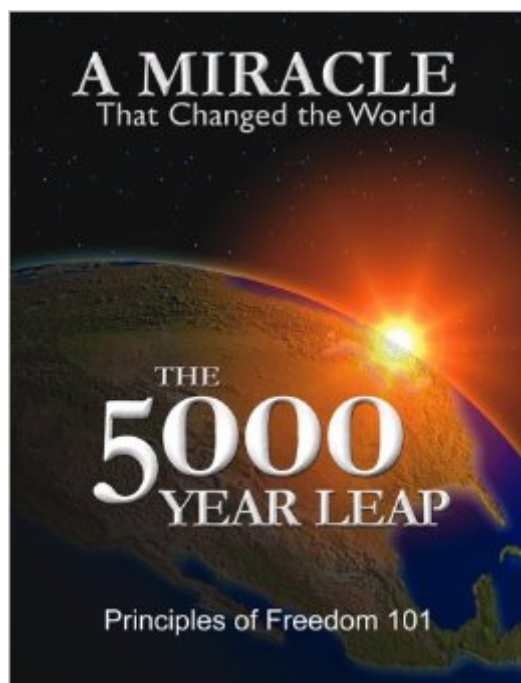


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The 5000 Year Leap



Synopsis

This is the best-selling Original Authorized Edition regularly featured by Glenn Beck to Fox TV viewers as a Must Read! The nation the Founders built is now in the throes of a political, economic, social, and spiritual crisis that has driven many to an almost frantic search for modern solutions. The truth is that the solutions have been available for a long time -- in the writings of our Founding Fathers -- carefully set forth in this timely book. In *The 5000 Year Leap: A Miracle That Changed the World*, Discover the 28 Principles of Freedom our Founding Fathers said must be understood and perpetuated by every people who desire peace, prosperity, and freedom. Learn how adherence to these beliefs during the past 200 years has brought about more progress than was made in the previous 5000 years. These 28 Principles include The Genius of Natural Law, Virtuous and Moral Leaders, Equal Rights--Not Equal Things, and Avoiding the Burden of Debt.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is an incredible book that should be read by all Americans. I first read this book back in the mid 1980s shortly after it was first published. It had such a profound effect on me that I can still recall where I was when I was reading it. That is rather amazing as I have probably read about 1600 books since then. I was excited to see that it had recently been republished as my original copy is pretty ragged. It was great to reread it and brush up on the great ideas contained in it. The premise of the book is that because of the free market system that took root after our Constitution was enacted, the United States literally made a 5000 year leap of progress in the time since then.

The author, W. Cleon Skousen, discussed the changes from the time of the founding of Jamestown in 1607 to the early 1980s when the book was written. In discussing Jamestown, he said: "The most striking thing about the settlers of Jamestown was their startling similarity to the ancient pioneers who built settlements in other parts of the world 5,000 years earlier. The whole panorama of Jamestown demonstrated how shockingly little progress had been made by man during all of those fifty centuries." He went on to say, "The settlers of Jamestown had come in a boat no larger and no more commodious than those of the ancient sea kings. Their tools still consisted of shovel, axe, hoe, and a stick plow which were only slightly improved over those of China, Egypt, Persia, and Greece. They harvested their grain and hay-grass with the same primitive scythes ..." He then discussed the Constitution that was developed by the Founders. It took 180 years for them to put it all together from the beginning of Jamestown in 1607 to the enactment of the U.S.

The 5000 Year leap left me irritated, challenged, and wanting to read more. I found the historical material the most interesting, but every time I read the views and conclusions, I felt the need to check the facts. Somehow it seemed that Dr. Skousen was bending the story. I may be off-base here, or I may not. It has inspired me to do more research. I had two problems specifically. Skousen's concept of good government, which he says he shares with the Founders, is to seek a balance between anarchy, which he equivocates with chaos, and tyranny. To me that sounds like halfway to tyranny, and doesn't help differentiate between the activities where government arguably has a role, and those in which it doesn't. He takes to heart the purpose of government as described in the Declaration of Independence, but I still felt an authoritarian streak running through the book. I think the Founders model was to get as close as possible to liberty, and keep the federal government as small as possible, leaving all else to the people or the states. It may sound like a small semantic difference, but the idea of seeking a balance between pure liberty and pure tyranny is a lot different than staying as close to pure liberty as possible. My other problem was his notion that the part of natural law that is political law is not discovered but revealed. I believe he is saying that the laws which are used to govern human behavior have been revealed by God, through scripture, and are not discovered through experiment as are the laws of physics. He quotes Blackstone on this. I am uncomfortable with this idea, and plan to read more of Blackstone's work to see for myself.

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