

WORSHIP

SUGGESTED WORSHIP SONGS:

One God, Prepare the Way of the Lord, Blessed Assurance, Anastasis, How Great is Our God

WELCOME

Have you been following the news about Israel lately? Why or why not?

WORD

EZEKIEL 39:1-8 (READ THE ENTIRE CHAPTER 39 FOR CONTEXT)

“And you, son of man, prophesy against Gog and say, ‘Thus says the Lord God, “Behold, I am against you, O Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal; 2 and I will turn you around, drive you on, take you up from the remotest parts of the north and bring you against the mountains of Israel. 3 I will strike your bow from your left hand and dash down your arrows from your right hand. 4 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 beast of the field. 5 You will fall on the open field; for it is I who have spoken,” declares the Lord God. 6 “And I will send fire upon Magog and those who inhabit the coastlands in safety; and they will know that I am the Lord.” 7 “My holy name I will make known in the midst of My people Israel; and I will not let My holy name be profaned anymore. And the nations will know that I am the Lord, the Holy One in Israel. 8 Behold, it is coming and it shall be done,” declares the Lord God. “That is the day of which I have spoken.”

LIVING IN THE END TIMES is our new Sunday message series on biblical prophecies. God declares Himself to be the first and the last, that there is no one like Him, and that He is in control of world events. Why study prophecies? It validates many things: who God is, the Bible as God’s Word, the reliability of the Bible, etc. It allows us to grow in our faith and prepare us for eternity. Why study prophecies about Israel? Israel is the centerpiece of God’s timetable! Jerusalem (*representing Israel*) will always be news headlines (**Zechariah 12:2-3**). When God says something, He will do it, it will happen, and it will surely come to pass. Let’s look at ISRAEL’s importance in God’s plan, and prophecies connected to it.

1) GOD’S GRACE (Israel becoming a nation)

God made a unilateral covenant with Abram (*Abraham*), Israel’s forefather (**Genesis 12:1-3**). God did not have to create Israel, but out of grace, He made a covenant to bless those who bless them and curse those who curse them. God’s purpose is to bless the entire world through Israel. God promised that the Messiah would come through Abraham’s seed; the entire world would be blessed through the Jewish people. They are less than .03% of the entire world population, yet over 22% of Nobel Prize winners are Jewish! Google, Waze, pacemakers, polio and cholera vaccines, USB sticks – all these are Jewish inventions. They have indeed become a blessing to the world!

Israel was not chosen by God because of their number – but because God chose to love them unconditionally (**Deuteronomy 7:7-8**). This is GRACE granted to them – not for any other reason but the choice of God to extend love towards them. This great benefit reaches us also in Christ Jesus (**Ephesians 1:4-7**). We were made part of His family in His great kindness and love – in Jesus, we have redemption and forgiveness. When we look at the Jewish people, we see God’s grace for them and us as well.

God also promised the Jewish people a piece of land. In **Genesis 15:7-8**, God promised to give land to Abraham. During those times, the land was occupied by various groups of people. God declared that Abraham’s descendants would be slaves in a foreign land for 400 years (*Egypt*), and they would get out with many possessions (**Genesis 15:13-14**). The Amorites were a people group that would be displaced when God’s people entered the Promised Land (**Genesis 15:15-16**). God gave them 400 years to repent while Israel was in Egypt! **Leviticus 18:20-24** and **Deuteronomy 18:9-11** list the sins of the Amorites and other nations (*idolatry, adultery, child sacrifice, homosexuality, bestiality, witchcraft, etc*). That land was given to Israel by God’s grace alone – from the Nile River to the Euphrates River (**Genesis 15:18**).

2) GOD’S FAITHFULNESS (Israel scattered & regathered)

When we say that God is FAITHFUL, it means that HE KEEPS HIS WORD. God said that if Israel copied the ungodly behavior of other nations and decided not to follow His commandments, God

WORD (cont'd)

would scatter them (**Deuteronomy 4:25-27**). God is faithful, and He keeps His promises. He stands by His word, even if it means disciplining us. Discipline is always painful, but it is redemptive as well (**Hebrews 12:5-6**). God disciplined His people so that they would learn about the value of living within the bounds of God's law. tells God's intention was for the world to know the Lord, even in the scattering and defeat of Israel (**Ezekiel 12:15-16**). He promised to scatter and discipline Israel, but He also promised that through Israel, the whole world would know Him, and promised that after they have been disgraced, He will "gather" them back to their land (**Ezekiel 36:22-24**)! History shows that God's faithfulness kept the Jews despite the many events that attempted its destruction:

- 2000 BC - GOD calls Abraham to go to enter the Land
- 1240 BC - JOSHUA led Israelites to the Promised Land
- 1040 BC - ISRAEL under kingship of Saul, David, Solomon
- 990 BC - The Kingdom is divided
- 722 BC - Northern Kingdom falls to Assyria - scattered
- 586 BC - Southern Kingdom falls to Babylon - scattered
- 70 AD - Temple in Jerusalem is destroyed by the Romans after Jewish rebellion.
- 135 AD - Romans rename Judea "Palestina" after the remaining Jews revolted. These were exiled and forbidden to live in Jerusalem.

For 2,000 years, Israel lost its power and control as various empires took over the land – Assyrian, Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Greek,

Roman, Muslim, Ottoman, and British empires. But the Lord kept His promise of preservation and restoration of Israel. How could a country that lost its land reappear? What God says, because He is faithful, He will do! On **May 14, 1948** Israel was recognized as a nation. As prophesied, the desolate land of Israel was eventually cultivated and fruitful (**Ezekiel 36:34-35**). Israel now exports fruits and vegetables to Europe and the world despite how farming is not ideal in the Middle East!

3) GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY (Israel attacked and saved)

The sovereignty of God means that His ultimate control will prevail – even if Israel is threatened. God also warns Israel's neighbors against going against His people (**Ezekiel 38:1-6**). Iraq and Egypt are countries prophesied that will not attack Israel (**Isaiah 19:24-25**). The first Arab country with a peace treaty with Israel was Egypt! In the last days, Israel, "the center of the world," will be attacked to "capture spoil and seize plunder" (**Ezekiel 38:12**). God shall intervene in His anger against Israel's enemy (**Ezekiel 38:18,22-23**). The entire nation of Israel will look to Jesus on that fateful day, and He will defend them (**Zechariah 12:8-10, 14:12**). **2 Peter 3:10-13** describes a destruction from God because of a war. As we wait for the end, we must be holy in conduct and godliness. God does not wish for anyone to perish, but **FOR ALL TO COME TO REPENTANCE (2 Peter 3:9)**. Receive His love and grace and obey what He says!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. What can you learn about God when you study prophecy?
2. In what ways have you experienced God's grace, faithfulness, and sovereignty?
3. What should you change in light of the truth that we are living in the end times?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for the land and people of Israel to be mindful of what God has promised and prophesied about them in the Bible. Be a blessing to the Jewish people --- pray for them and do good to them in whatever way God allows you to. Live your life as a witness of Jesus, the Messiah for all people.

MEMORY VERSE

EZEKIEL 39:7

7 "My holy name I will make known in the midst of My people Israel; and I will not let My holy name be profaned anymore. And the nations will know that I am the Lord, the Holy One in Israel.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives.

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- For the typhoon-devastated communities to recover economically and restored spiritually.
- War in Ukraine to end, loss of lives prevented; tension in the West Philippine Sea to be peacefully resolved.
- Continue to pray for the rest of Israeli hostages to be restored back to their families safely. Pray for Israel and the war with terrorists to end according to God's purpose and for His glory.
- For the election outcome in the US to pave the way for spiritual awakening in the church and a great spiritual harvest.

III. Church

WORD (cont'd)

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples.
- Elders, pastors, deacons, and families (holy, humble, harmonious, happy, heart-working).
- Ministries and churches expansion worldwide.

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God.
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends