



# ELIJAH AND ELISHA

MESSENGERS IN WORD AND DEED

# God Shows His Power

- God can work in small things to show His great power
- 2 Kings 5:1-14
- Elisha's healing of a leper foreshadows Jesus' healing many lepers in His ministry.

# God Shows His Power

- In Israel, lepers were considered ritually unclean and had to live outside the community, alone or in designated colonies.
- Therefore, the healing of leprosy in Israel was not only about restoring the physical health of the leper but also restoring that person to the community.
- But this story is about a Gentile with leprosy.

# God Shows His Power

- Naaman was the highest commander of Syria's army.
- Apparently, they didn't have the same rules about isolating those with leprosy as Israel did.
- Naaman was not only able to be in community with others, but he was also a great leader among his people.

# God Shows His Power

- Syria is also called Aram.
- It is north of Israel, and throughout Israel's history, they alternated between being an enemy and an ally of Israel, depending on the time and the situation.
- At this point in history, they were enemies. Yahweh had given victory to Syria over Israel (N).

# God Shows His Power

- At this point in history, they were enemies. The text tells us Yahweh had given victory to Syria over Israel (N).
- God was using Syria to accomplish His punishment of Israel for their idolatry.
- This was one of the curses of the covenant, one of the things Elijah and Elisha were sent to warn the people about.

# God Shows His Power

- When the Syrian army attacked Israel, Naaman brought a girl from Israel back as a slave.
- Though much of Israel worshipped false gods, this girl knew about the power of Elisha.
- She suggested to Naaman's wife that he go to Elisha to be healed.

# God Shows His Power

- So, the king of Syria sent a letter to the king of Israel, and Naaman took 10 talents of silver and 6,000 shekels of gold with the letter.
- This was an exorbitant amount of money, a king's ransom.
- Converted to today's money, it would be about three-quarters of a billion dollars.

# God Shows His Power

- When the king of Israel received the letter, he tore his clothes.
- Aram had just attacked Israel, so he thought the king was trying to start a fight with him.
- If he couldn't cure this man, the king of Syria might use it as an excuse to attack him again.

# God Shows His Power

- The text doesn't specify which king of Israel this was, but the king most recently referenced is Jehoram.
- Elisha did not respect him because of his lack of faith in Yahweh (3:1, 13–14).
- It is telling that his reaction was despair instead of going to Elisha in faith that he could heal Naaman.

# God Shows His Power




- It is frustrating but not surprising that he didn't start to trust in Yahweh after the water miracle at Moab.
- Elisha heard about it and sent word to the king that he would heal the man so Syria would know there is a true prophet in Israel.
- This wasn't about Elisha's glory but showed that the one true God is Yahweh.

# God Shows His Power

- Naaman came to the door of Elisha's house in all his military power with horses and chariots.
- But Elisha didn't even come to the door; he sent a messenger.
- He didn't acknowledge Naaman's lavish gifts. Elisha was not kowtowing to Naaman's authority, wealth or power.

# God Shows His Power

- The messenger told Naaman that Elisha said to go wash in the Jordan seven times, and his flesh would be restored.
- From Samaria, a trip to the Jordan would have been about 40 miles. There was no easy or direct route.
- Naaman was angry; this was too simple. He had expected Elisha to come out and call upon the name of his God, wave his hand, and cure him.

-  Naaman travels to Israel
-  Naaman travels to Elisha
-  Naaman travels to the Jordan River



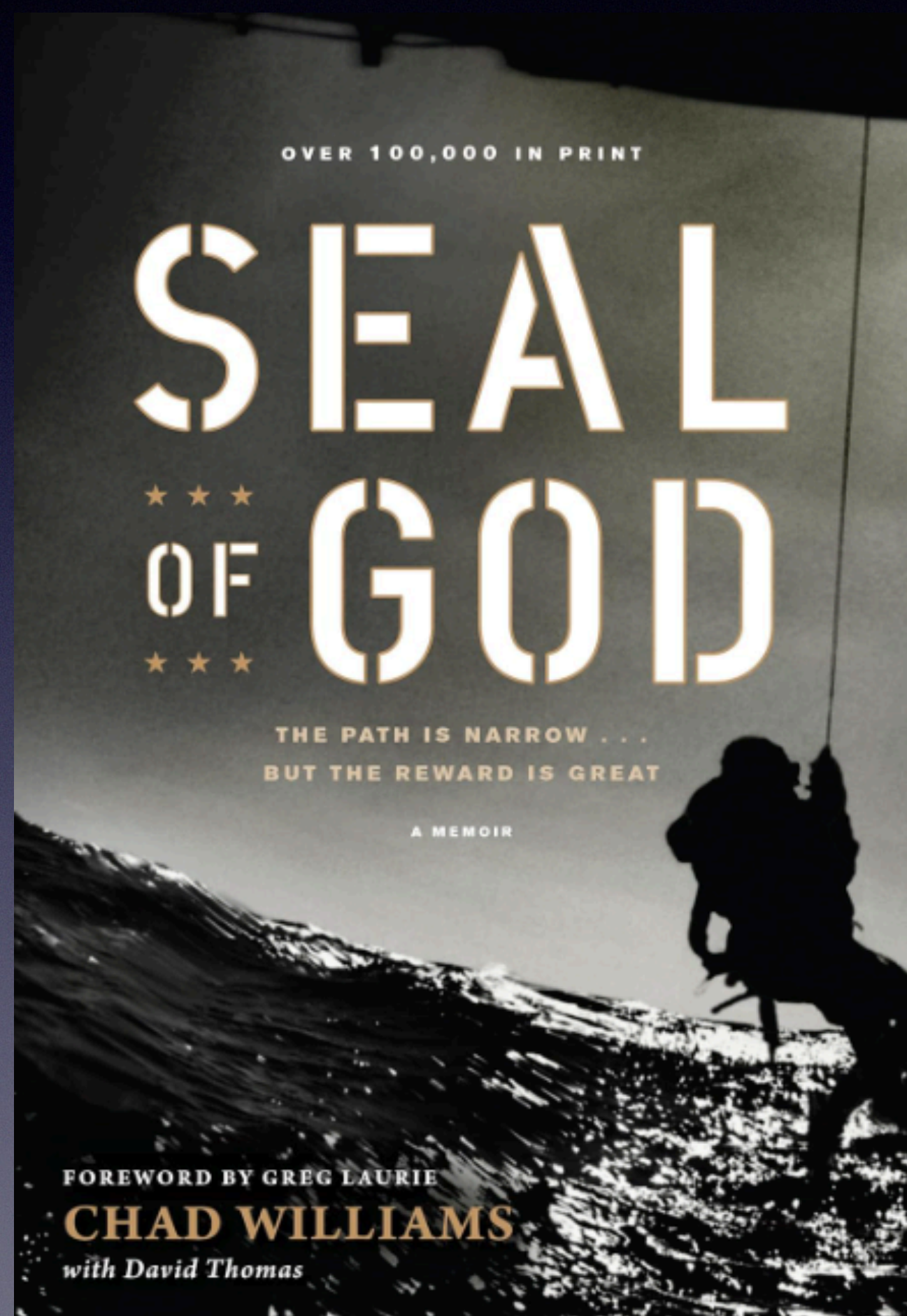
# God Shows His Power

- He said the rivers of Damascus were better than the Jordan anyway.
- His servants said if Elisha had asked him to do something complicated or difficult, he would have done it, so why not try something simple?
- So Naaman did it, and it worked.

# God Shows His Power

- This miracle reminds us of when Elijah heard God not in the great wind, earthquake, or fire but in the gentle whisper.
- Many of us expect that God only works in big, loud ways, but often He works in the small, simple things.

# Salvation Through This Message



- Former U.S. Navy SEAL Chad Williams detailed his journey through training, deployment to Iraq, and his spiritual transformation.
- Heard a sermon about Naaman by Greg Laurie and gave his life to Christ.

# No Other God

- There is no other God in all the earth but Yahweh
- 2 Kings 5:15-19
- In the same way Elijah's raising of the widow of Zarephath's son caused her to declare that Yahweh alone is God, so Naaman's being healed of leprosy caused him to declare that Yahweh alone is God.

# No Other God

- These were both Gentiles who came to faith in Yahweh after He performed personal miracles for them.
- This points us ahead to the theology of the Gospel – that we are saved by faith and regardless of our ethnicity.
- That theology is explained in the New Testament, but we see it throughout the Old Testament in many accounts of Gentiles who came to faith in Yahweh.

# No Other God

- Naaman tried to give Elisha the gifts he had brought, which were fit for a king, and called himself a servant of Elisha, a statement of great humility for a man of such power, wealth, and honor.
- But Elisha refused to accept them, even when Naaman urged him. Elisha had no need for excessive gifts. The Lord would provide for him everything he needed.

# No Other God

- Naaman also committed himself to never worship any god but Yahweh.
- He asked to take two loads of dirt from Israel so he could build an altar to Yahweh with dirt from His Holy Land.
- Then he explained to Elisha that when his master, the king of Syria, went into the Temple of Rimmon, the king had to lean on Naaman's arm.

# No Other God

- Therefore, when the king bowed, Naaman would have to bow.
- He would only be bowing his body, not his heart.
- He would not be worshipping Rimmon.
- He asked Elisha's pardon for this and Elisha gave it.

# No Other God

- Naaman would still live in the world of the Arameans; he wasn't going to move to Israel and physically join their covenant family. But he was committing his life to Yahweh and Yahweh alone, so he did join the covenant family spiritually.
- Naaman shows us what it looks like for a Gentile to come to faith in Yahweh, even hundreds of years before Peter and Paul were called to preach to the Gentiles.

# Scripture Condemns

- Scripture condemns those who use God for personal gain
- 2 Kings 5:19-27
- Gehazi had been Elisha's servant for a while, but he wasn't called a disciple of Elisha.
- He wasn't his chosen successor as Elisha had been for Elijah.

# Scripture Condemns

- Nothing is said about its leading to this, and now we see why. His heart was not pure. He may not have started out serving Elisha for personal gain, but when he saw a chance to use him for personal gain, he took it.
- Considering what Naaman had offered Elisha, Gehazi's request was extremely modest, but it was still an incredible sum for one person.

# Scripture Condemns

- A talent of silver was 300 years' worth of wages for a typical laborer.
- In today's terms, for someone making \$35,000 a year, it would be like receiving \$10 million.
- Elisha called him out with the language he used, which described a royal level of wealth (1 Samuel 8:14–17).

# Scripture Condemns

- Both Elisha and Gehazi used the phrase “as the Lord lives” (oath language), but for opposite reasons, highlighting a huge contrast between their hearts.
- Elisha used the phrase to anchor himself in God’s presence and authority.
- Gehazi used the same phrase to justify doing the exact opposite, to pursue personal gain.

# Scripture Condemns

- He had also convinced himself he was executing some kind of justice. He said Elisha had “spared Naaman.”
- Gehazi believed Naaman should have had to pay for his miracle, for whatever reason,
- Gehazi rationalized his greed by convincing himself that, because Naaman was an Aramean (enemy of Israel), it was acceptable to profit from him.

# Scripture Condemns

- Gehazi's actions demonstrate a lack of understanding of grace. Regardless of his justification, he went against his master's wishes, which he knew to be wrong, and he used God's name to do it.
- His behavior was deceptive. He lied to Naaman about Elisha's asking for the money. He hid the money from Elisha and then lied to him about where he had been.

# Scripture Condemns

- Elisha knew what Gehazi had done (verse 26) and confronted him when he returned.
- Regardless of the justifications Gehazi had made to himself, Elisha knew he was really dreaming of personal wealth, indicated by the way he talked about orchards and vineyards, animals, and servants.

# Scripture Condemns

- He cursed Gehazi with the leprosy of which he had just healed Naaman.
- This had much more serious consequences in Israel than just the disease.
- He would also be cut off from the community.

# Scripture Condemns

- This theme of people's trying to profit from ministry runs throughout Scripture.
- Gehazi is an early, vivid example of what later writers explicitly warned against.
- Ezekiel condemned the “bad shepherd” leaders of Israel who used the people for personal gain (Ezekiel 34).

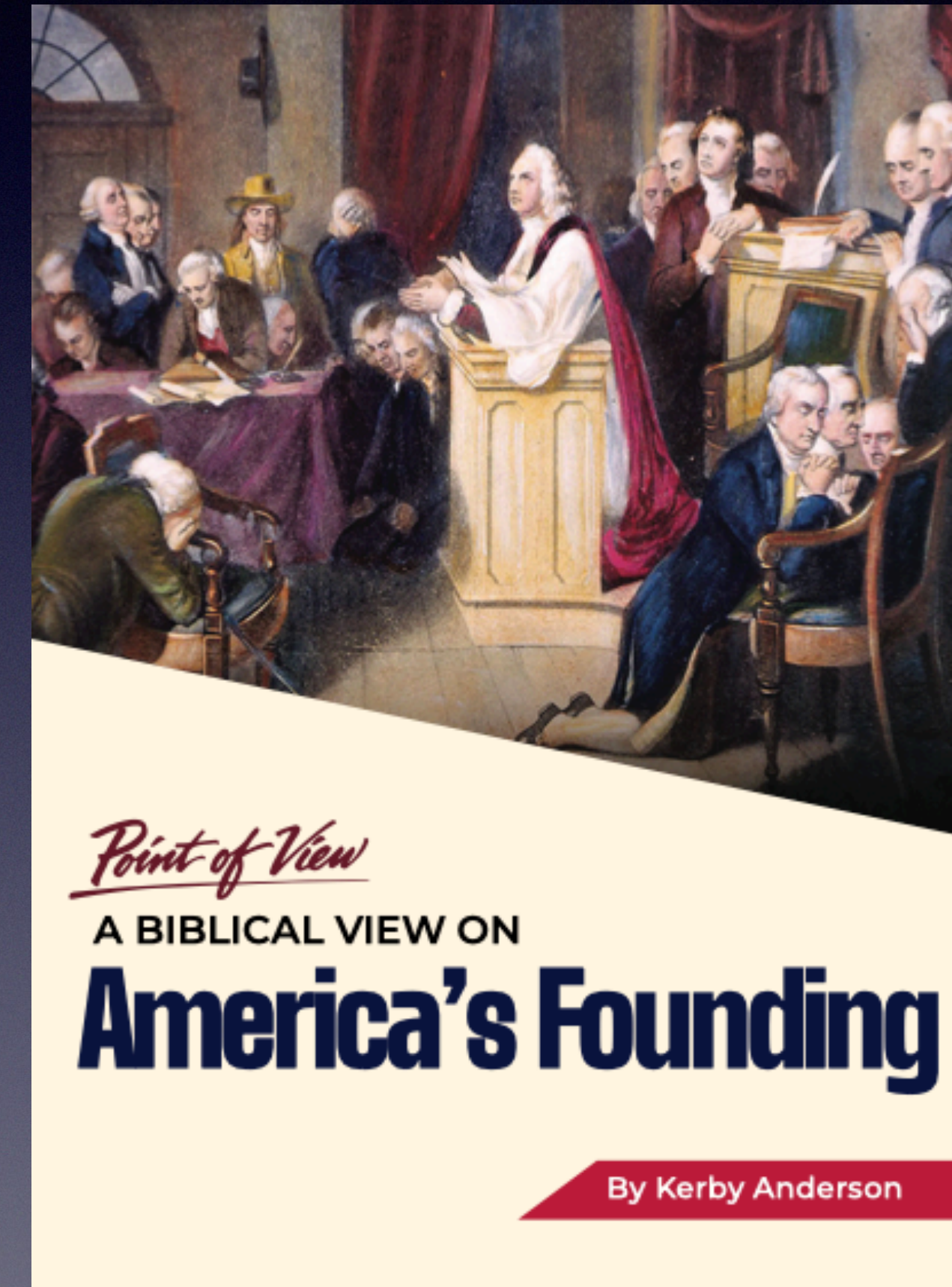
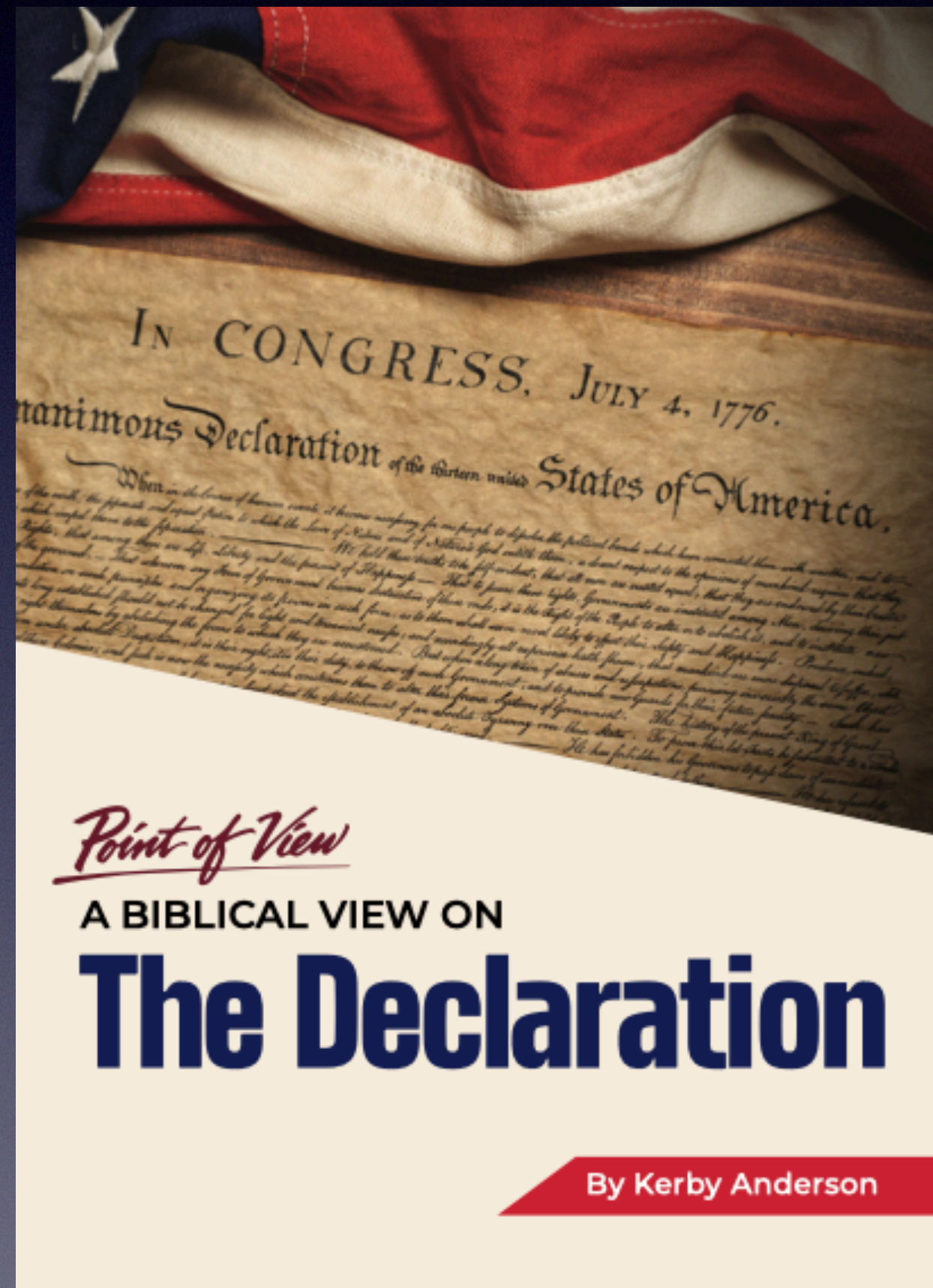
# Scripture Condemns

- Jesus drove the moneychangers out of the temple for turning it into a “den of robbers,” a quote from Jeremiah, who condemned leaders for using the temple for personal gain in his day (Matthew 21:12–13; Jeremiah 7:11)
- Peter described false teachers as exploiting the people out of greed or using their leadership roles for shameful gain (1 Peter 5:2–3).

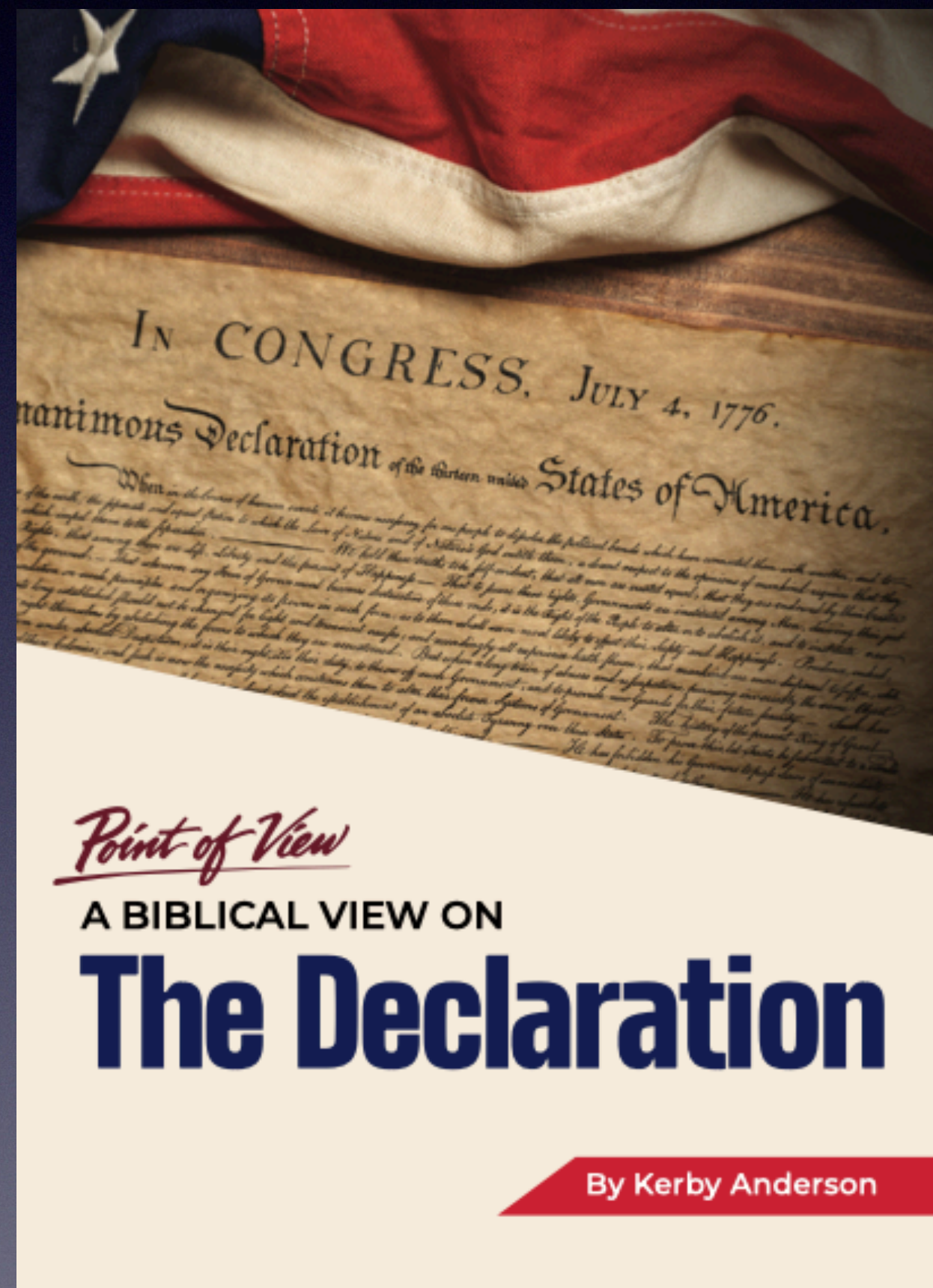
# Scripture Condemns

- Most ministry leaders are in it for the right reasons, but there are grifters who use God to swindle people out of money.
- Scripture tells us it is right to pay our ministry leaders fairly (1 Timothy 5:17–18), but no one should be motivated by profit to preach the Gospel (2 Corinthians 2:17).

# Resources

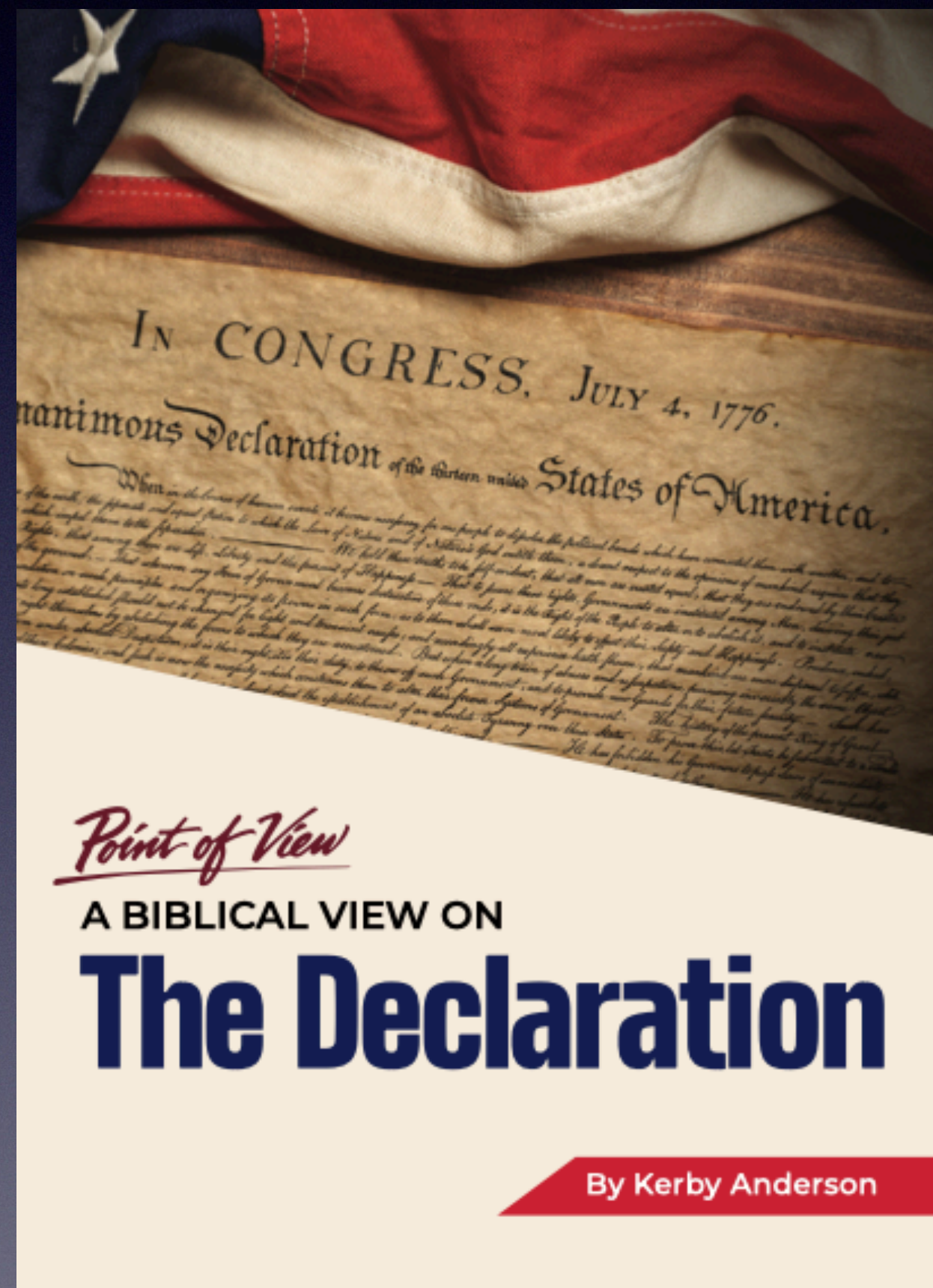


# Resources



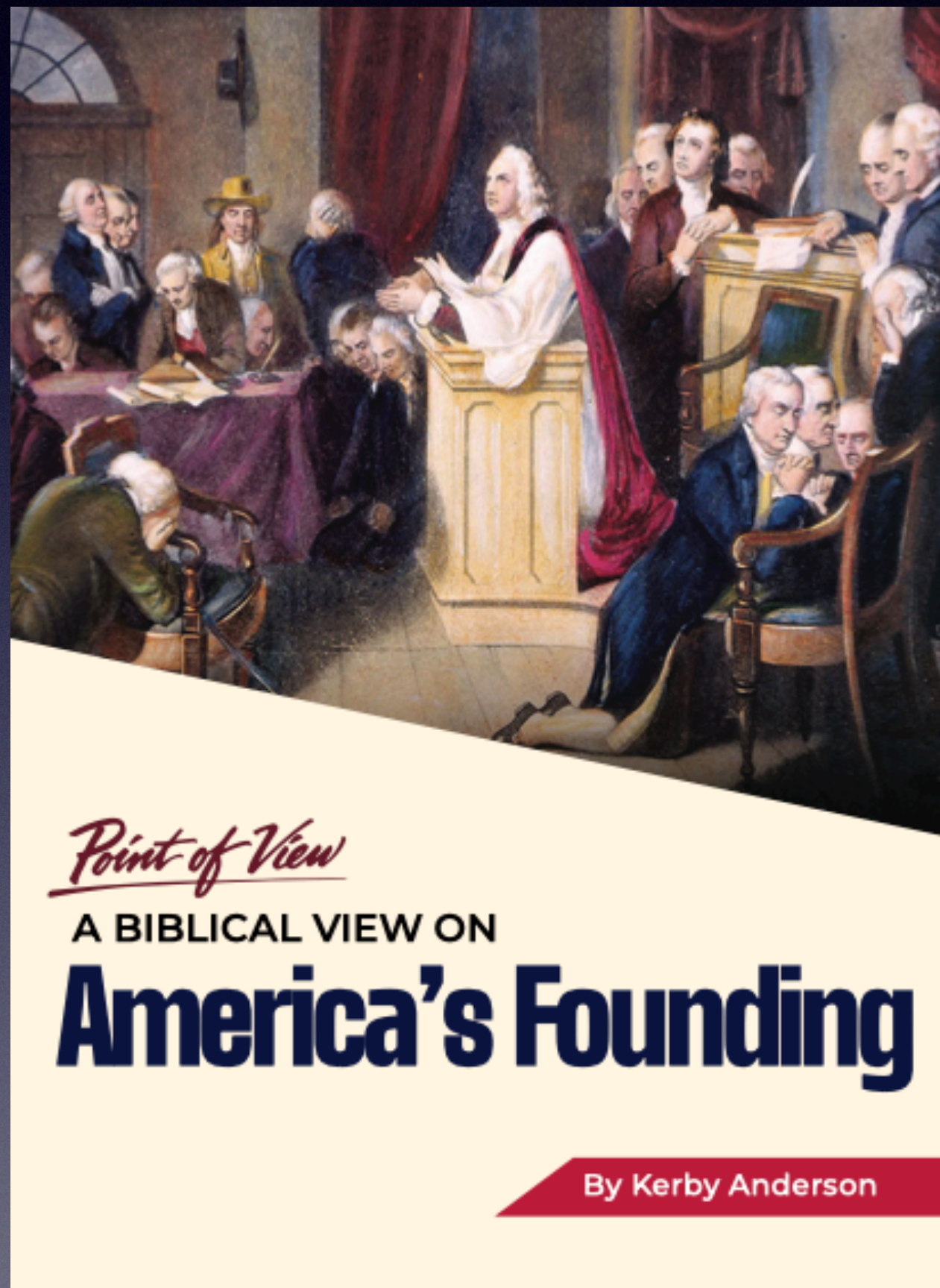
- The phrase “laws of nature” had a fixed meaning in 18th century England and America.
- It was a direct reference to the laws of God in a created order as described by John Locke and in William Blackstone’s Commentaries on the Laws of England.

# Resources



- God is also implicitly mentioned in the Declaration three other times.
- First, humans are “endowed by their Creator” with certain rights. Second, the colonists were “appealing to the Supreme Judge of the World.” Third, they called for “protection of divine Providence.”

# Resources



- This booklet dismisses the “myth of the Founder’s Deism” and idea of a “Godless Constitution.”
- It explains the founder’s views about “Religion and Morality” and their views about “Religious Liberty.”