



## **GOD'S JUDGMENT OF THE UNITED STATES**

BY TOM SWARTZWELDER

President Thomas Jefferson says, "I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; that His justice cannot sleep forever."

Jefferson, though, is not the only person who is trembling.

One of the most troubling absences in the Holy Scriptures concerns the United States of America. No other nation has ever attained the power of the United States, but it is generally conceded the United States does not appear in the Scriptures.

The customarily accepted premillennial view of prophecy describes end-time events in great detail. The revival of the Roman Empire in some form seems a certainty. The resurgence of Babylonian influence seems another certainty. Israel's regathering to the promised land is a generally accepted event. The return of the Messiah at the climactic Battle of Armageddon has wide acceptance, also.

But the United States of America does not appear. Why not? How can such a powerful nation, currently the world's only superpower, be missing?

Questions abound but without answer. Does the United States collapse and lose its status as a world power? Could it be that the current political unrest leads to a new American civil war or other turmoil that creates a dysfunctional country? Does another financial crisis, even worse than 2007-2008, bankrupt the country? Does the United States turn even more isolationist? Is the United States destroyed by a nuclear attack or perhaps by natural disasters such as are depicted in the early days of the Apocalypse? Does the occurrence of a pretribulation rapture of God's saints so change the country that unpredictable black swan events occur? Does the Apocalypse breakdown in oceanic/air transportation isolate the United States from world events in the Middle East through no

choice of its own? On the other hand, might the United Nations, located in New York City, become the headquarters of the resurrected Roman Empire and, thus, the United States actually *is* in prophecy as part of the Antichrist's power base?

Though unmentioned by name or description, it seems certain the United States will be involved in the final battle to control planet earth: the Battle of Armageddon. The Apostle John prophesied, "And I saw *coming* out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs; for they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the entire world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty" (Revelation 16:13-14, NASB). The phrase "the kings of the entire world" would likely include even the far western country of the United States just as World War II included distant countries.

The Apocalyptic judgments have a worldwide component that will undoubtedly affect the United States: "the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world" (Revelation 3:10, NKJV) and "The sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place" (Revelation 6:12-14, NKJV). Though unmentioned, the United States will undoubtedly participate in these worldwide events, too.

But not yet...

For His own reasons, God has, thus far, refrained from pouring forth His judgments on the United States. Several possible reasons may be stated. First, no country has been more generous to the world than the United States. The isolationists in the United States declare, "Charity *begins* at home" but, in reality, most isolationists mean, "Charity *ends* at home." No matter what they have, they will always want more and want others, especially the less fortunate countries of the world, to have less. The Frenchman Alexis de Tocqueville counters their logic in these words,

I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her commodious harbors and her ample rivers, and it was not there. I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her fertile fields and boundless forests, and it was not there. I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her rich mines and her vast world commerce, and it was not there. I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her public school system and her institutions of learning, and it was not there. I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her democratic Congress and her matchless Constitution, and it was not there. Not until I went

into the churches of America and heard her pulpits flame with righteousness did I understand the secret of her genius and power. America is great because she is good, and if America ever ceases to be good, she will cease to be great.

Second, the United States represents not only the land but also the hope of the free and the brave. The Statue of Liberty is more than a statue; it is also a symbol of hope to a despairing world. The Statue bears the words: "Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!" Those words bear a similarity to the Lord's own words: "Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28, NKJV) and "You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). No other nation has attempted to provide as much freedom as the United States. That effort has both a downside and an upside. However, it is based upon the scriptural principle that man was created to be free, not an automaton or a servant of the state as in communism. The world needs such a symbol of hope at this time.

Third, the United States has provided shelter, safety and peace for the Jews. God's Jewish people have encountered much discrimination in the United States, but the situation is better in the United States than elsewhere in the world. Forty percent of the world's Jewish population lives in Israel followed by thirty-six percent in the United States. France is in third place, but less than three percent of the Jewish population lives in France. Clearly, the Jews are in the United States for a reason that is beneficial to their survival and prosperity. If they could not live in the United States, where would they go? Perhaps God spares the United States for the security of His own people.

Fourth, the United States has provided most of the missionaries and missionary support during the modern missionary movement. God's plan emphasizes world evangelization. God has burdened many Christians in the United States with a missionary vision. Some go to foreign fields to share the gospel while many others give financially to support the foreign effort. Billions of dollars are invested each year in this mission, much more than is raised in other countries. Clearly, any judgment would greatly diminish America's effort to evangelize the world.

But America's sin cannot remain unpunished forever. Mrs. Billy Graham says, "If God does not judge America, He will have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah."

What scenario might change the current situation and hasten judgment? Perhaps it is foolish to speculate; however, the human mind searches for answers. One scenario deserves mention. This scenario is built upon either a pretribulation rapture or midtribulation rapture of God's saints.

If Christ comes for His church today, all believers will be “caught up to meet the Lord in the air” (1 Thessalonians 4:17). The United States probably has more believers and a higher percentage of believers than any country in the world. If ten million believers (less than 3% of today’s population) were removed from American life, the damage to American society would be severe. America would lose educators, politicians, machinists, lawyers, military personnel, health workers, transportation personnel such as pilots and truckers, information technology talent, farmers, parents, financial specialists, etc. This would severely damage the most important infrastructure of the country: qualified workers. The American economy would take a sudden hit like none previously experienced. The economic dislocations would likely lead to a major recession and perhaps worse.

The rapture of the saints would also remove the salt from the United States. The goodness which currently restrains evil would be greatly reduced. Religious influence and its accompanying morality would disappear overnight. Without restraint, the amount of sin would rise to the heavens as it did in the case of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Also, the American missionary effort would cease, because the missionaries would no longer be on the earth. Instead, the United States would be in need of missionaries.

At the same time the Holy Spirit will step aside (not be removed) and return to a role more similar to His Old Testament role. In fulfillment of God’s program, His restraining influence will be greatly diminished. This lack of restraint will open the door to the rise of the Antichrist (2 Thessalonians 2:8-9).

The impact of the rapture upon the world cannot be overstated in this author’s view. Suddenly, the United States will be like the other nations with no distinguishing spiritual influence.

As a result, the United States may quickly lose its role of world leader. The power will switch to western Europe or to a body such as the United Nations.

Our own beloved United States will then be in line to experience the same judgment as the other nations of the world, because there will be no reason for God to extend His grace any longer.

This author hastens to add this scenario is nothing but speculation on his part. It is offered, not as gospel, but as one plausible scenario in a very complex world.

The human mind does not like questions with no answers. Unfortunately for inquisitive minds, God has *not* chosen to provide answers regarding the role of the United States in prophecy.

However, we do know, “Wrongdoers will altogether be destroyed; The future of the wicked will be eliminated” (Psalm 37:38, NASB).

“For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?” (Revelation 6:17, NKJV). The answer is, “No person and no country.”

That answer will also be true of the United States of America.

Author’s Note: This article is the Appendix in the soon-to-be-released *God’s Righteousness on Trial: Will Evil Triumph?* God is being voted out by today’s world. Will that vote, though, be allowed to stand? Does God get the last vote?