



"I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved." Hab. 2:1

May 13th, 2011

Isaiah's vision of the Lord on His throne was very timely.

He faced many distractions, so the Lord gave him a vision of Himself. The death of good king Uzziah, the increasing idolatry of the Jews, and the rise of Babylon all presented distractions for Isaiah's eyes. So it was that the Lord revealed Himself as Isaiah's sovereign Lord.

How sad it is that many men lay claim to the word "sovereign" and then use it to bludgeon the saints into their fatalistic system of Augustinian theology. "Sovereign" comes from the Latin word "super" and means "above, over, or beyond." Such was God's revelation of Himself to Isaiah, "I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple." (Isa. 6:1) God is always transcendent, always above and over and beyond all the tawdry schemes of fallen men.

We are in need of that biblical vision in this hour. A dear friend told me of a sermon he preached, "Weapons of Mass Distraction." Everyday we are bombarded with "mass distractions." I hear men crying, "Look! Look! See the natural disasters, the assassination of Bin Laden (!?!), the governments without wisdom upholding evil and oppressing good, the churches building entertainment centres for the saints to enjoy the world in a religious atmosphere, the pastors providing DVD "waterslides" for church members so they can wallow in Holly/Bollywood filth."

Weapons of Mass Distraction are on every hand.

So what should we do?

We must renew Isaiah's vision. We need to see what he saw. We need to read it again and again. And then we need to lift up our eyes and behold our glorious Saviour upon His throne. The distractions of a world of lost men do not distract the sovereign God. He is above all that and will turn all their follies to His own good ends.

How foolish would Isaiah have been if he had turned away from the revelation of God, from the glorious vision of his glorified and exalted and sovereign Lord to worms wrestling in the mire.

Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up. And so must we.

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Don't Mess With Our Preachers -

(I received this a year or two ago from Pastor Jesse Smith. It is a report from two young preachers who preach on the streets in North Carolina. One of our men knows the "David" in this email;. He is David Bane the son of evangelist Randy Bane. Our church got such a blessing out of this story. Ed.)

"From Fall through the middle of the summer a friend of mine, David, and myself had been faithfully going to the center of our City (Asheville, NC), and open air preaching, 1-2-1 witnessing, and passing out Gospel tracts. By Gods' Grace and strength we did this every Saturday afternoon between 1pm and 5pm. Every week there were tourists, and shoppers, but part of the crowd would be, as we called them, "The usual suspects". These folks were 15-35ish in age. Some of them were homeless, some of them drunkards and dopers with nothing else to do but hang out down town.

There was one particular group that showed up around April that would heckle us pretty successfully. By that, I mean they would help us draw a large crowd with their outbursts against the message of the Gospel. But, by mid-summer this scenario became quite discouraging. Not only would they come around every time we would start to preach, but it got to where they were waiting for us to show up just so they could ridicule us when we got there. My friend and I had even considered moving to another part of the downtown to avoid the weekly barrage of jesting and mocking.

Then one day... (Don't you just love the times in the Bible where there's a long list of terrible things and then it says.. "But God..." Well, this day was just like that for us.) One day my friend David was preaching from about the second step of a semi-circle amphitheatre there in the park and our "usual suspects" were doing what they did best; mocking, jesting, and otherwise being disruptive. I

was at the top of the amphitheatre area (about 25 feet away from David) passing out tracts to folks walking by when I suddenly felt a need to pray for David. I knelt down and began to pray, and within seconds a man in his late 20's started yelling and came running into the park towards David and myself. He stopped in front of David (who was elevated about 4 ft above the man thanks to the stairs), and began screaming at him to stop preaching. Then he reached into his backpack and pulled out a very large survival style knife and said that if David didn't stop preaching he was going to kill him.

Suddenly, to my right, and above and to the right of David I heard more people screaming and cussing. I thought "Oh great, now our "Usual Suspects" are going to help this guy kill David and then probably kill me." (Just a few weeks before this there had been a stabbing that led to a man's death, in this same park.) Then, all of a sudden it dawned on me that our "Usual Suspects" were not running toward us, but toward the man with the knife.

It took a moment to make out what they were screaming; "You blankety, blank, blank. You leave "our" preachers alone or we'll blankety, blank, blank, blank kill you"!!!! The man with the knife looked confused and horrified. The last we saw of him, he was running up the block as fast as he could go, with our gang of "Usual Suspects" following close behind, still threatening him with bodily harm for "messing" with "their" preachers.

God surely does work in mysterious ways.

They had been listening, and watching. We didn't think we were making any progress, but God measures progress with a different measuring stick. They didn't just hear what we said, they watched what we did. They waited for us to come every week because they knew we were faithful to do what we believed God wanted us to do. To God be all the Glory.

The point is this: don't get discouraged, stay the course, and be faithful in your witness for Christ. Who knows, the day you decide to give up may be the day someone says of you, "Where's "our" preacher at?"

Amen!!!!

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What Should I Teach My Children About Movies? -

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES THAT FORBID WATCHING THE VAST MAJORITY OF HOLLYWOOD MOVIES AND TELEVISION PROGRAMS

The following Scripture passages teach me not to attend the modern movie theater or watch most modern Hollywood movies on video or DVD or the vast majority of television programming (including, and perhaps especially, the commercials!). While we cannot make a law that Christians can never watch any television program or any movie, it is also clear that Christian liberty is not the liberty to disobey the Bible. If the child of God can watch some program or movie without disobeying the Scriptures and with a clear conscience before God, that is between him and the Lord.

But the following Scriptures have a direct application to this issue and are a loud warning to those who have ears to hear.

1. "I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me" (Psalm 101:3).

This verse single-handedly forbids the child of God to watch the vast majority of the movies and television programs that are made today. Consider just a few of the wicked things that you or your children will see:

- * The breaking of all of God's commandments
- * Open and flaunted immorality
- * Casual drinking and drug usage
- * Drunkenness portrayed as something funny and innocent
- * Immodest and sexually alluring dress
- * Sexually enticing dancing
- * Violence and mayhem
- * Casual dating (Parents, do you want your children to date after the fashion portrayed in most movies and television programs?)
- * Mockery of the things of God
- * Pagan religions depicted as truth
- * Occultism, paganism, and New Age error (even in cartoons and in a large number of Disney movies)

2. "I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?" (Job 31:1)

This verse is similar to the one in Psalm 101:3, but it warns more specifically about looking upon women to lust after them. The Lord Jesus Christ warned, "But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matt. 5:28). These verses are solemn warnings to men and boys NOT to watch Hollywood movies, whether in the theater or at home. In public, most men will not stare at a woman very long because he doesn't want to be seen doing that, but when he is watching a movie, he can stare as long as he desires at an indecently clad female, even if his wife is sitting by his side. Twenty years ago I asked a pastor friend, "Why do you think so many pastors are falling to sexual sins?" I have never forgotten his simple reply: "Television."

3. "But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them." (Ephesians 5:3-7).

This is a perfect description of 99% of the Hollywood movies today, if not 100%. It also describes the sensual rock music that goes hand in hand with practically all of today's Hollywood movies. The child of God is not to participate in such things, even by proxy.

4. "But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth" (Colossians 3:8).

Not only is it dangerous to watch evil things but it is equally dangerous to hear evil things. There are occasions in this wicked world in which we do not have complete control over what we see and hear, but when we are in our homes, we do have control. And we do have control over where we go and what we do with our own time. Television programs and movies are literally filled with ungodly speech, with the things specifically and solemnly forbidden in Colossians. The ear is a gate to the heart and determines how we live. The Proverbs warns, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Prov. 4:23). The very first thing that is mentioned in that connection is "Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee" (Prov. 4:24)!

Movies and television programs are filled with the things forbidden in Colossians 3:8: "Foul language, including curses, offensive epithets, scatological language, sexually suggestive or indecent language, and censored language increased by 94.8 percent during the Family Hour between 1998 and 2002" (Calvary Contender, Dec. 2003).

5. "And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Genesis 6:5). "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened" (Romans 1:21). "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5).

The Bible warns the believer to cast down every evil imagination, because the imagination is the battle ground for the soul. Proverbs 23:7 says, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he..." The imagination goes from bad to worse. The flesh is never satisfied. Sin, which began in such a "small" way in the days of Adam, had so permeated and controlled man's thoughts by the days of Adam's great grandson Noah that his thoughts were only evil continually. That describes multitudes in our day, which is not surprising in that the Lord warned, "But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matt. 24:37). Romans tells us that the imagination plays a great role in the downward spiral that results in homosexuality and other moral perversions. It is impossible to have spiritual victory if one allows the imagination to dwell upon evil things. It is not difficult in this connection to see the danger of television programs and movies. They fill the imagination with vivid images that linger and that return even if not purposefully entertained. They feed the fleshly nature, but it is never satisfied and it only desires more sensuality, more excitement, more, more, and is thus led ever deeper into moral perversion.

In looking back on my childhood, I recognize that one reason why the Word of God had little or no effect upon me, even though I was in a Baptist church at least three times a week, was that my mind was always filled with worldly entertainment. We got a television when I was about eight years old, and though the programs were nothing like they are today, they were foolish at best and certainly did not encourage me spiritually. We got our television about a year after Elvis appeared on the Ed Sullivan Show. I remember that by the time I reached junior high school, I did everything I could to stay home on Sunday nights so that I could watch the most exciting programs of the week, such as the Disney Hour and Ed Sullivan and the Dina Shore program ("See the USA in your Chevrolet"). I don't remember if I was home that night in 1964 when the Beatles appeared on Ed Sullivan, but I could have been. I was in high school and about that time my parents were having a lot of problems and had pretty much given up on trying to keep me in church. I had already started drinking and carousing around with my buddies every weekend in our automobiles. There is no doubt that television and movies fed my carnal imagination in a way that nothing else could have done and, together with rock & roll, inflamed me with a passion for the things of the world.

6. "And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God" (Philippians 1:9-11).

This passage teaches the child of God to choose the most excellent things in life, not those things that are borderline and questionable. It teaches him to be without offence before God. The believer should ask himself, "Would I be embarrassed for the Lord Jesus to come and find me doing this thing?" We are to be filled with the fruits of righteousness, and that means we have to be emptied of the fruits of the flesh and the world. The child of God has two natures, the old and the new, and the one he feeds and pampers is the one that will dominate his life.

7. "And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Romans 14:23).

This verse warns the child of God not to participate in anything that is questionable. If you cannot say for sure that something is God's perfect will, if it creates nagging doubts, you should avoid it.

8. "Abstain from all appearance of evil" (1 Thess. 5:22).

Not only are we to abstain from evil itself but even from the appearance of evil. Attending the movie theater today has, at best, an appearance of evil, because the vast majority of the movies shown there are morally vile. The same is true for watching most Hollywood movies at home. If our friends see that we watch movies, they will be encouraged to watch them as well, and they probably will not be as "discriminating."

9. "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another. ... It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak" (Romans 14:19, 21).

Even if I could go to a movie theater and see a movie that was 100% wholesome by biblical standards and not see any movie trailers for wicked movies, I would still be giving a bad example to others. If I go to watch a G-rated movie, I might encourage others to go and watch an R-rated one and thus commit sin against God.

10. "Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron" (1 Timothy 4:2).

The conscience is a tender thing. It can easily be hardened by unrepentant exposure to evil. This is why television programs and movies have gotten ever more wicked with each passing decade. If one of today's PG-13 movies had been shown on television 40 years ago, it would have been condemned broadly even by many unbelievers. The same is true for rock music. Eminem or Marilyn Manson would not have been allowed on the Ed Sullivan Show in the 1950s, but there has been a steady searing of the conscience by exposure to the ever increasing moral vileness of the entertainment industry. When Christians allow themselves to watch programs and movies that they know are wrong, their conscience becomes seared so that eventually they can watch things without so much as a twinge of conscience that once would have shocked them deeply.

11. "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him" (Genesis 18:19).

God commended Abraham because he would command his children to keep the way of the Lord. Every parent needs to take this to heart. Contrary to the tenets of modern psychology and pop child training philosophy, parents are responsible to command their children and to show them the right way in life. Love is the key to making this work, of course. The father is accountable before God to be the godly head of the home and to oversee all things under Christ. The mother is responsible to work alongside the father and as his "helpmeet" in the home, and should never be guilty of undermining any godly thing that the father wants to accomplish. Each believing father and mother will stand before Jesus Christ and give account for how he or she lived in the home and how they raised the children. How wonderful it will be to hear the Lord say, "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Matt. 25:23). Nothing this world has to offer is worth losing the Lord's commendation.

There is an axiom that what parents allow in moderation, the children follow to excess. If parents are even a little careless about watching Hollywood movies, the children will most likely move much farther into areas of moral temptation.

Bro. David Cloud

Read more at: <http://www.wayoflife.org/files/3e4dfda414c35b1929454aed1be74103-437.html>

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Fact About Prophecy -

"The Bible contains 8,362 predictive verses about 737 different matters." For church-age saints, the most important one is the Rapture of the saints in the air—I Cor. 15:51-58. The next Scripturally prophesied event is the coming of the Lord in the air for His saints, for whom saints should eagerly live—I John 3:1-3 and expectantly look—Heb. 9:28.

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The Sons of Zeruah Are Too Hard -

2Sam.3:39 "...these men the sons of Zeruah be too hard for me..." - So said the man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22), in reference to certain men of the sword in his day. And are not we brethren, men of the sword? And is it not possible that we, many times, are too hard for our King, the Greater Son of David? Oh, how we must grieve Him by our determination to be right, as far as we understand the right. Was not Abner worthy of death? Did he not kill their brother, Asahel? Were they not the lawful avengers of blood? But Oh, where is the Spirit of Him who delights in mercy? (Micah 7:18) Do we need to hear again (and maybe again) - "But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice" (Matt.9:13)? Mercy first and foremost, and then if

needs be, and only if needs be, the sword. May our Great and Gracious God help us to be close followers of Him who is "rich in mercy" (Eph.2:4). Remember "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." Matt.5:7

A.J. McClure

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Allah, The Moon God -

It should not come as a surprise that the word "Allah" was not something invented by Muhammad or revealed for the first time in the Quran. The well-known Middle East scholar H.A.R. Gibb has pointed out that the reason that Muhammad never had to explain who Allah was in the Quran is that his listeners had already heard about Allah long before Muhammad was ever born (Mohammedanism: An Historical Survey, New York: Mentor Books, 1955, p.38). Dr. Arthur Jeffery, one of the foremost Western Islamic scholars in modern times and professor of Islamic and Middle East Studies at Columbia University, notes: "The name Allah, as the Quran itself is witness, was well known in pre-Islamic Arabia. Indeed, both it and its feminine form, Allat, are found not infrequently among the theophorous names in inscriptions from North Africa" (Islam: Muhammad, and His Religion, New York: The Liberal Arts Press, 1958, p. 85).

The word "Allah" comes from the compound Arabic word, al-ilah. Al is the definite article "the" and ilah is an Arabic word for "god." It is not a foreign word. It is not even the Syriac word for God. It is pure Arabic. (There is an interesting discussion of the origins of Allah, in "Arabic Lexicographical Miscellanies" by J. Blau in the Journal of Semitic Studies, Vol. XVII, #2, 1972, pp. 173-190). Neither is Allah a Hebrew or Greek word for God as found in the Bible. Allah is a purely Arabic term used in reference to an Arabian deity. Hastings' Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics I:326, T & T Clark, states: "'Allah' is a proper name, applicable only to their [Arabs'] peculiar God. ' According to the Encyclopedia of Religion: "'Allah' is a pre-Islamic name . . . corresponding to the Babylonian Bel' (Encyclopedia of Religion, I:117 Washington DC, Corpus Pub., 1979). For those who find it hard to believe that Allah was a pagan name for a peculiar pagan Arabian deity in pre-Islamic times, the following quotations may be helpful: "Allah is found . . . in Arabic inscriptions prior to Islam" (Encyclopedia Britannica, I:643). "The Arabs, before the time of Mohammed, accepted and worshipped, after a fashion, a supreme god called Allah" (Encyclopedia off Islam, I:302, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1913, Houtsma). "Allah was known to the pre-Islamic . . . Arabs; he was one of the Meccan deities" (Encyclopedia off Islam, I:406, ed. Gibb). "Ilah . . . appears in pre-Islamic poetry . . . By frequency of usage, al-ilah was contracted to Allah, frequently attested to in pre-Islamic poetry" (Encyclopedia off Islam, III:1093, 1971). "The name Allah goes back before Muhammad" (Encyclopedia of World Mythology and Legend, I:41, Anthony Mercatante, New York, The Facts on File, 1983). "The origin of this (Allah) goes back to pre-Muslim times. Allah is not a common name meaning "God" (or a "god"), and the Muslim must use another word or form if he wishes to indicate any other than his own peculiar deity" (Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, I:326, Hastings).

To the testimony of the above standard reference works, we add those of such scholars as Henry Preserved Smith of Harvard University who has stated: "Allah was already known by name to the Arabs" (The Bible and Islam: or, The Influence of the Old and New Testament on the Religion of Mohammed, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1897, p. 102). Dr. Kenneth Cragg, former editor of the prestigious scholarly journal Muslim World and an outstanding modern Western Islamic

scholar, whose works are generally published by Oxford University, comments: "The name Allah is also evident in archeological and literary remains of pre-Islamic Arabia" (The Call of the Minaret, New York: Oxford University Press, 1956, p. 31). Dr. W. Montgomery Watt, who was Professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies at Edinburgh University and Visiting Professor of Islamic studies at College de France, Georgetown University, and the University of Toronto, has done extensive work on the pre-Islamic concept of Allah. He concludes: "In recent years I have become increasingly convinced that for an adequate understanding of the career of Muhammad and the origins of Islam great importance must be attached to the existence in Mecca of belief in Allah as a "high god." In a sense this is a form of paganism, but it is so different from paganism as commonly understood that it deserves separate treatment" (William Montgomery Watt, Muhammad's Mecca, p. vii. Also see his article, "Belief in a High God in Pre-Islamic Mecca", Journal of Semitic Studies, Vol. 16, 1971, pp. 35-40).

Caesar Farah in his book on Islam concludes his discussion of the pre-Islamic meaning of Allah by saying: "There is no reason, therefore, to accept the idea that Allah passed to the Muslims from the Christians and Jews" (Islam: Beliefs and Observations, New York, Barrons, 1987, p. 28). According to Middle East scholar E.M. Wherry, whose translation of the Quran is still used today, in pre-Islamic times Allah-worship, as well as the worship of Ba-al, were both astral religions in that they involved the worship of the sun, the moon, and the stars (A Comprehensive Commentary on the Quran, Osnabruck: Otto Zeller Verlag, 1973, p. 36).

[Astral Religions](#)

In Arabia, the sun god was viewed as a female goddess and the moon as the male god. As has been pointed out by many scholars such as Alfred Guillaume, the moon god was called by various names, one of which was Allah! (Islam, p. 7). The name Allah was used as the personal name of the moon god, in addition to other titles that could be given to him. Allah, the moon god, was married to the sun goddess. Together they produced three goddesses who were called "the daughters of Allah." These three goddesses were called Al-Lat, Al-Uzza, and Manat. The daughters of Allah, along with Allah and the sun goddess were viewed as "high" gods. That is, they were viewed as being at the top of the pantheon of Arabian deities. "Along with Allah, however, they worshipped a host of lesser gods and "daughters of Al-lah" (Encyclopedia of World Mythology and Legend, I:61)".

[The Crescent Moon Symbol](#)

The symbol of the worship of the moon god in Arabian culture and elsewhere throughout the Middle East was the crescent moon. Archaeologists have dug up numerous statues and hieroglyphic inscriptions in which a crescent moon was seated on top of the head of the deity to symbolize the worship of the moon god. In the same fashion as the sun is pictured above the Egyptian deity. While the moon was generally worshiped as a female deity in the Ancient Near East, the Arabs viewed it as a male deity.

[The Gods of the Quraysh](#)

The Quraysh tribe into which Muhammad was born was particularly devoted to Allah, the moon god, and especially to Allah's three daughters who were viewed as intercessors between the people and Allah. The worship of the three goddesses, Al-Lat, Al-Uzza, and Manat, played a significant role in the worship at the Kabah in Mecca. The first two daughters of Allah had names which were

feminine forms of Allah. The literal Arabic name of Muhammad's father was Abd-Allah. His uncle's name was Obied-Allah. These names reveal the personal devotion that Muhammad's pagan family had to the worship of Allah, the moon god.

[Praying Toward Mecca](#)

An Allah idol was set up at the Kebah along with all the other idols. The pagans prayed toward Mecca and the Kabah because that is where their gods were stationed. It only made sense to them to face in the direction of their god and then pray. Since the idol of their moon god, Allah, was at Mecca, they prayed toward Mecca. The worship of the moon god extended far beyond the Allah-worship in Arabia. The entire fertile crescent was involved in the worship of the moon. This, in part, explains the early success of Islam among Arab groups that traditionally had worshiped the moon god. The use of the crescent moon as the symbol for Islam which is placed on the flags of Islamic nations and on the top of mosques and minarets is a throwback to the days when Allah was worshiped as the moon god in Mecca. While this may come as a surprise to many Christians who have wrongly assumed that Allah was simply another name for the God of the Bible, educated Muslims generally understand this point.

[A Muslim Taxi Driver](#)

During one trip to Washington D.C., I got involved in a conversation with a Muslim taxi driver from Iran. When I asked him, "Where did Islam obtain its symbol of the crescent moon?" he responded that it was an ancient pagan symbol used throughout the Middle East and that adopting this symbol had helped Muslims to convert people throughout the Middle East. When I pointed out that the word Allah itself was used by the moon-god cult in pre-Islamic Arabia, he agreed that this was the case. I then pointed out that the religion and the Quran of Muhammad could be explained in terms of pre-Islamic culture, customs, and religious ideas. He agreed with this! He went on to explain that he was a university-educated Muslim who, at this point in his life, was attempting to understand Islam from a scholarly viewpoint. As a result, he had lost his faith in Islam.

The significance of the pre-Islamic source of the name Allah cannot be over estimated.

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Study: Alcohol More Lethal Than Heroin, Cocaine

By MARIA CHENG

The Associated Press

Sunday, October 31, 2010; 8:08 PM

LONDON -- Alcohol is more dangerous than illegal drugs like heroin and crack cocaine, according to a new study.

British experts evaluated substances including alcohol, cocaine, heroin, ecstasy and marijuana, ranking them based on how destructive they are to the individual who takes them and to society as a whole.

Researchers analyzed how addictive a drug is and how it harms the human body, in addition to other criteria like environmental damage caused by the drug, its role in breaking up families and its economic costs, such as health care, social services, and prison.

Heroin, crack cocaine and methamphetamine, or crystal meth, were the most lethal to individuals. When considering their wider social effects, alcohol, heroin and crack cocaine were the deadliest. But overall, alcohol outranked all other substances, followed by heroin and crack cocaine. Marijuana, ecstasy and LSD scored far lower.

The study was paid for by Britain's Centre for Crime and Justice Studies and was published online Monday in the medical journal, Lancet.

Experts said alcohol scored so high because it is so widely used and has devastating consequences not only for drinkers but for those around them.

"Just think about what happens (with alcohol) at every football game," said Wim van den Brink, a professor of psychiatry and addiction at the University of Amsterdam. He was not linked to the study and co-authored a commentary in the Lancet.

When drunk in excess, alcohol damages nearly all organ systems. It is also connected to higher death rates and is involved in a greater percentage of crime than most other drugs, including heroin.

But experts said it would be impractical and incorrect to outlaw alcohol.

"We cannot return to the days of prohibition," said Leslie King, an adviser to the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and one of the study's authors. "Alcohol is too embedded in our culture and it won't go away."

King said countries should target problem drinkers, not the vast majority of people who indulge in a drink or two. He said governments should consider more education programs and raising the price of alcohol so it isn't as widely available.

Experts said the study should prompt countries to reconsider how they classify drugs. For example, last year in Britain, the government increased its penalties for the possession of marijuana. One of its senior advisers, David Nutt - the lead author on the Lancet study - was fired after he criticized the British decision.

"What governments decide is illegal is not always based on science," said van den Brink. He said considerations about revenue and taxation, like those garnered from the alcohol and tobacco industries, may influence decisions about which substances to regulate or outlaw.

"Drugs that are legal cause at least as much damage, if not more, than drugs that are illicit," he said.

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Notable Quotes and Quotable Notes -

* "We suffer all the way to wisdom. – Anon

- * "Never confuse the will of the majority with the will of God." – Anon
- * "There is no "I" in "church"! – Anon
- * "It is better to debate a question without settling it than to settle a question without debating it." - Joseph Joubert
- * " No sense having a dog and barking yourself." – Anon

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Therapy For the Funny Bone –

Poor old Sam was henpecked from three directions, his wife, his daughter, and his mother in law. When he came to church with his wife, who towered over him, he sat there with his arm on top of his head. I always wondered if he was protecting himself from a thump from one of the three. So when I heard the following story, I thought about Sam.

It seems an old woman was caught stealing a can of peaches from the grocery store and hauled before the judge. Her daughter and son in law showed up just in time to hear the judge ask the old woman, "Did you steal that can of peaches?"

To which the old woman replied, "Yep! The price was too high so I took 'em!"

"And are you sorry for taking them?" the judge queried.

"Not particularly," said the old woman.

"How many peaches were in the can?" the judge asked the bailiff.

"She had already opened the can by the time we arrested her, your honour, and there were three peaches in it."

"Well, then, I sentence you to three days in the county jail," and the judge raised the gavel to rap the bench and dismiss the court.

At which point the son in law glanced up at his wife, swallowed, cleared his throat, and spoke up loudly, saying, "Your honour, she also stole a can of peas!"

Preacher bloopers –

One of my dearest friends told me that he was invited to speak at an alumni fellowship meeting at the Bible college he attended. Since he was a veteran missionary, he preached to them about the

difficulty of raising his children on the mission field. One of the points in his message dealt with the differences in culture. He began to tell his fellow preachers about the problems he faced with his children being raised in American culture and then becoming interested in marrying children raised in another culture. At which point he suffered a "mindslip", and said, "Of course my wife and I are the same gender...." (intending to say, "culture").

He said it took a good 15 minutes to get all the preachers to stop laughing and back in their seats.

Been there. Done that.

One Sunday morning, a mother went in to wake her son and tell him it was time to get ready for church, to which he replied, "I'm not going."

"Why not?" she asked.

"I'll give you two good reasons," he said. "(1), they don't like me, and (2), I don't like them."

His mother replied, "I'll give you two good reasons why you SHOULD go to church:

(1) You're 49 years old, and (2) you're the pastor!"

The Best Way to Pray

Three preachers sat discussing the best positions for prayer, while a telephone repairman worked nearby

"Kneeling is definitely the best way to pray," the Baptist pastor said.

"No," said the Presbyterian minister. "I get the best results standing with my hands outstretched to Heaven."

"You're both wrong," the Methodist bishop said. "The most effective position is on my face before God."

The repairman could contain himself no longer. "Hey, you blokes," he interrupted. "The best prayin' I ever did was when I was hangin' upside down from a telephone pole."

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Poems That Preach -

The Gospel -

Good works the law commands,
But gives me neither feet nor hands.

Good news the gospel brings,
It bids me fly and gives me wings! – Anon

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The Chocolate Soldier -

(Ed. - As a young Christian I read C.T. Studd's booklet, The Chocolate Soldier, and it challenged me deeply. It is necessary reading for every serious disciple of Jesus Christ.)

The Chocolate Soldier

or Heroism—The Lost Chord of Christianity

by C.T. Studd (1860-1931)

"**H**eroism is the lost chord; the missing note of present-day Christianity!"

Every true soldier is a hero! A SOLDIER WITHOUT HEROISM IS A CHOCOLATE SOLDIER! Who has not been stirred to scorn and mirth at the very thought of a Chocolate Soldier? In peace true soldiers are captive lions, fretting in their cages. War gives them their liberty and sends them, like boys bounding out of school, to obtain their heart's desire or perish in the attempt. Battle is the soldier's vital breath! Peace turns him into a stooping asthmatic. War makes him a whole man again, and gives him the heart, strength, and vigour of a hero.

EVERY TRUE CHRISTIAN IS A SOLDIER—of Christ—a hero "par excellence!" Braver than the bravest—scorning the soft seductions of peace and her oft repeated warnings against hardship, disease, danger and death, whom he counts among his bosom friends.

THE OTHERWISE CHRISTIAN IS A Chocolate Christian! Dissolving in water and melting at the smell of fire. "Sweeties" they are! Bonbons, lollipops! Living their lives in a glass dish or in a cardboard box, each clad in his soft clothing, a little frilled white paper to preserve his dear little delicate constitution.

To read more: <http://www.wholesomewords.org/missions/msctserm.html>

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Eddy-Torial - The Tie That Blinds -

The troubling fact about believing in the sufficiency and authority of Scripture is that the Spirit of God sounds His alarms when men openly violate God's holy Word. Saul may say, "Blessed be thou of the LORD: I have performed the commandment of the LORD." But Samuel has his ears and eyes open to the Lord and replies, "What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" Men who esteem the Word of God highly always discern the hypocrisy of those who profess obedience and practice disobedience to Scripture.

There is a striking parallel today in the strange friendships between (new) evangelicals and their unorthodox companions. They tell us they are obeying God, but we keep hearing the "bleating of the sheep" and the "lowing of the cattle." We keep seeing who they like to hang around with.

Examples are everywhere, like Rick Warren's open courtship of New Agers like Ken Blanchard and Emergent gurus like McClaren and Driscoll.

John Piper extends an invitation to Rick Warren to speak at his conference, and Ravi Zacharias has a pow-wow with the Mormons. Trinitarian charismatics hold hands with Unitarians like T.W. Jakes. Westcott and Hort followers invite KJV men in to speak at their conferences and vice a versa. Pastors of independent Baptist churches happily use charismatic CCM music and then viciously attack anyone who points it out. Jack Schaap publicly identifies himself with Geronimo Aguilar and Clarence Sexton then enlists Schaap's help as he glories in his new ecumenical Baptist conference. Benny Hinn and Paula White hope to do business with the Vatican on their flirty little Roman jaunt. Navigators publishes books promoting (RC) contemplative spirituality. John MacArthur has no problem with the CCM rock music that permeates new evangelicalism. And Albert Mohler links up with Sproul and MacArthur and Ravi Zacharias ever so comfortably.

What strange bedfellows these "evangelicals" have!

Several truths are increasingly apparent:

- 1)** The new evangelical repudiation of the doctrine of separation in 1948 has spread its branches far and wide and is bearing its poisonous fruit in every denomination all over the world.
- 2)** Many new evangelicals profess to be orthodox in doctrine, but then promote men and ministries that are heretical. Rick Warren is a case in point. He would like to be known as an "evangelical," but has learned most of his theology and methodology from men like Robert Schuller, and now has close fellowship with New Agers and Emergent Church gurus.
- 3)** The desire to be "open minded" to new ideas leads evangelicals into syncretism. Syncretism is the "reconciliation of different beliefs" or a "union of communities," and means "to mix, blend." It has to do with combining things that just don't mix, like water and oil. New Evangelicals have surpassed even the modernists in the mixing of their doctrinal beliefs with cultists, hedonists, Romanists, and evolutionists.

4) We now see among evangelicals absolutely every imaginable combination of belief systems. The lines have become so blurred that it is difficult to tell that there ever were any lines to begin with. The new evangelical mindset is the theological surfactant that destroys the surface tension between the pure water of the Word and the sump oil of Sodom. And when they syncretize these two, you can't drink it or lubricate with it. The resultant mixture of truth and error is "no good to nobody!"

There is another question that needs to be addressed. Since God's Holy Word is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of men's hearts, and He asks ever so clearly, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?", I want to know what it is that binds "evangelicals" to heretics? What is it that they are agreed upon? There has to be a basic philosophy, a central tenet, a core doctrine that they all agree on as a basis for fellowship. There **MUST** be a binding belief. That's what Amos 3:3 teaches, they cannot and will not walk together without a basis for agreement. If they are walking together, then they agree on some key issues.

We know the tie that binds believers in Christ to other believers. It is sound doctrine. Our fellowship is in truth. John speaks by the Spirit, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." I John 1:3 Whenever a man departs from the truth he departs from our fellowship. So says Holy Scripture, "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him godspeed." II John 10

So what **DO** evangelicals and heretics agree on that makes it possible for them to walk together?

I think I finally understand what is the "tie that binds." There is a plaited cord uniting evangelicals and cultists, Romanists and evangelists, charismatics and non-charismatics, heretics and Baptists, the whole religious mob of our day. It is a frayed cord of loose ends, woven together by ten thousand hands over many centuries. It is being lengthened and strengthened as I write. It is the wisdom of men. In it there are strands of Greek philosophy, and cords of German rationalism. There are strings of African witchcraft and Norse mythology. There are Amerindian legends and aboriginal dreamtime stories. There are lengths of capitalistic consumerism, and threads of American pragmatism. Hollywood and Nashville add in their cables of hedonism. The Tie That Binds is drenched in secularism and sheathed in materialism. It binds them all together, and it blinds as it binds. It becomes the Tie That Blinds!

There is a cord of man's wisdom that holds them all together. Bishop Swing, Billy Graham, Mikhail Gorbachev, Robert Schuller, Barack Obama, Rick Warren, Paul Crouch, Angela Merkel, Pope Benedict, Julia Gillard, and Al Gore, all binded and blinded by the same cord. Forty five years ago I watched as BBF pastors lusted after Achan's Babylonish garment (all woven of the cords of men's wisdom), and thought, "Nobody would ever be foolish enough to fall for that!" I was wrong. As they fingered the cord and felt its weight and gazed upon its scintillating fibers, they reasoned out a philosophy that would bring them numerical growth, the trappings of success, great wealth, influence over others and intellectual respectability, but it blinded them. Man's wisdom always blinds its possessors. It blinds them to the simplicity of the gospel. The cataracts of pragmatism blurs their vision and they mistake size for success. Shortsightedness reasons that the rock beat of CCM is equal to the hymns of Zion. Philosophy brings a spiritual glaucoma and destroys our peripheral sight until we develop tunnel vision. We lose the big picture when we turn from Scripture to Drucker.

Some who read this will shake their heads and cling to the cord that binds them. Others will drop it and run, back to the precious wisdom of God in Holy Scripture. And then there will be those whose vision is failing and they will feebly ask, "How can I tell if I am held by the Tie That Blinds?"

There are many questions you can ask yourself. Here are a few:

- 1) Do I subscribe to the pragmatic view that big is good, or that it takes no size to criticize?
- 2) Do I subscribe to the hedonistic view that my faith is to be first pleasurable, then obedient?
- 3) Do I subscribe to the materialistic view that I deserve some earthly treasures as well as heavenly?
- 4) Do I subscribe to the rationalistic view that ungodly men are capable of doing textual criticism on the inspired Word of God?
- 5) Do I subscribe to the antinomian view that rejects any verse that prohibits a sinful action, attitude, or word?
- 6) Do I subscribe to the New Age teachings of Oprah?
- 7) Do I subscribe to the semi-occult view that angels are of more interest than my Saviour?
- 8) Do I cling to the syncretistic view that all religions are equal?
- 9) Do I hold to the view that all men are essentially good?
- 10) Do I embrace the evolutionary view that everything is gradually improving and peace will ultimately prevail?
- 11) Do I secretly believe that we humans can change our environment for the better if we follow the Gaian teachings of Al Gore?
- 12) Do I practice new evangelical hypocrisy by rejecting separation from error at the same time as I separate from separatists? Do I tell my brethren that it is wrong to warn others about my public sins at the same time I am pointing out theirs? Do I hatefully criticize them for lovingly criticizing me?

There is an even better way to discover whether you are being bound by the Tie That Blinds. Turn off the television and computer and go read your Bible. Read it believingly. Read it slowly. Read it without interruption. Read it submissively. Say yes to God's commands before you read it. Read it with your eyes open. Read it with a desire to know the difference between man's puny, tattered wisdom and the mighty Wisdom of God! And remember that God says over and over,

"...I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." I Cor. 1:19.

The counsel of the LORD, that shall stand!

Bro. Buddy Smith

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