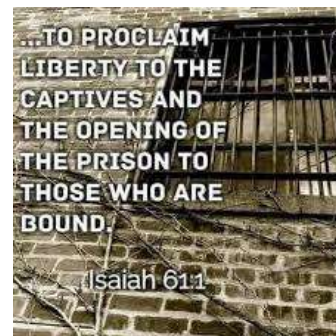
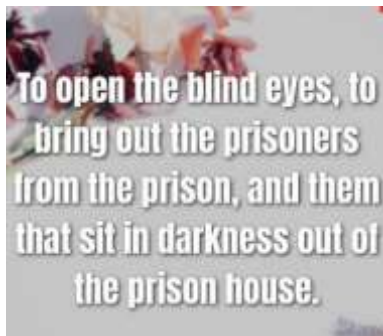
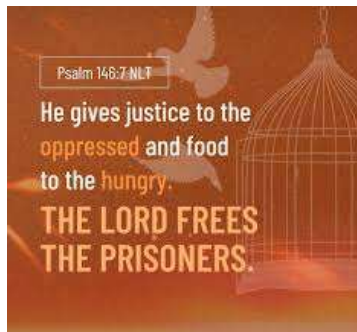


Trilogy on “Restorative Justice” vs. “Punitive Justice”

Part 2



Flaws in the Foundation of Canada that have Impacted Future Generations

Title page

page 1

1. The fathers of the Canadian Confederation saw Canada as being founded upon “*two founding nations*”—the French and the English—while by-passing egalitarian relationships with the Original Peoples of the land. pages 2-3
2. The founders of Canada continued the legacy of the British Crown who saw themselves as owners of the land through a process of *conquest* and “*discovery*” rather than a spiritual acknowledgment of land as “*a gift from the Creator God.*” pages 4-6
3. The *officers* of the Hudson Bay Company posts lived a life of hierarchical privilege and elitism over workers (often Indigenous) who were the *servants*. pages 7-8
4. The legacy that the Canadian fathers of Confederation inherited from Great Britain’s *hierarchical* as opposed to *egalitarian* form of government was perpetrated into Canadian Law by the *Indian Act* of 1876. pages 8-10
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6. In 1869, the Canadian Government “*purchased*” Rupert’s Land and the North West Territories from the Hudson Bay Company without consultation and protocol *before* the transaction. Subsequently, they saw themselves as the legal owners of the land, and imposed an alien British Westminster Abbey Parliamentary system of political parties upon a *relational* people. pages 14-17
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Flaws in the Canada's Foundation that have Impacted Future Generations

In 1867, the founding fathers of Canada did seek to build Canada as a dominion under God based on Psalm 72:8 that *"He shall have dominion from sea even unto sea,"* but we have somehow forgotten that Psalm 72 also gives dignity and worth to every people group and to every nation. That most certainly includes the Indigenous nations, the host people of the land whom the Creator placed in this part of the earth from time immemorial. *"May all kings fall down before Him, and all nations serve Him"* (Psalm 72:11), *"May people be blessed in Him, all nations call Him blessed!"* (Psalm 72:17), and *"May the whole earth be filled with His glory! Amen and Amen!"* (Psalm 72:19).



The **Canadian Fathers of Confederation** did, in measure, produce a much freer nation than what we see in many parts of the world that have either atheistic dictatorships or theocracies dominated by legalistic religious clerics. They did seek to transcend the nationalisms of being French or English culturally and linguistically, but they were also blinded to the humanity of the Indigenous Peoples of the land, and the dignity, honouring and respect that goes along with proper protocol, spiritual order and the recognition of all human beings of equal worth and value created in the image of their Creator.

Let us note how some of the beliefs and the actions of Canada's founding fathers line up with both Indigenous Traditional Beliefs and the Teachings of the Bible that *the founding fathers* claimed to believe in.

1. **The fathers of the Canadian Confederation and subsequent Canadian Governments generally saw Canada as being founded upon "two founding nations"—the French and the English—while basically ignoring the need to build real relationships of trust as equal "nation-to-nation" partners with the host Peoples of the land. Only recently has this begun to change.**

The concept of Canada as a country of two founding nations, French and English, emerged from the historical reality of British colonization and the **Quebec Act of 1774**, which protected the French language, religion, and law. This narrative was popularized in the mid-20th century by literature like Hugh MacLennan's novel **Two Solitudes** and became the dominant national origin story taught in schools all over Canada.

We all learned in school that Canada came about because a group of men met in Charlottetown in 1864, and that in 1867 they enacted the **British North America Act**. We were taught there were two founding nations (the French and the English) *"warring in the bosom of a single state."*

The myth of two-founding nations has been our largely unchallenged national origin myth, even though these *"founding nations"* have basically been at odds with each other from the beginning while mostly having the paternalistic attitude of seeing their relationship to the Indigenous Peoples as that of a parent to a child, not as equal partners.

This attitude in the Canadian psyche continued until the time of the **Meech Lake Accord** which was a failed 1987 constitutional proposal to bring Quebec into the **1982 Constitution Act** by recognizing Quebec as a *"distinct society."*



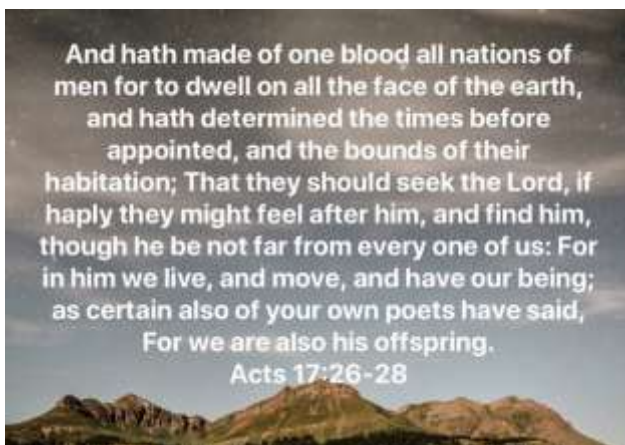
It collapsed when a First Nations Member of the **Manitoba Legislature**, Elijah Harper, said **“NO!”** eight times in the Legislature between June 12 and June 21, 1990, refusing to grant unanimous consent to expedite the debate on the **Meech Lake Accord**. The Manitoba Legislature's rules required unanimous consent to bypass public hearings and speed up the ratification process. As a result, the legislation died on the Order Paper of the Manitoba Government, and the **Meech Lake Accord** was effectively killed, and Elijah Harper became a national hero to both Indigenous and many Non-Indigenous Canadians in directly challenging the “*two founding nations*” myth in Canada.

What was the traditional First Nations belief about their place in this part of the earth that we know as Canada?



What does the Bible teach about the place of the Original Peoples in every part of the earth?

The Bible teaches that when the Creator scattered the nations over all of the face of the earth (Genesis 11) that He determined the places where people would live, and the boundaries of their habitations so that they would seek Him right from within their own borders and find Him, because He is not far from everyone of us, for it is in Him that we all live and move and have our breath! Acts 17:26-28; Deuteronomy 32:7, 8. He established borders and territories, and also established landmarks and boundaries. Proverbs 22:18; 23:10, 11.



2. The founding fathers of Canada continued the legacy of the British Crown who saw themselves as owners of crown land through the *“Law of Conquest”* and also the *“Doctrine of Discovery”* rather than through the spiritual acknowledgment of land as *“a gift from Creator God.”*

Whoever *“owns the land”* is the one who has the final word, the final authority over what will take place, and whose will shall prevail over the land that people live and walk on. The British Crown assumed ownership of the land occupied by the Quebecois, not on the principle of the supremacy of God over the people and the land, but on the principle of warfare, of *“the Law of Conquest”* at the **Battle of the Plains of Abraham** on September 13, 1759. Violence is never a stable foundation upon which one can build a stable nation-state.

Subsequently, they tried to appease the inherent desires of the Quebecois to preserve their cultural and ethnic identity by passing the **Quebec Act** in the British Parliament on June 22, 1774, an Act which guaranteed the right of the French-speaking people in Quebec to practice the Roman Catholic faith, and the Act also included the restoration of French Civil Law.

In addition, it was without any ethical foundation that the Canadian Government *“purchased”* some ¼ of Turtle Island (present-day North America) from the **Hudson Bay Company** on March 20, 1869 for \$1.5 million. This was a huge chunk of territory that King Charles II gratuitously called **“Rupert’s Land”** (in honour of his cousin Prince Rupert whom he named as Governor of this territory. This land was unilaterally and without negotiation usurped by the **Hudson Bay Company** on the unjust foundation of the **Doctrine of Discovery**. This gave European monarchs an assumed possession of lands by virtue of the blinded thinking that they had *“discovered”* land that was not occupied by human beings. Yet Indigenous Nations had already *“discovered”* this land from time immemorial.

<p>Doctrine of Discovery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provided that by law and divine intention European Christian countries gained power and legal rights over indigenous non-Christian peoples immediately upon their “discovery” by Europeans.• European monarchs developed this principle to benefit their own countries.• Theological grants were the legal foundation for claims of sovereignty by all colonial powers in America: “Christian princes” could take lands “unknown to all Christian peoples.”	 A map of North America with the region of Rupert's Land highlighted in orange. The map shows the Hudson Bay drainage basin and is labeled 'RUPERT'S LAND'.	 A portrait of King Charles II of England, with the name 'CHARLES II' written below it.	<p>HBC Charter</p>  The logo for the Hudson Bay Company (HBC) Charter, featuring the Union Jack flag and the letters 'HBC' in white on a red background. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• On May 2, 1670 King Charles II signed the charter that granted the company a monopoly over the Native Fur Trade• All rivers and streams that flowed into Hudson Bay in northern Canada would belong to the company• This would be called Rupert's Land
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On May 2, 1670, King Charles II of England (1630-1685) unilaterally proclaimed the **Royal Charter of the Hudson’s Bay Company** which gave an exclusive monopoly over the entire Hudson Bay drainage basin to *“the Governor and Company of the Adventurers of England trading into the Hudson Bay.”* As mentioned, this was done without consultation, without protocol, without negotiations, and without regard for the fact that the Indigenous Peoples of the land already had their own system of Government in place which was arguably more relational (where good chiefs were good listeners) than the **British Westminster System’s** *“confrontation-adversary approach”* to governance.

The clauses of the **Hudson’s Bay Charter** outline the rights and obligations of the Company over the new domain, *including the right to own mineral resources* and the obligation to search for the **Northwest Passage**. In the **Articles of Incorporation** of the **Royal Charter of the Hudson’s Bay Company**, King Charles II named his *“dear and entirely beloved cousin”* Prince Rupert as the Company’s first Governor of the territory which he independently ruled, and *“which shall henceforth be known as Rupert’s Land”* but there was no recognition of the ancient boundaries that the Creator had established from antiquity, and that the land was not to be permanently sold. Leviticus 25:23, 24.



When King Charles III gave the **Speech from the Throne** to the Canadian Parliament on May 27, 2025, he stated that *“we are gathered on the unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabeg people. This land acknowledgement is a recognition of shared history as a nation. While continuing to deepen my own understanding, it is my great hope that in each of your communities, and collectively as a country, a path is found toward truth and reconciliation, in both word and deed...”*

“To the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples – you have welcomed my family and myself to your traditional lands with great warmth and hospitality, for which I am humbly grateful.”

I believe that he said this with all sincerity, but have any of the British Monarchs from King Charles II to King Charles III ever acknowledged that the British Crown really had no legitimate or legal claim to what King Charles II gratuitously named *“Rupert’s Land”*? This was a serious violation of the Creator’s laws of ownership and stewardship of the land, and about who has the ultimate authority over the land.

What was the traditional belief about land ownership by the Indigenous People who lived on the land of Turtle Island and of the chiefs who signed the treaties between 1871 and 1921?

When Elijah Harper gave his Opening Keynote Remarks to the **Sacred Assembly** that he called for December 6 to 9, 1995, he emphatically declared that the vision for this land that was held by those who signed the treaties not only acknowledged the supremacy of God our as Creator, but *also the Creator as the Owner of the land, and the original people as stewards, a responsibility* that is now shared by Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Canadians in line with Indigenous beliefs.

“Our forefathers had difficulty understanding the concept of owning land. It is alien, like the concept of owning air, but we understand the need to use the land for the benefit of everybody, not for greed...” --Elijah Harper on December 6, 1995.

“I have a vision that lies in the heart and soul of our people for this country we call Canada... above all, this vision embraces the supremacy of God our Creator, and is inherent in the treaties that were made with the newcomers that came to this land...”

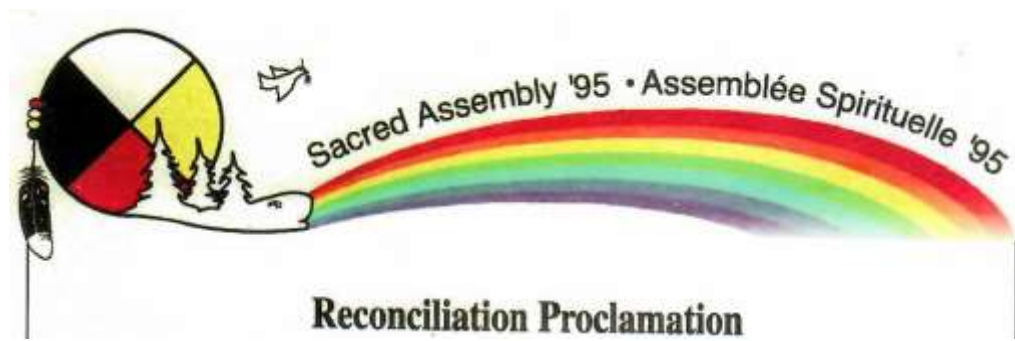
—Elijah Harper, Sacred Assembly, December 6, 1995

“We have a responsibility to maintain the unity of this land, and to sustain the environment. Our forefathers had difficulty understanding the concept of owning land. It is alien, like the concept of owning air. But we understand the need to use the land for the benefit of everybody, not for greed.... It has become more apparent that these things need to be resolved, and that the political process has failed us. I believe there is something missing, which is the spiritual element.”

Elijah Harper
Sacred Assembly, December 6, 1995

“We share the recognition that reconciliation between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Canadians must be rooted in a spiritual understanding of land as a gift from the Creator God.”

--Reconciliation Proclamation released on December 9, 1995.



We share the recognition

- that reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians must be rooted in a spiritual understanding of land as a gift from the Creator God;



When issues of who owned the land came up, it was Chief Peguis' view that it belonged to the Great Father, but that it could be loaned to Selkirk for a time as he particularly welcomed those needing refuge who were being persecuted and treated unjustly in other parts of the world.



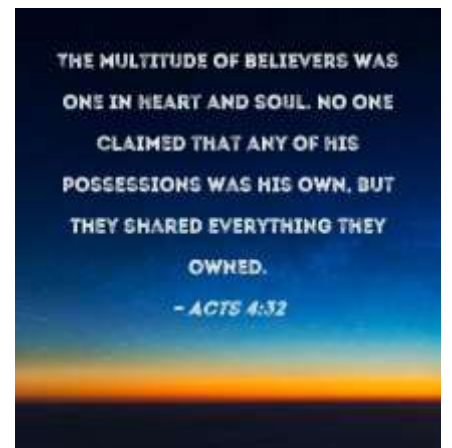
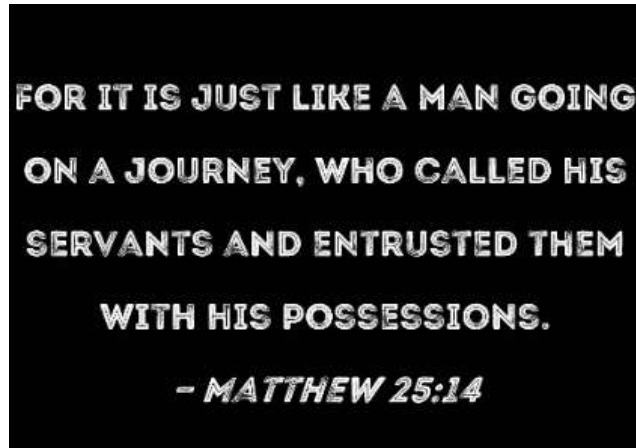
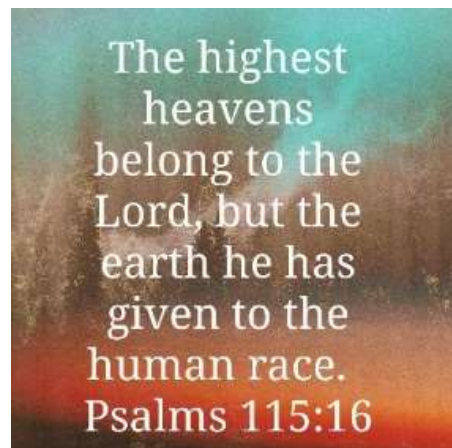
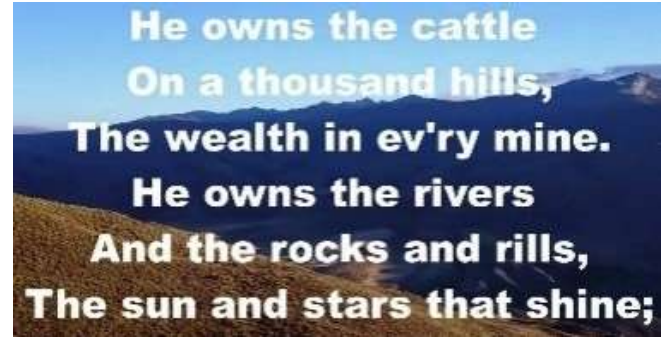
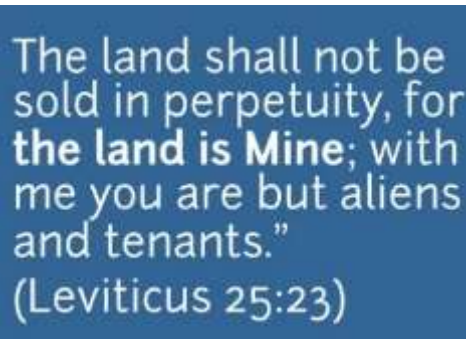
Crowfoot

Our land is more valuable than your money. It will last forever. It will not even perish by the flames of fire. As long as the sun shines and the waters flow, this land will be here to give life to men and animals. We cannot sell the lives of men and animals. It was put here by the Great Spirit and we cannot sell it because it does not belong to us

This is in agreement with other Native Chiefs who signed treaties in 1817 and 1877. Chief Peguis signed a Treaty with the Selkirk settlers in 1817, and Chief Crowfoot signed Treaty No. 7 in 1877.

What does the Bible Teach About Land Ownership?

This traditional view about land ownership and stewardship lines up better with the teachings of the Bible than what most of Western Christendom has taught about land and property ownership!



3. **The Governor and the Officers of the Hudson Bay Posts (usually British or Scottish) lived a life of hierarchical privilege and elitism over the employees and workers who were called “servants” (often Indigenous men and women).**

The **Officers** included Factors and Chief Factors were the managers in charge of a Hudson Bay trading post. In the 18th century, they were also called “*Masters & Traders*”. A **Factor** managed a single post or store, similar to a store manager, while a **Chief Factor** held a much higher rank, overseeing a large geographic area or department, functioning like a district manager and overseeing social, economic, and political activities at major fur trade posts.

The Governor of the **Hudson Bay Company** was initially the Chief Administrator of a vast territory granted by the Crown, wielding significant governmental and commercial power as Rupert's Land was its exclusive domain. The first Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company was Prince Rupert, who held a colonial-like power over the territory. As the company's Chief Administrative Officer, the Governor was responsible for managing its fur trade monopoly and exercising governmental powers to advance the Company's interests by coercion if necessary.

The **Servants** included the majority of the working population at **Hudson Bay Company** posts. This included various labourers, voyageurs, tradespeople, interpreters and clerks who worked under contract. Local and Indigenous women were also employed as cooks and housekeepers.

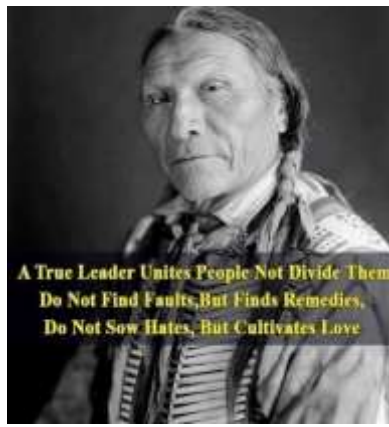
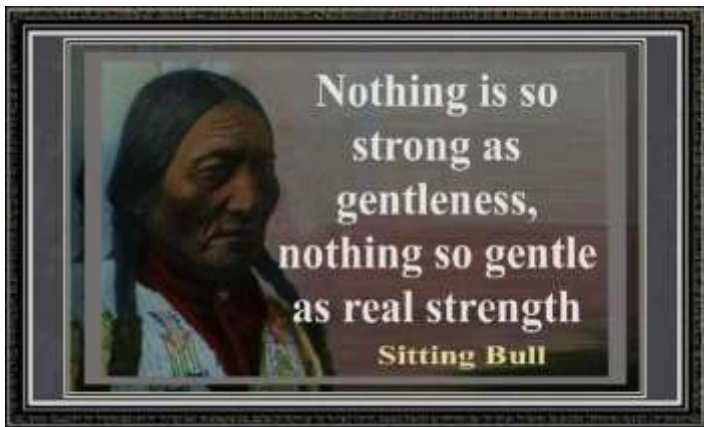
During the height of the fur trade, the *officers* of the **Hudson's Bay Company (HBC)** enjoyed a life of considerable prestige and many special privileges that were denied to the laborers and tradesmen, who were collectively known as *servants*. This strict class structure governed nearly all aspects of company life, from responsibilities and pay to daily comforts and opportunities for advancement.

This included financial privileges as shareholders in the Company business, protection from risk, superior accommodations, better food and provisions, reduced physical labour, prestige and respect, a path to advancement, greater autonomy and freedom of movement.

Based on the historical practices of the **Hudson's Bay Company (HBC)**, officers had greater and more stable access to Indigenous women than lower-ranking servants due to their higher social status and wealth. These “*country marriages*” (or à la façon du pays) were a key element of the fur trade and reflected the company's internal class hierarchy.

What were the traditional Indigenous beliefs with regard to a privileged class that ruled out of position and title rather than servant leaders?

While the disposition of wanting to rule over others top-down is a human problem that cannot be limited to any one nation or culture, it is inherent in traditional Indigenous culture that the chief is a good listener who tries to give everybody around the campfire a voice that will be heard, and that will seek to cultivate gentleness with and love for all people.



What does the Bible teach about ruling over people out of privilege in a top-down manner versus ruling out of servanthood and by the example of serving and making sacrifices for others?

Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you."
- Matthew 20: 25-26

But whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave — just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."
Matthew 20:26-28

THE GOD OF ISRAEL SPOKE:
THE ROCK OF ISRAEL SAID TO ME:
The one who rules righteously who rules in the fear of God.
is like **THE LIGHT OF MORNING AT SUNRISE**
like a **morning without clouds,**
like the **GLEAMING OF THE SUN ON NEW GRASS AFTER RAIN.**
2 Samuel 23.3-4

And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.
Luke 13:30

4. This legacy that the Canadian fathers of Confederation inherited from Great Britain's *hierarchical* as opposed to an *egalitarian* form of government was perpetrated and entrenched into Canadian Law in the *Indian Act* of 1876.

Indian Act - 1876

"The happiest future for the Indian race is absorption into the general population, and this is the object of the policy of our government. The great forces of intermarriage and education will finally overcome the lingering traces of native customs and traditions."

Duncan Campbell Scott
Department of Indian Affairs

The Indian Act - 1876/1895

The Indian Acts encouraged Aboriginal peoples to give up their culture and adopt "white ways". The original Indian act of 1876 ensures:

- ☞ Aboriginal peoples are placed in a different legal category than other Canadians
- ☞ The Canadian government has the right to govern all aspects of Native life including the denial of the right to vote in an election
- ☞ The right to legislate "lands reserved for Indians".
- ☞ The government can determine "who is an Indian".

The Indian Act

When Canada became a country, the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA) was created to administer policies regarding First Nations. In 1876, the Indian Act was passed. This act gave legal power to government to control the lives of First Nations communities across the country. The Indian Act combined earlier colonial and federal laws into one act, and included clauses about land, Indian status, and local government.

The Indian Act defines who is considered a "Status Indian." Individuals who qualify as "Status Indians" are wards of the government, meaning that the act treats them as if they were children in need of parental care. Before 1951, Status Indians were not deemed to be "people" under the laws of Canada, and therefore were denied certain rights that other Canadians enjoyed. Status Indians could only become "persons" by voluntary enfranchisement—by relinquishing their Indian status. Only then would they be allowed to vote, own property, or have the rights of other Canadian citizens. **WOW!**

The Indian Act provided for reserve land to be set aside for the use of Status Indians, and specified who could live on the reserves. Government officials exercised considerable power over people living on reserves. Among other things, they could dictate when and where children would go to school.

What were the traditional Native Beliefs about a hierarchical vs. an egalitarian form of Government?

The traditional beliefs of the First Peoples of the Land were based upon the Seven Teachings of Love, Truth, Wisdom, Respect, Honesty, Humility and Courage, which are in full alignment with the teachings of the Bible in which the most basic laws are summed up in the two commandments to 1) love God, and to 2) love your neighbour.

LOVE
TRUTH
WISDOM
RESPECT
HONESTY
HUMILITY
COURAGE



This is the Vision that Elijah Harper articulated in his Opening Address to the Sacred Assembly on December 6, 1995. *“This vision is not very complicated, but it is strong. It embraces unity, caring, loving and sharing, but this vision has been dormant. It has not been appreciated and understood by many ordinary Canadians. We have a responsibility to maintain the unity of this land, and to sustain the environment...We understand the need to use the land for the benefit of everybody, not for greed.”*

While every culture has its strengths and weaknesses so that we need to get to know one another in order to draw on each other’s strengths, it is clear that the Western mindset is more *individualistic*, thus making it more vulnerable to *selfishness* and to *greed*, while the Indigenous mindset is more *community minded* and thus conducive to *“caring, loving and sharing”* in the words of Elijah Harper.

For example, in western weddings, one has to often stress and strain over who to invite and who not to invite to one’s wedding, hoping that those who are not invited will not take offense or become hostile because they are not invited.

With weddings in First Nation’s communities, however, they do not have that problem inasmuch as whenever there is a wedding, the whole community is invited! Wedding receptions become community feasts, and if the reception is held in a home, they will have sitting after sitting in order to feed all who come over many hours, even if it goes until past midnight.

Another aspect of Indigenous cultures is that they are land-based, and rely upon hunting and fishing as a source for food. When hunters go out on the land, they do not all just hunt for themselves, but they will also hunt for those in the community who are the most vulnerable and who are without family networks of support. This is a more *relational* way of meeting the needs of the poor, the marginalized, the widows, the orphans and the vulnerable than a government welfare system that is based upon taxation dollars. It is based upon *“loving, caring and sharing.”*

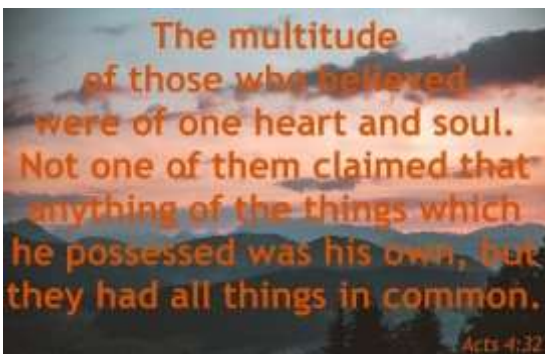
Here are a few logos that are on the Facebook pages of Kathryn Skov, who was Executive Assistant to Elijah Harper during the years of 1994 and 1995, right up until and during the time when Elijah Harper called a **Sacred Assembly** for December of 1995. At that Assembly, Kathryn experienced a personal touch from the Holy Spirit which changed her life forever, and these logos express the type of leaders that I believe is inherent in authentic Indigenous values and beliefs.



What does the Bible teach about a more egalitarian system that is not based upon class privilege, but on respect for the dignity of every human through loving, caring and sharing with one another?

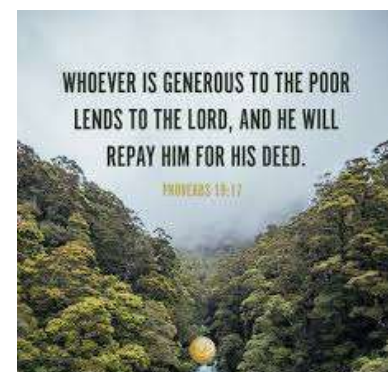
It was Karl Marx who coined the phrase, "From each according to his ability, to each according to their needs." Yet his ideology was never able to attain to that as long as it was held by revolutionaries with an atheistic, materialistic worldview. Marxism, whenever promoted by a secular humanist state, has never resulted in an egalitarian society, but always one in which the ruling class were in a position of privilege and of dominance over the common people.

In the biblical world, when a community was brought into a spiritual oneness through the Outpouring of the Holy Spirit, it expressed itself in a community where each one gave of what they had, be it time, resources to share or finances to give in order to meet the needs of the community around them. All of this was done freely, voluntarily, without coercion and without taxation dollars. This is the type of community that the church needs to be role-modelling to the world. This is a spiritual process which can only happen when there is spiritual unity releasing a spirit of love, a spirit of community (common unity) and a spirit of generosity in meeting human needs.



2 Corinthians 8:1-5

- We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints-- and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us.



5. **The non-egalitarian British legacy that the founding fathers of Canada perpetrated with the residential schools was a policy of paternalism, attempted assimilation, legalism, dominance and external control rather than heart-to-heart connection as the basis for transformation.**

In the early 1600s, Roman Catholic nuns and priests established the first residential schools into those parts of British North America which eventually became part of the Canadian Confederation in 1867. In 1883, sixteen years after Confederation, these schools began to receive funding from the federal government.

That year, consistent with the **Indian Act** of 1876, the Government of Canada officially authorized the creation of the residential school system. The main goal of the system was to assimilate Indigenous children into European Christendom in which both the church and state used the same type of “*top-down*” control where the basic motivation was the fear of punishment which never changes people on the inside.



As the song **Cherokee Nation** described it, “*Though I wear a shirt and tie, I’m still part red man deep inside!*”

This is not to say that all residential school boys wore “*shirt and tie,*” but both boys and girls were required to wear westernized clothing and hair cuts, and to put aside what was valuable in their own culture and language upon the misguided premise that western culture was superior in every way.



Metlakatla Residential School near Prince Rupert, B. C.



Residential School at Fort Resolution, NWT.

A total of 130 Residential Schools operated between 1831 and 1996. Over 150,000 First Nations, Métis and Inuit children were forced to attend residential school during this period, and many either died or never came home because of their experiences in the system.

While experiences varied, many students had negative experiences at school. They were forcibly removed from their homes and separated from their parents at a young age. They were forbidden to wear traditional clothing. School staff often used numbers to refer to students instead of their name. The vast majority of children were not allowed to speak their own languages at school.

Abuse was common at the schools. Children were beaten and locked in small spaces by teachers and staff for misbehaving. Numerous students were sexually abused.

In the 1990s, residential school Survivors began to speak publicly about the abuse they endured at the residential schools. They demanded that the federal government and the churches tell the truth about what happened.

At Elijah Harper's **Sacred Assembly** from December 6 to 9, 1995, the leaders of the mainline churches that ran the Residential Schools (Roman Catholic, Anglican, United Church of Canada and Presbyterian) apologized to the Indigenous People for their role in these Residential Schools. That was one time when the denominational church leaders in Canada rose up above their denominational and sectarian differences.

Then on June 10, 2008, then Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper publicly apologized before a packed session of the House of Commons in the presence of Inuit, First Nations and Métis leaders for the federal governments role in the residential school policies in Canadian history. That was one day in which the House of Commons rose above partisan political posturing.

So in the minds of many Canadians, public apologies have now been made. Why can we still not put the issues of the past that came out of the Residential Schools to rest? One of the problems is that too many of us have an inadequate understanding of what the word "*repentance*" means. We think it simply means being sorry for the things that were done in the past that were wrong.

This, however, is a very inadequate definition of repentance, because it still does not address the changing of minds or mindsets as to how we will relate to one another in the future. True repentance means "*a change of mind, or a change of a mindset.*" We still have not had a public conversation at the national level about issues of land ownership, and of the implications of the different mindsets involved that was inherent among those who signed the treaties.

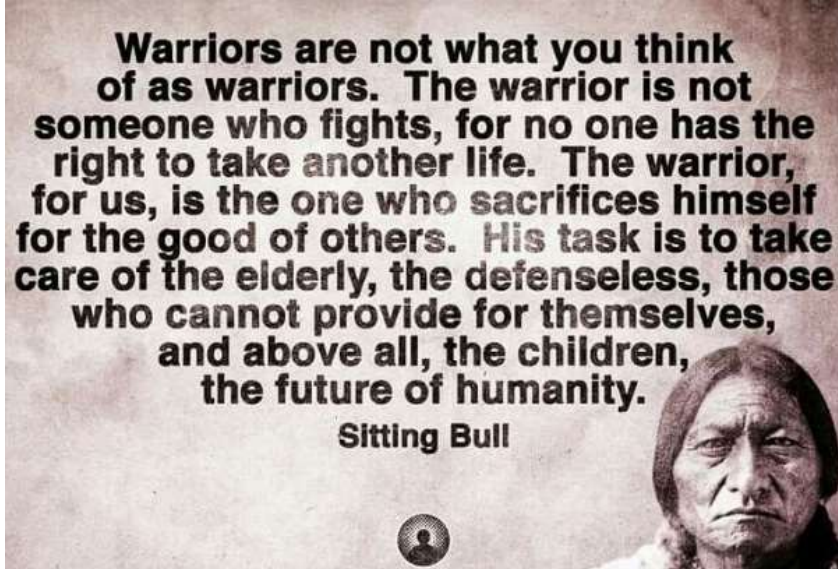
We have not yet had a national conversation about actually coming into agreement in answering the question of "*Who owns the land?*" It is the one who owns the land who is the ultimate parent, the ultimate authority and the ultimate source of wisdom in respecting the dignity and the sacred value of the people who live on the land, and that people and land are connected.

We also need to have a national conversation about the value of children, and having a mindset about decision-making that makes decisions in the light of what they will mean for our children, and keeping the next generation in mind. This affects areas such as whether it is the government or the parents who have the primary responsibility of raising children. It affects policies like national deficits and of leaving a mortgage for our children to pay. It affects policies clearly defining when human life begins, and does one generation have the right to pre-empt the right of another generation to even have a chance at life?

What were traditional Indigenous Beliefs about repentance, and about the value of children, and of leaving the next generation with a ceiling that can become their floor?

In his opening keynote address at the **Sacred Assembly** on December 6, 1995, Elijah Harper stated, "*There needs to be repentance.*" He clearly understood repentance as not simply saying, "*I am sorry for the past,*" but rather "*a change of mind.*" He would often refer to the need for there to be "*a meeting of the minds.*" Without *a change of mind*, transformative change will not occur.

Wise traditional chiefs like Chief Sitting Bull recognized the importance of *the meeting of the minds* in order to do what is truly in the best interests of our children, the next generation.



Remember, repentance is not confined to looking backward and being sorry for the mistakes that were made, but it embraces a looking forward, and it embraces a change of mind, a change of mindset, a change of thinking about what is of great value in other cultures, and what we can learn about one another and from one another as fellow human beings who are truly thinking of the future of humanity with a heart of love for the next generation, the children.

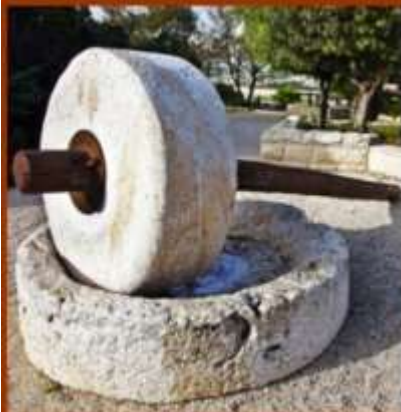
What does the Bible teach about repentance and of the importance of valuing the future of the human race with a high value for the next generation, the children?

The word that is used for “repent” in the Greek language is “*metanoeo*.” “Meta” means “after,” implying change after considering something. “Noeo” is “to perceive with the mind,” the noun form being “nous” meaning “the mind, the seat of moral reflection.” Hence, “Metanoeo” fundamentally means “to change the mind, to change when perceiving differently after reflection and consideration.”

Many Canadians think, “Our churches and our government has apologized for the residential schools? What can we do more?” What is really needed is a change of mind, a change of mind about respect for all human life, including the children, who need to be treated as human and people of value and therefore loved, not suppressed and treated as inferior. Unfortunately, judgmental and discriminatory attitudes are still prevalent among us. This calls for repentance.

Matthew 18:2-4

And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.



If anyone causes one of these little one, those who believe in me, to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.

Matthew 18:6

The composite image has a light blue background on the left and a white background on the right. The millstone image is in the center, showing a large, round stone with a wooden handle, resting on a concrete base.

6. In 1869, Canadian Government replaced the Government of the Hudson Bay Company with the spurious “*purchase*” of Rupert’s Land and the Northwest Territories. The new Canadian Government’s system of governance might have appeared to be more “*democratic*” than the HBC system of privilege.

However, it was not based upon a consultative, consensus approach to government. The founding fathers of Canada entrenched the British Westminster Parliamentary system of political parties, resulting in partisanship and polarization between “*Conservative*” and “*Liberal*,” between “*right wing*” vs. “*left wing*” dichotomies in the implementation of public policy.

This has entrenched a “*confrontation-adversary*” approach to governance which has not produced stability, but rather a continual alternating back and forth between “*Conservative*” and “*Liberal*” governments, each seeking to undo the legislation of the previous government.



“So we have communism and fascism—two world forces. Where do they come from? From *materialism*, which is the mother of all ‘isms.’ Materialism is the spirit that breeds corruption, anarchy and revolution. It undermines our homes, it sets class against class, it divides the nation. Materialism is our greatest enemy.” --Frank Buchman of *Moral Rearmament*.

“In a *materialist* ideology, the ultimate authority is mammon, a human will or a party line, and the ultimate basis for change is *force*. In a Christian worldview, the ultimate authority is God’s will, and the basis for change is *consent*.” --Frank Buchman.

Both the “*extreme left wing*” approach of centralized state control (Marxist) and the “*extreme right wing*” approach of magnifying the superiority of one’s nation over other nations (Nazi) lead to dictatorship when a materialist path is followed. The Indigenous form of government was not a materialist path based on greed and self-centredness, but rather a spiritual path based upon the Seven Teachings of love, respect, courage, humility, wisdom, honesty and truth.

This is not to even mention that under the system of governance implemented by the fathers of the Canadian Confederation, the First Nations people were not granted the right to vote in Canadian federal elections unconditionally until 1960. Before this, they had been subject to discriminatory laws and policies that restricted their right to vote. Under the **Indian Act**, First Nations people could only gain the vote by giving up their “*Indian status*” and treaty rights through a process called enfranchisement. This meant forfeiting their cultural identity, land rights, and other legal protections for full citizenship, a forfeiture which most were not willing to give up.

This has produced a mindset, a mentality of dependency upon the state, of being a ward of the state rather than a free person, and a paternalistic relationship of a “*parent*” to a “*child*” rather than a relationship between equals. This mindset has entrenched itself with a mindset that has looked more to “*our father in Ottawa*” than to “*our Father in Heaven*.” This mindset still exists among us, a mindset and way of thinking for which there needs to be a repentance and a healing.

While the Canadian Government may have initially required First Nations to give up “*land rights*” before they could vote, the westernized Church in Canada has required First Nations to give up too much of their “*cultural identity*” and “*traditional knowledge*” in order to belong to the Church.

What was the Indigenous approach to government in contrast to a materialist approach which is a hindrance to spiritual unity?

Prior to colonization, First Nations had diverse forms of government, including systems of sovereign nations with their own laws, leadership, and jurisdiction over their territories. These governments were varied depending on the nation, their culture, and their environment, and were often structured around kinship, spiritual beliefs, and the stewardship of the land.

Inherent in these spiritual beliefs is the understanding that human rights and responsibilities come from the Creator, and not from any human government. Therefore, those teachings and those values are *inherent* and inalienable, not subject to the *alienable* rights that come from temporal governments that are unstable, and are subject to change by succeeding governments or courts.

With materialist governments, what one government can legislate, another government can de-legislate, what one court can decree, another court can reverse. It is not so with the over 630 First Nations governments which are apart of the **Assembly of First Nations** from coast-to-coast.

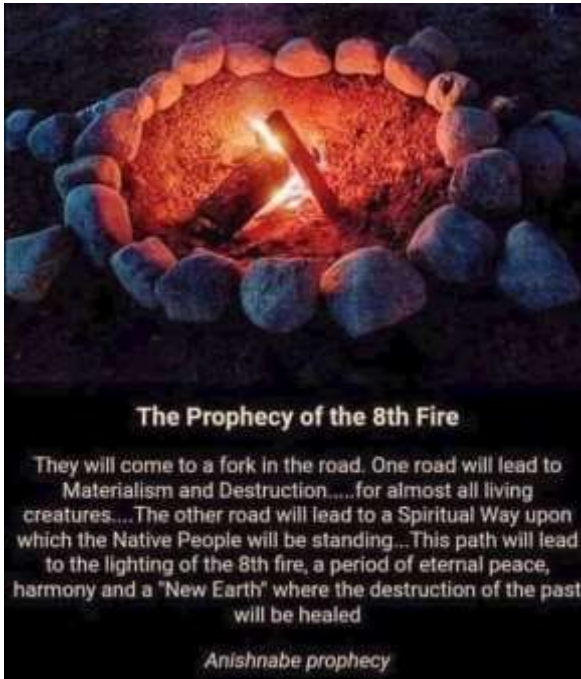


Under the Creator’s laws, as mentioned elsewhere, a good chief was not one who unilaterally ruled “*top-down*,” but was a good listener. We might think that sitting around a campfire in a decision-making process is primitive, but in reality, sitting around a campfire gives everybody around the campfire a voice. It also helps to remove walls of prejudice and defense mechanism so that people can open up and share honestly and truthfully from the heart in a sharing circle.

A good chief would listen to everybody, not in a partisan or polarizing way, not with a confrontation-adversary approach, but with a conciliatory, mediatorial approach in consultation with and respect for the *Elders*, the “*keepers of knowledge*.” These two pictures contrast the two forms of government, i.e. a “*sharing circle*” vs. “*confronting one another across an aisle as adversaries*.”



A sacred fire is a fire that is central to many Indigenous traditions, used for communication with the spirit world, healing, and community gatherings. It is seen as a spiritual doorway that opens a connection to both the Creator and the creation, and is used in ceremonies to mark significant life events, honor the land, and foster a sense of belonging.



In the Anishinaabe history, the sacred fire also refers to "seven fires" that are the seven prophetic eras or stages of the Anishinaabe journey foretold by seven prophets. These seven fires represent periods of time and key events, including leaving their ancestral homes by the sea, the journey west, the migration to the Great Lakes and further westward, encountering the "light-skinned race," and the time when language and culture are renewed.

The final "Eighth Fire" is a time of choice between a spiritual path and a path of materialism, and the choices made will determine if the "Eighth Fire" of peace is lit. In the governance of the people of our land, we are fast coming to a fork in the road where we will have to choose between "materialism" and "the spiritual way" that Elijah Harper talked about.

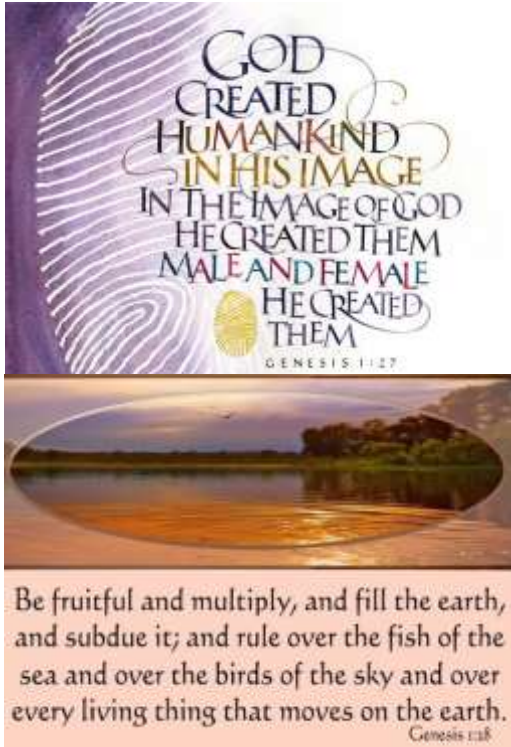
What is a biblical approach to rule, authority, dominion and government?

A biblical approach to government is neither like the top-down coercive rule of the state making unilateral decisions for the masses, nor is it like the rugged individualism of a libertarian ideology. The former leads to state control and domination, while the latter leads to fragmentation and to disconnection between individuals and society at large. The former leads to *tyranny* and to *dictatorship*, while the latter leads to *anarchy* and *chaos*.



In the Government of God, the King of the universe is the greatest Servant in the universe (Matthew 20:25-28; 23:11, 12; Mark 9:33-37; 10:42-45; I Peter 5:2, 3). His way of governing is not simply to demonstrate that greatness comes by serving others by love rather than dominating them by force, but it also demonstrates that his way of government is to lift up the meek and the lowly, and to exalt those who humble themselves (James 4:10; I Peter 5:5, 6). God raises up His sons and daughters to rule and to reign with Him in His Kingdom as joint-heirs and as co-heirs with His Messiah (Anointed One) in His inheritance as King of the nations (Romans 5:17; 8:16, 17; II Timothy 2:12).

This way of ruling and reigning is not just based on a few isolated and disconnected texts, but it is a theme running right through the Bible which is rooted in the very purpose for which God created human beings in His image and likeness in Genesis 1.

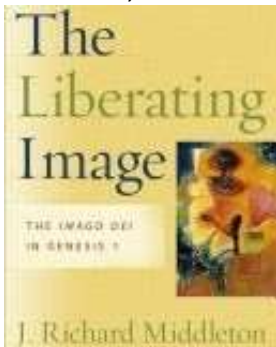


In our individualistic western way of thinking, we are prone to interpret Genesis 1:27 that God created every individual human being in His image as male and female. Yet God's image is created in community, and each individual reflects only a part of that image in the same way that an individual member of the human body is not the entire body. The word used for "man" in Genesis 1:27 is the word "adam" which "very often is used collectively to denote men and women, the human race." --Gesenius' Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament.

It takes the human race collectively to fully reflect and to reveal the image and the glory of our Creator into the earthly realm. We are created in His image to co-create with Him in bringing light where there is spiritual darkness, and order into the chaos. The areas that are a wilderness need to become a habitable place for humans and all of creation to live together in harmony, and to become like the **Garden of Eden**. This is what it means to "rule." It does not mean to "dominate" or to "exploit." *Domination*,

exploitation and *injustice* take place in all human governments whenever an imperfect individual, or a group of imperfect individuals, try to rule the masses non-rationally, and attempt to force change by legislation, coercion and even violence. In man's systems of government, somebody always ends up becoming *powerless* and oppressed by those who hold the *power*.

In the pagan empires of Egypt and Babylon, the king is the *image* of the god. The king *represents* the god by virtue of his royal office and is portrayed as acting like the god in specific behavioral ways. Of the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar, it was said, "*Whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive*" (Daniel 5:19) The description of ancient Near Eastern kings as the image of a god provides the most plausible set of parallels for interpreting the *imago Dei* in Genesis 1:27, 28 where humanity as a whole is dignified with the status and role of ruling that the ancient Near East texts from Egypt and Babylon had cited to be exclusively the status and role of kings who ruled over rather than with their fellow human beings in loving relationship to beautify the earth until it reflected the love, the wisdom and the glory of the Creator.



As J. Richard Middleton noted in his book, ***The Liberating Image, The Imago Dei in Genesis 1***, this "constitutes a genuine democratization of ancient Near Eastern royal ideology. As imago Dei, then, humanity in Genesis 1 is called to be the representatives and intermediary of God's power and blessing on earth" (page 121). This is why God wanted to use Israel as a light to the nations. He did not want them to have a human king who would always end up taking bribes, perverting justice and burdening them with heavy taxes.

A human king would invariably end up in ruling in a way that enslaved people rather than free them to be who they were creatively designed to be as image-bearers. I Samuel 8:1-22. God granted their request for a king because wherever God is not king and there is no temporal, civil government, there is complete disorder and chaos. Deut. 12:8, 9; Judges 17:6; 18:1; 19:1; 21:25.

7. The final area where we want to consider with respect to flaws in the foundation of Canada is one that has resulted in the dysfunction of our social justice and prison system. This has to do with the fact that the colonial British system of justice imposed by the Canadian fathers of Confederation was largely punitive whereas the pre-colonial system of justice was more restorative, with the goal being the restoration of relationship rather than punishment.

This area is so important that I have devoted Part 3 of a Trilogy contrasting and comparing *punitive* and *restorative* justice with a case study which clearly shows how these contrasts impacted the northern Inuit community of Pond Inlet, Nunavut. This case study clearly illustrates the initial flaws, fault lines and cracks that were in the **Canadian Confederation** from the very beginning that have left a legacy of pain, and which need to be understood as a part of our national psyche. I know that the claim that the British justice system is *punitive* while indigenous systems are *restorative* is a broad generalization with much truth, yet it can oversimplify complex legal histories.

Indigenous justice was not *always* exclusively *restorative*, and that while colonial legal systems prioritized punishment, modern British and Canadian law have attempted with futility to be *restorative* in more recent history. Yet these efforts have failed because when there is a materialist worldview without a personal relationship and communion with the Creator to bring healing to the pain of the human heart, “restorative” measures of “bail, not jail” has resulted in a revolving door syndrome where inmates are released on easy bail only to immediately reoffend again and again.

It has been said that the British system, that any relationship between the *truth* and *justice* is merely co-incidental, because neither side is interested in telling the whole truth. The prosecutor will not speak the truth about anything good that the accused has done, the defence will not speak the truth in admitting the crime with which he has been charged. Whoever wins is often the one who can afford to hire the cleverest lawyer rather than the most honest one.

What was the Inuit system of justice that enabled them to uphold community standards for years that provided opportunity to restore relationships instead of to alienate them further?



The book **ILAGIINNIQ Interviews on Inuit Family Values from the Qikiqtani Region** was published in 2011 by the **Niutaq Cultural Institute**. This important research documents the strong family values that were in the Inuit culture, and how disputes in traditional days were more often settled peacefully than they are today, and we should be learning from some of their elders and knowledge keepers rather than imposing a *punitive* justice system upon them that does not *restore* relationship.

The knowledge and the wisdom of community elders is a key to the **Healing the Land Process** that **Canada Awakening Ministries** has engaged in with northern Inuit communities such as Pangnirtung, Rankin Inlet, Clyde River, Arctic Bay, Kangirsujuaq, Cape Dorset and Pond Inlet.

The following quotations are taken from the book **ILAGIINNIQ** from various elders in the Baffin Island region.

According to **Elder Namonai Ashoona**, “We were prepared well in advance for what we had to do for our families. It was always stressed that our families came first, and that we were to get provisions first. We were taught to go to the elders or those who were older in our communities—such as our mothers, fathers and grandparents—for day-to-day instructions. We had to get along with members of our immediate families.” (page 10)

“If others lacked in provisions, you gave them what they needed...Family members are not to think in terms of owing each other. That is the Inuit way...Relatives don’t have to return the provisions that they are given by given by another relative. They have to be close and have togetherness. That is like a family rule” (page 11).

“We elders (any person who is older, parents or other family members) would form a group and, without hesitation, kindly and gently speak to the offender. We would do this even if faced with hostility. There were times when a person created problems in his or her own head.

“It was evident that when others pointed out your mistakes, you had to face them. This was handled in a gentle way, clearly and without scorn. We were shown a better way to live and to be better community members...

“When the time came for the elders to speak out and counsel a person, they would gather together specifically to speak to the person who was causing the problems. It didn’t matter if it was a man or a woman.” (page 25).

Elder Elaiyah Mangitak stated, “It was the role of the elders to resolve problems. The one creating the problems would be asked to attend a meeting and would be counselled by the elders. He or she was advised verbally, and all those who were counselling took turns speaking. I have seen this traditional way of counselling.” (page 51).

Or in the words of **Elder Josephie Padluq**, “When people found out about a problem, they would initiate counselling. The perpetrator and the victim—everyone involved—were brought together as a group to deal with it. The whole process was open, and all were involved.” (page 63).

The counsel of the elders was to offer wisdom, understanding, counsel and advice in a gentle, non-threatening way without raising one’s voice or being harsh. If, however, the offending party would not reconcile with the offended, any rebellion was not dealt with by imprisonment, but simply by being cut off from the community until they returned to a reasonable frame of mind.

In those days, to be cut off from community was a matter of survival, because everybody in the family and the extended family in the clan or community had to work together in order to survive, and to live off the land. There were no government handouts, as these tend to destroy and to undermine Inuit culture and way of life by doing things for them that by-pass the need for traditional Inuit knowledge and culture in order to survive.

What can we learn from the Inuit cultural way of counselling whereby both the offender and the offended had to meet and to have a clearing of the air? In the western world, we tend to counsel only the offended party in the area of counselling, and the offender is more often than not unwilling to show up, and to receive counsel, for fear of a justice that is without mercy. The traditional Inuit way was to deal with *the offender and the offended together*, and to have a hearing in a way that led to forgiveness, to reconciliation and to a restoration of relationship.

Many in the western world think in terms that in a materialist world if the offender is forgiven, he will only reoffend. In the Inuit culture, if the wisdom of the elders was not heeded in Inuit traditional approaches to counselling, the offender was cut off from the community until they changed to become a contributing member of the community. That was a real deterrent.

Today, the alternative that we have to counselling is to lay charges in the courts. The problem is, while sending somebody to jail might remove the offender from the community temporarily, but when he is released on bail, it is granted that he can again live in the community regardless of whether he has repented, and his survival depends on the community support. So the offender's time outside of the community will have done nothing to rehabilitate him or her.

So he or she returns to reoffend, and to repeat the same type of behaviour unless there has been an inward spiritual change, a true transformation of heart and a personal revelation of what the offender is doing to himself, to the community and to God. It is a revelation of the *goodness* and the *kindness* of God our Creator that leads to repentance.



In the words of **Elder Letia Kyak** from **Pond Inlet, Nunavut** (mother of Martha Kyak), *“People were brought together for counselling. For example, when an adult sibling dominated another...or when other family members had conflicts, right away they were brought together and advised. This was done through counselling...The young people had their behaviour examined directly...Couples were counselled together...not separately. Once their issue was brought up, they were counselled together... Mistreatment begins by having been mistreated.”* (pages 142, 143 and 149).

Today, the *qallunaat* influence has resulted in most people being counselled *separately*, and counsellors are given only one side of the story. Furthermore, in the courts, the judge hears only one side of the story from the *prosecuting lawyers* and another side from the *defence lawyers*, and the outcome often depends upon which side has the cleverest lawyer rather than on who is telling the entire truth. The lawyers approach the other side in an *adversarial* way, not in a *gentle* way that listens to the other side in a common quest for what is true and right.

It is no wonder that when I (Roger Armbruster) attended an **Inuit Bible Conference** in Pond Inlet, Nunavut, from March 20 – 27, 2008, and was able to share about a **Healing the Land Process** that we had done the previous year in Clyde River, Nunavut, the elders and leaders of the community became vitally interested. Letia Kyak's daughter Martha became a middle person of communication between the elders and myself.

On June 3, 2008, I received an email from Martha Kyak in which she stated,

“I met with the elders last week, and we will meet with them again. They were so thrilled that finally they are able to speak about the subjects that were hidden for so long. They can't wait for you to arrive and start praying for the healing of our land.”

From July 25 to August 1, 2008, **Canada Awakening Ministries** did do a **Healing the Land Process** in Pond Inlet, Nunavut. That is the subject of the third article on this trilogy on social justice which is entitled, *“A Case Study on British Justice vs. Traditional and Biblical Justice in Pond Inlet, Nunavut.”*

Is the new covenant, biblical approach to social justice the redemptive, restorative way rather than the punitive way which leads to more injustice and retaliation rather than forgiveness and healing?

66

Restorative justice is biblical because restorative justice is rooted in the character of God. God is not just a God of justice. He is a God of restorative justice.

The whole point of the Bible is the story about a redemption that is based on the premise of the penalty for one's sins having been paid, and a restoration of that which has been lost, namely, relationships between people and God, and relationships among people themselves.

The story of the Bible reveals a God who is not only a *God of justice*, but He is a *God of restorative justice* who wants relationships restored from brokenness and disconnection to one of true healing and reconciliation.

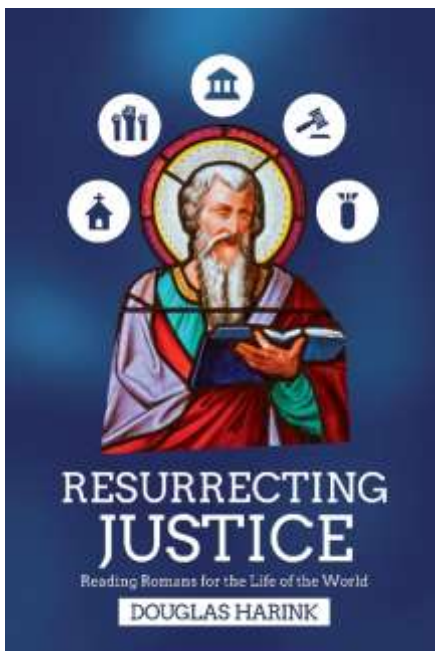
Repentance goes much deeper than simply being sorry for the things that one has done wrong in the past. Repentance involves a radical change of mind regarding whether one can atone for their own sins of the past by either self-effort or self-righteousness, or whether salvation comes through the righteousness of Another who is willing to restore relationship and communion at the Mercy Seat. Exodus 25:22. That is the place where self-justification ceases, and where mercy triumphs over judgment. James 2:13.

In both the older and new covenants, a deeper dive into the meaning of the word "*righteousness*" will reveal that it is not talking about merely an external morality, but about right relationships, relationships that are right with God and with one another. Therefore, the meaning of the word "*justice*" in the biblical world has more to do with "*the restoration of relationships*" than it has to do with "*punishment*," the punishment of people who do wrong out of their own relational brokenness, hurt, pain, alienation and disconnection from God and from others.

²¹But now for the good news: God's restorative justice has entered the world, independent of the law. Both the law and the prophets told us this day would come.

Romans 3:21

That restorative justice is integrally a part of both the old and the new covenants is evident from scriptures such as Romans 3:21. The KJV states, "*But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets.*" This can be accurately translated as saying, "*But now for the good news: God's restorative justice has entered the world.*"



In his book, *RESURRECTING JUSTICE, Reading Romans for the Life of the World* by Douglas Harink, we read the following enlightened teaching:

"When we read through Romans (and other letters of Paul) we encounter the words righteous and righteousness often...When Paul's letters were translated into Latin early on, the words appeared as *iustus* and *iustitia*, so when Paul refers to '**the righteousness of God that is revealed from faith to faith**' in Romans 1:17, the Latin reads *iustitia Deo*, '**the justice of God.**' When the early believers in Rome heard these words from Paul's letter, they would not have understood them to mean only '*righteousness*' or '*righteous*' separated from the meanings of social and political justice. In the Greek word for '*righteousness*,' they would have heard the Latin *iustitia*. Justice is the central and pervasive theme of the letter to the Romans—the justice of God, the just ruler, the just person, the way of justice in relationships, society and the world. It would therefore not be unreasonable to call Romans a treatise on justice."

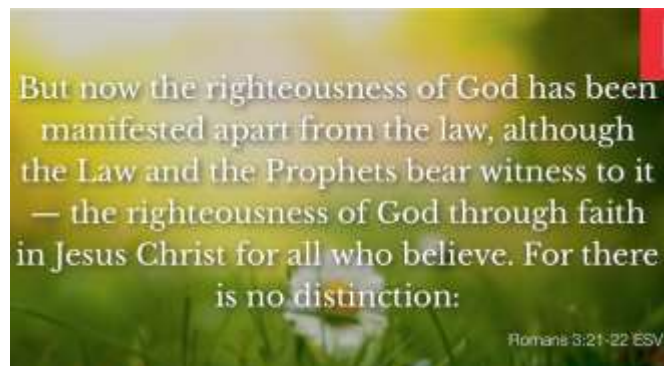
“Justice is founded in God—the God of the gospel...Paul declares that this new governmental reality is now unveiled. Its reality is not only revealed but also already powerfully present and active by Jesus’ death, resurrection from the dead and exaltation to universal Kingship. Paul’s mission is to call *all peoples of the earth* to give loyal obedience to the one Sovereign, Jesus the Messiah. Rome is not the good news. Instead, it must hear and believe an *other* good news.

“Ultimately, as we will see in Romans 8, God’s saving power will resurrect all creation to its promised glorious fulfilment along with the *bodies* of the redeemed. God’s redemption, restoration and renewal—God’s justice—begins with Messiah’s resurrection and reaches out beyond individual persons to all Israel, all nations and the breadth and depth of all creation.

“The justice of which Paul speaks here and throughout the letter is not an idea that might be derived from nature, culture, human sovereignty or legal tradition. Like the Psalmist, Paul is radical on this point: justice is in God Himself and comes from God. In giving justice *God is utterly true to His own nature, character and word*. God is the original, eternal and faithful Fount and Source of justice.

“The purpose of the proclamation of the good news is to *bring about* justice, because the good news is *the power of God* working salvation. Justice is what God *did* in the world in the death and resurrection of Jesus the Messiah. It is what God is *now doing* in the world by the Holy Spirit when the good news is proclaimed, believed and practiced.

“Nothing is said about justice as promulgating, enforcing or obeying laws, or as punishment or reward, or as equity or fairness, or as what we should struggle for...The One God of all peoples now manifests His justice *‘apart from law.’* Not law, but the triune God is the foundation of justice. Law provides standards and measures for discerning and doing justice. Yet Paul turns our attention away from law to the place where God Himself makes justice visible. *God manifests His justice in the death of Jesus the Messiah.*



“Romans 3:21, 22 emphatically asserts that the death, resurrection and exaltation of the Messiah is the one place where God’s justice is genuinely, publicly visible. It *‘has been manifested’* (Romans 3:21). It is *‘witnessed’* by the law and the prophets” (Romans 3:21). Through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, God *‘displayed’* his justice, because in His forbearance He had passed over former sins (Romans 3:25). Messiah’s death is where we are to see God’s justice.

“So then, God no longer merely passes over injustice. He destroys its enslaving power and bestows His own redeeming justice in Jesus the Mercy Seat (Atoning Sacrifice). In Messiah’s faithful death, resurrection and exaltation, God makes His justice visible, speaks justice, does justice and creates justice in us:

“[God] did this as a public display of His own justice, because in God’s forbearance He passed over the sins previously committed, so that in the now-time of fulfillment He might demonstrate that He Himself is just, and that He creates justice in those who share in the faithful [death] of Jesus”
(Romans 3:25, 26).

“How do we discern and learn God’s justice? We look to Jesus, the Mercy Seat!

“Paul lifts up each of these systems, the *Roman-Gentile* and the *Judean*, to the light of the gospel for critical examination and finds them fundamentally—though differently—flawed, incapable of bringing about divine justice in the world. From the Judean perspective, the whole Gentile-Roman society was infected by an awful disease, the worship of false gods...

“God’s justice in Messiah utterly transcends the difference between Gentiles and Judeans...In Romans 1:18 – 3:20 Paul challenges the tendency to mutual condescension in another way. He shows that in the light of God’s justice revealed in Jesus Messiah, neither the Roman Gentile system nor the Judean system provides any basis for boasting and sneering over the other. Neither society as a whole had lived up to the reality of God’s justice in Messiah. Both fell short of it. Romans 3:23.

“When the gospel invades the world, God’s strange justice in Jesus reveals the truth about the social, cultural and political systems of the nations. In the revealing light of the good news, not only do these systems fall short of justice. They are shown to often *foster* disorder, corruption, violence and injustice. Their fruits are often not justice and life but oppression and death.

“The good news powerfully bursts into, breaks open and lays bare the systems of ungodliness and injustice that hold humans in bondage and wreak havoc in history. The gospel arrives as judgment on the systems of this world *for the sake of justice and life*. We must see then that God’s wrath is God’s mercy. God’s wrath *against* systems of idolatry and injustice is good news for those who are enslaved, downtrodden and destroyed by them. God’s wrath liberates! The revelation of Jesus the Messiah is the arrival of God’s justice, wrath and mercy as a single liberating event.

“Paul makes a crucial distinction between the *system* and the *person*. For Paul, the “*wrath of God*” burns against *ungodliness (asebeia)*, not against the *ungodly*. In fact, we see that God in Messiah comes precisely *to the ungodly* and dies and rises again for them. *God is not intent on punishing the ungodly Gentile peoples but on delivering them from their bondage to systems of ungodliness and oppression. That is the justice of God.*

“Paul is clear that it is not God who *makes* the Gentile peoples into idolaters. Idolatry is their own act of exchanging the God-beyond-all for the gods of nature and nationalism (Romans 1:23, 25). Nevertheless, God turns the nations over into the custody of their self-generated gods. These gods attain actual spiritual and political power over human societies and effectively become the heavenly wardens of the nations.

“God’s wrath is good news because it exposes and unmask the idolatrous systems and structures that enslave the nations. Paul does not believe the idolatrous nations were simply left to go their own way, abandoned as it were, to the natural consequences of their idolatry and their deserved punishment.

“God’s justice does not move in the world with a ‘*righteousness/justice*’ through Abraham’s descendants in order to impose ‘*godly*’ law on the ‘*ungodly*.’ If the legally justified Abraham is to become the father of many nations and to inherit the world, this will come about through the God who ‘*gives life to the dead, and calls into visibility the things that are not yet manifest*’ (Romans 4:17), that is a righteousness that is not yet fully visible.

“A certain kind of sovereignty—human rule over other human beings, often with the threat of punishment and death—is itself the reign of Sin. All humankind has sinned in this regard, i.e. the desire to gain the upper hand, to lord it over, is hidden in every human heart and manifest in every social order from the family to the empire.

“God does not respond to injustice by getting *‘tough on crime,’* expanding the range of illegality, imposing stiffer penalties, building more prisons and applying the death penalty more frequently (or bringing it back). These all-too-human responses, Paul says, amount to increasing the regime of Death through ever more rigorous application of law and its penalties.

“But according to the good news, *God acts as God,* which means God acts *beyond the system of law.* God exceeds law altogether. God overcomes the regime of Sin, Death and Law with His own inexhaustible justice and life in the crucifixion, resurrection and exaltation of Jesus the Messiah. Whereas the calculus of law creates crimes and corresponding punishments, God creates beneficiaries of His goodness beyond measure.

“Grace abounding is a new sovereignty altogether—the sovereignty of divine generosity (Romans 5:21). Grace rather than Law is the new foundation and power of justice and life in the world. In the disclosing, unveiling and revealing event of sovereign grace, God pours out justice and eternal life for all through the One just human being, Jesus the Messiah as Sovereign. He is the truly human one, the true image of God. We must find our own humanity in His.

“When Jesus was raised from the dead and exalted to God’s right hand, a new *political* reality came into being. The Messiah, resurrected and ruling, creates a new political community (the *ekklesia = church*) in the world, which Paul frequently called *‘the Body of Messiah.’* The Messiah’s reign makes its way in the world by grace rather than by coercion. It conquers through the persuasive embodied power of the good news. Jesus Messiah makes His own sovereign claim on our lives when the gospel is proclaimed, believed and practiced.

“Revolutions are driven by the frustration of justice and by the thought that the overthrow of an existing regime will usher in a new era of justice and peace, and give birth to a new history. Those who advocate revolution are convinced that the fundamental problems of an oppressive system of sovereignty and Law will not be solved by tinkering. The bondages and injustices generated by the current system are too profound to be met by incremental improvements. A call to revolution envisages a new world order under the reign of God, and called followers into His non-violent revolutionary movement.

“Messianics are free to live the messianic life no matter what political and judicial systemic conditions exist—conditions that in any case are often at odds with life in Messiah. As systems operating according to the *‘sense-making schemes of the present age’* (Romans 12:2), government and law are captivated by Sin, and even frequently responsible for much injustice and evil in the world. When it comes to justice, Paul calls messianics to trust God and not to take justice into their own hands.

“It is simply a natural human instinct to want to avenge a wrong, whether by retaliation, punishment or seeking redress through authorities or law. Yet Paul’s appeal to the *‘beloved’* messianics is blunt: *‘Repay no one evil for evil’* (Romans 12:17), and *‘Do not avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God’* (Romans 12:19). When messianics *‘leave room’* and *‘make place’* for God’s justice to be done (Romans 12:19), they are doing the one thing messianics are always called to do: trust God. Trust in God is how messianics share in the justice of God.

“It is not for them to take up the world of divine justice and make it their own human agenda. Justice is given to them through trust. Messianics do not advocate or agitate for human wrath—retribution and punishment—against those who do evil. To do so would be a fundamental contradiction of their own reconciliation as enemies and their new life in Messiah. They entrust wrath to God. To do otherwise... would mean being *‘overcome or conquered by evil’* (Romans 12:21). Far from being passive acceptance of injustice, this is in fact the free, active, peaceable way in which God’s healing justice spreads through messianics into a world of injustice. It is the way of messianics to conquer evil.”