

WAR IN ISRAEL.



Will the **Hamas spirit** trigger the end times?



By Mark Driscoll ft. an interview with John Lovell

WAR IN ISRAEL:

WILL THE HAMAS SPIRIT TRIGGER THE END TIMES?

REALFAITH.COM

by Mark Driscoll
ft. an interview with John Lovell

War in Israel: Will the Hamas spirit trigger the end times?

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REAL GROUPS

Faith that does not result in good deeds is not real faith.

James 2:20, TLB

At RealFaith, we believe that the Word of God isn't just for us to read, it's to be obeyed. And living in community with fellow believers is one of the ways God the Father allows us to learn and grow to become more like His Son Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit. We do this through something called Real Groups. Here are a few tips to start your own.

1. Invite

Invite your friends, neighbors, family, coworkers, and enemies, because they all need Jesus whether they know Him or not! Whether it's a group of men, women, families, students, or singles, explain that you'd like to start a weekly sermon-based small group based on Pastor Mark Driscoll's sermons.

2. Listen to the sermon on realfaith.com or on the RealFaith app

You can host a viewing party to watch RealFaith Live and discuss it all at once, or you can watch it separately and gather to discuss it at another time that works for the group.

3. Get into God's Word

In addition to watching the sermon, make sure you and all group members have a study guide from realfaith.com for the current sermon series. There are questions for personal reflection as well as for groups that can guide your devotional times throughout the week. You can also sign up for Daily Devos at realfaith.com.

4. Gather together

Whether at someone's house, a public place, or through something like Zoom, meet weekly to discuss the sermon and what God has taught you through it. The great thing about Real Groups is that you don't all have to be in the same location. You can talk about sermon takeaways, what stood out to you in the study guide, or what God taught you in His Word that week. Focus on personal application as much as possible.

5. Pray

When you gather, feel free to share prayer requests, pray for each other on the spot, and continue praying throughout the week. Prayer is a great unifying force that God gives us to strengthen His family.

6. Share

Send us photos, videos, testimonies, and updates of how your group is doing to hello@realfaith.com. You might even be featured on our RealFaith Live show! We will be praying for you and your group and look forward to hearing what God does through it.

PREFACE

OCTOBER 2023

Suddenly and unexpectedly, Islamic terrorists in the Gaza Strip attacked Jews in Israel coordinated by air, land, and sea. Well over a thousand innocent civilians were brutally massacred, entire families were murdered while holding one another defenseless, babies were shot and beheaded, women were raped, and roughly two hundred people were taken hostage. All of this was caught on camera and posted to the internet for the world to watch in horror. Some terrorists even used their victims' phone to video tape the carnage, and then send it to the victims' loved ones to trigger deep trauma.

The nation of Israel is small, less than 9 million people, compared to the 340 million people who live in the United States. The terrorist murder of over 1,300 people compares to the 3,000 people who died at Pearl Harbor, and the 3,000 people who died on 9/11. Now, by factoring in the difference in population size, imagine if, on 9/11, 40,000 Americans died, and hundreds more were taken hostage, and you understand the sobering and horrifying national trauma in Israel.

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Source: UN Ocha, 2023

In response to the terror attack, Israel began bombing the Gaza Strip as Israel is officially at war for the first time in 50 years. This narrow stretch of land is one of the most densely populated places on earth, housing roughly 2 million people. The reason Israel bombed was to show their enemies that they were not going to welcome more attacks to commit genocide and remove

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the Jews from the earth. The problem is that Hamas terrorists use civilians as a human shield. They are hiding themselves and their weapons in hospitals, schools, mosques, and other public buildings. They travel in tunnels underground, and work from bunkers underground and beneath civilians. The world is responding in horror at the bombings of civilian targets in Gaza, but this is all part of the ploy to create enough international pressure to force Israel to not respond, and then settle for the giving up of more land and living at risk knowing that another attack will be coming no matter what, because the terrorists will not stop until the Jews are dead and the land is theirs. For Christians, we know that roughly only 2% of both Palestinians and Israelis are Christians who believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, who was Jewish and the fulfilment of the Jewish Scriptures, which means we have some brothers and sisters in harm's way, and a lot of people who need to meet Jesus as Savior and get a new heart before anything can change around them.

These are simply evil and demonic forces bringing destruction and death as they always do. The world was shocked because many people believe the progressive myth that human beings are basically good. That illusion and lie was shattered when the reality of evil was apparent as civilian women, children, and the elderly were slaughtered without provocation in the name of doing the will of some god.

As the world watched in horror, people were trying to make sense of what caused this evil, who was to blame, where it was all going, and how it would end. For the Christian, we alone know what is

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truly going on because we have Bible prophecy.

The Bible is the only accurately prophetic book in the history of the world. The Bible contains roughly 2,500 prophecies because our God rules, knows, and reveals the future in His perfect and supernatural Word. Roughly the first 2000 prophecies have been fulfilled, largely around the First Coming of Jesus Christ to live without sin, declare Himself to be the only God and Savior, die for our sin to be forgiven, and rise to conquer our enemies of Satan, sin, Hell, and the wrath of God. Jesus, who descended from Heaven, then ascended back to His throne. One day, Jesus will return a second time to slaughter the enemies of God, raise the dead, lift the curse, judge the unbelieving, reward the believing, sentence everyone to Heaven or Hell, and rule and reign forever and ever as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The remaining roughly 500 prophecies are awaiting to be fulfilled with Jesus' Second Coming.

The time between Jesus' First Coming and Second Coming is referred to by numerous images and titles in the Scripture. The most controversial and complex area of Biblical study is the end times, or what theologians refer to as, "Eschatology, from... [Greek]...eschatos, 'last'; the term refers to 'the doctrine of the last things'."¹

Regarding the imagery surrounding the last days, A Bible dictionary says, "The Bible's images of the end are built around a cluster of time images. One of these is the image of 'latter days' (Jer 23:20; 30:24; Ezek 38:16; Jas 3:5) or 'last day(s)' (Jn 6:39-40, 44, 54; 11:24; 12:48; 2 Tim 3:1; Jas 5:3; 2 Pet 3:3). Another motif is 'the end' (Dan 8:17; 9:26; 10:14; 11:35, 40; 12:4, 9,

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13; Mt 10:22; 13:39-40, 49; 24:3, 6, 13-14; 28:20; etc.). Yet another image is a coming Day of the Lord (two dozen references). While the details of sequence are not always clear in these references, they establish an important aspect of the Bible's view of history, namely, that it is moving in linear fashion to an appointed consummation."²

Biblical end times are painted in massive epochal imagery that is difficult to fully comprehend because of its' sheer scope. A Bible Dictionary says, "Two main principles underlie the Bible's images of the end. One is their cosmic scope. Prophecies of the end times are not stories of individuals but of natural forces and nations, both political and spiritual. Events at the end are happening on a huge scale, creating an impression of a stampede of masses toward a terrible destruction. The second pattern is that the images of the end are predominantly images of terror-a terror made all the more forceful by their power or hugeness (e.g., earthquakes, floods, invading armies, demonic forces) and the suddenness with which they inflict destruction on the earth. The major lessons that these visions of the end teach are the predictable spread of evil, the certainty of God's wrath and judgment against evil, the need for endurance (Rev 13:10) and a stance of preparedness for what is coming (Mt 24:25)."³

The events unfolding right now may be the beginning of the fulfilment of the final prophecies that lead to the Second Coming. While the world is gripped with fear that the end may be near, the believer should be guided by faith that, if that is true, then the Lord is near. For the Christian, this life is as close to Hell as we will ever be,

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and the end of this life is the beginning of the life we've been waiting for. For the non-Christian, this life is as close to Heaven as they will ever be, and the end of this life is the beginning of the judgement they have been hoping to avoid.

As I've said for many years, the Bible isn't just about what happens but what always happens. The Bible is not an old book in the past; it's an eternal book over all of history. The Bible is timely because it is timeless. Therefore, we look through the Scriptures to interpret events in our world through the Word of God. This is the heart of Bible prophecy.

I'm currently preaching through the book of 1 Thessalonians, Paul's encouragement and exhortation to a godly church in the city of Thessalonica. Keep in mind that I generally outline and plan my preaching schedule a year in advance. As we've seen many times throughout the history of Trinity Church, and throughout my 30 years preaching through books of the Bible, the section of Scripture I'm planning to preach through on any given week is timelier than we could've ever imagined.

The very week I was preparing to preach a sermon in 1 Thessalonians called "More Second Coming. Less Second-Guessing", the news broke that the Palestinian terrorist group Hamas has launched a full-scale attack on the nation of Israel at the end of a multi-day Jewish holiday celebration. What followed was one of the most prophetic weeks of my entire life as my mind was flooded with fresh revelation from the Lord, many things I'd never considered even after 30 years of preaching the Bible. Even up until the time I was coming from my

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office to preach during the weekend, God was still revealing things to me. I was so disoriented, my wife Grace had to drive me in to preach, and after preaching twice on Saturday night, I was up much of the night and could not come in to preach anymore on Sunday. While I was preaching, a man passed out in the aisle in the back of the room. Young and healthy, it made no sense. As people tended to him, I did not want to stop the livestream, and I did not want to ignore the man being tended to while the medics were on the way. So, I stopped and prayed for him, rebuked the Hamas demon spirit that I sensed was possibly harming him to stop a prophetic Bible teaching sermon, and he was restored with no reason for his ailments and no issues – so the medics let him drive home.

Within hours of posting the sermon online, it became my most watched sermon in 30 years of preaching. Even though the sermon was roughly 70 minutes long, there was a hunger among God's people to connect the Good News of the Bible with the bad news of the networks. This book is an expansion of that sermon, quickly written and released for free, to help God's people see the old demons at work in new days, and live with courage and hope because, as the world gets darker, we know that Jesus Christ, the Light of the World, is getting nearer!

This book seeks to make sense of this conflict happening in our day by tracing it back thousands of years to Abraham in the book of Genesis and how much of the sin in our world starts with sexual sin. The family feud between the Israelis and the Palestinians has been going on forever and will not stop until Jesus returns.

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CHAPTER 1

IT ALL STARTED WITH ABRAHAM

If you've ever seen a broken family, then you know how intense and emotional conflict becomes when there are two divisive, warring, and irreconcilable factions. For example, imagine that a man has a wife and children. Now, imagine that man also has a girlfriend and more children with her. Imagine that these women and children despise one another, fight often, are unkind to one another, and wish the other woman and her children were simply gone forever.

Now, imagine that the man is very wealthy and powerful, and he dies. Then, a major conflict erupts between the women over who gets the inheritance for their children. With one side set to win, and the other side set to lose, the stage is set for generations of conflict, bitterness, vengeance, and acrimony. Furthermore, the losing side of this conflict will feel they were treated unjustly, and, in the name of justice, seek to attack and take back what they believe is rightfully theirs. This back-and-forth battle over land, wealth, and power could conceivably continue indefinitely for generations. This is exactly the scenario at play 4,000 years after Abraham. Abraham had one covenant, two wives (Sarah and Hagar), and two sons (Isaac and Ishmael), which set in motion a

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terrorist attack 4,000 years later over which side of the broken family inherits the promises of God.

Covenant Promises in Scripture

In the Old Testament, God made long-term promises and created long-lasting relationships with a few choice men through something called a covenant. At the most basic level, a covenant is an agreement between parties^a. Various covenants are made between people, between people and God, and between God and people. In the Old Testament, the word covenant appears hundreds of times and is used in a variety of ways.

Personally, Job made a covenant with his eyes to not look at women lustfully^b. Relationally, deep brotherly love is covenantal^c, as is marriage^d. Nationally, the elders of Israel made a covenant with King David^e. Benefits of covenants can include protection from an enemy^f, peace^g, financial blessing^h and obtaining a homelandⁱ.

When the Bible speaks of God's covenant with His people, it is explaining how our relationship with God is made by His provision and exists by His terms. Through covenant with God, we enjoy a relationship with Him that is akin to marriage and includes protection from Satan our enemy, peace with God though we declared war on Him through sin, material provision in this life and the life to come, and a coming perfect kingdom as our home where Jesus will rule over all as our gracious

^a Gen. 26:28; Dan. 11:6 ^b Job 31:1 ^c 1 Sam. 18:3 ^d Prov. 2:16-17; Mal. 2:14 ^e 2 Sam. 5:3 ^f Gen. 26:28-29, 31:50-52; 1 Kings 15:18-19 ^g Josh. 9:15-16 ^h 1 Kings 5:6-11 ⁱ Gen. 23:14-16

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covenant king.

In a covenant with God, there is no bargaining, bartering, or contract negotiating regarding the terms of the covenant. Neither is God's covenant something we must earn by our good works. It is always a gracious provision from the loving Lord to His people. The sovereign Lord of Heaven and earth dictates the terms of God's covenants. It is God's covenant in that it is conceived, devised, determined, established, confirmed, and dispensed by God Himself, who often says, "I will establish my covenant with you."^a This aspect of God's covenants reveals His sovereign rule as Lord.

A covenant with God included five special features including:

- 1) A covenant mediator or head (the person with whom God makes the covenant) and their covenant role (whom the mediator represents)
- 2) Covenant blessings promised
- 3) Covenant conditions (or curses)
- 4) A covenant sign for celebration and remembrance
- 5) The covenant form that God's family takes as a result of the covenant

After our first father, Adam, sinned in the garden, God's response to our sin was covenant – saving, glorious, loving covenant. This is because God is, by nature of being Trinitarian, covenantal. As the Father, Son, and Spirit are a covenantal community as one God, so too they are graciously covenantal with believers, despite the fact we start as sinful enemies and rebels.

^a Gen. 6:18; 9:9, 11, 17; 17:7, 19, 21; Ex. 6:4; Ezek. 16:60, 62; Heb. 8:8

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God's choosing to enter into a loving covenant relationship with betraying sinners reveals seven things about God.

- 1) God is relational and invites us into loving relationship
- 2) God is gracious and gives us everything despite owing us nothing
- 3) God is sovereign and actively initiates covenant with us
- 4) God is Lord and solely establishes terms of the covenant
- 5) God is Holy and cuts covenants by having a sacrifice for sin
- 6) God is loving and pours out blessings to help us obey Him
- 7) God is just and has consequences, or curses, for those outside of covenant with Him

The Abrahamic Covenant

God makes five major covenants in the Bible⁵: with Noah and his family^a, Abraham and his descendants^b, Moses and the Israelites^c, David and the kingdom of Israel^d, and the new covenant of Jesus and the church^e.

We start reading the story of one of those men, Abraham, in Genesis 12. When Abraham was called by God to become the father of a new nation, the prototype of a life of faith, and one of the most important men in the Bible, he was simply another sinner living among the scattered nations.

^a Gen. 6:18; 9:8-17 ^b Gen. 12:1-3, 15:18, 17:1-14, 22:16-18 ^c Ex. 3:4-10, 6:7, 19:5-6, 24:8 ^d 2 Samuel 7:8-19; Psalm 89:3 ^e Matt. 16:17-19, 26:28; Luke 22:20

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We know very little about Abraham before God called him other than his genealogy, his barren wife, and his temporary home in Haran after having been born in Ur of the Chaldeans^a. Since Nehemiah 9:7 and Acts 7:2-3 seem to indicate that God called Abraham in Ur of the Chaldeans, and the key city of the Chaldeans was Babylon, Abraham may have even been called out of Babylon as a Babylonian who perhaps even sought to help build that great city that God judged, demonstrating the graciousness of God's grace^b. It is amazing that Abraham was seemingly just another sinner from a godless family when he too found gracious favor in the eyes of the Lord^c.

The one true God shows up in his life, telling him to leave his mother and father and head towards a land he promises him, aptly named the Promised Land. He then promises Abraham that, through his elderly wife who was barren, he would be a father. He was promised a great nation blessed by God that would be a blessing to the nations of the earth through one of his offspring or seed. This refers back to the original "seed" promise of Jesus coming in Genesis 3:15. The noun is singular, meaning Jesus. It is also collective, referring to Israel, the carrier of promise^d. Galatians 3:16 says, "Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, 'And to offsprings,' referring to many, but referring to one, 'And to your offspring,' who is Christ."

^a Gen. 11:27-32 ^b E.g., Isa. 13:19; 48:14; Jer. 24:5; 25:12; 50:1; Ezek. 1:3; 12:13; 23:15 ^c Josh 24:2 tells us that Abraham's father "served other gods" ^d Gen. 3:15; Matt. 1:1,17

Land, Lineage, and Lord

In Genesis 15, we see God appear to Abraham again and speak to him what we call the Abrahamic Covenant, which included three things – 1) Land 2) Lineage 3) Lord. Ever since then, there has been a battle for these three things between two people groups because of Abraham's sin following the covenant. As soon as the covenant was uttered, a demonic attack began for those three things that continues to this day. What God builds, Satan breaks. What God creates, Satan counterfeits. Who God loves, Satan hates. Who God blesses, Satan curses.

The first aspect – the Promised Land – becomes a central theme throughout Scripture. The Old Testament mentions this land around 2,000 times and the nation of Israel about 700 times. The New Testament mentions them as well. If you look at Israel on a map, it is a tiny dot. In the Bible however, it is the center point of God's plan for the world and the place where Jesus came to, the gospel went out from, and Jesus is returning to.

As for the second part of the covenant, Abraham (originally named Abram) was married to a woman named Sarah (originally named Sarai). The Lord promised them a son, but they waited for years and years – until Sarah was 90 and Abraham was 100, to be exact. They waited so long that they stopped believing God would be faithful to His promise.

So, Abraham took things into his own hands at the encouragement of his wife, who soon regretted this decision. Like I said, almost every problem begins by not having dominion over our pants. About 14 years before the promised son, Isaac, was born,

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Abraham impregnated an Egyptian slave, a handmaiden of Sarah, named Hagar and she birthed a son named Ishmael.

In Genesis 16:12, it's prophesied that Ishmael will be a wild donkey of a man, that no one will be able to tame him, that he'll be a warrior, and his descendants will be just like him. A Bible scholar, "demonstrates that the Hebrew phrase 'wild ass' (פָּרָה, pere') is connected to the Akkadian phrase meaning 'savage of a man'..."⁶ He goes on to have 12 sons, just like Isaac's 12 sons who become the 12 Tribes of Israel. So, Abraham has two wives, which is one too many, and two sons. The question becomes which son inherits the promise?

The Conflict Started with a Covenant

Regarding the third part of the covenant, we get to the question you're probably asking:

What does all of this have to do with today's time or the current ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas?

This might shock you but the Jews, the people of Israel, descend from Isaac and the Palestinians, from which comes Hamas, descend from Ishmael. Judaism comes from Isaac while Islam comes from Ishmael. The current war in the Middle East is a family feud 4,000 years in the making. It has not been solved by political means and it will not be solved by political means. This is ultimately a spiritual war between good and evil. This is also a family feud over the Abrahamic Covenant. God promised to make these sons into nations and today, for the millions of descendants on both sides, this is not just political, this is deeply personal and

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spiritual.

The Hamas Charter is considered its most important ideological document. Its central commitments are to religious and political war between Arab Muslims and Israeli Jews, belief that all of Palestine is Arab Muslim land, sacred and stolen by the Jews and their supporters like the United States, and that terroristic jihad (holy war) is the main means to eliminate Israel and the Jews and replace them with Arabs and Islam.⁷

This explains why, throughout history, the land has been a constant place of conflict and war. Efforts to have a "two state" solution giving some land to each side in hopes that they would be content, keep to themselves, and be good neighbors has proven over and over to be a hopeless myth. Gaza, where Hamas was living, was such an experiment, and now a bloody, failed experiment. For those of us in the West, with a nation like America that is only around 250 years old, the kind of long, complex history in places like the Middle East can be a befuddling mystery. In the mind of Hamas, this is a 4,000-year-old fight between the families, and a 1,500-year-old fight between religions.

Roughly 2,000 years after Abraham, a man named Muhammad was visited by a demon. He says it was an angel, but it was a demon. Speaking of fallen angels who became demons, Paul says in Galatians 1:8, "even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed." The message the demon gave Muhammad was false teaching and lies. The consequence is to be "accursed" which, "likely means being delivered up and devoted to the

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judicial wrath of God.”⁸

Muhammad’s demon then reinterpreted the entirety of Scripture and, from these revelations, comes Islam. The demon says Sarah was not the chosen wife, but Hagar, and that Isaac was not the chosen son, but Ishmael. He makes Ishmael into the chosen son and the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant, from whom comes the Arab people, including the Palestinians. He even says it was Ishmael who Abraham almost sacrificed in Genesis 22, not Isaac. It’s all deception. The fight that started 4,000 years ago sets the stage for the conflict we’re seeing in today’s news headlines.

Make no mistake, the war in Gaza started in Heaven. The first war was between Satan and God for the land of Heaven. Revelation 12:7-9 says, “Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.” Behind the war in the seen realm is the ongoing war in the unseen realm. Just like Satan wanted Heaven and attacked God to try and steal it, so now Satan wants Israel and attacked God’s chosen people to try and steal it. Those who do not have the Holy Spirit cannot fully understand exactly what is happening and foolishly believe that there is a reasonable way to reconcile the parties, but God and Satan will never be reconciled.

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CHAPTER 2

THE HAMAS SPIRIT VS THE HOLY SPIRIT

Because of Abraham's sin, we have a constant war between the descendants of Ishmael and the descendants of Isaac. We saw that this week with the invasion and terrorist attack by Hamas in Israel. The corresponding global rise in antisemitism is demonic.

The recent terrorist attack took place on a Saturday morning, which is the Jewish Sabbath. The reason they attacked on a Saturday morning was because they knew the Jewish people would probably be asleep or resting, their technology would be off, and they would be more vulnerable. The attack also came at the end of a week-long Jewish holiday of celebration and joy. It would be like if terrorists invaded the United States on Thanksgiving or Christmas early in the morning when civilians are most vulnerable.

The Hamas terrorists can be heard shouting "Allah Akbar" which some translate as "Our god is great" but likely means "Our god is greater". This is a declaration of spiritual war. Ephesians 6:12 says "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places." What this means is,

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when there's a physical attack, there's also an attack in the spiritual realm. The seen and unseen are both being violated simultaneously, and you see people being empowered by evil crying out that their god is greater. That is a declaration by a demon against Jesus Christ, the God of Abraham.

So, here's where God showed up and gave me fresh revelation this week to the point that it made me dizzy and lightheaded, and my hair stood straight up on my arms in my study. This Palestinian group attacking Israel, the Jewish people, is called Hamas. Hamas is an acronym for the Islamic resistance movement. In Arabic, the word Hamas means "zeal". It's also a Hebrew word that appears in the Bible. This is deeply prophetic.

In Genesis 6:11, it says "Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence." The Hebrew word for violence in this context is *hamas*. The whole world was filled by the spirit of *hamas*. Hamas is not just a group; it's a demonic spirit that works through various groups throughout Scripture and history. The filling of the world with *hamas* is the demonic counterfeit to being filled with the Holy Spirit. What God creates, Satan counterfeits and the reason God was so brokenhearted was because nearly everyone in the world was possessed, or filled, by the Hamas spirit instead of the Holy Spirit.

What did God do in response to a world filled and possessed by the spirit of Hamas? He sent a flood and killed everyone. The only people saved were Noah and his family because they had the Holy Spirit, which is the opposite of the Hamas spirit. The same Hamas spirit was working in several people

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groups after the flood including the Chaldeans and Babylonians^a, the Shechemites^b, and the Egyptians^c.

The counterfeit of the Holy Spirit is the Hamas spirit. The Holy Spirit is the spirit of life. The Hamas spirit is the spirit of death. The Holy Spirit is the spirit of Christ. The Hamas spirit is the spirit of antichrist.

Here's another shocking revelation God gave me as I was preparing for this sermon – when Ishmael is around 16 years old, Isaac is about two years old, and the teenage “wild donkey of a man” that we established means “savage of a man” Ishmael is mocking and tormenting his younger half-brother. So, you have a wild donkey of a man who is now grown and has no regard for human life because he and his mother are governed by the Hamas spirit. The literal Hebrew says that Ishmael was terrorizing Isaac, the same thing that the Palestinians do towards the Israelites. The Hamas spirit always terrorizes and attacks children. Case in point: Part of the recent Hamas attack on Israel is grown men terrorizing, killing, and beheading children.

In Joel 3:19, it says “Egypt shall become a desolation and Edom a desolate wilderness, for the violence [hamas] done to the people of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land.” God is referring to the book of Exodus when innocent baby boys, who are descendants of Isaac, are killed by a government possessed by Hamas. Here in Joel, God says He brought judgment and destruction on Egypt because they acted towards children by the Hamas spirit. When you see

^a Jeremiah 24:5 ^b Judges 9:34 ^c Joel 3:19

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spiritual and political leaders in different nations and generations doing the same thing, it might be because, although people come and go, their demons remain the same. The Hamas demon spirit that killed Hebrew children in Egypt may have also been at work with Herod in the days of Jesus when His family had to flee to Egypt like the Palestinians are currently doing to avoid the death sentence placed on the Jewish boys. As another mind-melting fact, Herod was a descendant of Ishmael, leading that same terrorist attack in the days of Jesus as happened recently in Israel. This may be because Herod, who was possibly a descendant of Ishmael, may have had the same demonic Hamas spirit inciting him and others to kill babies and destroy Israel.

The Holy Spirit and the Hamas spirit cannot coexist – one must be cast out, like a demon, which is just what Abraham does in Genesis 21. Sarah says Hagar and Ishmael must be cast out and he sends them away, confirming the Abrahamic Covenant and that God's promise will come through Isaac's descendants, not Ishmael's.

We now head into even more mind-blowing territory – eschatology, which is the study of last things or the end times.

CHAPTER 3

ARE WE LIVING IN THE END TIMES?

As the war in Israel unfolds, and rumors of other terrorist groups like Hezbollah funded by the terrorist nation of Iran begin to fire into Israel, the United States is deploying battleships to the region with troops on the ready. As nations like China, Turkey, and Russia are carefully watching the situation unfold wondering if they will be drawn into war, the global anxiety is rising. In conversations in person and online, people are asking ominous questions.

Are we headed to World War III?

Is the United States getting drug into an unwinnable war on every front by standing with Israel?

Does Iran, who is the puppet master behind this and other global terror, have nuclear capability and would their extreme view of Islamic jihad compel them to launch?

Are we living in the end times, and is Jesus returning soon?

The new Christians to whom Paul writes in 1-2 Thessalonians believed that Jesus had come the first time to live without sin, die for their sin, and rise from death to forgive sin and open Heaven. They also believed in the Second Coming of Jesus to raise the dead, lift the curse, judge

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the unbelieving, and rewards the saints with eternal life in the Kingdom of God. Like many new Christians, they became a bit too enamored with the complicated area of Biblical study called "eschatology". Like many Christians, these new Christians had a lot of questions about Jesus' Second Coming, and Paul wrote them two letters (1-2 Thessalonians) to help answer all their questions.

A Bible dictionary explains this term is, "Derived from the combination of the word *eschatos*, meaning 'last' and *logos*, meaning 'word' or 'significance'. Refers to the biblical doctrine of last things."⁹

A dictionary of theological terms further explains that "eschatology...refers to the ultimate climax or end of history wherein Christ returns to earth to establish his eternal kingdom of righteousness and justice among all nations. Eschatology, then, is the theological study that seeks to understand the ultimate direction or purpose of history as it moves toward the future, both from an individual perspective (What happens when a person dies?) and from a corporate perspective (Where is history going, and how will it end?)."¹⁰

To sum up all the nuanced and various beliefs about eschatology would be impossible. But, as a very general summary, one Bible dictionary says, "In the twentieth century there have been three basic forms of eschatology: thoroughgoing or consistent, realized, and inaugurated.

1. *Thoroughgoing eschatology*...is the view that Jesus and his followers proclaimed the imminent end of history. Since the end did not come when they expected, Jesus submitted

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to death as a way of forcing the full arrival of the kingdom.

2. *Realized eschatology*...takes the position that the first coming of Christ represents the full presence of the kingdom of God.
3. *Inaugurated eschatology*...views the first coming of Christ as the beginning of the kingdom that will be consummated at his second coming. As a result, believers live between the overlap of the 'already' and the 'not yet'. The last view most adequately represents the evangelical understanding of the biblical material."¹¹

Like most evangelical Christians, I hold the inaugurated eschatology view. As we study these issues, I will be teaching from the viewpoint that the Kingdom of God began at Jesus' First Coming, He currently rules over our world and history, is working through His Church by the Holy Spirit, and will return to unveil His kingdom in fullness forever.

With other Bible-believing Christians, despite all the secondary open-handed issues (e.g. the length of millennium, whether or not there will be a rapture and if so when, who the antichrist might be, what the mark of the beast might refer to, etc.), there are many points of closed-handed agreement that are well-summarized in an old worship hymn, "Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again."

While eschatology can be a fun area of the Bible to discuss, dialogue, and debate, we must not let it become a divisive issue between Christians. One thing we can all agree upon is that we will be together forever with Jesus, and every one

of us will learn some things that we were wrong about while we studied the Bible on the earth. Jesus encouraged us to approach the last days with humility saying, "concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only."^a

8 Major Themes in Eschatology

Under the broad category of eschatology, there are individual themes that appear throughout Scripture. Each of these themes is critical for God's people to understand the purpose of life, what happens after death, where our deceased loved ones are until the resurrection, when Jesus will return, and what happens after He raises His people from the dead. Here is a brief summary of the major eight themes in eschatology from a Bible encyclopedia:

Death. The Bible teaches that all humans will die (Heb 9:27). The only exceptions will be those who are still alive when Christ returns (1 Thes 4:17). Physical death, or the 'first death', is the separation of the soul from the body...

The Intermediate State. This refers to the condition of the person between the time of death and the resurrection. The traditional orthodox view is that believers experience a state of conscious bliss in the presence of the Lord, while unbelievers are tormented by separation from the presence of God...

The Second Coming. Scripture teaches that at the end of time Christ will return in a personal,

^a Matthew 24:36

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bodily form (Acts 1:11). No one knows exactly when this will occur, and it will consequently catch some by surprise, coming as a thief in the night (Lk 12:39, 40). Although the time is not known, the fact that it will occur is very definite. Many of Jesus' parables (esp. in Mt 24; 25) refer to this fact and to the appropriateness of alert, faithful, and intensive activity.

The Resurrection. All who have died will come to life. This will be a bodily resurrection, a resumption of bodily existence of each person. For believers this will take place in connection with the second coming of Christ, and will involve the transformation of the body of this present flesh into a new, perfected body (1 Cor 15:35-36). The Bible also indicates a resurrection of unbelievers, unto eternal death (Jn 5:28, 29).

The Judgment. There will be a time of judgment... some will be sent off to everlasting reward and others to eternal punishment...

The Final States. The Bible teaches the existence of heaven, a place of eternal joy, where Christians are in the presence of God, and of hell...

The Millennium. Many Christians believe there will be an earthly reign of God, called the millennium, immediately preceding the final judgment...based on Revelation 20:4-7. Those who hold that Christ will return personally to inaugurate this period are called premillennialists. Others, who teach that the kingdom will be established through the progressive successful preaching of the gospel, are termed postmillennialists. Still others, called amillennialists, do not believe that there will be any earthly reign of Christ at all, interpreting the 1,000 years of Revelation 20

symbolically.

The Great Tribulation. The Bible speaks of a time of great anguish or tribulation... exceeding anything that has ever occurred before. Some, identifying this with the 70th week of Daniel 9:24-27, believe it will be of seven years duration. Some believe the church will be present to experience this, the Lord not returning until the end of the period. These are termed posttribulationists. Others, known as pretribulationists, believe that the Lord's second coming will be in two stages, or phases – that, in addition to his public second coming, Christ will come for his church, to remove them from the world, or 'rapture' them, before the great tribulation. Still others, known as midtribulationists, believe that the church will be present for the first half of the seven years but will be removed before the severe part of the tribulation begins."¹²

6 Signs We Are Nearing the End

The Bible mentions six increased evil and demonic activities that will happen as we near the "last days" and await the return of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.

1. An increase in stress, anxiety, and mental illness.^a
2. An increase in scoffers who mock the Bible and those who believe it.^b
3. An increase in mockers of Christian morality who encourage pleasure, especially sexual

^a 2 Timothy 3:1 ^b 2 Peter 3:3

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sin.^a

4. An increasing love for false teachers and corresponding hatred for Bible preachers.^b
5. An increase in people who are anti-Christ, leading a massive counterfeit "Christian" apostasy, which paves the way for the Antichrist.^c
6. An increase in wealth, comfort, and a sense that God is not needed for a successful life or concern for eternity.^d

When Jesus died on a Friday, it seemed like all hope was lost. Then, everything turned around quickly and miraculously when Jesus rose from the dead on a Sunday. Just like this, at a time when it seems like the Christian Church is all but dead, gone, irrelevant, outdated, and defeated, Jesus will suddenly and unexpectedly return. With His Second Coming will come the resurrection of the dead, final judgment, and sentencing to Heaven or Hell for every person who has lived.^e No one will escape His judgment.

Spiritual Wars are Behind Every Physical War

As I mentioned earlier in this book, I pick my sermon series generally a year in advance and I felt like God told me to do 1 Thessalonians. I had no idea we were going to hit this section the very week of war erupting in Israel. I didn't know we'd be dealing with the Second Coming of Jesus as prophetic events are unfolding that pave the way, sooner or later, for the Second Coming of Jesus.

^a Jude 18 ^b 2 Timothy 4:1-4 ^c 1 John 2:18-19 ^d James 5:3
^e John 6:39-40, 6:44, 6:54, 11:24, 12:48

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Senior Hamas official Mahmoud Al-Zahar says:
"The entire planet will be under our law; there will be no more Jews or Christian traitors. We believe in what our Prophet Muhammad said...Allah drew the ends of the world near one another for my sake, and I have seen its eastern and western ends. The dominion of my nation would reach those ends that have been drawn near me...The entire 510 million square kilometers of Planet Earth will come under [a system] where there is no injustice, no oppression, no Zionism, no treacherous Christianity and no killings and crimes like those being committed against the Palestinians, and against the Arabs in all the Arab countries, in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and other countries..."¹³

This is deeply religious. This is why pagan and secular people don't really fully understand what's happening.

He says their belief and desire is for planet earth to come under a system where there is no injustice or oppression by being ruled by a demon named Allah who is worshipped by the world. Those who refuse to worship Allah will be killed by the violent and murderous terrorist Hamas spirit. He says there will be no Zionism, meaning no Israel. God said this would be the Promised Land and Satan says, "I promise you there will be no land". He also says there will be no "treacherous Christianity" because we read the same Old Testament as the Jewish people and see Jesus Christ as Jewish and the fulfillment of the Jewish scripture and prophecy. He says there will be no killings and crimes committed against the Palestinians or Arabs, because they see themselves as the victims.

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Islamic eschatology, or study of the last days, is based on a world ruled through jihad, which is a struggle or fight against Islamic enemies, and then there will ultimately be peace. Islamic eschatology of the end times is literally the one world government ruled by the demon possessed antichrist, all of which is a counterfeit of the Kingdom of God ruled by the Spirit-filled Christ. Islam is, to its' core, demonic and working to bring about the Last Days and Second Coming of Jesus Christ to stop the antichrist, defeat the jihadists, and bring a true peace ruled by the Prince of Peace.

On the other hand, what does the Bible say about the last days?

We finally get to 1 Thessalonians, which is the book from which this sermon was based. 1 Thessalonians 5:2-9 talks about the "day of the Lord", meaning the last days, saying the following:

*"...the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them as **labor pains** [cf. Matthew 24:8] come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape... God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

Jesus came the first time in humility but He's coming the second time in glory. He came the first time to shed His blood but He's coming the second time to spill the blood of His enemies. The day of the Lord will come "like a thief in the night" unexpectedly. That's what happened this week. Israel didn't understand or anticipate the incoming threat because they were having what they thought were peace talks with Hamas. They thought Hamas was working towards a peace agreement, but they were

actually plotting terrorism. But let me say this — God knew exactly what was going to happen. God is never shocked or surprised. He is always prepared and aware and God knows, rules, and reveals the future.

This section of Scripture also talks about “labor pains” or “birth pains” as it’s said throughout the Bible. Jesus uses the same analogy in Matthew 24:8. When they’re mentioned, the Bible says the pains will increase with frequency and intensity until something new is birthed, just like the way in which human life is birthed. Eternity will be birthed as we are birthed. There is great pain, pressure, and disorientation that increases until a mother feels like she’s going to die, and then new life is born. History is having labor pains, and just before it feels like we will all die, eternity will be birthed with the entrance of Jesus into the world for the last time.

What we are experiencing right now are labor pains, so to speak. The wars, the death, the fighting, the bloodshed will continually increase and increase until it births eternity and the Second Coming of Jesus. As we see things getting darker, the Christian can have hope that Jesus is getting closer.

What Happens to Believers Who Die Before Jesus’ Second Coming?

The Thessalonians are a godly church, and they really just have some questions of Paul, especially because many of them are newer believers. One of their questions is: What happened to my loved one who already died?

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Many of you have loved ones who have died, some who knew Jesus, and some who unfortunately did not. You're also probably wondering – what happened to them?

The Bible uses different language for the death of an unbeliever versus a believer – for an unbeliever, its “death” and for a believer, it’s “sleep”. It’s an analogy or metaphor because their body is in the ground like they’re sleeping, but their soul is with the Lord. You’re one person with two parts – body and soul – and as much as humanity tries to better their physical bodies through fad diets, plastic surgery, and gallons of makeup, the body is not the truest part of you. The soul is the truest part of you because it can live without the body.

Paul says it this way in another one of the numerous New Testament books he wrote: In 2 Corinthians 5:8, he says “...we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord.” In Philippians 1:21-23, he says, “For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain...My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better.”

So, when you’re a Christian, your body goes into the ground and your soul goes to be with the Lord. You are still alive and living in the presence of God until the Second Coming of Jesus when He will rejoin, reunite, and resurrect your body and soul. Your body will come out of the grave and you will be perfectly healed, and you will live forever. Heaven is a tremendous family and will be the homecoming that never ends.

In the first chapters of the Bible, Genesis 1-2, God made us body and soul to have dominion and life. Just one chapter later, in Genesis 3, our

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first parents, Adam and Eve, sin against God. Heaven is going to look like Genesis 1-2 because God got it right the first time, and He'll bring us back to His original divine design.

You'll be in a healed, resurrected body. You're going to see family and friends. You're going to go exploring. You're going to eat good food. You're going to go to great concerts. You're going to worship God. The sun's going to shine every day. To depart and be with the Lord is far better than anything this world can provide or promise. 1 Thessalonians 4:18 says to encourage one another with these words because, as it gets darker, the light of the world is coming.

What Happens to Believers Who are Alive at Jesus' Second Coming?

The second question the Thessalonians have of Paul is what happens to believers who are alive when Jesus comes back?

In Acts 1, after Jesus rose from death and His body and soul were reunited, He ascended into Heaven on the Mount of Olives. He descended to earth, born as a baby, to live, die, be buried, and to rise, and then he ascended. He went back up to Heaven. Two men, who were likely angels, are present and the disciples are also watching. They're like "Jesus is gone and we're not. What do we do now?"

Before He ascends, He tells them they'll receive power from the Holy Spirit and will go to be witnesses to the nations of the earth, starting in Jerusalem. That's why there's always a fight in Jerusalem. In verse 11, the angels tell

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the disciples that Jesus will return just as He ascended. He went up from the Mount of Olives and He'll come back down to the Mount of Olives. This mountain has vast significance in Jesus' life as it's where he prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane the day before He was crucified. Many times throughout His earthly ministry, He returned here to pray^a.

1 Thessalonians 4:16 says He'll descend from Heaven, which is reminiscent of the divine decree in Daniel^b that says He comes on the clouds and will descend from Heaven with an archangel. Jude 9 talks about the archangel Michael, one of two angels named in the Bible (the other is Gabriel). So, it seems when Jesus returns, he comes with an angelic army and leading that angelic army is the archangel Michael, who will be like a ruling military commander.

When Jesus returns, there's literally going to be war on earth and the King of Kings and Lord of Lords will ride back into human history with His angelic army. There is no Air Force and no Top Gun pilots that are ready for this showdown. The truth is that every human heart longs for something like this. Every great blockbuster Marvel movie rips off the Jesus story. The world is in peril. We're all doomed. If only someone from another realm could save us, then we could live happily ever after. Every Marvel movie should tithe 10% of their revenue to a church, because they stole that plot.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 is the primary Scripture used to support a concept held called the rapture. It's the belief that when Jesus returns,

^a Luke 21:37; Luke 22:39 ^b Daniel 7:13, 12:1

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He'll take people who believe in Him from the earth before things get really bad. It's widely debated and is an open-handed concept. You may ask, "Is that really going to happen?" We'll know eventually. But the truth is, if you don't believe in a rapture and there is one, you'll still like it. You're not going to stand there and be like "This doesn't fit my eschatology so I'm going to hold onto something heavy and refuse to go up". If there's a rapture and you love Jesus, you're going to go.

The beautiful part of the Bible is that it presents some imagery and then lets our minds creatively envision what Jesus has for us. We know He's coming back; we just don't know how or when. It gives us hope and curiosity, which is good.

So, the question still remains – are we living in the end times?

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The Thessalonians had this question 2,000 years ago and we still have that question. They thought they were there, and every generation throughout history has felt the same way.

The interesting thing is that Islam didn't exist until 500 or so years after 1 Thessalonians was written and, since then, the architecting of global war against Israel and the rising of the antichrist to lead that war has been set in motion.

In a Pew Research study conducted at the end of 2022, they surveyed people with a few questions about the end times.¹⁴ Since this was before the recent invasion of Israel, I'm assuming these numbers have probably gone up. Here were their

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findings.

To the question "Are we living in the end times?", 39% of all adults said yes, including 47% of professing Christians and 63% of Protestant Christians. When asked "Will Jesus Christ return to earth with a Second Coming?", 55% of all adults said yes, with 75% of professing Christians and 92% of Protestant Christians among that number.

Let me say this, 55% of adults said yes Jesus is coming back, but they don't all love Jesus. If I could point out the obvious, the question is "Is Jesus coming back to kill His enemies and send people to Hell?" For sure. "Do you love Him?" Nope. You need to rethink your plan. It's crazy.

Finally, when asked "Will Jesus return during your lifetime?", 10% of all adults agreed, including 21% of Protestant Christians, while 27% of all adults were unsure.

So, the question is, what are the final labor or birth plans that show or reveal that we're near the end? It's war. A final war is coming that will usher in and trigger the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, which we'll look at more in the next chapter.

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CHAPTER 4

THE FINAL WAR IS COMING

Almost everyone has an imbalanced view of Jesus' emotional life. Practically, we tend to see Him as either lion or lamb and not both. Those of us with more lamb personalities will focus on the parts of the Bible where Jesus was meek, kind, patient, loving, and appears more passive if not even timid. Those of us with more lion personalities will focus on the parts of the Bible where Jesus was strong, firm, urgent, controversial, and appears more active if not aggressive.

Are you more of a lion or a lamb? Do you see Jesus more as a lion or a lamb?

The Bible presents Jesus as both a lion and a lamb. Revelation 5:5-6 speaks of Jesus saying, "Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered...And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain..."

Jesus came to earth once in tenderness as a lamb as He was born a baby, crucified on a cross, resurrected from the dead, and ascended to Heaven. Lambs are meek creatures who stick together with their flock because they are very social animals. Lambs are vulnerable and so comforting and safe that we invite children to count them at night

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until they fall asleep. Lambs eat grass and are not a threat to any animal or human.

We witness Jesus as lamb in His tender love for women, children, the outcast, and suffering. Examples include the healing of Jairus' daughter, forgiving the sinful Samaritan woman at the well, weeping at the death of His friend Lazarus, and tenderly caring for His mother Mary from the cross. As a lamb, Jesus is tender.

Sometimes Jesus is a lion. A lion is the king of the jungle. A lion eats whatever it wants – buffalo, hogs, and even elephants or alligators. A male lion lives in a pride or pack with mainly females and children and will go to war against anything that threatens his pack. We see Jesus as a lion in His repeated wars with Satan, fights with demonic religious leaders, and making a whip to attack money changers at the Temple for exchanging the worship of God for the demon god of money, Mammon.

When Jesus returns the second time, He will return as a lion. The reason He has not yet had the final judgment is not because He is indifferent, but rather He is patient and is giving sinners ample opportunity to trust in the Savior, "Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed."^a

Jesus said that believers store up treasures for themselves in Heaven by their works in the

^a Rom. 2:4-5

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Spirit, so Paul says that unbelievers similarly store up wrath for themselves in Hell by their works of the flesh. Paul even uses the same Greek word as Jesus to contrast the judgment of believers and unbelievers^a. Paul concludes by saying of God, "He will render to each one according to his works: to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury...For God shows no partiality."^b

A day is coming when God will judge the living and the dead^c through the Son.^d When the Son of Man's throne arrives on the earth, all will stand before Him for judgment.^e

The Battle of Armageddon

Ezekiel 38-39 talks about a final war to end all wars. This is the same battle mentioned as the Battle of Armageddon in Revelation 16:16. It's pretty deep, so this will simply be a summary to tie in the concept to our study of the Last Days.

These two chapters mention several different nations with geographic locations around Israel. Today, a few thousand years later, different governments have put different names on those places, but those geographies remain unchanged in the story.

This war is part of the constant effort to undo the Abrahamic Covenant, to take the land, to

^a Matt. 6:19; Rom. 2:5 ^b Rom. 2:6-8, 11 ^c Acts 10:42; 2 Tim. 4:1; 1 Pet. 4:5 ^d Ps. 2:12; Mark 14:62; John 5:22; Acts 17:31 ^e Matt. 25:31-46; Rev. 20:11-15

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destroy the lineage, and to change who the Lord is. This will continue until the final battle where the nations surrounding Israel are empowered by the Hamas Spirit to declare war, take the land, eradicate the lineage, and thwart the Second Coming of the Lord.



Source: University of Texas, 2013

Ezekiel 38-39 talks of war from the north and the south. Gog and Magog are known today as Russia, which is 18% Muslim. What is called Persia in Ezekiel is today Iran, who is the puppet master for global jihadist terror. Iran spent 100 million dollars in recent years to train Hamas terrorists in the south and Hezbollah terrorists in the north, which is more militarily superior, well-armed, and trained. What you're starting to see is Iran instigating a proxy war from the north and south through Hamas and Hezbollah.

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Gomer Togarmah mentioned in Ezekiel is Turkey, which is also a Muslim nation. Israel right in the middle is a tiny nation and the fact that it still exists shows that the God of the Bible, and His promises, are real and true. There's no way Israel still exists without the hand of God. The war in the south in Ezekiel will include Libya, which is Islamic, Ethiopia, which is 31% Muslim, and may also include Sudan and Central Africa.

So, essentially, the story of Ezekiel 38-39 is this: the Hamas spirit of violence will empower all these nations to align together and to strike and attack Israel in an attempt to undo the Abrahamic Covenant, take the land, destroy the lineage, and stop the Lord. This will be the final war because this would be a war that Israel would lose and Satan would win, where Israel would be eviscerated unless the Lord Jesus returns.

So, you're asking – are we at the end? If Iran declares war on Israel and they're working by proxy from Hezbollah in the north and Hamas in the south, then the Muslim nation of Turkey will align with them, and Russia will align with them. The United States would be forced to enter the war, likely followed by China and this is World War III complete with nuclear weapons. This would be the beginning of Armageddon, the war to end all wars. Are we there? Not yet. Could we be on the verge of this? Absolutely. The next few weeks and months will be telling.

But here's the good news. We're going to encourage each other, like it says in 1 Thessalonians. Stay tuned for the good news in the next chapter.

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CHAPTER 5

OUR HOPE IS IN JESUS

"Behold, a day is coming for the Lord...I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken and the houses plundered and the women raped. Half of the city shall go out into exile...Then the Lord will go out and fight against those nations as when he fights on a day of battle. On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives that lies before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west..." - Zechariah 14:1-4

We saw the beginning of the birth pains recently in Israel. In the Last Hour of the Last Days, the spirit of Hamas empowers Satanic nations to align together for terror and war. Then the Lord will go out and fight. That's where history is going. The Lord Jesus Christ is returning, and He is not just taking the Promised Land; He's taking every inch of creation.

Jesus will return to put down every dictator and every demon. He will raise every believer and the King of Kings will usher in the Kingdom that never ends. Jesus Christ is coming to fight for His people. On that day, His feet shall stand once again on the Mount of Olives. He went up from the Mount of Olives and He'll come back there. The

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Mount of Olives lies before Jerusalem on the east and the Mount of Olives will be split from east to west. When Jesus returns, the mountain is split, and the nations are judged. The war ends. The dead rise. The Kingdom comes. And the Church has joy together with Jesus forever!

For God, everything is the History Channel, and nothing is the nightly news. As I was flipping through television channels recently, I stopped to watch footage from World War II, and I was not anxious because it's old news and I know the ending. When I flipped to another channel to watch the war in Israel, I became anxious because the fighting was happening in the moment and the future was uncertain.

The God of the Bible knows, rules, and reveals the future. The war in Israel caught their nation and mine by surprise, but it did not catch God by surprise. God knows everything that will happen and reveals part of it to us in prophecy. Paul tells the Thessalonians throughout his two letters that we can have "joy", "hope", and "encouragement". To encourage someone literally means to pour courage into them. In our day when a demonic spirit of fear is draining joy, hope, and courage from the world, God's people are supposed to return to the prophecies of Scripture and return to joy, hope, and courage. We know the end. Jesus is coming for us!

God Rules and Reveals the Future

Established in 1947 by a group of atomic scientists, including the revered Albert Einstein, the Doomsday Clock serves as a barometer for

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humanity's proximity to global annihilation. It is a metaphorical measure of humanity's vulnerability to cataclysmic events, such as nuclear war, climate change, pandemics, or asteroid impacts. The closer the clock's hands are to midnight, the closer we presumably are to a doomsday scenario.

According to a survey of 6,200 Americans conducted by BonusFinder.com, 71.2 percent of Americans say they have **no faith** in the U.S. government to save them or prevent a doomsday event.¹⁵ Even more unnerving, many respondents believe Doomsday could come within the next year.

Every politician promises they will make things better, they will bring more peace, they will bring more prosperity. As good as this sounds, if you still believe this, there's something wrong with you. The truth is, everything is going to get worse before Jesus returns and makes it all better forever. The world is stressed and depressed because they're uninformed.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 says:

"But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds

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to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. Therefore encourage one another with these words."

Here in verse 13, Paul says not to be uninformed. For the Christian, we don't need to be ignorant because God knows the future. God rules the future. God reveals the future.

One of my favorite verses in the entire Bible is in this section at the end of verse 17: "we will always be with the Lord". It has brought me to tears all week as I've prepared for the sermon on which this book is based. 1 Corinthians 13:12 says we'll see Jesus face-to-face. In Revelation 21:4, it says the nail-scarred hands will wipe every tear from our eyes and we'll no longer have worry.

There is a long list of things we can worry about – Is there going to be a war? Am I going to die? What's going to happen to the economy? Who's in charge? What does the future hold?

Here's what you need to know. If you're a Christian, you're with Jesus. You're always with the Lord and the Lord is always with you. So, you don't have to worry about anything because the Lord takes care of everything.

Final Encouragement

As Paul nears the conclusion of his first letter to the Thessalonians he says, "Therefore encourage one another with these words". Our entire world is very discouraged, but I'm not discouraged. I'm encouraged because the world is coming to an end, and I'll finally be with the Lord.

No more wars. No more sickness. No more death. No more poverty. No more injustice. No more

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fears. No more tears. No more recessions. No more elections. No more lies. No more crimes. For good to begin, bad must end. This all happens when Jesus Christ returns!

Encourage one another with these words. Our God is over history. Our God knows exactly what He's doing. No one knows exactly how near but we know He's coming back, and that's the best news of all.

Let's look at 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 together:

"Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night."

If we live by faith, we'll one day see by sight. We believe in the Scriptures. We believe in the prophecies of the Word of God. We believe in Heaven. We believe in Hell. We believe in resurrection. We believe in judgment. We're banking everything on it. This is what we tell our children. This is what we tell those on their deathbed. This is what we proclaim to the nations. Jesus Christ is the hope of humanity and there is no hope apart from Jesus Christ.

"While people are saying, 'There is peace and security,' then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. For you are all children of light, children of the day."

While people were thinking there was peace in security in Israel, suddenly there isn't. The destruction comes upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a pregnant woman. But here's the

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encouragement! We're not in darkness. We have the light of revelation in God's Word. People look out and see darkness, but we have the light of the world that eliminates all the darkness. His name is Jesus.

"We are not of the night or of the darkness. So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him. Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing."

All of human history is in a head-on collision course with Jesus Christ when He descends with the archangel and heavenly host. There will be those in the darkness and those in the light, those who are asleep and those who are awake, those who are drunk and those who are sober, those who think there is peace and those who see the labor pains intensifying, those who are destined for wrath and those who are destined to salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Invitation

I don't want to vote anymore; I want to be with the Lord. I don't want to go to war anymore; I want to be with the Lord. I don't want to read the news anymore; I want to be with the Lord. I don't

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want to pay my bills anymore; I want to be with the Lord. I don't want to be scared anymore; I want to be with the Lord.

And I want the same for you. If you don't yet have a relationship with Jesus and you're reading this book, it's not too late. The Bible says all those who call on the name of the Lord will be saved^a. A few verses earlier, Romans 10:9 says "... because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your hart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

It's that simple. Turn from your sin and turn to Jesus. If you earnestly ask Him to forgive you, He will. Find a godly, Bible-teaching church and start to learn God's word and be in healthy community with other believers. Jesus is returning to judge the living and the dead and there's still time for you to be among those who go to Heaven with Him forever.

If you have questions, recently prayed to accept Jesus' invitation for relationship, or need recommendations for a church in your area, email our team at hello@realfaith.com and we would love to help you learn more about Jesus. As I've always said, it's all about Jesus!

^a Rom. 10:13, Joel 2:32

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APPENDIX

TERROISM AND HOW REAL MEN CAN PREPARE FOR THE END: A CONVERSATION WITH JOHN LOVELL

I recently sat down to talk with my friend John Lovell of the Warrior Poet Project about Islamic terrorist threats, open borders, impending geopolitical war, and what this means practically for men to protect themselves and their families. The following are excerpts from that conversation in hopes that it helps you and gives you some practical steps and ways to deal with current and future events.

Pastor Mark (PM): Pastor Mark here with my friend John Lovell. We're going to jump right into it. Is that good?

John Lovell (JL): Yeah, let's do it.

PM: We're going to talk about Islamic terrorism, threats in the US, the mindset of an Islamic terrorist, and how men can prepare themselves, because we've got an open border. If we're expecting this current administration to protect us, then we officially need to be drug tested. Let's just jump right in. I think everybody kind of knows you – army ranger, military combat tactician. Give us the mindset of an Islamic terrorist and

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your experience and what we're dealing with now geopolitically in Israel and probably spreading globally from there.

JL: After 9/11, I was shipped off across the pond, Afghanistan, Iraq, I did multiple tours. One difficult thing I found, and this was really shocking to me, was the terrorists were actually pretty difficult to find. We were over there trying to find a fight and here we found terrorists even in their own country. So, we're cruising through Afghanistan or amidst the palaces of Iraq, and we can't find anyone to fight. They're hiding amongst the crowds. Then maybe you're in a vehicle convoy and they pop out of a crowd, shoot with an AK and then disappear. And it's like "What do you do with that?" Or you're set up somewhere and they do a rocket attack or an ambush, and then by the time you get up to where the rockets came from, nobody's there. So, it's very difficult to even find a fight. Oftentimes, we'd shrink our numbers so we'd have less people, and we'd just go through a hostile area hoping somebody would take a shot at us so we could roll 'em up. It was very difficult because I was like "Fight me like a man". And so that was frustrating, but it was an early clue as to some of their tactics. They're engaging in guerilla tactics. This works well when you're matched against a superior force, and you can't take them. So, what you do is you shut them down, you harass, you beleaguer. Just a few folks can cause a whole bunch of pain for other folks. And this is a bit of a terrorist strategy. It's a good tactic.

PM: For the average person watching, what's the

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difference between attacking a soldier and a terrorist terrorizing private citizens that are not trained for combat? What's the mental difference between going in to attack a trained soldier versus a grandmother or beheading a baby? What's the mindset there? Because right now, on college campuses across the United States of America, there are a bunch of kids educated beyond their intelligence that are pro-Hamas thinking that we can hug it out with these people, that they're reasonable.

JL: Yeah. If those same college kids were to go over and voice a physical, in-person response to Hamas, "Hey guys, we're here to support you", they would immediately be murdered by them. Hamas hates you. And so, it is absolutely unthinkable to me, it's incredible that these naïve kids are really just this off-base. They have no idea the kind of hate and ideology they're going against. What I've found when fighting these people is that have a completely different ethic that they're going about. It's a bit of a totalitarian mindset, whether it's a deceit, it's lies, it's terrorism. Terrorism is when military or extremists attack civilian targets versus the military. When you attack the military, it's called a war. Military attack on civilians is called terrorism. And that's what they're engaging in. And instead of trying to actually duke it out with fellow warriors, they're trying to beleaguer an entire population. A lot of this is a calculation to steal the heart of your enemy or to be able to have some type of sociopolitical angle that you can do further damage with than just bullets in bodies.

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PM: I think that's what a lot of people don't understand. Right now, especially in the northern half of the Gaza Strip, you've got terrorists that are hiding munitions, planning, and strategizing from mosques, from schools, from hospitals. They're in soft targets with vulnerable citizens and they're underground with tunnels and bunkers. They're traveling with the cover of a human shield. So now Israel is left with this really difficult decision. It's what counselors would call a double bind. You can lose or you can lose. Those are your options. If Israel doesn't respond, send troops in to find the bad guys to take munitions and shut down operations, then what happens to Israel if they don't put boots on the ground and get in the fight soon?

JL: You cannot possibly exist as a country if you allow terrorism to just go unchecked and unpunished. Well, that emboldens more terrorist attacks. There will be far worse attacks and more of them and then all your commerce is going to shut down because it's not safe to go to work. You can't travel anywhere because you may get hit up there. You can't stay in because you need to go out and be able to get resources to be able to stay alive. Your entire country could disappear if you allow terrorism of that magnitude. And by the way, Israel is surrounded by her enemies. And so, for Israel, it's literally fight Hamas or die. And then there's other terrorist organizations around. Now, it could be quite simple that there's a Palestinian and Iranian dispute. It's been around for millennia. It's not going anywhere. But here we're hearing about this dispute afresh because Hamas is

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involved. Our big beef is against the terrorist extremist Hamas. "Palestine, deliver us Hamas and Israel is not going to occupy you. Just hand over Hamas." Now, if Palestine can't hand over Hamas, that means either one, they may not physically be able to, in which case I would say you're a fallen territory. If you don't have the military and the policing and the infrastructure to be able to eject a terrorist organization, then you're a fallen area that needs to be occupied if you're to survive. Or you have the power to eject Hamas, but you choose not to, which makes you ideologically complicit. Either way, it's really interesting and very scary stuff happening. But our beef is with Hamas currently.

PM: And you say if Israel doesn't put boots on the ground and enter the fight, then they cease to exist as a country. That is the objective. I mean, let's just be clear, right? Zionism and the eradication of Zionism is exactly what Hamas would say [is their goal] – to eliminate the nation of Israel. I preached on it last weekend. For those who don't know, Biblically, Abraham had one covenant and two wives. And I think your wife and mine would both 100% agree that two wives is too many. And then the two wives had two sons. He has Isaac with Sarah; he has Ishmael with Hagar the Egyptian. The Palestinians are the descendants of Abraham through Hagar and Ishmael. The Jews are the descendants of Abraham through Sarah and Isaac. And the fight is over the land that God promised in the Abrahamic Covenant. So, literally, this is the Hebrew version of the Hatfields and the McCoys that has been going for 4,000 years. So, any thought that the meat

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sack we call a president is going to fly in, have a negotiation, and settle this is an absolute joke. It's a spiritual war. And the goal is the eradication of the Jewish people. That's exactly the objective. So, back to my original point, if Israel doesn't go in and fight, they cease to exist as a nation and eventually they just implode. What happens from a military campaign strategy standpoint when the Jewish soldiers and maybe the 2,000 Americans that are being told to be ready to deploy enter into the Gaza Strip Palestinian territory? And it's not just Hamas who doesn't want them there. No one wants them there and they have no friends and all they've got is foes. What does that campaign look like? Because it seems like at any moment, that's the next step of the fight.

JL: Yeah, the next step of the fight is the thing that's really scary to me. I don't think there's ever going to be peace between the sons of Abraham.

PM: Not until Jesus comes back. We believe the Bible, of course, right? Until Jesus comes back, this thing is not settled. And the Bible tells us, at least in my view, like Ezekiel 38-39, that all the nations surrounding Israel are going to come together in a united front, probably led by Jihadism. And the entire worldview of Islam is that their religion will dominate the earth, everything will be run by the Qur'an and Sharia law, and then peace will come, their king will rise, and their kingdom will rule the world. So, what they are literally doing is ushering in the antichrist and the end times. That's the entire objective of Islam. So, at the end of the day, to think there

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will be peace with people who consider it their calling from God to eliminate you is impossible. In addition, Islam is a religion of death. One of the highest honors is to die as a martyr and then you get a bunch of virgins, and they get a sweaty terrorist. I'm not sure how that's a mutual heaven. And then your family gets you honored as a martyr and then they get paid for the rest of their lives. Make no mistake, this is a brainwashing and an ideology of death and suicide, and there's no way to negotiate with someone who considers it their highest honor to lose their life. So, for you as a soldier, when you go into a place where you're surrounded by people, whether or not they're militants, they share this militant ideology, what happens to soldiers that enter in? I mean, what does that reality look like? What does that fight look like? And how long does this drag out?

JL: I've face-to-face confronted terrorists using their own children as human shields. You kick open door after door, and you finally arrive at the family, and you've got this jihad leader or just war fighter and he's got the whole family in front of him, and he's ducked over the shoulder. Immediately, you're looking for hands. You're wondering whether there's a gun sticking out to be able to spray you, in which case you hope that you can be very fast and accurate. I praise the Lord that I never shot anyone that didn't need shooting. I never had that. I know of other men in arms who, it's a bad shake, but there is collateral damage. Now, it's the terrorists who put their own family and civilians in this that are culpable. They're responsible. They chose the place, and they chose

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to position themselves there. They didn't want to fight. They want to use human shields. Now, it's a win-win for them in that, if you don't shoot, they get to kill all of you because you refuse to shoot back because of the circumstances that were orchestrated. Or you do shoot and if there's even any collateral damage, they get to use that as war propaganda to drain all US support because hey, guess what? You're attacking civilian targets. And actually, even when that didn't happen at all, they'll still always claim it. No matter what was in the building, if you blow up a building, they're going to claim that it was filled with a bunch of children. And it's a lie. It's just a flagrant lie. What was shocking to me was when I was studying Islam or this extremist war-fighting, physical, jihadist sect of Islam is lying, deceiving, murdering – any type of act was ok as long as it was justified with "We are extricating the infidel from the planet – Jews, Christians, Americanism, Zionism". Like, if they're killing those people, all is good in the eyes of Allah.

PM: So, you say the propaganda is going to hit. And it does hit in the States. We've seen Black Lives Matter chapters come out as pro-Hamas and pro-Palestine. We're seeing radical, progressive, cultural Marxist democrats that are on the wrong side of the fight. And I think what is so peculiar is if you're a lesbian activist and you showed up, let's say, in the Gaza Strip, what do they do to you if you show up to wave a Palestinian flag as a lesbian, progressive activist?

JL: Yeah, they're going to beat you up a bunch

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and then they'll rape you a bunch and then if they can't get a heavy ransom for you, they're just gonna kill you.

PM: So, what we're dealing with, basically, are demon-possessed animals that are unreasonable.

JL: Yeah.

PM: So, we hear that there are about 199 or so hostages, who knows what the actual number is. So, you just mentioned it, ransom, abuse, or death. What's it like to be a hostage of a terrorist right now in the Gaza Strip? What's their day look like?

JL: Well, I have no idea. I've never been a prisoner of war. I've never been a hostage. But to think about a certain type of violent, Islamic extremist, this has been the same thing for 14 centuries. They're the worst enslavers of all human history. So, for the slavery practices, they would cut brush into interior Africa, and they'd take entire tribes into slavery, and they'd immediately castrate the males and I think something like a 70-80% death rate from that. The women are going to sex harems and it's just the most brutal enslaving. If you're going to be a slave, the worst place you could have been a slave for many centuries was to Islam, if you even survived long enough to become one. That's not taught in our American schools anymore. As far as our woke schools are concerned, America invented slavery. I would not expect good treatment at all.

PM: So, let's move from Israel to the United

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States. We're here in Arizona and the southern border is wide open. Millions are walking in, no doubt whatsoever, [people on the] terror watch list, people just walking into the country. This week, it was a few Iranians that were on the terror watch list that were apprehended. I don't even know how that happens. I don't know if they twisted an ankle, and they were hitchhiking and got the wrong vehicle or what. So, what is the risk now, just from a security standpoint, as an average American citizen, as this escalates?

JL: There are two major risks to terrorism in the United States. One, there's the risk of bodily harm and injury. That means you're going about your life, just like those in the twin towers did that day on 9/11, and a terror attack happens, and you physically die or are deeply injured, or someone you love [dies or is injured]. One way terrorism affects us is the physical aspect. The second is when we become so fearful that we really stop living. We stop doing all the things that we might have or should have. We're afraid of big crowds so I'm just not going to go to church anymore. Now, the terrorism is winning. You have to be braver than that. We need to be smart and brave and make sure we're not victims of terrorism in a life sociological, spiritual way. We shouldn't be giving over to fear, but we also should be really, really smart in how we button up the hatches.

PM: Yeah, and if and when, or I should say when, unfortunately, tragically, a terrorist attack strikes, we just conditioned the entire country to live in fear and hide at home. We literally trained

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an entire generation to live in fear and hide at home. If this happens, that default is already created. So, what can a man do? Head of household, husband, father, this is a lot of your life work with Warrior Poet Society. What are practical things that men need to learn and need to do to at least take responsibility for the women and children that God has entrusted to their care?

JL: Right. So, I just told you two ways terrorism can affect you – physical harm and lifestyle harm. It's affecting you psychologically, morally, and in fear of losing your life, you stop exercising freedom, which is completely disruptive of your way of life. So, I can immediately, pragmatically say, "Hey, if you want to physically survive terrorist events, don't leave your home like ever." You know, now you're going to be really, really safe. However, now you're a casualty in the other way. Terrorism is winning either way. So tomorrow, I'm hopping on an airplane and going to Seattle to do a speaking event there, which I'm excited about. Now, that's physically kind of stupid in the sense of tactical security of like, you should avoid airports, you should avoid major crowds and major meeting places. I'm like no, no, no. Life is going to go on for me right now and I'm going to still go about all the things that I'm supposed to steward and all the things I'm supposed to do. So, I'm not going to give myself over to that fear, but I do want to be calculated. So, everyone has to make that decision on their own. But pragmatically speaking, [there's the] classical wisdom of hey, avoid really public areas, avoid public transportation, avoid being stuck in

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a city that you can't get out of quickly, avoid big cities in general. Those are just some simple pragmatic [things]. There are other things like make sure you keep a full tank of gas. You never know when you need to get outta dodge or you need to be able to get home. Some other things that would be practical are, I think, everyone should have physical provisions in their home. I don't want you so dependent on the grocery stores that if something went sideways and our supply chains were disrupted, our grocery stores emptied, and people in fear and chaos ended up making rushes on our delicate infrastructures, you and yours don't have any food, and in three days when your pantry empties, it's going to be really, really upsetting. So, having some storage food in your house would be a good idea. If you want to leave, great, but you shouldn't have to leave. So, there's a good idea. There are also a couple things that, if we lean into what's happening in Israel, it'll underscore the importance of this. Israel was not awesome with Second Amendment stuff. They don't have our constitution, obviously, but as of late, they have made it very difficult for civilians to have firearms and ammunition.

PM: They're talking about overturning that. It's amazing. Once the terrorists kill everybody, it's like, you know what? Maybe we should allow our citizens to defend themselves? But it's tragically too late.

JL: Absolutely. So, what you do is you exercise your Second Amendment right as an American. You get firearms and you refuse to ever give them up

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because all gun laws that contradict the highest law of the land, the Constitution, are illegal laws. You get your guns, and you keep them because your family's life may depend on it. You think of these terrorist attacks that were happening in these 22ish cities around Israel. Very few of them had firearms. What would have happened if every home had guns and ammo in it? I don't know what the death toll would be, but I would say it would be less than 1,300 civilians, probably by a long shot, because when terrorists meet and see resistance, they go and run out in the shadows. I've seen this going after high-value targets in Afghanistan and Iraq. Oftentimes, the lower guy will stick his neck out, but I would see the higher value targets run out in the darkness and hide and use their family as shields. Their guns are thrown up, they defecate on themselves. And so, a lot of times, just like the act of killer, they don't want a fair fight. If they did, they would find a fair fight. They're a terrorist even in their own country. So, if you can mount any armed opposition, when they go in looking for a soft target and you reveal yourself like, "Nope, not on [my land]" and you're a hard target, they immediately beat feet, pop smoke, and then they go find somebody else.

PM: Yeah, there was a report that came out and it was devastating. It showed a photo, I think it was a family of five. They previously had lived in Boston, and they moved back to Kibbutz in Israel, and they were all shot dead holding each other as a family defenseless with no weapons. And so, as a man, to sit there and hold your wife and children, and some of them were older teenagers, and you have

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no means of defending yourself and just watching your family die in your home in your arms, it's unbelievable.

JL: I think it's a very loving thing to do for you providers, you people who are tasked with protecting a family, to never give up the means of you being able to do so.

PM: Well, what we know is evil never stops itself. What we're seeing are those on the progressive left who have believed this complete myth that humanity is essentially good to the core and people are not evil, the problem is that eventually those evil people show up, they do evil, they take over, and you can no longer deny reality. Unless you stop evil, it does not stop itself. It doesn't do moral self-improvement. It only does degradation and depravity, and things only get worse. So, the storyline of the left is that we're good and getting better, and the storyline of the Bible is that we're bad and unless somebody stops us, we're gonna get worse. That's why we need Jesus to stop us and save us from ourselves and change us from the inside out. But what we're dealing with here is ideological evil that is fully demonic and, as a result, justifies itself as doing good. I mean, that's how absolutely horrifying this is. And, you know, when you're beheading babies and putting it on the internet, when you're killing people and you are videotaping it with their cell phone so you can send it to their mother to watch their murder, these are not people that are to be reasoned with. They're only people to be stopped.

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JL: Right.

PM: So, any final thoughts on what we're looking at going forward? Even in the United States of America, if you're paying attention, you should not be afraid. But, at the end of the day, there are very genuine bad actors in country and what is going to happen should be concerning.

JL: It's the next step that is so concerning for me. And I have lots of questions because I would love it if the controversy just stayed between Israel and Hamas but if it becomes about Israel and Palestine and then the surrounding countries, what happens in going through all these neighborhoods and Palestine mounting up resistance? Then, it's open war between the areas and you've got the Temple Mount smack dab in the middle of Jerusalem, and you've got armed Muslim guards up there. I'm like, what happens if you take those up and then Israel's like "Hey, we got the Temple Mount. Let's do what we've always wanted to do and rebuild the temple." And I'm like yeah, we are firmly in an apocalyptic World War III kind of scenario. Like, man, there's a hundred different ways I can look at this of Iran or Hezbollah or different people getting involved where this just looks like a powder keg. I think this is going to make the Cold War look far less. You have to be real careful how we navigate this. But now it'd be a time for a lot of prayer. I think hopefully people are scared enough that we can wake up and find a place where fear can disappear and give way to following Jesus, loving Jesus the great warrior, the great King Jesus commander who's going to lead us all into

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victory. So, we need not be afraid. That's what I hope.

PM: That's a good transition. I'm sure most are probably familiar but just explain Warrior Poet Society a little bit and what you're trying to do there...training, resourcing. Just explain the heart of that.

JL: Sure. We love people and we recognize there are a lot of bad actors out there. And so, if evil has a gun, I'd like you to have one too. Some folks are called to be sacred protectors and I would like all you men out there to be able to protect your family and your own and that can be a really good thing. So, to that end, we have all kinds of resources. We teach in-person pistol and rifle classes to get you guys trained up so you can be forces for good in the world and protect. I also have a streaming service WPSN (www.watchwpsn.com) and that allows folks to be able to get online training as well so you can see it and then go practice it on the range and get good to go as well. That's one piece of our movement at Warrior Poet Society. Really, it's a values-based community that extends far from there. We're not just defenders of people; we're also defenders of truth. So, we want to be able to fight for freedom in the war of ideas, but we also have a physical component that we also supply.

PM: I'm going to close with one thing. Is it ok if I give you a prophetic word?

JL: Yeah, bring it on.

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PM: I pray for you almost every day and I've gotten to know your wife and your sons and John, you are a great man, and your wife is fantastic, and your boys are incredible. And as I was praying for you, I felt like the Lord said, "Tell John he is my son and in him I'm well pleased." And I believe that God the Father is going to begin a season in your life where you learn a lot more about your sonship and His fatherhood. I believe it's going to flow down to your sons, and He has an anointing on them and a destiny and a calling for them. And they were sovereignly placed in your home. I think the church you are starting is going to be like a family. And I think you and your wife are going to be like mom and dad, and you're going to love and lead well. I believe you are a fantastic man and I'm deeply proud of you. I love you, I respect you, I honor you, and you are a good son. And I believe there's a season right now that you're entering into where you're going to get to know the Father in a brand new and deeper way. And it's going to be one of the most encouraging seasons of your life. And I love you, I'm praying for you, and thank you.

JL: Thank you. I do not feel worthy of any of that.

PM: None of us are but it's just the way the Father feels about you, the same way you feel about your sons. And as you raise your sons, you're going to learn how He feels about you as His son. And you're a good son.

JL: Thank you, sir.

PM: Love you buddy. Tell your wife we said hi.

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JL: Of course. See you soon.

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ABOUT PASTOR MARK DRISCOLL & REALFAITH

With Pastor Mark, it's all about Jesus! He is a spiritual leader, prolific author, and compelling speaker, but at his core, he is a family man. Mark and his wife Grace have been married and doing vocational ministry together since 1993 and, along with their five kids, planted Trinity Church in Scottsdale, Arizona as a family ministry.

Pastor Mark, Grace, and their oldest daughter, Ashley, also started RealFaith Ministries, which contains a mountain of Bible teaching for men, women, couples, parents, pastors, leaders, Spanish speakers, and more, which you can access by visiting **RealFaith.com** or downloading the **RealFaith app**.

With a master's degree in exegetical theology from Western Seminary in Portland, Oregon, he has spent the better part of his life teaching verse-by-verse through books of the Bible, contextualizing its timeless truths and never shying away from challenging, convicting passages that speak to the heart of current cultural dilemmas.

Together, Mark and Grace have co-authored *Win Your*

WAR IN ISRAEL

War, Real Marriage, and Real Romance: Sex in the Song of Songs and he co-authored a father-daughter project called *Pray Like Jesus* with his daughter, Ashley. Pastor Mark has also written numerous other books including *Spirit-Filled Jesus, Who Do You Think You Are?*, *Vintage Jesus*, and *Doctrine*.

If you have any prayer requests for us, questions for future Ask Pastor Mark or Dear Grace videos, or a testimony regarding how God has used this and other resources to help you learn God's Word, we would love to hear from you at **hello@realfaith.com**.



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