

PostExilicProphets 22-03-13b

We are ready now to resume this very interesting study, looking at the shape of things to come, the alignment of nations that will pertain after we are gone that is described in Ezekiel chapter 38 and chapter 39 of the book of Ezekiel. And as we look at that, we've seen that Gomer and Meshach and Tubal, this is a geographical area that is identifiable on the map. And we'll continue now to read the word of God, Ezekiel chapter 38, to review what we began looking at Wednesday night, which is what happens this Ezekiel 38 and 39, again, is at the beginning of the campaign.

This is not the final great battle. So let's take a look at it. Persia, Ethiopia and Libya in verse five are going to join with the forces in the North with shield and helmet, Gomer and all its troops, the house of Togarmah from the far North and all its troops, many people are with you.

Once again, just as a reminder, here are the participants. You've got Gomer and Togarmah and Meshach and Tubal all up there South of the Black Sea. You've got Russia North and East, and you've got Persia, Iran, due East.

And then there's some sort of confederation. It may involve the Saudis and Iraq. It may involve Egypt.

I personally think that not worrying too much about put which is Libya or Ethiopia, unless something strange and unusual happens, they've never been great military forces. At most they might provide support in the form of logistics or other places where forces could be staged. They could supply natural resources or something.

But if you look around at least today, and if these events are many years in the future, maybe these North African countries will develop and be more of a threat. Right now, the last thing I would be worried about in the Middle East is an invasion from Ethiopia or even an invasion from Libya. Once Gaddafi was trounced down there, they've kept their nose out of international affairs, but that could change.

At any rate, this is what the Bible says. So they are coming. Prepare yourself and be ready.

You and all your companies that are gathered about you and be a guard for them. After many days, you will be visited. In the latter years, you will come into the land of those brought back from the sword and gathered from many people on the mountains of Israel, which had long been desolate.

Make sense? This, you think about Israel, regathered, brought back from the sword, brought back from the Holocaust. They're back in the land that had long been desolate. Now they are there.

That could not have happened in earlier days. It happens now. The Lord God says in verse 10,

on that day, it shall come to pass that thoughts will arise in your mind and you will make an evil plan.

You will say, I will go up against a land of unwallled villages. I will go to a peaceful people who dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, having neither bars nor gates, to take plunder and to take booty, to stretch out your hand against the waste places that are again inhabited and against the people gathered from the nations who have acquired livestock and goods who dwell in the midst of the land. Recognize this description of modern day Israel? Sheba, Dedan, the merchants of Tarshish and all their young lions will say to you, have you come to take plunder? Have you gathered your army to take booty, to carry away silver and gold, to take away livestock and goods, to take great plunder? Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say to God, this says the Lord God, on that day when my people Israel dwell safely, will you not know it? Then you will come from your place out of the far North, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses.

This is modern day transportation, metaphorically represented as horses, a great company and a mighty army. Why is Israel dwelling in safety? Because three and a half years earlier, the head of the EU, the head of NATO slash EU slash revived Roman empire has made a treaty with Israel guaranteeing their safety. So Israel has not felt the need to arm themselves to the teeth, to secure their borders, to wall their villages as it were.

They are content because we have a treaty. We're gonna be okay. Think about the situation in this country to try to come to diplomatic solutions and to make treaties and agreements with entities that have historically violated every single treaty and every single agreement they have ever made is to invite disaster.

It is to appear weak and looking at a country of unwallled villages with a lot of prosperity and a lot of goods invites unwanted aggressive attention, weak leadership, poor strategy, not investing in peace through strength, but in peace through diplomacy. This is why Israel is going to be invaded in the middle of the 70th week. And when you look at the size of the invading forces and the minuscule by comparison nation of Israel, you can understand that even arming themselves to the teeth that without a powerful ally like the United States, they could just be overwhelmed.

It's such a small nation compared to what we saw in terms of the invading elements that are coming. So God says it will come to pass verse 18 at the same time when God comes against the land of Israel. And by the way, why do they feel so confident coming against them? He's only looking at their unwallled villages and their booty.

He doesn't say, I need to deal with your powerful friend, which is not a comfortable observation, but it's a necessary one. Israel doesn't seem to have a giant powerful bodyguard somewhere over the horizon. It only seems to be Israel and it seems to be ripe for the picking for some reason.

But it will come to pass at that time when God comes against the land of Israel, says the Lord God, my fury will show in my face, in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath, I have spoken. In that day, there shall be a great earthquake in the land of Israel so that the fish of the sea, the birds of the heaven, the beasts of the field, things that creep on the earth, all men who are on the face of the earth shall shake at my presence. The mountains shall be thrown down.

The steep places shall fall. Every wall shall fall to the ground. I will call for a sword against Gog throughout all my mountains, says the Lord God, and every man's sword will be against his brother.

This is the natural disaster of which we spoke that is going to stop this initial invasion by the King of the North and his confederation. I will bring him to judgment with pestilence and bloodshed. I will rain down on him, on his troops, on the many peoples who are with him, flooding rain, great hailstones, fire and brimstone.

Thus, I will magnify myself and sanctify myself and I will be known in the eyes of many nations. Then they shall know that I am the Lord. Many people think that this could be the spark that results in tribulational saints, people who know through this initial stopping of invasion that God is the Lord coming to faith because God will magnify himself and sanctify himself and he will be known in the eyes of many nations.

Remember in Revelation 16, that when God reveals himself, people are not impressed. They do not glorify God. They do not repent.

Remember that? That's in the latter stages. Anyone who is going to repent during this period is going to repent at the beginning of the three and a half years, not at the end. It says at the end of Revelation, let him who is righteous, let him who is unrighteous be unrighteous still.

By the end of the tribulation, everyone will have made up their minds and hardened their positions. Anyone who is going to repent, that's why there is a difference in what you see here and what we saw in Revelation chapter 16. Here are people who recognize God, magnify and sanctify.

When God magnifies and sanctifies himself, he is known and they know that he is the Lord. The implication here is that there will be those who repent at that knowledge. So that is chapter 38.

That is the beginning of the campaign of Armageddon. When you come to chapter 39, prophesy against Gog and say, thus says the Lord, I'm against you, O Gog, the prince of Rosh, Meshach and Tubal. I will turn you around and lead you on, bringing you up from the far north, bringing you against the mountains of Israel.

I will knock the bow out of your left hand. Remember the symbolism of the bow and arrows falling out of your right hand. So this is not the beast who takes charge of the EU with a bow and no arrows.

This is the king of the north who's got both. But God is gonna knock that out of his hands. You shall fall upon the mountains of Israel, you and all your troops and the people who are with you.

I will give you to birds of prey of every sort, beasts of the field to be devoured. This is gonna be scavengers from the surroundings who are gonna come in and take their rations, take their equipment, take their ammunition, take whatever weapons have not been damaged. But this earthquake, this natural disaster that stops them is gonna result in their destruction.

And then they're gonna be plundered. You shall fall on the open field for I have spoken, says the Lord God. You have a note here on the open field, which is literally the face of the field.

This is one of your new King James text notes. And I had a question on Wednesday night, isn't it kind of contradictory that he's in the mountains, but it says he's in an open field where this is the face of the field. So once he is devoured, I will send fire on Magog and on those who live in security in the coastlands.

Remember, Magog is the region from which God comes. Gog is from the land or region of Magog. And so the homeland is going to be set on fire in some fashion.

And those who live in security in the coastlands, then they shall know that I am the Lord. I will make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel, and I will not let them profane my holy name anymore. The nations shall know that I am the Lord, the Holy one in Israel.

It is coming and it shall be done. This is the day of which I have spoken. Notice, this is not the final battle of Armageddon because what happens in verse nine, those who dwell in the cities of Israel will go out and set on fire and burn the weapons, the shields and the bucklers, the bows and the arrows, the javelins and spears.

And they will make fires with them for seven years. Interesting that much as there was a transition period, I believe between the age of Israel and the age of the church, beginning at Pentecost and really extending almost 70 years, you'd say 40 years from say roughly AD 30 to AD 70, you had the transition from those who were still faithful Jews that had not yet heard of Christ. The gospel has to go forth to the diaspora.

When they hear about Christ, they have the opportunity to sort of jump the fence from being Old Testament saints to New Testament saints. Some of them might've perished after Pentecost and yet the gospel had not yet reached them. They are still Old Testament saints.

So there is a fade, there is a blending across from the end of the age of Israel. It doesn't just stop rock solid in terms of who is an Old Testament saint and who is a New Testament saint. You think about the disciples of John that Paul talks to, what baptism did you receive? Only the baptism of John.

He preaches Christ to them. They get the baptism of the spirit. They jump the age from Old

Testament saints to new.

In the same way, I think at the beginning of the millennial kingdom, it doesn't just instantly turn into the peaceable kingdom where everything is clean and bright and sunny and there is a transition. And this is why the people of Israel are going to make fires. They're gonna use the plunder that they begin to gather in the middle of the 70th week.

And they're gonna continue to use it into the early years of the millennial kingdom because the millennial kingdom is going to be a rehabilitation that will be accomplished by those saints. And they will be using these materials because it is an earthly kingdom. It's not, I go to prepare a place for you.

I'll come again, bring you to myself. You're gonna be in this abode. I've got a very interesting point to make about the abode.

First chance I get, but I have a lot to cover this morning. In any case, in the middle, for the last three and a half years, they're gonna make fires. They're gonna use these plundered resources from the King of the North, and they will continue to use them even after the second coming.

It's gonna take time to establish the kingdom. It took David time. Solomon took time to expand it, took time for Solomon to build the temple.

And this is a process. It's an earthly kingdom. It functions and is built using earthly processes.

So that is why you have these materials being used for seven years. This will be at least three or four years into the millennial kingdom. They will not take wood from the field or cut down any from the forest.

They will make fires with the weapons. What kind of weapons are these? They've got their own power. Is it gasoline? Is it diesel? Is it jet fuel? Is it nuclear power sources? Whatever it is, it can be converted from a sword into a plowshare, from a spear into a pruning hook, from a warlike purpose to a peaceful purpose.

They will plunder those who plundered them and pillage those who pillaged them, says the Lord God. And this will be part of the celebration of the victory because God brackets the beginning and ending of this three and a half year period. He's gonna bracket this with a victory at the beginning and a victory at the end.

The first victory ought to spark repentance and recognition of God's glory. And there are some who will turn, the rest of them will not. And that second final victory, that final judgment at the battle of Armageddon is gonna seal the fate of all of these who curse God, who blaspheme him, who do not repent after having seen everything that is depicted in the seals and the trumpets, the thunders and the bulls.

So you wanna talk about the hardness of men's heart. You wanna talk about the demonstration

in human history that there are some people, no matter what you do, you cannot love them into relationship with God. You cannot judge them into relationship with God.

You can't bring them with kindness. You can't draw them with grace, nor can you scare them or oppress them into faith and relationship with God. There are people who just refuse.

This is the nature of Satan and one third of the angels who are headed for destruction in the lake of fire. Nothing in the entire demonstration of human history changes their hearts and minds. God lays this out.

It is wonderful for the instruction of the unfallen angels who are convinced by demonstration that what God has said is not just true in principle, but is true in practice. And there is no doubt in anyone's mind that free will is truly free and that there are some who harden their hearts and who will not repent no matter what God does. So this is continuing in Ezekiel chapter 39.

It will come to pass in that day. I will give Gog a burial place there in Israel, the valley of those who pass by east of the sea. This is the great sea, the Mediterranean.

It will obstruct travelers because they will bury Gog and all his multitude. There's going to be such a heap of leftovers that it's going to change the highways. They will call it the valley of Hamon Gog.

And you look at your text note there and it's the multitude. The multitude of Gog. And for seven months, the house of Israel will be burying them in order to cleanse the land.

I think this seven months is at the beginning of the millennial kingdom. I think they will continue to use the salvaged materials for three and a half years into the millennial kingdom until the administration of the Lord Jesus Christ reorganizes and remakes all of the economic and industrial and social constructs in the land of Israel. This takes time.

It is an earthly kingdom. It doesn't just happen with a snap of the fingers because God is using servants. Guess what? You could well be one of those servants.

This kingdom is built and it is built by the servants of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is his kingdom. You have been faithful in a few things.

I will make you ruler over many things. What a privilege. What an opportunity.

Think of the expanded kingdom of Israel, which is much larger than the current nation of Israel. How many communities, how many regions, how many counties, if you will, or precincts are going to need governors, are going to need functionaries, are going to need those who can arrange and handle logistics, who can work with others, who are built in their soul to function within a government that is not corrupt. Can you imagine actual government that functions for the good of those who are governed and isn't self-interested, isn't politically motivated, isn't interested in power for its own sake, but is a community of those who have learned and grown

in this age to rule and reign with Christ in the next.

There's a lot to be done. We're not going to be in a angel painting suspended by a thread in heavenly glory. Those of us who qualify are going to rule and reign with Christ.

And it's a process. It's a government. It's an economy.

It's industrial. It is agricultural. It is social.

It is charities. And it will all be overseen by a perfect king. And those of us who qualify will walk with him in white, will meet with him to receive hidden manna, and will function in the transition out of darkness into the kingdom of the son of his love in the literal earthly millennial kingdom.

It's very exciting. Something to really look forward to and to invest ourselves in preparing for. That's what's being talked about here.

So all the people of the land will be burying and they will gain renown for it on the day that I am glorified says the Lord God. Look at this. They will set apart men regularly employed with the help of a search party to pass through the land and bury those bodies remaining on the ground in order to cleanse it.

At the end of seven months, they will make a search. The search party will pass through the land. When anyone sees a man's bone, he will set up a marker by it till the buriers had buried it in the Valley of Hamon Gog.

Why? I think this is probably nuclear contamination. Wouldn't that make perfect sense? And or biological elements, some sort of germ warfare. There's already talk of bio labs.

I saw a map that had 23 pins in it in Ukraine alone of bio labs that need to be checked. Somewhere between 16 and 23, I've heard various numbers, but it's well over a dozen. That Victoria, what's her name, was talking about the other day.

So whatever it is, something is dangerous about these remains. And you remember the judgment that we saw with the eyes in the sockets and melting and so on. Whatever this is, it is not good.

And even after the Lord Jesus comes and begins ruling in his kingdom, this stuff has to be, you know, hating the garment spotted by the flesh. And, you know, 20 foot poles, long tongs, isolation containers to take this stuff to this great burial ground. The name of the city will be Hamona.

Thus they shall cleanse the land. Hamona. So that's Ezekiel 38 and 39.

Again, as you look at the map and see where these current movements are leading and what these current confederations are achieving, you see these Northern Bloc, you see the Asiatic

Bloc, you see the confederation around oil in Saudi and Jordan and the conflict between Iran and Iraq. You can easily see them choosing opposite sides, one with the King of the East, one with the King of the North. Persia going with the King of the North, Iran going with Russia in the modern day, and watching Syria and some of these others.

If you look again at who surrounds Israel, you can see that this is easily fulfillable right now, as never before, especially with Israel dwelling in the land with unwalled cities and prosperity. That hasn't been historically true in 2000 years, but it's true in our lifetime. So what do we conclude from all of this? If we return to Dr. Pentecost and continue in this chapter 20 of Things to Come, you find that the description of where this conflict is gonna take place is given, we've already seen the not only Megiddo, but the Valley of Jehoshaphat, this extended area East of Jerusalem, the Valley of the Passengers in Ezekiel 39, 11, the Valley of the Passersby, we saw those, they got to remap the highways, those who travel by.

Isaiah 34 and 63, picture the Lord coming from Edom or Edomiah. And this is why we had the map here where the Megiddo, Kedron Valley and Edom, roughly North to South with Jerusalem at the center is gonna be this field of conflict. So as we look at this, it conforms to the extent pictured by John in Revelation 14, verse 20.

Revelation 14, verse 20, if we look at that, the wine press was trampled outside the city and blood came out of the wine press up to the horse's bridles for 1,600 furlongs. This is our very famous reference to blood as high as the horse's bridles. The length of that line we just looked at from the Megiddo down to Edom matches this description, 1,600 furlongs.

It's about 184 miles if you look at your text note. That's a big campaign area. So far beyond just the valley, we've already seen the great world powers.

This is the closing section of this chapter in things to come. The 10 Kingdom Federation of the Nations under the Beast, constituting the final form of the fourth great world empire. That's the EU in our modern day.

Secondly, the Northern Confederation, Russia and her allies, Togarmah, Meshach, Tubal, any of these Southern elements that get absorbed up into the North, they seem to somehow either transport, I don't know if they supply airborne regiment troops or if they supply resources. They don't attack from the South, but they're affiliated or confederated. Thirdly, the Kings of the East.

These are the Asiatic peoples from beyond the Euphrates. Once again, looking at your map, who is East of the Euphrates? You have everybody. This can include anybody over there to the East, but you have primarily China and their affiliates.

If you zoom this back out and see what is to the East, there's your King of the East, King of the North, Russia, King of the East, China. Here, the King of the South, North African power or powers, I think this could include Saudi Arabia, Egypt and any of their affiliates. He also

mentions that the Lord and his armies from heaven, this will not occur until the very end of the three and a half year campaign.

The animosity of the first four is vented against each other and against Israel. As we've seen in Zechariah, it is particularly against the God of Israel that they fight, particularly against the God of Israel that they fight. This is found in a number of passages that you can see here.

I gave you these on Wednesday, Psalm 2, 2, Isaiah 34, 2, Zechariah 14, 3, and so on. You understand this. They gather together.

They are against God and the people of God. So this invasion by the Northern Confederacy, Daniel 9, 26 and 27, the Prince of the Roman Empire will make a covenant with Israel for a seven year period. This gives Israel safety.

They don't feel the need to wall their villages and so on. And it is, as Pentecost says here, a satanic imitation of the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant, which gave Israel title deed to the land, not just deed to it, but security within it. God has promised the children of Abraham that they will dwell in the land that he promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and they will dwell there safely.

Well, they've already got title to the land, but the safety part is gonna be guaranteed, quote unquote, by the beast. This is pictured by John in Revelation 6, 2, as a writer going forth to conquer. He's given sovereignty by peaceful negotiations.

This condition exists for three and a half years after which the covenant is broken. And the period known as the Great Tribulation, which is coming up in our chapter 24, begins the latter half. The tribulation is evidently caused by Satan, who has been cast out of heaven into the earth.

And I think that has already happened, but at the middle of the tribulation period, he is going to vent his wrath by attacking the remnant of Israel and the saints of God. This is in Revelation chapter 12. We come back here to Revelation chapter 12.

And this is the chapter that has the woman, the child, and the dragon. You remember this? The woman is obviously Israel. She has a garland of 12 stars.

She's with child. She gives birth. And there's a dragon with seven heads and 10 horns, seven diadems on his heads.

His tail draws a third of the stars from heaven, throws him to the earth. And he wants to devour the child as soon as it is born. Notice, his tail draws a third of the stars of heaven and throws them to the earth.

This is before the child is born. And I think Satan is cast to earth, but in a more permanent way. War breaks out in heaven.

Michael and his angels fight. The dragon and his angels fight. They do not prevail.

They're not found in heaven any longer. They're cast out. That serpent of old called the devil and Satan.

This is the dragon, the great dragon, who deceives the whole world. He is cast to earth and his angels cast out with him. They have limited access to heaven.

This is going to be cut off in the middle of the 70th week. Now salvation and strength and the kingdom of our God and the power of his Christ have come. For the accuser of our brethren who accused them before God day and night has been cast down.

They overcome him by the blood of the lamb, by the word of their testimony. They did not love their lives to the death. Rejoice O heavens and you who dwell in them.

Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea. The devil has come down to you having great wrath because he knows he has a short time. So his expulsion from heaven is also a phased event.

I think he was initially cast out of the throne room and has become the God of this world, but he still has access to heaven. As you can see in Job chapter one and Job chapter two. He can come up for these angelic conclaves.

What have you been doing? I've been in the earth, wandering up and down in it, but he still has heavenly privileges. He and his angels are able to go up to heaven and fight with Michael and the heavenly angels, the unfallen angels. Michael and the unfallen angels win and they cast Satan and his angelic army down to this earth where he can no longer escape.

You see, he's initially loses heavenly privileges. Then he loses heavenly presence. He's on the earth.

And at the end of Armageddon, he is going to be cast out of the earth into the bottomless pit. Phased limitation and location of Satan from unlimited privileges in heaven to limited access to heaven. In the middle of the tribulation, no access to heaven.

And ultimately, at the end of the battle of Armageddon, he will be cast into the lake of fire. So again, what do we conclude from this? How and when does Satan get to do what he wants to do and where he wants to be? All of his activities are entirely within the bounds of the will of God. If God does not want Satan in his throne room, Satan is no longer there.

If God wants to cast him to earth and limit his access to heaven to only specific occasions, that's what God does. And Satan cannot confound or disobey the word and the power of God. In the middle of this 70th week, God's angels, and notice God could speak a word and uncreate Satan and his fallen angels.

What is the agency by which these angels are cast out of heaven? God's angels do it. God's

servants do it. His ministers, his flames of fire do it.

Why doesn't God just do it himself? God involves his angels as he involves us in his plan and purpose. And it is good for his angels to fight. I say again, it is good for the unfallen angels in heaven to fight.

If it wasn't good, God wouldn't have them do it. But Michael and the unfallen angelic armies fight a war in heaven. And after the period of this warfare, they're cast out.

We've seen in Daniel, Gabriel's trying to come and talk to Daniel, but the Prince of Persia delayed me and I had to call on Michael to help me and so on. You remember this, there is angelic opposition that is overcome. Point of application as we conclude for this morning.

Look at the unfolding divinely, sovereignly decreed pattern of human history that also implicates heavenly creation, heavenly history. It is all in the control of God. It all benefits his faithful and obedient servants.

There is no unfallen angel that says, you know, I really should have joined Satan and gone the other way. There is no faithful believer on this earth, regardless of what God programs into our lives, that is going to regret it. When we follow the path of faith and obedience, whatever God brings, we have the opportunity by his grace to meet opposition and to overcome it.

Notice again, loud voice in heaven. This is Revelation 12, 10, salvation and strength and the kingdom of our God and the power of his Christ have come for the accuser of our brethren who accused them before our God day and night has been cast down. They overcame him by the blood of the lamb, not by might nor by power.

It's God's power, God's spirit. It is the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, activated, enabled and made real in our hearts by the Holy spirit, the blood of the lamb and the word of their testimony. And they didn't love their lives to the death.

Love God, love one another. Therefore rejoice, oh heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth.

Are we heavenly minded? Are we heavenly citizens or are we earthly minded and earthly citizens? That is the question to ponder as we think about these things. We have a lot more to see and a lot more to cover and a lot more to compare in current events, but I hope this has been clear. I hope it's been helpful.

And once again, we're going to have stadium seats above the action, really good seats, not on the field, not even on the bench. We're going to be watching these things with the Lord Jesus Christ from glory until the time of his second coming to deliver his people Israel and set up and establish his kingdom in which I hope you and I are qualified to serve. It's very exciting.

Let's close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for the wonderful truth of your word.

Thank you for revealing it to us.

You have led us in on the unfolding purpose, the themes, the great movements in history, both in the past and in the future. And we know that through the comforting of your Holy Spirit, these truths strengthen us, comfort us, encourage us, and motivate us to lay hold of righteousness by faith, to be those who by faith and patience inherit the promises. We pray that as we reflect on what we've seen from your word that your Holy Spirit will give each of us encouragement and confidence and will give us the wisdom that we pray for, practical wisdom, as well as spiritual wisdom, to live what remains to us in this life for your glory and for the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, our savior.

We pray it in his name, amen.