

Second Service
Threats To My Life
Pastor JD

KAPONO: Would you join me in a word of prayer? Lord, we thank You so much. Your goodness is many times indescribable sometimes to others, Lord. So we thank You. Thank You for how You're so gracious and merciful to us, Lord, when we truly don't deserve it.

Lord, would You speak to us in Your word, in these three verses before us this morning, Lord? Calm our hearts, our spirits and clear our minds, and draw us to You this morning. In Jesus' name, Amen.

PASTOR JD: Amen and amen. Good morning and welcome. You can be seated. Thank you. So glad you're here. So glad those of you that are joining us online are.

A couple of things before we get started, the first of which is that I really want to thank all of you who served so faithfully and tirelessly yesterday at Theresa's Celebration of Life. The love and hospitality you showed to the hundreds of people that were in attendance really honored her life. But more importantly, it glorified God. It brought glory to the Lord, and God honored it and blessed it.

I hope you all know that you played a big part in getting Jesus to these precious but hurting people, not to mention the witness that this was to the community and the islands.

The comments keep pouring in on social media and the video of her service, just the one that's on YouTube, just that platform alone, as of this morning already has 19,000 views. I don't usually check, but I just — because it's not about the numbers — but it's about the numbers and that's —

[Laughter]

So what's happening, and this is what I want to thank you for, is that God used this, His church, and us, His people, to reach these people and get Jesus to these people. And now we're hearing the good report about how many are coming to Jesus Christ because of it. Yeah.

[Applause]

Only God gets all the glory for that. And so I wanted to thank you so much. I know it was a long day for a lot of you, and then you're stuck with me today, back-to-back, two days. Great are your treasures in heaven.

Second Service
Threats To My Life
Pastor JD

On a serious note though, please continue to pray because this was an unthinkable tragedy meant for evil. But God, as only He can, means it for good. But we need to continue to pray that He will bring about the salvation of many in the days ahead because of what we did here in this, His church, yesterday. So please continue to pray.

Speaking of prayer, we got our prayer meeting coming up on Tuesday, 7:00 p.m. here in the sanctuary. Mark your calendars, make plans to attend. We'd certainly encourage you to do so.

I'm going to start with a brief message — famous last words — “brief” should not be in my vocabulary, but I'm going to use it anyway. Just let me have it. Just a brief message about how God not only answers short, three-word prayers during those trials in our life, but how God may also deem it necessary to allow those very trials in our lives to protect us from a much greater trial. So that'll be Tuesday night. We'll start that way.

Then after I'll share — and here's that word again — brief prayer update concerning my wife. Many have asked. I will provide that.

And by the way, thank you for all of you that are praying for her. That means so much to us. The overwhelming outpouring of love and prayer is just — you have no idea. So thank you for that.

But after that, we're going to have our pastors come up and staff and lead us in prayer for specific needs. And then, time permitting, we'll open it up to all-church intercessory prayer and pray for the many requests that people send in asking us to pray for. So that'll be Tuesday night, 7:00 p.m.

All right, Jude. Hey, check this out. So you know, when we started this book / postcard, we started in *verse 1*, and we made it all the way through *verse 1*.

And then the second week we picked it up in *verse 2*. We made it all the way through *verse 2*. Last week we were living on the edge. We did 2 verses, *3 and 4*.

Yeah, you know what we're doing today? We're going to take it to a whole new level. We're going to do three verses. We're doing this! That was my introduction. Are you ready? Why don't you stand if you're able. If not, where you're seated is fine.

Second Service
Threats To My Life
Pastor JD

Let's read the lengthy passage before us today, all three verses beginning in *verse 5*. Jude, by the Holy Spirit, writes, **“Though you already know all this, I want to remind you that the Lord delivered His people out of Egypt, but later destroyed those who did not believe.**

And [Verse 6] the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home [Or dwelling] these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the Great Day.

In a similar way, [Verse 7] Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.”

Let's pray, especially after that. Father in heaven, please, would You at this time, as You're always so faithful to, just settle us and enable us to focus so that we can give You our undivided attention as You speak into our lives in and through Your word, especially with a passage like this that's before us today.

We desperately need for the Holy Spirit to be our teacher today, to teach us, to lead us into all truth, to minister to us that which it is that You have for us in this passage that's before us.

So Lord, keep all the distractions away. Don't let our minds wander. Keep us focused so we can concentrate. And then as we do, would You speak? Your servants are listening, Lord. So thank You, Lord. In Jesus' name. Amen and amen.

You can be seated. Thank you.

So I need to talk with you today about three specific threats to your life and my life that, sadly, for the majority of Christians, for the most part, goes unnoticed, and in going unnoticed, they bring about these unthinkable consequences, all of which are needlessly suffered because we've brought them upon ourselves.

In other words, had we but heeded God's word and God's warning, in His love for us, wanting to be protective of us, it could have all been averted and avoided. So that's what we have in our text today with Jude, who by the Holy Spirit, draws upon these three specific examples.

Second Service
Threats To My Life
Pastor JD

And interesting, these three, of all of the examples he could have chosen, he chose these three and for good reason, as we're about to see. Three examples, he says this much, these are — they serve as examples, really warnings from the Old Testament.

Why?

Remember last week that he started off very excited to write a letter about the salvation that we all share in common, and God just redirected him and had him, inspired him by the Holy Spirit to write a very serious letter about a very serious warning that posed a very serious threat to the church at that time.

And so we have this letter for that reason. It's really a warning, and it's a serious threat that we're being warned about. So serious are these threats that they all have the propensity to not only steal, kill, and destroy us, but also had a warning light prior of their formidable threat to us. This is the illustration if you don't mind.

You know, we're in our cars, and that warning light comes on. Something's wrong. This poses a threat to the operation of your motor vehicle. So what are you going to do about it? Are you going to take heed to it, or are you going to put electrician's tape on it? I'll give you a moment on that. I know it's still early in the sermon.

In other words: Warning! Warning! Warning! I'll just, you know, of course, being the godly, humble pastor that I am, I'll just speak for myself and take one for the team again. That check engine light, that is not of God.

[Laughter]

There's actually a worse warning light on the dashboards of our cars than the check engine light. You know what it is for the newer cars? Not that I drive newer cars. They've been around for a while.

It's the low tire-pressure light. Who thought of this? Who thought — who thought that would be a good idea? Warning! Warning! The tire pressure on your car has dropped by approximately 2 pounds per square inch. Pull over and stop the operation of the motor vehicle immediately. Danger! Danger! Danger!

Second Service
Threats To My Life
Pastor JD

And what do you do? You look at your tires. They look fine to me. Now, I'm busy. I'm running late. Always running late.

And there's always somebody in front of me that doesn't know I'm running late. Don't you know I'm running late? Why are you driving —

No. That's — I'm sorry. Not really. I mean, you know exactly what I'm talking about, so don't look at me all smug like that, okay? (Stumbling over words)

It's like they know. Oh, he's in a hurry. And they drive 10 miles an hour below the speed limit.

You know, I was asking Artie yesterday, I said, "Have you ever pulled over somebody for going too slow?"

He said, "Actually, no."

I said, "Isn't that a thing, though?"

He said, "Yes, it is."

I said, "Why didn't you pull them over then?"

[Laughter]

Anyway, sorry. Was that too much information? Is that okay? If you see Artie leave, you'll know why.

I'm actually going somewhere with this. So it's seemingly insignificant, inconsequential.

Okay, so what? My tire pressure is down by a couple pounds per square inch. I'll deal with that later. And then later comes, and you got a flat tire because you didn't go put air in the thing because you didn't have time. What an irritation.

And you got to look at this light, and it's like that light is looking at you. It's like, hello, your tire pressure is low. You need to do something about it. That's when the electrician tape comes out. I'm going to shut you up right now and right here. I'll get to it.

Well, here's the beauty of this illustration as I bring it together in such a profound way. We do that with the low tire pressure warning lights of God's word. We dismiss them under the

Second Service
Threats To My Life
Pastor JD

banner of being insignificant and inconsequential. Yeah, yeah, yeah. I'll get to it. I'll get to it.

No, no, no, no, no. Deal with it now. Yeah, but it's just a couple of pounds per square inch. That's all it takes. And by the way, you could be in a situation where that poses a danger to your very life.

Because if that tire goes flat, and you're traveling at a high rate of speed — which I never do, by the way, I'm always within the speed limit or so — and that thing goes flat and you're going around a corner at a high rate of speed, it could cost you your life.

So now what do you think about that little irritating, annoying, frustrating, infuriating, low tire pressure light? Well, now I'm going to go do something about it. So at this time, we'll bow our heads, close our eyes. You can leave and go to put air in that tire.

This is what Jude's doing. He's putting the lights on, the warning light. Warning light! Don't blow this off. Don't shine this on. Deal with this because of what's at stake here. This is a formidable threat. I know you don't see it that way, but it is. This has the potential to utterly destroy you. And is that not what the enemy seeks to do: steal, kill, and destroy?

So what are these threats? Well, in order, the three threats are, first: Unbelief in *verse 5*. Second: Rebellion in *verse 6*. And third: Immorality in *verse 7*.

So let's, as we go through these, view these as those warning lights that come on in advance, prior, to alert you to something that needs to be dealt with, that you need to be aware of, lest you unnecessarily and needlessly suffer the consequences, which did not have to be suffered had you but taken heed to the warning light in the first place.

So first one in *verse 5*: Unbelief. Here, Jude is just simply reminding us of what we already know, presupposing we know the Old Testament account of what happened at a place called Kadesh Barnea.

Now, for the benefit of those who don't know, God's people at Kadesh Barnea were on the cusp, I mean the cusp of entering the Promised Land, but they refused in their unbelief. It's quite a dramatic account.

Second Service
Threats To My Life
Pastor JD

I think it's *Numbers 13 and 14*. There's the *Book of Numbers* again. You know, the *Book of Numbers*, one of the most fascinating books in all of the Bible. We talked about it last week. *Numbers 16*, the account of Korah, Jude uses Korah as an example. In *Numbers Chapter 12*, the brother and sister of Moses, Miriam and Aaron. They come up against him in *Numbers Chapter 12*.

Numbers Chapter 6 is a book about the numbers, a chapter with the numbers of the camp of the Israelites, which means nothing until you get to *Chapter 22*.

And then all of a sudden, it comes into clear focus that they were camped in the formation of a cross, which is why Balaam, no matter how much money Balak was going to pay him, could not pronounce a curse upon them because it was a type, a foreshadow, a prophetic picture of the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross. **“And there is therefore now no condemnation to those that are in Christ.”** No curse No can.

So that's what Balaam decided to do, was to come up with another way. And it worked. He couldn't do it for without. So he did it from within. It was an inside job.

So he uses those examples. Well, here are three more examples, starting with the unbelief of the Israelites, and it cost them the Promised Land. Here's the account. I'll try to — I'll do my best just to kind of give you the backstory here.

So here they are — by the way, from Egypt to the Promised Land, maybe two weeks with no traffic. That's how long it would take, approximately. 40 years? That's called the scenic route. That's not the scenic route. That's called traffic being a parking lot for years.

I mean, you just — it takes you 40 years to get to a place that you could have got to in about two weeks? What's up with that?

So they're there, and they finally reach this place called Kadesh Barnea, and they're ready to go and enter the Promised Land. And they decide to send 12 spies, one from each of the 12 tribes of Israel into the land to kind of Spock it out.

Is that how you say it? Sorry, I guess not. Spy out the land, check it out, bring back a report because this is the Promised Land, and this is where God is leading us, and this is what God is

Second Service
Threats To My Life
Pastor JD

giving to us. So why don't you guys go check it out. We'll take one from each of the 12 tribes. Go check it out, come back, tell us what it is.

Well, they already knew what it was because God already told them what it was. It's the land that I'm giving you that is flowing with milk and honey.

And by the way, you're going to bring back some grapes. You ain't ever seen grapes like these. They're going to be so big, and you're going to bring back these grapes, these vines, that it's going to take all of your guys to carry. That's the land I'm giving you. It's all yours for the taking. All you have to do is take the promise that I promised you.

So off they go, 12 of them. They go in there, and what do they find there? They find huge Anakim, giants. These are the offspring of — we just talked about it First Service — the Nephilim, *Genesis 6*. I mean, these were giants. These were huge, enormous people.

And they come back and 10 of the 12 give a bad report and spread fear throughout the camp of the Israelites. And here's what they said. Get this.

They're like, There's no way, man. These guys, there were so many of them, and they were so huge, and they would smash us like grasshoppers. There's no way that we can possess the Promised Land, promised to us by God.

And by the way, we make that distinction. That's going to come up in a moment. The Promised Land is not a representation of heaven because the Promised Land still had battles. There are no battles in heaven. So entering the Promised Land is for us entering into the promises of God. And unbelief is what keeps us from entering the promises that God has promised us.

One has counted some 3000-plus promises in God's Word for us. That's a lot of promises. And by the way, God can't break a promise.

So if God gives you His word in His word, it's His word. That's deeply profound, isn't it? He can't go back on His word. He's given you His word. He's promise to you. I promised you this.

Promises like the well-known promise in *Romans 8:28*. **“All things work together for the good [I promise you] to those that love God and are that called according to His purpose.”**

Second Service
Threats To My Life
Pastor JD

That is a promise. That's a promise. One of over 3000 promises. But how many of us do not enter into a promise like that because of our unbelief? And that's exactly what happened to 10 of the 12. They bring back this bad report, spread fear, except two of the 12: Joshua and Caleb.

Again, you'll forgive me for the way I'm explaining and illustrating what went down, but it's kind of like Joshua and Caleb were saying to their 10 comrades, Guys, what are you talking about? God gave this to us. We can do this! We can take them.

But it was too late. I mean, they had already spread the fear and paralyze the Israelites in that fear. And now what do they do? They start doing what they always do, what they're very good at doing, and that's complaining to Moses against God. Moses just happens to be, you know, guilty by association. So they start murmuring, and they do it again. It's hard to imagine.

And lest we be too hard on them, we would have done exactly the same thing. We always like to, you know, shed ourselves in the Joshua and Caleb light. Yeah, man, I would have been like Joshua.

No, you wouldn't have. You would have been like the other 10. No! We're not going to go, Moe! Sorry.

So they complain and they say again, **“Were there not enough graves in Egypt? Did God had to bring us out here [To Kadesh Barnea] to kill us here because there weren't enough graves in Egypt?”**

Wow! Did you really just say that again? Yes. Well, God comes to Moses. This is really interesting. I want to say it's the beginning of *Numbers Chapter 14* . And He says, That's it, Moe. I'm through with these people. I'm done. No deal.

Because see, I was going to take the 12 tribes of Israel and I was going to make from those 12 tribes a great nation. So now I'm going to take it from them because of their unbelief, and I'm going to give it to you, and I'm going to make a great nation out of you, Moses.

Second Service
Threats To My Life
Pastor JD

I'm thinking, if I'm Moses, I'm like, Yeah, sounds good to me. Let's do it. Wait, so You're going to transfer all of that to me instead of them? You're going to make a great nation out of me?

But that's not what Moses does, which is why God would only offer this to a man like Moses because He knows that Moses will not take it.

This is why He'll never offer it to me because He knows I'll take Him up on it. Yeah. Where do I sign?

What does Moses do instead? He says, You can't do that, God. I mean, I'm — thank You, but no because here's what will happen if You do: Egypt and all of the nations will say their God could not bring them into the Promised Land, and it will bring Your name into shame, basically disrepute.

It will bring reproach upon Your name as their God because You failed to bring them into the Promised Land that You promised them. Promised Land = promised them. So no, You've got to — You've got to get them in there somehow.

So God's like, Okay, here's what we're going to do. Everyone who complained and was afraid and would not take Me at My word in their unbelief...

I'm sorry. That was probably a harsh way to say it. I'm sure there's a better way to say it.

But you're going to die there and not see the Promised Land. You will not enter the Promised Land. Only Joshua and Caleb will enter the Promised Land.

Why?

Because they believed. In their belief, they entered in. In your unbelief, you will not enter into the Promised Land. But you know your kids you were complaining to Me about, you know, our children, what are they going to do? We're sending them to their certain death.

No, you're not. You sent yourself to your own death. I'm going to take your children into the Promised Land. How about that? I mean, it's not like that. But you get the point? Their unbelief cost them the Promised Land. Here they were so close, but yet so far.

Second Service
Threats To My Life
Pastor JD

Here's another illustration. I know you guys are so gracious with me with my illustrations. But I was kind of thinking about when you drive through the H-3 tunnel, and you see just the magnificence, the stunning, breathtaking bay and the Koolaus.

And I mean, let's just say that's the Promised Land. and you're going through the tunnel. And then God pulls you over because you didn't put, you know, air in that tire when that light came on. You like how I did that?

And so you're stopped, and then you don't believe God, and you don't ever make it to that Promised Land. That's what it would have been like. They saw it. They were right there, man. They had just come out of the H-3 tunnel, but they would not enter in.

Why?

Because of unbelief. The threat unbelief poses to us as Christians can never be understated or underestimated. This is a big thing. This is a huge threat. I mean, it would be this unbelief that not only posed the greatest threat to their lives, but it would cost them their lives and the promises of God for their lives.

Question: What promises have I not been the recipient of because I've tied the ropes of God's promises, the hands of God's promises with the ropes of my unbelief? I shudder to think what have I not believed God for.

And if you want, conversely, flip it around. What have I believed God for, those outlandish promises? Yeah, I mean, those giants are so tall. and we're like grasshoppers to them.

But God, He promised me. So I'm doing it, and I'm going to take the promise. I'm going to enter into the promise. I'm just going to believe God. I mean, it makes no sense whatsoever. It looks like a suicide mission for sure. But if God promised it to me, and I know God can't go back on His promise, then you know what? I believe.

And when God hears and sees the heart of one of His own, with a heart of belief and not unbelief it's like, All right! Go in. And they did. And I'll bet you they're very glad they did. And how about the ones who in their unbelief did not?

Second Service Threats To My Life Pastor JD

How many of us are still living a Kadesh Barnea Christian life, a life of unbelief, not entering the promises of God? I'm so convicted right now, and it's not going to get any better with the second one in *verse 6* because it's rebellion.

This is difficult. There's no shortage of controversy among many a Bible teacher and commentator. We talked about this in the Prophecy Update because it draws upon the account found in *Genesis 6* concerning certain fallen angels who rebelled against God.

And these were no ordinary angels. So evil were they, and so evil was their rebellion that they had to be bound and reserved until their Judgment Day, having left their God-given positions of authority, in the very presence of God, their former estate, their former positions. They were among the fallen angels, of which a third went with Lucifer when he rebelled and was cast out of heaven.

But there's something in particular about these angels because they were so wicked that they had to be chained with everlasting chains and reserved for their judgment. You know when that is? During the 7- year tribulation.

So the wording and the way that God inspires Jude to pen this should not go unnoticed because it's couched in terms of having had it but rebelling against it, having once been in the presence of God but leaving of their own volition and rebellion, that presence of God, which led to their fall. Rebellion, like unbelief, is extremely serious.

And it may not have to be as pronounced as this, but again, this is an example for us, a warning to us of what can happen if we're harboring an attitude of rebellion in our hearts. We rebel against God. It can be very subtle.

Here's what it can look like. It's rejecting, rebelling, not accepting what God has given you. And you rebel, you turn away from God, you leave the presence of God, and you go in this direction that seems right to you, but it is the way that leads unto death. What's at the center of this is pride.

And it's seen when Lucifer, who was the first one to rebel against God, would say in his pride, which led to the rebellion, "I will ascend my throne above the Most High." I will, I will. "I" the letter right smack in the middle of "pride," right smack in the middle of the word "sin," and even right smack in the name "Lucifer."

Second Service
Threats To My Life
Pastor JD

Aye yai, yai, yai, yai, right?

Years ago — I've been keeping a prayer journal for, I mean, really decades now and actually a journal and a prayer list. Anyway, it's complicated because I'm complicated.

But every so often I'll go back, and I'll kind of just peruse those prayer requests that I had, and I'll kind of read some of my prayer journal entries.

And much to my consternation I will find “I” all over the place. And so I was so convicted, and the Lord really — it's not condemnation, it's conviction. And it was like my prayers need to have less of an “I” problem in them, less “I.” Because the prayers, though again, very subtle, were all about the unholy trinity: Me, myself, and I.

And at first you might think, well, okay, so just change the way you pray. And it's not all about you. Don't say “I.” “I” — get “I” out of there.

Easier said than done. I tried it. Did not work out too well. Just the sheer volume of how many times my prayers had “I” at the center.

Well, no wonder God wasn't answering those prayers. The “I” was the problem. It was at the core, the middle of the problem. See, the “I” is the rebellious part of us that says “I,” not You.

I will do it ♪ My way ♪

That was pretty bad, wasn't it? I could tell by the way you're looking at me. That was no extra charge. So whatever.

That's “I.” That's rebelliousness, that's rebellion. It says, I'm going to do this my way, God, not Your way, God. And we rebel against Him. And this is the warning light that says, Warning! Warning! Warning!

Be very careful and pay attention to this and do something about this and take heed to this because if you don't, it will be your end. Get rid of rebellion before rebellion gets rid of you. We need to be merciless with sin because sin is merciless with us. We have to remove rebellion before rebellion removes us, which it did with these particular evil fallen angels, many believe the Nephilim in *Genesis 6*.

Second Service
Threats To My Life
Pastor JD

Well, let's get to this third one as quick as we can. It's again going to be no less convicting, and rightfully so. But in *verse 7*, it's immorality.

So we've got unbelief with the example of the Israelites, Kadesh Barnea. We've got rebellion with the example of the fallen angels, the Nephilim of *Genesis 6*. And now we come to immorality with the example of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Oh, no, you didn't.

Oh yes, I did, says Jude.

No!

Because we know just the mere mention of Sodom and Gomorrah and the association to sexual perversion and sexual immorality — actually, this is the very reason that he chose this example, inspired by the Holy Spirit along with the other examples, this particular example of the days of Lot.

Again, we talked about this in the Prophecy Update because the Prophecy Updates are now parallel with the Book of Jude. Oh, by the way, parenthetically let me say, this is very exciting, by the way.

So we're, you know, we're taking our time through the Book of Jude. Thursday night, we start in *Chapter 40* of *Ezekiel*, making our way through the Book of Ezekiel. There's 48 chapters, and so we've got eight chapters left, and we're done with Ezekiel. And we've got, well, at the rate we're going, we've got probably 48 weeks in Jude.

But anyway... But watch this. I was thinking about this and actually thanking the Lord for this. You know what comes after the Book of Jude? Revelation. Do you know what comes after the Book of Ezekiel? Daniel.

No. Watch this. How cool is this? We could — I'm not that clever. I could never time it.

But God's that clever, and it would be just like God to time it to where we finish Jude and we finish Ezekiel, and we're in the Book of Daniel and Revelation at the same time. I can't wait.

You know what's going to happen? I was telling First Service this. We're going to get done with Jude, like Kadesh Barnea. There we are, we've just come out of the H-3 tunnel. We

Second Service
Threats To My Life
Pastor JD

finished Ezekiel. We finished Jude. Here's Revelation, here's Daniel, and the Rapture's going to happen.

I mean, okay, but wow! We'll take it, right? But wouldn't it be just like God to do that? Yeah. No, uh-uh. Come on up. Let's just get this show on the road. Anyway, that's just how I think. I know they have clinical terms for this.

So back to our sermon already in progress. We've got now this third example of Sodom and Gomorrah, the days of Lot. Now, you remember how this went down?

Okay, I'll just give you again, a very brief explanation of the back story. So you've got Lot and his family there in Sodom and Gomorrah, and God sends angels to them to get them out before the fire and brimstone of His judgment comes down. And note that this is a type of the pre-Tribulation rapture.

Here's how I get there. No fire and brimstone could come down until Lot and his family had been taken out. That was the urgency of it.

In fact, the narrative is quite detailed because we're told that Lot hesitated and was reluctant and was kind of like, hey, what's the hurry? Come on in, put you guys up for the night. Don't mind them. They're so perverted.

I won't get into that. But, hey, you know... They're like, no! We got to get out here now! Now!

And the narrative actually includes this detail that they took him by the hand, by force to get him out. What's the urgency? Because we can't bring judgment down until we get you out. And so too with us the judgment of God during the 7-year tribulation can't go down till we go up.

Am I yelling?

I hope God is not going to have to force me like, come on! Let's go! You know, when the Rapture happens, just grabbing me by the arm like He did Lot. I'm not going to be hesitating. I'm like, all right! It's about time! Let's go! Because no judgment can come until we go.

Second Service
Threats To My Life
Pastor JD

So that's what was happening here. The judgment of God was about to come down. Why was the judgment of God about to come down? Because of their unbridled wickedness, their unimaginable sexual immorality, and perversion. But here's what's interesting.

What if I told you that it wasn't actually chiefly the sexual immorality that led to the judgment? It's what led up to the sexual immorality that led to the judgment. What do you mean? Well, they were prosperous, which can be very dangerous. Again, nothing wrong with having prosperity. The problem becomes when prosperity has you. It's not what you have. It's what has you.

But they were so wealthy, so prosperous, and that being so prosperous can also be so dangerous. So that was problem number 1.

Problem number 2 — actually, problem number 1 was pride, which came as a result of their prosperity. It went to their head. It not only got to them, it got them, and they became haughty. And they had so much prosperity that they had an abundance of idleness, as we're going to see in a moment.

You know that saying of old: Idle hands are the devil's workshop. Well, that's not only true, it's also why it is that oftentimes being so prosperous can be so dangerous. Can I draw your attention to *Ezekiel 16*? I'll begin reading in *verse 48*.

I do have to kind of set the stage here because it's really a hard read, especially at first read. Now understand that God through the prophet Ezekiel is declaring to Judah, His people, of His soon coming judgment. And God compares them to her sister, Sodom.

And not only does God compare Judah — this is God's people Jerusalem — He not only compares them to Sodom; He declares to them that what you've done is worse than Sodom. That's bad. Because what Sodom did was really bad. And we did what they did, only worse? That's really, really bad. So that was the setup for *verse 48*.

“As I live,” says the Lord God, “neither your sister Sodom nor her daughters have done as you and your daughters have done. [Judah] [Jerusalem] [Israel] Look, this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: She and her daughter had...”

Second Service
Threats To My Life
Pastor JD

Now, watch this. Because you would think that the first thing that would be mentioned by Ezekiel in God declaring through the prophet Ezekiel would be their sexual perversion. But it's not.

So what was the iniquity? What was the sin that brought and wrought the judgment of God? Here you go: **“Pride, fullness of food, and abundance of idleness. Neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.”**

No regard for the poor who Jesus said will always be among you. They had so much money they didn't have to work. They had an abundance of idleness. No, we pay people to do that. We just kick back and throw parties, and we just get drunk, and we're drunkards and gluttons, and we've got all this food and all this prosperity and all this time.

Idle, abundance of idleness? I mean, idleness alone — I mean, that sounds good to me right now. What is that even like? You know when you work 7 days a week and 10, 12, 14 hours a day. Idle time? They still have that?

But this was an abundance of idleness that came as a result of the fullness of food, which came as a result of their pride. Look at the progression here.

So then they're so fat — I better be careful these days. Well, no, James says you're fattening yourself up for the slaughter. Go ahead.

No, it's — listen, be a Berean. Search the Scriptures for yourself. You're fattening yourself up for the day of judgment.

So these guys were fat and sassy. No regard for the poor and the needy. They were so arrogant, and we're told they were haughty.

Now, again, we talked about that in Prophecy Update. They're closely related, but they really are technically synonymous: Haughty, arrogant, and proud. They're closely related.

I think they're roommates, but they're in different rooms. That was actually a better illustration, I think. But they all live together and they all dwell together, but they're different in nature.

See, it's a misnomer that I hope cleared up First Service. But it's not pride that comes before a fall. **“Pride comes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.”**

Second Service
Threats To My Life
Pastor JD

You see the delineation there? What was the difference? Isn't that just semantics or play on words? No, it's not. And we're told in I think it's *Proverbs 12 (21)* which kind of unlocks it. It says, **“A haughty look and a proud heart...”**

See haughtiness, different than pride, looks down on others as being inferior to them being superior. They look down, haughtiness looks down their nose at you, peasants. Was that too much?

Are you getting the picture here? Should I stop painting this picture? Because it's really quite horrific. But that's the haughty Spirit that they had. And the haughtiness is what fills the heart with pride.

You see the relationship? So... and arrogance, closely related. It's that air of superiority, that haughty spirit, and it just fuels pride, which pride leads to destruction. And certainly Sodom was the recipient of the destruction from the fire and brimstone of God's judgment.

This is one of those principal you don't break. It breaks you. You go up against this, you're not going to win. I like — it's somebody else's illustration. That's why it's so good, not mine.

So that was a disclaimer, and this is why you're probably going to appreciate it. You didn't come up with this? No. Well, then it's going to be good. Let's hear it. Here it is.

Here's an ocean liner, big, huge ship. And the captain of the ship is noticing an approaching light. And he gets on the radio, and he says, Move away. We're on a course to collide. And I'm Captain So-and-so. Don't you know who I am?

No, I don't know who you are. Do you know who he is?

No.

He thinks he's somebody.

I don't know. He's Captain So-and-so. Change course.

The response comes back. No. You change course. Oh, well now, game on. We're doing this. Captain comes back again. His credentials... and we're a big ship, and I'm the captain of this big ship. You change course.

Second Service
Threats To My Life
Pastor JD

To which the response comes, Nah, I'm not changing course. You are. You know why? I'm a lighthouse.

Okay, change course.

That's the principles of God. You don't go up against them. You don't break them. They break you. It's the lighthouse. Change course. Change course, the path you're on. I told you it was good because it wasn't mine.

But they were haughty. And now listen to this. We're almost done. Hanging in there.

“They were haughty and committed abomination before Me.”

Can I work this backwards? Just indulge me. So the abomination came vis-à-vis being haughty,

which came vis-à-vis their disregard for the poor and needy,

which came vis-à-vis their abundance of idleness,

which came vis-à-vis their fullness of food,

which came vis-à-vis their pride and prosperity.

Do you see how that works? Did you notice that conspicuously absent from any of this is any mention specifically of sexual perversion? That was the result, not the source.

The source was everything on this list, which is what makes immorality such a serious threat to the life of a Christian, knowing what leads up to it, what is the source of it, what is the cause of it, getting down to peeling off all the layers surrounding it, and you get down to the — here's another illustration.

I'm reluctant to say, actually, it wasn't me. I stole this from somebody else, so it'll be good again. You know when you take a pain reliever when you have a headache? Have you read the bottle on these things? “Temporary relief.”

Temporary? No, I want it to be permanent.

No, it's just, it's going to provide temporary relief, which is why you have to keep taking them every 6 hours. It's just — all you're doing is providing temporary relief of the symptoms. You're not dealing at all with the problem. Let's get down to the source of what

Second Service
Threats To My Life
Pastor JD

keeps causing these headaches. Something else must be going on because the headaches keep coming back.

So I know this is deeply profound, but it stands to reason that the symptoms that I'm taking a pill for temporary relief for could be eliminated if I eliminate the source of what's causing the pain that I need temporary relief for.

So in other words, if I can deal with the source of it and get it out, then the headaches go bye-bye. Is that fair?

What if you find out that it's a serious tumor that's causing the headaches, and here you are just providing temporary relief, dealing only with the symptoms? No, we've got to root out the core problem.

What's the core problem?

Immorality is only the symptom of the problem of pride. Let me say that again. The sexual immorality, that's only the symptom outwardly, but it manifests because the core problem is what's in the heart.

If you really think about it when it comes specifically — I want to be appropriate here — but when it comes to sexual sin, dare I say pornography, you know what's at the core of that? “I” I take from that. I fancy myself as being so full of myself that I can take that which belongs to another for myself.

Does that make sense? It's just pride. Sexual morality is the symptom of the core problem. And that problem left unchecked — you leave that light on, and you don't take heed to that warning light — this is game-over.

Sexual sin — you're sinning against your own body. It's an abomination before the Lord. But what's the source of it? What's the cause of it? The cause of it is the pride in our hearts. It's “I.” It's me. It's idolatry.

Anything that takes the place that is rightfully the Lord's on the throne of my life, anything or anyone that becomes more important than Jesus, that's an idol.

Let me just try lastly to — and I'll bring it to a close. But what we're saying with all three, the unbelief, the rebellion, the immorality, here's the message that's being sent when we don't

Second Service
Threats To My Life
Pastor JD

take heed to the warning. And again, the consequences that ensue are so needless, so unnecessary.

But at the core of it, what we're saying to God is I will replace You on the throne of my life, and You no longer have Your rightful place at the center of my life. I do. I do.

And so now Jesus is not in His rightful place at the center. And if He's not there — and by the way, for the Christian marriage, if Jesus is ever replaced from His rightful place at the center of your marriage, Christian, I promise you, on the authority of God's word, that marriage is not going to last. Because this is what keeps it together, Christ at the center.

Because see, this is what happens. I guess I'll use the marriage example, but it's all pride, right? The husband to the wife. The wife to the husband.

True story. Not here. On the mainland. I don't use examples from here. I don't really do biblical guidance anymore, thankfully, not because it's beneath me. I just, I don't have time anymore. And that's why God raised up the amazing people that He's raised up here.

But many years ago on the mainland, I had a couple, and I'm looking at these guys and I'm just like, God, what do I say to them? I mean, it was biblical — we don't call it counseling. It was biblical guidance for this married couple that were on the verge of a divorce. And within five minutes I knew why.

I mean, you know, they're both just “well, you.” Two words — by the way, husband, wife, get these two words out of your vocabulary: Always and never. You always blah, blah, blah, blah. You never blah, blah, blah, blah.

I tell you, use those words, those are trigger words, as they call them. They are fighting words. And you're going to roll up your arm sleeves. And what causes quarrels and fights amongst you, James asks. Pride.

So here's the husband to the wife. Here's the wife to the husband. And I'm like, okay, God, just give me wisdom. First of all, I can't take this. This is just really grievous. You know, I've got by the grace of God, not because I'm an amazing husband, I've just got a very blessed marriage with the most amazing wife a husband could ever want.

Second Service
Threats To My Life
Pastor JD

So it's really hard for me, and I even tell the married couple up front. You know, I've never tasted from this cup, thankfully, so maybe I'm not the right guy. I'm trying to get out of it. Maybe I'm not the right guy to seek biblical guidance from concerning your marriage that's on the verge of divorce.

But this was a Holy Spirit moment. And I looked at them, and I said to them the following: You both need to humble yourselves before Jesus and each other or you're not going to survive. They're looking at me like — this is probably why I don't do marriage, biblical guidance anymore.

They're like, oh, yeah! Me? What about her? Me? What about him? That's the pot calling the kettle black!

No. Stop! Can I just ask you a question in all sincerity? When was the last time as a husband, as a wife, as a married couple, you could ever fight or quarrel or have an argument with them when they were humble?

You know what, honey? I'm sorry. Forgive me. What did you do with my husband?

Who are you, you imposter? No, wait. What's — what's — what are you doing? Wait. No, no, no, no. No, no, wait. What, you're sorry?

Yeah. Did you just say the three hardest words to speak in the English language? I was wrong. (Struggling to get words out) I was wrong.

You were wrong? You're asking me to forgive you? You're humbling yourself?

Yeah.

Wait, you're submitting to me?

Yeah because Ephesians 5:20 comes before Ephesians 5:21. Look it up. Guys don't have Ephesians 5:20 in their bibles. I think they cut them out because it says, **“Submit to one another, [Husbands, wives] as unto the Lord.”** And then it says, **“Wives, submit to your husbands.”**

So guys are like, yeah, no, forget 20. 21: Submit to me woman.

Second Service
Threats To My Life
Pastor JD

Listen. Hey, guys, can I just save you some time and learn from my mistakes, learning the hard way with the scars to prove it. It won't work because that's not how God designed it to be.

So you humble yourself, and you say, "You know what, honey? You're right. I was wrong. Forgive me. Because after all, it's not have I been wronged. It's have I wronged. And I'm asking you to forgive me because I've been the recipient of God forgiving me for much."

And who has been forgiven of much loves much. And it completely diffuses it.

And all of a sudden she's like, "No, you know, I'm sorry too. I was wrong."

And then now you're going to fight about who's more sorry and who's more wrong. We actually had that happen one time. Yeah, I won that one. No, she basically said, I'm going to beat you to the cross and tell on you.

I said, No, you're not! You know because she's very competitive. So I'm like — anyway, that's a whole nother — why did I go there where we should be closing now?

In fact, Kaponu, come on up, and I'll have to close. And why don't you stand up, and I will close.

Father in heaven, would You, by the Holy Spirit, give us the wisdom from above to get to the core of the problem, to eliminate the threat before it's too late and we suffer needlessly the consequences of not taking heed to the warning and dealing with the threat?

Lord, we just looked at three, but there are so many. But at the core of it is the "I" problem. It's me, it's pride, it's self, refusing to die to self, and pick up our cross and follow You.

Oh, the self-will, God, that refuses to bend. The "I" becoming a "C" which is a bent "I." The "C" being Christ, You Lord. It's the snake, when stepped on, hisses back and fights back, as opposed to the worm, when stepped on, breaks.

Lord, we need to be more broken, our pride, our will, the strong will in all of us. Break us O, Lord. Make us O, Lord, like You O, Lord, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.