

Pride And It's Consequences
by Mark Legendre

On April 14, 1912, the British ocean liner known as the "Titanic" made its maiden voyage. The ship, which was 882 feet long, was owned by the White Star Line and was the world's largest ship at the time. Many people considered this ship to be unsinkable. Its journey began in England and was to end in New York. There were over 2200 passengers on board, including many prominent persons as well. On the night of April 14th, it sideswiped an iceberg which tore open a 300-foot gash through the hull. Within only three hours the ship had sunk 1200 miles east of New York and 400 miles south of Newfoundland. Over 1500 people on board lost their lives.

Before the Titanic left on its maiden voyage, the captain of the ship was quoted as having made the statement that "God himself could not sink this ship."

The statement made by the captain of the Titanic and the ensuing tragedy point up the serious consequences that sometimes come about when we are filled with what is called "pride." Solomon wrote in Proverbs 16:18 that "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." It is amazing what pride will cause some people to do. In the book of Judges we read about a man by the name of Abimelech, the son of Gideon, whose skull was broken by a woman casting down a millstone from a tower in the city of Thebez. Abimelech did not want it to be said that he had been killed by a woman. He therefore instructed his armor-bearer to thrust him through with his sword to make it look like he had been killed in the battle rather than by a woman (Judges 9:50-54). It was pride that caused Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon to lose his kingdom and his sanity for a period of 7 years (Dan. 4:30-37). It was pride that led David into numbering the people of his kingdom to see how great it was and therefore to bring tragic consequences upon his people because of this sin (1 Chron. 21:1-27).

Pride continues to cause many problems today as well. The Pharisee who prayed to God in Luke 18:9-14 was filled with pride and self-righteousness and it affected the way he prayed. Pride keeps people from becoming Christians, from seeking the help of God and others, and from admitting our wrongs. The answer to this problem is to "humble ourselves and leave the exalting to God" (1 Pet. 5:5-7).