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RELIGIOUS FRAUD, PLUNDER, AND MURDER

MICAH 3

Though Micah's date is between 740 and 700 B.C., his words to "the house of Israel," clearly describe common problems within the church, as well as in society. Micah confronts the judges, civil rulers, religious leaders, as well as the false prophets, *i.e.* those who claimed to speak for the Lord of his day. (Peter tells us that societies' problems are the result of the problems within the church, 1 Pet 4:17.)

Micah lays exceedingly strong charges against those in authority. He not only reveals that they hate the good and love the evil, but he identifies their evil against the *sheep* as the worst kind of butchery, slaughter and murder. Though he lays most of the blame for the carnage on the butchers, he does not ignore the fact that the sheep love the false messages, for they are not told that the end result of those pleasant messages is death. Because the sheep fail to seek after and follow the Truth, they become willing victims of the butchers.

Furthermore, Micah clearly lays out the clear distinction between the children of the Wicked One and the children of God.

However, Micah does not leave the Christian in a hopeless situation, and he moves on to prophecy of the glorious future for the Gospel Church, which is the day in which we live.

Micah 3:1 And I said, Hear, I pray you, O heads of Jacob, and ye princes of the house of Israel; Is it not for you to know judgment?

"The persons addressed are the scandalous leaders of the house of Israel, *i.e.* of the covenant nation, and primarily those living in his own time, though by no means those only, but all who share their character and ungodliness, so that the words apply to succeeding generations quite as much as to his contemporaries."

(*House of Israel, i.e.* both Samaria and Jerusalem. Keil-Delitzsch, [K-D] Commentary on the Old Testament, v. 10.467. "Micah 3:12, for your sakes... He is not speaking to the surrounding pagans,

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but to Israel's religious leaders, the **Pharisees**, &c." ; According to Rabbi Kertzer: "Modern Judaism is especially the religion of 'the **Rabbis**,' and the **Pharisees** were the first **Rabbis**." Rabbi Morris N. Kertzer, *What is a Jew*, p. 18. 1956, Simon & Schuster. 1996 Tuchstone Edition.)

Micah is speaking against the judges, *i.e.* those who apply the law-word of God to render justice; the princes, *i.e.* the civil rulers; the priests, *i.e.* those who taught the law-word of God, and the prophets, *i.e.* those who spoke in the name of the Lord, 1 Kings 22, 2 Chronicles 18.

Micah's charge against all the leaders is that there is no justice; they hate the good, and love the evil. The love of money and power has corrupted everything. The result will be the annihilation of the apostate house of Israel, v. 12.

Our period of time in history is significant, but not unusual. Christians are being swept off their feet, and are investing billions of dollars of God's money to finance openly apostate "Christian" teachers in the religious, public and private arenas, as well as openly anti-Christ nations.

Going through the prophecies of Micah, one should be very strongly impressed with God's message against those who "fleece" the Sheep of His pasture with deceits, frauds, lies and half-truths. The people of God are compared to sheep, and they easily follow a strong leader regardless of the doctrinal soundness of that leader. (Ps. 74:1, 79:13, 95:7, 100:3, Jer. 23:1, &c.)

Though I have never been a shepherd over literal sheep, from what I understand, sheep have very little mind of their own in that they will follow their leader

wherever he leads them. The Lord said that His sheep know His voice, and will flee at the voice of a stranger, which leaves us with a problem. **Either all those following along after the many false shepherds of our day are not the Lord's sheep**, or the false shepherds are very effective *angels of light*, indistinguishable to the natural mind from true shepherds. (I realize there is only one *Shepherd*, but throughout Scripture, spiritual leaders are called *shepherds*.)

Observe: The natural man loves any message that offers him the freedom to be his own god, able to determine for himself what is good and what is evil. Paul tells us to put off the works of the "old man." (Eph 4:22ff.) That command tells us that the "old man" is still present, and can remain in control of the *sheep*. The "old man" is prone to follow lies and deceits.

The problem is that the *sheep* love to follow false shepherds – they love to have their ears tickled with messages that appeal to the flesh, *e.g., wine and strong drink*. (Micah 2:11, Jer. 5:31.) God's *sheep* many times gladly follow the deceitful and lying messages, seemingly unconcerned that they are being led to the slaughter – that is, the lying messengers are saying and doing what appeals to the masses for their personal benefit. The New Testament authors, as did Christ Himself, called the lying shepherds *wolves* intent on devouring the *sheep*. (Matt 7:15, Acts 20:29, 1 Peter 5:8, 2 Peter 2:1-3.)

[H]aving *itching ears* that like to be scratched, the sheep readily accept the pleasant words that appeal to the old man. Thus, they have little or no inclination to obey God's instructions to *try the spirits whether they are of God*, even though they have been told that *many false prophets are gone out into the world*. (2 Tim 4:3, 1 Jn. 4:1.) They have little inclination to obey the words of Christ to search the Hebrew or Septuagint Scriptures to see if what they are being told is true. (Jn 5:31, Acts 17:11, 2 Tim 3:15).

Though they profess to be part of the Lord's flock, they do not know nor understand the scriptures. (Ps 95:7, 100:3, Matt 22:29). They are thus easily led astray by those "trusted" teachers who wrest the scriptures to their own destruction, and to the destruction of those who follow them. (Hosea 13:9, Ps 56:5, 2 Peter 3:16. Though out of its context, we can say with Paul that they are without excuse – they have no one to blame except themselves, Rom 1:20.)

Isaiah 8:20 *To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in*

them.

God's condemnation throughout Scripture is primarily against the *false shepherds*, false religious leaders known as *wolves*, rather than against the easily led astray sheep. The tone of the passages against the *wolves* implies that, more often than not, the *false shepherds* realize what they are doing – they realize that their words are lies and deceits designed to reap riches, fame and glory for themselves.

Parentheses: The early formulators of the then new dispensational millennial doctrine in the late 1700s and early 1800s intentionally threw out 1400 years of orthodox Christian doctrine. They knew and readily confessed that they were formulating a new line of Christian thought. The *sheep* did not follow them because of their sound doctrine, but because of their strong personalities.

"Micah 3 is divided into three parts of four verses each: 1) vv. 1-4, to the princes who turn right into wrong, and flay the people for their own benefit; 2) vv. 5-8, to the false prophets who lead the people astray and confirm them in their sin with lying prophecies of peace, as they call down God's retribution upon themselves; 3) vv. 9-12, to the three classes of the divinely-appointed chiefs of the nation – the princes, the priests, and the prophets – the destruction of Jerusalem, and the turning of Zion and the temple mountain into a ploughed field and wooded heights on account of their degeneracy." (K-D)

Micah speaks against the leaders of the house of Jacob and the princes of the house of Israel, which houses represent those in Christ in the New Testament:

Isaiah 49:3 *And said to me, Thou [art] my servant, O {e} Israel, in whom I will be glorified.*

(e) By Israel is meant Christ, and all the body of the faithful, as the members and their head. (Geneva. See also 42:1.)

Matthew Henry comments on 1 John 5:19, *And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.*

"3. They are on God's side and interest, in opposition to the state of the world: And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness, #1Jo 5:19. Mankind are divided into two great parties of dominions, that which belongs to God and that which belongs to wickedness or to the wicked one. The Christian believers belong to God. They are of God, and from him, and to him, and for him. They succeed into the right and room of the ancient Israel of God, of whom it is said, The Lord's people is his portion, his estate in this world; Jacob is the

lot of his inheritance, the dividend that has fallen to him by the lot of his own determination (#De 32:9); while, on the contrary, the whole world, the rest, being by far the major part, lieth in wickedness, in the jaws in the bowels, of the wicked one..."

Thus, there are only TWO classes of people in the world today, Christians and non-Christians: There is no longer a Jew/Gentile distinction, for "the house of Israel" ceased to exist 2000 years ago, 3:12. The new house of Israel is the Gospel Church, those in Christ Jesus, Micah 4:1ff.

How can those who profess to believe God's word try to unite the light with darkness, righteousness with unrighteousness as is being done in the two other faiths that claim their roots in Abraham: "Judeo-Christianity" and "Chrislam"? (2 Cor 6:14ff) Why are we trying to merge two systems of thought that are at war with each other—one that wars against Christ, and one that follows Christ?

Micah 3:1-4

To the princes who turn right into wrong, "*and flay the people for their own benefit.*"

Typical of the word of God, Micah, 2:12, 13 gave a bright spot in the midst of the thunderings and lightnings of God's wrath against apostate Israel. After his wrath is appeased, chapter 4 gives the promise of a great turning of the **nations** to the gospel of Christ. God has exposed the secret motives of the heart of those in 3:1-4. The sin being spoken against is primarily the sin of those in power, including both religious and civil leaders. They misused their power for personal gain, to increase their own wealth and power.

In chapter 3, the short break in the clouds of God's wrath is over, and He again speaks against the evil ones who are in control, the princes and leaders of the families in Israel, the heads of the families and of the households. These are men whose duty is to know judgment and justice, to know good and evil, and promote the good and punish evil. (Rom 13.)

However, the corruption of the "leaders" is evident; God has exposed the secret motives in 2:1, 2. They hate good and they love evil and money. They not only rob the people, but they treat them like cattle to be butchered to produce food for the hungry—these men are hungry wolves, hungry for power and wealth.

3:2, 3, the wicked hate the good (which would include truth) and love the evil, for it is through their evil deceptions and lies that they obtain and maintain their wealth and power. Micah compares these wicked men to wild

beasts that rip and tear apart their prey.

Illustrations: We had a very public confrontation with the powers that be in Montgomery County, Indiana. A man who helped us in that situation said that the best way to get what he wanted was not to raise a public outcry, petition the county nor to go through the courts, but by placing money in the right places.

On the other hand, we had a very personal encounter with a man on the County Commission in WV. He was hungry for power and wealth. On the local level, we won our suit against him, but because of his connections with the powers in Charleston, we lost our case at the Supreme Court. I would have voted for Joe Manchin over Morrissey simply because of his connection with the hungry wolf on the Hardy County Commission; he devoured everyone in his path to wealth and power. Corruption enabled him to avoid justice. [facebook.com/hardycountyinformed](https://www.facebook.com/hardycountyinformed)

I came out the worse for wear in the fight with the wild beast in WV who devoured everything in his path. He claimed to be a good Christian and supported his church with great flair. On the other hand, the Indiana encounter came out very well.

The above cases are far too common at the local, state and federal level. There can be no justice apart from the standard established in the law-word of God. The day is coming when that standard shall be enforced. Micah 4:1ff.

V. 4, the Lord promises distress upon the leaders who cause His people to err, and who give them false hope. The Lord will punish the wicked. "Therefore, in the time of judgment, God will not hear their crying to Him for help, but will hide His face from them, *i.e.*, withdraw His mercy from them." (K-D)

"just as those oppressed by them had formerly cried, and they would not hear. Their prayer shall be rejected, because it is the mere cry of nature for deliverance from pain, not that of repentance for deliverance from sin." (JFB, Jamieson, Fausset Brown Commentary.)

Vv. 5-7 is addressed to the false prophets who lead the people astray, and confirmed them in their sin with lying prophecies of peace, which call down God's retribution upon themselves.

Now Micah turns from the godless princes and judges to the prophets who lead the people astray for the profit that is in it for themselves. As the first strophe expanded on 2:1 & 2, this second expands on 2:6 & 11, and the false prophets.

Note: If it were me speaking, I would start placing the

blame on the sheep for being so gullible and allowing themselves to be “fleeced” by their religious leaders. But the Lord continues to place the primary blame on the prophets who for the profit speak lies in his name.

Although Micah speaks against the corrupt family and civil leaders, his harshest words are against the corrupt religious leaders who “prophesy for profit.” (Spurgeon called them “Profiting Prophets.”) The Lord promises to devise evil against those who devised evil against the easily deceived sheep. As he speaks to the immediate prophets of Israel, he also speaks to the *prophets* of the New Testament Gospel Church, *qv*.

V. 5, *make my people err.*

[They] knowingly mislead My people by not denouncing their sins as incurring judgment. (JFB)

The false shepherds *make my people err* by “failing to charge them with their sins, and preach repentance, as the true prophets do, and predicting prosperity for bread and payment.” (K-D) They prophecy peace as long as they are supplied with the good things, but when that supply slacks off, then they foretell war and calamity; they *prepare war* — “literally, ‘sanctify war,’ that is, proclaim it as a holy judgment of God because they are not fed.” (JFB)

Vv. 6, 7, though the false prophets claimed to have words from God, and the people believed that they had God’s light in them, they had no vision from God. God promises that the time will come when everyone will see that they have nothing but darkness; then they will be afraid to speak again in the name of the Lord. (“Darkness is often the image of calamity, Isa. 8:22, Am. 5:18, 8:9.” JFB)

The sun will go down, and darkness will cover the false prophets. Their time of prosperity will be over, and they will lose favor with the people. Their days of huge speaking fees will be over, and the people will hold them in contempt when their prophecies do not materialize. However, it seems that no matter how many times the foolish prophecies fail to materialize, a great many continue to be deceived by the same false words.

Example: Many of us remember the booklet, “88 Reasons Why The Rapture Will Be in 1988” (Edgar C. Whisenant). It was a very popular book back in the 1980s, as it told people what they wanted to believe. (“88” sold 4.5 million copies, with 300,000 copies sent free to ministers. It was so popular that TBN provided special instruction on preparing for the rapture.) When the rapture did not take place, Whisenant followed it up in 1989, 1993, and 1994. Whisenant made a fortune as the sheep flocked to purchase his book and hear him

speak. His *sure word of prophecy* turned out to be lies. If I remember right, he made enough money from the simple minded who wanted to justify their foolish faith to purchase a farm in Kentucky. He died in 2001.

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edgar_C._Whisenant)

A family visited our church back then. When I visited them, they asked me what I thought of “88 Reasons...” When I told them the truth, they were quite distressed, and never came back. Note 2 Peter 1:19 is followed by 2 Peter 2:1, and the warning against *false prophets* among the people of God.

2 Peter 1:19 *We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:*

2 Peter 2:1 *But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in **damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them**, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.*

Though the context of Peter’s warning is Judaic heresies as condemned in Hebrews, it applies to all false teachers who offer unscriptural doctrines.

Micah contrasts himself with the false prophets who have no commission from God. Micah says that God commissioned him by His Spirit, and the purpose of his words is not to gain wealth nor fame, but to speak truth and judgment—*to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin*. Micah’s purpose is quite contrary to the false prophets’ whose purpose was personal enhancement.

Vv. 9-12 is directed to the three classes of the divinely-appointed chiefs of the nation: the **princes**, *i.e.* civil rulers who were responsible for justice and the affairs of state; the **priests** and the **prophets** who were to support the princes in justice. However, though the princes were corrupt, the priests and prophets assured the people that God was with them, and would protect the city from misfortune. They failed to mention that the Holy One demands holiness from his people. They supported the corrupt civil rulers by assuring the people that God would protect the city. (K-D)

V. 9, boldly and courageously, Micah speaks to the chief men of the land – the husbands and fathers, the judges, the priests, and all the civil leaders, and charges them with willfully and knowingly rejecting the truth of God’s law-word. They do more than corrupt the truth with lies; they *abhor*, or detest, the truth, for it prevents their prosperity.

V. 10, is a very interesting statement: *They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity.* That is, they build their “kingdoms” with deceit, lies and half-truths.

“Eze 22:27, Jer 22:13. They pillage the poor. Calvin.” ; “... by money got by rapine and oppression, by spoiling the poor of their goods and their livelihood, for them and their families, which was all one as shedding innocent blood; and by money obtained by bribes, for the perversion of justice, and such like illegal proceedings, truly called iniquity.” (Gill)

Observe: How many pastors who know the truth compromise the truth, if not outright lie, in order to build up Zion, the physical assembly:

22 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, 23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. (Heb. 12.)

Notice how the passage in Hebrews continues:

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.

The Spirit continues on as He did through Micah – He warns against rejecting God’s law-word. He warns about the result of rejecting His law: *For our God is a consuming fire* against those who compromise the truth in order to *build up Zion and Jerusalem.* **How many pastors have knowingly compromised the truth in order to gain and hold a crowd? And my people love to have it so.**

The authors of various “fluffy” books–books that are passed off as Christian, yet have very little resemblance to the word of God–are building up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity. Can God hold them guiltless?

Also included here is the multitude of churches built upon what appeals to the crowd. Their goal is to have a good attendance and a good offering. Their various “carnal” efforts do not appear to be to “feed the flock” the truth of God’s law-word. The word of God has a lot to say about the false shepherds:

Jeremiah 50:6 *My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away on the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their restingplace.*

Ezekiel 34:2 *Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks? 7 Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD; 8 As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely because my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock; 9 Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD; 10 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them.*

False shepherds abound today; men who are more interested in their personal well-being and standing before the “brethren” than they are interested in what is good for the people from God’s law-word. But the Lord will hold them accountable to His truth:

Amos 1:2 *And he said, The LORD will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the habitations of the shepherds shall mourn, and the top of Carmel shall wither.*

Micah 3:11, they promised God’s protective hand of blessings to sinners without serious conversion from sin and to righteousness and holiness.

The heads thereof judge for reward... That is, the civil rulers rule according to what is most profitable for them. *The prophets thereof divine for money...* That is, the religious leaders teach according to what will give them the most increase. But the same *prophets* who preach for profit preach against the civil rulers who rule for profit, and preach against corrupt judges who judge for profit.

Divine for money... The prophets tell men the good things that will come their way; they *prophesy* according to the sum of money that comes to them.

Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; (2 Peter 2:15)

Note the hypocrisy of those who “preach to the purse,” yet say they are leaning on the Lord.

V. 11 joins the corrupt judges who *judge for reward, the priests who teach for hire, and the prophets who divine for money* together.

Micah describes them as people who predict peace and prosperity for a morsel of bread, and thereby lead the people astray, setting before them prosperity and salvation (pray this prayer for prosperity or to be “rap-tured” from this evil world? *Ed.*), instead of preaching repentance to them, by charging them with their sins. Thus they become accomplices of the wicked rulers, with whom they are therefore classed in ver. 11, together with the wicked priests. (K-D)

Do we think the scripture saith in vain that

...the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? (1 Peter 4:17.)

It is sad to hear religious leaders make their “pitch” towards those who can least afford it. They say to those who are at the bottom, “Vow to me the first thousand dollars that comes in after you make this vow, and fulfill that vow, and God will bless you abundantly.”

John Gill: [V. 11] Or, “O thou that buildest up” {g}, &c. or “everyone of them that buildeth up” {h}, &c. for the word is in the singular number; but, be fire words rendered either of these ways, they respect the heads and princes of the people; who either repaired the temple on Zion, or ornamented the king’s palace, or built themselves fine stately houses in Jerusalem, or large streets there, by money they took of murderers to save them, as Kimchi; or by money got by rapine and oppression, by spoiling the poor of their goods and their livelihood, for them and their families, which was all one as shedding innocent blood; and by money obtained by bribes, for the perversion of justice, and such like illegal proceedings, truly called iniquity. The Targum is,

‘who build their houses in Zion with bloodshed, and Jerusalem with deceits.’ (John Gill)

These false teachers use deceits to get gain; they built up Zion with the blood of the innocent:

Her princes in the midst thereof are like wolves ravaging the prey, to shed blood, and to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain. (Ez. 22:27.)

Micah 3:12, *Zion for your sake shall be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps...*

From the very start out of Egypt, National or carnal Israel had been threatened with annihilation if she went into sin, and refused to repent and depart from her sin. Now Micah gives specific details of her destruction.

Apostate and unrepentant Israel met her end that had been prophesied from her start. The age of the old carnal or National Israel ended with the destruction of Jerusalem. The city was turned into a mountain of rubble, and Zion was plowed.

For your sake... The Lord laid the blame upon the false teachers, the wolves, for the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, and then later by the Romans:

34 ¶ Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: 35 That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. (Matt. 23.)

Micah 3:12 was literally fulfilled. According to Josephus (Wars, b. 7, ch. 2, s. 1. Note 2),

“This Tereutius Rufus, as Reland in part observes here, is the same person whom the Talmudists call Turnus Rufus; of whom they relate, that “he ploughed up Sion as a field, and made Jerusalem become as heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest;” which was long before foretold by the prophet Micah, ch. 3:12, and quoted from him in the prophecies of Jeremiah, ch. 26:18.”

The Jerusalem of Christ’s day became a heap of stones. When the walls of Jerusalem were overturned, Rufus, upon Rome’s orders, plowed a furrow where the overturned walls had stood. Today, the walls of Jerusalem are many feet above the Jerusalem of Christ’s day.

“12. #Jer 26:18 quotes this verse. (Micah 3:12, ed.) The Talmud and MAIMONIDES record that at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans under Titus, Terentius Rufus, who was left in command of the army, with a ploughshare tore up the foundations of the temple.

mountain of the house—the height on which the temple stands.

as the high places of the forest—shall become as heights in a forest overrun with wild shrubs and brushwood.” (JFB)

“AND THE CITY WAS PLOUGHED UP. It has been taught: When Turnus Rufus the wicked destroyed the Temple, R. Gamaliel was condemned to death.” (*The Babylonian Talmud*, Complete Soncino English Translation. TImud-Mas. Ta’anith 29a. Paul’s Gamaliel in Acts

5:34, 22:3?)

And thus, Micah 3:12 was completely fulfilled in 70 A.D. According to Micah, any remains of ancient Carnal, or National Israel and Jerusalem were totally erased from the face of the earth.

Carnal Jerusalem was judged and passed away, to be replaced by the New Jerusalem *which is above*. (See Gal 4:26, Ps 48, Isa 2, 52:9, 62:1, 2, 65:18, Heb 12:22, Rev 3:12, & ch 21.)

Accordingly, any offer to “Walk the streets where Jesus walked” is of necessity deceit, a fraud and a lie that was manufactured and maintained in order to extract support for a modern nation which named itself Israel. The National Israel that now claims Palestine and Jerusalem is in no way connected with ancient Israel nor with the Jerusalem of Christ’s day. According to Micah 3:12, any such literal connection ceased, and such a connection now exists only in the vain imaginations of those who want to believe it. (As archeologists dig deeper in modern Jerusalem, they proudly admit they are finding the ruins of the first century Jerusalem.)

“Ancient *Zion* housed the corrupt civil rulers and judges who sold judgments; *Jerusalem* housed the common man, husbands and fathers; and special mention is made of *the mountain of the house* – that is, the temple hill – which refers to the temple in which the people had a false trust: *The temple of the LORD, The temple of the Lord...* (Jer. 7:1-15.)

The predicates are divided rhetorically, and the thought is this: the royal palace, the city, and the temple shall be so utterly destroyed, that of all the houses and palaces only heaps of rubbish will remain, and the ground upon which the city stood will be partly used as a ploughed field, and partly overgrown with bushes (cf. Isa. xxxii. 13, 14.)” (K-D)

If God would do such destruction against His people under the old covenant because of their false prophets, then what is in store for His people today, the New Israel, the church, as the false prophets prosper at the expense of His sheep? (Heb. 10:26-31.)

Note that Micah prophesied in the days of Hezekiah, king of Judah, and the king repented, and turned from his wicked ways. (Jer. 26:18, 19. Our prayer should be that the leaders in the church would have the same spirit of repentance.)

• CONCLUSIONS:

1. The natural man loves any message that offers him the freedom to be his own god, able to determine for himself what is good and what is evil. There is se-

vere judgment ahead for those leaders, religious especially, who offer man the freedom to be his own god; they do not condemn sin, so there can be no godly justice. They seek and offer peace without justice—“*peace, peace when there is no peace.*”

2. There are only two classes of people in the world today. The children of the wicked one, (John 8:44) and the children of God, (Romans 8:14).

3. All, pastors, politicians, civil leaders, and judges, who compromise the truth in order to build up their “kingdom” are murderers. They are guilty of the blood of those they deceive for their own purpose. Through fraud and lies, they deceive the innocent or simple who do not know the scripture. Note that the pastor is responsible before God to know and teach the truth, and the hearer is responsible to validate from God’s word what he hears. (Mark 4:24.)

Pastors who compromise or outright ignore the word of God in order to draw a crowd shall stand before God the same as the “pork barrel” politicians who sell their votes to the highest bidder, and who purchase votes with the public monies; they are the same as judges who accept bribes. In other words, the root cause of the corrupt political and judicial systems is corrupt religious leaders whose motive is to make a good living, build a large ministry and/or draw a crowd.

How many pastors do we know who worked hard to establish an empire—that is, build a large ministry—in order to be able to retire, and turn their “kingdom” over to their son. The son then squandered it away with liberalism and apostasy, e.g. Charles and Andy Stanley. We have been especially saddened to see this “kingdom” mentality in the Orthodox, Calvinistic churches, as well as in the non-Orthodox churches.

4. The perpetrators of the frauds, the wolves intent on fleecing the Lord’s heritage, assure the people: “*Is not the Lord among us? none evil can come upon us.* Are we not seeing increases of people and money, and is not the *workman worthy of his hire?* Surely, these increases mean the Lord is blessing our efforts. Even if we are doing wrong, the Lord is among us, for the increases prove His presence. Besides, *none evil can come upon us,* for we are under grace, not under law. Christ took the punishment for our sins.” (1 Tim. 6:5, 6.)

This writer existed in the “Any means to a godly end” movement for several years.

How often have we heard that because we are a “Christian Nation,” God is prospering us? We are liv-

ing on debt which must collapse at some point.

5. The victims of the wolves who seek dishonest gain through deceit, fraud and lies are identified as murder victims. (Cf. Micah 2:1, 2.) Micah's main message is against the false prophets who prophesy, or speak in the name of the Lord. They falsely speak in the name of the Lord for their own personal gain, as they perpetrate fraud upon the people of God, the *sheep of his pasture*. Micah could not make his point clearer. Those who corrupt the law-word of God for whatever reason, money especially, are **murderers**. The **victims of any dishonest gain accomplished through lies, fraud or deceit are murder victims**, regardless of the identity of the perpetrators.

6. The deceivers must develop and present believable lies in order to accomplish their goals. Moreover, great fault must lie with the victim, for he did not seek advice nor pray about the situation.

7. The perpetrator may actually believe in his hardened heart that he is doing the right thing, and that the Lord is pleased with him. When one believes his own lies, the Lord permits him to destroy himself.

8. Money corrupts truth. 1 Timothy 6:10 *For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

9. Judicial Blindness is clearly taught in scripture. (John 9:39) It prohibits men from seeing cause and effect, especially in their own lives; therefore, they see no need to repent, nor to turn to obedience to God's word. If they would see the need to repent, they would see God's mercy in every area of society, including their families and civil government.

10. As the Lord brought shame upon the prophets of old, He will also bring shame upon false prophets, the murdering wolves of our day, and confound them openly with the truth.

• PROTECTION FROM RELIGIOUS FRAUD, PLUNDER, AND MURDER

The only weapon against and protection from the evils described by Micah is best summed up by Christ Himself:

John 5:39 *Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.*

"The plural with the article refers to the well-known collection in the Old Testament. {#Mt 21:42 Lu24:27} Elsewhere in John the singular refers to a particular passage. {#Joh 2:22 7:38 10:35}" (Robertson's NT Word Pictures.)

Acts 17:11 *These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.*

They inquirers were excited, so they readily, eagerly and passionately receive the word. The speakers can have great oratorical abilities and skills, charisma, impressive education credentials, and maybe along with great emotions, and sincere people will gladly receive his messages without question. But Luke placed an **and** in the middle, which tells us that despite the persuasive message, the people searched the Old Testament scriptures to verify Paul's words.

If the hearers do not know and follow the truth as concealed in the Old Testament and revealed in the New Testament, or if they are unconcerned about the truth, they will become murder victims, and their blood will be upon their own head.

We must assume that sin can influence the best of men, including preachers, and that the love of money has corrupted the best of men. Everything proclaimed from religious men must be compared to the scriptures.

Admittedly, protection from the wicked outside the church is not as simple. However, the murderers in the civil arena will not be dealt with until the murderers in the church are rejected.

FINAL WORD

There is an amazing number of passages in Scripture, both Old and New Testaments, warning God's people against the false prophets who rip and tear apart His people for the money. And He promises, in His proper time, His judgment and wrath against those who take advantage of others for personal gain. The major theme of those passages is against the religious leaders, and not against the pagans, e.g., Hosea, Amos, Micah, Jeremiah chps 6, 23, 27, 28, Isaiah 9, Ezekiel 13, 2 Corinthians 11, 2 Thessalonians 2, 2 Peter 2, 1 John 4, &c.

Passages such as Isa 30:10, 11, Jer 5:31, 6:13, 14, 2 Pet 2:3, Micah 2:11, 3:11, Rom 16:18, Philip 3:18, 19, &c. are against those whose words are motivated for gain. In 2 Chron 18, in order to bring judgment upon Ahab, God sent a lying spirit. In 2 Thess:3-12, God sends a strong delusion, so His people *should believe a lie*. Believing the lie, they call down upon themselves God's damnation for not having pleasure in His truth.

Though Micah 3 ends on the note of ancient Israel's total destruction, chapter 4 opens with the promise of the New Israel of God to replace the apostate ancient Israel. That is, Micah 4 introduces the New Israel of God,

the New Jerusalem, or the **Gospel Church**, which replaced ancient Israel. What Micah prophesies concerning the new Jerusalem and the “Israel of God” which replaced apostate Jerusalem and Israel is made clear by Paul in his letter to the churches at Galatia, chapter 5. See Ezekiel chapter 40ff for a description of the Kingdom of God, the Gospel Church. See also Isaiah 2, Jeremiah 50, Daniel 2:44, chapter 7, Isaiah chapter 60ff. There are more prophecies of the Gospel Church replacing ancient Israel than we can list.

Galatians 6:15 *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. 16 And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.*

Bro Need

Easter is coming

THE BUNNY BAN –

From the April 8, 2006 issue of WORLD magazine...

“Government officials in St. Paul, Minnesota, took the precaution of removing an Easter Bunny display inside the lobby of city hall, saying it isn’t the city’s place to promote religion.”

The above news story illustrates just how far our society has degenerated. First off... it is ridiculous for government officials to think they need to protect us from religious displays. Secondly... it is even more ridiculous for anyone to consider a bunny display as a religious display. Unfortunately, many of today’s so-called Christians actually do consider the Easter Bunny to be a part of their Christian religion. The same is true of Santa Claus. Folks, this goes beyond ridiculous – to appalling.

• **JESUS AND THE EASTER BUNNY –**

If the average youngster was asked what Easter is all about, he or she would probably respond with comments about the Easter Bunny, or about Easter eggs, or about jelly beans and other candy. To this, the average adult would say, “Oh, how cute.”

How sad! Most children don’t know beans about what Easter is about. Most parents don’t take time to tell their children what Easter is all about. Many parents don’t know any more about what Easter is about than their children. They may equate it with a special church service, but that is as far as it goes.

I’m not much for religious holidays like Christmas and Easter because they are man-made holidays. They

did NOT originate with God, or with Jesus, or with the apostles, or with the first-century church. They originated with man and they involve many pagan traditions that have absolutely nothing to do with God, or with Jesus, or with Christianity.

Easter did not become a holiday until the fourth century during the reign of Constantine. The word Easter is derived from Eastre who was the goddess of spring. Easter bunnies and Easter eggs and Easter lilies, etc. originated from pagan celebrations of spring. They are carryovers from celebrations that were very unchristian in nature.

In the mid 1600’s the English Puritans dropped the celebration of Easter because they disliked the ritualism that had developed. Most of the Protestant churches in the United States followed this Puritan tradition until the late 1800’s. Think about it... most Americans have only celebrated Easter for just over 100 years. In that time, Easter has become so commercialized that many Americans don’t have the slightest idea what Easter is about.

(Reprinted from kit@pharocattle.com)

Today, Easter is a commercial event as well as a religious holiday, marked by high sales for greeting cards, candies (such as Peeps, chocolate eggs and chocolate Easter bunnies) and other gifts.

Every spring, the anticipation and excitement of Easter is electrifying for many people. Churches prepare elaborate Easter programs that illustrate the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Parents take time to color Easter eggs and hide them so their children can hunt for them.

It’s typical for TV movies this time of year to depict Easter as an enjoyable occasion of renewed happiness. Television advertisements and commercial businesses also get very involved with Easter as they offer colorful Easter baskets, Easter costumes and chocolate rabbits to celebrate this great religious event.

Many churches advertise outdoor Easter sunrise services, with any and all invited. Weather permitting, the Easter celebration is visually reinforced by watching the sun rise in the east.

But what do bunnies and colored eggs have to do with Jesus’ resurrection?

And if this celebration is so important, why didn’t Jesus teach His apostles and the early Church to observe it? The books of the New Testament were written over a span of decades after Jesus Christ’s death and resurrection, yet nowhere do we see so much as a hint of any

kind of Easter celebration.

So where exactly did Easter and its customs come from? Why do hundreds of millions of people celebrate the holiday today?

Most historians, including Biblical scholars, agree that Easter was originally a pagan festival. According to the New Unger's Bible Dictionary says: "The word Easter is of Saxon origin, Eastr, the goddess of spring, in whose honour sacrifices were offered about Passover time each year. By the eighth century Anglo-Saxons had adopted the name to designate the celebration of Christ's resurrection."

Should you observe Easter?

If you want to be a true disciple of Christ Jesus, you need to carefully examine whether your beliefs agree with the Bible. It is not acceptable to God to merely assume that He approves of or accepts non-biblical celebrations, regardless of whether they are done for proper motives.

The fact is that God says, "Learn not the way of the heathen"—those who don't know God's truth (Jeremiah 10:2, King James Version).

His Word gives us explicit instructions regarding worshipping Him with practices adopted from pagan idolatry: "Do not inquire after their gods, saying, 'How did these nations serve their gods? I also will do likewise.' You shall not worship the Lord your God in that way; for every abomination to the Lord which He hates they have done to their gods . . . Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it" (Deuteronomy 12:30-32).

Jesus Christ now commands everyone to repent of following all man-made religious traditions: "Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30; compare Matthew 15:3).

Will you honor Christ's lifesaving instructions so that God can bless you? He said: "If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor" (John 12:26).

God wants you and me to obey His life-giving Word. When we do, we can serve Christ as His ambassadors on earth. There is no greater calling on earth and throughout time. For your ongoing happiness and security, turn to God now and seek His complete and perfect way.

Historical paganism notwithstanding,

JESUS CHRIST DIED ON THE CROSS AND

HE AROSE FROM THE DEAD AND HE LIVES

TODAY!

(The Wake-Up Herald is published by Robert McCurry. herbap@aol.com)

CHAPLAIN EDWARD MCKENDREE BOUNDS

(1835-1913) 3rd Missouri Infantry

By Dr. H. Rondel Rumburg

After Wars End

E. M. Bounds headed home to Missouri but could not remain. There was a need which he could not abate; Franklin was on his heart. He had seen the extreme atrocities of war at Franklin, Tennessee. Yes, he felt compelled to return to that war-torn city in order to become the minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The hatred of the Federal forces still permeated the place and the church facility was in a wretched condition. The Lord had blessed his ministry there during the final events in the war.

With war being over, a new start was needed. First he gathered some godly men who would join him in times of prayer. Pastor Bounds set up weekly prayer sessions that sometimes extended for many hours, and not for the sake of flaunting the amount of time, but because God was with them. Later people who were with him in his service for the Lord spoke of his praying and preaching,

Not a foolish word did we ever hear him utter. He was one of the most intense eagles of God that ever penetrated the spiritual ether. He could not brook delay in rising, or being late for dinner. He would go with me to street meetings . . . and listen to the preaching and sing with us those beautiful songs of Wesley and Watts. He often reprimanded me for asking the unconverted to sing of Heaven. Said he: "They have no heart to sing, they do not know God, and God does not hear them. Quit asking sinners to sing the songs of Zion and the Lamb."

His ministry at Franklin saw the fire of heaven fall in a grand ingathering of souls. The revival lasted for weeks and around one hundred fifty people made professions of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. There was the following testimony given of the effect of his ministry on a single individual:

"When I was only a lad," the former president of Kentucky's Asbury College, B. F. Haynes, wrote some 45 years later, "there came to Franklin, Tennessee, where we lived, as pastor of our church, the Reverend E. M. Bounds whose preaching and life did more to mold and settle my character and experience than any pastor I ever had. His preaching profoundly impressed

me, his prayers linger until today, as one of the holiest and sweetest memories of my life, his reading of hymns was simply inimitable. Nothing was sweeter, tenderer, or more enrapturing to my young heart and mind than the impressive, unctuous reading of the old Wesleyan hymns by this young pastor ... in a spirit, tone and manner that simply poured life, hope, peace and holy longings into my boyish heart.”

Bounds was not confined to the local church where he pastored, but he began an itinerant ministry as well. In his pastoral ministry after Franklin he was assigned to Selma and Eufaula, Alabama, and St. Louis, Missouri.

Family

During his ministry in Alabama E. M. Bounds met Emma Elizabeth Barnett of Washington, Georgia. He went to minister in St. Louis and there the couple married in September of 1876. This marriage lasted just eight years when Emma died in 1884. Bounds was left with three children along with his wife’s deathbed request. There were three children: a son Edward and two daughters, Celeste and Corneille. The request she made was for him to marry her cousin Harriet. She believed Harriet would be the perfect wife and mother that the family would need.

He acceded to his wife’s request, but we do not know how long it took Harriet Alexander Barnett to accept her dead cousin’s desire. They married and the match Emma made was a good one; it was especially a blessing to E. M. The Lord added more children to his family. There were three sons: Samuel, Charles and Osborne; there were three daughters: Elizabeth, Mary and Emmie. During those years there was the loss of two children: Edward age 6 from his marriage to Emma and Charles age 1 from his marriage to Harriet.

• WRITING MINISTRY

At St. Louis he first worked as an assistant editor for the denominations St. Louis Advocate which was a regional journal. He served nineteen months in this position and moved to Nashville in order to become the associate editor of the Christian Advocate which was the official weekly paper for the entire Methodist Episcopal Church, South. His work in Nashville was ended in 1894. Charles Jennings noted:

On June 7, 1890 Rev. Bounds assumed his new duty as Assistant Editor of the M. E. Church, South official publication, the Christian Advocate. By this time many members wanted the National Conference to take a strong stand against worldliness. Due to his beliefs on strict holiness standards and his position favoring

the role of evangelists in the church, Bounds resigned his position four years later. He quietly left the Christian Advocate, refusing any retirement pay and moved his family to Washington, GA. Rev. Bounds had been like a weeping prophet to his Methodist Church whose leadership was now bent on compromise and profit. His invitations for ministry had stopped and he was now rejected by the National Conference. He then began to receive invitations for ministry from outside his Methodist Church. Wherever he preached the throngs gathered, the heavenly fire descended and hundreds found themselves under conviction of sin and confessing their new-found faith in Jesus Christ.

As mentioned there was the final move of his family to Washington, Georgia. Here they took up residence in the Barnett family house. The final years of his life were spent in writing, praying and in an itinerate revival ministry. How appropriate his words, “The Church is looking for better methods; God is looking for better men.” He was one of those men the Lord was looking for as God’s use of him showed.

Rev. E. M. Bounds labored on until his final promotion. His wife Hattie Bounds wrote, “Washington, Ga., August 24, 1913: Doctor Bounds went home this afternoon; funeral here to-morrow afternoon.” He died at age of 78 and was buried at Resthaven Cemetery.

Writing about heaven E. M. Bounds explained,

God has fashioned us for this heavenly life. He implants in us these heavenly desires. When we stand thus attested to heaven, thus looking toward heaven, thus longing for heaven, these are the marks of God’s hand, the results of His work of grace in our hearts. He puts in us the Holy Spirit to keep the memory freighted with and alive to the fact of heaven, to keep the desires ardent for heaven, to keep the hands busy for heaven and to keep the taste sweet and fresh for heaven. God works this mighty heavenly work in us so that we look not at the things which are temporal, value not the things which are insipid and transitory, and strive not after the perishing things of earth.... True religion always makes little of earth and much of heaven.

He had published only two of his books: Preacher and Prayer and The Resurrection. Two friends took up the manuscripts and writings of E. M. Bounds to bring them into print, and this was how his other nine books came to publication. These friends were Rev. Homer W. Hodge and Rev. Claudius L. Chilton. This last mentioned friend wrote:

Strike your tent, O pilgrim,

Gird your loins and follow on;
Soon your journey's ended,
'Twill bring thee to thy God.'

GLOBAL WARMING

SUBJECT: THE LATEST ON GLOBAL WARMING

The Arctic Ocean is warming up, icebergs are growing scarcer and in some places the seals are finding the water too hot according to a report to the Commerce Department yesterday from the Consulate at Bergen, Norway.

Reports from fishermen, seal hunters and explorers all point to a radical change in climate conditions and hitherto unheard of temperatures in the Arctic zone. Exploration expeditions report that scarcely any ice has been met as far north as 81 degrees 29 minutes.

Soundings to a depth of 3,100 meters showed the gulf stream still very warm. Great masses of ice have been replaced by moraines of earth and stones, the report continued, while at many points well known glaciers have entirely disappeared.

Very few seals and no white fish are found in the eastern Arctic, while vast shoals of herring and smelts which have never before ventured so far north, are being encountered in the old seal fishing grounds.

Within a few years it is predicted that due to the ice melt the sea will rise and make most coast cities uninhabitable.

I must apologize. I neglected to mention that this report was from November 2, 1922, as reported by the AP and published in The Washington Post 96 years ago.

This must have been caused by the Model T Ford's emissions, or possibly from horse and cattle farts.

(Copied)

ON THE MOUNTAINS LET ME TELL

A solitary medical doctor urged his horse forward into the cold and foggy November night. Behind him lay the safety, warmth, and comfort of a fort. Ahead lay danger, mystery, and a long ride back to his isolated Presbyterian mission station called "Waiilatnu" - the place of rye grass.

In the wee hours of the morning, Marcus Whitman rode into the mission compound at Waiilatpu. Ten years earlier, this had been a wilderness, inhabited only by wild beasts and wild men. Now there were cultivated fields, orchards, flocks of sheep, herds of cattle, and a gristmill. This clearing had come to represent a clash between two cultures. On one side of the clearing were

the lodges of the Cayuse, where even now could be heard the muffled death wail of a bereaved Indian family. On the other side of the clearing were five covered wagons, a vivid picture of Westward expansion.

In the middle of these two cultures stood Marcus and Narcissa Whitman. Ten years ago, they had left their homes in rural New York to come into this wilderness with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Some Cayuse had welcomed their influence, had abandoned their pagan ways, and had come to embrace Christianity. They had ceased their witchcraft, their murder, and the horrid practice of burying alive their unwanted children. These Cayuse had learned to cultivate the ground, to raise cattle, and to love their children.

But some Cayuse had not appreciated the Whitmans' sacrifice. Fear, resentment, and suspicion ran deep. In the last few weeks, muttered threats and secret powwows had broken out into open resentment. Indians were dying of a measles epidemic despite the best efforts of Marcus. It was a Cayuse custom to kill a "te-wat" - medicine man, if his patient died. Marcus knew that the Indians also resented the growing influx of white men from the east. But Marcus could not change history. He could only do what he could to help the Indians adapt to a changing world.

Marcus dismounted at the T-shaped mission house. It was late, and Marcus was tired. But he sent his wife, Narcissa, to bed so that she could get some needed rest, her last on earth. Marcus took her place attending the sick children, white and red alike, who needed his aid through the rest of the night.

Perhaps a great flood of memories swept over Marcus that night. He recalled the day when he, as a young medical doctor sitting in a church in rural New York, first heard the missionary Samuel Parker tell of the tribes beyond the distant Rockies. He remembered the day that Narcissa Prentiss had agreed to become his wife. He remembered how, at their wedding, Narcissa had requested that the congregation sing the great missionary hymn, "Can I Leave You?" He remembered that, by the fifth verse, the song was stifled by sobs as his courageous bride sang alone this stanza:

In the deserts let me labor.
On the mountains let me tell,
How he died—the blessed Saviour
To redeem a world from hell!
Let me hasten, let me hasten.
Far in heathen lands to dwell.

They had already given so much. Narcissa, so young and eager, was already broken in health. Marcus too

was worn with care and toil. And not far away, Alice Clarissa, their only child, rested in a shallow grave—drowned in the Walla Walla river at the tender age of two. The Whitmans had sacrificed wealth, home, family, friends, society, and their own health to come and labor here. But they still had one thing more they could give. The supreme test of their loyalty would come with the dawn of a new day.

On November 29, 1847, a band of hostile Cayuse came to the main mission house, demanding medicine. Marcus had dealt with angry men before, and he hoped for the best. He could not deny their request and reached for his bag. One of the Cayuse warriors stepped behind Doctor Whitman, drew a concealed tomahawk from his belt, and slammed the blade into the base of the doctor's skull. A shot was fired, and instantly all was confusion. Narcissa must have known what the gunshot meant. But she did not panic. Her first thought was not for herself, but for the little orphan girls of the Sager family who depended upon her. Bolting the door to her room, she gathered the children about her as a general massacre began outside. The fury of the murderers would not be restrained even by the sight of women and children. A gun was thrust into the window, and a bullet tore through Narcissa's shoulder, wounding her severely.

Several of the immigrants from the east were slain in the yard. A ministerial student named Andrew Rogers, a descendant of Scottish Covenanters, could have escaped, but instead he ran toward the compound to defend the women and children and was mortally wounded in the process. With his life's blood ebbing away, Andrew Rogers fought on. Getting Narcissa and the orphan girls upstairs into a loft, he kept the murderers at bay for over an hour with the broken end of a gun barrel.

At last, the wounded Narcissa was lured out of the house by promises of safety. On the way out, she passed her husband lying in a pool of blood. Amazingly, he was yet alive. Their conversation was brief, but he assured her of his love for her and his confidence in God's eternal purposes. As Narcissa came trustingly outside, a volley rang out and she was instantly pierced by several balls. She had given her all for the Cayuse. She had nursed the Indian children, taught them to read the Bible, taught them to pray, and to sing the name of Jesus. She had been faithful unto death, and now was to receive the crown of life.

The massacre did not end with the killing of the Whitmans. All the able-bodied men the Indians were able

to find were massacred. Helpless women and children were savagely abused and held ransom for almost a month. Finally, the women and children were rescued by a series of thrilling events.

After a search that took several years, justice was eventually served upon all of the murderers. Some of the murderers were tracked into the Blue Mountains by a Christian Nez Perce chief, and some of the guilty Cayuse were slain in battle. Five of the murderers, including the two men who personally slew Marcus and Narcissa, were brought to trial and convicted of capital murder by a jury that included converted Indians.

What became of the martyrdom of Doctor and Mrs. Whitman? Was their sacrifice in vain? Did a young doctor and his bride waste their potential when they went "far in heathen lands to dwell"?

The obscure mission station called Waiilatpu was obscure no more. Newspapers in the east were soon ablaze with the stirring account. In those days of slow mail, the newspaper was the way that relatives in New York first learned of the martyrdom. Judge Prentiss, as he read the headlines handed him by his grieving wife, must have remembered the image of his daughter, an eager young bride, singing:

In the deserts let me labor,
On the mountains let me tell,
How he died—the blessed Saviour
To redeem a world from hell!

A great wave of interest in missions swept across the United States in the coming years. Boys and girls, inspired by the courage of the Whitmans, took up the banner of Christ. Henry Spalding, a steadfast friend of the Whitmans who labored at Lapwai, a mission station east of Waiilatpu, returned to the field after the tragedy, reaping a great harvest that had been sown among the Cayuse and Nez Perce. A converted chief named Timothy became an earnest and dedicated Christian. Spalding's church in Idaho still exists to this day as a testimony to the martyred missionaries.

In the U.S. Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. stands a statue of Marcus Whitman, clad in buckskins. He holds a Bible in one hand, and saddlebags full of medical supplies in the other. His life and influence have not been in vain for Marcus and Narcissa served a God who has promised, "My word shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isaiah 55:11).

—Drawn from Marcus and Narcissa Whitman and the Opening of Old Oregon by Clifford Dairy

IS THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST THE ONLY DOCTRINE THAT MATTERS?

By Thomas Williamson

One of the new theological trends of our day is the teaching that since the Christian faith is based on the fact of the literal, physical resurrection of Christ, therefore other historical events in the Bible are not really important or essential to the faith, and it doesn't matter if they really happened or not.

Specifically, we are told that it is not really important whether the events in Genesis really took place, or whether Christ is born of a virgin. Supposedly, even if it could be proved that these events did not really happen as described in the Bible, the basis of Christian faith would still stand firm, as long as we can rely on the fact of Christ's resurrection.

Those who teach these things assure us that they personally believe everything in the Bible, but they feel that some Bible teachings are hard to defend, and that we should make our faith more relevant to those who do not totally share our confidence in everything that the Bible teaches.

A well-known proponent of these views is Andy Stanley, pastor of North Point Community Church, a megachurch in Alpharetta, Georgia. In order to get an understanding of this viewpoint, it will be necessary to refer to Stanley's teaching on the subject.

In a recent Christmas message, Stanley declared, **“One of the challenging things about the Christmas season and one of the challenging things about the Christmas story is, in fact, the Christmas story - the Christmas story as it relates to the birth of Jesus. Because there is so much miraculous, there is so much amazing, there is so much that's really unbelievable about it and a whole lot of people just don't believe; and I understand that. Maybe the thought is that they had to come up with some myth about the birth of Jesus to give Him street cred later on.**

“It is interesting because Matthew gives us a version of the birth of Jesus. Luke does, but Mark and John don't even mention it; and a lot has been made of that

“And you have heard me say some version of this a million times, but if somebody can predict their own death and resurrection, I'm not all that concerned about how they got into the world, because the

whole resurrection thing is so amazing and, in fact, you should know this, Christianity does not hinge on the truth or even the stories about the birth of Jesus, it really hinges on the resurrection of Jesus.”

It is nice to know that Stanley firmly believes in the Resurrection of Christ but if we all can believe that God can perform a miracle like the Resurrection, and ask others to believe that, why should it be hard to believe that the same miracle-working God could bring about a Virgin Birth? If it is permissible to doubt the Virgin Birth, even though the Bible tells us it happened, then on what basis can we ask people not to doubt the Resurrection?

Stanley appears to believe that it is not enough that the Bible tells us so - our final authority is the fact of the Resurrection, not the Bible. **“For the first 300 years of the existence of Christianity, the debate centered on an event - not a book. The question was not, is the Bible true, is the Bible true, is the Bible true? The question was - did Jesus rise from the dead? Christianity, don't miss this, Christianity does not hang by the thread of 'the Bible tells me so.' And if your church sent you off to college with that house of cards, I apologize. And if your entire life, your whole thing has been, 'I gotta defend the Bible, I gotta defend the Bible, uh oh, there's information that looks like it contradicts the Bible. 'I can't look over there. Honey don't look over there.' I'm so sorry you are left with that fragile version of our faith.”**

This naturally raises the question, If it is not enough to say that “the Bible tells me so,” then how do we know that the Resurrection actually happened? We were not there to see it, so basically, we believe in the Resurrection because the Bible tells us so. Why is “The Bible Tells Me So” adequate to authenticate the Resurrection, but not the Virgin Birth?

Once the Virgin Birth is set aside as nonessential, then we can dispense with other peripheral teachings from the Bible, to our heart's content. With regard to the splitting of the sea in the Exodus and the falling of the walls of Jericho, Stanley says, **“Even if those events never occurred, it does nothing to undermine the evidence supporting the resurrection of Jesus and thus the claims He made about Himself. .**

. . Christianity becomes a fragile house-of-cards religion, when we hear that perhaps the walls of Jericho didn't come tumbling down.

. . [Some argue that] if the entire Bible isn't true, the Bible isn't true. And if the Bible isn't true, Chris-

tianity comes tumbling down. So consequently, during your whole lifetime and my whole lifetime, Christians have felt compelled to defend the Bible. Because the only way to defend the Christian faith is to defend the Bible. And what your students have discovered, and if you read broadly you've discovered, is that it is next to impossible to defend the entire Bible."

Stanley's teaching has been widely acclaimed. After all, he is a megachurch preacher with lots of followers, and he is making Christianity more relevant and attractive to the younger generation of millennials who might not want to attend a stuffy, old-fashioned church where they still believe that whatever the Bible says is so.

Stanley's teaching is neither validated nor discredited by his status and stature as a well-regarded and widely admired megachurch preacher. In order to evaluate such teaching in a dispassionate and unbiased manner, we need to look at the Bible itself to see what truth claims it makes for itself. Is the Bible just a collection of myths that were told around the campfire for the benefit of their value as morality tales, just as we might repeat Aesop's fables or the parables of James Thurber?

Or does the Bible represent itself to be an accurate historical description of vitally important events in the salvation history of God's people? Let us evaluate what the Bible says about itself - that is a more reliable approach than to rely on the thoughts and sentiments of any preachers today, regardless of how many followers and admirers they may have.

DOES THE BIBLE REPRESENT ITSELF AS A BOOK OF HISTORY?

Let's start right in with the Virgin Birth. Matthew tells us that "the birth of Jesus was as follows" (Matthew 1:18, NKJV) and concludes in 1:22 by saying, "All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet" and he then quotes Isaiah 7:14. The Virgin Birth is presented as a historical fact, not a myth.

It doesn't sound like the Virgin Birth story was concocted as an afterthought by the Apostles in order to give Jesus some "street cred." It was predicted 700 years in advance by Isaiah, long before Christ's "street cred" could have become an issue. Matthew and Luke both present the Virgin Birth story in a straightforward manner as an actual historical event, with no hint that the story was manufactured to enhance the Messiah's resume.

Luke introduces his gospel, including the Virgin Birth narrative, by saying that he writes for the purpose "that thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed," Luke 1:4.

Going back to the Exodus account, the biblical authors consistently regard it as an actual historical event, not a myth (see Nehemiah 9:9-23, Psalm 78:12-57, Hebrews 3:16, 11:29, etc). The fall of the walls of Jericho is affirmed in Hebrews 11:30.

The Exodus was one of the crowning events in story of salvation history (God's activity on behalf of His people), thus assuring us that God will save us through Christ's death and resurrection. If the Exodus didn't really happen, or if it doesn't matter if it happened or not, we are all in the wrong religion.

CAN WE DISPENSE WITH THE VIRGIN BIRTH, IF IT IS TOO DIFFICULT FOR MODERN MAN TO BELIEVE?

The Lutheran Witness publication of the Lutheran Church- Missouri Synod, summed it up well in a 1957 article: "The doctrine of the virgin birth of Christ is a fundamental article of our faith, the denial of which makes saving faith in Christ impossible...."

"A true child of God finds it no harder to believe this miracle than any other. ... If we do not believe this, but regard Jesus as the true, natural son of Joseph and Mary, then we are compelled by Holy Scripture to regard Jesus as having been born in sin like all the other sons of men (John 3:6, Ephesians 2:3). The Virgin Birth was God's way of producing a holy child, who was also the Son of God and therefore able to fulfill the everlasting atonement and reconciliation of the world to Himself (2 Corinthians 5:19)."

Other comments on the importance of the Virgin Birth:

AL MOHLER: "The doctrine of virgin birth was among the first to be questioned and then rejected after the rise of historical criticism and the undermining of biblical authority that inevitably followed. . . . The fact is that biblical Christianity and ultimately the Gospel of Christ cannot survive the denial of the Virgin Birth. Because without the Virgin Birth, you end up with a very different Jesus than the fully human, fully Divine Savior revealed in Scripture."

ADRIAN ROGERS: "There was never a birth like the birth of Jesus before His birth; and there has not been a birth like His birth since His birth. . . . Jesus

Christ is the God-Man. He is not half man and half God. He is not all man and no god. He is not all God and no man. He is as much man as though He were never God and as much God as though He were never man. Jesus is the God-man made possible by the Virgin Birth.”

JOHN WALVOORD: “The incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ is the central fact of Christianity. Upon it the whole superstructure of Christian theology depends.”

JOHN MACARTHUR. “You see, if Jesus had a human father, then the Bible is untrustworthy, because the Bible claims He did not. And if Jesus was born simply of human parents, there is no way to describe the reason for His supernatural life. His virgin birth, His substitutionary death, His bodily resurrection, and His second coming are a package of deity. You cannot isolate any one of those and accept only that one and leave the rest or vice versa, accept them all but one.”

BRANDON HINES, on the “Pulpit and Pen” web site, responding to the claim that “Christianity doesn’t hinge on the truth or even the stories around the Birth of Jesus.”

“If this were true, the Bible would not have bothered to explain His birth. This devaluing of Jesus’ birth and its impact on Christianity is a result of his low view of Scripture and its authority. While Stanley claims that Christianity hinges on the resurrection and not the birth (which is a false dichotomy), he fails to recognize that the Resurrection would not have happened without the birth. Neither would the death, the atonement, or the forgiveness of sins.”

ARE THE HISTORICAL DETAILS IN THE BIBLE IMPORTANT?

As long as we have the general outlines of what the Bible teaches, is it important to accept and believe every detail of historical information in the Bible? Here is what Presbyterian scholar Edward Young said concerning this issue:

“The encounters of God with men did not take place upon a cloud or in a vacuum. They took place upon this very earth, in time and in history. To modern men this fact may seem unimportant; to the Bible it is supremely important. Certainly one of the great ‘encounters’ of man and God was that between the Lord and John the Baptist. We might easily be tempted to say that the matter of concern

here is simply the fact that the holy God met with the Baptist.

“Such, however, is not the manner in which the Bible presents the encounter. Hear what the evangelist says: ‘Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being Governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness’ (Luke 3:1-2).

“Why this stress upon historical detail? What difference does it make who was upon the throne of Rome at the time? How can these historical details be of any possible benefit to our spiritual life? Questions such as these, however, are based upon a misunderstanding of the nature of Christianity. It makes all the difference in the world who was on the throne of Rome. It makes all the difference in the world where the ‘encounter’ between God and John the Baptist took place.

“Luke is most concerned to give us the necessary details which form the proper background of the revelation of God to John, for this revelation took place in history. At a definite point of time and at a certain place upon the face of this earth, God met with John the Baptist. Remove this historical background from Christianity, and you remove Christianity itself, for Christianity is a religion which is founded squarely upon that which was done once for all in history.”

IS THE RESURRECTION THE ONLY EVENT IN THE BIBLE THAT IS IMPORTANT?

We can all readily agree that it is important to believe in Christ’s physical resurrection. But how about Christ’s Transfiguration, as described in Matthew 17, Mark 9 and Luke 9? If only the Resurrection matters, then the Transfiguration doesn’t really matter. Christianity stands tall and firm, even if the Transfiguration event never happened.

However, the Apostle Peter felt that it was very important to believe in the Transfiguration. In 2 Peter 1:16- 18, he said, “For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

“For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory. This is my beloved Son, in whom I am

well pleased.

“And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.”

So, as it turns out, the Resurrection is not the only important doctrine in the Bible. Peter strongly emphasized that the truth of Christianity hinged on the Transfiguration event. If it can be shown that it didn't happen, that it was nothing more than a “cunningly devised fable,” then Peter loses his own “street cred” and credibility and reliability, and our faith in Christianity is exposed as nothing more than a “house of cards” after all.

DO NEW TESTAMENT WRITERS CITE MYTHS AS OBJECT LESSONS?

In modern times, we may sometimes quote and refer to legendary material from Greek mythology or more recent sources, such as the Narnia novels by C.S. Lewis, using such sources as object lessons. It is understood by everyone that no one, including those citing such material, believes that these events actually happened in real life.

Is it possible that New Testament writers used the Old Testament in this manner, citing mythical materials for their value as object lessons, without implying or believing that these things really happened? Let's take a closer look.

In Romans 5:14-17, Paul cites the story of Adam's fall to explain how sin came into the world. *“Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.*

“But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.

“And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.

“For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.”

It is obvious here that Paul did not regard the story of Adam's fall as an instructive myth or as a metaphor for the loss of man's original state of primitive, unspoiled bliss. He firmly believed that Adam was a real person, and that the fall from grace of this literal personage was the explanation for sin coming into the world.

Once our belief in a literal Adam and Eve is discarded, we are left without any explanation for the origin of sin (or of mankind, for that matter). Some modern

theologians are currently working on trying to develop an alternate explanation for the introduction of sin into the world, since they have cast aside the literal truth of Genesis. Wouldn't it be better to accept the Bible's explanation of such things, rather than to reinvent the wheel and come up with our own new explanations?

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS TEACHING?

If the doctrine of the Resurrection is the only thing in the Bible that really matters, should we stop preaching, teaching and writing about the other historical events and teachings in the Bible that are not important and that maybe never really happened at all? I suppose it will be all right to keep preaching about the Crucifixion, since Christ had to die first before He could be resurrected.

Should we remove all references to doctrines other than the Resurrection from our confessions of faith? After all, we don't want to turn off the Millennials and hipsters who may be offended by all that doctrinal material that they find hard to accept.

In John 10:35 Christ said “The scripture cannot be broken.” Perhaps He should have said, “Only the scriptures having to do with My upcoming Resurrection cannot be broken. Everything else the Bible says can be broken, and to be perfectly honest, a lot of that stuff is really hard to defend.”

In Acts 20:29 Paul stated that he had presented “*all the counsel of God.*” Why did he bother to do that, if the doctrine of the Resurrection is the only part of God's counsel that really matters? Why did he have to bring up the Creation (Acts 17), the Exodus (1 Corinthians 10), the Second Coming (1 Thessalonians 4), the importance of baptism (Acts 19) and all those other nonessential matters that might be offensive to pagan Roman seekers?

The Bible is a book of progressive revelation, starting with the Genesis account of how we and the world we live in got here. Everything in the Bible gradually builds up to the full truth about Christ, His person and work, and His Resurrection. Take away the foundational layers of this revelation, and the entire superstructure, including the Resurrection, becomes unstable and unreliable, and eventually crashes to the ground. If we cannot believe in Genesis, Exodus or the Virgin Birth even though the Bible tells us so, we will come to the place where we are no longer content to believe in the Resurrection on that basis either.

SHOULD WE PICK AND CHOOSE WHAT PARTS OF THE

BIBLE ARE IMPORTANT AND RELIABLE?

C.F.W. Walther, a prominent Lutheran theologian of the 19th Century, gave good advice when he wrote, “It is absolutely necessary that we maintain the doctrine of **inspiration as taught by our orthodox dogmaticians. If the possibility that Scripture contained the least error were admitted, it would become the business of man to sift the truth from the error. ... The least deviation from the old inspiration doctrine introduces a rationalistic germ into theology and infects the whole body of doctrine.**”

In 1940, an editorial in the Lutheran Witness stated, “**We have testified from the beginning of our synodical life to the present day and hour that we are not permitted to distinguish between things in the Bible that are to be believed and others that need not be believed. We have always said and say today that any one who denies even a fact so remote from the doctrine of salvation as, let us say, the fact that David slew Goliath or that Ruth was a Moabitess cannot have fellowship with us, for the simple reason that such a person denies what is plainly stated as a fact in the Bible.**”

The 1833 New Hampshire Baptist Confession of Faith states: “**We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction; that it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter; that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us; and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world, the true centre of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried.**”

We are on dangerous and slippery ground when we judge the Bible instead of allowing the Bible to judge us. When we publicly admit that it is not important to uphold the accuracy of plain historical statements of fact in the Bible, we open the floodgates of doubt, disbelief and repudiation of everything that the Bible teaches, including the Resurrection.

Instead of reducing the Christian faith to an unstable minimum requirement of belief, we should encourage a maximum amount of faith in everything that God has spoken in His Word.

THE LEGGING PROBLEM

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Maryann White, | Monday, March 25, 2019

I’ve thought about writing this letter for a long time. I waited, hoping that fashions would change and such a letter would be unnecessary — but that doesn’t seem to be happening. I’m not trying to insult anyone or infringe upon anyone’s rights. I’m just a Catholic mother of four sons with a problem that only girls can solve: leggings.

The emergence of leggings as pants some years ago baffled me. They’re such an unforgiving garment. Last fall, they obtruded painfully on my landscape. I was at Mass at the Basilica with my family. In front of us was a group of young women, all wearing very snug-fitting leggings and all wearing short-waisted tops (so that the lower body was uncovered except for the leggings). Some of them truly looked as though the leggings had been painted on them.

A world in which women continue to be depicted as “babes” by movies, video games, music videos, etc. makes it hard on Catholic mothers to teach their sons that women are someone’s daughters and sisters. That women should be viewed first as people — and all people should be considered with respect.

I talk to my sons about Princess Leia and how Jabba the Hutt tried to steal her personhood by putting her into a slave girl outfit in which her body became the focus. (That’s the only scene in the whole franchise in which Leia appears in such a way — and it’s forced upon her.)

Leggings are hardly slave girl outfits. And no one is forcing them on the countless young women who wear them. But I wonder why no one thinks it’s strange that the fashion industry has caused women to voluntarily expose their nether regions in this way. I was ashamed for the young women at Mass. I thought of all the other men around and behind us who couldn’t help but see their behinds. My sons know better than to ogle a woman’s body — certainly when I’m around (and hopefully, also when I’m not). They didn’t stare, and they didn’t comment afterwards. But you couldn’t help but see those blackly naked rear ends. I didn’t want to see them — but they were unavoidable. How much more difficult for young guys to ignore them.

I’ve heard women say that they like leggings because they’re “comfortable.” So are pajamas. So is nakedness. And the human body is a beautiful thing. But we don’t go around naked because we respect ourselves — we want to be seen as a person, not a body (like slave-girl Leia). We don’t go naked because we respect the other people who must see us, whether they would or

not. These are not just my sons — they're the fathers and brothers of your friends, the male students in your classes, the men of every variety who visit campus. I'm fretting both because of unsavory guys who are looking at you creepily and nice guys who are doing everything to avoid looking at you. For the Catholic mothers who want to find a blanket to lovingly cover your nakedness and protect you — and to find scarves to tie over the eyes of their sons to protect them from you!

Leggings are so naked, so form fitting, so exposing. Could you think of the mothers of sons the next time you go shopping and consider choosing jeans instead? Let Notre Dame girls be the first to turn their backs(ides) on leggings. You have every right to wear them. But you have every right to choose not to. Thanks for listening to the lecture. Catholic moms are good at those!

<https://ndsmcobserver.com/2019/03/the-legging-problem/>

BEHIND THE SMARTPHONE BACKLASH

ANTERIOR CINGULATE CORTEX

People who do more media multitasking—such as looking at a smartphone while watching TV—perform worse on cognitive control tasks and have a smaller density of gray matter in the anterior cingulate cortex, a brain region associated with executive function. —Loh and Kanai, PLOS One, 2014

RIGHT PREFRONTAL CORTEX

In comparison with non-users, heavy smartphone users show impaired attention, lower ability to process numbers, and reduced excitability in the right prefrontal cortex, an area associated with decision-making. —Hadar et al., PLOS One, 2017

NUCLEUS ACCUMBENS

A higher daily frequency of checking Facebook on a smartphone was associated with smaller gray matter volumes in the nucleus accumbens, a brain region associated with tracking rewards such as food and sex. —Montag et al., Behavioral Brain Research, 2017

SENSORY INTEGRATION

People who do more media multitasking may have a stronger ability to integrate information from multiple sensory channels. They may spread their attention to different sources of information regardless of whether they are relevant to the task at hand. —Lui and Wong, Psychonomic Bulletin & Review. 2012

PINEAL GLAND

Exposure to just two hours of blue light from a backlit tablet delays the release of melatonin, a sleep-promoting chemical, from the pineal gland by about 22 per-

cent. —Figueiro et al., Applied Ergonomics, 2013

WARNING SIGN

My students keep their cellphones facedown on their desks, but if you watch, they're flipping it over every, I don't know, two minutes? It's like it's a nervous tic. —Nate Malenke, adjunct professor, James Madison University (has never owned a smartphone)

DISTORTED PERSPECTIVE

I guessed I was on my phone for an hour, but it ended up being two. I constantly hear that kind of underestimation of how much people use their phone, by about 100 percent. People expect the number to be half as much as it actually is. —Kevin Holesh, founder of the smartphone-use-tracker Moment

HIPPOCAMPUS

Older people who habitually use GPS to get around had less activity, and a lower volume of gray matter, in the hippo-campus than older people who are used to navigating by landmarks and visual cues. —Bohbot et al., Society for Neuroscience annual meeting, 2010

ADDICTION?

Forty-two percent of people look at their phone within the first 10 minutes of being awake. —Eero Data Report, October 2017

By Jazqueline Edtwiler. Popular Mechanics, Apl. 2018

CLIMATE CHANGE

A MILLION YEARS OF CLIMATE CHANGE WITHOUT HUMANS AND CO₂: IAN RUTHERFORD PLIMER

Posted By Ruth King on July 17th, 2013

Where Does the Carbon Dioxide Really Come From?

Ian Rutherford Plimer is an Australian geologist, professor emeritus of earth sciences at the University of Melbourne, professor of mining geology at the University of Adelaide, and the director of multiple mineral exploration and mining companies. He has published 130 scientific papers, six books and edited the Encyclopedia of Geology.

PLIMER: “Okay, here’s the bombshell. The volcanic eruption in Iceland ,

... Since its first spewing of volcanic ash has, in just **FOUR DAYS, NEGATED EVERY SINGLE EFFORT** you have made in the past five years to control CO₂ emissions on our planet – all of you.

Of course, you know about this evil carbon dioxide that we are trying to suppress – it’s that vital chemical compound that every plant requires to live and grow and to synthesize into oxygen for us humans and all animal life.

I know...it's very disheartening to realize that all of the carbon emission savings you have accomplished while suffering the inconvenience and expense of driving Prius hybrids, buying fabric grocery bags, sitting up till midnight to finish your kids' "The Green Revolution" science project, throwing out all of your non-green cleaning supplies, using only two squares of toilet paper, putting a brick in your toilet tank reservoir, selling your SUV and speedboat, vacationing at home instead of abroad, nearly getting hit every day on your bicycle, replacing all of your 50 cent light bulbs with \$10.00 light bulbs.....well, all of those things you have done have all gone down the tubes in just four days.

The volcanic ash emitted into the Earth's atmosphere in just four days – yes, FOUR DAYS – by that volcano in Iceland has totally erased every single effort you have made to reduce the evil beast, carbon. And there are around 200 active volcanoes on the planet spewing out this crud at any one time – EVERY DAY.

I don't really want to rain on your parade too much, but I should mention that when the volcano Mt. Pinatubo erupted in the Philippines in 1991, it spewed out more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere than the entire human race had emitted in all its years on earth.

Yes, folks, Mt Pinatubo was active for over one year – think about it.

Of course, I shouldn't spoil this 'touchy-feely tree-hugging' moment and mention the effect of solar and cosmic activity and the well-recognized 800-year global heating and cooling cycle, which keeps happening despite our completely insignificant efforts to affect climate change.

And I do wish I had a silver lining to this volcanic ash cloud, but the fact of the matter is that the bush fire season across the western USA and Australia this year alone will negate your efforts to reduce carbon in our world for the next two to three years. And it happens every year.

Just remember that your government just tried to impose a whopping carbon tax on you, on the basis of the bogus 'human-caused' climate-change scenario.

Hey, isn't it interesting how they don't mention 'Global Warming'

Anymore, but just 'Climate Change' – you know why?

It's because the planet has COOLED by 0.7 degrees in the past century and these global warming bull artists got caught with their pants down.

And, just keep in mind that you might yet have an

Emissions Trading Scheme – that whopping new tax – imposed on you that will achieve absolutely nothing except make you poorer.

It won't stop any volcanoes from erupting, that's for sure.

But, hey, relax.....give the world a hug and have a nice day!"

<http://www.ruthfullyyours.com/2013/07/17/a-million-years-of-climate-change-without-humans-and-co2-ian-ruthford-plimer/>
Note: The article was sent to me, but I could not document the source with Google. I found it with Microsoft Bing.com. Google only produced results debunking any articles critical of climate change. It is time to abandon Google.

DEBT

If you want to sleep soundly, buy the bed of a man who is in debt Surely it must be a very soft one, or he never could have rested so easy on it. I suppose people get hardened to it, as Smith's donkey did when its master broke so many sticks across its back. It seems to me that a real honest man would sooner get as lean as a greyhound than feast on borrowed money...What pins and needles tradesmen's bills must stick in a fellow's soul! A pig on credit always grunts. Without debt, without care. Out of debt, out of danger; but owing and borrowing are bramble bushes full of thorns. If ever I borrow a spade of my next door neighbor, I never feel safe with it for fear I should break it; I never can dig in peace as I do with my own—but if I had a spade at the shop and knew I could not pay for it, I think I should set to and dig my own grave out of shame. Scripture says, "Owe no man any thing" (Rom 13:8), which does not mean pay your debts, but never have any to pay; and my opinion is that those who willfully break this law ought to be turned out of the Christian church—neck and crop, as we say.

CH Spurgeon, John Ploughman's Talk, Chapel Library

IS GROWTH GODLINESS?

For a good number of years, this writer associated with what could be called the "Sword of the Lord" mentality. I went to and was sent to "Sword" conferences where "soul winning" was stressed. At these conferences, I collected autographs in my Bible of men like Jack Hyles and John R. Rice and other "great" men in that movement. The churches with 100 baptisms in a year would get a big writeup in the Sword. The Sword would give account of evangelists and how many answered the "altar call" as they sung 75 verses of "Just as I am." Recently, someone put me on the Sword mailing list, and it seems that the Growth is Godliness theme is

not as strong as it was when I associated with the Sword mentality.

The Sword mentality permeated the once powerful BBF (Baptist Bible Fellowship) movement, but it never seemed right in my spirit. I followed it because everyone around me was caught in the Sword mentality, including the three pastors I served under. The Sword mentality has left tens of thousands of murder victims in its wake.

After my conversion in 1977, the Lord started opening my eyes to the vanity of the Growth is Godliness message. Though I could see the evil of the movement, all my pastor friends with whom I fellowshipped were of that mentality. However, I did stand against that mentality, and it was not until the late 1990s that the Lord started placing others in my path who were not captive to the Sword mentality.

As a pastor in Linden, we had a situation arise as we discussed some basic Biblical principles with a missionary whom we had been supporting. His missionary organization was a printing and teaching organization. In their material, they used a deceitful plan of salvation, *i.e.* “Ask Jesus into your heart and you’ll be saved.” There was no instruction about the redemptive work of Christ.

Please note that God saves whomsoever he will, however he will. However, “Ask Jesus...” is nowhere found in Scripture. “*For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness...*,” and salvation is not the results of words—a prayer. Can one be saved apart from understanding the redemptive work of Christ? To my everlasting shame, I have told **many** hundreds of sinners to simply “Ask Jesus into your heart,” so I am paranoid about this subject. That prayer is all I had for many years until I was converted from faith in a prayer to faith in Christ. I also have left many murder victims behind.

When several of our men and myself confronted the missionary over his prayer for salvation and some other things, he fled to an old familiar argument. “Look at how much we have grown. Therefore, what we are doing is right.” We replied, “Then you must say that the Mormons are right because of their growth.” Mission boards and missionaries by the hundreds will use the growth which they might experience to confirm that God’s hand is upon them. Churches and religious organizations of all kinds will do the same. But is growth scriptural confirmation?

I have been in meetings where the moderators intro-

duced various pastors as successful men because of their gain in numbers, because of the size of their ministries, because of the influence in their communities, and many other things which the world holds as marks of success.

We cannot avoid being caught in the trap of “Growth is Godliness” in religious circles. (In secular circles, it is “Might makes Right.”) When one might try to confront some of these pastors, leaders or missionaries with a Biblical principle they are violating, they may think or say, “How many are you running in Sunday School,” or, “How many did you have ‘saved’ last week?” If the number doesn’t meet their approval, then they will dismiss the “message”. I actually had one pastor tell me, “If you are right, then I am lost.” He was deceived by his pride, and refused to turn from faith in his prayer, and turn to faith in Christ. (Obadiah 1:3)

In 1 Timothy 6, Paul warned a young preacher named Timothy about the fallacy of the “Growth is Godliness” mentality. In fact, he is quite hard on that mentality, saying that line of reasoning comes from men of corrupt minds.

V. 3: “...and to the doctrine which is according to godliness.” He goes on to define the man who has departed from the words of Christ as “*men of evil surmisings, perverse disputing of corrupt minds, destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness.*” This is a hard saying. Any doctrine connecting godliness with gain (increase in size, or numbers) is evil surmising, a product of an ignorant and conceited mind.

1 Timothy 6:5 *Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.*

Paul goes much farther than just warning Timothy of these types of men. He tells him to not only avoid them, but get away from them. They carry a dangerous plague, for they resist the truth of the gospel. (Calvin)

Note: **First**, Paul is addressing a pastor of a local church. **Second**, Paul tells this pastor that contentment, not gain is godliness.

Have we not all accepted this worldly philosophy even in our surmisings? “I have gained, or am gaining, worldly possessions or, wealth. Therefore, I am right. I have political influence; therefore, I am right. Our numbers make us influential. I have these things; therefore, God is blessing. This big church and fancy buildings prove God is blessing us.” The list is endless, but the idea is same: **Gain proves godliness.** Furthermore, the world may look at our gain, and say, “They are doing

something right.” (Notice v. 4, “evil surmisings” of the mind, not evil words of the mouth. The sin of pride is in the heart, Ps. 139:23, Jer 4:14, Matt 15:19, Mark 7:21, Heb 4:12.)

I like what William Garnall said back in 1665, “He that sells cheapest shall have most customers, though, at least, best will be best cheap; trust with self-denial [is] a better penny-worth, than error with all its flesh pleasing (*The Christian in Complete Armor*, “Banner of Truth Trust,” p. 82).”

Doctrines connecting godliness with gain (Growth is Godliness) fill our airwaves and control many pulpits; it is taught in our Christian schools and colleges. This writer’s background is with the group of evil surmisers: “If you don’t have so many professions this week you are not godly.” “If you don’t see as many professions as I do then you aren’t as godly as I am.” “If you don’t build a large church you are not right with God.”

If godliness is connected with gain in any way, then it is not the doctrine according to godliness. It is an **evil surmising, perverse disputing** of men of corrupt minds, and **destitute** of the truth.

We have been trained in the school of Humanism very long and well. In our heart of hearts, we believe like everyone else—increase in numbers, and increase in possessions is equal to godliness. If we are not careful and prayerful, Gain is Godliness will control our minds. It is a vain imagination that must be continually cast down by a disciplined mind. (2 Cor 10)

The child of God has freedom available, freedom from the power of the vain imaginations. He has been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb; he has been “set free indeed” from the power of sin. He has been redeemed from “the vanity of the mind.” (Eph 4:17) That freedom must be preached. We must avoid passing down the Gain is Godliness mentality to the next generation as it was passed down to us. (1 Pet. 1:18-20).

Restricting the redemptive work of Christ to simply “evangelism,” *i.e.* emphasis on numeric growth, is disastrous to the cause of Christ. His redemptive work includes teaching and living above the desires of the flesh. We are seeing the results today of the restrictive gospel which has been preached. Its destructiveness is all around us. Christ came to give power to live for today that the following generations might serve God and those around us influenced for Him. (1 Cor. 15:34, 1 Pet. 1:9.)

Note Paul’s warning to pastors, vv. 9, 10. The temptation for gain, particularly monetary gain, is a snare

which will lead men to temporal destruction and eternal misery in hell.

Paul (1 Tim. 6:6-8) defines “godliness,” and it does not fit according to what we have been taught, nor with what we want to believe. “*But godliness with contentment is great gain.*” Both Matthew and Luke record our Lord’s words where he identifies godliness with being faithful in obedience to God, and leaving the results up to him. (Matt 6:33ff., Luke 12:22ff.) We must obey and trust him to advance his kingdom when and how he sees fit.

Conclusion: The doctrine which identifies “**Gain with Godliness**” is not according to the words of our Lord Jesus Christ. True godliness is being faithful in every area to God’s Word, which includes soul-winning, evangelization, missions, teaching, even politics and civil government involvement when appropriate, for there is no area of life nor thought outside of the realm of God’s kingdom. Godliness is faithfulness, being content and leaving the results up to Him. Be faithful to our Lord and His Word and learn the very unnatural lesson to “*therewith be content.*”

We can rejoice and be glad, for our instructions for God’s blessings are very simple:

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. 14 For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*

SUCCESS

Public education is fulfilled its purpose of driving families out, as parents are being forced to step up to their responsibilities to educating their own children. Sent to me: One of our daughters who has a lot of “outside” contacts said that the head lice are so common in the government schools that the problem can no longer be treated, for they are immune to any treatment.

Adolescence Now Lasts Until Age 24

“In the UK, the average age for leaving home is now around 25 years for both men and women.” That is, kids who refuse to grow up, and Obama enabled them with his requirement that children be covered by their parents’ insurance plans cover them until they are 26 years old.

<https://www.truthrevolt.org/news/medical-journal-adolescence-now-lasts-until-age-24>

PERSONAL

As I have been doing a lot of research over the web,

I am making a disquieting discovery. Good, Conservative, and Christian sources are no longer showing up in the Google search engine (I use Startpage.com, for it hides the source of searches from Google, but it still uses Google's search engine). As I have been doing theological research, the only sources that are generally showing with Google are "left wing" political, pro-Jewish and anti-Christian sites that discredit scripture. Do a search for Abraham. You will probably be surprised and disappointed at the results. I am trying Microsoft Bing, though there are other good search engines.

See <https://www.komando.com/?s=search+engines> (Check duck-duckgo.com. A new, real Christian Conservative site—truenews.com

Surgery:

Nose surgery went fine. The doctor places a splint in my nose which is to come out the 16th. A splint is sure better than what nose surgery was just a few years ago with many inches of packing.

There are 3 reasons why we like to go Wright-Patterson Airforce Base Hospital. 1. It is in the military health care system, so there is no worry about paperwork and payment. 2. The doctors and nurses are excellent, so the care could not be better. 3. The one we go to, WP, provides "5 star" accommodations for families that must drive some distance; it 66 miles for us through the traffic coming in and out of Dayton, Ohio; that is, 90 to 120 minutes depending on traffic. There are several "Fisher Houses" around the country. A trust was provided by Admiral Fisher to establish places where families could remain close while a member is in that military hospital, including some VA hospitals.

Various veteran organizations maintain the houses (nicer accommodations than one would normally find in a motel.) Because my surgery would probably be early on the 8th, we reserved our room for Sunday afternoon the 7th. Because of my past heart issues, they suggested we stay the night of the 8th. We certainly had no problem with that suggestion.

• ALL OF THAT TO SAY THIS

We have no TV at home. When we turned on the TV at about 5:30 Sunday evening in the Fisher House kitchen, the channel was set on FOX. They were having a very interesting panel discussion. The topic turned to leggings. The men were insistent that leggings were equal to a woman in her underwear. They admitted it was almost the same as seeing a naked woman, and almost impossible to avoid looking at her in an airport or wherever she might be seen. On the other hand, the

woman on the panel said that leggings were simply another pair of pants, and she could see nothing wrong with them. She maintained that the fault was on the men for looking. The men and the host vociferously disagreed with her, but she maintained her opinion that the fault was with the men. (Don't accuse me of a prude Baptist background. The panel was clearly speaking from the world's point of view. Does a Christian have "Liberty in Christ" to follow his heart in appearance, regardless of what the world thinks?)

The discussion clearly revealed how differently men and women think. In this case, their idea of modesty was completely different. What many women might think is modest, a normal man will think is next to nakedness. Should not Christian husbands and fathers warn the ladies God has placed under their care when they wear attire that will invoke sensual ideas to the world around them?

1 Timothy 2:9 *In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; 10 Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.*

1 Thessalonians 4:6 *That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified.*

Does our apparel "adorn the doctrine of God our Savior," or does it defraud those watching us in the world where we live?

Our weekly home bible study in Romans is posted at Sermonaudio.com/providence, along with the PDF notes. Also, there is a six part series on the history of Church music posted. It was presented at the Wilmington OPC church where we attend.

WAR REQUIRES MONEY

The carnal wars among men are primarily about money: "Ike" warned us many years ago about the Military-Industrial Complex. Expensive carnal warfares are urged for huge profits that are involved, with no concern about the monetary cost nor about the horrendous cost of lives and property. Wars offer tremendous profits for both industry and for the money-lenders. All modern wars are financed by debt which will never be repaid. However, there is a "Pay Day coming Some Day!"

Financing the war for sound doctrine depends on the time and gifts of God's people.

Titus 1:15-2:1

A preacher is commissioned by the Lord Jesus to preach the good news to all (Matt. 28:19-20). A preacher is to do what God directs him to do in the Word of God. Paul in his letter to Titus, his son in the faith they shared, instructed him regarding preaching according to the faith of God's elect (1:1) as he clung to the true word of sound doctrine (1:9). He was to exhort with sound doctrine and refute or correct those who were opposed to sound doctrine (1:9).

What is the servant of God to expect as a result of preaching to the spiritually defiled and unbelieving? He is to expect that this sound doctrinal preaching will not be received with purity from these defiled ones (1:15). This is the result the preacher should expect from those with defiled minds and consciences.

So what is to be expected as a response to the preaching of sound doctrine? They will falsely profess knowing God, but they will deny Him by the way they live (1:16). What motivates their response? They act out being the children of the god of this world through detesting and disobeying every good work showing why they are rejected by the holy Lord God (1:16). A "good work" in this context means everything that is in conformity to the will of God; this they reject and thus they are unable to stand the test. All the doctrines of the Bible are practical—faith is to be translated into works. The word "reprobate" here means that they have been tested for genuineness, as a gold coin would be tested, but the result was they are fraudulent.

In the light of such a response what should the faithful preacher do? He must keep on preaching the things that become "sound doctrine" (2:1) as opposed to diseased heresy as set forth by false teachers. "Speak thou" is emphatic as coming from the apostle; in other words it has apostolic authority. Capitulating, compromising or conforming to these fakes is out of the question from what Paul is telling Titus. Thomas Taylor (1576-1632) asserted, "No Christian teacher nor man must be so shaken at the ungodly courses of others in their rank, that they either give over or give back from their unrighteousness in their duties." The preacher must keep on preaching sound doctrine regardless of opposition.

Preaching to the "pure" is different from preaching to the "defiled" (1:15). The pure received sound doctrine because they were regenerated and had the imputed righteousness of Christ. The Lord said "my sheep hear my voice, and I know them."

What should a preacher do? He should continue to preach sound doctrine regardless of what people

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say or do.

Charles H. Spurgeon spoke of sound doctrine in his inimitable way, "The glorious doctrines of grace should not be slovenly delivered. Right royal truth should ride in a chariot of gold. Bring forth the noblest of your milk-white steeds, and let the music sound forth melodiously from the silver trumpets, as truth rides through the streets. If people do not attend, do not let them find excuses in our faulty utterance. If, however, we cannot mend in this respect let us be the more diligent to make up for it by the richness of our matter, and on all occasions let us do our very best." He also warned that we must not be a detriment to that truth. "An excellent Christian woman once heard John Howe [the Puritan preacher], and, as he took up an hour in his preface, her observation was, that the dear good man was so long a time in laying the cloth, that she lost her appetite: she did not think there would be any dinner after all. Spread your table quickly," said Spurgeon, "and have done with the clatter of the knives and the plates."

(Ron Rumburg)

The spiritual warfare for sound doctrine against the many false doctrines and fables of our age involves money also, but unlike the State, those fighting in this battle with the only weapon they have, sound doctrine, whether it be with print or preaching, cannot print the money to carry on the warfare against the gates of hell.

• PLEASE
REMEMBER US IN
YOUR PRAYERS AND
GIVING.



