

Birth Pains of the End Times? Floods, Quakes and Spiritual Collapse

From catastrophic floods in Texas to escalating earthquakes across the Pacific Rim, the world is shaking, both physically and spiritually. What many write off as environmental chaos or coincidence, others are beginning to see as part of a larger pattern prophesied in Scripture. These events may not simply be natural occurrences, but [prophetic signals that align with biblical warnings](#) about the end of the age.

In recent months, the frequency and severity of disasters have intensified.

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Texas faced unprecedented flash flooding, submerging entire neighborhoods and costing many their lives.

Simultaneously, wildfires ravaged the Grand Canyon and parts of California were set ablaze earlier in the year, turning historic landmarks to ash and entire communities to rubble.



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At the same time, seismic activity has spiked with hundreds of earthquakes reported beneath Mount Rainier and more than 1,300 recorded in Japan's Tokara Islands in one week alone. Volcanic eruptions in Ecuador and Indonesia only add to the sense that creation itself is groaning, just as Romans 8 describes.

But these signs aren't limited to the natural realm.

Spiritually, the global church is being tested as deception spreads and foundational truths are increasingly replaced with popular opinion.

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Biblical teachings on sin, repentance and holiness are being sidelined by messages centered on comfort and self-affirmation. Scripture warns of a time when sound doctrine will be abandoned, and many will be drawn to false teachers. This spiritual drift appears to be preparing the way for the rise of the false prophet and the global deception prophesied in Revelation 13.

Meanwhile, advances in technology and artificial intelligence are building a digital infrastructure that mirrors the beast system described in end-times prophecy, centralized, controlling and global in scope.

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As these events unfold with increasing urgency, the call to biblical discernment has never been more critical. Followers of Jesus are commanded not only to [be aware of the times](#), but to stay grounded in the truth of God's Word. While the world reels in chaos, believers are reminded that the final chapter has already been written, Jesus is returning and His Kingdom will reign.

James Lasher is staff writer for Charisma Media.

Is Zionism Biblical? Prophecy Watchers Unpack the Debate

As headlines about Israel continue to dominate the news, many believers are asking deeper questions: [What role does modern Israel play in God's plan?](#) Is Zionism rooted in Scripture, or is it a political movement disconnected from biblical truth?

In a recent episode of The Week in Bible Prophecy, Prophecy Watchers hosts Gary Stearman and Mondo Gonzales tackled these very questions, offering thoughtful insight for Christians who support Israel and long to understand its prophetic significance.

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The hosts began by unpacking the term “Zion,” a word deeply woven throughout the Bible as a symbol of God’s presence, His promises and His people. They pointed to moments like Solomon’s temple dedication as a high point in Israel’s spiritual history, when Zion represented the glory of God in Jerusalem. That symbolism, they explained, continues to hold spiritual weight today, especially as the Jewish people have returned to the land after nearly 2,000 years of exile.

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Stearman and Gonzales acknowledged two major extremes in the Church: one that dismisses Israel’s current role entirely, and another that supports it blindly without biblical context.

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They walked through the history of Zionism, clarifying that while early political Zionism wasn't religious in nature, Christian Zionism sees the Jewish return as fulfillment of God's prophetic word.

Perhaps most importantly, they reminded viewers that [God's covenant with Israel remains intact](#), not because the people are perfect, but because God is faithful.

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For those who want to hear more from Gary and Mondo on this compelling topic, watch the full video above.

James Lasher is staff writer for Charisma Media.

Russell Brand Opens Up About Addiction, Trials and the God-Shaped Void

Comedian and actor Russell Brand is no stranger to controversy, but in a recent conversation with former MMA fighter Bas Rutten, Brand peeled back the curtain on the deeper spiritual truths behind his past battles with addiction, and [how God used his lowest moments as a catalyst for transformation](#).

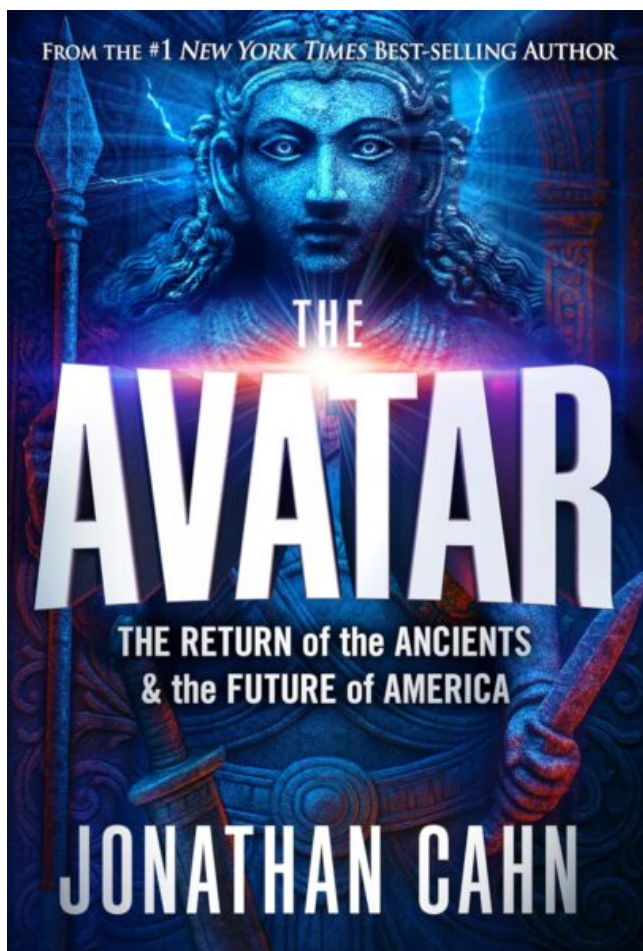
"Addiction is the soul's attempt to make the material feel holy, to fill a God-shaped void with pleasure, fame, or chemicals," Brand said in a clip he posted to X. For him, addiction wasn't merely about escapism. It was a symptom of a spiritual hunger, a longing for something eternal, something

sacred.

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This hunger for the holy, Brand explained, often drives people toward idols that ultimately fail them. “Sex can’t give it to you. Fame can’t give it to you. Money can’t give it to you,” he said. “So in the end, you have to introduce chemicals which can at least alter your state.” But even those could not satisfy the soul.

Scripture echoes this deeply human struggle. In James 1:2-4, believers are told to “count it all joy... when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.” Rather than viewing suffering as abandonment, the Bible reveals that trials are often a refining fire—an invitation to return to the One who alone can satisfy.



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Brand described how, after he gave up resisting God and could no longer outrun his emptiness, he descended into a spiritual crisis. "After [the] fighting ended, I spiraled. The devil attacked me, but God allowed it, because rock bottom wasn't the end; [it was the path back to Him.](#)"

That single line encapsulates a profound biblical truth: God doesn't waste our suffering. In fact, Romans 8:28 reminds us that "for those who love God all things work together for good."

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For Brand, the process of healing didn't begin with numbing the pain—it began with facing it and recognizing its spiritual cause. "Addiction is an attempt to sanctify and make spiritual the material," he said. "That our thirst for God and our hunger for the holy is so strong that you have to have God."

These confessions are not just about Brand's personal recovery. They are reminders of a greater truth: even in our darkest moments, God is present and working. Isaiah 43:2 promises, "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you... when you walk through the fire, you will not be burned."

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No matter how deep the pit, the gospel assures us there's no place too far for God's grace to reach. Whether you're struggling with addiction, depression, or simply searching for meaning, Brand's testimony, and Scripture itself, makes one thing clear: rock bottom may just be the beginning of redemption.

As Brand discovered, “You have to have God.” Nothing else will do.

James Lasher is staff writer for Charisma Media.

Israel Strikes Damascus: Are We Seeing Prophecy Begin to Unfold?

The images and headlines coming out of Syria this week are sobering. For the first time in a long time, Israel carried out a direct airstrike in the heart of Damascus, hitting the Syrian Defense Ministry headquarters. It’s the kind of development that, for those who read and study the Bible, makes you stop and pay attention.

Is this the beginning of something prophetically significant? We don’t know yet. But Scripture tells us to watch, to stay alert and to understand the times we’re living in.

A Strike That Got the World’s Attention

According to a report from the Associated Press, “The Israeli military launched Wednesday a rare airstrike in the heart of Damascus, hitting the Syrian Defense Ministry headquarters.” This came just hours after a drone strike on the same location. Syrian state media confirmed there were casualties but gave no details.

The strike didn’t happen in a vacuum. Clashes have been erupting for days in the southern Syrian city of Sweida between government troops and Druze militias. In response,

Israel launched multiple strikes on Syrian government targets, saying the actions were in defense of the Druze minority.

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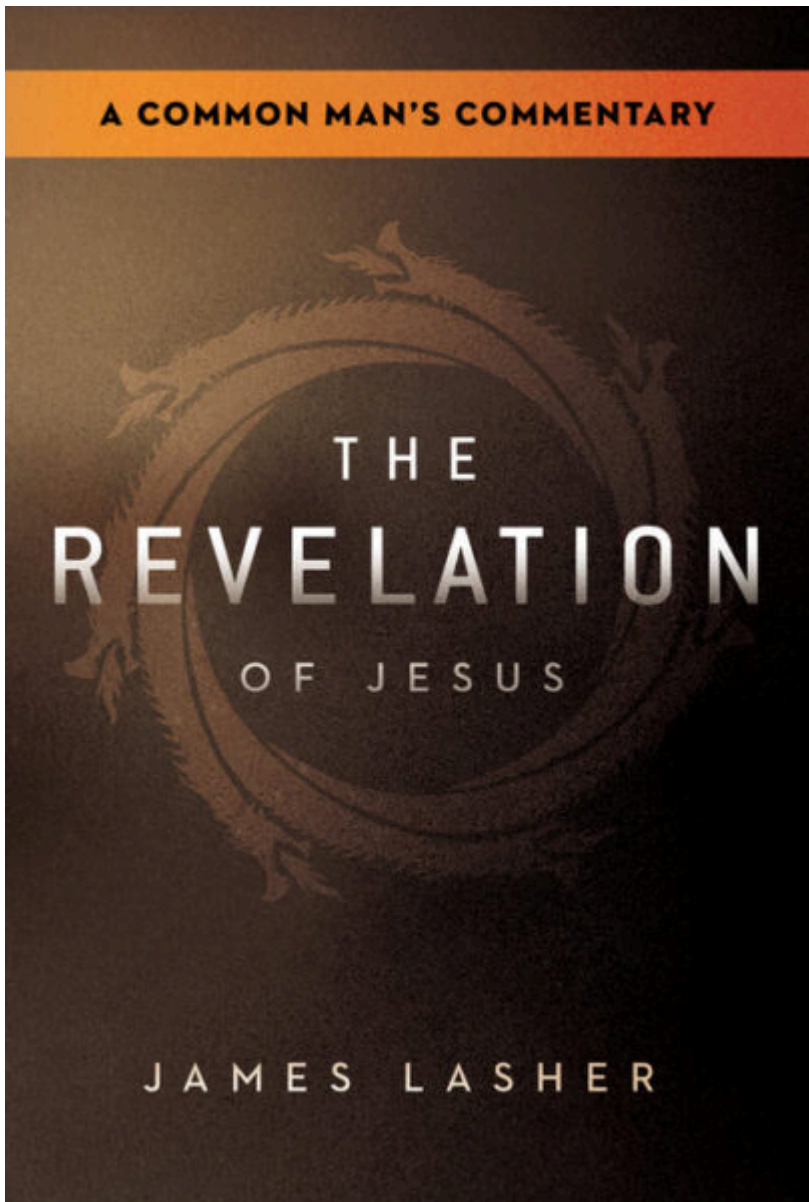
Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz posted on social media that, "The painful blows have begun." And Prime Minister Netanyahu followed with a statement emphasizing Israel's intent to keep the region near its border demilitarized, along with a commitment to protect Druze communities.

These are not hollow words. Israel has reinforced troops along its northern border and has made clear it will continue escalating if needed.

What Does the Bible Say About Damascus?

Hearing about attacks on Damascus instantly brings to mind the ancient words of the prophet Isaiah. In chapter 17 of his book, Isaiah tells of a time when Damascus will be reduced to ruins, no longer a functioning city, but a desolate heap.

That prophecy has fascinated and unsettled students of Scripture for centuries. While Damascus has suffered many wars, including during the Syrian civil war, it has never been completely destroyed in the way Isaiah describes. It remains one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities on earth.



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So when we see headlines about Israeli missiles striking the core of Damascus, it naturally raises the question: Could this be the beginning of what Isaiah saw?

We can't say for sure. And it's wise to avoid sensationalism or trying to force current events into prophetic timelines. But it's just as unwise to ignore them altogether. This is a moment that calls for spiritual discernment.

Why This Matters Spiritually

Jesus told His disciples to be alert, to watch for signs and not be caught off guard. In Matthew 24, He described wars, unrest, and upheaval as the beginning of birth pains leading up to His return. What's happening in Damascus may not be the final fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy, but it could be part of a larger unfolding picture in the Middle East.

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And let's be honest: the pace of world events has been accelerating. Global instability, rising anti-Israel sentiment, the realignment of nations and now direct strikes in Damascus, all of it reminds us that we're living in days where prophecy and headlines are beginning to echo one another more frequently.

Stay Awake and Rooted in the Word

If you've been paying attention to what's happening in the world and feel a sense that things aren't just "business as usual," you're not alone. Many believers are feeling that same nudge, that now is the time to press into the Word of God like never before.

These aren't the days to be lukewarm or distracted. They're days to open your Bible, study the prophets, read the words of Jesus, and ask the Holy Spirit for wisdom. If you're watching the news more than you're in the Word, your understanding of what's really happening will always be incomplete.

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We don't know exactly how the situation in Damascus will play out. But we do know what Jesus said: stay alert, keep your

lamps burning, and be ready.

So let this moment stir your heart, not with fear, but with urgency. Stay rooted in Scripture. Stay sensitive to the Spirit. And above all, stay close to Jesus.

Because no matter what happens next, He's coming soon.

James Lasher *is staff writer for Charisma Media.*

Prophetic Shifts in the Middle East: Israel's War and the Echoes of Ezekiel

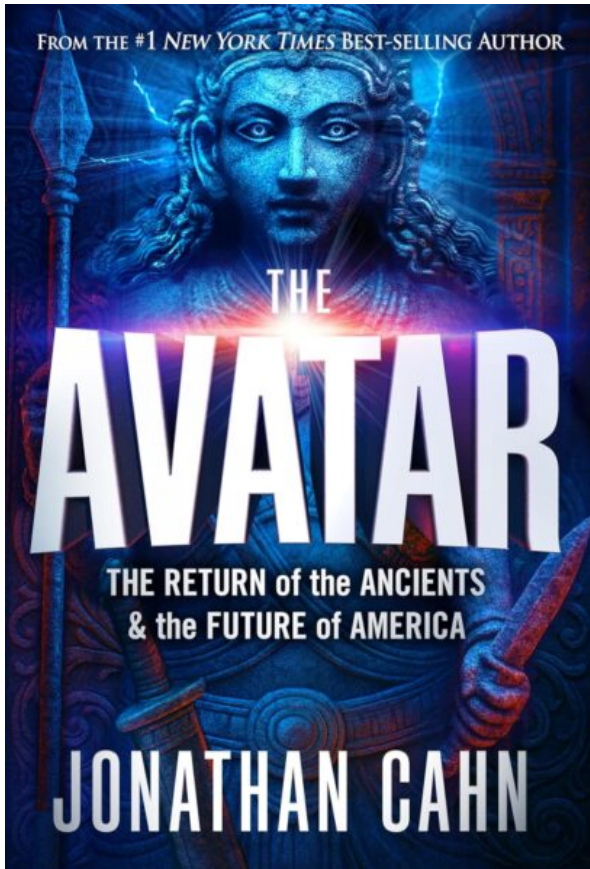
The prophetic clock in the Middle East appears to be accelerating as conflict, alliances and Scripture converge in the headlines.

In a recent episode of 700 Club Israel, Gordon Robertson and CBN Jerusalem bureau chief Chris Mitchell discussed how unfolding [events in Israel align with biblical prophecy](#), particularly the war launched by Iran and the spiritual significance of Numbers 23.

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"We are going through tumultuous, historic and biblical changes right now in the whole Middle East," Mitchell said. "You look back to October 7, the worst day in Israel's history since the Holocaust ... we are seeing not only a geopolitical shift, but a biblical shift of all the nations in the region."

The episode highlighted Israel's response to Iran's recent missile barrage, which was named Operation Rising Lion, based on Numbers 23:24: "A people rises like a lioness and lifts itself up like a lion." Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu publicly referenced the verse, using it as a spiritual battle cry tied to Israel's divine destiny.



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Mitchell emphasized that [these connections are more than coincidence.](#) "So many times that portion of the week just equates to what's happening geopolitically in the region," he said, referring to the week's Torah portion that included the story of Balaam's failed attempt to curse Israel. "You really can't understand the Middle East until you look at it from a biblical perspective."

The conversation also turned to the growing interest in whether Israel is heading toward a season of temporary peace, possibly setting the stage for greater prophetic fulfillment.

“Are we on the cusp of a new expanded Abraham Accords with Saudi Arabia coming in?” Mitchell asked. “Is this the peace that some people look to preceding the Ezekiel 37–38 war? That’s what many people are asking.”

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While some observers see signs of peace emerging, both Robertson and Mitchell pointed to the prophetic significance of regional instability. “Israel’s never been at peace in its entire history,” Robertson said. “There’s always been a declaration of war that has stood against them since 1948.”

Despite increasing international pressure and media hostility toward Israel, Robertson reflected on the biblical parallel with Balaam. “He was meant to curse Israel,” he said. “And we see that right now in the media. We see they’re cursing Israel, misinforming about Israel, accusing Israel, intentionally lying about it.”

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As the world watches the Middle East intensify with conflict and diplomacy, Mitchell concluded that believers must discern the times. “God’s purposes will unfold throughout all this,” he said, urging Christians to view these events through a prophetic lens and pray for Israel’s peace and destiny.

James Lasher is staff writer for Charisma Media.

Pastor Defies Opposition With Baptisms, Sparks National Movement for Children

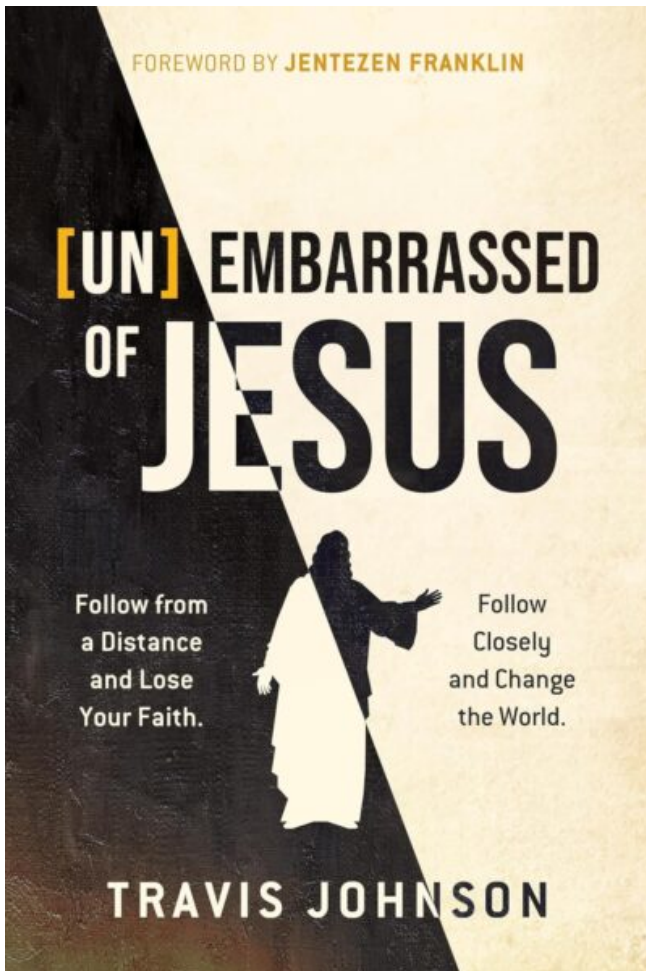
Pastor Travis Johnson shared his remarkable testimony of courage and spiritual breakthrough during a Daystar interview, recounting a 2007 encounter that transformed both his ministry and community.

While baptizing new believers at a Miami-Dade beach, officials shut down the event, calling it “offensive.” Johnson remembered being told by the parks director, “You have to come in before 5 a.m. to do baptisms.” Undeterred, he responded, “We’ll cooperate... but we’re going to have another baptism on this date. If you arrest us, I’ll cooperate. I’ll tell the whole church: OK everybody in the cop car.”

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Officials never showed, and a year later, one of the same lifeguards who tried to stop them got baptized in those same waters.

From that bold act of faith, God continued to move in surprising ways.



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Johnson shared how a small group in his church rallied to help a Coast Guard family adopt a little girl from Ethiopia. One member suggested selling Christmas trees to raise funds, and the Buy A Tree, Change A Life, initiative was born.

"We gave 100% of that money away," Johnson said. "God just blessed that... I think He said, 'Yeah, I can pour some gasoline on that fire.'" What began as a local fundraiser became a national movement now active in churches across the country, raising nearly \$13 million to support children both globally and locally.

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Reflecting on the journey, Johnson encouraged viewers not to wait for qualifications before stepping into their calling.

“God is looking for people who are available,” he said. “You don’t know how to do it, then you do it, then you know how to do it.”

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His story is a call to bold obedience and a reminder that what looks like a giant may actually be “your next platform.”

To view the full interview with Pastor Johnson, watch the video above.

James Lasher is staff writer for Charisma Media.

4 Keys to Spiritual Discernment Every Believer Needs

Spiritual discernment is essential in a time when believers are constantly bombarded with conflicting voices, cultural pressure and personal uncertainty. Many Christians find themselves worn down—not from disobedience, but from operating outside of God’s appointed timing. That was the central theme of Pastor Mike Signorelli’s recent message at V1 Church, where he introduced a biblical strategy [to help believers align with God’s rhythm](#) for their lives.

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“Discernment should be developed internally before it’s distributed externally,” Signorelli said. “You got people who want to distribute more discernment externally than they want to develop internally.”

Preaching from Ecclesiastes 3 and Luke 12, Signorelli unveiled a four-part framework called D.O.S.E. to help Christians move forward with clarity, faith and intentional obedience.

- **D – Discern the Season You’re In**

“Could it be that you’re not burned out because you’re doing the wrong things? It’s that you’re doing the wrong things in the wrong season.”

Signorelli emphasized the difference between doing what is right and doing it in the right season. He taught from Ecclesiastes 3:1, explaining that the Hebrew word *zeman* means “appointed time,” not “suggested time.” Discerning this timing is critical to avoiding spiritual burnout and aligning with God’s will.

- **O – Observe and Fully Embrace Today**

“Today is all we’ve got. That’s why it’s called a present—because today is a gift.”

Signorelli encouraged the congregation to stop living in the regret of yesterday or the fear of tomorrow. Instead, they should engage fully with the responsibilities and blessings of today, trusting that God’s grace is sufficient for the moment.

- **S – Stay Faithful in the Small Things**

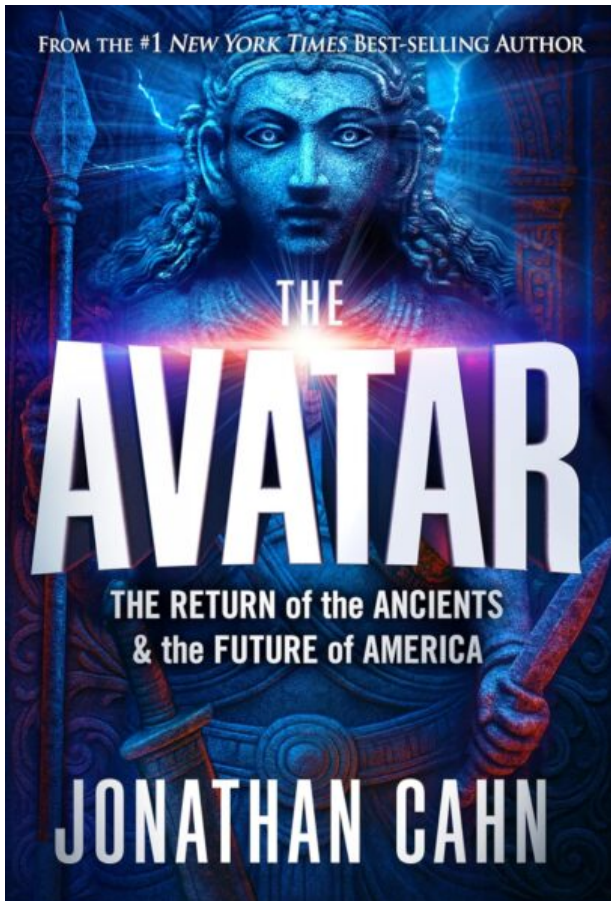
“Faithfulness in what seems insignificant leads to greater stewardship later.”

He reminded believers that obedience in obscurity prepares them for influence in visibility. Even unnoticed acts of faithfulness are seeds that bear fruit in God’s timing.

- **E – Execute with Consistency and Intentionality**

“Life is not about doing it all. It’s about doing the right thing in the right time.”

Signorelli warned that delay, often caused by fear or insecurity, leads to wandering. He urged the church to act with purpose, encouraging them to “stand up, sign up, and show up.”



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Pastor Signorelli challenged every believer to seek the Lord in prayer and sit in His presence for five minutes each day to ask, “What season am I in?” He encouraged journaling the response and sharing it with a trusted friend for accountability.

“Most of your discouragement is you not being in agreement with what God appointed for right now,” he said.

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Spiritual discernment isn't reserved for the elite, it's a daily practice of surrender. As Signorelli put it, "When you align with the rhythm of grace, [the rhythm of discernment](#), then you'll find rest. You'll find purpose. You'll find fruitfulness."

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Let this be a season marked not by suggestion, but by divine appointment. Pursue the Lord with everything, and let discernment lead you into your next breakthrough.

James Lasher is staff writer for Charisma Media.

Beware the Rise of False Messiahs: From 'Jesus of Siberia' to the Modern Mahdi

A chilling story out of Russia is again reminding the global church of Jesus' warning in Matthew 24:24—"For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect."

Sergei Torop, a former traffic officer turned cult leader [who claimed to be the reincarnation of Jesus](#), has been sentenced to 12 years in prison for psychologically and physically harming his followers. Known as "Vissarion," Torop founded the "Church of the Last Testament" in 1991, establishing isolated settlements in Siberia where nearly 300 people lived under his strict rule.

What began as a post-Soviet spiritual search quickly spiraled

into a dangerous cult marked by authoritarian control, financial exploitation and psychological manipulation.

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Russian authorities found that Torop and his associates caused serious harm to numerous individuals, including minors, while defrauding the regional government of over \$60,000. Followers were lured by promises of divine truth but instead became enslaved to a man who set himself up as “the living word of God.”

Torop’s story is not unique. Across history and into the present day, charismatic individuals have claimed messianic or prophetic status, preying on the spiritually hungry and desperate.

In fact, another recent example comes from a two-part video series by Christian author L.A. Marzulli, who interviewed [a man claiming to be the Mahdi](#)—a prophesied Islamic savior figure. This modern claimant denies being Jesus but claims to be His messenger, asserting that he carries the “Holy Spirit” of God and should be followed as the divinely appointed “caliph” of our age. He claims to unite all faiths and bring peace, yet his teachings twist Scripture, deny the divinity and resurrection of Christ, and reinterpret prophecy to elevate himself.

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Both Torop and the self-proclaimed Mahdi reflect the same underlying spiritual deception—individuals setting themselves up as saviors, speaking in divine authority and gathering disciples by claiming hidden knowledge and mystical experience. Scripture is clear: “Do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God” (1 John 4:1). Sadly, many are drawn to these figures during times of upheaval, when truth feels elusive and hope scarce.

This is a pattern that has repeated throughout history. From Simon Bar Kokhba to Sabbatai Zevi, false messiahs have appeared in times of crisis, offering counterfeit hope. They promise peace but bring confusion. They claim revelation but contradict the Word of God. And they demand loyalty to themselves rather than pointing people to the true and risen Christ.

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As the church navigates this age of deception, several biblical truths must anchor our discernment:

- **Test every claim by Scripture:** No new revelation should override the Word of God.
- **Reject anyone who denies Christ's finished work:** Any teaching that diminishes the cross or Jesus' bodily resurrection is heresy.
- **Beware authoritarian control:** True Christian leadership equips others for ministry and always exalts Christ—not the leader.
- **Look for the fruit:** Jesus said, "By their fruit you will recognize them" (Matt. 7:16). Is the outcome of a ministry healing or harm?
- **Guard your heart from spiritual sensationalism:** Desperation can lead to deception if not rooted in truth.

In a time when the world longs for answers, the danger of deception increases. Christians must be watchful, discerning and rooted in the true Gospel of Jesus Christ—not swayed by dreams of unity, signs and wonders or smooth words from self-appointed messengers.

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The sentencing of “Jesus of Siberia” and the emergence of a modern Mahdi are clear reminders that not everyone who claims to speak for God actually does.

Let us be a people grounded in truth, unmoved by false claims and ever watchful for the return of the true Messiah, Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God.

James Lasher is staff writer for Charisma Media.

Deception of the Masses: The Return of Totalitarian Media Tactics

In the latest episode of Through the Lens on Hope for Our Times, Pastor Curt Reed explores how the Antichrist will rise to global power through deception, flattery and mind control.

Drawing from the book of Daniel and historical parallels to Nazi Germany, [Reed warns that “history is repeating itself”](#) as today’s media tactics mirror the propaganda strategies of the Third Reich. “He is going to corrupt by way of flattery,” Reed says, referencing Daniel 11:32. “People love flattery, right? We see that.”

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Reed draws a stark comparison between the Antichrist’s future control and the manipulation seen during global crises and political upheavals.

“The final Antichrist and his cohort, the final false prophet, are going to move in that very direction,” he said. “They will be filled with lies, with falsehood, deceiving people on a global governmental stage.”



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Citing modern programs like DARPA's Modeling Influence Pathways, Reed explains how governments are already experimenting with AI-driven media control, warning, “They have just found new ways to do the same old things.”

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For those seeking a deeper understanding of what to expect in this breakdown of end-times deception, here are five key takeaways from the video:

- The Antichrist's rise will mirror the propaganda strategies of Nazi Germany.
- Media manipulation will be central to global deception, just as it was under Goebbels.
- Modern AI and government projects like DARPA's MIP are laying the groundwork.
- False teachers and emotional manipulation are already preparing people to be deceived.
- Only those who know the Word of God will be able to [discern truth from lies.](#)

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To hear the full teaching and explore the Scriptures Pastor Reed references, watch the full video below.

James Lasher is staff writer for Charisma Media.

Palantir, PayPal and Prophecy: Pastor Connects Billionaire Peter Thiel to End-Time Signs

As technology, surveillance and global control continue to dominate headlines, many believers are asking whether today's innovations are laying the groundwork for the Antichrist.

In a recent video, Pastor Kap Chatfield addressed growing speculation around tech billionaire Peter Thiel, highlighting eerie parallels between Thiel's work and [prophetic warnings found in Scripture](#).

"Is this tech billionaire Peter Thiel the Antichrist?" Chatfield asked. "A lot of people all over the internet are asking this question, especially after this interview came out where he openly talked about transhumanism and he kind of hinted at the fact that he's not totally against the idea of depopulating the globe."

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Thiel, co-founder of PayPal and Palantir, has made public comments about the Antichrist and the rise of global surveillance. In one interview, Thiel speculated: "The Antichrist will talk about Armageddon all the time. He'll scare people then offer to save them."

Chatfield pointed to 1 Thessalonians 5:3: “For when they say, ‘Peace and safety!’ then sudden destruction comes upon them...” He suggested that while Thiel appears to be issuing warnings, it’s worth asking whether he is also contributing to the very system he seems to fear.

“Could you possibly be creating the very technology that you’re warning everybody about?” Chatfield said. “When you say, ‘Oh peace and safety, this technology is for your good,’ and then sudden destruction comes upon everybody when the surveillance state is created.”



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Palantir, the company Thiel co-founded, develops surveillance systems used by governments and law enforcement, including ICE. The company’s name is derived from the “Palantír,” a mystical seeing orb used by evil forces in The Lord of the Rings. Chatfield questioned the symbolism: “Is it just poetic? [Or is there a spirit behind what they’re doing](#) that they might

not even be aware of?”

He also referenced Daniel 11:37, which says the Antichrist will “regard neither the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women.” Thiel was raised Lutheran and is in a same-sex marriage. “He hasn’t publicly professed his faith and he’s also living a godless lifestyle,” Chatfield said. “So is he a guy who doesn’t regard the God of his fathers?”

Despite these concerns, Chatfield urged viewers not to attack or condemn Thiel but to pray for him. “People like this are people that Jesus paid a high price for on the cross,” he said.

Rather than stir fear, Chatfield said his purpose is to equip believers to respond biblically to the times. He laid out five key biblical responses to help Christians remain spiritually grounded and alert.

5 Biblical Responses to the End Times

1. Be Discerning and Not Deceived

“Stop scrolling more on social media than you’re spending time in the word of God and in prayer and in the house of God,” Chatfield said. Citing 2 Thessalonians 2:3, he emphasized the need to stay rooted in Scripture: “Let no one deceive you by any means, for that day will not come unless the falling away comes first and the man of sin is revealed...”



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2. Stay Filled with the Holy Spirit

Chatfield explained that the Holy Spirit is currently restraining the rise of lawlessness in the world. “The Holy Spirit of God, the third person of the Godhead in the church, the people of God is what is restraining the full rise of

evil,” he said, referencing 2 Thessalonians 2:7.

3. Live Holy and Ready

“We gotta live holy and ready,” Chatfield urged. Referencing 1 John 3:3 and Matthew 25:6, he added: “Behold, the bridegroom is coming... Go out to meet him.” He warned viewers not to delay obedience or take sin lightly.

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4. Focus on the Mission, Not the Mayhem

Pointing to Luke 19:13, Chatfield encouraged Christians to stay mission-minded: “Do business till I come.” He challenged believers to stay active in the work of the gospel. “Get off your butt. Stop scrolling. Go to church. Go to your job. Make disciples. Preach the gospel. Lay hands on the sick. Cast out devils. Raise the dead.”

5. Look for Jesus, Not Just the Beast

“My challenge to you is to look for Jesus. Don’t look for the beast,” Chatfield said, quoting Titus 2:13: “Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.” He reminded viewers that prophecy is meant to prepare, not to paralyze.

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“He’s not telling us this stuff to scare us,” Chatfield concluded, “but to prepare us.”

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