

# What's Boiling in Babylon?

by Christopher J. Patton

Babylon is a confusing concept. Even the name harkens back to when intelligent speech miraculously became bewildering babbling. That's how God defeated mankind's first great attempt at a worldwide government combining mystical religion, cross-border trade, and dictatorial military power.

The Bible's use of Babylon may literally refer to that ancient city of the tower, to the kingdom that destroyed Jerusalem and took Judah captive, or to the Iraqi town, which Saddam Hussein has partially restored as an archaeological museum of the city that was once the wonder of the world. The Bible allegorically uses Babylon to represent the Roman Empire in its historic and prophetic role as the oppressor, enemy, and destroyer of Jerusalem and Judah. Thus, depending on biblical context, prophecies about Babylon may refer to either the actual cities of Rome or Babylon, or they may refer to the modern economic and political system, inherited from Babylon and Rome, that will empower Antichrist.

Satan is stirring the Babylonian pot of rebellion once again, and it's threatening to boil over within our generation. The Devil's plan is to divide mankind in order to destroy us all – both people and planet. The demonic forces are as united in this purpose even as it seems they inspire continuous political division and conflict between the world's various ethnic tribes and nations.

The Devil's big lie is really no different today than in the past. He seeks to unite the world against the Eternal God of Israel under a single great leader we call "Antichrist". Most who will support him will likely be well-intentioned, but deceived, in their effort to deal effectively with the world's great problems of human rights, peaceful development, shared prosperity, and global resource management. The western media mantra is that a New World Order of peace and prosperity can be created through global trade, if we can all be united through religious tolerance in worship of a universal god, and in accordance with international agreements, treaties, charters, or other regulations administered by the international bureaucracy created by the United Nations, the World Court, the World Trade Organization, and similar global organizations.

Between now and the revelation of Antichrist, the situation on our planet will become increasingly uncertain and frightening. Matters will finally reach the point where western nations will voluntarily rally around that prophesied hero giving him the power to address global problems. Individual liberties granted by God are already being surrendered in a stream of continuous small steps of increasing government monitoring and control of our daily lives.

## Prophecies for Today

As we go to press, dramatic changes stand ready to unfold in the Mideast. We do not know exactly how events will develop. We do have God's sure prophecy through His Word. "Surely the LORD God does nothing unless He reveals His secret counsel to His servants the prophets." (Amos 3:7; II Peter 1:19) Here are some sections of scripture to read and reflect on.

### Jeremiah 51:37

Although Darius the Mede largely destroyed Babylon in ancient times (Daniel 5), it continued to exist as a city for centuries. In fact, Babylon is inhabited today. The Bible specifically predicts a day when its destruction will be so complete that there will be no inhabitants will dwell where the city once stood. There is no military reason to bomb Babylon right now, but should Baghdad be destroyed, will a UN-administered, Iraqi transitional government be established in Babylon? Will it grow into a regional power center worthy of later atomic or divine destruction?

### Psalms 83

Verse 4-5 of this psalm recounts a conspiracy Israel's present day neighbors against the "name of Israel". They desire the land given by God to the descendants of Jacob (verse 12). Egypt, Syria, or Damascus are missing from this list of conspirators.

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Please read Psalm 83:13-18. The psalmist calls for this (Islamic) coalition's dramatic defeat, "Fill their faces with dishonor, that they may seek Thy name, O LORD. . .that they may know that Thou alone, whose name is the LORD, art the Most High over all the earth."

Why? That they might know that YHVH is the true Creator God - and not Allah! Could Bible-believing Christian revivals among Israel's Semitic cousins break out if they are defeated in battle? Let us pray for their salvation.

### Isaiah 17:1-2

Damascus is the oldest, continuously inhabited-on-the-same site city on earth. It has never been totally destroyed, yet the Bible promises that it will "be removed from being a city". Will Syria become involved in the current military operations? Will Damascus be destroyed as a consequence - perhaps by a small, precisely targeted, nuclear bomb? Syria hosts several terrorist organizations and boasts a military more powerful than Iraq's.

### Ezekiel 37

This section of scripture, along with others, predicts the physical restoration of Israel as a nation. Every year the Jewish people continue to be gathered from the four corners of the earth. God's purpose is to gather all of the natural descendants of Jacob back to the land promised to Abraham. There He will redeem them spiritually out of great tribulation. At Jerusalem, the Davidic Messiah-King will return to His people to establish peace over all of the earth. (Isaiah 11)

Outside of Israel, the largest number of Jewish people (about 5 million) is found in the United States. God has said that He will bring them home to the land of Israel, too. Right now, American Jews are not likely to leave this land of peace and plenty for an Israel under constant attack by her neighbors.

Could relative internal peace be restored to Israel as a result of America's military initiative against Iraq? Whether the attack on Iraq and still unknown events connected to it is what Psalm 83 seems to predict, or if it is another set of events, this psalm indicates a large victory that could give rise to a period of relative peace and stability in Israel. If so, the Promised Land would become a more desirable place for Jewish people to go to in the face of rising anti-Semitism. Today, the emigration of Jews from France to Israel is up due to the increase of anti-Semitism in France and Europe. Could anti-Semitism rise in America to the point that millions of Jews would leave for Israel?

Yes, I believe so. First, because I believe that God has promised to extract His chosen people from a culture of deceitful, materialistic, secular humanism and bring them to the land of their prophesied meeting with Messiah son of David. Once in Israel, the temporary peace enjoyed in the early years after the rise of Antichrist will turn into a time of national tribulation that will confront the Israelis with the need for spiritual repentance and salvation according to the gospel.

Secondly, Zechariah 12:3 predicts that "all nations" will come against Jerusalem. There are no exceptions, and that means that one-day America will oppose the God of Israel at Jerusalem. I do not think that this dramatic change will take place instantaneously. Already the media is full of Satan's lie that Israel is the cause of all the world's problems. Anti-Zionism is popular and politically correct on university campuses as well as in many other political or religious forums. Anti-Israel sentiment closely follows behind anti-Zionism, and, in most circumstances, both really turn out to be anti-Semitism in deceptive disguise.

Any perceived set-back to U.S. political and economic well-being, that is in some manner linked to the Mideast (Iraq? Oil? Terrorists?), will come to be blamed on the Jewish people. Not because this blame is legitimate, but because Satan wants to destroy Israel and the Jewish people in order to defeat the God of the Bible.

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American human nature is no different than that of any other people. The Jewish people have been welcome in the United States because of the dominant historical role that the Bible has played in our society's moral and religious foundations. Now that the Bible is culturally discredited, the way is wide open for anti-Semitism to flourish with increasing public acceptance.

### Ezekiel 38 & 39

Most likely, the events in these chapters take place either shortly before or after Antichrist brokers a seven-year Mideast peace agreement guaranteeing the right of a re-gathered Israel to exist in secure borders. By then, there will be few Jewish folks living anywhere outside of Israel. (Ezekiel 38:8) Gog and Magog refer to a grand alliance of (Islamic) South Asian enemies of Israel lead by Russia. They violently invade a peaceful, prosperous Israel only to be defeated by God's divine fury. (See especially verses 10-18.) Why?

“And My holy name I shall make known in the midst of My people Israel; and I shall not let My holy name be profaned anymore. And the nations will know that I am the Lord, the Holy One of Israel.” (Ezekiel 39:7)

[NOTE: As the “King of the South”, Egypt appears later in prophecy, during the middle of the seven years treaty that establishes Antichrist's “peace in the Mideast”. Read Daniel 11:40-43. It seems that an Egyptian ruler, perhaps presenting himself as an Islamic mahdi (like a messiah), will revolt against Antichrist. His motive will likely be to destroy the newly rebuilt Jewish Temple and the Jewish people. The Israelis will open their doors to their covenant-confirming ally (Daniel 9:27), who takes possession of the “Beautiful Land”, desecrates the temple, and proceeds to implement his own “Final Solution”. He fails when Jesus returns to save His people, putting a stop to all wars and destruction in the process.