

PostExilicProphets 22-03-09b

Thank you, Dan, for that great arrangement of open my eyes that I may see visions of truth thou hast for me. If you are unfamiliar with the words to that song, be sure and look them up. It's a wonderful tribute to the role of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

And that, of course, is essential to bearing the fruit that we are talking about that is going to be evaluated at the judgment seat of Christ, which is the next event after the rapture, and for which we want to be fully prepared. With that in mind, let's pick up our study now. We're looking at the nature of the conflict that really begins after the false peace in the middle of the 70th week of Daniel, detailed in Daniel 9, and what alignment we might be watching for in the world that will prefigure the constellation of nations and alliances that we see in that context.

So I left off here in Dr. Pentecost's book, Things to Come, where he says there are a number of theories as to the events in the campaign of Armageddon. And it tells you that this takes some study to unravel. Number one, Armageddon will be a conflict between the revived Roman Empire and the Northern Confederacy.

This would be, in our day, an EU-Russia conflict. Number two, so number one, Armageddon, you can just say theories about what Armageddon is. Number one, it's a conflict between the RRE, the revived Roman Empire, the EU in our current day, and the Russian Confederacy, the King of the North.

That's theory one. Number two, a conflict between the Roman Empire, he calls it, which we would call the EU, and the kings of the East, or the Asiatic powers. This would be, in our day, China versus the EU.

And there are ways to understand prophecy that this is what Armageddon would be. Number three, Armageddon will be a conflict between all nations and God. Well, we're going to see that in a sense this is true, but it depends on which part you're talking about.

Number four, it will be a conflict between all four great world powers. King of the North, King of the East, King of the South, and the EU slash revived Roman Empire slash beast and his 10 toes, all be fighting each other. Number five, it will be a conflict between the Roman Empire slash EU, Russia, and the Asiatic powers.

That those three will be fighting each other. Number six, it will exclude Russia, but will take place between the Roman, Eastern, and Northern powers, but exclude Russia. And reasons for this will become clear a bit later.

Based on the theory that Ezekiel 38 and 39 take place in the millennium. There are some who think Armageddon is in the millennium, if you can believe that. Seven, Russia is the only aggressor at Armageddon, based on the theory that there will be no revived form of the Roman Empire.

And so Dr. Pentecost continues by saying, one can see what a wide divergence of opinion there is as to the chronology of events in this campaign. The great movements of armies in the conflict of Armageddon, by the way, we're going to sort these out and come to just a single conclusion, but in looking at why the others are not true, it's going to be very helpful. Great movements of the armies in the conflict of Armageddon, the campaign of Armageddon this period of years, begin with an invasion of Palestine by the King of the North and the King of the South.

This is how it begins. Daniel 11, 40. King of the North and the King of the South are going to invade Palestine.

This in the modern day would be Russia and maybe the Arabs, maybe Egypt, maybe Libya, any combination thereof, anybody South of Israel could be implicated. So with that invasion, this kicks off the big final picture. The head of the Roman Empire, this would be the EU and of the Israeli state are federated by a covenant.

This is going to take at least its final form in the covenant of Daniel 9, 20, 70. We'll make a covenant with the many for one week. That an attack against the one isn't an attack against the other.

So because Israel is being attacked by the King of the North, King of the South, the EU feels it needs to step in. With the invasion, the events of the campaign which will shake the whole world begin. This initial movement is described in Ezekiel 38, 1 through 39, 24.

Now remember, this is not the final battle that the Lord Jesus is going to come and end. This is how the conflict begins. So this alignment and these confederations are what we would be watching for because they're not all going to come into existence within three and a half years.

They will pre-exist the rapture. The powers represented in this chapter have already been identified as Russia and her satellites. Therefore, only the events need to be summarized.

There is general agreement among Bible students concerning the outline of events. Pay attention now. This was written in 1958.

Russia is seen to make an alliance with Persia, Ethiopia, Libya, Germany, and Turkey. This is Ezekiel 38, verses 2, verse 5, and verse 6. So the first several verses of Ezekiel 38. Russia is seen to make an alliance with Persia.

Who is Persia? Iran. Ethiopia and Libya. This is the North African area, however you want to define that.

Germany and Turkey. Here's a little current events pop quiz. The foreign minister for Ukraine and the foreign minister for Russia have been meeting for the last couple of days to try to hash out the terms of a ceasefire.

Where did they meet? Turkey. They met in Turkey. They are in Turkey as we speak, negotiating.

Just so you know. Because Israel seems like easy prey, verse 11, this all is in Ezekiel 38, this confederation decides to invade the land for a spoil, verse 12. Weakness invites invasion.

I say again, weakness invites action, aggressive action. A protest is made to this invasion, verse 13, but it is unheeded. Oh, don't invade, but they do anyway.

Sound familiar? The extent of this invasion must be learned from parallel passages, for Ezekiel omits the progress of the invasion, but rather describes the destruction of the invader on the mountains of Israel. So rather than all of the intermediate steps, the invader is destroyed on the mountains of Israel in Ezekiel 39, verses two through four, as the result of divine intervention through a convulsion of nature. A convulsion of nature.

This is at the beginning. This is not three and a half years later when the covenant is in effect and so on. And so the beast moves in and says, we're going to protect you.

But before they can really get started, something by way of a natural disaster destroys the invader of the north on the mountains of Israel. This is Ezekiel 39, two through four. What form this takes, is this a man-made natural disaster? Is this a technological hack? Is this a solar flare? Is it an earthquake? Something happens and they are destroyed on the mountains of Israel.

And the convulsion of nature is described in Ezekiel 38, 20 through 22. Seven months is consumed in disposing of the dead, Ezekiel 39, 12. I had always thought that this would leak into the millennial kingdom, but evidently I was wrong.

And this is seven months that take place during the 70th week of Daniel, after this initial convulsion and initial invasion is stopped. And this is one of the reasons the beast can cover himself with glory and claim that he's a peacemaker and so on. He didn't really do anything.

He's got no arrows in his bow, but the invasion is stopped and he says, see what a good friend I am to Israel. He's going to take credit for this stopping of the invasion. Credit he does not deserve and did not earn.

Seven months is consumed in disposing of the dead. This makes you wonder if a nuke goes off. They were trying to, you know, people that make bombs and the explosion in the bomb lab and they're gone.

Something of this nature. Nuclear fission is nature, right? It's built into atoms. Seven months consumed disposing of the dead, Ezekiel 39, 12.

Seven years in disposing of the debris. Now, if seven years to dispose of the debris, this would go past the end of the tribulation and into the beginning of the millennium that they're still cleaning up the trash and go a lot quicker under the rulership of the Lord Jesus. The scene of this destruction is said to be on the mountains of Israel, Ezekiel 39, two through four.

And the time is in the latter years, Ezekiel 38, eight, pay attention the latter years. He's going to talk about this a little bit more. And the latter days, Ezekiel 38, 16, latter years, 38, eight, latter days, 38, 16.

This is different as he's about to describe than the last day or the great day. It's the latter years, the latter days, but it's not the last days. It's not the last years.

Destruction is a sign to the nations, Ezekiel 38, 23, and it is a sign to Israel. Dr. Pentecost is going to argue that this natural disaster that stops the invasion in the middle of the week that the beast takes credit for is going to actually wake up a lot of people who are going to convert at that point. They're going to recognize both Jew and Gentile that there is a God, and they're not going to buy the beast's false narrative.

They're going to say, I think there's a God, and I think I better sign up. This is where you get your 144,000 and so on. There are a number of considerations that make it clear that this invasion by Gog, Ezekiel 38, is not the same as the battle of Armageddon, Revelation 16, 16.

A number of things say one is at the beginning and the other is at the end. Number one, in the battle of Gog, which we're saying is at the beginning, several adversaries, there are definite allies that are mentioned. It is Gog and his allies.

That's the invasion at the beginning. While in Armageddon, all nations are engaged. All nations, Joel 3.2, Zephaniah 3.8, Zechariah 12.3, and Zechariah 14.4, as we have already seen.

All nations are going to gather in the valley at the end, the one that the Lord Jesus ends. That's the first consideration. Number two, Gog comes from the north.

Ezekiel 38.6, Ezekiel 38.15, Ezekiel 39.2. This is the king of the north. This is the power in the north that comes down. While at Armageddon, the armies come from the whole earth, not just the north.

Number three, and by the way, interestingly, we mentioned the king of the south briefly as being part of this invasion. But the king of the south is not going to march through Israel and then come back down to invade. Evidently, they are implicated in some other way.

They are confederated, but maybe it is support, maybe it's oil, maybe it's other resources. But the attack is all from the north, and it dies on the mountains of Israel. Number three, Gog comes to take spoil.

They want resources out of that area, Ezekiel 38.11 and 12. While at Armageddon, the nations assemble specifically to destroy the people of God. At the beginning, it's about oil or resources or whatever there is.

Maybe they just want strategic placement in the land in the same way that Mr. Putin wants Ukraine right now, for strategic reasons, for personal reasons, for historical reasons, for any

variety of reasons. But at the end, this is the nations against God, and they are implicating themselves against the people of God, and by extension against God Himself at the end. Number four, there is protest against this initial Gog invasion, Ezekiel 38.13. You shouldn't ought to be doing that.

Do we see any kind of protest against invasion in the current day? That's what is going to happen in the middle of the 70th week. Invasion is going to happen, and people are going to be up in arms. How dare you? How can you? Oh, the humanity and so on.

But at Armageddon, there is no protest because all the nations are joined against Jerusalem. They've had enough, and nobody says we shouldn't do this. Number five, Gog is the head of the armies in his invasion, Ezekiel 38.7. But at Armageddon, the beast is the head of the invasion.

At the beginning, the beast is ostensibly allied with Israel. At the end, he is just as in bed as everybody else with the idea of destroying Israel and attacking God. This book ends with the Tower of Babel idea, right? Number six, Gog is overthrown by convulsions of nature, Ezekiel 38.22. The armies at Armageddon are destroyed by the sword that goes out of the mouth of the Lord Jesus Christ, Revelation 19.15. Big difference.

Number seven, Gog's armies are arrayed in the open field, Ezekiel 39.5. While at Armageddon, they are seen in the city of Jerusalem, Zechariah 14.2-4. Our passage. Number eight, the Lord calls for assistance in executing judgment on Gog, Ezekiel 38.21. In other words, he's going to employ some agency in the earth. He is going to call forth some agency while at Armageddon, he treads the winepress alone.

Isaiah 63.3-6, treading the winepress of God's wrath. He doesn't use any intermediate agency or any earthly agency. He is going to personally destroy the whole crowd.

Two diverse movements must then be acknowledged, one at the beginning, one at the end. Ezekiel 38.39, talking about the beginning. This thing in Zechariah 14.2-4, talking about the beginning.

Half of the city being slain and the other half being preserved at the beginning. So when does this take place? Our new topic now is identification of the time in general. When will this take place? The first problem to be settled is the problem of the time of this invasion.

When is Russia going to invade Israel, could be the modern day version of the question. Number one, this does not refer to a past event in Israel's history. Preterists, goodbye.

It is obvious from the details given to us in these chapters, no invasion experienced in Israel's history is sufficient to be the fulfillment of this prophecy. There have been invasions in the past, wrought hardship on the land and the people, but none that answer to the details presented here. Not Titus in 70 AD, not the Crusades, none of that, or what preceded the Crusades when the Arabs took over Jerusalem.

Number two, this can only refer to some future event in Israel's experience. There are a number of considerations supporting this view. Number one, context of the book of Ezekiel.

Chapter 37 of Ezekiel deals with the restoration of the nation Israel to her land. Now this is where I slightly part ways with Dr. Pentecost, because he thinks that this restoration of the land is a result of the covenant of Daniel 9 that the beast makes with Israel. We've got 1948.

He didn't see the 67 war, the 72 war, the restoration of Jerusalem. All of that came after this book was written. And I don't know that it's been updated.

I don't see that it's new, revised, updated edition. I think this is from a 1958 perspective, and Israel didn't even fully occupy the land that had been granted in 48, 10 years earlier by the British, and so on. There was a lot of stuff that had to be done before they really became the nation of Israel, Parliament, the Knesset, and the rest of it.

So he sees that as not taking place until the 70th week begins. Sorry, they're already there, right? So it is pictured as a gradual process, which it has been since 48. The prophet sees the process of bone being joined to bone, tied together with sinews, clothed with skin.

Remember 37 of Ezekiel prophesied of these bones, but it's a process. It is a regathering in unbelief for the prophet observes that there is no life in the assembled carcass, verse 8. Chapter 40 carries us on to the Millennial Age. Thus the movements of Gog and Magog are seen from the context to transpire between the time of the beginning of the restoration of Israel, flesh and sinew covers the bones, to the Millennial Age in Ezekiel 40.

So you can see the timing is going to fit between 1948 and the Millennium. We're observers, we're in that time frame right now. B. That was A. The context of Ezekiel tells us the time is somewhere after Israel becomes a nation again on its own land and the Millennium.

B. The specific statements in the passage. Twice a reference is made in chapter 38 of Ezekiel to a time element. It is said to take place in the latter years, verse 8, in the latter days, verse 16.

This has specific reference to the latter years and days of God's dealing with the nation Israel, which since it is before the Millennial Age, chapter 40, must place it during God's dealing with Israel in the 70th week of Daniel's prophecy. And that's where it's going to take place right smack in the middle of that week. C. It will be after the beginning of the restoration for Israel is seen to be inhabiting their own land, Ezekiel 38.11. They dwell there, they've got cities, they've got industries, they've got possessions.

This would indicate that it takes place after the covenant made by the Prince that shall come of Daniel, line 27. This is where I part with Dr. Pentecost just a little bit. It doesn't have to wait for that.

It's already happened and that covenant has not happened. But that gradual restoration that he points to in 37 makes perfect sense in our observed experience over the last six decades,

seven decades. D. It will be connected with Israel's conversion, which is obviously future, for the destruction of the invader is a sign to that nation which opens their eyes to the Lord, Ezekiel 39.22. That has not happened.

Israel is a secular nation. They've got their complement of Orthodox Jews and the rest of it, but they haven't converted to Christ. They're not Messianic in any but minuscule groups, right? Since the final removal of the blindness does not come to that nation until the second advent, this prophecy must have a definite relation to that event.

And it's going to be within, it's going to precede it by three and a half years at most. E. The indication that the land will be reforested, verse 39, I'm sorry, chapter 39, verse 10, confirms this conclusion for Israel has always been dependent on other sources of supply for her lumber. It is our conclusion then from the passage itself that the events herein described must take place in the future at a time when God is again dealing with Israel as a nation.

When is God going to deal with Israel as a nation again? When the church clock stops and the final seven years of the Israel clock start ticking away. That's when God will view Israel as a nation. He stopped doing that when the church age began.

So that's A, the general pinning down of the time, and we're pretty satisfied that it's going to be during the 70th week. B, the time in relation to specific events. The invasion described by Ezekiel has been related to nearly every major prophetic event as to its time.

Some of these positions must be examined in order to determine as carefully as possible just when this event will transpire. These are the seven things I said we were going to look at real quick. Number one, some hold, first of all, the invasion takes place prior to the rapture of the church.

Such is the position taken by David L. Cooper who says, it's utterly impossible for one to locate the fulfillment of this prediction after the millennial age. It cannot be placed in the beginning of the millennium, nor at the end of the tribulation. It must therefore be located before the tribulation because there is no other place for it to occur since the three other suggested dates are impossible.

It can't happen at the inception of the kingdom of the father because it takes seven years to clean up the debris. It takes seven months to bury the dead. That's not happening in the kingdom of the father.

It's a whole new heaven and new earth. So there will be a time between now and the beginning of the tribulation when the Jews will be dwelling in the land in unwalled cities and will be at rest. That is in fact the case right now.

Largely, you got your conflicts there with the Palestinians, but you notice how that's been pushed completely off the news as almost everything else. There's got to be news happening. There's got to be conflict, but you can't find it.

There's just this fire hose of nothing but Russia, Ukraine. You can't get news about what's going on in the Middle East. You can't find what's happening in Turkey, except that the foreign ministers are there.

You can't find out anything. You can't find out that the truckers actually arrived in Washington D.C. after traveling the country for a week and a half or what was said or done at that point. It's just all been swamped.

This, Dr. Pentecost says about idea one, that it's going to happen before the rapture, seems to be an impossible thesis due to several considerations. Number one, the New Testament teaching of the imminence of the rapture makes it impossible that an event such as this must first be fulfilled. We've dealt with the idea of the imminence of the rapture, and sorry, but there are in fact some things that have to be in place before the rapture occurs, one of which is Israel in the land.

You couldn't have had the rapture until 1948 because Israel wasn't there, and God couldn't suddenly turn them into a nation, ex nihilo. Certain things have to be in place. So I don't buy the imminence of the rapture notion.

Imminence is individual. The rapture is imminent because as soon as we quit breathing and thinking and living, we're at the rapture. So it's imminent in that sense.

There are things that have to take place so that the 70th week of Daniel can transpire. These alliances have to largely be in place. Israel has to be in their own land, etc.

So I don't buy that. Secondly, he says, the context of the prophecy itself states that this will take place in the latter years and in the latter days. Since this prophecy is addressed to Israel, it must be their years and their days.

I agree with this point. You don't talk about the latter days of the church age. That's a different clock.

This prophecy is addressed to Israel. It must be their years and their days being referred to in the prophecy. Since Israel and the church are two distinct groups with which God is dealing, it is impossible to make Israel's latter years apply to the latter years of the church as it would do if this is fulfilled prior to the rapture.

Totally agree. Three, as far as can be determined, Israel will not gain any title to the land nor have the right to return to it until the prince that shall come makes a covenant with her. Daniel 9 27.

This is where we part ways. They have title to the land and it didn't come from the prince who shall come. At best, you could say that this was an agreement by the post-World War II European powers.

It could be the revived Roman Empire in its nascent or incipient form, the people of the prince who shall come, but it's not the prince himself. This one's a little shaky. Israel is said to be out of the land and Jerusalem trodden down until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

Luke 21 24. Well, this is a phased-in process and Jerusalem is no longer being trodden underfoot by the Gentiles. That is gradually changing away.

Are Arabs Gentiles? Yes. It would be necessary, according to this theory, to maintain either that the covenant which gives Israel a false peace was made prior to the rapture or that the times of the Gentiles end at the rapture. Such is not of the word.

Others teach, secondly, that the invasion takes place at the end of the tribulation, i.e., that the whole battle of Armageddon, all of this stuff, all takes place at once. There are many Bible students who adopt this interpretation of the time element. However, there seem to be difficulties in this position which make it impossible to accept.

1. The passage in Ezekiel does not mention a battle. Remember, how is the invasion stopped? Natural disaster on the mountains of Israel, not a battle. The destruction is at the hand of the Lord through the convulsion of nature.

Even though the sword of verse 21 should be proven to be a nation, the Lord is seen to be the agent in this destruction rather than a destruction through a war. In the conflagration of Armageddon, there is a great battle fought between the Lord and His hosts and the assembled nations in which the King of Kings emerges as the victor. That thing that happens at the end is different in so many respects.

He's going to go on to point out things that we've already seen. In Zechariah 14 and Revelation 19, all the nations of the earth are seen to be gathered, not just the King of the North. Thirdly, in Ezekiel, the destruction takes place on the mountains of Israel.

The events at Armageddon are said to take place at Jerusalem, at the Valley of Jehoshaphat and Edom. In Ezekiel, Israel is said to be dwelling in her land in peace and safety. We know from Revelation 12, 14-17 that Israel is not going to dwell in the land in peace and safety during the latter half of the 70th week.

It's going to be bad, bad times during that whole campaign of Armageddon. They will be a special target of Satan's attack. So we conclude that the invasion cannot be identified as the events of Zechariah 14 and Revelation 19 at the end of the tribulation.

So it's not going to be before the rapture. It's not going to be at the end of the tribulation. We've eliminated two of the seven possibilities.

Number three, others hold the invasion, but isn't it helpful to learn about the characteristics to define and clarify what's happening at the end at the battle of Armageddon versus this invasion at the beginning? I don't know about you, I never understood this before. I'm a seminary

graduate. I've been through prophecy after prophecy, but I never really sat down and went through what Dr. Pentecost has written here.

It makes perfect sense. It is scriptural. I like it a lot.

Very helpful. And things have to align for this invasion by Russia to take place in the middle of the tribulation. He can't suddenly build armies during the peace of the first three and a half years.

He's already got to have them. He can't have confederations and allies or conquests that he's making during the false peace of the first three and a half years. He has to already have that stuff.

I would submit he may be gathering it now. And as you watch Russia aggregate and consume and devour, moving westward, this is going to be the stuff that is going to get used to then hook south and try to take Israel. So very interesting in that regard.

This is why I want to work through these. I apologize if it's kind of a lot to take in, but just think about the big picture ideas. This invasion is going to take place essentially in the middle of the 70th week at the beginning of the time of Jacob's trouble, the last three and a half years.

Others want to say it takes place at the beginning of the millennium, but let me just say it doesn't wash. You don't have an invasion at the beginning of the millennium. The millennium is the end of the invasion.

Jesus has already come. Mountain is split. Water is flowing.

King is set up in Jerusalem. It just doesn't work. I'm going to skip a lot of that.

And many of the arguments, while interesting, don't serve our purpose. Others teach that the invasion takes place at the end of the millennium. Remember there is a Gog Magog at the end.

Those who hold to this position contend this is the fourth. I've kind of skipped the third beginning of the millennium. Our common sense tells us that's not true.

Those who hold to this position contend that the Gog and Magog of Ezekiel and that of Revelation 20 verse 8 are the same. It's easy to see similar things and say they are the same when they're not. This Gog invasion at the beginning is not the same as the one that Satan leads at the end of the millennium.

There is an invasion, but it's not so much an invasion as a surrounding. This seems to be an impossibility from the following considerations. Ezekiel mentions only a northern coalition as being engaged in this invasion.

Why is this of interest? We are watching the northern coalition form before our very eyes. If this is the one, we're watching it coalesce. Cool, no? It's fun to watch.

Not to say we don't have sympathy. Nobody likes to see people get invaded, lose their homes. All the sympathy and heartfelt.

Just for one political comment, the best comment I've heard about this whole scenario was made, and I wish I knew the lady's name. I came in in the middle of it, but she said, Our involvement in this whole debacle ought to be focused on humanitarian aid. Help people leave, supply them with food and clothing.

To the extent that we use any resources, it's going to be pretty hard for the leader of the northern coalition here, Mr. Putin, to be mad at us if we are not throwing planes and missiles and ammunition and weapons at him through proxies, but are simply engaged in a humanitarian effort. Help the people that are leaving, help them to relocate, supply them. But her suggestion was stay out of the conflict, even by proxy.

That way you don't poke the bear and ignite World War III with two nuclear superpowers at each other's throats. You can understand if you're Mr. Putin and somebody is channeling and piping all kinds of stuff that is stopping your progress by way of military equipment, ammunition, and fighting a war by proxy. I know how to end that.

I'll go past the proxy and hurt the person that's stopping me. Basically, and Matthew will have more to say about this after class, but there is a better way than poking the bear, which we are literally doing. Anyway, Ezekiel mentions only the northern coalition engaged in this invasion.

In Revelation, all the nations of the earth are gathered together. This is when Satan is released from the pit after the thousand years. In Ezekiel, there is no specific mention made of the instrumentality of Satan nor of his being bound for a thousand years prior to this invasion, while both things are emphasized in the Revelation account.

Number three, the context in Ezekiel shows that this invasion is before the institution of the millennium. In Revelation, the millennium has been in existence for a thousand years. Number four, in Ezekiel, the bodies of the slain require the labor of seven months to dispose of the dead.

This is 39.12. In Revelation 20, verse 9, the slain are devoured by fire and no disposal is necessary. Fire from God consumes them. There's nothing to bury.

Number five, in Ezekiel, the invasion is seen to be followed by the millennium. In Revelation, this movement is followed by the new heaven and the new earth. Certainly, the new earth could not conceivably be corrupted by unburied corpses for seven months.

These considerations make it impossible to accept this theory as to the time of the invasion. Fifth, and finally, it is suggested that the invasion takes place at the middle of the 70th week. There seem to be several considerations that indicate that this is the invasion of the Palestine by the king of the north in the middle of the week that sets off the satanic attack against the people with whom God is dealing, the nation Israel, as recorded in Revelation 12, 14-17.

In other words, thumbs up on number five here. We like this, middle of the 70th week. A, the invasion takes place at a time when Israel is dwelling in their own land.

B, the invasion takes place when Israel is dwelling in peace in the land. C, Ezekiel uses two expressions in chapter 38, giving an indication as to the time. In verse 8, there appears the expression, latter years, and in verse 16, the latter days.

70th week makes perfect sense because this is the last seven years of the age of Israel. He goes on to spend a couple of paragraphs talking about similar expressions and clarifying the term last day is an expression related to the resurrection and judgment program, and this is in John chapter 6 and John 11 and John 12. Last days is related to the time of Israel's glorification, salvation, and blessing in the kingdom age, Isaiah chapter 2, verses 2-4, Micah 4, 1-7.

He has a lot more to say about that. Suffice it to say, I like the idea that latter days and latter years is the end of the age, where last days and last day is a different thing. So, many commentators interpret Daniel 11-41 with reference to the occupation of the land of Palestine by the beast.

The event that causes the beast to move in is the invasion of Palestine from the north by the king of the north. The king of the north comes in, he gets wiped out by natural means on the mountains of Israel, but this gives the beast, the prince of the EU or revived Roman Empire, whatever you want to call it in the west, the excuse to move in and occupy Israel. That's his excuse.

He does it without conquest. The covenant made by the beast, Daniel 9-27, has evidently guaranteed Israel an inviolate right to the land. We won't let anybody invade you a game, is the idea.

And the fact that this covenant is breached when the northern invasion takes place, the beast says, well, we better move in and occupy you so that this doesn't happen again. But moving into the land is in fact a violation of the covenant itself, which says that you'll have sovereign title of the land and we won't occupy. But he says, well, we need to occupy.

You can see this kind of rationalization taking place all over the world right now. So we can conclude from this that the invasion takes place in the middle of the week and it is the excuse for the beast to break the covenant that he made three and a half years earlier. It's recognized that the events of the last half of the week are occasioned by the casting of Satan out of heaven or by some other enablement and empowerment that God allows, like unto the Gog Magog deal at the end of the millennium when he's released from the pit.

Satan's first act in opposition to Israel is to move the king of the north to this invasion. This is the beginning of the great campaign, which begins in the middle of the week and continues until the destruction of Gentile powers at the return of the Lord. It's been noted that the word translated battle in Revelation 16, 14, the battle of the great day of the Lord that's called

Armageddon, is better translated campaign.

This signifies the movements of armies and is in contrast to an isolated battle. The observation then is that God views all these movements of the armies as one great campaign, which will be terminated by their destruction at the return of Christ. So this campaign is going to span the entire last three and a half years.

So what is our conclusion? We need to draw to a close here for tonight. I will leave you to look up in your perhaps new copy of Things to Come all the other considerations. I'm satisfied by those that we can summarize here.

So such a view that this campaign begins in the middle of the 70th week leads to the following chronology. One, Israel makes a false covenant with the beast, the prince leader of the EU, and dwells in the land in a false security. Because of a desire for spoil at the expense of an easy prey, the king of the north, satanically motivated, is going to invade Palestine.

That's number two. Covenant, invasion three and a half years later. Thirdly, the beast breaks his covenant with Israel and moves into the land immediately after this invasion, which is terminated by a natural disaster of some kind at God's behest.

Four, the king of the north is destroyed on the mountains of Israel. Five, the land of Palestine is occupied by the armies of the beast. This is Daniel 11, 45.

Six, at this time, the great coalition of nations takes place that form one government under the beast. Seven, the kings of the east are brought in against the armies of the beast. This is where China has not joined the coalition and so they come in and it's the EU against China as a result of the dissolution of the government of Gog.

So the leftovers of Russia will affiliate with China, whatever's left, and they're going to come in under the flag of China. Eight, when the nations of the earth are gathered together around Jerusalem, Zechariah 14, one through three, and the valley of Jehoshaphat, Joel 3, two, the Lord will return to destroy all Gentile world power so that he might rule the nations himself. Further described in Zechariah chapter 12, verses one through nine, which we've already seen, 14, one through four, which we just saw, Isaiah 33, one through 34, 17, describes this ultimate denouement, and Jeremiah 25, 27 through 33, and so on.

So what are we looking at in the news today? We are seeing the king of the east forming. We are seeing the king of the north forming and expanding as never before. Even the Soviet Union couldn't do what they are in the process of doing, and it is done by conquest.

We are seeing the EU forming together and resembling what this prince is going to rule and operate in and from, and we see the power in the south, which is going to sort of be subsumed under. This is kind of like the Medes and the Persians. You've got the king of the south for a while, Egypt and the Arabs and Libya and something in North Africa, but it's going to kind of get absorbed and subsumed and drawn upon by the king of the north.

And so you really have the west, the north, and the east. The south doesn't really enter into it. Africa doesn't really come into play, and you notice you do not see the United States involved unless they are somehow subsumed under the whole western confederation.

It's possible, but I would expect to see an eagle flying in or something. So we are somehow neutralized, and I would submit if we keep poking the bear, we're liable to get ourselves neutralized and not be a factor in this great world-ending conflict that precedes the millennium. So, interesting things.

Lots to observe in the Word of God. Clarity on what takes place in the last half of the 70th week of Daniel. I feel like I understand that and can see the shape of it much more clearly than at any time in the past.

And this is a good time to have clarity, isn't it? And a good time to have hope, because if the days are as short as we think they may be, now is the time to sprint to the tape, expend all remaining whatever ammo we've got left to lay up for ourselves treasure in heaven, bear fruit of the Spirit, love one another, get it done, lay aside every weight and sin that besets us, run with patience the race that is set before us, because it looks like there's really not much time left. So I say sprint to the tape, burn whatever you got left in the tank, and be ready for the return of the Lord Jesus. I think it is going to be sooner rather than later, and it's very exciting.

So I'm just glad we've got a little bit of time to kind of cram for the final. So with that said, let's close in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for the truth of your Word.

Thank you for the comfort and encouragement it gives us. Thank you for the clarity and the peace that we have in looking at world events that seem to disturb and rattle so many who look to the things that they have relied on for security and find them crumbling, find them unstable. But we are grounded with our house built on the rock, and our confidence through the Lord Jesus Christ allows us to view these world events with interest and with understanding.

We pray that as we do so that your Holy Spirit will impress the truth of your Word on our hearts, help us to truly purge out the old leaven, and to be ready to abide in Christ and bear that fruit for which you have put us on the earth to produce. We pray it in Jesus' name. Amen.