

America in Prophecy

by John F. Walvoord

John F. Walvoord explores the uncertain role of the United States in biblical prophecy and the implications for its future amidst global events.

Scripture: Daniel 9:27

Topics: "End Time Prophecy", "Christian Testimony"

Description

John F. Walvoord delves into the question of the future of the United States in relation to biblical prophecy, highlighting that while the Bible does not specifically mention the United States, it is probable that the nation will play a subordinate role in the end-time events. The sermon emphasizes that America's current power and influence may decline due to internal corruption or international complications, similar to great nations in history. Despite this, the United States has been a significant source of Christian testimony and missionary work, possibly fulfilling God's purposes through its prosperity and support for the Gospel.

Transcript

One of the natural questions facing the world, but especially citizens of the United States of America, is the place of the United States in the unfulfilled prophetic program. In the last fifty years, the United States of America has become one of the most powerful and influential nations of all history. What does the Bible contribute to the question of the future of the United States?

In keeping with the principle that prophecy is primarily concerned with the Holy Land and its immediate neighbors, it is not surprising that geographic areas remote from this center of Biblical interest should not figure largely in prophecy and may not be mentioned at all. No specific mention of the United States or any other country in North America or South America can be found in the Bible. None of the rather obscure references to distant lands can be taken specifically as a reference to the United States. Any final answer to the question is therefore an impossibility, but nevertheless some conclusions of a general character can be reached.

The World Situation At The End Time

As previous study of prophecy has indicated, the Scriptures provide an outline of major events in the period beginning with the rapture of the church and ending with the second coming of Christ to establish His kingdom. Immediately after the rapture there will be a period of preparation in which the ten-nation confederacy in the Mediterranean will emerge and the little horn of Daniel 7 will be revealed as its eventual

dictator. At the same time there will be the emergence of a world church as suggested in Revelation 17.

At the conclusion of this period of preparation the head of the Mediterranean confederacy, who will be the Roman "prince that shall come," will make a covenant with Israel (Daniel 9:27) which will introduce the second phase of the period, namely, a period of protection and peace for Israel. After enduring for three and a half years or one half of the projected seven-year period contemplated in the covenant, the Roman ruler will take the role of world dictator, assume the prerogatives of deity, and begin the great tribulation with its corresponding period of persecution for Israel and the emergence of a world religion with the world ruler as its deity. This third period will be climaxed by the second coming of Christ to the earth and its attending judgments.

The Relation Of The United States To These World Events

Although the Scriptures do not give any clear word concerning the role of the United States in relationship to the revived Roman Empire and the later development of the world empire, it is probable that the United States will be in some form of alliance with the Roman ruler. Most citizens of the United States of America have come from Europe and their sympathies would be more naturally with a European alliance than with Russia or countries in Eastern Asia. It may even be that the United States will provide large support for the Mediterranean confederacy as it seems to be in opposition to Russia, Eastern Asia, and Africa. Actually a balance of power in the world may exist at that time not too dissimilar to the present world situation, namely, that Europe and the Mediterranean area will be in alliance with America in opposition to Russia, Eastern Asia, and Africa. Based on geographic, religious and economic factors such an alliance of powers seems a natural sequence of present situations in the world.

If the end-time events include a destruction of Russia and her allies prior to the final period of great tribulation, this may trigger an unbalance in the world situation that will permit the Roman ruler to become a world ruler. In this event, it should be clear that the United States will be in a subordinate role and no longer the great international power that it is today.

It has been suggested by some that the total absence of Scriptural comment on the United States of America in the end time is evidence that the United States previously has been destroyed by an atomic war or some other catastrophic means and therefore no longer is a voice in international affairs. Such a solution, however, overlooks the fact that not only the United States but all of the Americas are omitted from prophecy, and the same is true of Australia. The fact is there are few references to any country at some distance from the Holy Land. The view, therefore, would be preferable that while the United States is in existence and possibly a power to be reckoned with in the rapidly moving events which characterize the end of the age, world political power will be centered in the Mediterranean area and necessarily the United States will play a subordinate role.

History has many records of great nations which have risen to unusual power and influence only to decline because of internal corruption or international complications. It may well be that the United States of America is today at the zenith of its power much as Babylon was in the sixth century b.c. prior to its sudden downfall at the hands of the Medes and the Persians (Daniel 5). Any realistic survey of moral conditions in the world today would justify a judgment of God on any nation, including that of the United States. The longsuffering God has offered unusual benefits to the United States both in a material and religious way, but they have been used with such profligacy that ultimate divine judgment may be expected. The question no longer is whether America deserves judgment, but rather why divine judgment

has been so long withheld from a nation which has enjoyed so much of God's bounty.

A partial answer may be found in the fact that the United States of America in spite of its failures has nevertheless been a source of major Christian testimony in the world and has done more to promote the missionary cause in terms of money and men than any other nation. Although the United States numbers only five per cent of the total world population, in the last century probably more than fifty per cent of the missionaries and money spent has come from America. In view of the fact that it is God's major purpose in this present age to call out Jew and Gentile to faith in Christ and to have the Gospel preached in all nations, the prosperity which has been true of America has made possible this end and may have been permitted by God to accomplish His holy purposes.

Another important reason for delay in divine judgment upon America is the Abrahamic promise concerning his seed, "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee" (Genesis 12:3). The United States for the most part has been kind to the Jew. Here the seed of Abraham has had religious freedom and opportunity to make wealth. Judgment on other nations has frequently been preceded by persecution of the Jew. So far in the United States the Jew has had equal treatment.

It is evident, however, that if Christ came for His church and all true Christians were caught out of this world, America then would be reduced to the same situation as other countries. The true church will be gone, and Israel may be persecuted. The drastically changed situation would no longer call for material or political blessing upon the United States. It would therefore follow that with the removal of the principal cause for withholding judgment, namely, the promotion of the missionary cause and befriending the wandering Jew, reason would no longer exist for maintaining America in its present standard of power politically and economically. It may well be that the United States, like Babylon of old, will lose its place of leadership in the world, and this will be a major cause in the shift of power to the Mediterranean scene.

Conclusion

Although conclusions concerning the role of America in prophecy in the end time are necessarily tentative, the Scriptural evidence is sufficient to conclude that America in that day will not be a major power and apparently does not figure largely in either the political, economic, or religious aspects of the world. America may well be at its zenith today both in power, influence, and opportunity. In view of the imminent return of the Lord, the time is short and the cause of evangelism is urgent. If prophecy has any one message as bearing on our times, it is that time and opportunity are short, and impending world conditions soon may close the door for further witness in many areas. What is true of America is true for the evangelical church throughout the world, and prophecy in general serves to emphasize the importance of the present task of bearing witness to the Gospel, beginning at Jerusalem and to the uttermost parts of the world.

The destiny of nations is in the hands of the omnipotent God. History is moving inexorably to its prophesied consummation. The divine program in all its detail will be fulfilled. The Son of God will reign in Zion. The nations will bow at His feet. Ultimately the present earth will be replaced with a new heaven and a new earth in which the New Jerusalem will be the home of the redeemed of all ages. All nations will continue throughout eternity to worship and adore the infinite Triune God whose majesty, wisdom, and power will be unquestioned. In that eternal day, God's love and grace will be supremely revealed in those among all nations who are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.

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