

PostExilicProphets 22-01-12a

Good evening, welcome to the Wednesday Night Bible Study and Post-Exilic Prophets here at Grace & Truth Bible Church. We're picking up in Zechariah chapter 11. And tonight we're going to be looking at two things.

One is directly linked to the other. We're gonna be looking back in the past in the 500 plus years before the time of Christ. And there is a direct connection to what God says to his people at that time and the situation we find ourselves in today.

That's what I like, scripture that has traction and pertinence to the life we live on a daily basis. And there's no better place to be than here tonight to see that connection. Let's take a moment and ask God's blessing on our study, on our fellowship, and we'll begin.

Father, what a wonderful encouragement and comfort it is to know that we are held securely in your hands. We are in the Lord Jesus Christ, and in him we have so many wonderful blessings, potentials, opportunities, and provisions. We thank you for that.

We thank you for him and for the wonderful example that he set for us in his earthly life, the calling that we have to be his representative and his body on this earth in his absence and to await the day of his return to take us to himself. And for those of us who are qualified to be presented before your throne, we pray that as we look at this portion of your word together tonight, that your Holy Spirit will impress it on our hearts, give us understanding, give us insight, help us to remember it in the days ahead and to find in it that cleansing grace and that strength to lay hold of righteousness by faith that is our heritage as believers in this age. We pray all these things in Jesus' name, amen.

I'm going to start by picking up a thought that we left off with last time, and that is the rapid changes that are taking place around us in culture and in society. You heard me mention the coming metaverse, and I just want to read you a few excerpts, both pro and con about this. And then I'm going to ask Matthew to come up and share a quick something with us.

But as you know, Mark Zuckerberg has changed the name of his company, Facebook, which is one of the most ubiquitous and influential entities on the planet to meta. And it is his stated goal and intention, you can watch the video, to create a brave new world out of ones and zeros. It will be virtual and so on.

So there are Christians who almost immediately became alarmed at this. I read you excerpts from some of these articles and I want to just give you a little bit more. Most of this is from just the last few months.

This is from an article by Dr. Alex Tang, and it's on a website called kiros2.com, K-A-I-R-O-S numeral two dot com. And I just want to read you a few quick things. The metaverse is web 3.0, the next step in the development of the internet.

Now, let me just preface the rest of this by saying, the reason we're talking about this is this is the latest version of creating a reality defined by the thoughts of men. And this is what Zechariah is talking about in chapter 11. Our passage in Zechariah chapter 11 is quoted in Matthew.

And there's a reason why it's quoted, and it has to do with Judas and the 30 pieces of silver and what is contained in that Old Testament allusion that Matthew offers toward the close of his gospel. There is so much in there. This that I'm giving you now is background.

File this away, keep it in your mind, and we're going to see that a more primitive, but just as deadly version of this took place in the temple in Jesus' day. That's why we're going into this. It's not just news for its own sake.

We have a modern analog. We have a modern expression of the same human endeavor. It just has more tools and more technology at its disposal, but it is the same thing.

It is enabled and driven by the same type of fallenness in the human heart that goes unaddressed and unmitigated when the word of God and the son of God are rejected. It is an expression of rejection of God's word. And therefore the John 1, 1 word, the Messiah himself, the Lord Jesus Christ himself in favor of man by man's efforts, creating his own self-satisfying world.

So keep that in the back of your mind. This is directly linked to our passage. There's a reason I'm going through this.

Pay attention. We're not in panic mode. We're in interested spectator mode.

And we are aware that there is a threat. There is a potential here and forewarned is forearmed. Metaverse is web 3.0, the next step in the development of the internet.

The evolution of the internet as a private data sharing network for scientists with clumsy modem access, moving forward to its user-friendly browser has been very rapid. Web 1.0 was when web pages were static and we could only read them. Web 2.0 was a marvelous interactive experience, was and is, we can edit, produce, and chat using that technology.

There's been a proliferation of chat groups leading to blogs, personal websites. Then you add sound and video and social media, such as Facebook and Twitter. Web 2.0 for all of its benefits is still, however, 2D, two-dimensional.

It remains on the screen. Web 3.0 or Metaverse is 3D. Content with which we can interact is no longer flat.

It is now three-dimensional. The movie Ready Player One, I think I actually saw that, didn't I? Didn't I see it, Ready Player One? Ready Player One is a good visualization of what the Metaverse is or what it will one day be. In the first half of this article, this guy is going to

describe what the Metaverse is, then share implications it will have on Christians and the church.

I've already pretty well described the Metaverse, which has developed because of rapid advances in what is called artificial intelligence. It's really not intelligent because intelligence is a characteristic of persons. And no matter what you do on a computer, it does not have personhood.

I'll probably be talking about personhood this coming Sunday, the things that define it. It's very helpful because it gives us discernment on what is and isn't a person, what is and isn't intelligent. An AI is nothing more than a glorified calculator with enormous data storage capability.

When the AI in the computer Deep Blue beat chess grandmaster Garry Kasparov in 1997, it was done by examining 200 million chess positions per second. Deep Blue has enormous memory storage, millions of chess games. What became more interesting is when it is discovered that AI can be programmed to learn and to discover new ways of learning.

This was called machine learning. AI Alpha Zero was given only the rules of chess and programmed to play itself to win. Within six hours, the AI had taught itself so well that it was able to beat a human grandmaster.

Computer scientists admit they no longer understand AI learning, so it is now named deep learning, as in too deep for me, I'm over my head. Subsequently, new AI chess engines were so powerful that it was matched against other AI rather than humans. Now, Matthew and I are very familiar with this being on the chess programming website and listening to guys talk about these advances.

AI Lila Chess Zero is the present world champion in 2020. The extraordinary computing power of AI and deep learning and problem solving and the development of new ideas is the foundation of the rise of the metaverse. Basically, the metaverse is composed of four main components.

Number one, augmented reality. This is looking at the world around you. Initially, it's through glasses and seeing extra things.

It's an overlay of reality with things that are computer generated, transmitted across the internet or whatever. So you're walking down a street and you may see an advertisement on what is actually a blank wall, the side of a building. Well, there will be a moving interactive advertisement there.

If you say, I'd really like a taco, a taco stand somewhere in your vicinity may light up or have a guiding star like the wise men to take you to find your desired taco. It will be a mix of reality and this augmentation composed of various things. So the second is life logging.

Number one, augmented reality, overlay computer generated stuff on top of what you see around you. Secondly, life logging. This has already been happening for years, if not decades.

This is Google Maps knowing everywhere you've been. When you went with your phone and had your location turned on, Google knows. I can show you a map of every place I've been in the last 10 years, every piano customer I visited, every trip I've made to Dallas, Patty and I going out to Arizona, up to the Grand Canyon.

There's a little path and stops and how long did we spend at each place? It's all there going back years. So what places do I frequently shop? Is it Walmart? Is it Reserves? Is it 10 bucks? Is it, where do I go? What pharmacy do I go to to get my medicine? Oh, is it Bennett's? Is it CVS? Is it Walgreens? Is it a Walmart pharmacy? And by collating and triangulating this information, so much more about you can be known than what you would be willing to divulge if you were just asked on a questionnaire, well, what are your likes and dislikes? What have you looked for on Amazon? What have you Googled on eBay or Craigslist? What are you looking for? You looked for a while and now you stopped looking. So it looks like maybe you got it.

I wonder where that purchase is. Well, there's extensive purchase history going back years at all of your online venues. This didn't used to be the case when you went down to Safeway and laid down a \$20 bill and brought home a paper sack of groceries.

This has been a revolution in just the last few decades of data. So life logging. If you start Googling symptoms of something, well, that's gonna be tagged on you.

Wonder if this person's got lumbago or bunions or any one of a hundred different things. So number two, life logging. Number three, mirror worlds.

This is the reproduction in the virtual environment of real things. So instead of going to a concert hall and seeing a concert, you enter a virtual concert hall and see a virtual representation of the very same concert in real time or near real time. I thought it was pretty cool when I saw a Steinway piano that could sit in someone's living room and reproduce instantly the performance with every nuance that is being conducted in Carnegie Hall over a near real time.

It's only limited by latency, but the piano will reproduce some of the greatest pianists alive today and even some that have passed on in your living room. But this is mirror worlds and this is several steps beyond that. So you're living in a virtual world.

Finally, virtual reality, which doesn't mirror this reality. It is a new reality of one's own or someone else's construction, imagination, fantasy. In this world, you can fly.

In this world, you're young and thin instead of old and creaky. In this world, you can have three heads and multicolored pigtaileds, or you can be anything or anybody. It's the sky's the limit.

Augmented reality is the technology to superimpose a virtual world onto the real physical

world. Now, let me stop here and say, this is new in its power and in the technological support to do it, but man has been superimposing a virtual world onto reality for as long as there has been philosophical thought. We map motives, we map intentionality, whether we think the gods are angry and they drop a Pepsi bottle into one of the outback or wherever that was.

This idea is not new. We interpret reality in terms of what we expect, what we believe, what we have in terms of hopes. And we just now have a lot of technology that can make this much more tangible, if you will, much more converted into information for the senses.

In the past, this was a mental exercise. It would happen in the mind. I imagine that someone is hostile to me, or I imagine that someone loves me, or I imagine that there is a God, I imagine that there is a God or I imagine that there are gods and so on.

It was the world of the imagination confined to our skull. Now this can be harvested, collected, designed, implemented, and fed back into our senses as virtual reality. Google Glass, I talked about these a couple of years ago when I first read about them, where you put these glasses on and suddenly it's like the pop-up display.

The first time I ever saw this was for pilots, where a heads-up display could be projected onto a cockpit glass where you can see through it to see the real airplanes flying as well as you may be able to under the limits of visibility. But you've got radar, you've got airspeed and altitude and a lot of other things that are on this display, and you're seeing it all at the same time. And if you're trying to get a weapons lock on a target, that square would follow the actual airplane on your, I don't know, they don't call it a windshield.

I have to ask my roommate what that thing is called. An airplane windshield, a jet cockpit glass. But this was the earliest that we saw, but now Google Glass and so on.

Those who have played Pokemon using a mobile phone have seen lifelike Pokemon in their visual space. You hold your phone up and these little guys you're trying to find that are hiding, you have your camera up there and you're seeing the same view, but these Pokemon are added in. Well, they've moved so far beyond that you can't believe it.

Another useful implementation of augmented reality, online shopping. If you wanna buy a sofa, not sure where to place it in your living room, you can download a program, switch on your phone camera and place the sofa virtually in your living room through your camera. You can move the sofa around and see how it fits with your other furniture and decorations.

Who doesn't like that rather than bringing the thing home and having your husband moving around? Life logging. Remember that was number one now, that's virtual reality, augmented reality. Life logging is the storing of personal data.

For decades, we've been storing our digital data ever since the advent of social media. Our postings, comments, photos, audio and videos are a permanent part of the internet. Never before have so large a part of humanity been willing to reveal their most intimate details to a

global audience.

Many have abandoned journal writing to document every minute of their waking and parenthetically, some live stream themselves sleeping. Moments in their Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, telegrams and photo storage. The internet has enough data and information on each one of us to build a detailed persona, digital person or avatar.

Real life applications are in healthcare where our lifestyle choices, healthcare risk and medical histories are available to our doctors, employers and insurance companies. The creation of our avatar or our digital self is of special interest in mirror worlds. Mirror worlds in the metaverse are not actually a mirror reflection of reality, our real world, the one we are living in, but a digitized duplicate of reality made up of ones and zeros.

AI is building up this mirror world even as you read this. You remember me telling you last time about how many 1.5 billion individual trees that Microsoft Flight Simulator has got stored, trillion? Yeah, however many, there are way more than I can count. Or care, is this branch really different? Are all snowflakes truly unique? Okay.

All the Google and Apple mapping data goes into the geospatial data of this world. All the Google Books and Library of Congress scans, eBooks, digital documents add to the database of knowledge. The internet is the largest database of knowledge since life began on earth.

Every photo, selfie and podcast broadcast has contributed. Alexa, Assistant and Siri provide invaluable uploads. Can add to that Bixby on your Android, or at least my Galaxy.

So does spyware state surveillance data and trillions of bureaucratic forms that are created every day. This mirror world is in use in designing autonomous driving cars and trucks. These vehicles are actually moving in a digital rather than a real world.

As far as they're concerned, they don't sense the real world, they're reacting to digital mirror world that's inside their computerized brains. Other real world applications include the use of robotics in factories, hospitals and shipyards. The acute autonomous robots which deliver the case file in a hospital or the autonomic robot police that enforce good behavior in the streets of Singapore move in a mirror world.

Second Life is a popular computer game in which we can create an avatar to represent us and interact with other avatars in a virtual world. Online programs have evolved into complex social experiments. Avatars, parentheses humans, are developing a civilization.

They are building houses, developing businesses, getting married, nurturing communities. It'll only be a matter of time when we can move into the metaverse or the mirror world using our own avatar based on our life logging. This technology is already here.

It is called virtual reality. And on the note of it is already here, I'd like Matthew to come up and share something he sent to me earlier today. You think, well, okay, that's on the fringe.

It's something that might occur maybe five or 10 years down the road. But Matthew had an experience today that... Here, sit here, Matt. I'll just stand close enough that they can hear you.

Yes, well, yeah, I was at work a couple of years ago when our company formed. They very quickly developed or adopted a web-based kind of a community thing for the corporation called Workplace. And Workplace is actually a product of Facebook.

And now we know that Facebook is now meta and they're all into creating a metaverse. Well, I never really used Workplace because it just produced a lot of spam for my inbox because I was automatically made members of groups and stuff. All the employees' names were dumped into this thing.

And so we all had access to it and we were all put into kind of default groupings. And anytime there was a post in that grouping, I would get an email saying, hey, there's a new post with your colleagues, check it out. And I was like, where is all this coming from? And so I just ignored most of it.

And most of it, I just put it in the trash bin and then emptied the trash bin. But every once in a while, I would see something on there that sparked my curiosity. So I would check it out and I would go to the, logging in was a big pain in the hinder parts, but because the security, it was so entangled.

And so it was very inconvenient to even log into it. But they've made it a lot easier now. I was in there today and I was answering some posts about laptops and how much capacity they have to do things.

And I just happened to see this thing about, my company was developing, starting a pilot program for virtual world. So I was like, oh, that's right. Workplace is a product of Facebook.

Of course, of course. So I, anyway, I clicked on it. And this guy said, I've already created my avatar.

And here's a photo of me visiting the company headquarters. And so you could see his little kind of, the avatars right now look kind of a little bit cartoonish, but there he was. And he was walking through the lobby of headquarters somewhere in South Carolina, I think.

And I was like, holy smokes. And then he linked to a setup guide so that you could get started doing it yourself. Now, this is a pilot program right now.

It's not officially been adopted for support by our IT department, but they're starting this pilot program just to kind of get people to try it out and work out the bugs and everything. So, but they were selling it as, you could use it to collaborate with your teammates. You know, you could all assemble in a, just like we used to do at the campus.

You can go to a room, you can reserve a room, go to that room in the building. If it's on level

three, then you walk up or take the elevator up to level three. You go to the room.

Everybody's looking at each other instead of using Teams to do real kind of like Zoom calls. And I was thinking about that today, that Zoom calls actually consume a lot of bandwidth. But if you remember the 3D video games like Half-Life, they didn't require a lot of bandwidth.

All of the work was done on your computer to create the environment and to map it onto your screen. And so it occurred to me that this would be a lower bandwidth way to interact with people than our actual Zoom call, where you've got to push video out to however many people in your network. And if they're all working from home, you know, with different, you know, some people don't have as good internet as others.

And some people are in India and some people are here in the United States and the latency and all that. If the bandwidth is smaller, it would make it a lot more convenient and perhaps effective to do this type of a thing, where you're actually in like a video game and you're wandering around the map and meeting your colleagues. And they showed some snapshots of like a CEO giving a demonstration where he's playing a YouTube video on a screen.

And this is in this virtual world. And so that video is mapped onto the side of a wall or something. And he's up there, you know, like this.

Well, and then the people in the crowd, if they want to ask a question, they can raise their hand. And I noticed, you know, in Teams, which is like Zoom, you can press a button that says raise your hand because you want to ask a question. And then the speaker will be notified that you're raising your hand.

But in this type of thing, they can see that you're raising your hand because you're raising your virtual hand and they can virtually see that. So anyway, it was just like, yeah, no kidding. It's invading your space almost wherever you are.

So anyway, I shared that with Sam today and he wanted me to just give a brief description of it and how it's beginning to start at our corporation. Now, workplace.com, I don't know how many corporations that's in, but I got to think it's quite a lot because people are used to using Facebook. And if they can go to work and there's Facebook at work to interact with their colleagues and their teammates and collaborate with other teams, that's just a very natural thing for them to do.

So I got to think this workplace is in quite a few corporations and who knows how many municipalities or principalities or states or whatever. But anyway, so yeah, it's coming to something near you whether you want it or not. Yeah, I appreciate that, Matt.

Thanks. It's, you know, having some exposure to what's going on in the world, I think is helpful. And the idea that you can exist as an avatar and you can idealize yourself, you can put on a front that doesn't reflect the real you.

Nobody knows what you really look like necessarily or what your actual feelings are. You know, part of child development, Elizabeth can tell you, is in reading body language and facial expressions and human interaction at the personal level, we develop skills in this. Well, if all of that is masked because you've got a cartoon avatar that is your mask, this is where the word hupokrites, hypocrite comes from is you're behind the mask and the mask says one thing and there's something else behind it.

So it can potentially facilitate a lot of miscommunication, a lot of misunderstanding and a lot of deception potentially. But more about that in a moment. But the mirror world of the metaverse.

So you've got a mirror conference room with mirror people giving mirror presentations and you're actually sitting there in your socks having a bowl of Cheerios, but your avatar is sitting there in a tie and looking very well-prepared and engaged and you can fall asleep in your kitchen chair and your avatar is just sitting there looking like, oh yes, I'll listen to the recording later. Virtual reality is moving into a constructed digital world and interacting with objects in that world as we do in the real world. It is 360 degree total immersion experience.

The first popular real world use of VR by the billion dollar gaming industry were games such as Oculus and PlayStation virtual reality sets that allowed players to play totally immersive virtual reality games in their own living rooms. You've seen funny videos about people who are immersed in a world and they run into walls and knock their \$3,000 flat screen TVs into the floor because the monsters are about to get them and so on. Other real world VR uses are training education pilots trained how to fly planes, soldiers, how to fight, surgeons, how to operate in totally immersive experience.

The metaverse or web 3.0, when it begins to migrate to our workstations or home entertainment or houses will be a fruitful experience. We've been interacting with 2D objects but we are 3D beings. So what are the concerns that Christians may have in this regard? And I like this calming note.

It should not raise much alarm to Christians as it is just technology, as much as the computer, the plow or the printing press. Human beings are called to be creators using the materials of the created world but we are also called to be stewards of the created order. Technology is created to make our lives better and indeed it has.

We live longer, starve less, we're healthier, have more comforts than our ancestors. Christians are not Luddites. In fact, technology, which is the printing press played a large role in the reformation of the Christian church.

Christian concerns about the metaverse can be divided into the following. Number one, artificial intelligence. Number two, identity.

Number three, worship. Number four, hospitality. And number five, the gospel.

And you can go on and read more about that. I want to read a quick summary or give you a

quick summary of an article I read by a guy called David Larson, L-A-R-S-O-N on Crisis Magazine. He published this at the end of October last year.

I try my best to temper my tech skeptic instincts but despite these efforts, I can't help but consider all the worst possibilities of the coming metaverse. In fact, the more I read about it, the more I think Christians should start preparing for it now before we, along with our family and friends are pulled into a life far from the one God created for us. He describes what it is and to navigate this world, each person will apparently need an avatar, a kind of digital representation of themself.

If you think the world has gone crazy with navel gazing millennials, self-actualizing by identifying as whatever feels right in the moment, wait until turning from a man to a woman or a man to a rabbit just takes a click of a button rather than surgery and hormones. This description is from the October 22 Vanity Fair piece titled, The Man to a Rabbit. The metaverse is about to change everything.

And this had come out the week before he wrote this last October. You could imagine wearing your digital avatar out in the real world where other people who are wearing headsets see an augmented version of their reality, including you dressed up as your digital avatar, which could also change based on who is looking at you. Maybe you come across as a three-headed puppy with multicolored pigtails to your kids.

That's where that phrase came from earlier. But a professional in a suit to your coworkers. In this scenario, you could play a game of Pac-Man in the real world, running around trying to capture virtual coins that no one else can see.

That won't look funny. Or evading multicolored ghosts who want to eat you alive. You could sit in a coffee shop in New York while a friend sits in a coffee shop in Paris.

Both have a real coffee together even though you're not in the same place. You could imagine a virtual chessboard and somebody far across the country, instead of doing correspondence chess, you could play on this virtual board and so on. The way you will be fed these images, sounds, and other input will at least initially be through headsets and glasses.

Ray-Ban in partnership with Facebook has created Stories, a line of sunglasses that look just like their traditional lines, but can do many of the things your smartphone allows you to do. Take videos, talk on the phone, listen to music, post things to social media. Mark Zuckerberg has a description of that and they've got a link.

Zuckerberg is making these glasses along with a program for business meetings called Horizon Workrooms. Think Zoom meets virtual reality as early efforts to contribute to this infrastructure. That's what Matthew was talking about.

A lot of early work for the metaverse has been done by video game companies like Epic Games, but the metaverse will not be a game world. It will never reset or pause or end. It will go on

indefinitely like the real world.

It will be synchronized with our real world and there will be no limit to the users of this digital world. Zuckerberg says you don't have to choose between being on your device or being fully present. We believe that this is an important step on the road to developing the ultimate augmented reality glasses.

Imagine seeing holograms, turn-by-turn directions, being able to play chess on a table in front of you with your loved one 3,000 miles away right from your glasses. This, Larson is a chess player and he says, as a chess player for so many other realms of life, this sounds amazing. My problem, or if I'm honest, one of many is the first part about not having to decide whether to use your device or not because it will just be a part of your continuous experience.

At least with our current form of the internet, by choosing to look down at my screen, I am aware that the world on the screen and the world outside of the screen are two different things. Some people may be addicted to their screens so the choice isn't fully voluntary. Other people may trust what they see on the screens too much so it twists how they see the real world, but there is at least this choice and separation.

This is the same with people that have gotten too far into hallucinatory drugs or gotten too far into transcendental meditation and other forms of contact with the spirit world where you begin to lose your ability to distinguish between what is real and what is manufactured. Think hypnosis. Think my coverage of the book, Predictable Irrationality, where we are unconsciously and subconsciously sensitized and we think we're making a free will decision and we're really not.

What happens when there is no choice to pull a device out of your pocket and look at that physical item? What if, as another author, Baba Jide, B-A-B-A-J-I-D-E, I don't know how to say that, Baba Jide, Baba Jeed. Anyway, what if, as Baba Jide said, this mediated experience is fully immersive and never pauses or ends? Well, we should certainly make sure we trust whoever we give this power over our reality. This is the power to edit our perceptions and therefore our thoughts in real time.

This, of course, already happens. I did a little experiment this past week. I consciously and on purpose read Facebook every day and just kind of followed where the little, what do we call the things, the little programs that, no, they're, but what is it that figures that out? Algorithms.

Because you click on a thing, there are algorithms that, with no human thought or control, say, well, since you clicked on a video, you probably want to see this video, or you clicked on this post, you probably want to see this that is of interest. You clicked on something related to farms, here's a whole bunch of stuff on farms. You clicked on a car, here's a bunch of car stuff.

And these algorithms just sort of lead you by the nose down these paths. I did this for a couple of three days and I'm done. I've had enough.

But I just wanted to experience how this works. And you can see where it becomes addictive. It is just a sinkhole for time.

Oh my gosh, cute parrot videos. They've actually got a kind of video. I was showing Patty one of these where I think it is some sort of test, how long will you continue to watch? So these two girls go into a bathroom and this gal says, I hear a funny noise.

And she takes the lid off the tank and there's something wrapped in foil in there. And so she sits down on the floor and she starts to unwrap this foil. Well, it just goes on and on and on.

And her friend is saying, I just can't believe it. How did that get in there? And it's all of this commentary. So it takes like 15 minutes to get the foil off.

And when she gets that off, here's something wrapped in shrink wrap. You still can't see what's it. Well, it appears to be two objects.

And so she starts taking off the shrink wrap and it's like 15, 20 minutes. I just shut it off. I thought, you know what, this is some kind of, I don't know what kind of click bait this is, but they're just saying, how stupid are you? How long will you watch this endless thing? There was another one where a guy was standing there with a girl in a wedding dress.

And she said, before you marry me, I want you to know the real me. Well, she has this rubber mask on and she starts to take it off, but she never does. She wrestles with it.

And the front comes up a little bit and goes down. The back comes up a little bit and goes down. She hands him some scissors to cut it off.

But then she says, oh no, no. And I turned that one off after about two minutes. But this is the point.

We should certainly make sure we trust whomever we give this power over our reality to. When we come back from the break, we're going to be back in the Bible. We're going to be back in Zechariah.

We're going to be in Jeremiah. We're going to be in Matthew. And we are going to see Jesus indict the people of Israel who gave this power to their religious leaders, to their elders, to their scribes, to the Pharisees and to the Sadducees to define reality for them.

This is what we saw Sunday in Matthew when Jesus told the multitude, stop following these people. He didn't say run away if you see them. He said, if they are communicating the truth of scripture, listen to them, do what they say, but do not do what they do.

So we can't flee the world. We don't have to shut off the internet, but we do have to be careful how much power we grant to those who would define a different reality for us than the one revealed to us in the word of God and the power of the spirit of God. This is the point of application for our travels into current events.

But let's pause here and take our break. When we come back, we're going to see this is not a new strategy. It is an old trick with a new wrapper.

We'll see that when we come back.