

ISRAEL, HAMAS AND JESUS

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October 7th, 2023 was the largest single day killing of Jews since the Holocaust. Where did this conflict come from? How far back does it go? What is it about? What should be the church's response? We always want to respond with a perspective that points to who God is. He is constant, unchanging, and in control, even when things in this world seem out of control.

THE BIG IDEA: Whatever God creates, Satan counterfeits.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think people want to know what the future holds? List several specific reasons.
2. If you were given the opportunity to see your future, would you take it? Why or why not? How many details about the future would you want to know?
3. How does it make you feel to know that only God knows the future completely?
4. Chris said that the Israel / Hamas conflict centers around 3 questions: *Who gets the land? Whose lineage prevails? Who will be Lord?*
5. **Who gets the Land?** *With your Bible or Bible App, [read Genesis 12:1-3](#).*

¹ The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land that I will show you. ² I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others. ³ I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you." [Genesis 12:1-3 \(NLT\)](#)

6. 4,000 years ago, God chose 1 person and 1 family to represent Him in this world. In verse 1, God commands Abraham to do what 3 things? What 3 things does God promise Abraham?
7. God promised Abraham 3 things: a land, a large family that would eventually become a great nation, and a special blessing that would affect everyone on the earth. But what was Abraham and Sarah's reality when God promised these 3 things? How can reality get in the way of what God promises us?

⁷ Then the LORD told him, "I have certainly seen the oppression of my people in Egypt. I have heard their cries of distress because of their harsh slave drivers. Yes, I am aware of their suffering. ⁸ So I have come down to rescue them from the power of the Egyptians and lead them out of Egypt into their own fertile and spacious land. It is a land flowing with milk and honey—the land where the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites now live. [Exodus 3:7-8 \(NLT\)](#)

8. Out of the trauma of being enslaved in Egypt for 400 years, God promises to give the Israelites a land that would produce both milk and honey. But the land was occupied and there would be resistance. How do you and I overcome resistance to what God wants for us today?
9. **Whose Lineage will be blessed?** *With your Bible or Bible App, [read Genesis 16:1-12](#).*

¹ Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had not been able to bear children for him. But she had an Egyptian servant named Hagar. ² So Sarai said to Abram, "The LORD has prevented me from having children. Go and sleep with my servant. Perhaps I can have children through her." And Abram agreed with Sarai's proposal. ⁴ So Abram had sexual relations with Hagar, and she became pregnant. But when Hagar knew she was pregnant, she began to treat her mistress, Sarai, with contempt. ⁶ Sarai treated Hagar so harshly that she finally ran away. ⁹ The angel of the LORD said to Hagar, "Return to your mistress, and submit to her authority." ¹⁰ Then he added, "I will give you more descendants than you can count." ¹¹ "You are now pregnant and will give birth to a son. You are to name him Ishmael (which means 'God hears'), for the LORD has heard your cry of distress. ¹² This son of yours will be a

wild man, as untamed as a wild donkey! He will raise his fist against everyone, and everyone will be against him. Yes, he will live in open hostility against all his relatives.” [Genesis 16:1-4, 6, 9-12 \(NLT\)](#)

10. Ten years have passed since God made a promise to give Abraham a son and a lineage. They get tired of waiting on God, so they come up with a way to help God out. How has your impatience got you into trouble? Why do we think God needs our help to deliver on His promises?
11. Out of this fateful decision comes the Arab race. (*The word Islam literally means submission—see Genesis 16:9*) What promises does God give the Arab race? How does God describe the descendants of Ishmael?
12. **From which son will come the one true Lord?** Here is where the biggest divergent happens between the Bible and the Quran. In the Bible and Hebrew scriptures, Isaac was born out of the faith of Abraham and Sarah. God chose Isaac over Ishmael, and Isaac receives that blessing. From his descendants come Jesus Christ. In the Quran, it is Ishmael that is chosen as the lineage, and from Ishmael’s lineage comes Mohammad.

2,400 years after Abraham, and 570 years after Jesus lived, Mohammed is born. A descendant of Ishmael, Mohammed goes into a cave, says an angel appeared to him, and gives him the gospel contrary to the one handed down by the Apostles, and he establishes a new religion. **Whatever God creates Satan counterfeits.** How have you seen Satan distort and counterfeit what God wants for your life? Your marriage? Our culture and our world?

13. With your Bible or Bible App, [read Ephesians 6:10-12, 18:](#)

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. ¹⁸ And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people.

[Ephesians 6:10-12, 18 \(NIV\)](#)

14. Chris said, “*Being Strong in the Lord means we won’t allow ever-changing headlines to make us emotionally unstable.*” How can you be stronger in the Lord and His Word this week so you won’t become unstable? What habits do you need to change so that you can be stronger?

MOVING FORWARD

Knowing that Christ could return at any time, what’s one important thing you’ve been putting off doing tomorrow that you need to do today?

FOR FURTHER STUDY

The book of Revelation and the second coming of Christ is one of the most talked about and controversial topics found in God’s Word. If you would like to go deeper and get answers about the End Times, you can purchase the following book by Mark Hitchcock called [101 Answers to the Most Asked Questions about the End Times](#).

WEEKLY READING

Spend some time reading and reflecting on the following verses: Genesis 16, Genesis 22:1-18, Matthew 24, 2 Peter 3:9, and Ephesians 6:10-18.

