

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

Heavenly Minded

Vol 7 Iss 1



For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham. Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.

In this issue...

Art by Danny Hohlbaum

Rolled Away Run With the Angels Mushrooms Over the ME

See www.heavenlyminded.com for this issue and much more!

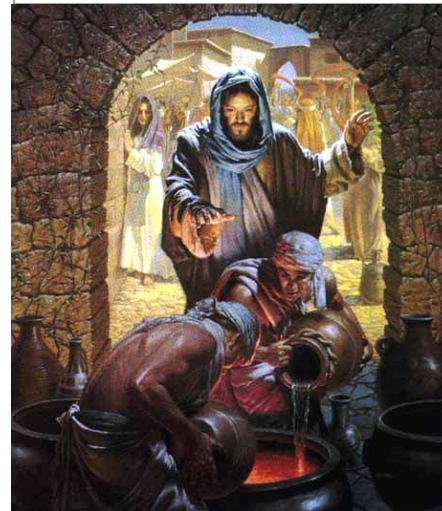
Dear Friends,

Fundamentally, following Christ results in a dramatic change, doesn't it? Many if not most of us, intellectually accepting that, naturally try to 'be good'. Usually, the harder we try the more we fail. Yet, when it finally begins to sink in that Christ is simply calling us to follow Him, to let Him lead, the change in our lives becomes more and more obvious.

That's because in trying to be good, trying to be righteous, we inevitably pollute and denigrate the Gospel because we pick and choose what we think is really, really important and excuse ourselves on the rest. Inevitably, we 'culturalize' it. In America – 'we don't drink and we don't chew and we look down on those that do'. But, the harder we try, the more frustrated we can become because being good like Jesus is beyond us, way beyond us. The yoke-fellow of Christ is a cross bearer far more than a cross wearer (think about that). The grace of God does not allow for the conforming of the Gospel to support our definitions of righteousness regardless of national, regional or personal morals. To the contrary, it is in truly following Jesus day by day that we are being conformed to the Gospel by His Spirit within.

The Gospel is a radical message, isn't it, with a really radical conformation -- too radical for the world and too radical for the natural man. Of course, radical Christianity is a redundant descriptive just as lukewarm Christianity is an oxymoron. Jesus' first command to his disciples was "Follow Me." May God bless each of us with the grace to do just that and as a consequence, be more like Him.

In Christ's Love, John and Darlene Dickey



John 2 – The first sign

Ceremonial wash water became "the good wine". To John and to all of us who have been fed up with the deadness of religiosity, whether Jewish or 'Christian', this speaks loudly of Messiah. And the message wasn't lost on John; it resonated in his heart and you can almost sense him dancing in the background – thrilled inwardly. 'Yes! Jesus is the Messiah! His ways are not man's ways. He's not into this religious mumbo jumbo. He's radical! He's real! He can even turn deadness to joy! Wow! If He can do that to water – He can do it to me!!'

And that's exactly what belief in Jesus Christ does – when He becomes your Lord and Savior, He takes the deadness of a vain life and transforms it into 'the good stuff' of love, joy, peace and their companions. It's the 'good wine' of God's Spirit and only Christ can make it. Jesus isn't asking us to believe in a religious system of traditions. He wants you to believe in Him. (From "Gimme the Good Stuff")

Rolled Away

What kind of a general in his right mind, camped in enemy territory on the brink of going into battle, requires his whole army to be circumcised?? (See Joshua 5) Earlier, at the beginning of the book of Joshua, the children of Israel were camped on the east side of the overflowing Jordan river. Moses, who had led them for forty years of wilderness wandering was dead and had appointed Joshua to take the mantle of responsibility for leadership.

In short order, he began to instruct the people and "...they answered Joshua, saying, "All that you command us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go. Just as we heeded Moses in all things, so we will heed you. Only the LORD your God be with you, as He was with Moses. Whoever rebels against your command and does not heed your words, in all that you command him, shall be put to death. Only be strong and of good courage." (Josh 1:16-18)

It wasn't long before the willingness of the troops to follow their new leader was put to the test. But the interesting thing is not so much that they were willing to go through with the circumcision on the eve of battle; rather, it's the fact that they needed to do so at all. Now, the Bible explains, "...this is the reason why Joshua circumcised them: All the people who came out of Egypt who were males, all the men of war, had died in the wilderness on the way, after they had come out of Egypt. For all the people who came out had been circumcised, but all the people born in the wilderness, on the way as they came out of Egypt, had not been circumcised." (Josh 5:4,5)

Now, this is truly bewildering. Consider that some 40 years earlier

as recorded in Exodus 4, in sending Moses back to Egypt to lead his people out, God met him along the way and threatened to kill him if his wife did not circumcise their two sons. She was infuriated, but she complied. Then in giving the law to the people, the Lord confirmed the requirement of this practice, which started with Abraham, when in Exodus 12 He made clear the necessity of circumcision in order to celebrate the Passover. Even foreigners who wanted to celebrate it had to be circumcised.

So what in world happened? You mean to tell me that a whole generation who grew up in the wilderness and who celebrated the Passover annually (as Num 9:4,5 makes clear) just blew off one of the most central and ancient laws. Did Moses just blow it off too?? Did the Lord show tolerance of this while at the same time instructing them to use drastic discipline in the other aspects of the law? I mean this represented 40 years of overt disobedience to God's command. This was a blatant desecration of the Passover year after year. Did a whole generation simply 'not get the memo'?

There is really only one plausible explanation – the Lord allowed it in order to give us a lesson and I submit that it is a prophetic one -- a picture-lesson that may startle and inspire you. Let me explain.

First, a little history. Forty years earlier, Moses led them out through the Red Sea. Therein, they were separated from Egypt, a type of the world in scripture. Some people point to this event as a picture of salvation, but I don't think that's the primary point. They refer to 1 Cor 10:1,2 which says, "Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all were

baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea,..." In this passage, Paul is exhorting the Corinthians to avoid idolatry noting that even though the host of Israel was separated from Egypt, they lusted and became idolatrous and as a result incurred the wrath of God.

We as Christians have been separated, if you would, from the world as well and some will add that we as believers can wander in a period of wilderness-like experiences until we enter the promised land of heaven or when we receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. I don't disagree, but I don't believe that's the principle point of the picture. Remember, the key to prophecy, whether in prose, praise or picture, is the Jewish people not the gentile church. Some point to the word baptism in the verse however the baptism of Moses is not a symbol of salvation any more than the baptism of John.

I suggest that it is rather symbolic of the separation of the Jewish people from the world. Clearly, the Jews have always considered themselves a separate people and the rest of the world has agreed. It all started with Abraham who was called out of world so to speak around 2000 BC and up to the time of Christ, it spanned 40 generations as cited in Matthew chapter one.

The men who came out of Egypt were indeed circumcised, but over the course of the wandering in the wilderness for 40 years they, as a group, became uncircumcised. Then, they came at last to the place of the crossing on the east side of the Jordan. This was the same place, in fact, where John the Baptist later baptized Jesus, immersing Him under the water. You may recall that John, somewhat dumbfounded said, "I should be baptized by You!" But Jesus replied, "Permit it to be so now, for thus it is

fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." (Mat 3:15)

At this point, Joshua chapter three picks up the story. "Then Joshua rose early in the morning; and they set out from Acacia Grove and came to the Jordan, he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they crossed over. So it was, after three days, that the officers went through the camp; and they commanded the people, saying, "When you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and the priests, the Levites, bearing it, then you shall set out from your place and go after it." Josh 3:1-3

For many years, Bible scholars have shown how the ark of the covenant is a beautiful picture of the Lord Jesus. Thus, in type, we have a scene wherein the people are told to follow the symbol of Jesus. The passage continues, "Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure. Do not come near it, that you may know the way by which you must go, for you have not passed this way before." (Josh 3:4 emphasis mine)

Anyway, Joshua then told the priests to carry the Ark into the Jordan river. Now, this gets interesting because the name Jordan means "descender" and it descends into the Dead Sea. As such, it has long been known to be a picture of death or sin leading to death.

But here in Joshua, as the priests who are carrying the Ark, the type or picture of Christ, entered the river, something supernatural happened – "So it was, when the people set out from their camp to cross over the Jordan, with the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people, and as those who bore the ark came to the Jordan, and the feet of the priests who bore the ark dipped in the edge of the water (for the Jordan overflows all its banks during the

whole time of harvest), that the waters which came down from upstream stood still, and rose in a heap very far away at Adam, the city that is beside Zaretan.” (Josh 3:14-16 emphasis mine) Supernaturally, the river was immediately ‘swallowed up’ – the water stopped far upstream, all the way up at a place called **Adam!**

Can you see it? The picture is perfect. That’s why Jesus insisted on being baptized in that very spot. When Christ died for us on Calvary (as the Ark entered the river) sin and death (the Jordan) was “swallowed up” in victory (1Cor 15:54) all the way back to Adam! All the way back to the time when mankind first sinned and died. (I’ll get to the Zaretan part momentarily.)

As a consequence, all the people crossed over on dry ground – death lost its sting (1Cor 15:55) – and they entered the promised land of God’s Kingdom. Isn’t this beautiful?!

But there’s more. Just as Jesus told His disciples to follow Him, Joshua told the Israelites to follow the Ark. But they were told to follow it specifically from a distance of “about 2000 cubits”. Now, I will suggest that this could be a prophetic illustration of the Jews following Christ in fulfillment of Romans 11:25-27 about 2000 years after Christ’s death and resurrection. Paul wrote in that passage, “*For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written:*

“The Deliverer will come out of Zion,

And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;

For this is My covenant with them,

When I take away their sins.”” (emphasis mine)

So the time in which God worked in and through the Jewish people was about 2000 years (Abraham to Christ) and the time He worked in and through the Church is the same – about 2000 years. See Pro 11:1 and Pro 16:11.

But there’s still more. Back in Joshua, we read that the day they did this crossing was the 10th day of the first month which was the day specified in the law that each man was to choose for himself and his family a spotless lamb in advance of the Passover. Remember, this is prophetic through and through, and it is specific to the Jewish people not the mostly gentile church.

So the Jewish people miraculously crossed over the Jordan on dry ground and camped at Gilgal. “*At that time the LORD said to Joshua, “Make flint knives for yourself, and circumcise the sons of Israel again the second time.” So Joshua made flint knives for himself, and circumcised the sons of Israel at the hill of the foreskins.”* (Josh 5:2,3) “*So it was, when they had finished circumcising all the people, that they stayed in their places in the camp till they were healed. Then the LORD said to Joshua, “This day I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you.”*” (Josh 5:8,9 emphasis mine)

To appreciate this last statement, we need to do two word studies. First, we’ll look at the term “rolled away”. Its first mention is in Genesis 29 and is used referring to the rolling away a stone so that waters would gush forth which speaks prophetically to the flow of “living waters” – i.e. the Holy Spirit. Additionally, pertinent to Christ, it is recorded in Mat 28:2, Mk 16:4 and Lu 24:2 that the stone covering Christ’s sepulcher was rolled

away by an angel to reveal the empty tomb – to show that Christ had risen.

So on this day of being circumcised after 40 years of disobedience, there was a “rolling away” that points forward in time to a fountain of the Spirit and the revealing of the risen Messiah.

Do we have prophetic scriptural support for this? You bet:

Zech 13:1 says, “*In that day (the last days) a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.”* And,

Zech 12:10 says, “*And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.”*

The prophet Zechariah proclaimed the time in the last days when the Jewish people would be provided a fountain for sin and uncleanness receiving the Spirit of grace and have revealed the One whom they pierced – Jesus. Remember that name Zaretan? The city next to Adam? The Jordan was heaped up “far away” all the way back to Adam which is next to Zaretan. What do you think the name Zaretan means – yep, pierced. What a wonderful prophetic picture! Not only does this event portray the swallowing up of death and sin all the way back to the first sinner, the first Adam; but, it also speaks to the revealing of the last Adam, Jesus Christ (see 1 Cor 15:45) who was pierced for us.

Psa 22:16 prophetically quotes the Messiah,

“For dogs have surrounded Me;

The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me.

They pierced My hands and My feet;”

Rev 1:5-7 says of Jesus, “*To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us*

kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.”

Now for the next word, “reproach”; it is first mentioned in scripture in Gen 30:23 where Rachel, after being barren for so long, finally has a baby (Joseph, who is also a well known type of Christ) and says that God has taken away her reproach. Therefore, we can associate in type this term with the reproach of barrenness and specifically barrenness linked to being without Christ.

This brings to mind the scripture passage wherein Christ, being hungry, came to the fig tree (a well accepted symbol of Israel) and finding no fruit on it, said, “*Let no fruit grow on you ever again.*” (Mat 21:18) and indeed, Israel has been spiritually barren for the last 2000 years or so.

But God has pictured that the time will come when all Israel will again be circumcised. Now, you may think, ‘Wait a minute. It is still the Jewish custom to circumcise the male children; always has been.’ Yes, but that’s not the circumcision this event portrays.

Moses wrote in summation of the law:

“And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments of the LORD and His statutes which I command you today for your good? Indeed heaven and the highest heavens belong to the LORD your God, also the earth with all that is in it. The LORD delighted only in your fathers, to love them; and He chose

their descendants after them, you above all peoples, as it is this day. Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer." (Deut 10:12-16)

And in speaking of the last days, he recorded:

"Now it shall come to pass, when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the LORD your God drives you, and you return to the LORD your God and obey His voice, according to all that I command you today, you and your children, with all your heart and with all your soul, that the LORD your God will bring you back from captivity, and have compassion on you, and gather you again from all the nations where the LORD your God has scattered you. If any of you are driven out to the farthest parts under heaven, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you. Then the LORD your God will bring you to the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it. He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers. And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live." (Deut 30:1-6)

And the prophet Jeremiah, pointing to the time of God's wrath, wrote: "If you will return, O Israel," says the LORD,

"Return to Me;

And if you will put away your abominations out of My sight, Then you shall not be moved.

And you shall swear, 'The LORD lives,'

In truth, in judgment, and in righteousness;

The nations shall bless themselves

in Him,

And in Him they shall glory."

For thus says the LORD to the men of Judah and Jerusalem:

"Break up your fallow ground, And do not sow among thorns.

Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, And take away the foreskins of your hearts.

You men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, (Jer 4:1-4)

Just as the original Jews who left Egypt were circumcised, the original forefathers had saving faith – Abraham, Isaac and Israel. But, separated from the world and under the law of Moses, their descendants became uncircumcised -- faithless, dedicated to works, walking in the reproach of spiritual barrenness. And though they have, over the centuries, kept the Passover in a manner of speaking, that is, they've held to their customs and law, as with the children of Israel in the wilderness, it has all been illegitimate.

But it has now been about 2000 years (cubits) since the day that the ark (Jesus) cleared the way past death and sin. Therefore, the day is upon us in which their condition will change.

Yes, the days are upon us in which Joshua (which is the same name as Jesus) will fulfill this prophetic picture and figuratively lead Israel across the Jordan on dry ground. That is, He will extend His saving grace to them. The stone of their blindness (see Rom 11:7-10) will be **rolled away** and they will see the resurrected Christ. As a consequence their hearts will be circumcised – radically changed. Saved by faith, they will receive a marvelous outpouring of the Holy Spirit and once again bear much good fruit!

Run With the Angels

What is it? What does it look like? If I were to believe the man on the TV, it looks exciting, and the more excited I get about it, the more I'll see it. I know it's the stuff that leads to giant-killing and water-walking; I've seen cancer cured and drug addictions instantly gone. I've known a dying child raised to life, seen the earth literally moved and been provided for in the most miraculous ways.

But I've also been beaten to a pulp by a giant, over-whelmed under the waves, seen cancer kill and addictions destroy. I've known a living child to die, mountains to menace and taunt and the desperation of being penniless for years in foreign lands.

So what is it? And what does it look like, really? Is it here when the five thousand are fed but gone on the cross? Is it present when the sea and wind are stilled but absent in the garden tomb?

Was it there when John said, "Behold the Lamb of God," but only a memory when he asked, "Are you the One?"

Was it there when Job said, "*The Lord gives and the Lord takes away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.*"?

How about when he uttered, "*Oh, that I were as in months past, As in the days when God watched over me;*

When His lamp shone upon my head,

And when by His light I walked through darkness;

Just as I was in the days of my prime,

When the friendly counsel of God was over my tent; When the Almighty was yet with me,

When my children were around me;

When my steps were bathed with cream,

And the rock poured out rivers of oil for me!

Is it here today and gone tomorrow? Is it that which dances with me the first dance and then only flirts the rest of the night? Perhaps, it ebbs and flows like the tide? Or maybe it lifts me like a whirlwind and then drops me as it abates?

Some say that either you've got it or you don't. Some say it grows. Some say that if you don't do certain things with it, you don't have it. What is it and what does it look like?

I was prompted to consider these things when my dearest friend said to me, "When I was younger, I had such great faith. But, after all the things I've been through, it's like I need to have faith again." To which I responded, "I'm sure your faith has not failed." Let me explain:

The Bible says a whole lot about faith – Jesus said it could be great or little. That fear and doubt are its opposites. Paul says that the just shall live by it. And that we can be weak in it or strong in it. That God has dealt to every man a measure of it. It works through love. It grows. James said that it is tested and made complete in how it acts out in your life. Peter said our faith will be tested. John said that it is the vehicle by which we overcome the world.

Most of us consider Hebrews 11 as the defining chapter in the Bible for faith and I would not disagree. I submit, however, that modern popular teaching of the scriptures has placed more emphasis on what faith does that is 'spectacular' than what it does that is eternal. Now, when I say 'spectacular' I mean that which startles or surprises, that which is outward and visible – you know, like Lazarus shuffling out of the tomb wrapped in grave clothes or the lame man jumping and leaping or the leper cleansed or fire from the sky consuming the false prophets... When I say 'eternal', I mean ... eternal. And this, I believe, is God's great concern.

Now, Jesus implied that faith can fail but what we learn from the Bible is that its failure is not expressed in what you might expect. You see, just before His crucifixion, the Lord told Peter, "*Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.*" (Lu 22:31,32) You remember the story – Peter did turn away. He denied Christ three times. He wept bitterly as a result and he was not present at the cross. However, I submit that the Son of God never prayed a prayer that wasn't answered, therefore we can be assured that Peter's faith never failed. Now, it sure looked like it did. Peter probably felt that way. I mean he denied knowing Jesus with strong language. He deserted His Savior. By all outward appearance, we might conclude that indeed his faith failed.

But it did not. And Jesus knew.

On the other end of the spectrum, the most impressive and expressive feat of faith in the Bible is found in the following passage:

Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, "Sit here while I go and pray over there." And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me."

He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will."

Then He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "What! Could you not watch with Me one hour? Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done." (Mat 26:36-42)

Mark recorded Jesus praying, "*Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will.*" (Mark 14:36)

In Luke's gospel, it is amplified -- *And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.* (Lu 22:44)

Dear one, Jesus sought another way; Peter turned away. Their faith never failed though. What you've

been through may have left you feeling broken, beaten or bereft of the youthful exuberance and experiences of faith you once had. You may feel very hard pressed to place your trust in God and obey Him; but don't mistake that for the absence or failure of the faith He has planted in your heart. Jesus said, "Nevertheless, not my will but yours be done," and went to the cross. Peter returned to the Lord and eventually met a cross as well. God knows your life in Christ has meant carrying a cross and that it can get burdensome at times. But He has been helping you and will see you through to the end. If you need help carrying it, He will provide that – He did so for His Son.

As Paul wrote, "*For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of our trouble which came to us in Asia: that we were burdened beyond measure, above strength, so that we despaired even of life. Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead, who delivered us from so great a death, and does deliver us; in whom we trust that He will still deliver us..." (2 Cor 1:8-10)*

Perhaps what you see and feel is not as spectacular as when we were younger but remember, *faith is the substance (that which under girds – a foundation) of things hoped for; evidence (a proof) of things not seen.* Those things hoped for and things not seen are mostly on the other side of the cross so to speak. Keep in mind where we're headed. That's where your faith will ultimately be fulfilled. That's where you'll run with the angels. Mark Harris sings a beautiful song about it:

*I wanted to tell you how closely I've kept
The memories of you in my heart
And all of the lifetimes that we had to share*

*Live even though we're apart
But don't cry for me
'Cause I'm finally free*

(Chorus)
*To run with the angels
On streets made of gold
To listen to stories of saints new and old
To worship our Maker
That's where I'll be
When you finally find me*

*No don't you be weary cause waiting for you
Are wonders that you've never known
Just hold on to Jesus, reach out for his hands*

*And one day They'll welcome you home
And that's when you'll be
Finally free
Finally free*

(Chorus)
I wish you were here, I wish you were here

*And all of the dreams that you treasure
Will soon come together
And that's when your sorrow will find tomorrow*

And you will rise again

(Chorus)
*We'll run with the angels on streets
made of gold
We'll listen to stories of saints new and old
We'll worship our maker that's where we'll be
When you finally find me*

I wish you were here, I wish you were here

(Mark Harris - Wish You Were Here
From the album *The Line Between The Two*)

Mushrooms over the Middle East - WND - 01/12/07

By Hal Lindsey

I don't know why it staggered me to read the report in the London Sunday Times. I've not only expected it, I've discussed it previously on numerous occasions.

The story in last Sunday's edition of the Times revealed that Israel plans to use tactical nuclear weapons in a pre-emptive strike against Iran's nuclear program. I believe it's the only logical choice available to Israel, but reading the report rocked me back on my heels anyway.

Like when you hear of someone dying whom you already knew had cancer – it isn't surprising, but that doesn't soften the blow. The government of Israel immediately denied the report, but official denials are to be expected, so they're basically meaningless.

The most significant fact is the story found its way to the front page of the London Sunday Times and NOT the Jerusalem Post, Washington Post or New York Times. Why is that significant? The London Sunday Times is – by and large – untainted by U.S. Middle East politics.

And it's certainly no friend of Israel. It is, therefore, widely respected throughout the Arab Middle East. That makes it the perfect place for Israel to "plant" the story. Now, the obvious question is: Why would *Israel* plant such a story? I think there are a couple of reasons.

The first and most important is to measure and soften-up public

opinion to whatever degree possible in advance of such a strike. Leaking the plan in advance will help Israel gauge the level of potential global anger if it does, indeed, launch a tactical nuclear strike.

They can also judge whether the world might actually be relieved if someone takes out Iran's nukes before Mahmoud Ahmadinejad launches them on Israel and starts a regional nuclear holocaust. It's increasingly the global consensus that this is exactly what will happen if Iran develops a nuclear capability.

It's especially true in Washington and Brussels. Everyone knows that some nation or coalition must destroy or cripple Iran's nuclear facilities – but no one wants to do it. There is, however, one disturbing fact that ought to trouble the cowardly Europeans. London, Paris, Berlin and Brussels are just as much in range of Iran's nuclear missiles as Tel Aviv. And Ahmadinejad's apocalyptic vision includes subjecting *all* infidels to Allah.

The current recommendations, ranging from threats to bribes to endless negotiations, are like castles in the air. They're just wishful thinking with no foundation beneath them. Ahmadinejad's objective is to begin an apocalyptic nuclear war that brings the Muslim messiah called the Mahdi back to earth.

One of the reasons suicide bombers are so effective is because their goal is to die. They needn't trouble themselves with escape routes or back-up plans. They aren't concerned with the risks.

How does one threaten someone whose goal is martyrdom for Allah?

What kind of bribe would entice a suicide bomber? He believes that Paradise awaits him, with all his wildest fantasies to be fulfilled.

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad believes it's his divine mission to begin the Apocalypse and bring about the return of the Islamic messiah. He believes that is the will of Allah. How do you negotiate with Allah?

The recent unanimous Security Council vote imposing sanctions on Iran suggests that even the Russians and the Chinese are starting to get a bit nervous about Ahmadinejad's religiously driven objectives. They demanded a watered-down version, but they could have vetoed it completely.

Why didn't they? Because the version that made it out of the Security Council still gives Russia and China the opportunity to continue their lucrative nuclear monopoly with Iran. It's a calculated risk. As long as Iran's nuclear program continues, so do their profits. If Israel destroys Iran's program, they still keep their profits. And now there's the possibility of future profits repairing the damage.

But neither the Russians nor the Chinese are stupid. They are useful infidels, but infidels nonetheless. They know the sword of Ahmadinejad's apocalyptic jihad would turn against them, too.

In a worst-case scenario, Russia and China left themselves the option of ducking their diplomatic cover behind their Security Council vote if world opinion turns against them.

So Israel is carefully observing global reaction to its carefully planted "leak." The second reason for Israel to "leak" the report is to warn the Arab world without officially abandoning its policy of nuclear

ambiguity. Israel historically refuses to confirm or deny it possesses nuclear weapons. Since it refuses to confirm they exist, Israel doesn't have to reveal the size of its arsenal.

For the Arabs, that's always made attacking Israel a gamble. For all they know, Israel could be bluffing. Or Israel could possess a large enough nuclear arsenal to reduce the Middle East to a sea of glass. But a nuclear Iran makes Israel's nuclear ambiguity a liability, rather than an asset.

Leaking the story to the London Sunday Times sends a clear message to Tehran that Israel not only has nukes, but will use them if it feels its survival is at stake. And Ahmadinejad has made it clear that Israel's survival *is* at stake.

What the Iranian president has failed to calculate is that Israel would readily use tactical nuclear weapons to destroy Iran's otherwise invulnerable nuclear facilities. And the plot thickens.

Heavenly Minded is distributed free of charge. To add a name to our distribution list for either the hardcopy or electronic PDF version, simply contact us at : jdickey@heavenlyminded.com.

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!

AS IRAN DEFIES U.N. ON NUCLEAR ISSUE, EVANGELICAL LEADERS FOCUS ON EZEKIEL'S PROPHECIES ABOUT IRAN



Fears are steadily growing in the Middle East, Europe and here at home that the United States is readying a massive air strike against Iran's nuclear and military facilities in the next year or so, but possibly as early as this spring.....**Newsweek** ran a cover story last week on a possible U.S. strike entitled, **"RUMORS OF WAR,"** echoing -- whether the editors meant to or not -- Jesus' teaching in Matthew 24 that in the last days there will be and "wars and rumors of war" before the Second Coming..... **The Economist** ran a cover story last week, entitled: **"NEXT STOP, IRAN?"**.....in a major front-page story today, **the Times of London cites senior British officials** saying "they fear President Bush will seek to 'settle the Iranian question through military means' next year, before the end of his second term if he concludes that diplomacy has failed.".....as one

British official put it: "He [Bush] will not want to leave it unresolved for his successor".....meanwhile, I'm getting emails from all over the world -- including from people inside Iran -- wanting to know if a U.S. attack is imminent....**The White House and Pentagon say no war is being planned,** but **Vice President Cheney told ABC News that every option is still on the table**.....why?.....because Iran continues to make a series of dangerous and provocative moves that could trigger hostilities after all.....at the same time, **I can report a steadily growing interest among evangelical Christian leaders in the Mideast as well as in the U.S. in what the Bible has to say about the future of Iran.** In fact, several prominent Christian leaders are currently developing radio and television programs that will soon be aired nationally and globally to discuss the Iranian nuclear threat and to explain the prophecies of Ezekiel 38 and 39, in which Russia and Iran form a military alliance with other Middle Eastern countries in an attempt to destroy Israel in what Ezekiel describes as "the last days".....First, let me review the latest geopolitical news; then we'll look at the inside story of rising evangelical interest in Iran.....**Iran on Wednesday defied the United Nations' February 21st deadline to stop enriching uranium** and instead is feverishly trying to complete the "nuclear fuel cycle," a highly complex scientific process that when mastered would allow the mullahs to build one nuclear bomb after another....."Iran has not suspended its enrichment-related activities," said a **confidential IAEA**

report, obtained by Reuters. "Iran has continued with the operation of the (small ground-level pilot fuel-enrichment) plant....It has also continued with the construction of the (underground) Fuel Enrichment Plant, including installation of cascades, and has transferred UF-6 to the plant."....."The report -- sent both to the Security Council and the agency's 35 board member nations -- set the stage for a fresh showdown between Iran and Western powers," **noted the Associated Press.** "Even before it was issued, **Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice** said the U.S. and its allies would use the Security Council and other 'available channels' to bring Tehran back to negotiations over its nuclear program.".....Said **U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon:** "I urge again that the Iranian government should fully comply with the Security Council" as soon as possible, he told reporters in Vienna, saying Iran's nuclear activities had "great implications for peace and security, as well as nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction.".....That said, as the possibility of a military showdown between the U.S. and Iran grows, a growing number of prominent pastors and evangelical Christian leaders are interested in where Iran fits into Bible prophecy.....Last month, I was invited to a Muslim country in the Middle East to brief **several hundred Arab and Iranian pastors and evangelical leaders** on the latest geopolitical developments in the region and to teach on Ezekiel 38 and 39.....these are prophecies that most Christian leaders in the region are unfamiliar with, but as readers of this weblog know, have profound implications for all the people of the

epicenter....it is too early to say if the fulfillment of these prophecies is close at hand, but it was a fascinating day of discussions that left many of these Christian leaders with a newfound sense of urgency to share the gospel with Muslims in their countries and to develop crisis management plans should a geopolitical war or a prophetic war break out in the next few months or years....A few weeks later, I was traveling to New Mexico to preach on the **implications of Ezekiel 38 and 39** for followers of Christ, and to continue working on a documentary film based on **Epicenter** that is being jointly produced and distributed by **Tyndale House Publishers** and **Skip Heitzig, the senior pastor of Calvary Chapel of Albuquerque**.....my flight took me first to Denver, and as I boarded at Washington Dulles airport, I happened to sit next to **Dr. James Dobson**.....Dr. Dobson and I have known each other for a number of years and have often discussed events in the Middle East. Turns out, he had been in Washington for meetings with high level administration officials to discuss Iran, Iraq and the latest developments in the Middle East. He told me he is increasingly concerned about the Iranian nuclear threat, and has been studying Ezekiel's prophecies. He asked me to send him a copy of **Epicenter** and then discussed with me the possibility of doing a series of radio programs to explore these urgent issues later this spring....that's still in development and I'll let you know more when I know more.....what's more, I recently found out that **Kay Arthur**, the world renowned Bible

teacher, is also increasingly concerned about the military alliance that's forming between Russia and Iran and how this might relate to Ezekiel's prophecies.....last fall, a friend of hers encouraged her to read ***The Ezekiel Option*** and ***Epicenter***.....she did, and ended up giving copies of *Epicenter* to each of her senior staff.....A few weeks ago, Kay called me and asked if I would come down to her headquarters in Chattanooga to teach on the Biblical description of the "War of Gog and Magog" and to record a series of radio and TV programs to explain these prophecies in light of current events.....I agreed, and just spent the last several days with Kay and her team doing just that.....before going to Tennessee, I spent several days with **a team of Iranian Christian pastors** out West.....they have a **satellite television ministry which is seen by between 4 and 7 million Iranian Shiites every day**.....they wanted me to discuss Bible prophecies about Iran with them and help them develop a plan to communicate "God's love and plan for Iran" through their live satellite broadcasts, as well as figure out how to answer the many phone calls and emails they are sure to get from inside Iran once such programs are broadcast into the country.....they see a showdown with Iran coming, and they feel passionately about reaching their fellow Iranians with the good news of Christ's love.....these are amazing people.....one pastor and his wife used to be Shiite Muslims on the streets of Tehran in 1979 shouting, "Death to America!".....now –

because of how Christ changed their hearts and minds -- they live in the U.S., love America, love the Jewish people, and want to work together with a Jewish believer in Jesus like me to share the gospel with the people of Iran..... amazing..... There are, of course, other people teaching on these geopolitical developments and these prophecies besides me.....I simply share these developments to provide a few snapshots, to give you a sense of how Iranian actions are worrying political leaders and motivating evangelical leaders at home and around the globe.....will there be a war in the region this year or next?.....honestly, it's too early to say.....as I've been writing about for months, 2007 is the Year of Decision....President Bush and the Congressional leadership will need to decide soon just how they're going to handle the Iranian nuclear threat.....but Church leaders also need to decide just how they are going to handle the Iranian threat, as well....after all, time is short, and the stakes are high.

By Joel Rosenberg

See <http://joelrosenberg.blogspot.com/>
Joel C. Rosenberg is the founder of The Joshua Fund and the New York Times best-selling author of *THE LAST JIHAD*, *THE LAST DAYS*, *THE EZEKIEL OPTION*, *THE COPPER SCROLL*, and *EPICENTER* with more than one million copies in print. *THE EZEKIEL OPTION* was named by the ECPA as the Gold Medallion winner of the "Best Novel of 2006." Joel previously served as a senior advisor to several U.S. and Israeli leaders, including Steve Forbes, Rush Limbaugh, former Israeli Deputy Prime Minister Natan Sharansky, and former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.



In the Garden by R Diciani