

“The Final War”

(Part 2)

Ezekiel 38-39

- INTRO. - Now, it's been a couple of weeks, but we were looking in Ezek. 38 last time, and we made it to v. 17. But I want to go back and read vv. 14-17 again because I want to make just a few comments on those verses before we move on to v. 18, where things shift.
- Look with me again at v. 14, “Therefore, prophesy, son of man, and say to Gog, ‘Thus says the Lord God, “On that day when My people Israel are living securely, will you not know *it*? And you will come from your place out of the remote parts of the north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great assembly and a mighty army; and you will come up against My people Israel like a cloud to cover the land. It will come about in the last days that I shall bring you against My land, in order that the nations may know Me when I shall be sanctified through you before their eyes, O Gog.” Thus says the Lord God, “Are you the one of whom I spoke in former days through My servants the prophets of Israel, who prophesied in those days for *many* years that I would bring you against them?””
- Again notice that the armies will come “out of the remote parts of the north.” The Hebrew language gives it the sense of “the uttermost parts” of the north. (expound)
- And once again, geographically, God always speaks relative to the land of Israel. Jerusalem is the center and everything is based on that. Now, identifying the exact names is *not* essential to understanding this prophecy. The focus of this prophecy is that the nations surrounding Israel will *all* attack.
- But If you look at a map and locate these ancient settlements, you will see that Israel is attacked from the north, south, east and west. They are at the center of the entire world, just as the Bible states.
- I like the NASB rendering (here) because I believe the wording of verse 12 clearly describes what is going on - Israel will be at the very *center* of the world.
- Moving on, again the “horses” here may *not* be literal horses. As MacArthur writes, “some see horses here...being used symbolically to represent meaning which would be easy to grasp in Ezekiel’s day, but which would be fulfilled in the future time with different war forms suitable to that time.”
- And notice that God Himself is going to bring this about “in order that the nations may know (Him) when (He) shall be sanctified...before their eyes.” The ultimate purpose of all this is to glorify God by

showing His sovereign power over the nations of the earth. (expound)

- And notice lastly, the question of v. 17, “Are you the one...?” This is referring to “Gog” who is no doubt the Antichrist. He is the one who will come against God’s people in the final jihad.
- But let’s move on down (now) into v. 18. Here, the marked shift is, from what *man* does to what *God* does. Look with me at v. 18, “‘And it will come about on that day, when Gog comes against the land of Israel,’ declares the Lord God, ‘that My fury will mount up in My anger.’”
- Verse 19, “‘And in My zeal and in My blazing wrath I declare...’” (Stop right there a moment.) This attack against Israel will ignite God’s holy wrath against the invading nations.
- The KJV is graphic. It says, “...my fury shall come up in my face.” Listen, let me tell you something, you don’t ever want to make God mad. The fury of God is nothing to mess with, as we are going to see.
- Go on in v. 19, “...in My zeal and in My blazing wrath I declare *that* on that day there will surely be a great earthquake in the land of Israel. And the fish of the sea, the birds of the heavens, the beasts of the field, all the creeping things that creep on the earth, and all the men who are on the face of the

earth will shake at My presence; the mountains also will be thrown down, the steep pathways will collapse, and every wall will fall to the ground.”

- Now, this is no ordinary earthquake. This is something supernatural here. God is going to send earthquakes that will rock the cities of earth to ruins, level the mountains, and the islands will disappear from the sea!
- And some have said that they believe this is describing the effects of nuclear weapons here, and that certainly *could* be the case. But I believe it will simply be the supernatural power of God shaking the earth like never before.
- I believe people will know that this is God shaking the earth when this invasion of the Holy Land occurs. God is going to let loose His armaments. We talk about nuclear power and how great it is, but the devices of men are useless against the power of Almighty God.
- When the world comes against His people, God Himself will defend them. I hope and pray that the United States of America is still standing with them at that time.
- Go on to v. 21, “‘And I shall call for a sword against him on all My mountains,’ declares the Lord God. ‘Every man's sword will be against his brother. And with pestilence and with blood I shall

enter into judgment with him; and I shall rain on him, and on his troops, and on the many peoples who are with him, a torrential rain, with hailstones, fire, and brimstone.”

- Now, there is absolutely no question that this final battle will be orchestrated by God in order to judge these nations. Verse 21 tells us that suddenly all these enemy soldiers in the Holy Land, instead of being against Israel, will turn and begin to kill one another. Many will die from “friendly fire.”
- But in addition to that, God will unleash His great arsenal of divine weapons on them. Count them. There are seven weapons in God's arsenal: earthquake, pestilence, bloodshed, rain, hail, fire, brimstone. The perfect number, indicating divine judgment.
- It is interesting that this is exactly what is described in the Book of Revelation during the last half of the Tribulation. It is a clear picture of God's wrath and fury unleashed upon the nations of the world.
- Now, think about this. We've all heard about (and perhaps even seen) hail the size of marbles and some even the size of golf balls. But we read in the book of the Revelation that God is going to rain down hailstones that weigh a hundred pounds! I tell you, God is great in His power, and He is going to unleash the full strength of His power in the

destruction of these armies.

- And all of this is going to be for the purpose of God's glory. Look at v. 23, “And I shall magnify Myself, sanctify Myself, and make Myself known in the sight of many nations; and they will know that I am the LORD.”
- Now, I want us to see this same thing in some other prophecies. Turn with me for a moment to Zeph. 3:8. Here's what it says, “‘Therefore, wait for Me,’ declares the LORD, ‘For the day when I rise up to the prey. Indeed, My decision is to gather nations, to assemble kingdoms, to pour out on them My indignation, all My burning anger; for all the earth will be devoured by the fire of My zeal.’”
- You see, at the beginning of this battle, Israel will be on the verge of annihilation. But as they are being defeated and all seems hopeless, Jesus Himself will return to defend them and wipe out her enemies.
- Turn with me to Zech. 14 for a moment. Look with me at v. 1, “Behold, a day is coming for the LORD when the spoil taken from you will be divided among you. For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished, and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city.” This is going to

happen before the intervention of the Lord on their behalf.

- But then it all changes. Look at v. 3, “Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle. And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south.”
- The Lord Himself will fight against those nations, and He will prevail. In fact, for the most graphic picture of this anywhere in the Word of God, drop down to v. 12, “Now this will be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the peoples who have gone to war against Jerusalem; their flesh will rot while they stand on their feet, and their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongue will rot in their mouth.”
- The word for “rot” there *can* mean “dissolve.” Their flesh will dissolve while they are standing on their feet. Their eyes will dissolve in their eye sockets. Their tongues will dissolve in their mouths. What does *that* sound like? It sounds like nuclear destruction.
- But understand something: God is *not* limited to human weapons. This *could* simply be the fire of God’s wrath consuming them.
- ILL. - This *could* be like the “Great Siberian Explosion” in Tunguska which occurred in 1908. Before man discovered how to split the atom, an unexplained fireball streaked across the sky and exploded just before hitting the ground. Based on the damage, it is estimated to have been 40 kilotons. This is 2,000 times more powerful than the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima in World War II. The radius destroyed was roughly half the size of Rhode Island. Trees just below the explosion were stripped and scorched. The trees in a 1300 square mile radius were stripped and knocked flat.
- The description in Zechariah could be a huge fireball, a nuclear blast, a meteorite, or simply the power of God unveiled without natural explanation. We don’t really know.
- But look at v. 13, “And it will come about in that day that a great panic from the LORD will fall on them...” No joke! I guess so! “...and they will seize one another’s hand, and the hand of one will be lifted against the hand of another.”
- This explains why they will turn against each other in battle and begin to kill one another. And then, (of course) we have seen this in our study of

Revelation. Turn to Rev. 14 for a moment, and we'll see it from another perspective.

- Rev. 14, beginning in v. 18, "And another angel, the one who has power over fire, came out from the altar; and he called with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, 'Put in your sharp sickle, and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, because her grapes are ripe.' And the angel swung his sickle to the earth, and gathered *the clusters from* the vine of the earth, and threw them into the great wine press of the wrath of God. And the wine press was trodden outside the city, and blood came out from the wine press, up to the horses' bridles, for a distance of two hundred miles."
- What an incredible slaughter this will be!!! The valley that earlier was the way of deliverance for Israel will become the great winepress of God filled with the blood of their enemies.
- Well, let's go back to Ezekiel. Let's move now into chp. 39. Now, Ezek. 39 repeats some of the same themes, but gives us a little more detail. Look at v. 1, "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; and I shall turn you around, drive you on, take you up from the remotest parts of the north, and bring you against the mountains of Israel. And I shall strike your bow from your

left hand, and dash down your arrows from your right hand. You shall fall on the mountains of Israel, you and all your troops, and the peoples who are with you; I shall give you as food to every kind of predatory bird and beast of the field. You will fall on the open field; for it is I who have spoken," declares the Lord God."

- Now, notice a few observations about this section. First of all, it is interesting that the KJV says in v. 2 that God will leave 1/6 of the invading army. To be honest, I don't know where the KJV translators got that from the Hebrew text. Neither the NASB nor the NIV have it that way.
- Now, I'm *not* saying that this couldn't be the case, but I don't see that in the Hebrew text. All we really need to know (here) is that God will utterly destroy them. The soldiers will be completely disarmed, they will fall down dead on the battlefield, and the birds of the air and the beasts of the field will come and devour their bodies.
- And then there is one more element of this divine judgment. Look at v. 6, "And I shall send fire upon Magog and those who inhabit the coastlands in safety; and they will know that I am the LORD."
- Do we need to add anything to that? Listen, you would *not* want to be a part of that invading host. No one will be able to stand against God's fury and

wrath. The very fire of heaven will fall upon them and consume them.

- We see the purpose for all this in vv. 7-8, ““And My holy name I shall make known in the midst of My people Israel; and I shall not let My holy name be profaned anymore. And the nations will know that I am the LORD, the Holy One in Israel. Behold, it is coming and it shall be done,’ declares the Lord God. ‘That is the day of which I have spoken.’” (expound)
- Well, drop down to v. 9, ““Then those who inhabit the cities of Israel will go out, and make fires with the weapons and burn *them*, both shields and bucklers, bows and arrows, war clubs and spears and for seven years they will make fires of them. And they will not take wood from the field or gather firewood from the forests, for they will make fires with the weapons; and they will take the spoil of those who despoiled them, and seize the plunder of those who plundered them,’ declares the Lord God.”
- It is going to take seven years to burn up all the weapons of war. They won’t need any firewood for those seven years because they will have plenty of fuel to burn from the aftermath of this great conflict.
- And since this is, I believe, at the end of the Tribulation period, the burning of the war materials

will extend into the Millennial Kingdom. This will be a part of the initial work of setting up the kingdom period.

- And look at vv. 11-16, ““And it will come about on that day that I shall give Gog a burial ground there in Israel, the valley of those who pass by east of the sea, and it will block off the passers-by. So they will bury Gog there with all his multitude, and they will call *it* the valley of Hamon-gog. For seven months the house of Israel will be burying them in order to cleanse the land. Even all the people of the land will bury *them*; and it will be to their renown *on* the day that I glorify Myself,” declares the Lord God. And they will set apart men who will constantly pass through the land, burying those who were passing through, even those left on the surface of the ground, in order to cleanse it. At the end of seven months they will make a search. And as those who pass through the land pass through and anyone sees a man's bone, then he will set up a marker by it until the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamon-gog. And even *the* name of *the* city will be Hamonah. So they will cleanse the land.”
- The Jewish people are very particular about the cleanness of the land. That's why, when you go to Israel and when there is a funeral, orthodox Jews don't wait. They immediately bury the body. They believe the land is defiled until that body is buried. All of these bones are going to need to be buried as

soon as possible.

- In fact, special crews are going to be assigned. Some will go through and mark all the dead bodies, and others will come along and bury them. But because there are so many, it will still take 7 months to bury them all.
- MacArthur writes, “The description fits the time after Christ’s Second Advent extending into the 1000 (year) millennial era as those who go into His kingdom to do the work (cf. Rev. 20:1-10).”
- Now, there is an interesting phrase in v. 11 (according to the KJV translation). It reads, “...and it shall stop the *noses* of the passengers..” That is possibly a reference to the horrific stench that will result from all the dead bodies filling up that huge valley.
- The name “Hamon-gog” literally means “the multitude of Gog,” and the city that will be built up there will be known as “Hamonah” or “multitude.” This will be a memorial city to mark the ultimate war against Israel. Moffatt, in his translation, calls it "God's mob."
- Now, folks, think about this. This vast cemetery in Israel has *not* yet come into existence, but it was named by God Almighty (through the prophet Ezekiel) 2500 years ago. And during the millennial reign of Christ, this will be a continual

reminder of what God does to people who resist Him.

- Let’s go on to v. 17, “And as for you, son of man, thus says the Lord God, 'Speak to every kind of bird and to every beast of the field, "Assemble and come, gather from every side to My sacrifice which I am going to sacrifice for you, as a great sacrifice on the mountains of Israel, that you may eat flesh and drink blood. You shall eat the flesh of mighty men, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, as *though they were* rams, lambs, goats, and bulls, all of them fatlings of Bashan. So you will eat fat until you are gluttoned, and drink blood until you are drunk, from My sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you. And you will be gluttoned at My table with horses and charioteers, with mighty men and all the men of war," declares the Lord God.”
- Now, this is very similar to the kind of language that is used to describe the time after the Battle of Armageddon in Rev. 19. This is one of the main reasons why I believe that this battle will be equivalent to that one, and will be at the very end of the Tribulation period.
- But the *main* reason I believe that is found in v. 22. There it says, “And the house of Israel will know that I am the LORD their God from that day onward.” That, of course describes Israel’s spiritual regeneration, when she recognizes and acknowledges her Messiah, King Jesus. And *that*

will *not* happen until the glorious appearing (or Second Coming) of Christ.

- One Bible prophecy student writes, “There has been a debate about the time of the Russian invasion... But over the years I have been troubled by one problem that I can't get away from. In Ezekiel 39:22 we read that the invasion will result in Israel's conversion to God. And elsewhere in the Bible, God says that Israel's conversion will come at the end of the Tribulation, when the second coming of Christ occurs.”
- He points out that in Zechariah 12:9-10, God says, "It shall come to pass in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem." That refers to the war of Armageddon. "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and of supplications; then they will look on Me whom they have pierced; they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and shall grieve for Him, as one grieves for his firstborn."
- That is *not* going to happen until right at the very end. Israel will see Christ and acknowledge Him. And surrounded by all the nations seeking her extermination, she will cry out for Jesus, and He will come down and deliver her. The people of Israel will look on Him whom they had pierced. That's when she will be converted!
- The Bible tells us God will give Israel incredible victory in this war and it will result in a final re-gathering of all Jews back to the nation of Israel. From this day forward they will know the Lord.
- Verse 23, “And the nations will know that the house of Israel went into exile for their iniquity because they acted treacherously against Me, and I hid My face from them; so I gave them into the hand of their adversaries, and all of them fell by the sword.”
- One day the nations of the earth are going to understand who runs this universe and who is in charge of history. They're going to realize that it is the one and only true God with Whom they have to do.
- Verse 24, “According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions I dealt with them, and I hid My face from them.” This is the reason for their being exiled from among the nations.
- Verse 25, “Therefore thus says the Lord God, "Now I shall restore the fortunes of Jacob, and have mercy on the whole house of Israel; and I shall be jealous for My holy name.”
- Is this the church? No, it is the “whole house of Israel.” This is describing Israel's salvation. You say, “Well, I'm *not* sure about that.” Look at v. 26, “And they shall forget their disgrace and all their

treachery which they perpetrated against Me, when they live securely on their *own* land with no one to make them afraid. When I bring them back from the peoples and gather them from the lands of their enemies, then I shall be sanctified through them in the sight of the many nations.”

- What other “land” could that be than the land of Palestine that God has covenanted to His people Israel?
- Look at v. 28, “Then they will know that I am the LORD their God because I made them go into exile among the nations, and then gathered them *again* to their own land; and I will leave none of them there any longer.”
- Folks, could that be any clearer? There is no way this refers to the church. This clearly is the nation of Israel. I just don’t understand how some people can say that all these prophecies are for the church.
- I don’t understand how they can say that God is finished with Israel. This is still future and this has *not* yet happened, but it *will* happen one day, and it will happen to God’s people Israel.
- Verse 29, “And I will not hide My face from them any longer, for I shall have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel,” declares the Lord God.” The pouring out of the Spirit on Israel will be similar to the pouring out of the Spirit on the church on the

Day of Pentecost. Only *this* will occur at the Second Coming of Christ.

- There's coming a day in Bible prophecy when God will once again pour out His Spirit, *not* on the church, but this time on the nation of Israel. The Holy Spirit will work, opening their eyes to the gospel. That will be a glorious day. That will be the final jihad and it will utterly fail because God will fight for his chosen people. And the world will know that God is the Sovereign Lord.
- It will coincide with the final regathering of Israel and will result in the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom, with Christ (the greater David) ruling and reigning in Jerusalem for 1000 years. We have seen a partial regathering, but one day there will be a complete regathering.
- On May 14, 1948, the nation of Israel was gathered back into her land. But they have been gathered back in unbelief. Verse 29 moves us to that final hour of the “time of Jacob’s trouble” (the Tribulation period).
- It tells us of that glorious day when the Lord will no longer hide His face from His chosen people. The vine that we have been grafted into will be fully restored.
- Why had God hidden his face from the Jew for the last 2,000 years? Well Paul said a blindness has

come in part upon Israel. We're in the church age when Jew and Gentile are given the same invitation.

- Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved. But the time is coming when Israel as a nation will have the blinders taken off. How will they be taken off? Well, by the coming of the Messiah, by the demonstration of God's power on their behalf in such a supernatural way that they will all recognize that the one they rejected, the one they pierced, the one they nailed to the cross is their Messiah. Their eyes will be opened.
- The question, though, is “where are we right now in God’s time table?” We know we are in the times of the Gentiles. God’s clock concerning Israel has stopped at 69 weeks. But very soon it could start back up again.
- Could it be that the things we are seeing right now in the Middle East are setting the stage for these things to take place? It could very well be. That’s why we must be diligent in our service and in our faithfulness to Christ.
- PRAYER