

Terminal Threat: Israel, Turkey and the Prophetic Struggle Over Damascus

For those of us watching the Middle East with biblical lenses, the unfolding events are not simply political maneuvers but prophetic signposts. The Bible repeatedly warns that in the last days nations will rage against Israel [and turmoil will swirl around Damascus.](#)

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Today, reports from Jerusalem confirm that what the prophets spoke of is lining up before our very eyes.

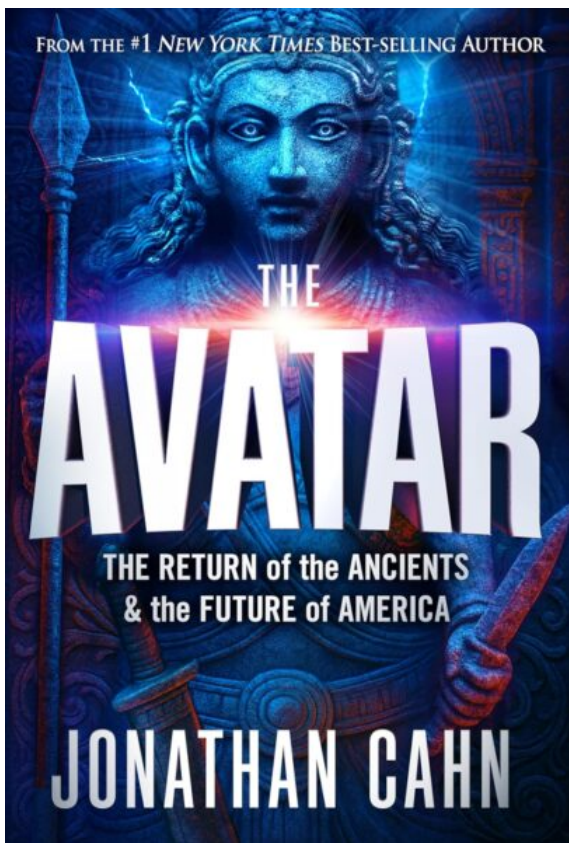
Turkey's Rising Influence in Syria

Middle East analyst Jonathan Spire highlighted the troubling role Turkey is playing in shaping the future of Damascus on a special edition of The Watchman Newscast with Erick Stakelbeck. "The victory of Hayatam and Ahmed Ashara in Damascus back in December of last year was, of course, their victory, but it was also the victory of Turkey," Spire said. He explained that the new regime "owes everything to Turkey," and with Ankara now pledging to build an airport, military, and police structure, "what you will have is a fully fledged client state of Turkey, a Sunni Islamist client state of the Islamist regime in Ankara down there in Damascus."

For Israel, the implications are chilling. As Stakelbeck noted, this means "a dangerous thing at Israel's doorstep. A regime in Turkey that is hostile to the Jewish state for sure."

Damascus and the Prophetic Pattern

The city of Damascus has always carried spiritual weight in biblical prophecy. The prophet Isaiah declared, “Damascus will cease from being a city” (Isa. 17:1). With Turkey entrenching itself, the specter of Damascus becoming a launching point for hostile Islamist forces against Israel brings that prophecy into sharper focus. Spire warned that despite Western optimism, “this is not the first time that we have had the experience of Sunni Islamists in government ... and up until now, we have a 100% rate of complete catastrophe as a result of that.”



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From Egypt's brief Muslim Brotherhood rule to Hamas in Gaza and ISIS in Iraq and Syria, the pattern has always ended in destruction and violence. Yet, as Spire added, “some people in the West think, ‘No, no, this time it's all going to be different.’ Well, I have news for them. It generally isn't

going to be all that different.”

Israel’s Vigilance and Iran’s Weakness

Israel, aware of what is taking shape across its northern border, has already mobilized. Stakelbeck explained that Israel “has acted militarily recently, just as recently as July, to prevent Shah’s new Syrian army from coming down there into Swayda province.” These moves show a determination to keep hostile forces from pressing too close.

At the same time, Iran, long the patron of chaos in the region, has been weakened. “The Iranian regime is in a very low point domestically,” Spire said, citing widespread shortages in water and electricity. Still, he warned that “Iran is determined to begin the long process of rebuilding both its own military capacities and indeed the capacities of its proxies. It wants to get back in the game.”

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A Global Spiritual Picture

Chris Mitchell of CBN News added a sobering reminder about the spiritual battle at the heart of all this. “After Oct. 7th when the world is turning against the Jewish people, the world is turning against Israel, when lies are being told, when deception is really spreading globally ... anti-Semitism has just exploded globally. So totally irrational.”

What Scripture prophesied is unfolding, nations aligning, Israel standing alone and [the city of Damascus becoming a flashpoint once again.](#)

A Call to Prayer and Readiness

As Christians look at these events, the call is not to fear but to discern and act. Jesus said when these things begin to happen, “look up, for your redemption draws near” (Luke 21:28). Now is the time to pray for Jerusalem, stand with Israel and prepare our hearts.

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May believers everywhere commit themselves to prayer, discernment and action—becoming true watchmen on the wall, preparing the way of the Lord as the days of fulfillment draw ever closer.

James Lasher is staff writer for Charisma Media.

End-Times Prophecy: Why Hatred and Division Are Signs of the Last Days

As wars, disasters and rumors of global turmoil continue to capture attention, [another sign of the end times is quietly spreading](#), one that targets the very heart of the church. Scripture warns that in the last days, hatred and accusation will rise, even among believers, threatening unity and peace within the body of Christ. This spiritual climate of division, fueled by judgment and anger, may prove to be one of the most destructive forces Christians will face.

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Rabbi Kirt Schneider, in a recent message shared on Daystar, called attention to this overlooked aspect of prophecy. “In addition to the wars and the rumors of wars and the earthquakes and the natural disasters and the plagues, there’s something else that Jesus spoke of in relationship to the last days,” he said. “And he spoke, friends, about the spirit of hatred and accusation in Matthew 24 and Luke 21, even about Christians turning on Christians.”

A Neglected Sign of the Last Days

According to Schneider, this spirit is not theoretical but already active in the church. “Satan has come to steal and kill and destroy,” he explained. “What’s the end result of hatred? Does hatred produce life? Does accusation bring life about?”

Personal Struggles With Judgment

Schneider acknowledged his own struggles with these spiritual battles. “Here I am walking with the Lord now close to 45 years, and I still deal with the spirit of accusation and hatred in my own heart, even with those closest to me. You get frustrated, we all do, and I have to check my heart.”

He shared how he responds in those moments: “Whenever there’s something that comes up in my heart, frustration or anger or accusation or hatred, you know what I do? I lift it up to the Lord. I say, ‘Lord deliver me from this. Cleanse me of this. This isn’t of You.’”

Preparing Hearts, Not Debating Charts

Schneider cautioned believers against reducing prophecy to debates and timelines. “So many of us are focused on the time charts, when will the Rapture come, pre-trib, post-trib, mid-trib, and we even argue with everybody about our point of view,” he said. “But yet at the same time that we’re talking about all these things out there, we don’t recognize the deception that’s going on in our own heart when we’re not treating our own husband or wife or neighbor rightly.”

Instead, he urged Christians to remember the true purpose of prophecy: readiness. “The purpose of knowing about the end times isn’t so that we can argue with people to prove that our end time theology is right,” he said. “Jesus taught us about the end times so we could get ready to meet Him.”

Living With Urgency and Love

Pointing to Israel’s rebirth in 1948 as a prophetic milestone, Schneider said believers must live as though Christ could return at any moment. “We are living, beloved, in a time of great expectation that we have not seen the likes of since the apostles were on earth,” he said. “The truth is we don’t know the day of His return, it could be at any moment.”

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That reality, he added, should drive Christians to daily self-examination: “It’s not what did somebody else do wrong; it’s how did I mishandle that situation? Jesus didn’t come into the world to judge the world but to save the world. There is no condemnation for those that are in Christ Jesus. Don’t be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

A Call to Unity

[The antidote to the spirit of hatred](#) is love and humility. “Blessed are the peacemakers, Jesus said,” Schneider reminded. “We need to come together. Jesus said to the church, ‘All men will know you by your love.’ We’re all part of the same body, members one of another. So I want to encourage you today, if you need to, say, ‘Father God, attune my heart to Jesus’ heart. Let me walk in You, in unity, in love, and in grace for all men.’”

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Schneider’s message is both a warning and a call to transformation. He continued, “Love is a bridge builder ... let’s walk in peace, beloved.”

James Lasher is staff writer for Charisma Media.

Demonic: Transgender Minneapolis Shooter Exposes the Spiritual Warfare in America

A transgender gunman who carried out [a deadly attack at a Catholic school in Minneapolis](#) left behind a manifesto filled with antisemitic hate, Holocaust references and messages directly targeting Jesus Christ – evidence of a spiritual darkness fueling such violence.

Authorities identified the shooter as 23-year-old Robin Westman, who killed two children and wounded 17 others before dying of a self-inflicted gunshot wound. The FBI has classified the massacre as domestic terrorism and a hate crime against Catholics.



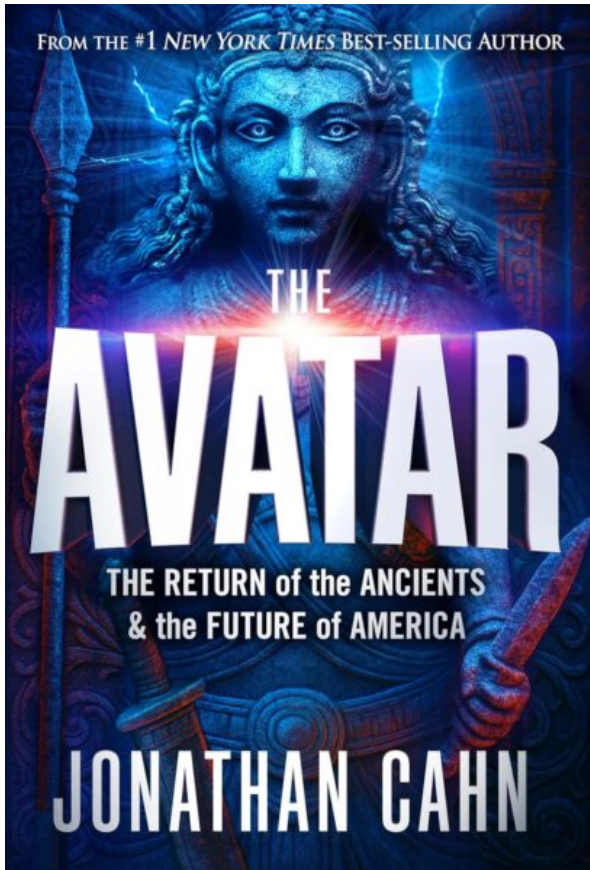
Transgender shooter Robin Westman

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In journals translated from Cyrillic script, Westman wrote that [if he carried out a racially motivated attack](#), it would be “against filthy Zionist Jews.” He scrawled “6 million wasn’t enough” on ammunition magazines, while another bore the words “Destroy HIAS,” naming a Jewish refugee aid group. A firearm was marked with “Israel must fall, release the files.”



Video later recovered from a deleted YouTube channel showed a diagram of a church stabbed with a knife and a cardboard target with an image of Christ taped to the head. One magazine was emblazoned with the phrase, "Where is your God?"



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[For Pastor Greg Locke,](#) the demons behind the shooter's writings reflect a spirit that has fueled antisemitism for generations.

"Although it is politically driven and media-driven, I think it's a deep spiritual issue," Locke said in a recent podcast addressing antisemitism. "I would say it's very demonic because it's the same spirit that's been around since, you know, Pharaoh trying to eradicate the Jews, Haman trying to eradicate the Jews, Nebuchadnezzar trying to eradicate the Jews, Hitler. It's the same spirit. It's just upon a different person in a different generation."



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He added that the deception at the heart of antisemitism contradicts the witness of Scripture. "Oh, everything wrong in the world is a Jew's fault. It's Israel's fault. And so people just say that with no facts whatsoever. And it makes them sleep better at night. They feel better and say, 'Oh yeah, that's what the world believes.' No, it's not what the world believes. And it's certainly not what the God of the Bible believes because 202 times He's called the God of Israel. He's never called the God of America. He's never called the God of Africa, the God of Iran. He's called the God of Israel. And so

to take that away from the Jewish people, I think is a heresy.”



Shooting target with Jesus' image

Westman, who had legally changed his name in 2020, wrote that he had been suicidal but wanted to take others with him. “I don't want to [do] it to spread a message. I do it to please myself. I do it because I am sick,” he wrote.

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The targeting of both Jewish people, Jesus Himself and those who follow Him in this attack illustrates that antisemitism and hatred of Christ are not simply social or political issues

but manifestations of spiritual warfare. These acts are demonic at their core because they oppose God's truth, His covenant people and His Son.

As Scripture warns, the last days will be marked by lawlessness and deception. Attacks like the one in Minneapolis reveal a growing hostility toward the things of God, but they also remind us that Jesus' return is drawing near.

James Lasher is staff writer for Charisma Media.

How the Shofar on the Temple Mount Relates to Prophecy Today

For the Jewish people, few sounds carry as much weight as the blast of the shofar. [When the ram's horn was sounded on the Temple Mount](#), it was more than just a note of tradition: it was a moment filled with history, longing and deep biblical meaning. For millennia, the shofar has symbolized God's kingship, repentance and the hope for redemption.

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Christians looking on should recognize that this moment is profoundly significant for the Jewish people. While we believe the ultimate fulfillment of God's promises is found in Jesus Christ, the shofar still speaks to the covenant God made with Israel and the prophetic future we read about in Scripture.

The Roots of the Tradition

The Temple Institute recently highlighted on Facebook the ancient reasons why the shofar is blown, drawing from the teachings of Saadia Gaon, a rabbi from the 10th century. His list of 10 explanations provides insight into why the shofar has remained such a powerful part of Jewish worship, especially around Rosh Hashanah and the Days of Awe leading up to Yom Kippur.

Here's a closer look at what those 10 reasons are and what they mean:

1. Recognizing God as King

The shofar is sounded the way trumpets once were at the crowning of earthly kings. On Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish people proclaim God as Creator and King of the universe.

2. A Call to Repentance

Its blast begins the 10 Days of Repentance, a season when people are reminded that, by turning from sin, their future can be reshaped.

3. Remembering Mount Sinai

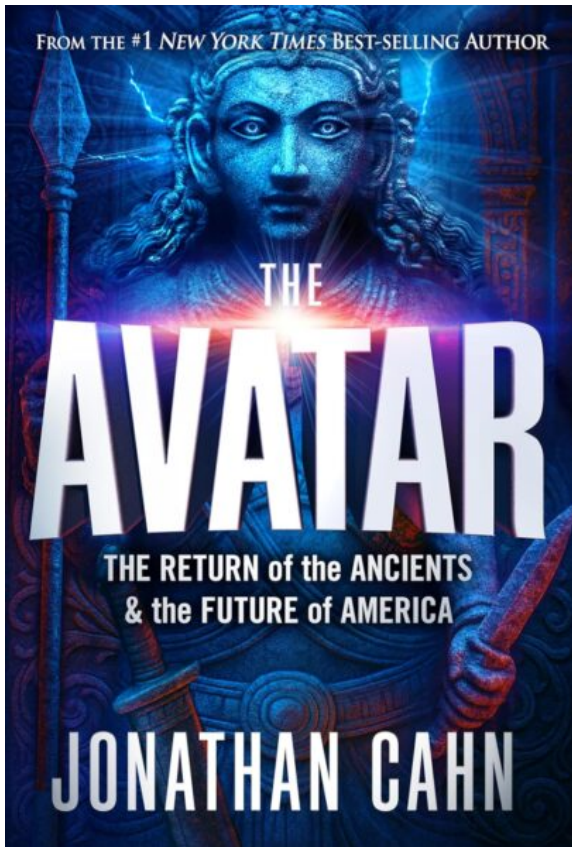
The horn recalls the thunderous sound that accompanied the giving of the Law at Sinai. It serves as a reminder that God's standards are not man-made but divine.

4. The Prophetic Call

Just as prophets called Israel to turn from sin, the shofar echoes their warnings and their hope that God seeks to refine, not simply to punish.

5. Longing for the Temple

The sound also stirs prayer for the rebuilding of the Temple, where trumpets and shofars once accompanied worship and God's presence was uniquely revealed.



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6. The Faith of Abraham

Using a ram's horn ties back to Abraham's willingness to offer Isaac. Instead, God provided a ram, showing His covenant love.

7. Stirring Awe of God

The piercing note is meant to jolt the heart, first with fear of judgment, then with reverence for God Himself.

8. Anticipating the Day of Judgment

The shofar points forward to a time when God will bring

justice to the world, inspiring hope for a restored creation and the coming Messianic age.

9. The Ingathering of Israel

It symbolizes the promised day when the scattered people of Israel will be brought back to their land in unity and strength.

10. Resurrection of the Dead

Finally, the horn reminds hearers of the future resurrection, when even death will be overturned by God's power.

The Christian Connection

As #1 New York Times best-selling author Jonathan Cahn describes in his new book *The Avatar*, "I held up a shofar, the ancient biblical trumpet, the ram's horn, before the multitude...I explained that the sound of the trumpet was the sound of freedom and a representation of the power of God."

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For believers in Jesus, [these blasts are not just part of Jewish tradition](#), they resonate with the hope we hold in Christ. Paul himself wrote that at "the last trumpet...the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (1 Cor. 15:52).

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The blast of the shofar on the Temple Mount is a living sign of God's ongoing plan for His people. It is both a reminder of God's covenant faithfulness and a foreshadowing of the day when the trumpet of God will announce the return of Christ.

James Lasher is staff writer for Charisma Media.

Operation Blessing and Regent Students Join Forces to Help Disaster Victims

The Bible teaches that serving others is central to the Christian life. Jesus Himself declared in Mark 10:45 that He came “not to be served, but to serve.” [That same spirit of compassion](#) was on display as Regent University’s incoming freshman class joined Operation Blessing for its third annual service project.

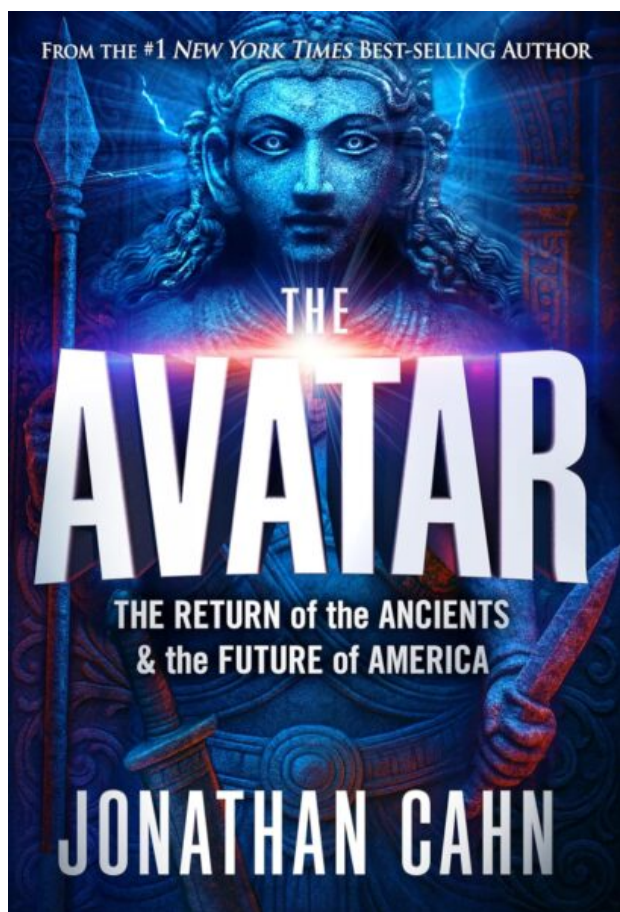
Excitement filled the air as hundreds of students packed hunger relief bags, hygiene kits and disaster relief supplies to bless those in need. “Very excited. I am very grateful to be here,” one student said as they worked alongside classmates.

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Operation Blessing and Regent University partnered to combine their missions of service and leadership. “They have a passion to raise up Christian leaders to change the world. And we have a passion to help provide help and hope to a hurting world in tangible acts of love in times of crisis,” Dan Moore of Operation Blessing explained.

Some 500 students prepared 1,100 hunger relief bags for local residents, while also assembling nearly 3,000 hygiene kits and 2,000 disaster relief kits for Operation Blessing’s response

teams. The timing was significant, as hurricane season is predicted to be active this year. “It makes a huge difference,” one staff member said. “They’re going to be packing these hygiene kits, these disaster relief kits full of cleaning supplies that will go into communities that are impacted by disasters.”



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Students said the effort not only gave them a sense of purpose but also showed them how serving can be a powerful witness. “We don’t just seek to provide physical help, but through that physical help, we can then extend spiritual help and show these people the love of Christ,” one volunteer said. Another added, “It just shows you that [your purpose is more than just yourself.](#)”

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As Regent celebrates the largest freshman class in its history, leaders noted how service is built into the school's mission. "Giving of yourself is actually the best thing you can do. And that emulates the life of Christ, which we're trying to do here as we create Christian leaders to change the world," a Regent representative said.

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Service like this echoes the heart of Christ's teaching. For believers everywhere, it is a reminder that when we lend a hand to those in need, we reflect His love to a hurting world. May we all seek opportunities to serve others in the name of Jesus.

James Lasher is staff writer for Charisma Media.

Heroic Pastor Remains in Warzone to Shepherd His Flock Amid Gunfire

Scripture tells us that "all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3:12). Around the world, [countless believers endure trials for their faith](#), standing firm in the midst of danger. In the war-torn city of El-Fasher, Sudan, one pastor is living this reality daily, embodying courage and faith under fire.

A Pastor Who Refuses to Leave

As two militias battle for control of the region, the Rev. Daramali Abudigin has chosen to remain when many others fled, reports Religion News Service. The 44-year-old priest of St. Mathew, Anglican Church of Sudan, continues to minister in a city besieged by hunger, bombs and stray bullets. "I didn't leave the church," Abudigin told Religion News Service. "In a while, I considered leaving, but I changed my mind. I am still staying with my flock. Whenever we lose a person, it makes me very sad."



Rev. Daramali Abudigin

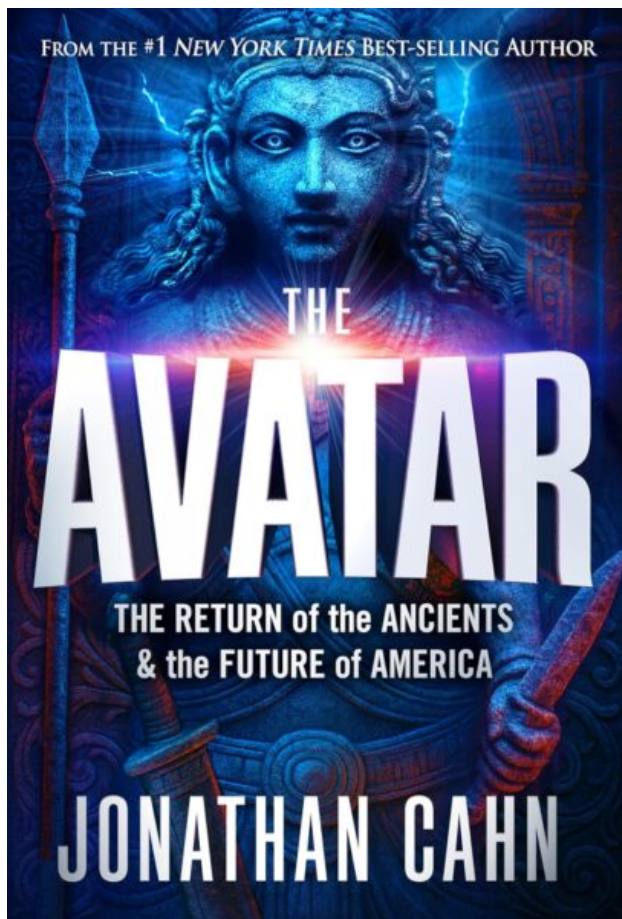
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In May, he lost five church members who were living with him after armed men randomly fired into the church compound. Despite the personal grief, Abudigin's resolve only deepened.

He lives in the city with his wife and three sons, refusing to abandon the Christians left in El-Fasher.

Standing Alone Amid Devastation

El-Fasher, the capital of North Darfur, has been under siege since April of last year. The paramilitary Rapid Support Forces have carried out relentless assaults, shelling homes, markets and refugee camps. At least 57 people were killed in one August attack, with many more dying from hunger and disease. “The bombs and the bullets strike homes,” Abudigin said. “The markets are very dangerous. [One can lose their life anywhere and any time.](#)”



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When his fellow pastor, the Rev. Luka Jomo, was struck by a stray bullet in June, Abudigin rushed him to the hospital, but it was too late. Two young men staying with him were also

killed. Even in tragedy, he continued to open the doors of his church to any who would come. "There are no other pastors in Darfur in general," he explained. "I am the only one in El-Fasher, and I usually combine worshippers in one church to save them from random bombings and shootings."

Hunger and Hardship

Beyond the gunfire, starvation is claiming lives. "Many children have malnutrition, and we are going to see many of them dying if they do not get help urgently," Abudigin said. Though food can be found in the markets, few can afford it. The priest himself struggles to survive, as what little the church sends for his upkeep is "not enough. They used to send me 200,000 Sudanese pounds (USD 330) per month, but now this cannot feed me for two days," he admitted.

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Despite his own need, Abudigin's heart is fixed on the community. "Food is urgently needed because hunger is killing people every day. As I am talking to you about hunger, we have lost a child because of it, and another two because of disease, since there are no medicines," he said.

A Call to Prayer

The Rev. Daramali Abudigin stands as a light in one of the darkest places on earth, serving God's people with courage few could imagine. His example reminds us of the early church, where believers risked everything to remain faithful.

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As brothers and sisters in Christ, we are called to remember them in prayer. Let us pray for Pastor Abudigin and all

Christians in Sudan who are enduring persecution, hunger and danger. May God grant them strength, peace and endurance, and may His comfort cover all who suffer for the sake of His name around the world.

James Lasher is staff writer for Charisma Media.

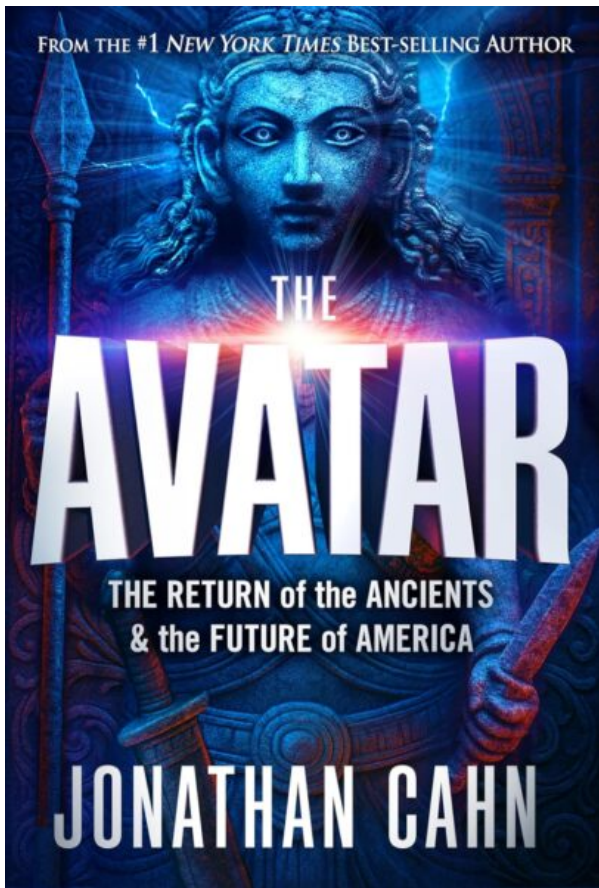
Wikipedia Co-Founder Larry Sanger Announces Plan to Convert to Christianity

Larry Sanger, the co-founder of Wikipedia, has revealed plans to convert to Christianity after spending most of his adult life as a religious skeptic.

[Sanger recently announced on X his intention](#) to “seek to be confirmed in early September into the Anglican Church of North America,” adding with humor, “I’m fairly sure they’ll let me in.”

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As reported by The Christian Post, Sanger explained his decision by describing a recent visit to an Anglican Church service: “I absolutely loved the liturgy, which I found deeply spiritual, as well as the fellowship. It helps that the liturgy is all on overhead projectors, and the acoustics are such that I could actually hear the sermon if I turned my hearing aids all the way up.”



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Sanger said he stopped believing in God as a teenager but later spent more than two decades studying Christianity on his own. After reading the Gospels in 2020, he concluded that he did believe in God and needed to “pray to God properly.”

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The 57-year-old internet pioneer also highlighted why he chose the Anglican Church of North America, noting that the denomination is “entirely consistent with my approach” because “they have been set up to be welcoming to a wide variety of Christians, while being firm on the fundamentals.”

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Once a central figure in creating the world's largest online encyclopedia, Sanger has since emerged as [one of Wikipedia's sharpest critics](#). He contends the site's neutrality policy is "dead" and pointed to its coverage of Jesus as an example of bias. "It simply asserts ... that 'the quest for the historical Jesus has yielded major uncertainty on the historical reliability of the Gospels,'" he said. "A great many Christians would take issue with such statements, which means it is not neutral for that reason."

James Lasher is staff writer for Charisma Media.

Pastor Greg Locke: Antisemitism Is a Demonic Spirit Against God's People

Israel is not just fighting a war of weapons and politics but also a war of perception and, at its deepest root, a war of the spirit. That was the central theme of Pastor Greg Locke's appearance on the Al Hamashmout ("On Meaning") podcast with Israeli host Tamir Dortal. Locke, an outspoken evangelical leader from the United States, made it clear that Christian support for Israel is not a political preference but a biblical mandate.

Islam and the Threat to the West

Locke did not mince words when it came to the threat of radical Islam. "London has fallen. Paris has fallen. I mean, places in Germany—we were just there—it's falling to Islam and America is getting very, very close," he said. "There are

places in Texas. There's places in Dearborn, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota that are nearly fully Islamic. They're trying to institute all of their Sharia law."

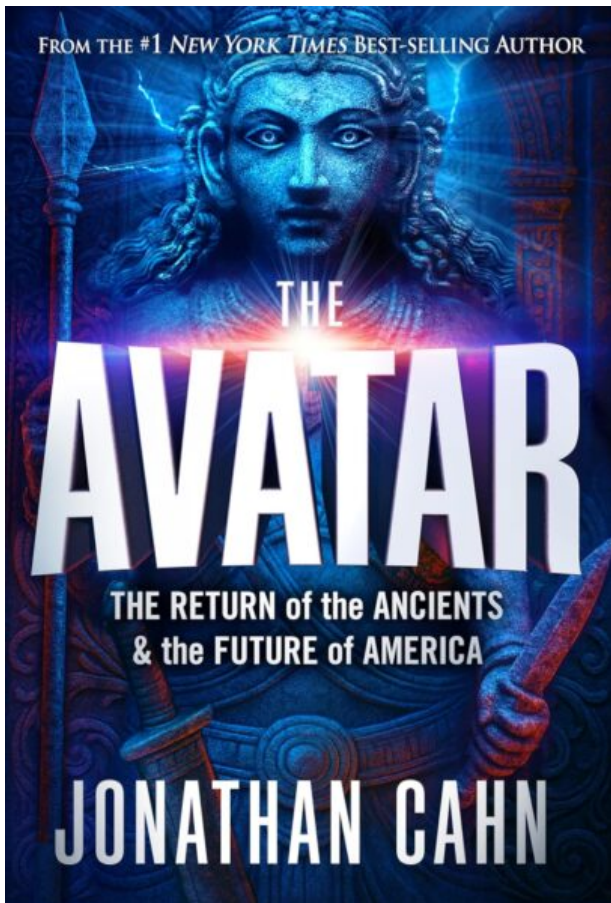
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The pastor stressed that the hostility is not hidden. "The enemy of the world is Islam 1,000%. Nowhere in the Bible does it say Abraham, Ishmael, and Jacob. It's Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," Locke said. "These people are hellbent on destroying the Jewish people and anybody that will stand with them."

Antisemitism as a Spiritual Issue

While many blame politics or propaganda for antisemitism, [Locke said its roots run deeper.](#) "Although it is politically driven and media-driven, I think it's a deep spiritual issue. I would say it's very demonic," he explained. "It's the same spirit that's been around since Pharaoh trying to eradicate the Jews, Haman trying to eradicate the Jews, Nebuchadnezzar trying to eradicate the Jews, Hitler. It's the same spirit. It's just upon a different person in a different generation."

Locke insisted that opposition to Israel is ultimately opposition to God. "He's called the God of Israel 202 times. He's never called the God of America, the God of Africa, the God of Iran. He's called the God of Israel," he said. "To take that away from the Jewish people, I think, is heresy."



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Winning the PR War

The Tennessee pastor also pointed to how social media fuels a distorted view of Israel. "Israel is not really doing well in the social media realm," Locke said. "The PR monster is really against Israel. And so many people think things are bad here and it's just constant war and danger and starvation in Gaza. That's all they hear—what I call the TikTok generation."

Locke believes Israel must counter misinformation with bold truth. "If Israel would just get the right people with big platforms, I think they could win this war from a social media standpoint," he said.

Rejecting Replacement Theology

Locke said one of the greatest dangers inside the church

itself is replacement theology—[the teaching that the church has replaced Israel in God's plan.](#) He did not hold back: “Replacement theology... it's ridiculous because we have not replaced the Jewish people. We have not replaced Israel. The church is separate, and both of them have a prophetic appointment with God, but not one without the other.”

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For Locke, support for Israel is inseparable from biblical Christianity. “If I believe what I say I believe, then why wouldn't I love the Jewish people?” he asked. “Because if I really believe that Jesus is the Messiah, then to me His coming here is a second coming, but to the Jewish people it's a first coming. But it's the same person. So why wouldn't I love the Jewish people? Why wouldn't I want to help them and support them?”

Israel as a Living Miracle

Locke pointed out that Israel's very existence proves God's covenant is still alive. “The biggest miracle in the entire world is the fact that the Jewish people still exist,” he said. “They have been the most hated, the most misunderstood, the most judged, criticized and persecuted people on the planet. And what do they do? They flourish.”

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He reminded listeners that the prophets foretold the land itself would respond to the Jewish return. “God promised that as more Jewish people come back to the land, the ground would prosper. The crops would grow. There'd be springs in the desert. All of these prophecies. And when you come here and see it, you get a different feel.”

Standing with God's Word

The survival and prosperity of Israel is not an accident of history but the fulfillment of God's eternal Word. "This land belongs to the Jewish people," Locke said. "It's predictive. It's prophetic."

And as Scripture affirms, the covenant God made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob still stands. The words He spoke about Israel in His Word are still true today.

James Lasher is staff writer for Charisma Media.

Burning Man's Orgy Dome Toppled: A Modern Tower of Babel in the Desert?

For years, Nevada's Burning Man festival has been branded as a celebration of "radical self-expression." But as thousands descend on Black Rock City each year, the events that unfold increasingly look less like art and more like a hedonistic, pagan revival. [From orgiastic "temples" to drug-fueled spectacles](#), many view it as a gathering that flaunts rebellion against God. And ironically—or perhaps not—disaster seems to follow.

The Collapse of the Orgy Dome

The Mirror reported that at the 2025 festival, strong winds and dust storms ripped across the desert, destroying one of Burning Man's most notorious attractions: the Orgy Dome. Promoted as a "sex positive community" where attendees can

“educate the world about consent” and engage in group sex, the dome was reduced to rubble in a matter of hours.

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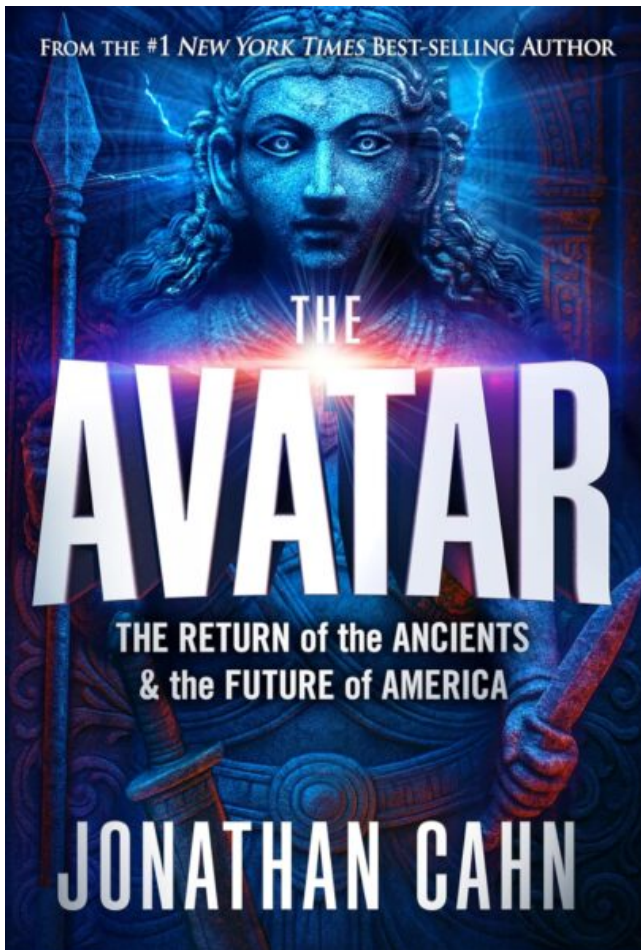
“Our build team worked so hard this past week to erect our lovely space. Unfortunately, the winds yesterday undid all that labor and wrecked our structure,” organizers admitted on social media.

The timing wasn’t lost on onlookers. One viewer wrote online, “That’s Jesus Christ saving people from STDs.” Another quipped, “The wind is doing the Lord’s work.” Others echoed the biblical theme of judgment, with one remarking, “Jesus said, ‘NOT TODAY YOU HEATHENS!’”

The storm didn’t just hit the dome. The National Weather Service issued dust storm warnings as gusts of 50 mph swept across the playa, flattening camps, scattering belongings and leaving festivalgoers shaken. Four injuries were reported, though officials said none were life-threatening.

Prior Catastrophes: Mud and Death

This isn’t the first time Burning Man has been brought low by the very elements it seeks to control. [In 2023, torrential rains turned the desert floor into a swamp](#) of foot-deep mud, trapping tens of thousands with no working toilets and scarce supplies. Authorities confirmed at least one death, though details were scarce.



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Attendees trudged barefoot through mud or wrapped their feet in plastic bags as they tried to leave. High-profile celebrities like comedian Chris Rock and DJ Diplo were reduced to hitchhiking out of the festival after slogging miles through muck.

The storm was so unusual that it broke records, delivering more rain in three days than Reno normally sees in the entire month of September.

God's Response to Idolatry?

From a Christian perspective, the parallels are hard to ignore. In Scripture, storms, floods and winds are often instruments of God's judgment or correction. The prophets warned Israel against bowing to idols and indulging in

immorality, reminding them that the land itself would “vomit out” those who defiled it (Lev. 18:25).

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Burning Man, with its orgy domes, effigy burnings and revelry that celebrate everything but holiness, is a modern echo of those warnings. What some call “bad luck” looks a lot like divine warnings.

Paul reminds believers in Galatians 6:7, “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.” When tens of thousands gather to flaunt sin under the banner of art, it should not surprise us when creation itself pushes back.

A Call for Discernment

This isn't about gloating over storms or tragedies. Christians should grieve any loss of life and pray for those caught up in deception. But we cannot ignore the larger spiritual picture: festivals like Burning Man glorify darkness, and the disasters that repeatedly strike them may well be God's way of reminding the world that He is still on the throne.

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Instead of mocking His order, we should be aligning with it. As Jesus said in Matthew 24:37–39, the days before His return will look like the days of Noah, filled with eating, drinking and immorality until judgment arrives suddenly.

James Lasher *is staff writer for Charisma Media.*

September 23 Rapture Predictions: Do Not Be Deceived

For decades, people have tried to pinpoint the exact day of the rapture, and every time, they have failed to do so. From 1948 to 1967, 1988 and beyond, not a single prediction has ever come to pass. Evangelist Perry Stone recently addressed the latest wave of speculation, [this time pointing to September 2025](#), and he cautioned believers not to fall into the trap of date-setting, but instead to stay grounded in what Scripture actually teaches.

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“There has always been time frames throughout modern history in which people have set dates for what they believe to be the rapture,” Stone said. “I remember in 1948 people talked about it because of the restoration of Israel. In 1967 they discussed it again because of Jerusalem being reunited. ... And then there was the big one, from 1948 to 1988, which was 40 years. But He didn’t come in 1988.”

Why the Fall Feasts Draw Attention

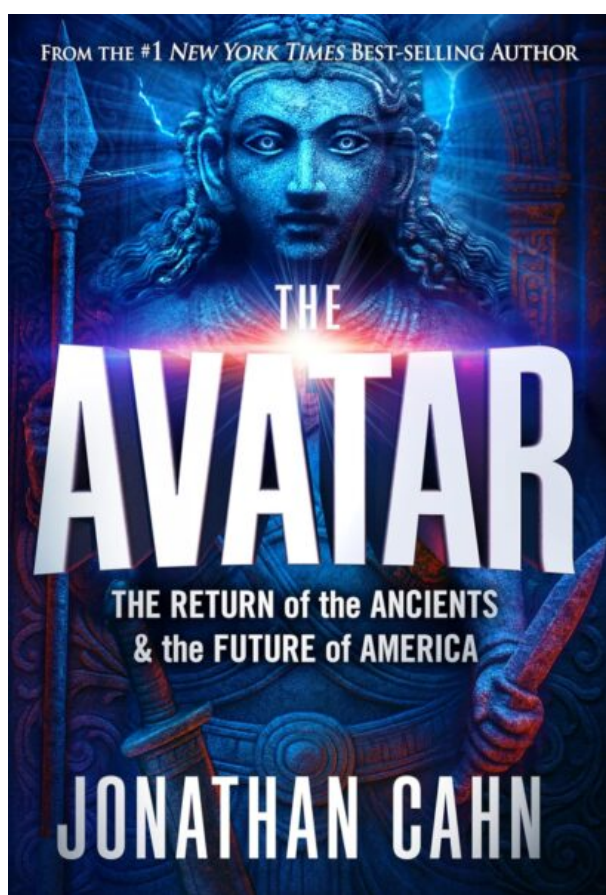
Much of the excitement around rapture predictions centers on the Jewish fall feasts—especially the Feast of Trumpets, also called Rosh Hashanah.

“Rosh Hashanah is a two-day period ... based on the appearance of the silver sliver of the moon,” he explained. “Nobody knew

the actual day or the hour it was going to happen until three witnesses saw the silver sliver of the moon.”

This detail, Stone noted, is why some connect it to Jesus' words that “no one knows the day or the hour.” The Feast of Trumpets also involves the blowing of 100 trumpets, which many tie to Paul's words about “the last trump” in 1 Corinthians 15 and 1 Thessalonians 4.

“To say that it's going to happen in a fall period could be absolutely correct,” Stone said. “However, why are they selecting this time period?”



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The Theories Behind 2025

Stone said those pointing to September 2025 cite three main reasons: the Jewish shemitah cycle, a calculation involving 2,550 prophetic “days” as years, and Daniel's 70th week

supposedly beginning that fall. But he pushed back hard.

“All of this is speculation and this is people’s interpretation,” he said. “A lot of this is fed by internet blogs and YouTube channels ... they put these real sensational things up trying to get you to watch.”

What the Bible Actually Says

Stone reminded his audience that Jesus was clear: “It is absolutely a fact that Jesus said nobody will know the day and the hour of [His] return,” he said. [“Can you know the times and seasons? Yes.”](#) You will know the general idea based on the signs of the time ... but the Scripture makes it clear that no man knows the day or the hour.”

Stone believes two prophetic conditions must still unfold before the tribulation begins: the gospel being preached worldwide (Matt. 24:14) and the global outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Joel 2). While both are beginning, neither has reached full completion.

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“These two things must happen before the tribulation begins,” he explained. “Is it happening? It’s beginning to happen, yes. But we are not in the fullness yet.”

The Danger of Setting Dates

The danger in date-setting, Stone warned, is twofold: it destroys credibility when predictions fail, and it fuels the arguments of scoffers.

“Once again, it gives the mockers and the scoffers an opportunity to say, ‘You people are just crazy,’” he said. “It hurts the credibility of prophetic teachers when it doesn’t

happen when they've predicted it."

Stone encouraged believers to remain prepared regardless of the timing: "If He comes this September, I'm ready. If He comes five years from now, I'm still living, I'm ready. ... Be therefore also ready, for such an hour you think not, the Son of Man cometh."

Stay Watchful, Not Fearful

Stone offers all of us a reminder that Jesus will not return when everyone is looking for Him, but rather when it is least expected.

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"He's not coming when everybody's looking for Him," Stone said. "He's coming when they're least expecting it. That's all through the New Testament."

So in the meantime we must watch for the signs, but not get caught up in dates. Keep doing what Jesus commanded: fulfilling the Great Commission and building the Kingdom of God.

James Lasher *is staff writer for Charisma Media.*