

AS I WRITE, April 15 is still fresh in the mind, and the sting of death remains, combining the current pangs of tax extraction with the promise of a greater burden to come, thanks to the Barackification of healthcare.

So imagine my delight when I read in a back issue of a leading Christian magazine (call it *Evangelicalism Now*) that, come next April 15, I should just flip off Uncle Sam and cheat on my taxes.

I mean, sure, breaking the law bothers some people. EN mentions that: "The issue before us is not whether law should be obeyed in normal circumstances. We all agree on that." I feel better already, and my editorial brain is already forming the next sentence before I read it, and it has something to do with ours being abnormal circumstances.

"The question is: Under what circumstances is it appropriate to disobey a law?" Close enough!

As it turns out, cheating on my taxes is biblical. You doubt? Well maybe you've forgotten that recognizing that "the law is not everything" is "a biblical principle." You must have also forgotten that Daniel flouted the "laws of the Medes and Persians" to pray to the LORD. You must have accidentally not-remembered Rahab's treason against the devil-worshipping pagans of Jericho. You must be having a senior moment when it comes to Jesus and the Jewish Sabbath laws. And you must have missed your ginko biloba dose this morning, because Peter very memorably said, "Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey [the Jews] rather than God." Indeed, EN points out, "the law of the land is superseded by the law of love."

I think I love my family so much that I will give it my tax dollars.

As if that isn't enough to convince me, EN then puts down the NIV and picks up a miniature Old Glory and a sparkler. "[T]his nation itself was founded on overthrowing not just a law but an entire government." Now, at first my editorial brain

paused at this. I thought a nation (Lat. *natio*, "birth, a people" from the verb *nascor*, "to be begotten") could be "founded" only by a father and not by an act of disobedience, but then I consulted my *Honest Abe's Dictionary of Olde Peculiar Terms*. So, yes, it is both biblical and American for me to cheat on my taxes. I can almost picture my boys on a set of matching ATVs.

I'VE BEEN FACETIOUSLY misleading. That magazine isn't really called *Evangelicalism Now*. And in the editorial "Blessed Is the Law—Up to a Point," the masthead wasn't attempting to justify cheating on one's taxes. They were arguing that, given today's circumstances, it is "legitimate (albeit regrettable) for an immigrant to enter this nation clandestinely to gain [certain] freedoms."

The circumstances listed are these: "economic and political hardship" and U.S. immigration policies that "make it nearly impossible for some immigrants to enter this nation." Given those circumstances, Americans should cut the lawbreakers some "slack."

Actually, more than that. "While we do not admire lawbreaking, we cannot help but admire people who go through great privation to attain the dream of economic and political liberty." So let us not only absolve them with amnesty but stand in awe of their sin.

Is it sin? Well, *sic et non*. "It is deeply regrettable that they have broken the laws of our land." But why regret it at all

when it is nothing short of "deny[ing] the witness of Scripture" to say that there is never a time when we should obey God rather than men?

Certainly we should, and the biblical accounts provided by EN are perfect examples. The law told Daniel not to pray. The law told Rahab not to assist God's people. The law told Peter not to preach the Gospel. And Jesus is Himself the Sabbath.

Roman law told a convert named Onesimus that he was a slave—what some might call economic and political hardship. When Onesimus went on the lam, Saint Paul's response (written from jail) was to send him back to his master, Philemon. Paul encouraged Philemon to receive Onesimus as "more than a slave, as a dear brother," but he would remain a slave nonetheless. As a new Christian, Onesimus' calling was to abide by the law and sacrifice his liberty.

The trouble with twisted-Scripture immigration propaganda is that it almost always contains some genuine biblical truth. EN is right: Christians must "extend hospitality to the stranger and succor to the suffering." We have no right to be a jack-ass toward people of any station in life who cross our paths. Nor do we have a right to admire, if not absolve, otherwise law-abiding people for flouting just and reasonable laws because they only yearn to be free to mow our lawns.

In a completely unrelated matter, I wonder: Come next April 15, will the otherwise law-abiding illegal immigrants and their employers cheat on *their* taxes? ♦



Let's Cheat on Our Taxes



You Say Ásátru, I Say Shores

IN THESE DAYS of political correctness and multiculturalism, the surprising thing is that there was so little controversy when the board of School District 205 awarded a \$40,000 contract to revisionist historian Michael Hoffman, author of *They Were White and They Were Slaves: The Untold History of the Enslavement of Whites in Early America* and *Judaism Discovered: A Study of the Anti-Biblical Religion of Racism, Self-Worship, Superstition and Deceit*.

Hoffman, who had once attacked that same board for firing a white principal who had changed the failing grades of white students, began volunteering his time last fall to mentor disadvantaged white students at a new charter school in the district. The superintendent was so impressed by his efforts that she drew up a contract for Hoffman's services that was slightly less than \$10,000. (Any expenditure over \$10,000 has to come before the board.)

Now that Hoffman was being paid, he could expand his program, which he called Ásátru, an Old Icelandic word that means (roughly) "those true to one's ancestors." District officials were so pleased by the results that they decided to offer Hoffman the \$40,000 contract. Some critics raised objections that Ásátru is really a religious program in disguise, and even one with some rather unpleasant racial elements. Still, board president David Kelley, a former state chairman of the Libertarian Party of Illinois and its 1994 gubernatorial candidate, told the *Rockford Register Star* that the program is "a cost-effective at-

tempt to reach students who might otherwise turn to crime."

A minor problem arose when it was revealed that Hoffman's Ásátru, Inc., was not incorporated with the state of Illinois. While the district insisted that Hoffman would need to file for incorporation, the school-board attorney told the *Register Star* that "the board won't have to wait for the state to approve the company's application."

And indeed, just a week later, the board voted unanimously to approve the contract, which runs from March 10 until June 30. Later this year, the board will consider expanding the program to a second school in the district.

IF ALL OF THIS seems a bit hard to believe, that's because I've changed a few of the details. There is no Ásátru, Inc.; Michael Hoffman does not have a contract with District 205 (nor should he); and he hasn't been mentoring white students and protesting the firing of a white principal.

In its essence, however, the story is true. On March 9, the school board voted unanimously to award a \$40,000 contract to Shores, Inc. (*Shores*, the company's website notes, means "rooted"). The company's founder, Yahcolyah Muhammad, once demanded that the very same school board "Show respect for the black community and not remove our leaders," when the board fired Kenneth Jackson, the principal of Jefferson High School, for changing the failing grades of black students. Muham-

mad later volunteered his time to mentor black students at the district's Leadership and Learning Academy, which he parlayed into his paying gig.

And while Muhammad has never written any books, he is the founder and director of curriculum and instruction at Muhammad University of Islam, an organization associated with the Nation of Islam. Minister Yahcolyah is a fairly popular speaker at Nation of Islam events and runs an Islamic study group that brings other Nation of Islam luminaries to speak at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb.

One of those speakers, Ashashed Muhammad (no relation to Yahcolyah), came to the NIU campus on August 29, 2009, to hawk his book, *The Synagogue of Satan*, the Nation of Islam's equivalent of Hoffman's *Judaism Discovered*. (The Foreword to *The Synagogue of Satan* was written by Malik Zulu Shabazz, the national chairman of the New Black Panther Party.) Minister Yahcolyah's website for the Islamic study group includes a book list featuring such titles as *Our Saviour Has Arrived* by Elijah Muhammad ("Messenger of ALLAH"), *The Isis Papers* by Dr. Frances Cress Welsing ("This work is dedicated to the global system of white supremacy"), and the Nation of Islam's old chestnut, *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews*.

While the *Register Star* reported on March 1 that Minister Yahcolyah's bio on the Shores website noted his role at the Muhammad University of Rockford, that line is now missing. I wonder why. It's not as if school-district officials or school-board members, or even the *Register Star* or any of the other Rockford media that covered the vote, saw any problem with Minister Yahcolyah's apparent racism and antisemitism.

In the fall, if Minister Yahcolyah finds that running programs at two schools is too much work, perhaps he can hire Michael Hoffman to help him out. Stranger things have happened—like the approval of this contract. ♦