

Is the United States in Prophecy?

Prophecy has two main “hubs”: 1) The nation of Israel, 2) The Messiah. Most strands of prophecy connect to one of these two great themes. As we consider the place of the United States in last days’ prophecy, it would be wise to keep this in mind.

The fact is the United States is not directly stated to be involved as a major player in last days’ prophetic events related to Israel. Of course, we assume that in some form the USA is represented in general when the Bible speaks of “all nations” in relation to end time prophecy, but the fact is we are not singled out as a major player. Why?

Well, since the Bible doesn’t say, we can’t speak with dogmatism here, but a logical conclusion would be that as the last days’ climax comes to a head, the USA will no longer be a major player in regard to Israel or the Middle East.

Prophetically, the major players that touch Israel, and hence last days’ events are seen to be Russia and her coalition as found in Ezekiel 38-39, and in addition to that the Antichrist who comes out of Europe. Evidently (argument from silence), the USA will at some point go by the wayside as a major player.

Some think that the United States will continue to be a dominant player until the Rapture. The United States (apostate as we are) still by far has the largest amount of professing Christians anywhere in the world. If the Rapture were to take place in the near future, it would not necessarily make much of an impact on Russia or Europe, but it would undoubtedly change the entire complexion of the United States. In effect, the USA would cease to be the nation we now know it to be. Overnight it would go from being a superpower to a nation just trying to survive.

Others think that the United States may well take a major hit by weapons of mass destruction which would completely cripple us as a world power. With rogue nations and radical groups now acquiring nuclear weapons this possibility no longer sounds far-fetched. When serious players in the world such as Iran call the USA “The Great Satan” and publicly call on the world to envision a world without the United States of America, that is noteworthy.

Still others surmise that economically the USA may at some point collapse to where we are no longer a major player among the nations of the world.

Whatever the variables, it is noteworthy that the prophetic Scriptures do not present the United States as a major player in end-time events.

“Evidently, Antichrist and his European empire will replace America as Israel’s chief ally and as the major world power (see Daniel 2:44-45; 7:23-25). This strong presence of Europe indicates to me that something will have happened to America that shifts world power back to Europe.” -- **Mark Hitchcock** in IS AMERICA IN BIBLE PROPHECY?, p. 67

However, in my study of the Scriptures, I have found one (only one) place that may implicate the United States in relation to end-time prophecy. It is not explicitly clear and therefore we must not be dogmatic, but it definitely is a possibility that deserves serious consideration. This text is found in the context of the “latter days” war invasion of Israel by Gog and Magog (involving Russia and Iran, etc.) as found in Ezekiel 38-39.

Ezekiel 38:13 (NKJV)

13 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?’ ” ’

Scholars generally agree that Sheba and Dedan are the Arab peoples dwelling in modern-day Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States (cf. 1 Kg. 10:1-13, 2 Chron. 9:1-12, Isa. 21:13, Jer. 25:23, 49:8, Ezek. 25:13, 27:15, 20, 38:13). Even now Saudi Arabia is concerned about Iran advancing. Saudi Arabia is concerned about two things – possession of her oil and possession of Mecca. No wonder they will sit this one out. They want no part of Iran and company moving in on their territory.

But observe that they only raise questions. They are not in a position to stop this aggressive action against Israel or do anything about it.

Also note that Tarshish and all her young lions also raise questioning objections and yet don’t do anything.

Tarshish was a term that in ancient times described the western extreme of human civilization – the farthest parts West. That designation is significant!

Jonah in his rebellion headed for Tarshish (cf. Jonah 1:3). There are various viewpoints as to the precise identity of Tarshish – so we must not be dogmatic. Some think it refers to Spain. But others think because of the context here in Ezekiel 38 related to the “latter years” – “latter days” (Ezek. 38:8, 16) it more probably refers to the western world that will be in place at the time of the end.

The “western most” world in that sense is thought to be Britain, with the “young lions” representing British colonies that then became their own countries such as the United States, Canada, Australia, etc. Again, it is not totally clear, so we can’t be dogmatic.

However, in this scenario one of the “young lions” would be the United States. It is true that the “western world” (Tarshish) as seen in the development of history, and certainly in relation to the “latter days” fits this picture.

So, if the British view is correct – and it might be – then this is the only place that United States of America is specifically implicated in the prophetic Scriptures – albeit not directly. But note that if this is the case, she has a very passive role, simply raising a few anemic questions that have no muscle behind them. That would seem to fit the trajectory of where the U.S.A. and those long associated with the British Empire are going. This would fit the view that America fades into virtual insignificance and is no longer in a position, for whatever reason, to help Israel in the end times. Into that vacuum will step the Antichrist.

The prophets spoke with amazing insight and clarity regarding the last days’ events. For whatever reason, the USA in the end is not a major player. We are not told why, so we can only speculate.

However, for as long as the Church remains on the scene our mission ever remains the same – no matter what is happening. As the church, we ought to be doing everything we can to share the gospel of Jesus Christ. We need to constantly live in light of an eternal perspective.

Are we the terminal generation? We don’t know, but God has told us to live “READY” no matter where we are at in relation to the specifics of God’s prophetic timetable. We are always only a heartbeat away from eternity!

Live Ready!