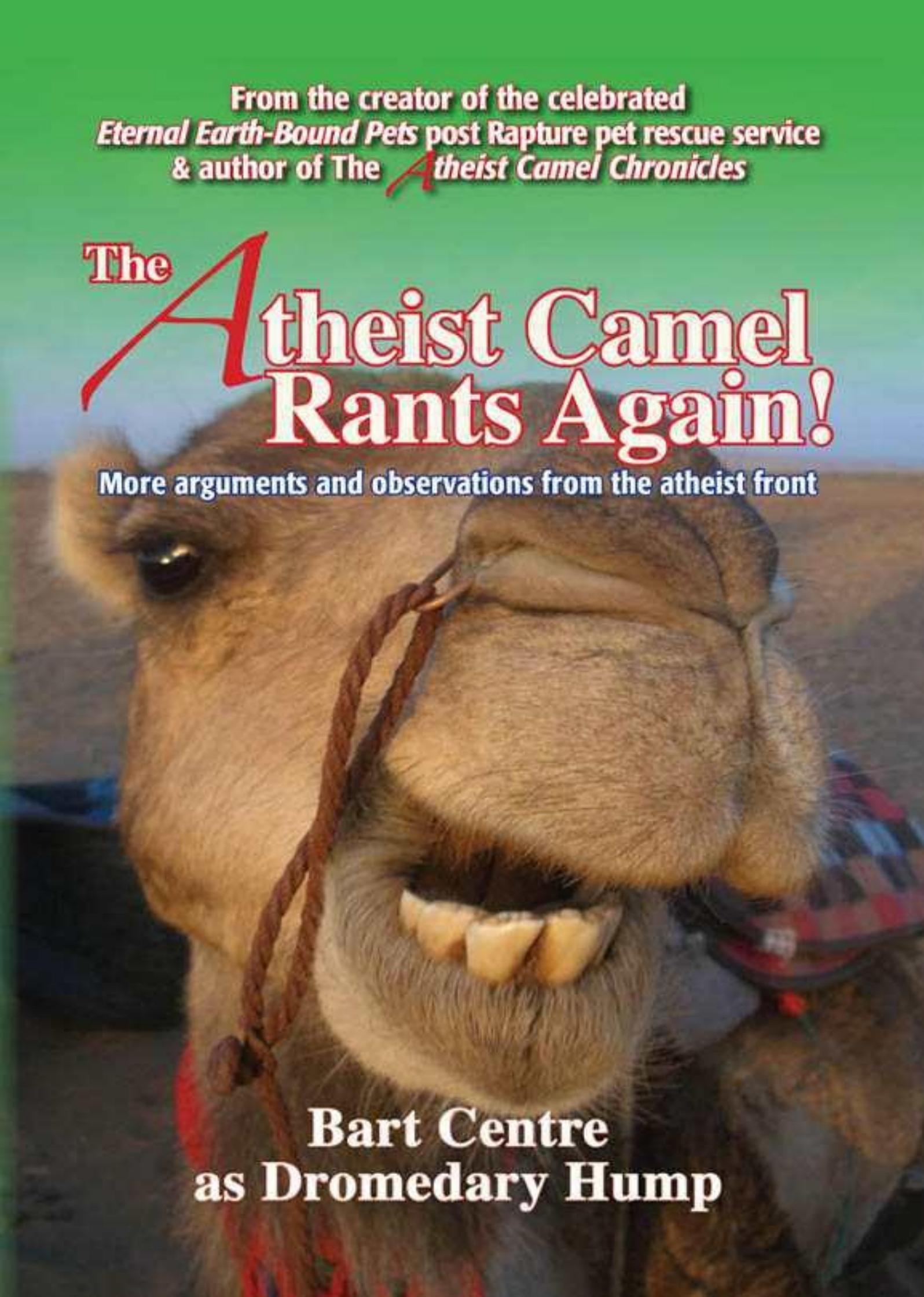


From the creator of the celebrated
Eternal Earth-Bound Pets post Rapture pet rescue service
& author of *The Atheist Camel Chronicles*

The **A**theist Camel Rants Again!

More arguments and observations from the atheist front



**Bart Centre
as Dromedary Hump**

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Dedicated to atheist activists and freethinkers
past and present who have paved the way
for freedom of thought.

“I will not attack your doctrines nor your creeds if they accord liberty to me. If they hold thought to be dangerous—if they aver that doubt is a crime, then I attack them one and all, because they enslave the minds of men.”

—Robert G. Ingersoll, *The Ghosts*

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Introduction

The visibility and influence of religion on the cultural front hasn't much diminished since the publication of my last book, *The Atheist Camel Chronicles*. Evangelical preachers continue to make proclamations that attribute deaths from natural disaster and war to their God's disappointment with man's lack of morality and impenitence. A conservative pope continues to dip his fingers in the blood of millions as he ignores science and condemns condom use.

The clergy remains in the headlines as new evidence of Church complicity in ministerial child molestations is unearthed. Theistically inspired school board activists continue to distort history and proffer pseudo-science to promote their religio-political agenda. Jihadists, both Muslim and Christian, continue to demonstrate, rage, burn, threaten, and kill in the name of their deity and prophet. Given these realities, it is disheartening and difficult to see any light for civilization at the end of a dark religious tunnel.

But advancement is not always the product of cataclysmic events. Much like evolution, it often comes in slow, subtle, incremental changes. Organizations such as the Freedom from Religion Foundation, Americans United for the Separation of Church and State, and the Military Religious Freedom Foundation have scored many significant wins against creeping theocracy and religious oppression in the US. More wins than losses— wins that help establish precedence for reason over religion. We owe the leadership and membership of these watchdog protectors of our rights and defenders of the Wall of Separation a great debt. That debt is best repaid by joining and supporting their tireless efforts.

On a smaller scale, but just as importantly, freethinking authors, bloggers, local and college humanist and atheist groups, and individual atheists continue to raise awareness, shake apathy, and inspire activism. Even those who must suppress their acceptance of reason over myth and keep it hidden lest it impair relations with family, friends, or co-workers serve the cause. By strengthening the foundation of their

rationality through readings, by subtly questioning and challenging theist “Truths,” and by encouraging the next generation toward self-reliance and independent thinking...they also serve. I salute them and commend them for their courage.

Throughout this book you will find that I use the term “fundie” and “fundies.” For the uninitiated, it is a shortened version of “fundamentalist.” These are Christians (and, where applicable, also followers of other religions) who view their scripture as inerrant, infallible, written by God or with his divine inspiration; their belief in Creation, all the stories of the Bible, and all its miracles are taken as fact, not parable. The abbreviated term “fundie” is not used as an epithet in my writings, just a convenient abbreviated descriptor. I use other terms that cannot be mistaken for anything other than epithets.

Similarly, I use of the term “Xtian” and “Xtianity” randomly throughout the text as an abbreviation of “Christian” and “Christianity.” This tends to enflame fundies as being disrespectful. Unfortunately, it isn’t disrespectful albeit I have no particular reason to show respect for Christianity. The term “Xtian” is actually ancient and goes back to the Greek letter “chi” being used by the early Greek Christians as an abbreviation for “Christ.” The symbol for the letter “chi” is “X.”

Finally, this book is not written for believers unless they are on the fence, dangling their feet onto the side of rational thinking. If these essays help ignite their boldness and give them a push, excellent. It is not intended to try to win the minds of hardcore religionists to reality. While I may toy with and engage them on the net, I have long ago come to realize that proselytizing to those to whom reason is the enemy and to be avoided at all costs is a waste of my time. Thus, to those who question how I could possibly expect to break through to religionist minds and win them over to reason with my unrepentant, sometimes mocking, and unapologetic style, the answer is plain: I don’t.

If these essays can assist freethinkers in debate, challenge thought, raise awareness, prompt more activism, provide some modicum of wisdom and guidance in a religionist majority society, or just make them laugh, this offering’s objective will have been achieved.

Bart Centre
AKA, Dromedary Hump

1

“Atheism = Communism = Immorality”: The Mantra of the Theistically Confused

24 Mar 2009

The theist propensity to equate Communism with atheism and vice versa is a function of two things: basic lack of understanding of what Communism is and what atheism isn't.

Joseph Stalin killed millions. A psychopath and paranoid, he embodied the strong-man, iron-fisted methods used by tyrants to retain power since time immemorial. One need only think of the biblical story of the pharaoh killing all first-born Hebrews to understand. The pharaoh didn't kill them because he was a pagan, or even because they were Hebrews. He acted to prevent a prophesized leader from emerging who would free the Hebrews, to ensure his power base and the Hebrews' continued enslavement—a simple question of economics. How do we know this? Because had his mythical actions been intended to eradicate the Hebrews, he wouldn't have stopped with just killing the first-born.

It wasn't an issue of pagan immorality vs. monotheistic morality—it was a political imperative. How different that is from the Hebrew God's commandment to eradicate all pagan tribes in their territorial path: men, women (except the virgins), children, and livestock.

While Communism embraces atheism, it does so in order to establish the State as the sole authority. It's a quasi-religion with the tyrant as its primate. It also recognized that the Church had a cohesive effect on the peasantry, and thus represented a potential threat to the State's exclusive power. Stalin never killed in the name of “godlessness”; he killed in the name of retention of one-man rule and the omnipotent power of the State.

“Uncle Joe” didn't just single out the religious for his murderous purges. He feared intellectuals, homosexuals, and anyone with a political perspective different from his own, including differing interpretations of Communism (note the similarity to the Church's targets of persecution for centuries: other religions, Protestant sects, and upstart cults like the Cathars). He had Trotsky removed and ultimately killed, along with untold thousands of other potential rivals and challengers.

Was this because of his lack of belief in God/gods? Was his rallying cry to his faithful followers, “Kill the theists in the name of atheism”? Hardly. Theists weren't even the primary concern. One may as well blame Stalin's education in a seminary for

his genocidal acts.

Theists will oft regroup and say: “*Okay, fine, but Stalin and Mao represent a lack of morality and ethics that results from the rejection of God and God’s laws.*” But morality and ethics predate Christianity and monotheism. The ancient Egyptians, Greeks, Chinese, and Persians had laws and a code of ethics and morality, as did every highly developed or developing civilization. And yet this scope of genocidal destruction by a king of his own people was unknown in pagan pre-Judeo-Christian times. Additionally, and more currently, most people are familiar with the US Bureau of Prisons report that shows the rate of criminality is much higher among believers than non-believers, which, among other evidence, renders the claim of atheists’ lack of ethics and morality debunked.

Atheism is defined as having no belief in God or gods. That’s all. There is no hierarchy, no belief system. Communism, like religion, has a hierarchy; it is an entire belief system with a focal point of worship (the State), a dogma, doctrine, and expectation of compliance to that doctrine with a threat of punishment for noncompliance. In that regard, Communism has much more in common with religion than it does with atheism.

To attribute Joseph Stalin’s or Mao’s psychopathic tyrannical actions to their atheism, as opposed to their mental illness, hunger for power, and fanatical devotion to their political belief system, is tantamount to attributing Edward I’s (“Longshanks”) murderous suppression of the Scots and Welsh to his theism (when only his persecution of English Jews can be attributed to his Christian beliefs).

This distinction and the logic it represents are largely lost on or, more precisely, ignored by religionists. After years of indoctrination that Communism=Atheism= Lack of Morality, it’s an uphill battle to get them to admit the fallacy. But then understanding the facts, like understanding evolutionary theory, wouldn’t help their cause, so why should they?

Additionally, recognition of this reality wouldn’t give theists a counter-argument for the millions of deaths attributable directly to religious fervor— killing for Yahweh or for Christ, executions of heretics, witches, et al.

No, they have no impetus to understand or reject their hackneyed Communism/atheist/morality confusion and delusion. So their self-imposed confusion marches on.

2

The “Religion Section” Gets Proper Placement

21 Apr 2009

I noticed something interesting in my local newspaper the other day. After reading the main news and business sections, next was the religion section. It’s a weekly part of the paper. It’s not a very large part—one folded page/four printed sides. But, interestingly, only one and a half of those pages are actually devoted to religion. This is, after all, New Hampshire, where religion takes a backseat to living, logic, and lobster.

There’s typically one religion story on the lead page. I always peruse it since one never knows if there will be some good fodder for my blog, or something to animate me to write a scathing letter to the editor debunking some theist’s crazy statement. This week’s story was devoted to Catholicism. Boring. I turned the page and browsed the announcements that take up half of page two: all-you-can-eat church buffets, church bingo events, church tag sales, church raffles, church pancake breakfasts, priest singles night, an alter boy molestation seminar, and previews of the coming Sunday’s sermons from churches all over the area.

Then what I noticed for the first time about the “religion section” made me laugh out loud. On the bottom half of page two was “Strange News Stories” from around the country; you know the type: “*Dumb Crook Holds Up Bank with Skunk,*” “*Deer Locked in Baskin Robbins Store Gets Ice Cream Headache,*” etc., etc. On the third page of the religion section were the comics, the horoscope, and Ann Landers’ advice column. Page four was a full-page business ad.

The comics, daily horoscope, funny news from around the country, and an advice column for the chronically befuddled all grouped together there in the religion section!!

It caused me to ponder...do they group all the laughable, superstitious, and patently useless parts of the paper together in the religion section on purpose, or is this just a coincidence? I’m thinking the former. Either way, it couldn’t be more appropriate. No sense mixing important real world events, information, and fact with superstition, humor, pseudo-science, and advice to the confused and weak-minded.

I wonder if this is a common practice or peculiar to New Hampshire. Check out your paper; you may be living in a less religiously infected area than you think. Or

maybe your newspaper's publisher is an atheist.

3

Your Bling Belongs to Jesus

25 Apr 2009

A devout Xtian woman attempted to explain to me that all possessions/material things are owned by God/Jesus, that she/we are only using them like some kind of a lend lease program. There is nothing in the New Testament to support such a whacky notion. But in the Hebrew Bible, there are some verses that lead these folks to this conclusion. Here are some examples:

Deut. 10:14 "...the heaven of heavens is the LORD's thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is."

Psalm 50:12 "If I were hungry I would not tell you, For the world is Mine, and all it contains."

Job 41:11 "Who has given to Me that I should repay him? Whatever is under the whole heaven is Mine."

Haggai 2:8 "The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine, declares the LORD of hosts."

So, if taken and applied literally, private property doesn't exist. But there's a problem. Since the Talmud has very specific guidelines for what one does to a thief, how is this reconciled with property not being owned by the individual but by God? Presumably the plaintiff would have no standing in court since the stolen items wouldn't be owned by him. Only God could sue/seek recompense. But God wouldn't sue; since the goods have simply changed hands to another "user," no damage has been done. It's a victimless crime. It was God's will.

And how does this jibe with Jesus saying: "*Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's*" (Matthew 22:21)?

Clearly the coin of the realm is material wealth that Jesus had no interest in nor claim on.

And then there is this contradiction: "*The heaven, even the heavens, are the LORD's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men*" (Psalm 115:16).

Oops!

And this verse that credits not God but Satan with owning everything on earth:

"*The devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the*

kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee” (Mathew 4:8-9).

So what’s going on here? That God/Jesus owns everything is clearly a faulty concept, a misinterpretation of scripture, and is rife with multiple contradictions. Further, to imbue a god with ownership of what one earns, buys, and accumulates in a material world is to attribute to a spirit being some vested interest in worldly goods. But some theists are so devoid of self-respect, self-reliance, and self-esteem, and are so dependent on their imaginary friend, they can’t conceive of being worthy to own anything free and clear on their own...thus it must be God’s!

Why would Jesus want to claim ownership of that Xtian’s mobile home full of cats and old *TV Guides*? And if her car isn’t hers, how come she keeps hiding it from the repo man? Questions to ponder.

4

Swine Flu End-Times Fulfillment

29 Apr 2009

Well, seems ole Jesus is playing with pigs one more time. No, he's not infecting pigs with demons (Mark 5); this time he's infecting humans with pigs' virus. What a character.

It didn't take long for the Christian soothsayers to start crediting Jesus with the swine flu outbreak. That's right—I said “crediting” because this is a good thing to them. Here's an example of a self-appointed prophet of God issuing his advance notice that this is the big one, the precursor to the End Times, the Rapture, Christ's return, HALLELUJAH!!! <http://jgrantswankjr.blogspot.com/2009/04/swine-flu-prophecy-plagues-of-endtime.html>

The key to his crazed ranting is this passage: Mathew 24:7—“*For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.*”

Can it be any more obvious? Between wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, unrest between Iran and the US, Korea and the US, Venezuela and the US, famine in Africa, the massive earthquake in Italy, and now the swine flu pestilence, it's as obvious as the Virgin Mary's intact hymen that it's all about to hit the fan for us non-believers, while a free ride to Candy Land is in store for the faithful. The prophesy is about to be fulfilled. Thank ya, Jeezus!

Oh, sure, there are also conspiracy theorists on the net proclaiming swine flu is a terrorist attack, or a New World Order covert attempt to reduce world population. But no one is really going to buy those crazies, not when the Bible itself so plainly spells out the signs that announce Jesus is about to come down and open up a can of whoop-ass on the godless heretics. Besides, internet Christian prophets are all abuzz, and they can't *all* be wrong...can they?

So here's the plan. Put on a big gold cross, maybe burn all your heretical books and CDs on your front lawn, and squeal your everlasting devotion to Jesus, the Lord of the Pigs. Oink loud and maybe writhe around on the ground like the really hardcore True Christians do. You may still catch the swine flu, but at least if you expire you'll be assured of eventual resurrection with the rest of the believers who died in all the other pandemics.

I'm guessing a major pork product BBQ in paradise is being prepared. Bring your own Wet Ones.

5

Gay Marriage and Imported Religious Ire Coming to a State Near You

20 May 2009

Last week, the New Hampshire State Senate approved by a narrow margin a bill that would permit homosexual marriage, following Massachusetts' and Vermont's lead. Our governor, a moderate Democrat, has said he believes marriage should be strictly between a man and a woman, but has not decided if he would veto the bill or sign it.

Mrs. Hump and I wrote Governor Lynch to express our support for the law. We reminded him that ten years from now, when gay marriage is the norm across the country, his opposition to the law would be analogous to the religious fanatics and hate-mongers who opposed inter-racial marriage and made it illegal in some states not so very long ago—politicians who today are roundly deplored and held up as examples of the worst kind of Americans. I'm betting he'll sign the law.

What prompted us to write the governor was a story in *The Baptist Press* that called upon the faithful from across the country to phone the NH governor's office encouraging him to veto the law. I hate it when religious nuts from outside New Hampshire meddle in our affairs. The whole story can be found here: <http://www.bpnews.net/BPnews.asp?ID=30411>.

Naturally, they invoked scripture as their justification for opposition while pledging they held no homophobic or intolerant feelings toward gays (as though there is some difference between their religion's support of homophobia and subjugation of human rights, and their own intolerant behavior). Churches across the country are in a veritable frenzy over New England's shift toward gay marriage acceptance.

So, along with emailing the governor's office, I dropped the good Xtians at *The Baptist Press* a thank-you note. Here it is:

Dear Baptist Press,

If we hadn't read your story, my wife and I wouldn't have realized there was an organized attempt by people outside of New Hampshire to try to influence our governor to veto the Gay Marriage Bill. Now that we know this, we have been moved to contact Gov. Lynch and implore him to support equal rights and recognition of all humans and sign the bill.

It wasn't long ago that religious fanatics and racist government officials forbade inter-racial marriage. Most of us look back on those days as an embarrassment,