

# Thoughts on Freedom

a time for

REPENTANCE and MOURNING

written September 14th, 2001

updated March 2nd, 2003

Copyright © 2001, 2003

Mark W. Weaver

# Thoughts on Freedom

## PART I: ORIGINS

Our nation is a nation of immigrants. In the 225 years since our birth, people from all across the globe have gradually populated our land. What makes America such a desirable place to live? Why do so many rush to our shores? The answer can be summarized in one word—freedom.

But the freedoms we have enjoyed for so many generations in this nation did not suddenly appear out of nowhere. Nor are they supported by nothing. Have you ever pondered upon freedom? Have you ever considered freedom's meaning? Have you contemplated freedom's roots? Where does freedom come from?

Most people falsely believe that civil governments grant freedom. But this is not correct.

If you'll recall from your history books, our forefathers wrestled our freedom from England's King George. They determined that no king had a "divine right" to rule over men. These visionaries believed that freedom came from God and that governments were in place to protect our "God-given" freedom, not grant it.

Guided by deeply developed principles which sprang from a culture shaped largely by the Christian Reformation, our nation's founders crafted a marvelous document—The Declaration of Independence:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure

these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed..."

Two thoughts emerge from this passage:

1. Our Creator is the One who grants these rights—including our liberty (or freedom)
2. Governments are instituted to secure these rights (as opposed to granting them)

Losing sight of these fundamental concepts can lead us down a path of delusion into thinking that the American form of freedom can easily be established in other cultures. But while the principles of freedom are universal, the foundations of freedom can only be truly secured upon the bedrock of Judeo-Christian faith.

## PART II: HUMAN DIGNITY

Underlying this premise of God-given freedom is the even more fundamental idea of human dignity. But human dignity can only be derived from one place—the idea that mankind has been created in the image of God. This idea flies directly in the face of evolutionism which teaches that man is here purely by chance and without purpose.

Those who believe that man is created in the image of God and not evolved, believe that human life is sacred. To those who believe this way, murder is heinous. When we strike a death-blow to another human being out of hatred, anger, or even selfishness—not to be confused with the systematic processes of justice or the need for self-defense, a different discussion possibly for a different time—we are striking at the very image of God. Aborting unborn children is the most heinous

# Thoughts on Freedom

nous act of all because it strikes at those defenseless ones while their God is still forming them in the womb. Be assured, God does not wink or turn His head away when such things occur. Nor does He ignore us when our films and television screens are regularly filled with images of murder, mayhem, sexual perversion, and destruction.

## **P**ART III: MAINTENANCE

History has proven that political freedom, once established, is not so easily maintained. Freedom almost works against itself because with freedom comes opportunity for abuse.

Yes, freedom is grand! But how quickly we forget that with it come certain responsibilities. The primary means that we have to protect our freedom is to live our lives in an upright way. By upright I mean straight, level, correct, fitting, and proper. In other words, we need to live our lives in a way that pleases God. In so doing, we support and maintain our freedom.

But when we don't live our lives in this way, and use our liberty for license to self-pleasure, we risk our freedom and bring calamity upon ourselves. For example, when we use our freedom to drink alcohol to excess, we may have fun at the moment, but the next morning we suffer consequence. If we drink a lot, we can risk having our judgment impaired, lose our privilege to drive, or destroy a family relationship. This is but one example.

Not long ago, my wife and I attended a picnic with some co-workers that descended into a state of drunken revelry. We left early. Those who behaved in such a manner

failed to understand that this kind of behavior does not escape the attention of God. It may seem innocent enough at the time, but when single incidents such as this one are added together with thousands and thousands of others over a period of time, and collected together with the actions of others committing child abuse, murder, lewd sexual acts, thievery, extortion, and the murder of innocent unborn, our nation's foundations and walls of protection are weakened. When a nation collectively fails to maintain its fear and memory of God, and to live in an upright manner, consequences follow on a large scale. By thumbing our noses at uprightness, we open ourselves up to all kinds of calamity.

## **P**ART IV: JUDGMENT

History is filled with powerful nations that crumbled because of selfishness and sin. We may not think that there is any connection between drunkenness, lewdness, abortion, and the bombing and destruction of three of our nation's most prized buildings, but there clearly is. On Tuesday morning, we experienced what happens when a righteous God finally tires of a nation's arrogance, its worship of money, its drunkenness, its sexual perversions, and its murder of unborn children in the womb.

Make no mistake. As this nation prepares to go to war, we do so because we are experiencing some of God's judgment. .

September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, watching in horror with our mouths agape as the twin towers collapsed killing thousands of innocent victims, we began to awaken from our drunken stupor. And as we listened to the President and others speak of a prolonged war, we

# Thoughts on Freedom

have begun to sober up. But what comes next is up to us. It is time to turn from our selfishness and sinfulness. We have the opportunity to deflect some of God's future judgments by turning now from our neglect of uprightness and our neglect of God himself. The ancient Assyrian city of Nineveh, after hearing from the prophet Jonah of the impending judgments of God, repented of their wickedness, turned to God, and escaped future judgment. We now have that same opportunity.

Look at this passage from Revelation 18, verses 7 & 8:

*"In the measure that she glorified herself and lived luxuriously, in the same measure give her torment and sorrow; for she says in her heart, 'I sit as queen, and am no widow, and will not see sorrow.' Therefore her plagues will come in one day--death and mourning and famine. And she will be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judges her."*

In one day!

Read on through verses 9 & 10:

*"The kings of the earth who committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her will weep and lament for her, when they see the smoke of her burning, standing at a distance for fear of her torment, saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour your judgment has come.'"*

One hour!

Read also verses 16-20:

*... and saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city that was clothed in fine linen, purple, and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls! For in one hour such great riches came to nothing.' Every shipmaster, all who travel by ship, sailors, and as many as trade on the sea, stood at a distance and cried out when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, 'What is like this great city?' They threw dust on their heads and cried out, weeping and wailing, and saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city, in which all who had ships on the sea became rich by her wealth! For in one hour she is made desolate.'*

One hour!

Taken in context with other verses in the same chapter, it is unlikely that these verses refer directly to this incident in New York City on Tuesday. Nonetheless, the similarities are chilling.

We can neglect this message, harden our hearts and place our trust only in our ability to gather intelligence, to secure our borders and airports, to build international coalitions, and to use our military might. If we neglect God now, and fail to become upright, the America we have known and loved will surely be gone forever.

*"Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; But we will remember the name of the Lord our God." (Psalm 20:7)*

God gave us our freedom. And He can take it away. Like the reckless soul who drinks, drives, and has his license revoked, God can just as easily strip a nation of its privileges. In Biblical times, Israel neglected to obey God and became slaves and captives of for-

# Thoughts on Freedom

eign nations. America is not immune. If we do not repent, we risk having the hand of God's protection permanently removed from our land. Now is not a time for arrogance.

America is strong only because God has made us strong. He has made us a beacon of freedom to the entire world. But our enemy—those haters of America and God—struck a major blow against our freedom this week. We lost this round. We will likely lose some subsequent rounds. We are not as strong and invincible as our arrogance tells us we are.

## **P**ART V: TURNING

Our President has designated Friday as a National Day of Prayer and Remembrance. Let us therefore pray for forgiveness, seek His mercy, and turn our hearts toward the Lord. And let us not cease praying after Friday passes. Friday, and beyond, let us continue to remember not only those who have lost their lives or may yet be struggling to survive under the rubble, and their families, let us also remember and return to the One who gives us our freedom.