

Eye on the World

Feb. 18, 2017

This compilation of material for “Eye on the World” is presented as a service to the Churches of God. The views stated in the material are those of the writers or sources quoted by the writers, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the members of the Church of God Big Sandy. The following articles were posted at churchofgodbigandy.com for the weekend of Feb. 18, 2017.

Compiled by Dave Havir

Luke 21:34-36—“But take heed to yourselves, lest your souls be weighed down with self-indulgence, and drunkenness, or the anxieties of this life, and that day come on you suddenly, like a falling trap; for it will come on all dwellers on the face of the whole earth. But beware of slumbering; and every moment pray that you may be fully strengthened to escape from all these coming evils, and to take your stand in the presence of the Son of Man” (Weymouth New Testament).



An article by Melanie Arter titled “Netanyahu: ‘For the First Time in My Lifetime,’ Arab Countries Don’t See Israel As An Enemy, but As An Ally” was posted at cnsnews.com on Feb. 15, 2017. Following is the article.

At a joint press conference with President Trump at the White House, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that for the first time in his lifetime Arab countries in the Middle East see Israel as an ally instead of an enemy.

“Mr. President, in rolling back militant Islam, we can seize an historic opportunity, because for the first time in my lifetime, and for the first time in the life of my country, Arab countries in the region do not see Israel as an enemy, but increasingly as an ally,” Netanyahu said.

The prime minister said that under President Donald Trump’s leadership, “this change in our region creates an unprecedented opportunity to strengthen security and advance peace.” He said that also under Trump’s leadership, together the U.S. and Israel “can reverse the rising tide of radical Islam.”

“As you have said, our alliance is based on a deep bond of common values and common interests, and increasingly, those values and interests are under attack by one malevolent force—radical Islamic terror,” Netanyahu said.

"Mr. President you've shown great clarity and courage in confronting this challenge head on. You've called for confronting Iran's terrorist regime, preventing Iran from realizing this terrible deal into a nuclear arsenal, and you have said that the United States is committed to preventing Iran from getting nuclear weapons," he said.

"You call for the defeat of ISIS. Under your leadership, I believe we can reverse the rising tide of radical Islam, and in this great task as in so many others, Israel stands with you, and I stand with you," Netanyahu added.

The prime minister said he's looking forward to working with Trump to "dramatically upgrade every field: in security, in technology, cyber and trade and so many others." In addition, Netanyahu said he welcomes Trump's "call to ensure that Israel is treated fairly in international forums and that the slander and boycotts of Israel are resisted mightily by the power and moral position of the United States of America."



An article by Anna Fifield and Yuki Oda titled "Japanese Nuclear Plant Just Recorded an Astronomical Radiation Level; Should We Be Worried?" was posted at washingtonpost.com on Feb. 8, 2017. Following are excerpts of the article.

The utility company that operated the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant in Japan—the one that went into triple meltdown after the enormous 2011 earthquake and tsunami—has released some jaw-dropping figures.

The radiation level in the containment vessel of reactor 2 has reached as high as 530 sieverts per hour, Tokyo Electric Power Co.—or Tepco, as it's known—said last week. This far exceeds the previous high of 73 sieverts per hour recorded at the reactor following the March 2011 disaster.

That was the world's worst nuclear disaster since the one at Chernobyl, in Ukraine, in 1986. Almost 16,000 people were killed along Japan's northeastern coast in the tsunami, and 160,000 more lost their homes and livelihoods. The cleanup is taking much longer than expected.

At this level of radioactivity, a person could die from the briefest of exposures.

Tepco recorded the radiation near the reactor core, suggesting that some melted fuel had escaped, using a long, remote-controlled camera and radiation measurement device. It was the first time this kind of device has been able to get into this part of the reactor. There it found a three-foot-wide hole in a metal grate in the reactor's primary containment vessel.

So how dangerous is this?

At this level of radiation, a robot would be able to operate for less than two hours before it was destroyed, Tepco said.

And Japan's National Institute of Radiological Sciences said medical professionals had never even thought about encountering this level of radiation in their work.

According to the Kyodo news agency, the institute estimates that exposure to one sievert of radiation could lead to infertility, loss of hair and cataracts, while four sieverts would kill half the people exposed to it.

This measuring device hasn't even gone into reactors 1 and 3 yet—that's still in the works.

So should the people who live in Japan who live on the Pacific basin be freaking out?

Not yet, some analysts say.

Although the radiation level is "astoundingly high," says Azby Brown of Safecast, a citizen science organization that monitors radiation levels, it doesn't necessarily signify any alarming change in radiation levels at Fukushima. It's simply the first time they have been measured that far inside the reactor.

Hiroshi Miyano, a nuclear expert and visiting professor at Hosei University, also warned against overreacting. He said the radiation reading might not be particularly reliable since it was only an estimation based on the image analysis. (Tepco said there was a margin of error of 30 percent.)

"It's not something new to worry about," he said, although he added that it underscored how difficult the next steps would be.

But some think there is cause for concern.

Fumiya Tanabe, a nuclear safety expert and former chief research scientist at the Japan Atomic Energy Research Institute, said while experts expected the radiation reading inside the Daiichi reactors to be high, it was still "shocking" to learn how high it was six years on.

"It will be very difficult to operate robots in there for a long time to come, and to remove the melted fuel. So the finding might greatly affect the decommissioning time schedule," he said.

Could the radiation level be even higher?

Possibly. The 530 sievert reading was recorded some distance from the melted fuel, so in reality it could be 10 times higher than recorded, said Hideyuki Ban, co-director of Citizens' Nuclear Information Center.

So what does this news portend?

Tanabe said that the level of the reading should give pause to proponents of nuclear power in Japan, including Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who has been pushing to restart reactors shut down after the 2011 disaster.

"It's unbelievable that anyone would want to restart nuclear plants when Japan hasn't learned how and why the Fukushima Daiichi accident happened, or learned lessons from it," he said.



An article titled "CIA Director Gives Medal to Top Saudi Royal" was posted at yahoo.com on Feb. 12, 2017. Following is the article.

The heir to Saudi Arabia's throne has been awarded a medal by the new director of the US Central Intelligence Agency, who honoured his counter-terrorism work.

Mike Pompeo, on his first overseas tour since being confirmed as spy agency chief in late January, made the presentation to Crown Prince Mohammed bin Nayef at a weekend ceremony, the official Saudi Press Agency (SPA) said.

Prince Mohammed, 57, has been interior minister since 2012 and has years of experience in intelligence work.

Widely respected in the West for his efforts to combat violent extremism, he oversaw a crackdown on Al-Qaeda which killed security officers and foreigners in the kingdom between 2003 and 2007.

In 2009 Prince Mohammed survived with only light injuries an assassination attempt by Al-Qaeda.

Pompeo awarded him the George Tenet Medal in recognition of his "excellent intelligence performance, in the domain of counter-terrorism and his unbound contribution to realise world security and peace."

George Tenet was the CIA's longest-serving director, from 1996 to 2004.

Pompeo and Prince Mohammed also held talks on security issues, SPA said.

The prince told SPA that "no attempt will succeed in driving a wedge between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the US."

It was the latest Saudi reaffirmation of ties between the absolute Islamic monarchy and Washington since President Donald Trump took office on January 20.

Riyadh's Foreign Affairs Minister Adel al-Jubeir told reporters on Sunday that there was nothing surprising or unusual about Pompeo's visit as the two sides address issues of mutual concern.

"The US and Saudi Arabia . . . have extensive ties. We have extensive challenges that we're working on in counter-terrorism, in security, maritime security, and the whole gamut of issues," he said.

The United States and Saudi Arabia have a decades-old relationship founded on the exchange of American security for Saudi oil.

But ties between Riyadh and Washington became increasingly frayed during the eight-year administration of former president Barack Obama.

Saudi Arabia's Sunni leaders felt Obama was reluctant to get involved in the civil war in Syria and was tilting towards its Shiite-dominated rival Iran.

Pompeo is a strident critic of an international deal reached in 2015 to lift sanctions on Iran in exchange for guarantees that it will not pursue a nuclear weapons capability.

In interviews and written pieces, Pompeo has pointed to Iran as the primary source of conflict in the Middle East since Tehran's 1979 revolution—views which coincide with those of Riyadh.

Pompeo had been in Turkey late last week for talks with officials there.



An article by Peter Hasson titled "WikiLeaks Releases Documents on Alleged CIA Spying on French Presidential Candidates" was posted at dailycaller.com on Feb. 16, 2017. Following are excerpts of the article.

Anti-secrecy organization WikiLeaks released a set of documents allegedly showing CIA espionage on candidates in France's 2012 presidential elections.

The seven pages of documents appear to be classified orders for intelligence operatives to gather information regarding candidates' political strategies and internal communications. WikiLeaks' release of the documents comes amid growing tensions between Trump and the intelligence community over leaks of classified information that have portrayed people close to Trump in a negative light.

"All major French political parties were targeted for infiltration by the CIA's human ('HUMINT') and electronic ('SIGINT') spies in the seven months leading up to France's 2012 presidential election," a press release from WikiLeaks states.

"The revelations are contained within three CIA tasking orders published today by WikiLeaks as context for its forthcoming CIA Vault 7 series. Named specifically as targets are the French Socialist Party (PS), the National Front (FN) and Union for a Popular Movement (UMP) together with current President Francois Hollande, then President Nicolas Sarkozy, current round one presidential front runner Marine Le Pen, and former presidential candidates Martine Aubry and Dominique Strauss-Khan."



An article by Jack Montgomery titled "Merkel Will Pay Migrants Millions to Leave Germany" was posted at breitbart.com on Feb. 11, 2017. Following is the article.

Chancellor Angela Merkel is setting aside €90m (£76m) in taxpayers' money to create a fund which will pay migrants to withdraw their asylum applications and leave Germany voluntarily.

The handouts will form part of a 16-point plan to speed up the removal of rejected asylum seekers, after Tunisian migrant Anis Amri murdered a Polish

lorry driver, hijacked his vehicle and drove it into a Christmas market in Berlin while awaiting deportation.

U.S. president Donald Trump told *The Times* that Merkel made a “catastrophic mistake” when she opened the doors to an unlimited number of migrants in 2015. Her vice-chancellor, Sigmar Gabriel, later admitted that his superior had underestimated how difficult it would be to integrate migrants on such a grand scale, and that Germany had been plunged into a *kulturkampf*, or “cultural war,” as a result.

Germany rejected 170,000 asylum claims in 2016 but, according to the *Mail*, just 26,000 were repatriated. 55,000 more decided to leave voluntarily—apparently leaving 81,000 bogus applicants unaccounted for.

“We rely heavily on voluntary departures,” admitted Chancellor Merkel, who was announcing the package after falling behind the Social Democrats in polls for Germany’s upcoming elections.

Martin Schulz, the former President of the European Parliament who has been nominated as the Social Democrat challenger to Merkel, said he backed the proposals to speed up deportations.

Schulz has previously insisted that “the people who are arriving [in Europe] are refugees who have been threatened [and] we should welcome them”—a statement which is at odds with the Vice-President of the European Commission’s admission that at least 60 per cent are economic migrants.

As a leading figure in the European Union, Schulz was a strong supporter of the compulsory migrant quotas. These were forced through by the bloc despite strong opposition from central and eastern European member-states, which did not agree with Germany’s unilateral decision to throw open the borders.

Schulz hit out strongly at these countries in 2015, accusing them of “national egotism in its purest form.”

Polish interior minister Mariusz Blaszczak described at Schulz’s words as “an example of German arrogance.”



An article by Rick Moran titled “Study: 72 Convicted Terrorists Living in US From 7 Muslim Countries Under Trump Ban” was posted at american-thinker.com on Feb. 12, 2017. Following are excerpts of the article.

This is a bombshell study from the Center for Immigration Studies based on a report by the Senate Judiciary Committee’s subcommittee on immigration. It says that 72 US residents convicted of serious terrorism charges were born in countries that president Trump wants to target for extreme vetting.

The appeals court ruled that there was “no evidence” that any terrorists came from those countries.

Here are excerpts from the Washington Examiner.

■ According to a report out Saturday [Feb. 11], at least 17 claimed to be refugees from those nations, three came in as “students,” and 25 eventually became U.S. citizens.

■ The Center for Immigration Studies calculated the numbers of convicted terrorists from the Trump Seven:

■ Somalia: 20

■ Yemen: 19

■ Iraq: 19

■ Syria: 7

■ Iran: 4

■ Libya: 2

■ These immigrant terrorists lived in at least 16 different states, with the largest number from the terror-associated countries living in New York (10), Minnesota (8), California (8), and Michigan (6). Ironically, Minnesota was one of the states suing to block Trump’s order to pause entries from the terror-associated countries, claiming it harmed the state. At least two of the terrorists were living in Washington, which joined with Minnesota in the lawsuit to block the order.

■ Thirty-three of the 72 individuals from the seven terror-associated countries were convicted of very serious terror-related crimes, and were sentenced to at least three years imprisonment. The crimes included use of a weapon of mass destruction, conspiracy to commit a terror act, material support of a terrorist or terror group, international money laundering conspiracy, possession of explosives or missiles, and unlawful possession of a machine gun.

■ In dismissing the Trump executive order, San Francisco’s Ninth Circuit court of appeals said, “The government has pointed to no evidence . . . that any alien from any of the countries named in the order has perpetrated a terrorist attack in the United States.”



An article by Patrick Goodenough titled “60% of Refugee Arrivals Since Judge Halted Trump’s Order Come From 5 Terror-Prone Countries” was posted at cnsnews.com on Feb. 16, 2017. Following is the article.

Sixty percent of the refugees admitted into the United States since a federal judge halted President Trump’s executive order designed to prevent “foreign terrorist entry into the United States” originate from five of the seven countries identified by the administration and its predecessor as most risky.

Of the total 2,576 refugees resettled in the U.S. from around the world since U.S. District Judge James Robart's February 3 restraining order, 1,549 (60.1 percent) are from Syria (532), Iraq (472), Somalia (363), Iran (117), and Sudan (65). No refugees have arrived from the other two applicable countries, Yemen and Libya.

Of the 2,576 refugees to have arrived since Feb. 3, 1,424 (55.3 percent) are Muslims—817 Sunnis, 132 Shi'ites, and 475 refugees self-identified simply as Muslims, according to State Department Refugee Processing Center data.

Of the refugees hailing from the specified countries of terrorist concern, Muslims accounted for the overwhelming majority of those admitted in all cases except for Iran.

Muslims comprised 99.6 percent of the admissions from Syria; 73.5 percent of those from Iraq; 99.7 percent of those from Somalia; and 93.8 percent of those from Sudan. Of the Iranian refugees admitted, by contrast, only 9.4 percent were Muslims, while just under 60 percent were Christians of various denominations.

Trump's Jan. 27 order barred entry to the U.S. of all refugees for 120 days; prohibited entry to refugees from Syria indefinitely; and blocked all entry—immigrant and non-immigrant—by nationals of Syria, Iraq, Iran, Somalia, Sudan, Libya and Yemen for 90 days.

(The order does not itself name the seven countries, referring instead to "countries referred to in section 217(a)(12) of the INA, 8 U.S.C. 1187(a)(12)." That law, signed by President Obama in Dec. 2015, required additional security for arrivals from Syria, Iraq, Iran, and Sudan and any other country designated by the Department of Homeland Security as a source of legitimate terrorism concerns. Two months later Obama's DHS added Somalia, Yemen and Libya to the list of "countries of [terrorist] concern.")

In the week between Trump's inauguration and his Jan. 27 executive order, a total of 2,090 refugees were admitted to the U.S., of whom 918 (43.9 percent) were from the identified countries: 296 from Syria, 218 from Iraq, 211 from Somalia, 155 from Iran, 37 from Sudan, one from Yemen and none from Libya.

The following seven-day period—from the day of the executive order to the day before the judge's restraining order—only 19 refugees were admitted from the countries of concern (18 Somalis and one Iraqi, all but two arriving on the actual day of the order). Those 19 comprised just 2.2 percent of the total 861 arrivals over that period.

The next week, from Feb. 3 to Feb. 9, saw 1,180 refugees arrive, 882 (74.7 percent) of whom were from the countries of concern.

Last Saturday, Trump tweeted that 77 percent of refugee admissions since Robart's ruling, which was subsequently upheld on appeal, "hail from seven suspect countries."

(The actual figures at that time, according to the Refugee Processing Center data, were 402 refugees from Syria, 340 from Iraq, 155 from Somalia; 115

from Iran; 38 from Sudan; and none from Yemen or Libya, amounting together to 71.7 percent of the total admissions.)

Since then the proportion of refugees from the countries of concern has declined somewhat, although the countries continue to account for a disproportionate number of the total contingent of refugees admitted since Feb. 3.

While those five countries alone—Syria, Iraq, Iran, Somalia and Sudan—have provided 60.1 percent of the refugee arrivals from Feb. 3 until today, another 22 countries have together accounted for the remaining 39.9 percent.

Those 22 countries are Afghanistan (25), Bangladesh (2), Bhutan (96), Burma (147), Burundi (2), Central African Republic (12), China (1), Cuba (17), Democratic Republic of Congo (347), El Salvador (23), Eritrea (48), Ethiopia (15), Honduras (3), Moldova (10), Pakistan (24), “Palestine” (2), South Sudan (6), Russia (22), Tanzania (1), Uganda (4), Ukraine (213) and Vietnam (8).

Apart from the majority of 1,424 Muslims, other religions represented among the refugees admitted since Feb. 3 include Christians, (including Catholics, Protestants, Orthodox and evangelicals, from countries including Iraq, Iran, DRC, Ukraine and Burma), Buddhists (mostly from Bhutan), Hindus (from Bhutan), Baha’i (from Iran), Yazidis (from Iraq) and Ahmadis (from Pakistan).



An article by Emily Ferguson titled “Chelsea Clinton Calls Arrest of Undocumented Immigrant With 6 Prior Deportations ‘Horrible’ ” was posted at freebeacon.com on Feb. 16, 2017. Following are excerpts of the article.

Chelsea Clinton took to Twitter on Wednesday night to air her opinion on the detainment of an undocumented immigrant who has already been deported six times, calling the woman’s arrest “unconscionably terrible.”

The undocumented woman, who is also a convicted criminal, was arrested last week while she was at a Texas courthouse receiving a protective order after filing abuse allegations against her boyfriend, the *El Paso Times* reported Wednesday.

The woman was detained after a criminal complaint was filed on Feb. 9 that indicated she had previously been deported from the United States.

Clinton wrote she needed a thesaurus to explain how horrified she was by the arrest.

“I need a thesaurus. What’s another word for horrifying? Sick? Awful? Running out of adjectives these days that mean unconscionably terrible,” she wrote on Twitter.

The undocumented immigrant in question was identified as Irvin Gonzalez, also known as Ervin Gonzalez, a transgender woman who was staying at the Center Against Sexual and Family Violence in El Paso, Texas. She has been

deported six times since 2010 after arrests for various crimes including possession of stolen mail, false imprisonment, and assault, according to the criminal complaint filed by U.S. immigration officials.

El Paso County Attorney Jo Anne Bernal told the El Paso Times she is worried that undocumented immigrant suffering from abuse will now be afraid to come forward out of fear of being deported. Gonzalez was allegedly abused by her live-in boyfriend, Mario Alberto De Avila, who is currently in jail on a charge of forgery of a financial document.

It is unclear whether Gonzalez sought to become a U.S. citizen.

Clinton did not discuss in her tweet what she thinks about her father's past tough comments on immigration, Twitchy noted.

In January 1995, then-President Bill Clinton said his administration was working towards "deporting twice as many illegal aliens," "hiring a record number of new border guards," and "cracking down on illegal hiring."

Clinton also said he would prioritize deporting undocumented immigrants arrested for crimes, adding that undocumented immigrants pose "an abuse of immigration laws."



An editorial by Judge Andrew Napolitano titled "Intellectual Honesty And Political Indifference" was posted at townhall.com on Feb. 16, 2017. Following is the article.

Over the past weekend, Trump administration officials offered harsh criticisms of the judicial interference with the enforcement of the president's immigration order. The Jan. 27 order suspended the immigration privileges of all refugees from Syria indefinitely and all immigrants from seven designated countries for 90 days.

After a federal district judge in Seattle enjoined the federal government from enforcing the executive order and the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld that injunction, President Donald Trump's folks pounced.

They argued that we have an imperial judiciary that thinks it has the final say on public policy—one that will freely second-guess the president in areas that are exclusively his under the Constitution.

Here is the back story.

The Constitution provides for essentially a shared responsibility in the creation of laws. Congress passes bills, and the president signs them into law. Sometimes bills become laws over the president's veto. Bills are often proposed by presidents and disposed of by Congress.

When challenges to the meaning or application of the laws are properly made, the judiciary decides what the laws mean and whether they are consistent with the Constitution. My point is that there are substantial roles for the legislative and executive branches in the process of lawmaking and that there is an exclusive role for the judiciary in interpreting the meaning of the law.

When it comes to articulating and carrying out the foreign policy of the nation, the president is superior to the other branches. Though the House of Representatives and the Senate appropriate money for foreign policy expenses and the Senate ratifies treaties and confirms ambassadors, the president alone determines who our friends and enemies are. Congress has given him many tools with which to make and carry out those determinations.

Among those tools is substantial discretion with respect to immigration. That discretion permits the president, on his own, to suspend the immigration privileges of any person or group he believes poses a danger to national security. Though the effect of his suspension may, from time to time, fall more heavily on one religious group, the purpose of that suspension may not be to target a religious group.

Can an immigrant who has been banned from entering the United States challenge the ban?

In a word, yes. Once an immigrant has arrived here, that person has due process rights (the right to know the law, to have a hearing before a fair and neutral authority and to appeal to a superior neutral and fair authority). This is so because the Constitution protects all persons.

The challenge to the president's exercise of his discretion cannot be based on a political disagreement with him or an objection to the inconveniences caused by the enforcement; it can only be based on an alleged constitutional violation. In the Seattle case, the states of Washington and Minnesota had sued the president and alleged that he had issued his Jan. 27 order to target Muslims, many of whom study or work at state universities.

Can the courts hear such a case?

In a word, yes; but they must do so with intellectual honesty and political indifference. The judiciary is an independent branch of the government, and it is coequal to the president and the Congress. It is answerable to its own sense of scrupulous intellectual honesty about the Constitution. It is not answerable to the people. Yet in return for the life tenure and unaccountability its members enjoy, we expect political indifference—that judges' decisions shall not be made in order to produce their own politically desired outcomes.

It is the job of the judiciary to say what the Constitution means, say what the statutes mean and determine with finality whether a governmental actor used governmental power consistent with the Constitution and the statutes. When the courts do this with intellectual honesty and indifference to the political outcome, they are doing their job, and we should accept the outcome.

Must the president justify to the satisfaction of judges his exercise of discretion in suspending immigration privileges?

In a word, sometimes; he only needs to do so when a fundamental liberty, such as the free exercise of religion, is at stake—and not when state universities might temporarily lose students or faculty or the enrichment that those from foreign lands often bring.

This can be a dangerous sea for judges to navigate because judicially compelling the president to justify his development of the nation's foreign policy might expose that development to unwanted eyes and ears who could cause the nation ill in perilous times.

Suppose intelligence officials told the president they believe that Islamic State-inspired lone wolves are about to enter the United States from three of the seven countries but some of them have multiple passports and may leave from one of the other four countries. That would clearly justify the president's executive order, but it would be foolhardy for him to explain in a court how he came to know that and detrimental to then have to await a court's approval while the evildoers arrive here.

In our democracy, the president and members of Congress make promises and then convince us that they have kept them so we will re-elect them. The whole purpose of an independent judiciary is to be anti-democratic—to protect the life, liberty and property of all people from the unconstitutional behavior of the two political branches of the government. When the judiciary does this, it is not being imperial; it is doing what the Constitution requires. If this were not the case, then nothing would prevent the political branches from trampling the rights of an unpopular minority.

The late Justice Robert Jackson once famously quipped that the Supreme Court is infallible because it is final; it is not final because it is infallible. But that infallibility—if you will—must be tempered by fidelity to the rule of law, which demands the intellectual honesty and political indifference that the Constitution requires for the personal freedoms of all of us to survive.



An Associated Press article by Sudhin Thanawala titled "Texas Splits With Other States to Defend Trump's Travel Ban" was posted at yahoo.com on Feb. 15, 2017. Following are excerpts of the article.

The state of Texas on Wednesday defended President Donald Trump's ban on travelers from seven predominantly Muslim nations as an assertion of presidential authority intended to protect the country from terrorists, splitting with states that have denounced the order as a religious attack.

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton filed documents asking the San Francisco-based 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to reconsider its decision not to immediately reinstate the ban.

“Every state has a substantial interest in the health and welfare of their citizens, but the states must rely on the federal executive to determine when the entry of aliens should be suspended for public-safety reasons,” Paxton wrote.



An article by Terence P. Jeffrey titled “California’s 12,209,605 Medicaid/CHIP Enrollees Outnumber Populations of 44 States” was posted at cnsnews.com on Feb. 15, 2017. Following are excerpts of the article.

The number of people enrolled in Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) in California alone exceeds the total populations of 44 of the other states of the union, according to data published by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Census Bureau.

As of Jan. 1, 2014, states joining Obamacare’s Medicaid expansion could enroll people in the federal-state program under new, relaxed eligibility requirements. California was one of those states.

In the fall of 2013, the Obamacare exchanges opened to enroll people in health insurance plans for 2014.

The average number of Medicaid/CHIP enrollees in California in July-September 2013—the last quarter before the Obamacare exchanges opened—was 7,755,381, according to CMS.

By November 2016, the latest month for which CMS numbers are available, the number of Medicaid/CHIP enrollees in California was 12,209,605.

That is a three-year increase of 4,454,224—or 57.43 percent.

No state has nearly as many Medicaid/CHIP enrollees as California, and no state has added nearly as many to its rolls since the Obamacare exchanges opened, according to CMS.

The 12,209,605 people on Medicaid and CHIP in California as of November 2016 equaled 31.1 percent of the state’s total 2016 population of 39,250,017, as estimated by the Census Bureau.

New York, according to CMS, has the second largest number of people enrolled in Medicaid/CHIP—with 6,411,789.

That is up 733,363—or 12.9 percent—from the average of 5,678,417 people enrolled in Medicaid/CHIP in New York in July-September 2013.

In addition to California itself, the five other states that had total populations in 2016 that outnumbered California’s 12,209,605 Medicaid/CHIP enrollees were:

- Texas (27,862,596)
- Florida (20,612,439)

- New York (19,745,289)
- Pennsylvania (12,802,503)
- Illinois (12,801,539)

All other states had total populations that were smaller than the number of people on Medicaid or CHIP in California.

Ohio, the nation's seventh most populous state, had 11,614,373 people in 2016, according to the Census Bureau. That fell 595,232 short of the 12,209,605 people on Medicaid or CHIP in California.

California's 4,454,224 increase in the number of people enrolled in Medicaid/CHIP since July-September 2013 is more than the population of half the states.

It is 17,250 more than the 4,436,974 people who lived in Kentucky, the nation's 26th most populous state.

Nationwide, 74,407,191 people were enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP as of November, according to CMS. The 12,209,605 enrolled in California equaled 16.4 percent of the total national Medicaid/CHIP enrollment.

Meanwhile, California's total 2016 population of 39,250,017 was 12.15 percent of the nation's total population of 323,127,513.

"Medicaid is a mean-tested entitlement program that finances the delivery of primary and acute care services, as well as long-term services and supports," says the Congressional Research Service.

"It is a federal-state program, and participation in Medicaid is voluntary for states, though all states and the District of Columbia choose to participate. In order to participate in Medicaid, the federal government requires states to cover certain mandatory populations and benefits, but the federal government also allows states to cover optional populations and services. Due to its flexibility, there is substantial variation among the states in terms of the factors such as Medicaid eligibility, covered benefits, and provider payment rates."

"The Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)," says CMS, "was established in 1997 to provide new coverage opportunities for children in families with incomes too high to qualify for Medicaid, but who cannot afford private coverage."



An article by Kelly Riddell titled "Mainstream Media Whines As Trump Calls on Less Established News Outlets" was posted at washingtontimes.com on Feb. 13, 2017. Following are excerpts of the article.

The mainstream media isn't liking the new set up at the White House: Lesser name news outlets are being called on during press briefings, rather than the old, established bellwethers.

During his press conference with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, President Donald Trump called on two news outlets: WJLA a local ABC news affiliate, and the *Daily Caller*. Both failed to ask him about the fate of his national security adviser Gen. Michael Flynn, who has been marred in a controversy that he spoke to Russian authorities before Mr. Trump took office.

And the mainstream media immediately pounced—saying Mr. Trump was picking favorites in order to avoid questioning on Mr. Flynn.

“By handpicking reporters, Trump manages to get through a news conference without being asked about Flynn,” New York Times reporter Peter Baker lamented on Twitter—failing to mention that all U.S. presidents handpick reporters.

Mark Murray at NBC News was equally flummoxed.

In response to a tweet from Lizzie O’Leary—who aptly pointed out that White Houses have been calling on specific reporters “they know won’t grill them since time immemorial,” Mr. Murray responded: “But not during bilateral pressers with world leaders, where questions typically go to wire reporters (AP, Reuters).”

Hadas Gold at Politico, quoted NBC Journalist Brian Williams, who noted on-air “what wasn’t being asked” at the press conference, adding the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* weren’t called upon.

Deputy Washington Editor of the *New York Times*, Jonathan Weisman, wasn’t pleased.

“Biggest papers in the U.S. blare headlines on embattled National Security Adviser Flynn. Trump calls on WJLA & *Daily Caller*, no Flynn questions,” he tweeted.

Too bad.

The reporters at WJLA and the *Daily Caller* may have dropped the ball in their line of questioning—but that’s not Mr. Trump’s fault.

The mainstream media—especially CNN, *The New York Times*, and *The Washington Post*—have largely been combative of Mr. Trump’s presidency. Why would they think they would then be given preferential treatment at his press conferences? Because they’re the establishment?

There seems to be a fundamental misunderstanding here.

It’s refreshing to see a White House give voice to lesser known news outlets—it’s more democratic in a way, opening the press corps up to different lines of questioning.

For, the mainstream media have tried to control the narrative for way too long. Their complaining they’re losing it is comical.



An article by Nick Bolger titled “Rand Paul Angrily Leaves Health Care Reform Meeting With Paul Ryan, Cites ‘Unacceptable’ Replacement Plan” was posted at freebeacon.com on Feb. 16, 2017. Following is the article.

Sen. Rand Paul (R., Ky.) stormed out of a meeting Tuesday with other Senate Republicans and House Speaker Paul Ryan (R., Wis.) on repealing the Affordable Care Act, saying afterward that he heard “undesirable” replacement plans at the gathering.

“I hear things that are unacceptable to me,” Paul said after the meeting, according to Politico. “If they don’t seem to care what conservatives think about complete repeal of Obamacare, they’re going to be shocked when they count the votes.”

The Kentucky senator has repeatedly pushed for the complete repeal and replacement of Obamacare and was unsatisfied with the partial replacement plans being discussed with Ryan and Senate colleagues.

Paul reportedly left the meeting after lengthy discussions about keeping the Affordable Care Act’s Medicaid expansion and creating tax credits that he called a “new entitlement program.”

A Republican in the room, however, told Politico that Medicaid expansion was not discussed during the meeting.



An editorial by Ann Coulter titled “The Silence of the Lambs Congress” was posted at townhall.com on Feb. 15, 2017. Following is the article.

Let’s compare what President Trump has accomplished since the inauguration (with that enormous crowd!) with what congressional Republicans have done.

In the past three weeks, Trump has: staffed the White House, sent a dozen Cabinet nominees to the Senate, browbeat Boeing into cutting its price on a government contract, harangued American CEOs into keeping their plants in the United States, imposed a terrorist travel ban, met with foreign leaders and nominated a Supreme Court justice, among many other things.

(And still our hero finds time to torment the media with his tweets!)

What have congressional Republicans been doing? Scrapbooking?

More than 90 percent of congressional Republicans kept their jobs after the 2016 election, so you can cross “staffing an entire branch of government” off the list. Only the Senate confirms nominees, which they’ve been doing at a snail’s pace, so they’ve got loads of free time—and the House has no excuse at all.

Where’s the Obamacare repeal? Where are the hearings featuring middle-class Americans with no health insurance because it was made illegal by Obamacare?

The House passed six Obamacare repeals when Obama was president and there was no chance of them being signed into law. Back then, Republicans

were full of vim and vigor! But the moment Trump became president, the repeals came to a screeching halt.

After the inauguration (gigantic!), House Speaker Paul Ryan and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell put out a plan for repealing Obamacare . . . in 200 days. They actually gave their legislative agenda this inspiring title: "The Two Hundred Day Plan."

TWO HUNDRED DAYS!

What was in the last six Obamacare repeals? If we looked, would we find "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy" carefully typed out 1 million times? Seriously, what does Paul Ryan's day look like?

This is the Silence of the Lambs Congress. They're utterly silent, emerging from the House gym or their three-hour lunches only to scream to the press about Trump.

To the delight of the media, these frightened little lambs are appalled by nearly everything Trump does. They've been especially throaty about Trump's temporary travel ban from seven terrorist nations—as designated by the Obama administration (and by everybody else who hasn't been in a deep freeze in a Finnish crevasse for the past decade).

Just like the six Obamacare repeals, a refugee ban was already written and passed by one house of Congress. Then suddenly: the Silence of the Lambs. McConnell and Ryan are hiding under their desks, as Trump is being attacked from every side.

Way, way back, 15 long months ago, congressional Republicans didn't have a problem with a total ban on Syrian and Iraqi refugees. Not for a mere three months like Trump's order—but permanently, unless the director of the FBI, the secretary of the Department of Homeland Security and the director of national intelligence personally certified that a particular refugee posed no danger to the U.S.

That bill passed the House with an overwhelming, veto-proof majority, including 47 Democrats. Then it went to the Senate to die.

But when President Trump imposed a comparatively mild three-month ban on immigrants from Syria, Iraq and five other terrorist nations, the same Republicans who had voted for a limitless ban on refugees whiled away their days calling reporters to denounce Trump.

A little more than a year ago, Rep. Michael McCaul, R-Texas, bragged in a press release that he had introduced the House's refugee ban, calling it a bill that would "protect Americans from ISIS."

But when it came to Trump's three-month pause, McCaul told the Post that Trump's order "went too far."

I guess that ISIS problem just sort of faded away. (Or maybe we should check with Mrs. McCaul, inasmuch as it's her family money that makes Rep. McCaul one of the richest members of Congress.)

Rep. Charlie Dent, R-Pa., who voted for the House's permanent refugee ban, demanded that Trump immediately rescind his travel ban, babbling on about the "many, many nuances of immigration policy"—which he must have learned about on one of his congressional jaunts to a Las Vegas casino.

Rep. Justin Amash, R-Mich., said that Trump's order "overreaches and undermines our constitutional system." Evidently, he was suddenly struck by the realization that it's "not lawful to ban immigrants on the basis of nationality," despite having voted to ban refugees on the basis of nationality just 15 months earlier. (I'm OK with this, provided the Syrians, Somalis and Yemenis are sent to live on Justin's street after being told about his support for gay marriage.)

Sens. Jeff Flake, R-Ariz., and Ben Sasse, R-Neb., both rushed to *The Washington Post* with this refreshingly original point: NOT ALL MUSLIMS ARE TERRORISTS! Why, thank you, senators! Where would the GOP be without you?

The Post also quoted spokesmen—spokesmen!—for Republican Sens. Mike Lee of Utah, Rob Portman of Ohio and Lindsey Graham of South Carolina complaining about not having been briefed on Trump's order. The senators themselves were far too busy to talk to the press because they were—wait, what were they doing again? Words With Friends? Decoupage?

Since the election, Sen. Bob Corker, R-Tenn., has been mostly occupied polishing his anti-Trump quotations to get a pat on the head from an admiring media. He complained about Trump's order, saying it was "poorly implemented" and that he had to find out about it from reporters. (I wonder why.)

This is the moment we've been waiting for our entire lives, but Republicans in Congress refuse to do the people's will. Their sole, driving obsession is to see Trump fail.

I am not presently calling for these useless, narcissistic, Trump-bashing Republicans to be defeated in their re-election bids, but they're on my Watch List. To be cleared, they can start by getting off the phone with *The Washington Post* and passing one of those six Obamacare repeal bills.



An editorial by Walter Williams titled "Pawns of Liberals" was posted at jewishworldreview.com on Feb. 15, 2017. Following is the article.

Ordinary black people cannot afford to go along with the liberal agenda that calls for undermining police authority. That agenda makes for more black crime victims. Let's look at what works and what doesn't work.

In 1990, New York City adopted the practice in which its police officers might stop and question a pedestrian. If there was suspicion, they would frisk the person for weapons and other contraband. This practice, well within the law, is known as a Terry stop.

After two decades of this proactive police program, New York City's homicides fell from over 2,200 per year to about 300.

Blacks were the major beneficiaries of proactive policing.

According to Manhattan Institute scholar Heather Mac Donald—author of "The War on Cops"—seeing as black males are the majority of New York City's homicide victims, more than 10,000 blacks are alive today who would not be had it not been for proactive policing.

The American Civil Liberties Union and other leftist groups brought suit against proactive policing. A U.S. District Court judge ruled that New York City's "stop and frisk" policy violated the 14th Amendment's promise of equal protection because black and Hispanic people were subject to stops and searches at a higher rate than whites.

But the higher rate was justified.

Mac Donald points out that while blacks are 23 percent of New York City's population, they are responsible for 75 percent of shootings and 70 percent of robberies. Whites are 34 percent of the population of New York City. They are responsible for less than 2 percent of shootings and 4 percent of robberies. If you're trying to prevent shootings and robberies, whom are you going to focus most attention on, blacks or whites?

In 2015, 986 people were shot and killed by police. Of that number, 495 were white (50 percent), and 258 were black (26 percent). Liberals portray shootings by police as racist attacks on blacks. To solve this problem, they want police departments to hire more black police officers. It turns out that the U.S. Justice Department has found that black police officers in San Francisco and Philadelphia are likelier than whites to shoot and use force against black suspects.

That finding is consistent with a study of 2,699 fatal police killings between 2013 and 2015, conducted by John R. Lott Jr. and Carlisle E. Moody of the Crime Prevention Research Center, showing that the odds of a black suspect's being killed by a black police officer were consistently greater than the odds of a black suspect's being killed by a white officer. And little is said about cops killed. Mac Donald reports that in 2013, 42 percent of cop killers were black.

Academic liberals and civil rights spokespeople make the claim that the disproportionate number of blacks in prison is a result of racism. They ignore the fact that black criminal activity is many multiples of that of other racial groups. They argue that differential imprisonment of blacks is a result of the racist war on drugs.

Mac Donald says that state prisons contain 88 percent of the nation's prison population. Just 4 percent of state prisoners are incarcerated for drug possession. She argues that if drug offenders were removed from the nation's prisons, the black incarceration rate would go down from about 37.6 percent to 37.4 percent. The vast majority of blacks in prison are there because of violent crime—and mostly against black people.

That brings us to the most tragic aspect of black crime. The primary victims are law-abiding black people who must conduct their lives in fear. Some par-

ents serve their children meals on the floor and sometimes put them to sleep in bathtubs so as to avoid stray bullets. The average American does not live this way and would not tolerate it. And that includes the white liberals who support and make excuses for criminals.

Plain decency mandates that we come to the aid of millions of law-abiding people under siege. For their part, black people should stop being pawns for white liberals and support the police who are trying to protect them.



A video and an article by Chandler Gill titled "Maxine Waters Says Trump is Part of 'Kremlin Clan' So He Should Be Impeached" were posted at freebeacon.com on Feb. 16, 2017. Following is the article.

Rep. Maxine Waters (D., Calif.) charged President Donald Trump with being part of a "Kremlin Clan" on MSNBC's "All In With Chris Hayes" Wednesday night, and said he should be impeached because of it.

"I've come to conclude that Trump has the 'Kremlin Clan' surrounding him and have been involved with him for a long time and you named some of them this evening," Waters told Chris Hayes.

She named former campaign chair, Paul Manafort, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, and former National Security Adviser Michael Flynn as members of the "Kremlin Clan."

"So, whether we're talking about any of them or Wilbur Ross or Carter Page, these are all people with ties that are documented with Russian and the Kremlin, and so I have named them 'Trump's Kremlin Clan' because how is it that all of them with this background and with these connections end up in the same administration?" she asked.

She told Hayes that there is "more to be learned" about this group of people.

She said that Trump deserves to be impeached because of his staff's "collusion" with Russia.

"I tell you, there's more to be learned about it," Water said. "I believe there has been collusion. They were involved in his campaign and we've got to dig. These investigations have got to show the connection and prove that collusion, because, as for me, I think it leads to impeachment and I believe that and that's what I'm paying attention to."



An editorial by Kurt Schlichter titled "Shoving Alinsky's Rules for Radicals Right Back in the Left's Ugly Face" was posted at townhall.com on Feb. 13, 2017. Following is the article.

The Left is getting massively out-Alinskyed, and the hilarious thing is that this band of withered hippies, unemployable millennial safe-space cases, and unlovable + unshaven libfeminists don't even know it.

Oh, their masters sure know it. Soros is bitterly having to ramp up his infusions of blood money to keep his community-organized "grassroots" movements afloat.

The less dumb ones among the lying dinosaur media are panicking as their influence fades, and Chuck Schumer is enduring such a non-stop parade of serial humiliations that if the Senate were a penitentiary, he'd be McConnell's prison Mitch.

The Leftist mafia godmaleidentifyingparents pulling the strings of the Marxist Muppets know the score—they are losing. And it's awesome. Because, finally, the Right has taken Saul Alinsky's Rules for Radicals and shoved it up where #TheResistance don't shine.

Thank you, Andrew Breitbart. You yelled "Follow me!" and led a movement that had previously been dominated by doofy wonks and bow-tied geeks over the top in a glorious bayonet charge against the paper tiger liberal elite.

The Left hadn't taken a good, solid gut punch since Ronald Reagan turned the Oval Office keys over to the wimpcons who found fighting Democrats uncouth because conflict made for awkward luncheons down at the club.

Bizarrely, the guy who picked up the standard and carried it forward when our beloved commander was felled by fate was a New York billionaire with no identifiable ideological foundation who instinctively understood the one thing that could make up for his other failings: He knows how to fight liberals and win. For Donald Trump and the revitalized conservative movement, Alinsky's book isn't some dusty old commie tome—it's a lifestyle.

Alinsky's Rules are relatively simple, and they make sense when you are fighting a conventional opponent with an interest in maintaining the status quo. The Rules are terrific for dealing with an old-school conservative guy who drives a Buick, enjoys gardening, and doesn't want any trouble. They aren't so effective against conservative brawlers who like to punch, and who aren't too fussy about whether it's with tweets or with fists.

The Rules are not some magic incantation; they are simply some tactical principles that work in certain kinds of fights against certain kinds of opponents—particularly ones willing to unilaterally disarm in the face of an unprincipled enemy.

But once the secret is out, it's relatively easy to turn them around on an enemy that is so stupid it thinks it's going to gain widespread acceptance among normal Americans by dressing up as genitalia. That's why the thirteen classic Alinsky Rules are playing out right now in a way the Left did not expect.

■ Rule 1: "Power is not only what you have, but what the enemy thinks you have."

Actually, we now have a lot of power. No, we don't have direct power over liberal bastions like Hollywood, the media and academia, but by threatening to use governmental levers of power to impact their tax breaks, copyright laws, and subsidies, we can pound them into submission. And Trump is clearly willing to use all his powers to beat the living liberalism out of our enemy.

Wait, this is where the Fredocons loosen their bow ties and stutter, "Why . . . we can't . . . Professor Wellington Wimpenheimer IV would not approve . . . it's so mean . . . oh, well I never!"

Wake up. Man up. If you ever want to win (and maybe someday even kiss a girl) you need to get real. They hate us, and we either win or we spend the rest of our miserable lives as Boxer the Horse, slaving away to fund the welfare state under the lash of the Left until it decides it's time to pack us off to the glue factory.

■ Rule 2: "Never go outside the expertise of your people."

■ Rule 3: "Whenever possible, go outside the expertise of the enemy."

Stupid GOP wonkcons want to fight to where the liberals are strong, like on entitlements. Trump is smart enough to fight where liberals are weak, like on the economy. And he's going to throw down some serious jujitsu by doing a liberal thing—infrastructure spending—in a conservative way.

He's a developer—he knows how to build stuff, and he will freak the Left out by delivering concrete results (not the least of them, a wall) where liberals (for whom "infrastructure" means giving our money to their deadbeat constituents) never actually build stuff anymore.

As a conservative, I'm not thrilled about "infrastructure" spending. But as a conservative insurgent who wants to see the Left on its collective collectivist back, twitching like a dying roach, I'm thrilled.

■ Rule 4: "Make the enemy live up to its own book of rules."

This is not so much about pointing out the lies and hypocrisy that constitute Leftist orthodoxy—the vicious racism they deny is racism because it's anti-white, the racism against non-whites who refuse to serve a liberal master, the sexism against women who think babies should be actually be born, and so on.

It's about not letting them tie us into knots by using our morals and values as bear traps to immobilize and neutralize us. Fortunately, most of us have discovered how losing our superficial "political values" helps us regain our freedom. We have embraced the power of not #caring.

And liberals have no idea what to do when they shout "Trump is a meanie," and we shrug, smile, and bust out with an impromptu interpretive dance to celebrate Neil Gorsuch.

■ Rule 5: "Ridicule is man's most potent weapon."

Actually, the AR15 a more potent weapon, but ridicule will do as long as the Left doesn't try to make good on its countless threats of violence and tyranny.

Regardless, we finally we have a conservative corps that is willing to mock the members of that motley collection of pompous, inept, lying jerks we call the Democrat Party and its media catamite corps. When they turn around and try to mock us back, well, we aren't watching their late night hack comics anymore, and frankly they can make all the jokes they want. The punchline is still going to be "And then the Republicans repealed Obamacare."

■ Rule 6: "A good tactic is one your people enjoy."

I'm having fun watching the liberals lose. How about you?

■ Rule 7: "A tactic that drags on too long becomes a drag."

I don't know—I doubt I am ever going to be tired of so much #winning.

■ Rule 8: "Keep the pressure on. Never let up."

Remember the Trump outrage du jour a couple days ago when we were supposed to be on the verge of war with Australia? Well, Down Under's kangaroos and giant scary spiders still wander freely, and we've long since moved on. President Trump has been busy owning the news cycle with appointments, executive orders, and the occasional squirrel-sighting tweet that sends the media chasing off on a rodent-seeking tangent.

Oh no, Kellyanne Conway said to buy Ivanka's stuff—if I ever cared (and I never did), I've already moved on to giggling about the progressive freak out over ICE being allowed to do its job again.

■ Rule 9: "The threat is usually more terrifying than the thing itself."

No, Alinsky was wrong. The thing itself is much, much worse—as Democrats will find out when President Trump signs the law mandating national concealed carry reciprocity.

■ Rule 10: "The major premise for tactics is the development of operations that will maintain a constant pressure upon the opposition."

Democrats are trying to do the massive resistance thing again, and it's going about as well as when they tried the massive resistance thing against integration. It may arouse libs in blue cities and on soon-to-be-defunded college campuses, but normals are getting tired of the nonstop Leftist nonsense. See Rule 7.

Conversely, Trump's nonstop series of orders, appointments, and policies seems to be helping him—mostly because they are popular.

■ Rule 11: "If you push a negative hard enough, it will push through and become a positive."

Unhinged Leftist obstruction, including violence, is driving people right. However, leftist harping on Trump's rough edges seems to be backfiring—instead of "Oh my, what a brute!" people seem to be saying "Good. He fights."

■ Rule 12: "The price of a successful attack is a constructive alternative."

Trump has a program and it's popular. What's the Democrats' program? "Give us more of your money so we can buy votes from welfare cheats, and then we'll lecture you on your privilege?"

The Democrats have no meaningful policies because their entire focus is on them regaining and keeping power—that's their desired end state, not a country made great again, and that's why they get no traction anywhere on the map outside of the dysfunctional blue spots.

Watch for them to eventually seriously propose secession by the liberal states—after the last few months, I've been tempted to move my novel *People's Republic*, about California ignoring the admonition to never go full Venezuela, over to the nonfiction section.

■ Rule 13: "Pick the target, freeze it, personalize it, and polarize it."

Well, they try to. They try to make Trump a demonic chimera composed of bits and pieces of Hitler, Mussolini, and more Hitler, and he just doesn't care. We don't care, because we know what they are really saying is that we normals are the monsters, that it's not Trump governing that is illegitimate but that it is we normals having a voice in governing ourselves that is illegitimate.

And now we are woke, as the ridiculous Left would put it, to the Left's tired Alinsky antics. We see it's all a lie. It's all a scam. And we aren't playing the game by their rules anymore.



Isaiah 55:6-11—"Seek you the LORD while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. 'For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,' says the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and do not return there, but water the earth, and make it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it."