



**Upcoming Stuff
Jesus Provides Clues
Exekiel 39:1-6
Matthew 24:3-8**

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Well, has this been a fun week or what? We kicked off Purim by seeing a last days version of Haman, in the form of the Ayatollah killed. We then witnessed the utter insanity of not the Iranian people, but of their government which is deeply into apocalyptic wishes. You see, the Ayatollah and many of those who are in the government are followers of the Muslim doctrine of Mahdism.



Without going into all this means, Raymond Ibrahim tells us the following.

Mahdism poses a serious, though vastly overlooked, threat to international security, primarily because its current articulation in Iran requires its adherents to take “proactive” steps to help usher in the Mahdi—most notably by initiating an “apocalyptic” showdown with what are seen as Islam’s foremost enemies: the “greater” and “lesser” satans, namely, America and Israel. (Ibrahim 2026)

Why the desire for nuclear weapons, to begin the apocalypse is why, or at least at some level that is what it looks like.

Why attack literally everyone around you? Because of that idea. Insanity? Yes, it is. But it is consistent with that specific world view.

We looked at the condition's requisite in Israel for the Gog Magog War to kick off and right now those are lacking. Yes, many are now questioning the prior “conventional wisdom” about the prophecy but the reality is this, nothing has changed. What is going on right now in the Middle East did not take Jesus by surprise.

And since it appears there is confusion, more than there should be but remember, accurate Biblical teaching is missing everywhere these days, some have said this preps for Armageddon or is the beginning salvo.

No, not really. There are many who are trying hard to conflate the lunar eclipse, the date of the attack and some of the players as all being prophetic. It might be as pertaining to Jeremiah 49, but other wise, I see Obadiah being fulfilled in Gaza and Lebanon and a shifting of geopolitics that will provide for the framework of pseudo-peace to set up things for Ezekiel 38 & 39. God is still with His people.

Again, and let me be clear, the United States is not referenced in the Bible. Yes, I am aware of the seriously crazy bending of the text some do to bring the US in, but if you use a consistent hermeneutic, nope, the US is not there. The only nation consistently referenced in the scriptures at the end of the age is Israel. Revelation only references Israel and Babylon. Ezekiel references Persia as a player in the Gog Magog war and all of what is going on today is making me think the invasion in most likely after the rapture but prior to the revealing of the Beast and the seven-year peace deal. But I can't be dogmatic about that.

Iran has been seeing a massive outpouring of God's spirit, and many are now followers of Jesus there. “A million Muslims have accepted Christ in Iran as tens of thousands of mosques in the Islamic country have closed, according to reports on the ground and multiple ministries in the region. In February, Mohammad Abolghassem Doulabi, a senior cleric in Iran, revealed that 50,000 of the nation's 75,000 mosques had closed because of a substantial drop in attendance.” (Foust 2024)

At present, we have no idea what Iran will look like in the near future. But all of that would change at the rapture. All of the believers would be gone all across the planet and suddenly, geopolitics changes dramatically. In that confusion an invasion takes place involving a coalition of nations to include Persia, Turkey, most likely Russia, as well as Libya and Ethiopia / Sudan. I say that because there is some disagreement on which border. God draws this coalition into Israel and they are confident of victory. But they are walking into a trap which God has set up for them.

Ezekiel 39:1–6

“And you, son of man, prophesy against Gog and say, ‘This is what the Lord GOD says: “Behold, I am against you, Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal; and I will turn you around, lead you on a rope, take you up from the remotest parts of the north, and **bring you against the mountains of Israel. Then I will**



strike your bow from your left hand and make your arrows fall from your right hand. You will fall on the mountains of Israel, you and all your troops, and the peoples who are with you; I will give you as food to every kind of predatory bird and animal of the field. You will fall on the open field; for it is I who have spoken," declares the Lord GOD. "And I will send fire upon Magog and those who inhabit the coastlands in safety; and they will know that I am the LORD." (NASB 2020)

Notice who ends the war. God does. All done so that Israel as well as the entire planet know, God did this. There will be no doubt and no question.

What else did Jesus say about how things look prior to His second coming.

Matthew 24:3–8

"And as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, **when will these things happen, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"** And Jesus answered and said to them, "See to it that no one misleads you. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will mislead many people. And you will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end. **For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. But all these things are merely the beginning of birth pains.**" (NASB 2020)

Questions

- When will these things happen? (Matt 24:3)
- What will be the sign when these things are about to take place? (Luke 21:7)
- What will be the sign of your coming? (Matt 24:3)
- What will be the sign of the end of the age? (Matt 24:3)

We have already talked about the number one problem we have in the last days and that is deception, being misled. Everything Jesus says to His disciples is prefaced with that singular concern. And that concern continues for us today.

One of the questions was about the coming destruction of the Temple. We have talked about that as well as the reasons for that.

Jesus then warns His disciples, and us as well, of some of the conditions we see around us as we are in the Church Age.

Here is a big warning from Jesus. What is this all about that there are those who are going to say they are the Christ?

Up to this point in history, no one had shown up and asserted they were Messiah. For some reason, that was not a big thing but afterwards, yep.

Now there will be many who do so.

It is said that in the last one hundred years there have been no less than thirty-six men who have claimed to be the Messiah, and these have deluded millions. (De Haan 1996, 9)

Historically, Yeshua was the first Person who claimed to be the Messiah. After Him, many came claiming to be the messiah. From the time of Yeshua until about the middle of the 1850s, a great number of Jewish



men—from Simon Bar Cochba to rhabbeta Tzvi and Jacob Frank—arose claiming to be the messiah, and indeed led many astray. (Fruchtenbaum 1983, 6)

Simon Bar Cochba convinced the people to rebel one more time against Rome, this became known as the Second Jewish Revolt.

When the revolt first began, even Hebrew Christians were involved. “But as the revolt progressed, Rabbi Akiba made the sad blunder of declaring Bar Cochba the Jewish Messiah. From this point on, the revolt was led under the messianic banner of Bar Cochba, and the element of religion now entered in. This switch or policy forced the Hebrew Christians to pull out of the war since they refused to acknowledge Bar Cochba as the Jewish Messiah.

The result was tragic. It was at this stage of Hebrew Christian history that a complete break took place between the Jewish Christians and the rest of the Jewish people. If anyone can be blamed for turning Christianity into a “Gentile religion,” it is Bar Cochba and not Paul, who has often been so accused, Jewish Christians were now to be ostracized. (Fruchtenbaum, Hebrew Christianity: Its Theology, History, and Philosophy 1983, 42)

Jerusalem was plowed and declared off limits to anyone who was Jewish. It was rebuilt by Rome and became a Gentile city and renamed as Aelia Capitolina and the name of the land was changed to Palestina.

There are many today who say they are Christ.

You can watch them make pronouncements on YouTube of who they think they are.

How do we know we live in the church age? This proliferation of Christs is simply a characteristic of this age.

It is not a sign of the end, people claiming to be Messiah is to be a given during the time period that Jesus is saying is about to begin. In other words, deception that is from the pit of hell and intended to keep people from coming to the real Christ.

Wars and rumors of war, localized war actually may also fall into that category as well. Localized war has indeed been the theme of the last 2000 years. Now we come to verse 7.

Matthew 24:7–8

“For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. But all these things are merely the beginning of birth pains.” (NASB 2020)

This is not the same as wars and rumors of war. Jesus is now answering the question related to the signs of the end of the age. Note, not of the rapture as some say, but of the end of the age.

Let’s focus in on the global war idea in the time we have left today. Nation against nation is a Jewish idiom for world war.

“Zohar Chadash states: “At that time wars shall be stirred up in the world. Nation shall be against nation and city against city; much distress shall be renewed against the enemies of the Israelites.”

Another Jewish source known as the Bereshit Rabbah states: “If you shall see the kingdoms rising against each other in turn, then give heed and note the footsteps of the Messiah (XLII:4).”



The rabbis clearly taught that a world-wide conflict would signal the coming of the Messiah. (Fruchtenbaum, *The Messianic Bible Study Collection* 1983, 7)

A world-wide conflict would not signal that Messiah had returned, but it would signal the beginning of the "birth pangs," Matthew 24:8. This began in August of 1914.

In the summer of 1914, events that began with the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand spiraled out of control to the point that in August, World War I began.

Following the plan of Count Alfred Von Schlieffen, who said "The heart of France lies between Brussels and Paris." (Tuchman 1990, 21)

What took place was essentially a stalemate and for four years, killing took place in a narrow corridor between France and Belgium on an industrialized basis.

Of the combatants
9 million dead
21 million wounded
Civilian dead – 10 million

There is much more but this was the beginning of birth pangs. What has been the result?

Millions have been killed in or due to actual combat "but in cold blood, for various ideological or religious reasons—comes to upward of 80,000,000 lives. Thus, during the twentieth century, no less than 167,000,000 lives—and quite probably in excess of 175,000,000—were deliberately extinguished through politically motivated carnage. That is the approximate equivalent of the total population of France, Italy, and Great Britain; or over two-thirds of the total current population of the United States. This is more than the total killed in all previous wars, civil conflicts, and religious persecutions throughout human history. (Brzezinski 1993, 17)

The beginning of birth pangs.

Depending on how you measure conflicts or war, 40 nations are currently involved in some type of action. Throw cyberwarfare into the mix and the numbers are off the charts.

As I write this, Pakistan has just attacked Afghanistan who has counterattacked. There has also been a cyberattack on Polish critical infrastructure. Continuing activity involving ISIS in Nigeria and now, we are in wait and see mode regarding the final act on Iran.

I am stopping there; we will pick up again next time. Let's pray.

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