

NAVIGATING TOWARD OUR DESTINY - Part VI Navigating Under a Flag of Convenience!

Text: I Samuel 8

Key Word: Flag

Key Thought: The Flag We Navigate under Speaks Volumes About Our Desires

Why So Many Shipowners Find Panama's Flag Convenient - 5 August 2014

Panama, a small nation of just three million, has the largest shipping fleet in the world, greater than those of the US and China combined. Aliyya Swaby investigates how this tiny Central American country came to rule the waves.

Thanks to its location and slender shape, Panama enjoys a position as the guardian of one of the world's most important marine trade routes, which connects the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. For a hundred years the Panama Canal has provided a short cut for ships wishing to avoid the more hazardous route via Cape Horn.

Panama Direct

Dubbed one of the seven wonders of the modern world, the 77km (48-mile) canal is a feat of engineering that handles 14,000 ships every year along its intricate lock system. Many of these vessels fly the Panamanian flag yet the country itself has a limited history of trade. Panama only has one small shipping line as well as a number of companies providing supplementary maritime services around the ports and canal.

Cheaper foreign labour

Most merchant ships flying Panama's flag belong to foreign owners wishing to avoid the stricter marine regulations imposed by their own countries. Panama operates what is known as an open registry. Its flag offers the advantages of easier registration (often online) and the ability to employ cheaper foreign labour. Furthermore the foreign owners pay no income taxes.

About 8,600 ships fly the Panamanian flag. By comparison, the US has around 3,400 registered vessels and China just over 3,700. Under international law, every merchant ship must be registered with a country, known as its **flag state**. That country has jurisdiction over the vessel and is responsible for inspecting that it is safe to sail and to check on the crew's working conditions.

Open registries, sometimes referred to pejoratively (derogatively) as **flags of convenience**, have been contentious from the start. The first transfer of ships to Panama's register in 1922 involved two US passenger ships wishing to serve alcohol to passengers during Prohibition. More followed as shipowners sought to avoid higher wages and improved working conditions secured through US legislation.

Luis Fruto, representative of the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) in Panama, says the country turns a blind eye to its *"responsibilities in order to acquire higher registration."* The ITF has led a campaign against flags of convenience since 1958. (Contd.)

'Scandal'

In 2000, ITF general secretary David Cockroft was able to buy a Panamanian first officer's certificate for \$4,000 to navigate a ship - even though he had no maritime skills or experience . . . "The scandal brings us back to the days that Panama was called a 'convenience flag'," said Franklin Castrellon, former spokesman for the Panama Canal Commission, an independent agency.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-28558480>

As We Navigate Through Life Are We Changing to “Flags of Convenience” to Avoid “God’s Stricter Regulations?”

I. THE NATION OF ISRAEL

II. THE NATION OF THE UNITED STATES

III. THE NATION OF CANADA

I. THE NATION OF ISRAEL

Just before God gave Israel judges to oversee their actions we read in the last verse of the book of Judges . . .

“In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as he saw fit.”

Judges 21:25

Our text explains very clearly that the last leader (judge) by the name of Samuel had two upcoming sons who were evil in many ways. They chose not to follow the strict Word of God.

*“But his sons did not walk in his ways. They turned aside after **dishonest gain** and **accepting brides** and **perverted justice.**”*

I Samuel 8:3

The nation up to this time was governed in a Theocratic manner. Jehovah had descended to reign over Israel. The judges were selected to be governed by God and His Word only. Unfortunately, the time had come for massive changes to take place. It was the moment the nation was going to begin a downward trek that has never completely turned around in over 3,000 years. Even the Apostle Paul wrote about the trend in his day.

“For everyone looks out for his own interests, not those of Jesus Christ.”

Philippians 2:21

I. THE NATION OF ISRAEL (Contd.)

He also warned the church of his day (and ours) through the Epistle to the Corinthians

“But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent’s cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

4. For if someone comes to you and preaches a Jesus other than the Jesus we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the Spirit you received, or a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it easily enough.

II Corinthians 11:3,4

The nation of Israel changed its flag (even though it flies the Star of David) to a **flag of convenience** by continuing its democracy that can never compare to **ONE NATION UNDER GOD.**

II. THE NATION OF THE UNITED STATES

The United States began with a constitution that was ratified June 21, 1788 in which 12 states were represented.

“The United States Constitution is the supreme law of the United States. The Constitution, originally comprising seven articles, delineates the national frame of government. Its first three articles embody the doctrine of the separation of powers, whereby the federal government is divided into three branches: **the legislative**, consisting of the bicameral (two-chambered) Congress; **the executive**, consisting of the President; **and the judicial**, consisting of the Supreme Court and other federal courts.”

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Constitution

The preamble of the constitution is the part of it that states why it was written.

“It says that the people are in authority and that our founding fathers wrote it to **form a more perfect union, establish justice, ensure domestic tranquility, or peace and to secure liberty for them and their children.**”

II. THE NATION OF THE UNITED STATES (Contd.)

This is their Pledge to Allegiance

"I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America,
and to the Republic for which it stands, **one Nation under God,
indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.**"

Do you also remember the slogan placed upon their currency?

Secretary Chase instructed James Pollock, Director of the Mint at Philadelphia, to prepare a motto, in a letter dated November 20, 1861: "Dear Sir: No nation can be strong except in the strength of God, or safe except in His defense. The trust of our people in God should be declared on our national coins." The Congress passed the Act on April 22, 1864. It was initially placed upon all gold and silver coins and then in 1957 it began to be printed on their paper money. Today it is upon their paper currency from \$1-\$100.00.

Unfortunately, it has become a divided nation today under the leadership of men and women who day by day neglect God and His Word.

III. THE NATION OF CANADA

What about the Nation of Canada or as it began to be known as the Commonwealth or Dominion of Canada.

**Georges Vanier
(1888-1967)**

"May almighty God in His infinite wisdom and mercy bless the sacred mission which has been entrusted to me by Her Majesty the Queen and help me to fulfill it in all humility. In exchange for His strength, I offer Him my weakness. May He give peace to this beloved land of ours and ... the grace of mutual understanding, respect and love."

The Education System

Bishop John Strachan, a leader who helped form our public education system, stated that *"the church must continue to play a central role in education. You cannot divorce religion from education because schools will inevitably reflect the philosophical and religious or (irreligious) biases of those who direct them."*

III. THE NATION OF CANADA (Contd.)

Before Canada was even organized into a nation, God was moving in and through the lives of people on its native soil. Immediately prior to the United States War of Independence (1776), many British Loyalists moved North and settled in the area of Nova Scotia. They were fleeing the tumult of a war which was about to break out, but did not know that they were stepping into a revival! A Congregationalist, named Henry Alline, ministered in that region and carried a strong evangelistic message. Hundreds of souls were saved in what became known as The New Light Revival. The revival began to spread to other Atlantic provinces. One minister who preached in Saint John, New Brunswick, said of that city; “...one can hardly go through the streets of this city without hearing the voice of praise or seeing the young men assembling together for prayer.”

Erhard, Haven, Alline, Thompson and Steinhauer were men whose lives were godly examples for others to see and follow. Their pre-Confederation witness was followed and many others had deep experiences of Christian faith that carried over into the Confederation period. One such person was Sir Samuel Leonard Tilley. Tilley was a committed Christian. He was also the premier of New Brunswick and a Father of Confederation. When the Fathers of Confederation were discussing the drafting of the British North America Act (1867), they spent time discussing what the new country should be called. After reading Psalm 72.8, which says; “He shall have **dominion (rule)** also from sea to sea, and from the River unto the ends of the earth.”, Tilly was drawn to the word dominion. He proposed calling the young country **The Dominion of Canada**. Enough of the other founding Fathers liked this, and The Dominion of Canada was agreed upon.

Just as Tilley wanted to see God have dominion over Canada, so did Egerton Ryerson (1803-1882). Ryerson was a Methodist minister, but he was more than a minister. He has been called the “*Founder of Public Education in Ontario*.” He wanted “...a common patriotic ground of comprehensiveness and avowed Christian principles.” He was the first principal of Victoria College in Coburg, Ontario. Upon being inaugurated to that position, he said that the school would have “...a balanced curriculum, infused with the *‘fundamentals of Christian theology...’*” He said that the Ontario school system was to be a “*Christian public school system.*”

Some years later, The 1896 Ontario Public School Act stated; “...it shall be the duty of every teacher of a public school to teach diligently and faithfully all of the subjects in the public school...to maintain proper order and discipline in his pupils in the pursuit of learning; to include, by precept and example, respect for religion and the principles of Christian morality and the highest regard for truth, justice, love of country, humanity, benevolence, sobriety, industry, frugality, purity, temperance and all other virtues.”

<http://www.zionchristianministry.com/international/north-america/canada/the-christian-heritage-of-canada/>

III. THE NATION OF CANADA (Contd.)

Robert Stanley Weir wrote a poem in 1908 that has become the words for our Canadian National Anthem. The phrase “*God Keep our Land Glorious and Free*” was added in 1980. The last verse of the poem says

Ruler Supreme, who hearest humble prayer,
Hold our Dominion in Thy loving care,
Help us to find, O God, in Thee,
A lasting, rich reward,
As waiting for the better day
We ever stand on guard.

May God move upon the hearts of the people to return to the One and Only God who can rightfully lead us. Enough of the Flags of Convenience! It is destroying the nations of the world. As we Navigate Toward Our Destiny, let's be reminded of the additional verses in Psalm 72 which were written by Solomon calling upon God to bless the nation through him. It has been suggested that this Psalm was used during King Solomon's coronation..

- 11. May all kings bow down to him
and all nations serve him.*
- 12. For he will deliver the needy who cry out,
the afflicted who have no one to help.*
- 13. He will take pity on the weak and the needy
and save the needy from death.*
- 14. He will rescue them from oppression and
violence,
for precious is their blood in his sight.*
- 17. May his name endure forever;
may it continue as long as the sun.
Then all nations will be blessed through him, [d]
and they will call him blessed.*
- 18. Praise be to the Lord God, the God of Israel,
who alone does marvelous deeds.*

Psalm 72:11-14, 17,18

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Date: July 15/18

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Am

Song: Make Way for the King - Bm

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Robert Stanley Weir - The National Anthem

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