

# NEW BABYLON RISING

RON RHODES



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## **New Babylon Rising**

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# New Babylon and End-Times Chronology

I enjoy taking complex subjects and making them simpler for people to understand. I've tried to do this in all my previous books on Bible prophecy, and that is my goal for this book.

Toward that end, on the pages that follow I have presented a chronology of the end times that will help you understand precisely where New Babylon—in both its *religious* and *commercial* aspects—fits into God's overall plan. I also want to show how various other prophetic events relate to the emergence of New Babylon. That will enable you to more easily grasp how all the pieces of the prophetic puzzle fit together.

In this chapter I provide a list of 50 short and easy-to-understand summaries of specific prophetic events arranged in what I believe to be a logical and coherent chronology of the end times. That may sound like a lot, but don't be alarmed. All the points are arranged under topical headings, and they flow together quite nicely. Don't assume you need to memorize all this. For now, these summaries are designed to give you a feel for the big picture before you learn

more about the specific details. This should help make the entire book smooth sailing for you!

*Here's a tidbit of advice to keep mind:* If you ever feel the need to, you can always revisit chapter 1 and skim this big-picture survey. The fact that it appears in the first chapter of this book makes this a convenient spot for you to return to.

Let's begin!

## **Prior to the Tribulation Period**

1—*God Has a Divine Purpose for the Current Age.* Jesus gave us insights on the course of the present age in some of His prophetic parables. For example, in the parable of the great feast, Jesus taught that God offered the kingdom to Israel, but the Jews were indifferent to the offer. God's message of the kingdom is now for all people, including the Gentiles. In the parable of the wheat and weeds, Jesus taught that true and false believers will coexist together until a future time of judgment when they will be separated. In the parable of the mustard seed, Jesus taught that the kingdom started small and will grow immeasurably large.

2—*Israel Has Been Reborn as a Nation.* Israel's rebirth as a nation in 1948 was a direct fulfillment of biblical prophecies (Ezekiel 36:10,24; 37). Since then, just as prophesied, the Jews have been streaming back to the Holy Land from virtually every nation in the world. God has future plans for Israel! We recall that while Jerusalem is the most oft-mentioned city in the book of Revelation, Babylon is the second-most-mentioned city. Moreover, while Jerusalem is portrayed as God's city (Revelation 21:2-3), Babylon is portrayed as a demonic city (18:2).

3—*Apostasy Will Increase as We Near the End Times.* First Timothy 4:1 states, "The Holy Spirit tells us clearly that in the last times some will turn away from the true faith; they will follow deceptive spirits and teachings that come from demons" (see also 2 Timothy

3:1-8; 4:3). Apostasy will rise to a fever pitch during the tribulation period (Matthew 24:9-12). This will serve to set the stage for the rise of religious New Babylon during the first half of the tribulation (Revelation 17).

*4—Apparently the United States Will Weaken as We Near the End Times.* The United States of Europe—the revived Roman Empire that will be headed by the antichrist—will initially be the political and economic superpower during the tribulation (see Daniel 2; 7). The antichrist will later shift his headquarters to Jerusalem, and then to commercial New Babylon, which will serve as the economic powerhouse of the end times. It seems logical to infer that for all this to happen, the United States must progressively weaken and may even become an ally of the antichrist’s global empire (Daniel 2; 7).

### **The Rapture and the Resulting Events that Follow**

*5—The Church Will Be Raptured Prior to the Tribulation Period.* The rapture is that glorious event in which the dead in Christ will be resurrected, living Christians will be instantly translated into their glorified bodies, and both groups will be caught up to meet Christ in the air and taken to heaven (John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:51-54; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17). The rapture apparently occurs prior to the tribulation period. I say this because (1) no New Testament or Old Testament passage on the tribulation period mentions the church; (2) Jesus promised to keep the church from the “hour of trial” coming upon the whole world (Revelation 3:10); (3) Jesus promised to deliver believers from the wrath to come (1 Thessalonians 1:9); (4) the church is not appointed to wrath (Romans 5:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:9); and (5) God typically delivers His people before His judgment falls (see 2 Peter 2:5-9). With no Christians left on earth, it will be all the easier for the false religious system associated with New Babylon to globally rise to power.

6—*As a Result of the Rapture, the Divine Restrainer Will Be Removed.* Second Thessalonians 2:6 tells us that the antichrist is presently being restrained, and only when the restrainer is removed will the antichrist be revealed. Only one person—the omnipotent God—is powerful enough to restrain Satan, who energizes the antichrist (2 Thessalonians 2:9; 1 John 4:4). We can logically infer that the restrainer is the Holy Spirit, who indwells every believer in the church. When the church is raptured from earth prior to the tribulation, the restrainer (the Holy Spirit) will also be removed from the earth. The antichrist will then manifest himself soon after (see 2 Thessalonians 2:6-7), and religious New Babylon will arise (Revelation 17).

7—*As a Result of the Rapture, Christians Are Glorified in Heaven.* First Thessalonians 4:13-17 affirms that when the rapture occurs, the dead in Christ will be resurrected and living Christians will be transformed into their glorified bodies. All this will happen instantly. First Corinthians 15:42-43 tells us that the bodies of both groups of believers will be imperishable, glorious, and powerful. Whereas our present bodies are like tents that can be easily knocked down, our glorified bodies will be like sturdy buildings (2 Corinthians 5:1-4). Christians in heaven will be completely unaffected by New Babylon. We will, however, cheer in heaven when New Babylon is finally destroyed at the end of the tribulation (Revelation 18:20).

## **The Church with Christ in Heaven**

8—*Sometime Following the Rapture, Christians Will Face Their Lord at the Judgment Seat of Christ in Heaven.* All believers will one day stand before the judgment seat of Christ (Greek, the *bema*) (Romans 14:8-10; 1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 9:24-27). At that time, each believer's life will be examined with regard to deeds done while on Earth. Personal motives and intents of the heart will also be weighed.

Note that this judgment has nothing to do with whether Christians will remain saved. Those who have placed faith in Christ are forever saved, and nothing threatens that (John 10:28-30; Romans 8:29-39; Ephesians 1:13; 4:30; Hebrews 7:25). This judgment rather has to do with the reception or loss of rewards for how one has lived on Earth since becoming a Christian (1 Corinthians 3:12-15). Some years after Christians are judged in heaven, New Babylon will face catastrophic judgment on Earth at the end of the tribulation.

9—*The Marriage Between the Church and the Lamb Takes Place in Heaven.* Jesus Christ, the Lamb, frequently referred to Himself as a bridegroom (Matthew 9:15; 22:2-14; 25:1-13; Mark 2:19-20; Luke 5:34-35; 14:15-24; John 3:29). The church is regarded as a virgin bride awaiting the coming of her heavenly bridegroom (2 Corinthians 11:2). Sometime after the rapture, the marriage of the Lamb (bridegroom) and the church (bride) will take place. Unlike the pure bride of Christ (Revelation 19:7), religious New Babylon is described as a great prostitute (17:1,3).

## **The Invasion of Israel**

10—*Meanwhile on the Earth, Israel Will Live at Peace in Her Own Land.* Scripture reveals that in the end times, an all-out invasion of Israel by a massive northern assault force composed of Russia, Iran, Turkey, Sudan, Libya, and other Muslim nations will take place. A precondition for this invasion to occur is that Israel must be living in security and at rest in her homeland (Ezekiel 38:11). Some prophecy scholars believe that Israel is presently living in relative security and rest because of her powerful military, which is able to repel any attack from surrounding enemies. If this view is correct, then the Ezekiel invasion could occur in the not-too-distant future.

11—*Israel Will Be Invaded by a Northern Military Coalition.* The nations that make up this military coalition include Rosh (modern

Russia), Magog (the former southern Soviet republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan), Meshech and Tubal (modern Turkey), Persia (the Islamic Republic of Iran), Ethiopia (modern-day Sudan), Put (modern-day Libya), Gomer (another reference to modern-day Turkey), and Beth-togarmah (yet another reference to Turkey) (Ezekiel 38:1-6 NASB). There is good reason to believe that this invasion could take place prior to the tribulation period. Apparently New Babylon will not be a part of this invading force. Scripture reveals that God will utterly annihilate these invaders (Ezekiel 38:19-22). Because commercial New Babylon will not be destroyed until *the very end* of the tribulation period, we can conclude it is not a part of the invasion (Revelation 18).

### **The Beginning of the Tribulation**

*12—The Antichrist Will Sign a Covenant with Israel, and This Will Mark the Beginning of the Tribulation Period.* Daniel 9:27 tells us, “The ruler will make a treaty with the people for a period of one set of seven, but after half this time, he will put an end to the sacrifices and offerings.” The antichrist will agree to a seven-year covenant with Israel (the entire tribulation period), but he will break the agreement after three-and-one-half years, putting an end to sacrifices and offerings in the rebuilt Jewish temple. Once the tribulation period begins with the signing of the covenant, people can watch for the rise of religious New Babylon during the first half of the tribulation and the rise of commercial New Babylon during the second half. (To clarify, there is one New Babylon that will be a literal city along the Euphrates River, but during the first half of the tribulation the religious aspect of New Babylon will be predominant, and the commercial aspect will grow into prominence during the second half. I’ll address this in more detail later in the book.)

*13—The Antichrist Will Rapidly Rise on the World Scene.* He will

be a genius in intellect (Daniel 8:23), commerce (Daniel 11:43; Revelation 13:16-17), war (Revelation 6:2; 13:2), speech (Daniel 11:36), and politics (Revelation 17:11-12). This Satan-inspired individual (2 Thessalonians 2:9) will rise to prominence and make a peace treaty with Israel (Daniel 9:27). In his desire to dominate the world, he will double-cross and then seek to destroy the Jews, persecute believers, and set up his own global kingdom (Revelation 13). Initially religious New Babylon will hold sway over the antichrist and his forces (Revelation 17:3), but at the midpoint of the tribulation, the antichrist and his forces will destroy the false religion (verse 16), and he will set himself up as god (2 Thessalonians 2:4). He will then move his headquarters to New Babylon, and instead of promoting false religion, he will focus on developing a global commercial center. (More on all this shortly.)

*14—Early in the Tribulation, the Jewish Temple Will Be Rebuilt.* We know that the temple must be rebuilt at least by the midpoint of the seven-year tribulation period because Jesus, in His Olivet Discourse, warned that the antichrist will desecrate the temple at that time, setting up an image of himself within the structure (Matthew 24:15-16; see also Daniel 9:27; 12:11). Even today we hear reports that various Jewish individuals and groups have been working behind the scenes to prepare various materials for the future temple, including priestly robes, temple tapestries, and worship utensils. The rebuilding of the temple seems to be on the horizon.

*15—The Signs of the Times Will Affirm that the End Times Have Arrived.* A “sign of the times” is an event of prophetic significance that points to the end times. We are specifically instructed by Jesus that certain signs will take place as the tribulation period unfolds (Matthew 24). These signs include a great increase in earthquakes, famine, pestilence, signs in the heavens, people who love themselves (humanism), money (materialism), and pleasure (hedonism). There

will also be an escalation in false Christs, false prophets and teachers, false apostles, and greatly increased apostasy. These and other such signs will testify that the end times have indeed arrived (see Matthew 24). The increase in false Christs, false prophets, false apostles, and apostasy will smooth the path for the rapid rise of the false religion associated with New Babylon early in the tribulation period.

### **The First Half of the Tribulation**

*16—During the First Half of the Tribulation, the Lamb Will Receive the Seven-Sealed Scroll.* Christ alone in heaven is found worthy to take this scroll (Revelation 5). This wondrous scene in heaven sets the stage for all that follows—the actual opening of the seven seals. As each seal is opened one by one, we witness judgments falling on those on Earth at the hand of our sovereign and majestic God. Later during the tribulation, judgment will fall on commercial New Babylon (Revelation 18).

*17—The 144,000 Jewish Evangelists Will Engage in Ministry.* The 144,000 are Jewish men who come to faith in Jesus sometime after the rapture of the church (Revelation 7; 14). They fulfill the mandate originally given to the Jewish nation to share the good news of God with people (Gentiles) all around the world (see Isaiah 42:6; 43:10). These witnesses will be “sealed” (divinely protected) by God as they carry out their service for Him during the tribulation (Revelation 14:1-4; see also 2 Corinthians 1:22; Ephesians 1:13; 4:30). It appears they will begin their work very early in the tribulation period—a work that will be a direct challenge to the false religion associated with New Babylon.

*18—God’s Two Prophetic Witnesses Will Engage in Ministry.* Early during the tribulation, God will raise up two mighty prophets—witnesses who will testify to the one true God with astounding power. The power of these witnesses brings Elijah (1 Kings 17;

Malachi 4:5) and Moses (Exodus 7–11) to mind—the two greatest personalities of the Old Testament. In the Old Testament era, two witnesses were required to confirm a testimony (see Deuteronomy 17:6; 19:15; Matthew 18:16; John 8:17; Hebrews 10:28). Apparently these witnesses will engage in their ministry during the first half of the tribulation, during which time they will directly challenge the false religion connected with New Babylon.

19—*The Seven Seal Judgments Will Be Unleashed.* Human suffering will steadily escalate during the tribulation period. The first set of judgments to be unleashed on Earth are the seal judgments. These include the rise of the antichrist, the outbreak of war, widespread famine, massive casualties, God’s people being killed, a devastating earthquake, and even worse judgments (Revelation 6). Things will go from bad to worse. Many people will seek comfort from the religious system associated with New Babylon. Others will turn to the true God as a result of the 144,000 Jewish evangelists and two prophetic witnesses.

20—*Martyrdom Will Increase.* While all Christians on Earth will be raptured prior to the tribulation (1 Thessalonians 1:10; 4:13-17; 5:9; Revelation 3:10), large numbers of people will become believers during this seven-year period (Matthew 25:31-46; Revelation 7:9-10), and many of these individuals will be martyred (Revelation 6:9-11). Christ urges His people to stand strong and not fear martyrdom (Revelation 2:10). It is noteworthy that many of these believers will be executed by officials affiliated with New Babylon’s false religious system, which is said to be “drunk with the blood of God’s holy people who were witnesses for Jesus” (Revelation 17:6).

21—*The Trumpet Judgments Will Be Unleashed.* Things will continue to go from bad to worse during the tribulation period. The trumpet judgments include hail and fire falling on the earth, a fiery mountain plummeting into the sea, a star (asteroid) falling from

heaven and making a deep impact on the earth, various cosmic disturbances, hideous demons torturing humans, fallen angels killing a third of humankind, and even worse judgments. Again, many people will seek comfort from New Babylon's religion. Others will become Christians in response to the ministry of the 144,000 Jewish evangelists and the two prophetic witnesses.

22—*Religious Babylon Will Dominate the World.* The false religion associated with New Babylon will exercise global influence (Revelation 17:15). It will be utterly unfaithful to the truth and therefore be a spiritual “harlot” (verses 1,5,15-16). It will also exercise powerful political clout among the nations of the world (verses 12-13). It will seem outwardly glorious while being inwardly corrupt (implied in verse 4) and will persecute believers during the tribulation period (verse 6). This false religious system will emerge during the first half of the tribulation and will spew out great deception and apostasy.

### **The Midpoint of the Tribulation**

23—*The Little Scroll Will Be Opened.* In Revelation 10, we read of an angel with a mysterious little scroll. John obeyed the angel's instruction to eat the scroll, and though it was sweet (like honey) in his mouth, it quickly soured in his stomach. The scroll seems to represent Scripture. God's Word was sweet to John. However, it was also bitter because it included stern warnings of woe and judgment for unbelievers. The book of Revelation records much of this woe and judgment—including that which will eventually fall upon New Babylon (Revelation 18).

24—*The Antichrist Will Be Wounded and Will Be Seemingly Resurrected (Revelation 13:1-3).* Some Bible expositors believe the antichrist will suffer a mortal head wound, die, and then be literally resurrected. Others believe he will be wounded, though not mortally, and will feign a resurrection from the dead. Either way, the

world will believe he has literally resurrected from the dead and therefore will worship him. At this point, one can almost see the writing on the wall that the days of religious New Babylon are numbered, for the antichrist will become the sole object of worship during the second half of the tribulation.

25—*Satan Will Be Cast Out of Heaven.* In Revelation 12:12-13 we find a sobering description of Satan's ousting from heaven, after which he will indwell—or, at the very least, fully energize—the antichrist (2 Thessalonians 2:9). Satan will be filled with fury because he knows his time is short—a mere 1,260 days, or the last three-and-a-half years of the tribulation. Satan's fury will be expressed through the person of the antichrist, and things will go from bad to *much* worse on the earth.

26—*The False Religion Associated with New Babylon Will Be Destroyed.* At the midpoint of the tribulation, the antichrist, along with the ten kings who are under his authority, will destroy the false religious system associated with New Babylon. The antichrist will then come into global dominion both *politically* and *religiously*, demanding to be worshipped as God (Daniel 11:36-38; 2 Thessalonians 2:4; Revelation 13:8,15). The final world religion will involve worship of the antichrist alone. No competing religious systems will be allowed—including the one associated with New Babylon.

27—*God's Two Prophetic Witnesses Will Be Executed and Then Will Be Resurrected.* The miracles performed by God's two prophetic witnesses are reminiscent of Elijah (1 Kings 17; Malachi 4:5) and Moses (Exodus 7–11). They will minister during the first half of the tribulation, and, once their ministry is complete, they will be martyred by the antichrist. All the unbelievers on Earth will celebrate their deaths. Three-and-a-half days later, however, the two witnesses will resurrect from the dead, and the people's celebration will turn to dread (Revelation 11:7-12).

28—*The Antichrist Will Break His Covenant with Israel.* In Daniel 9:27 we read, “The ruler [the antichrist] will make a treaty [covenant] with the people [the Jews] for a period of one set of seven [seven years], but after half this time [after three-and-a-half years], he will put an end to the [Jewish] sacrifices and offerings” (inserts added for clarification). Notice that the covenant was designed to remain in effect for seven years. But at the three-and-a-half-year mark, the antichrist will renege on the covenant and shut down Israel’s temple sacrifices. From that point onward, the antichrist will insist that he alone be worshipped.

29—*The Abomination of Desolation Will Occur.* At the midpoint of the tribulation, the antichrist will desecrate the Jewish temple by putting an image of himself within it. This is the “abomination of desolation” Jesus spoke of in Matthew 24:15 (NASB). The antichrist will start out as Israel’s *protector* (with a signed covenant) but will end up becoming Israel’s *persecutor*. He will turn from being Israel’s *defender* to being its *defiler*.

30—*The False Prophet Will Carry Out His Diabolical Ministry.* Satan will empower the false prophet to engage in what we might call Grade-B miracles—lesser than God’s miracles, but still impressive (see Exodus 7:11; 2 Timothy 3:8). The false prophet will do these miracles to induce people to worship Satan’s substitute for Christ—the antichrist (see Daniel 9:27; 11:31; 12:11; Matthew 24:15). The false religion connected with New Babylon will then be rendered obsolete as worship of the antichrist becomes the sole acceptable religion.

31—*The Antichrist Will Blaspheme God.* At the midpoint of the tribulation, the antichrist will engage in self-exaltation and self-deification. Second Thessalonians 2:4 says he will “exalt himself and defy everything that people call god and every object of worship. He will even sit in the temple of God, claiming that he himself is God.”

There is no greater blasphemy than this. The antichrist truly is *anti-Christ*, putting himself in Christ's place. As Revelation 13:5-6 puts it, "The beast [will] speak great blasphemies against God... terrible words of blasphemy against God, slandering his name and his dwelling—that is, those who dwell in heaven."

32—*The Jewish Remnant Will Flee from Israel*. Jesus warns the Jews in Jerusalem that when these horrific circumstances unfold, they should forget about gathering their personal belongings and get out of town immediately. They are to literally run for their lives. Time spent gathering things might mean the difference between life and death. Jesus indicates that distress will escalate dramatically and rapidly for the Jews (Matthew 24:16-22; see also Revelation 12:5-6). Jeremiah 30:7 describes this period as "a time of trouble for my people Israel."

33—*The Antichrist Will Make War on the Saints*. Scripture reveals that the antichrist will engage in great persecution against not only the Jews but also the saints of God: "The beast was allowed to wage war against God's holy people and to conquer them. And he was given authority to rule over every tribe and people and language and nation" (Revelation 13:7-8). A parallel passage is Daniel 7:21, which, speaking of the antichrist, tells us that he was "waging war against God's holy people and was defeating them." Notice that while religious New Babylon persecuted and martyred God's people during the first half of the tribulation (Revelation 17:6), the antichrist will persecute and martyr them during the second half. God's people will have a tough time during the entire tribulation!

34—*Midtribulation Announcements Will Be Uttered from Heaven*. We can view Revelation 14 as a connecting link between the events that take place midway through the tribulation period (Revelation 10–13) and those that transpire during the second half (15–16). These divine announcements include details about the

impending bowl judgments (the worse judgments of all) as well as words of assurance, encouragement, and comfort for God's people in the midst of the tribulation.

## **The Second Half of the Tribulation**

*35—The Great Tribulation Begins.* The second half of the tribulation period—that is, the last three-and-a-half years—is called the “great tribulation” (Matthew 24:15-21; see also Daniel 9:27). It is during this time that the antichrist will act as “god on Earth,” enforcing both political and religious supremacy and setting up his headquarters in commercial New Babylon. This will be the worst time in all human history.

*36—The Good News Is that the Great Tribulation Will Be Limited to Three-and-a-Half Years.* Revelation 13:5 tell us that the antichrist will make claims to deity, blaspheme the one true God, and demand to be worshipped, and these activities will continue for precisely 42 months—which is three-and-a-half years. Daniel 7:25 also reveals that the antichrist will oppress God's people “for a time, times, and half a time.” A “time” is one year, “times” is two years, and “half a time” is half a year. This comes to a total of three-and-a-half years.

*37—The Mark of the Beast Will Be Enforced.* Revelation 13 reveals that the antichrist and the false prophet will subjugate the entire world so that no one who fails to receive the mark of the beast can buy or sell. This mark will literally be a passport to commerce. There will be the “haves” and the “have nots.” This means that those who refuse the mark of the beast will find it very hard to acquire food. Because commercial New Babylon will be the commerce center of the world during the second half of the tribulation, it is logical to infer that a key component to the success of New Babylon is the antichrist's mark of the beast. The only people who will be allowed to sell their products to super-rich New Babylon will be those who have received the mark (Revelation 18:11-15).

38—*Deception Will Continue to Escalate.* Jesus warns that during the tribulation period there will be many false prophets who lead people astray (Matthew 24:11). The apostle Paul speaks of end-times “evil deception” rooted in “lies” (2 Thessalonians 2:9-11). Revelation 12:9 tells us that Satan—“the one deceiving the whole world”—will be very active during this period. The antichrist’s first lieutenant, the false prophet, will deceive “all the people who belong to this world” (Revelation 13:14). Certainly deception will play a significant role in the success of commercial New Babylon, for when God indicts this place in judgment, He will affirm, “Your merchants were the greatest in the world, and you deceived the nations with your sorceries” (Revelation 18:23).

39—*The Bowl Judgments Will Be Unleashed.* By this time, the seal judgments and trumpet judgments will have already been inflicted upon the earth. Next the bowl judgments will be unleashed (Revelation 16:1-21). People will be inflicted with harmful and painful sores, the sea will become like blood, the rivers and springs of water will also become like blood, the sun will scorch people with fire, the world will be plunged into utter darkness, the Euphrates River will dry up (preparing the way for the outbreak of Armageddon), and more. Woe to those who are upon the earth at this time!

40—*The Gospel of the Kingdom Will Be Proclaimed.* In Matthew 24:14, Jesus prophesies that “the Good News about the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, so that all nations will hear it; and then the end will come.” Contrary to the deceptions associated with commercial New Babylon (Revelation 18:23), the truth will also be proclaimed. God’s light will continue to shine in the darkness.

## **The End of the Tribulation**

41—*The Campaign of Armageddon Will Begin.* Armageddon—a catastrophic war campaign—will take place at the end of the

tribulation (Revelation 16:14-16; see also Daniel 11:40-45; Joel 3:9-17; Zechariah 14:1-3). Millions of people will perish in the worst escalation of conflict ever to hit planet Earth. There are eight key stages that unfold during this ongoing campaign:

42—*Stage One of Armageddon: The Antichrist's Allies Will Assemble for War.* These allies will gather for one purpose—the final destruction of the Jews (Revelation 16:12-16). This attack will be demonically inspired.

43—*Stage Two of Armageddon: Commercial Babylon Will Be Destroyed.* During the second half of the tribulation period the antichrist will set up his headquarters in New Babylon, and it will become a global commercial center. It is this center that will be annihilated during stage two of Armageddon. This destruction will be an expression of God's mighty wrath (Jeremiah 50:13-14). Babylon will become a desert wasteland. It will be "devastated like Sodom and Gomorrah" (Isaiah 13:19; Jeremiah 50:40)—the destruction will be all-encompassing and permanent.

44—*Stage Three of Armageddon: Jerusalem Will Fall and Be Ravaged.* The destruction of the antichrist's headquarters in New Babylon will not lessen his resolve to destroy the Jewish people. He will then instruct his military forces to attack Jerusalem. Zechariah 14:1-2 reveals that "all the nations" will be gathered to "fight against Jerusalem." I hate to say it, but this must mean that the United States will be a part of the invading force. Jerusalem will fall and be ravaged in the face of this overwhelming attack.

45—*Stage Four of Armageddon: The Antichrist Will Move South Against the Jewish Remnant.* Following the destruction of Jerusalem, the antichrist will then move south against the Jewish remnant that escaped from Jerusalem at the midpoint of the tribulation when the antichrist put an image of himself in the Jewish temple. These Jews will be hiding in the deserts and mountains (see Matthew

24:16)—perhaps in the area of Bozrah/Petra, about 80 miles south of Jerusalem. From an earthly perspective, this remnant of Jews will be helpless—they will be utterly defenseless against the overwhelming forces of the antichrist.

46—*Stage Five of Armageddon: Israel Will Be Endangered and Will Experience National Regeneration.* Endangered by the overwhelming forces of the antichrist, the Jewish remnant will supernaturally experience national regeneration by turning to their Messiah, Jesus Christ (Hosea 6:1-3; see also Joel 2:28-29; Zechariah 12:2-13:1). They will finally recognize their former blindness; their spiritual eyes will be opened and they will see the truth. They will see Jesus for who He truly is and cry out to Messiah Jesus for deliverance.

47—*Stage Six of Armageddon: Jesus Christ Will Return in Glory.* Jesus will promptly answer the prayers of the Jewish remnant. The divine Messiah will return personally to rescue His people from danger. Every eye will see Him (Revelation 1:7; see also Matthew 24:30). Christ will come as the King of kings and Lord of lords, and none will be able to withstand Him (Revelation 19:11-16).

48—*Stage Seven of Armageddon: The Final Battle Will Erupt.* Jesus will confront the antichrist and his military forces and will slay them with the “breath” of His mouth: “The Lord Jesus will slay him with the breath of his mouth and destroy him by the splendor of his coming” (2 Thessalonians 2:8). What this means, in popular vernacular, is that Jesus will essentially say “drop dead,” and the forces of the antichrist will experience instant death. They will be no match for the King of kings and Lord of lords (Revelation 19:16). The Jewish Messiah will obliterate all who oppose Him.

49—*Stage Eight of Armageddon: Christ Will Victoriously Ascend to the Mount of Olives.* “On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem. And the Mount of Olives will split apart, making a wide valley running from east to west. Half the mountain

will move toward the north and half toward the south” (Zechariah 14:4). We can observe in Scripture that topographical upheavals often accompany God’s great acts of judgment (see Micah 1:2-4; Nahum 1:5; Revelation 16:18-21).

50—*The Prophetic Saga Continues*. Christ will establish His 1,000-year millennial kingdom on earth (Revelation 20:2-7; see also Isaiah 65:18-23; Jeremiah 31:12-14,31-37). This will be followed by the eternal state, in which God’s people will dwell with Him face to face forever and ever and ever. Scripture reveals that believers will forever dwell in an eternal city called the New Jerusalem, which will rest upon a new earth (Revelation 21-22). How fitting that while New Babylon is described as a great prostitute (Revelation 17:1,3), the New Jerusalem is likened to a chaste bride (Revelation 21:9-10). Moreover, while New Babylon is portrayed as a temporal city that will be destroyed by God Himself toward the end of the tribulation (Revelation 18:8), the New Jerusalem is portrayed as an eternal city (Revelation 21:1-4).

*My friend, it will be glorious!*