

JEFF KINLEY

THE END  
— OF —  
AMERICA?



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## THE END OF AMERICA?

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*To all those who have supported my mission  
to empower believers across America with  
God's vintage truth.*



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# INTRODUCTION

America is in trouble. Big trouble. As a nation, we are dancing on a perilous precipice, teetering on the verge of destruction. Aside from the known threats of global terror, a Middle East meltdown, a soaring national debt, and the divisive spirit that has split our nation in two, our country's very foundations are cracking beneath our feet. America is losing her *soul*. And it's only a matter of time before the bottom drops out and we find ourselves in a free fall from which there may be no recovery. It's a foreboding reality bearing down on us, and staring us right in the face.

For those of us Christians who love our country, this present state raises nagging, unanswered questions: What's really happening to our nation? What are the causes of our decline? How do we make sense of it all? Whatever happened to America the "Christian nation"? Where did we go wrong? Does the Bible say anything about our national condition? Are there Scripture passages that speak to our current situation? Can anything be done to turn us around? Or is it already too late?

There is no shortage of prophecy pundits who would sensationalize the fact that we are living in the last days of the church age.

And with these voices come a wide spectrum of interpretations and opinions regarding just where we are on the prophetic timeline, and more specifically, how the United States fits into God's apocalyptic big picture. In this book, my goal is to drown out the white noise of speculation for you by asking a simple, pointed question:

What does the Bible say?

By doing this, we can develop a clear vision of who we are as a nation, discern where we are in prophecy, and discover what, if anything, Scripture says about America's eventual demise. Along the way, we will come to those places where the biblical road ends and we can go no further. During these moments in foggy, uncharted waters, I will propose reasonable, informed scenarios regarding possible paths and outcomes. However, rather than get caught up in the confusion of the unknown, we'll spend the majority of our time looking at what we *do* know from Scripture. And rest assured, God has *plenty* to say about the end times and how the world's nations factor into it.

I trust what you encounter in this book will enlighten you. But more than merely informing you with facts, I pray it will transform you with truth. Warning: Some of what you will read will disturb you. But that's not necessarily a bad thing. For sometimes God uses the shocking truths to wake us up, instilling within us a fresh, heavenly perspective, and ultimately rousing us to action.

And that's part of the beauty of Bible prophecy. It not only reveals God's truth regarding our future, but also revives our hearts in the present. And we truly need that revival today.

It's way past time the church in America had this conversation. Time for us to talk about the uncomfortable "hard things," and to figure out where we go from here. But if you've bought this book, there's a good chance you are up for that challenge. For by facing

these raw truths about prophecy and our beloved nation, you join a unique band of believers who will not only experience renewed confidence and clarity, but also respond to the call that God has issued for us in these last days.

Jeff Kinley



## IS AMERICA REALLY IN DECLINE?

*Look back over the past, with its changing empires that  
rose and fell, and you can foresee the future too.*

—MARCUS AURELIUS, *Meditations*

Did you feel it?” It was just after 7:00 a.m. last fall when I was abruptly awoken by a strange noise. An intruder was trying to break into my bedroom—or at least that’s what it sounded like. The door was rattling back and forth as if someone on the other side desperately wanted in. I called out in my half-awake state, wondering if perhaps my wife had gotten up and accidentally locked herself out. The rattling grew louder and then, unexpectedly, my bed began to shake as well. Struggling to make sense of this bizarre phenomenon, I reasoned that our upstairs air conditioning unit had malfunctioned and was vibrating through the wall and floor.

Then, just like that, everything went silent. The door no longer rattled. The bed stopped shaking. The whole episode lasted only 30 seconds or so. Now fully awake, I went downstairs to look for my

wife, start the coffee, and try and get to the bottom of what had just happened. Opening my laptop, I immediately found what I was looking for, in of all places, Facebook. Posts filling my feed all were asking the same, repeated question:

“Did you feel it?”

What I soon discovered was that, according to the US Geological Survey, a 5.8 magnitude earthquake had occurred moments earlier near Pawnee, Oklahoma.<sup>1</sup> The tremors from this moderately strong quake were felt as far away as Kansas, Texas, Illinois, Missouri, and here in Arkansas’s Ozark Mountains. Several aftershocks followed. Granted, this wasn’t the kind of earthquake that levels skyscrapers and devastates entire communities, prompting the dispatch of disaster relief. It didn’t turn cities into rubble or create mass panic. But it *was* the kind that definitely got your attention...*and* woke you up.

Earthquakes are actually not all that uncommon. And America has suffered her share of them. But perhaps none so memorable as the quakes of 1811-12 along the New Madrid fault. This fault line, running through parts of Missouri, Tennessee, and Arkansas, also threatens many other nearby states. Between December 1811 and March 1812, a series of violent earthquakes and tremors shook this region, not far from where I live. The first of these occurred at 2:00 a.m. on December 11, 1811. A few hours later, a stronger quake erupted. Estimated to have had a magnitude of 8.6, the earthquake knocked people off their feet, destroying small towns, buckled the earth like carpet, and caused huge landslides. Hundred-foot-long fissures appeared in the countryside. Trees were snapped in half like twigs. Sulfur spewed out of the ground and massive flooding occurred due to the collapse of protective riverbanks. But the crisis wasn’t over.

One month later, another earthquake hit the same area, this one

so intense that it woke the president's wife, Dolly Madison, approximately 1000 miles away in Washington, DC. However, the strongest of them all happened on February 7. Experts believe it registered 8.8 on the Richter scale, making it one of the most powerful quakes in human history. This one rang church bells in Boston and crumbled brick walls in Cincinnati. Islands in the Mississippi River disappeared, and boats sank. But perhaps more amazing than all this was that this event produced a "fluvial tsunami," causing the mighty Mississippi River to *flow backward* for several hours! Witnesses say lights flashed out of the ground, thunder and explosions were heard, and black smoke filled the sky. It is also recorded that animals exhibited strange behavior leading up to this catastrophic series of events.

All told, more than 2000 earthquakes hit this region in a three-month period. The New Madrid Fault is six times larger than California's San Andreas fault zone. Experts say a similar future event even greater than the 1812 catastrophe is very possible. With no prior warning, a gargantuan quake like this would likely wipe Memphis off the map.

## **America's "Fault"**

In what would be one of His last conversations with His disciples, Jesus Christ prophesied numerous earthquakes as a telltale sign of the end of the age and His soon return. Whether or not a cataclysmic earthquake in the United States is included in that prophecy is unknown. We only know the potential for such earthquakes *is*, in fact, a reality.

But these days, it's more than just earthquakes that are shaking and threatening our land. Millions across our country now sense that America is experiencing what can be described as "culture quakes." Far from the geophysical disruptions shaking the physical ground, these upheavals weaken and undermine the very bedrock

of our nation. The tremors from these seismic strains extend across state lines, reverberating and rippling into cities, towns, and rural communities.

Yours included.

They produce deep fissures, swallowing up America's character. And they are threatening to rip us apart...from sea to shining sea.

While many good people valiantly strive to restore our country to the principles and values upon which she was founded, we still seem to be losing this war. Like rising floodwaters, evil continues to surge while virtue and decency are slandered and silenced. It feels like we're losing ground in an uphill battle. And the stakes continue to rise as the window of opportunity for victory diminishes.

Can you *feel* it?

The result of this cultural shift is that we now have a series of active "fault lines" crisscrossing the country. And with tremors being felt daily, it's only a matter of time before the "big one" hits. Odds are you're one of those who senses the hour is late, and that history's clock is close to striking midnight. Despite skeptics' objections to the contrary, Bible prophecy's *foreshocks* are proving to be true after all.

Can you *believe* it?

Do you find yourself wondering how long we have before our country collapses? Have you felt the moral ground beneath you eroding away what's left of our national character and identity? Has it become clear to you that a basic Judeo-Christian worldview, along with common-sense decency, are now becoming obsolete and unwanted? Are the words of the prophet Isaiah more specifically applicable to us now than at any time in our nation's existence?

Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil;  
Who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness;  
Who substitute bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!<sup>2</sup>

Can you *see* it?

Not long ago, my wife and I were enjoying a casual dinner out with friends, and the conversation turned to Bible prophecy. The discussion took on a more serious tone when my friend asked, “Tell us, Jeff. How close are we? And what’s going to happen to America? What does the Bible actually say?”

These are questions I hear with increasing regularity these days. And it’s no longer just prophecy enthusiasts who inquire about such things. Presently, there is a growing concern regarding the last days among those who previously never gave the subject much thought. This is reflected in recent research that revealed 4 out of 10 adult Americans now believe we are living in the end times as described by Bible prophecy. And among evangelicals, the numbers reach 77 percent.<sup>3</sup> But why? Why the sudden uptick? Why *now*?

I believe one compelling reason is because the signs of the times have simply become too obvious to ignore. Overwhelming evidence suggests we have entered the final stages of last days’ prophetic fulfillment. Even the casual observer is forced to admit that we are living in an unprecedented moment in human history. Revelation unveils the fulfillment of key apocalyptic prophecies, many of which are being prepared and foreshadowed in our day. This leads many prophecy experts to believe that Revelation’s day is dawning on the horizon.

But what does all this have to do with the United States? We will discuss America’s future role in Bible prophecy in chapter 6, but for the time being, let’s address what is happening *right now* in our country. I believe there is evidence to suggest that our current condition shows symptoms of a nation on the brink of chaos and collapse. America is not merely slipping on a downward path. We’re *landsliding* toward destruction. And fast. We’re in a free fall... without a parachute. And like the rest of Americans, followers of Jesus

Christ are dead center in the thick of it. We are caught in a dense, gravitational pull downward.

So what is the evidence to support the belief that our country is indeed heading toward an untimely death? Are there identifiable causes contributing to our national demise? Why are we seeing this widespread reversal and shift in thought, values, spirituality, and the law? Does God's Word have anything to say about all this? And is it too late to change? Can *anything* be done to save our country?

## The Death of Nations

Years ago, while returning from a missionary venture in Central America, our plane made a brief stop to pick up passengers in the tiny country of Belize. As we made our final approach, I peered ahead through my window at an alarming sight. All along the sides of the runway were wrecked planes, both small and large. These crumpled aircraft, some privately owned and others presumably related to the area drug trade, had all crashed upon landing and simply been bulldozed off to the side to make way for oncoming traffic.

Similarly, history's runway is littered with the remnants of empires and nations that rose to prominence and power, but eventually crashed, collapsed, or were conquered. Travel back down the road of time, and you will see the wreckage of such nations. They read like a rogues' gallery of paganism:

Egypt. Assyria. Babylon. Persia. Greece. Rome.

These man-made kingdoms once ruled the known world, standing unmatched in their sovereignty. But each of them also initiated or perpetuated the oppression of God's people. What remains of these ancient kingdoms today is not much more than ruin and rubble, their greatness largely buried in history books and beneath sand.<sup>4</sup> And the preservation of their memory exists due to archeology, artifacts, and exhibits on display in museums across the world.

All of these mighty empires eventually met their end. This is because all attempts, whether by individuals or governments, to create or maintain civilizations while rejecting God eventually meet their own mortality.

In recent history, there have been other attempts to create world-dominating empires. Their names are as recognizable as their rulers are detestable. Lenin. Stalin. Mussolini. Khomeini. Gaddafi. Ceausescu. Castro. Hussein. And in what was clearly Satan's attempt to mimic Jesus's prophetic millennial reign, Germany's Adolf Hitler boasted that his Third Reich would last 1000 years.

It survived only 12.

Whether spending their last days in an underground command bunker like Adolf Hitler, or in a hole under a farmhouse like Saddam Hussein, all these empire builders eventually saw their end. Nations are born. They live and then they die. That's because human institutions are inherently temporary. The authors of Psalm 46 understood this transitory nature of nations when they wrote,

The nations made an uproar, the kingdoms tottered;  
He raised his voice, the earth melted.<sup>5</sup>

The Hebrew word used here for "tottered" is the same word used earlier in that same psalm to describe "mountains *tumbling* into the sea." The nations men establish will one day crumble. In contrast, the city God establishes "will not be moved" (verse 5). This psalm also speaks of mountain quakes, and the earth shaking. But for those who trust in Yahweh, He is their "refuge and strength... a very present help in trouble."<sup>6</sup> All nations shake and tumble like mountains crashing into the sea. Only God's kingdom is established and eternal.<sup>7</sup>

But in spite of recounting history and remembering the crumbled ruins of past kingdoms, we Americans struggle to imagine our

own country not existing in perpetuity. In other words, it's difficult for us to ponder the *end of America*. "Those were other nations," we argue. "Those empires *deserved* to die. We're not like them." We customarily celebrate America's birth on July 4, but give little thought to that time when our nation will take its place in history's graveyard. Some may argue that to contemplate America's ultimate demise is a morbid exercise, even depressing. After all, who likes to think of their own death? Isn't that a bit unnatural?

Not according to Scripture. The Bible says that contemplating our mortality is not only something God commands, it's also a very healthy idea. David wrote, "Teach us to number our days, that we may present to You a heart of wisdom" (Psalm 90:12), and

LORD, make me to know my end, and what is the extent of my days; let me know how transient I am. Behold, You have made my days as handbreadths, and my life-time as nothing in Your sight; surely every man at his best is a mere breath (Psalm 39:4-5).

Scripture authors, under the Holy Spirit's leadership and inspiration, compare our days on earth to a breath, a passing shadow, a morning mist, and withering grass.<sup>8</sup>

Our life here is finite. Limited. Temporary.

And what's true for people also applies to nations. There's nothing at all morbid or depressing about this truth. It's simply coming to terms with our mortality and reality, and positively applying wisdom in order to live a more purposeful and fulfilling life for God... while we can.

So from a biblical and historical perspective, our lives (and the country in which we live) have a relatively short life span. Like you and me, at some point in time, America will die. As we will see in the next chapter, though our country is indeed unique and exceptional,

it is by no means exempt or eternal. Therefore, we must begin asking: Why, how, and when will America see her end?

## **Enemy at the Gates**

There are many reasons a nation dies, just as there are many reasons for the death of an individual. And many ways that death can occur. The end came for one mighty nation in a single evening. The Babylonian Empire ruled southern Mesopotamia for a relatively short period, during which it conquered Jerusalem and took thousands of Jews captive, including Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Babylon's King Beltshazzar had thrown a lavish party during which he publicly mocked God's people, got wasted on wine, and praised gods of gold and silver. While all this was happening, King Cyrus of Persia and his army were systematically and stealthily digging their way into the capital city. Diverting the Euphrates River that flowed through Babylon, the Persian army gained access via the riverbed that ran under the city gates. While Beltshazzar and a thousand of his nobles partied like it was 539 BC, the enemy successfully penetrated the city's fortifications, and that night, Babylon fell. Beltshazzar was also slain that same evening.<sup>9</sup>

So Babylon fell in one night, whereas Rome's demise lingered like a slow disease before the empire and its "Eternal City" finally breathed its last. Rome was not "built in a day," and it didn't end that way either. Though historians propose different reasons for the eventual demise of the empire, virtually all of them agree that, over time, multiple factors were to blame for the fall of Rome. Those contributing factors include economic problems, military overexpansion, moral decadence, invasions by barbarian tribes, government corruption, and even the rise of Christianity. But these days, relatively few Americans bother to think of Babylon or Rome, and wouldn't, except for encountering them through a movie or history class.

So what about America? Are we like those ancient nations, destined to suffer similar fates? Are we really experiencing, in real time, the decline and fall of our country? Are there credible, identifiable threats to our existence? Or is this simply an alarmist's perspective? Perhaps just another case of prophetic sensationalism?

I don't think so.

I believe what we are seeing right now in our country are tangible warning signs alerting us to the decline and inevitable end of our country as a world power and gospel influence. This book will uncover the specific catalysts contributing to our downfall, but let's begin by looking at two leading causes. These are areas in which the enemy has already breached the outer gate, entered the city, and is now destroying us from within.

### *Declining Spirituality*

In 1967, Albanian dictator Enver Hoxha declared to the world, "There is no God." With these words, he officially established atheism as law in his country. Enver's legacy would later be marked by oppression, the outlawing of private property, a government-controlled media, and the widespread violation of human rights. Today, decades from Hoxha's oppression, religion is allowed in Albania. Nevertheless, Albanians continue to suffer under the vestiges of that still-strong communistic regime.

Our government has yet to *officially* ban God and Christianity from the country. However, many of our nation's leaders have sought to limit, and in some cases, eradicate completely the traditional biblical influence and spiritual fingerprint that once marked us as a nation. Both philosophically and practically, this fundamental transformation of America is being propagated and played out in the halls of government, colleges and universities, political parties, the court system, public schools, and local communities. We

have now become a society that is saturated in secularism. Those who believe in God (as defined by Scripture) are aging, and the next generation of Americans are becoming increasingly unconvinced regarding the realities of God, Jesus, sin, salvation, and the trustworthiness of the Bible.

In a 2015 study of unchurched people, the Barna Research Group found that 25 percent of today's unchurched adults are either atheistic or agnostic (Barna refers to this collective group as "skeptics"). About one-third of them have never once attended a church service. Further, this group of skeptics was found, on average, to be younger, more educated, mostly women, racially diverse, and regionally dispersed around the country.<sup>10</sup>

In other words, the next generation is more "gospel resistant," especially among Millennials. They simply are not buying into their parents' and grandparents' faith.

But spirituality is also taking a hit among professed churchgoers. Less than half of Americans now attend church of any kind, and for those who do, it occurs infrequently. When asked, "What, if anything, helps Americans grow in their faith?", *church* didn't even make the top-ten list! How ironic that the very institution birthed to foster and nurture spirituality and faith is having little influence in helping people grow in their relationship with God.

That may not accurately describe your particular church, but it does accurately represent a cross-section of America. Barna also found that 59 percent of Millennials who grew up in church have dropped out at some point. And finally, for all age groups, he discovered that among the reasons people don't attend church is because they either "find God elsewhere" (40 percent) or say that church "isn't relevant to me personally" (35 percent).

Further evidence of our spiritual decline is that, according to the Pew Research Center, the United States, as a whole, is becoming less

religious and more secular. There are now more religiously unaffiliated Americans (23 percent) than Catholics (21 percent) and mainline Protestants (15 percent). About 1 in 4 Americans identify themselves as *evangelical* Protestants, though evidence shows that number is also on the decline.<sup>11</sup>

Bottom line: As a nation, we are thinking less and less about God. We are God-less. And the fallout from this fact is eroding our foundations. From a purely human perspective, you could attribute this declining spirituality to a combination of secular and atheistic voices advancing an anti-God agenda, along with Christians' failure to impact and infiltrate their communities. Many professing believers and their families seek refuge from the world and its influences by withdrawing from secular society, choosing instead to spin a cocoon of Christian comfort in their own "safe space" environment. This leaning toward isolationism is one reason we feel progressively marginalized in the marketplace and public life.

Other Christians immerse themselves into culture with no intention or skills on how to penetrate the darkness or make a real difference for God or good in their world. Some simply live decent, upright lives in hopes that others will observe them and want what they have. But some also blend in completely, adopting worldly philosophies, values, and practices. Either way, ultimately, no impact for Christ is made. And the country continues its plummet into godlessness.

America is dying spiritually.

But she is also...

### *Decaying Morally*

Perhaps nowhere is America's decline more blatantly obvious than in the area of moral values and standards. What is openly

practiced today would cause our parents' generation to blush in shame. But today there is no blushing, and there is no shame.

In June of 2015, the United States Supreme Court handed down a landmark decision, proclaiming that same-sex couples had a “civil right” to legally marry. As expected, gay rights activists and homosexuals celebrated nationwide, flooding community courthouses where men married other men and women married women. Then-president Barack Obama joined in the celebration as well, lighting up the White House façade so that it depicted a giant gay pride flag.<sup>12</sup> With this historic, unprecedented decision, what the Bible refers to as an “abomination” was officially made the law of the land.<sup>13</sup> What was once commonly understood to be unnatural and deserving of divine wrath is now widely accepted as a “constitutional right” all across this country.<sup>14</sup>

And with the legalization of homosexual marriage comes additional fringe benefits and rights, including tax and health benefits. Naturally, this Pandora's box of what the Bible defines as immorality, spearheaded by America's highest court, also opens the door for other kinds of immorality to be legalized—such as polyamorous unions (group marriages), men with boys (pedophilia), and even incestuous relationships.<sup>15</sup>

After all, “Love is love,” right?

And according to homosexual advocates, government sanctioning of such aberrant unions are “not going to be as far in the future as people think.”<sup>16</sup> NAMBLA (North American Man Boy Love Association) is seeking to make this a reality as they fight what they call the “end of oppression of men and boys who have mutually consensual relationships.”<sup>17</sup> The ACLU has now joined them in this fight.<sup>18</sup> There is also a women's version of the NAMBLA organization as well, who celebrate sex between adult women and young girls.

But simply using words like *love*, *consensual*, and *rights* cannot

alter the unchanging, universal moral standard as outlined in Scripture and encoded within humanity's conscience. More about this in chapter 4.

This, of course, is *not* to say that every practicing homosexual supports a pedophilic or incestuous gay agenda. It also does not imply that those who struggle with homosexual sin, gender confusion, or lustful urges are party to such radical elements of this movement. Apart from their homosexuality, many gay people lead otherwise exemplary lives. But the argument remains: If there is no God to whom we are accountable, and there is no objective, absolute standard by which to determine what is morally right or wrong, then there cannot logically be anything whatsoever “wrong” with a sexual union between a man and man, a woman and a woman, a man and a boy, a woman and a young girl, a mother with son or daughter, or a father with a son or daughter. There is no conceivable way to legitimately support an argument against such wicked pursuits without a divine, unchanging moral standard.

However, our government, its courts, and the courts of popular opinion have solved this conundrum for us. With their rulings and reasonings, they have effectively proclaimed that there is no God. And the Book Christians claim He wrote is officially unreliable and irrelevant to our modern world.

We've also seen in recent years a rise of *transgenderism*, or people of one gender transitioning to another. Though this is logically unsupportable and medically impossible to achieve (a person's DNA remains the same from conception to death), their mental perspective and self-perception *can* change as a result of one's gender confusion. Their bodies can also be modified and altered to reflect that preferred perception through surgery and other means.

When former Olympian decathlete Bruce Jenner embraced what he felt was his emerging identity to “become a woman,” media

outlets fell all over themselves praising and celebrating the 65-year-old man's decision. They also exploited him. ESPN applauded and honored him with the Arthur Ashe Courage Award. Six months after his "coming out," *Glamour* magazine crowned him Woman of the Year. Oh, the irony of awarding a *man* the Woman of the Year award, something at which true feminists should have been outraged. The jury is still out on how Jenner will navigate his chosen path, but if he is anything like many other transgenders, his is a decision that will likely lead him into even more confusion and depression, for research shows that 41 percent of transgenders have attempted suicide.<sup>19</sup>

But transgenderism is only a part of many other strains of the current epidemic of gender confusion, including *gender fluid*, or the bizarre belief that a person's identity can change over time from male to female or to a combination of both. Under the misnamed banner of equality, this twisted thinking has infected colleges and universities across the country, most of which now recognize six or more gender identity choices and sexual orientations. This is done so the schools can know how to properly address these individuals and determine what dorm he/she/etc. should be assigned to. The male or female check-boxes on college applications have now been replaced with male, female, trans male/trans man, trans female/trans woman, gender queer, gender nonconforming, or some other identity, which is a sort of fill-in-the-blank option where you can actually write in your own gender/sexual identity.<sup>20</sup> Following suit, ABC News has provided a list of 58 "gender options" now available to Facebook users.<sup>21</sup>

So how have Americans responded to this gender identity explosion? Transgenderism and gender fluidity are now widely accepted, and those who dare to stand against them, question them, argue with them, criticize them, or simply disagree with them are instantly

branded with an identity of their own—namely *homophobic*, *bigot*, or some other word connoting a hateful, repressive, deplorable human being. There is even a concerted effort by the “gender identity police” to force heterosexuals to use “proper” gender-inclusive pronouns when referring to individuals who identify as the opposite of their birth gender or as a gender-fluid person. He/she are replaced with “zie, sie, ey, ve, tay, e.”<sup>22</sup>

Mayor Bill de Blasio of New York City threatened business people who fail to address customers by their preferred gender (*ze* or *zir*) with violation of the law and fines up to \$250,000.<sup>23</sup> We have truly passed through a portal to an alternate reality here.

I realize some of this may sound fantastical, unrealistic, and even difficult to imagine. But just a few years ago so did the idea of homosexual marriage becoming the law of the land. With a simple swipe of a pen, the United States Supreme Court laid an axe to the tree of morality and marriage, an institution planted by God that had remained unchallenged for thousands of years.

The impact of this decision on American society is obvious. Redefining the very idea and institution of marriage and family—as established in the Bible—fundamentally disables a civilization’s GPS, leaving it to wander aimlessly. We have become a nation held hostage by whatever depraved urges and lusts our hearts can imagine.

The family is *the* cornerstone of human civilization, and the unifying fabric of any nation. Husbands, wives, fathers, mothers, children. . . *family*. *This* is what naturally propagates humanity and creates stable cultures. It has been the most basic institution linking humanity from generation to generation since the beginning of creation and time. Created, designed, and defined by *God*, not human courts or prevailing opinion.

Tragically, today’s families are suffering, as fewer than half of American children (46 percent) under the age of 18 are living with

2 married, heterosexual parents in their first marriage.<sup>24</sup> This is a marked change from 1960, when that statistic stood at 73 percent. Most couples no longer marry young, start a family, and stay married for life. Now, more Americans are putting off marriage, and even rejecting the very idea of it. Living together with a “partner” has replaced traditional marriage for many. The result is that 41 percent of America’s children are now born outside of marriage, compared to just 5 percent in 1960.

But when you exclude God and the Bible from a country’s laws and values, this is what happens. It’s another crack in the foundation of a nation, and more evidence of our decline.

America is decaying morally.

Common sense and conscience are also eroding, as we are literally celebrating sin in the streets. From gay pride rallies, misguided mass gender protests, gang violence and looting, America is losing her mind as she embraces false narratives as truth and “fake news” as reality.

Our money still declares “In God We Trust,” but our actions argue to the contrary. A corrupted government and a morally bankrupt population have joined together in removing much of God, His Bible, and His values from our culture. We vehemently deny that the Creator created the world, replacing Him with a preposterous, undocumented theory of origins that is force-fed to students in the classroom. The removal of prayer from schools in 1963 was merely emblematic of a greater strategy to devalue God Himself and His role in national life.<sup>25</sup>

As a result, the Judeo-Christian God is now considered *passé*, out of date, and unnecessary. Like an expired can of vegetables, our country’s Christian values and morals are good for nothing except to be thrown in the trash. It’s a new day in America, and there is no

room for a faith that won't allow us to do whatever we want. This is how the New Freedom is defined.

The ultimate answer, of course, is not for us to pass opposing laws forcing prayer back into schools or to introduce bills requiring that the Ten Commandments be erected in every town square. That would miss the point completely. Things have gone way beyond merely an *Us vs. Them* control for public policy or legal power. And it's not an issue of "forcing our religion" on others. It's more a matter of simply restoring common moral sense and sanity to our nation. If the basic moral code upon which virtually all the world's civilized nations are founded (don't murder, steal, lie, commit adultery) happens to align with Christianity, that does not mean the state is "establishing a religion." But it *does* mean that our nation once recognized where that moral code originated from. Sadly, we no longer do. God's standards have been replaced by the opinions, preferences, and demands of depraved thinking and political correctness.

Even Russian president Vladimir Putin has stated that America has moved away from her Christian roots and is now on a "path to degradation."<sup>26</sup>

Like the law of gravity, God simply *is*. We didn't make up the law of gravity. Instead, we discovered it and found ways to temporarily suspend it for our benefit and enjoyment (e.g., flying). You can deny gravity's existence if you so choose. And you can act on that denial, even attempting to *defy* gravity's force. But eventually you must succumb to its power and return to solid ground. You can jump from the roof of a skyscraper and publicly whine and scream about your denial of gravity throughout your short descent. But gravity will have the last word, catching up with you and convincing you of its reality and power.

So it is with God. The nation that denies and defies Him will ultimately collide with His reality and suffer the impact of that collision.

There is no escape from gravity. Even in outer space, you cannot avoid it. It is a force whose long, strong arms reach to the ends of the universe. And the One who created the law and force of gravity is greater than the sum total of it. God's moral laws and the consequences for breaking them are inevitably inescapable.

Because of our spiritual and moral deterioration, we have become a nation filled with self-absorbed people marked by incessant consumption, obsession with entertainment, and driven by flesh-fueled lusts. So-called "rights" have replaced personal responsibility. Moral relativism now rules the land, spreading like a demonic virus all the way to the highest offices in government. We are officially a post-Christian society. In addition, economic peril looms around the corner, with unprecedented national debt and out-of-control spending by a bloated government that is endangering our standard of living.

Experts warn that these are among the glaring symptoms of a catastrophic system failure.

## The Grave Digger

Our country is racing down a path that leads to destruction. Of course, as biblically informed Christians, we recognize the source of this godless agenda and assault on decency. At the epicenter of this seismic shift in our country is Satan himself. He, according to Jesus, is a "liar and the father of lies."<sup>27</sup> He also called Satan "the ruler of this world."<sup>28</sup> Scripture further tells us that "the whole world lies in the power of the evil one."<sup>29</sup> The apostle Paul recognized the devil as "the god of this *world*" (Greek, *aionos* = "age").<sup>30</sup> He is "the prince of the power of the air," a force of "darkness" and "wickedness."<sup>31</sup>

Satan and his demons are *in the world*, actively destroying and dismantling all that is holy, good, and decent. And they accomplish their mission through cleverly devised, deceptive strategies and

schemes.<sup>32</sup> Their sinister plan has a trifold objective: (1) To exact vengeance and hatred against the one who expelled them from heaven; (2) to deceive, denigrate, and destroy the crowning achievement of God's creation, those who bear the image of God; and (3) to prepare the world for the man of his choosing, whom Scripture says is "coming...in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved" (2 Thessalonians 2:9-10).

Presently, Satan is lying and deceiving the nations concerning the existence of God, the nature of man, the reliability of the Bible, heaven and hell, death, and the meaning of life itself. But every proposition he peddles is a deception and an illusion. His marketing mantra is "follow your heart"—a poisonous lie wrapped in a thin layer of self-fulfillment. A calling card of the devil is to lure you in with pleasurable poison and lies until you eventually beg for it. It is simply not his nature or capacity to prosper mankind for good, but only to pervert him for evil.

According to Scripture, a day is coming when this great deceiver will be bound and prevented from deceiving the nations any longer.<sup>33</sup> Despite what some may believe, he is not presently "bound" by the emotional, incantational prayers of well-meaning Christians. He is alive and well on planet earth. His stock is soaring. And he is selling his sinful shares at bargain prices, promising huge returns. Yes, this is *his* hour. He is targeting human identity ("Did I evolve or am I created in the image of God?"), gender ("Am I really a man, or could I be a woman?"), sexuality ("If I desire it, then why shouldn't I do it?"), and the family ("Why can't I marry another man if I want to?"). Of course, Satan's preoccupation with sexual deviance isn't limited to those who practice homosexuality. There are significantly more heterosexuals who are tempted by their own desires

and fall into sexual immorality. A multibillion-dollar porn industry, though only the tip of this immoral iceberg, certainly demonstrates this truth.

Obviously, those who deny the existence of God will also deny the reality of Satan. But it's a dual-denial leading to a double-deception. In the end, every person will come to understand it was all just another big lie. Satan set the bait, and predictably, humanity bought it, bit into it, and was hooked. Time and Bible prophecy will prove that God is real and that His Word is true. But for many, that will be truth realized too late.

These are some of the national warning signs of a fatal illness. They are the tremors indicating an impending, and perhaps unavoidable, spiritual seismic event. America's downfall has been a long time coming. A gradual bleeding out of its most vital resources. In cooperation with humanity's adversary, we have helped to dig our own grave using the shovel of independence from God. And we have etched our own tombstone epitaph with the chisel of human pride.

But just how bad will things get before America can no longer stand due to the seismic shifting beneath her foundation? Will we simply continue in a downward spiral, or will there be some great revival that saves us in our final hour? Will we receive some measure of dying grace? Or will we reap the wrath that is deserved for what we have so willfully sown these past decades? Or could something else unexpected occur?

With the end of America, history is repeating itself, just as it has done many times before with other nations. Only this time, unlike all the others, it will signal and coincide with the end of days.

## **Understanding the Times**

As Christians, we must respond to what is happening in our country. But we must do more than simply react. We must *discern*.

We cannot merely look at the state of our nation and world and scratch our heads, wondering what it all means and what to do about it, if anything. Instead, we must look to God's authoritative Word for our wisdom and game plan. And that's where the prophetic scriptures help us.

A significant percentage of Americans believe we are approaching a biblical end-times scenario. Even so, many Christians remain uninformed about what the Bible actually teaches regarding the last days. The average Christian's working knowledge about prophecy typically involves a rudimentary understanding of Jesus's return combined with prophetic tidbits and a patchwork vision of future world events. The primary reason for this "future fog" is that most pastors simply do not preach and teach Bible prophecy. But why? I believe this absence of prophecy in the pulpit is due to a variety of reasons. Here are my Top 10:

1. The pastor doesn't feel qualified to teach on the subject.
2. Preaching on prophecy requires hard work and much study. Some pastors may get by more on personality than having diligently studied the Word. Some pastors busy themselves with the "business of the church"—meetings, leadership duties, and church activities, leaving little time to do what God has called them to do—*preach the Word*.
3. Prophecy is sometimes viewed as controversial, sensational, and for some, even frightening or offensive. There are enough obstacles pastors face with their congregations without creating more distance between the pulpit and the pew.
4. There are divergent views on eschatology (the study

of the end times) within the body of Christ. As such, prophecy is often seen as a divisive topic, and therefore avoided.

5. To be too dogmatic or confident regarding prophetic interpretation can come off as prideful, or even cult-like at times.
6. To talk about the end times requires talking about God's wrath, and some pastors don't want to be viewed as a "prophet of doom." Negativity tends to *emptying* seats, not filling them.
7. No one *really* knows the future, so why dwell on it?
8. Many pastors and denominations do not believe in a literal, prophetic fulfillment of Scripture. Rather, they take a "spiritual" or symbolic approach when interpreting books like Daniel or Revelation.
9. There are so many more *relevant* things to preach on (marriage, handling stress, family issues, parenting, personal problems, positive attitudes, etc.).
10. Perhaps for some, they fear that if members think the world will end soon, they will stop giving financially.

While we may sympathize with some of these reasons, are any of them valid enough to avoid preaching what makes up about 27 percent of the Bible?<sup>34</sup>

There are some voices today claiming America is "just fine." They say we're actually *progressing*, making great strides toward tolerance, love, and equality. They say it's actually the *Christians* and those with conservative values who are the real problem. The church is what stands in the way of progress toward the betterment of our country and mankind. They allege the United States never really was

a “Christian nation,” and that our foundations are solidly secular. Could they be right about this? Is it possible that what Christians have long believed about America’s biblical beginnings is merely embellished history?

Let’s find out.