

Worldviews

Apologetics Resource Center Newsletter

WWW.ARCAPOLOGETICS.ORG

WINTER
2024

Director's
Column 1

Marcia Montenegro

Culture 2

Dr. Peter
Jones

Salt & Light 4

Parrish Alford

Church &
State 14

A. Eric
Johnston

Easter Is Not Pagan By Marcia Montenegro

The Word "Easter"

The word "Easter" does not come from Ishtar or Astarte! This does not even make linguistic sense since words from those languages do not migrate into English.

Quote==Because the English Anglo/Saxon language originally derived from the Germanic, there are many similarities between German and English. Many English writers have referred to the German language as the "Mother Tongue!" The English word Easter is of German/Saxon origin and not Babylonian as Alexander Hislop falsely claimed. The German equivalent is Oster. Oster (Ostern being the modern day equivalent) is related to Ost which means the rising of the sun, or simply in English, east. Oster comes from the old Teutonic form of auferstehen / auferstehung, which means resurrection, which in the older Teutonic form comes from two words, Ester meaning first, and stehen meaning to stand. These two words combine to form erstehen which is an old German form of auferstehen, the modern day German word for resurrection.=="Is the Name Easter of Pagan Origin?" by Roger Patterson at <http://bit.ly/1KqW2st>

Another theory:

Quote==From the Late Latin name Paschalis, which meant "relating to Easter" from Latin Pascha

"Easter", which was in turn from Hebrew (pesach) "Passover". Passover is the ancient Hebrew holiday celebrating the liberation from Egypt. Because it coincided closely with the later Christian holiday of Easter, the same Latin word was used for both.==From <http://goo.gl/aJlkvx>

Also see this information:

<https://goo.gl/8vae8Y>

On Bede's spurious claim about the origin of Easter as a goddess name:

Quote==This was his attempted etymology of Easter - which is only called that in English of course. The problem is that as the Goddess in question, Eostre is completely unknown otherwise, and Bede was an enthusiast for adopting pagan customs in to Christianity or allowing them to persist where it did not impact on Christian doctrine where possible (out of kindness and a desire to allow people to keep their old ways), so this proposed etymology is probably spurious. In the 19th century a German antiquarian invented Osatra, as the German form, using Bede as his source.

Bede admits this idea is his speculation - he is not actually aware of a goddess called Eostre, he just thinks there was one.

[Continued on Page 16](#)

The cultural conflict is no longer simply political. The economic value of socialism or capitalism is no longer the debate separating citizens. It is, rather, what our children are learning, whether in non-Christian state schools or even in some Christian schools, about their sexuality, their family life and the theological issues that determine ultimate meaning.

The Sixties was a key moment for Western culture. It might be hard to imagine, but when I was growing up as a lad in working-class Liverpool, England, and even when I became a young man in the Fifties, I had never even heard the word “homosexual.” If, by some chance, that word came up at one time, I would not have known what it meant. Then came the Sixties, when deviant sexuality exploded into the public square and now “alternate” sex is seen as normative.

Normalizing the LGBTQ Agenda

The present administration boasts that its cabinet has more female, gay, black and trans members than ever before. It went further in the normalization of sexual extremism by appointing Sam Brinton to the Department of Energy, where he is responsible for nuclear waste. It seems he took “nuclear” to heart, appearing at the White House in high-heeled shoes, bright lipstick, a striking moustache—and sporting a fetching dress he had stolen at an airport luggage collection point! When his theft was uncovered, the administration reluctantly let him go. The Biden Administration also elevated Rachel

(née Richard) Levine, a trans lad/lass with flowing golden tresses. Levine is a four-star admiral who holds the post of Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services. In public, he proudly presents in formal naval attire, thus reinforcing the administration’s position on transgenderism. This is the new political norm,[1] which the President made official. At the end of the “Proclamation on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex Pride Month, 2023” the president declared (joining God and queer issues) that the month of June was to be a time for all Americans to “recognize the achievements of the LGBTQI+ community, to celebrate the great diversity of the American people, and to wave their flags of pride high.” The final line states: “In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this thirty-first day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand twenty-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and forty-seventh.”

It’s little wonder that “nearly every major U.S. brand promulgates the LGBT agenda,”[2] and many people are proud of their support of LGBTQ issues. This is especially true of sports personalities. Georgia Marie Stanway, captain of the British ladies’ soccer team, exults: “We’re never shy in saying what we stand for. We’re a squad that promotes inclusivity, equality, we obviously have a number of people that feel very strongly about it.”[3] The

California Senate engaged in a ceremony honoring “The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence.”[4] The “Sisters” are gay men dressed as nuns, who make fun of the traditional nuns’ view of sex. They are drag queens in nun outfits, calling themselves by obscene names, peddling hatred and reveling in blasphemy. Americans are a tolerant people. But we should realize that sexual deviance has by now become an issue to divide the nation into the morally and socially cool, versus the luddites.

They Are Coming for our Children in their Schools

Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates, friend of Jeffrey Epstein and visitor to his island, has invested tens of millions of dollars in a radical non-governmental organization called the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), which is endorsed by the World Health Organization. The IPPF is pushing for young children to be considered “sexual beings.”

“Sexual activity may be part of different types of relationships, including dating, marriage, or commercial sex work, among others,” IPPF said, about what children under 10 should be taught. The toolkit said that children under 10 should also be told: “As you grow up, you might start to be interested in people with diverse gender identities.”[5] This view is taught in numerous schools.

Such explicit instruction is clearly

emphasized in the drag queen shows put on in public libraries for children all over the country, developing in them an interest for “diverse gender identities,” that is, interest in non-binary sexual androgyny in which sexual identities are joined in a hopeless mish-mash. This androgynous sex is expressed in: homosexuality, in which both males become females in their love-making; bi-sexuality, in which a person enjoys both male and female sex; transgenderism, in which a male or female person pretends to be the opposite sex; and in drag queen practice. Interestingly, Texas Christian University now offers a course teaching that the male/female gender binary is an expression of white supremacy![6] It also discusses how to create a drag persona. As the culmination of this “academic work,” students participate in a performance in the university’s annual drag show.

They Are Coming for our Children in Our Churches

On Monday, June 5, 2023, the Episcopal Cathedral of St. John the Divine hosted a “Faith Perspectives Panel” examining the intersection of religion and the LGBTQ+ movement as part of the Cathedral’s iconic Pride celebration.

[Continued on page 6](#)

“Christian Nationalist” just a new label for an old narrative from the left by Parrish Alford

A secular journalist's recent effort to sound the alarm on the damage she argued “Christian nationalists” can do at the ballot box brings up an interesting discussion on the origin of rights, says the president of a Southern Baptist seminary.

Dr. Albert Mohler Jr. said on [Washington Watch](#) Thursday that Heidi Przybyla's take is not surprising, given the Politico news reporter is a product of her environment. Przybyla's mission in a guest spot on MSNBC recently was to inform Americans of the danger created when Christians are politically engaged. The journalist stated:

"The thing that unites them as Christian nationalists - not Christians, by the way, because Christian nationalists is very different - is that they believe that our rights as Americans, as all human beings, don't come from any earthly authority. They don't come from Congress;

they don't come from the Supreme Court - they come from God. The problem with that is that they are determining [that] men are determining what God is telling them."

It's a take that underscores what's being taught in institutions of higher learning, Mohler, the president of [The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary](#), told show host Tony Perkins.

"[You look at the argument] made by Przybyla ... and you recognize that's exactly what the leftist academy has been teaching - and this is what's being regurgitated now as if it makes sense. We can be very smug and self-satisfied ourselves, just given sin, if we're not careful; but it's as if she discovered how to split the atom. She's just saying, 'Look, I just discovered this. These are very weird people. They believe that rights come from God,'" Mohler said.

Przybyla's point of view, Mohler argued, reveals little understanding of American history.

"It's as if all of a sudden she's discovered that Christians believe that human dignity and human rights come from the Creator - which, by the way, is exactly what it says in the Declaration of Independence. The entire American system is built upon respect for rights, not the rights," Mohler emphasized.

Many college profs ignore American history.

A report directed by Arizona State University professor Donald T. Critchlow and commissioned by former House Speaker Newt Gingrich and two other Republicans found that basic points of American history are often ignored or, if discussed at all, are presented to students in a negative light.

The year-long project focused on [class syllabi from the leading universities](#) in the country, many of them ranked in the top 150, Fox News reported.

"As you look at the American Revolution, it was a revolution of sorts based upon continuity of belief in human dignity coming from a divine creator and human rights that we're endowed with by the creator," Mohler said.

In that way, said Mohler, the American Revolution stands in stark contrast to the French Revolution.

"What came later in the French Revolution was a very secular revolution in which you had a declaration of the rights of man as if they all of a sudden existed. So, the Left has gone in the French direction," Mohler continued. Yet he detects more irony in that "they've been in France so long, [but] they don't even understand that the French revolutionaries were rebelling against the very claim that rights come from God." [Continued on page 12](#)

The panel discussion centered around deconstructing the “binary view” of the church, namely the doctrine of God the Creator.[7]

In June, 2023, another Lutheran female “minister” recited a heretical “Sparkle Creed” as part of a recent church service, (about which I have already commented).[8] The Edina Community Lutheran Church (ECLC) “minister,” Anna Helgen, led the congregation in the “creed”:

I believe in the non-binary God whose pronouns are plural. I believe in Jesus Christ, their child who wore a fabulous tunic and had two dads and saw everyone as a sibling-child of God.

I believe in the rainbow spirit who shatters our image of one white light and refracts it into a rainbow of gorgeous diversity....

A non-binary God is not the Creator we know from Scripture. A little later in the service, another male “pastor” then offered another prayer: “You come to us as [LGBTQIA+] youth with no home. You are embodied by Two-Spirit people still fighting against the impacts of colonization, erasure and stolen land.”[9] (Two-Spirit people are the androgynous shamans in pagan religions.)

Clearly future church attenders (our children and grandchildren!) will encounter even less dogma from church authorities about sexual issues such as premarital, extramarital

and androgynous sex. They will be less willing or able to realize the sinfulness of free sex, especially as they hear about their Bible’s “queer” god and the oppressive powers of heterosexual orthodoxy, whiteness and capitalism.

Eager wannabe pastors will be trained in highly respected training programs in our major divinity schools. For example, The University of Chicago’s religion department offers a “queering god” class which explores queer and trans foundations in relationship to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam and “analyzes the ways that contemporary artists, activists, and scholars are using theology to reimagine gender and experiment with ‘new relations, with new relational forms.’”[10] Most recently, Harvard Divinity School also proposes a course on queering God and discusses “Dismantling Heteronormativity.”[11] Duke Divinity School held a pride worship service with prayers to “the great queer one” during the spring 2023 semester. [12]

Journalist Robert Knight describes our present cultural situation in a striking but realistic manner:

The growing divide in the United States isn’t merely political. This runs far deeper. It’s a struggle

between those intent on using government and corporate power to turn America into a Marxist version of Sodom and Gomorrah, and those resisting this radical transformation.”[13]

The LGBTQ agenda has become the new orthodoxy of woke culture. Anyone who even questions it is declared a heretic and cast from society for blasphemy. In this cultural setting we can expect resistance to and eventually persecution of those who hold to biblical orthodoxy. This agenda is new in recent Western history, so it is important for us to take a look at ancient history.

From Where Do These Perversions Come?

I have developed a line of investigation in a long article, “Androgyny: The Pagan Sexual Ideal,”[14] in which I cite a number of important sources. This history is crucial for understanding the theological and spiritual implications of homosexuality for the thinking of today’s church and culture.

To understand how we go there, we must travel back into the past, where we find that the priests associated with the worship of the goddess Ishtar from the Sumerian age (1800 BC) flaunted their androgyny. [15] Their condition was due to their “devotion to the goddess Ishtar who herself had ‘transformed their masculinity into femininity.’”[16]

[Continued on page 8](#)

HAPPY EASTER HE IS RISEN!

FROM THE BOARD AND
STAFF OF ARC



Up from the Grave He Arose
By Robert Lowry

Low in the grave he lay, Jesus my Savior,
waiting the coming day, Jesus my Lord!

Up from the grave he arose;
with a mighty triumph o'er his foes;
he arose a victor from the dark domain,
and he lives forever, with his saints to reign.
He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!

Vainly they watch his bed, Jesus my Savior,
vainly they seal the dead, Jesus my Lord!

Up from the grave he arose;
with a mighty triumph o'er his foes;
he arose a victor from the dark domain,
and he lives forever, with his saints to reign.
He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!

Death cannot keep its prey, Jesus my Savior;
he tore the bars away, Jesus my Lord!

Up from the grave he arose;
with a mighty triumph o'er his foes;
he arose a victor from the dark domain,
and he lives forever, with his saints to reign.
He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!

They functioned as feminized men and as occult shamans, with their divine□demonic ability to trans-gress boundaries.”[17] They celebrated no boundaries, that is, no binaries. So, you see that the “non-binary,” as we say today, was already a powerful, spiritual notion, denying the existence of the binary, separating creation from the God the Creator, which was the ultimate function of these pagan shamans.

The renowned history-of-religions scholar, Mircea Eliade, calls this “ritualized androgynization.”[18] Androgyny is also an appropriate term for alternate sexuality today, for it evokes the joining of sexual distinctions in one reality.

We see the myth of a non-binary pagan god, served by non-binary androgynous or homosexual priests in ancient Mesopotamian and Indo-European nature religions, as well as in the myths of Australian Aborigines, African tribes, South American Indians and Pacific islanders. Even though separated by many centuries, Eliade shows an evident historical and “theological” connection between the Mesopotamian homosexual shamans called *assinnus*, what the Canaanites called *qedeshim*, what the Scythians called *ennares*, and the Syrians *galli*.

Mircea believes that “ultimately, it is the wish to recover this lost unity in existence that has caused man to think of the opposites ...as a single

reality.”[19] Eliade explains the spiritual meaning of androgyny as “a symbolic restoration...of the undifferentiated unity that preceded the creation,”[20] in direct opposition to the Old Testament account of creation which is marked by male/female distinctions and a distinct divine Creator. The androgynous being thus sums up the very goal of the mystical, Oneist quest, whether ancient or modern:

In mystical love and at death one completely integrates the spirit world: all contraries are collapsed. The distinctions between the sexes are erased: the two merge into an androgynous whole.[21]

For many years, I have tried to give understanding to same-sex sexuality, not simply as a means of breaking God’s law, but as a deep expression of pagan spirituality. I do this not out of a sense of superiority but out of love for fellow human beings who ignore the life-giving truths of the Bible. So this has deep implications for our witness in today’s world. The presence and importance of androgynous sex was also practiced in the North American tribes, known generally as *berdaches*, amongst the Navajo as *nadle*, and among the Zuñi, as *Awonawilona* (“he-she”).[22] This is a source of pride among present-day homosexuals, showing their spiritual importance in earlier times. Homosexuality is thus not the invention of the 19th century romantic religion, where sexual orientation

began to be openly identified and accepted as “my personal truth.” On the contrary, homosexuality has a long spiritual history.

Showing this relationship is not just a cause, on the one hand, for pride, as homosexuals now affirm, seeing their spiritual place as leaders in ancient religious cults as “two spirit persons.” This phrase means people who succeed in creating an androgynous unity, denying the opposites of male and female. This gives a certain historic understanding of a sexual practice that reaches much further back in history and why the Old Testament knew about it, and why Moses, in announcing the reality of God the Creator to the Pagan world of his day, emphasizes the importance of the male/female distinction (Genesis 1:27).

Christians need to understand that the practice of androgynous sexuality/spirituality is essential to pagan animism and has been throughout the centuries. It is widely expressed, as we noted, in South American spirituality, for instance. The stubborn, universal rejection of God’s created design through time and space helps us understand why Scripture takes such an opposing view of this sexual expression. Understanding the deep relationship between sexuality and spirituality helps us as we interact not only with ideas but with human beings in our own culture. This “big picture” delivers us from some simplistic “better than thou”

opposition to homosexuality as part of a moralistic discourse. We all are sinners.

They are Coming for our Children’s Worship

However, a deep confrontation between biblical orthodoxy and pagan religion is already bursting out not only in a perversion of sexuality but also in a perversion of spirituality. The California school system now requires that children be exposed to the worship of the old pagan gods—in the name of fair play. In 2021 the state board of education, as part of ethnic studies, approved programs to decodify systems of oppression into their component parts of white supremacy, patriarchy, classism, genocide, private property and God. The state curriculum encourages teachers, in accord with DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion), the contemporary notion of morals, to have children sing praises to the Aztec gods, in particular the god Tezcatlipoca who was worshipped with human sacrifice and cannibalism.[23] Needless to say, this state program includes accusing Christianity of “theocide,” killing the gods of South American indigenous spirituality.

Ultimately the confrontation between sexuality and spirituality is a [Continued on page 10](#)

confrontation between the pagan gods and the God of the Bible. These are two fundamentally different worldviews. One you can call “Oneist” or “non-binary” because everything is one including God who is no longer the distinct Creator. According to “wokist” orthodoxy, “those [oneist] deities must be resurrected and restored to their rightful place in today’s social justice cosmology.”[24] There may well be a rebirth of the worship of these pagan gods. This is just a glimpse of what the coming social-justice-Marxism-Sodom and Gomorrah takeover may mean.

Both worldviews speak of human sacrifice. In paganism, the conflict of the gods is expressed as political power where those in power kill their political opponent, as in Soviet and Maoist Marxism. In Christianity, the good news is that God himself gave His Son, as a human sacrifice, to be killed to save us from our sins. In this confrontation of the gods, the Biblical God is the one who shows grace to sinners, including sexual androgynes, and eventually redeems the cosmos. In that love, the Church, as His bride, must also show love to her opponents, whatever the cost might be.

Notes

[1] <https://freerepublic.com/focus/f-chat/4146133/postschallenging-the-heteronormative-culture>

[2] Warner Todd Houston, Iconic American clothing company wants to follow Bud Light, build out ‘gender-fluid’ line wnd.com ^ | 5/11/2023.

[3] “Georgia Stanway insists England will ‘stand by what they believe in’ – despite FIFA forbidding the One Love armband at the World Cup,” [MailOnline](http://MailOnline.com), July 3, 2023.

[4] Katy Grimes, CA Senate Honoring The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, [California Globe](http://CaliforniaGlobe.com) | May 28, 2023 |.

[5] Frank Bergman, “Bill Gates Plows Millions into Group Claiming Kids Are ‘Sexual Beings’ SLAY New^ | April 17, 2023.

[6] Samantha Kamma, Texas Christian University offers “Queer Art of Drag” course teaching “gender binary” is white supremacy [Christian Post](http://ChristianPost.com) ^ | 06/22/2023 | n.

[7] <https://juicyecumenism.com/2023/06/22/episcopal-cathedral-panel-deconstructs-binary/>

[8] Lutheran female “minister” leads congregation in pro-LGBT ... [LifeSite](http://LifeSite.com)—<https://www.lifesitenews.com>

> blogs > lutheran-femal... Jun 29, 2023.

[9] Art.cit.

[10] “Is God queer?": University of Chicago offers “Queering God” course to study reimagining of gender in theology

Course description asks questions like, “What does queerness have to do with Judaism, Christianity, or Islam?”

[11] Harvard Divinity School offered a course in “Queering Congregations.” HDS Spring 2023 / Section: 01 / Class number: 21466: Queering Congregations:

Contextual Approaches for Dismantling Heteronormativity.

[12] <https://juicyecumenism.com/2022/04/05/queer-god-duke-divinity/>

[13] Robert Knight, “The Real Battle — and Opportunity,” *The Washington Times* (September 25, 2023).

[14] Peter Jones, “Androgyny: The Pagan Sexual Ideal,” *Journal of Evangelical Theological Society*, 43/3 (September 2000), 443–69, a review article posted on Amazon of a book on homosexuality by Jenell Williams Paris, *The End of Sexual Identity: Why Sex Is Too Important to Define Who We Are* (Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2011), see <https://truthXchange.com/2011/05/heterosexuality-is-an-abomination/>.

[15] Nissinen, *Homoeroticism in the Biblical World: A Historical Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), 28. For what follows of this older period, I am greatly indebted to this study. Nissinen’s work is supported by Helmer Ringgren, *Religions of the Ancient Near East* transl. John Sturdy (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1973), 25, who speaks of naked “eunuchs” associated with the cult to the Sumerian goddess Inanna (another name for Ishtar), that includes an hieros gamos rite. These priests dressed up and wore make-up like a woman, and expressed their “otherness” via their androgyny. Physically they were men but their appearance either was feminine or had both male and female characteristics.

[16] Nissinen, *ibid.*, 30.

[17] Nissinen, *ibid.*, 32.

[18] Mircea Eliade, “Androgynes,” vol vi, *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, (Macmillan, 1987), 277; also Mircea Eliade, *The Quest: History and Meaning in Religion* (University of Chicago Press, 1969), 134.

[19] Mircea Eliade, *Mephistopheles*, 122.

[20] Mircea Eliade, “Androgynes,” *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, 277.

[21] Mircea Eliade, “Androgynes,” 277.

[22] See the long and favorable study of the South American situation by Walter Williams, *The Sprit and the Flesh: Sexual Diversity in American Indian Culture* (Beacon Press, Boston, 1986, 1992). He sees the role of the Berdache as elimination dichotomies for the acceptance of ambiguity (p.3).

[23] <https://www.themonastery.org/blog/california-considers-adding-chants-to-aztec-god-to-school-curriculum>.

[24] Christopher Rufo, *America’s Cultural Revolution: How the Radical Left Conquered Everything* (Broadside Books, 2023), 165.



Dr. Peter Jones is scholar in residence at Westminster Seminary California and associate pastor at New Life Presbyterian Church in Escondido, Calif. Former director of

truthXchange.

You can read more of his work here:

<https://www.truthxchange.com>

Continued from page 5

Mohler said "Christian nationalist" is just a new label for an old narrative from the Left.

"... I'm old enough to have gone through the entire vocabulary of the modern conservative movement in terms of the dismissals of the Left," Mohler noted. "It has been the 'Radical Right,' the 'Christian Right,' the 'New Christian Right,' the 'Radical Christian Right.' A lot of these people are so young they actually believe this is a new thing. The same criticisms were made against Evangelicals in the age of Ronald Reagan."

The end game that Christians cannot accept

The seminary president argued that Christians should be willing to address and refute the narratives and to remain politically engaged.

"We take ideas seriously. We're will-

ing to talk about every one of these arguments - what it means to be a Christian, what it means to understand the nation, what might rightly be identified as 'nationalism.'

"But we do this while telling Christians, 'This just reminds us what's at stake.' We've got not only to vote, we've got to be right. This is an intentional effort to try to keep us out of the public square or to dismiss us ... to make conservative



Christians embarrassed about being conservative Christians. That's what we know we cannot accept," Mohler said.

<https://afn.net/church/2024/03/11/mohler-christian-nationalist-just-a-new-label-for-an-old-narrative-from-the-left/>

Copyright 2024 American Family News Network - Used by permission."



Parrish Alford is an Associate Editor for American Family News

**Easter
Areopagus Journal Bundle
5 Journals for \$20.00**

Jesus Legend or Lord?
(Vol. 3, No. 3)

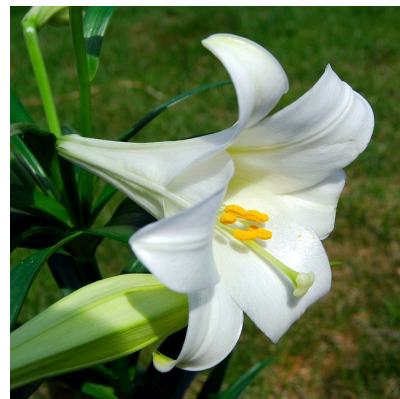
Jesus Legend or Lord?
(part two)
(Vol. 3, No. 4)

Are Biblical Doctrines Stolen
from Pagan Myths?
(Vol. 9, No. 4)

Who Do Men Say That I Am?
(Vol. 4, No. 6)

Essential Doctrines
(Vol. 9, No. 2)

Send a check to
Apologetics Resource Center
2376 Lakeside Drive
Birmingham, AL 35244
Write "Easter Bundle" in memo
line of check.



March 2024
HB 151 (Constitutional Amendment)
HB 152 (Enabling Legislation)

The purpose of this memo is not to summarize or explain the bills. Others have done that. Its purpose is to explain these provisions which create a gambling empire of corruption and deception of the Alabama public. This analyses the House Engrossed Version. There will be amendments.

This bill creates a gambling monopoly for casino sports wagering, and a lottery, and a Poarch Creek Indian (“PCI”) Compact for expanded Indian venue gambling. Gambling and regulation of gambling is a law unto itself.

During 2023, a legislative committee met secretly and was not open to the public. While the Open Meetings statute does not apply to the legislature, these meetings took place to shroud in secrecy the efforts to legalize gambling in Alabama. Continuing this veil of secrecy, the bill attempts to codify the singular authority of the Alabama Gaming Commission (“AGC”) and allow it to operate without any oversight.

The CA allows any form of gambling. Therefore, only a statute enacted by the Legislature, but not the people, is all that is necessary to further expand gambling at a later date.

Existing gambling venues may continue to operate until January 1, 2027. These are the bingo/slot machine operations which are currently unlawful, but for which there is no law enforcement. This gives the gamblers the opportunity to continue making money while they are working toward the changeover to “lawful gaming.”

No future CA that affects gambling for less than the entire state may be approved by the

voters. It is nonsensical to say that the Alabama Constitution cannot be amended by the voters. This is evidence of the corrupt nature of the proposal.

Ten casinos are authorized, but there could be more. There are six specifically named plus one for the PCI off nontribal lands. The PCI has three now, so that equals ten. However, a compact required by the bill would allow Class III gaming on any tribal land and therefore no limit. Additionally, while sports wagering may be online, there is no restriction for opening “betting parlors” anywhere.

An Alabama Gaming Commission is established. It is an appointed commission and is not elected by the public. In other words, members of the commission are answerable only to themselves. The AGC regulates all gambling. The AGC would have its own police force.

AGC records would be public, but it has withholding discretion without an objective standard. Anyone with Freedom of Information Act requests experience knows this is a problem. It is an opportunity to hide information. Courts will have no jurisdiction to enforce a FOIA request.

Authority is given the AGC to enforce civil penalties, including the power to arrest. There is no court jurisdiction for an aggrieved person. This violates the due process rights of those who may be involved in the gambling industry and everything related to it.

When a casino is to be located in a city or county it may be approved by local referendum or simply by a resolution of the city council or the county commis-

sion. There is no transparency and the ability to regulate gambling is very limited and likely beyond the public's involvement.

A lottery board is exempt from the state procurement law. Again, there is no transparency for the public and ripe for corruption.

There are criminal penalties for violations of the law. These are many of the existing code sections for unlawful gambling. The penalties are not appreciably increased and some places not increased at all. The deterrent to unlawful gambling is sufficient criminal penalties in order to deter the offenders. When the penalties are minor, the offenders keep doing business. As has been noted before, the answer to unlawful gambling in Alabama is to increase criminal penalties, not to allow the gamblers to continue with virtual impunity.

The conclusion is that the AGC will operate gambling of every kind, without oversight, for the benefit of the gambling industry. Lack of law enforcement interest and mild penalties will encourage unlawful gambling, the very reason gambling advocates give for the necessity of this legislation.

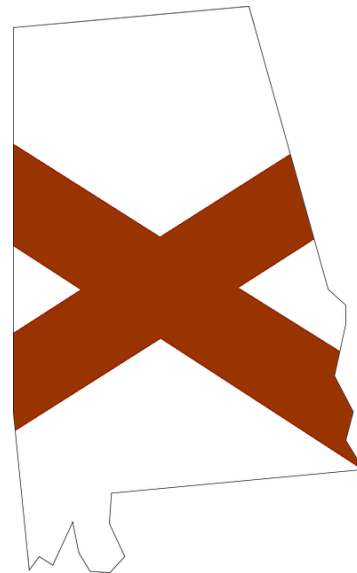
As the legislative process unfolds, we will see if those behind these bills will continue their secretive overbearing dictatorial disregard of openness and fairness in the consideration of these bills. Will there be open and equal debate of whether gambling should be legalized and monopolized? Or, will the selfish gambling profiteers deceive their way into legal protection?

This statement is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to provide legal assistance. We hope if you have questions or know of those who do, you will contact us and we can assist through referral to one of our cooperating attorneys. © 2020, Southeast Law Institute.



Mr. Johnston is the Director of the Southeast Law Institute

[https://
www.southeastlawinstitute.org](https://www.southeastlawinstitute.org)



Continued: Easter Is Not Pagan By Marcia Montenegro

[Continued from page 1.](#)

There is not a single reference to her, from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles, any of the other writings we have from the period, or from inscriptions. No depiction - no amulets - nothing. Her Germanic version was invented completely in the 19th century, and again has no evidence whatsoever from history or archaeology to back it up.==From goo.gl/laCMGT

The Easter Eggs

Second point, the Easter eggs:
Quote==Christians first began using eggs to celebrate Easter in ancient Mesopotamia, when they dyed eggs red - the color of blood - to symbolize the power of Jesus' blood to give people new life. In some Orthodox churches, priests still bless red eggs during Paschal (Easter) vigil services on the night before Easter. You and your children can dye an entire group of eggs red rather than a variety of colors, and then discuss how Jesus loves people so much that He was willing to suffer and bleed on the Cross to pay the cost of our sins.==From <http://bit.ly/1KgXqMI>

Even if eggs were used as a pagan symbol, eggs are originally God's eggs because He created the chickens that lay the eggs. Eggs are part of the created world, created by God.

The Easter Rabbit

Thirdly, what about that fluffy bunny rabbit? Many sources state that the Easter bunny arrived with German immigrants and a tradition of "an egg-laying hare." The children "made nests in which this creature could lay its colored eggs. Eventually, the custom spread across the U.S. and the fabled rabbit's Easter morning deliv-

eries expanded to include chocolate and other types of candy and gifts, while decorated baskets replaced nests." See more at <http://goo.gl/Auf1Z7>

Comments from CANA

Like the eggs, bunnies are part of God's creation. Even if they have been used as a pagan symbol of fertility by certain groups, the rabbit was originally just a creature made by God and will always be such a creature. Symbols change meaning across time and culture, and many objects and animals have served as symbols for many religions.

There is nothing inherently evil with decorating an egg as part of celebrating the resurrection of Jesus, and nothing wrong in pretending the bunny is hiding the eggs (unless you do not like to use these stories, which is a decision by parents) or giving a stuffed bunny to a child.

In fact, seeing colored eggs or stuffed bunnies as evil is actually akin to a pagan worldview where objects have inherent secret meanings and/or are animated by spirits. Ironically, those who label Easter eggs and bunnies as evil are reacting in a pagan manner. See the [CANA article on symbols](#).

Facts, Not Fear

Much of this slandering of Easter traditions is rooted in the works of Alexander Hislop, who has been refuted and debunked. He was wrong! He did not support his statements historically. See [CANA article on Alexander](#)

[Hislop.](#)

Hislop's influence has led many into myths and untruths. These untruths, along with websites that preach hate and legalism, have been spread by cults and those who have fallen for these fear-based untruths.

FACTS, NOT MYTHS OR FEAR should be our watchword.

"But have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women. On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness." 1 Timothy 4:7

Jesus says this of the devil:

"He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies." John 8:44b

Let us not believe lies or spread them. For Christians, let us celebrate the risen Christ and use Easter to tell others about the resurrected Savior.

"He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said. Come, see the place where He was lying." Matthew 28:6

"For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures..." 1 Corinthians 15:3, 4

RESOURCES

"Easter -- Is It Pagan?" By Ralph Woodrow (who repudiated his earlier work, "Babylon Mystery Religion"

<https://bit.ly/2TIV5bG>

Celebrating with Easter Eggs for Christians

<http://bit.ly/1KgXqMI>

Video

<http://bit.ly/1YdzaCE>

Easter and Passover

<https://bit.ly/2O6G3pL>

How the date for Easter is determined

<http://goo.gl/WujA7r>

TWO BABYLONS EXPOSED

Hislop's 'Babylonian Mystery Religion' Teaching Exposed and Overturned: The Commendable Intellectual Honesty of Ralph Woodrow

<http://bit.ly/1ixhf9Q>

Apologetics Index

<http://bit.ly/1gsd0dG>

GotQuestions on Easter

<https://bit.ly/2T6VejV>

Book Review of "The Two Babylons," CRI Journal

<https://www.equip.org/article/the-two-babylons/>



Before trusting Christ, Marcia Montenegro was a professional astrologer and was involved in Eastern and New Age practices for many years. Through her ministry, Christian

Answers for the New Age, Marcia speaks around the country and on radio, and writes on New Age and occult topics.

<http://www.christiananswersforthenewage.org/default.html>