

It's Getting Weird (Rise of Islam)

Welcome back on a Sunday evening... (baptism tub still here...)

- As a teaching pastor, I am called to "equip the saints" (Ephesians 4:12). Mainly expository, but every so often, there are moments in history;
 - seasons where the shepherd must look up from the immediate path and point out wolves gathering on the horizon...
- need to talk about what's happening around us so that we are not deceived
- My goal is not to scare you. It's to prepare you...
- "Christ wants his followers to live in such a way that when the world was falling apart, they were not" (Dr. Jim Denison) - part of my goal...

With that heart, we also must recognize, the Bible speaks of intensifying deceptions in the last days...

- 1 Timothy 4:1 - "In later times, some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons." - And so...

Message Title: "It's Getting Weird..."

- Over 3 weeks, looking at increasing phenomena shaping our current world:
 - The Rise of Islam
 - Reports of Aliens
 - The Advance of AI

More setup: Paul warned the Thessalonian church about exactly the kind of season we are living in:

- 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 - "The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false..." (sobering) (2 Thess 2:3 = Falling away comes)
- Satanic agendas. false signs/doctrines. and a falling away... This is describing a spiritual infrastructure of deception - and he tells us it will intensify as the age draws to a close.

Church, I believe we are living in those days...

So tonight, let's look at the first area where I believe this deceptive activity is visible and accelerating.

- The Rise of Islam. Scripturally infused, verifiably fact checked... (will post notes!)
 - Question at the end: "What am I to do?"

PRAY

First thing, I want to clarify a difference between:

- the Muslim (image) & the System of Islam (false)
- If you are a muslim, have come out of Islam, or know any - we love you and are praying for you

Mohammad's Religion

- Islam means "submission." in Arabic. (close to Salam: peace)
- Specifically, submission to Allah, which is the name Muslims use for God.

- Muslim is a religious title, **not an ethnic one**. There are Arab Muslims, Black Muslims, Hispanic Muslims, Asian Muslims. Muslims are to Islam what Christians are to Christianity.
- **Here is the history in brief... (a few reminders from previous sermon...)**
- Islam was **founded roughly 600 years after Christ**
- A man named **Muhammad was born in 570 AD in Mecca, Saudi Arabia**.
- In 610 AD, at age 40, he claimed the angel Gabriel appeared to him in **a cave** while he was meditating and began delivering divine revelations.
 - **(same angel... Mary/Joseph, Daniel)**
- Over the next 20+ years, the visions and revelations Muhammad received became the **Quran** — **Islam's holy book**
 - consisting of **114 chapters called Surahs**. *(direct word of Allah)*
- Muhammad also claimed that in 620 AD, the angel **Gabriel transported him to Jerusalem on a supernatural winged creature**, where he met Jesus, Abraham, Moses, and other prophets before ascending to heaven for a night.
 - **Dome of the Rock (image)** - *Al-Aqsa Mosque*
- Due to **opposition to his new message**, Muhammad and his followers **fled Mecca to Medina** in 622 AD — roughly 200 miles north. **(image of map)**
 - His movement grew rapidly in Medina.
- Eight years later, **he returned with a growing army, conquered Mecca**, destroyed idols, established **The Ka'bah** as **holiest site in Islam**. **(image)**
- **Muhammad died** of natural causes in 632 AD. tomb is in Medina to this day.
 - The movement split over his successor into **two main branches** — **Sunni (elected leadership)** and **Shiite (bloodline leadership)**. Those remain the **two primary branches of Islam** today; they disagree on much, but share the **Quran as the central authority**.
- What is remarkable, still fascinates historians, **speed of Islam's expansion**.
 - Within just a few years of Muhammad's death, the Islamic movement had **seized the Holy Land and spread across Central Asia, North Africa, and Western Europe**.
 - **By the sword...** The **Quran commands** it directly. Surah 9:29 - "Fight those who believe not in Allah, even if they are of the People of the Book, until they pay the tax and are in a state of subjection."
 - **"People of the Book" = that's us. Christians and Jews.**
 - The options are clear: **convert, pay the tax, or die**.
 - In many parts of the world, those are still the options...
- Now, something that may surprise you: Muhammad taught that **Allah gave four books** to mankind: **"The Law of Moses, the Psalms of David, the Gospels of Jesus, and the Quran"**
 - Muslims affirm the first three as originally inspired by God — but claim that **Jews and Christians corrupted them over time** and that the **Quran supersedes** them all as Allah's final, uncorrupted word.
 - **(Mormons, J-Dubs, others do the same thing...)**
 - Muslims also **revere many of the same biblical prophets** we do — Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Ishmael, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, David, Solomon, Elijah, Jonah, John the Baptist, and even Jesus. But since **Muhammad was the last prophet** on the scene, his word overrides all others (just like Joseph Smith) (re-packaged)
- Pause: we must be clear - **Islam is not a different road to the same God**.

- 1 John 2:22-23 - "Who is the liar but **he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist**, he who denies the Father and the Son. No one who denies the Son has the Father."
- Islam **developed 600 years after Christ** — and it **denies the very core of the gospel**.
- **Islam denies that Jesus is the Son of God**. The Quran states it plainly: "*It is not befitting for Allah to take a son*" (Surah 19:35). (they believe **Isa** to be a **prophet**)
- The Quran also **claims that Jesus was never crucified** — "*...they killed him not, nor crucified him, but so it was made to appear to them...*" (Surah 4:157). **Gnosticism!**
- At its theological core, Islam is **an antichrist system** - not in the sense of a single end-times figure, but in the **precise sense that John uses the word**: it is **opposed to the gospel of Jesus Christ**.
 - **denies Deity of the Son, and denies the justification of the cross**.
 - Friends, that is not a neutral or small theological difference...
 - That is **a direct affront to the heartbeat of Christianity**.
- We live in a time that all religions are treated as equally valid. **It is not so.**

Global Surge

- For decades, most Americans viewed Islam as something **"over there."**
 - That season is over... **It is globally exploding at a rate more rapid than ever seen in history...**
- Next to Christianity, Islam is the **second-largest religion in the world**, with **approx 2 billion followers** — **24% of the global population as of 2025**.
- According to the Pew Research Center, it is the **"...the fastest-growing major religion on earth, outpacing Christianity in raw numerical growth"** [Source: Pew Research Center, "The Changing Global Religious Landscape," 2017; NPR, June 2025] - **Poll variances** for sure...
 - **Potentially exceeding Christianity by 2035 (due to family sizes)**
- **In Europe:**
 - **The landscape has already shifted dramatically** - **immigration & higher birth rates**
 - In cities across **England, France, and Belgium** that once rang with church bells, the **"Ahdan"** (Islamic call to prayer) now echoes in the streets (multiple times per day)
 - In the **UK alone there are close to 2,000 mosques**. (**150 fold** in just 60 years...)
 - A **few areas of Europe** even have reports where **Islamic Sharia Law** operates as the **de facto social order** within some **local neighborhoods**... (*Malmo, Birmingham, etc*)
 - **Sweden**, once synonymous with Lutheran Christendom, is on track to be **majority non-Christian within a single generation** from now (*don't have time: Asia/Australia*)
- **In the United States,**
 - **see the same trajectory**. Larger land mass so not as noticeable...
 - The Muslim population has **roughly TRIPLED** over the last fifteen years, now standing at approximately **4.5 million**.
 - The Council on American-Islamic Relations documented **mosque growth: 1,200 in 2000 to over 2,700 in 2020** **129% increase in 20 yrs**.
 - **Dearborn, Michigan** is over 40% Arab-American with a **significant Muslim majority**.

- **In New York City**, beginning in 2021, the **Islamic call to prayer has been permitted to broadcast publicly** over loudspeakers *five times daily*, including *during Ramadan (February) 2026*, drawing **significant public media response**.
 - **NY Mayor (Zohran Mamdani, a democratic socialist)** (*public oath on Quran!*)
 - *This week: A lady in Paterson New Jersey* -
 - **It's legal: City Council passes the ordinance** (*reasonable volume and times*)
- But the *symbolism and theological statement* it makes should not be lost on the Church.
- A *former prominent Muslim* has noted that the **public adhan in Western cities** is **primarily a tool of political assertion, not personal devotion**.
- *"Muslims don't need loudspeakers to pray — they have phone alarms. But political Islam needs to claim public space."* (*Danny Durmawi, Political Islam Analyst*)
 - It's a **public declaration of territorial dominance** (*historical facility overtaking*)
- And we are *not talking about Iran or Pakistan*, people. We are talking about **New York City**.
 - (*New York has been strange from the 1800's... stronghold of sorts?*)
- *Not just in liberal states*, friends. It's **right here in Texas**. Texas is in the **top 5 states in the US** of both *total number of Muslims* and *total number of Mosques*. (*some of that due to land mass*)
 - **EPIC City, Texas** (*40 miles northeast of Dallas*) - **EPIC = East Plano Islamic Center** (*now referred to as "The Meadow"*) - *proposed master planned community for muslims* - Political battles with *Governor Abbot* and *AG Ken Paxton (Sharia city allegations...)*
 - *Greg Abbot signed a law in 2025 banning Sharia compounds* in Texas (*thank God!*)
- There is **something built into Islam's DNA and Agenda**: It's known as the **Caliphate - "An Islamic pursuit of government that, in its purest form, seeks to bring the entire world under its combined political and religious authority."**
 - That is *not a fringe idea*. It is *baked into their worldview and eschatology*.
 - This *"religion of peace"* has **global dominion as its true endgame**.
- And while *many individual Muslims are peaceful*, radical Islam has been actively targeting and killing people — **particularly Christians and Jews** — for decades on an unprecedented scale.
 - The **slaughter of Christian Nigerians alone** should be enough to wake any American up. There is **no other religious movement in the modern era that even comes close to this level of persecution**.
- We should be aware of these things: *both as followers of Christ* & as *citizens of a free country*.
- Islam is not coming to the US friends... **It's already here**. And it's *calling for sbumission*...

Deceptive Crescent *not "Croissant" - ha!*

- **(image)** *Often paired with a star*, (*adopted from Byzantine, Turks, Ottoman symbols*) - deals with the *lunar calendar*, specifically *Ramadan* ...further research **connects to the Caliphate!**
- Now, I want to *be a fair witness*. The **vast majority of Muslims in America are not terrorists**. Many are our *neighbors, coworkers, and even friends*. We must *love and live alongside* them.
- But **we must distinguish between individual Muslims and the foundational texts of Islam**, because *their texts' claims* are **impossible to reconcile with Christianity** or **a free society**.
- We are regularly told Islam is **"a religion of peace."** But *the source texts tell a different story*.
- **On deception**: The Quran *permits/even encourages*, **use of deception to advance Islam** among non-believers (*Surah 3:28; 16:106*). (*though debated use among Sunnis & Shiites*)

- Furthermore, **Surah 3:54** declares: "**Allah schemed, and Allah is the best of schemers.**" The Arabic word for schemer is **Makara** — *to deceive, to beguile*. Most Muslims *use this verse approvingly*, **describing Allah as the greatest of deceivers**.
- Compare that with: **Numbers 23:19** - "**God is not man, that He should lie.**"
 - These are **not two versions of the same God**. These are *incompatible theological systems* - one rooted in **truth**, the other in **deception**.
- **On violence**: **Surah 9:5** (known as the **Verse of the Sword**) commands: "**Kill the polytheists wherever you find them, and capture them and besiege them and sit in wait for them at every place of ambush.**" - **Who are the polytheists? Christians (trinity) Shahada: no God but Allah**
 - This is *not ancient history*, or "**radical**" Islam cherry-picked from obscure texts
 - **This is their foundational doctrine**. This is **orthodox Islam**, straight from the source.
- **Lying is encouraged. Violence is commanded. God who deceives is described approvingly.**

Cultural Pawns

- *Perhaps the strangest aspect* of this moment is the alliance between **Islam and the LGBTQ+ movement**. "**Queers for Palestine**" banners at political rallies (*image*)
- This is **spiritual delusion on full display**. *Islam's position on homosexuality is unambiguous*.
 - **The Quran** speaks of these acts as "**shameful, transgressing, and an abomination**"
- *In at least eleven Muslim countries: Iran, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Qatar, and others*, **homosexual acts are punishable by death**. To be clear, they *publicly execute* people for *same-sex conduct*.
- **Sharia law** prescribes severe punishment for homosexuality *across multiple Islamic traditions*.
- Yet in **Western political coalitions**, **Muslim protagonists and LGBTQ activists** frequently *march together* — *opposing conservative Christianity, opposing traditional Western institutions*. (*intentionally funded and driven, BTW - more on this in a moment...*)
- Here is what is happening: **the radical Islamist playbook calls for dismantling Western civilization from within**, using every *available pressure point* — *racial grievance, gender ideology, LGBTQ activism, anti-Israel sentiment* — to **fracture Western social cohesion**.
 - **The LGBTQ community is being used as a tool** in the short term while Islam works to **destabilize Christian foundations for long-term eroding and subjugation**.
 - Once the foundation is gone, **the pawn gets discarded...**
- **This is the nature of deception**: it uses people, and then it dispenses with them...
 - **The church does not hate LGBTQ individuals**. We preach *truth and grace to all people made in the image of God* (regardless of their struggles with sin).
 - But we must be **clear-eyed about the spiritual & geopolitical dynamics at play**.
 - Gullible people are *being used, deceptively*, and are **completely ignorant to it...**

Antisemitic Machine

- *Cannot do this convo justice* and **skip over the issues of Muslims and Jews** (*though many live alongside each other in Israel and are even close friends...*)
- The **connection between Islam and antisemitism** is *not incidental/conspiratorial*, it is **textual**.
- **The Hadith/Hadees** (*not mentioned above*) are the **collected sayings and actions of Muhammad**, they are **VERY authoritative** and explain "**how**" a Muslim *lives out the Quran*.
- *One of the verses in the Hadith* is **Sahih Bukhari 52:177**: in which Muhammad said, "**The Hour will not be established until you fight the Jews, and the stone behind which a Jew will be hiding will say, 'O Muslim! There is a Jew hiding behind me, so kill him.'**"

- **This is not fringe propaganda.** This is from the **most authoritative Hadith collection in Sunni Islam.** It's **mainstream Islamic theology!**
- The **explosion of antisemitism in the West** following the **October 7, 2023**, Hamas attacks on Israel did not come from thin air. **It was cultivated, and derived from their holy Scriptures...**
 - The **Anti-Defamation League** reported that **antisemitic incidents in the United States hit an all-time high in 2023 — a 140% increase from the year before.**
- **Qatar, through its state-funded media empire Al Jazeera,** has been **a primary vehicle for anti-Jewish propaganda** and has **“...funneled over \$4.7 billion into American universities and campus influence operations since 2001, according to the Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy (ISGAP)”** **Liberal universities are off the rails & being funded!**
- The **propaganda & battle for narratives** is alive. Prominent **“so called conservative influencers”** speaking **disdain against Christian/Jews & support for muslims (and winning)**
 - **This is nothing new BTW, it's been like this for ages... (and will continue)**
 - **And, I'm not condoning everything Israel or the Jewish people do either...**
- But, **this isn't just geopolitics.** This is the **spirit of Antichrist** at work.
- **Regardless of how one views the modern political state of Israel,** let us remember that God has only called **two people groups in the Scriptures** his **“Elect” - Israel and the Church.**
 - Now I am **not** going to get into **Replacement, Covenant, or Dispensational theology** in this message, **we need to focus on Islam,** but let's just remember: **we worship a Jewish Savior from a majority set of Jewish Scriptures.** It's a **Judeo-Christian faith.**
- And you must **not believe everything you hear online** in this information age. **Think critically.**
 - **Don't hear me wrong - my message tonight is not love the Jew and hate the Muslim...**
 - **ALL need Jesus for salvation, Jew or Arab... American or foreign... right or left...**

The Coming Mahdi

- **Here is where it gets fascinating for me... (though connections may not be how...**
- **Sunni / Shiite views different - baked into Shiite eschatology and Iranian Ayatollah govt - coming Mahdi - their world domination will usher in the 12th Imam (coming Mahdi) - feeds Muslim brotherhood, etc - see Jonathan Cahn recent video...**
- **Islam has its own eschatology** — its own **end-times narrative** — and it is **a striking inversion of biblical prophecy.**
- **Islam teaches that a coming messianic figure — the Mahdi — will appear in the last days.**
- The **Quran and Hadith** teach that he **will be the perfect Muslim who will arrive on horseback, unite the world under Islam, and establish global peace. He will rule for seven years through war, preceding the era of peace...**
 - Following the Mahdi, Islamic tradition holds that **Jesus will return and join the Mahdi**
 - **the return of Isa (Jesus), who will help the Mahdi defeat the Dajjal.**
 - **establishing this Islamic golden age. Does any of that sound familiar?**
- **An antichrist figure. A seven-year period. The return of Jesus. A coming kingdom of peace.**
 - It is the **biblical end-times framework** — **twisted, inverted, and repackaged...**
 - Some go as far as saying the **Biblical antichrist** will be the **Islamic Mahdi...**
 - Others assign **Ezekiel 38-39 (Gog & Magog)** into **end times geopolitics (Iran/Russia)**
 - Muslims teach about **Gog and Magog** (known as Yajuj and Majuj in Arabic), who are recognized as a major sign of the end times. Mentioned

in the Quran (18:94-98) and in authentic Sunnah (hadith), they are described as two destructive, large tribes trapped behind a barrier... who will be released before the Day of Resurrection

- **Secular west driving Christ out of its culture creating a vacuum** for the anti messiah with an anti Christian culture... you can already see the "spirit of Antichrist" At work in this...
- **Whatever your eschatological position**, the spiritual reality is undeniable - **Islam is a system in direct opposition to the gospel of Jesus Christ**, it is **rapidly expanding across the earth**,
- The **strong delusion** is already at work. **Millions in the West believe** Islam is **"a religion of peace"** **despite what the texts clearly teach and the blood that has already been shed**.

What Should I Do?

- **First: Do not live in fear!**
 - **2 Timothy 1:7** - "For God has **not given us a spirit of fear**, but of power and of love and of a sound mind." - **Greater is He who is in you**, than He who is in the world!
 - Yes, **some Muslims are radical & dangerous** (depending on **earlier/later teachings** of Mohammad), **use wisdom & discernment**. **Many are peaceful, searching, and open**.
- **Second: Don't over-rotate**. **Engage your Muslim neighbors evangelistically** with **truth & love**.
 - **Many Muslims genuinely believe that Christians hate them**. Prove them wrong. Be kind. Be caring. **Respect cultural and gender distinctions** — **men, women, etc**.
 - Remember, **muslims are not our enemies**, they are **a mission field**. Many actually do **love this country, have served in the military, and are our genuine neighbors**.
 - The **same God who saved you** desires that every Muslim on earth be saved
 - **1 Timothy 2:3-4** - "God our Savior . . . desires **all people [including Muslims!] to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth**."
 - **Start with common ground** — we both believe in absolute truth, one God, angels, resurrection, and judgment. **Use that as a bridge**. **We even share some of the same prophets and scriptures...** Start there. **And if the door opens**, encourage them to **read one of the Gospels (Luke)** - many have **never actually read one**.
 - If you want to get sharper on these conversations, I'd highly recommend a book: **"Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus"** (Nabeel Qureshi). Look up his talks **on YouTube**.
- **Third: Pray for Muslims**.
 - There are **reports of remarkable things happening**.
 - Missionaries are reporting that **Jesus Himself is appearing to Muslims in dreams and visions**. They call Him **"the Man in White"**. He shows up in their sleep and draws them to the gospel. I've heard firsthand testimonies of this. The harvest is real, and it is happening right now. **God is moving... Pray for them...**
 - **Pray for the radical ones** - Remember, **Jesus prayed for the violent ones — for the thieves on the cross, for the Roman soldiers, even for Paul who was hunting down Christians** before Christ knocked him off his horse...
 - And **pray for those being deceptively used** by the system of Islam as well.
 - **Keep in mind: leaving Islam is not like switching churches**. **It is a massive betrayal that brings shame on a Muslim's entire family and community**. **Excommunication is very likely, and in many parts of the world, Muslims can be**

killed for leaving their faith. When a Muslim comes to Christ, they may lose everything. **That should move us to compassion, not judgment.**

- **Fourth: Refuse the deception.**
 - **1 John 4:1** - "Do not believe every spirit, **but test the spirits to see whether they are from God.**" Do not let **media spin, influencer audience, or political theater** define your understanding of Islam. **Go to the source texts** (if mature enough in faith) Know what you're dealing with. We must be **wise as serpents; innocent as doves** (Matt. 10:16).
 - **Islam's Jesus** — **Isa** — is a false version who never died on the cross, never rose from the dead, and is not the Son of God (**Surah 4:157**).
 - **We respond with the real Jesus** — **crucified, risen, returning.**

Our Glorious Hope

I've taken you through some **heavy territory tonight**. **Don't leave here anxious or afraid.**

- Paul *didn't end his letter to the Thessalonians with a warning*. **He ended it with a doxology:**
- **2 Thessalonians 2:13-15** - "But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth... **So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught.**"
- Amid **all his warnings**... Paul looked at those believers and said: **God chose you & is for you.**
- **Not cosmic luck. Not random selection.** **God** — who is **not surprised by the rise of Islam**, by the **spirit of Antichrist**, by any of it — **called you to be saved through the Spirit and the truth.**

The Antidote to the **Strong Delusion** is the **Strong Foundation**.

- **You have the Holy Spirit** if you know Jesus.
- **You have the truth** every time you open your Bible. (*the Spirit leads you into it...*)
- Those two weapons are **more than sufficient for every deception of the enemy.** **ABIDE!**

Revelation 19:11–16 describes the return of Jesus — **not as a lowly servant on a borrowed donkey**, but **as a conquering King**. *Every empire crumbles. Every deception is exposed. Every knee bows.*

- The **Man of Lawlessness** is destroyed **"by the breath of His mouth"** (**2 Thessalonians 2:8**).
- *Not by military force. Not by viral influence... Not by geopolitical strategy.* **By a breath!**
- That is how **decisively superior Jesus** is to **everything positioned against** Him.

The **most urgent question** tonight is *not what do you think of Islam*. But **do you know who Jesus is?**

- A **great rebellion/falling away** is coming, but **the Return is coming** too! **Keep your eyes on Him!**
- **John 16:33** - "In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; **I have overcome the world.**"

PRAY