

Chapter 20

Babylon Is Fallen

It's time to keep a promise. Back in Chapter 14 I said I'd eventually cover what the Bible has to say about the final disposition of Babylon. So here we go.

The key to understanding Babylon is its pervasiveness. It is not one thing, but many: anything that systematically replaces Yahweh in our affections. On a personal level, it can be religion, but it can also be the absence of religion. It could be a lifestyle—ranging from being the most lascivious sexually deviant libertine to the most ascetic monk trying to impress God with his self-sacrifice. It might be the single-minded pursuit of power, sex, or money; but it could just as easily be self-righteous disdain for such things—pride in being humble. It could be a solid wall or a smokescreen—if it keeps us from having a real relationship with our Creator, it's part of Babylon. We all need to heed the stern warning of John: **“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.”** (I John 2:15-17) There's God's gift again: choice. We can choose the lust of the world—defined here as imminent death; or we can choose to do the will of Yahweh—which is to believe, trust in, and rely upon Him—which gives us eternal life. Gee, that's a tough one.

Babylon as a scriptural metaphor, however, usually takes on more “corporate” proportions—going far beyond its personal ramifications. The end result is always the same: a purposeful, systematic rebellion against Yahweh's revealed will. But its manifestations shift by time and place. The prototypical Babylon, of course, is the ancient city on the Euphrates, the birthplace of organized idolatry in the post-flood world. In later times another city, Rome (Revelation 17:1-10), earned the epithet of “Babylon.” How much of the slam should be attributed to the brutal persecution of Yahweh's people before Constantine's time, and how much to the apostasy of the Rome-based Catholic Church after him, is left unsaid. What is clear, however, is that the whore of Babylon (**“Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth,”** to be more precise) will ultimately be revealed to be something far beyond the scope of the city of Rome. She is not merely evil in herself, but as “the *mother* of harlots,” she spawns further generations and permutations of evil.

We have already explored how Babylon shows up in false worship. Virtually every “religion” on earth is a man-made construct designed to obfuscate, one way or another, the love of God. They are invariably based on works and

submission—formulas by which man is told he can earn his own “salvation.” The definition of *that*, of course, varies from religion to religion. To Muslims, it’s arrival in a fictional paradise dripping with low-hanging fruit and populated with sex-starved virgins (which kind of leaves the gals out in the cold)—it’s stuff Muhammad couldn’t get enough of. (Allah’s not there, by the way. He’s in hell gleefully torturing everybody who didn’t make it because he *predestined* them to their fiery torment.) With Hindus, it’s just the opposite: they long for nothing, or more correctly, *nothingness*—the complete absence of feelings, thoughts, and memories. That’s their nirvana: escape from the cycle of life. Makes sense, I suppose, if all they know in this world is pain, suffering, and fear—a life totally bereft of joy and fulfillment. The really insidious religions, like Mormonism, masquerade as Christianity while leading their adherents deeper and deeper into a Babylonian-style “mystery religion” that promises to make them gods of their own worlds, just as Yahshua is of this one. Satan’s got something for everybody, and it’s all lies. Many religions are more philosophies than anything else, trying to get you through this life rather than into the next one. We’ll discuss the real heaven (and the real hell) in future chapters. Suffice it to say that to talk intelligently about either place, you have to be getting your information from someone who’s actually been there. Otherwise, your theories are nothing but uneducated guesses.

As we have seen, the religion of Babylon—in all its forms—will be ultimately absorbed into the one-world religion of Lucifer worship, fronted by the devil’s emissary on earth, the Antichrist, his game-show-host house magician, the false prophet, and an image of the beast that’s somehow hosting Satan’s spirit. By the middle of the Tribulation, followers of all the world’s false religions will have a collective epiphany, realizing that they’ve all been worshipping the same entity, the Dragon, all along. When George W. Bush said in a 2003 press conference, “I believe we [Muslims and Christians] worship the same god,” he was voicing this very religious epiphany. To my mind, it was the worst blunder of his presidency (and he made some whoppers). Maybe *he* worships the same god as the Muslims. I don’t. In the end, it will all boil down to a clear choice: know Yahweh, or worship the dragon, Satan, Lucifer. In reality, that’s always been the case.

But Babylon has a non-religious side to it as well. Like I said, *anything* that systematically separates us from Yahweh is a candidate for this dubious honor. Indeed, most of the relevant Revelation passages seem to be describing not a religion but a system of finance or commerce. And as we have discovered, an entity we find at work in the world today fits the prophecies to a tee. For years, conspiracy theorists have been breathlessly tracking the progress of the Illuminati, a secretive (though not terribly secret) Luciferian organization whose goal is to unite the world under one all-powerful government ruled by a super-rich elite class—them. The Illuminati, after two-hundred-plus years of behind-the-scenes

maneuvering, are now alarmingly close to actually achieving their one-world ambition. I predict that as the Tribulation approaches, the international bankers and industrialists of the Illuminati will welcome the advent of the Antichrist as the last puzzle piece they need to complete their goal of the domination of earth. They will finance his rise (as they did Hitler and Lenin), undermine his foes, and greedily prepare to reap the ultimate windfall: ownership of the whole world.

Some of them won't understand the Satanic connection, of course. They'll consider themselves too enlightened to be influenced by such ancient religious hocus pocus. Others—those at the very center of the inner circle—will recognize that their god and the Antichrist's god are one and the same: Lucifer (or Allah, or Ba'al, or whatever he will choose to be called). Both groups, however, will make the same fatal error. They will assume that the emerging European leader is their ally, someone they can manipulate to achieve their own purposes, someone whose goals are in alignment with their own, someone they can manage. After all, they have grown used to bending Presidents and Kings to their will—bringing them to power as well as removing them from office. It's an art they've been perfecting since their inception, and by this late date they are very, very good at it. In their pride, the Illuminists will take for granted that the Antichrist, too, will prove to be someone they can control. Those few who know they're following Lucifer will erroneously assume that Sun Tzu's adage, "The enemy of my enemy is my friend," is true and that it will work to their advantage. But it is not true, and never has been in any causal sense. They're playing with fire, and they've never seen a match like this one before.

The truth of the matter is found in John's vision: **"And the ten horns which you saw on the beast [i.e., his home-boys, the leaders of his European Federation], these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire. For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled."** (Revelation 17:16-17) In other words, Yahweh (as He has so often) is going to use one evil to eradicate another. To amend *The Art of War*, "The enemy of My enemy may not be my friend, but he might prove useful."

So without further ado, let's see what God's word has to say about the demise of **"Babylon the Great, Mother of Harlots and of the Abominations of the Earth."** At this point, John has just witnessed the rise of the Antichrist and his ten-nation empire, and has been told that the men who will "give their kingdom to the beast" will hate the harlot. Considering her behind-the-scenes role in bringing the Antichrist to power, that may seem surprising. But the reason for their hate will become clear presently. **"After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory...."** Lucifer would like you to believe he's the great illuminator, so God wryly begins by sending an angel to

shed some badly needed light on the subject. **“And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, ‘Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury.’”** (Revelation 18:1-3) Demons, foul spirits, and unclean birds (i.e., scavengers) all speak of evil. Babylon, then is the very home of wickedness in the world, despite its riches and apparent success. Actually, it’s worse than that for the “citizens” of Babylon; it has become a prison, a cage, from which there is no escape. I’m pretty sure you won’t see any Illuminati bankers repenting and using their wealth to spread the gospel; their own nefarious organization assures unwavering devotion to Lucifer’s cause.

The angel is speaking in generalities here: **“all the nations...the kings of the earth...the merchants of the earth.”** Bear in mind that there are almost as many people are alive and walking the earth *today* than in all previous ages combined—6,446,131,400 (at this particular moment) out of what *can’t* add up to much more than ten or twelve billion, total. Therefore it’s perfectly logical to assume that the conditions of which he speaks are those that will prevail world-wide during the days of the prophecy’s fulfillment (rather than some previous period of great evil). So who, today, have the “kings of the earth” crawled into bed with? Who has made the “merchants of the earth” filthy rich? And who, if you’ll pardon the expression, has been screwing “all the nations”? Why, the Illuminati, of course, the octopus-like cartel of international bankers and industrialists who have been attempting to run the world their way—from behind the scenes—for the past hundred years or so. On the eve of their greatest triumph they will learn the truth of the first half of the proverb: **“Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death.”** (Proverbs 11:4) When the angel reports that **“Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen,”** he’s talking about *them*.

The tip-off is the phrase *“all the nations (i.e., ethnicities, people groups).”* Until quite recently, it could never have been truthfully said that **“all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication,”** or as we might say in our polite manner of speech today, “all the nations have been seduced into an illicit and self-destructive relationship with the harlot of Babylon,” (or, in our somewhat less than polite but nevertheless accurate vernacular, “every country on earth is getting screwed.”) What am I talking about? I’m talking about crushing and inescapable national and personal indebtedness on a worldwide scale.

How we got here is a long and twisted tale. Hold onto your hat. Remember John Dee? He was the Cabalist innovator in the courts of England's Henry VIII and Elizabeth I who is credited with founding Freemasonry, or at least organizing it along occult lines.

Cabala, by the way, is an esoteric system of interpretation of the Hebrew scriptures based on the dubious idea that every word, letter, number and accent mark has a hidden, occult meaning (with which, presumably, you can make the Tanach mean anything you want it to). Invented by Jewish mystics with way too much time on their hands, it surfaced somewhere between the seventh and eleventh centuries, promising religious enlightenment to the elite cognoscenti, the initiates into its mysteries. It enjoyed an enthusiastic following among pagan-leaning Jews, and later among so-called "Christian" ecstasies until the "age of enlightenment" in the eighteenth century—which is hilariously ironic, since Lucifer's—the wannabe "light-bearer's—fingerprints are all over it. Cabala was an important ingredient in the writings of Adam Weishaupt, the founder of the Illuminati. Not surprisingly, it is making a comeback in these Last Days: a Google search will turn up hundreds of thousands of references on the Web. Since it's authored by the Father of Confusion, it not only defies precise description, it apparently can't even be spelled: it is alternately rendered Cabbala, Caballah, Kabala, Kabbalah, Kaballah, Qabala, Qabalah, and Qaballah.

Anyway, one of Dee's machinations was the proposition that the British were descendents of the ten lost tribes of Israel. I know it sounds stupid, but he had really good political reasons for promulgating this theory.

The Jews had been expelled from Britain in 1290 (as they would be from Spain in 1492). But in the turbulent wake of England's split from the Roman Catholic Church (precipitated because Henry presumed he needed a divorce from his first wife Catherine if he was to father a male heir) it was considered prudent to forge a political alliance with the Jewish bankers of Amsterdam, who had grown rich and powerful as international money lenders (and who, not incidentally, bore no love for the Roman Catholic Church). The concept of British Israel was thus forged to suggest a common racial identity. This paved the way for the eventual return (in 1664) of the Jews to England. It also created the erroneous basis for British Imperialism: the idea that they, as the rightful heirs of Abraham, were destined to rule the earth. (If I had a nickel for every time someone stole something or killed someone because of a twisted interpretation of Yahweh's scriptures, I'd be a wealthy man.)

Fast forward to 1689. The last of the Catholic-leaning Stuart kings is replaced on the English throne by William of Orange (formerly William Stradholder, Captain General of the Dutch Forces, who had—through the machinations of Jewish money lenders in Holland—married Mary, princess of York, setting him

up as the future English king.) Five years after his coronation, William repaid his benefactors for their influence—and in the process plunged England, and eventually the whole world, into the cesspool of financial Babylon. In 1694, you see, he persuaded the British Treasury to borrow 1,250,000 pounds from the Jewish banking houses of Amsterdam. National debt, as we know it today, was born.

The amount was horrendous, but the terms were worse. The lenders' names were to be kept secret. They were given a charter to establish a central bank—the Bank of England. This bank's directors were then given the right to establish the gold standard for paper currency. (At this point, the fox was in the henhouse.) Further, the bankers were allowed to lend out ten pounds worth of paper currency for every pound they held in gold—in effect, creating money out of thin air. Alarmed yet? It gets worse. The national debt they had created (and this is the real innovation here) was to be paid for by direct taxation of the English people—both the principal and the interest on the unpaid balance. Of course, then as now, it was never intended that the principal would ever be paid off. Rather, the bankers would continue to pull money out of the ether and lend it to the government at interest: in four short years England's national debt increased almost *thirteen fold*, to 16,000,000 pounds! The foxes now owned the chickens *and* their children's children's children. *Way to go, William. Hope you enjoyed being king.*

Perhaps you've gotten so comfortable with the idea of national debt that none of this bothers you. But it should, for Yahweh Himself considers the whole scheme an "abomination" (Revelation 17:5). Perhaps you think it's somebody else's problem. Wrong again. It's your problem, if you're a taxpayer or depend on one. I don't care what country you live in; if you pay income taxes, a large proportion of those taxes goes to pay for interest on loans, money your government has borrowed. And why have your leaders borrowed this money? To pay for wars, for social programs, crime-fighting—things that more often than not, the powers behind the governments have *engineered* in order to induce them to borrow money to deal with them. You may protest, *What about infrastructure—roads and such? What about space exploration? What about protecting the environment?* Yes, all of these things and more are properly within the purview of government budgets. But none of them have ever *required* borrowing a penny. If there are beneficiaries, the costs should be borne by them. If there are villains that negatively impact expenses, they too should bear their proper share. That's why we have, for example, gasoline taxes for road users, fines for industrial polluters, and tolls for bridge passage. We have no business using taxpayers' dollars to send space probes to distant planets searching for signs of life—signs the scientists desperately hope to find so they can prop up their sagging evolutionary presuppositions. Communication satellites, on the other hand, should be paid for by the people who benefit from the service they provide.

Am I implying that we should all stage a tax revolt? No. It's far too late for that. William of Orange cooked our goose back in 1694, and we've been reheating the poor thing ever since: 1913 was a particularly auspicious year, with the passage of the American Federal Reserve Act *and* the National Income Tax—something so contrary to our founding fathers' ideals it took a Constitutional amendment to perpetrate it. Andrew Jackson is *still* rolling over in his grave about that one. Back in chapter 14—Mystery Babylon—I recommended reading G. Edward Griffin's *The Creature from Jekyll Island—A Second Look at the Federal Reserve* (1994-2004), American Media). I mention it again here because if we don't understand how currency, wealth, and central banks work, we will never comprehend the evil octopus of financial Babylon as presented in prophetic scripture.

National debt in the modern (post-1694) sense is a stealthy and nefarious form of slavery. We are all familiar with the term “debtor nations,” a description used of those small, poor countries who come to the rich industrialized ones hat in hand, looking for a loan or a handout. It's an erroneous concept: *all* nations are debtors, even (or should I say *especially*) the largest and most prosperous. The United States, as I write these words, has a legally mandated debt ceiling of over nine *trillion* dollars. We're not just in a financial hole, folks—this is the journey to the center of the earth! So how do developing nations borrow money from “wealthy” ones? They don't.

To understand why, we need to comprehend how money is created. In the real world, building wealth is the natural result of industry—of applying work and insight to the solution of problems and the meeting of needs. That explains why Israel, for example, with very little in the way of natural resources, is so much more prosperous than any of its oil-soaked Islamic neighbors. But that's only the real world. The world of international finance is something else again. The money that's loaned to developing or “third-world” nations is *created* in parallel with the debt it represents—not by wealthier nations, but by banks. It is nothing but ones and zeros in a computer somewhere. There is absolutely nothing of real value backing it up. Scary, huh?

Today, all industrialized nations operate their own Bank-of-England style central banks. In the U.S., it's the Federal Reserve Bank; in Germany, it's Die Deutsche Bundesbank, France has the Banque de France, and so forth. There's even a European Central Bank, headquartered in Frankfurt. These are, in effect, banking monopolies with sweeping powers that were created by legislative acts of their respective nations. They are allowed to issue currency far in excess of any actual assets they hold—the FRB, for example, has no silver at all, and all the gold held in the Federal Reserve System and at Fort Knox covers no more than ten percent of the outstanding paper currency. Our money, therefore, has no

substantive basis of value—it is created by fiat, by the policy not of the government, but of the central bank. *But wait, you say. These central banks are owned by their respective national governments, aren't they?* No, sorry, they're not. They're corporations, owned by individuals and other corporations, not by governments. Worse, they all have interlocking directorships, joint stock ownership, cross ownership, and substantial cross loans. The directorates and majority shareholders of these institutions comprise an incestuous list indeed. The same family names pop up over and over again: Rockefeller, Morgan, Lazard, Warburg, Schiff, and of course, Rothschild—the Who's Who of the Illuminati. Their interests lie in protecting each other, not in looking out for the welfare of their host governments—and certainly not the citizens of those nations. People in these industrialized countries are there for only one purpose: to pay the bills.

There's more to **“all the nations [that] have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication”** than the industrialized world, of course. Developing nations don't have their own central banks. Does that prevent them from selling their souls to the devil, as we have? Not any more. Today, they have the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund which, in slightly different ways, serve as conduits for international bankers (read: Illuminati) to create new money in parallel with new debt. The World Bank, holding only nominal reserves contributed by its “wealthy” member nations, draws up bonds on the behalf of the “debtor nation,” which are then sold to commercial banks. In purchasing these bonds, money is “created” by these banks. The IMF presents itself as a financial pool of money quotas contributed by its subscribing nations—most of the world. But only a quarter of the quotas are payable in gold (the rest being created in parallel with debt)—again, credit is being manufactured out of thin air and wishful thinking, with but a fraction of the new money backed by anything resembling real assets. Actually, it has been even worse since 1979, when the IMF instituted what are known as “Special Drawing Rights,” which serve for all practical purposes as a new form of international currency—a.k.a. new-world-order funny money.

Did you happen to pick up on the *real* game the international banking community is playing? With “wealth” being conjured up from nothing in parallel with the debt of their victims—excuse me, *client nations*—they are risking little or nothing (since no real assets are changing hands), yet interest payments—in real money this time—must still be paid. And paying down the principal? Who's got anything left over for that? In theory, debt principal that is paid off cancels the artificial creation of “wealth” that was accomplished through the original loan. But the loans are never really expected to be retired. That's the whole point: the interest is supposed to pile up forever, making the international bankers ever richer in the process. Although there's no consensus on the number, the total world debt today seems to be somewhere in the neighborhood of 100 trillion dollars. If you work out the compound interest numbers for the next twenty or

thirty years, the picture becomes truly frightening—or slapstick silly—depending on your spiritual point of view.

There are natural consequences to basing the world's money system on the creation of debt. First, it raises the cost of goods and services, which curtails the buying power of men and nations. This leads to a surplus of those same goods and services, which precipitates cut-throat competition, leading in turn to inflation. If left to manage itself, this process inevitably leads to either bankruptcy or war (or both). The Illuminati may be master tinkerers, but even *they* can't keep this ship afloat forever. And don't forget, the whole point was to take what billions of people had earned with their hard work and sacrifice and put it into the bloated pockets of an arrogant elite who didn't earn it. It's nothing but an elaborate snatch and run, and the whole world is their 7-Eleven. What was it Yahweh wrote with His own finger? Oh, yes: **"You shall not steal."** (Exodus 20:15)

Lest we forget what got us started on this rant, allow me to reprise these few verses: **"Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury."** (Revelation 18:1-3) The Illuminati and their whole one-world-and-it's-all-for-me scheme are toast. The house of cards is scattered to the winds. The usurious interest they charged on loans of money that didn't really exist (and wasn't theirs anyway) is nothing but a happy memory. As we shall see, some are pleased about this turn of events, and some are horrified. But there's nothing anyone can do to hasten or prevent it: the fall of economic Babylon is a prophetic *fait accompli*.

I mentioned that the ten nations of the Antichrist's original European empire (Revelation 17:16) are said to hate the harlot, despite her assistance in elevating their boy to a position of unparalleled prominence. Now you know why. They, with every other government on earth, are up to their eyeballs in debt to them—debts that will no longer have to be repaid if the Illuminati can be somehow neutralized. This particular gambit is not without historical precedent. The Knights Templar, formed in 1118 ostensibly to provide security for Catholic pilgrims visiting Jerusalem, had for almost two centuries grown obscenely rich by lending money at interest to European heads of state. In 1307, one such king who was deeply in debt to them, Philip IV of France, colluded with Pope Clement V to seize their wealth and turn them—7,000 strong, though twice that many were arrested—over to the Inquisition for "re-education." *Voila!* Problem solved. No more debt. I get the feeling that the Antichrist will do something very much like this to the International Banking Community that helped put him in power.

And it gets better (for him). The Antichrist is about to take over their scam, like one Mafia don encroaching on the territory of another. If I may indulge in a little blue-sky speculation here, I would suggest that the Antichrist might, upon his ascension to earth's throne, cancel all debts, public and private—just wipe the slate clean (SF7). This move would ingratiate him to the masses, who are personally, like their nations, in hock up to their necks, while costing him nothing. It would also serve as the launch platform for Illuminati II—a new world-wide super-bank controlled by the central government—i.e., by the Antichrist himself. Of course, whether or not he actually does this is immaterial—it's not specifically prophesied. But it's what I would do in his shoes, an evil win-win scenario. Of course, if you don't receive the Mark of the Beast, your debts remain on the books. The fact of the prophesied worldwide financial meltdown—the fall of the commercial/financial whore of Babylon—is what we need to be cognizant of. Whether the Antichrist will cause it or merely capitalize upon it is anybody's guess. The shattered pieces of a financial infrastructure devastated by nuclear war and its aftermath will be there for the taking—but only the most ambitious, ruthless and cunning of megalomaniacs would attempt it.

Where does all this leave the Tribulation neo-believers? After all, it was primarily for them that this information has been provided—the news of Babylon's fall isn't of much practical use to us on this side of the rapture. Or is it? John's vision tells us what to do, now *and* then: **“And I heard another voice from heaven saying, ‘Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. Render to her just as she rendered to you, and repay her double according to her works; in the cup which she has mixed, mix double for her. In the measure that she glorified herself and lived luxuriously, in the same measure give her torment and sorrow.”** (Revelation 18:4-7) This begins with the same advice we saw in the Old Testament: **“Up, Zion! Escape, you who dwell with the daughter of Babylon.”** (Zechariah 2:7) You can't flee from “Babylon” if you don't realize you're living there. If the world's system is the foundational basis for your life, you're in big trouble. If you “share in her sins,” you'll “receive of her plagues.” This is a plea for a pilgrim mentality among the followers of Yahweh, both before the rapture and after. Especially after. It is a call for holiness—separation from the world and separation *to* God. The speaker here (though we aren't told) could well be Gabriel, the angel whose particular mission is the welfare of Israel, for he refers to his audience as “my people.” This, then, is one final warning to God's chosen: *If you're still part of the problem, stop. Repent. Turn around. Think differently. Flee. Be an enemy to this evil, for she is certainly an enemy to you!*

On a more specific note, this instruction seems to be directed especially toward Israel. It is with bitter irony that we note the significant involvement of individual Jews in the perpetration of Illuminati oppression. And indeed, it goes

even deeper than that: historically, Jews have been culpable in the perpetration of heinous crimes at the national level. For instance, out of 556 important functionaries in the Bolshevik state in 1918-19, 457 of them were Jews. Karl Marx, from whom they got their philosophy (based on Weishaupt's concepts), was Jewish. For that matter, Adolph Hitler was concerned (or perhaps convinced) that he was the grandson of a woman who had been raped by the scion of a prominent Jewish (and Illuminati) family—a Rothschild, no less—making *him* one-quarter Jewish. The fact that it was a presumption on his part didn't prevent him from murdering six million Jews in blind retribution. The Jews have always been their own worst enemy.

Remember what Moses warned of in Deuteronomy 28:53? If the Israelites refused to serve Yahweh, they would **“eat the fruit of [their] body, the flesh of [their] sons and daughters...in the siege and desperate straits in which the enemy shall distress you.”** This cannibalism was, sadly, literally fulfilled several times in their disastrous history. But I believe Moses' warning could go even further: that Jews would ultimately be responsible for metaphorically devouring their own race through precipitating prejudices and pogroms. Today, some researchers have noted the Jewish strongholds within the Illuminati and concluded that Zionism is the problem. References to the infamous fabrication *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* are ubiquitous in the literature. They have mistakenly equated Yahweh's purpose in restoring Israel with the Illuminati's satanic agenda of enslaving the world through their avarice. How wrong you can be.

Because they're the power behind a thousand thrones, the Illuminati bankers and industrialists are confident that they can't—at this late date—be shaken from their positions of power. But their security is an illusion. **“For she says in her heart, ‘I sit as queen, and am no widow, and will not see sorrow.’ Therefore her plagues will come in one day—death and mourning and famine. And she will be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judges her.”** (Revelation 18:7-8) Not since the days of Adam Weishaupt have the members of this nefarious organization been *personally* vulnerable. Sure, they suffered setbacks and roadblocks to their agenda over the years, but they weren't subjected to punishment for their crimes—primarily because they owned governments the way Jim Henson owned Kermit the Frog. The industrialized nations were their puppets, and the developing nations were the dirt under their feet. They're seemingly untouchable. But Yahweh, as we have seen, delights in doing the impossible—even when it comes to judgment.

The world's economic meltdown won't occur gradually over a period of years or months. It will happen in one day, in one hour, as suddenly and as unexpectedly as the September 11 Islamic attack on the World Trade Center. Bringing down the financial infrastructure of the earth, however, will take more

than flying a couple of airliners into tall buildings. The task will be more like trying to destroy the Internet, something that was designed to be so pervasive and decentralized that a thousand individual attacks wouldn't even dent it. Complicating the problem is that the Illuminati is—as far as the world can see—leaderless. Not since the days of Albert Pike has anyone been able to point to a single individual and say, “That’s the head of the Illuminati.” This fact has led some to conclude that it doesn’t really exist anymore, that all that’s left is the babblings of conspiracy theorists and paranoid kooks. I submit to you, however, that this manifestation of Babylon is now being personally supervised by the same person who’s been running the religious side of the whore’s enterprises for the last six thousand years: Satan himself.

I believe that financial Babylon will enter World War III fully expecting to emerge more or less intact from that conflict. (After all, the Illuminati predicted, promoted—and probably planned—this war, just as they did the previous two worldwide conflagrations and countless smaller wars, financing and equipping the military machines of every major contestant. They most certainly planned *for* it.) They will envision crawling from their hiding places amid the rubble of Western Europe and North America—or with foresight, Paraguay, Madagascar, or some similarly out of the way place—rub their hands together, and prepare to make another killing, buying up what’s left of the “civilized world” for pennies on the dollar. Business as usual.

This time, however, Yahweh is not going to let them get away with it. Through one mechanism or another, the entire structure of commercial Babylon is prophesied to fall apart—suddenly and irretrievably. My guess is that the one-two punch of nuclear war and Cumbre Vieja will do the trick. The Illuminati octopus is counting on holding all the cards when the dust settles. They’re probably not prepared for World War III going nuclear, and they’re *certainly* not factoring in the satanic ambition and empowerment of the Antichrist. His plans don’t include toeing their line or paying loan interest to them. He’s thinking big, thinking outside the box. And that’s a problem, because they *own* the box—they designed and built it to contain guys like this. *Who does he think he is?* Remember, Illuminati strategy from the beginning has been to control, finance, and manipulate *both* sides of every conflict. Ironically, with their “side” the only one left standing, they will find themselves betrayed by their own front man. Welcome to the grim reality of Satan worship, guys.

One more random thought before we move on: the Antichrist, as we have seen, will be assassinated (only to be re-animated) on the eve of his ascension to the throne of the United States of Earth. I have hypothesized that his murderer is a Jewish priest trying to do Yahweh a service. But he could just as easily be an agent of the Illuminati. Establishing means, motive, and opportunity would be a

no-brainer. Impossible? I give you the parallel precedent of John F. Kennedy's assassination, and rest my case.

Okay, back to Babylon. **"The kings of the earth who committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her will weep and lament for her, when they see the smoke of her burning, standing at a distance for fear of her torment, saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour your judgment has come....'"** Here we see the political fallout. The "kings of the earth" find the flow of funny money cut off. There will be no more borrowing money to gain political advantage—standard operating procedure among governments large and small today. It's called deficit spending, but in reality it's selling our children into slavery, just as our parents sold us. In a very real sense, access to this counterfeit capital is all that stands between many politicians and the unemployment line. As they spend you into an illusory prosperity (and your children into slavery) they drive the gullible voters to the ballot box in enthusiastic droves. *Vote yes on free lunch.*

I must confess that I've never been able to read Revelation 18 without picturing New York City in my mind. I realize that's probably a provincial and limited view—that any city, even *that* one, could fully embody the evil of Babylon. After all, John wouldn't have called *Rome* "Babylon" (in so many words) if Nebuchadnezzar's capital on the Euphrates had been sufficient to describe the real character of the "mother of harlots and abominations" of which Yahweh is so concerned about teaching us. I need to remind myself that the Greek word for "city," *polis*, in context, may not mean so much "a place" as "a system," for in John's day, a city was the closest thing there was to a system—internally interlocking, interdependent, symbiotic, and self-interested—a living socioeconomic organism. In the twenty-first century, such a *polis* need not be confined to a single location. That being said, if one city in the world were to be singled out as the poster child of Commercial Babylon, post-rapture New York would have to be it—in my imagination the very incarnation of the human pride and concentration of ill-gotten wealth that Yahweh so clearly despises.

For example, the New York Stock Exchange is unquestionably the world's epicenter for what we see next: **"And the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore: merchandise of gold and silver, precious stones and pearls, fine linen and purple, silk and scarlet, every kind of citron wood, every kind of object of ivory, every kind of object of most precious wood, bronze, iron, and marble; and cinnamon and incense, fragrant oil and frankincense, wine and oil, fine flour and wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, and bodies and souls of men."**

(Revelation 18:9-13) Imagine what would happen if all such trade suddenly stopped—not just on Wall Street but in every securities trading center. Remember what I said the Antichrist would probably do in response to the anarchy of the post-WWIII world? I hypothesized that he would freeze wages and prices. We need to understand that Satan knows nothing of freedom, of *choice*. His style is top-down control—something he has never been able to universally impose until now, at the midpoint of the Tribulation. The creation of markets through innovation and hard work is a byproduct of the creative nature of Yahweh that He built into us. That man has so often been motivated by greed or covetousness in his commercial endeavors doesn't change that fact. But creativity under the Antichrist's rule will give way to control—brutal and unbending—once he has wrested power over Babylon's *polis*/system away from her former overlords.

Take a close look at that list through first century eyes. In all of the categories we see here (media of exchange, apparel and fashion, building materials, food and beverages, drugs and cosmetics, transportation, and human resources) we see a decided leaning toward the high end of the scale—luxuries. In the middle of the list is the phrase “wine and oil,” which reminds us of something we saw earlier. The third seal judgment pronounced (and I paraphrase), “The average man must work all day for barely enough to keep him alive, but the rich ruling elite will still enjoy their luxuries.” (Revelation 6:6) That was the state of affairs right into the dark days of the Magog War: the cream of society (who were prepared for it) rose above the stench of death, viewing the devastation as little more than an opportunity to buy the earth for a fraction of its worth. But here in Revelation 18, we see their plan coming apart.

Now, not only is the market gone for luxury goods, so is their posh lifestyle. **“The fruit that your soul longed for has gone from you, and all the things which are rich and splendid have gone from you, and you shall find them no more at all. The merchants of these things, who became rich by her, will stand at a distance for fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, and saying, ‘Alas, alas, that great city that was clothed in fine linen, purple, and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls! For in one hour such great riches came to nothing....”** There's that phrase again—the same thing we saw when the politicians witnessed the demise of Babylon. Now **“the merchants...stand at a distance for fear of her torment.”** Notice that it's not the merchants and politicians who have been destroyed, but the behind-the-scenes elite whose boots they've been licking for so many years. Now they're whistling a different tune: *We don't even want to be within miles of those people. What's happening to them might happen to us, too. Guilt by association. Punishment by proximity. Reprisal through radiation sickness.*

The same phenomenon is now seen even farther down the food chain, demonstrating two things. First, the influence and reach of the Babylonian system

is pervasive indeed, and second, when the worm turns, nobody wants to be near the apple. **“Every shipmaster, all who travel by ship, sailors, and as many as trade on the sea, stood at a distance and cried out when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, ‘What is like this great city?’ They threw dust on their heads and cried out, weeping and wailing, and saying, ‘Alas, alas, that great city, in which all who had ships on the sea became rich by her wealth! For in one hour she is made desolate.’ Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you holy apostles and prophets, for God has avenged you on her!”**

(Revelation 18:14-20) New York has one of the busiest harbors in the world. Coincidence? If you say so. Sadly, there’s a third thing happening here, or rather, *not* happening. Nobody seems to recognize the evil nature of financial Babylon. All they know is that she is suffering a violent and sudden death, and that’s going to hit them hard in the wallet. Those who witness her demise aren’t cognizant of their own culpability before God. They’re merely afraid of the poverty they now see looming in their futures.

Once again we need to take a lesson from September 11. The terrorist attacks came with a price tag—some say their direct and indirect costs exceeded a hundred billion dollars. We all stood back wringing our hands, saying stupid things like, “No place is safe anymore. We must find a way to protect ourselves.” But we all saw the names of the perpetrators (mostly Saudis, not Afghans) in the newspapers, learned of their motivations and their beliefs, and read their handwritten prayers to Allah. We all listened to the tapes of Osama Bin Laden telling us plainly that his terrorist organization, al-Qaeda, was nothing—that Islam was everything. And yet, with all that evidence, there *still* aren’t a hundred people in America who are willing to stand up and tell the truth: that the reason we were attacked is the evil teaching of Islam—and that if we don’t fight Islam itself, we will never make any progress toward curtailing its terrorism. My point is simply this: there’s a trend developing here, and it isn’t good. We once fought against Nazism. Then we compromised with Communism. Today we refuse to acknowledge the obvious evils of Islam. But during the Tribulation, men won’t even *recognize the existence* of Babylon—the most pervasive, all-encompassing evil of them all. What will it take to get their attention? A cut in salary.

But what happens? How is Babylon finally overthrown? Here’s how John describes it, but I’m afraid it raises more questions than it answers. **“Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, ‘Thus with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down, and shall not be found anymore. The sound of harpists, musicians, flutists, and trumpeters shall not be heard in you anymore. No craftsman of any craft shall be found in you anymore, and the sound of a millstone shall not be heard in you anymore. The light of a lamp shall not shine in you anymore, and the voice of bridegroom and bride shall not be heard in you anymore. For your merchants were the great men of the earth; for by your sorcery all the nations were deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all who were slain on the earth.’”**

(Revelation 18:21-24) Just when this started sounding like the destruction of a real, physical city, (in my imagination, New York) we get down to that last sentence, which clearly doesn't fit the Big Apple in any literal sense. But according to prophetic precedent, it's perfectly normal for Yahweh to mix literal fulfillments with metaphorical ones. If New York *represents* the sins of financial Babylon, God could literally wipe it off the face of the earth (directly fulfilling this prophecy) in symbolic retribution for the evil system that has been seducing men to their eternal deaths—and persecuting the saints of Yahweh—ever since the days of Adam.

Let's review the facts. The Babylon of which John speaks, if you put it all together, is a system of evil that permeates the earth—a system of religion, politics, and commerce that Yahweh will utterly destroy through miraculous and violent means of His own choosing. Those who benefited by it will lament its passing. Political leaders, merchants, and middlemen (those involved in shipping) are specifically seen mourning her loss. As Babylon's domination of the entertainment industry (**harpists...**), the industrial base (**craftsmen...**), agribusiness (**the sound of the millstone**), and the energy industry (**the light of a lamp**) comes to an end, the normal cycle of life (**the voice of the bridegroom and bride**) will be disrupted.

Because the most detailed description of her fall comes in Revelation 17 and 18—near the end of the book, *after* all of the seal, trumpet, and bowl judgments have been pronounced, many thoughtful students of scripture assume that commercial Babylon's hour of demise occurs near the end of the seven-year Tribulation. After all, the seventh and final bowl judgment includes this statement: **“And great Babylon was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath.”** (Revelation 16:19) The angel that delivered the details concerning the fall of Babylon to John was one of the angels of the seven bowls—the last series of judgments to be revealed. But although John no doubt wrote these things down in the order he saw them, his book is replete with parentheticals and flashbacks; it is obviously not laid out in strict chronological order. The death of *commercial* Babylon actually makes far more logistical sense if we place her sudden destruction during World War III—the nuclear phase of the War of Magog. Remember the phrase, **“For in one hour she is made desolate.”**

Point one: if indeed New York is representative of the “city” that's described, it can be expected to be at the top of everybody's nuclear hit list—whether the Muslims', the Russians', or the Antichrist's (all of whom would have different reasons for wanting her gone). Of course, the same would be true of any literal city God might choose to make His point—London, Paris, Rome, etc. But perhaps we should be thinking not of “one city,” but of “all the cities that fit the profile.” If we think of financial Babylon as a *system*, then we could expect it to have

multiple epicenters—all of which would be logical targets of a nuclear superpower trying to eliminate the threat of a European megalomaniac.

Point two: it's hard to imagine any semblance of "business as usual" remaining for three or four years after a third of the planet and a quarter of its population is destroyed in a nuclear war or its aftermath—certainly not enough for merchants to be shocked and dismayed at the destruction of a single seaport city so long after the war. But the surprise and distress that the "merchants" of the world would experience if, suddenly and unexpectedly, a city (or system) wielding the financial and political influence of New York were wiped out by a nuclear bomb—*that* would certainly precipitate the kind of anguished reaction John describes: "Alas, alas, that great city..." This strongly suggests an earlier, rather than later, destruction of commercial Babylon.

Point three. According to the prophecy of the second Trumpet Judgment—which will occur sometime after the commencement of World War III (Trumpet #1) but before the burning "star" falls from the heavens (Trumpet #3)—all life will die in one third of the earth's oceans, including any ships that happen to be there at the time (Revelation 8:9). This "third of the sea" is probably a description of the greater Atlantic Ocean. Now, carefully compare this fact with the description of Babylon's demise: it specifically mentions *witnesses in ships at sea*: "**Every shipmaster, all who travel by ship, sailors, and as many as trade on the sea, stood at a distance and cried out when they saw the smoke of her burning.**" This implies that the destruction of financial Babylon will occur *before* the "great mountain burning with fire" is "thrown into the sea"—the singular event prophesied to turn a third of the sea to blood and kill everything living within or upon it. In other words, the "one-hour" destructive event that destroys financial Babylon will *precede* the second Trumpet Judgment (the Cumbre Vieja eruption and tsunami, unless I miss my guess). That leaves us but one logical prophetically specified cause: Trumpet Judgment #1— nuclear warfare.

A couple of chapters back I mentioned that there are two potential "natural" disasters just waiting to happen—the Cumbre Vieja volcano in the Canary Islands and the recently-discovered Apophis Asteroid. Either of these could be described as "**a great millstone being thrown into the sea.**" But although the "**great star from heaven,**" i.e., the third Trumpet Judgment (Revelation 8:10-11) is described as "**burning like a torch,**" which is something any asteroid would do as it entered the earth's atmosphere, its destination is described as "**a third of the rivers and on the springs of water.**" In other words, its landing zone is spread out over a goodly portion of the earth's surface—it *won't* be "thrown into the sea," at least not all in one piece. And its *effect* is not the instantaneous destruction of cities, but rather the slow, prolonged agony of poisoned water supplies. The coming asteroid, then, does not fit the profile of the "Babylon killer."

That doesn't mean we should ignore it, however. This quarter-mile wide asteroid (initially called 2004 MN₄ and now officially designated 99942 Apophis—the Greek form of Apep, “the Destroyer,” the patron of evil and darkness in the Egyptian pantheon) was given its name because it's so big and scary. In the context of Babylon's demise, though, the interesting thing about Apophis is what we know of its *timing*. We can be reasonably certain that the events listed *within* each judgment series (seals, trumpets, or bowls) will happen chronologically in the order they were listed, even though the three series overlap each other. Therefore, if we know when Trumpet #3 is going to blow, we will have established an outer limit for the demise of financial Babylon, a date before which its destruction must come about. According to our established Tribulation timeline, Apophis will arrive sometime *after* the commencement of World War III and about a year *before* the abomination of desolation. NASA scientists have calculated the precise date: Friday, April 13, 2029.

Gee, that's right around the corner, you say. Why haven't I heard about this impending disaster in the news? Because of a bigger (and also scripturally significant) news story dominating the media at the time Apophis was discovered: The *Washington Post* (April 9, 2005) reported that “the tsunami in South Asia pushed 2004 MN₄ out of the news.” The article went on to say, “The asteroid would miss, but only by 15,000 to 25,000 miles—about one-tenth the distance to the moon. Asteroid 2004 MN₄ was no false alarm. Instead, it has provided the world with the best evidence yet that a catastrophic encounter with a rogue visitor from space is not only possible but probably inevitable.... Asteroid 2004 MN₄ is a ‘regional’ hazard—big enough to flatten Texas or a couple of European countries with an impact equivalent to 10,000 megatons of dynamite [*sic*: TNT?]*—*more than all the nuclear weapons in the world.” The *Post* promises a near miss, but don't bet your life on it. (At the time of this writing, NASA is giving it a 1-in-38 chance of hitting earth, rating it an unprecedented 4 on the Torino risk scale.)

If the scripture wasn't telling us a different story, we might well surmise that this could be the bad boy that finishes off commercial Babylon. But the whole will be history before the asteroid gets anywhere close. As we have seen, Babylon's fatal wound was inflicted under the first Trumpet Judgment—nuclear war. But apparently, the *coup de grâce* will be administered through the *second* Trumpet. **“Then the second angel sounded: and something like a great mountain burning with fire [a precise definition of a volcano] was thrown into the sea [a precise definition of Cumbre Vieja's unique threat], and a third of the sea became blood; and a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.”** (Revelation 8:8-9) This, as it turns out, is the same event we saw when Babylon's demise was being described: **“Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying ‘Thus with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down, and shall not be found anymore.’”** (Revelation 18:21) The “Then” that begins

the verse *follows* John's description of how commercial Babylon had been destroyed in "one hour," how she was mourned on earth, and how her demise was the cause of rejoicing in heaven. *Ding, dong, the wicked witch is dead.*

In both passages, the Greek word for "threw" or "thrown" is derived from *ballo*, which means either to throw or hurl, to let fall (allowing gravity to do its work), or to place something into position. Thus the word allows for Cumbre Vieja's collapse to come at precisely the right moment, in precisely the right/wrong place. The Canary Islands are off the coast of Morocco. When Cumbre Vieja plunges into the mid-Atlantic, destruction from the biggest tsunami on record is assured for influential cities on both sides of the ocean—European financial and industrial centers like London, Liverpool, Glasgow, Dublin, Lisbon, Amsterdam, The Hague, Brussels, Hamburg, Copenhagen, Oslo, and Stockholm, and American centers of power and wealth, like New York, Washington, Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Norfolk. Starting to get the picture?

Though I've provided a likely scenario explaining how (and when) it might happen, Yahweh didn't give us enough information to be dogmatic about the means by which financial Babylon will meet its demise, but there's no doubt that it will—a worldwide financial meltdown. All the evidence points toward a sudden, shocking catastrophe that takes place well before the mid-point of the Tribulation. It will be seen among the world's upper classes as a disaster of unprecedented proportions. It's significant that the mourners of Babylon don't seem to be lamenting its loss for its own sake or the sake of those who lost their lives there—but they're really upset that they aren't going to make any more money out of this scam. Nor do they recognize its destruction as God's judgment upon a wicked thing. But it *is* judgment—not an accident, not a mistake, not a fluke of nature, not merely a big piece of bad luck.

The reasons for this judgment are threefold. First, Babylon's "**merchants were the great men of the earth,**" which implies a greed-induced lust for power among the leaders of commerce, finance, and industry. These people should have aspired to be the servants of mankind, not its masters.

Second, "**by [her] sorcery all the nations were deceived.**" The word for "sorcery" here is *pharmakeia*, which is derived from *pharmakon*, a drug or spell-inducing potion, or by extension the one who administers it: a druggist, poisoner, or sorcerer. The point is that Babylon's "sorcery" isn't necessarily manifested in overt Satanic ritual worship, like sacrificing a goat to Lucifer in the lobby of the U.N. building. And although the Illuminati have documented ties to major illicit drug cartels, think beyond cocaine and heroin. We—and I mean the whole world—have become accustomed to the idea that there ought to be a magic pill to fix anything—even our own sin. We're into masking symptoms, not preventing the sicknesses that cause them. We consider it our right to play with matches, and

then we curse God when we get burned. As a case in point, 40 million people are currently infected with the AIDS virus. In response, the World Health Organization and two other UN agencies launched a program called the “3X5” campaign, designed to provide three million AIDS patients antiretroviral drugs by the end of 2005. Meanwhile, the Vatican’s recommendations of “fidelity, chastity, and abstinence” (which I heartily endorse) are roundly scoffed at in “enlightened” circles, even though everybody who thinks about it for a nanosecond knows that AIDS could be obliterated in one generation if everyone in the world would simply restrict themselves to one sexual partner in their lifetime. That’s God’s design, but we seem to prefer Satan’s sorceries.

Third, **“in [Babylon] was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all who were slain on the earth.”** This statement clearly identifies Babylon as a system, not a city, for the slain and martyred are from every “nation, tribe, people, and tongue” on the earth. More importantly, the blood of these people, saved and unsaved (the reference is presumably to the Tribulation’s dead) is laid squarely at the feet of this system. The implications of this are staggering. Billions are dead—or will die—because of Babylon’s evils. False religions are part of it: from Islam’s role in starting World War III to the subsequent gathering of lesser sects to worship the dragon and the beast, Babylon’s culpability is undeniable. And religion’s mirror image, atheistic materialism, the foundation of Babylon’s commercial-industrial-financial complex being described here in Revelation 18, is equally guilty of the blood of the prophets and saints. The Antichrist, it appears, is not the only villain on the scene.

Not everyone is dismayed to see Babylon go under. In heaven, where they see things more clearly than we do here on earth, this scene unfolds: **“After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, ‘Alleluia! [Literally, “Radiate Yahweh’s light!”] Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God! For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her.’ Again they said, ‘Alleluia! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!’ And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, ‘Amen! Alleluia!’”** (Revelation 19:1-4) “Alleluia” is a Greek transliteration of two Hebrew words, *halal* (praise) and *Yahh* (a contraction of Yahweh), hence it basically means “praise Yahweh.” *Halal*, however, has some interesting connotations. The primitive root means “to be clear,” or “shine,” so the word connotes the glory of Yahweh shining in and through us. *Halal* suggests celebration, boasting in Yahweh, going so far as to make oneself a fool of oneself in glorifying Him—there’s an exuberance about the word that reminds us of King David dancing with abandon before his God. In today’s vernacular we might say this heavenly multitude is “pumped.” They’re reacting to Babylon’s fall as they would to the winning touchdown. (In a strange twist, *halal* is also the root of

Satan's name, questionably translated "Lucifer," who was created as Yahweh's most glorious angel. Choosing such a versatile name for him was no doubt Yahweh's intention, for we've come to know Satan as a boasting fool—not the angel of light he should have been.)

The phrase **"Her smoke rises up forever and ever"** should sound familiar to us. We heard something very similar in Isaiah 34, where the prophet was describing the ultimate fate of Edom (in today's Jordan). It's apparently a bad idea to systematically oppose the will of Yahweh. But don't jump to the conclusion that God enjoys punishing rebels in eternal fire. He would much rather see them repent and become His children. I've said it before, but it bears repeating: Yahweh's greatest gift to us is choice—He won't make our decisions for us. Thus the man known as the "weeping prophet" laments not only Israel but her oppressor Babylon as well: **"Babylon has suddenly fallen and been destroyed. Wail for her! Take balm for her pain; perhaps she may be healed. We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed. Forsake her, and let us go everyone to his own country; for her judgment reaches to heaven and is lifted up to the skies."** (Jeremiah 51:8-9) There it is again: **"Forsake her."** Flee from Babylon. Get out while there's still time. This is the third time we've been given this advice. Is God trying to tell us something?

It is fitting, perhaps, that the final word against the ultimate Babylon should have been spoken by Habakkuk, a man who ministered when Nebuchadnezzar was breathing down the neck of a rebellious but still-independent Judah, when the Chaldeans were at the height of their power. **"For the vision is yet for an appointed time; but at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry...."** This a warning to those who see the world operating as it always has—without the hand of Yahweh heavy in judgment upon it—and erroneously conclude that His wrath will never come. God is patient, but not infinitely so. He has promised to right the wrongs, and He never breaks his promises.

"Behold the proud, his soul is not upright in him; but the just shall live by his faith. Indeed, because he transgresses by wine, he is a proud man, and he does not stay at home. Because he enlarges his desire as hell, and he is like death, and cannot be satisfied, he gathers to himself all nations and heaps up for himself all peoples...." This is the heart of Yahweh's case against Babylon: they are drunk with pride because of the power they wield, yet with all the wealth they've amassed, it's never enough. So they bring nation after nation within the sphere of their influence. (Remember what I said about national debt?) Like the grave itself, they will never be satisfied until they own it all.

And what do their victims have to say about it? **"Will not all these take up a proverb against him, and a taunting riddle against him, and say, 'Woe to him who increases what is not his—how long? And to him who loads himself with many pledges'? Will not your**

creditors rise up suddenly? Will they not awaken whom you oppress? And you will become their booty...." I hate to gloat, but I told you so. Babylon will be hated because it holds the mortgage on pretty much the whole world. And who will the world be more likely to follow than the one who cancels their crushing debt? I have hypothesized that the Antichrist will do this very thing. Maybe I should downgrade my Speculation Factor.

Could it be that the survivors of World War III will finally figure out that the people who make the money by supplying the world with weapons might be the same people who start the wars? **"Because you have plundered many nations, all the remnant of the people shall plunder you, because of men's blood and the violence of the land and the city, and of all who dwell in it. Woe to him who covets evil gain for his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of disaster!..."** The bankers of Babylon intend to use their ill-gotten wealth to ride out the storm they've caused, hiding out until the protagonists run out of bombs and the will to carry on. The plan then calls for taking their ownership of the world's assets to the next level, buying up the "distressed properties" of Europe, North America, Russia, and the Middle East at pennies on the dollar.

Even if no one else knows what they're up to, Yahweh does. **"You give shameful counsel to your house, cutting off many peoples, and sin against your soul. For the stone will cry out from the wall, and the beam from the timbers will answer it, 'Woe to him who builds a town with bloodshed, who establishes a city by iniquity!' Behold, is it not of Yahweh Almighty that the peoples labor to feed the fire and nations weary themselves in vain? For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Yahweh, as the waters cover the sea."** (Habakkuk 2:3-14) Babylon's plan is not to leave the rubble of war just lying there, of course. They intend to rebuild it into a utopia of their own imagination—with them in charge, as masters in the ultimate master/slave state. There's only one slight problem. They've forgotten God. As another wise man once wrote, **"Unless Yahweh builds the house, they labor in vain who build it. Unless Yahweh guards the city, the watchman stays awake in vain."** (Psalm 127:1) Yahweh *will* build the house. He's the only one who can.