

Could the End-Times Rapture Mean the Fall of America?

The United States, while still prospering financially and wielding great military might, seems to be in trouble on numerous fronts. The status of the world's greatest superpower is not as firm as it has been in the past. Current events are magnifying cracks in the foundation. From the prophetic perspective, this raises important questions—questions about what role, if any, America plays in the end-time picture set forth in the Bible. When considering the showdown with Iran, and all its prophetic implications for Israel, the world and the Middle East, it's fitting to briefly assess America's future. The place of America in Bible prophecy is probably the most asked question about the end times.

America is never explicitly mentioned in the pages of Scripture. The Bible never uses the word "America," nor does it say, "the United States." However, through the years, prophecy teachers have isolated several Scriptures they believe could be symbolic references to America. Some of the more notable ones are:

—Isaiah 18: the unnamed nation.

—Ezekiel 38:13: the "young lions" or "merchants of Tarshish."

—Revelation 17–18: Babylon the Great

Having examined each of these views in detail, I don't believe any of them directly refer to America. I don't believe America is mentioned directly or indirectly in Scripture.

America's absence from the end-time picture raises the "why" question. Why is America missing in action in end-time prophecy? One obvious possibility is that America is simply not mentioned, just like most other nations. End-time prophecy

shines the spotlight primarily on Israel and the Middle East, so America may just be omitted for that reason. While that's certainly possible, end-time prophecies do include Russia, Turkey and the kings of the East, all of which lie outside the Middle East, so including America would not necessarily be a stretch.

So what are we to make, if anything, of the scriptural silence concerning America in the end times?

While there is certainly room for disagreement on this point, I believe the lack of any mention of America in the end times is a clue that something must happen to America to lower the nation from superpower status before the end times begin. After all, it would be strange to omit any reference to the world's greatest superpower in end-time events if America is still the greatest nation on earth.

Assuming it's true that America's absence from end-time prophecy is an indication that America is no longer the world's dominant power, what will happen to significantly decrease America's influence?

While a multitude of scenarios are possible alone or in a deadly combination, taking all the facts into account, my view is that the final fall of America will occur as a result of the rapture of all believers to heaven. The Bible predicts that a day is coming when the bride of Jesus Christ will be suddenly whisked away to heaven in the time it takes to blink. All over the earth, believers will suddenly disappear.

When the rapture occurs, every believer in America and all over the earth will be immediately transported to heaven, leaving those who are left behind to pick up the pieces of a shriveled workforce and shattered economy, not to mention the psychological trauma and fear that will prevail. While there are believers in every nation, about 5-10% of Americans profess faith in Jesus Christ alone for salvation from sin.

The sudden removal of 20-30 million people from the United States would be apocalyptic (literally).

While no one on earth knows for sure what will happen to the United States in the end times, the lack of any biblical mention of America as a key player does not bode well for continued American greatness and dominance.

Knowing this should not cause us to give up and do nothing—to throw up our hands in despair. We need to continue to do three main things. First, fervently pray for our nation and its leaders every day (1 Tim. 2:1–2).

Second, we must strive to live godly, righteous lives as salt and light in an increasingly decaying and darkening world. Proverbs 14:34 reminds us that “righteousness exalts a nation.”

Third, America needs to maintain support for Israel, so she can experience the promise to those who bless Israel (Gen. 12:1–3). President Trump has honored the Jewish people by recognizing the Golan Heights as part of Israeli territory and declaring that Israeli settlements in the West Bank do not violate international law. In spite of the United States’ shortcomings, I believe God’s hand of blessing remains upon this land, at least to some degree, for our support of Israel.

We do all these things as we await the coming of Jesus. No one knows when He will come. We need to be ready all the time and do what we can while we can in His service. {eoa}

Taken from Showdown with Iran by Mark Hitchcock Copyright © 2020 by Emanate Books, an imprint of Thomas Nelson. Used by permission of Thomas Nelson, .

Mark Hitchcock has authored over 30 books related to Bible prophecy. He has earned Th.M. and Ph.D. degrees from Dallas Theological Seminary and is an associate professor there. He lives in Edmond, Oklahoma, with his wife, Cheryl, and serves

as senior pastor of Faith Bible Church. He and his wife have two married sons and three grandchildren. Follow him on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.