

You're of no earthly value unless you're...

# Heavenly Minded

Vol 5 Iss 3



One Fold, One Shepherd by Larry Dyke

*The underlying foundation of the Christian faith is the undeserved, limitless miracle of the love of God that was exhibited on the Cross of Calvary; a love that is not earned and can never be. Paul said this is the reason that "in all these things we are more than conquerors." The things we try to avoid and fight against—tribulation, suffering, and persecution—are the very things that produce abundant joy in us. "We are more than conquerors through Him" "in all these things"; not in spite of them, but in the midst of them. A saint doesn't know the joy of the Lord in spite of tribulation, but because of it.*

*—Oswald Chambers, My Utmost For His Highest*

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## ***In this issue...***

Second Sign Road Map to Pieces The New Sanhedrin Another Gospel

### **Dear Friends,**

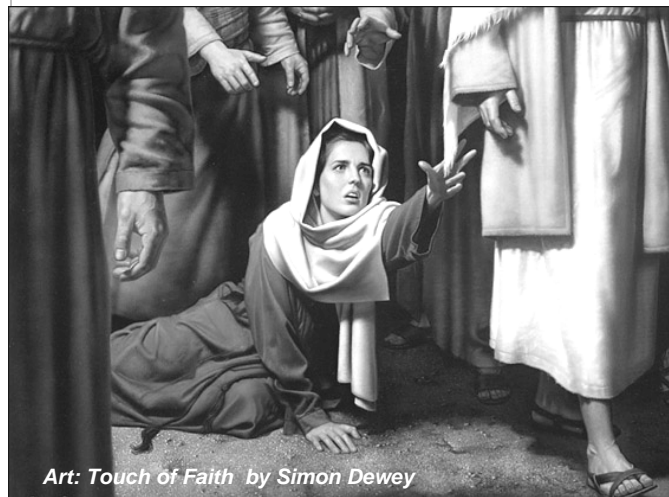
So many things are happening in rapid-fire progression that are significant or potentially important prophetically yet they don't necessarily make the secular headlines. For that reason, we've included a few articles this month on current events relevant to prophecy. We hope they will move your hearts to ever more deeply look for and hasten the Lord's return (2 Pet 3:12) as well as encourage you in your ministries. In addition, we've continued our devotional study in the Gospel of John along with an article reminding us of our Lord's wonderful grace. We hope they will bless you.

*In the bitter waves of woe  
Beaten and tossed about  
By the sullen winds that blow  
From the desolate shores of doubt,  
Where the anchors that faith has cast  
Are dragging in the gale,  
I am quietly holding fast  
To the things that cannot fail.*

*And fierce though the fiends may fight,  
And long though the angels hide,  
I know that truth and right  
Have the universe on their side;  
And that somewhere beyond the stars  
Is a love that is better than fate.  
When the night unlocks her bars  
I shall see Him--and I will wait.*

*--Washington Gladden*

*In Christ's Love, John and Darlene Dickey*



Art: Touch of Faith by Simon Dewey

*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.  
Hebrews 11:1*

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The goal of HM is to encourage our readers to "Set your affection on things above..." and thereby to be the greater and more effective witness to Christ. Articles may be shared freely and reproduced but only in their entirety. Comments and suggestions are always welcome. GBY!

## The Second Sign

John 4:43 – 54

*“the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”(Rev 19:10)*

How refreshing it must have been to Jesus during those two days in the town of Drunken. That’s what Sychar means – drunken. But the Samaritans weren’t the least bit inebriated physically. For two days, they drank of the water of life and without a single sign, not one miraculous healing or casting out of demons, they sincerely believed that Jesus was not only the Jewish Messiah but the Savior of the world. Why? His Word. They heard Him and believed.

This could hardly picture more prophetically the age in which we live and are quickly concluding. You see, for two days, (prophetically, two thousand years -- see 2 Pet 3:8), Christ ministered to these non-Jews, these ‘mongrel half-breeds’ who wanted to know God but were miserably misled by their traditions. In similar fashion those with the Spirit of Christ have ministered to the Lord’s sheep among the gentiles throughout this age, the church age.

But then it was time for Jesus to return to the Jews. Those in Judea were out to get Him, to take Him down, and those in His home town of Nazareth simply could not see Him as anything but the carpenter’s son. So, *“...after the two days He departed from there and went to Galilee. For Jesus Himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country. So when He came to Galilee, the Galileans received Him, having seen all the things He did in Jerusalem at the feast; for they also had gone to the feast.”*

Notice the emphasis on seeing the things He did in Jerusalem. These folks were receptive but not in the manner of the Samaritans. They, like all who live by signs, craved more miracles to keep the leaky balloon of their shallow faith filled. Now, please do not think I mean to belittle the miracle working power of our Lord! To the contrary, He has done many, many outrageous miracles in my own life and I reverently treasure each one. Nevertheless, it is the wonderful Word of God that says, *“...faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.”* (Rom 10:17) Remember, the book of John is all about believing in Jesus (Jn 20:30,31).

Like the Galileans, the religious Jews of today are looking for a messiah who will fulfill myriad signs such as making it possible for them to build the temple and crushing their enemies. Actually, this is the very thing that will make them so susceptible to the lies and deceptions of the soon coming Antichrist. What they are looking for, he will seem to provide. Meanwhile, his protégé, the “false prophet”, will likely spin an interpretation of the scripture to make it look like the AC is the long awaited messiah and worthy of worship.

Back to our text. *“So Jesus came again to Cana of Galilee where He had made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and implored Him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death.”* Now, this man was not

seeking a sign out of curiosity. He had a desperate need. He was of the king’s court and had probably exhausted his other options. From Cana, it was about half a day’s walk to Capernaum, and so it was no small thing he asked of Jesus. This stands in stark contrast to the Roman centurion of Matthew chapter eight, also in Capernaum, who insisted that Jesus had but to speak the word for his servant to be healed and that he wasn’t worthy to have Christ come to his home. This father, however was desperately needing help for his son.

*“Then Jesus said to him, ‘Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe.’”* ‘Wait a minute,’ you might ponder, ‘this fellow’s child was near death and yet Jesus seemed to scold him. That appears callous, almost distant.’ But Christ’s priority was and is faith – true faith in God. This man’s desperation had brought him the four to five hours journey from Capernaum to Cana. His first step back had to be in faith.

Notice also, that although Jesus addressed the man, he used the plural “you people”. What people? The Jews? Surely. However, let’s consider this a bit more. Paul wrote that the Jews, as a people seek after a sign, it’s in their nature (see 1 Cor 1:22). For this reason, I believe that Jesus here was speaking both to the Jewish people of His day and prophetically to those in these last days. You see, Jesus didn’t and doesn’t make mistakes... you’ll see what I mean.

*“The nobleman said to Him, ‘Sir, come down before my child dies!’”* Jesus said to him, *‘Go your way; your son lives.’* So the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he went his way. And as

*he was now going down, his servants met him and told him, saying, ‘Your son lives!’* Then he inquired of them the hour when he got better. And they said to him, *‘Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.’* So the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus said to him, *‘Your son lives.’* And he himself believed, and his whole household.”

Jesus had said, *“Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe.”* But then this man simply believed Jesus as He spoke the words, “your son lives”. In fact, it was only 1PM on the day this happened so if he had any doubt, the father could have easily made it back to Capernaum that evening. But in fact, he spent the rest of the day and the night in Cana before heading back. Clearly, he believed Jesus. The next day, when the servants confirmed the hour of his son’s healing, it served to confirm his faith and give birth to the same among his whole family. So, although Christ spoke to this man about the need for signs and wonders, he wasn’t speaking of him. Jesus was not mistaken! Never was, never is, never will be. Thus, it is likely that Jesus spoke of the Jewish people in general and it’s possible that this nobleman represents typically the group of Jews in the last days described as the ‘remnant’ – Jewish believers who will not be taken in by the AC’s false miracles. (See Joel 2:32, Zeph 3:13, Zech 13:8-10, Rom 9:27; 11:5, Rev 12:17)

Whether that be the case or not, how about the rest of us believers? What does this vignette tell us of our Lord and our faith in Him?

God's priority for us is faith and trust. It was the darkest, loneliest and most desperate night of my life. We had brought our 17 year old son, Gabriel, to the USF hospital for emergency critical care. His heart was enlarging and his pulmonary artery pressures were very high. As a consequence, he was struggling to breath and his oxygenation levels had dropped from the 90's to the low 60's. As a teaching hospital, USF didn't assign a single doctor to be responsible for Gabe, but simply rotated interns through. Each one would ask the same questions, but none gave any help or hope. 24 different physicians in three days and only one indicated the least bit of compassion or concern.

Gabriel's disease was rare and so they wanted to take advantage of the situation. In the process, they treated him as a guinea pig. The nursing staff was only slightly better but actually made things worse for our boy by mistakenly giving him drugs to which he reacted violently.

Clearly, he was getting worse and worse but we had trusted the Lord for 17 years, day by day, for his life and I could not face giving up on him. Four days without sleeping, I fought desperately in prayer.

His O2 levels were down in the 50's that night, if I remember right. I'd implored, just like this nobleman for God to intervene miraculously as He had before in Gabe's life. The weeping and desperation left me simply slumping on the floor of the deserted, dark waiting room. Then I knew, just knew, I had to let go.

The Lord impressed upon my heart that He hadn't taken Gabe until then because of that. But now, it was time. He said to my heart that I had

to trust Him, that Gabe was indeed in His hands, that heaven was real. I had to believe Him, not for health but for heaven.

To say that I did that full of faith would be a lie. But I did it. I told the Lord, "I trust You, Father. If it is Your will to take Him, and if You're waiting for me to release him in my heart, I do that now."

A few hours later, it was morning. His oxygen was down to the 40's and he struggled for every breath even with the oxygen mask over his face. I took a few moments to go to the waiting room again and pray.

Suddenly, my daughter, Star rushed in exclaiming, "Dad! Dad! It's a miracle! His oxygen has gone back up to 93! They've never seen anything like it! The machine is working. They checked it and it's working right. Dad, come and see!"

My heart was pounding like thunder as I entered his little room and sure enough, I saw it with my own eyes – 91 and steady. Doctors and nurses were scrambling everywhere. The lead physician was dumbfounded. This was impossible. I whispered to Gabe – his eyes were closed and he was still breathing hard but with more peace – "Honey, your oxygen is back to near normal and these folks are amazed. The Lord is indeed here with you." He smiled his big grin.

It was real. The doctors verified it but couldn't explain it. For all of us who loved Gabe, it was a sign, a needed sign, that God was near, very near.

Even when He ushered Babe home later that day, I knew He had shown Himself – that He could do the temporary healing but chose to do the permanent healing.

Even when it means you don't get what you want from God, you must take Him at His word. You must know that you can trust Him for the ultimate good. Faith has never been about getting God to do things our way. It's always been about trusting Him and submitting to His way. When you've heard from Him and your heart is fully assured, that's when you can ask specifically with no wavering. All things are indeed possible to him who believes but believing comes from hearing from Him first. Moving mountains, frankly, is not the big deal – He's literally done that for me as well (someday I'll share that story, perhaps) – the greater thing among the "all things" which are possible is when you can truly let Him have His way even when it is completely contrary to everything you desperately desire.

Next point, although the man implored, he also directed. Directing God is a sign of two things really. First, it reflects a fundamental distrust of Him. You see, if you truly believe He is Who He says He is – all good, all powerful, on your side, etc. – you can be confident that He will answer your prayers in the time and way that will ultimately and throughout eternity be best for you. Second, it shows that your relationship with Him is backwards – you're trying to make Him submit to your will rather than finding your peace under the 'shadow of His wing.' For the nobleman, this posture had to change. As a member of the royal family or court, he was likely used to giving instructions to most of the people in his life.

Jesus didn't go to the man's home but He did save his son. Now, to his credit, the nobleman did not need a

sign. He experienced a sudden change of heart and simply took Christ at His word. Believing His word without the tangible proof so to speak is always the guidepost that directs us along the narrow road of salvation. And this is as true for the newest believer as it is for the most aged saint. *"Faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen."*

As we consider Hebrews 11 and all the wonderful saints who are mentioned therein, we note that they all exhibited the same thing, the same "I'll take You at Your word, Lord" attitude. That's why we call it the 'Hall of Faith'.

Finally, Jesus acted when the nobleman addressed Him as Lord (Sir in the KJV). God is always concerned that we have the relationship right. Not because He needs the 'strokes' of our praise. But we will never be complete inwardly until we know Him as Lord. He is the Potter; we are the clay. If you're like me, you will find yourself sometimes jumping off the potting wheel and landing splat on the floor. That's a terribly humbling place to be, all mushy and disfigured – not because of what God did but what I did. It happens every time I try to be lord. How about you?

God may give us a sign from time to time. But the desire of His heart is that we learn to trust Him apart from signs, that we learn to relate to Him without directing or instructing for He indeed is our Lord. He truly does know what He's doing.

*"This again is the second sign Jesus did when He had come out of Judea into Galilee."*

# Revived Sanhedrin Discusses Temple

By Hal Lindsey

On Jan. 20, IsraelNN.com reported:

*A unique ceremony – probably only the second of its kind in the past 1,600 years – is taking place in Tiberius today: The launching of a Sanhedrin, the highest Jewish-legal tribunal in the land of Israel.*

*The Sanhedrin, a religious assembly that convened in one of the Holy Temple chambers in Jerusalem [before AD 70], comprised 71 sages and existed during the Tannaitic period, from several decades before the Common Era until roughly 425 C.E.*

*Details of today's ceremony are still sketchy, but the organizers' announced their intention to convene 71 rabbis who have received special rabbinic ordination as specified by Maimonides.*

These religious authorities believe it was necessary to re-establish the Sanhedrin because only this properly ordained body of sages can authenticate a Messiah when he comes. There is a growing expectation of the long-awaited Messiah to appear among devout Jews. The rebirth of the Jewish state and recapture of Jerusalem has increasingly influenced this conviction.

On Feb. 9, just a few weeks after the Sanhedrin's re-establishment, another enormously important development took place. The religious sages began to consider the rebuilding of the Temple and reinstatement of ancient animal

sacrifices as prescribed in the Law of Moses.

The first step toward facilitating this monumental endeavor was to seek to determine the exact location of the Temple's foundation. Sanhedrin spokesman Rabbi Chaim Richman told Arutz-7:

*It is appropriate that the Sanhedrin convened to discuss this lofty matter of the Temple's location this week ... the Sanhedrin continues to move toward strengthening the nation of Israel.*

*As all these things happen all around us, the Sanhedrin is researching ways to renew the deepest roots of our faith – to renew Temple service, reunite Jewish legal tradition and inspire the Jewish people to aspire to greatness. Our people have one path before us, and we will continue to march toward our destiny.*

Sanhedrin member Rabbi Yisrael Ariel is the most ardent believer that the Temple is to be rebuilt in this generation. He is the former Yeshiva head, founder of the Temple Institute, and one of the paratroopers who took part in the 1967 liberation of the Temple Mount. He said:

*People today ask, "Who are we in this generation to even consider building the Temple?" But in this week's Torah portion we see that the commandment to build a Temple was given to Jews who had just sinned and committed idolatry in the Sin of the Golden Calf. The fact is that what God requires in this world is for regular people to do their best. That is what we are trying to do.*

The most difficult problem is to determine with certainty exactly where the previous Temple's

foundations are. Muslims have not allowed Israeli archeologists to do archeological research on the Temple grounds. As a matter of fact, the Muslim custodians of this area, which they believe is their Third Holiest site, have systematically sought to destroy and remove any archeological evidence of Israel ever having a Temple there.

The Sanhedrin determined that there are only two viable theories as to where the Temple stood. One teaches that the Temple stood on the same basic site on which the Muslim mosque known as the Dome of the Rock was built.

The second theory (which I am convinced is the most accurate) is that the Temple was built north of the Dome of the Rock. Dr. Asher Kaufman developed this theory, using certain archeological evidences that he found before the Muslim's destroyed them. However, the most important archeological sign is the position of the Eastern Gate. According to ancient accounts of the Temple, its east-west centerline passed through the center of the Eastern Gate.

We have absolute evidence as to where the ancient Eastern Gate stood. I have viewed personally the remains of the ancient Eastern Gate, which is located under the modern Gate that was built on top of its ruins.

While photographing the area in 1983 for my book, "A Prophetic Walk Through The Holy Land," I sought to verify Dr. Kaufman's theory. I established the east-west centerline from the Eastern Gate. Then I received one of the most supernatural visitations of my life. My

mind was suddenly flooded with a couple of verses that had been a mystery to me.

This is what I was shown. "I was given a reed like a measuring rod and was told, 'Go and measure the temple of God and the altar, and count the worshipers there. But exclude the outer court; do not measure it, because it has been given to the Gentiles. They will trample on the holy city for 42 months.'" (Revelation 11:1-2 NIV) So I measured off the distance from the centerline to the point where the wall of the inner court would stand. There was at least 6 meters clearance from the nearest points of the Dome of the Rock and the Temple inner-court wall. The Apostle John clearly predicts that "the outer court was not to be included in the rebuilt Temple, because it was given to the Gentiles."

So what does all this mean? The Temple can be rebuilt and stand alongside the Dome of the Rock without disturbing it. And since the outer court, also known as the Court of the Gentiles, is given to the Gentiles in this period just before the Messiah comes, it infers that there would be a Gentile building there, i.e., the Dome of the Rock.

The fact that a re-established Sanhedrin is now considering the rebuilding of the Temple after 2,000 years is extremely important to students of Bible prophecy. I believe that we are very near the final climactic events that end with the Second Coming of Christ.

# Road Map to Pieces (Excerpts)

By Jack Kinsella

Ezekiel speaks to a period of time when Israel will be 'a land of unwallled villages' (Israel is currently building a wall), describing Israel as a people, "at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates," (Ezekiel 38:11) at the time of the Gog Magog invasion.

Daniel's prophecy is even more breathtaking, describing a seven-year covenant that will be 'confirmed' by the antichrist for one 'week' (seven years) but that the confirmed covenant will be broken halfway through. (Daniel 9:27)

Daniel described the covenant as one in which he "shall divide the land for gain." (Daniel 11:39)

The failed Oslo Agreement signed in 1993 (that spawned what Israel calls the 'Oslo War') was due to have reached its goal by September, 2000 and was based on the formula of 'land for peace'.

Just think of it! In order for the antichrist to 'confirm' a seven-year covenant based on a formula that will 'divide the land [of Israel] for [political] gain' there must first be a covenant based on that formula in existence.

(You can't even confirm a dentist's appointment unless there was first an appointment made to confirm.)

But it just so happens that there IS a peace covenant between Israel and 'the many', outlining a seven-year process based on the formula of 'land for peace' that needs confirming.

The vision of 'two states side-by-side' will never be realized, politically speaking, without a universally recognized border (dividing what used to be Israel) into two separate states.

But the one who 'confirms' Daniel's covenant isn't the US president, or a 'Quartet' or the United Nations. Daniel says it will be confirmed by the 'prince' of a revived Roman Empire consisting of ten 'kings'. (Note that Daniel calls the antichrist a 'prince' and not a 'king')

The modern EU consists of 28 nations, and at its core is the Western European Union consisting of 25. But the WEU has only ten FULL members, the ten most powerful 'kings' in Europe.

Both organizations agreed to be led by a kind of 'prince'. In June, 2000, the WEU met at its 46th Session to discuss merger with the EU and decided it couldn't take place.

So instead, it recommended creating a kind of joint secretariat whereby the Secretary General of the EU would also be the Secretary General of the WEU, creating a kind of 'prince' appointed by ten 'kings' who, although subordinate to them, wields more power as an individual than the 'kings' can collectively.

That recommendation is on the books as WEU Recommendation 666 and the current 'prince' of the revived Roman Empire is Javier Solana.

And Solana has been working overtime to insinuate Europe into the Arab-Israeli conflict, going so far as to tell Israel the EU would be part of the process, whether Israel 'likes it or not.'

Before anybody jumps the gun, I don't know if Solana is the antichrist. To tell you the truth, I kind of doubt it.

The Bible says the whole world will accept the antichrist as 'god' and will worship him as such in order to participate in his system.

Even Christians who believe that they will go through the Tribulation have to admit that, when the antichrist comes on the scene, he will be so seductive and "shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect," according to Jesus. (Matthew 24:24)

Most mid and post trib interpreters point to the reference to the 'very elect' Jesus is referring to as being evidence of the Church during the Tribulation. If they are correct, then the antichrist is unlikely to be Solana.

Solana doesn't fit the profile, but his job description does.

The Solana question aside, everything else is falling into place with such precision as to be undeniable.

Ticking them off, we have; a failed 7 year 'land for peace' deal, the position of 'prince' in a revived Roman Empire, (created by Assembly Recommendation 666 which is dominated by the ten-nation Brussels Treaty signatories) and;

A renewed peace effort at a time when Israel is building a security wall around itself, while the whole world deludes itself into believing genuine peace is possible -- despite the religious element that guarantees it is not.

(The power of that delusion is evidenced by the global willingness to honor Arafat as a 'peacemaker'

whose death is joked to be worthy of a second Nobel Peace Prize)

As Israel struggles to obtain even an illusion of peace and safety, to its north and east, the Gog Magog alliance is taking shape precisely along the lines outlined by Ezekiel.

It couldn't be more obvious. Jesus IS coming soon. Current events are conspiring together to bring about the exact political and religious alignments described by the Bible, thousands of years ago, all converging at exactly the same point in history.

The only fly in the ointment is the absence of the United States as a major player on the global scene during the Tribulation Period.

Taken together with the absence of any mention of the Church's role on earth during the Tribulation, it isn't a stretch to connect the dots and conclude that these two omissions from the last days' record are connected.

"Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." (1 Corinthians 15:51-52)

"Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1st Thessalonians 4:17-18)

*Excerpted from the Omega Letter Daily Intelligence Digest, Volume 41, Issue 9*

# The E.U. and the Revived Roman Empire

(Excerpts) By Jennifer Rast  
Contenderministries.org

Daniel chapters 2 and 7 reveal a strong connection between the formation of the European Union and end-times scripture. The possible fulfillment of this scripture began in 1950 when the Roman Empire began to show signs of being revived. In 1950 the European Coal and Steel Community was proposed as a means of achieving economic unification in Europe following the war. The hope was that this would strengthen economic trade in Europe. This unified effort led to the signing of the treaties of Rome in 1957, which established the European Economic Community (EEC), and the European Atomic Energy Council. That treaty was taken a step further with the signing of the Brussels Treaty in 1965. The Brussels Treaty began the process of rebuilding the old Roman Empire through reunification of European states under one political system, one economic system, and eventually under the protection of one military force. The treaty established a commission, council, parliament, and court for the union. The revived Roman Empire prophesied in the



Bible was well on its way to becoming a reality.

More states were added to this growing union in 1973, 1981, and 1986, making up the 10 permanent member states of today's European Union. In 2002, the Euro was introduced as the first step toward a unified single currency in Europe. Upon adopting the Euro, Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Guterres raved, "As Peter was the rock on which the church was built, so the Euro is the rock on which the

European Union will be built."

The EU today is made up of over 25 countries, however the ten nations of the Western European Alliance have a separate status as full members, while those nations who joined subsequent to the original 10 have only associate membership, or observer status. This

10 nation military wing of the EU may very well fulfill the prophecy of the beast with 10 horns from Daniel 7:7-8 and Revelations 13:1. On this beast's back will ride the woman that symbolizes a global religious system that is to appear before Christ returns to set up His kingdom.

The purpose of the EU's creation was and is, ultimately, to create a European super-state or "United States of Europe", as some have suggested naming it, that would eventually rival the United States in influence and military might. In 1999, Javier Solana became the High Representative for the EU's

foreign and security policy, and through recommendation 666, he was given emergency powers over the military wing of the EU in 2000. All that currently remains to create a truly revived Roman Empire is the creation of a permanent executive branch of government and the full integration of the new Euro currency. With the introduction of the new EU constitution, the groundwork is being laid for just such an executive branch and economic system.

The EU flag has a circle of 12 stars on a blue background. These stars were inspired by the halo of 12 stars appearing around the Madonna as depicted in Catholic pictures of her. Leon Marchal, former secretary general of the Council of Europe, confirmed that the stars are representative of "the woman of the Apocalypse". He expounded, "it's wonderful that we have gotten back to the introit of the new Mass of the Assumption. It's the corona stellarum duodecim of the woman of the Apocalypse". He is referencing the woman in Revelation 12 who appears with a crown of 12 stars. The Bible uses this symbolism to represent Israel, however the Catholic Church has always claimed that she represents the Virgin Mary, "the mother of God". A leaflet titled "Building Europe Together" states that "The European flag is a shared flag, blue with 12 gold stars symbolizing completeness. The number will remain 12 no matter how many countries there are in the European Union."

The anthem of the EU "Ode to Joy" also contains religious symbolism. "Ode to Joy" is the prelude to the last movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, which has religious

implications. EU publications state that the anthem really is an "ode to freedom, community, and peace", however the lyrics, by Friedrich von Schiller, are actually about the entering of the shrine of a pagan goddess and the uniting of all men in brotherhood, by the power of magic.

Further evidence of a religious side to the European Union is a poster that was issued by the EU, showing the tower of Babel. The poster carried the slogan "Many tongues, one voice." As if the celebration of the pagan tower that led God to confuse the languages of a defiant people (Genesis 11) isn't enough, a crane in the background was shown rebuilding the tower. Now, once again, a rebellious people are rebuilding mystery Babylon. In a parliament building in Strasbourg, France, you will find an enormous replica of the unfinished tower of Babel that the secular press has named "Eurobabel".

If that religious symbolism seems too obscure to be that significant, perhaps a snapshot of Revelation 17 will peak your interest in the religious symbolism of the EU. Revelation 17 depicts a great harlot riding on a beast. The beast in Revelation 17 represents the world government and the great harlot is a global religion that will ride in on its back. This harlot riding a beast was used when Britain issued a stamp to commemorate the first EU parliament election in 1979. It is now the official picture of the EU, and is painted on the dome of the parliament building in Brussels. It is also pictured on the same building that holds the "Eurobabel".

# No Other Gospel

By Sarah Dickey

*"But even if we, or an angel of heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed."* (Gal 1:8) Paul wrote this to the church in Galatia concerning their turning from grace to the law. Recall, 'gospel' means GOOD NEWS. The good news is that the gift of salvation is just that – a gift, not a payment for service, past, present or future.

Unfortunately, the people in that church had turned aside from the concept of grace encouraged by false teachers to plant their hope of heaven within their effort to adhere to the law, in essence, trusting in their own works – which God calls filthy rags – for justification.

## By Grace, Through Faith

*"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast."* (Eph 2:8-9)

An interesting study is to look up the prepositions used for the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in Scripture. Most often, we see a pattern of *from* God, *by* Jesus Christ the Son, *through* His Holy Spirit. Jesus is the "by grace" mentioned by Paul. It is *by* His obedience at the cross and *by* His immeasurable grace that we have the right to claim God as our Father. His Holy Spirit is the *through*. It is through a work of His Spirit that we believe – that we obtain faith. Thus, not even faith is a work that we can boast of as coming from some special nature of our own. It is a gift from God for

those who hear and believe. (See also Gal 5:22)

Faith, while being a gift from God through a work of His Spirit and by the grace of the blood of His Son, is something we can choose to nurture and grow or not. When Jesus was teaching his disciples about forgiving in Luke 17:3-4, the disciples understood that faith was utterly necessary for forgiveness. In fact, their request of the Lord was that He increase their faith so that they could forgive. Somehow, they knew that they did not possess the kind of faith true forgiveness requires.

Jesus' response, however, may have been confusing. *"If you have the faith of a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,' and it would obey you."* After this, He went on to teach about the servant who worked all day in the field then came in to serve his master before eating himself. The master had no need to thank the servant because this was his reasonable service. Jesus taught that we are to do the same as this servant.

"What?!" you may ask. "What good would it do a mulberry tree to be planted in the ocean?" Was Christ simply saying that faith can bring about the otherwise impossible or was He giving us more on which to think? Is there a connection between this kind of faith and the attitude of the servant?

The word for "plant" actually means to bear fruit. For a tree to bear fruit in salt water would clearly be amazing. The mulberry tree, 'sucaminos' in the Greek is a tree "having the form and foliage of the

mulberry, but fruit resembling the fig". Now, for you students of prophecy, you'll recall that the ocean is a type of the gentile nations in scripture and the fig tree is representative of Israel. With that in mind, this could be picturing the bringing forth of fruit similar in nature to the Jewish nation among the gentile nations. Hey that sounds like evangelism and the 'planting' of churches full of believers. Indeed, this speaks of the miraculous ministry of spreading the gospel that, as servants of Christ, we are commanded to do.

The reason Jesus followed up with the attitude of the humble servant is because we usually get spiritually smug and uplifted when the Lord does something outstanding through us. It happens all the time to ministers, missionaries and miracle-workers. We can get to thinking that we had something to do with it and begin acting like we deserve better than to come in from the fields and continue serving as if nothing happened.

## Not of Works

*"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ" (Gal. 2:16).*

*"...if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work." (Rom 11:6)* Does it get any clearer?

So what about the teaching that works assure or advance our salvation or that we are somehow made more righteous through works? Let's see what God thinks about that: Isaiah 64:6 says, *"But we are all like an unclean thing, and all our*

*righteousnesses are like filthy rags"*.

The translation of 'filthy rags' is a bit gentle. The term in Hebrew is actually "menstrual cloths", something that even the proximity of would render someone in those times unclean.

I am certain we all recall the harlot, Rahab, who was justified by faith. What prior works did she have of which to boast? Prostitution is not synonymous with piety. Of course, her faith which was a gracious gift from God resulted in a work of righteousness, that is her hiding of the spies. But Hebrews makes it clear that it was her faith that justified her. *"By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish"*. Not only did the Lord see fit to justify and save her from destruction, but he put her in the ancestral line of the Savior! What wonderful grace!

Godly works are a natural reaction to such grace, not a requirement for it. They are done through faith in Him. This is why in Galatians 5:22, the virtues we all long for are described as fruit of the Spirit, not the labor of man. A tree does not labor to bring forth fruit any more than we should think that our fleshly labors produce them. And it is not even our own will that produces this fruit – it is the fruit *of the Spirit!* Hebrews 11:6 reads, *"But without faith it is impossible to please Him."* There is definitely room in the godly life for discipline, but our strivings alone will never produce a life which pleases Him.

## The Effects of the Law on Conscience

Chillingly, a natural effect of rejecting grace and embracing the

law is the searing of the conscience. One cannot say that he accepts grace and yet observe the religious law. They are contrary to each other (Rom 11:6, Gal 2:21, Gal 2:16). In fact, the scripture says that in order to live and be saved by the law, you must be perfect. (We all know that there was only One who was perfect – Jesus.) To do this and not go insane with the guilt of the inevitable transgressions, one must push out of his or her mind the voice of God convicting and calling to grace. Paul addressed this problem in the church in Ephesus through his letter to Timothy. The Judaisers were within the church, teaching the law, and compelling those who would listen to follow it. They had their consciences seared with a hot iron. Consequently, much of the first part of the letter deals with issues of the conscience.

Our conscience is very often what God uses to convict us. Of course, He will also use others who can lovingly restore us or the revelation of His Word through His Spirit. However, if our conscience is hardened, we can tune all of this out, allowing ourselves to become “Sunday Christians”, doing whatever we please throughout the week and then transforming into the pious church mouse on Sunday morning. Remember what the leaven of the Pharisees was? Hypocrisy. Acting. This is what the law does to people – it forces them to act as if they actually keep it, all the while knowing in their conscience that they don't and hardening their hearts to the call of the Lord.

### So What??

All of this learning has to have a purpose and an application, right? Otherwise we are simply puffing ourselves up with ‘knowledge’ and lacking in wisdom. So what we should do with this is to remember grace. For our sin, for our salvation, for our brother's (or sister's) sin – remember grace. The goodness of His grace is never an excuse for sin. Rather, it can be the motivation to repent. (See Rom 2:4) However, let's not put ourselves or our neighbor under the law or some overly exalted denominational tradition and in doing so become guilty of the Pharisees' sin – hypocrisy. Let us thank the Lord and rejoice that His News really is Good! Then we may take the truly Good News, full of Grace (and Truth!) to those who will hear. We can ‘plant’ those mulberry trees in the ocean so to speak and do it with a honest, humble heart. That's what Jesus taught. *(edited by John)*



*Peace and Harmony by Nancy Glazier*

*In His days the righteous shall flourish, And abundance of peace...Psa 72:7*