

The END of ALL Things Is at HAND



Are You Ready?

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EXCERPT

Chapter 9 AMERICA IN BIBLE PROPHECY

Since the title of this chapter is “America in Bible Prophecy,” it might be appropriate for me to begin with these familiar words, “my fellow Americans.” Most Bible-believing Christians believe that we are living in what the Bible calls “the end times.” If this is a correct understanding of the times in which we live, we would think that America would have a very significant role in Bible prophecy.

America is the greatest nation in the history of nations. America is the only superpower in the world. Our military, our economy, our form of government, our wealth and prosperity, with all its faults, far exceeds all the other nations in our world today and is the envy of every nation. If you don't appreciate your blessings here I suggest you go live somewhere else for awhile and then come back. While oppressive nations build walls to keep their citizens in – America build walls to keep people out. Most of the people of the world would come to America if they could.

Yet when we read the prophecies in the Bible about the end times, we don't find any mention of America. There is not even the vaguest reference to America in the Bible. As American people who love our country and enjoy the “the good life” of living here, thinking that it will go on forever, we should ponder why America is not mentioned in all the great end-time events. What could this mean? The question that should concern all of us is “Where is America in Bible Prophecy.” It is a sobering question. Before trying to answer that question, it is important to point out what is not America in Bible prophecy.

What is Not America *Merchants of Tarshish*

Probably the most popular verse in the Bible that people try to identify with America is found in Ezekiel 38. This chapter, along with chapter 39, describes the invasion of Israel by Gog and Magog. This invader is said to be “from the far north country” (Ezek. 39:2). It invades Israel

in the “latter years” after the Jewish people have been gathered back to their ancient land. From the description Ezekiel gives of this invader, and the timing in history, it certainly seems like he is talking about Russia.

Now the interesting verse in question is Ezekiel 38:13 which reads, “Sheba, Dedan, the merchants of Tarshish, and all their young lions will say to you, Have you come to take plunder? Have you gathered your army to take booty, to carry away silver and gold, to take away livestock, and goods, to take great plunder?”

When Russia invades Israel, some group of people named Sheba, Dedan and the merchants of Tarshish and all their young lions protest. Sheba and Dedan were located in modern Saudi Arabia. While we are not sure about the location of Tarshish, Bible scholars believe it to have been located in the Western Mediterranean, possibly in Spain.

Regardless of the exact location, to the Hebrews, Tarshish was as far West as one could go. When God called Jonah to go East to Ninevah, he went as far West in the opposite direction he could go. He went to Tarshish. Over time, the ships of Tarshish became a way the Hebrews referred to any large merchant ships from the West that were built like the “ships of Tarshish.”

It is unwise to associate biblical names and places with modern countries when we are not certain as to the identity of the original names. Because Great Britain once ruled the seas, some

interpreters have identified the “ships of Tarshish” with Great Britain. Furthermore, they have identified the “young lions” as the English speaking nations like the U.S. that was founded by British immigrants. So the teaching goes that the “young lions” is speaking about the U.S., Australia, New Zealand, etc.

With all due respect to every prophecy teacher who identifies the “young lions” with the U.S., I think we can all agree that is quite a stretch in biblical interpretation. And it makes for a good sermon for folk who feel they need to understand it all. The “ships of Tarshish” do probably represent the Western, sea-going nations but to identify this with the U.S. is just not sound biblical scholarship.

The Great Eagle

A second reference in the Bible people try to identify with the U.S. is in the 12th chapter of the book of Revelation. The context of the story is during the period of Tribulation when God provides a way for the Jews to escape into the desert where He protects them from Satan during the last 3 1/2 years of the Tribulation. Rev. 12:14 reads, “But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time, times and half a time, from the presence on the Serpent (12:14).

Over the years, people have told me that because the eagle is the national symbol of America, this Scripture refers to a U.S. airlift of Jews to safety. Once again, this is a nice thought, and I wish it was true. But this Scripture really has nothing to do with America. The Bible is its own best commentary. If you want to know what this means you see if you can find a similar statement elsewhere in the Bible. And lo and behold, we can.

The book of Exodus tells about God delivering the Hebrews from Egypt. In Exodus 19:4, the LORD says, “You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to Myself.”

Of course there was no America during the time of the Exodus. But God was there and it was God, and God alone, who brought the Hebrews out of Egypt. So it will be during the Tribulation period. The record is clear in the book of Revelation that God will supernaturally provide for and protect the Jewish people from Satan and the anti-Christ-false Messiah.

Babylon

A third reference in the Bible that people identify with America is also in the book of Revelation. Revelation 18 talks about the fall of Babylon the Great.” Now when you read the description of Babylon, it certainly sounds a lot like America, particularly our economic prosperity. The economies of the world are tied to and depend on America remaining strong. We can certainly understand that when God’ judges America and our economy crumbles, the world will go down with us. The economies of all the nations will collapse.

Once again, we have to read what the Bible actually says before we can interpret what we think it means. In Revelation 18, Babylon the Great is called a city, not a country. In Revelation 17:9,18 we are told that this city sits on seven hills. In the first century context of the book of Revelation, the only city this could possibly be is Rome, which was known as the city of seven hills. Because of the persecution by Rome, the apostle John, writing from Patmos, could not actually say the word “Rome.” So he used the code word early believers had for Rome, which was Babylon.

Peter also called Rome by the name Babylon in 1 Peter 5:13. So we have a confirmation from Peter as well as history that Babylon was the code word for Rome. It seems that Revelation 18 is referring to the last great Gentile world empire, probably a United States of Europe that is greatly influenced by Rome.

General Prophecies

So if these references are not speaking about America, where is America in Bible prophecy? Why is it that our nation, the greatest of all nations in all of history, and the last Gentile superpower is not mentioned specifically in Bible prophecy?

There are two types of prophecies in the Bible regarding nations. One is general prophecies and the other is specific prophecies. America is included in the general prophecies about the nations.

For example, Jesus said in Luke 21:24, “And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.” While America is home to about 6 million Jews, America is a Gentile nation. All Gentile nations, including America, have a life-cycle. They have a beginning, a time of development, and they have an end to their prominence.

While only the Almighty knows the details, when Israel liberated Jerusalem in 1967, many believe this signaled the end of the times of the Gentiles. America, it seems, is the last great sovereign, superpower Gentile nation. Those of us who live in America love our country and are grateful to be Americans. But we must understand, that as a Gentile nation, our days of glory and prominence will, in God’s time, come to an end.

There are numerous Scriptures that speak of the end of the nations. When the Bible says that God will destroy the nations, He doesn’t mean that all the people will die but that the empire will die. But at the end of days, the former empires of the nations will worship the One True God and His kingdom will rule over the earth. Here are a few Scriptures.

Zephaniah 3:8-9, “My determination is to gather the nations to My assembly of kingdoms, to pour on them My indignation, all My fierce anger; all the earth will be devoured with the fire of My jealousy. For then I will restore to the people’s a pure language, that they all may call on the name of the LORD, to serve Him with one accord.”

Haggai 2:22, “I will shake heaven and earth. I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms; I will destroy the strength of the Gentile kingdoms ...”

Zechariah 12:2-3,9, “Behold I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness (trembling or threshold) to all the surrounding people’s when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall be in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples, all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it. And it shall be in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.”

Isaiah 34:1-2, “Come near, you nations, to hear; and heed, you people! Let the earth hear, and all that is in it. The world and all things that come from it. For the indignation of the LORD is against all nations ... “

Joel 3:1-2, “For behold, in those days and at that time, when I bring back the captives of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; and I will enter into judgment with them there on account of My people, My heritage Israel, whom they

have scattered among the nations; they have also divided up My land.”

Zechariah 8:22, “Yes, many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the LORD.”

Isaiah 2:1-4, “Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD’S house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths. For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.”

Now with all these wonderful promises in the Bible, we can rejoice knowing that God’s people have a glorious future and that all the nations, including America, will one day acknowledge the rule of God.

Even though America and the empires of all the Gentile nations will come to an end. There is one country that has a promise from God that it will last forever. That everlasting nation is Israel.

Jeremiah 46:2 8 reads, “Do not fear, O Jacob My servant, says the LORD, for I am with you; for I will make a complete end of all the nations to which I have driven you; but I will not make a complete end of you. I will rightly correct you, for I will not leave you wholly unpunished.” (Jeremiah 30:11 says the same thing.)

Specific Prophecies – Why Not?

After all of this encouragement, we are still left with the question, “Why is America not specifically mentioned in Bible prophecy?” The best our human minds can understand is because America will not be the superpower that it is today. What are some reasons that could cause the demise of America as the leading superpower of the world? I want to briefly mention six possibilities.

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