

# How America Can Escape Ancient Rome's Treacherous Path

The English historian Edward Gibbon [1737-1794] noted in his work on the decline and fall of the Roman empire that long-lasting oppression will have serious effects. To paraphrase him: The minds of men will be gradually reduced to the same [low, generic] level, the fire of genius will be extinguished, and even the military spirit will evaporate ... The industry of the people will be discouraged and exhausted by a long series of oppression.

Historian William Henry Chamberlain [1897-1969] would add that the twin evils of limitless bureaucracy and extortionate taxation took hold of the empire and rendered as its product a soft and idle citizenry [much like modern America]. He writes:

“The Roman populace was no longer in a mood to fight for its constitutional liberties; it was lulled to sleep by the time-honored method: panem et circenses [bread and games; sustenance and entertainment provided by government to appease public discontent]. So long as it received free food at public expense, and elaborate games and spectacles, it ceased to concern itself with public affairs.

“Private initiative disappeared; more and more the all-powerful imperial government was expected to look after everyone and attend to everything ... The Roman populace was no longer in a mood to fight for its constitutional liberties.

“But Rome's fall came about not so much from any overwhelming pressure from without as from weaknesses and dry rot within, which finally made the decayed empire easy prey for the onrushing barbarians of the North.

“One may be sure that the Founding Fathers of the American Republic, if they were alive today, would be quick to note with alarm certain parallels between American and later Roman developments, notably the willingness to sell out individual rights and freedom and local autonomy for a mess of centralized statist pottage.

“For most of the Founding Fathers were among the most learned men of their time. The Federalist Papers and the preserved letters of Jefferson and John Adams, Franklin and Madison are full of references to the events and developments of classical times and to the lessons which should be drawn from these happenings of the past. Perhaps the most impressive of these lessons is the fatal folly of letting all power become concentrated in a single state authority.”

Canadian classical scholar W.G. Hardy [1895-1979] commented that political freedom in the Roman Empire was tossed away in the interests of peace, security and materialism. “There was the canker of slavery and the equally dangerous practice of keeping a segment of the population permanently on the dole.”

John Mordecai Podhoretz’s recent article for the New York Post, titled “Biden’s base: Why he won’t end the COVID ‘emergency’ for months,” brings Gibbon’s caution to mind. Unnecessary and high-handed extension of an emergency that is no longer an emergency comes down to oppression and subjugation. It once again illustrates America’s regression from a Republic to an Empire, a process that has been going on for at least 50 years and that closely resembles Rome’s path from glory to downfall and collapse.

Podhoretz writes: “The COVID emergency is over—three months from now! It will take President Joe Biden about 240 days, all in all, to bring an end to an ‘emergency’ that ought to have been over the very moment he said it was over in Sept. 2022 [60 Minutes interview Sept. 18th, “the pandemic is over”]. Welcome to Orwell-ville.

“So what gives here? What’s with the three months?

“It’s simple. This is not about an emergency, and it hasn’t been for more than a year. This is about the people who have actually gained things from the emergency and who need to be weaned off the unhealthy and society-killing benefits they have reaped since March 2020.

“What the Biden people are doing here is trying to provide a soft landing for their government-worker constituents, so many of them toiling from home, who have been the true beneficiaries of the changes in workplace rules since 2020—not the people for whom they work, namely us.”

Where to start? In relation to the exhaustion and discouragement of the American people, we only have to point at the most recent COVID coup, featuring Dr. ‘Science Itself’ Fauci, Big Pharma, Big Tech, television network uppers, government bureaucrats, blue state politicians and assorted zealots and ultras. And not to forget, President Trump being played like a fine Stradivarius in his nightly COVID briefings and quest for ratings, viewership and reelection.

As early as March 2020 we began to suspect that something was not right with the COVID rampage. We wrote: “Up to now President Trump’s most compelling reason for reelection to a large segment of Americans was a bustling economy, but not so to evangelicals because the president has honored his campaign promises from 2016. [But] Like the queen being captured in a chess match, the advantage of a bustling economy has been removed from the table by the devastating effects of the coronavirus on the U.S. economy. As a result, Trump’s reelection this fall is no longer a given.”

Little could we imagine the crescendo of absolutist things to come: public school closings, family businesses ruined, contrived mask gimmicks, compulsory employee vaccinations, forced military jabs, banned travel nationally and

internationally, loved ones dying all alone in sterile hospitals—all accomplished by design, evidently through tainted, shoddy and financially politicized 'science.'

America's backsliding and abandonment of faith will continue unless American Christendom comes alive and becomes conversant in the prime denominations of political currency, which are:

1. How many votes can you bring to the table?
2. How much money can you bring that brings votes to the table? And moreover, doubling down on that commitment.

 Albert Camus [1913-1960] was a French philosopher, writer and recipient of the 1957 Nobel Prize in Literature at the age of 44, the second-youngest recipient in history. He was in Paris when the Germans invaded in 1940. His philosophical fiction novel of 1956, "The Fall," calls attention to what awaits Christians on their way forward: "Freedom is not a reward or a decoration that is celebrated with champagne. Nor yet a gift, a box of dainties designed to make you lick your chops. Oh no, it's a chore ... a long-distance race, quite solitary and very exhausting."

Praise be to God that Gideon's and Rahab's are beginning to enter the public square. {eo}

Bring *Charisma* magazine home with a subscription today!

**David Lane** is the founder of the American Renewal Project.