-bound “to avenge any humiliations suffered by his father,” wrote historian Florence Dupont in her book *Daily Life in Ancient Rome* “Not to be avenged was the worst misfortune.

LOVE, ROMAN STYLE: MEN AND WOMEN MARRIED YOUNG: GIRLS WERE DEEMED READY AT 12 AND BOYS AT 14. AUGUSTUS PENALIZED MEN STILL SINGLE AT 25 AND WOMEN AT 20. ENGAGEMENTS WERE SEALED WITH AN IRON RING PLACED ON THE BRIDE'S THIRD FINGER. WEDDING PARTIES STARTED WITH THE SACRIFICE OF A PIG, FOLLOWED BY CAKE. AMID DIRTY SONGS, THE COUPLE LEFT FOR THEIR NEW HOME, WHERE THE BRIDE GREASED THE DOOR POSTS BEFORE BEING CARRIED ACROSS THE THRESHOLD.

Those years found Augustus pondering very modern issues: law and order, welfare, family values, and moral decay, including sexual transgressions in his own household. Augustus would boast that he found Rome brick and made it marble, but more lasting by far than his monuments was the influence of his reign, which helped shape life and thought in much of the world for the next 2,000 years. The Age of Augustus would create a framework of government and society that would transform Western Europe—and hence America—with Rome's laws, its institutions, its language, and what eventually would become its state religion, Christianity.

Without the good roads and widespread order of the Pax Romana—the two centuries of peace that Augustus introduced the “good news” of Christ might never have spread. Yet the stability was wafer thin. In the decades just before A.D. 1, Augustus had conned the Roman people into scrapping their cherished but ultimately unworkable republic and its freedoms for the security and efficiency of an imperial dictatorship. Beneath the grandeur of empire lay a decaying social system peopled overwhelmingly by the poor and the left out. It was there that Christianity, offering hope in a hopeless world, would take root, grow, and eventually flower.

Indeed, the teachings of Christ were spread in a world of unrelenting cruelty. Who today could condone the sight of men and women being fed to beasts as people of all classes shrilled their delight? To the Romans, the spectacle was a just punishment for lawbreakers. What's to be made of a superpower that conquered cities by enslaving the men and killing the women and children? Owning or killing people, Romans believed, was as natural as water running downhill. Who can comprehend a father's tossing an infant into the village dung heap for being female, sick, or a surplus mouth to feed? The Romans were not offended, especially if the father followed the law and invited five neighbors to examine the baby before he left it to die.

Why not? In the Year One, questioning such behavior would have drawn blank stares. “The Romans saw the world as it was,” says Sarah Pomeroy, a classics

professor at New York's Hunter College who wrote *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity*. “They didn't think of whether anything was unjust.”

In the world of the Romans, the cure for stomachache was a dose of water in which feet had been washed. Hawkers in the town squares offered amulets conferring power from gods for every need, from giving sight to the blind to raising a child (among the baby gods: Wailer, Breastfeeder, Eater, and Stander). Children, until they walked and talked, were not considered humans. Citizens didn't use soap but cleansed themselves with olive oil and a scraping tool. A stick with a wet sponge on the tip did what toilet paper does today. (Indeed, paper as we know it did not exist until a hundred years later in China.)

Centuries of rough existence had bred a Roman acceptance of savagery and the conviction that life was a series of bleak choices. How, for instance, might a poor family acquire a slave? If it had food to spare, it could pluck a child from the dung heap and raise it in servitude. “Nothing was wasted in the ancient world: not an abandoned baby, not the cloth that kept the ragpicker in business . . . not even the grains of barley in horse manure on the streets,” writes Yale historian Ramsay MacMullen in his book *Roman Social Relations, 50 B.C. to A.D. 284*. “There were always people poor enough to fight over another's leavings.”

Political and social influence was reserved for a tiny group: the senators and knights who owned most of the land and the bulk of the wealth. By one estimate, these elites—essentially the guys in togas in the Hollywood epics—made up less than one tenth of 1 percent of the population. Rome's upper-middle class—prosperous but not immensely rich—ranked socially only a notch above the vast citizenry that was poor. Many of the not-rich enough contented themselves with a few well-cultivated acres where, amid kin and slaves, they lived relatively comfortable lives, going barefoot, sleeping on straw, and eating pork, vegetables, and bread.

The colossally rich, like the patrician who gave his pet eel a jeweled bracelet, retained their unsalaried political offices by treating supporters to gigantic parties. But in the century leading up to the Year One, fewer and fewer politicians could afford the soaring costs of feasts, theater shows, and gladiatorial combats that the public had come to expect. Many officeholders turned to bribes. By the first century A.D., venality was rampant. Even officers in the army expected payoffs from their soldiers.

MASTER AND SLAVE: THE WELL-TO-DO-LIKE THESE POMPEIANS, WITH THEIR SLAVE HAIRDRESSER—EMPLOYED DOZENS OF SLAVES AS HOUSEHOLD SERVANTS. SLAVES WERE CONSTANTLY AT THE SIDE OF THE MASTER OR MISTRESS OF THE HOUSE, READY TO DRESS THEM, HOLD THEIR MIRRORS, BRUSH THEIR HAIR, SCRAPE THEIR BACKS, AND ACCOMPANY THEM WHEREVER THEY WENT. WITHOUT SLAVES, HISTORIAN ... FINLEY OBSERVED, ROMANS “COULD NOT IMAGINE A CIVILIZED EXISTENCE TO BE POSSIBLE.”

The Romans had a propensity for rewarding the wrong people. In the two centuries before the Year One, a long series of wars kept untold thousands of farmers in the army and away from their farms. To prevent their families from starving, many soldiers sold their neglected land to rich landowners. Once out of the legions, multitudes sought refuge in Rome, swelling the city’s population in A.D. 1 to nearly 1 million people. It wasn’t a promise of good jobs that drew the dispossessed veterans to Rome, however. Slaves did nearly all the work, not just the menial but also such important tasks as operating stores, delivering mail, practicing medicine, and tutoring the children of the wealthy. What pulled the ex-soldiers to Rome was “bread and circuses,” specifically free food and free entertainment financed by taxes and tributes from conquered territories.

The government, since Caesar’s rule, had given daily wheat rations to most citizens of Rome, the plebeians who included all adults except for foreigners, slaves, and women. Even farmers who still owned land were abandoning it and flocking to the city to live on the dole. Rome’s elites scorned the new comers as rabble—“the blood suckers of the treasury,” Cicero called them—and Caesar tried belatedly to curb the giveaway. But his welfare reform was short lived. Augustus, Caesar’s successor, reversed the cuts in 5 B.C. and extended the benefits to boys as well as men.

In the Year One, to keep his citizenry happy and grievance-free, Augustus was delivering a lavish array of religious ceremonies, festivals, and ludi, “the games in honor of the gods.” Chariot races drew crowds of 200,000 or more to the Circus Maximus, where the most popular scene—a mass littering of overturned chariots, squealing horses, and maimed men—was known as a “shipwreck.” A day at the Forum often began with fans savoring Augustus’s wild-beast matches, although the regulars had a good idea which animals would win. Packs of hounds always beat herds of deer, bears withstood bulls, and lions usually finished off tigers. But not even the ferocious charge of the rhinoceros

could penetrate the thick hide of the elephant.

The afternoon brought more variety: animals vs. humans. Some of the men, trained and equipped with spears, lived to fight another day. But for others, the outcome was never in doubt. They were the bestiarii—condemned criminals who later would include Christian men and women—thrown into the arena with no training and no weapons. The carnivore often was a quick-killing lion; many fans preferred smaller beasts that did more dragging and tearing.

WORLDLY ROMANS: TO FEED ITSELF, ROME RELIED ON ITS EMPIRE, WHICH STRETCHED FROM THE ENGLISH CHANNEL TO NORTH AFRICA AND FROM SYRIA TO SPAIN. THE ROMANS BUILT DEEP-WATER HARBORS TO GET WHEAT FROM EGYPT AND SICILY, WINE FROM SPAIN, AND OLIVE OIL FROM AFRICA. ONE OBSERVER REPORTED THAT ROME “SEEMS LIKE A COMMON WAREHOUSE OF THE WORLD . . . THE ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE OF SHIPS NEVER CEASES.”

By the Year One, the ludi were part of everyday Roman life. “One might even say that they pervaded life,” wrote the French historian Roland Auguet in *Cruelty and Civilization: The Roman Games*. “They imposed their rhythm on existence and provided nourishment for the passions.” Augustus, ever a stickler for order, tried to regulate the gore. If two gladiators still stood after dueling long and hard, he decreed, both should receive the palm of victory. But the mob preferred blood. For centuries, ludi sponsors would ignore Augustus’s law and force the faceless men—helmets hid their features—to fight until one became a corpse in the sand.

A decree telling spectators where to sit was part of Augustus’s most ambitious project, his campaign to restore public morality. The best seats went to patrician couples, the Vestal Virgins, soldiers, and married men. Why favor married men? Augustus had the notion that Rome’s population was shrinking because too many men were visiting prostitutes, keeping concubines, and avoiding marriage. If more men would take wives, he believed, Rome would have what Cicero termed “less lust and larger families.”

To promote family values, Augustus hatched a system of rewards and punishments. Husbands who fathered three children were put on fast tracks for promotions. Mothers of three won a voice in property questions. Bachelors and spinsters, on the other hand, saw their inheritances restricted. Scrapped was an old law that let husbands kill adulterous wives. But any man who refused to divorce such a woman, the emperor decreed, should be prosecuted. Wives could divorce

their husbands, but at a risk: Fathers apparently always got the children.

The men of Rome had griped about their women for nearly two centuries, ever since the Senate agreed in 195 B.C. to let ladies wear dyed clothes and ride in carriages. Wives were expected to keep the hearth burning, fetch water, cook, spin, weave, and bear children. They weren't supposed to drink—a sure sign of sexual aberrations. (The reason men kissed their female kin, Cato the Elder reported, was to check for wine on their breath.) Nor, in the presence of males, were they to appear very smart. Wives who discussed history and poetry and used correct grammar, the writer Juvenal observed, were “really annoying.”

No romance. Romans married for duty, specifically to preserve family lines and replenish the citizenry. Fathers decided who wed whom. Until Augustus decreed that engaged girls be at least 10, some Roman daughters, including his own, were betrothed in infancy. Teenage boys, like their fathers, could have their way with prostitutes or slaves of either sex. But first-time brides were expected to be virgins. One of Julius Caesar's wives no doubt passed the test: She was only 11. Affection was rarely a factor in Roman engagements. “But it was taken for granted that if the husband and wife treated each other properly, love would develop and emerge, and by the end of their lives it would be a deep, mutual feeling,” says David Konstan, a classics professor at Brown University.

Few people, ancient or modern, made a bigger mess of family life than did the family-values leader of Rome. Augustus ditched his first wife, Scribonia, because of a “moral perversity of hers,” namely her contempt for his mistress. A year later, the randy emperor fell for Livia, who happened to be six months pregnant and married to another man. Three days after the baby arrived, Augustus and Livia wed. Livia's freshly divorced husband, posing as her father, obligingly gave her away.

Livia kept Augustus content, critics would claim, by sending slave girls to his chamber and looking the other way as he dallied with politicians' wives. Whatever the cause, the emperor would ultimately laud his marriage as 51 years of happiness. But his opinion of his only child, Julia, was less felicitous.

Julia was born just before Augustus divorced her mother, the strait-laced Scribonia. As a newborn, she was betrothed to a son of her father's ally, Mark Antony. When friend turned foe, Augustus had her young fiancé killed. When she was 14, Augustus wed her to his nephew Marcellus, who would die two years later.

She then married another cousin's husband, Agrippa, and consequently gave Augustus four grandchildren. But the emperor was not satisfied. When Agrippa died, Augustus matched Julia with Livia's son Tiberius, even though Tiberius was happily married to someone else.

GORE TRIUMPHANT: IN A SINGLE SEASON, AUGUSTUS FINANCED SPECTACLES THAT SAW AS MANY AS 10,000 GLADIATORS FIGHTING—AND MANY DYING. HE BUILT A LAKE FOR A BATTLE INVOLVING 30 SHIPS AND 3,000 COMBATANTS. IN HIS WILD-BEAST SHOWS, 3,500 ANIMALS PERISHED, INCLUDING ELEPHANTS AND RHINOCEROSSES. “LET US GO BACK TO ROME,” ONE FAN WROTE FROM ABROAD. “IT MIGHT BE RATHER NICE, TOO, TO SEE SOMEBODY KILLED.”

The result was the greatest sex scandal of the Augustan Age. Tiberius, craving the wife he was forced to divorce, withdrew to an island and brooded. The abandoned Julia, meanwhile, took her first stab at enjoying life on her terms. She had lovers not just a few, it was said, but many. She got drunk in revels at the Forum, informants reported, and offered herself as a prostitute on the street.

In 2 B.C., word of his daughter's transgressions reached Augustus. In a blaze of publicity, he terminated Julia's marriage, wrote the Senate a letter detailing her alleged debaucheries, and banished her, at 37, to an island in the Tyrrhenian Sea.

Ten years later, an identical charge hit Julia's daughter, also named Julia, and she, too, was sent into exile. For good measure, Augustus struck back at one perceived cause of his progeny's lax morals. The emperor had long endured the poems of Ovid, whose *Art of Love* seduction manual flew in the face of the official family-values campaign. For corrupting his kin, the monarch expelled Rome's most popular poet to a Black Sea town so backward that men wore trousers.

A FEW GOOD VIRGINS: ELITE FAMILIES PROPOSED PREADOLESCENT DAUGHTERS FOR 30-YEAR JOBS AS VESTAL VIRGINS WHO KEPT THE TEMPLE OF VESTALS FIRE BURNING. THE PERKS WERE EXCELLENT: POSH PARTIES, MEALS OF SOW'S UDDERS AND THRUSHES, AND PRIME SEATS AT GLADIATORIAL SHOWS. BUT THE RISKS WERE GREAT FOR SOME: LOSE YOUR VIRGINITY, AND YOU'D BE BURIED ALIVE.

Slippery slope. Augustus never understood that a force far more pervasive than Ovid's poems was fueling Rome's moral slide. It was wealth that rotted out the Roman character. With trade and tribute pouring in from the provinces, the rich grew richer, lazier, and more indulgent. Nor did the doles and free spectacles

CHRISTMAS

by Robert McCurry

strengthen the moral fiber of the city's idle mob. As time went on, the disparities between the rich and the wretched widened in every respect. Housing costs in the cities soared, chasing the impoverished into attics and one-room hovels with no water and no hearth. In the countryside, land increasingly fell into the hands of a few patrician families that now owned thousands of acres tended by hundreds of disinherited, indigent workers.

By the third century A.D., to meet the rising costs of defending its frontier, Rome was soaking the poor. The Romans never imagined anything like today's graduated income tax, which places the heaviest burden on those best able to bear it. Rome's system was the opposite: The richer and more politically connected a man was, the less he paid.

The fifth-century collapse of the empire that began just before the Year One had many perceived causes, from exhaustion of topsoil to poisonous lead in the pipes of an otherwise splendid plumbing system. No claim has been more controversial than Edward Gibbon's. His five-volume *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776-88) blamed Christianity, asserting that it had wrecked the old religions that had sustained the Roman soul and stabilized the Roman state. But Will Durant, the 20th-century philosopher, noted that the old religions were breaking up long before Jesus was born. Romans lost faith in their leaders, Durant wrote in *Caesar and Christ*, "because the state defended wealth against poverty, fought to capture slaves, taxed toil to support luxury, and failed to protect its people from famine, pestilence, invasion, and destitution."

As for the spread of Christianity—now the world's largest religion with roughly 1 billion followers—sources from antiquity suggest an important role by the emperor who reigned during Jesus's childhood. Thanks to Augustus's Pax Romana, Christ's revolutionary message was able to spread from one generation to the next in a world made stable by the hegemony of Rome, developing, as the apostle Paul described it, "in the fullness of time."

"A peace was prevalent which began at the birth of Christ," the Christian teacher Origen wrote in the second century. "For God prepared the nations for his teaching so that they should be under one prince, the king of the Romans, and that it might not . . . be more difficult for the apostles to carry out the task laid on them by their Master when he said, 'Go and teach all nations.'"

Christmas. Believe in Christmas or not, like it or not, prepared for it or not, participate in it or not—Christmas is here—again! It is the inevitable, unstoppable, and most popular celebration of the year that comes every December. I recall when I was a child that the Christmas season did not begin until after Thanksgiving and it seemed the mystical December 25th Christmas day would never arrive. Now that I'm older, things have changed. The days, weeks, and months go by ever so quickly, and presto!—Christmas is here again.

Why Christmas? The majority say, "Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Jesus." Why a Christmas season? Most will say, "Jesus is the reason for the season." Really? No, not really—the manger scenes, Christmas carols, and religious activities notwithstanding. Interestingly, Christmas is not a Bible subject or even a Bible Word.

It is a historical fact that the season and day now known as Christmas preceded the birth of Christ by hundreds of years. Christmas was adopted from earlier heathen winter solstice celebrations celebrating the sun, including the Roman festival of Saturnalia celebrated from December the 17th to the 24th; Celtic Yuletide which was a twelve-day long festival of feasting around November/December; the Roman New Year celebrated on January the first when greenery was used to decorate houses in celebration of the birth of the undying sun, and presents were given to children and the poor. The Roman Catholic Church "Christianized" this pagan festival by substituting the birth of Christ for sun worship and named it Mass of Christ. The title was later shortened by the church to Christ-mas. The traditions celebrated at Christmas today were invented by blending together customs from paganism and many different countries.

• A BRIEF LOOK AT "CHRISTMAS IN AMERICA"

In the early 17th century, a wave of religious reform changed the way Christmas was celebrated in Europe. When Oliver Cromwell and his Puritan forces took over England in 1645, they vowed to rid England of decadence and, as part of their effort, canceled Christmas. By popular demand, Charles II was restored to the throne and, with him, came the return of the popular holiday.

The pilgrims, English separatists that came to America in 1620, were even more orthodox in their Puritan beliefs than Cromwell. As a result, Christmas

was not a holiday in early America. From 1659 to 1681, the celebration of Christmas was actually outlawed in Boston. Anyone exhibiting the Christmas spirit was fined five shillings. By contrast, in the Jamestown settlement, Captain John Smith reported that Christmas was enjoyed by all and passed without incident.

After the American Revolution, English customs fell out of favor, including Christmas. In fact, Congress was in session on December 25, 1789, the first Christmas under America's new constitution. Christmas wasn't declared a federal holiday until June 26, 1870.

- **BEFORE THE 'CIVIL WAR'**

The North and South were divided on the issue of Christmas, as well as on the question of slavery. Many Northerners saw sin in the celebration of Christmas; to these people the celebration of Thanksgiving was more appropriate. But in the South, Christmas was an important part of the social season. Not surprisingly, the first three states to make Christmas a legal holiday were in the South: Alabama in 1836, Louisiana and Arkansas in 1838.

In the years after the Civil War, Christmas traditions spread across the country. Children's books played an important role in spreading the customs of celebrating Christmas, especially the tradition of trimmed trees and gifts delivered by Santa Claus. Sunday school classes encouraged the celebration of Christmas. Women's magazines were also very important in suggesting ways to decorate for the holidays, as well as how to make these decorations.

By the last quarter of the nineteenth century, America eagerly decorated trees, caroled, baked, and shopped for the Christmas season. Since that time, materialism, media, advertising, and mass marketing has made Christmas what it is today. The traditions that we practice at Christmas today were invented by blending together religious and secular customs from paganism and many different countries.

In 1997, Artist Robert Cenedella drew a painting of a crucified Santa Claus. It was displayed in the window of the New York's Art Students League and received intense criticism from some religious groups. His drawing was a protest. He attempted to show how Santa Claus had replaced Jesus Christ as the most important personality at Christmas time. Obviously, he was correct.

- **SHOULD CHRISTIANS CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS?**

I like Charles Spurgeon on this subject because he does not fit easily into either of the simple pre-cut

molds that tend to dominate those with strong opinions on whether Christians should even acknowledge, much less celebrate Christmas. In one corner you have those who give a resounding "NO" to this question. After all, the Bible does not even hint at celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ annually. Furthermore, Christmas is an adaptation of a pagan festival and "what hath light to do with darkness?" In the other corner are those who seem to think that anything less than an all-out celebration of Christmas—even by those who are not Christians—is an assault on Christianity and one more indication of how godless our culture has become.

Spurgeon's views are clear that Christmas is not a biblical holiday and so minces no words in criticizing the attempt to equate it with vital Christianity. He sometimes ridicules and chides the observance of Christmas as a "popish festival." This point of view is what is most often quoted when Spurgeon and Christmas come up. For example, on Sunday morning, December 24, 1871, Spurgeon preached a sermon entitled, "Joy Born at Bethlehem." He began his sermon with these words:

We have no superstitious regard for times and seasons. Certainly we do not believe in the present ecclesiastical arrangement called Christmas. First, because we do not believe in the mass at all, but abhor it, whether it be sung in Latin or in English; and secondly, because we find no Scriptural warrant whatever for observing any day as the birthday of the Savior; and consequently, its observance is a superstition, because not of divine authority. Superstition has fixed most positively the day of our Savior's birth, although there is no possibility of discovering when it occurred. ... It was not till the middle of the third century that any part of the church celebrated the nativity of our Lord; and it was not till very long after the Western church had set the example, that the Eastern adopted it. ... Probably the fact is that the "holy" days were arranged to fit in with the heathen festivals. We venture to assert, that if there be any day in the year, of which we may be pretty sure that it was not the day on which the Savior was born, it is the twenty-fifth of December. Nevertheless since, the current of men's thoughts is led this way just now, and I see no evil in the current itself, I shall launch the bark of our discourse upon that stream, and make use of the fact, which I shall neither justify nor condemn, by endeavoring to lead your thoughts in the same direction. Since it is lawful, and even laudable, to meditate upon the incarnation of the Lord upon any day in the year, it cannot be in the power of other men's superstitions to render such a meditation improper for today. Regarding not the day, let us, nevertheless, give God thanks for the gift of His dear Son.

Spurgeon had little patience with his Protestant brethren who made much of the day out of religious devotion. Yet, Spurgeon did not think it some violation of Scripture to utilize the inevitable emphasis of the season to preach the incarnate Christ. So it is easy to find sermons on the birth of Christ that he preached around Christmas time.

In December of 1855 Spurgeon preached on “The Incarnation and Birth of Christ” from Micah 5:2. His opening words were these:

This is the season of the year when, whether we wish it or not, we are compelled to think of the birth of Christ. I hold it to be one of the greatest absurdities under heaven to think that there is any religion in keeping Christmas-day. There are no probabilities whatever that our Savior Jesus Christ was born on that day and the observance of it is purely of Popish origin; doubtless those who are Catholics have a right to hallow it, but I do not see how consistent Protestants can account it in the least sacred. However, I wish there were ten or a dozen Christmas-days in the year; for there is work enough in the world, and a little more rest would not hurt laboring people. Christmas-day is really a boon to us, particularly as it enables us to assemble round the family hearth and meet our friends once more. Still, although we do not fall exactly in the track of other people, I see no harm in thinking of the incarnation and birth of the Lord Jesus. We do not wish to be classed with those

“Who with more care keep holiday
The wrong, than others the right way.”

In the same vein Spurgeon preached a message on December 25, 1864, entitled, “Mary’s Song,” based on Luke 1:46-47. In it he says:

Observe, this morning, the sacred joy of Mary that you may imitate it. This is a season when all men expect us to be joyous. We compliment each other with the desire that we may have a “Merry Christmas.” Some Christians, who are a little squeamish, do not like the word “merry.” It is a right good old Saxon word, having the joy of childhood and the mirth of manhood in it, it brings before one’s mind the old song of the waits, and the midnight peal of bells, the holly and the blazing log. I love it for its place in that most tender of all parables, where it is written, that, when the long-lost prodigal returned to his father safe and sound, “They began to be merry.” This is the season when we are expected to be happy; and my heart’s desire is, that in the highest and best sense, you who are believers may be “merry.” Mary’s heart was merry within her; but here was the mark of her joy, it was all holy merriment, it was every drop of it sacred mirth. It was not such merriment as worldlings will revel in today and tomorrow, but such merriment as the angels have around the throne, where they sing, “Glory to God in the highest,”

while we sing “On earth peace, goodwill towards men.” Such merry hearts have a continual feast. I want you, ye children of the bride-chamber, to possess today and tomorrow, yea, all your days, the high and consecrated bliss of Mary that you may not only read her words, but use them for yourselves, ever experiencing their meaning: “My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior.”

It has been 150 years since Spurgeon preached these sermons and Christmas continues to be a controversial subject among many Christians; “Should I or should I not observe Christmas?” Spurgeon was wise in concluding that since he could not cancel Christmas, he would avail himself of the opportunity of the season and the day to proclaim the incarnation of Christ.

These sermons also assure us that the building where Spurgeon preached was never decorated with a Christmas tree, holly, mistletoe, and wreaths during the Christmas season to generate a “Christmas spirit.”

Federal judge: “Christmas is both secular and religious”

Christmas has been a federal holiday in America since June 26, 1870. In August, 1998, Cincinnati attorney Richard Ganulin filed suit in U.S. District Court claiming that “Christmas is a religious holiday, and the Congress of the United States is not constitutionally permitted to endorse or aid any religion, purposefully or otherwise, or entanglement between our government and religious beliefs.”

Congress granted Christmas this special status in 1870, following the lead of several state legislatures. It is now one of ten government-sanctioned holidays that include birthday celebrations for Martin Luther King and George Washington, and the recognition of Independence on July 4. Ganulin argued that the establishment of the December 25 date, though, “effectively endorses one set of Christian religious and Christian cultural beliefs...” In dismissing the suit, U.S. District Judge Susan Dlott argued that the Christmas holiday did not violate Ganulin’s right to equal protection under the law. She added that

“The court has found legitimate secular purposes for establishing Christmas as a legal public holiday.” When the government decides to recognize Christmas Day as a public holiday, it does no more than accommodate the calendar of public activities to the plain fact that many Americans will expect on that day to spend time visiting with their families, attending religious services, and perhaps enjoying some respite from pre-holiday activities.

“Ganulin and his family have the freedom to celebrate, or not celebrate, the religious and secular aspects of the holiday as they see fit,” Dlott added. “The court simply does not believe that declaring Christmas to be a legal public holiday impermissibly imposes Christian beliefs on non-adherents in a way that violates the right to freedom of association.”

Dlott also gave her interpretation of the “Lemon” test from *Lemon v. Kurtzman* which is used widely in deciding if an action by the government violates the establishment clause of the First Amendment. She opined that Christmas “has a valid secular purpose, it does not have the effect of endorsing religion in general or Christianity in particular, and it does not impermissibly cause excessive entanglement between church and state.”

Unwittingly or not, Judge Dlott trivialized both Mr. Ganulin’s case, and her own ruling by including a ditty with her official written decision. It read:

The court will address/Plaintiff’s seasonal confusion/Erroneously believing of Christmas/MERELY a religious intrusion

Whatever the reason/Constitutional or other/Christmas is NOT/An act of Big Brother!

Christmas is about joy/And giving and sharing/It is about the child within us/It is mostly about caring!

One is never jailed/For not having a tree/For not going to church/For not spreading glee!

The court will uphold/Seemingly contradictory causes/Decreeing “The establishment” AND “Santa”/both worthwhile “CLAUS(es)!”

We are all better for Santa/The Easter Bunny too/And maybe the great pumpkin/To name just a few!

An extra day off/Is hardly high treason/It may be spent as you wish/Regardless of reason

The court having read/The lessons of “Lynch”/refuses to play/The role of the Grinch!

There is room in this country/And in all our hearts too/For different convictions/And a day off too!

• CHRISTMAS IS HERE TO STAY

Christmas is not only a federal holiday; it is an irreversible America tradition. Believe in it or not, agree with it or not, participate in it or not — Christmas is here to stay. Many American families view the Christmas season as an important time of the year to come together whether they are Christians or not. Although in recent times Christmas has become highly commercialized, Christmas is a very special time of year and many families have their own ways of celebrating

this holiday. May all who know Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior, rejoice and proclaim:

• JESUS CHRIST IS GOD!

“Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.” Matthew 1:23

“Thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.” Matthew 1:21

“Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.” Galatians 1:3-5

“O come let us adore Him!

He is the mighty King, Master of everything,

Almighty God is He.

Bow down before Him,

Love and adore Him.

His Name is Wonderful, Jesus my Lord!

EBOLA-OWNED BY THE US GOVERNMENT

FDA threatens three companies with criminal charges for making Ebola treatment claims (but won’t test natural substances against Ebola)

by Mike Adams, the Health Ranger

(NaturalNews) In furtherance of the medical monopoly that dominates western civilization today, the FDA issued warning letters to three companies over what they call fraudulent health claims regarding Ebola treatments.

Beyond the warning letters, here’s the rest of the story the national press isn’t reporting

While I agree that no claims of treatment or cures should ever be made against any disease until they are supported by substantial evidence, there are some shocking facts about all this that both the FDA and FTC are conveniently ignoring:

Fact #1) The FDA refuses to conduct any testing on natural or alternative therapies (such as colloidal silver) in order to find out whether they work or not. What if some of these alternative medicines actually do work, but the medical monopoly doesn’t want us to find out?

Fact #2) The FDA openly rubber-stamped the treatment of Ebola patients with the entirely unproven, experimental drug “ZMapp,” which has so far resulted in around a 40% fatality rate in Ebola patients. How exactly is it that an unproven pharmaceutical is okay to use as a treatment for Ebola, but an unproven herb or

natural remedy is completely unacceptable and possibly illegal? (The double standard of so-called “science” is breathtaking...)

Where is the FDA’s warning letter to the manufacturer of ZMapp? Oh, wait... instead of receiving a warning letter from the FDA, the ZMapp manufacturer received a \$42 million grant from Health and Human Services.

Fact #3) The FDA openly allows billions of dollars of pharmaceuticals to be prescribed each year for health conditions they were never approved for! This is called “off-label prescribing” and it’s a huge part of the pharmaceutical industry’s profit model.

The way it works is that a drug company receives a limited FDA approval for the drug to treat a specific, limited health condition, then that drug company engages in widespread bribery and kickbacks to doctors to encourage them to prescribe the drug for all sorts of other conditions that have never been backed by clinical trials or scientific evidence of any kind. All the while, the company claims the drug is “FDA approved,” but not for the health conditions for which it is commonly prescribed!

In truth, many of the drugs U.S. consumers are prescribed for certain health conditions aren’t backed by any evidence at all. The illusion of so-called “evidence-based medicine” across the pharmaceutical industry is truly an elaborate myth. The FDA doesn’t even conduct any testing of pharmaceuticals at all and instead relies on drug companies to submit their own tests... which are often fabricated or falsified.

Fact #4) The United States government claims patent ownership over Ebola and all its variants.

(http://www.naturalnews.com/046946_ebola_outbreak_vaccines_patents.html) The patent number is CA2741523A1 and you can view it here. (<http://www.google.com/patents/CA2741523A1>)

The existence of this patent means that no company can even conduct scientific tests with Ebola viruses without running afoul of U.S. patent laws. Even worse, any company possessing Ebola would probably find its principals arrested and charged as terrorists under the U.S. Patriot Act which has specific provisions regarding “biological terrorism.”

This combination of “anti-terrorism” laws and U.S. patent laws creates an actual monopoly of research on Ebola treatments. Only the government itself can authorize such research, and it is of course entirely beholden to pharmaceutical interests. This is why all research funding for Ebola cures is strictly limited to vaccines and pharma drugs. No other alternatives are even tested or considered.

Fact #5) The FDA has never shown that colloidal silver or natural cures don’t work to help prevent Ebola. Granted, we can’t expect the agency to run around testing everything in sight just to find out what doesn’t work, but shouldn’t a few of the more likely natural remedies be studied against Ebola in the interests of the public good?

Despite all the talk by the FDA (and the mainstream media) about “bogus cures,” the simple scientific truth is that such status has never been established. No government organization or medical group has ever tried colloidal silver against Ebola. So how, exactly, are they so sure it’s a “bogus” cure? A more technically accurate term would be “unproven.” And I agree that colloidal silver is indeed an “unproven” treatment vs. Ebola, as is everything else.

http://www.naturalnews.com/047016_Ebola_treatments_warning_letters_unproven_cures.html

• **COMMENTS:**

I urge you to read the article, and you will find that Ebola was developed and patented by the US government. The rapid response with the vaccines show that they have been in the works for many years. “Spontaneous vaccine development a scientific impossibility”

(http://www.naturalnews.com/046946_ebola_outbreak_vaccines_patents.html)

The same company that is developing and marketing the vaccine has been fined \$490 million by the Chinese for bribery. It also admitted to a massive criminal bribery network in the United States.

The question remains: is Ebola a massive fraud to promote drugs, to promote martial law, to decrease the world population as desired by the population control crowd?

Those who will take the time to do any research, will find it highly likely that this is another government project as was the “deer tick” experiment.

“But our own government wouldn’t do that to us.” But “our own government” is killing how many US citizens per year through abortion?

The truth about World War II has been revealed many times. The US was intentionally brought into that war by the president, and how many lives and how much money was spent to satisfy the desires of a few people?

Yes, our “own government” would certainly do such a thing as Ebola. Think of the opportunities to make money, solve the “overpopulation” problem and to bring in the desired “New World Order”.

PERSONAL

Shoulder problems

I am sorry it has been so long since we sent out the last Examiner. As I mentioned then, I had to have rotator cuff surgery on my right shoulder. I went in two weeks after my first surgery to have my stitches removed, and told the surgeon that my shoulder did not feel right. She sent me for an x-ray. By the time we got home from the hospital, she had left a message on our answering machine saying I had a loose screw (her words). Two of the four screws had come loose, and I needed to come back in the next day for surgery. When I saw her, I told her that for years, folks had been telling me I had a screw loose, but she was the first doctor to confirm the problem, and that she could fix it.

The hospital is about two hours away up a valley where we do not have to cross the mountains. Occupational therapy is about an hour drive by way of a crooked two-lane road east over the mountains. But these mountains are less than 3000 feet, so you folks who live in real mountains really wouldn't consider these much. But for this boy who grew up in Indiana, spent time in Maryland and Louisiana, these mountains are mountains.

Therapy two times a week plus about an hour's worth of exercises a day at home and various hospital visits on other days really has put a time constraint upon us. But the healthcare is good, and the VA is paying for it.

Praise the Lord, the sling has been off for a few weeks now, and I am regaining some use of my right arm and hand. I can type again, but by my arm being immobilized for so long, it does not take long for my hand and arm to get tired. I do have a voice recognition program which I have been using. It works well after you learn the commands.

I had a follow-up visit with the surgeon December 4, 2014, and she told me that in eight more days I can do anything with my right arm that I feel like doing, which will include being able to use a chainsaw. STIHL now makes a chainsaw that is very easy to start, and I hope to be able to get one before I need to get back in the woods for firewood. I do not relish the thought of trying to start my older chain saw with my right arm.

I also told her that the numbness and pain in my right hand keeps me awake most of the night. That is not normal, so I need to go back in for neurology to check the nerves in my right arm.

Therapy is going well, but we have not started on any strength training in my right arm yet. Everyone I

have talked with who's had this kind of surgery says it takes about a year to recover reasonable use of the arm, and a lifetime of certain exercises to keep the shoulder working properly.

We were able to go see a new granddaughter in Ohio, (my oldest daughter is in the Dayton Cincinnati area) and stop by for a couple days to see another one of our families of nine grandchildren in the Hocking Hills area of Ohio. Obviously, it was a very enjoyable time.

Bettie's brother from Brazil was able to come to the states for several weeks. She had not seen him for 15 years, so we went to North Carolina for a Thanksgiving day "family reunion". One day down, one day there, and one day back. Thanksgiving Eve is when we got our 20 inches of snow here, and we had to drive for a couple of hours before we got out of that hard snowfall. But it was gone in a few days.

Sadly, our garden pretty much had to go to waste. My shoulder surgery had to be done right when the garden was starting to produce well. We did, however, get a good number of tomatoes, green beans and spaghetti squash, but the purple hulls had to stay on the vines, and we had to leave the blackberries for the young fox that was hanging around at the time.

All in all, it has been a very busy three months, particularly when I didn't feel like doing much for the first couple weeks after the surgery.

Thank you so much for your prayers and support. We certainly pray that God will continue his blessings upon you all this coming year.

LIKE PIGS

ROWLAND HILL illustrated the folly of sinners by the story of a butcher who was followed by the swine right into the slaughterhouse. As pigs are not usually in the mind to go where they are wanted, it seemed a mystery how these animals were so eager to follow their executioner; but when it was seen that he wisely carried a bag of peas and beans with which he enticed the creatures onward, the riddle was solved at once. Unsuspecting of impending death the hogs cared only for the passing gratification of their appetites, and hastened to the slaughter—and in the same manner ungodly men follow the great enemy of souls down through the jaws of hell, merely because their depraved passions are pleased with the lusts of the flesh and the pleasures of sin which the devil gives them by handfuls on the road. Alas, that there should be such likeness between men and swine! (Copied)

GOD'S PROMISE TO ABRAHAM - "I WILL BLESS THEM THAT BLESS THEE"

By Thomas Williamson 3131 S. Archer Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60608

Much of our Christian emphasis on foreign policy in the Middle East today is based on the promise that God made to Abraham in Genesis 12:3, "And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

The first half of this verse is a promise that God made to just one person, Abraham. The original Hebrew is in the second person singular, meaning that God is speaking only to Abraham. The King James Version correctly reflects this grammatical construction, since "thee" is singular, referring only to one person, whereas "ye" would refer to multiple persons.

Matthew Henry's commentary states of Genesis 12:3a that "This made it a kind of league, offensive and defensive, between God and Abram."

Of the second half of the verse, Matthew Henry says, "This was the promise that crowned all the rest; for it points to the Messiah, in whom 'all the promises are yea and amen.' Note, (1), Jesus Christ is the great blessing of the world, the greatest that ever the world was blessed with."

Recently Genesis 12:3 has been spiritualized by Christian Zionist preachers, who say that this verse applies not just to Abraham, but also to Abraham's descendants, specifically to the modern state of Israel founded in 1948. Supposedly, it means that evangelical Christians as individuals, and America as a nation, are bound to provide unquestioning support, financial and otherwise, to the state of Israel. It is said that if America fails to back up Israel in every way possible, financially, militarily and otherwise, then God will be through with America and will have us nuked

CALL ME ISHMAEL. When it is pointed out that the various Arab nations, including Palestine, are also descended from Abraham, the Christian Zionists say that the promise of Genesis 12:3 applies only to the descendants of Isaac. (Of course, there is no mention of Isaac in Genesis 12:3. They often misquote the verse, saying it refers to "blessing Israel," but Israel is not mentioned in the verse, either).

Zionists say, based on their non-literal, speculative, spiritualized interpretation of Genesis 12:3, that we are to give total, unquestioned support to some of Abraham's children, while others of Abraham's children are to be hated, persecuted, ethnically cleansed, bombed back into the Stone Age, maybe even nuked.

But in Genesis 21:13, 17-18 God also bestows His blessing on Ishmael and his descendants, saying, "For I will make him a great nation." According to the same principles of interpretation by which we have made Genesis 12:3 a command for political support of the modern nation of Israel, Genesis 21:18 must be taken as a command for political support of the modern Arab nations. (Anybody want to start up a "Christian Ishmaelist" movement to lobby for Arab national greatness?)

Christian Zionists claim to have 70,000,000 followers in America, who insist that our politicians render unquestioning obedience to the military and political agenda of the Israeli government.

Does God really demand that we support all actions and activities of the Israeli government, even if those actions violate God's moral standards of righteousness?

It should be pointed out that even in Old Testament times, when Israel was a nation specially chosen by, and ruled over by, Jehovah, He did not expect His people to support and endorse all actions of the government of Israel.

When the government of Israel committed human rights violations, the prophets openly condemned them, 2 Kings 6:21-23, 2 Chronicles 28:9-11, Nehemiah 5:7-11, Jeremiah 34:11-17, Amos 2:6-7, etc. Nowadays, liberal Jewish groups still protest human rights violations in Israel. But fundamentalist Christians would never dream of doing such a thing – it is against their religion. It is their duty to either deny that such violations take place, or else to endorse and commend such violations. We have been told that God will smite us if we disagree with anything that Israel does.

The lawgiver Moses commanded the Hebrews that they should not oppress the strangers or non-Jews in their lands, Exodus 12:49, 22:21, 23:9, Leviticus 19:33-34, 25:35, Deuteronomy 10:18-19, 23:7, 24:17, 27:19. That message, of course, is not mentioned today – it is considered "politically incorrect."

When King Ahab and Queen Jezebel unjustly expropriated the vineyard of Naboth, the prophet Elijah publicly denounced the king for this unjust action, 1 Kings 21:17-24. Jehu cited this official action of the government of Israel against Naboth as justification for overthrowing that government, 2 Kings 9:25-26.

But nowadays, when the Israeli government expropriates the lands and properties of Palestinians, without compensation, we look the other way and say nothing about it.

In Jeremiah 27:1-5, the prophet Jeremiah picketed

a public meeting of the government of Judah with representatives of Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre and Sidon. He was protesting the foreign policy of Judah. We would never do anything like that today – it would be considered a violation of the command to “bless Abraham.”

A HOMELAND “TO DIE FOR” In Jeremiah 27:6-17, the prophet advocated the surrender of Israel’s territory to the King of Babylon, in return for peace – today, we would call it “land for Peace.” But today, our warmongering televangelists denounce “land for peace” as unthinkable for any reason whatsoever, and threaten God’s wrath against anyone who would support such a thing.

Supposedly it is better for the Jewish and Arab children of Abraham to keep on killing each other over the land (while these sanctimonious war profiteers collect the money from sales of their Armageddon videos. Could it be a conflict of interest to allow American foreign policy to be dictated by these mega-millionaire preachers, who stand to make a profit if there is war in the Middle East?)

DO AS I SAY, NOT AS I DO. We have seen that God’s inspired prophets did not meet the Christian Zionist standard of blind, unquestioning support for Israel. As it turns out, today’s Christian Zionists do not meet that standard, either.

Whenever the modern Israeli government takes any action that does not fit in with the speculative doomsday scenarios of the Armageddon Theology, the Christian Zionists will loudly protest and insist that the Israelis are doing wrong.

For instance, in 1994 Christian Zionist leaders, including Pat Robertson and Ralph Reed, publicly condemned the policies of the Israeli government under Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who was seeking a peace settlement with the Palestinians. Robertson has also attacked the policies of Israeli foreign minister Shimon Peres.

It seems hypocritical for Christian Zionists to threaten the wrath of God against those who express disagreement with any policy of the Israeli government, when they have done the same thing themselves.

Modern Israelis and other Jews are well aware of the fact that the Christian Zionists believe, based on a mistaken interpretation of Zechariah 13:8, that there must be a devastating war in the Middle East in which two-thirds of all the Jews will be slaughtered. It is commonly understood that the Christian Zionists do not

really care about what is best for the Jews, as evidenced by their constant lobbying efforts to stir up World War 3 in the Middle East. Millions of Jews may wind up dead, but it will be good for sales of the Armageddon videos that are peddled on the televangelists’ broadcasts and web sites.

This raises the question of who is really “blessing Israel;” those who are working for peace in the Middle East, or those who are agitating for a war designed to get two-thirds of all Jews wiped out?

Some gullible evangelical Christians may not understand these issues, but our Jewish friends understand what is at stake very well – they are being prepared to serve as cannon fodder for the next Holocaust.

PREACHER, LEAVE THOSE JEWS ALONE. Gershom Gorenberg, in his book “The End of Days: Fundamentalism and the Struggle for the Temple Mount,” says, “I’ve listened to . . . American evangelical ministers who insist on their deep love for Israel and nevertheless eagerly await apocalyptic battles on Israel’s soil so terrible that the dry river beds will, they predict, fill with rivers of blood.

Rabi Eric Yoffie, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, stated that “People who say there can be no peace are not really friends of Israel.”

Robert O. Freedman, political science professor at Baltimore Hebrew University, says concerning Christian Zionists, “Once you get in bed with them, you are, to a certain extent, subscribing to their view of what America ought to be. And that, in my view, is not in the best interests of the Jewish people.”

Former Shin Bet secret service chief Carmi Gillon and former police commissioner Assaf Hefetz, commenting on the activities of Temple Mount extremists who are financially supported by fundamentalist Americans, warned that an attack on the Al Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem “would lead to an all out war and unleash destructive forces that would imperil Israel’s existence.”

The eagerness of some televangelists, to get a war going in the Middle East (along with their vociferous Arab-bashing and Muslim-baiting), must be considered in context of their belief in the infamous Armageddon Theology, which insists that 2/3 of all the Jews must die.

Grace Halsell, in her book “Prophecy and Politics,” observed: “Convinced that a nuclear Armageddon is an inevitable event within the divine scheme of things, many evangelical dispensationalists have

committed themselves to a course for Israel that, by their own admission, will lead directly to a holocaust indescribably more savage and widespread than any vision of carnage that could have generated in Adolf Hitler's criminal mind."

American Christians who really want to be a blessing to the children of Abraham need to realize that they do not have to render blind, knee-jerk support to the most extremist elements of Zionism, or to those who are actively trying to foment massive wars in the Middle East that would be contrary to the interests of the Israeli people. Not everyone is going to agree that stirring up a war to get 2/3 of all the Jews killed is a good thing for the Jews.

We should be very cautious about demanding that all Christians follow a narrow and extreme agenda of endless war and conflict in modern Israel, based on a very questionable and allegorizing application of Genesis 12:3. All of us desire the best for the Israeli people, but there will be honest differences of opinion on how to translate that desire into political action and foreign policy. These differences of opinion should not become tests of fellowship.

Nor should we forget that our Prime Directive as Christians is found in the Great Commission. Our mission is to evangelize, baptize and teach, not to try to hasten Christ's coming by agitating war and violence in the Middle East.

The desire to "bless Israel" is commendable. Let us do just that, by preaching the Gospel to the Jewish people and by promoting policies that will enable Israelis to live in peace with their neighbors in the Middle East, rather than trying to get millions of Jews killed in order to fulfill the deluded doomsday fantasies and Armageddon scenarios of certain money-grabbing televangelists.

Pr 22:3 *"A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished."*

A SUGGESTED SURVIVAL LIST

By Chuck Baldwin

I fully realize that most of us Americans cannot fathom a world in which food cannot be obtained from the supermarket or fuel cannot be obtained from the corner gas station or that the power grid could be off line for more than a few hours. Hardly anyone in the national media will even entertain the idea that anything catastrophic could ever happen in this country that would disrupt our lives for more than a few days.

Additionally, the vast majority of pastors and churches refuse to deal with any of these issues and do their best to keep people comfortably sedated. I also know that when you try to discuss these issues with church leaders, you hear such things as "This is America – it can't happen here," or "God won't let that happen," or "The Rapture will take place first," and other such expressions of denial. Each time I write my Suggested Survival column, I receive a plethora of correspondence from Christian people chastising me for my "lack of faith."

Yet, I remind readers that the Old Testament story of Joseph was written "for our learning." (Rom. 15:4) I also remind readers that the tribulations, which American Christians keep saying can't happen to them, have been happening to Christians throughout the world for decades. I guess God must not love those poor folks as much as He loves us fat, lazy Christians in America, huh?

Most sensible people know that America's economic outlook is bleak, the current phony surge in the stock market notwithstanding. For all intents and purposes, the U.S. is bankrupt. We are living on borrowed money and on borrowed time. Every honest economist knows this is true and is making personal preparations for the inevitable. And, by the way, so are many federal law enforcement officers. Many of you would be shocked to discover just how much "prepping" is being done by in-the-know federal agents. ...

Even if my concern regarding nuclear war never materializes (I would love to be wrong about this), how long before another terrorist attack similar to 9/11 takes place? How long before there is another Hurricane Katrina or Los Angeles riot? How long before an EMP takes out the power grid? How long before major water dams dry up? How long before a major drought disrupts the food supply? How long before America's tattered and fragile economy spawns hyper-inflation? The possible eventualities that might spark a serious national catastrophe are so numerous, it is virtually impossible to count them all.

Am I fear-mongering? Absolutely not! Anyone who knows me or who has listened to my speeches and messages knows I am constantly proclaiming, "Fear not." It is the federal government and its puppets in the national media who are constantly trying to instill fear in the hearts of people, in order to scare us into accepting their Nanny State and Police State. They know people will surrender liberties they would not

ordinarily surrender if they are frightened enough.

No, I am not living in fear, nor am I trying to instill fear in others. But I am advocating readiness. Only foolish people would sit back and do nothing to try and protect their families and loved ones in the face of danger. Twice the Scriptures say, “A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished.” (Proverbs 22:3; 27:12 KJV) I remind my Christian brethren: when it rains, it rains on the just and the unjust alike. (Matthew 5:45)

Accordingly, people from virtually every walk of life have asked my thoughts on how they should prepare. Therefore, I will, again, attempt to share with my readers some of the counsel I have given these folks. [These are his personal opinions, ed.]

Location:

Analyze your living conditions. Where do you live? Do you live in an urban or rural environment? Is it a big city or small town? Do you live in an apartment or condominium? How close are your neighbors? Do you even know your neighbors? Would you trust them if the electricity was off and they were hungry? How easily could you secure your home? If you live in a cold weather environment, how long could you stay warm without electricity? These are the kinds of questions you need to ask yourself now.

Over the past several decades, masses of people have migrated into large metropolitan areas. More people currently live in urban areas than at any time in American history. While this may be well and good for times of prosperity, it is an absolute nightmare during any kind of disaster. Needless to say, any inner-city environment could become a powder keg almost instantaneously given the right (or wrong) circumstances. And the bigger the city, the bigger the potential problems. ...

(“Russia’s bombers to conduct regular patrols, ranging from the Arctic to the Gulf of Mexico” <https://ca.news.yahoo.com/russias-bombers-conduct-regular-patrols-ranging-arctic-gulf-140627703.html>)

If you live in the inner city, I suggest you consider moving to a more rural location. If you can afford it, now is a great time to buy a “safe house” outside the city. If you are fortunate enough to have family or some trusted friends nearby, you may want to put your heads--and some resources--together in preparation for serious upheaval. Obviously, a team of prepared people is much better than being alone.

If you must stay in your urban location, have some common sense plans in hand in the event of a major

disaster. Get to know your neighbors: find out whom you can trust and whom you can’t. Keep some extra gasoline on hand, in case you need to get in your car quickly and leave. Have several exit routes planned ahead of time in case roads are blocked. Have a “bug-out” bag containing essential ingredients to live on for at least three or four days. If leaving is not an option, have a plan to secure your home as best you can. You’ll need to think about things such as food, water, medicine, warmth, self-defense, etc. But at this point, to do nothing is absolute lunacy! ...

Provisions:

During a major disaster, food will quickly disappear. Living for over three decades on the Gulf Coast, I can tell you with absolute certainty that whenever disaster strikes (usually an approaching hurricane, for those folks), food and provisions at the store completely sell out in a matter of a few hours. People panic, and within hours, you cannot find food, bottled water, ice, generators, batteries, candles, etc. In a matter of hours, every gas station in the area will be completely out of gas. Not days. Hours!

Furthermore, almost all disasters include a complete loss of electricity. The water supply is also compromised. At that point, clean water will become absolutely priceless. Dehydration becomes a very real and present danger. I remember witnessing a man give an ice vendor \$100 for an extra bag of ice after Hurricane Ivan. My wife and I went 14 days without electricity in the aftermath of that hurricane. Believe me, I got a taste of just how precious bottled water, ice, batteries, generators, fuel, etc., can become.

I suggest you have a supply of food and water to last at least three months. Many survival experts insist that a six-month supply is the minimum. Personally, I can live a long time on tuna fish or peanut butter. You can purchase MREs from a variety of sources, as well as camp-style packaged food from many sporting goods stores. Of course, bottled water is available everywhere during normal times. Stock up! Distilled water will store longer than spring water. Plus, I suggest you have some water purification tablets or a Katadyn water filter on hand. And, if you are able, prepare to grow your own food. In cold weather climates such as we have here in Montana, people quickly learn how to construct and utilize greenhouses in which to grow food. Canning food is another very helpful hedge against deprivation. If your parents and grandparents lived through the Great Depression as mine did, this was standard operating

procedure.

Get a generator. Keep a supply of fuel on hand. Stay stocked up on batteries, candles, portable lights, first aid supplies, and toiletries--especially toilet paper and toothpaste. I also suggest you never run out of lighters or matches. You never know when you'll need to build a fire. If you live in a cold weather climate, you probably already have some sort of wood stove or fireplace.

Gas masks, geiger counters, plastic sheets for doors and windows, and iodine tablets are an absolute necessity in any kind of radiation emergency. And don't overlook the benefits of a good knife. Plus, you can NEVER have too much duct tape.

Obviously, you need to take stock of your clothing. Do you have clothes suitable for extended outdoor activity? What about boots? During a disaster, you would trade your best suit from Neiman Marcus for a good pair of boots. Do you have gloves? Insulated underwear? What about camouflage clothing? These could become essential outerwear in the right conditions. Plus, any "bug-out" bag will need to include spare clothing. And as most folks here in Montana know, "cotton kills." For extended outdoor wear in cold weather, wool is the only way to go.

Communication and medical provisions are also a high priority in any kind of emergency. And what about medical supplies? ... What about your prescription drugs?... Also, seriously consider learning about natural, herbal medicines. Those plants growing in your "back forty" might just cure a headache, stop bleeding, or even save your life. Think about it now. ...

Commodities:

I suggest you have at least some cash on hand. Just about any and all disasters will result in banks being closed for extended periods of time. That also means credit card purchases being suspended. You need to have enough cash to be able to purchase essential goods (if they are even available) for an undetermined amount of time. ...

In fact, in a disaster, what is considered a valuable commodity can change rather quickly, as the barter system takes a life of its own. What is valuable is determined by what you need and how badly you need it. In a prolonged disaster, simple things such as toilet paper, canned goods, ammunition, and clothing could become extremely valuable; while cars, video games, televisions, etc., could be reduced to junk status. In antiquity, wars were fought over things such as salt. You might be surprised to learn that there are already

active barter groups in your area. I suggest you establish a relationship with these people now.

Speaking of cars, remember that during a prolonged national emergency that might involve some sort of nuclear attack or widespread civil unrest, an Electromagnetic Pulse (EMP) might be employed; in which case, most every late model vehicle would be completely inoperable. Accordingly, if one can keep an older, pre-computer-age vehicle in good working order, he or she might be driving the only non-government vehicle capable of going anywhere. Of course, you might not want to drive it to town, if that is the case.

Self-Defense:

Needless to say, during any kind of disaster, your safety and protection will be completely up to you. If you really think that the police are going to be able to protect you during an upheaval, you are living in a dream world.

In the New Orleans, Los Angeles, and Ferguson emergencies, many people found that police protection was non-existent. Lawless gangs quickly took control of the streets, and people were left to either defend themselves or swiftly become the helpless prey of violent marauders. In fact, in New Orleans, some of the policemen actually abandoned their oaths to uphold the law and joined with the criminals, turning their weapons against the public.

Face it, folks: in any kind of disaster, you must be able to defend yourself or you and your family will be meat for these animals of society that will quickly descend without mercy upon the unprepared, unsuspecting souls around them. This requires that you be armed. It also requires that you be skilled enough to be able to efficiently use your arms. Therefore, I strongly suggest that you purchase firearms sufficient to keep you and your family safe, and also that you practice sufficiently to know how to use them. [Note the prospect of needing to kill your own game for meat. Do you have a place to hunt. 12 gauge pump shotgun is the best home protection. One center fire long gun needed to kill game, one large caliber handgun, 38 cal or larger, Glock is preferred. An accurate .22 is always nice to have. See Baldwins' article for a more complete list self-defence arms.]

Go to your local **independent sporting goods** store (I don't recommend the large national chain stores to do your firearms shopping) and get to know your hometown firearms dealer. Most of these people are kind and helpful folks who will be more than happy to assist you in finding exactly what type of firearm is

suitable for you and your family....

Spiritual Power:

I firmly believe that man is created to have fellowship with his Creator-God. I really don't know how people can face an uncertain future without the spiritual knowledge, wisdom, comfort, and power that is made available through Jesus Christ. I believe the maxim is true: "Wise men still seek Him." I strongly suggest that you seek to possess a personal relationship with God's only begotten Son. In truth, spiritual preparation is far and away the most important preparation of all. Accordingly, be sure to pack a copy of God's Word in your survival gear....

[end]

"Be Prepared". Check out his "Survival Blog.com. Read his complete article, <http://newswithviews.com/baldwin/baldwin824.htm>

If you have not been able to find a local church where the pastor is unafraid of the issues of the day, please join us online through Skype or Facetime (Mac). Our messages are downloadable in Word format, and at Sermonaudio.com

Pay attention to the news: Michael Brown was the needed spark to "justify" anarchy to bring this nation into uncontrolled chaos. It was made clear that there were going to be riots regardless of what the Grand Jury decided. It was not the "blacks" of Ferguson who led in the riots; rather, according to local residents, it was imported professional agitators, including Communists, and **encouraged by Obama.**

(<http://www.kansascity.com/news/local/crime/article1251108.html>. <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2014/08/23/the-communist-agitators-trying-to-ignite-ferguson.html>. <http://www.thefederalistpapers.org/us/obama-secretly-met-with-ferguson-protestors-asked-them-to-do-this>)

Officially encouraged and sanctioned anarchy is here, and will spread to where very oppressive marshal law will be required.

[Parentheses: Notice the big public outcry over the killing of a black man who was intent on killing a white policeman, but absolutely no national coverage of the "flash-bang" grenade that landed in the crib of a baby, among other serious misdeeds against innocent people. There is a preplanned agenda in the works. Are you ready? Learn how to hunt and fish so you can feed youold I don't care whatever yours]

The new four lane highway, "Corridor 'H'" through our county was financed as an emergency escape route extension of I-66 from DC. But it does not yet connect with I-66, and one must travel a very crooked 2-lane road over the mountain to get to the start of

the Corridor. I "ride" with our local sheriff when both he and I have a chance. He is very concerned, and desires to inform the citizens without sounding like a "whacko". He meets privately with citizens seeking advice as to what will work best for our county. He has tried to unite with the surrounding sheriffs to determine what to do when disaster strikes DC, and our county increases from 14,000 to well over 100,000 within a few days as people flee from the anarchy of Northern Virginia and DC when the Chinese or FED money stops flowing. Our sheriff is personally making preparation, and is urging others to do the same. He says "not if, but when". We personally know some state police, and they are doing the same. By being so close to the epicenter of the coming anarchy, we know of several federal agents who have "bug out" homes in remote mountain areas in our county. I realize law enforcement collapse has been warned about for some time, and it may sound like "wolf, wolf", but keep up with what is going on.

Psalms 4:8 "I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety."

Psalms 12:5 "For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the LORD; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him."

Proverbs 21:31 "The horse is prepared against the day of battle: but safety is of the LORD."

Proverbs 27:12 "A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself; but the simple pass on, and are punished."

A lot of sincere Christians are going to be "punished".

POINTS TO PONDER

First: Students complain about paltry school lunches; that is to say, the taxpayers are not providing enough food for them. What happened to students bringing in their own meals? Since when is it the taxpayers' responsibility to feed the students? Most of us remember when we went to school; if we went to public school, we took our own lunches. We survived just fine on what our parents provided, even if it was peanut butter and jelly.

Second: The big fuss over the "Houston sermon grab" even stirred up Rush Limbaugh. However, I assume that those pastors are more than likely heads of Incorporated churches, which they sought in order to gain tax-exempt status under 501(c)3. (I don't believe Incorporation is required in order to be tax exempt under the IRS. We were not incorporated in Linden, and never had a question from the IRS.) Incorporated

ministries are creatures of the state. The Incorporation papers that were signed agreed to abide by whatever the state decrees, as well as to submit any financial records that the state desires. Read your Incorporation papers. Those who seek government subsidies through tax-exempt status can fully expect the government to make unbiblical requirements, yet those incorporated groups agreed to obey those requirements.

Romans 13 requires obedience to the authority over us. Incorporation willingly submitted God's ministry to the state's authority, so disobedience to that authority is violation of Scripture.

We have a free book, "Church Inc." which develops the biblical errors of being incorporated.

Third: 500 million people infected, if you have a **flashlight app** on your smart phone. All the personal information, passwords, bank information, personal contacts, family photos, etc., you have on that phone are collected and forwarded to China, India or Russia. Only a factory reset of your smart phone can get this Trojan off of your smart phone.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/Q8xz8xKEFvU>

<http://www.snoopwall.com/threat-reports-10-01-2014/>

Fourth: Ebola-politics as usual.

Ebola Scare Disappearing, 10/21/14

The New American: The 43 people who had direct or indirect contact with Duncan are now safely out of quarantine. The Carnival cruise has returned to port without incident.

"As the Ebola virus scare story disappears from national headlines, it is safe to assume that the mainstream media will now move on to more relevant topics."

http://www.thenewamerican.com/world-news/north-america/item/19343-ebola-scare-disappearing?utm_source=Newsletter&utm_campaign=692aac4a78-The_Editors_Top_Picks_3_12_143_12_2014&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_8ca494f2d2-692aac4a78-288838389

On The Other hand

"Doctor: health authorities covering up Ebola like cases in US" Patients being "disappeared" to prevent panic.

<http://www.infowars.com/medical-professional-health-authorities-covering-up-ebola-cases-in-u-s/>

Who is to be believed? Is it a pandemic to be covered up to prevent public panic, or is it a lot of noise about nothing in order to sell drugs?

Obama's "Ebola Czar" Thinks Overpopulation Is Top Challenge (10/21/14)

In addition to having essentially no medical qualifications for the newly invented "Ebola czar" post

aside from serving as a lobbyist for a pharmaceutical firm, attorney and political operative Ron Klain (shown) is under fire after a video surfaced of him declaring that "growing population" — particularly in Africa — was the "top leadership challenge" for the world today. Critics expressed outrage over the comments, especially considering warnings by demographic experts of an upcoming plunge in population caused by a dramatic decline in birthrates across most of the world. But news reports citing insiders suggest that Obama has even bigger plans for Klain within the administration than exploiting the Ebola scare to advance tyranny.

<https://www.thenewamerican.com/usnews/health-care/item/19345-obama-s-ebola-czar-thinks-overpopulation-is-top-challenge>

Have you seen the picture floating around the Internet "Ebola emergency response team". It is a picture of Obama and Klain in a golf cart with the lettering "Ebola emergency response team" on the front of the cart. Obama is getting out of the car with his golf club in his hand. Politics as usual

Obama Regime Pushing Abortion To Fight Ebola

We couldn't make it up if we tried. A pro-life group is calling Barack Obama to task for endorsing the use of cells extracted from aborted babies to develop an Ebola vaccine, even though the medical community is saying that using cells from plants and animals would be just as effective.

http://conservativeamericaonline.blogspot.com/2014/10/obama-regime-pushing-abortion-to-fight.html?utm_source=America%27s+Conservative+News&utm_campaign=0c2206b6eb-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c28c63c891-0c2206b6eb-255830569#more

Is The UN Using Vaccines To Secretly Sterilize Women All Over The Globe?

In some areas of the world, purposely cutting off someone's family line is considered to be one of the most wicked things that you can possibly do

<http://www.infowars.com/is-the-un-using-vaccines-to-secretly-sterilize-women-all-over-the-globe/>

Pandemic scare in order to sell drugs and bring about tighter restrictions? The Truth of the matter? Only the Lord knows.

Let us be reminded that those with evil designs for this nation and for society in general have absolutely no regard for freedom and human life. Sadly, that includes Bill Gates along with a good number more well-known ".com" millionaires.

Fifth: "Hundreds of Westerners Join Middle East Jihadist"

<http://abcnews.go.com/WNT/video/hundreds-westerners-join-middle-east-jihadists-24241155>

There seems to be an amazing rush of Westerners to

join the followers of Mohammed who enjoy beheadings, rape, torture, violence of every kind including the slave trade. Why?

My speculation is that the loss of a Christian culture, which stands against the aforementioned evils, is the primary cause. Add to that the emphasis in education on death (school children having to write their own obituaries), the promotion of the murder of the unborn and the extremely violent movies and video games, we now have a generation that desires to act out that violence without fear of having to “pay” for their violence. What better excuse can they have for murder and mayhem than to be a follower of the demonic spirit Allah?

DC Schools Strip Christmas From Calendar After Muslims Complain

<http://www.infowars.com/dc-schools-strip-christmas-from-calendar-after-muslims-complain/>

FREEDOM LOST

1 Samuel 7:7-12

Over 20 years previous to this passage, Israel had lost a battle with their enemy, the Philistines, and Israel was now servants of the Philistines. The ark of the Lord had been lost in that battle, and Eli’s sons were killed when it was taken. The Lord caused the Philistines to send back the ark, and it was placed in the house of an Israelite who was close at hand.

The people longed for the liberty and independence they had had before the Philistines conquered them. They were tired of being the servants of the Philistines. Over in chapter 13:20, 21, we see that when the Philistines were in control, Israel was disarmed, and were not even allowed to have grind stones to sharpen their tools.

No doubt they had to have travel documents, and could not fly without going through an x-ray machine.

V. 3, Samuel finally told them that if they wanted their liberty and freedom back, they had to deal with strange gods and Ashtaroth, and serve the Lord only .

America serves the god of mammon, among other gods. We gripe and complain about the loss of freedom, but I really do not see a genuine desire to deal with the strange gods.

There are many moves attempting to restore personal liberty and freedom without dealing with the false gods. All of those efforts have the Lord Himself against them because there is no genuine heart change from sin to God.

V. 4-6, the people put away their false gods, confessed their sins, and renewed their commitment to the Lord. The pouring of the water in v. 6, represented the cleansing of the people. Paul talks about the cleansing of the heart by the water of the word.

I have noticed today that rather than returning to the word of God, people are getting further away from it with the many fluffy books. There is an abundance of programs that seek freedom apart from repentance, faith and obedience.

The various character training programs are foolishly and vainly seeking liberty and freedom apart from God’s word.

Ecclesiastes 12:13 *“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.”*

US, RULED BY MUSLIMS

John Brennan, current head of the CIA converted to Islam while stationed in Saudi Arabia. Obama’s top advisor, Valerie Jarrett, is a Muslim who was born in Iran where her parents still live. Hillary Clinton’s top advisor, Huma Abedin is a Muslim, whose mother and brother are involved in the now outlawed Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt.

* Assistant Secretary for Policy Development for Homeland Security, Arif Aikhan, is a Muslim.

* Homeland Security Advisor, Mohammed Elibary, is a Muslim.

* Obama advisor and founder of the Muslim Public Affairs Council, Salam al-Marayati, is a Muslim.

* Obama’s Sharia Czar, Imam Mohamed Magid, of the Islamic Society of North America is a Muslim.

* Advisory Council on Faith-Based Neighborhood Partnerships, Eboo Patel, is a Muslim.

* And last but not least, our closet Muslim himself, Barack Hussein Obama. It’s questionable if Obama ever officially took the oath of office when he was sworn in. He didn’t repeat the oath properly to defend our nation and our Constitution. Later the Democrats claimed he was given the oath again in private?

* CIA director John Brennan took his oath on a copy of the Constitution, not a Bible.

* Congressman, Keith Ellison took his oath on a copy of the Qur’an.

* Congresswoman Michele Bachman was vilified and almost tarred and feathered by Democrats when she voiced her concern about Muslims taking over our government.

Considering all these appointments, it would explain why Obama and his minions are systematically

destroying our nation, supporting radical Muslim groups worldwide, opening our southern border, and turning a blind eye to the genocide being perpetrated on Christians all over Africa and the Middle East. The more damage Obama does, the more arrogant he's become!

Our nation and our government has been infiltrated by people who want to destroy us. It can only get worse!

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BOOKS: FREE UPON REQUEST, AND OTHERWISE

* "God has a wonderful plan for your life. The myth of the modern message." by Ron Comfort

* "The True Israel of God", L. R. Shelton.

* "Zion's Glad Morning", by Willard Ramsey.

* "Messiah's Second Advent, a study in eschatology", by Calvin Goodspeed.

* "Robert Baxter and the mid-tribulation rapture teaching", by evangelists John L Bray.

* "Then shall be great tribulation period", by John L Bray.

* "This Generation Shall Not Pass", by John L Bray.

* "Immediately after the tribulation", by John L Bray.

* "Rapture: Post-tribulation and pre-wrath", by Don Montgomery.

* "The Vision of Daniel-fulfilled", by R.D. Smith.

"Christian modesty and the public undressing of America" with full color cover, by Jeff Pollard

* "The cloning, a Novel", by Jan Ledford. Millennium III publishers.

* "Identifying Identity's Gentile Corruption" by Pastor Need.

* "What Does the Future Hold? Exploring various views of the end times", by Marvin Pate. Baker Books

* "Random Remarks", by J.W. Porter

* "The Other Jesus, The Gospel Perverted", by Pastor "Need"

* Various past issues of "the Pillar", published by Hallmark Baptist Church. These contain many good articles from a post-millennial, reformed perspective.

* Booklets by Thomas Williamson: "Essays in Old Testament prophecy", "Mission Accomplished, What Christ Achieved as a Result of his First Coming, death and resurrection", "Is congregational voting scriptural", "What does the Bible really say about that", "Defining our terms-essays in New Testament

prophecy".

* "The Child's History of The Fall Of Jerusalem." By Mrs. M.A. Hollock. Published by the American Track Society, New York. 1809. 92 page booklet. This is the most understandable view of Matthew 24 that you will find. 1809 means this booklet was published well before the modern rapture theory came into being in the middle c. 1850.

* "Study for new converts", by pastor Need

Books for sale

* "Apostate. The Man who Destroyed the Christian West." By Kevin Swanson. \$12.50.

* "What Does The Bible Say About That? A Biblical worldview curriculum for children for ages nine and up." Kevin Swanson. \$12.50.

* "The Three R's. Rapture, Revisionism, Robbery. Pre-tribulation Rapture from 1832 to Hal Lindsay." Dave MacPherson. \$10

* "The Incredible Schofield and His Book". Joseph Canfield. \$15

* "Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands. People in need of change helping people in need of change." Paul David Tripp. \$15

* "Death of the Church Victorious". By Pastor Need. \$20.

THE COMING SODOMITE WAR

All areas of society have been conquered by the "gays", but the church. The next several years will bring attacks against Christians and the church using the law, just as the Muslims use the sword. How will we prepare and respond?

http://www.tcfamily.org/2013%20Additions/2013_07/A%20

[WARNING%20TO%20THE%20CHURCH.htm](http://www.wnd.com/2014/08/churches-warned-tidal-wave-of-gay-theology-loomng/#aUtWc7CVjzBu4Ae1.99). <http://ipost.christianpost.com/news/the-gay-agendas-planned-psychological-attack-on-straight-america-12488/>

<http://www.wnd.com/2014/08/churches-warned-tidal-wave-of-gay-theology-loomng/#aUtWc7CVjzBu4Ae1.99>

Churches warned: 'Tidal wave of gay theology' looming

<http://www.wnd.com/2014/08/churches-warned-tidal-wave-of-gay-theology-loomng/#aUtWc7CVjzBu4Ae1.99>

The Utah Polygamy Ruling opens Pandora's box against the biblical family. The sodomites got a real boost from it.

<http://www.thenewamerican.com/culture/faith-and-morals/item/19032-the-utah-polygamy-ruling-and-the-tale-of-the-slippery-slope>

HYPER-GRACE

Christianity's central doctrine being twisted?

Posted By Jim Fletcher On 08/30/2014

At a time when the American church is undergoing seismic changes, one threat is particularly insidious, argues renowned scholar, professor and radio host Michael Brown.

"It is widespread," says Brown, whose new book "Hyper-Grace: Exposing the Dangers of the Modern Grace Message" has become a sensation among evangelicals. "Primarily the main teachers and preachers associated with this are in Pentecostal and charismatic circles. One major leader told me this is the biggest issue they are dealing with in their churches."

A hyper-grace approach to ministry typically emphasizes the love and forgiveness of God at the expense of His holiness and justice.

Writing in Charisma magazine, Joseph Mattera agrees with Brown about the unbalanced teaching sweeping American churches.

"Whole churches and movements have oriented themselves to a distorted understanding of the gospel by espousing a 'hypergrace' approach that trickles down to not only what they preach but who they allow to minister and teach," he writes, noting he was told there is even a new television station devoted to "this view of 'grace.'"

Mattera said many churches and preachers "refuse to take a stand against sin and rarely if ever mention the need for repentance or topics like hell and judgment."

"Many of these same churches," he says, "allow people to minister in music, as small group leaders and even as ministers with no personal accountability, while looking the other way when they are living sexually immoral lives and regularly engaged in drunkenness!"...

"You'll have Baptist pastors interested because it leads with their once-saved-always-saved views. Then from Tulsa to the Philippines, people are asking how to deal with this," Brown told WND. "The balance that must be achieved is, in dealing with the error, we cannot hurt the message of grace."

"I see it as symptomatic – as our society in the whole – in that we often have a narcissistic mentality that the gospel starts with me and is here to please me. That's not what hyper-grace teaches exactly, but to the extent that God can't make me uncomfortable, to the extent we embrace that mentality, it contributes greatly to the problem," he said....

"Absolutely, hyper-grace can be a problem," he

told WND. "On the positive side, those hearing a true message of grace are getting refreshed and revitalized. On the larger level, though, I absolutely see the hyper-grace message as antithetical to genuine revival. When you talk about the need to repent, sin in the camp, seeking God – these are all received negatively in the hyper-grace camp. For many, many reasons it can be antithetical to revival."

Brown cites ministry leaders Joseph Prince and John Crowder as among the most popular hyper-grace proponents.

In Chapter 9 of "Hyper-Grace," Brown discusses Crowder, a self-described "advocate of mystical Christianity."

"Actually this type of teaching resurfaces on a regular basis. Trace it back 50 years, 100 years, and church leaders were dealing with hyper-grace. One of the claims is that it is new revelation, and John Crowder represents a much smaller sphere of influence, but he's also stated that after you read his books you want to throw out other books and not listen to your preacher. Claims like that need to be examined very carefully."

"Hyper-Grace: Exposing the Dangers of the Modern Grace Message" available from the WND Superstore now!

URL to article: <http://www.wnd.com/2014/08/christianitys-central-doctrine-being-twisted/>



New Online Bible 4.21. Includes the ability to run under Wine on Mac, Linus and Windows. Includes Spurgeon's sermons, and Calvin's Commentary.

All articles by Bro. Need unless otherwise noted. Use with credit.