

## *Babylon: Myth, Metaphor, or Memorial*

*"I will rise up against Babylon', declares the Lord God Almighty. 'I will cut off from Babylon her name and survivors, her offspring and descendants' declares the Lord. I will turn her into a place for owls and into swampland: I will sweep her with the broom of destruction', declares the Lord Almighty."*

*Isaiah 14:22-23 New International Version*

### ***Historical Parenthesis***

**T**he Babylon of myth and history from the beginning of time had set itself to be the centre of rebellion against God. The sequence of events according to the Scriptures is stated as follows. The *"whole earth was of one language and a common speech"* for some time after the Flood. But it was not long until there was discontent with the *"righteous"* circumstances introduced by Noah, and a desire to alter these into self-generated philosophies in regions beyond Mesopotamia. So there began a great migration of *"tribes and*

*families*", in which the sons of Noah and their descendants moved into their respective world-wide territories and practices

The first recorded imperial dictator was known as Nimrod, whose father, Cush, was a key figure in the great apostasy from God. Cush, the son of Ham, the son of Noah, later became known as *Hermes* in Egypt, *Mercury* in Greece and Rome, and *Nebo* in Babylon, in the idolatrous worship of the sun as God. It was Cush who founded the city of Babel, later to be known as Babylon, and who provided its early rebellious anti-God philosophy. His son, Nimrod, or Ninus, was the consolidator of the city-state of Babel, and the political expansion into the world's first empire from Mesopotamia. Their declared ambition in building Babel, and expanding the Babylonian hegemony, was *self-identity* ("let us make a name for ourselves"); *self-gratification* ("lest we be scattered over the face of the earth"); and *self-transcendence* ("let us build a city, and a tower to reach to the heavens")

Between them they created the world's first literature in the Sumerian cuneiform script which would dominate the region of Asia for the next two thousand years. They were skilled in all forms of metal-work from jewellery to war weapons to chariots. Their architects and engineers were creators and builders of the great cities of antiquity. The proliferation of gods and idolatrous practices gave birth to a variety of priesthoods; which, with the emergence of hero-kings and ruler-divinities, and an emphasis on temple-building, consolidated the priesthoods into a powerful institution of state.

The religious systems, including the influence of the zodiac and the occult, generated by the Babylonians and the Chaldeans, were given the name of "*Mysteries*", and became incorporated into Egyptian, Assyrian, Greek and Phoenician practices in Asia, and then spread throughout the world in distinctive multifarious forms. The priesthoods gave them the name of "*Mysteries*" because of the imposed seal of secrecy, and the sanction of the administered oath required to be accepted into the respective religious communities. By a combination of science, magic and occult practices the initiated participants experienced phenomena of "*lights, radiant fire, strange*

*and amazing objects, terrible apparitions...and, finally, the appearance of the great god Osiris, Tammuz, Nimrod or Adonis, to soothe feelings and engage affections . . .*"<sup>91</sup>

The ancient system of the "Mysteries" was wholly designed to glorify a dead individual, initially Nimrod, then Semiramis, "Queen of Heaven", then their "son", Tammuz, who was claimed to have the power of resurrection from the dead. From this "infernal trinity" sprang the whole pantheon of gods and mythic heroes to be worshipped instead of the one true God. Cush became known to pagan antiquity under the character of *Bel*, "the Confounder", or "Chaos", the god of confusion, son of Janus (of whom Ovid said he was "the god of all gods"), from whom all lesser gods were supposed to have had their origin

At this point, however, God intervened once again, saying:

*"If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they do will be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other. So the Lord scattered them from there all over the earth, and they stopped building the city. That is why it was called Babel - because there the Lord confused the language of the whole world. From there the Lord scattered them over the face of the whole earth ."*<sup>92</sup> (my emphases)

Some fifteen hundred years later the aristocratic prophet, Daniel, became the chief adviser to the Babylonian world emperor of the time, Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel pointed out to Nebuchadnezzar that, in the dream sequence just given to them both, and subsequent interpretation by Daniel, there was no mention of the forgettable kings of Babylon who preceded Nebuchadnezzar; and also, of those equally forgettable Babylonians who were likely to succeed him, until the time of the Medo-Persian conquest, followed by Greece, both of whose memorable leaders ruled from Babylon—and that even then God had emphasised the diminishing relevance, "After you, another kingdom will arise inferior to yours."

In other words, Nebuchadnezzar was the only *personal* world ruler recognized by God; the others were *kingdoms*, civilizations, not *persons*, and they were successively "inferior". That was because God had foretold through the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah particularly,

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<sup>91</sup> *The Two Babylons*, Alexander Hislop. Published by A&C Black, London.

<sup>92</sup> Genesis 11: 6-9

as he had to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, that *another similarly powerful world ruler like Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon would arise “in the last days” to confront God’s Messiah-Prince.*<sup>93</sup> All other nations and forms of government would decay and disappear due to their intrinsic weaknesses until the Biblically historic Anti-Messiah, or Antichrist, appeared in person in a future Babylon.

Although there are four mentions of the word “*mystery*” in John’s *Apocalypse*<sup>94</sup> they are related to only two phenomena - *the mystery of the “Seven Churches”, and the mystery of “Babylon the Great”*. These could also be classified respectively as “*the mystery of godliness*” and “*the mystery of lawlessness*” recorded by the Apostle Paul. Intriguingly, the two mysteries are presented by God to the Apostle John in his *Apocalypse* as two figurative women—one a sun-clad *Heavenly Mother* and the other a lurid *Mother of Harlots*.

Significantly John is carried away “*into the wilderness*” to see the vision of this woman

*“. . . sitting on a scarlet beast covered with blasphemous names, with seven heads and ten horns. She is dressed in purple and scarlet, glittering with gold, precious stones and pearls, with a golden cup in her hand filled with abominable things and the filth of her adulteries. On her forehead there is inscribed.*

*‘MYSTERY  
BABYLON THE GREAT  
MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES  
AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH’.*

*“One of the seven angels who had the seven plagues came out and said to me, “Come, I will show you the punishment of the great prostitute, who sits on many waters. With her the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication . . . ”*

Both women in the vision are magnificently dressed. Both women are mothers; one “*gave birth to a son who is to rule all nations*”, and the other “*the mother of harlots and the abomination of the earth*”. Both are extremely influential in the Biblical history of the world. One is a pure woman, the other is a prostitute. One comes out of the heavenly city of God, Jerusalem; the other comes out of notorious city of Satan,

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<sup>93</sup> Isaiah 2:2, Jeremiah 23:20, 30:24

<sup>94</sup> Revelation 1:20, 17:5,7

Babylon. One is representative of the Universal Church believers from the beginning to the end of time; the other is representative of the false conglomeration of unbelievers who have sold themselves to Satan in false religious representations until the end of time.

The definition of a prostitute is a woman who offers herself indiscriminately in exchange for money or influence. So the "mystery" of this Babylon the Great was that as "*the mother of prostitutes*" she had given birth to a practice of religions which prostituted the revealed purposes of God for self-centred gain. There are only three divinely "*revealed*" religions among the world-wide proliferating variety of ecclesiastical denominations, in the sense that they exclusively claim to "*bond*" individuals with the Creator. That is the true meaning of the word "*religion*", *religio*; it is the bringing together the two sides of a wound, or torn garment. Buddhism has no God; and Hinduism has a proliferation of gods. Only Judaism, Christianity and Islam claim to provide that personal relationship, but in God's sight they have prostituted themselves for institutional gain by introducing rabbis, pastors and popes between individuals and God. As the world reaches its end, God's fury with their whoring betrayal is directed at this pluralistic Babylonian monstrosity, the Biblically classified "*Mother of Prostitutes*".

In the sixth century BC, rabbinical Judaism's isolation of Jehovah and replacement of Moses' *Pentateuch* by the Babylonian-influenced *Torah* and *Traditions*, and subsequent rabbinical rejection and crucifixion of Jesus as Messiah, introduced a new first century AD persecution of Christians by Jews as well as Romans. When institutional *Christendom* of Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy, together with its sister institutional religion, *Judaism*, lost their Jehovah-centred integrity by the seventh century AD, the "Prophet" Mohammed, Abraham-descended Arabian offspring religion from Ishmael and Esau, launched a unifying crusade: a new God-centred *Islam* under the name of "*Allah*", an alternative name for God derived from the Jewish *El Elohe*. But, in time, Islam too became corrupted by its professional religionists into a militant institution which was rebellious to God's commands. The "*Mystery Babylon: Mother of Harlots*" of the last days of the world, therefore,

in God's view is ALL the Biblically-claiming but rebellious Jehovah—excluding institutional religions—*Judaism, Christendom and Islam*

### *Israel and Arabs*

From the Biblical standpoint there is one continuous significant element in the secular history of the nations as the old world draws to a close: the future of the perennially conflicting two Biblical "*great nations*" of divine promise, the descendants of Abraham's second-born Israel through Sarah; and his first-born Ishmael through his Egyptian maid. The central focus of that divinely foretold historic conflict of descendants is Mesopotamia, or the Middle East, and the epicentre is the "*Jerusalem/Babylon axis*", some elements of which have been described earlier. *In the last days of the old world the kingdom of God is centred in Jerusalem; the kingdom of Satan in Babylon.*

God has made clear it is His purpose that the descendants of Abraham—not just the Children of Israel—should be His chosen vehicle of divine enlightenment; and, when the Israelis failed, the descendants of Abraham through Ishmael. Time after time in the *Old Testament* God used the Amalekites, the Ammonites, the Midianites, the Moabites, as instruments of His purposes when Israel was disobedient or rebellious. Later Christians, sharing Abraham's faith, would be His alternative instrument to create "*the kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven*". It is an awesome, well-nigh incredible relationship, purpose, destiny and vision. It spans four thousand years of pulsating, turbulent events involving both lines of Abraham's physical descendants—the tribes of Israel and Ishmael—and his spiritual progeny, the Christian Church.

This remarkable relationship can be seen in the Jewish struggles to be "*the light to enlighten all nations*" of their divine destiny until their rebellion and Dispersion by Assyria, Babylon and Rome; in the two thousand years of the Christian's attempts to do likewise; and in the fourteen hundred years of the Arabs' fanatical devotion to the tenets of Islam. It is what lies behind the Jewish return to their "*Promised Land*" as the claimed "*God's chosen people*" in the twentieth century. It is what fuels the passions of the Islamic Arab nations in

their claims to Canaan/Palestine, Jerusalem, and the current, implacable, world-threatening conflagration in the Middle East.

In the time since Abraham, the Jews forgot, or have casuistically ignored, God's promise to Abraham's elder step-son, Ishmael, that "*I will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation*".<sup>95</sup> The "*Twelve Tribes of Ishmael*", according to God's promise, would also be a "*great nation*" as well as "*the Twelve Tribes of Israel*". And so "*the Arab nation*" came into being alongside the Jews in the region of Canaan/Israel, and became natural tribal enemies long before they chose the Islamic teachings of their Prophet Mohammed which would increase the mutual enmities.

### ***Israel/Ishmael Conflict***

As the twenty-first century opens the threat to world peace is not the religious and political ambitions of the *Western Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox* or *post-Luther Reformed Churchoids* of the past two thousand years, but the resurgent threat of the third, *Islamic Churchoid*. (The dictionary definition of "*churchoid*" is "*resembling a church*" and has been applied to the various religious institutional and denominational organisations differing from the original Church definition of a "*spiritual organism*" of Jesus and the Apostle Paul.)

Historically, the above religious organisations departed from the *Law of Moses*: negatively, the *Remnant Jewish* exiles returning from Babylon to Judah brought with them the rabbinical Judaism denounced by Jesus; and positively, in his rejection of Judaism Jesus initiated his *Church of the Messiah*; the Arabian descendants of Esau through Mohammed brought into the world the militant and murderous *Islam* because of his accusatory "*disobedience*" of both Judaism and Christianity. Between these three revelatory off-shoots of Abraham they created what the Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard in the nineteenth century termed the hydra-headed "*monstrous mental delusion*" of the three historically counterfeit Churchoids.

The militant Islam of the "*dark ages*" died away with the dissolution of the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires and was no

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<sup>95</sup>Genesis 21:13-18

<sup>94</sup>Revelation 1:20, 17:5,7

longer a threat of any kind, religious or political, at the start of the twentieth century. So, what makes religious/political Islam a threat in 2008? At the beginning of the twentieth century Winston Churchill wrote about Islam in his book *The River War*:

*"No stronger retrograde force exists in the world. Far from being moribund Mohammedanism is a militant and proselytizing faith. It has already spread throughout Central Africa, raising fearless warriors at every step, and were it not that Christianity is sheltered in the strong arms of science . . . the civilization of modern Europe might fall, as fell the civilization of ancient Rome."*

Some thirty years later Hilaire Belloc wrote in *The Great Heresies*:

*"Will not perhaps the temporal power of Islam return and with it the menace of an armed Muhammedan world which will shake the dominion of Europeans—still nominally Christian—and reappear again as the prime enemy of our civilization? . . . Since we have here a very great religion, physically paralyzed, but morally intensely alive, we are in the presence of an unstable equilibrium"*.

During the thousand years following Mohammed's death the Islamic religion spread from Arabia westwards to the Atlantic, and eastwards to the Pacific, in over thirty countries, in response to a failed Judaism and a failing Christendom. The unique emphasis in Islam of integrating the mundane with the spiritual, the observance of practice over correctness of doctrine, meant that the decisions of commitment were not made in terms of religious doctrine and political theory, Church and State, but between unquestioningly obeying God's (Allah's) way and rejecting every other way as wrong.

In fact, the classical Islamic languages had no equivalent expression for "*religion*" and "*politics*", so there were no internal national "*frameworks*" such as Church and State, with their religious and political variables, to create tensions or rivalries within the parent *Churchoid*. In Islamic military and imperial expansion all political and religious allegiance was summed up and enforced in the phrase, "*Convert to Islam, or Die*".

The worldwide expansion of Islam peaked between the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries due to a combination of the devastating catastrophe of the "*Black Death*" plague in both East and

West nations, together with the limitations of the five thousand year-old collapsing agrarian system in the face of new sources of wealth, new sea-faring technology, new political and economic systems emerging in Europe and the Americas. The clash of agrarian, economic, political and religious systems produced unprecedented and increasing tensions on the Islamic Empire as the rural, tribal and Koran-based systems were not equipped to deal with the titanic economic and political convulsions taking place in the West.

There were attempts within the Islamic nations to imitate the commercial West while still observing the teachings of *Islam*, but these were mostly superficial military and sea-faring adventures by ambitious *caliphs* and *sultans*, which lacked an adequate economic and political infrastructure to counter the rapidly expanding international commerce of the West. This Islamic decline accelerated until the nineteenth and twentieth centuries when, as we will see later, oil was discovered in predominantly Moslem States in the Middle East and created new opportunities for *Islam*.

At the end of the nineteenth century ancient Israel—later called Judea and Palestine—was a barren, inhospitable country, much of it desert, inhabited mostly by Arab peasants ruled by the Ottoman Turks, who were also Islamic, and had only about 24,000 resident Jews. But the twentieth century was to radically transform not only Palestine and the “*Jewish Question*” but also the whole Mesopotamian “*Fertile Crescent*” region, and bring it once again into central geopolitical importance.

The “*Industrial Revolution*” in the West in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries brought the Middle Eastern region into significant commercial and political focus with the creation of the Suez Canal, and the modernization of methods of transport—ocean-going liners, automobiles and airplanes. Oil became the “*black gold*”, and there was a frenzy of exploration. The greatest concentration of the coveted liquid was found in Mesopotamia—in Iran, in 1908; in Iraq, in 1927; in Bahrein, in 1932; in Saudi Arabia, in 1938.

At the same time, the emerging conflict between “*Zionist*” Jewish religious and political groups in Europe culminated in the

demand for their own State of Israel, backed by leading world powers for their own financial and political interests, and was intensified and made infinitely more complex because of their international essential needs of oil supplies from the Islam dominated region.

At the end of World War II the politicized “Zionist” Jews of Europe—a mostly secular combination of Western Europe capitalists and Eastern Europe socialists - launched terrorist raids against the reluctant British occupiers of Palestine; and, after Britain withdrew its mandate, the United Nations Organization agreed to the partition of Palestine into an Arab State and Jewish State. This was acceptable to neither, and the seeds of the future Biblical Armageddon were sown because of irreconcilable institutional religious and political interests. The Jews had the Promised Land and no oil; the Arabs had enormous supplies of oil and territory, but no Jerusalem and Palestine. In 1959, the oil-producing nations formed the “*Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)*” and, following a meeting in Baghdad, accepted a proposal by Iraq to use their newly acquired powers of refusing oil to intimidate the world.

In 1945 the Arabs formed the “*Arab League*”, and oil was included in the constitutional terms of reference. With the post-war rise to power of President Nasser of Egypt, oil was moved to a central place in Arab policy - even although Egypt had none of its own. In his book, *The Philosophy of a Revolution*, published in 1954, Nasser described oil as one of the three components of Arab power: “*Petroleum is the vital nerve of civilization, without which all its means cannot possibly exist.*”

But it was against the newly occupied “*Zionist Israel*” that the Arabs directed their newly found, oil-based, economic coercion. In 1948 they imposed what was described as “*a boycott*”, but was really blatant blackmail, against any company in the world trading with Israel or making any investment in the country; if they did, then they were banned from doing any business with any Arab State—no oil deals, no investments, no exports, no imports, no construction contracts, nothing was excluded. It was a crippling economic blow

at Israel, as well as a serious limitation on many major multinational corporations, unless they were large enough or important enough—such as arms manufacturers, or the rapidly expanding telecommunication firms - for them to disregard the Arab blackmail. The blackmailing move was not successful at the time, but the pattern was clear—oil-producing Arabs were in a position to blackmail the world's great nations unless they agreed to Arab terms. That threat still exists, as can be seen in the current, 2008, extortionate rising of the price of oil from £10 a barrel to £130 and going higher, and only disagreements among the Arabs themselves have blunted the edge of this formidable intimidatory weapon.

The humiliating defeat of the Arabs in the 1969 *Six Days' War*, and the increasing power and prominence of Israel in the Middle East region and the world, was a constant goad to the seventeen Islamic nations surrounding Israel. Their defeat, too, had exposed them to manipulation by the international superpowers for their own ends, and increased the Arab dependence on one or other of them—yet another humiliation. Their own obvious national weaknesses, despite the unifying religion of Islam, combined with the blatant greed and corruption in their various societies, also embarrassed them before the world.

These factors contributed towards the growth of Islamic militancy in the 1980s. If the Arab armies were inadequate, and their politics a myth, then at least, they thought, they could take pride in the theology and culture of their Islamic heritage—and the formidable military arsenals their great oil wealth helped them to purchase. When Ayatollah Komeini emerged from his exile in France in 1979 to overthrow the Shah of Iran and declare an Islamic Republic he was greeted with hysterical fervour not only by Iranians but by the whole Arab world—especially when he defied the powerful United States of America as "*the Great Satan*".

In neighbouring Iraq another revolution was also taking place, with Saddam Hussein ruthlessly consolidating his own Ba'ath Party power—a combination of Nazism and Stalinism—and with declared ambitions not only to be ruler of a powerful new Iraq but also a leader of all the Arab peoples. In a speech delivered in 1979, after he

had consolidated his grip on dictatorial power, he said:

*“The glory of Arabs stems from the glory of Iraq. Throughout history, whenever Iraq became mighty and flourished, so did the Arab Nation. This is why we are striving to make Iraq mighty, formidable, and developed, and why we shall spare nothing to improve welfare and to brighten the glory of Iraqis.”*

For eight years both Muslim Iraq and Iran countries fought a war for supremacy of their different political/religious ideologies in the Middle East, both their huge armies supplied by the most modern military equipment from the West and the Soviet Union, with Iraq finally defeating Iran. The United States was the major supplier to the Middle East countries, selling them \$30.7 billion worth of weapons from 1987 to 1990. The Middle East was then reckoned to be the largest arms market in the Third World, accounting for more than half of all arms purchases in the previous decade.

### ***Militant Islam Reborn***

Islam had its first sectarian division within twenty years of Mohammed’s death, the effects of which are still evident in Arab rivalries in the twenty-first century. It was basically political but had its roots in religion; that is, two followers of Mohammed contended for succession to the leadership, and when one of them agreed to submit his claims to arbitration a number of his followers promptly broke away in turn, saying that he should have appealed to the “*Book of God*”.

This was the origin of the most important sectarian divisions in Islam—*Sunni*, *Shia* and *Khawarij*—over different views of leadership and militancy. The *Sunnis*, meaning “*Path*” or “*Traditions*”—by far the largest—believed that the Caliphate was an elective office and must be held by a member of the *Qurayah* tribe; the *Shi’ites*, meaning “*Shiah*” or “*the party of Ali*”, regarded the descendants of Ali as the only rightful Caliphs, which was an Allah-bestowed office and not subject to human appointment. The third sect, the *Khawarij*—the smallest—believed that the Caliphate was open to believers fitted for the office. In the twentieth century, when the Middle East was being divided among contending Western powers, Saudi Arabia had

been given what turned out to be the most productive and wealthiest oil region, despite the royal family being aligned with the extremist *Wahabhi* sect of Islam. Complicating all this, according to an early tradition Mohammed had said that Islam would eventually be divided into 73 sects, of which 72 would perish and only one remain.

After the discovery of oil, the two most important developments of the twentieth century in the Middle East were the emergence of the two fanatically ambitious leaders, Ayatollah Khomeini of Iran, and Saddam Hussein of Iraq. The former launched a militant Islamic fundamentalism, and the latter launched the dream of a new Babylonian world empire. Between them, unconsciously, they prepared the world for the Biblical Armageddon. The problem for the fanatically fundamentalist Islamists of Iran in the turbulent Middle East was that while they were passionate advocates of Islam they were not Arabs. But Saddam Hussein was not only an Arab, he was a man consumed with a vast ambition to restore the glory and power of the ancient Babylonian Empire. After oil was discovered in Iraq in the early part of the twentieth century, with the oil revenues and rise to power of Saddam Hussein, by 1990 Iraq was reckoned militarily, and with the world's fifth largest oil supply, to be the fifth most powerful nation in the world. The internal religious problem of both nations, complicating their opposing political ambitions, was the rival claims of dominating sects within Islam and even within their own countries. In 1979, Ayatollah Khomeini, a leading *Shi'ite*, after his victorious expulsion of the Shah, announced an Islamic campaign to purify Islam, to make Iran an Islamic State governed by Islamic *Law and Traditions*; then launched a religious crusade against the world of infidels and the "*Great Satan, America*".

About the same time, a new type of Arab had emerged, young Islamic extremists inspired by the successful Iranian revolution, who no longer respected or feared the quarreling old oligarchic sheikhs whom they saw as betrayers of their religion, cultures and countries. With money available from both renegade Arab and Soviet sources they formed groups whose main goal was to drive the Jews out of Palestine by whatever means were necessary. They conducted armed

raids against Israel in a rising crescendo of terror. In response, the Israeli government stepped up their reprisals, which still continue. Seeking justification and support for their claims and actions the extreme groups of Arabs—led overtly or covertly by Iran, Iraq, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Algeria and Libya financed an increasing number of terrorist activities in the West. This threat has grown in seriousness as the oil-financed military capability of the Arab nations expands exponentially.

With the twentieth century combination of oil and its vast profits, plus religious extremism, together with *Zionist* political militancy and subsequent Jewish immigration to Israel/Palestine, there has emerged a new aggressive Arab on the world scene. While Jewish nationalistic *Zionism* unwittingly contributed towards forging a cohesive Arab identity, a paradoxical spin-off from the oil wealth drove an envious and avaricious wedge between the have and have-not Arab nations. A small country like Kuwait had oil reserves of 90 billion barrels, while a large country like Egypt had none; also, some of Kuwait's huge reserves were actually under Iraqi territory, and Kuwait had access to the sea and Iraq did not. Iraq had the greatest oil resources after Saudi Arabia, but the vast reserves lay under the deserts shared with Kuwait. Saudi Arabia had the largest immediate deposits of oil, but was ruled despotically by the extremist royal family of the *Wahabhi* sect of Islam. At the beginning of the new millennium, while the Western superpowers were dependent to a great extent on Middle Eastern oil, the two great Asian nations of China and India, with their resurgent and booming economies were posing a monumental threat in their rapidly expanding demands for oil and political influence to fuel their confident ambitions.

Currently, while the world's leading powers fight off the hovering specter of financial collapse, and frantically engage in a deadly competition of out-selling and out-buying each other in oil sales and armaments purchases, the Middle East Muslim nations are leading buyers of all military weaponry, and the great powers of West and East are supplying the Arab nations with everything—including—surreptitiously!—nuclear expertise. The US Foreign Relations

Committee has compiled a list of corporations from 25 countries that sold Iraq materials and equipment or technology for nuclear, biological, and poison gas weapons.

Meanwhile, during his ruling tenure, Saddam Hussein had used a huge proportion of the oil revenues of Iraq to rebuild ancient Babylon. With typical flamboyance he began the rebuilding during the time of war with Iran—in order, he said, to inspire the Iraqi people. By the time of his invasion of Kuwait he had rebuilt a large part of Nebuchadnezzar's fabled city of golden brick. In two-and-a-half years his builders baked and set more than sixty million bricks to reconstruct the start of the architectural glory that was ancient Babylon, some of which was destroyed and much of the remainder damaged during the anti-Saddam war in Iraq.

William Blake, writing of Milton's shortcomings in his *Paradise Lost*, said, "*The reason Milton wrote in fetters when he wrote of Angels and God, and at liberty when of Devils and Hell, is because he was a true Poet and of the Devil's Party without knowing it*". When the three great revealed religions of Judaism, Christendom and Islam, discuss ecumenicism they are "*the Devil's Party without knowing it*".

Currently, despite a socially-fractured British society unable to resolve its internal problems Christianity's leading Anglican Churchoid is convulsed and unable to resolve their fundamental problems of women priests and homosexuality; the Islamic Churchoid is split between fundamentalism and modernism; and Israel's Zionist leaders prepare to launch a different holocaust of nuclear strikes against Iran. Meanwhile the three Churchoids, like the United Nations and Tony Blair, spend fruitless months and years discussing peace and brotherhood while "*fettered*" to discuss the spiritual issues which are the real solutions to a doomed world.

With the collapse of atheistic Marxism, what is emerging on the world scene is the rise of a greater threat than politicized Roman Catholicism or pseudo-religious Marxism, a "*Devil's Party*": a religious ecumenicism of a bland form of Islam, Israel's pseudo-Biblical ambitions for a restored "*Promised Land*"; and the late Pope's ambitions for an authoritarian Roman Churchoid in Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America; all under the

umbrella of a vaguely defined democratic ideal. This has taken a new twist in the twenty-first century with the former British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, launching his "*Faith Foundation*" to bring all the religions of the world together under one umbrella. The new Pope Benedict, the European Union and the United States are eagerly bringing a "*religious coalition of the willing*" linking Islam with Christendom and Judaism.

### ***A "Third Revolution"***

The Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard, said that there are two kinds of revolution: the really passionate revolution, which tears everything down; and the other, bloodless, kind, which leaves everything standing but "*cunningly emptied of significance*". But the post-Marxist, 20th century prophet, Alexandr Solzhenytsin, has added another, third, kind of revolution: "*. . . a moral revolution . . . because of a change to inward development . . .*" He went on to quote Dostoevski in his *Diary Of A Writer*: "*. . . when, with the passage of time, a nation's spiritual strength is sapped, that nation falls, together with all its civil statutes and ideals.*"

Christopher Dawson, in his book, *The Gods of Revolution*, writing on the subject of the English, French and American Revolutions, has a chapter entitled, "*The Birth of Democracy*", in which he says:

*". . . this (European Enlightenment) movement was not originally a democratic one and it was only in the second half of the eighteenth century that the democratic ideal was clearly formulated".*

Then, going on to speak of Jean Jacques Rousseau as the real force behind the French revolution, and not the usually accepted Voltaire or Diderot, he declares:

*"It was he who first fired men's minds with the ideal of democracy not as a mere system of government but as a new way of life, a vision of social justice and fraternity which is nothing else than the kingdom of God on earth. It is true that Rousseau himself was not a revolutionary in the ordinary sense. The revolution that he preached was not a political or economic one but a spiritual one . . ." (my emphases)*

The historic institutional Christian Church at that time, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, was in no spiritual state to deal with

the turbulent variety of social and political issues being raised, and it was left to the Jacobin Society, led by the notorious Robespierre, to emerge as the “*spiritual*” voice of France following on the Revolution. In time Robespierre would become the embodiment of despotism and terrorism which destroyed the ideals of the French Revolution, but at first he—and not Miraneau, Marat or Danton—regarded the Revolution as essentially a moral and religious reformation. At the launching of the radical religious movement “*The Worship of the Supreme Being*” in Paris, on June 8, 1794, it was said that Robespierre “*officiated as a kind of priest.*”

Meanwhile, the existing institutional Christian churches were increasingly in disarray, and “*popular religion*” discredited, so the rapidly developing “*Secular Democracy*” of the Western nations became less and less interested in spiritual values and possible solutions, and simply used the religious representatives as impotent tokens at ceremonial occasions. As modern political Democracy was being born, historical Christianity was entering terminal irrelevancy.

Writing of this period in his book, *Evolution and Revolution*, W.F.Wertheim said:

*“Evidently, in order to attract broad masses, a revolution needed elements of popular cultism that had been hitherto associated with religion. In later revolutions there were similar experiences. One could quote in this connection the Lenin cult in the Mausoleum on the Red Square in Moscow, or certain facets of the Mao cult in China . . .*

*“Evidently, the kind of fervour associated with religious movements, seeks expression in familiar forms even though the prevalent revolutionary ideology is a-religious or anti-religious, as for example, the branding of religion by classical Marxists, as ‘opiate of the people’. Each revolutionary movement, though rational in its means and immediate political aims, represents, at the same time, the dream of a fully renewed social order, and this dream may find its expression in quasi-religious forms . . .”* ( my emphasis)

Actually, Marx did not say that religion *per se* was the “*opiate of the masses*” but “*religious systems*”—an important distinction. As a China-watching journalist based in Hong Kong I reported the new page of history being written in China, and I wondered if an

authoritarian godless regime such as Marxism in China in the twentieth century would provide a similar critical flashpoint of confrontation and purging which stimulated and perfected the vision of the first century Christians when faced with a violently antagonistic Roman Empire; or those of the 19th century when faced with the combined tyrannies of monarchic State and ecclesiastic Churchoid? There was nothing comparable in scale or potential in any other country in the world. Mao Zedong's millions of Marxist followers believed and practiced daily, with commitment and passion, "*The Thoughts of Chairman Mao*" on a scale rarely attained except by a very few dedicated Christians to their Scriptures.

It was this historical revolutionary process which fascinated in its appalling social costs which are still being paid, and in its horrifying yet stimulating challenges which are still being overcome by the Christians in China. They reeled under the onslaught against their faith; they were imprisoned; they were tortured; they were socially ostracized; they were disenfranchised; they were discriminated against in employment and education and official benefits; they were put to prison and to death. All the things that happened to their Master on earth, and which he said all true followers would also experience.

A handful of these disenfranchised Chinese Christians continued to believe, and they emerged spiritually triumphant after fifty years with more committed members in the Chinese *Church of the Messiah* than the pathetically programmed members of the Chinese Communist Party of Mao Zedong. There are now not only an estimated hundred million disenfranchised but dynamic Christians inside China, there are a million of them committed to furthering their spiritual beliefs across China, and there are one hundred thousand of them dedicated to evangelising ninety percent of the non-Christian world as they preach their way from Paris and Peking "*Back to Jerusalem.*"

While the Western world is becoming progressively more secular and even atheistic the rest of the world is becoming more dynamically Christian. The American scholar, Philip Jenkins, has recorded in his recently published book, *The Next Christendom: The*

*Coming of Global Christianity*, has stated that the Christian prophets of doom are ignorant of the explosive growth of Christianity outside Western Europe:

*“In 1990, for instance, there were approximately ten million Christians in Africa; by 2000 there were 300 million; by 2025 conservative estimates are that the number will rise to 633 million. Those same estimates put the number of Christians in Latin America in 2025 at 640 million, and in Asia at 460 million . . . By the middle of this century there will be three billion Christians in the world—one and a half times the number of Muslims.”* (my emphasis)

Solzhenitsyn said that there is a third type of revolution, in addition to the two mentioned by Kierkegaard, a spiritual revolution—the turning from the material-oriented to the spiritual-directed, from deliberate self-will to conscious God-will—which has been described by him, in *From Under The Rubble*, as “*a moral change . . . to inward development*” and continued:

*“This turn toward inward development, the triumph of inwardness over outwardness, if it ever happens, will be a great turning point in the history of mankind, comparable to the transition from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance. There will be a complete change not only in the direction of our interests and activities but in the very nature of human beings (a change from spiritual dispersal to spiritual concentration), and a greater change still in the character of human societies. If in some places this is destined to be a revolutionary process, these revolutions will not be like the earlier ones—physical, bloody and never beneficial—but will be moral revolutions, requiring both courage and sacrifice, though not cruelty—a new phenomenon in human history, of which little is yet known and which as yet no one has prophetically described in clear and precise forms . . .”*<sup>96</sup> (my emphasis)

### ***Islamic Expansion***

What is of intense interest to Christian evangelical Bible scholars, which was said to contribute to the right-wing conservative vote in the US 2004 Presidential election, and is the basis of President George W Bush’s personal commitment to support for the Zionist government. This, despite former Prime Minister Tony Blair’s

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<sup>96</sup> Oxford University Press (2002)

expressed commitment for a more pro-Islam policy in the increasing polarisation of confrontation between the Zionist aspirations for Israel, and the neighbouring Islamic nations seeking Jerusalem as “*their*” capital.

This was the region and issue defined by the Prophet Daniel’s prophecies—the Mediterranean coastal nations, and the world’s geopolitical heart-land with Babylon as its centre. Nineteen Moslem nations stretch from the Atlantic to Iran; and at least seven more are in the former Soviet Union from there to the China Sea. As Marxism fades, and the Soviet Union has been divided among several Moslem-dominated states, fundamentalist Islam is said to be planning to take over—especially in nuclear and oil-rich Central Asia—with a view to ultimate world domination.

This is no wild utopian myth as was evident from the serious convictions of Winston Churchill and Hilaire Belloc mentioned earlier. Also, more recently, one Islamic historian, Bat Ye’or, has written of Europe becoming a possible “*Eurabia*”:

*“Europe has evolved from a Judean-Christian civilization with important post-Enlightenment secular elements to (become) a secular Muslim transitional society with its Judeo-Christian mores rapidly disappearing”.*

In the mid-twentieth century there were only a handful of mosques throughout Europe, but it is now reckoned that every leading country has around a thousand mosques, France and Germany have around five or six thousand, and in Britain alone there are a thousand mosques and over three hundred Muslim organisations of one kind or another. In British mosques some clerics openly discuss “*bringing the West to its knees*” through infiltration of its social structures. Abdullah Faisal, an imam in North London, was jailed for nine years in 2003 for racial incitement and soliciting murder by quoting such declarations from the *Koran* as:

*“When the sacred months are over slay the idolaters wherever you find them. Arrest them, besiege them and lie in ambush everywhere for them”* (Surah 9.4)

After the July, 2005, bombings in London a *YouGov* poll found six percent of British Muslims considered the attacks were justified; that

is an estimated 100,000 Muslims. One in four of all British Muslims expressed some measure of understanding for what drove the bombers to commit the acts. Nearly one in five (18 per cent) said they had no primary loyalty to Britain, giving as their reason that “*western society is decadent and immoral*”.

In an article in the *The Spectator*<sup>97</sup>, Dr Patrick Sookdheo, the director of the *Institute for the Study of Islam and Christianity*, stated:

*“The Muslim community (in Britain) now inhabits principally the urban centres of England as well as some part of Scotland and Wales. It forms a spine running down the centre of England from Bradford to London, with the ribs extending east and west. It is said that within 10 to 15 years most British cities in these areas will have Muslim-majority populations, and will be under local Islamic political control, with the Muslim community living under Sharia . . . For some time now the British government has been quoting a figure of 1.6 million for the Muslim population. Muslims themselves claim around 3 million, and this is likely to be far nearer to the truth. The growth of the Muslim community comes from their high birth rate, primary immigration, and asylum seekers both official and unofficial . . .”*

In the United States recently, the political journal *Commentary*, carried a prominent article entitled “*The Islamization of Europe*”<sup>94</sup> written by a prominent British political analyst, David Pryce Jones, in which he summarized;

*“In the meantime, a battle of a different but no less decisive kind has been taking place within Europe, where some twenty million Muslims have settled. Thanks on one hand to their high birth-rate, and on the other hand to the sub-replacement birth-rate that has become the norm among other Europeans, the demographic facts alone suggest a continent ripe for a determined effort to advance the Islamist agenda . . .*

*“Those in Europe who have striven in ways great and small to extend special privileges to Muslims, while subtly deprecating their own national identity and culture, have indeed opened the way to Islamist separation and Islamist agitation. They have thereby hastened the very clash of civilizations that they (or some of them) foolishly claim they are avoiding. If Bassam Tibi is correct in stating ‘either Islam gets Europeanized or Europe gets Islamicized’ powerful forces are at work to foreclose the question”.*

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<sup>97</sup> 30 July 2005

<sup>98</sup> December 2004

There is alarm also in Russia where it is estimated that the Muslim population is increasing rapidly, now 23 million in a total population of 144 million. In addition to the 3 to 4 million immigrants from former Soviet states, such as Azeris and Kazakhs, there are reported increasing numbers of intelligent but disillusioned Russian youth who are converting to Islam. In 1991 Russia had around 500 mosques, but a recent figure is given as 5,000 mosques, helped by funds from the Middle East.

Meanwhile, the conflict with an emerging militant Islam in al-Qaeda has been accelerated by the belligerent statement by Osama bin Laden's second-in-command, Ayman al-Zawahiri, declaring in a world-wide media broadcast:

*"O nations of the crusade alliance, we proposed that you at least stop your aggression against the Muslims. The lion of Islam, mujahid Sheikh Osama bin Laden, may God preserve him, offered you a truce until you leave the land of Islam. Has Sheikh Osama bin Laden not informed you that you will not dream of security until we live it in reality in Palestine and before all infidel armies leave the land of (the prophet) Muhammad, may peace be upon him. You, however, shed rivers of blood in our land so we exploded volcanoes of anger in your land".*

With all the centralising of pro-Islam and pro-Israel conflict in regional and international politics one of the most intriguing of Biblical prophecies is the Prophet Daniel's revelations of the "last days of the world" concentrated in a Babylon-Jerusalem axis. The central country and character of Daniel's prophesied "last days" are Babylon/Iraq and its Nebuchadnezzar-like dictatorial world ruler confronting an implacable Israel.

Sodom and Gomorrah were completely annihilated but that was never the case with Babylon. It continued to exist under Alexander and afterwards the Syrian kings. Peter preached there and wrote his first *Epistle* from Babylon. There was a Christian church there in the third century AD, and a city of 10,000 people until fairly recently. At no time was there ever destruction described by Isaiah:

*"See, the day of the Lord is coming — a cruel day, with wrath and fierce anger — to make the land desolate and destroy the sinners within it . . . Babylon, the jewel of kingdoms, the glory of the Babylonians' pride, will be*

*overthrown by God like Sodom and Gomorrah. She will never be inhabited or lived in through all generations . . .*<sup>99</sup>

It raises the intriguing question for conservative evangelicals in the West's *Churchoids*: Are these signs of the polarisation of the Biblically prophesied "*end times*" of the world, with the nations of the world gathering in confrontation in the Mesopotamian/Mediterranean region over the issue of Israel/Palestine under the politically trumpeted banner of "*Freedom and Democracy*"? And will Israel's enemies be Islam and its supporters led by a nemesis like the late Saddam Hussein or the current Osama bin Laden—or someone just like them?

Chapter -16 -  
will be available on this site on the 1st May 2009

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<sup>99</sup> Isaiah 13:9-19