

# THE COMING Millennial Kingdom

What Life Will Be Like for Us  
When Jesus Reigns on Earth



NATHAN E. JONES

Foreword by David R. Reagan

"*The Coming Millennial Kingdom* provides us with an advanced, comprehensive backstage pass to our future as believers. Expertly written and deeply rooted in Scripture, your understanding of prophecy will be greatly enhanced!"

—**Jeff Kinley**, host *The King Is Coming*; cohost *The Prophecy Pros Podcast*

"A masterful exploration of the millennial kingdom, uncovering its wonders through the lens of Scripture. Jones paints a vivid picture of Christ's righteous government, with Jerusalem as its capital, and a restored creation where peace reigns. This work is an invitation to marvel at God's redemptive plan and fix our eyes on the reign of King Jesus in His glorious kingdom."

—**Dr. Ron Rhodes**, author, *The End Times in Chronological Order*

"Sadly, the intricate details of our 1,000 years here on earth in Christ's kingdom are marginalized or misinterpreted by many Christians who think we're in the millennial kingdom now. When believers are not taught, they fall into serious doctrinal error and confusion. I was pleased to read Nathan's book about Christ's kingdom that is yet to come. It will open many eyes with an outstanding overview of premillennialism."

—**Jan Markell**, founder/director, Olive Tree Ministries

"This book breaks through the dark, tumultuous clouds of these end times with brilliant descriptive details about God's unfathomable promises to believers. The apostle Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 2:9-10 come alive in the reader's spiritual understanding: 'As it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.'"

—**Terry James**, [Raptureready.com](http://Raptureready.com)

"*The Coming Millennial Kingdom* is incredibly thorough, taking readers on a tour through the Old and New Testaments to demonstrate the literal nature of God's unconditional prophetic promises about the future kingdom age. Jones points to the only hermeneutically sound conclusion: There is a literal future kingdom age coming, in which God's promises to Israel and the church will be beautifully fulfilled!"

—**Todd Hampson**, author, *Non-Prophet's Guide* series; cohost *The Prophecy Pros Podcast*

"This easy-to-read book on our coming future home and governmental responsibilities will be an encouragement to God's people. Readers will be inspired to serve the Lord with great anticipation of the fulfillment of our future rewards in the 1,000-year reign of Jesus our King."

—**Mondo Gonzales**, cohost at *Prophecy Watchers*

"Nathan guides the reader through various questions regarding the coming Davidic kingdom of Christ on the earth. His conclusions are encouraging, faithful to Scripture, and filled with hope. The book causes one to pray with even more passion for the kingdom of Jesus Christ to come soon."

—**Terry Cooper**, lead minister, Ninevah Christian Church, KY

“Christians too often think of the immediate over the eternal. With bills to pay, kids to raise, and sales quotas to meet, the earthly frequently trumps the eternal. *The Coming Millennial Kingdom* redirects our focus and answers pressing questions about our future. Nathan’s approach is biblical without being mechanical, a perfect blend of futurist and biblical realist that every believer should read.”

—**Joe Kerr**, ghostwriter, editor, White House Special Media Press Corps

“Few scholars can communicate important biblical truth in an easy-to-understand fashion. Nathan Jones is one of those scholars. In *The Coming Millennial Kingdom*, he skillfully explains intricate details about the future earthly reign of Christ in a way that fills the reader with vivid images of, and an earnest longing for, the glorious return of the King!”

—**J.B. Hixson, PhD**, president/founder, NBW Ministries

“*The Coming Millennial Kingdom* contains teaching and encouragement about the climax of all human history: the messianic kingdom of Christ. It is well organized and engaging and has treasures for every reader to discover. Best of all, it provides comfort and hope in what the Lord has yet to do with this world—causing believers to long for Christ’s return.”

—**Bradley W. Maston, PhD**, pastor, Fort Collins Bible Church, CO

“With such darkness, death, and destruction on this earth, how exciting to read, in detail, what the future will look like during the reign of Jesus Christ, when the government is finally on His shoulders! *The Coming Millennial Kingdom* is sure to bring a sense of relief, encouragement, and perspective to believers everywhere.”

—**David Fiorazo**, author, podcaster, host of *Worldview Matters*

“Nathan’s treatment of the coming kingdom is well outlined, well written, and well rounded. It covers every vital aspect of the kingdom—from the promises to the tribulation to the kingdom blessings—on a level that is within the reach of the student, yet rich enough for the theologian.”

—**Lee W. Brainard**, Soothkeep Ministry

“Nathan Jones’s depth and knowledge of Bible prophecy is a truly a gift from the Lord. *The Coming Millennial Kingdom* is an example of the simple yet profound way that he communicates biblical truth along with down-to-earth applications. The information he provides here makes this a must-have resource that will bless everyone who reads it!”

—**Dr. Victoriano Batista, PhD**, Calvary Chapel pastor and evangelist; coauthor of *The Mighty Angels of Revelation*

THE COMING  
Millennial  
Kingdom



NATHAN E. JONES



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Cover design by Faceout Studio, Spenser Fuller

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## **The Coming Millennial Kingdom**

Copyright © 2025 by Nathan E. Jones

Published by Harvest House Publishers

Eugene, Oregon 97408

[www.harvesthousepublishers.com](http://www.harvesthousepublishers.com)

ISBN 978-0-7369-9166-7 (pbk)

ISBN 978-0-7369-9167-4 (eBook)

Library of Congress Control Number: 2024946099

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**Printed in the United States of America**

25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 / BP / 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

*This book is dedicated to my loving parents,  
Edward and Joyce Jones,  
who have faithfully been teaching their children since the cradle to  
“watch...and pray always that you may be counted worthy”  
(Luke 21:36).*



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to think that this book stands as the pinnacle of my lifetime studying the Bible, particularly that wonderfully endearing doctrine called eschatology. But, alas, as a wise old professor once so sagely pointed out, we students of the Bible merely stand on the shoulders of close to 2,000 years' worth of interpreters and interpretations. Therefore, of those on whose shoulders I am now standing, I must start my acknowledgments by crediting the source of all divine knowledge—my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Thank You, Lord Jesus, for revealing Yourself through Your Holy Scriptures and guiding Spirit. I so long to see Your radiance emanating from the throne of David and to worship You as the worthy King of kings. Long live the kingdom of Christ!

I would also like to acknowledge the theologians and scholars of past church history, many of whom have been lost and forgotten by time, but in glory we will at long last become acquainted. I would also like to acknowledge the theologians and scholars of present church history, many of whom have taught, lectured, or mentored me in my journey to better understand “our great God and Savior” (Titus 2:13). These paragons of my Bible college and seminary years poured their passion for the Lord, His Word, and His Great Commission into each of their lessons. And, to the many colleagues and mentors during my ministry career, way too numerous to name here, thank you.

And, finally, much appreciation to the good folks at Harvest House Publishers, whose passion for disseminating God's Word continually motivates their readers to prayerfully attain that long-anticipated affirmation, “Well done, good and faithful servant” (Matthew 25:21, 23).

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# FOREWORD

**B**ack in 2007, God gave me a vision to transform the Lamb & Lion Ministries website into a web ministry. Up until that time, the website had simply been an archive of our publications and videos. I felt the Lord wanted us to develop it into a dynamic, interactive tool for evangelism and a communication hub for the discussion of Bible prophecy. What I needed to accomplish this was an Internet evangelist.

Trying to find the right person to take on this task seemed next to impossible. Ideally, I wanted a person who was technically qualified in all aspects of website creation and maintenance. But the person also needed to be trained theologically and have an in-depth knowledge of Bible prophecy. Needless to say, that combination of qualifications was not going to be easy to find. In fact, I doubted that such a person even existed!

But I kept praying, and once again, God proved that with Him all things are possible (Matthew 19:26). Nathan Jones, who at the time was serving at a megachurch in Kentucky, applied for the position, explaining that he had both a heart for Bible prophecy and extensive technical knowledge in communicating over the Internet. I was astounded and delighted.

After Nathan was brought on board, I discovered that God had blessed our ministry with a highly gifted person who could do much more than just present the gospel over the Internet and answer questions about Bible prophecy. Also serving as my cohost on our ministry's television program *Christ in Prophecy*, I watched Nathan over the years develop into a very talented teacher, preacher, and writer. He has become a much-requested conference speaker, and the books he's written are full of spiritual insights.

Furthermore, he has been gifted by God to explain the difficult concepts of Bible prophecy in down-to-earth, understandable terms that the people in the pews can comprehend. He shares my belief that God wants to communicate with the average person and not just scholars.

Regarding the interpretation of Bible prophecy, Nathan believes that God truly means what He says. Therefore, his explanations of prophecies always seek the plain-sense meaning. He studiously avoids spiritualization and sensationalism—two of the worst abuses of Bible prophecy in the church today.

Because the spiritualization of Scripture prevails in most denominations, causing them to deny any future earthly reign of Jesus, most Christians know little or nothing about the many prophecies concerning the coming kingdom of Christ—a reign promised to bring peace, righteousness, and justice to the earth for 1,000 years. Nor are they aware of the promise that Christians will participate in that kingdom, and that during the millennium, Jesus will also fulfill all the promises He has made to the Jewish people. To rectify this tragic oversight, Nathan, in this book, will reveal to you the glorious “forgotten” promises God has made about the future kingdom of Christ that is soon coming to the earth.

Knowing Christ's coming victory—and your role in it—will equip you with an eternal perspective that will enable you to cope with life's challenges in the here and now. And, as this world grows

increasingly dark, I believe you will agree with me: Hope is needed now more than ever. Knowledge about God's marvelous promises concerning the near future will provide you with that much-needed hope in the present.

So prepare yourself for a spiritual feast of God's prophetic Word and turn the page.

*Maranatha!*

Dr. David R. Reagan

Founder of Lamb & Lion Ministries





## CHAPTER 1

# NATIONS IN FREEFALL

*My mother used to tell me of a millennium that was coming, when Christ should reign, and all men should be free and happy. And she taught me, when I was a boy, to pray, "Thy kingdom come." Sometimes I think all this sighing, and groaning, and stirring among the dry bones foretells what she used to tell me was coming. But who may abide the day of His appearing?<sup>1</sup>*

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*

Let's gather around the coffee table as if playing a round of Trivia Night. First question: *What would you say have been the greatest empires in world history?*

So you can best answer this question, let's quickly define what an empire is: "an extensive group of states or countries ruled over by a single monarch, an oligarchy, or a sovereign state."<sup>2</sup> The criteria for determining greatness is based on the enduring impact the empire has made on the world overall, either through its military domination, scientific advancements, or cultural achievements. The greatest empires have the biggest impact on global society, thereby controlling

the destinies of millions of people. These are the far-reaching history changers that charted the course of overall human development for generations to come.

Which empires did you choose? If you are thinking along the same lines as I am, I chose the following nine as being the greatest:

1. Egypt for its pharaohs and pyramids
2. Babylon for its pivotal role in the Old Testament
3. the Persian Empire for its sciences
4. the Macedonian-Greek kingdom for its culture
5. the Roman Empire for its military strength
6. the British Empire for its vast colonization of every continent
7. the Soviet Union for the fear it so long hung over the world
8. the United States for the freedoms it provides
9. the European Union for the amazing achievement of unifying long-warring nations

(Though, as an American, I am, of course, guilty of being Western-centric in my choices.)

Alas, I answered wrong. According to the historical-geographical experts at *WorldAtlas*, the following eight empires check all the criteria boxes as being the truly greatest of the world-impacting dominions.<sup>3</sup>

## THE EIGHT GREAT EMPIRES

### ***1. The Akkadian Empire***

The Akkadian Empire is the great-granddaddy of all subsequent empires, stretching as far back as nearly one step away from Noah's ark. Established around 2334 BC by the esteemed Sargon of Akkad,

this empire ruled over 310,000 square miles of ancient Mesopotamia, which was truly an amazing mass of land at a time when the world was so thinly populated. At its zenith, the Akkadian Empire was the model of strength due to its centralized government, well-ordered administration, and well-managed infrastructure.

But like all rulers who taste too much success and amass too much power, Sargon's grandson Naram-Sin developed a "deity-sized ego" and so proclaimed himself "king of the four corners of the universe" and a god equal to any other in the Mesopotamian pantheon.<sup>4</sup> Thus the Akkadian decline began around 2154 BC due to a combination of revolts against Naram-Sin, political instability, economic decline, a devastating drought, and invasions by the rival Gutians. All of these factors contributed to the collapse of this once-impressive forerunner empire.

## **2. *The Persian Empire (Achaemenid Empire)***

Established by Cyrus the Great and dominating the Middle East between 550 to 330 BC, ancient Persia at its peak spread remarkably over three continents: Asia, Africa, and Europe. The Persian Empire is remembered for its deeply educated society that adhered to codified laws, was run by an efficient bureaucracy, boasted one of the first postal systems, and constructed the 1,553-mile Royal Road that facilitated trade and military dominance. The Medo-Persians even showed respect for the customs and religions of its conquered people.

The empire's fourth king, Xerxes (486–465 BC), likely King Ahasuerus from the book of Esther, lived by the maxim, "A wise ruler listens to the counsel of his advisors before making decisions."<sup>5</sup> And indeed, Xerxes did listen to his advisors' advice when it came to making an example out of his absent wife, Queen Vashti, who had refused to parade herself naked around his drunken friends. The first chapter of the book of Esther exposed how Xerxes' fearful advisors worried such insolence would put all the empire's men at risk of having



their wives despise their husbands. Nip it in the bud, they begged, and so the king banished his own wife. All it took to bring down this “enlightened” empire was the arrival of the unstoppable Alexander the Great and his Macedonian armies in 334 BC, who were enraged over Xerxes’ earlier victory at the famous Battle of Thermopylae.

### ***3. The Roman Empire***

Birthered out of the Roman Republic in 27 BC by its first emperor, Julius Caesar, the Roman Empire stands apart as the geopolitical juggernaut that profoundly shaped the future of Western civilization. To this very day, Western societies model Roman law and governance, continue to utilize Roman infrastructure and architecture, speak languages that find their origins in Latin, have practiced Christianity since Constantine I, and long for the return of Rome’s Pax Romana period, which for centuries brought its citizens prosperity and stability. At its zenith, the might of the Roman military spread its iron control over three whole continents.

Unfortunately, Rome’s emperors earned their fame as notorious lunatics and self-proclaimed gods who grew increasingly mad from drinking lead-laced wine. Case in point, the brutal Caligula (AD 37–41) fed prisoners to wild beasts, held conversations with the moon, and legend says he appointed his beloved horse Incitatus as Rome’s first equine official.<sup>6</sup> The Roman Empire died a slow and painful death as it crumbled into pieces due to military overreach, economic instability, societal decadence, and an open-border policy that led to barbarian invasions until its inevitable fall in AD 476.

### ***4. The Mongol Empire***

Eurasia was blitzkrieged by the mighty Mongol warlord Genghis Khan in AD 1206. His exceptional military strategy and his successors’ strong organizational skills established the largest contiguous empire ever forged. Having developed advanced communications and trade

systems to facilitate the empire's control over such a vast amount of territory, the Mongol Empire linked East to West along the Silk Road to produce an unprecedented cultural exchange.

Such rapid expansion came at an unfathomable cost, as the sheer brutality of Khan's conquests caused the mass killing of one-tenth of the world's known population—a staggering 50 million deaths!<sup>7</sup> For Genghis Khan, his “greatest happiness” was “to vanquish your enemies, to chase them before you, to rob them of their wealth, to see those dear to them bathed in tears, [and] to clasp to your bosom their wives and daughters.”<sup>8</sup> Way too vast an empire to maintain control over, by the late thirteenth century, the Mongol Empire became fractured and plagued by domestic conflicts, succession issues, and frequent rebellions.

### ***5. The Ottoman Empire***

Birthered out of the Turkish tribes under Osman I in AD 1299 and reaching its peak under Suleiman the Magnificent (1520–1566), the Ottoman Empire dominated the old Roman lands for an incredible 600 years (1299–1922). Strategically situated between Europe and Asia, this superpower was hailed for its multiethnic and multicultural society, religious tolerance, well-established laws, and long-running social stability.

The Ottoman Empire was also infamous for its shady style of leadership. History recorded that the rulers in Turkey were so criminally corrupt that their primary interest was robbing their own people blind. They were also too lazy to run the affairs of the empire at the local level, so neglected their municipalities.<sup>9</sup> Like the Mongols, the Ottomans engaged in genocide. Of the estimated two million Armenians living in the empire at the onset of World War I, the Ottomans deported well over a million, and hundreds of thousands more were summarily massacred. The rise in power of the Western nations caused this empire's bitter defeat, and by the end of World War I, most of its lands were divvied up among its enemies.

## 6. *The British Empire*

From the sixteenth to the mid-twentieth century, the sun never set on the lands controlled by the British Empire, which, during that time, was considered the world's most extensive geopolitical power. This imperialistic empire mastered maritime exploration and trade to colonize practically every continent. The British Empire influenced much of the world's cultures, governments, and systems of law, and made English the dominant trade language to this day.

The first king of Great Britain, James VI (1566–1625), led a very long line of sovereigns who smugly believed in the divine right of kings as being superior to any mere man. As James stated, “The estate of monarchy is the supremest thing upon earth; for kings are not only God’s lieutenants upon earth, and sit upon God’s throne, but even by God Himself they are called gods.”<sup>10</sup> However, globalizing the world came at a steep price, for the British Empire of today is practically an empire in name only due to many of its colonies having declared their independence, the rise of rival powers, and the horrific losses it suffered over two world wars.

## 7. *The Russian-Soviet Empire*

Founded in Moscow under Ivan I in the twelfth century and evolving into the Russian Empire under Peter the Great in 1721, the latter’s autocratic tsarist rule resulted in massive territorial expansion, leading Russia to control the largest single landmass of any country in history. Social class unrest led to the horrifically bloody Communist October Revolution of 1917. The Soviet Union devoured the Russian Empire and then meteorically rose to superpower status during the Cold War.

In its attempt to construct a socialist utopia, the Soviet Union—under the monstrously violent Joseph Stalin, who led the country from 1924 to 1953—purged more than 20 million of his people and starved millions of Ukrainians to death. He once bragged to Winston Churchill, “The devil is on my side. Because, of course, everyone

knows that the devil is a Communist—and God, no doubt, is a good Conservative.”<sup>11</sup> Inherent defects within the Communist system of government inevitably led to the Union’s economy collapsing in 1991. Though Russia subsequently lost its superpower status, it remains a formidable global threat under President Vladimir Putin.

### ***8. The United States of America***

While the United States wouldn’t categorize itself as an empire, many other nations do so because of the USA’s unchallenged military, political, and cultural influence over the entire world. Having declared its independence in 1776 from the British Empire, the US has stood on one leg by its faith in Judeo-Christian values and on the other by the ideals of the Enlightenment concerning liberty and democracy. Swelled in population not by conquest but by immigration, fueled by seemingly endless resources, and almost unbeatable in technological innovation, the US emerged from World War II as a global power and claims the title as today’s only recognized superpower.

Ever since President Harry Truman tasked Congress in late 1945 with the charge, “We must relentlessly preserve our superiority on land and sea and in the air,” the US has planted some 750 bases in about 80 foreign countries and territories, leading one author to label the US as “a pointillist empire that spans the globe.”<sup>12</sup> Today, the US has abandoned its foundational beliefs, been stricken by internal divisions, is teetering on bankruptcy due to reckless deficit spending, and has been losing its influence on the world stage. For these reasons, many historians classify the US as an empire in swift decline.

## **THE COMMONALITY**

Why did I just give you a brief survey of the world’s most influential empires? Because this leads to the second question of our trivia night: *What do all of these empires have most in common?*

Your answer might span the spectrum from raw political power, to vast military might, to long-standing cultural influences, to economic superiority, and even to longevity. And you would be right, though only to some degree.

The sole shared characteristic, once revealed, should appear blindingly apparent, much like a buoy light bobbing in a storm at sea. It's a characteristic historically and repeatedly proven again and again. And it is this:

Every one of these mighty empires became an absolute, total failure, either consummately in the past or is currently in a state of decline now and so is heading toward an inevitable collapse.

### THE FAILURE OF HUMAN GOVERNMENT

Why is failure alone the most significant common trait? Why have these and every other mighty empire or nation been stamped in red with *Failure*? The reason is because they have been unable to fulfill the primary reason for why human governments exist.

Because we all live out our days under some flavor of political *ism*, and so benefit from or suffer under them, let's identify the primary reason why human governments exist. As the US is considered by many to be the pinnacle of all human governments in the freedoms it enjoys, the influence that it extends, and the wealth it generates, let's look to the nation's Founding Fathers for the answer to the reason why every empire or nation inevitably fails.

While laying the groundwork for the prenatal US, the Founding Fathers held fast to the biblical revelation that government under human control has been divinely purposed. The God of this logical and orderly universe is the very One who instituted government by revealing Himself and His will for its establishment in the Bible.

Case in point: In the Old Testament, the prophet Daniel wrote that God is the very One who “changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings” (Daniel 2:21). In speaking to Babylon’s potentate, Daniel exclaimed, “The God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory...and has made you ruler over them all” (verses 37-38). God does so “in order that the living may know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, gives it to whomever He will, and sets over it the lowest of men” (Daniel 4:17).

In the New Testament, the Son of God revealed that the power of authority originates from heaven when He told Pilate, “You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above” (John 19:11). The apostle Paul echoed Christ’s revelation: “There is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God” (Romans 13:1). Even when it comes to the painful chore of paying taxes, Paul instructed us as to why we should pay up, noting (somewhat to our reluctance) that our leaders “are God’s ministers” who are “attending continually to this very thing” (verse 6). The apostle Peter echoed this divine calling, instructing every person to

submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake, whether to the king as supreme, or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good (1 Peter 2:13-14).

What exactly was the Most High attempting to accomplish by placing and empowering certain people to govern over other people? One of America’s Founding Fathers, Thomas Paine, believed the purpose as “security being the true design and end of government.”<sup>13</sup> Another Founding Father, Thomas Jefferson, declared, “The most sacred of the duties of a government is to do equal and impartial justice to all its citizens.”<sup>14</sup> And, when both security and justice reign,

then as John Adams noted, “the form of government, which communicates ease, comfort, security, or in one word happiness to the greatest number of persons, and in the greatest degree, is the best.”<sup>15</sup>

In summary, security instead of enslavement, justice instead of corruption, virtue instead of vice, and the preservation of the happiness of its people rather than the cause of their suffering—these are the godly ideals upon which these men founded a nation. They understood that to these ends rest the primary reason for why God has instituted human government.

America’s Founding Fathers also learned from their burdens living in a vassal territory suffering under a control-freak British king that such an idealized form of government would be, with a God-fearing citizenship, tenuous to maintain at best, and without a God-fearing people, an inevitable failure. Why so? Because the Founding Fathers understood from the hard lessons they’d learned in life, as well as from the Bible’s warnings that human governments will always remain inherently evil because mankind is inherently evil, and in sore need of a redeemer (Romans 3:23).

In his essay on Alexander Hamilton, historian Forrest McDonald echoed the sentiment of the Founding Fathers when he wrote, “Men are inherently evil, governed by greed and lust and love of power and a host of even less endearing passions.”<sup>16</sup> And, as America’s first president, George Washington, with no small amount of fear, spoke his fabled warning about the true nature of any government ruled over by fallen men: “Government is not reason. Government is not eloquence. It is force. And, like fire, it is a dangerous servant and a fearful master.”<sup>17</sup> Paine went so far as to call government, even in its best state, a “necessary evil,” and in its worst state, an “intolerable one!”<sup>18</sup>

Even secularists have peered down the long corridor of history and come to the same conclusion. As author Cory Price remarked, “Given the nature of humankind, no organization seems capable of permanence; for better or worse.”<sup>19</sup> Empires demonstrate time and

time again that they will eventually become unsustainable because “the constant interplay of internal and external pressures inevitably introduces too many fractures, overwhelming these consolidations of power, and leading to their eventual collapse.”<sup>20</sup> In other words, people do not get along very well with each other, making lasting national unity an impossibility.

In drafting the US Constitution, the authors alertly understood that as long as human governments exist as a necessary evil, their administrators will be prone to fall into villainy and corruption. The Founding Fathers knew that as long as a government is composed of people, and because people are inherently fallen and evil, the more corrupt a government will become, causing more and more of its people to suffer. Lawlessness and crime will run rampant, natural disasters will go unaided, poverty and hunger will be the norm, disease and misery will be their citizens’ inheritance, war and strife will define their existence, and human suffering will know no end.

So, to stem the inescapable tide of unscrupulous behavior expected from its elected leaders, the Founding Fathers wisely espoused that governmental power must be limited.<sup>21</sup> They did this by dividing power into separate branches to create a balance of power among those branches. A government must constantly be checked and watched and questioned by the population so that it can extract only the least amount of taxes necessary to perform the most limited of functions, that of providing security for its people. A government not constantly monitored, they believed, would inevitably grow into a monster—one that, to feed its endless thirst for power, would consume its people’s money and trample on their God-given inalienable rights.

### **A NEW EMPIRE RISING**

Unfortunately, the Founding Fathers are long dead, and Western nations increasingly no longer hold to the Fathers’ firm beliefs in



God-given inalienable rights and religious freedom. Cries are erupting from all points of the compass, calling for a new form of government to replace what's considered old and broken. What we are now witnessing—with no small trepidation—is the formation of a global government. A whole new empire is on the rise!

Knowing what we do about the Bible's teachings concerning mankind's fallen nature, and likewise its failings in bringing about a secure and just government, this begs our third question: *Will this prenatal global government, once established, be benevolent or destructive?*

At first glance, it would be uncharitable to claim that no nation has ever strived to benefit its people. During the twentieth century, the leaders of the free world made an unprecedented attempt to unify all governments—first under the banner of the League of Nations and then under the United Nations (UN)—assumedly to seek altruistic outcomes. For example, in December 1948, the UN adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), a document that lists 30 basic human rights.<sup>22</sup> In this document, the UN exhorted every person in every society to promote respect for these freedoms. Those who penned the UDHR believed that educated people make morality-based decisions that contribute toward the common good of all in a society.<sup>23</sup> A global body that governs from a belief in human rights sounds great, utopian even, and right in line with the purpose for why governments exist.

And yet, in the decades since the UDHR was created, the record of human rights abuses throughout the world has been growing at an alarming rate. In response, in 1993, the UN General Assembly set aside the following decade to focus on promoting a universal culture of human rights. But, just ten years later, the UN announced that its efforts were making no noticeable difference in promoting world peace.<sup>24</sup> After all, how could the UN possibly promote peace when, at the same time, it militarizes its humanitarian actions under its Responsibility to Protect Doctrine?<sup>25</sup> As ethicist Esther Reed pointed

out, when a government attempts altruism, it always “risks blundering into the proverbial china shop and knocking over everything not nailed firmly to the floor.”<sup>26</sup>

We can only conclude, then, from the United Nations’ unending failures, that a truly global government birthed out of the UN will only and inevitably result in becoming just as much a force of destruction as the nationalistic empires ever were. God have mercy!

### **GOVERNMENT AS THE CAUSE OF A CRISIS OF FAITH**

People take notice when their government fails their expectations to protect them from lawlessness and crime, natural disasters, poverty and hunger, disease and misery, war and strife, and the deluge of human sufferings that ravage the world. Despite all the positive propaganda spewing from tech-censored mainstream media, we know for a fact that today’s governments are failing because they cannot keep the peace, but rather, often remain in a perpetual state of war. We can only lament when a government fails to put an end to our sufferings, which limits our pursuit of happiness. At some point in our lives, no matter how pro-big government some of us might be, we awaken to the realization that government has at some level failed to achieve its primary purpose—true security and justice for its people.

The abject failure of the God-ordained institution that is human government has led many to experience a crisis of faith in God Himself. Bob Wenz, formerly with the National Association of Evangelicals, identified this very problem. He noted that the failures of government have long resulted in a crisis of faith for many who believe in God, and for those who do not believe in God, creates a major obstacle to their coming to salvation.<sup>27</sup>

Hence the meteoric rise in our day of the “nones.” Individuals who could be properly labeled “practical atheists,” their disillusioned souls

have forsaken the belief in a sovereign Creator and a theistic world-view. In the process of a society increasingly transitioning from theism to atheism, these nones have transferred onto the government—what they see as a most imposing institution seemingly bigger than life—the divine qualities of a great being who is all-knowing, all-powerful, and all-good. In doing so, these practical atheists expect that government will somehow be able to anticipate and prevent all evils from ever happening. Wenz called this a “false premise” because the practical atheist is wrongly expecting their government to possess all the divine qualities and abilities that no person, let alone any government, could ever possess.<sup>28</sup> The unbeliever’s faith is misplaced when making a god out of government, and so that faith remains unfulfilled and perpetually in crisis.

And to those who do believe in God and have been raised with a Judeo-Christian upbringing, Sunday school taught us what America’s Founding Fathers long espoused—that bad things happen in our world because humanity is inherently sinful. While God necessarily chooses to not directly intervene in restraining all of humanity’s evil tendencies, He has ordained human government to function in His place, at least to a limited degree, in a restraining capacity and to punish evildoers.

Wenz pointed out that when those who believe in God likewise see a human government fail, their crisis of faith becomes twofold.<sup>29</sup> When seriously evil leaders succeed in their corrupted pursuit of happiness, dismayed believers are left asking, “Why didn’t God exercise His divine power and prevent ‘this’ from happening?” They know that God has established human governments, and when they fail to live up to their unrealistic expectations, they join the practical atheists in crying out, “Why didn’t the government stop ‘this’?”

For centuries on end, believers in God have struggled with the inclination to blame the Almighty for not preventing every bad thing that’s ever happened, while at the same time also projecting that same blame onto their God-ordained human government. Wenz concluded

that his experiences in ministry have proven to him that many of the once-faithful had abandoned their faith in God because they couldn't find a "satisfactory answer" to this dilemma.<sup>30</sup>

## **THE PROBLEM OF EVIL**

"God has failed us."

"Government has failed us."

"How then can there be a God?"

This dilemma has been identified by the defenders of the Christian faith—the apologists—as the problem of evil as it relates to failed human government. And, as we have come to learn, it creates a crisis of faith for two groups. The first are those who hold to theism, meaning those who believe in the existence of an all-powerful, all-knowing, eternally living, perfectly good, and all-loving being who created the world. And second, there are their atheistic counterparts, meaning those who deny the existence of any sort of divine being or supernatural reality.<sup>31</sup>

Many worldly philosophers and faithful theologians have attempted to tackle this conundrum, each from their point of view. Speaking for the atheists, philosopher J.L. Mackie concluded that the belief in a God who is omnipotent and wholly good conflicts with the presence of evil (which he defined as suffering) in the world, and because God and suffering cannot possibly coexist, theistic belief must then be positively irrational.<sup>32</sup>

Speaking for the theists, professor Donna Divine explained what happens when a theistic person's faith is challenged by the perceived failure of God to prevent evil from winning:

When one's ideology, once taken for granted as a narrative of the past and a projection for the future, cannot explain what is happening in the present, it will create a difference

between what is imagined and what is real, resulting in a deep feeling of loss.<sup>33</sup>

Or, as songwriter David Grossman sang in “The Sticker Song,” such a feeling of loss leads the burdened theist to plead with the Almighty over how much evil they can swallow and to beg their heavenly Father to show mercy.<sup>34</sup>

A day doesn’t go by that I haven’t prayed that prayer. I’m sure that you have, too, as we reel at the bewildering chaos ravaging this evil world around us. Christians throughout the centuries have shared in this heavenward plea.

How we respond to this faith struggle inevitably affects, in turn, our view of the origins of moral law. A struggling theist could end up shifting their worldview from what’s called theonomy, meaning a belief in the cosmos originating in a personal Creator who set the universe’s foundation and defines what moral law is, to a less monotheistic-centered heteronomy, meaning the cosmos originated in some deistic supernatural realm.<sup>35</sup> They could even shift so far as to embrace the fully atheistic perspective of autonomy with its belief that the cosmos and moral law originated from within itself.<sup>36</sup> Many in our society have adopted this latter, hopeless view.

Such vastly differing worldviews have sparked our divisive culture wars, polarized our societies against each other, and fractured our systems of morality. We clash over contradictory opinions on socio-political matters because we don’t share common moral or political viewpoints.<sup>37</sup> With no shared value system, societies inevitably tear themselves apart at the seams. And when societies finally do descend into chaos, their governments yet again demonstrate their inability to create a unified belief system that can hold their nations together, even when increasing force is used.

Even the paragons of faith from the Bible, such as the minor prophets, faced the same faith crisis we experience today. For example, the

prophet Micah, when he lamented over how failed and corrupt the nation of Judah's government had become, wailed:

The faithful man has perished from the earth, and there is no one upright among men... The prince asks for gifts. The judge seeks a bribe. The great man utters his evil desires and so they scheme together (Micah 7:2-3).<sup>38</sup>

Another minor prophet, Habakkuk, staked himself out on a rampart to behold his beloved yet abased Jerusalem and lamented over the evils of his time. God responded to the frustrated prophet that he must wait for the Lord to act, for "the vision is yet for an appointed time," and so, in the meantime, "the just shall live by his faith" (Habakkuk 2:1-4). The spokesmen of God struggled in their misery, pining over whether there would ever be any hope that mankind would finally be freed from the failure that is flawed human government. They were told merely to wait patiently for God's will to be done, and in the expectant waiting, to keep the faith.

The prophets wondered, as we wonder today, our fourth question: *Is humanity destined to forever suffer under the weight of corrupted governments?*

## **THE VISION OF THE END OF HUMAN GOVERNMENT**

Praise God, our heavenly Father has not left this long-pondered-over question unanswered! The Almighty's response to the problem of evil as it relates to failed human governments was at last given decades after Habakkuk's time, and to of all people, the head of the most powerful government of its era—Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon (605–562 BC).<sup>39</sup> God provided the world His answer via a dream imparted to Nebuchadnezzar, one that the young prophet Daniel interpreted and recorded for us in Daniel chapter 2.

The prophet divulged that the troubled king had marveled at a massive statue forged in the shape of a man. The statue's head was molded out of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, it stood erect on two legs of iron, and its feet were comprised of a mixture of iron and clay. And, to his utter amazement, the king also witnessed a stone—described as “cut out without [human] hands” (verse 34)—careening like a meteor out of the sky to strike the statue at its feet. The great statue was subsequently obliterated, and its dust blew away in the wind. Suddenly, the sky-felled stone grew into a mighty mountain, until it filled the entire earth.

Daniel credited God alone for the revealing of what King Nebuchadnezzar had dreamed, as well as what the dream had meant—the prophesied end of all human empires. The prophet himself would later experience two of his own God-given visions that would reiterate this prophecy. The first was the vision of the four beasts as recorded in Daniel 7, and the second was the vision of a ram and a goat in Daniel 8.

When we lay these three messages from God side by side and compare them, we learn that the statue represented four temporal human kingdoms followed by a fifth divine kingdom.<sup>40</sup> The head of gold, corresponding to the lion (7:4), explicitly identified Nebuchadnezzar to be that head as king of the Babylonian Empire. The chest and arms of silver, corresponding to the bear (7:5) and the vision of the two-horned ram (chapter 8), represented the Medo-Persian Empire, which would decades later conquer Babylon. The belly and thighs of bronze, corresponding to the leopard (7:6) and the shaggy goat (chapter 8), represented the supplantation of the Medo-Persian Empire by Greece and its division after the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BC.<sup>41</sup> The legs of iron, corresponding to the composite beast (7:7, 19), would come to be identified as the Roman Empire. Rome's final, divided, weakened condition was represented by the two feet comprised of a mixture of iron and clay. The ten toes corresponded

to the ten horns (7:24), indicating the final form of earthly human government would divide the world into ten regions, each one ruled by a powerful king.

Daniel also noted the metals that formed this behemoth statue increased in strength going from head to toes while, oddly, at the same time, they decreased in value. Jewish historian and theologian Arnold Fruchtenbaum explained that the Babylonian monarchy was known for its valuable gold and a king who stood above the law, the Medo-Persian monarchy for its love of silver and a king who was subject to the law, the Greek kings forged in brass held to no central dynastic or royal right to rule, and Rome tread fiercely as if iron but existed as a republic led by an imperial form of government.<sup>42</sup> The visions presented the power of each successive human government as growing less centralized, until the final one would comprise a power-sharing arrangement among ten kings and one “little horn” who would rise to rule the entire world, but only for a brief time (Daniel 7:8; 8:9-12).

Nebuchadnezzar’s vision foretold how a day would come when human governments, in all their forms, would be wiped away by the arrival of that stone not cut by human hands. Fruchtenbaum emphasized the fact that the stone that came from the sky denotes a divine origin, with mountains in the Bible often symbolizing a king, kingdom, or throne.<sup>43</sup> So, in summary, Daniel had prophesied that a divine ruler would burst from the sky at the speed of a streaking meteor to obliterate all human governments and to establish His illustrious kingdom—one that will encompass the entire earth.

## **THE TIMING OF THE END OF HUMAN GOVERNMENTS**

*When can we expect the end of human governments to occur?*

As for the timing of this coming divine kingdom, Jesus Christ said this event would occur after the trampling of Jerusalem by the



Gentiles has ended and “the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled” (Luke 21:24-28). The “times of the Gentiles” is that long period of history from the Jewish exile by the Babylonian Empire in 586 BC to the second coming of the Messiah, when Christ will personally liberate the city of Jerusalem, thereby ending the Gentile nations’ influence over that city.<sup>44</sup>

Because the return of the Messiah will end the “time of the Gentiles,” this coming divine king must be that metaphorical stone that smote Nebuchadnezzar’s statue representing human governments and blew the remains away like dust. That means the end of Gentile rule can be achieved only by the second person of the Trinity. Jesus Christ Himself proclaimed that when He returns to the earth, it is He who will “strike the nations” (Revelation 19:15). And once that great deed is accomplished, the Messiah will establish His eternal and universal kingdom (Revelation 20-22).<sup>45</sup> On that glorious day, governments under human control will at long last become a relic of the past, replaced forevermore by Christ’s kingdom.

## WHY GOD TELLS US THE FUTURE

*What are God’s reasons for revealing the whys and hows of human governments ending and being replaced with Christ’s coming earthly kingdom?*

According to theologian Lit-Sen Chang, God’s reasons involve both ultimate and immediate purposes.<sup>46</sup> First, let’s look at the ultimate purpose. God provided special revelation through the prophets and the unique highest prophet—Jesus Christ, the source of all prophetic revelation (Revelation 19:10). Our Lord used words, visions, dreams, miracles, and theophanies so that He could “reveal His divinity to His creation, display His many excellencies, and declare His glory, especially in His work of redemption.”<sup>47</sup> As we witness how God’s plan for the ages unfolds, we’re meant to be astounded more and more by our wonderful Creator, Redeemer, and King.

And second, the immediate purpose is achieved when God displays His awe-inspiring majesty. Doing so causes sinners to fall on their faces in repentance, become regenerate, and live on to fulfill their ultimate purpose of loving God and each other for all eternity. When the fallen become saved, their miraculous recreation and restoration into a right relationship with the heavenly Father reflects His glorious excellencies, which go on to lead even more of the lost to salvation.<sup>48</sup>

Did you know that a whopping 31 percent of the Bible is prophetic? God truly wants us to know the future! Knowing God's prophetic Word, therefore, becomes extremely vital to our lives.

How God reveals Himself and His will through the unfolding of biblical prophecies acts as an evangelistic beacon calling sinners to salvation and into a right relationship with the everlasting Father. And, for those who are already saved, Bible prophecy can also be wielded as a powerful apologetic, which, as Jude defined, allows Christians to "contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). By the power of the Holy Spirit and through the study of God's Word, Christians can use prophecy as a spiritual weapon to expose the erroneous teachings and heresies that oppose the worship of the one true God and lead mankind astray. As Chang so eloquently described this epic battle for the truth, "It is theology at war!"<sup>49</sup>

God's revelation of Himself and His will through fulfilled Bible prophecy brings Him praise and glory, leads the lost to salvation, and provides an unassailable defense of the Christian faith. Those are the big-picture purposes.

God's little-picture purpose for revealing His future victories is directed at two different people groups. The first consisted of the prophets' immediate audience—the Israelites. After 70 years of exile to a pagan, foreign nation, the Jews in Daniel's time held very little hope of ever returning to their homeland. God's prophetic messages

to Israel—both then and now—were meant to reassure the Jewish people that their time of exile from their homeland and His presence would indeed come to an end. Because God remains ever-faithful to His covenants, He then must restore His people—not only to Jerusalem but also into His everlasting kingdom. Prophecy provided the ancient Israelites with hope, and as you will soon see, is meant to give modern-day Israel great hope as well.

The second group to benefit from this little-picture purpose for why God has promised a divine, everlasting kingdom has been identified by biblical scholar Sidney Greidanus. He explained that God wanted to provide much-needed hope to His other chosen people—the church.<sup>50</sup> Ever since the church was founded at Pentecost and up to that wondrous day when Christ will call all His faithful up to heaven in the rapture—this era called the church age—Christians have suffered and will continue to suffer mightily under the oppression of failed human governments. Why, a staggering 45 million Christians were martyred in the twentieth century alone!<sup>51</sup>

As we, the church, wait for Jesus to usher in His perfect kingdom, we groan unceasingly under the pains of persecution. We're oftentimes left dismayed that there appears to be no end in sight to our sufferings. The longer this promised kingdom is delayed, the easier it becomes for Christians to lose hope, and so risk losing faith in Jesus and His stated promise to return. To counter this malaise, God has revealed hope-filled prophecies about Christ's kingdom that are meant to confirm His faithfulness as a covenant-keeper who always keeps His promises. With that revelation, we Christians can take heart, shore up our faith, and persevere in our hope that infinitely better days lie ahead.

### **WHAT YOU ARE ABOUT TO LEARN**

Each of us lives out our days under a dire predicament—failed human governments. Mankind's inability to overcome its fallen human

nature and so properly provide security, justice, and peace has caused so much misery, hardship, and death over the past millennia. This human failure has perpetuated a crisis of faith for many who believe in the Almighty. And the fact that unbelievers have erected a false and futile god out of government has created a major roadblock that hinders many of them from coming to faith in Jesus Christ, thereby keeping them traveling along the broad road to hell.

But, my friends, God has not left us without hope! Look to the Bible. Our heavenly Father has provided His response to our crushing existential problem. The answer to failed human governments will be the institution of Christ's kingdom, better known as the millennial kingdom.

*So, what exactly is this kingdom Christ will institute?*

*When is He going to establish His rule?*

*Will we actually live in this kingdom?*

*And, finally, what will everyday life be like for those dwelling in that new era?*

These are the vital questions you and I are about to explore, and they're hardly trivial. So, in the next chapter, I will explain what the kingdom of Christ truly means. Then we will discover what prophecy has to say concerning the dire conditions that must come about before the kingdom arrives. Next, we will mine the Bible for the verses that teach us how Christ's kingdom will be established during the millennium, as well as what everyday life will be like (my favorite part).

And, finally, we will put to the test whether the millennial kingdom truly succeeds in bringing about the prophesied perfect society we all long for, or whether we should instead be looking toward the eternal state. We'll do so by diving into the various viewpoints the great theologians of the past have proposed about this future kingdom and compare them to what the Bible has to say. This is necessary because, as one commentator noted, "It may sound like a lot of

quibbling over 1,000 years, but it goes to the heart of understanding God's glorious promises for the future."<sup>52</sup>

By the time you have finished this book, my heartfelt hope is that you will fully understand the *whats* and *hows* about the ways God will use the kingdom of Christ to provide the solutions failed human governments can never provide. I would also like to remove any hurdles you may be experiencing about placing or growing your faith in Jesus Christ due to lingering questions about why an all-good and all-powerful God would allow us to suffer under the weight of our fallen natures and inept authorities. And, most importantly, as you continue your life's journey, as if a stranger in a foreign land, I want to encourage you to join me as a fellow citizen of this coming glorious kingdom.

To accomplish these goals, I plan to use Scripture and Scripture alone to reveal what God wants us to know about His kingdom. We will take our stand on the critical beliefs that Scripture is the infallible Word of God and that God desires for mankind to know His great plan for the ages (1 Corinthians 2:10-16; 2 Timothy 3:16). With these two vital assumptions working as our guiding light, you will gain a clearer understanding of God's incredible plan for your life in the here and now, and for the future. You will then be able to defend what you have learned, becoming an equipped defender of the faith—an apologist. And lastly, you will be ready to go out into the world and proclaim Christ's kingdom, thereby leading the lost to salvation and the saved into having stronger faith and a renewed hope.

Sound good? Then let's get into it!