



## Why isn't America in the Bible?

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People of faith who love America for its goodness, and who also love our Judeo-Christian heritage as set forth in the Bible, sometimes understandably confuse the two.

Of course our country's actual name appears nowhere in the sacred text. No one says it does.

But there's this itch: Wouldn't the nation that has realized the ideals of freedom and justice more fully than any in human history, at least be foreshadowed in God's holy book, if not somehow coded between the lines?

Isn't it only human to yearn for proof that our sweet land of liberty enjoys the Lord's special anointing? It is – and that's exactly why America is not in the Bible. God purposely didn't put it there, lest we'd fixate on a supposed anointing he never conferred.

It seems to me there are at least three important reasons why America isn't in the Bible.

- (1) ***For His Glory.*** God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, God our Creator, Sustainer, and Redeemer, wants there to be no mistake that anything fallen human beings can make on our

own in this world, no matter how excellent, no matter how noble, can possibly rival that which he has made and continues making according to his divine plan and purpose.

This even includes the most successful and beneficial political-economic-social-cultural order mankind has ever built, the United States of America. He is a lovingly jealous God, demanding all our worship to his own glory alone - none to be shared with the proud works of men's hands.

- (2) ***For Our Protection.*** Our all-wise Father knows that hubris, the sin of pain and vainglory, is self-wounding to us even as it is offensive and dishonoring to him. He didn't want to put that stumbling-block in our way as grateful, patriotic Americans.

The earth is to be inherited by whom? The meek, says David in the Psalms, and Jesus repeats it in Matthew. The pitfall of peace and prosperity in a flourishing homeland is what? Self-love and self-sufficiency, warns Moses in Deuteronomy. The kingdom of heaven awaits whom? The poor in spirit, not the puffed-up, says Jesus in the first of his Beatitudes.

Is God pleased with many things about America? No doubt, though he is surely displeased with many others. But does he want us to think for a moment that this is as good as it gets? Absolutely not.

- (3) ***For Our Reward.*** In establishing his kingdom, God has prepared for us, and promised us, and - with Jesus' own blood - paid for our admission into, "a better country, that is, a heavenly" (Hebrews 11:16). Far better than any earthly country is or ever could be.

Without a doubt, America in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is a wonderful place to enjoy life and liberty and pursue happiness. It is arguably without equal on earth today or in any previous day. Yet it pales beside the New Jerusalem that awaits his faithful ones.

America is not in the Bible because the Lord doesn't want us just camping at some oasis. He wants us as pilgrims on the move, eyes to the far horizon, faithfully improving the time, to be sure - but ever journeying on like Abraham toward "a city that has foundations" in "a kingdom that cannot be moved" (Hebrews 11:10 and 12:28).

Discern well, cautions the author of Hebrews, between the things that can be shaken and the things that cannot. How tragic if our temporal (and perfectly appropriate) love of country should blink or distract us from the sublime eternal destiny Christ has bought for us. He and his Father call us away from any misuse of Scripture so inclined.

My list of reasons why America is not in the Bible could go on, but these make the point. We've not even discussed how the well-intended fallacy (or in fact, heresy) also harms the republic we claim to cherish.

Politicized religion and religionized politics are a worsening sickness in our country right now. Unchecked, they could ruin a good thing - and a significant part of the problem is Christians who should know better. We need to up our game.

Someone gave me a book called *The Trump Prophecies*, which elaborate scenarios about how God is using our 45<sup>th</sup> President. Plausible? Maybe or maybe not. While author Mark Taylor makes no explicit "America's in the Bible" claim, the atmosphere of hubris and idolatry hangs over his work. There's an air of Gnostic titillation that makes me say no thanks.

Careful, honest, orthodox, application of God's revealed word in Scripture has never been a more urgent duty for all of us who bear allegiance to the USA and love the Lord.

We can be grateful he cares enough about us to have left the name of our country *out* of the Bible - as a powerful silent reminder for

every knee to bow at the Name above all names: Jesus Christ crucified, risen, and reigning.



*Patriotic hubris? No thanks*