“WHAT IN THE WORLD IS GOING ON?”

Ezekiel 38-39

6/22/25

A weatherman get a lot of attention when there is a stormy day. Why, because what we want to know is what the weatherman sees. Given what the atmosphere looks like, what does he see that we need to know about? Is it going to rain? Do I need an umbrella? Do I need a raincoat? Is it going to be cold? We shift how we operate based on what the weatherman has to say.

In the same way, God is talking. And one of the ways God speaks is through His Word and allowing circumstances in our world that are not pleasant or even scary. He allows those things for a couple reasons...1st because He already deemed it so and also to get our undivided attention. It's a wake-up call of sorts. When your alarm clock goes off and wakes you up, it brings you out of one reality of slumber and sleep into a new reality of alertness.

This morning, we’re taking a pause on our family series to address “What in the World Is Going On?” Maybe should say: “What Is Going on in the World?”

* What kind of world is our kids growing up in?
* Could we see violence happen in our nation, in our communities?
* Are we in danger? Will we & our kids be in danger in the days to come?

October 7th, 2023, news channels & social media feeds about Hamas terrorists launching a massive attack on Israel dominated the headlines. Attacks came by air, land, & sea. Attackers landed at festival & elsewhere by paragliders. Hundreds of terrorists crossed border on motorcycles or on foot & began randomly killing anyone they encountered. They stormed into homes killing people & taking people hostage – children, elderly people, others. Women were raped. Babies were killed. The attack resulted in the deaths of approximately 1,200 people, primarily Israeli citizens, and the abduction of around 250 individuals, many of whom were civilians, including some foreign nationals. Some were killed or died while being held captive.

On that weekend I knew of many Christians who were afraid, and where anxiety had set in very deep. Unfortunately, sometimes the realities of the level of evil in our world can sometimes disrupt our peace of mind, no matter how strong our walk w/ Christ is.

Fast forward to a just a couple of weeks ago with Isreal attacking key nuclear targets in a very aggressive move to stop Iran from producing the ability to have a nuclear weapon. Then we all know what happen yesterday from Americas military in destroying key nuclear targets as well in assisting our ally, Isreal.

In talking with so many over the past couple of weeks, it seems the question of the past few days have been, what do you think of all this unrest going on, or what do YOU think about all this stuff going on in Israel?” People are concerned, and dare I say even afraid.

Some here today, or online maybe wrestling w/ some fear & worry. We don’t like to admit it b/c we are people of faith. But there’s a profound sense of fear, uncertainty, anxiety across our nation, our world, and yes even our churches.

But here is the theme of today’s message: WE SHOULD NOT BE SURPRISED, ALARMED, OR AFRAID this morning – We need only to connect the dots left in scripture where we have got some really clear indications of why we are seeing the things we are seeing right now in our world.

Let me be clear this morning...This is not a message of politics nor of my opinion, but to open our eyes and keep our focus on God’s Word, not man’s word and opinion.

So, let’s start with the question, “Are we really in the “Last Days”?

* 2 Timothy 3:1-5

*You should know this, Timothy, that in the last days there will be very difficult times.****2****For people will love only themselves and their money. They will be boastful and proud, scoffing at God, disobedient to their parents, and ungrateful. They will consider nothing sacred.****3****They will be unloving and unforgiving; they will slander others and have no self-control. They will be cruel and hate what is good.****4****They will betray their friends, be reckless, be puffed up with pride, and love pleasure rather than God.****5****They will act religious, but they will reject the power that could make them godly. Stay away from people like that!*

* *2 Timothy 4:3-4*

*For a time is coming when people will no longer listen to sound and wholesome teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever their itching ears want to hear. 4 They will reject the truth and chase after myths.*

Now this might sound a bit startling and deeply disturbing, because the words we read in our English Bibles fail to do justice to the colorful and extremely expressive language found in the original writings, but I believe with all my heart that we have long arrived at and are living in a 2nd Timothy 3 & 4 world.

With that said, we can look at scripture in a way as to see what can be expected as we draw near the time God makes right ALL the wrong we see today...And there’s a lot, but again, connecting the dots we can see Gods amazing plan and hand in every single movement...

American Pastor David Jeremiah: “Every prophetic event casts its shadow. While the event itself happens in a moment of time, there are visible shadows of that event prior to its occurrence. For example, the seven–year period known as the Tribulation will begin in a single moment with the Rapture of the Church. While the Church will not be on earth to experience the difficult days of the Tribulation, the storm clouds of that period will gather long before it begins. The discerning believer will be aware of and watching for the shadows of future prophetic events.”

As I mentioned about the weatherman earlier, the scriptures call out the impending storm coming, and we can see the storm clouds forming in a way as to see what can be expected as we draw near the time God makes right ALL the wrong. There’s a lot going on, but again, connecting the dots in scripture, we can see Gods amazing plan and hand in every single movement...which should replace our fears, worries, and anxieties, with hope, confidence, and peace.

Here are a few clear events that have or will happen:

1. God said in end times Israel would be scattered & regathered. This prophecy is found in various Old Testament books like Deuteronomy, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel

* Ezekiel 11:17

*I, the Sovereign Lord, will gather you back from the nations where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel once again.’*

This has happened – May 14, 1948 – Israel became a nation.

Jesus warns us in Matthew 24:4-12 – about “birth pains” and the signs of the last day.

*4 Jesus told them, “Don’t let anyone mislead you, 5 for many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am the Messiah.’ They will deceive many. 6 And you will hear of wars and threats of wars, but don’t panic. Yes, these things must take place, but the end won’t follow immediately. 7 Nation will go to war against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in many parts of the world. 8 But all this is only the first of the birth pains, with more to come.* *9 “Then you will be arrested, persecuted, and killed. You will be hated all over the world because you are my followers. 10 And many will turn away from me and betray and hate each other. 11 And many false prophets will appear and will deceive many people. 12 Sin will be rampant everywhere, and the love of many will grow cold. 13 But the one who endures to the end will be saved. 14 And the Good News about the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, so that all nations will hear it; and then the end will come.*

*Paul tells us in Romans 1:28-32*

*28 Since they thought it foolish to acknowledge God, he abandoned them to their foolish thinking and let them do things that should never be done. 29 Their lives became full of every kind of wickedness, sin, greed, hate, envy, murder, quarreling, deception, malicious behavior, and gossip. 30 They are backstabbers, haters of God, insolent, proud, and boastful. They invent new ways of sinning, and they disobey their parents. 31 They refuse to understand, break their promises, are heartless, and have no mercy. 32 They know God’s justice requires that those who do these things deserve to die, yet they do them anyway. Worse yet, they encourage others to do them, too.*

2 Peter 3:3 warns that..

In the "last days," a period before the return of Christ, there will be scoffers who mock and deny the truth of the Gospel, particularly the promise of Christ's return, while indulging in their own desires.

They will question the delay of Christ's coming and disregard the evidence of God's power displayed in creation and past judgment like the flood

So, we can establish this morning, we are in the last days...Now what can we take from recent intensified “conflict” with Iran? I believe in some way, that these events of the past 2 weeks are the welcome mat to other significant events things that has now moved us to an elevated level in Gods timeline.

**The War of Ezekiel**

The Old Testament book of Ezekiel (Ch. 38 and 39) details a prophecy about a future battle with Isreal.

* Now just to note, this event is not to be confused with the famously known Battle of Armageddon in the book of Revelation. The Gog-Magog War involves a regional coalition, either before or during the Tribulation, in the hills of Isreal.
* Whereas Armageddon is depicted as a final, global showdown where all the kings and armies of the earth are gathered to oppose Christ and His coming kingdom in the valley of Megiddo.

In Ezekiel’s prophecy, we are introduced to Gog and Magog. Gog and Magog typically represent forces of chaos and opposition to God or God's people. Gog is described as a leader or ruler from the land of Magog. As for Magog, there seems to be a bit of debate as to whether Gog and Magog are one and the same, or Gog hails from the northern region of Magog. In many studies and commentaries Gog seems to be the king and Magog the kingdom; so that Gog and Magog are like Pharaoh and the Egyptians.

I. IDENTIFYING THE ENEMY

Ezekiel 38:2-6 points to a coalition of nations led by Gog. Where’s Gog and Magog? According to many scholars, this is an area north of the Black Sea and is generally thought to represent a region located north of Israel. Historically, some have associated Magog with areas in modern-day Russia.But again they don’t act alone…they include allies, such as Persia (Iran), Cush (Ethiopia/Sudan), Put (Libya), Gomer (Turkey), and Togarmah (Asia Minor).

II. THE CONDITION OF ISRAEL

In Ezekiel 38:8,11 we see this invasion occurs when the people of Israel are secure and at rest,

Israel is Restored from war, dwelling safely, living in unwalled villages (no defenses). The invasion comes when Israel is at peace, confident in its safety.

III. GOD’S FURY IS REVEALED

Ezekiel 38:18-22 we see that God’s fury is stirred His weapons:

* Great earthquake (v.19)
* Pestilence, rain, hailstones, fire, brimstone (v.22)
* Confusion among enemies (they attack each other)

This battle is not won by Israel, but by divine intervention.

IV. THE AFTERMATH OF THE WAR

Ezekiel 39:9-12

Israel will:

* Burn weapons for seven years (The act of burning the enemy's weapons for fuel is a symbolic representation of a complete and decisive victory over them)
* Bury the dead for seven months / Cleanse the land (v.14)
  + The sheer number of dead will require a lengthy period to bury them all.
  + The seven months are not meant to be taken literally but rather represent a complete and thorough process.
  + The act of burying the dead is not just about disposing of bodies but also about cleansing the land of defilement and restoring God's presence among his people

The scale of destruction is vast and undeniable.

V. GOD’S PURPOSE

Ezekiel 38:23; 39:7

That the heathen may know that He is the Lord. That Israel will no longer profane His name

Key Point: The war is about God’s glory, justice, and faithfulness to His people.

Closing:

In essence, Ezekiel 38-39 paints a picture of God's ultimate sovereignty and protection over his people, even in the face of a formidable enemy and a seemingly hopeless situation. It may not seem like it, but God is still in control of the nations. He sets the boundaries and still judges wickedness and will do so in a very big way and final way soon!

God’s power will be made known to the world.

* Romans 14:11

*For the Scriptures say*, *“As surely as I live,’ says the Lord, ‘every knee will bend to me, and every tongue will declare allegiance to God.*

Keep an ear out when you hear of Israel in the news as Isreal remains central in God’s prophetic plan.

You may be asking, why did you have to bring this up today Shawn? Because the truth is, we must be spiritually ready—the time is near.

* Romans 13:11

*This is all the more urgent, for you know how late it is; time is running out. Wake up, for our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.*

Not just due to world events, but because the end could happen anytime. Do you know Jesus personally, or just know about Him? Big difference.

Psalm 18:2

The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge.

For those who do, keep walking with hope today, sharing your faith with others, so they too will see all of these events from a different perspective...a perspective of hope, excitement, and peace!