



*"...The heart of the sons of men  
is full of evil,  
and madness is in their heart  
while they live..."  
(Ecclesiastes 9.<sup>3</sup>)*

*Wherewith shall I come before the LORD,  
and bow myself before the high God?  
He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good;  
and what doth the LORD require of thee,  
but to do justly, and to love mercy,  
and to walk humbly with thy God?  
(Micah 6.<sup>6,8</sup>)*

the righteousness of being woke:  
resisting the un-biblical anti-woke heresy

part 1

deuteronomy 4.<sup>9</sup>

Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life...

This homily serves as introduction to this series of homilies entitled, "The Righteousness of being Woke: Resisting the Un-biblical Anti-woke Heresy."<sup>1</sup>

These days, it is fashionable on America's political and cultural right to complain about and rage against what it calls "wokeness," or "woke culture" —as if sleeping and slumbering are somehow preferable to being awake! It is bizarre. And this is really saying something about a political and cultural movement that is increasing drunken with and addicted to the most bizarre and easily refuted conspiracy theories in America's long history of infatuation with conspiracy theories.

Challenged by and fearful of ideas and individuals that they cannot understand and will not countenance, those on America's political and cultural right use "woke" as its latest catch-all pejorative for the political left and its defense of those very ideas and individuals that the right finds so challenging and fear-inducing. Nevertheless, those on the right seem often to struggle to clearly define, explain, or articulate the meaning of the political and cultural phenomena that they so fear and loath.

---

<sup>1</sup> The other homilies examine the subject in light of Exodus 13.<sup>3-10</sup>, Deuteronomy 6.<sup>20-23</sup>, and Luke 22.<sup>19-20</sup>.

But the word, “woke,” as used in a political and cultural setting is easy to understand and explain. “Woke,” as a political and cultural phenomenon has a nearly hundred-year history. For most of that history it existed in obscurity. For most of its long and rather silent history, “woke” indicated the awareness and acknowledgement of the oppressive racism, with its injustices and violence, that America has practiced against African Americans from its inception. This oppressive racism is an established and irrefutable fact. Indeed, it is “truth,” for “truth is knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come,”<sup>2</sup> or, “things as they *really* are, and... *really* will be.”<sup>3</sup> Truth suffers no delusion, no matter how good it *feels*—feelings being the new American standard for identifying truth.

Anyway, the Black Lives Matter movement resurrected the term from its obscurity and expanded the meaning to include not only awareness and acknowledgement of racist oppression, but resistance to it as well. More recently “woke” awareness has expanded to include past and present injustices and wrongs committed against other vulnerable groups such as women and the LBGTQ community.

To be “woke,” then, is to remember, first, then to resist, and finally to call for reform and repentance of social injustices and wrongs committed against individuals or groups—in America’s case, African Americans, women, and LBGTQ, past and present, have been particularly vulnerable to injustice and oppression. Therefore, in using the term in a pejorative manner, America’s political and cultural right confesses, unbeknownst to itself, its preference for forgetfulness, ignorance, and sin. To be anti-woke represents the rejection of truth and the refusal to engage in the process of repentance, reform, and renewal. It calls for spiritual sleepiness and slumber. It is nocturnal, a creature of the night, an inhabitant of dark places. In willfully avoiding the light of day, its slumber is the sleep of hell.

One of the foundational tenets of this right-wing anti-woke heresy involves America’s history with slavery and racism. There is an attempt on the part of the slumbering right to deny this history; to deny the wrongs African Americans have and do endure; and to deny that much of

---

<sup>2</sup> DC 93.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Jacob 4.<sup>13</sup>

America's "greatness" was built on the back of those who were immorally enslaved to serve as free and forced labor. More, the sleep walking right wishes to forget and deny present racism and its deleterious, and sometimes murderous effects upon its targets. The movement wishes to remove such truths from school curriculums and public discourse. It wishes to keep our children asleep, forgetful, ignorant, wicked.

All of this, one suspects, it does in order to maintain an unjust system in service to the delusion of ungodly white supremacy or to maintain America's race-based caste system that has dominated America from its inception. In so doing, it becomes the defender of injustice, violence, and oppression—not only of African Americans, but of all vulnerable groups. America's anti-woke mob seeks to continue oppression. It is an oppressor.

While most of those who complain loudly of "wokeness" are undisciplined in their rage, tragically, there are some, like Florida's DeSantis, who, more wickedly crafty than most, cynically seek personal and political gain by further enflaming and manipulating the frenzied and fearful anti-woke or slumbering mind—often making appeal to those deemed more reasonable by dressing up the hateful anti-woke heresy in the language of "parental rights" and other pleasant sounding lies.

Whether wielded in an undisciplined or in a cynical and crafty way, the anti-woke heresy is dangerous to society and the soul of its people. It must be challenged, resisted, and overcome. In this series of homilies, we resist the aspect of the anti-woke heresy that challenges the remembrance of America's historical and systemic oppression of African Americans—though its message applies to all forms of injustice, violence, and oppression. We resist the anti-woke heresy with the Bible—a Book that so many anti-woke heretics claim to know and love. It is yet one more of many sad commentaries on American Christianity that so many who claim the title, "Christian" have passionately adopted the hateful anti-woke heresy that is so incompatible with the Bible.

For, make no mistake about it. The anti-woke heresy that seeks to forget America's past wrongs and ignore America's present injustices against African Americans is decidedly at odds with the

Bible. It is, in fact, about as unbiblical as unbiblical can get. To forget and ignore social injustice is antithetical to every Biblical and Christian principle. It is utterly un-Christian. If it is un-American to remember our own or any oppressive past or ignore our own or any oppressive present, then to be American is to be unbiblical and un-Christian.

We will begin this series of homilies and our resistance of the anti-woke movement's slumbering denial and forgetfulness of America's oppressive history toward African Americans with a story that is familiar to all of us: the story of Israel's exodus from Egyptian bondage. The story is a staple of western culture. It is the central story of the Hebrew Bible. The story's point is central to not only the Hebrew Bible, but the Christian Bible as well. It is the central point of Christian doctrine. To wit:

God is a Savior, a Redeemer, a Rescuer, a Liberator, an Emancipator. This reality is more than central to the Biblical witness, it is central to the Divine Character. But, for every Savior, Redeemer, Rescuer, Liberator, and Emancipator, there is an enslaver, an oppressor that must be humbled, resisted, defeated, halted and, where necessary due to the continued and obstinate hardness of heart, annihilated. The two messages—liberator and oppressor—go together, hand in glove, one the context for the other. One cannot remember one without remembering the other. Nor should one. The remembrance of salvation and liberation without a thorough understanding and remembrance of what it is one is saved and liberated from is meaningless and nonsensical on its face.

Here, I recall something that the great Colonial era preacher, Solomon Stoddard, observed.

“Men must be led into the Understanding of the badness of their Hearts and the strictness of the Law, before they will be convinced of the Preciousness of Christ.”<sup>4</sup>

The battle over wakefulness or slumber in matters related to social justice has a very long history, pre-dating, even, America's existence. Israel's God and King knew of the existence and insistence of forgetfulness. So, in his wisdom, and while Israel was still little more than a rag-tag

---

<sup>4</sup> *Seasons of Refreshing*, Keith J. Hardman, p. 45.

collection of Bedouin preparing to enter a more populated region later to be called Israel, God warned those whom he had brought out of oppression,

“Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life...”

America’s re-branded dalliance with forgetfulness and ignorance, then, is not new or unanticipated. Forgetfulness and ignorance are exactly what one expects of and gets from every oppressor. In its wish to oppress and keep oppression from coming to light, America’s right imitates the great oppressors of the Hebrew Bible, especially Egypt, as we will see in the following homilies.

But Israel, the victim of Egyptian oppression with its attendant injustices and violence was called out of its oppression to stand against all forms of injustice. The first step of this resistance was the remembrance, awareness, and acknowledgement of injustice, violence, and oppression. Israel was never to forget, sleep, or slumber in relation to its own oppression. It was to remain awake to the possibility of newer occurrences of oppression of yet newer vulnerable groups. It was always to remember. It was never to forget. Israel was, then, to be and remain “woke.” The laws and ordinances that God gave to Israel were intended as a safeguard against falling asleep to oppression and thus becoming the next in history’s long line of oppressors.

Like ancient Israel, African-Americans are called to woke remembrance of their oppression. Their remembrance is righteous. Their call to America to woke remembrance of its own wrongs against African-Americans is righteous. Americans are called away from forgetfulness. They are called to wokeness. They are called to woke remembrance. This series of homilies lends but one more voice to that call.

It should be understood that this call to woke remembrance is not simply a matter of reviewing history. It is not even simply a matter of righting past wrongs. Rather, America’s call to woke remembrance is a call to imagine, initiate, and maintain a more just society in the present and in the future. America’s future depends on woke remembrance of and repentance for injustice,

violence, and oppression, past and present.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus!