

# Religion in a time of pestilence

## *21 short prescriptions during the Covid-19 pandemic*



By Dr Krab

### Part 10

Modern paganism tends to impose a puritanical public morality. This we now see in our own poor country where smokers must either quit or feel those bees at work in their chests or pay R50 for a packet of illegal tobacco. As for those who like a drink ...

Our government, in C S Eliot's words, promotes "regimentation and conformity, without respect for the needs of the individual soul" and "the puritanism of a hygienic morality in the interest of efficiency."

According to Eliot, modern paganism will even attempt to elevate the status of Christian identity in society. But paganism embraces Christianity not because it's true, but because it consolidates the nation and discourages dissent. He notes that authoritarians have always celebrated public morality. Eliot warns that such a moralistic Christianity is more than a perversion of the faith: "It is not enthusiasm, but dogma, that differentiates a Christian from a pagan society." Such versions of Christianity might even "engender nothing better than a disguised and peculiarly sanctimonious nationalism, accelerating our progress toward the paganism which we say we abhor."

Are you and I really taken in by the president's pious utterances during the lockdown? How far away are we from Lesotho's former PM who said he couldn't be prosecuted for the alleged murder of his first wife because he was the head of state?

Our government is laying the country to waste while plotting to extend and implement confiscating land without compensation. It's not going to be returned to "the people," the state will have it, thank you. "The people" wouldn't appreciate it.

This is a good time for Christians to engage with the Holy Spirit of God to learn to discern what is true and what is false. While the Cuban medical team is routinely referred to as consisting of "doctors," we must learn to separate fact from political fiction.

We scoffed when the previous regime spouted its racist rhetoric in poor English, but we may end up with something worse. Many in the first century thought things couldn't get any worse and trembled to think what Rome would come up with next ... but hell wasn't half full yet.

Keep your eyes on Jesus, not the TV news.