

God's Plan for America

Zarahemla Fellowship

Nathan's Promise

God has a plan for America and the Bible reveals it. When King David asked permission to build a house for the Ark of the Covenant, the prophet Nathan brought the Lord's answer. God said, "*I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime*" (2 Sam 7:10).

The place to which God referred could not be land in the Middle-East over which David reigned. God said they would "*move no more.*" The Northern tribes were taken by the Assyrians and never returned. Those remaining were taken to Babylon about 120 years later. While they return, Rome banned them from their Promised Land in 135 AD.

God also promised that "*the children of wickedness*" would not afflict them again as they did before, but Assyria, Babylon, Greece, and Rome all did. The appointed land must be a different place.

The Puritans

When England persecuted the Pilgrims and Puritans, they discovered that America could be a land of refuge. The Pilgrims came in 1620 and the Puritans began following 10 years later. John Cotton preached the farewell sermon for the first Puritan flotilla bound for America. He used Nathan's prophecy as his text and quoted other promises that were given to the ancient Hebrews. The Puritans believed that they were the Lord's people and inherited the promises given the Israelites. Like the early Hebrews, they were strangers in the country where they resided and had to flee to another land. America was their Promised Land, a place of refuge, where they would be divinely protected from the "*sons of wickedness,*" free to purify the church, and build up God's kingdom.

Jacob's Inheritance

God gave Abraham "*this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates*" (Gen 15:18). Jacob, one of Abraham's grandsons received, that portion but said that God also gave him more lands. He told his sons, "*The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills*" (Gen 49:26). Those extra lands, "*the utmost bound of the everlasting hills,*" are likely parts of the continents' coasts and isles of the sea. Jacob bequeathed them to Joseph: "*They shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren*" (Gen 49:26). Like Joseph, who was sold, ended up in Egypt, rose to authority, and later sustained his kinsfolk during a famine, Joseph's descendants received a separate Promised Land that in later times would provide refuge. This promised land fits the place to which the Pilgrims and Puritans came.

Isaiah's Prophecies

Isaiah hailed "*the land shadowing with wings, which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia*" (Is 18:1). The rivers of Ethiopia are the rivers surrounding Sheba, which Josephus identified as the Nile, Antapus, and Astaborus Rivers (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 2, Chapter 11). It was the same city from which the Queen of Sheba came to prove King Solomon (1K 10, 2 Chr 9). Jesus mentioned this event when He said, "*The queen of the*

South . . . from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon" (Matt 12:42). The phrase "*uttermost parts of the earth*" means the edge of the world. If Sheba was at the end of the known world, the land beyond the rivers of Ethiopia refers to a place outside the habitations known in Biblical times. This is the land that Isaiah hailed.

Isaiah revealed that God would lift up an ensign on that land. He said, "*All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, see ye, when he lifteth up an ensign on the mountains; and when he bloweth a trumpet, hear ye.*" (Is 18:3). Elsewhere, Isaiah revealed that the place where God would raise an ensign was at the end of the earth or the other side of the globe. He said, "*he will lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and will hiss unto them from the end of the earth*" (Is 5:26). America is beyond the habitations known in Biblical times and on the other side of the earth. It is among the isles of the sea, the extra land given to Jacob and bequeathed to Joseph. It is the appointed place where Joseph's descendants could prepare a latter-day land of refuge.

Additional Confirmation

Many Americans used to believe that God's promises to ancient Israel applied to the United States and its citizens. On February 22 and 23, 1857, F. E. Pitts, a Methodist minister from Nashville addressed members of Congress in celebration of George Washington's birthday. He listed 13 Biblical prophecies that revealed America as the favored land in God's plan (http://originofnations.org/old_bi_literature/Pitts.htm).

1. The land of the promised nationality was to be located between two seas — the eastern sea and the great western sea (Ezek 38:18, 20).
2. This land is described as being hitherto uncultivated and unimproved (Ezek 38:8, Is 35:1).
3. That wonderful country was to be inhabited by a people "*gathered out of the nations*" (Ezek 38:8,12).
4. In the promised nationality, unlike the political economy of ancient Israel, foreigners were to be allowed a place to dwell, enjoy their homes and the pursuits of happiness in common with the citizens of the country (Ezek 47:22-23).
5. The principle of extension, in enlarging the boundaries of their primary possessions, should specifically characterize the prosperity of the promised nationality (Is 49:18, 20).
6. The land of restored Israel is described as a country restored from its desolations, by the peculiar construction of its towns and villages, and the prosperity and quietude of its inhabitants (Ezek 38:8,11,12).
7. The infancy of that country should receive the attention of royal patronage (Is 49:23).
8. A country would be remarkable for the number of its majestic rivers (Is 35:21).
9. The land of restored Israel is described to be literally more elevated than any portion of the world (Is 2:1-2).
10. The peaceful character of the inhabitants and the intelligibility and uniformity of their language should designate that people (Is 33:19).
11. The rapid advancement of intelligence and divine instruction should mark the rising progress of that people (Dan 12:4, Is 54:13).
12. The country inhabited by the people "*gathered out of the nations*" should be settled in thirteen distinct States, like as it was with Israel: only "*Joseph should have two portions*" (Ezek 27:13)

13. Our country is the land described by the prophet Isaiah lying westward from Judea (Is 18:1-2).
14. The promised nationality was to be a republic (Jer 30:21, Hos 1:11, Is 1:26).
15. Finally, the waiting isles of Isaiah are a sublime announcement of our great country, and its early occupation by European emigrants (Is 60:9).

America's Purpose

When Nathan revealed that God would appoint another land as refuge of His people, he disclosed God's purpose for America: *"Also the Lord telleth thee that he will make thee an house"* (2 Sam 7:11). Both Isaiah and Micah prophesied that the Lord would build His house in the last days. Isaiah wrote, *"It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it"* (Is 2:2). America became a great nation because many Europeans came to it for its religious and economic freedoms, unleashing the innovations and ingenuity of a free people. Once it achieved world success, people from every nation came to it to learn from its universities and businesses, but its most important asset is the house of the Lord that will be established there during its time of worldwide influence.

The House of the Lord

David wanted to build a house for the Ark of the covenant. Although he brought the Ark to Jerusalem, David was not allowed to build a permanent house. His son, Solomon, did and God accepted it. The Shekhinah, or visible glory of the Lord, dwelt there. The Babylonians destroyed that Temple, but the Persians authorized the Jews to rebuild it. The Shekhinah never dwelt in the second Temple, and Rome destroyed it as Jesus prophesied. Jesus also told the Jews, *"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up"* (John 2:19).

The Temple that the Jews destroyed and Jesus raised up was His own body. While God dwelt in sacred buildings before, Jesus's birth marked a new and more glorious temple: the glory of God in a human body. Jesus healed the sick, preached the gospel, made the blind see and the deaf hear, and raised the dead. All of these are more glorious than a building adorned with gold silver, and jewels.

A Spiritual House

After His resurrection and ascension, the Holy Ghost anointed Jesus' disciples as the Savior promised. The same Spirit that dwelt in Jesus and raised Him from the dead also dwells in those who receive the Holy Ghost (Rom 8:11). Every person in whom the Holy Ghost resides is a temple of God. Paul wrote, *"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"* (1 Cor 3:16). He repeated, *"Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?"* (1 Cor 6:19).

Like Solomon's Temple was made of many stones, the house of the Lord that Isaiah and Micah prophesied for the last days is constructed with many stones. These stones are living stones. Peter explained, *"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ"* (1 Pet 2:5). The assembly of believers anointed by the Holy Ghost form a spiritual house. Paul elaborated, *"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit"* (Eph 2:20-22). The house that God promised to build for David is a spiritual house of

anointed devout Christians living together under the guidance of the Holy Ghost. This is America's divine Destiny.

America Today

While the Pilgrims and Puritans came to America for religious purposes, others came for economic ones. Most believed in Jesus but some did not. The intervening time from Jamestown and Plymouth till today has always witnessed a mixture of believers and non-believers.

Pew Research recently released their latest survey. It showed that only 63% of Americans identified themselves as Christian, remarkably down from 90% in 1990. Historians estimate that 97% of American colonists were Protestant Christians in 1776.

The decline of Christianity in America has been accompanied by a decline in morality and increases in crime and violence. The Bible prophesied this development: *"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers"* (2 Tim 3:1-2), with a long list of bad behaviors following. The holy kingdom that the Pilgrims and Puritans envisioned appears to be filled with irreverent wrongdoers.

A Separation

Some of Jesus' parables foretell the separation of good and bad that occupy His kingdom in the last days. In one He said, *"The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; 42 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire"* (Matt 13:41-42). He added, *"The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just"* (Mat 13:47-49).

The Final Glory

The division that is happening in America, in the land that God appointed for the seat of His kingdom, is separating people into two camps. Those who offend will be removed (Matt 13:41), while the others will *"shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father"* (Matt 13:43). With the offenders gone, anyone can come to the Lord's kingdom and learn the ways of salvation. Isaiah foretold it: *"Many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths"* (Is 2:3). As they return to their own countries, they will bring the good news. The knowledge of Jesus and His gospel will fill the earth and peace will prevail: *"They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea"* (Is 11:9).

Come and Worship

We believe the day for the Lord to establish His kingdom *"in the top of the mountains"* is near. We invite you to join with us in preparing for citizenship in it. Come and worship our Savior with us, as we draw closer to how Jesus wants us to live. You are always welcomed in our fellowship.

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