

From Our Pastor

April 6th, 2019

Sabbath Greetings to Everyone!

"Breaking up is hard to do" is a familiar line from a popular song from the 70's. While the song is about romantic relationships, it is obviously true of agreements between nations. "Across the pond" Brexit is proving to be the ultimate illustration.

In 1957, France, West Germany, Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands signed the Treaty of Rome, which established the European Economic Community (EEC), the predecessor of today's European Union. It was the result of several attempts to foster economic cooperation between European nations in the wake of World War II. Nations that traded together, it was believed, would be less likely to go to war with each other.

When the United Kingdom first applied for membership in the EEC in 1963, France's President Charles de Gaulle vetoed its application. The UK finally made it into the club in 1973, but just two years later was on the verge of backing out again. The testy historical relationship between the French and English is still alive and well as the Brexit confusion illustrates.

The Maastricht Treaty, of 1993, created the Brussels-based European Union (EU), of which the EEC, renamed simply the European Community (EC) was the main component. The EU was designed to integrate Europe's nations politically and economically, including a united foreign policy, common citizenship rights and (for most member nations, but not including the UK) a single currency, the euro.

Many Brits felt that having to live by regulations made in Brussels was wrong. Large payments from the UK to subsidize farmers on the continent were opposed. Fishing quotas and marketing regulations were opposed. The EU imposing huge immigration numbers of migrants into the UK became the major source of anger. On June 23, 2016 a referendum passed. The new prime minister, Theresa May, on March 29, 2017 signed an order to the Council of the European Union, officially starting the two-year countdown to Britain's EU departure. The agreement she then negotiated with the EU has met with opposition and after many attempts has not been approved by Parliament. The due date has passed, and everything is in chaos. Since there is no agreement on what to do, no one can predict what is next.

Proverbs 29:18 tell us, "Where there is no vision, the people perish..."

In Britain today apparently there are many visions among the elected leaders and many who simply have no vision. Things are bad and the average citizen or business owner faces uncertainty. Since Scotland and Northern Ireland voted to stay in the EU, and the people of England and Wales voted to leave, there is talk of a national split.

This turmoil and near panic situation has a spiritual cause. God labels the tribe of Ephraim--the ancestors of the British--as a "silly dove." "Ephraim also is like a silly dove, without sense— They call to Egypt, they go to Assyria (other nations for alliances). (Hosea 7:11)

The real reason for their confusion and indecision is given in verse 13: They have forgotten God. "Woe to them, for they have fled from Me! Destruction to them, because they have transgressed against Me!" When the British were a great empire and ruled the seas, their churches were filled with worshippers every week and the English Bible--translated at the order of King James 1 in 1611 --was read constantly in homes. Now all across the UK empty churches are being turned into mosques and the truths of the Bible are rarely taught or allowed.

The prophet Isaiah predicts what will happen next, not just to Britain, but to all the nations that have rejected God and are experiencing the same type of division and governmental chaos. "Woe to the rebellious children," says the LORD, "Who take counsel, but not of Me, and who devise plans, but not of My Spirit, that they may add sin to sin;" (**Isaiah 30:1**)

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