

America in the Bible? (Not?)

Introduction

I have often wondered if America is referred to in the Bible - I believe others have struggled with this question as well. Although America was not recognized as a nation until after 1776, a considerable portion of Bible prophecy concerns times much later than this. Based on the present world situation it seems that America should logically be involved in some of the end-times events recorded in the Bible, and thus, should be included (using some appropriate symbolic identity).

There are seventeen books of prophecy in the Old Testament (OT), several of which concern end-times events, but the book of Revelation in the New Testament (NT) provides the most complete coverage of events that occur during the last seven years of the world as we know it. The book of Revelation was written for all of Jesus' servants (believers), but it primarily concerns Israel, God's chosen nation. However, the events that are described therein have significant impact on the entire world. America is the only present-day nation committed to the support of Israel. For it to not be included in these prophetic end-times narratives seems strange, almost like an oversight. If America's pledge to Israel for undying support continues to the end, you would certainly think some indication of that would appear in OT prophecy, and/or in the book of Revelation. The purpose of this chapter is to identify and analyze three possible Bible references that may provide an answer to this seeming conundrum, one documented in the OT, and two in the NT.

The Northern Army War

One of the most likely events in which we might expect America to be involved is recorded in Ezekiel 38, where armies thought to be from Russia, Persia, Ethiopia, Iran, Iraq, Germany, and Armenia (and possibly others), come against Israel in what is identified as the Northern Army War. Ezekiel 38:8 indicates that this army comes against Israel in the end-times (*“latter years”*). The approximate timing of this event seems to be reinforced by references to Israel’s regathering and apparent agricultural success in bringing the country back from being a wasteland. Many, many Jews have returned to the land of Israel since it was recognized and established as a nation in 1948, and the agricultural and economic success achieved by the Jewish people since that time is recognized worldwide. Although the exact timing of this war during the *“latter years”* is difficult to establish, there are several clues that help to identify the period during which it must occur. We already know that it begins during the seven years described by Daniel 9:27, which is also the period of time described in the book of Revelation. Ezekiel 39:22 states that Israel will recognize the Lord as their God from the end of the war, forward. This suggests that the war begins during the Great Tribulation (the last 3 1/2-years of Daniel’s prophesied seven year period), and results in the mass exodus of the Jews from Judea (M’t. 24:16). Revelation 12:14 states that the Jewish remnant (*“the woman”*), will be provided with safe passage to her place in the wilderness, where God protects and nourishes her to the end. Ezekiel 38:18-22 describes events that also occur during the day of the Lord’s wrath (Re. 16:13-21), which seems to place the timing of the war and the day of God’s wrath together. Ezekiel 39:8 also makes reference to *“the day whereof I have spoken,”* which could certainly be referring to the Day of the Lord, the time of the Great

Tribulation (the last 3 1/2-years). Joel 2:20 also records the Lord's dealing with the Northern Army during the "*Day of the Lord.*"

The exact timing of the events that occur during the seven year period prophesied by Daniel is not clearly documented in the Bible. For a more complete analysis of events that occur during this period I recommend that interested readers refer to Chapter 8 of the "Layman's Commentary on the Book of Revelation," by Jesse C. Jones, available at the website SCRIBD.

The scriptures referred to above lead me to the conclusion that the Northern Army comes against Israel just prior to, or near the beginning of the time identified as the "*Great day of the Lord's wrath,*" (see Revelation Chapter 16). The question raised regarding this event is, Where is America? America is the only nation that has identified Israel's destiny with its own, thus, you would think our nation would be in the thick of the battle: Israel's very existence seems to be in jeopardy. The only place in this passage of scripture that could seemingly refer to America is in Ezekiel 38:13, which says, "*Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, art thou come to take a spoil? hast thou gathered thou company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil?*" In this verse "*Sheba, Dedan, and Tarshish*" represent merchant lands, that traded with the isles ("*young lions*"), by ship. England has often been referred to as the "old lion," and its empire included many lands that were settled, or conquered in war, any of which could possibly be identified as "*young lions.*" Thus, we need to consider the basis for considering America to be one of the "*young lions,*" for symbolic biblical reference purposes.

The phrase "young lions" is cited eleven times in the KJV of the Bible: all of which are in the OT. The interpretation of this phrase is often given as "princes," or young warriors, who

defend against oppressors, or attack enemies. The “*young lions*” in Ezekiel 38:13 join with *Sheba, Dedan*, and the merchants of *Tarshish*, in questioning those coming against Israel about their motive. Sadly, this does sound like the recent responses of America in dealings with troublesome nations.

Zechariah 11:3 records the “*young lions*” roaring for the “*pride of Jordan is spoiled.*” This apparently refers to the fall of Jerusalem, and the loss of stature and prestige of the Jewish leaders (the Jewish young lions).

I find little justification here for assuming that the phrase “*young lions*” is a symbolic biblical name for America.

The Great Whore

A lengthy article available at the internet site “THE PROPHETICNEWS” entitled, “25 Reasons Why America is Mystery Babylon,” documents the argument in favor of New York City (and America) being identified as the “*Great Whore*” in Revelation Chapter 17. I will not try to summarize this lengthy article, but will argue for a different conclusion by using excerpts from A Layman’s Commentary on the Book of Revelation, Chapters 17 and 18, written by Jesse C. Jones, and available at the website SCRIBD.

In Revelation 17:1-18, John the Apostle is called aside by one of the angels who pour out the seven plagues of God’s wrath, and he is shown the judgment of the great whore.

“And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven

heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration. And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. And here is the mind of wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition. And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful. And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.”

The whore is described as sitting upon many waters, which represents peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues (Rev 17:15). Thus, we know that the whore's influence and power arise from her influence over many people and nations. The word whoredom is used many times in the Bible to describe religious apostasy, a turning away from God to the worship of idols. The kings of the earth have committed spiritual fornication with this whore church: they have submitted to, and accepted the whore church doctrine, which promotes pagan idolatry under the guise of, and professed adherence to Christian faith. As a result, inhabitants of the earth have become intoxicated (mad) with the wine of her fornication. Sadly, many denominations and individual churches in our land seem blind to the wiles of the devil in this regard. They drink the wine of the whore's fornication until they are willing to accept almost any abomination: homosexuality, same-sex marriage, pedophilia, pornography, abortion, adultery, and fornication, as well as many other less grievous offenses. Satan can raise up forms of religion that incorporate just about every Christian precept except belief in salvation, based on the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Even Satan's ministers present themselves as ministers of righteousness (2 Co. 11:15). Satan has been successful in preparing a significant part of the contemporary Christian church for the coming of the antichrist and his whore church.

The whore is holding a golden cup full of abominations and uncleanness of her fornications. Jeremiah 51:7 refers to a golden cup that represents Babylon, a focus of great evil in the OT, and we note that Revelation 16:19 says that God remembered Babylon, to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. Thus, we have considerable evidence that the golden cup in the hand of the whore represents Babylon. However, we assume this

refers to a spiritual Babylon: the three earthly cities that have been suggested as likely candidates for this hateful role include Babylon, Jerusalem, and Rome.

Upon the forehead of the whore was written, “*MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.*” The mystery of iniquity (2 Th. 2:7), was already at work during the time Paul wrote this letter to the Thessalonians, but the full revelation of this mystery is held in check until the “*one that restraineth*” is taken out of the way. When believers are raptured during the Great Tribulation, the influence of the Holy Spirit on earth will be greatly diminished. When Christ returned to heaven after His resurrection He sent the Holy Spirit to reside within, and minister to and through, individual believers. When these believers are taken from the earth, this aspect of the Holy Spirit’s ministry is completed, and God then prepares to pour out His wrath on the earth, and those left behind. The presence of the Holy Spirit in the believers on earth before the rapture restrains the evil plans and activities of Satan, but when the believers are raptured that wicked one (antichrist), will be without restraint. Iniquity within the harlot church will then be fully revealed.

In Revelation 17:7, the angel begins to explain to John the mystery of the woman and the beast that carries her. The beast is described as one that lived, and died, and lived again when he arose out of the bottomless pit. Compare this to Revelation 1:4, which describes God as “*. . . him which is, and which was, and which is to come.*” This is another instance of Satan trying to counterfeit God and His Christ. Revelation Chapter 13 documents the antichrist’s (beast’s) rising out of the bottomless pit. Here we have additional evidence that the antichrist is wounded unto death, but his deadly wound is healed, and he lives again. The antichrist rises to power proclaiming peace, and making a treaty with the Jews, allowing

them to resume daily sacrifices in the temple (Da. 9:27). He apparently reigns for three-and-one-half-years in relative quietude before things begin to get out of hand and he begins to meet resistance, as his true nature surfaces. This seems like an appropriate time for an assassin to strike a blow to his head, but instead of death and subsequent burial, he is restored to life. The scripture says that he ascends out of the bottomless pit. We know that the bottomless pit is the abode of the dragon and his demons. The antichrist's spirit, which goes to hell at his death, is apparently replaced by the spirit of Satan himself when he is restored to life, for he becomes an absolute fiend after his resurrection. This is all part of a gigantic charade to mimic Christ's death and resurrection. All those that continue to dwell on the earth whose names are not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world will wonder at this seeming resurrection. They will undoubtedly look on this resurrected beast as a god.

Revelation 17:9 states that the seven heads are seven mountains, or kingdoms, on which the woman is sitting, and in Revelation 17:10, we see that there are seven kings, five of which are fallen, one still exists, and one is yet to come. In this verse we find there are seven kingdoms (and kings) leading up to the final reign of the beast, who is identified in Revelation 17:11, as the eighth king, but of the seven. These kingdoms include Babylon, Persia, Greece, Egypt, and Assyria. Rome is the sixth kingdom that still remains when the antichrist comes to power. Although the current Roman empire is in disarray, and greatly weakened, the implication from this passage of scripture is that the antichrist rises up from this empire. To properly explain this scripture the antichrist's reign must represent both the seventh and eighth kingdoms. His initial reign, beginning when he arises out of the sea, lasts for the first 3 1/2-years, and undoubtedly represents the seventh kingdom. His second reign lasts for the

final 3 1/2-years, and apparently begins when he arises out of the abyss after his deadly wound. This second reign represents the eighth kingdom. This would explain the meaning of Revelation 17:11, and be in accord with the number of kingdoms in Revelation 17:10.

The ten horns on the beast represent ten kings that will receive their kingdoms coincident with the rise of the antichrist. They will rule for one hour, which is interpreted as being a limited period of time, and they will give their power and strength to the beast. We conclude from this that at the beginning of Daniel's 70th week a person of fierce countenance, understanding dark sentences, rises up within a confederation of ten nations, loosely identified with the Roman Empire, as it existed after Constantine's death. These ten kings are given rule during the antichrist's rise to power, but soon after he consolidates his ruling authority, he removes them. During the consolidation of his reign this king (antichrist) subdues the rulers of three of these nations. His power is greatly increased over the next few years until he controls the whole earth (Da. 7:23). In establishing his expanding kingdom he encourages the growth of the harlot church (represented by the whore) under the control and guidance of his assistant, who we recognize as the false prophet. The ruthless enforcement of the antichrist's policies eventually begin to cause unrest that leads to his assassination from a deadly wound to the head. Satan seizes this opportunity to enforce absolute fealty from those left on the earth, so he resurrects the body of the antichrist with his own evil spirit. The antichrist thus fits the description of Revelation 17:8, which says that the beast was, and is not, and ascends out of the bottomless pit, and goes into perdition.

Whereas the antichrist was totally evil before his assassination, he returns as an absolute fiend, demanding the worship of all people, severely persecuting the Jews and Christians, and allowing no one to buy or sell unless they receive his mark of identification. It is at this

time that he places the abomination of desolation (his image) in the temple and demands that all people worship him. This is what he has desired since the beginning: worship, for he longs to be God's equal. It is also the time alluded to in Revelation 17:16, which states that the ten kings allied with the antichrist turn against the whore, make her desolate, eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For some reason that is not given the antichrist and his ten-nation kingdom turn against the harlot church that he and his henchman (the false prophet) organized and nurtured. The antichrist is very jealous of any person or entity that receives worship; possibly the harlot church turns away from worshipping him and his image, and thus earns his ire.

Revelation 17:18 GNT states that the whore is "*the great city, which has kingship over the kings of the earth.*" As indicated above, biblical expositors have understood this to mean Babylon, Rome, or Jerusalem. The context of this scripture leaves little doubt that it refers to the location of the antichrist's power base; the thing that is not clear is whether this refers to his economic and political power base, or just his religious power base. We have interpreted the scripture references to the whore in Revelation 17 as applying to her representation of the harlot church, having religious authority over peoples, nations, multitudes, and tongues. In Revelation 18 she represents the world's economy (commerce), having power over trade, business, banking, and transportation. It is not clear whether this "*great city*" is the seat of the antichrist's religious authority through the harlot church, or whether this refers to the seat of his commercial power base through the ten underling kings, or possibly both.

Revelation 18:1-24 describes the fall of the antichrist's economic power base. The economic collapses in 1929 and 2009 are the only events in recent memory that might be com-

pared to this, but there will be no recovery from the collapse described here. God's judgment on spiritual Babylon includes much more than just the crash of markets of trade.

“And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye not be partakers of her sins, and that ye not receive her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her as even she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup that she hath filled fill to her double. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit as a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore, shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning. Standing afar off for fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour is thy judgment come. And the merchants of the world shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more: The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men. And the fruits

that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all. The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, And saying, Alas, alas that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in shops, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like this great city! And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! For in one hour is she made desolate. Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles, and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her. And a mighty angel took a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. And the voice of the harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee; And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.”

In this chapter John sees a very powerful angel come down from heaven with glory that shines over much of the earth. The angel cries with a mighty voice that Babylon is fallen, is fallen. It seems clear from this passage of scripture that merchants and tradesmen from across the world establish lucrative business relationships (committed fornication), with this great commercial center, and its destruction generates much distress. These merchants

trade fine merchandise of gold and silver, precious stones, silk, linen, and thyine wood, used for incense and inlaying, to their contacts within the city.

The judgment of this great commercial center is going to be devastating, for she is to receive double what she has given, and her plagues of death, mourning, famine, and fire will come in one day. The kings of the earth, and the merchants, tradesmen, and shipmasters that were made wealthy through trade with the great city will stand afar off and cry, and cast dust on their heads. However, the saints, prophets, and apostles in heaven will rejoice, for God will have avenged them. A mighty angel casts a great millstone into the sea in Revelation 18:21 saying, thus, with violence shall the great city be thrown down. It may be that the destruction of the city is, in part, caused by the tidal wave created by this symbolic millstone. The voice of harpers, musicians, pipers, and trumpeters will not be heard any more, nor will there be any craftsmen or merchants in this city ever again. This city is seemingly the engine that drives the antichrist's worldwide economy. Thus, it figures strongly in the death of prophets and saints all over the world, and their blood cries out for revenge.

To return to our discussion of exactly which city is referred to here, I believe we need to start with what most expositors have concluded about the focus of Chapter 17, and Chapter 18. There is wide agreement that Chapter 17 refers to the whore's headquarters, the city from which the false prophet administers the antichrist's religious base; whereas Chapter 18 refers to his economic power base, which obviously has entanglements throughout the end-times world. I personally believe a case can be made for these two chapters to be referring to the same city. Note that Chapter 18 seemingly continues to describe the destruction of spiritual Babylon, which we identified as the golden cup in the whore's hand. Further, Revelation 18:3 refers to God's anger at the fornication precipitated by the whore, as well as many

other negative references to “*ber*,” which we also assume refers to the whore. The question that remains is, “Which city is it that is referred to here?” To suggest any answer to this we must fall back on our own human intuition, which is always suspect. I offer the following:

1. I would tend to eliminate Babylon simply because it does not exist at this point in time, and I do not see any activity on the horizon to indicate that it is likely to be re-built to become the center of religion and/or commerce in the time remaining. OT prophecy also argues against Babylon ever arising again as a major city (Is. 13:19-22; Jer. 51:37).
2. I would also question that the city referred to is Jerusalem, due to all the other competing events that occur in Israel during the last seven years. Also, Jerusalem is historically the home of the Jews, God’s chosen nation: not a likely location for a powerful competing world-wide religious system.
3. The city of Rome that has several features that argue in its favor. It is located on seven hills, it has a history of being the religious center for much of the Christian world since the time of Constantine, and the antichrist comes to power through the evolved Roman kingdom. However, several other cities including Constantinople (Istanbul), Brussels, and Jerusalem also boast of their seven hills. Everything considered Rome seems to be a viable location for the antichrist’s religious power base described in Revelation 17. That it could also become his commercial power base seems less likely.
4. We must recognize the potential of New York becoming the antichrist’s economical power base, due to its present position as the financial capital of the world. We will discuss this possibility later.

Is America “The” Nation?

Matthew 21:33 relates a parable given to the Jews by the Lord about the householder who developed a vineyard, let it out to certain husbandmen, and then departed to a far country. When the time of the fruit drew near he sent servants to the husbandmen to collect the proceeds from the crop, but the husbandmen beat, killed, and stoned the servants. Then the householder sent his son, thinking that the husbandmen would respect the son. Instead they killed the son also. This parable obviously refers to the Jews insisting on the crucifixion of Jesus by Pontus Pilate, Procurator of Judea. Matthew 21:43 records God’s plan of action as a result of the Jews rejection of Christ: *“Therefore say I unto you, “The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.”*

When I recently became aware of this verse I was shocked that I had not noticed it before. My immediate thought was, “Could this be referring to America?” I couldn’t think of any other nation that had been blessed as we have, any nation whose founding documents all validate the fact that America was established as a Christian nation. To prove that this verse, in all probability, does in fact refer to America, I want to start by establishing America’s Christian foundation by quoting a few excerpts from the many documents and statements attributed to notable personages that the time of our nation’s beginning:

1. The Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776, *“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.”*
2. Thomas Jefferson :*“My God! how little do my countrymen know what precious blessings they are in possession of, and which no other people of earth enjoy!” “God who gave us life gave us liberty. Can the liberties of a nation be secure when we have removed a conviction that these*

liberties are the gift of God? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, that His justice cannot sleep forever.”

3. Noah Webster: *“The moral principles and precepts contained in the Scriptures ought to form the basis of all our civil constitutions and laws. All the miseries and evils which men suffer from vice, crime, ambition, injustice, oppression, slavery, and war, proceed from their despising or neglecting the precepts contained in the Bible.”*

4. Abraham Lincoln, April 30, 1863: *“We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven. We have been preserved, these many years, in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth, and power, as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace, and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us! It behooves us, then to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness.”*

5. George Washington: *“No people can be bound to acknowledge and adore the invisible hand which conducts the the affairs of men more than the people of the United States. Every step which they have advanced to the character of an independent nation seem to have been distinguished by some token of providential agency...We ought no less to be persuaded that the propitious smiles of heaven cannot expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right, which heaven itself has ordained.”*

6. John Adams: *"We have no government armed with powers capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion. Avarice, ambition, revenge, or gallantry would break the strongest cords of our Constitution as a whale goes through a net. Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other."*

7. John Jay about the importance of faith for virtue, *"Should our Republic ever forget this fundamental precept of governance, men are certain to shed their responsibilities for licentiousness and the great experiment will surely be doomed."*

8. Benjamin Franklin: *"Only a virtuous people are capable of freedom. Nothing brings more pain than too much pleasure; nothing more bondage than too much liberty."*

9. 1776 Virginia Declaration of Rights: *"Free government, or the blessings of liberty, can be preserved to any people, but by a firm adherence to justice, moderation, temperance, frugality, and virtue."*

10. Theodore Roosevelt, July 4, 1886: *"We must keep steadily in mind that no people were ever yet benefited by riches if their prosperity corrupted their virtue."*

11. James Madison: *"Liberty may be endangered by the abuses of liberty as well as the abuses of power."*

12. Alex De Tocqueville, noted French political philosopher visited America in her infancy to find the secret of her greatness. He first examined businesses, schools, national government, and cities and towns but could not find the reason for its strength. Then he visited the churches of our nation whose pulpits were aflame with righteousness and found the secret which he summarized as follows: *"America is great because America is good; if America ever ceases to be good, America will cease to be great."*

13. In as late as 1892 the Supreme Court rendered the following decision: “Our laws and institutions must necessarily be based upon and embody the teachings of The Redeemer of mankind. It is impossible that it should be otherwise; and in this sense and this extent our civilization and our institutions are emphatically Christian... This is a religious people. This is historically true. From the discovery of this continent to the present hour, there is a single voice making this making this affirmation...we find everywhere a clear recognition of the same truth...These and many other matters which might be noticed, add a volume of unofficial declarations to the mass of organic utterances that this is a Christian nation.”

I hope these statements of the founders, as well as those of later leaders and notable individuals and groups will convince readers that America was indeed established as a Christian nation, guided by people of virtue, who believed that freedom was worth fighting and dying for. Of the 56 men who signed the Declaration of Independence five were captured by the British and tortured before they died, twelve had their homes sacked or burned, two lost sons and one lost two sons in the fighting. Nine died in the war. They knew when they signed the Declaration on July 4, 1776, in the city of Philadelphia, that if they succeeded they faced years of hardship, and if they failed they would face a hangman’s noose as traitors. The closing words of the Declaration declare: “*With a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.*”

The Constitution of the United States was prepared by 55 men who were appointed to a Constitutional Convention in May 1787, with the task of developing a National structure which would deal with foreign nations, and administer matters of National concern (as distinguished from State or local concern). The 13 states had already established guidelines of their own, and the Constitution was to be based on these to the benefit of the population as

a whole. The National government was to be supreme in its domain, and the State governments were to be sovereign in all affairs not National or foreign. Although they had difficulties for the first few weeks, 81-year old Benjamin Franklin rose and addressed the troubled convention, pleading that they remember God had brought them through the struggle of the war, and that He would surely guide them in this endeavor if they only asked. After that they began each day of deliberation with prayer.

The men of the Convention were of extraordinary ability and experience, men of high regard like Washington, Franklin, and Hamilton, chief justices of the supreme courts, and men who had achieved distinction at the bar and in business. Of the 55 members of the Constitutional Convention 31 were lawyers. On September 17, 1787, thirty-nine delegates signed the Constitution, and nine months later the required nine states ratified it, putting it into effect. Rhode Island was the last of the thirteen states to ratify it in 1790.

This is a short summary of the number of speeches, statements, documents, prayers, and events that that led up to the fight for freedom in the Revolutionary war, and establishment of the rule of law afterward. If I ever had any doubts about the Christian foundation of our nation they were certainly eliminated after this study. The wisdom of the founders when they forged America, the greatest and most prosperous nation in all history, was given to them from God, because they acknowledged Him and and sought His aid in all their endeavors. Their oft-repeated theme to future generations was that our nation would not continue to be so blessed if we turned away from God, and were no longer a God-fearing nation. We will address this possibility later.

Before we leave this subject I want to recognize the resources I have used for many of the quotes and historical facts given above: 1) "The Rebirth of America," Arthur S. DeMoss

Foundation, 1986; 2) "The U.S. Constitution: a Reader," Hillsdale College Press, 2012; 3) "The Constitution of the United States, Its Sources and Its Application," by Thomas James Norton, America's Future, Inc., 1943.

America: An Inevitable Empire?

I was shocked when I became aware of the geological advantages of the North American Continent over that of the rest of the world. This is well documented in a report by Stratfor entitled: The Geopolitics of the United States, Part 1: The Inevitable Empire. The information provided below is used with Stratfor's permission.

"The American geography is an impressive one. The Greater Mississippi Basin together with the Intracoastal Waterway has more kilometers of navigable internal waterways than the rest of the world combined. The American Midwest is both overlaid by this waterway and is the world's largest contiguous piece of farmland. The U.S. Atlantic Coast possesses more major ports than the rest of the Western Hemisphere combined. Two vast oceans insulate the United States from Asian and European powers, deserts separate the United States from Mexico to the south, while lakes and forests separate the population centers in Canada from those in the United States. The United States has capital, food surpluses and physical insulation in excess of every other country in the world by an exceedingly large margin.

North America is a triangle-shaped continent centered in the temperate portions of the Northern Hemisphere. It is of sufficient size that its northern reaches are fully Arctic and its southern reaches are fully tropical. Predominant wind currents carry moisture from west to east across the continent. Climatically, the continent consists of a series of wide north-south precipitation bands largely shaped by the landmass' longitudinal topography. The Rocky Mountains dominate the Western third of the northern and central parts of North

America, generating a rain-shadow effect just east of the mountain range — an area known colloquially as the Great Plains. Farther east of this semiarid region are the well-watered plains of the prairie provinces of Canada and the American Midwest. This zone comprises both the most productive and the largest contiguous acreage of arable land on the planet.

The most distinctive and important feature of North America is the river network in the middle third of the continent. While its components are larger in both volume and length than most of the world's rivers, this is not what sets the network apart. Very few of its tributaries begin at high elevations, making vast tracts of these rivers easily navigable. In the case of the Mississippi, the head of navigation — just north of Minneapolis — is 3,000 kilometers inland. The network consists of six distinct river systems: the Missouri, Arkansas, Red, Ohio, Tennessee and, of course, the Mississippi. The unified nature of this system greatly enhances the region's usefulness and potential economic and political power.

First, shipping goods via water is an order of magnitude cheaper than shipping them via land. The specific ratio varies greatly based on technological era and local topography, but in the petroleum age in the United States, the cost of transport via water is roughly 10 to 30 times cheaper than overland. This simple fact makes countries with robust maritime transport options extremely capital-rich when compared to countries limited to land-only options. This factor is the primary reason why the major economic powers of the past half-millennia have been Japan, Germany, France, the United Kingdom and the United States. Second, the watershed of the Greater Mississippi Basin largely overlays North America's arable lands. Normally, agricultural areas as large as the American Midwest are underutilized as the cost of shipping their output to more densely populated regions cuts deeply into the economics of agriculture. The vast bulk of the prime agricultural lands are within 200

kilometers of a stretch of navigable river. Road and rail are still used for collection, but river ports allow for the entirety of the basin's farmers to easily and cheaply ship their products to markets, not just in North America, but all over the world. Third, the river network's unity greatly eases the issue of political integration. All of the peoples of the basin are part of the same economic system, ensuring constant contact and common interests. Regional proclivities obviously still arise, but this is not Northern Europe, where a variety of separate river systems have given rise to multiple national identities.

The early United States did not face any severe geographic challenges. The barrier island system and local rivers provided a number of options that allowed for rapid cultural and economic expansion up and down the East Coast. The coastal plain — particularly in what would become the American South — was sufficiently wide and well-watered to allow for the steady expansion of cities and farmland. Choices were limited, but so were challenges. This was not England, an island that forced the early state into the expense of a navy. This was not France, a country with three coasts and two land borders that forced Paris to constantly deal with threats from multiple directions. This was not Russia, a massive country suffering from short growing seasons that was forced to expend inordinate sums of capital on infrastructure simply to attempt to feed itself. Instead, the United States could exist in relative peace for its first few decades without needing to worry about any large-scale, omnipresent military or economic challenges, so it did not have to garrison a large military. Every scrap of energy the young country possessed could be spent on making itself more sustainable. When viewed together — the robust natural transport network overlaying vast tracts of excellent farmland, sharing a continent with two much smaller and weaker powers

— it is inevitable that whoever controls the middle third of North America will be a great power.

For the United States, the attraction of owning one's own destiny made it the destination of choice for most European migrants. At the time that Mexico achieved independence it had 6.2 million people versus the U.S. population of 9.6 million. In just two generations — by 1870 — the American population had ballooned to 38.6 million while Mexico's was only 8.8 million. This U.S. population boom, combined with the United States' ability to industrialize organically, not only allowed it to develop economically but also enabled it to provide the goods for its own development.

Global history from 1500 to 1945 is a lengthy treatise of increasing contact and conflict among a series of great regional powers. Some of these powers achieved supra-regional empires, with the Spanish, French and English being the most obvious. Several regional powers — Austria, Germany, Ottoman Turkey and Japan — also succeeded in extending their writ over huge tracts of territory during parts of this period. And several secondary powers — the Netherlands, Poland, China and Portugal — had periods of relative strength. Yet the two world wars massively devastated all of these powers. No battles were fought in the mainland United States. Not a single American factory was ever bombed. Alone among the world's powers in 1945, the United States was not only functional but thriving.

The United States immediately set to work consolidating its newfound power, creating a global architecture to entrench its position. The first stage of this — naval domination — was achieved quickly and easily. The U.S. Navy at the beginning of World War II was already a respectable institution, but after three years fighting across two oceans it had achieved both global reach and massive competency. But that is only part of the story.

Equally important was the fact that, as of August 1945, with the notable exception of the British Royal Navy, every other navy in the world had been destroyed. As impressive as the United States' absolute gains in naval power had been, its relative gains were grander still. There simply was no competition. Always a maritime merchant power, the United States could now marry its economic advantages to absolute dominance of the seas and all global trade routes. And it really didn't need to build a single additional ship to do so (although it did anyway).

There is another secret to American success — both in controlling the oceans and taking advantage of European failures — that lies in an often-misunderstood economic structure called Bretton Woods. Even before World War II ended, the United States had leveraged its position as the largest economy and military to convince all of the Western allies — most of whose governments were in exile at the time — to sign onto the Bretton Woods accords. The states committed to the formation of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank to assist with the expected post-War reconstruction. Considering the general destitution of Western Europe at the time, this, in essence, was a U.S. commitment to finance if not outright fund that reconstruction. Because of that, the U.S. dollar was the obvious and only choice to serve as the global currency.

But Bretton Woods was about more than currency regimes and international institutions; its deeper purpose lay in two other features that are often overlooked. The United States would open its markets to participating states' exports while not requiring reciprocal access for its own. In exchange, participating states would grant the United States deference in the crafting of security policy. NATO quickly emerged as the organization through which this policy was pursued. From the point of view of the non-American founders of Bretton

Woods, this was an excellent deal. Self-funded reconstruction was out of the question. The bombing campaigns required to defeat the Nazis leveled most of Western Europe's infrastructure and industrial capacity. Even in those few parts of the United Kingdom that emerged unscathed, the state labored under a debt that would require decades of economic growth to recover from. It was not so much that access to the American market would help regenerate Europe's fortunes as it was that the American market was the only market at war's end. And since all exports from Bretton-Woods states (with the exception of some Canadian exports) to the United States had to travel by water, and since the U.S. Navy was the only institution that could guarantee the safety of those exports, adopting security policies unfriendly to Washington was simply seen as a nonstarter. By the mid-1950s, Bretton Woods had been expanded to the defeated Axis powers as well as South Korea and Taiwan. It soon became the basis of the global trading network, first being incorporated into the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and in time being transformed into the World Trade Organization. With a single policy, the Americans not only had fused their economic and military policies into a single robust system but also had firmly established that American dominance of the seas and the global economic system would be in the interest of all major economies with the exception of the Soviet Union.

From a functional point of view the United States controls North America because it holds nearly all of the pieces that are worth holding. With the possible exception of Cuba or some select sections of southern Canada, the rest of the landmass is more trouble than it is worth. Additionally, the security relationship it has developed with Canada and Mexico means that neither poses an existential threat to American dominance. Any threat to the United States would have to come from beyond North America. And the only type of coun-

try that could possibly dislodge the United States would be another state whose power is also continental in scope. As of 2011, there are no such states in the international system.”

Chosen and Blessed

I hope that our arguments above have convinced readers that the creation, founding, and structuring of America can't be explained by mere happenstance. The miracle of a rag-tag army of farmers overcoming the British army of sixty-thousand troops, commanded by the ablest generals in Europe, with a naval force of twenty-two thousand seamen in eighty British men-of-war can only happen when men like Washington, inspired by Heaven, can conceive a surprise move on the enemy by crossing the Delaware on Christmas Eve. And who but the Ruler of the winds could have delayed British reinforcements by three months during a critical point of the war, or provide for the miraculous, last minute detection of Benedict Arnold's treacherous scheme? Who but God could move on a man like eighty-one-year old Benjamin Franklin to address the disagreeing Constitutional Convention stating that “I have lived a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth: that God governs in the affairs of man. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid? We have been assured, Sir, in the Sacred Writings that except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. I firmly believe this . . .” It was after this that every session of the Convention opened with prayer, which led to the successful development of our Constitution, which established a republic based on the absolute laws of the Bible, not a democracy based on the changing whims of people. Abraham Lincoln wrote this regarding the relationship between the principles of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution: “A word

fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.” Sadly, our nation no longer holds to President Lincoln’s characterization which was drawn from Proverbs 25:11.

The Falling Away

For all the blessings our nation has been privileged to receive we now find ourselves like Israel when the curse of Matthew 21:43 was spoken by Jesus. The leader of our nation proclaims that we are no longer a Christian nation, and sets about instituting regulations and procedures validating that statement. Compare this to the purpose of the Pilgrims in coming to a new land given in the New England Charter, which states in part, “. . . to advance the enlargement of Christian religion, to the glory of God Almighty . . .” And again in the 1892 decision of the Supreme Court, which states in part: “Our laws and our institutions must necessarily be based upon and embody the teachings of The Redeemer of mankind. It is impossible that it could be otherwise; and in this sense and to this extent our civilization and our institutions are emphatically Christian . . .” Os Guinness, in his book “A Free Peoples Suicide,” emphasizes the founders belief that freedom depends on virtue, and virtue depends on faith, and faith is a gift of God (Eph. 2:8). Thomas Jefferson once asked, “Can the liberties of a nation be secure when we have removed the conviction that these liberties are the gift of God?”

Abraham Lincoln had this to say about the Bible: “All the good from the Savior of the world is communicated through this Book; but for the Book we could not know right from wrong. All the things desirable to man are contained in it.” Now ask yourself how many people you know spend any significant time studying the Bible, the source of God’s wisdom. Only eighteen years from the time the Pilgrims set foot on Plymouth Rock, the Puritans founded the first and perhaps the most famous Ivy League school: Harvard. Almost all the

Ivy League schools were established to train ministers of the gospel. Harvard's "Rules and Precepts," published in 1646, included the following statement: "Every one shall consider the main end of his life and studies (is) to know God and Jesus Christ which is eternal life." I doubt that God would look with favor on what is being taught at Harvard and other institutions of higher learning in 2016.

The today's world God's Word, the Bible, seems to command little honor and respect, even by those who identify themselves as Christians. I am especially sensitive to this failure for I was one of those who failed to recognize the wonderful knowledge and wisdom that God has provided through this easily accessed medium, the written word. My wife developed early onset Alzheimers Disease when she was 49-years old. As a result I had a lot of lonely time in the evening, after I had put her to bed. Soon, I began to spend this time reading Christian books. However, it wasn't long before I began to talk to God about everything that was going on in my life, and He began answering by giving me some pretty remarkable answers. This went on for some when He hit me with a task that I did not feel adequate to handle: writing an article on the seven churches of Revelation (Revelation Chapters 2 and 3). I continued to argue with Him until I happened on a book on that very subject. Now I thought I had my AHA moment of rebuttal, which I immediately brought to His attention. As I have subsequently learned, you can never get one-up on God. His response was He now wanted me to write a commentary on the entire book of Revelation. I again argued, but finally gave in with the stipulation that He would have to give me the necessary understanding about all the symbology used in the book of Revelation. This is a rather long explanation about how I got turned on to studying the Bible. I now treasure the time I can spend digging for gems in the Bible more than anything else in the world, and my

Bible is the dearest possession I own. I relate this experience to give the reader some basis for understanding my discouragement in the lack of interest in studying the Bible in today's world. The fact that 2 Timothy 3:16 states that all scripture is given or inspired by God, has little or no affect on those that do not know, and are not known, by God. They undoubtedly believe the Bible to be naturally inspired, rather than spiritually inspired. Those that identify themselves as Christians have even less excuse, for they (supposedly) know God, and should have some interest in knowing Him better. 2 Peter 1:20-21 adds: "*Knowing this first, no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*"

I wish I could say something that would spark an interest in reading and studying God's Word. If you are interested in understanding the triune God of the universe, or if you have doubts about Him that you would like to resolve, I cannot think of a better source for study. Many great men of renown have undertaken Bible study to prove that it is false, and that there is no God; but to their surprise they were convicted, and became believers into Jesus Christ. C. S. Lewis, one of the greatest writers of the twentieth century, fell away from the Christian faith he knew as a youth, but then returned under the influence friends and literature, including the Bible. He wrote more than thirty books, but the one I would recommend for any seeker, or new convert is "Mere Christianity," one of the most popular and beloved introductions to the Christian faith ever written.

Beside the Bible the other document that has been crucial to our nation's survival and success is the United States Constitution. After the Bible it is considered by many to be the second most important document ever written. I recently completed a free on-line course on the Constitution provided by Hillsdale College. I am ashamed to admit that I didn't

know a lot about the Constitution (the law of our land) before I took this course. I learned that the Constitution was a unique creation: a system of self-government established and maintained by consent of the governed. A constitutional republic with individual liberty, elected representatives and limited government, with power to protect individual pursuits related to life, liberty, property, and the pursuit of happiness: inalienable rights endowed by our Creator. With wisdom far exceeding their own, the founders provided for protection against the inappropriate exercise of power by one branch of the government over the others through a system of checks and balances: the executive, the legislative, the judicial, and the individual. The individual was the primary driver, for only by his/her consent could the government govern. But this entire plan necessarily depended on individual virtue, for that was recognized as the only effective restraint against men's greed. It was this very point that was often mentioned by the founders: the only way to maintain the Republic was for the individual citizen to remain virtuous. A quote by Daniel Webster strikes at the heart of this: "Let the religious element in man's nature be neglected, let him be influenced by no higher motives than low self-interest, and influenced by no higher motives than low self-interest, and subjected to no stronger restraint than the limits of civil authority, and he becomes the creature of selfish passion or blind fanaticism." Much of today's activity within the Federal Government seems to fall into this category brought about by the actions of people that seem to fit Daniel Webster's description above.

Sadly, in today's world our federal government seems determined to modify, bend, or ignore our Constitution. Our individual rights suffer as a consequence, often in ways that we do not immediately comprehend, and in a manner that causes us to feel helpless to do anything about it. But this didn't happen overnight, nor does the present administration de-

serve all the blame for the disintegration of our nation. In October 1964, Ronald Reagan delivered a speech in support of Barry Goldwater's campaign for President in which he discussed some of the ills that plagued our nation, both then and now. He emphasized the importance individual freedom, and how the Progressive element of our society sacrificed this freedom for (supposed) security. He quoted Plutarch's warning: "The real destroyer of the liberties of the people is he who spreads among them bounties, donations, and benefits." He also alluded to the Federal Government's ineptitude in managing those things it has taken over in apparent violation of the Constitution: health, housing, farming, industry, commerce, education, labor, and so on. I can't think of any of these that have been improved by Government takeover. President Reagan gave some very telling examples in farming and labor, but I want to use an example from my own personal experience while working for NASA.

I went to work for NASA in Houston, Texas, in May 1962, and retired in December 1981, while working at the NASA White Sands Test Facility (WSTF) near Las Cruces, New Mexico. During my tenure with NASA I was blessed to be part of the team of people that implemented the bold statement of President John Kennedy to send men to land on the moon, and return to earth safely. This cobbled together team from a wide array of government and industrial sources made this hard to believe task a reality. However, while working for the Federal Government I saw a lot of lethargy in other Government organizations. I believe the Manned Space Program was successful because it attracted a mix of managers, engineers, and technicians from technology based firms who came to Houston, and other NASA sites, with a "can do" and "how can we make it work" attitude. They joined a skeleton organization of existing NASA employees to undertake this seemingly impossible task. Howev-

er, during my tenure with NASA, I encountered other older government organizations that President Reagan could have included in his list of bad management examples. While working at the NASA WSTF I received a call from one of the White Sands Missile Range (WSMR) laboratory managers who asked if we (WSTF), could run a certain test for them. Now WSMR was a much larger facility than WSTF, and normally you would think they could have performed this test themselves. Nevertheless, I told my caller to check with our laboratory manager to see when we could fit it into our schedule. We ran the test the next day, and the WSMR laboratory manager headed back to the Range with a pickup load of data and a big smile on his face. While at WSTF he told our test personnel that he had been trying to get his test done at the Range for over a year. He could not seem to find a way to satisfy safety, inspection, quality control, and other “nay sayers” at the Range. I believe this is a good example of the lethargy characteristic of government organizations that have been in existence for a while: no one wants to take responsibility when there is the slightest chance that some failure may occur, or someone might get hurt. Rules and procedures multiply over the years, and the “nay-sayers” can always find some reason to delay any decision that, in their wildest dreams, might end up reflecting badly on them. Also, the Federal Government seems to operate on the idea that bigger is better. Consequently, government organizations tend to grow, grow, and grow, and thus encourage the proliferation of “nay-sayers.”

Political influence is another downside of government management. It seems to grow in proportion to the size of the particular organization. It contributes to the ineptitude characteristic of government organizations, although I have encountered it in industry as well. We were about to let a major contract for test facility construction at the NASA Johnson

Space Center when I discovered that one of the bidders was a company that I had found to be dishonest and unreliable previously. I went to the Corps of Engineers Headquarters in Ft. Worth, Texas, in an attempt to keep them from awarding the contract to this company, based on my previous bad experience. Although it was to be a NASA test facility, with severe schedule and safety restraints, they refused to act on my evidence. Sure enough, we ran into scheduling and technical difficulties with this firm that required some rather innovative (and unauthorized) solutions to meet spacecraft schedule requirements.

There is much that could be said on this general subject, but it is obvious that I cannot cover it all in this relatively short dissertation, so let me close this part of our argument by quoting Article 10 of the Bill of Rights to the Constitution: **“The power not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.”** Thomas Jefferson had this to say about this Amendment: I believe the States can best govern over home concerns, and the General Government over foreign ones. I wish, therefore, to see maintained that wholesome distribution of powers established by the Constitution for the limitation of both, and never to see all offices transferred to Washington.” Obviously, we have not satisfied Jefferson’s wishes, nor have we complied with the Constitution on this point.

Our Nation is in serious trouble: surely the school bathroom controversy introduced by the present Federal Administration points out how ridiculous it is for Washington politicians to be determining who can use the woman’s bathroom at local public schools in America. Or for that matter, for the Supreme Court to be telling Texas that they cannot insist on the enforcement of recognized and acceptable medical practices at Texas abortion clinics. Federal Government overreach is seemingly impossible to reign in. We need to heed Jeffer-

son's wish to never see "all the offices transferred to Washington." I'm sure that he would be shocked to see the present state of the Union.

Closure

I hope that you are now entertaining the idea that Jesus was really referring to a future America with His words in Matthew 21:43. The creation geography of the nation of America, the Christian ethos of its first settlers, and the founders strong dependency on God's guidance in the enactment of the nation's guiding documents (the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution), gave us a nation of singular power and influence in the world: a nation that has given much for maintaining freedom in the world. But we are now at a crossroads, for we have enjoyed the benefits made available from our success, and we have failed (or are failing) to honor the wise council of the founders succinctly stated by John Witherspoon in his first Thanksgiving message after the war for independence: "A republic once equally poised must either preserve its virtue or lose its liberty."

I have searched long and hard for some way to end this writing in a way that would inspire readers with some of the pride and dedication characteristic of those who brought this nation to greatness against overwhelming odds. If you consider what God did to prepare this land, and what the founders did (with God's help) to bring this nation to be recognized as the leader of the free world, how can you be satisfied to do nothing to help to restore its honor and virtue? When we were attacked on September 11, 2001, I had a strong urge to do something: I wanted to volunteer to help in some way. I was 72-years old at that time: obviously of little use to anyone, but the point is that terrorists had touched me in the place where pride, honor and patriotism reside. I was feeling what I now wish every citizen of this land would feel when America is belittled by our leaders, or is "spat upon" by foreigners.

Os Guinness, in his book “A Free Peoples Suicide,” has some comments along the same line that I would like to quote: “Once America soars higher than any eagle has soared before, does the eagle no longer need the sun? And is there any sun that the high-soaring eagle recognizes as higher than itself? Is there a reality beyond freedom on which American freedom depends? Those were the questions addressed by G. K. Chesterton after his visit to the United States in 1921, and that was the context of his sober prediction that some ‘ultimate test’ would come. If—as has happened in our postmodern age fourscore years after he wrote—‘the power of the Jewish and Christian faiths is discarded and the power of the Enlightenment is pronounced dead, what would be the authority that authorizes freedom, human dignity, rights, democracy, and finally, meaning itself? Men will more and more realize that there is no meaning in democracy if there is no meaning in anything,’ Chesterton wrote, ‘and that there is no meaning in anything if the universe has not a centre of significance and an authority that is the author of our rights.’”

“Freedom is the eagle whose glory is gazing at the sun? No nation rises higher or lasts longer than the great ideas that inspire it. Freedom never lasts forever, because it is harder to be free than not to be free. Freedom must therefore be sustained and not simply won, ordered and taken for granted. American freedom, like American greatness, was not derived from itself, and cannot be sustained by itself. For the source of its strength it must always look beyond itself.”

“All of which raises the supreme question for Americans today: Will the eagle cease to fly toward the sun and be grounded? Or will the eagle renew its gaze on the sun and soar again? Always free, will the United States remain free always? That is the standing or falling issue that the present generation faces.”

“Americans, that is also the the form of the question through which you confront three of history’s great questions comment all civilizations toward the end of their course: What do you have that you did not receive? What have you done with your inheritance? And what is to be done if you answer the first two questions wit honesty?”