

LAMPLIGHTER



"Prophecy is like a lamp shining in a dark place" - II Peter 1:19

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**The United States
in Bible Prophecy**



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Observations by the Editor

Giving Thanks

As most of you know, for 23 years this Ministry had a 15 minute daily radio program that was broadcast nationally. At its peak, it was carried on about 70 stations all across America.

Several years ago the Lord began to lead us in the direction of television, and in September of last year, we converted our radio program into a weekly TV program. That has proved to be a very wise move for us in terms of outreach (see page 18).

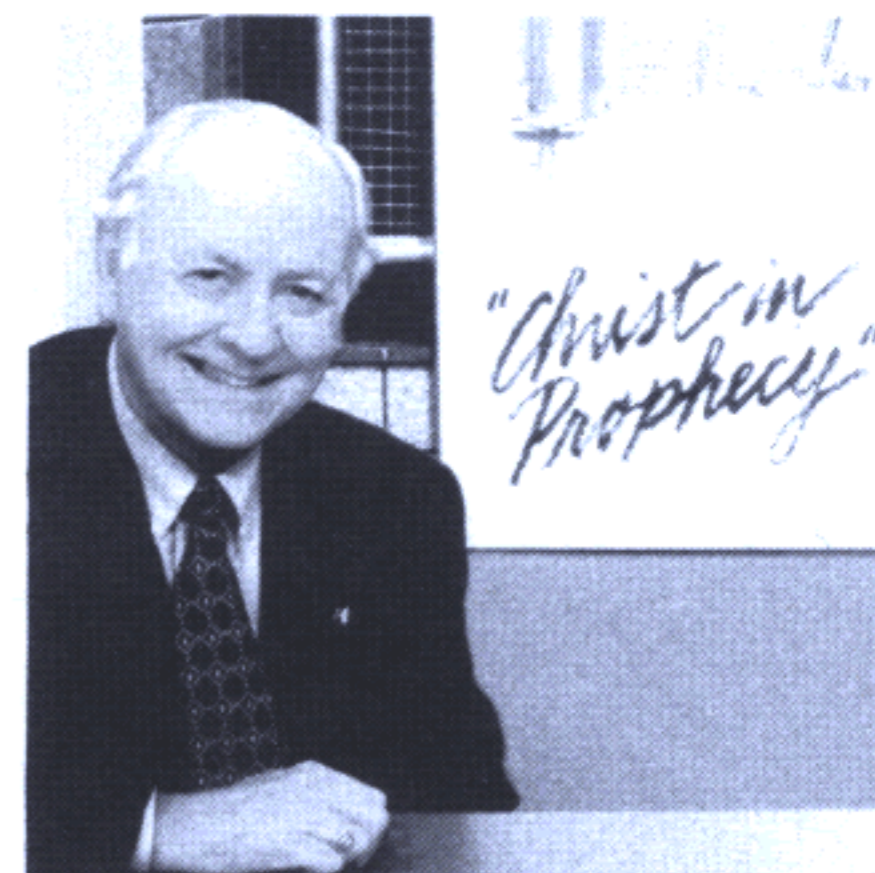
Since that time, I have been besieged by letters, email messages, and phone calls from people who have expressed their dismay and displeasure over the cancellation of our radio program. I receive the same feed-back in person when I hold meetings at churches that are located in former radio broadcast areas.

All of us here have been blessed by these back-door expressions of appreciation for our many years of radio broadcasting. I just wish we would have received all these words of thanks while we were still broadcasting! Many, if not most, of those who have expressed their sorrow over our departure from radio are people who never sent a donation or a letter of thanks while the program was still on the air.

I guess that failure is a natural one for all of us. We tend never to appreciate something until it is gone. We even treat people that way.

I'd like to urge you to be more attentive to the sources of your blessings. And I would like to further urge you to take the time to communicate your appreciation in words and in finances. Those who are laboring to expand the Lord's kingdom need encouragement.

One of the ministries that has blessed me greatly over the years has been RBC Ministries in Grand Rapids, Michigan. These people publish an outstanding daily devotional guide called "Our Daily Bread." Each year I write them a letter and send them a check to let them know that they are being used of the Lord to enrich my spiritual life. You can sign up to receive their publication over the Internet at www.rbc.net.



Dr. David R. Reagan

Giving is always a greater blessing than receiving. Of course, the Lord Himself is constantly encouraging me in many ways, but it is always a blessing to receive words of appreciation from those who are blessed by our ministry — like the quotes you will find on page 19.

One of the greatest blessings I have received in this ministry is serving as a channel of God's love to other ministries. We have had the blessing of playing a substantial role in the establishment of four other Bible prophecy ministries: Lion of Judah in Franklin, Tennessee (Gary Fisher); According to Prophecy in San Diego, California (Don Perkins); Maranatha Evangelistic in De Ridder, Louisiana (Al Gist); and Crown and Sickle in Amite, Louisiana (Don McGee).

In the early 90's we were blessed to be able to raise over \$100,000 for Bridges for Peace in Jerusalem to help with the absorption of Jewish refugees. And just recently we were able to give a donation of \$5,000 to the Garden Tomb Association in Jerusalem.

Yearly we raise about \$50,000 for Hands of Luke Ministries in Juarez, Mexico.

One thing I have learned for sure: it is impossible to out give the Lord!

Thanks for your love and support. Keep us in your prayers. ✝

The United States in Bible Prophecy

Can America be found in end time Bible prophecy?

If so, where? If not, why not?

What is America's destiny?

Dr. David R. Reagan

(Note: This article is an excerpt from Dr. Reagan's newest book, *America the Beautiful? The United States in Bible Prophecy*.)

Several years ago I got a call from a friend who was a student of Bible prophecy. When I answered, he shouted triumphantly, "I have discovered America!"

I thought for a moment and then replied, "I thought Columbus did that!"

"No," he shot back, "I mean I have discovered America in Bible prophecy." He proceeded to explain how he had concluded that the United States must be the super power described in Revelation 18 — the power that dominates the world during the Tribulation.

An Understandable Quest

It is only natural that we should wonder where the United States is in Bible prophecy. We love our nation. We are concerned about its future. And we are mystified by the fact that it does not seem to be specifically mentioned in God's Prophetic Word.

The persistent question about America's future has motivated many prophecy experts to resort to their imaginations. The unfortunate result has been the "discovery" of the United States in some very unusual passages — passages that strain credulity. This imaginative approach to the interpretation of Bible prophecy is one of several factors that have motivated contempt for the whole field of prophetic studies, prompting many people to write it off as "a playground for fanatics."

Let's take a look at some of these passages of Scripture where the United States has been "found," and let's try to determine whether or not the discovery has really been made.

A "tall and smooth people"?

- 1 Alas, oh land of whirring wings
Which lies beyond the rivers of Cush,
- 2 Which sends envoys by the sea . . .
Go, swift messengers, to a nation tall and
smooth,
To a people feared far and wide,



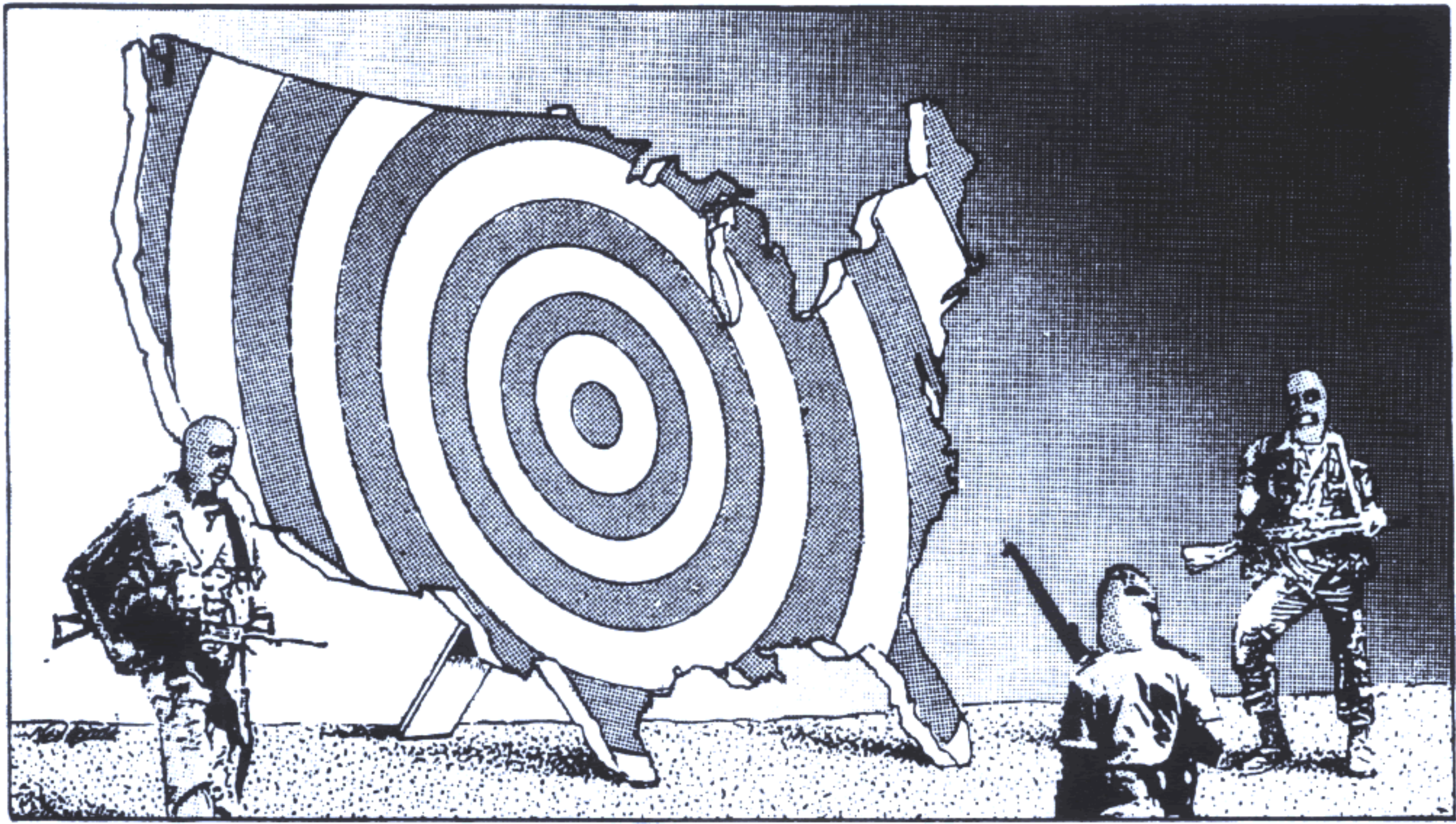
A powerful and oppressive nation
Whose land the rivers divide . . .

- 7 At that time a gift of homage will be
brought to the Lord of hosts
From a people tall and smooth,
Even from a people feared far and wide,
A powerful and oppressive nation,
Whose land the rivers divide —
To the place of the name of the Lord of hosts,
even Mount Zion.

Some have used these verses from Isaiah 18 to prove that the United States is in Bible prophecy. They note that the passage speaks of a people "tall and smooth" who are "feared far and wide" (verse 2). The passage further states that this is a "powerful nation whose land the rivers divide" (verse 2). The chapter ends by stating that the people of this nation will bring "a gift of homage" to the Lord when He returns to reign from Mt. Zion (verse 7).

Because these verses speak of a powerful nation whose land is divided by a great river, some people with rather vivid imaginations have jumped to the conclusion that the nation is the United States, since it is divided by the Mississippi River. They further argue that we are a people who are tall and clean-shaven, and that our military might is feared throughout the world. Finally, they argue that since we are a Christian nation, we would certainly bring gifts to the Lord when He returns.

But the opening verse of this chapter states specifically that it is speaking of the nation of "Cush," the ancient name of Ethiopia. At the time Isaiah wrote this passage, Ethiopia was the



Los Angeles Syndicate

Ned Levine

seat of the powerful 25th Egyptian Dynasty (730-660 BC). The river referred to is undoubtedly the Nile.

The prophecy that the Egyptians will pay homage to the Lord during His future reign over all the earth is explained in detail in the next chapter. In Isaiah 19:16-25, Isaiah reveals that when the Lord returns, He “will make Himself known to Egypt, and the Egyptians will know the Lord in that day. They will even worship with sacrifice and offering, and will make a vow to the Lord and perform it” (verse 21).

Isaiah proceeds to explain that a highway will be built that will connect the old foes of the Middle East — Syria, Israel and Egypt. The three will be united by a common faith in the same Lord, and their people will move freely along this highway from one country to the other (Isaiah 19:23-25).

The three nations will live in peace and harmony and will be considered “a blessing in the midst of the earth” (verse 24). In fact, the Lord Himself will proclaim: “Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance” (verse 25).

Isaiah 18 has nothing to do with the United States in prophecy, and even if it did, it would not answer the question about the role of America in end time world politics. It is a prophecy about the millennial reign of Jesus that will be established after His return.

A “village” of Tarshish?

Probably one of the most popular passages where people claim to have found America is in Ezekiel 38 where the prophet describes an invasion of Israel that will be launched in the end times by a nation “from the remote parts of the north” (verse 15). The descriptive verses about the northern power make it clear that this nation is Russia. What is not so clear is where the

United States fits into this invasion.

Those who find us in the passage point to Ezekiel 38:13 which says that “the merchants of Tarshish and all its villages” (or “young lions,” depending on the translation) will speak out against the invasion. The argument is that Tarshish is Britain and the “villages,” or “young lions,” are the English speaking nations like the United States and Australia that were founded by British immigrants.

To say the least, this is a highly imaginative interpretation. It truly shows the desperation that people feel in trying to find America in prophecy. Those who cling to this passage end up building an upside down pyramid, with a major conclusion resting on the tip of one very obtuse verse.

The validity of the argument is seriously questioned by the fact that no one knows for certain the true identity of “Tarshish.” In recent years the interpretation has fallen on hard times because archaeological discoveries indicate that Tarshish was most likely ancient Tartessus in modern day Spain.

But the diehards have continued to cling to Ezekiel 38 as the passage that refers to the United States in prophecy. They have responded to the archaeological evidence by saying, “It makes no difference if Tarshish really is Spain. After all, who discovered America? Columbus. And where did he come from? Spain!” So, their new interpretation is that the “merchants of Tarshish” are all the nations of the world that were developed from Spanish explorations. These mental gymnastics show how hard it is to give up old theories in the light of new evidence.

Tarshish is used in Scripture as a symbol of the areas west of Israel. Therefore, the most likely meaning of Ezekiel’s statement is that the nations of Western Europe will speak out against the Russian-led invasion of Israel in the end times.

One thing is certain — Ezekiel 38 does not settle the search for America in prophecy.

A “great eagle”?

Sometimes the search for the United States in prophecy becomes downright silly. For example, another favorite passage for applied imagination is found in Revelation 12:13-14 —

- 13 And when the dragon saw that he was thrown down to earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male child.
- 14 And the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, so that she could fly into the wilderness to her place, where she was nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent.

The “woman who gave birth to the male child” (verse 13) is Israel. So, these verses are saying that in the middle of the Tribulation God will provide a means of escape for the Jewish remnant in Israel. They will be carried into the wilderness to a hiding place on the “wings of a great eagle” (verse 14).

Some people have seized on this imagery to teach that the United States, whose national symbol is the eagle, will supply the end time air lift that will save the Jewish remnant!

But the Bible is its own best interpreter. And when you look up the phrase, “wings of an eagle,” you will find that it is the same one that God used in Exodus 19:4 to describe how He brought the Israelites out of Egypt: “You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings, and brought you to Myself.” The same imagery is used in Deuteronomy 32:11 where it speaks of God’s protection of Israel in the wilderness: “Like an eagle that stirs up its nest, that hovers over its young, He [the Lord] spread His wings and caught them, He carried them on His pinions.”

God is often portrayed in the Scriptures symbolically as a protective bird. In Psalm 91 the reader is told to put his trust in God and He will “cover you with His pinions, and under His wings you may seek refuge” (Psalm 91:2,4). In Psalm 17:8 David cries out to the Lord in a prayer, asking God to “hide me in the shadow of Your wings.” (See also Psalms 36:7, 57:1, 61:4, and 63:7.)

In Revelation 12, God is the “eagle,” not the United States. All the passage in Revelation 12 teaches is that God is going to supernaturally protect the Jewish people when they flee from the Antichrist into Jordan in the middle of the Tribulation.

“Babylon the great”?

This brings us to the final and most widely used passage for identifying the United States in Bible prophecy. It is Revelation 18 where the destruction of “Babylon the great” is described:

- 1 After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority . . .

- 2 And he cried out with a mighty voice, saying, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird.

- 3 For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed acts of immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich by the wealth of her sensuality . . .

- 8 For this reason in one day her plagues will come, pestilence and mourning and famine, and she will be burned up with fire; for the Lord God who judges her is strong.

- 9 And the kings of the earth, who committed acts of immorality and lived sensuously with her, will weep and lament over her when they see the smoke of her burning.

There is no doubt that the United States shares many similarities with the corrupt commercial empire described in this chapter. The empire is described as one that is in rebellion against God, to the point that it has become “a dwelling place of demons” (verse 2). It further states that the immorality of this empire has corrupted all the nations of the world (verse 3).

It is also made clear that this “Babylon the great” will completely dominate the world economy, and its destruction will result in the collapse of the economies of all nations. This causes the kings, merchants and shipmasters to “weep and lament” and cry out, “Woe, woe!” (verses 9,11,17).

In the present international context, it certainly sounds like the United States. But, again, the Bible is its own best interpreter, and chapter 17 of Revelation makes it clear that “Babylon the great” is an empire whose capital is Rome, not Washington, D.C.



The Scripture Context

In Revelation 17:9 we are told that the seven heads of the beast (the Antichrist) are representative, in part, of “seven mountains.” In the First Century context, this could only be a reference to Rome, for it was known as “the city of seven hills.” This identification is further reinforced by verse 18 which states that the woman riding the beast “is the great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth.” Again, there is only one city that could fit that description in the First Century context of the passage, and that is Rome.

When Revelation 17 and 18 are considered in reference to what the rest of the book teaches about the events of the Tribulation, it is clear that the “Babylon the great” that is mentioned in these two chapters is the last Gentile world empire, the empire of the Antichrist.

The book of Daniel teaches that this empire will be centered in the geographical base of the old Roman empire, which, of course, is what we now refer to as Western Europe. Revelation 17 and 18 reveal that the capital of this empire will be Rome. And Revelation 13:7 states that this empire will truly be worldwide in nature, encompassing every nation on the face of the earth: “And it was also given to him [the Antichrist] to make war with the saints and to overcome them; and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him.”



Most Bible prophecies have a pre-fulfillment in symbolic type before they are ultimately fulfilled in reality. The destruction of the United States (whether by external or internal forces), and the impact of that destruction upon the world, could certainly constitute a pre-fulfillment of Revelation 17 and 18, but the true fulfillment will have to await the annihilation of the empire of the Antichrist.

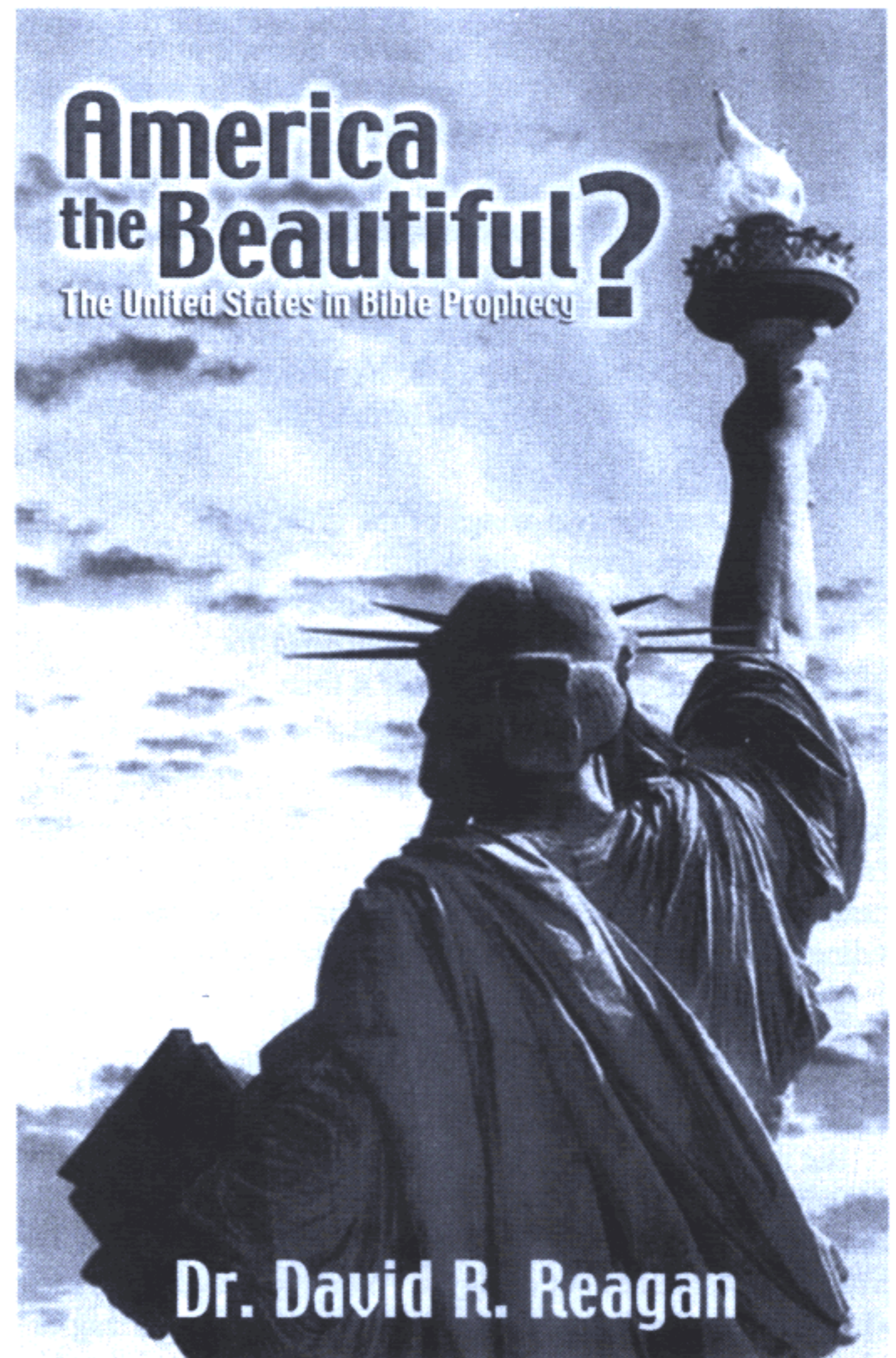
Some Conclusions

So, where is the United States in Bible prophecy? A partial answer is that we are not mentioned directly and specifically. We are covered by general prophecies that relate to all nations, but beyond that, our end time destiny is not specifically mentioned.

General prophecies that apply to the United States include those that say all nations will be judged (Isaiah 34:2-3) and all nations will cease to exist except the nation of Israel (Jeremiah 30:11 and 46:28).

But how could God overlook the world’s most important and powerful nation? I don’t think He has. I believe America can be found in Bible prophecy, not specifically, but in prophetic type. In other words, I believe there is a nation in Scripture that is a forerunner of America in its origin, its purpose, and its destiny. Let’s take a look at that nation. ✚

(Note: For a continuation of this article, you will need to purchase a copy of Dr. Reagan’s new book, *America the Beautiful? The United States in Bible Prophecy*.)



Where is the United States in Bible Prophecy?

Dr. Reagan answers this question in his latest book, *America the Beautiful?* As you saw in the previous article, the United States is not to be found in any of the passages that have been traditionally identified.

But Dr. Reagan asserts that our nation can definitely be found in Bible prophecy in what is called “typology” or symbolic prophecy. He also presents a number of scenarios to explain why the United States is not going to be a major power when the Tribulation begins.

In the process, Dr. Reagan presents a fascinating overview of the fundamental biblical principles that govern God’s relationship with the nations of the world. He also discusses the spiritual implications of the 9/11 attack against America.

This is a down-to-earth, easy-to-read book that will help you understand the biblical relevance of current world trends and events.

The book sells for \$10, including the cost of shipping. To order a copy, call 1-800-705-8316 between 8am and 5pm (Central time) Monday through Friday. ✚

Biblical Implications of the War in Iraq



“A pre-emptive war by the United States against a nation like Iraq goes against the very grain of our understanding of the Gospel, our church’s teachings, and our conscience. A pre-emptive strike does not reflect restraint and does not allow for the adequate pursuit of peaceful means for resolving conflict. To be silent in the face of such a prospect is not an option for followers of Christ.”

Sharon A. Brown Christopher, President of the Council of Bishops of the United Methodist Church. From an open letter to Methodists dated October 4, 2002.

Observations by Dr. David R. Reagan

As you can see from the quote above, the war in Iraq prompted many people, including Christian leaders, to question whether or not the war was a just one. What made this particular statement so important is that it was issued by the leaders of the denomination with which President Bush is affiliated.

The month before Bishop Christopher issued her letter, a group of 51 Protestant, Orthodox and Catholic leaders made public a letter they had sent to the President in which they strongly opposed any war with Iraq “on moral grounds.” They explained:

The pre-emptive use of military force by the United States to deal with proliferation problems, as serious as they may be, establishes a dangerous precedent, particularly for other nations that feel threatened by the weapons capabilities of their neighbors. Furthermore, unilaterally overthrowing enemy governments heightens concern in other countries about American respect for their integrity as nations, as well as for international law.

The signers of this letter included, among others, the heads of the National Council of Churches, the Presbyterian Church (USA), the Reformed Church in America, The Episcopal Church, the Church of the Brethren, the Mennonite Church, the Disciples of Christ, the Society of Friends (Quakers), the United Church of Christ, the Unitarian Universalist Church, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

In January of this year, Pope John Paul II jumped into the fray by issuing a statement that he opposed any American attack on Iraq except as “the very last option.” In a speech to diplomats accredited to the Vatican, he said, “One cannot resort to war, even when the intention is to ensure the common good, if not as the very last option, and in accordance with very strict conditions, and taking into account the consequences to the civilian population both during and after the military operation.”



Secular Voices

President Bush’s determination to launch a pre-emptive attack on Iraq did not fare any better in the secular world.

- “I have become thoroughly familiar with the principles of a just war, and it is clear that a substantially unilateral attack on Iraq does not meet these standards.” — Former President Jimmy Carter in the *New York Times*, March 8, 2003.
- “War against Saddam Hussein [allows] international law to be replaced by the law of the fist.” — President Vladimir Putin of the Russian Federation, April 3, 2003.
- “Nothing in international law authorizes a pre-emptive war to overthrow a government and disarm it.” — Professor Erwin Chemerinsky of the University of Southern California in the *Los Angeles Times*, March 25, 2003.

Millions went to the streets all over the world to denounce “American imperialism” and to demand that the United States take no action against Iraq without the specific approval of the United Nations Security Council.

The Fundamental Issue

As these quotes clearly indicate, the moral challenge to the war was prompted by the fact that the war was a pre-emptive one. In other words, it was a war which we launched in response to a perceived threat and not in response to an actual attack.

That made it a very different type of war for us. In recent history, all our wars have been defensive in nature. We got involved only after we or an ally were attacked. Thus, we entered World War II in response to the Japanese attack on us at Pearl Harbor. Likewise, we launched a war against Afghanistan after the 9/11 attacks by terrorists who were based in that country.

In World War I, Korea, and Vietnam, we went to war to help protect countries who had been attacked by aggressors. The same was true in 1991 in the Gulf War when we came to the assistance of Kuwait.

But the war in Iraq was not in response to any attack on us or an ally. Again, it was a pre-emptive attack designed to counter a perceived threat. Can such a war ever be justified?



Applying Scripture

The many Christian leaders who felt compelled to condemn the war as “unjust” often pointed to scriptural admonitions and asked, “As Christians, aren’t we supposed to be peacemakers? Aren’t we supposed to turn the other cheek? Aren’t we supposed to forgive as we have been forgiven?”

Historically, some Christian groups, like the Quakers, have used these biblical principles to develop a strong doctrine of pacifism, arguing that it is always wrong for a nation to go to war, even in self-defense, and that it is always wrong for a Christian to participate in a war.

The Special Status of Governments

What these people fail to recognize is that these are principles of personal morality which do not necessarily apply to nations. That’s because the Bible makes it clear that God has empowered governments to do things that individuals cannot do. For example, the Bible says that God has given governments the authority to use the sword as “an avenger of God to bring wrath upon those who practice evil” (Romans 13:1-4).

The authority to use force as an “avenger of God” is a power

I do not have as an individual. Only duly constituted governments have this authority. In fact, they not only have the authority, but they have the responsibility to use that authority.

Governments have been given this authority in order that citizens “may lead a tranquil and quiet life in godliness and dignity” (1 Timothy 2:2). And this is the reason that the Bible exhorts us to obey governing authorities. Here’s how Paul put it in Romans 13:1 — “Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.”

Now, the Bible teaches that God takes seriously His delegation of authority to governments. Accordingly, if a government refuses to use its authority to control evil, God will allow the evil to multiply to the point that the government will be destroyed from within. As Romans 1:28 puts it, God will deliver the nation over to a “depraved mind,” and the nation will collapse from the weight of its own moral rot. The Roman Empire and the Soviet Union are vivid examples of this principle in action.

The Bible also teaches that if a government itself becomes evil and abuses its power, the Lord may motivate another nation or alliance of nations to discipline that government.

Illustrations

The Bible is full of examples of this principle. Thus, God used the Jews to judge the Canaanites (Leviticus 18:24-28). Then, when the Kingdom of David and Solomon split into two nations and the northern nation of Israel gave itself to idolatry, God sent the Assyrians to judge Israel (2 Kings 17:1-23). The Word says God gave Israel “into the hands of plunderers,” and they were “carried away into exile from their own land to Assyria” (2 Kings 17, 20, 23).

In like manner, when the southern nation of Judah began to follow her sister nation’s path of rebellion against God, He sent prophets and remedial judgments to warn them. When they persisted in their sin, God raised up the Babylonians and sent them to conquer Judah and take the Jews into exile (2 Chronicles 36:15-17).

God used the Medes and Persians to judge Babylon, just as He later raised up the Greeks under Alexander to judge the Medo-Persian Empire. In Jeremiah 51:20, God refers to the Medes and Persians as “My war club; My weapon of war.” In Isaiah 13:3 He refers to them as “My consecrated ones . . . My mighty warriors . . . to execute My anger.” In Isaiah 10:5 He calls the Assyrians His “rod of anger.”

A Mystery

One thing that should leap out from these historical examples is that when God uses one nation or a coalition of nations to judge another nation, it is not always a matter of clear-cut good against evil. More often than not, it is a matter of evil judging evil.

And this reality presents us with a mystery: Why does God use evil to judge evil? Even more mysterious is the fact that sometimes God judges an evil nation with a nation that is even more evil!

A good example of the complexity of this issue can be found

in World War II. People often think of it as a war that pitted good against evil — the righteous Allied Powers against the malevolent Axis Powers. But the Allied coalition contained a very evil leader, Stalin, who had the blood of millions on his hands. Yet, God worked through this man and his nation, Soviet Russia, to defeat Hitler and end the Nazi Holocaust.



The Example of Habakkuk

How can this be explained? How can a righteous and holy God use evil to punish evil? The book of Habakkuk addresses this difficult issue.

Habakkuk was the last prophet God sent to warn the nation of Judah that if they did not repent they would face destruction. Habakkuk preached his heart out, warning the people that they were courting the wrath of God. But the people would not listen. They mocked Habakkuk and scoffed at his warnings.

When Habakkuk returned home, he cried out to God, asking when He was going to affirm his message by pouring out His wrath. Basically, Habakkuk was crying out for God to legitimize him as a prophet by sending some wrath.

God's response astonished Habakkuk. The Lord revealed that He was in the process of raising up the Chaldeans and that He was going to send them to destroy Judah.

Habakkuk cried out: "Don't you know, Lord, that the Chaldeans are the most evil people on earth? Aren't you aware of how vicious they are — how they murder, loot and rape?"

Habakkuk's pleas were met with strong silence. Finally, Habakkuk summed up his feelings in a profound question: "Lord, You are holy and righteous. How can You, therefore, punish those who are evil with those who are more evil?"

Again, the response was silence. That's because God never answers such questions. When Job kept asking, "Why me, Lord?" the Lord responded by asking him a question: "Where were you, Job, when I created the universe?" In other words, God was saying, "Who are you to question Me? Your responsibility is to trust Me, not to question Me."

Habakkuk got very upset over God's silence. He climbed up in a tower and sat down and pouted, waiting for the Lord to answer him. At long last, the answer finally came. God spoke to Habakkuk and said, "Write My answer on a tablet in large letters so that someone running by can read it at a glance." It was obviously going to be an important answer.

A Tough Answer to a Tough Question

Remember the question: "How can a righteous and holy God punish those who are evil with those who are more evil?"

The answer: "*The righteous shall live by faith*" (Habakkuk 2:4).

It was a tough answer to a tough question, and Habakkuk was not prepared to accept it. He immediately responded by reminding God of the treachery, cruelty, immorality and idolatry of the Chaldeans. In the midst of his recitation of this litany, God interrupted him with these words: "The Lord is in His holy temple. Let all the earth keep silence before Him" (Habakkuk 2:20). It was a nice way of saying, "Shut up Habakkuk! I am on the throne. I am in control. There is nothing you can tell me about the Chaldeans. Stop whining and start trusting that I know what is best."

Realizing that God meant what He said, Habakkuk went to his knees in prayer. It was a rather pitiful prayer. Basically, he said, "Lord, I realize You are going to do what You've said. You are going to send the Chaldeans to destroy us. So, I want to ask that in Your wrath You will remember mercy" (Habakkuk 3:1-2). Habakkuk is wallowing in self-pity as he cries out to the One who is the source of all mercy, to please remember mercy!

Once again, God cuts him off, interrupting his prayer with a glorious vision of the Second Coming of the Messiah. Habakkuk sees the Lord shattering the nations, uprooting evil, and bringing a reign of peace, righteousness and justice (Habakkuk 3:3-15).

Actually, the vision was an answer to Habakkuk's prayer, for it assured him that one day all the evil nations of the world will be dealt with. It also delivered him from his self-pity by getting his eyes off himself and reviving his eternal perspective.

Habakkuk responded by singing a song of tough faith (Habakkuk 3:17-18):

Though the fig tree should not blossom, and there be no fruit on the vines, though the yield of the olive should fail, and the fields produce no food, though the flock should be cut off from the fold, and there be no cattle in the stalls, yet I will exult in the Lord, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation.

What a statement of faith! Habakkuk is saying, "Lord, if you send the Chaldeans, and they totally destroy our nation, I will still praise Your Holy Name."

Well, God did send the Chaldeans. They destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple, and they took the people into captivity, transferring them to Babylon. Yet, today, 2,500 years later, the Chaldeans are in the dustbin of history, and the Jews are regathered to their homeland. Only God has the long range picture of history.

"International law is that thing which the evil ignore and the righteous refuse to enforce."

A quote from *Exodus* by Leon Uris.

The Unpleasant Truth

The bottom line is that the only nations God has to work through are evil ones. Psalm 2 teaches that all the nations of the world are involved in a conspiracy against God and His Anointed One.

God may have used our nation to judge the very evil government of Iraq, but that does not mean our hands are clean. We may not have torture chambers, we may not suppress freedom of speech or religion, and we may not harbor or sponsor terrorists, but our hands are not clean!

- We have the blood of 45 million aborted babies on our hands.
- We are the world's foremost producer of pornography.
- We exalt and promote homosexuality.
- We spend over 400 billion per year on gambling.
- We constitute 5% of the world's population, yet we consume 55% of all the illegal drugs produced in the world.
- We are the moral polluter of planet earth through our immoral and violent movies and television programs.

In summary, we are a nation in rebellion against God, and if we do not repent, then like Iraq, our day of judgment will come.

The Concept of Just War

Now, regarding the concept of "just war," the Bible does not provide specific rules for the launching of war or for its conduct. But over the centuries, Christian theologians like Augustine and Aquinas have taken scriptural principles like love and mercy and have used them to develop rules of "just war" — both for starting a war and conducting a war.



With regard to launching a war, there are three basic rules:

- 1) The war must be a last resort.
- 2) The war must be in self-defense.
- 3) The war must have right intentions.

Let's consider these three rules as they apply to the war the United States launched in Iraq.

Last Resort?

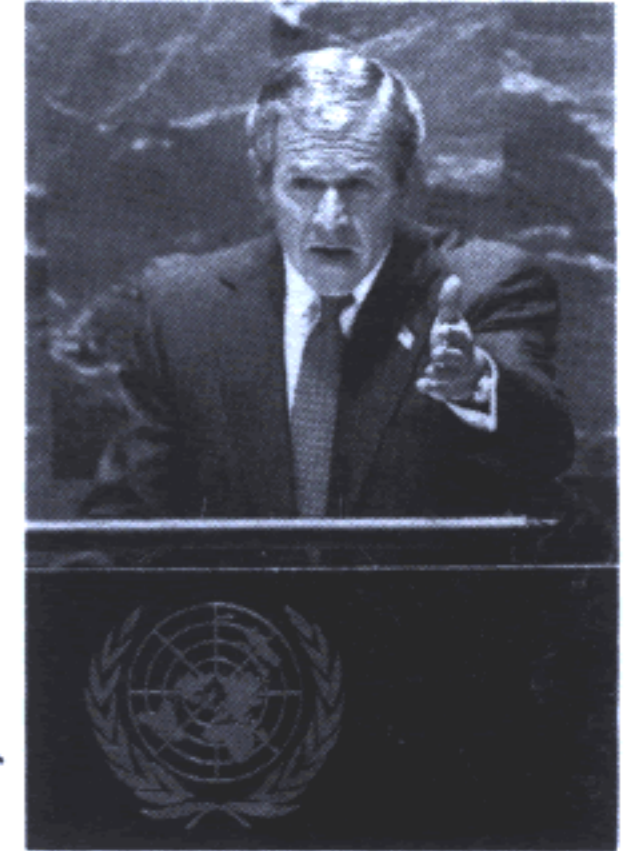
Was the war a last resort? Keep in mind that in the cease-fire agreement that ended the Gulf War of 1990-1991, Saddam Hussein agreed to disarm. He also agreed to stop making weapons of mass destruction, and he agreed to end all support for international terrorism.

During the 12 years thereafter, Saddam violated all these agreements. He did not disarm. He continued to produce weapons of mass destruction. He continued to sponsor terrorism. For example, we know from captured Taliban fighters that

Saddam supplied chemical weapons training to Al-Qaeda. During those 12 years, the United Nations passed 18 resolutions demanding that Iraq comply with the cease-fire agreement. All were ignored.

Then, last September, President Bush went to the UN and demanded enforcement action. The UN Security Council responded by passing a unanimous resolution calling for Iraq to disarm or face the consequences. But Saddam continued to play his hide and seek games.

War was clearly our last resort, in accordance with the principles of just war.



Self-Defense?

That brings us to a more difficult question: Was the war in self-defense?

Until the last Century, this principle was rather clear cut. But it became muddied in the mid-20th Century due to the development of weapons of mass destruction and the air power to deliver them. Suddenly, nations were faced with the reality that to wait for an attack might mean national suicide.

A good example is the Six Day War of 1967. In the spring of that year, the President of Egypt, Gamal Nasser, started calling for the annihilation of Israel. In May he demanded that the United Nations withdraw its peacekeeping forces from the Sinai, and when they complied, he started deploying a large scale military force along the border with Israel. A few days later Egypt blockaded the Gulf of Aqaba to prevent Israeli shipping from entering the Red Sea. On May 30th Jordan joined the Egyptian-Syrian military alliance and put their troops under Egyptian command. Iraq followed suit.

At this point it was obvious to everyone that the Arab coalition was positioned to strike a lethal attack on Israel from several directions at one time. The Israelis decided not to wait for the attack. They launched a pre-emptive strike on June 5th that destroyed the entire Egyptian air force on the ground.

Should the Israelis have waited for the Arab attack? Keep in mind that Israel is only 75 miles wide and 300 miles long! To have waited for an Arab attack would have meant Israel's doom.

In like manner, in 1981 the Israelis discovered that Iraq was trying to produce nuclear weapons. Keep in mind that Saddam Hussein was bragging at the time about being "Nebuchadnezzar the Second," making it clear that he intended to destroy Israel, just as the first Nebuchadnezzar had done.

The Prime Minister of Israel, Menachem Begin, decided that he was not going to sit idly by and wait for Saddam to lob a nuclear bomb toward Israel. Begin ordered

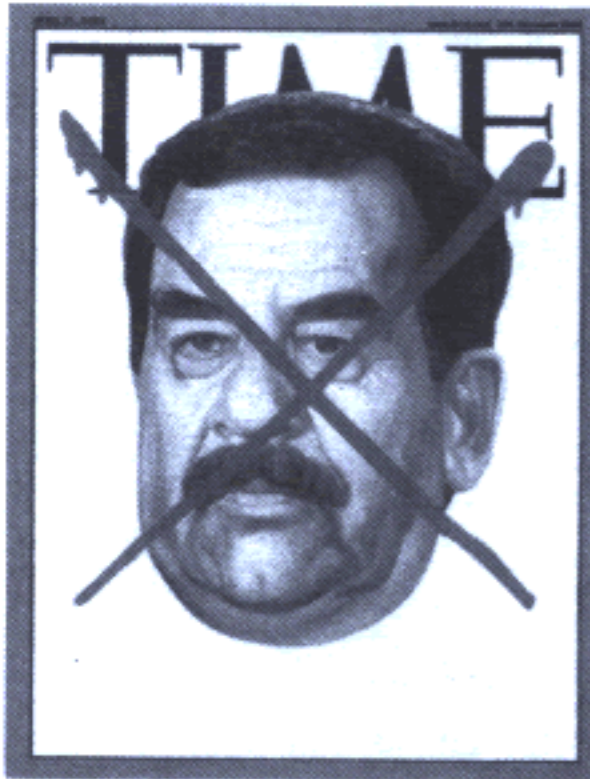


Menachem Begin

a pre-emptive attack on the Iraqi nuclear plant located near Baghdad. On June 7, 1981 a group of 16 Israeli jets pulled off a sneak attack that resulted in the complete destruction of the facility.

The world condemned Israel. But today the world sighs with relief that Saddam was not allowed to complete his nuclear weapons project. The point is that the destructive nature of modern warfare is such that pre-emptive attacks can now be justified. Here's a statistic that drives home that point: one nuclear submarine today carries more destructive power than all the bombs dropped during World War II.

Application to Iraq



Now, with regard to Iraq, we must keep in mind that World War III began on September 11, 2001 with the attack on New York and Washington, D.C. We are now engaged in a world wide struggle with Islamic terrorists who are determined to destroy us.

We would be foolish to sit back and wait for further attacks from gangster regimes who have weapons of mass destruction and who sponsor terrorism. And certainly the regime of Saddam Hussein was one of these. Consider his track record:

- In 1980, one year after he seized power in Iraq, Saddam launched a war of aggression against Iran in which he used chemical weapons repeatedly. Almost two million people died in this war that lasted eight years.
- In 1988, as soon as the war ended with Iran, Saddam launched a campaign of genocide against the Kurds in northern Iraq. Again, he used chemical weapons, wiping out one village of 5,000. It is estimated that he killed over 150,000 Kurds before the violence ended.
- In 1990 Saddam invaded Kuwait with the intention of conquering all the Middle East and then destroying Israel.
- In 1993 Saddam sponsored the attack on the World Trade Center. His agent, Ramzi Yousef, said the goal was to kill 250,000 people.
- Also in 1993 Saddam's agents attempted to kill former President George Bush during his visit to Kuwait.
- During the 1990's Saddam supplied chemical weapons training to Al-Qaeda.
- Once the Arab uprising began in Israel in September 2000, Saddam started supplying grants of \$25,000 to the family of each suicide bomber.

As can be readily seen from the list above, Saddam Hussein was a dangerous man. Were we to simply sit and wait until agents of his dumped a shoe box full of Anthrax from a tall building in New York — or detonated a “dirty bomb” on a cargo ship in New York harbor? Our pre-emptive attack was in re-

sponse to a credible threat. Furthermore, our attack was a resumption of the Gulf War of 1990-1991, which was clearly a defensive war.

Intentions?

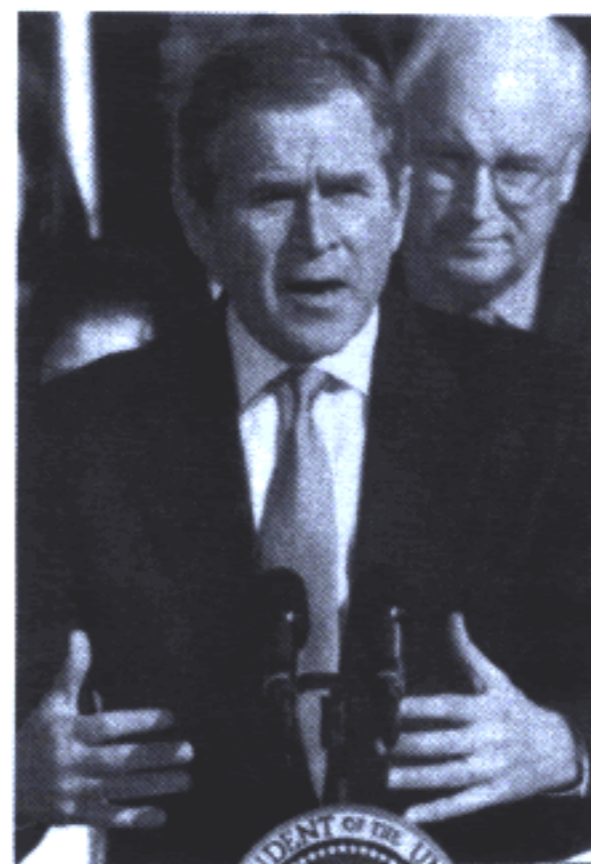
What about intentions? Was our war against Iraq launched with just intentions?

Just wars must be waged with proper intentions. For example, even though we entered World War II justly in self-defense, it would have become an unjust war if our intention had been to annihilate the German and Japanese peoples. A defensive, just war cannot have as its goal the genocide of the opponent.

Nor can a just war's purpose be national aggrandizement, such as the seizure of land or assets.

So, what about the war in Iraq? Our purpose was not territorial conquest. Our purpose was not to seize the oil fields. Our purpose was to remove a madman from power, disarm him, and liberate his people from a cruel tyranny. Our intentions were pristine. This is where America shined the brightest.

What other nation would have spent so much money and risked so many lives for such unselfish purposes? The only selfish motive we had was a justifiable one — namely, to protect our country and our assets abroad from future terrorist attacks.



An Historical Comparison

President Bush took the same position toward Saddam Hussein that Winston Churchill took toward Hitler. But there was a significant difference — Churchill was not in power when he stood up and spoke out against the danger of Nazism, calling on the world to draw the line on Hitler's ambitions.

The British leader who had the power was Neville Chamberlain. Like the rest of the European leaders, he wanted to appease Hitler. Winston Churchill, like Bush today, was denounced as a “war monger.”

Prime Minister Chamberlain flew to Munich in 1938 and agreed to give Hitler the Sudetenland (a portion of Czechoslovakia!) if Hitler would agree to peaceful co-existence with his European neighbors. When Chamberlain returned to



England, he proclaimed, "we have peace in our time!"

Chamberlain was a fool. His appeasement policy only whetted Hitler's appetite. And guess what? The world turned to Winston Churchill, the realist, when Hitler invaded Poland a year later in 1939.

At least the deluded European leaders could look back and say, "We just didn't realize what a monster we were dealing with." But the world could not say that about Saddam Hussein. His track record was clear.

The Nature of Man

Like Winston Churchill, President Bush is making decisions based upon a Judeo-Christian perception of Man. The Bible teaches that Mankind is basically evil: "Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind . . . [for] the heart [of Man] is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick" (Jeremiah 17:5, 9). The leaders of Europe, in contrast, are Humanists who believe in the basic goodness of Mankind. They were willing to trust the empty promises of Saddam Hussein. President Bush was not.

On his death bed, Neville Chamberlain made an incredible comment about the trust he had placed in Hitler. He said, "It all would have been okay if Hitler had not lied to me." Only a deceived Humanist would be surprised by a person like Hitler or Saddam telling a lie.



The Centrality of Israel

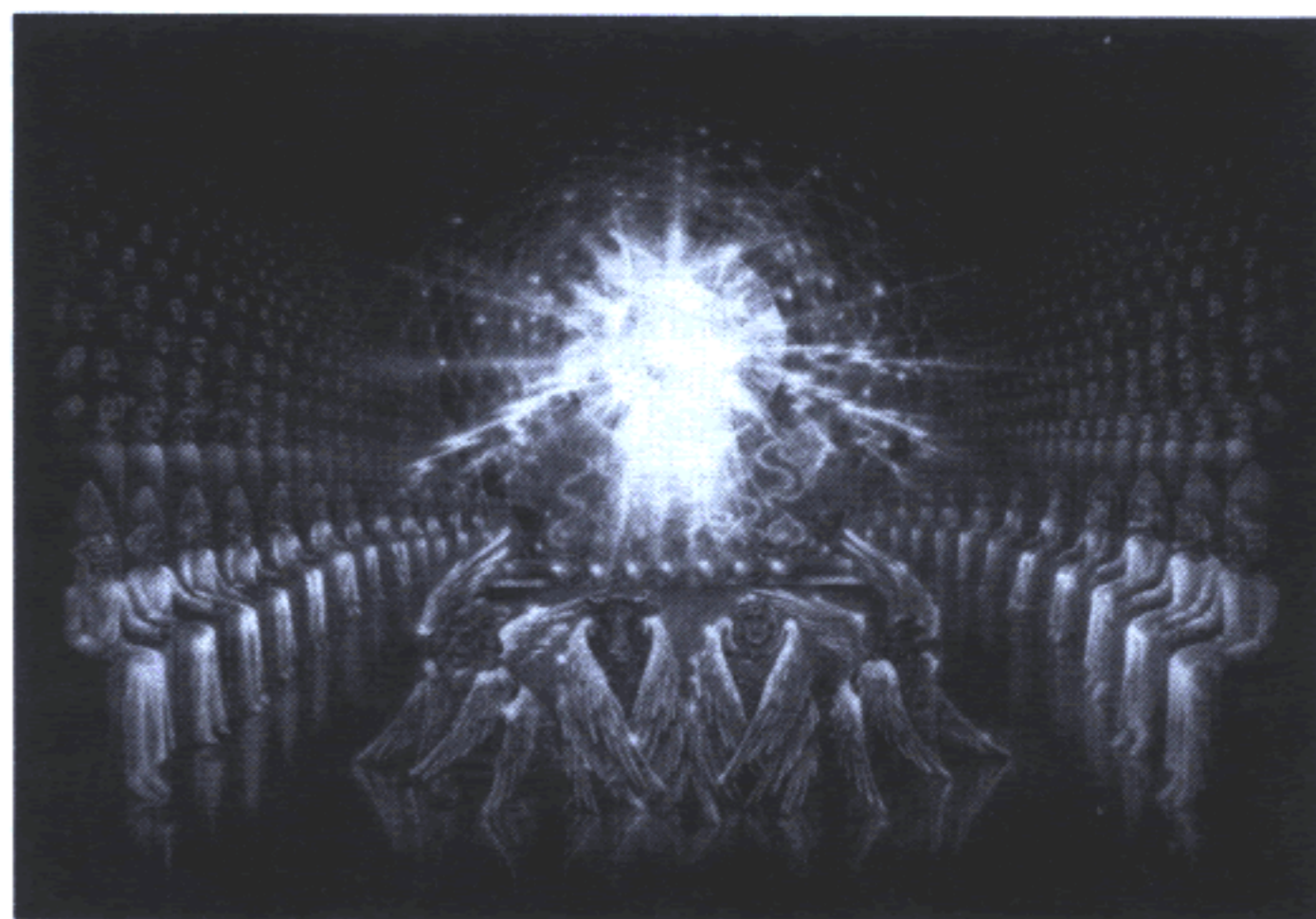
Again, we must remember that we are engaged in a world war of long duration. We have been blessed with a godly President who understands the dangers and is willing to rise to the challenge. The crucial question is whether or not the American people are willing to follow his leadership.

I suspect that the moral rot that has been eating away at the heart of our nation has proceeded to the point that when the going gets tough, the American people will be willing to turn their backs on Islamic despotism and decide that we must cut Israel loose in order to placate the Islamic world. If that happens, as I fear it will, then our nation's fate will be sealed.

The crux of international politics always seems to come back to Israel in these end times. And this is where President Bush has gotten himself in trouble. In his desire to reward Prime Minister Tony Blair for British support in the war against Iraq, President Bush agreed to support "The Road Map for Middle East Peace" that has been devised by Russia, the European Union, and the United Nations. It is a revival of the Oslo Process of trading land for peace, and as such, it is in reality a road map to national suicide for Israel.

It takes two sides who want peace in order to make peace. The goal of the Arabs in the Middle East is not peace with Israel; it is the annihilation of Israel. Any "peace" that is made in the process will be a tactical peace to provide time for the Arabs to build up sufficient power to launch their final assault against Israel.

President Bush's father was the one who forced Israel to start the whole insane process of trading land for peace. He did so when he was at the peak of his popularity, right after the victory of the United States in the Gulf War. Within months, his popularity was gone, and he lost his effort to be re-elected. Those who bless Israel will be blessed; those who curse Israel will be cursed. The son is following in the footsteps of his father. Let us pray that his eyes will be opened to the folly of trying to force Israel to give up its heartland to placate the Islamic fundamentalists.



A Source of Comfort

We live in perilous times when "men faint from fear over the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken" (Luke 21:26).

In the midst of all my concerns about Islamic terrorism, American decadence, and the survival of Israel, my consolation is the image of God that appears in Psalm 2. The psalmist says that the leaders of the world are constantly shaking their fists at God and His Anointed One, the Messiah, asking, "Who do You think You are to try to tell us what to do? We will do as we please!" The psalmist then says that God responds to all this nonsense by sitting in Heaven and laughing!

Yes, God is sitting in Heaven laughing at all the two-bit dictators who strut about the world scene like little bantam roosters. He laughs not because he doesn't care. He laughs because He has it all under control.

The glorious and comforting message of Psalm 2 is that God has the wisdom and power to orchestrate all the evil of Mankind to the triumph of His Son in history. A day of reckoning is coming when Jesus will return to deal with the injustice in this world. On that day, the ungodly presidents, prime ministers, and kings of this world will crawl into holes in the ground and cry out for the mountains to fall on them. Justice is coming!

Maranatha! ✝

“Babylon the Great”

New York, Rome, or Babylon?

Dr. David R. Reagan

Whenever a war breaks out in the Middle East, prophetic speculation always shifts into high gear, and that is understandable since end time Bible prophecy focuses on the Middle East and mentions several wars that will take place there.

Common Speculations

The first question seems always to be whether or not the war is the War of Armageddon. I guess this question is a natural one because this is the prophetic war that people have heard the most about. But that war is one that will occur at the end of the Tribulation, following a seven year period of unparalleled destruction on the earth.

Those who are more familiar with Bible prophecy often speculate as to whether any new war in the Middle East might be the War of Gog and Magog. Actually, Bible prophecy talks about two wars of Gog and Magog. One occurs either at the beginning of the Tribulation or in the middle, depending on how you interpret the relevant verses which are found in Ezekiel 38 and 39. This war consists of a Russian coalition of Islamic nations that invade Israel and are supernaturally destroyed by God (Ezekiel 38:18-22 and 39:1-6).

The other War of Gog and Magog occurs at the end of the Millennium when once again the peoples of Russia rally the whole world to attack the throne of Jesus in Jerusalem. The nations that join this revolt are also supernaturally destroyed (Revelation 20:7-10).

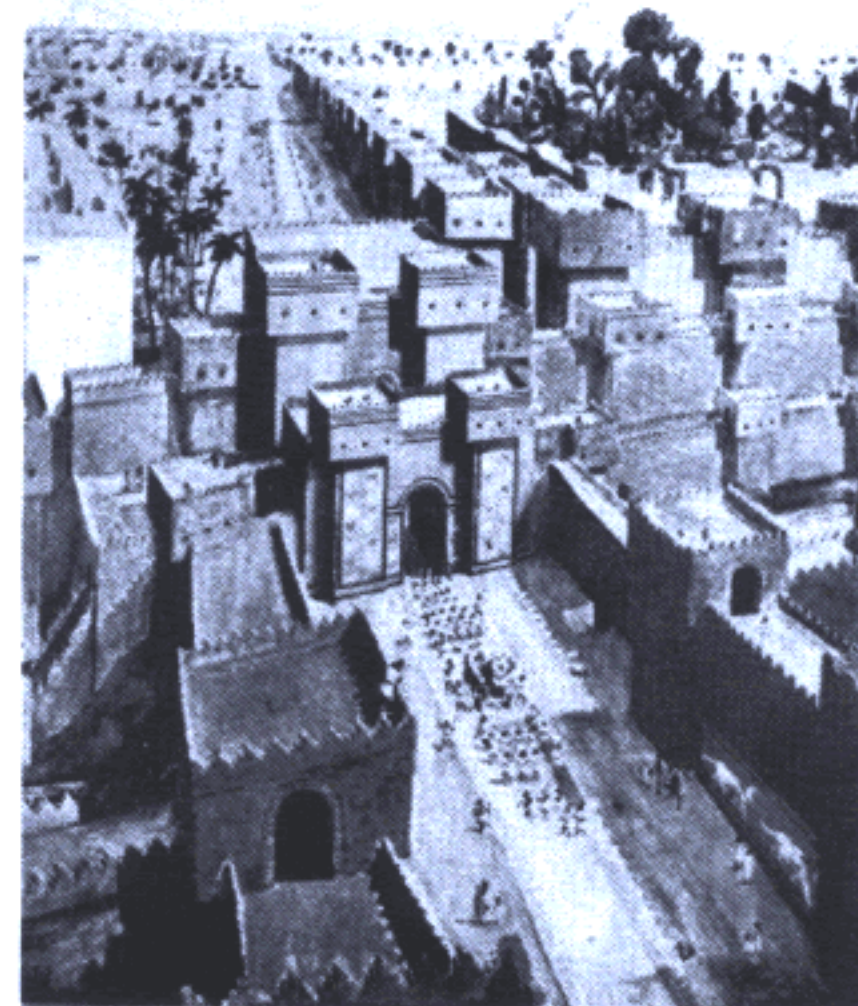
New Speculations

I was astonished to hear one of the best known teachers of Bible prophecy propose a new theory when the United States attacked Iraq. He proposed that the war was a fulfillment of a prophecy in Jeremiah 50:9-10 which reads as follows:

For behold, I am going to arouse and bring up against Babylon a horde of great nations from the land of the north, and they will draw up their battle lines against her; from there she will be taken captive. Their arrows will be like an expert warrior . . . and Chaldea will become plunder . . .

The first problem with this interpretation is that it violates the context in which the passage is found. That context is the destruction of the Antichrist's kingdom that will take place at the end of the Tribulation. The second problem is that the U.S. led coalition was anything but a 'horde of great nations.' We had three allies who supplied combat troops: England, Australia, and Poland. And the invasion certainly did not come from the north. It came out of Kuwait, from the southeast.

Incredibly, this prophecy teacher, who was determined to force this passage on the War in Iraq, tried to argue that the invasion really came from the north because, as he put it, "If you will check the latitude line that runs through Baghdad, you will find that it is the same one that runs through Savannah, Georgia, and thus the majority of the United States lies north of Baghdad." To say the least, I was dumbfounded by this lame attempt to twist the Scriptures to fit this teacher's preconceived idea.



An artist's conception of ancient Babylon.

The most popular new speculation that I found all over the Internet was one that argued the United States is Babylon and would therefore experience an overwhelming defeat in Iraq in accordance with the prophecies contained in Isaiah 13 and 14 and Jeremiah 50 and 51. The outcome of the war put an end to this speculation.

A more credible speculation that many outstanding Bible prophecy teachers proposed was that the War in Iraq would lead to the destruction of Baghdad and the subsequent rise of Babylon as the new capital of Iraq. This speculation also failed to materialize because of the precision bombing that was aimed almost exclusively at military targets.

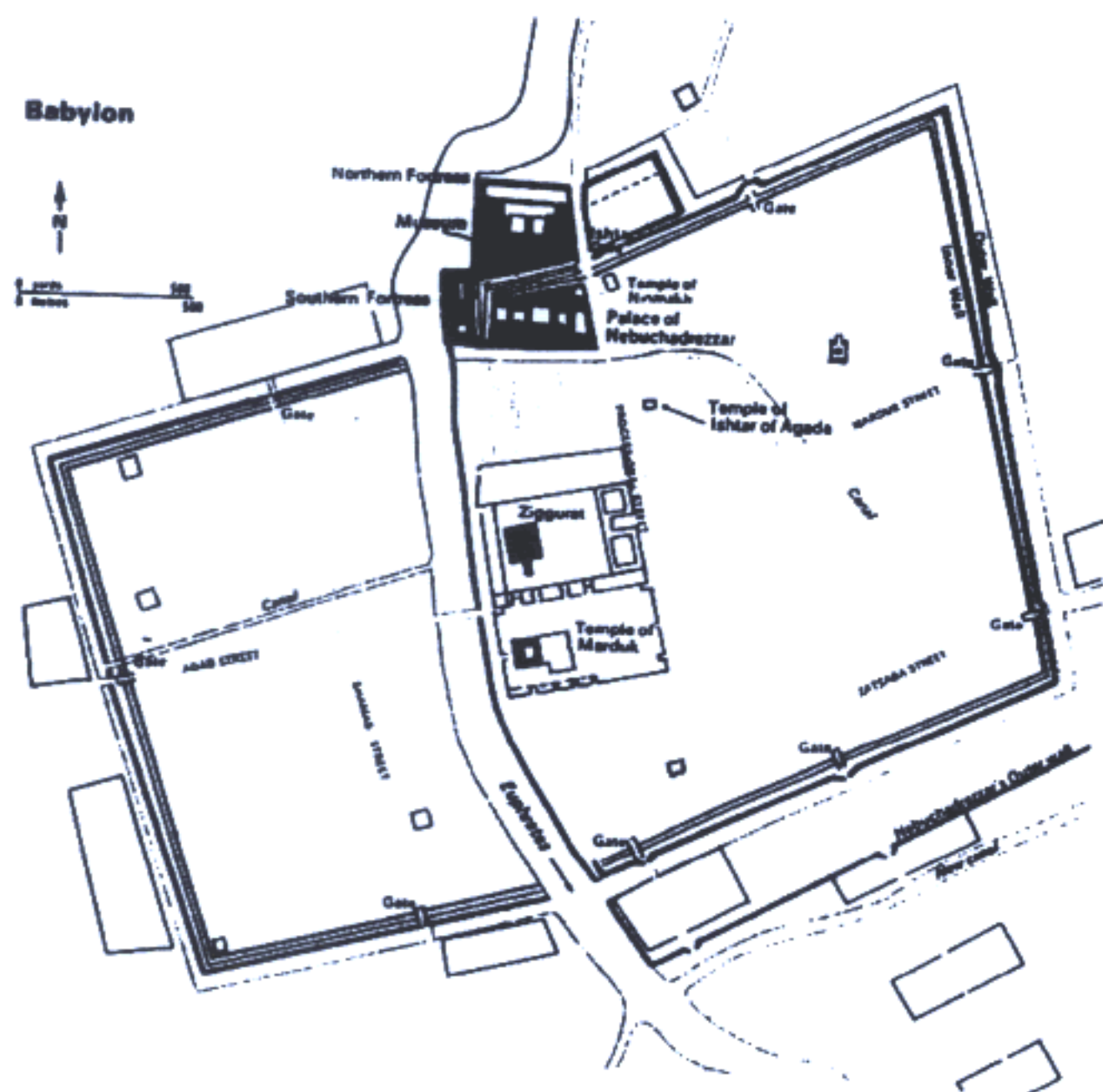
A Biblical Speculation

The speculation about the rise of Babylon in the end times is biblically based. This is the reason that Tim LaHaye, in his "Left Behind" series of books, presents Babylon as the capital city of the Antichrist's world kingdom.

Let's take a look at the biblical basis of this assumption. It begins in the Hebrew Scriptures in Isaiah 13 where the prophet says that Babylon will be destroyed in "The day of the Lord" (Isaiah 13:6, 9). This terminology is a clear reference to the end times and, of course, Babylon can not be destroyed unless it is rebuilt.

Isaiah 14:1-17 says that the king of Babylon at the time of its end time destruction will be an oppressor of unparalleled ruthlessness. This is an image that certainly brings to mind the Antichrist.

The book of Revelation in the New Testament confirms these Old Testament prophecies. Revelation 17 associates the end time apostate world religion with Babylon. And in a similar manner, Revelation 18 associates the political empire of the Antichrist with Babylon.



A drawing of ancient Babylon, divided by the Euphrates River.

Consider Revelation 18:1-10. This passage clearly teaches that Babylon will be the capital city of the Antichrist and that at the end of the Tribulation, the city will be destroyed in one hour of one day (Revelation 18:8,10).

Now, in view of these biblical passages from both the Old and New Testaments, you might wonder how anyone who takes Bible prophecy seriously could doubt that Babylon will be rebuilt and serve as the seat of power of the Antichrist. Yet, there are many outstanding Bible prophecy teachers, like Dave Hunt and Ed Hindson, who argue that Babylon will never be rebuilt and that the world headquarters of the Antichrist will be Rome.

The Argument for Rome

Let's take a look at the other side of the argument — that the Babylon of the end times will really be modern day Rome.

There are two reasons that are usually given as to why the end time Babylon may not be the Babylon of Iraq;

- 1) The Bible indicates that after Babylon is conquered by the Medes, it will become a heap of ruins and will never be rebuilt again.
- 2) There is strong evidence that Babylon is used symbolically in the book of Revelation to refer to Rome.

With regard to Babylon being destroyed and never being rebuilt again, let's take a look at Isaiah 13:17-20 —

17 Behold, I am going to stir up the Medes against them [the Chaldeans] . . .

19 And Babylon, the beauty of kingdoms, the glory of the Chaldean's pride, will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.

20 It will never be inhabited or lived in from generation to generation.

Those who argue for the rebuilding of Babylon discount this

passage for several reasons. First, they argue it is an end time prophecy referring to the destruction of Babylon at the end of the Tribulation.

But this simply is not true. The context is clearly speaking of the conquest of Babylon by the Medes. There certainly are end time prophecies about Babylon in Isaiah 13, but this is not one of them. End time prophecies are often mixed with contemporary prophecies. For example, in Luke 21 some of the prophecies about the destruction of Jerusalem pertain to 70 AD, whereas others refer to the end times.

The second way people try to discount the clear meaning of Isaiah 13:17-20 is to argue that it could not refer to the Medes' conquest of Babylon because that victory was so surprising and swift that it did not result in the destruction of the city. "The passage says Babylon will be destroyed in the same manner as Sodom and Gomorrah, and that means sudden, total destruction."

It is true that the Medes conquered the city in a relatively bloodless and non-devastating manner. Supposedly, they dammed up the Euphrates River, which ran through the center of the city. Then, while the Babylonian rulers were in the midst of a drunken feast, the armies of the Medes simply walked down the dried-up riverbed, underneath the walls!

But the passage does not say that Babylon will be overthrown like Sodom and Gomorrah! That claim is based on an interpretation that the text does not justify. Read the passage carefully. It simply says that after the Medes conquer the city, it "will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah."

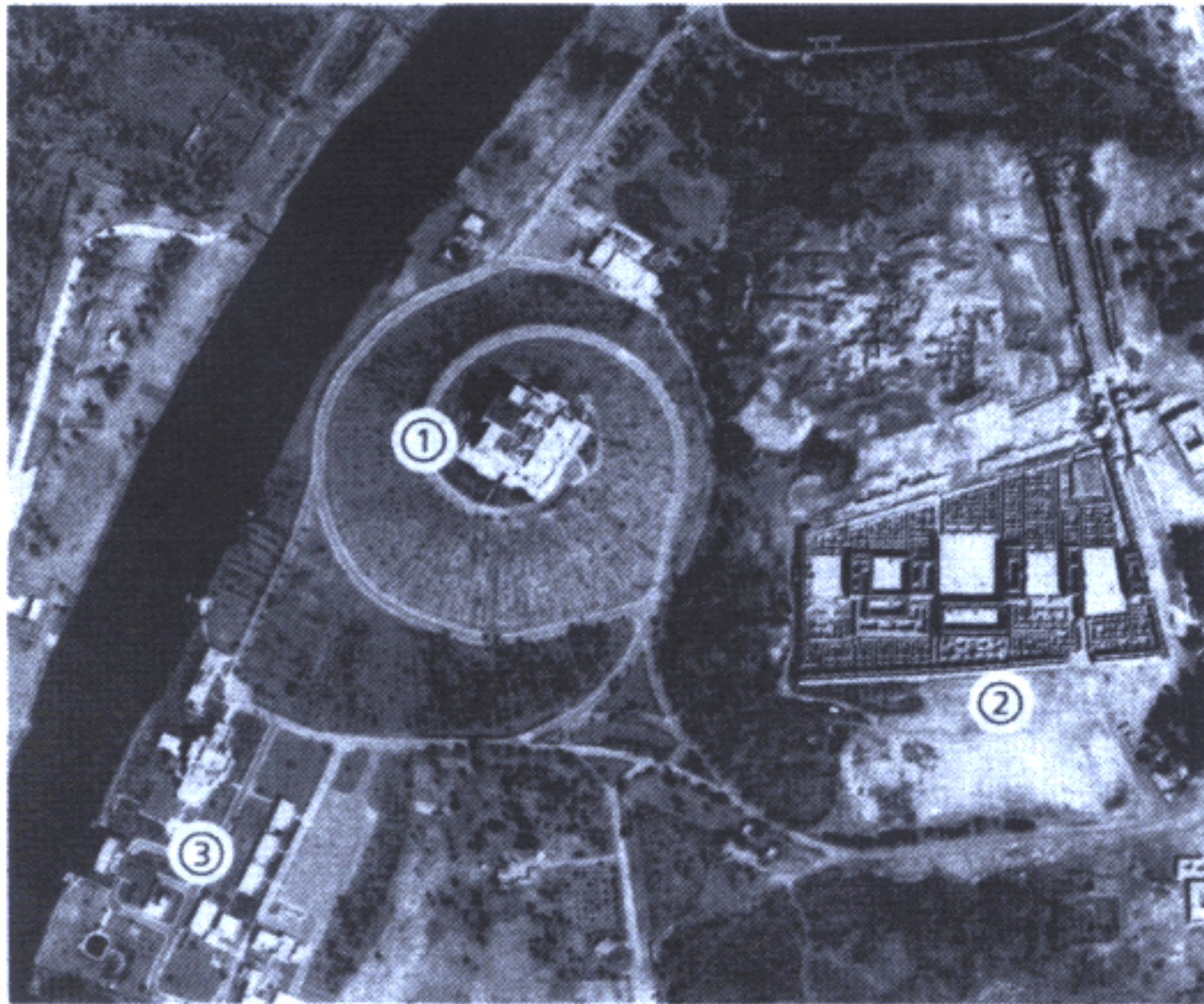
And that is exactly what happened. The city was conquered by the Medes in 539 BC. Thereafter, it went into a sharp decline. By the time Alexander the Great arrived 200 years later, it was in ruins. He announced his intentions to rebuild it, but he died suddenly before he could do anything. His generals abandoned the city and moved the capital to the Tigris River where they built a new city called Selucia.



Satellite photo of the eastern half of ancient Babylon, showing it still in ruins. The circle at the top left is one of Saddam's palaces.

Babylon became like Sodom and Gomorrah — a heap of ruins — and it has been in that condition ever since, just as prophesied in Isaiah 13.

But those who believe Babylon will be rebuilt counter by asserting that its rebuilding was begun by Saddam Hussein. It is true that Saddam built one of his many presidential palaces there, on the outskirts of the ancient city. But he did not rebuild the city for habitation. All he did was restore some of the ruins of Nebuchadnezzar's palace as a tourist attraction. Modern day satellite photos of the site still show it to be an uninhabited heap of ruins.



Close-up of the northwest corner of the eastern sector of ancient Babylon. Number 1 is one of the many presidential palaces built by Saddam Hussein. Number 2 is the remains of Nebuchadnezzar's palace. Number 3 marks the location of some guest houses.

Of course, with modern building techniques, the Antichrist could quickly build an international headquarters on the site, but Isaiah 13:20 says that once it is conquered by the Medes, "it will never be inhabited or lived in from generation to generation."

The References in Revelation

So, what about the references in the book of Revelation which clearly indicate that Babylon will be the headquarters of the Antichrist during the Tribulation? The problem is that a qualifying term is used that makes it highly questionable that the meaning is literal Babylon.

The passage is Revelation 17:5. In the New American Standard Version, the translation introduces the reader to "a mystery, Babylon the Great." The King James and New King James Versions both render the meaning as "Mystery Babylon the Great."

Either way, the use of the qualifying word, mystery, seems to indicate that Babylon is to be taken symbolically. This conclusion is reinforced by Revelation 11:8 where Jerusalem is referred to symbolically as the city "which mystically is called Sodom and Egypt." Notice again the use of the word mystically as a tip-off that the author is speaking symbolically.

In like manner, Peter uses Babylon as a symbol of Rome in 1 Peter 5:13. He was writing from Rome, and he closes the

epistle by sending greetings from "the church which is in Babylon." This statement makes it clear that among First Century Christians, Babylon was a nick-name for Rome.

Keep in mind that when John wrote Revelation, he was a Roman prisoner. He could not, therefore, make any disparaging references to Rome in his writings, so he used the nick-name of Babylon and even emphasized that it was a code word by referring to it as "Mystery Babylon."

That John had Rome in mind is indicated later in chapter 17 of Revelation in two places. In verse 9 he refers to it as the city of "seven mountains." In the First Century context, this could only refer to Rome, which was known as "the city of the seven hills." In verse 18, John refers to the city as "the great city that reigns over the kings of the earth." Again, this could only have been Rome in a First Century setting.

So, there you have it — a summary of all the arguments pro and con concerning whether or not the end time capital of the Antichrist will be ancient Babylon or modern Rome. I challenge you to be a good Berean (Acts 17:10-11). Dig into the Scriptures, study diligently, and draw your own conclusions.

The important thing to keep in mind is that it doesn't really make any difference whether it will be Babylon or Rome, because either way, Almighty God is going to destroy the city, its king, and all its sinful activities in one hour of one day (Revelation 18:8, 10).

The point is, that regardless of the true identity of Babylon, Jesus is going to triumph, and we, the Redeemed, are going to win in the end. *Maranatha!*



The fall of Saddam Hussein brought to mind a famous poem by Percy Shelley written in 1817.

Ozymandias

I met a traveller from an antique land,
Who said — "Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert . . . Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them, the heart that fed.
And on the pedestal, these words appear:
'My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings,
Look on my Works, ye Mighty, and despair!'
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal Wreck, boundless and bare,
The lone and level sands stretch far away."

The Gospel of Inclusion

Dennis Pollock

Since the days of the early Church, the body of Christ has frequently been attacked by heretical viruses that attempt to dilute or deny the Gospel, and render the people of God impotent. If you read the writings of the early Church Fathers, you find much of their time taken up with combating the heresies of their day.

Two thousand years later things are no different. Recently a form of the ancient heresy of universalism has sprung up from an unlikely source. Carlton Pearson, the popular black Pentecostal pastor, Bishop, and singer, has recently come up with a new and improved version of the Gospel. It seems, according to Pearson, that we don't need to "get people saved" because everybody is already saved. They just don't know it.

Pearson is quick to proclaim that he believes all the right things: The Trinity, Jesus' death on the Cross for sinners and His literal resurrection, and all the other cardinal doctrines of the Church. He just adds one of his own.

The Gospel According to Pearson

According to Pearson, Jesus' death on the Cross redeemed the whole world to God. He has become the Savior of the world, and that means that everyone has been saved. It's just that most don't know it. By telling people the good news they are able to start benefitting from Christ's death right here and now, instead of living out their lives on this earth in darkness, and only finding out at death that Jesus is Lord and Savior.

Pearson says that a God who could send all the non-Christians to Hell would be worse than Hitler: "Hitler killed six million (people), mostly Jews. He is the most despised man in the twentieth century. Is God worse than Hitler . . .?"

He says that he does believe in Hell, but that the only ones who will ever go there are those who "in their heart, intentionally and consciously reject the grace of God." Normal sinners who don't think much about the Gospel one way or the other are given a free pass.

Kenyon or Jesus?

Carlton Pearson may be sincere, but he is most sincerely wrong! He claims to have received the germ of his ideas after reading E. W. Kenyon's writings 25 years ago, and that he has now been preaching this for three years. Whether Kenyon believed such nonsense, I cannot say, but it is certain that the apostle Paul and the Lord Jesus Himself most definitely did not.

Jesus actually dealt most directly with this very issue, when He declared:

Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it. (Matthew 7:13,14)

Carlton Pearson serves as the pastor of Higher Dimensions Family Church in Tulsa, Oklahoma. He is a graduate of Oral Roberts University.



Carlton Pearson

Oral Roberts recently denounced him in a 12 page letter, and Richard Roberts criticized him openly on his television show.

ORU will no longer allow him to use the campus center, and they will not allow him to pick up students for services at his church. He has recently resigned from the ORU Board of Regents.

Bishop T. D. Jakes told *Charisma Magazine* that "Pearson's theology is wrong, false, misleading and an incorrect interpretation of the Bible." Gilbert Patterson, the president of Pearson's denomination, has issued a statement in which he formally distanced the denomination from his teachings.

Pearson says that he will not back down from his teachings. He recently stated that he is considering writing a book on the subject that will be entitled, "God is Not a Christian."

This sure doesn't sound like an "everybody is already saved" theology to me! Jesus declares that few on earth will find the precious gift of eternal life, and gives a "narrow gate" as the reason for it. Jesus is that narrow gate!

The apostle Paul gave his life in preaching Christ to the lost. Can you imagine Paul's response, had Pastor Pearson confronted him with his philosophy: "Paul, Paul, take it easy. You don't need to put yourself out so much. After all they're already saved. Our job is merely to inform them of the benefits that are already theirs. If they don't find out from you that Jesus is Lord, they'll come to appreciate it when they die."

In 2 Corinthians 5:20 Paul passionately exhorted the believers:

Therefore we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.

He did not say, "Tell them they are already reconciled." He said that their message was "be reconciled to God." The implication is clear. The sinners are obviously not yet reconciled. Only through repentance and faith in Christ can they find that reconciliation.

Carlton Pearson believes that by presenting this "Gospel of Inclusion" to the world we will present a much more attractive Jesus. He states: "It is my objective to simply re-present Jesus in a softer and more loving way, being less excluding and more 'inclusive' in His love, tolerance, acceptance, and glorious promise to all." It is basically a Christianized version of the old psychological mantra of the sixties: "I'm OK, you're OK."

Twisted Logic

It is a strange piece of twisted logic that he uses to defend his position. He seems to be saying, "If we tell the sinners and the heathen that they really don't need Jesus, they'll be more likely to accept Him."

The logic of this bizarre doctrine gets even more far-fetched when you carry it to its fullest conclusions. Pearson is saying that Jesus' death has saved everybody on the planet, and that the only ones who will go to Hell will be those who hear the Gospel, and "intentionally and consciously" reject it. If this were true then the very first step the Church should take should be to recall every one of her missionaries. If these folks are already saved, and the only way they can go to Hell is to hear the Gospel and reject it, our missionaries are not messengers of life; they are bearers of eternal death. By telling the "good news" to the masses they are sending multitudes to Hell. It would be far better to keep quiet.

According to Pearson's theory, ordinary Christians should never share Christ with anyone. As long as sinners are in the dark about the Gospel they are safe. It is only when they hear it that they can reject it and end up in Hell. The entire Church should resolve to never share the Gospel with anyone. Perhaps that way, when the Christians die off, and there are no more believers on the earth, all mankind can live blissfully ignorant of the Gospel and all will be saved.

Such is the absurdity of Carlton Pearson's Gospel of inclusion. Thinking to make God more attractive to sinners, he has perverted the glorious message entrusted to the Church.

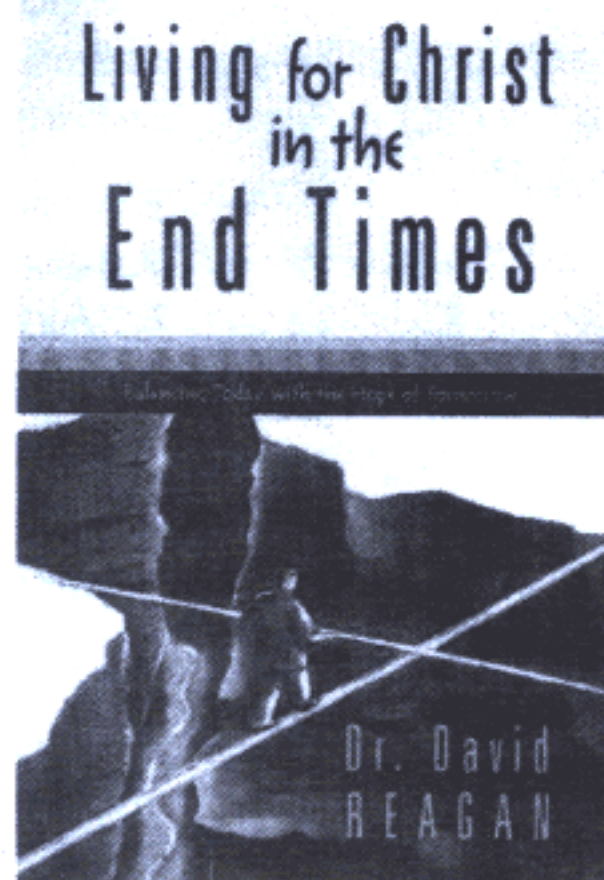
The Church should not indulge this twister of the Gospel. Until he acknowledges the truth he has no more right to act as Bishop or Pastor than the Dali Lama or Shirley MacLaine. Any Christian who would support such a minister has no appreciation for the Cross of our Savior. If Paul were alive, he would not countenance Pearson's strange doctrines for a second. Neither should we. ✚

Apostasy Revealed!

The Bible says that one of the characteristics of the end times will be apostasy in the Church. Carlton Pearson's gross apostasy is only one example of the apostasy that is flooding the Church today.

Dr. Reagan's book, *Living for Christ in the End Times*, reveals this apostasy in graphic detail. You will be astonished to read about the major Christian leaders who are currently denying the fundamentals of the faith. And you will see that no denomination is immune to this end time virus.

The book runs 262 pages in length and sells for \$10, including the cost of shipping. To order a copy, call 1-800-705-8316. Purchase a copy for yourself and another for your pastor or your church library. ✚



Iraq in the Bible



Israel is the nation most often mentioned in the Bible. What most people are astonished to learn is that Iraq is the second most frequently mentioned nation. The names used in the Bible are Babylon, land of Shinar, and Mesopotamia, a term that means "between the two rivers," referring, of course to the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. Consider:

- Eden was in Iraq — Genesis 2:10-14
- Adam and Eve were created in Iraq — Genesis 1:26-28
- Satan made his first recorded appearance in Iraq — Genesis 3:1-6
- Nimrod established Babylon in Iraq, and the tower of Babel was built there — Genesis 10:8-9 and 11:1-4
- The world's languages were confused there — Genesis 11:5-11
- Abraham came from a city in Iraq — Genesis 11:31
- Isaac's bride came from Iraq — Genesis 24:3-4,10
- Jacob spent 20 years in Iraq — Genesis 28:1-2,10, 29:1-4 and 31:38.
- One of the world's earliest empires was located in Iraq — Daniel 1:1-2 and 2:31-39
- The events in the book of Daniel took place in Iraq.
- The events in the book of Esther took place in Iraq.
- One of the most remarkable revivals in history took place in Ninevah, a city located in Iraq — Jonah 3
- The book of Nahum is a prophecy against Ninevah.
- The book of Revelation uses Babylon as a symbol of evil resistance to God.

TV Coverage Doubles!

The DayStar Network has started broadcasting all its programs over the Dish Network (channel 9408) everywhere in the United States. That just about doubles the outreach of our weekly TV program called "Christ in Prophecy."

DayStar reaches 31 million homes that subscribe to the DirecTV satellite system. The Dish Network system reaches 20 million homes. Our program is also carried on Sky Angel, a Christian satellite service that has one million subscribers.

Previously, our program was available over the Dish Network in only four cities. Now the coverage is nationwide.

Additionally, our program is carried over 39 stations that are affiliated with the DayStar Network. Three new stations are about ready to start broadcasting in San Francisco, California, Jackson, Mississippi, and Charleston-Huntington, West Virginia.

Because of the new development with the Dish Network, our cost of programming will be increased by ten percent, effective July 1st. DayStar is one of only two television networks whose programs are broadcast nationally over both DirecTV and the Dish Network.

DayStar also started broadcasting recently over the Hotbird 6 satellite that reaches 74 countries in Europe, the Middle East and Asia. And keep in mind that our broadcast is available live all over the world via the DayStar website (www.daystar.com).

Dave took a crew of five to Israel in early June to shoot television programs that will be broadcast in the fall of this year. Three of those programs will be combined to produce a new



The opening and close of the Ministry's recent Easter program was shot in a cemetery in McKinney, Texas. Shown above at the site are (left to right) Ann Reagan, Dave Reagan, Don Gordoni, Leo Houck, Rachel Houck, and Larry Watts. This 30 minute program presents a powerful defense of the resurrection of Jesus and is available for a cost of \$10. To order it, call 1-800-705-8316.

video program called "Jerusalem through Spiritual Eyes." It will feature the gates of Jerusalem, the tombs of Jerusalem, and the Via Dolorosa.

The Ministry's new "Revelation Revealed" video program (see the back cover) will be divided into four television programs that will be broadcast later this year. ✚

DayStar Television Network Coverage

Times: Wednesday at 6:00pm and a replay on Monday at 12:30am (Central time).

Television Stations

Little Rock	AR	KKAP	36
Phoenix	AZ	KDTP	39
Tucson	AZ	KPCE	29
Modesto	CA	KACA	61
Stockton	CA	K52CK	52
Sacramento	CA	KRJR	47
San Francisco	CA	KDTS	22
Denver	CO	KRMT	41
Tampa	FL	WSVT	18
Atlanta	GA	WDTA	53
Gainesville	GA	W28CD	28
Macon	GA	WDMA	32
Honolulu	HI	KWBN	44
Boston	MA	WYDN	48
Jackson	MS	WJKO	43
Las Vegas	NV	KTVY	67
Buffalo	NY	WDTB	39
Apex	NC	WACN	34

Raleigh	NC	WWIW	66
Oklahoma City	OK	KOCM	46
Philadelphia	PA	WELL	8
Knoxville	TN	WDTT	38
Memphis	TN	WJRJ	59
Nashville	TN	WIIW	14
Dallas	TX	KMPX	29
Houston	TX	KLTJ	22
San Antonio	TX	KQVE	46
Seattle	WA	KWDK	56
Charleston	WV	WTSF	61

Note: Station numbers will be different on cable. So, if you are on cable, consult your TV guide for the proper channel number.

Satellite Systems

DirecTV	National	Ch. 369
Dish Network	National	Ch. 9408
Sky Angel	National	Ch. 9713
Hotbird 6	Europe	Ch. Tr 133
	Middle East	
	Asia	

Family Vision Network

Our program is also available over the Family Vision Network in Southern Louisiana. It is broadcast on Wednesday evenings at 7:00pm and on Monday mornings at 8:30am over three stations:

KAJN-TV (Ch. 40) in Lafayette
KAGN-TV (Ch. 65) in Crowley
KFAM-TV (Ch. 58) in Lake Charles

KAZQ TV 32 in Albuquerque, NM

Tuesdays at 9:30pm
Fridays at 12:30pm

Also available on the Dish Network on channel 8817 and on the following cable channels: Comcast Cable (22), Comcast Cablevision (32), Cable One (9), USA Media (22), GST Home (78), and Chamesa Future Vision (22).

Internet

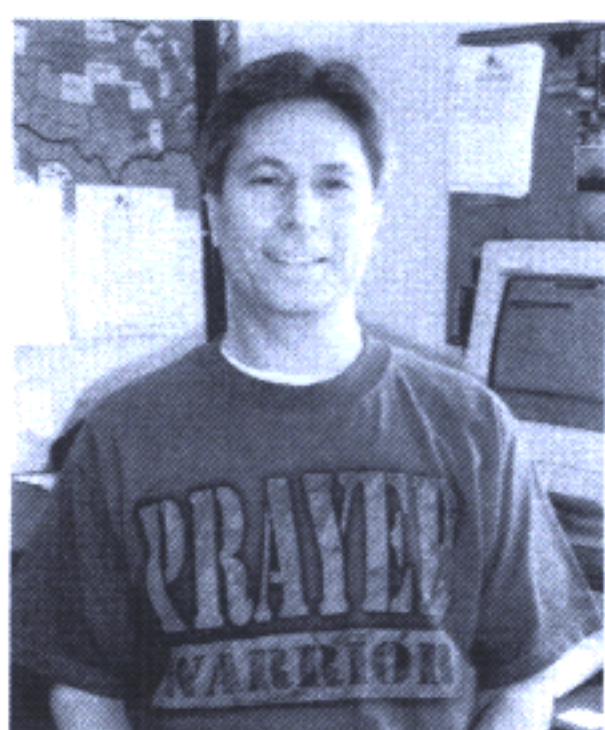
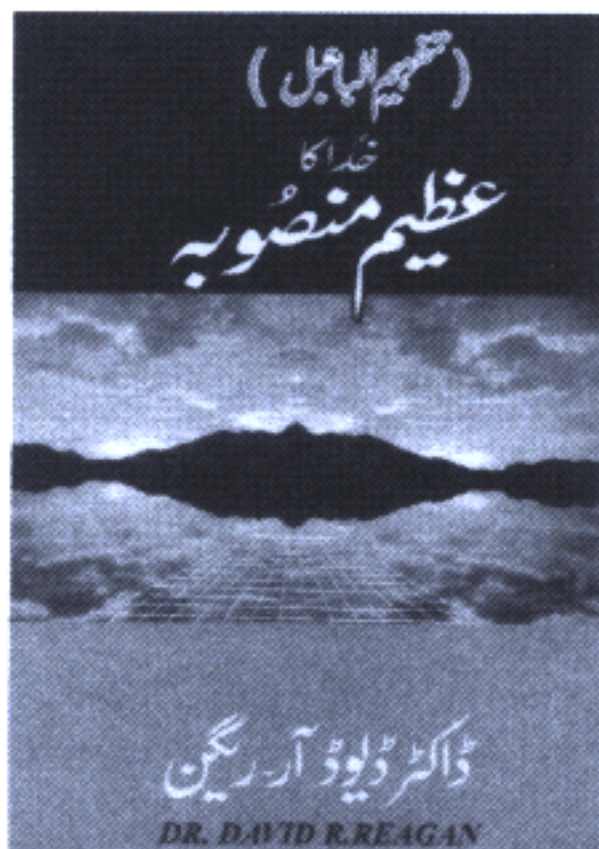
To access the program live over the Internet, go to the DayStar website (www.daystar.com) and click on "Watch LIVE!"



NEWS UPDATE

Meeting Schedule — A new commitment has been added to Dave's speaking schedule in **September**. He will conduct a meeting in conjunction with the Vintage Gospel Lads Quartet at Harvester Christian Church in St. Charles, Missouri (21-24). In **November** Dave will be at Oakwood Christian Church in Enid, Oklahoma (7-9), and both Dave and Dennis will be speaking at the Louisiana State Prophecy Conference which will be held at the Tall Timbers Baptist Encampment located near Alexandria, Louisiana. In **December** Dave and Dennis will be taping video interviews at the Pre-Trib Study Group Conference in Dallas, Texas (8-10). The following weekend, Dave will conduct a conference at the Christian Church in Mulhall, Oklahoma (12-14).

Foreign Publications — Pictured at the right is the cover of the Urdu version of Dave's book, *The Master Plan*, which was recently published in Pakistan. Copies can be secured through Pastor Nazir Gill in Pakistan (nazirjon@fsd.paknet.com.pk). Many of the Ministry's publications have been published in Hindi and Telugu by John Ishmael in India. He has also published a collection of Dr. Reagan's writings in the national language of Nepal. Copies of these publications can be obtained by writing to Mr. Ishmael (john@rlfministries.com).



Gary Byers

Milestones — On June 1st, George Collich completed 13 years of service to the Ministry. George serves as our Administrative Minister for Expenses. That same date marked four years of service by our Media Minister, Don Gordon. In July, we will be celebrating ten years of service by our Associate Evangelist, Dennis Pollock. And that same month, Gary Byers, our Administrative Minister for Income, will complete 20 years of service!

Gary is a biblical counselor and prayer warrior who is particularly gifted in working with teenagers. We praise God for these faithful and dedicated servants in the kingdom.

Come See Us! — During your travels this summer, if you are in the Dallas area, give us a call or come see us. We would love to meet you personally and show you our facilities. We can fax you a map or tell you by phone how to find our headquarters.



Letters and Email Messages

The Magazine — "Thank you so much for sending me the Lamplighter. I enjoy reading it so much. I am 91 years old and live in a nursing home where I am free to pray for the patients as they are receptive. I use a handy walker with a seat and a basket to carry my Bible. I read my scripture verses every day." — Letter from Mary Campbell in Pensacola, Florida.

"The Lamplighter continues to bless me with useful material for preparing sermons. The recent edition on 'The Jews in Prophecy' was especially helpful in putting information in summary form in my hands. You do much of my research for me. This is important to a busy pastor." — Email message from a pastor in Canby, Oregon.

The Television Program — "I just had to write and tell you what an awesome show (Europe in Bible Prophecy) you had on TV this week! I think it was one of the BEST shows on prophecy and world events I have ever seen . . . I just LOVED your very clear, precise, methodical presentation of the facts and your comparison of the facts to Scripture . . . Wow! Absolutely DYNAMIC. Hats off to you!!" — Email message from Annette Skibo.

"I find your television show to be a wonderful source to strengthen my knowledge so that I may spread the word and help introduce more and more people to the wonderful world of Bible prophecy. Thank you so much for all you do." — Email message from Andy Holloway, age 18, in Peoria, Arizona.

Website — "Wow, wow, wow! I happened across your website while I was searching for information about the Rapture, and I just want to say it has been the most informative, backed-up-by Scripture site I have ever seen!" — Email message from Nancy Hampton in Illinois.

"After reading the article on your website entitled 'Living With An Eternal Perspective,' I broke down and cried for about 20 minutes! The article was for me! Thank you so much for being a blessing to me." — Email message from Joshua in Washington State.

Books — "Thanks for writing 'Trusting God.' It has changed my life, and I hope forever . . . I was given your book when my husband was laid off from his job. Well, God spoke to me that day through your book. Now, when adversity comes my way, I can say 'Bring it on, because I know who is taking care of me!'" — Email message from Laura Burns in Indianapolis.

"I just finished reading your book, 'America the Beautiful?' and it really touched my heart . . . I also loved 'Wrath and Glory,' and I enjoy your website." — Email message from Jean Hynes in Louisville, Kentucky.

Revelation Video Ready for Distribution

This video program has taken a full year to produce. First, Dr. Reagan condensed the entire book of Revelation into a one hour script, covering the book from beginning to end, chapter by chapter. Then he video taped his commentary. The final step — the one that has taken the greatest amount of time — was the editing of the program to insert pictures, video footage, charts, maps, and diagrams.

This is a visually intensive program that utilizes the eyes to reinforce the message you will hear with your ears.

And what a message it is! Your hope will increase as you come to better understand the message of victory that the book of Revelation reveals.

Many Christians have written off this book as too scary or too complex. Dr. Reagan shows that it is a book that can be understood by any true Christian who is indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

Use the video for individual or group study. The presentation is divided into chapter groups, making it easy to pause and discuss what has been presented.

The video has a running time of one hour. The cost is \$15, including the cost of shipping. Consider purchasing an extra copy for your pastor or church library.

You can place your order by calling **1-800-705-8316** between 8am and 5pm Central time, Monday through Friday. ✚



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