



We've all heard the saying, "A cat has nine lives." Apparently, the possibility of a state lottery also has nine lives. I was told when I began to work with the Legislature in January that nothing is dead until it is, "Dead, dead, dead." I was an eyewitness in the House of Representatives when not one, not two, but three attempts at a state lottery were rejected. I am grateful to those responsible for the repeated rejection of a state lottery. I thought at that point, and others in the legislature thought that a state lottery was, "Dead, dead, dead."

But then, March 27th came. I got up in Jackson on that Monday morning and drove to First Baptist Church in Tupelo, MS. I had the wonderful privilege, thanks to

Charles Rodgers, of preaching at the Senior Citizen Rally for northeast Mississippi (area 2). We had a wonderful time. I drove back to Jackson and went straight to the North gallery of the House. At midnight, sitting in the gallery, I watched the train wreck as the Legislature missed the deadline on certain budget items for the next year. March 27 came and went without the budget being completed.

Though I am a rookie, I believe some in our leadership in our state government wanted this to happen. You say, "Why would you believe that?" Missing the deadline necessitates

the Governor calling a special session before June 30. He can blame the Legislature for the wasted money of a special session in a state economy hurting for revenue.

A special session can (I did say can, not will) give him and his followers (I did say followers, not leadership) a fresh start on a state lottery. It will be the Governor's call whether or not the special session deals with a state lottery. If (and I did say if) the Governor chooses to ask the special session to deal with a state lottery, it will be "short notice" with little warning. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound

of cure. Please go ahead while you have time and opportunity to let the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the Speaker of the House, and your Senator and Representative know how you feel. By the time you know about the problem, it may be too late.

Be proactive on this issue. Anyone against the lottery will appreciate your effort; anyone who doesn't appreciate your effort needed it anyway, so let them know. Contact your elected officials in our state. The main number at the Capitol is 601-359-3770.

You have heard the old saying, "There's more than one

way to skin a cat." A special session of our Legislature could be another way for those in favor of a quick fix for our economy and budget to "skin a cat" with a state lottery. But who wants a dead cat?

Some in our state would have you believe the lottery is the "Cat's Meow" for all that ails our state's economy and budget. This the same bunch that said casino gambling would solve all our problems. Please, don't gamble on the lottery. It is better to be safe than sorry.

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## The Cat's Meow

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### SYRIA

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using chemical weapons that have resulted in the deaths and sufferings of scores of Syrian civilians. Americans must not be isolationists in such matters."

Gaines agreed with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's assessment that, "in both word and action [Trump] sent a strong and clear message [that] the use and spread of chemical weapons will not be tolerated."

The SBC president added, "When military bullies harm helpless people, someone should stand up for the innocent and for righteousness. I believe America should do just that."

Carver, now the North American Mission Board's executive director of chaplaincy, claimed the American strike should be considered an ethical use of military force for at least three reasons:

■ It had a just cause because "the U.S. had warned... Assad for over five years against the movement or deployment of weapons of mass destruction," and Assad "failed to heed the clear warnings."



GAINES



CARVER

"In the aftermath of this week's deadly gas attack, it simply made no sense for President Trump to wait for Assad to use these deadly weapons at some point again in the future. It was necessary for the sake of peace and order in that region," Carver told BP in written comments.

■ Trump's order to strike was lawful and in keeping with the U.S. president's "authority to take limited military actions that protect U.S. national security, promote our democratic values, and defend the innocent of other nation states."

"If the U.S. had done nothing, it would have been a dereliction of our duty as a world power and a nation founded on Judeo-Christian principles."

■ The strike was a "last resort" following years of diplomatic, economic, and political efforts to halt human rights violations by the Assad regime.

Immediate past U.S. President Barack Obama threatened Assad with retaliation after Assad earlier used chemical weapons on his own people, but backed down later when Assad did so.

Carver added that Americans should "pray without ceasing for our president and all of those who are in authority over our lives, especially during this critical time in the history of the world."

"Pray that God will provide President Trump the wisdom, discernment and moral courage to meet his increasing demands as commander-in-chief," Carver said. "Pray that the president exercises his authority in a credible, noble and God-fearing way.

"Pray for God's protection, provision, perseverance, and peace on the members of the Armed Services who support and defend our nation, and who are deployed in harm's way preserving global peace and order."

ERLC's Moore said "the crisis in Syria ought to shock every human conscience," adding the missile strike is "welcome," if part of a larger strategy for Syria.

"It ought to be clear that the Assad regime's murderous terrorism there threatens to further unravel the already precarious situation in the Middle East, and has implications both for human rights and national security."

"As long as the most recent actions by the United States are part of a long-term strategy to resolve this crisis, I see them as welcome."

"We should pray for the president and our country's national security leaders for wisdom in confronting this awful situation. Above all, we should pray for peace and justice in Syria, and for the thriving of the Syrian church, where we have had brothers and sisters in Christ since before Paul's Damascus Road conversion."

Following the strike, ERLC tweeted, "We are praying for the people of Syria, who are created in the image of God. Will you join us?"



MOORE

### BIBLIOPHER

MDLGLUIUH GDRAA HUYUCIU LWU

LV GJYD YDCAXHUW CW EB WREU,

HUYUCIU KD EU; RWX MDLGLUIUH

GDRAA HUYUCIU EU, HUYUCIU KD WLK

EU, SJK DCE KDRK GUWK EU.

ERHP WCWU: KDCHKB-GUIUW.

Clue: W = N

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Psalm 11:4

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