

Bible Prophecy Update – July 14, 2024

Links

- Sun Sentinel, Hitler and the Nazis docuseries director fears world on precipice of World War III

<https://www.sun-sentinel.com/2024/06/19/hitler-and-the-nazis-docuseries-director-fears-world-on-precipice-of-world-war-iii>

- FDA, Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (also known as Bird Flu)

<https://www.fda.gov/food/alerts-advisories-safety-information/updates-highly-pathogenic-avian-influenza-hpai>

- CNN, US government inks a deal with Moderna to make pandemic flu vaccine

<https://www.cnn.com/2024/07/02/health/moderna-mrna-bird-flu-vaccine/index.html>

Prophecy Update
A Thief in the Night
Pastor JD Farag

DAVID: Lord, we wait for that time for You to come again, Lord, and take us all home. We're so ready. And we're so excited. We look to You every day, Lord. And may You continue just to bless our church, Lord. And bless everyone over here, Lord. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

PASTOR JD: Amen and amen. And good morning and welcome. You can be seated. Those of you online that are joining us, we're so glad that you are. Welcome. Before we jump in, I just want to let you know that today is Tamayo Perry's Celebration of Life. It will be at the North Shore. And it will begin at 3:30.

And I've already talked to the pastor about the length of his sermon Second Service. So that — because I know him. And so we can get out of here in enough time to get to the North Shore. For those of you planning to attend, as you know, Tamayo and his wife, Emelia, were part of our church ohana, and please pray for her, for Krista, Sarah. I mean, I could just grocery list the names of the people. There are many.

But please pray for the North Shore because this tragic and unexpected death of a beloved and well-known brother in the Lord took everybody by surprise. And as I've sought the Lord concerning the tragic way that he went home to be with the Lord in his death, the Lord ministered to me that God is going to use Tamayo's death with all the fame he had and all the people he knew to bring multitudes to Christ and salvation. Yeah.

[Applause]

So please pray, and we would most certainly appreciate that. Well, as you know, this is our first of two Sunday morning services which we devote to the teaching of Bible prophecy. We've been doing these weekly Bible Prophecy Updates for quite some time now.

And Second Service is the sermon. It's a verse-by-verse study through the word of God. We're currently in the amazing Book of Revelation. And today we're going to start in *Chapter 3*, and our text will be *verses 1 through 6*.

And it's the letter to the church in Sardis in a sermon that I've titled, 'The Deadly Danger of Self Reliance.' How's that one? Did you? Nobody needs to come Second Service actually. This is for me. I have a Ph.D. in self-reliance and self-confidence and operating in the strength of my own flesh, which is what we're going to look at.

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But more specifically, and perhaps practically and more importantly, biblically, three ways to instead rely upon the power of the Holy Spirit, and in so doing, avoid the dangers that come when we rely on ourselves, self-reliance.

So that'll be Second Service. It'll be livestreamed at 11:15 for those of you online. And also for those of you that are on YouTube or Facebook, we want to encourage you to go now to JDFarag.org instead of waiting until we end the livestream so that it's uninterrupted because that's the entirety of the Update. So it's not censored in any way.

All right let's get to it. (Heavy sigh)

I'd like to answer a twofold question concerning Jesus comparing His return to that of a thief in the night. And the first part of the question is specific to whether Jesus is using this analogy, if you prefer idiom, to refer to the pre-Tribulation rapture or the 7-year Tribulation, or His Second Coming.

And the second part of the question has to do with whether or not this idiom of a thief in the night applies to us as believers, or rather, does it apply to nonbelievers? Now, why am I taking and tackling this topic in the context of a Prophecy Update?

Because pronounced throughout Scripture, we find this idiom likening the Savior's return to that of a thief in the night. It seems that the Lord deemed it necessary to associate His return with a thief in the night. There must be a reason, really, a number of reasons, chief of which is that He does not want us to be caught off guard when, not if, He comes, hence the analogy, the comparison to a thief in the night.

Let's think this through. I know this might seem like a profound grasp of the obvious, but you don't expect a thief in the night to come. That's why the thief in the night comes. Are we good so far? How am I doing? Okay. I mean, could you imagine the thief? You get a text by 11:00 p.m. Hey, I'm your local thief. I'll be there 2:00. Is that a good time for you? Yeah. Bring it. I'll be watching. I won't be sleeping. I will be expecting you.

That's what Jesus is saying. I mean, He's clearly saying that if you knew what time the thief was going to come in the night, you'd be ready. You're not going to be sleeping. You're going to be watching. And now we've got security cameras that, you know, we can keep watch. And here he comes. All right! Right on time.

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And conversely, now let's flip it around. What if said thief does not let you know what time he's going to come as a thief in the night? Well, you're going to go bed. Go sleep. And he's going to come at a time when you expect not because had you expected him to come, you would have stayed up and been awake and watched in anticipation of his coming. And that's the whole point. And that's my whole introduction. So hopefully that worked great.

Now, I want to share with you five passages of Scripture. I found five. There might be more, but no less than five where this idiom “a thief in the night” is mentioned in the context of the Lord's return.

And the first one is — we're going to borrow from our Second Service sermon, just two verses this time from our text, *Revelation Chapter 3:2-3*. Now this, again, is the letter to the church in Sardis, which we will study Second Service.

Jesus had just got done writing, having John write to the church, to the angel if the church in Sardis write, **“I know your deeds”** [Verse 1]. [Verse 2, wait for it] [Wake up!] **Strengthen what remains and is about to die. For I have found your deeds unfinished in the sight of my God.** [That is key, incomplete] **Remember therefore what you have received and heard. Hold it fast and repent. But** [Listen to this] **if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you.”**

Revelation 16:15, Jesus speaking, John writing, **“Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.”**

That's a little bit TMI on the second part of the verse, but I was pretty good about the first part. But Jesus, again, in His own words, saying that His coming will be as a thief and promising a blessing to those who are awake and watching in anticipation of His coming. So for them, it will not be as a thief in the night. Are we still good?

All right. *Matthew 24*. Now this whole chapter, of course, very well-known chapter, and for good reason. I want to draw your attention to, starting in *verse 42*, Jesus speaking. **“Watch therefore** [This keeps coming up, doesn't it?] **for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming, but know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore, you also be ready for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”**

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2 Peter Chapter 3:10. I want you to notice kind of a difference here in what Peter, by the Holy Spirit, writes. He says *Chapter 3:10*, in the second epistle **“But the Day of the Lord...” [not the Coming of the Lord], [the Day of the Lord] [That's different] [Hang on] The Day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with the great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat. Both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. ”**

1 Thessalonians Chapter 5, the first four verses. The Apostle Paul, by the Holy Spirit, writing to the church in Thessalonica. And I want you to pay particular attention to what he says because actually he's going to say and use this idiom two times in four verses.

Let's start in *verse 1*. **“Now, brothers and sisters, about times and dates, we do not need to write to you, for you know very well that the Day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, [Verse 3] “peace and security” destruction will come on them suddenly as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. But you, [Notice the contrast] brothers and sisters, are not in darkness, so that this day should surprise you like a thief.”**

Why is it not going to surprise you like a thief in the night would surprise you? Because you're awake and you're watching and you're expecting. You. Not they. It's going to catch them off guard because they're not expecting it. But you are. So it won't be for you as a thief in the night.

Okay. The common denominator with these prophecies is that of the paramount importance, and I don't know if it's possible to overstate this, but the paramount importance of waking up and watching so as to not be caught by surprise. You know, when you're sleeping, especially those of you who are deep sleepers, but if you're a deep sleeper, I don't want to know, okay?

Because, oh, to have a good, deep night's sleep. You know, the REM sleep, that restorative sleep where you wake up in the morning and you're like, “Praise the Lord!” Instead of getting maybe some sleep, not deep sleep, and you wake up going, “praise the Lord,” (Said tiredly) and it's hard to get out of bed.

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But you know when you're sleeping, you have a good night's sleep, deep sleep, you are completely unaware of anything going around you. Some people have such deep sleep you could change the sheets and not wake them up. Again, if that's you, I don't want to know about it. Okay?

And so, again, flip it around. Conversely, no, you're not sleeping. And certainly if you are, it's not a deep sleep because you know how sometimes you can be sort of asleep, but you're still kind of sort of aware of your surroundings, what's going on, you know, especially when the neighbors a little bit loud, and you're trying to go to sleep?

So you're aware. But if you're not sleeping, you're watching. Being awake is the antithesis of being asleep. I know again, deeply profound, right, grasp the obvious. But if I'm awake, I'm aware. And if I'm aware, I'm watching. And I'm watching because I'm anticipating, so that when, not if, He comes, I will not be caught by surprise. So let's talk about the delineation between the Lord coming as a thief in the night and the Day of the Lord coming as a thief in the night. These are two different things.

I'm going to try my best to explain the difference between them. Does this Day of the Lord coming as a thief in the night, referred to the pre-Tribulation rapture? Or does it refer to the 7-year tribulation, or does it refer to the Second Coming at the end of the 7-year tribulation? Answer: All of the above. I'm not trying to be clever here, but it actually is all of them by virtue of three distinct context in which this idiom is deployed.

Stay with me on this. First, in *1 Thessalonians 5:4*, it applies to born-again believers at the pre-Tribulation rapture who are awake and watching, and as such will not be caught by surprise when the trumpet sounds. And Paul says as much. In fact, he starts it off by saying, I don't even need to really write you these things. I taught you these things. You already know these things.

But just as a friendly reminder, I just — when it comes to dates and times, and the Lord's return, and the rapture of the church, you already know it's not going to be for you as a thief in the night. Now for them, it will. Because you're awake, and you're aware, and you know He's coming, and that He can come at any time.

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So you're watching with great excitement and anticipation as would a bride for her wedding day, when her bridegroom in that day would come as a thief in the night at an hour, and on a day no man knew, which made a huge problem for wedding announcements. Because you didn't — you know, when? Don't know yet. Hour? Not sure. Date? No date scheduled. Just be ready. Just be ready. Have your lamp stand.

This is now *Matthew 25*. More applicable for the Jews for Israel, but it's still has application for us because the lamp is representative of the word of God in typology. Thy lamp — oh Thy word, O Lord, is a lamp unto my feet. The oil in the lamp is a type of the Holy Spirit. We need the Holy Word and the Holy Spirit. And we need to keep our lamps lit all the time and wait because we don't know when it's going to be.

But when, not if, it happens, we don't want to be caught off guard. We want to be right in the front of the line. Ho! Was that too much? So it applies to the pre-Tribulation rapture in the context within which Paul writes concerning the believers who should not be caught by surprise when, not if, the thief comes in the night.

But it also answers the second part of that question such that it applies to both believers and nonbelievers. And again, stay with me, and I'll explain how I get there. The Lord's coming, for his bride will be as a thief in the night for those who are not expecting it. They will be caught by surprise.

Now the Day of the Lord does not refer to the rapture of the church. It refers to the judgment of God, the wrath of God, the Day of the Lord, the commencement of the 7-year tribulation, and really with it, the duration of the 7-year tribulation. vis-à-vis a prophecy we just studied on Thursday night in *Daniel 9:27*. See, the pre-Tribulation rapture does not start the 7-year tribulation. The fulfillment of *Daniel 9:27* about the 7-year covenant with many being enforced, made greater, stronger, that's what starts the clock ticking.

And the Jews are allowed to rebuild the temple, and the Antichrist will make this agreement with them, enforce this covenant, not agreement, covenant really. And he'll allow them, he'll make it greater, sweeten the deal, as they say, by allowing them to rebuild their temple, which, by the way, in Israel today they'll stop at nothing and do everything if they can get their temple.

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And the Antichrist will say, okay, we got to close this deal. In other words, there's already a deal on the table. I believe that it was unveiled by one Donald J. Trump called the Peace and Prosperity Plan, but it's not been yet enforced, implemented, executed, for lack of a better word.

So when the Antichrist comes on the scene, he'll enforce it and he'll sweeten it, make it greater, Ekbir in Arabic, my native tongue, in the Hebrew, the same word, Ekbir, to make it Akbar, you know, greater, stronger, sweeter, sweeten the deal a little bit. We'll throw in a temple. All right. Where do I sign? Boom! We got a deal. That's what starts the 7-year tribulation.

But the 7-year tribulation is synonymous with the Day of the Lord, the wrath of the Lord, the judgment of the Lord. And that too will come as a thief in the night. Not only that, but so too will the Second Coming be as a thief in the night. Wait a minute. I mean, people are gonna know relatively close once the 7-year tribulation starts.

The Antichrist confirms the covenant. And we even have the specificity, again, in *Daniel 9:27* about the three-and-a-half-year mark, which Paul echoes to the Thessalonian — easy for me, to say — the *2 Thessalonians*.

[Laughter]

I'm sorry. *2 Thessalonians 2*. That's a lot more pastoral. The prophecy in *2 Thessalonians Chapter 2* where he says that the Antichrist will, in the newly rebuilt temple, will set himself up at the three-and-a-half-year mark, which comports with *Daniel 9:27*, which Jesus, by the way, quoted in *Matthew 24*.

And he's going to commit the abomination that causes desolation. We've been studying this in Daniel. And he's going to declare himself to be God, set himself up as God, and demand to be worshiped. And then they're going to realize this is not our Messiah. And this will happen in three-and-a-half-year mark.

And for the last three and a half years of the 7-year tribulation, as Jesus said in *Matthew 24*, they are to run. Don't go back and get your duffel bag or your iPhone. You forgot your charger. Leave it there. Run to the place that is prepared for you, modern-day Petra in

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Jordan — I should say ancient Petra in modern-day Jordan — for the last three and a half years.

So again, my question that I'm trying to answer; I'm kind of like having an argument with myself up here, I think. But I'm going to ask and answer the question of how is it possible that the Second Coming could be as a thief in the night?

2 Thessalonians 2 vis-à-vis a powerful delusion, a strong deception. Why? Because they will buy the lie. Why? Because they did not accept THE truth, Jesus, who is THE way, THE truth and THE life. And because they rejected THE truth, they'll accept THE lie. And they will come under this powerful delusion. In other words, they won't even know they're in the 7-year tribulation.

So at the end of the 7-year tribulation when Jesus comes with us — I love how one said it — the rapture and the Second Coming are bookends on the 7-year tribulation. At the rapture Jesus comes for us. Aww!! And at the Second Coming, Jesus comes with us as His bride by His side, ten thousands and thousands by His side.

You know at the Second Coming — I hope you know this — listen, I don't want anybody from this church when we're up there going, oh, I didn't know we were coming back with you.

[Laughter]

Because then I'm going to be called on the carpet. Like what? Where's your pastor? Get him over here.

[Laughter]

See, they're going to be so delusional and deceived, and they're not going to be awake and watching for it, which is why they're not going to be expecting of it. So it applies to all of the above. It applies to the pre-Tribulation rapture. It applies to the 7-year tribulation, the Day of the Lord, and it applies the Second Coming of the Lord at the end of the 7-year tribulation. And it applies to believers and nonbelievers alike, yet in different ways.

Well, what do you mean? Well, this thief in the night idiom for us won't be a surprise because we're believers, and we know He's coming. We don't know when, but we're watching, and we're ready, and we're awake, so we won't be caught by surprise.

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However, for the nonbeliever, it applies in a different way. I suppose you could say that in some way it's the same analogy with two different ends. Here's an example. We talk about this whenever we go through the ABCs of salvation and the gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ.

You know how we're told in Scripture — I actually want to read these scriptures — **“Every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.”**

Well, wait, does that apply to the believer when they come to Christ, or does it apply to the nonbeliever? Answer: Both. For anyone now, every tongue confessing that Jesus Christ is Lord ends in salvation, whereas at the end, when every knee bows and every tongue confesses in that great and final day that Jesus Christ is Lord, it won't be unto salvation. It will be unto damnation.

What's my point? It applies to both in different ways. A thief in the night applies to both believers and nonbelievers in different ways, as does the every tongue confessing that Jesus Christ is Lord applying to believers and nonbelievers in different ways.

Let me read *Romans 10* starting in verse 8. **“But what does it say? The word is near you, in your mouth, in your heart; that is the word of faith which we preach that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. [And here's why, verse 10] For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”**

Now *Romans 14:11-12*, this is different. **“For it is written, “As I live,” says the Lord, [Oh, notice we got a little bit of a tone change in this one] every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.”**

Translated: More better confess now, if I can say it like that. I just did. See, this side of the Day of the Lord and the judgment of God the confessing of Jesus Christ as Lord is unto salvation. But there is coming a day, and I can't wait.

And I say this in a sanctified way. I don't want to bring anybody's names or faces to your, you know, mind, like I am myself right now, that I can't wait to see their knee bow, their arrogant, anti-Jesus knee bow and their ugly, big mouth, blasphemous tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

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[Congregation says, "Amen."]

Only, it's going to be for damnation. I don't take delight in that. I just know God's going to have the final word, and it's going to be the word that is going to be spoken by their tongues in their mouths. And they will confess. Every knee will bow. I don't care who you are or who you think you are.

I'm not mad. Does it sound like I'm mad right now? I should probably go to the *Philippians Chapter 2:9-11* passage although... anyway...

Paul writing, again, to the church of Philippi, **"Therefore God also has highly exalted Him [Speaking of Jesus] [And I love this] given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven [Watch this] and of those on earth, and of those under the earth."**

Ho! Ho! I think that's everyone. I think that's every tongue. I think that's every knee. Now listen to *verse 11*. **"...and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."**

That day is coming. All right. Here's where I'm going with all this. Let me catch my breath. I got a little excited there. Confessing Jesus Christ as Lord applies to believers unto salvation, right? And so too does this apply to nonbelievers unto damnation. Well, such is the case with the analogy comparing the Lord's return to a thief in the night, not coming as a surprise for those of us who have come to salvation.

However, conversely, it will most certainly come as a surprise for the nonbeliever, which is what I want to address for the remainder of our time together today. And then in order to do that, we're going to go ahead at this time and end the livestream on YouTube and Facebook, and hopefully you're already at the website.

If you'll kindly allow me to, I want to pose a question for all of us to consider, myself included. I include myself in this. I hope you know that. And I do so in order to put all of this into perspective.

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Here's the question. Back in 2020, did COVID-19 and the ensuing vaccine so-called catch you by surprise as a thief in the night? It did me. Who saw that coming? I mean, just boom. All of a sudden, the whole world shut down.

Who among us — let's be honest — we're in church — who among us saw that coming? Who among us knew that that was going to happen? Who among us was not surprised by that as they would be with a thief in the night coming? I want to follow it up with another question.

But it's one for which I — please hear my heart — I trust you'll agree to disagree agreeably with me in the name of brotherly love, one for another, as disciples of Jesus. Is that not what Jesus said? They're going to know you, not by the how big your Bible is, or how worn out it is, or how worn out you are.

No. How are they going to know? What's going to be a litmus test for people, nonbelievers, to know that you're a believer in and follower of Jesus Christ? Your love one for another. That's how. I really do need to preface that. You'll see why here in a moment.

But I'm just going to ask you, as one said, I think so aptly, one of the highest marks of spiritual maturity in the life of a Christian is the willingness to agree to disagree agreeably. You probably already have a sense of where I'm going with this. I'm just — I guess I'm trying to ask you humbly ask you, will you just — if you disagree with me — can we agree to disagree agreeably in the name of Jesus as disciples of Jesus?

Okay. I went into all that to say this. The events of September 11th, 2001, and all that ensued — again, agree to disagree agreeably — was ultimately pre-planned to pave the way for COVID in 2020.

Now, here's the question I want to pose for those who remember that day, 23 years ago now. Did that catch you by surprise like a thief in the night? Yeah. Oh, let's be honest. Real talk now. Okay? Who among us went to bed Monday night, September 10th, expecting Tuesday morning on September 11th for all of that to go down and happen?

I better not see somebody raise their hand. Because we're going to lay hands on you afterwards if you do, and it won't be like you think. I'll let the Holy Spirit take it from there. Come on. I know these are rhetorical, right? These are rhetorical questions.

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We — none of us saw it coming. It caught all of us completely off guard. We were stunned. We were shocked. It was surreal. Forget 2021. I mean 2001. What year is this? 2024? Forget 2001. And I know that's a sore subject for many people. And so besides, I'm looking around. Some of you weren't even born.

[Laughter]

And when I love it when I meet young people. And I'm thinking — because my son — anyway, they weren't even born yet. And so I just think to myself, I'm old. Because I remember. I mean, it's that — one of those, you know, do you remember what you were doing when...fill in the blanks.

I'm not going to go back to JFK because that's you know, how like when you're online, and you got to fill in your information and your birth date? And as you get older, it gets a little scarier. Because, you know, they start off, you know, 2000, and you're scrolling down like, you know, I hope that it goes back that far.

[Laughter]

Can we just — 2001 — let's just take that off the table and we'll use it for purposes of illustration and example. But let's talk about 2020. Is that all right? I — was it not surreal that we woke up one morning, and the whole world was on lockdown? I mean, nobody saw that coming.

Would it be safe to say, fair to say that that came as a thief in the night and completely caught all of us off guard and by surprise? We weren't expecting that. Oh, we started hearing about, you know, the cases, and they're spreading, and what they're really spreading, or not, you know, this so-called whatever we call it, COVID-19, whatever this thing is or was.

But what they were really spreading is fear because fear is extremely powerful when it comes to motivation, motivating and incentivizing. Fear is so powerful you can get people to stand in line to do something they would have never agreed to, all under the banner of fear.

And the Holy Spirit has not given us fear. That comes from a demonic spirit. The Holy Spirit gives us power, love, and a discipline mind. Not sound mind. It doesn't quite catch the

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fullness of the meaning. Give me a minute on this. And this is actually very important and germane to our understanding.

A disciplined mind is like a disciplined child. You know how you discipline your children. You correct them. Well, the Holy Spirit enables us, empowers us to discipline our mind. I think — you know we're so — well, I should not speak for myself because it's untrue of me when it comes to what I allow to go into my body. I mean, I don't — that looks really good. I know it's got formaldehyde in it, but I'm going to ingest it. And it's going to go into my body.

Now that's me. Now let's talk about you. Some of you are very health conscious. I have the utmost respect for you. You're very careful about what you're going to put in your body. And I admire you and I applaud you for that.

Have you noticed, by the way, just a side note, parenthetically, how very convenient and even inexpensive they've made it to put chemicals and poison and formaldehyde in your body through the drive-thru? And how hard it is to get actual food that isn't genetically modified, and how expensive it is? Oh, unable to ship to Hawaii. Unavailable in your area. Out of stock. Supply chain issues. Oh, and then you finally find something that's actually healthy, and you looked at the price tag on it. And you need a second mortgage to buy it. That's by design, you know.

Well, what's your point? My point is this. We're not as disciplined with what we allow into our minds as some are very disciplined with what they allow into their bodies. And you know which is worse? The mind. Because we're to take every thought captive into the obedience of Christ.

See, the mind is the battleground. Satan can't read your mind. Thank God. God can. Be careful. But he can put thoughts in your mind, plant seeds. And if we let it in, and it's met with the supple soil of a fertile mind, it begins to germinate and sprout.

In other words, when the devil comes knocking, don't let him in, and set the table, and have him stay over for dinner. No! Out with you! You lie! You lie! You lie! I have to do that every once in a while. I just gotta. Just sounds good. More growl next time I do it.

But you're a liar! You're the father of lies! You're not gonna lie to me! I'm not going to let that in! Because that's how he attacks. He attacks the mind. That's why we got the helmet

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of salvation. To protect our minds. So it bounces off that helmet. He shoots those flaming arrows, and it hits the helmet.

And it protects our mind because what's the number 1 thing? And we're going to talk about this Second Service in this letter to the church of Sardis. Very interesting detail concerning the assurance of salvation.

What's the one thing that when we get saved Satan wants to attack? Your assurance of salvation? I don't know. He starts putting little seeds of doubt in your mind. And you start, you know, thinking about well, yeah, I mean, I don't know now. He's got you if you let him in.

Well, back to the Prophecy Update already in progress. That was a complete surprise. Are we in agreement at least with 2020? Forget 2001. That's fine. I get it. I still love you. You're still saved. Nah. But let's just — just 2020 — standalone. Nobody saw that coming. That was a complete surprise. Nobody was expecting it.

Now, it's been — can you believe it's been four-plus years? Oh, that's old news now. That was four-and-a-half years ago. It's over now. Did you get the memo? Pandemic's over.

Okay, so what am I going to do? Well, you can go back to sleep now. I'm going to suggest that over the last two years in particular, it really started more s-s-subtly, but maybe — and particularly over the last two years, many have already been lulled back into a deep sleep. And like with the church in Sardis, who Jesus tells to wake up, which again we'll go into more detail Second Service, there are many now who are sound asleep again, trusting in their lives of perceived normalcy, prosperity.

How about peace and security? This, as we're going to see, is what happened with Sardis, and it led to their downfall. They fancied themselves as being so secure, sheer cliffs on three sides and a moat. Nobody else had a moat. We got a moat on the other side. We're impenetrable. And nothing's going to happen to us. So kick back, sleep. Relax. Enjoy. We're safe.

No. You're dead, Jesus said. And it would happen twice in the history of that city. And like with the city, so too was this true for the church. Understand that the church now is kind of like, okay, whew, wow. It's over. I mean, the pandemic is over. We're all gasping for breath

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because we were — we had to wear masks for four and a half years, or however long it was. Wow, that was... man...

Did that really happen? I mean, it was so crazy. So we're kind of like, okay, nothing to see here. Carry on. Move along. It's over. Go about your lives. Everything's good now. And I'm sad to say that the church, in some cases even more so than the world, is more guilty of this than the world.

You know when Sardis fell? It came at a time when they were not awake, not watching, and it led to their — two words — sudden destruction. Enter the present-day Sardis and this same perception of, hey, you know, things are kind of getting back to normal. I know it's a new normal, but I'll take new normal as long as it's got the word “normal” in it. Because I like normal. Because normal is predictable.

When things aren't normal, then they're not normal. They're not predictable. And I'm out of control, by the way, every single one of us, myself included when things are not normal and things are going crazy, we're out of control. And we don't like to be out of control. If you really let the Lord search your heart on this, what you'll find is a lot of the conflicts and problems and issues in your life, at the core, peel back all the levels, all the layers around it, those are all symptoms of the core problem.

You know what the core problem is? You want to be in control. Well, don't look at me like that. Am I right? And even in our relationship with the Lord, we sing it, we say it, we know it: God is in control. And here we are, deep down inside, going, no, I want to be in control. Yeah, but I don't know what God's doing. That's scary. No, it's called faith. But I want to walk by sight. No, we, the righteous, shall live by faith. Walk by faith, not sight.

In other words, imagine this: God's in control. And you're going to have to trust Him. Yeah, but I don't know what He's doing! That's okay. He does. He knows what he's doing. But there's this innate nature within all of us, that Adamic nature, that sin nature, that flesh, that rears its ugly head, that strives for normalcy and consistency, and security and predictability because we feel safer and more in control of our circumstances in the world about us.

We don't like it when things are all kapakahi because then we have to trust God. Imagine that. Things are just crazy right now. And God's going, I know. (Chuckling)

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Yeah, but God, I don't know. What are You doing?

You'll see.

No, I don't want to wait. I want to know.

No. Just wait. You'll see.

Don't you hate those words? Psalm 27:13-14? By the way, for those of you that need to hear that as a word from the Lord fitly spoken today, just wait; you'll see.

No, I want to see. And I don't want to wait.

No. Just wait. You'll see. You don't know what I'm doing. You'll still see what I'm doing. And by the way, when I do, when I do it, you're going to go...

(Amazed look on face)

Oh! Thank — I'm sorry. I'm sorry. You're repenting. You're on your face. I'm so sorry, God, I didn't — I didn't know. I know, but I did. Oh, Lord, had I known.

Well, I tried to tell you. What, you don't trust Me?

Yeah, but God, I could have never imagined that You would have worked it out like that. I mean, I had already emailed You all the instructions on how I think we can solve this problem amicably. And apparently, it came back rejected. Unsendable. Undeliverable. And apparently, You didn't like my idea and my suggestion, God. Now I see why. Oh, Your ways are so much higher than our ways. Oh, forgive us, Lord.

Let me see if I can try to wrap this up. People's guards have been let down again. Would you agree? People have been lulled back to sleep again. Would you agree? So if that's true, and I believe it with all my heart, when, not if, the thief comes, believers will be caught up in the pre-Tribulation rapture, and nonbelievers will be caught off guard by the pre-Tribulation rapture.

Did you get that? See, those of us, like Paul, writing to the Thessalonians, and especially if you've been coming to this church for any length of period of time — and if you have, God bless you. You have major treasures in heaven for putting up with me for this long. Today is not going to be — I better be careful — it's already — don't look at your watches.

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But we're not going to be caught off guard. We're going to be caught up. It's not going to be a surprise. It's going to be "Wow!" It's not going to be "whoa!" It's going to be — I don't even think it's going to be a wow. I think it's going to be — nothing's going to come.

(Blown-away gawking)

Doubtless many of you already are hearing the propaganda. You know I use that word, and what that word means, right? I'm going to proceed with the presupposition that you understand what propaganda is.

But it's been going on for quite a while. They're getting — everybody that — that's back to sleep and back to work and back to normal. And they're starting to already kind of get everybody prepared with this propaganda for the next pandemic. (Said in scary voice)

However, it may not be what one thinks. What do you mean? Well, whether it's the so-called bird flu or Disease X, it may all come via the threat of a pre-planned World War III. You been hearing about this? You know in Israel right now; it's on fire. I mean, it's just, I mean, I'm running out of metaphors, so I'll just leave it at.

It's just any time now. Things are so hot, right there, right now, exactly as God's word said it would be at the time of the end. It's just a matter of time because we're at the end.

Now, why do I focus on bird flu, Disease? X, World War III, economy, fear, fear, fear, fear, fear, fear? Because Jesus said this is exactly what the propaganda would be at the time of the end. Can I draw your attention back to *Matthew 24*? This is in response to the disciples asking Jesus basically has a three-fold question starting in *verse 3*. **"Now, as he sat on the Mount of Olives, [He, speaking of Jesus] the disciples came to Him privately saying, "Tell us, when will these things be?"**

He just got done telling them, that not one stone will be standing on another — we talked about this Thursday night — as they were admiring the temple there in Jerusalem with the sun glistening off the gold, and just the brightness and the brilliance of the temple in all of its splendor. Here they are on the Mount of Olives. And Jesus just got done telling them that not one stone will remain upon another.

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And they're like, okay, when is this going to be? And so they ask a three-fold question actually. I used to teach this is a twofold, but there's actually three. **“Tell us, when will these things be? [One] What will be the sign of Your coming? [Two] And of the end of the age?” [Three]**

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Three-fold question. Answer? *Verse 4.* **“And Jesus answered and said to them, “Take heed that no one deceives you. [Let no man deceive you] For many will come in My name, saying, I am the Christ, and will deceive many.**

And you will hear of [Listen] wars and threats of wars. [Are we hearing of wars and threats of wars?] [Now don't panic] See that you are not troubled, for all these things must come to pass. But the end is [Not quite yet] not yet.

[And here's why, verse 7] For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom...”

In the original, it's ethnic group against ethnic group, racial group, race against race. Here's the thing. I love how one guy said it. It's not a skin issue. It's a sin issue. Take the K out. And it's not that race or this race. We're all part of the human race. But racial tensions and ethnic groups rising against ethnic groups.

And listen to this. **“There will be famines, pestilences, [Plagues] and earthquakes in various places.”**

And then in *verse 8*, He likens all of these aforementioned signs, in answer to their question, to birth pains, which, as we know, come in greater frequency and with greater intensity.

Now I ask you, is this not happening with greater frequency and greater intensity? It's the likes of which we have never seen before. But people are sleeping. Now, we've always had earthquakes. We've always had wars. We've always had famine. We've always had plagues and pestilences. We've always had uprisings.

Well, the only problem with that logic is we may have always had them, but we've never had them with the frequency and the intensity that we are now having them. Because Jesus is likening, not as a thief in the night, His coming, but a baby coming, the birth pains that precede the baby coming, the birth pains that precede His coming.

I'm almost done. I'll do my best to be brief. But I think it's incumbent upon me to share with you in advance, so you're not caught by surprise by the propaganda. Don't be duped. Let no man deceive you.

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Again, I don't want to have to be called, you know, from my mansion, "JD, we got another one of your members here. Didn't know this. Get over here. We need to talk."

I want you to know, lest you be ignorant. How many times did the Apostle Paul, with a sanctified strength, say and write, by the Holy Spirit, "**Don't be ignorant**"? The predictive pre-programing is in full force and precisely as we were told it would be in Bible prophecy. And it's increasing with greater frequency and intensity. If you only knew.

I know — I don't seek pity. I do seek prayer. I'll take prayer. The Apostle Paul asked many times for prayer. By the way, pray for me this afternoon. Like Paul would ask for boldness, I would ask you to pray for me, that I have boldness this afternoon to proclaim Jesus Christ to people who need Jesus Christ. So I don't say this to seek pity, but if you only knew.

It's coming at me so fast that I just sometimes I just throw my hands up, say, Lord, if I talk about all of this, the Prophecy Update is going to last four days. Four days, not hours, days. Please help me, Lord! (Stumbling over words) You gotta...

So He's always so faithful. I think He feels sorry for you. I don't think it's me. I don't think He feels sorry for me. I think He feels sorry for you. He just, you know, don't do that to those poor people again.

Just here — we'll condense it, okay? So we condensed it. We, the Lord and I — I hope doesn't come off wrong. But I should say — better said — the Lord condensed it for me to three, three parts just in the last few days.

First one. It's from the Sun Sentinel just on Wednesday, July 10th, bearing the title of, listen to this, 'Hitler and the Nazis' docuseries director fears world on precipice of World War III. This is one, representative of literally hundreds.

And I'm not talking about months ago. I'm talking about within weeks. That's just the headline. I read the article — I probably shouldn't have. My blood pressure went up. I'm just like, you know what, you guys, really? I already knew about this. I'm not surprised.

This doesn't catch me by surprise as a thief in the night because Jesus already told me that you would publish, the Sun Sentinel would publish this, on July 10th. He told me that in *Matthew 24*.

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How about this one? This is from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, FDA. Gotta love those three-letter agencies. They have a website. Look at this. Aww, they want to keep everyone updated on the, and I quote, highly pathogenic avian influenza, also known as the bird flu. Fear! Fear! Fear! Fear! You know, I'm still trying to figure out what cows and eggs have to do with birds. Maybe somebody can help me out with that after.

Last one. No need to fear. Moderna is here. Oh, wow. Whoa! Just in time. (Chuckling)

Oh, I guess they just received, and I quote again, a new \$176 million contract with the U.S. government last Tuesday, July 2nd, two days before the 4th of July, to develop an mRNA flu vaccine that could be used for H5N1 bird flu like the virus currently causing an outbreak in U.S. dairy cows. You don't say. Okay.

One last question and then three quick scriptures from the Savior himself, all of which speak to all of this. First, here's the question, and please think this through with me. Will you be caught by surprise like a thief in the night when, not if, another lockdown comes due to the next war/plandemic breaking out? Will you be caught by surprise? If so, this need not be so. Given that Jesus told us so.

Jesus, who loves us more than we could ever possibly begin to fathom or comprehend, told us about all this well in advance of all this, *John 13:19*. I am telling you now before it happens, so that when it does happen, you will believe that I Am. The I Am. I am He. In other words, let me read *John 14:29*, which is similar. I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen, you will believe.

In other words, nobody else can tell you prophetically, in advance, the future. No religious writings have prophecy. Have you noticed that, by the way? Only the Bible has prophecy predicting events some 2000-3000 years before their fulfillment with 100% accuracy, which is the litmus test. Only the Bible.

Why? Because it's the word of the true and the living God who knows the end from the beginning. And He wants to let us in on what He knows because He lives outside of time. See, He's already seen the end of the parade. We're still at the beginning of the parade. Oh, I know I shouldn't — we just had our 4th of July political, I mean, parade in Kailua. Anyway...

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He loves us so much. He says I want you to know in advance. I'm going to tell you what's going to happen before it happens. So when it starts happening, and you go wait a minute, He told us that was going to happen. And now, it's happening. And wow! He must be God. Ya think?

So He's going to tell us in advance before it happens, so when it happens, nonbelievers will believe, and believers will look up. And that's *Luke 21:28*. I love this. Jesus says, **“Now when these things [Key word] began to happen...”**

Began to happen? Maybe last year's Prophecy Updates I still could emphasized and highlighted the word **“begin.”** But we're past begin. Nah, it's been happening. They began to happen already, so...

[But] **“...when you see these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads. [Why?] because your redemption draws near.”**

In other words, I want you to know that when these things start to happen —What? What things? — the things I told you were going to happen before they happened. So now all of a sudden, you're looking around the world about you're, and you're going, Jesus said this would happen! I just — I think the Lord just looks at us and is just like (Smacks forehead).

I'll speak for myself. I told you so. I told you this was going to happen. So why are you surprised? Instead of being surprised, you should be excited because I'm coming. I'm coming. And when I do, I don't want you to be caught off guard.

Please, I implore you. Last time, I'll ask you this. Don't be — don't be surprised if the rapture happens this afternoon. Wouldn't that be cool? Oh, God. Let me have that one just for a moment. Please don't say, oh, wow! This really caught me off guard. Who's your pastor?

Don't — please — that's the last time we're just going to ask you. Please don't be surprised, okay? Because you already know. You're expecting it. You got your lamp, the Word, and you got the Holy Spirit, the oil. You're filled with the Holy Spirit. Your lamp is filled with the Holy Spirit. And you're waiting with great anticipation, so that when, not if, that trumpet sounds you're like, yeah!

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Oh, yeah, I forgot. There's nothing coming out. It's more like... (Stunned speechlessness)

I'm done almost. Here's good news, I mean, the good news. No one needs to be caught off guard. Why do you think God went to the lengths that He went to, to in the pages of Holy Writ, have well-nigh one third of the Bible be prophecy if He didn't want us to know in advance?

Do you get the impression that God wants us to know ahead of time, so we'll believe, and believers will look up, be watching, be awake, not be caught by surprise? So that's the good news. It's there's still time, though what time is it now? Not a lot. Not a lot. But there's still time.

Give me a couple minutes. I want to end with the gospel of salvation and the ABCs, just a childlike explanation. Starting with the A, which is just for admit or acknowledge. This is foundational that before coming to Christ, you understand that you might be a good person, but you'll never be good enough. because there's no one good or righteous. *Romans 3:10* says, “**...not even one.**”

And *Romans 3:23* tells us why. It's because “**...All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.**”

We were all born sinners, which is why we must be born-again to enter the kingdom of Heaven, Jesus said. So unless and until we enter a guilty plea and acknowledge that we've broken God's law, we can't go any further. So there you are, in the courtroom of the universe with the judge of Heaven. It's actually the other way around. But I wanted to twist it up to keep you guessing.

And you're going to be sentenced. You enter your plea. You're guilty as charged. What's the sentence? Death, “**...for the wages of sin is death.**”

That's the bad news. And the badder the bad news is, the gooder the good news will be. Don't email me. I know that's not proper English. The bad news is we've all been sentenced to death because all have sinned. But the good news is “**...the gift of God [Gift of God] is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**”

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Now we're talking. Now we're getting somewhere. I acknowledge my sin. I plead guilty. And unless and until I do, I cannot have that penalty paid in my stead. And that brings us to the B, which is really central because it is simply believe in your heart that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Again, like we talked about *Romans 10:9*, “...if you believe in your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead, you will be saved.”

John 3:16: The most well-known verse in all of the Bible by all of the world. “For God so loved the world, [The people in the world] that He gave His only begotten son, that whosoever would believe in Him, [Put their trust in Him] for the forgiveness of sins will not perish but have everlasting life.”

And the C, lastly, is for simply call upon the name of the Lord. Or as *Romans 10:9* also says, “...if you confess with your mouth...” And again, we already covered that. But please understand that “...out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks,” right?

You confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord. That's just an expression of what's already in your heart. Because out of the abundance of your heart, the mouth speaks. If Jesus is in your heart, you believe in your heart Jesus is Lord, then what's going to come out of your mouth? Jesus is Lord. Because Jesus is in your heart; you believe in your heart.

Romans 10:13 just simply says — I mean, it's so — it's too simple sometimes, I think. I mean, this stand-alone could just seal the whole deal. “All who call upon the name of the Lord will be saved.”

What's the catch? There's no catch. That's all? Yeah, all who call. It's that simple? Yeah. You mean, there's not — what, what, wait, wait. Where the fine print? What do I have to do? Nothing. He did it all. Nothing. It is finished, period, not comma. And aren't you glad? Could you imagine? It is finished. However... Oh, that puts an “if” on it.

Again, we're going to talk about this Second Service. One of the most disastrous and destructive demonic lies from the devil himself, concerning the assurance of our salvation by grace through faith in Christ, period. It's the gift of God. It's not of works lest anyone should boast. I implore you today if you're in this service or watching online. We do these ABCs every week, as you know.

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But please. If you've never called upon the name of the Lord, confessing with your mouth, out of the abundance of your heart, believing in your heart that Jesus Christ is Lord and that God raised Him from the dead, please, I implore you, do not delay the most important decision of your life for eternal life.

Things are getting crazy. You know that saying, “you ain't seen nothing yet.” You ain't seen nothing yet. Why would you want to put off the most important decision of your life for eternal life? I plead with you. Today is the day of your salvation. Do not delay.

I have a very short “But God Testimony” today that was kind of moving. It comes from Carol Wise who writes, “Dear Pastor JD. Just finished watching your discussion with Dr. Chris. Thank you so much. It confirmed what a friend had been telling me. Unfortunately, I didn't believe her and went ahead to get three vaccinations. But God is in charge of me and my life. He's in control. If He allows death...”

I want you to listen to what she writes here because this is akin to Esther who says, “**...if I perish or perish,**” going uninvited to the king. It's, akin to Job who would say, “**...though He slay me yet will I praise Him.**” Yet will I trust Him. O would to God that those would be uttered from our lips.

Well, that's what she says. And she ends with, “...if He allows death, I will go to be with Him. Either way, I will love and praise Him. Carol wise, an online congregant.”

David, come on up. Why don't you stand up? You know, if we really, truly — and I'll speak for myself — lived our lives like this with a very, very light touch on this world and the things of this world, do you know what peace will ensue? The peace that comes from a surrendered life. Here am I, Lord. Do with me as You please. My life is in Your hands, the day of my birth, the day of my death, and everything in between. It's in Your hands. You knew me before I was formed in my mother's womb. And You know that day when that time comes when You're through with me.

If I'm ushered home before the rapture — actually, I'm gonna just lastly share something that I shared on Thursday night that Pastor Chuck, before he went home to be with the Lord, said one time. He said, “If I'm up here in the pulpit and I just like drop dead of a heart attack, don't you bring me back.”

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[Laughter]

No. For real. For me to live is Christ. To die is gain. That's the only way to live. That's not just the best way to live our Christian lives. That's the only way to live our Christian lives, in complete surrender to Him.

Father, thank You. Thank You for Carol's "But God Testimony." And Lord, we would ask that You would protect Her and not pay her as these three injections deserve. With all the people that are getting sick and even dying from them, Lord, keep her, heal her. Keep all of us for the rapture when that trumpet sounds.

Oh, what a day it'll be. Lord, thank You that for us is not going to be a surprise. But it's just going to be the culmination of a life lived for You. So that we hear those words from You that we all long to hear, "**Well done, good and faithful servant.**" Amen. Oh, Jesus, we love You so much. Jesus, come quickly please. We pray. Maranatha! In Jesus' name, Amen.