

# Shackled Freedoms

## Introduction

While most Americans are busy trying to endure and outlast the pandemic, preserving this country's coveted freedoms may be making its last stand. Judge Andrew Napolitano says, "... we are approaching the end of a civilized and free society as we have known it."<sup>1</sup>

1. Governmental figures have made "rules" that limit the worship experience.
2. Politicians have restricted church attendance through manipulated "science."
3. Civic leaders have permitted destruction of hero statues, like Washington, Jefferson and Lincoln without retribution.
4. Mayors have tolerated mob violence with little or no penalties.
5. Conspiring wealthy social media giants (Twitter, Google and Facebook) have deprived thousands of Americans of their free speech.
6. Governors have destroyed livelihoods from Covid-19 "confinement rules" with limited medical justification.
7. The Left has promoted Marxism and is rapidly implementing its socialistic ideals.
8. Restriction of travel, limiting family, friends and business contacts from ever-changing CDC recommendations has hurt America, perhaps irreparably.
9. Levying unwarranted, even arbitrary, fines and punishment for non-compliance of Covid "rules" has gone beyond reason and medical science.<sup>2</sup>

"This can't happen here!" It is happening here – through regulation of even private behavior by unconstitutional "rules" that are *enforced as if laws*.

**Cultural stability** and **peace** have been exceptions in world history. This country has been blessed to experience those exceptions – until recently. Covid-19 became a pretext for crushing the economy and creating repressive "police-state controls." Americans are adjusting to a "new normal" under a "coercive way to govern out of Washington, D.C. and state capitals"<sup>3</sup>

Former Attorney General William Barr said that the Covid lockdowns, other than slavery, are the "greatest intrusion on civil liberties in American history."

- He expressed alarm at the broad First Amendment restrictions, especially related to the free exercise of religion.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.newsmax.com/judgeandrewpnapolitano/cuomo-madison-murphy-constitution/2020/07/09/id/976370/>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.americanthinker.com/articles/2020/06/the\\_war\\_for\\_free\\_speech\\_is\\_here.html](https://www.americanthinker.com/articles/2020/06/the_war_for_free_speech_is_here.html)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.wnd.com/2021/01/persecution-ahead-time-prepare-underground-church/>

- Barr noted that when statutes (“rules”) are endlessly manipulated, everything becomes a potential crime by implication (e.g., spacing of individuals, wearing masks and indoor worship).<sup>4</sup>

At a Rome symposium, called “Advancing and Defending International Religious Freedom through Diplomacy,” U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See, Callista Gingrich, said:

“The United States understands that upholding the right to religious freedom is not just a moral necessity, it is a national security imperative. When nations effectively promote and protect religious freedom, they are safer, more prosperous, and secure.”<sup>5</sup>

Another guest discussant, former U.S. Secretary of State Pompeo observed:

“In the late twentieth century, the Church’s power [in its] ... moral witness helped inspire those who liberated central and eastern Europe from communism, and those who challenged autocratic and authoritarian regimes in Latin America and East Asia.... That same power of moral witness should be deployed today.

“What the Church teaches the world about *religious freedom* and *solidarity* should now be forcefully and persistently conveyed by the Vatican.”<sup>6</sup> This licensed suggestion can be implemented only by restricting freedom of most individuals and promoting the “Vatican way.”

### **Pretense to Manipulate and Control**

A recent disturbing peer-reviewed study concluded that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) illegally inflated Covid-19 fatality numbers.

- That included impropriety in testing data and mortality statistics.
- They restricted the use of mandatory oversight and scientific checks.
- The CDC issued a horrifying alert, instructing medical examiners, coroners and physicians to de-emphasize underlying comorbidity in causes of death. This made Covid-19 the cause of death and not a contributor!

The CDC’s inflated data has, in turn, been used by elected and public health officials to ***justify closures of schools, places of worship and small businesses***, creating social and economic chaos.<sup>7</sup>

Of additional dismay, those powerful “guiding hands” of America’s health leaders appear increasingly self-serving, with calloused interest for the suffering. Some in those upper echelons of government and media are making fortunes from pharmaceutical companies,

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.breitbart.com/politics/2020/09/16/ag-william-barr-coronavirus-lockdowns-greatest-intrusion-on-civil-liberties-since-slavery/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://va.usembassy.gov/ambassador-gingrichs-remarks-at-international-religious-freedom-symposium/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://it.usembassy.gov/moral-witness-and-religious-freedom/>  
<https://visiontimes.com/2020/10/07/pompeo-urges-faith-leaders-to-exhibit-moral-fortitude-highlights-repression-in-china.html>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.wndnewscenter.org/study-finds-cdc-inflated-covid-numbers-by-1600/>

creating new Covid-19 treatments and denying existing life-saving and safe medications (examples: hydroxychloroquine and ivermectin).

- The resistance to use these drugs by the NIH and the misinformation given to the public regarding successful treatment protocols has been labeled a scandal.
- On December 16, 2020, the FDA said that ivermectin “is not approved for the prevention or treatment of Covid-19.” Yet, it has been shown to be highly effective.

YouTube subsequently took down a U.S. Senate hearing, featuring experienced doctors and epidemiologists who spoke in favor of using this medication.<sup>8</sup>

Intensifying this coverup, YouTube removed another video of Attorney Thomas Renz testifying to Ohio legislators that the Covid-19 fatality rate was no different than influenza statistics.

Renz, along with other lawyers, have alleged that federal officials intentionally misled the public, especially in reporting Covid deaths.<sup>9</sup> This became a pretext for restricting societal freedoms.

Adding to the scurrilous reporting and handling of Covid patients was Governor Cuomo of New York. He had contagion options for N.Y. residents infected with the virus. He totally ignored them and ordered that those patients be put in nursing homes that were totally unprepared for acute care. Over 12,000 needless deaths eventuated.

- The state’s Attorney General Letitia James said that that data was even underreported!
- A subpoena for nursing home documents by a federal Senate investigating committee was blocked by the Democratically controlled State Senate.

False statistics, politicians directing medical care and the blocking of information has become an early phase to a global reset, which this publication recently discussed. Managed socialism is infiltrating America. Will freedom soon morph into serfdom?

### **Repression of Religious Worship**

San Francisco’s Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone spoke out against the city’s unjust repression of worship. In a Washington Post op-ed piece, he said:

“I never expected that the most basic religious freedom, the right to worship, protected so robustly in our Constitution’s First Amendment, would be unjustly repressed by an American government.... But that is exactly what is happening in San Francisco.”<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.wnd.com/2021/02/many-people-american-medical-establishment-killed/>

<sup>9</sup> Stieber, Zachary; YouTube Takes Down Video of Testimony Given During Ohio House Session, February 21, 2021.

[https://www.theepochtimes.com/youtube-takes-down-video-of-testimony-given-during-ohio-house-session\\_3704812.html?utm\\_source=newsnoe&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=breaking-2021-02-21-1](https://www.theepochtimes.com/youtube-takes-down-video-of-testimony-given-during-ohio-house-session_3704812.html?utm_source=newsnoe&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=breaking-2021-02-21-1)

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2020/09/16/archbishop-salvatore-cordileone-right-to-worship/>

- Indoor retailers were permitted to open.
- Churches were not.

In Seattle, Washington, the Department of Parks and Recreation closed Gas Works Park to Sean Feucht Ministries, blocking a worship rally. This was a direct imposition against a Christian gathering.

- The city had been allowing anarchists to control the park for weeks.
- It was a religious discrimination move.<sup>11</sup>

That is a blatant local example of a greater worship suppression that has occurred throughout America. An anti-Christian/religious spirit has been smoldering in the hearts of powerful governmental and civic leaders for years. Covid-19 became the excuse to suppress Christian expression and control millions – under the pretense of “protecting society.”

British reform leader Nigel Farage said that similar marked restrictions of liberties that governmental ministers are making are draconian decisions without due process by Parliament. The government has taken too much power. As in many places in America, this is giving the police potential power beyond what is reasonable or necessary.

- “This is about our liberties. This is about our freedoms. The more power central government takes, the more difficult it is to get those freedoms back,” he warned.
- This has opened the door to restrict other freedoms, based on the state’s interest to manipulate society!<sup>12</sup>

A unique illustration of micro-coercion came from California Governor Gavin Newsom when he announced that when people do meet in churches, they are not allowed to sing or chant.<sup>13</sup>

### **Our First Freedom**

November 25, 2020, the Supreme Court ruled: “... even in a pandemic, the Constitution cannot be put away and forgotten.... by another major branch of the government.”

- It cannot be sidestepped by state officials, including governors!

***But who will enforce this legal mandate that is being defied by many politicians and state officials?***

In the Bill of Rights our framers put religion as the number one “right”!

- Numerous state governors have targeted the free exercise of religion in the name of safety.

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.westernjournal.com/seattle-allows-leftists-spread-chaos-gives-christians-outrageous-news/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.breitbart.com/europe/2021/02/11/farage-we-are-fast-becoming-police-state/>

<sup>13</sup> <https://dailycaller.com/2020/07/03/california-gov-gavin-newsom-singing-churches-coronavirus-covid-19-lockdown/>

- Pushing further, Governor Cuomo did not even deem worship as essential and created artificial and illegal restrictions on its expression! The State’s Supreme Court sided with Cuomo. This was challenged:

The U.S. Supreme Court stepped in and recognized the fundamental right to worship. It concluded that by failing to consider worship as essential “while characterizing other choices as essential, **he demonstrated hostility toward religion.**”

- Justice Neil Gorsuch wrote: The “government is not free to disregard the First Amendment in times of crises.” Our first freedom is to worship.<sup>14</sup>
- ***But – who will enforce this legal mandate from the highest court?***

In 1993 Congress passed the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA). Those “laws” protected religious practices that are fundamental to religious beliefs. Yet:

- Vice President Kamala Harris has animus for Catholics.
- She has also (which seems to be shared by Catholic President Biden) antagonism toward “moral theology” that restricts behavior.

She sponsored a “Do No Harm Act” **to emasculate RFRA**, along with Congressmen Kennedy and Scott of the House.

That would compel a Catholic physician, as an example, to prescribe contraceptives or perform abortions if he/she participates in federal or state reimbursement programs. It would also require a parochial school that receives state grants to employ persons in open same-sex relations as teachers or even ministers.

It would turn “the free exercise clause on its head, driving religious faith to the margins of public life and religious exercise out of public life altogether.”<sup>15</sup>

This is Joe Biden and Kamala Harris’ understanding of “freedom from religion.” If passed, it will become the foundation for other severe restrictions on religious exercises.

### **The Constitution in Jeopardy**

Members of Congress have ceded their power to the executive pen of a president and the titans of tech.

- On his limited “campaigning” before being “elected,” candidate Biden pledged to seek a “consensus” (of both parties) before any executive order would be signed. He criticized his fellow Democrats for planning to rely too heavily on the executive pen. “Only a dictator would do that.” Yet – he has signed a record number of such documents, stating: “I’m not making new law. I’m eliminating bad policy.”<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.newsmax.com/judgeandrewpnapolitano/covid-cuomo-emmy-speech/2020/12/03/id/999797/>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.cal-catholic.com/kamal-harris-tiny-space-for-religion/>

<sup>16</sup> <https://dailycaller.com/2021/02/02/joe-biden-executive-orders-bad-policy-trump-administration/>

The process of creating federal laws from elected representatives is being bypassed. Making more scandalous by “changing of the American way” are the despots who head Twitter, Facebook and Instagram, hiding under Section 230 protection.

- They’ve shut down conservative websites, programs and even education centers.
- They blocked President Trump’s communication with America.
- They closed Parler – a growing alternative to Twitter.<sup>17</sup>

Shortly before the election, Twitter banned or suspended tens of thousands of accounts to “protect” Americans from “inciting violence” and “sharing misleading information” about the election outcome. Twitter said that they want to stop any suggestions that might lead to “offline harm.” This pretext and pretense are a ploy to forward socialism and limit the freedom of Americans.

- Yet, they never took steps to block those accountable for the violent protests, riots and burning of cities last summer.
- They want to promote “healthy conversation” only (that drive their politically-driven, left-leaning “ideals”)!<sup>18</sup>

The “tech universe” is stealing free speech from American citizens. They allow Iran’s Ayatollah Ali Khamenei to post all kinds of violent and hate-filled posts about the United States and Israel, but they blocked President Trump.

“Interesting, too, that a Simon & Schuster *book deal* was just abruptly canceled with Republican Sen. Josh Hawley after he objected to some of the 2020 election results. The book’s title? *The Tyranny of Big Tech*.” “See the pattern here? Trump, Parler, Hawley. Forced silencing of conservative (only) opinion. Shockingly obvious.”<sup>19</sup> This assault on American liberty is a form of Marxism that is infiltrating the culture.

Technology companies were given “power to control” the oxygen of information 15 years ago. A 1996 Congressional Communications Decency Act was passed to give ground rules to emerging new technologies – but with limited oversight:

- Technology companies **were protected from liability for the content they carry:** The liability solely exists with whomever provided that content. **But they were also given** discretion over what they chose to carry.
- These companies have disproportionately leaned toward socialism. Their voices are anti-Christian. The freedom of conservative voices has come under siege.

How far will this go? Columnist Star Parker noted: “I produce a weekly television talk show, “CURE America with Star Parker.” The show was booted off Vimeo because the far-left

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<sup>17</sup> <https://www.wnd.com/2021/01/limbaugh-titans-tech-now-running-america/>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.newswars.com/the-great-purge-twitter-has-suspended-more-than-70000-accounts-since-friday/>

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.dianediamond.com/online-censorship-cancels-the-right-of-free-speech/>

Southern Poverty Law Center identified one of our Christian advertisers as a hate group and because one pastor said that homosexuality is a sin.”<sup>20</sup>

Private companies like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube have more rights (since 1996) to engage in censorship than federal or state governments, which are limited by the Bill of Rights.

- Even the ACLU has called for an investigation of Amazon, Google and Apple over some of their restrictive policies.
- A senior staff attorney of the ACLU said: “It is a dangerous thing for any government to decide what people can or can’t say before they even say it. Governments can use that power against people whose opinions it does not like and wants to suppress.”<sup>21</sup> That’s tyranny!

Currently threatening the Second Amendment rights is H.R. 127 that was introduced in Congress January 4, 2021. If it passes, anyone wanting to buy a firearm would not only have to register the gun but reveal where it is located and maintained; and, they must also pay an insurance policy for it, which would cost \$800. The owner must also first pass “a psychological evaluation” by a licensed psychologist. How rigid would the “mental” standards be? Whatever the government decides.

- This would make it prohibitive to have a firearm by a large number of Americans.
- It would let the government know where yours is if they should choose to confiscate it (a not-so-subtle plan in the making).<sup>22</sup>

In an unprecedented threat, President Joe Biden issued an order for a new commission to study Supreme Court reform. Biden illegally pressured Chief Justice John Robert to limit the conservative bent on abortion, gun rights and immigration – or Democrats would pack the court!

- Though the three key branches of the federal government are supposed to be a check and balance with each other, Biden’s move could seize power over the Supreme Court.
- This would weaponize the Executive Branch of the government.

Stunning and disturbing: Chief Justice Robert has already acquiesced in several areas:

1. He turned from deciding cases solely based on their legal merits to prioritizing concern for the court’s *institutional integrity*.
2. He surrendered to the “precedent rule” in place of a direct legal-based decision.
3. He limited review of lower courts’ legal decisions in the face of clearly wrong mandates in the areas of women’s health and Second Amendment cases.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> <https://townhall.com/columnists/starparker/2021/01/20/freedom-of-speech-slipping-away-n2583378>

<sup>21</sup> Peabody, Michael; *Religious Liberty TV* via email

<sup>22</sup> <http://endoftheamericandream.com/h-r-127-a-new-bill-in-congress-would-literally-end-your-2nd-amendment-rights-permanently/>

<sup>23</sup> <https://dailycaller.com/2021/01/30/gardey-bidens-warning-shot-to-chief-justice-roberts/>

Another egregious example of caving: In January 2021, the Supreme Court declined to further religious rights by turning away (refusing to hear) an appeal of Calvary Chapel, a Nevada church, that Nevada's limiting of worship capacity was unconstitutional.<sup>24</sup>

### **Weakening Democracy**

Founded in 1823, the venerable *Lancet* medical journal stepped into the "political hate" arena in January of 2021!

- An unsigned editorial (most unusual) claimed that President Trump (1) "provoked" the mob that stormed the Capitol, (2) systematically weakened the role of science in federal policy, (3) stacked review boards with industry figures, (4) rolled back industrial and environmental regulations and (5) never took the pandemic seriously (all dishonest claims).
- What is a peer-reviewed, medical journal doing entering into the political arena?

This publication now promotes a progressive agenda, supports "climate change" plans, accepts the tyranny of Black Lives Matter, abortion, gay rights and gender equality. A demonic influence is in evidence. Many physicians are abandoning who they are "licensed to be" to forward a global "reset" of almost "everything"!

Painfully, these left-leaning trends cannot tolerate Christian influences.<sup>25</sup> The mindset of so many "citizens of the world" is being influenced by powers at variance with God.

Another fearful bill before the Senate (which passed the House February 25, 2021), that would infringe on religious freedom and threaten moral convictions, is the Equality Act.

### **The Equality Act would amend the Civil Rights Act:**

1. By forbidding discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
2. Abortion would be classified as "health care," making it a national policy for "abortion on demand" for any reason.
3. It would outlaw any psychological or psychiatric treatment/counseling for gender dysphoria. Hormone therapy and mutilating sex surgery would be protected as "health care right," even for children.
  - It would force schools and athletic competitions to permit biological males to compete against biological females.
  - No conscience or religious belief exceptions would be permitted.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> <https://www.wnd.com/2021/01/supreme-court-rejects-church-refuses-ease-covid-caps/>

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.breitbart.com/politics/2021/01/16/woke-lancet-biden-presidency-a-fundamental-reset-opportunity-for-american-renewal/>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.firstthings.com/web-exclusives/2021/01/what-to-know-about-the-equality-act>  
<https://www.ncregister.com/blog/equality-act-alert>

Churches could not fire teachers, pastors or priests if they held positions or views at moral variance with their organization. It would discriminate against faith organizations and churches.

The Godless Left is now in charge of our Country: The White House, the House and the Senate, in their drive for control, want everyone to see government as God.

- “In May of 2017 in the Rose Garden, President Trump used his executive pen to ensure Christians and other people of faith don’t have to check their beliefs when entering the halls of government. He also prevented the federal government from going after pastors and other leaders who speak about political issues from a moral perspective.  
“Four years of this environment was too much for secularists to tolerate. The Left wants people of faith to be targeted, bullied, and silenced.
- “New on the scene to counter Christians is the organization ***Secular Democrats of America***. They see Christians as a ‘Christian nationalist movement,’ giving cover for ‘white supremacy.’ They insist that rather than faith, Americans employ reason, science and evidence, and disentangle government policy from the influence of sectarian religious interests that have become dangerously entrenched at all levels of government.”!

These “secular Democrats” want the Christians’ First Amendment rights to be stripped. It will forward a Marxist agenda.<sup>27</sup>

“We are a network of Democrats advocating for inclusion of nonreligious Americans and mobilizing to protect our secular democracy. We organize to protect religion freedom and defend the constitutional separation of religion and government.”<sup>28</sup>

It is heinous to know that the secular Facebook “struggles” to remove child porn content but remains efficient and ruthless at censoring Bible passages.<sup>29</sup>

### **A “New” [fearful] America**

It is happening quickly. The Left is imposing destruction of what much of America stands for. Painfully, mixed with its tyrannical “governing” is their silencing of dissent. That cements their power. Eric Utter notes in *American Thinker*: Facebook shut down PatrioticMe, a wonderful online retailer of patriotic clothing because of “policy violation.” They were silenced.

Frankfurt based Deutsche Bank and New York based Signature Bank cut ties with President Trump because of his part in the Capitol siege (fake news).

Lecturer Juliette Kayyen said: “Trump is (an) operational leader of domestic terrorism” (totally false). She called for his complete isolation.

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<sup>27</sup> Markell, Jan; *Olive Tree Ministries*, February 2, 2021.

<sup>28</sup> <https://seculardems.org/>

<sup>29</sup> <https://nationalpreview.com/watch-facebook-bans-bible-passages/>

Republican congressman Ron Paul was blocked out of his Facebook account because he shared “a column blasting Big Tech for silencing Americans and accusing social media platforms of engaging in a coordinated effort to stifle free speech. His was a weekly news publication that Senator Paul has had since 1976.”<sup>30</sup>

A law school canceled a civil rights law course that David Schoen (lawyer for President Donald Trump in his second impeachment trial) was going to teach. He was also suspended from a civil rights lawyer email discussion list because he stood up for President Trump.

- Schoen said that “we are in very perilous, divided times” in the United States.
- He had received the Pro Bono Publico Award from the American Bar Association (ABA) in 1995 for his civil rights work. The ABA handbook says he was “recognized for his enormous contribution to bringing about change in schools, prisons, jails, foster care, police departments, and election ballot access in the South.”<sup>31</sup> He is now disgraced because he helped Trump.

Attorney Michael van der Veen, another of Trump’s trial attorneys, said that his house was graffitied. He had to move his children to a secret location and hire armed guards to protect his home. A recent national poll by the Cato Institute revealed that 62% of adults are afraid to honestly express their views because of the current political climate. That fear was even deep enough that some felt their jobs could be jeopardized if they spoke out.

- Legally, freedom of speech has been protected by law. However:
- Culturally driven laws have been restricting freedom to express unpopular views.

Jeff Jacoby, in reporting the above, entitled his article: “Fear of Speech is Replacing Freedom of Speech.”<sup>32</sup> Revelation 13 talks of an earth beast (some nation) that has lamb-like horns (a facade resembling peace and counterfeiting the “Lamb of God” in that book) – but will speak like a dragon (Satan – 12:9). Might that symbolize the United States, as it is now changing? It even states that it will have power over life and death. That is the United States in prophecy! Fearful times are unfolding.

There are ahead of us trials and experiences that may make it seem that heaven has forsaken us. Even our precious Savior cried out in His last words, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Matthew 27:46). But He submitted Himself fully to His Father.

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<sup>30</sup> [https://www.americanthinker.com/blog/2021/01/the\\_left\\_closes\\_in.html](https://www.americanthinker.com/blog/2021/01/the_left_closes_in.html)

<sup>31</sup> [https://www.theepochtimes.com/trump-impeachment-attorney-canceled-by-law-school-civil-rights-law-group\\_3700521.html](https://www.theepochtimes.com/trump-impeachment-attorney-canceled-by-law-school-civil-rights-law-group_3700521.html)

<sup>32</sup> <https://townhall.com/columnists/jeffjacoby/2020/07/27/fear-of-speech-is-replacing-freedom-of-speech-n2573203>

- The Resurrection became His ultimate victory, which opened eternal life to us!
- That sense of abandonment may well be the experience of many in America. The Bible says, however, that truth and fairness will be victorious at the end.

Lean on the promises of God's Word.

- *"These shall make war with the Lamb, and **the Lamb shall overcome them**"* (Revelation 17:14a).
- Later, those saved who are around God's throne are *"Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, **These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb**"* (Revelation 7:12-14).

The final outcome? God wins! His faithful followers become part of that kingdom!

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