

THE EPOCH TIMES

LIFE &

TRADITION

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Although vulnerability is a key factor in a good marriage, it is something that many women today struggle with, according to marriage expert Suzanne Venker.



Nurturing Marriage in Tough Times

A conversation with marriage expert Suzanne Venker

BARBARA DANZA

One of the many profound lessons this challenging year has taught us is just how important our closest relationships are. For some married couples, difficult times may have forged stronger bonds; for others existing issues may have become magnified.

I asked Suzanne Venker, a relationship coach and the author of five books on marriage, for her advice on nurturing marriage in troubled times. Here's what she said.

The Epoch Times: Every married couple wants a good marriage. What do you believe are the key characteristics of a good marriage?
Suzanne Venker: There are four main aspects of marriage that have the capacity to make or break the relationship. If a couple can agree on those, they have a great shot at a happy marriage. Those four areas are: money, parenting, religion, and in-laws.

Money is the No. 1 source of marital conflict and divorce. This has always been the case, but the nature of the problems has changed. For one thing, men and women are bringing a boatload of student loan debt to the marriage and viewing this debt and "his" and "hers." Nothing is your own after you get married; the entire purpose of marriage is to become one, or part of a team.

If a couple's monies are separate and if there's no transparency, this is a huge indicator the couple is approaching marriage all wrong. To be successful at marriage, you have to work together. All income is joint income when you marry, regardless of who makes what—and both partners need equal spending power. Bottom line: When it comes to money, if you and your spouse are adversaries rather than allies, your marriage will be rocky or will end.

How to parent the children—or more specifically, how to discipline them—is also huge. It is imperative that a couple be on the same page about how to discipline, otherwise the kids wind up in charge because they'll use their parents' disagreements to their advantage and wreak havoc on the marriage.

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Why We Can 'Believe' in Andrea Bocelli

The Italian tenor's new album shares joy and inspiration

Italian singer Andrea Bocelli in concert at Madison Square Garden in New York on Dec. 13, 2018.

MAUREEN MACKEY

The great Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli has delighted and amazed audiences all over the globe with his stunning vocal performances. Now, a new musical release continues that tradition.

His latest album, "Believe," showcases songs that have "inspired and sustained Bocelli over the years," according to his publicity postings.

The songs on "Believe" include Bocelli's rousing interpretation of the great Rodgers and Hammerstein "Carousel" tune, "You'll Never Walk Alone," as well as a never-before-heard track

from composer Ennio Morricone.

"I think that this was the best moment for an album speaking to the spirit," said Bocelli on Nov. 13 during the Facebook Live launch of "Believe," which was broadcast around the globe from his home in Tuscany.

"There are many different kinds of music in this album," he added. "We have music by Mozart, there is music by [Ennio] Morricone—somebody will remember that he wrote 'Romanza'—and there is a song written by me," said Bocelli humbly.

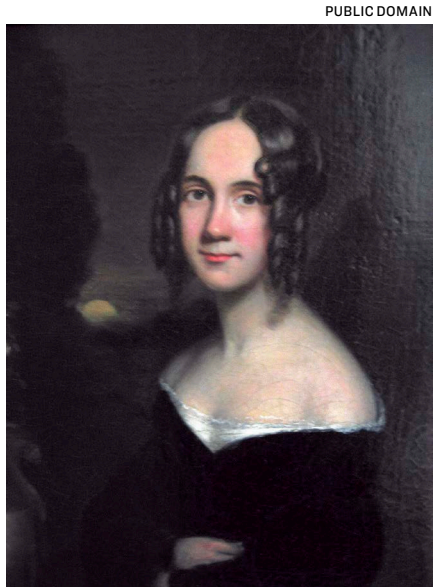
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NICHOLAS HUNT/GETTY IMAGES





Norman Rockwell's illustration "Freedom From Want," appearing in the March 6, 1943, issue of The Saturday Evening Post (it was created in November 1942), has become emblematic of our Thanksgiving celebration. National Archives and Records Administration.



She was known as the "Mother of Thanksgiving" for having taken up the cause of making Thanksgiving a national holiday. Sarah Josepha Hale, 1831, by James Reid Lambdin. Richard's Free Library, Newport, New Hampshire.

Thanksgiving Day gratitude usually involves expressing our appreciation to some form of a higher power, even for nonbelievers.

TRADITIONAL CULTURE

A Day of Light and Hope in Our Darkness THANKSGIVING 2020

JEFF MINICK

Most of us know some sort of barebones history about the origins of Thanksgiving, that three-day feast in 1621 at the Pilgrim colony in Plymouth, Massachusetts. It included some of the colony's Native American allies from the Wampanoag tribe and their chief, Massasoit. Taught among other survival skills how to plant corn by English-speaking Squanto (a member of the confederation of Wampanoag tribes), the Pilgrims wanted to celebrate both their survival and their successful harvest.

But what about the 19th-century writer and editor Sarah Josepha Hale? Ever hear of her in relation to Thanksgiving?

Me neither.

A Woman of Accomplishment and a Defender of Tradition
In her own day, Sarah Hale (1788–1879) was quite the celebrity. For one, Hale was a New England poet whose most famous work—"Mary Had a Little Lamb"—is still known and recited by American youngsters. She turned to writing and poetry as a means of income to support herself and her five children after her husband died in the ninth year of their marriage.

Hale's literary accomplishments led to her appointment as the editor



"The First Thanksgiving, 1621," circa 1912 and circa 1915, by Jean Leon Jerome Ferris. Private Collection. Library of Congress's Prints and Photographs division.

of Godey's Lady's Book, a women's periodical that she made into the most popular magazine in the country. In addition to her editing skills and business acumen, for 40 years Hale wrote columns as well.

She was a staunch abolitionist but extolled the traditional roles of women as wives and mothers, and opposed women's vote. Though criticized as being too traditional in her views, Hale's position as editor and her writing made her, according to the online Encyclopedia, "perhaps the most widely known and most influential women of her time."

Hale also championed restoring or building various historical sites. Through her advocacy and her fundraising, for example, she helped preserve George Washington's home, Mount Vernon, and worked tirelessly soliciting money for the building of

the monument that now stands at Bunker Hill.

But one more jewel belongs in the diadem of this remarkable woman.

The Mother of Thanksgiving

For years, Sarah Hale, through articles and scores of letters, pushed politicians to make Thanksgiving a national holiday. Though New Englanders had long celebrated the occasion—the dates varied from state to state—Thanksgiving did not resonate with the rest of the country. In 1789, George Washington declared a day of national thanksgiving to honor the victory of the American Revolution and the passage of the Constitution, and John Adams and James Madison did likewise during their presidencies. But otherwise, American leaders showed little interest in this celebration until 1863.

It was in that year—when the country was engaged in a brutal civil war—that Hale, who for 36 years had pushed for a national day of giving thanks, wrote to President Lincoln about this idea and was finally rewarded with success. In his proclamation to the nation, Lincoln declared the last Thursday of November as "A National Day of Thanksgiving and Praise" on which Americans were to ask God to "commend to his tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife" and to "heal the

wounds of the nation."

As a result, Sarah Hale earned the nickname of the "Mother of Thanksgiving."

Traditions

Many Americans share certain traditions on Thanksgiving Day. Families gather together, and turkey and dressing, green bean casserole, and pumpkin pie are fixtures on the menu. Some watch televised football games or the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. The ongoing pandemic has changed some of these activities, with governors in some states issuing edicts about how Thanksgiving may be celebrated, but for most Americans this holiday remains a celebration of family and food.

And most families practice their own special traditions. In a Reader's Digest article, "34 Most Meaningful Thanksgiving Holiday Traditions," Charlotte Hilton Anderson shares some holiday activities sent to her by her readers. Some play games on this day, one family camps out in the living room after the big meal and falls asleep watching television, and another features a "dinosaur hunt" for the young ones, hiding turkey bones around the house and having the kids track them down.

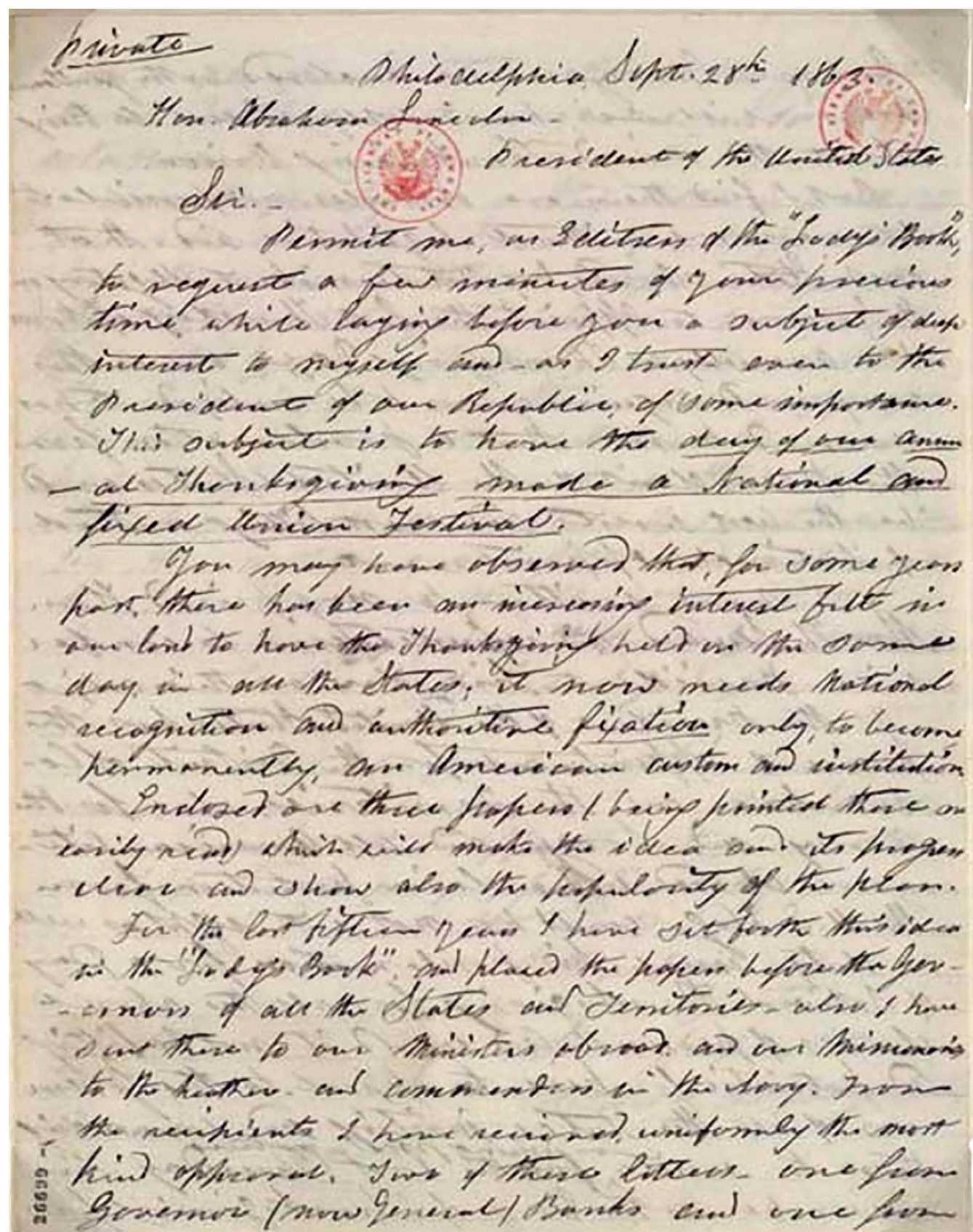
In my household, no Thanksgiving meal would be complete without the "green salad," more formally called "Pacific Lime Mold" or "Lime Cottage Salad." This tart yet sweet con-



"Grace Before the Meal" (or "Mealtime Prayer"), 1885, by Fritz von Uhde. Old National Gallery, Berlin.



"The First Thanksgiving at Plymouth," 1914, by Jennie Augusta Brownscombe. Pilgrim Hall Museum, Plymouth, Mass.



September 1863 letter from editor Sarah Josepha Hale to President Abraham Lincoln discussing the need for a national Thanksgiving holiday. Library of Congress.

coction livens up the flavor of turkey and dressing, and adds color to the table. Sparkling cider is another staple for this feast.

We also gather before the meal, hold hands, say grace, and then go around the circle with each person sharing something they are grateful for. Some of the little ones are too shy to speak, but every year their older brothers and sisters shed light on their lives and personalities by giving thanks in this way, allowing me to get to know them better.

Gratitude

Sometimes the trials of this long and sometimes dark year we have endured—COVID-19 with its attendant masks, social distancing, and closures, the riots and fires in many of our major cities, a bitter election that has only deepened the already ugly divide among the American people—make gratitude seem in as short supply as some commodities in our grocery stores during the worst of the pandemic. These days, being grateful often requires a summoning of the will, if we even remember to appreciate the good people and things in our lives.

Moreover, Thanksgiving Day gratitude usually involves expressing our appreciation to some form of a higher power, even for nonbelievers. We can offer a "thank you" to a person, but the atheist who spuriously says "I'm grateful for my children" or "I'm

grateful for America" is inexact in his language. Exactly who or what does he intend as the recipient of that gratitude?

But to whatever god we may pray, or whatever our circumstances, we can find in the practice of gratitude not only a remembrance of the blessings in our lives but also a source of consolation, hope, and strength. Whether for large gifts like the birth of a child or a successfully treated cancer, or the small everyday pleasures of a cup of coffee and a biscotti, expressing our appreciation, even just to ourselves, frequently lifts our spirits and keeps us moving forward.

To have set an entire day aside just to express this thanks makes Thanksgiving one of the best of holidays.

To Heal the Wounds of the Nation

Perhaps, as in that dark time of the Civil War, Lincoln's hopes for that first official Thanksgiving should be our hope as well for a country that is almost as terribly and bitterly divided as America was then.

Thanksgiving will occur this year at a time when Democrats and Republicans are at one another's throats, and when both parties show acrimony toward their own members—the radical left versus liberals in the Democrat party, the Trumpists versus the Never-Trumpers in the Republican. If he becomes president, Joe Biden has vowed to bring

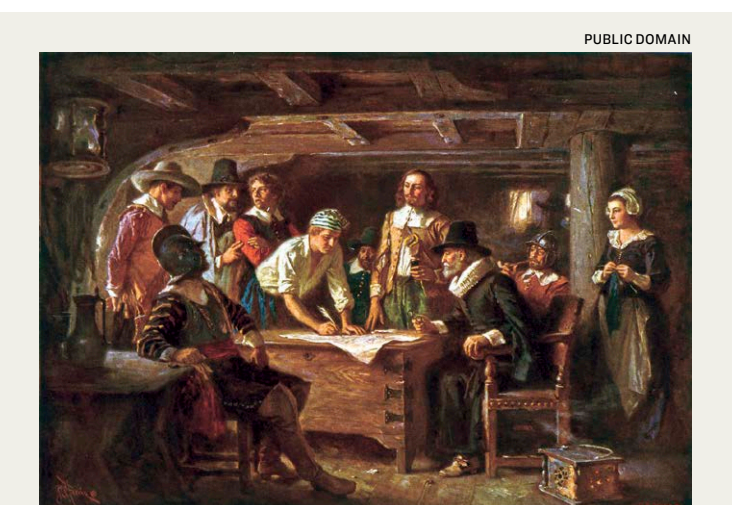
Americans together again. Given his angry rhetoric, the ongoing investigation into his corruption vis-à-vis his son Hunter, the radicals like Kamala Harris who surround him, and the anger of tens of millions of Americans who believe he stole this election, the odds of Joe Biden unifying the American people are slim.

No—if we are to coexist as a people, we mustn't depend on politicians to reunite us. Instead, individuals must bridge that chasm: America's sons and daughters who can think with their hearts, who can reach out to friends and family members who hold opposing viewpoints, and who are grateful to be citizens of the United States.

Let's Make This Thanksgiving Special

On this feast day, let's take a few moments to appreciate the blessings bestowed on us. We flip a switch, and a room lights up. We turn on a tap, and hot water cascades from the spigot. We pull a small device from our pocket and check out the latest news, laugh at a joke Aunt Rosemary sent us, and send a message via social media to our cousin in France. We drive to Grandma's house for our meal in 30 minutes, a journey that would have taken half a day or more just a century earlier.

In addition, we still possess the rights and liberties that are as natural to most Americans as breathing.



"Signing the Mayflower Compact 1620," 1899, by Jean Leon Jerome Ferris.

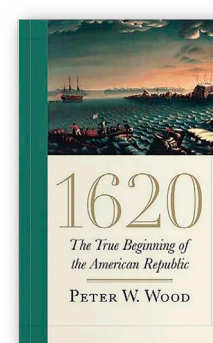
Seeds of Liberty: Remembering the Mayflower Compact

The year 2020 marks the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the Pilgrims in the New World. It's also the quadricentennial of what came to be called the Mayflower Compact. Aware that they had landed far north of their intended destination of Virginia and were therefore under the jurisdiction of no government, the Pilgrims feared that their new colony might disintegrate without government of some sort. Moreover, not all of those who arrived with them shared their religious beliefs, which they suspected might also lead to disharmony.

And so, while still aboard the Mayflower, the leaders of this group drafted and signed a short compact, a covenant establishing a way to "enact, constitute, and frame, such just and equal Laws, Ordinances, Acts, Constitutions, and Officers, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general Good of the Colony; unto which we promise all due Submission and Obedience."

These 41 men created an extraordinary document, an agreement in which the signers established their own government. Though the Pilgrims later became part of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, the Mayflower Compact is the first written social contract in American history, the grandfather of our Declaration of Independence and our Constitution. By taking matters into their own hands, and by committing themselves, their families, and their descendants to liberty guided by law, they paved the way for American republicanism.

When we're sitting down to eat our Thanksgiving Day dinner, let's pause to give thanks to these early settlers for their wisdom and their vision.



A rebuttal of the radical revisionist history of our past called "The 1619 Project" and published by The New York Times.

Some of those liberties are under attack, but when in our history was this not the case? Like our ancestors, we must defend and fight for those rights; otherwise they will vanish. But on Thanksgiving, we can pause to appreciate and treasure them.

Finally, we can use Thanksgiving Day as a teaching moment for our children. Near the end of "1620: A Critical Response to the 1619 Project," a rebuttal of the radical revisionist history of our past published by The New York Times, professor and author Peter W. Wood writes: "A citizen should grow up knowing we are a free people under the rule of law. A citizen should know that it is not some happy accident but the result of an immense effort over many generations. It was the work of courageous men and women who pursued principle even when the situation seemed hopeless."

Let's bear those thoughts in mind in the next few weeks and hope we possess the same valor and virtues of our predecessors.

Happy Thanksgiving to all!

Jeff Minick has four children and a growing platoon of grandchildren. For 20 years, he taught history, literature, and Latin to seminars of homeschooling students in Asheville, N.C., Today, he lives and writes in Front Royal, Va. See JeffMinick.com to follow his blog.

What Our Readers Say (#29)

“ Now I truly feel as if I can breathe while reading the news as presented by The Epoch Times - THANK YOU ... Thank you for your years in the trenches and for rising to be a beacon in this dark world. Shine on, Epoch Times, shine on! ”



The Epoch Times has made it SAFE to read the news again! As a former English teacher, I am educated in knowing when writing and verbal communication posing as “news” crosses into the sector of “opinion” - a line which has become obliterated in mainstream media and standard “news outlets” these days. Mainly I believe this is due to the 24/7 news cycle, but that’s a soapbox for another day. Most American news sources have become so biased in their reporting that they truly believe their bias and opinion is reporting the truth - and even though it may be true in their eyes, both liberal and conservative sides are often far from the full truth. **The Epoch Times is a true breath of fresh air, being forthright in its bias: FOR Democracy and AGAINST Communism.** With that bias clearly

communicated, ET presents the news of our nation and world in prose which delivers the facts concisely and without the tendency or need to emote or opine. The news “air” is so toxic everywhere else I turn that I had all but stopped reading the news and instead was relying on those around me to keep me abreast of critical and timely news events. Now I truly feel as if I can breathe while reading the news as presented by The Epoch Times - THANK YOU. Thank you for providing a safe place for me to exercise my civic responsibility of gathering data/news and being informed, while at the same time allowing me to think for myself. Thank you for your years in the trenches and for rising to be a beacon in this dark world. Shine on, Epoch Times, shine on!

KAREN LEIGH FULLER



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JAMES G. NEEDHAM



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Finally!!! Years ago I swore off the deceptive mainstream media and avoided USA Today while traveling like it was the plague (too soon?), local newspapers, and, God forbid, The New York Times, Wall Street Journal and rest of their ilk. A great newspaper without an agenda outside of telling the whole truth and nothing but the truth (Judge Judy would be proud). Colorful pictures, great articles and timely “complete” news. **My wife and I both love it and encourage all of our neighbors and friends who come over to our house to enjoy!** Great job and keep up the great work Epoch Times!

BOBBY GOUGLER



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