

Iraq

Second Most Mentioned
Bible Nation

Compiled by Dr. Harold Bollinger, D.A.

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Forward

No other nation, except Israel, has more history and prophecy associated it than Iraq. For those who fought the battles and still stand for the good of the world and for their eternal reward:

Remembrance

By Charles Henrywood

Grant peace, O Lord, across our strife-torn world
Where war divides and greed and dogma drive.
Help us to learn the lessons from the past
That all are human and all pay the price.
All life is dear and should be treated so.
Joined, not divided, is the way to go.

Protect, dear Lord, all who, on our behalf
Now take the steps that place them in harm's way.
May they find courage for each task they face
By knowing they are in our thoughts always
then, duty done and missions at an end
Return them safely to family and friends.

Grant rest, O Lord, to those no longer with us
Who died protecting us and this their land.
Bring healing, Lord, to those who, through their service
Bear conflict's scars on body or in mind.
With those who mourn support and comfort share.
Give strength to those who for hurt loved-ones care.

And some there be who no memorial have
Who perished are as though they'd never been.
For our tomorrows their today they gave
And simply asked that in our hearts they'd live.
We heed their call and pledge ourselves again
At dusk and dawn - we will remember them!

Chapter1



Events recorded in Scripture

A few important facts regarding the important history and roles that Iraq, once called Babylon, has played down through history.

The Garden of Eden was in Iraq and was once called the cradle of civilization!

In this land, Noah built the ark. And the Tower of Babel was constructed.

Abraham was from Ur, which is in Southern Iraq! Isaac's wife Rebekah is from Nahor, which is in Iraq. Jacob met Rachel in Iraq.

Jonah preached in Nineveh, which is in Iraq. Assyria, which is in Iraq, conquered the ten tribes of Israel.

Amos cried out in Iraq! Daniel was in the lion's den in Iraq! The 3 Hebrew children were in the fire in Iraq.

Belshazzar, the King of Babylon saw the "writing on the wall" in Iraq.

Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, carried the Jews captive into Iraq.

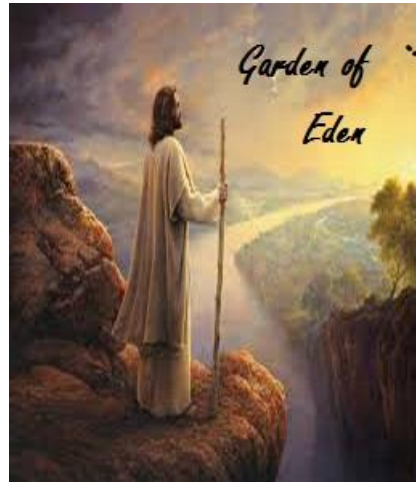
Ezekiel preached in Iraq. Peter preached in Iraq.

The "Empire of Man" described in Revelation are called Babylon, which was a city in Iraq!

Israel is the nation most often mentioned in the Bible, but the second most mentioned nation mentioned in the Bible is Iraq

The names used in the Bible are for Iraq is Babylon, Land of Shinar, and Mesopotamia. The word Mesopotamia means between the two rivers, more exactly between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. The name Iraq, means country with deep roots.

Chapter 2



The Garden of Eden was in Iraq

Genesis 2:11-14

One of these branches is the Pishon, which flows around the entire land of Havilah, where gold is found.

The gold of that land is exceptionally pure; aromatic resin and onyx stone are also found there.

The second branch is the Gihon, which flows around the entire land of Cush. The third branch is the Tigris, which flows to the east of Asshur. The fourth branch is the Euphrates.

These rivers and this land is located in the country of Iraq.

Adam was placed in Iraq

Genesis 2:7-8 And the Lord God formed a man's body from the dust of the ground and breathed into it the breath of life. And the man became a living person.

Then the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he placed the man he had created.

“From the dust of the ground” implies that there is nothing fancy about the chemical elements making up our bodies.

The body is a lifeless shell until God brings it alive with his “breath of life.”

When God removes his life-giving breath, our bodies once again return to dust. Therefore our life and worth come from God’s Spirit.

Many boast of their achievements and abilities as though they were the originator of their own strengths. Others feel worthless because their abilities do not stand out.

In reality, our worth comes not from our achievements but from the God of the universe, who chooses to give us the mysterious and miraculous gift of life. Value life, as he does.

Satan made his first recorded appearance in Iraq

Genesis 3:1-6 Now the serpent was the shrewdest of all the creatures the Lord God had made. "Really?" he asked the woman. "Did God really say you must not eat any of the fruit in the garden?"

"Of course we may eat it," the woman told him. "It's only the fruit from the tree at the center of the garden that we are not allowed to eat. God says we must not eat it or even touch it, or we will die."

"You won't die!" the serpent hissed. "God knows that your eyes will be opened when you eat it. You will become just like God, knowing everything, both good and evil."

The woman was convinced. The fruit looked so fresh and delicious, and it would make her so wise! So she ate some of the fruit. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her. Then he ate it, too.

Disguised as a crafty serpent, Satan came to tempt Eve while in the Garden of Eden. Satan at one time was an angel who rebelled against God and was thrown out of heaven.

As a created being, Satan has definite limitations. Although he is trying to tempt everyone away from God, he will not be the final victor.

In Genesis 3:14-15, God promises that Satan will be crushed by one of the woman's offspring, the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

Temptation is Satan's invitation to give in to his kind of life and give up on God's kind of life.

Satan tempted Eve and succeeded in getting her to sin. Ever since then, he's been busy getting people to sin. He even tempted Jesus (Matthew 4:11). But Jesus did not sin!

How Eve could have resisted temptation by following the same guidelines we can follow.

First, we must realize that *being tempted* is not a sin. We have not sinned until we *give in* to the temptation. Then, to resist temptation, we must

- (1) Pray for strength to resist,
- (2) Run, sometimes literally, and

(3) Say no when confronted with what we know is wrong. James 1:12 tells of the blessings and rewards for those who don't give in when tempted.

The serpent, Satan, tempted Eve by getting her to doubt God's goodness. He implied that God was strict, stingy, and selfish for not wanting Eve to share his knowledge of good and evil.

Satan made Eve forget that entire things God had given her and, instead, focus on the one thing she couldn't have.

We fall into trouble, too, when we dwell on the few things we don't have rather than on the countless things God has given us.

The next time you are feeling sorry for yourself and what you don't have, consider all you *do* have and thank God. Then your doubts won't lead you into sin.

Chapter 3



Nimrod established Babylon & Tower of Babel was built in Iraq

Genesis 10:8-9 One of Cush's descendants was Nimrod, who became a heroic warrior.

He was a mighty hunter in the Lord's sight. His name became proverbial, and people would speak of someone as being "like Nimrod, a mighty hunter in the Lord's sight."

Who was Nimrod? Not much is known about him except that he was a mighty hunter. But people with great gifts can become proud, and that is probably what happened to Nimrod. Some consider him the founder of the great, godless Babylonian empire.

Genesis 11:1-4 At one time the whole world spoke a single language and used the same words. As the people migrated eastward, they found a plain in the land of Babylonia and settled there.

They began to talk about construction projects. "Come," they said, "let's make great piles of burnt brick and collect natural asphalt to use as mortar. Let's build a great city with a tower that reaches to the skies—a monument to our greatness! This will bring us together and keep us from scattering all over the world."

The brick used to build this tower was man-made and not as hard as stone.

The tower of Babel was most likely a ziggurat, a common structure in Babylonia at this time.

Most often built as temples, ziggurats looked like pyramids with steps or ramps leading up the sides. Ziggurats stood as high as 300 feet and were often just as wide; thus they were the focal point of the city.

The people in this story built their tower as a monument to their own greatness, something for the whole world to see.

The tower of Babel was a great human achievement, a wonder of the world. But it was a monument to the people themselves rather than to God. We may build monuments to ourselves (expensive clothes, big house, fancy car, important job) to call attention to our achievements.

These may not be wrong in themselves, but when we use them to give us identity and self-worth, they take God's place in our lives. We are free to develop in many areas, but we are not free to think we have replaced God. What "towers" have you built in your life?

The confusion of the languages took place in Iraq

Genesis 11:5-11 But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower the people were building.

"Look!" he said. "If they can accomplish this when they have just begun to take advantage of their common language and political unity, just think of what they will do later.

Nothing will be impossible for them!

Come, let's go down and give them different languages. Then they won't be able to understand each other."

In that way, the Lord scattered them all over the earth; and that ended the building of the city. That is why the city was called Babel, because it was there that the Lord confused the people by giving them many languages, thus scattering them across the earth.

This is the history of Shem's family when Shem was 100 years old, his son Arphaxad was born. This happened two years after the Flood. After the birth of Arphaxad, Shem lived another 500 years and had other sons and daughters.

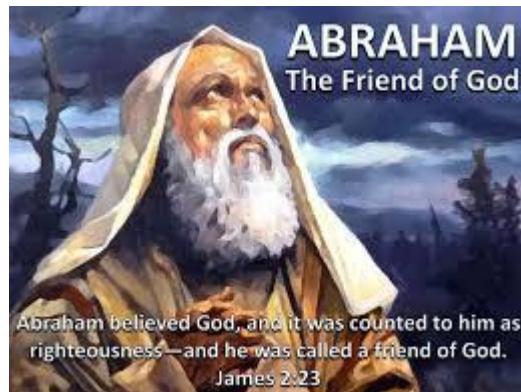
In Genesis 9:24-27 we read Noah's curse on Canaan, Ham's son (Genesis 10:6), ancestor of the evil Canaanites.

In Genesis 10:22-31 we have a list of Shem's descendants, who were blessed (Genesis 9:26). From Shem's line came Abram and the entire Jewish nation, which would eventually conquer the land of Canaan in the days of Joshua.

Abram grew up in Ur of the Chaldeans, an important city in the ancient world. Archaeologists have discovered evidence of a flourishing civilization there in Abram's day.

The city carried on an extensive trade with its neighbors and had a vast library. Growing up in Ur, Abram was probably well educated.

Chapter 4



Abraham came from a city in Iraq

Genesis 11:31 Terah took his son Abram, his daughter-in-law Sarai, and his grandson Lot (his son Haran's child) and left Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan. But they stopped instead at the village of Haran and settled there.

Terah left Ur to go to Canaan but settled in Haran instead. Why did he stop halfway? It may have been his health, the climate, or even fear.

But this did not change Abram's calling ("the LORD had said to Abram,"

Genesis 12:1). He had respect for his father's leadership, but when Terah died Abram moved on to Canaan. God's will may come in stages. Just as the time in Haran was a transition period for Abram, so God may give us transition periods and times of waiting to help us depend on him and trust his timing. If we patiently do his will during the transition times, we will be better prepared to serve him as we should when he calls us.

Acts 7:2-4 this was Stephen's reply: "Brothers and honorable fathers, listen to me. Our glorious God appeared to our ancestor Abraham in Mesopotamia before he moved to Haran.

God told him, 'Leave your native land and your relatives, and come to the land that I will show you.' So Abraham left the land of the Chaldeans and lived in Haran until his father died. Then God brought him here to the land where you now live.

Isaac's bride came from Iraq

Genesis 24:3-4 "Swear by the Lord, the God of heaven and earth, that you will not let my son marry one of these local Canaanite women. Go instead to my homeland, to my relatives, and find a wife there for my son Isaac."

Genesis 24:10 He loaded ten of Abraham's camels with gifts and set out, taking with him the best of everything his master owned. He traveled to Aram-naharaim and went to the village where Abraham's brother Nahor had settled.

Chapter 5



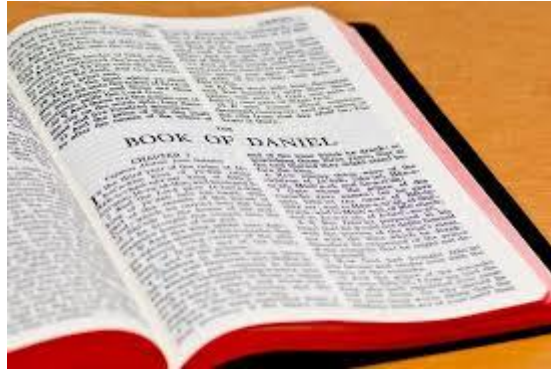
Jacob spent 20 years in Iraq

Genesis 27:42-45 But someone got wind of what Esau was planning and reported it to Rebekah. She sent for Jacob and told him, "Esau is threatening to kill you.

This is what you should do. Flee to your uncle Laban in Haran. [44] Stay there with him until your brother's fury is spent.

When he forgets what you have done, I will send for you. Why should I lose both of you in one day?"

Chapter 6



The first world Empire was in Iraq

Daniel 1:1-2 During the third year of King Jehoiakim's reign in Judah, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it with his armies. The Lord gave him victory over King Jehoiakim of Judah.

When Nebuchadnezzar returned to Babylon, he took with him some of the sacred objects from the Temple of God and placed them in the treasure-house of his god in the land of Babylonia.

Daniel 2:36-38 "That was the dream; now I will tell Your Majesty what it means.

Your Majesty, you are a king over many kings. The God of heaven has given you sovereignty, power, strength, and honor.

He has made you the ruler over all the inhabited world and has put even the animals and birds under your control. You are the head of gold.

When Daniel says “we,” he is referring to himself and his three friends. Just as Daniel involved them in praying for God’s help, he gave them credit when he presented the interpretation. Because they helped Daniel in the prayer, he was careful to share the credit with them.

Chapter 7



The greatest revival in history was in a city in Iraq

Jonah 3:1-10 Then the Lord spoke to Jonah a second time: "Get up and go to the great city of Nineveh, and deliver the message of judgment I have given you."

This time Jonah obeyed the Lord's command and went to Nineveh, a city so large that it took three days to see it all. On the day Jonah entered the city, he shouted to the crowds: "Forty days from now Nineveh will be destroyed!"

The people of Nineveh believed God's message, and from the greatest to the least, they decided to go without food and wear sackcloth to show their sorrow.

When the king of Nineveh heard what Jonah was saying, he stepped down from his throne and took off his royal robes. He dressed himself in sackcloth and sat on a heap of ashes.

Then the king and his nobles sent this decree throughout the city: "No one, not even the animals, may eat or drink anything at all."

Everyone is required to wear sackcloth and pray earnestly to God. Everyone must turn from their evil ways and stop all their violence.

Who can tell? Perhaps even yet God will have pity on us and hold back his fierce anger from destroying us."

When God saw that they had put a stop to their evil ways, he had mercy on them and didn't carry out the destruction he had threatened.

Jonah had run away from God, but was given a second chance to participate in God's work. You may feel as though you are disqualified from serving God because of past mistakes. But serving God is not an earned position—no one qualifies for God's service. But God still asks us to carry out his work. You may yet have another chance.

Jonah was to preach only what God told him—a message of doom to one of the most powerful cities in the world. This was not the most desirable assignment, but those who bring God's word to others should not let social pressures or fear of people dictate their words.

They are called to preach God's message and his truth, no matter how unpopular it may be.

The Hebrew text makes no distinction between the city proper (the walls of which were only about eight miles in circumference, accommodating a population of about 175,000 persons) and the administrative district of Nineveh that was about 30 to 60 miles across. A "very important city," Nineveh took three days just to visit.

The pagan people of Nineveh believed Jonah's message and repented. What a miraculous effect God's words had on those evil people! Their repentance stood in stark contrast to Israel's stubbornness. The people of Israel had heard many messages from the prophets, but they had refused to repent. The people of Nineveh only needed to hear God's message

once. Jesus said that at the judgment, the men of Nineveh will stand up to condemn the Israelites for their failure to repent (Matthew 12:39-41). It is not our hearing God's word that pleases him, but our responding obediently to it.

God responded in mercy by canceling his threatened punishment.

God had said that any nation on which he had pronounced judgment would be saved if they repented (Jeremiah 18:7-8).

God forgave Nineveh, just as he had forgiven Jonah. The purpose of God's judgment is correction, not revenge. He is always ready to show compassion to anyone willing to seek him.

Chapter 8



The events of the book of Esther took place in Iraq

We treasure security, even though we know that security in this life carries no guarantees—possessions can be destroyed, beauty fades, relationships can be broken, death is inevitable.

Real security, then, must be found beyond this life. Only when our security rests on God and his unchanging nature can we face the challenges that life is sure to bring our way.

Esther's beauty and character won Xerxes' heart, and he made her his queen. Even in her favored position, however, she would risk her life by attempting to see the king when he had not requested her presence.

There was no guarantee that the king would even see her. Although she was queen, she was still not secure. But, cautiously and courageously, Esther decided to risk her life by approaching the king on behalf of her people.

She made her plans carefully. The Jews were asked to fast and pray with her before she went to the king. Then on the chosen day she went before him, and he *did* ask her to come forward and speak.

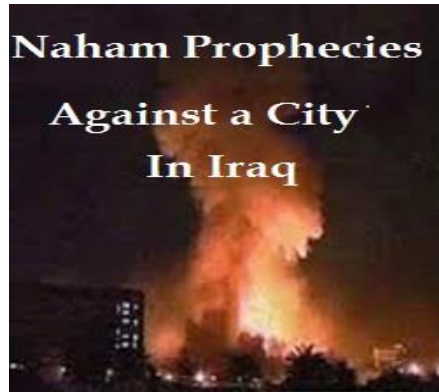
But instead of issuing her request directly, she invited him and Haman to a banquet. He was astute enough to realize she had something on her mind, yet she conveyed the importance of the matter by insisting on a second banquet.

In the meantime, God was working behind the scenes. He caused Xerxes to read the historical records of the kingdom late one night, and the king discovered that Mordecai had once saved his life.

Xerxes lost no time in honoring Mordecai for that act. During the second banquet, Esther told the king of Haman's plot against the Jews, and Haman was doomed.

There is grim justice in Haman's death on the gallows he had built for Mordecai, and it seems fitting that the day on which the Jews were to be slaughtered became the day their enemies died. Esther's risk confirmed that God was the source of her security.

Chapter 9



The book of Nahum was a prophecy against a city in Iraq

Nahum, like Jonah, was a prophet to Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian empire, and he prophesied between 663 and 612 B.C. Jonah had seen Nineveh repent a century earlier (see the book of Jonah), but the city had fallen back into wickedness. Assyria, the world power controlling the Fertile Crescent, seemed unstoppable. Its ruthless and savage warriors had already conquered Israel, the northern kingdom, and were causing great suffering in Judah. So Nahum proclaimed God's anger against Assyria's evil. Within a few decades, the mighty Assyrian empire would be toppled by Babylon.

Nahum served as a prophet to Judah and Assyria from 663-612 B.C. Manasseh, one of Judah's most wicked kings, ruled the land. He openly defied God and persecuted God's people. Assyria, the world power at that time, made Judah one of its vassal states. The people of Judah wanted to be like the Assyrians, who seemed to have all the power and possessions they wanted.

The mighty empire of Assyria that oppressed God's people would soon tumble. Those who do evil and oppress others will one day meet a bitter end.

The prophecies of Babylon as seen in Revelation 17 and 18

In looking at Revelation 17 &18, two of the most intriguing chapters of the bible, yet two of the most difficult a disputed. These chapters deal with the subject of Babylon and for a unit of prophet doctrine, that is, the destruction of Babylon.

Chapter 17 deals with Babylon as an ecclesiastical or spiritual entity. Chapter 18 deals with Babylon as a political entity, and is seen as the Babylon of the future.

The location of Babylon is likely known as the city of ancient Babylon in Iraq, about 50 miles south of Baghdad on the Euphrates River.

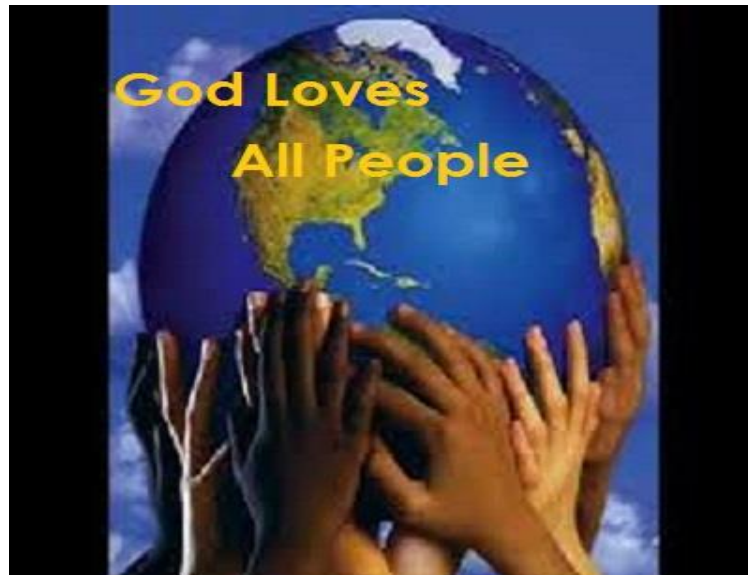
Though steeped in rebellion and in prophecy, God's plan for his people and all nations of the world will be known and in time revealed to show God's power and his love for all people.

References:

Holy Bible: King James Translation

Holy Bible: New Living Bible translation

Additional comments and charts are taken from: *Life Application Study Bible*. Illinois: Tyndale House 2007.



God's love is for everyone

God's word is for everyone. Despite the wickedness of the Ninevite people, they were open to God's message and repented immediately. If we simply proclaim what we know about God, we may be surprised at how many people will listen.

No other nation, except Israel, has more history and prophecy associated with it than Iraq.

No part of God's plan can be avoided nor neglected.