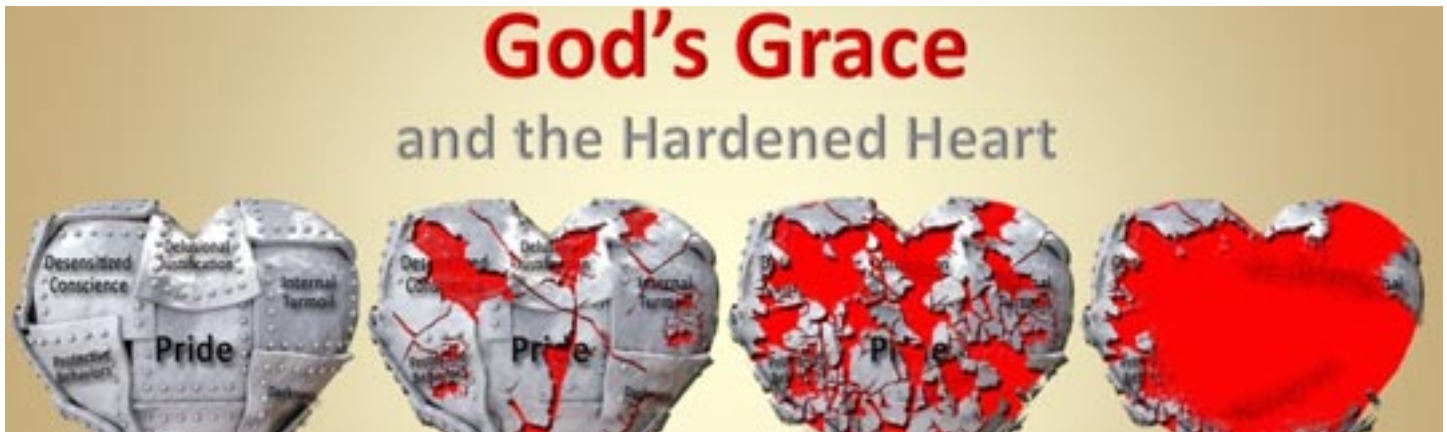


## “The wheels of their chariot got stuck in the mud ...”

By Bill Johnson



### The wheels of their chariot got stuck in the mud ....

I am referencing in my title (above) the Egyptians following hard after Moses and the Israelites - to their demise - into the Red Sea. Exodus 14:21-29. Quoting from Ligonier Ministries' Tabletalk May 2022: No military leader in his right mind would choose to use chariots in that situation, but the Lord had said that He would harden Pharaoh's heart to pursue Israel (vs.4). He is sovereign even over wicked men and their plans and when He hands people over to the hardness of their hearts, they take foolish actions, becoming more irrational the more they sin (see Romans 1:21).

Key point: when He hands people over to the hardness of their hearts they take foolish actions, becoming more irrational the more they sin.

We see such foolishness/wickedness from Pharaoh all through that timeframe with Pharaoh rejecting Moses' request to "Let my people go" as he ignored one threat after another. He (God) turned their waters into blood, causing their fish to die. Their land teemed with frogs, which went up into the bedrooms of their rulers. He spoke, and there came swarms of flies, and gnats throughout their country. He turned their rain into hail, with lightning throughout their land; he struck down their vines and

fig trees and shattered the trees of their country. He spoke, and the locusts came, grasshoppers without number, they ate up every green thing in their land, ate up the produce of their soil. Then he struck down all the firstborn in their land, the firstfruits of all their manhood. Psalm 105:29-36

.... Through this and more Pharaoh refused to let the Israelites go despite the misery, the loss, the humiliation both to himself and his nation. You all presumably are aware of the Biblical account leading up to Moses' final threat to let the people go or lose the first born of every Egyptian family and their livestock. And, they did - as God through Moses dealt judiciously against Pharaoh and the people he led, the Egyptians.

What about our American history over a number of generations. What about American leadership and American voters and our degraded voting system? We elected Bill Clinton President (1992-2000) not only a bewildering first time but a second time (1996) even after he said "I did not have sex with that woman" and after he was impeached (December 19, 1998) by the U.S. Senate. America elected Barack Obama (2008-2016) not only once but a second time ... ill-advised to say the least - even at the first election. We discovered (though the mainstream media does what it does best - concealed that Barack Hussein Obama was mentored by Marxists (Frank

Marshall Davis, Bill Ayres and Saul Alinsky) and that for 20 years he had attended the church of Jeremiah Wright – so highly problematic that even the Chicago Tribune brought out some of the issues. "In one, Wright said the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks were the 'chickens coming home to roost' on the U.S. for its foreign policy. In another, he uttered the now-infamous words 'God d\*\*n America.' Obama publicly disagreed with the sentiments in a carefully crafted speech about race, in which he said he could no more disown Wright than one could disown a family member."

**Barack Obama promised "hope" and change. He got change and he is still getting it!**

With the U.S. Supreme Court passage of Roe v. Wade in 1973 opening the door to over 60,000,000 deaths of the unborn, to the passage of Obergefell v. Hodges in 2015 legalizing same sex marriage, to the long-term failure of the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate to faithfully and effectively pass legislation that would protect and defend its citizens both home and abroad as outlined under the U.S. Constitution. The Republican leadership beyond Ronald Reagan has also been dreadful with President George H. Bush (famously promised no new taxes (1988), and, in failing to uphold that promise - after

[Continued on Page 2]

## Personal Note from the President



holding a substantial lead over his Democratic opponent, Bill Clinton, squandered the lead and thereby served only one term).

George W. Bush (2000-2008) you recall, just days after 9-11 (September 17, 2001) stated that Islam was a Religion of Peace. That false narrative opened the floodgates to those with Islamic affiliations to worm their way into governmental leadership positions. Where was discernment? Where was the CIA, the FBI? Where was the Joint Chiefs of Staff? This was and has been our government at the highest levels now for a number of years.

### **The insanity of Pharaoh? The insanity of the American government, highly magnified now by President Joe Biden (2021).**

(1) Mexican cartels are shipping in millions of illegal immigrants and deadly drugs like fentanyl. Drug overdose deaths rose in 2021 to 108,000, a 15 percent increase over 2020.

(2) Energy costs alone are up 30 percent, and they affect all else. Everything now costs far more and is headed higher. President Biden's war on energy has doubled the cost of fertilizer and other basic elements of food production. Grocery stores shelves are and will be affected much more. 8.5 percent inflation is gobbling up paychecks and savings.

(3) Attorney General Merrick Garland has pledged that his DOJ is "committed to holding all January 6th perpetrators, at any level, accountable under law," but has refused to answer questions from Congress regarding the involvement of federal agents on January 6th.

(4) As gas prices hit another record, President Biden's Interior Department canceled

millions of acres of drilling leases in the Gulf of Mexico and Alaska. Joe Biden cancelled the Keystone XL pipeline, but green-lighted Putin's Nordstrom 2 Pipeline.

### **They take foolish actions, becoming more irrational the more they sin.**

(5) Biden's border/immigration debacle and his secret flights of illegals into the American heartland, Joe Biden's Afghanistan catastrophe, Hunter Biden's laptop, Joe Biden's cave-ins to China.

(6) President Biden and his leadership team push for abortion through the ninth month of pregnancy.

(7) Congressional Democrats voted to get rid of reality-based gender terms such as man, woman, mother or father to please the LGBTQ crowd that run the party, but they've temporarily restored "woman" and "women" to advance their pro-abortion agenda.

### **They take foolish actions, becoming more irrational the more they sin.**

(8) For decades, our United States' leadership at the highest levels has been handing out our technology to China's communist regime on a silver platter. Included in that handout has been leading weapons systems that American taxpayers have shelled out hundreds of billions of dollars for; thereby those hard-earned dollars are rendered next to useless by suicidal policies that enable our enemies to leapfrog our defense systems with newer weapons based on our very own research and components. So, America helped them thanks to the willing deception of American politicians, both Democratic and Republican, and corporate globalists. Chairman Xi and the Chinese Communist Party have had their way with us at our great expense and national security.

### **The wheels of their chariot got stuck in the mud.**

### **God saved Israel. Will God save America?**

Isaiah 59:1-2, 14: *Yet the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: but your*

*iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. ... Justice is turned back and righteousness stands far away; for truth has stumbled in the public squares and uprightness cannot enter."*

### **Trevor Loudon interviewing with Epoch Times' Joshua Philips while discussing the massive issues we are facing stated:**

*It's Communism vs the Constitution: Everything from Chinese fentanyl, to the Confucius institutes, to the buying up of politicians, to Black Lives Matter, to the LGBTQ agenda - (that's another Communist influence), the shutting down of American energy, the shutting down of natural resources, the indoctrination of kids in schools - from kindergarten to Phd level. The answer is the Constitution, the Americans putting God first not last. Americans waking up to reality and standing strong again.*

Quoting from regarded Puritan John Flavel, Works, IV:354-356 *The most powerful means that have been employed to destroy God's people have been rendered ineffective. ...*

*How the weak have been used for the good of the church! Christ did not choose eloquent orators, or men of authority in the courts of kings and emperors, but twelve poor labourers, and fisherman. ... And yet, in how short a time was the Gospel spread in all the kingdoms of the world! At the sound of rams horns, Jericho was delivered into the hands of Israel. 300 men with their pitchers and lamps, the huge host of Midian was discomforted. The Protestants, besieged in Bezers in France, were delivered by a drunken drummer, who going to his quarters at midnight, rang the alarm bell of the town, not knowing what he did, and that just as the enemy was making the assault. ...*

*Can we not but acknowledge a divine and special providence overruling these matters when we see the most apt and potent means for the church's ruin frustrated, and the most silly, and contemptible means succeeded and prospered for it's good?*

# Who's In Control?

By Steve Huston



Like a game show host, Biden gives away formula, phones, and finances, along with many other gifts. One might print more money to cover his grand schemes; but this time, there's no replacing what he's attempting to give away - America's sovereignty! This will affect every American man, woman, and child without exception. **Biden is in the process of handing ultimate control of America's healthcare system and U.S. national sovereignty over to the World Health Organization (WHO).** It's not his to give away; he has no constitutional grounds to do so; and if successful, this land known for freedom and self-governance since its inception would become enslaved to the whims of communist, globalist, dictators. **It's treasonous!**

Liberty Counsel gives this dire warning:

*On May 22-28, 2022, the 75th World Health Assembly will convene at United Nations (UN) headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, with delegates from 194 nations, to vote on the Biden administration's amendments that will hand over national sovereignty and authority to the WHO, which during the COVID pandemic, carried the water bucket for the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) regarding the Wuhan lab.*

*On January 18, 2022, officials from the Biden administration quietly sent the WHO extensive amendments without an official statement or a single press conference. These proposed amendments are written to strengthen the organization's ability to unilaterally intervene into the affairs of nations merely suspected of having a "health emergency" of possible concern to other nations. If these amendments are approved, the WHO will have the power to declare an "international health emergency," nullifying the powers of nation states. The U.S. amendments delete a critical existing re-*

*striction in the regulations: "WHO shall consult with and attempt to obtain verification from the State Party in whose territory the event is allegedly occurring..." This enables the Director-General to declare health emergencies at will and can be used to justify ostracism and economic or financial actions against the targeted nation by other nations aligned with WHO or who wish to harm and control the accused nation.*

*The contents of the proposed amendments were not made public until April 12, 2022. The existing WHO regulations provide for an 18-month grace period during which a nation may withdraw its "yes" vote for amendments. However, the current proposed amendments would reduce that opportunity to six months. If the amendments are passed, a majority of the nations could change their individual votes and reverse the approval in the next months....*

*Liberty Counsel Founder and Chairman Mat Staver stated, "The Biden administration has now set America up for cede U.S. sovereignty concerning the health of Americans to the World Health Organization. The proposed amendments would give the WHO global jurisdiction over the United States including the authority to declare national emergencies. We have already seen the lawless abuse of power under Joe Biden by the Centers for Disease Control, which the courts have fortunately blocked. Americans would have very little recourse against the WHO. America must not give up its sovereignty to the WHO."*

While mainstream media is silent many truth-tellers sound the alarm.

On May 16, Frank Gaffney hosted a webinar entitled *Stop the Sellout of US Sovereignty to the WHO* with many panelists both warning of this danger and compelling the viewers to act now. Go to <https://stopvaxpassports.org>; watch it and take action!

"The term, 'Public Health Emergency,' is ill-defined and could include not only a viral pandemic, but also a rise in crime rates, climate change, or any other issue that arguably may affect 'public health.' Further,

the attempt to slip this surrender of sovereignty through quietly as a series of amendments to the current International Health Regulations constitutes an attempt to subvert the treaty process, thus performing an end-run around our legislature and the legislatures of the world."

Who defines "health" or "emergency"? **WHO will define those things, giving them as long reaching and tight grasping arms as they desire because they'll have the backing of many globalists,** allowing them to do whatever they believe is necessary to maintain control for the good of your and the world's "health".

German Health Minister, Jens Spahn states, "Countries that fail to follow up on their commitment to the WHO should face sanctions." Other globalists believe that this health agency "needs to be empowered - financially, and politically." Also, WHO needs to establish a "new international system for surveillance."

WHO Director General Tedros hints at why America has a new Board of Disinformation while the EU and UK have launched their own fight against "Disinformation;" how else does one silence the truth about this international grab for sovereignty? "We're not just battling the virus. We're also battling the trolls and conspiracy theorists that push misinformation and undermine the outbreak response."

**We must 1) Cry out** to the God of heaven. **2) Strongly urge** our senators to fulfill their obligation to the Constitution and their electorate. And **3) having done all we can humanly do, rest in the One** who is truly in sovereign control, Jehovah, God Almighty.

**Alex Newman (The New American) also gives an in-depth look:**

<https://rumble.com/v14zywt-biden-and-un-health-schemes-are-a-massive-deep-state-power-grab.html>

**Sample email from Gaffney:**

<https://www.securingamerica.tv/stop-the-sellout-of-us-sovereignty-to-the-who/>

# If Roe v. Wade Goes Down THIS is What We're Up Against

By Chris Johnson



Last month, it was revealed in a leaked brief draft that the Supreme Court seems to be poised to overturn the wicked Roe V. Wade ruling which allowed abortion nationwide. We hope to see that decision made official in the month of June.

It was also revealed that the left is NOT poised to take this ruling lying down.

As much as Roe v. Wade has been the biggest dragon conservative culture warriors have gone out questing to slay in the past decades, it has also been one of the left's biggest champions. Which, it is surmised, is the purpose of the unprecedented leak of the decision draft: to gin up enough outrage and chaos that even one judge might decide the cultural upheaval isn't worth it and change their decision.

Following the leak, outrage and chaos ensued. Protestors gathered at the Supreme Court immediately; within days they showed up outside the homes of conservative justices, and then organized rallies in major cities nationwide. These protests revealed the true nature of many of the leftists dedicated to this abhorrent procedure.

One protestor in New York City showed up on the steps of a church with a doll stuffed in the front of her clothes. She swung the doll around, yelling, "I'm killing the baby!" That same week, a Wisconsin Christian counseling center was firebombed and defaced with graffiti reading, "If abortions aren't safe, you aren't either." Another protest in Arizona featured one sign which read, "Fetus=Good Snack."



Most revealing, the Satanic Temple announced plans to sue for their right to abortion under religious freedom law, calling it a ritual. This is vindication for those of us who have identified abortion as human sacrifice.

These are just a few egregious examples of the death-cult furor over the potential threat to this barbarous and bloodthirsty practice.

Contrast this with the way pro-life groups have peacefully and respectfully rallied for the unborn in Washington D.C for decades, if you need any reassurance who the good guys are.

Leftist ideology has women reduced to believing their equality as human beings depends on their easy access to promiscuity. So much so, that when that access is threatened some of them behave more like beasts.

Others stick to encouraging the chaos. Take former White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki, who when asked about protestors outside the homes of the justices replied, *"So I know that there's an outrage right now, I guess, about protests that have been peaceful to date, and we certainly continue to encourage that outside of judges' homes and that's the president's position."* Context indicates that they were encouraging the peacefulness to continue, not necessarily the protests, but given the opportunity to denounce this illegal activity of trying to influence a judicial decision, she instead gave tacit approval. And, of course, she speaks for the president.

Meanwhile other leftist voices, as diverse as late-night comedy show host Stephen Colbert and New York Senator Kristen Gillibrand, accused the justices of lying under oath during their confirmation hearings, with some claiming they could be open to prosecution because of it.

To sum things up, the left is losing their mind at the possibility of losing this federal statute. Just a reminder, overturning Roe v Wade doesn't make abortion illegal; it leaves that decision up to the states. For many states, including Michigan, that means that old laws and state constitutional amendments will immediately kick in, out-

lawing abortion at any age – with no further lobbying or litigation.

The problem is that liberals know that too. Here in Michigan, with the support of our governor and the branch under her control, Planned Parenthood is trying to gather petition signatures to put that existing law on the ballot. They want voters to pass a radical, bloodthirsty amendment to the state constitution allowing abortion right up to AND AFTER the moment of birth.

And, with the abortion lobbyists' deep pockets, the people gathering signatures are being paid for each signature; this means that they are highly motivated to gather signatures by describing the amendment in the floweriest terms possible and distorting the truth about the laws that are on the books. We want to encourage you in this space not to sign ANY Michigan petitions that are described as having to do with abortions in the next few months and make sure your pro-life friends and family know about this too. **[For more information about combating Planned Parenthood's efforts in Michigan, see the enclosed response card to order the DVD featuring Thom Powell.]**

Of course, we need to pray. For the justices, their safety and that they would be resolute in this decision. For law enforcement, that they would be empowered to keep the peace judiciously in the midst of the chaos if the decision does stand. For the thwarting of Planned Parenthood's petition efforts. For the women who are impacted by this, that they would recognize the wickedness of this practice and repent of it. Lastly, for the church, that we would clearly represent **God's justice and grace** to a world which is so separated from it.

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# Fire, Flu, And Famine - What Else Could Go Wrong?

By Lisa Van Houten



In 1989, a visit to a supermarket led to the fall of the USSR. Boris Yeltsin stopped at an American grocery store after visiting the Johnson Space Center. He was astonished by the abundance of food and products, a sharp contrast to the breadlines and empty shelves he was accustomed to in the Soviet Union. He saw the stark difference between capitalism and socialism. Yeltsin later wrote in his autobiography, *“When I saw those shelves crammed with hundreds, thousands of cans, cartons and goods of every possible sort, for the first time I felt quite frankly sick with despair for the Soviet people. That such a potentially super-rich country as ours has been brought to a state of such poverty! It is terrible to think of it.”*

Now, 33 years later many in the U.S. are also sick with despair – that the United States of America, the most materially-blessed nation in the world, is being brought down to such a level. In Rudyard Kipling’s famous poem, The Gods of the Copybook Headings, there’s a line which reads: **“but though we had plenty of money, there was nothing our money could buy.”** Thanks to Biden inflation, Americans may soon have neither plenty of money nor food. For months frustrated Americans have felt as if we’re turning into a third world country as Biden’s policies have led to bare shelves and skyrocketing food prices.

The baby formula crisis is giving Americans a taste of what could very well be ahead for all of us. Desperate mothers are driving hours in search of formula to keep their infants alive. Several babies with specific medical conditions have been hospitalized after parents have been unable to find the specialty formula they need. Unsurprisingly, the Biden administration has focused more on the “right” to murder babies, than making sure they’re fed. For four months the largest producer of baby formula has

been shuttered by the FDA. Biden’s FDA shut down the Abbott factory in February due to suspected bacterial contamination, which has yet to be proven, but no one in the administration took steps to ensure there would be an adequate supply of formula for our nation’s needs to compensate for the loss of Abbott’s products. Yet pallets and pallets of formula are stockpiled at our southern border designated for illegal immigrants - but not American babies.

However, the concern of not being able to find certain products may soon escalate to far greater food shortages – not just here in America, but around the world. There is a “perfect storm” of circumstances that’s leading to a global food crisis.

Ukraine is considered one of the most important “breadbaskets” of the world. As the war in Ukraine is prolonged, crop planting is adversely affected, while Russian military purposefully destroys stockpiles of grain.

In the U.S., not only has the cost of fertilizer increased by as much as 300% from last year, farmers are having difficulty getting the fertilizer they need since much of it is imported from Russia. Add to that the higher price of seed and soaring fuel costs, many farmers may not be able to afford to plant as many crops as usual. Diesel is the lifeblood of farmers, but not only are there shortages of the fuel, the average price per gallon in the Midwest is \$5.34. A year ago, it was \$2.14. Filling a tractor tank daily now costs some farmers \$1,000 and the most intensive part of the farming season is just beginning.

Then there is the strange phenomenon of U.S. food processing facilities being destroyed by fire. Is it just coincidence that in the first four months of 2022 alone at least 17 major incidences of fires, explosions, and even plane crashes have impacted food processing plants? In all of last year there were only 11 such mishaps. While I don’t know if there is a sinister cause, I do know these incidents will have an impact on our food supply.

To top it off, a bird flu is impacting the

flocks of chicken farmers. In Iowa alone, 13 million chickens have had to be destroyed and the nationwide total farmers have lost is: 22 million egg-laying chickens, 1.8 million broiler chickens, 1.9 million pullet and other commercial chickens, and 1.9 million turkeys. We’re already seeing the impact in the cost of meat and eggs at the grocery store.

Yet no matter how concerning the picture is for the U.S., the outlook for other regions of the world is far more dire. In many developing nations millions of people could face starvation. A word we don’t hear too often is being used to describe the coming food crisis: **famine**. Areas such as the Middle-east and Africa are expected to be especially hard-hit. Some nations are already rationing food.

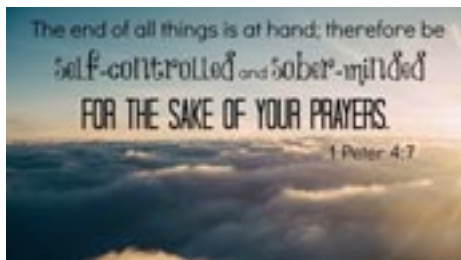
But even though conditions are rapidly deteriorating in our nation and around the world, as Christians **we should not** wallow in despair or live in fear. *“And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places.”* Matthew 24:6-7

**However, we should** prepare for worsening times so that we can not only provide for our family but also minister to others. *“Now in these days prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. And one of them named Agabus stood up and foretold by the Spirit that there would be a great famine over all the world (this took place in the days of Claudius). So the disciples determined, every one according to his ability, to send relief to the brothers living in Judea. And they did so, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.”* Acts 11: 27-30

**And most importantly**, place our hope in our Heavenly Father who promises: **“Behold, the eye of the Lord is on those who fear him, on those who hope in his steadfast love, that he may deliver their soul from death and keep them alive in famine.”** Psalm 33:18-19

# A Call to Sober-mindedness

By Steve Huston



The articles found within this newsletter make it obvious that we have much to be sober-minded about. How can one help but recognize that these perilous times are sober times that require brokenness and love to pray rightly for our nation, our misguided leadership, a widening swathe that runs through every generation that yells tolerance yet shows none, and frankly, a world that seems to have lost their collective minds. In light of these things, when Ecclesiastes tells us there is a time to weep and a time to laugh it would seem that now is a time to weep although laughter at the very things that should cause us to weep seems to come much easier to many.

I've prayed for you, dear Reader. There are times I feel led to preach or write something that will pinch and I'd rather not go there; but be assured it pinches me first as I work through it. In other words, I've gotten a good look at the plank in my own eye; so I have prayed that God will fill you with grace and love for me as I will likely be misunderstood. Let me state up front that I love to laugh and have a good time. The joy of the Lord is my strength and I firmly believe that Christians should laugh and smile, showing the love of Jesus to a world that makes me want to cry, scratch my head, and yes, sometimes, be angry over. Laughter isn't the problem; after all, Proverbs tells us a merry heart doeth good like a medicine. The question is what are we laughing about? At what or whose expense are we making fun?

Pastor Harry Reeder spoke on Gender and Sexuality at the Ligonier *Upholding Christian Ethics 2022* conference. To put it quite simply, he knocked it out of the park; listen to it to be encouraged and stirred. While the message itself was sobering, he never talked about being sober-minded; yet several things became clear regarding sober-mindedness as I listened. (Please don't blame Pastor Reeder for my conclusions.)

I'd been asking myself why so many conservatives and Christians laugh at or make jokes about sin or those caught up in sin's consequences. Remember when Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson said she couldn't define what a woman is? Conservative and Christian social media pages were full of various memes making fun of this. Biden, AOC, and numerous others have been the punch line of many jokes instead of the subject of prayer, and laughter instead of brokenness and weeping. Meanwhile their ideas gain traction in the minds of others.

Then I heard Pastor Reeder say that a return to neopaganism "always brings a culture of insanity, absurdity (59 genders and counting), immorality (sexual anarchy is all around us; is there no end to the LGBTQAI+ alphabet soup?), lethality (the possibility of murdering your own child within 28 days after birth and no one allowed to question you about it), and is rooted in profitability (the porn industry alone is a virtual goldmine)." It all comes from sin; we can't sensibly explain sin's absurdity and these are easy targets to poke fun at or insult. But should we? Is that really what God would have us to do? When we laugh at sin it loses some of its sting for us; yet its consequences remain dire.

As he mentioned seven different sanctities (sanctity of life, of gender, of family, of marriage, of work, of rest, of Sabbath) I thought about what sanctity means – "the quality or state of being holy or sacred: inviolability." Being holy, should these be joked about? Words matter. I remembered that God's name is holy and how sitcoms used euphemisms for God's name, attaching it to a punch line for a laugh. I see how these euphemisms have become commonplace, even in the church, and I can't help but think that as we laugh at that which is sacred we lose just a sliver of respect or awe for that thing which God has called holy.

Near the middle of his message this man of God stated that the mission of the church is "to turn sinners right side up." Being changed by Christ we are now "the salt of

the earth, the light of the world, your life changes, your marriage changes, your family changes, the way you do business changes, the way you're a citizen changes." With these Biblical truths ought not our view of what constitutes appropriate joking change as well? If we're not taking sin seriously, if we're not taking sacred things seriously, by what means are we going to convince the sinner that they need to be "turned right side up"? How does one effectively love, pray for, and evangelize another after they've insulted or made fun of them? Was this the example of Christ?

We cannot be silent about sin because the Bible isn't silent about sin but why is it easier to either joke about sin or those caught up in the consequences of sin instead of speaking truth that confronts a lie? Many of us, myself included, need a transformation of our mind, a renewing of our mind to "prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" and to reach those who are bound by the chains of sin with the love of God which can set them free indeed.

Twice, in a short list, while warning not to grieve the Spirit at the end of Ephesians chapter four, we are admonished about our speech. Stating specifically that our speech needs to be "that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers." There's room for joviality, praise God; but it needs to be edifying not tearing down. Paul says, "Let all...clamour and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice." Remembering that James calls the tongue a fire, let's take this puritan illustration to heart: "Watch over it as one that dwells in a thatched house watches over sparks from his chimney."

A call to sober-mindedness is not a call to look like one has been sucking on lemons or a call to having a downcast spirit. It's a call to seeing sin and sacredness as God sees them. Being broken over our own sin and the sin of our nation while loving God with all that we are and loving our neighbor enough to speak truth to them as we would desire to enjoy the fruit of truth ourselves.

Oh God, set a watch over my heart and my tongue. Amen.

# Two Prophets Against Two Cities

By Chris Johnson



The book of Jonah lends itself to Bible story book treatment. In spite of being listed with the other prophetic books, there's very little prophecy in it. Its narrative seems out of place in the midst of the other prophets, with their foretelling of plumb lines against walls, metal statues, and the moon turning to blood. Jonah's story is refreshingly easy to understand in the midst of things that make us modern readers go, "huh?"

The prophecy that IS included in it is directed towards Nineveh. Nonetheless, when the book was written and included with messages of the other prophets, which were directed primarily at Israel, it was clearly meant to mean something to them as well.

The amazing story of Jonah's lackluster ministry to the wicked city of Nineveh – the capitol city of Assyria – leaves us wondering what Jonah's message to the Assyrians/Ninevites actually was. The Bible doesn't really tell us, other than that their city would be overthrown in 40 days. The Biblical account doesn't even tell us what they are to repent *for*, other than to say that their evil had "come up before God."

Extra-biblical sources tell us that the Assyrians were particularly brutal, skinning their enemies alive, skewering them on spears, and other atrocities. It is perhaps this violence that they were called to repent of. The Bible doesn't give us Jonah's message, but whatever it was, it was obviously effective, in spite of Jonah's famously unmotivated preaching.

So why was this story of a prophecy to Assyria included among the recordings of God's messages to the Israelite people?

One of God's methods of illustrating His prophecies to His people was to command His messengers to carry out a sort of divine performance art. Hosea was told to marry a

prostitute. Isaiah was told to walk around naked for several years. Ezekiel had to lie on his side every day for over a year. Jonah illustrates how a city that truly fears God responds to His warnings.

The Bible mentions the prophet Jonah one other time, in the book of Kings, regarding a prophecy he delivered to King Jeroboam the second. Another of God's prophets active during this regime was Amos, who was saying things like, "*The end has come upon my people Israel; I will never again pass by them. The songs of the temple shall become wailings in that day, declares the Lord GOD. 'So many dead bodies!' 'They are thrown everywhere!'*"

Now, I ask you, how likely is it that Jonah, the half-hearted prophet who didn't want to be there, was preaching repentance any harder than that? The book of Jonah makes a point, both times it mentions non-Israelites, to show their immediate desire to satisfy Israel's God. The sailors from Joppa carrying Jonah away from Nineveh were "*exceedingly afraid,*" pronouncing "*You, O LORD, have done as it pleased you. 'So they picked Jonah up and hurled him into the sea.'*" And what happened? The wrath of God abated and the sea was calm. Likewise the Ninevites believed Jonah's warning from God, apparently immediately, "*from the greatest of them, to the least of them.*" And what happened? "*God relented of the disaster that He had said He would do to them, and He did not do it.*" In fact, the book of Jonah specifically says that "*The word reached the king of Nineveh and he arose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.*" Then he commanded the whole city, **EVEN THE BEASTS**, to fast in repentance.

But what happened when Amos brought HIS message to Israel and their king? "*Amaziah [the priest] said to Amos... 'never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom.'*"

Amos was banned from the city where the northern kingdom worshipped God.

What was the consequence of Israel's refusal to repent? Amos 7 says, "*'For behold, I*

*will raise up against you a nation, O house of Israel,' declares the LORD, the God of hosts; 'and they shall oppress you from Lebo-hamath to the Brook of the Arabah.'*" The location there is a direct reference to Jonah's prophecy recorded in Kings, by the way.

That nation that God raised up against Israel was Assyria, of which Nineveh was the capitol. Within 80 years of the Ninevite king's humble repentance, Assyria – under a different king of course - had conquered Israel and all the fortified cities of Judah, encircling Jerusalem under King Hezekiah, who *did* lead his nation in repentance and whom God saved by miraculously annihilating 180,000 Assyrian troops overnight.

So what does that have to do with us in 2022? We serve the same immutable God. His Holy standard has not changed. His power has not waned. His plan, spanning the centuries, is still in place. Look at the sin with which Amos accuses Israel; see if it sounds familiar: "*Woe to those who lie on beds of ivory and stretch themselves out on their couches, and eat lambs from the flock and calves from the midst of the stall, who sing idle songs to the sound of the harp and like David invent themselves instruments of music, who drink wine in bowls and anoint themselves with the finest oils, but are not grieved over the ruin of Joseph.*"

Lambs, calves, music, wine, oil – these are objects of temple worship and sacrifice. God says, "*I abhor the pride of Jacob...*" Rather than grateful service to their God, Israel is bestowing these rites upon themselves.

Are not God's people in our culture guilty of the same sort of self-worship, accruing to ourselves authority which rightfully belongs only to God? Through Jonah, God showed Israel *and us* the level of wickedness He was willing to forgive.

Will we respond like Nineveh or Jerusalem?

# The Cost of Compromise

By Lisa Van Houten



It's become abundantly clear that there can be no neutral ground in the moral revolution taking place in our culture. Every Christian, every church, and every Christian institution will have to clearly declare which side of the moral divide they are on. There is no longer a tolerant view of Biblical Christianity in our secular world; those who hold to the authority of God's Word are seen as enemies for not affirming the new ethos regarding sex and gender. While many Christians are seeking to win the world's approval, compromise brings disastrous results. As one example of many, Calvin University has been going down that road for a number of years.

There are many similarities between Calvin University and the Old Testament account of Jehoshaphat. Jehoshaphat started his reign as one of Judah's godliest kings, while his counterpart, Ahab, was one of the wickedest kings of Israel. 2 Chronicles 17 says: *"The Lord was with Jehoshaphat ... He did not seek the Baals, but sought the God of his father and walked in his commandments, and not according to the practices of Israel. Therefore the Lord established the kingdom in his hand. ... His heart was courageous in the ways of the Lord."*

As with Jehoshaphat, Calvin, affiliated with the Christian Reformed Church, was founded as a distinctively Christian college which sought to honor God and follow His commandments. The motto of Calvin, my alma mater, is *"My heart I offer to you, Lord, promptly and sincerely."* Those were not just empty words in generations past, but truly a call to teach students to follow Christ wholeheartedly. Sadly, for many years now, Calvin (now a university) has betrayed and squandered that foundational spiritual heritage. As Jehoshaphat made an alliance with idol-worshipping King Ahab,

Calvin is now bowing to one of the idols of our culture – LGBT ideology.

You can read the full account of Jehoshaphat's compromise with ungodliness in 2 Chronicles 17-20. Yet one striking statement Jehoshaphat makes to Ahab is this: ***"I am as you are, my people as your people. We will be with you in the war."*** Both by words and actions, Calvin is telling those pushing the LGBT agenda, "I am as you are," while joining forces with those seeking to undermine the authority of Scripture. Calvin has chosen the wrong side in the war for truth.

The change didn't happen overnight; just one compromise here and another there until the snowball grew and rolled faster and faster down the hill of apostasy. It's evident in their hiring choices. For example, one professor organized a Down Syndrome drag show (he resigned after outside forces, including we at ADA, shed light on the issue); another professor has vocally advocated for abortion on demand; while another has performed a gay "marriage" ceremony of a former student. More than 100 faculty members signed a letter in support of this professor after his position was threatened. In 2009, Calvin faculty overwhelmingly voted against a policy that would have prohibited them from supporting homosexuality and same-sex marriage.

Calvin also hosts an LGBT student organization, Sexuality and Gender Awareness (SAGA). The group boasts that it is "a peer education group of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, plus (LGBT+), and straight students who support each other and educate the campus." The group holds yearly LGBT campus events and workshops in the dorms. **Calvin even offers a map of "gender inclusive" restrooms for transgender students.** Increasingly, Calvin gives tacit approval to the push among students and staff to advance the acceptance of LGBT lifestyles and ideology. **Our DVD entitled "A Christian College's Slide into Confusion," featuring Glenn Bulthuis, delves further into Calvin's decline. You can order it by calling us at 231-924-4050.**

On paper, Calvin claims to uphold scripture and the sanctity of marriage, yet continues to affirm sinful lifestyles. There's a veneer of Christianity, but underneath the shiny surface is nothing more than flimsy plywood that won't stand up against the weight brought to bear by secular forces. The following typifies Calvin's destructive compromise: In a 2018 interview, Calvin Chaplain Many Hulst stated: *"... I want to honor scripture, but I also honor my LGBT brothers and sisters."* Can you imagine saying you 'honor my adulterous brothers and sisters'? There's no difference. She claims she "wants" to honor scripture, however, instead, by honoring those living in rebellion to God she's not only denouncing the authority of God's Word, but also legitimizing that which Romans 1 makes clear leads to alienation from God. The truly loving thing would be to help those embracing LGBT lifestyles to see that they're exchanging the truth about God for a lie. Those in leadership at Calvin are failing to lovingly warn those under their guidance about the consequences of sin. *"Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them."* (Romans 1:32) **It's not loving to affirm the sin which separates someone from God.** As James 5:19-20 says: *"My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins."*

Often the consequences of Christians compromising with the world are not immediately seen. In the case of Jehoshaphat, the consequences of his alliance with Ahab impacted not only his children and grandchildren, but the entire nation of Judah - causing them to turn away from God and worship idols. All because one man compromised. What will be the consequences for the thousands of students impacted by Calvin's compromise?

Alternatively, what impact will there be if Christians boldly and unapologetically stand for Truth?