



## Are You Ready? Watch for Signs



What is your favorite season of the year? According to Morning Consult data, it's FALL. A recent survey, of who knows how many people, found 41% of U.S. adults chose fall. Summer appears to be the next favorite at 24%, however this author adores spring. Hearing these statistics at a recent meeting, I was fascinated by the information. I was even more delighted with the speakers comments about early signs of fall, as well as signs of a 'bad' vs 'mild' winter approaching. Shall I share this info, my head pondered a bit??? Yes, I decided, so read on my loyal Ransom Note fans.

In September 2016 we made a trip to Iceland. The pictures above might remind you what fall looks like — even in a country far away. Yellow and purple bits of color were spotted as we walked around the area. No signs of wee bits of new growth peeking their leaves through the dirt. Instead, the plants were beginning to show signs of fatigue. It just did not feel nor look like early April. So, it is fall, but how can we tell if the snow will be little or mighty this coming winter?

First, we need to watch the small, moving creatures that creep or fly around in our neighborhoods. Check out the squirrels. The Boys Town Farmer's 2024 Almanac dropped in this bit of rhyming wisdom.

*"Squirrels gathering nuts in a flurry,  
Will cause snow to gather in a hurry,"*

I guess it makes sense for the furry fellows to scurry and store away sufficient acorns on which to fill their tummies when snow covers their habitat. A second sign of a tough winter for these guys is just plain crazy. The human is suppose to check out their tails. If they are very bushy, beware. Now tell me, "How do I know if their tail is bushier in 2024 than in 2023?" I suppose I could catch a couple and coup them up in a cage for twelve months. Then fall of 2025 catch another pair of acorn eaters and compare their bushy tail ends. Of course I would also be required to store up the weather reports for winter in order to remember if winter 2024 was a mild, modest, or a deep, deep snow season. Too much work for this 89 year old.

So much for squirrels. Let's look at another bit of rhyming weather wisdom as it relates to the makers of honey.

*"See how high the hornets nest,  
'twill tell how high the snow will rest."*

Allegedly this rhyme applies to all flying creatures — The higher their nests, the more cars may be stuck in the snow or something like that. Ok, but that, too, presents a little problem for human measurement. First of all, how many of us have a tree appropriate for a hornet's nest, or even a nest for a sparrow? Secondly, if one did have a green leafy tree, or say, even a statley pine, do you remember on which branch the robin hatched her kids a year ago? Or, even more troublesome, the neighborhood pine tree might have found its way into a friend's living room on Christmas day, and now how can you compare? Good luck. I think I will just take what the Lord sends along in December - March. I really don't need much preparation. Concordia removes the snow and my boots are handy in my closet with ear muffs nearby. Besides, I adore snow.

Probably a far more important a question is, "How Ready Are You For The Return of the Lord?" I'm certainly not an authority on His second coming, nor am I able to predict future events. Matthew 24:36 says, *"But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father."* **Guess I just better be ready 24-7.** No, I don't think it means I need my snow skis and wooly mittens in my daily backpack. I believe my life, heart, and soul must be constantly in tune with the Father. Daily, He wants my respect and focus — not just for an hour on the Lord's Day.

How do I prepare for the unknown day or hour when the trumpets toot out His coming? My medicine cabinet contains two or three items which I have rarely, if ever used. Why? I never know when some form of illness or injury will occur UNEXPECTEDLY and I want to be prepared. Our home has items in the ceiling called 'alarms' and 'sprinklers' in case of fire. They have not gone into action since we arrived at Concordia except a few times when they were set off intentionally to see if we were PREPARED for fire.

Likewise, daily, I need to be in tune with the Lord. He is clear about the condition of our hearts and souls, which must put Him first in our lives and thoughts. When our actions or minds go astray, we need to swiftly activate prayers for forgiveness and to rekindle our love and focus on Kingdom deeds. No, not even sighting squirrels with bushy tails will announce God's return for his children.

**Only The Heavenly Father Know When He Is Returning. So . . .  
Eyes Open! Watch! Remain Holy! Make Certain You Are You Ready**