

# Book of Ezekiel

## Chapter 39

*Theme:* prophecy against Gog and furnishes added details about the destruction of this enemy.

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**Theme:** Chapter 39 continues the prophecy against Gog and furnishes added details about the destruction of this formidable enemy.

**Bible Reader's Companion Introduction: Chapter summary.** Ezekiel's last bold prophecy describes a foreign invasion of the Holy Land, thrown back only when God intervenes. This is the sixth and last of a series of messages delivered the night before the exiles received news of Jerusalem's fall. God's people have been restored to their land and live in peace (38:7) when armies attack from the north (vv. 1-16). The prophet's predictions of an aroused God who crushes Israel's enemies in a final, decisive battle at history's end, now come true, as the Lord uses the elemental forces of nature to crush the invaders (vv. 17-23). The destruction of the enemy is further developed in chapter 39. God, Israel's Holy One, defeats the enemy and so displays His commitment to Israel (39:1-8). The defeat is so great that it takes Israel years to dispose of the abandoned weaponry (vv. 9-10), and months of effort by the entire population to bury the dead and cleanse the land (vv. 11-16), even though scavenger animals and birds feast on the dead (vv. 17-20). The nations will recognize God's hand in the defeat (v. 21). Israel at last will know God, and that He who scattered them for their sins has now regathered them for His glory (vv. 22-29).<sup>1</sup>

**BKC: 39:1-8.** The invading armies will be totally destroyed by God. Having brought them against the mountains of Israel (v. 2; cf. 38:8), God will weaken them (39:3) and strike them down on the mountains of Israel. This once-mighty army will then be food for birds and . . . wild animals.

God will also punish the homelands of the invaders: I will send fire on Magog and on those who live in safety in the coastlands. Sending fire implies destruction and military devastation (30:8, 14, 16; cf. Hosea 8:14; Amos 1:4, 7, 10, 14; 2:2, 5). The nation that will spawn the invasion will herself be destroyed. The "coastlands," already mentioned several times by Ezekiel (cf. Ezek. 26:15, 18; 27:3, 6-7, 15, 35), imply the farthest reaches of the known world. Through all this God will teach Israel that He is holy and is not to be profaned by their sins (cf. 36:22). Also the nations will see that He is the Holy One in Israel.<sup>2</sup>

"Chapter 39 retells the story of Gog's attack and defeat but with a slightly different emphasis from that of the prior chapter. Not much attention is given to the attack itself (merely vv. 1-2), whereas a great deal of space is devoted to describing the massive slaughter of Gog's forces. In a sense, then, Chapter 38 concentrates on the threat from the powers opposed to God and His people, while Chapter 39 concentrates more on the deliverance of God's people from that threat. The end of the chapter dwells at length on Israel's restoration (vv. 21-29), especially on the immediate (pre-Gog) era of that

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<sup>1</sup>Richards, L. (1991). *The Bible reader's companion*. Includes index. (Eze 38:1). Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books.

<sup>2</sup>Walvoord, J. F. (1983-c1985). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (Eze 39:1). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

restoration. Thus the chapter starts with the distant future but ends in the nearer future with the promise of return from captivity to the land of Canaan and the greater truths which that return points toward."

### **Ezekiel 39:1**

**Therefore, thou son of man, prophesy against Gog, and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal:**

**Life Application Bible: 39:1ff** The story of the battle continues. The defeat of the evil forces will be final and complete; they will be destroyed by divine intervention. Because of this victory, God's name will be known throughout the world. His glory will be evident, and the nations will understand that he alone is in charge of human history. God will clearly show his love for his people by restoring them to their homeland.

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## Word Focus

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### **Gog**

(Heb. *gog*) (38:2; 39:1) H1463: Ezekiel prophesied God's judgment against "Gog, a prince of the land of Magog" (38:2). The land of Magog is named with Meshech and Tubal, regions near Asia Minor (38:2; Gen. 10:2). But more than as a specific person and territory, Ezekiel uses Gog and Magog as a metaphor for vast armies invading Israel from the north in the end times (38:8). They oppose God and seek to destroy His people Israel, but God promises to deliver them (38:14–23). In the Book of Revelation, Gog and Magog become symbolic names for evil nations deceived by Satan and opposed to God and the kingdom of Christ (Rev. 20:8).<sup>3</sup>

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The Lord again announced His antagonism toward Gog (cf. 38:2-3). He repeated that He would turn him around and bring him from the remotest parts of the North against the mountains of Israel (cf. 38:4-9, 15).

**Guglielmo:** We must understand that we have enjoyed a period of nuclear stability that has lasted for some 50 years. And that stability has been based upon a doctrine known as "Mutually Assured Destruction." And this was based upon there being only two adversaries, the United States and the Soviet Union. These two nations had a fairly equal balance of power. And both nations, for the most part, were rational.

Folks, that no longer exists. Many nations have in their possession nuclear weapons. More than 11 Third World countries have nuclear weapons, and the number continues to grow. Over 22 countries have or are developing intercontinental ballistic missiles. And 66 countries have the ability to launch surface-skimming cruise missiles. There is no longer a stable balance of power. There is no longer a sense of being rational with many of these countries. And, as Robert Hunter said at a private briefing at NATO headquarters in

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<sup>3</sup> Nelson Study Bible

Brussels, "A nuclear confrontation in the Middle East is not just likely, it is certain. It is just a matter of timing."

And, Robin Beard, Assistant Secretary of Defense, said at this same meeting in Brussels, "When the Soviets were in power, we knew the procedures [to put into] place to prevent an accident. Today, we don't even know who has the button - and there's a power grab going on."

Now, in Ezekiel chapter 39, we see them coming down upon Israel to destroy the Jews and take back the land. It truly does seem that God has placed the players in position, and in His time He will allow this war to begin! <sup>4</sup>

### **Ezekiel 39:2**

**And I will turn thee back, and leave but the sixth part of thee, and will cause thee to come up from the north parts, and will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel:**

**Missler:** This implies that 5/6ths of the field forces that come against the little State of Israel, are to be wiped out. That gets everybody's attention. It will be like the Six Day War all over again, but with the decimal point moved over a bit. <sup>5</sup>

**Dake: [I will turn thee back]** When Gog comes into Palestine this time he will be turned back and completely destroyed. The result will not be thus when he invades Palestine 3 1/2 years earlier (in the middle of Daniel's 70th week) to take over Jerusalem and the Jewish temple as his capital (Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:51; 2 Thes. 2:3-4; Rev. 11:1-2; Rev. 13:1-18). God will permit him to drive the Jews out of Palestine and occupy their country for about 3 1/2 years in the last part of the 7-year tribulation period. Then, during this time He will raise up new enemies north and east of Gog's 10 kingdoms to keep him occupied in war so that he cannot concentrate on the total destruction of Israel. At the end of these 3 1/2 years, after conquering these enemies, he will lead the nations against Israel and Jerusalem to do what he intended at the beginning; but before he can take all of Jerusalem he will be defeated by the second coming of Christ (Zech. 14:1-15; 2 Thes. 1:7-10; Jude 1:14-15; Rev. 19:11-21). This is the time he is to be turned back from his purpose and his armies are to be destroyed—all but a sixth part. <sup>6</sup>

**Dake: [sixth part of thee]** A sixth part of men under Antichrist being spared would mean about 166,667 escaping destruction and 833,333 being destroyed out of every million. We have no way of telling how many millions of men will be in the vast armies of the nations, but there will be many to fulfill Ezekiel 38:22; Rev. 14:20.

**Dake: [from the north parts, and will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel]** Antichrist's army will come down from the north into Palestine, as the Assyrians, Babylonians, Grecians, and others did in the past. Syria is north of Palestine, and an army

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<sup>4</sup>Joe Guglielmi, Ezekiel Sermons, Calvary Chapel of Manitowoc

<sup>5</sup>Chuck Missler, Notes on Ezekiel, Khouse.org

<sup>6</sup>Dake Study Bible, Dake's Commentary on Ezekiel

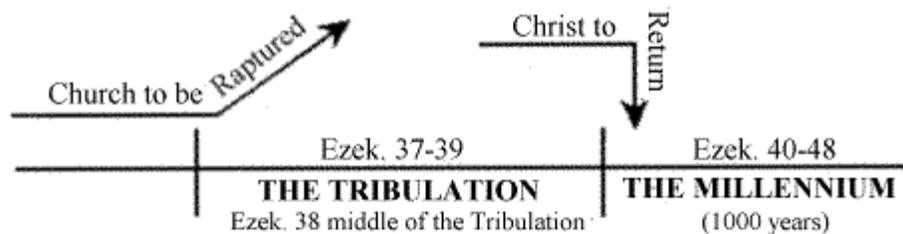
from Babylon would come west through that country and then south into Palestine to avoid the desert.

In verse 3 it speaks of "the bows" and "the arrows." Don't come to the conclusion that in this battle they are going to be using bows and arrows to fight with. Not at all! When the Scriptures were translated into the King James language or English back in 1611, they translated these words to fit with the technology they had back then, bows and arrows! But, these Hebrew words can easily be translated "launchers" and "missiles," which can mean a variety of different technologies we have for war today!

**Clarke:** And leave but the sixth part of thee—The margin has, strike thee with six plagues; or, draw thee back with a hook of six teeth.

**McGee:** "Leave but the sixth part of thee" is literally "I will six thee," or better still, "I will afflict thee with six plagues." These plagues are listed in chapter 38 verse 22 as pestilence, blood, overflowing rain, great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. This is the way God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. According to the record, "Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven" (Gen. 19:24). And this is exactly the way God intends to destroy this army which will come out of the north against, His people to destroy them. You must remember that Russia has always been anti-Semitic. At the present writing the largest population of Jews—outside the land of Israel and the United States—is over there in Russia. We are hearing a great deal of criticism of Russia for not permitting the Jews to leave. Well, in these last days God will deal with Russia for its treatment of His people.

There is a message for us here. When God was ready to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, Abraham thought He was being unjust. He asked God, "Will you destroy the righteous with the wicked? Will you spare the city if there are fifty righteous—forty—thirty—twenty—ten?" God said no, He would not destroy the city if ten righteous were found there. But there were not ten, and God sent His angels to get Lot out of the city, saying that they could not destroy the city until Lot was out of it. My friend, this is one reason I believe that God will not let the Tribulation come until He takes His church—that is, all born-again believers—out of the world. Let me illustrate this with the following diagram:



To put it very bluntly, all hell will break loose on the earth during the Tribulation Period. It will be a frightful, terrible time. I don't understand the folk who insist that God's redeemed ones, which we designate as the church, will go through the Tribulation. The Bible makes it clear that those who will be witnessing on the earth during this time will be the 144,000 Jews.

God, having dealt in judgment with the enemy that invaded Israel from the north, allows Antichrist to be the world ruler for the remainder of the Tribulation Period. Then the Lord Jesus Christ will come to the earth to establish His kingdom; we have that pictured in chapter 19 of Revelation. In chapter 20 of the Book of Revelation the kingdom, the Millennium, begins.

With these tremendous events in mind, it would be well to pause a moment and consider the material we have studied. After a careful examination of three of the four major prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, certain great principles emerge, which the fourth prophet, Daniel, will confirm. These principles have an ageless application for nations of the world and for believers (when I say “believers,” I am speaking about those who have trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and believe that the Bible is the Word of God). In Ezekiel we have seen God dealing with Israel. My friend, when God says “Israel” He means Israel; He does not mean the church. How some can believe that God means the church when He says Israel is a flip on the flying trapeze of theology that is beyond me. Let’s allow God to mean what He says and realize that He has been dealing in these prophecies with the literal people of Israel. That is the correct interpretation. However, there is an application we can make since God’s dealing with Israel is a microcosm of His dealings with the world in which we live. The principles God has used in dealing with His own people Israel are *eternal*, for they are linked to the character and attributes of God. I have stated some of them in the Books of Isaiah and Jeremiah, and now I am prepared to draw certain conclusions from Ezekiel.

No prophet emphasizes the glory and the holiness of God more than Ezekiel. He *saw* the glory of God—that was the great vision he had at the beginning of his book. He never forgot it. And we should not forget it either. His emphasis, therefore, is upon God’s judgment. God is longsuffering, not willing that any should perish, and He warned his people again and again that, if they did not turn to Him, He would judge Jerusalem. Then Jerusalem was destroyed, and Ezekiel offered the people encouragement as they looked into the future. “But,” he said, “another enemy is coming.” When the Lord Jesus Christ was on earth, He wept over the city of Jerusalem because He knew that Titus the Roman would be around in a few years to destroy the city, just as Nebuchadnezzar had done in the past.

Things were wrong in Jerusalem; and, if that city was to enjoy the blessings of God, those things had to be made right. The liars should cease lying; the thieves should cease stealing; the lawless should become law-abiding; and righteousness should prevail in the city. Only when God was acknowledged and respected in the land could blessing rest upon Jerusalem. Righteousness must prevail before any nation or individual can experience the love, mercy, and goodness of God. Jerusalem was *wrong*—the people were thinking wrong; they were acting wrong. They were in sin, and God was *right* in judging them. God never blesses that which is wrong.

This is made evident when we contrast Ezekiel with Jeremiah. I want you to notice this again because I consider it rather important. Jeremiah reveals the heart of God. God does not want to judge. As He said in Isaiah, judgment is *strange* work. He would rather save—that is His business. He is not willing that any should perish. He is very much involved with the human race. The great statement in John’s Gospel is that He became *flesh* and came down here among us. This reveals His love and concern for us. It broke

His heart that Jerusalem would be destroyed. Jesus wept over it just as Jeremiah had wept over it centuries before.

In Ezekiel we have something altogether different. At the very time Jerusalem was being destroyed Ezekiel's wife died, and God forbade him to mourn or sorrow for her. He was to act like nothing happened. God wept over Jerusalem, but He did not *mourn*. He did not repent for what He had done, because He was right in doing it. God, with tears in His eyes, punished Jerusalem and destroyed the city, but He was doing that which was in keeping with His character. He did what was right because what God does is right. Paul asks, "... Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid" ([Rom. 9:14](#)). Of course there is no unrighteousness with God. Whatever God does is right. His *glory* is manifested in *judgment*. His *grace* is manifested in *redemption*. If God had not provided redemption for us, there would be no salvation for man whatsoever.

In chapters 38 and 39 of Ezekiel we saw that the kingdom in the north which is going to invade Israel (which I believe is Russia) will be destroyed in the future. The question is: *Why* will God destroy Russia? Let's read this verse again: "And thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land, that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes" ([Ezek. 38:16](#)). What is God going to do? He is going to *destroy* them. I can hear someone exclaim, "Do you mean God will actually do such a thing?" Certainly He will. The liberal theologian has a problem with the Creator destroying what He chooses, such as the Lord Jesus cursing a fig tree and also destroying a few pigs. I was in a conference one time when a man who was a liberal in his theology almost wept because Jesus destroyed those pigs ([Matt. 8:30-32](#))! Yet every morning *he* ate bacon for breakfast! He was like the Walrus and the Carpenter who wept, but were busy eating oysters as fast as they could. I am not impressed with these people who get upset with God because He judges. I have a notion that God gets a little upset with them.<sup>7</sup>

### **Ezekiel 39:3**

**And I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand, and will cause thine arrows to fall out of thy right hand.**

**[Sword]** (*Chereb*) which can mean any destroying instrument.

**[Arrow]** (*khatis*) which means piercer. It is occasionally used of a thunderbolt. It could be translated today as a sharp, piercing missile.

**[Bow]** (*keh-sheth*) which means launcher.

**Missile:** Remember that this text was translated into English in 1611 during the reign of King James I. Thus, they were restricted to their knowledge of the technology of that day. Thus, if we were to translate Ezekiel 39:3 today, we could say, "I will smite thy

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<sup>7</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (Eze 39:6). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

launchers out of thy left hand, and cause thy missiles to fall out of thy right hand.”<sup>8</sup>

**Clarke: I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand**—The Persians whom Antiochus had in his army, chap. 38:5, were famous as archers, and they may be intended here. The bow is held by the left hand; the arrow is pulled and discharged by the right.

The Lord promised to defeat Gog there; it would be as though He knocked his weapons out of his hands. Yahweh did not reveal whom He would use to do this or how He would do it, but 38:21 suggests that at least part of the defeat would be a result of Gog's soldiers killing each other (cf. Judg. 7:22). Gog and his army and allies would fall in the Promised Land, and birds and beasts would eat their corpses (cf. vv. 17-20; Rev. 19:17-21). Such a fate was the ultimate indignity in the minds of the ancients (cf. 2 Kings 9:35).

**Ron Daniel:** Some commentators protest the interpretation of these chapters as being modern. They point out that the weapons are swords, bows, and arrows, and that the transportation used is horses.

Interestingly, two months after the 9/11 attacks, the USA didn't question the fact that the Afghan Rebels we were aiding were all on horses. Military experts say that in country like that, horses are better than a four-wheel drive. In mountainous terrain, the only better vehicle is a helicopter.

But before you begin to think that this sounds like an excuse, it is important to point out that linguistically, the word used for "horse" here (soos) literally means "leaper." It is used in Jeremiah 8:7 to describe a bird of some sort.

The word for "riders" (REH-keb) literally means "drivers that are carried," as in a chariot. By literal definition, this could certainly be helicopter or fighter pilots who are being carried in cockpits.

The "arrows" (khayts) are sharp, piercing missiles, and the "bows" (KEH-sheth) are launchers - from a root meaning "severe, fierce, harsh." And of course the term "sword" is used in Scripture to describe all sorts of destroying weapons, and sometimes entire armies.

We would certainly be justified in translating this as God saying, "when your army comes riding or flying all your various forms of transportation, I'm going to wipe you out - I'm going to knock your missiles and launchers right out of your hands."

This will be accomplished through an earthquake, raining down fire and brimstone, and the army turning against one another. Even those in the lands who stayed home in safety will have fire sent down upon them. There will be no doubt that this was a supernatural occurrence.

### **Ezekiel 39:4**

**Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy bands, and the people that is with thee: I will give thee unto the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be devoured.**

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<sup>8</sup> Chuck Missler, Notes on Ezekiel, Khouse.org

**[the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be devoured]** The same prediction as in Ezekiel 39:17-20; Matthew 24:27-28; Luke 17:34-37; Rev. 19:17-21. The fowls and beasts of the earth will literally eat the flesh and drink the blood of the millions slain at Armageddon.

### **Ezekiel 39:5**

**Thou shalt fall upon the open field: for I have spoken *it*, saith the Lord GOD.**

**[upon the open field]** The open field refers to all the land of Palestine and surrounding countries where the hosts of the armies of all nations under Antichrist will be mobilized, but mainly to the mountains of Israel (Ezekiel 39:17).

### **Ezekiel 39:6**

**And I will send a fire on Magog, and among them that dwell carelessly in the isles: and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.**

**Missler:** The ancient writers figured that “isles” or “coastlands” were remote coasts of the Mediterranean; but there is no need to put that limitation on the language. The Lord is going to rain fire and hailstones of fire and brimstone upon Magog. As long as it is “those guys” we sort of cheer. But verse 6 reads, “I will send a fire on Magog, and among them that dwell securely in the coastlands.” I don’t know who those are, but among others one of them could be the United States.<sup>9</sup>

**[Magog]** It seems that Magog will be the chief hater of the Jews; it is thus singled out along with the maritime countries as the object of God’s wrath. This is perhaps why both Gog, the prince, and the land of Magog are mentioned in particular in Rev. 20:7-10 in connection with the last rebellion against God on earth, which will take place 1,000 years later.

**Clarke: I will send a fire on Magog—**On Syria. I will destroy the Syrian troops.

**Fire** from the Lord often refers to lightning bolts (see 1 Kin. 18:38). **they shall know:** There is a significant emphasis in chs. 38; 39 on God’s purpose in demonstrating the central truth that He is **the LORD** (see vv. 13, 21, 22, 28; 38:16, 23). God’s battle with Gog will demonstrate His sovereignty and majesty in His universe.

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<sup>9</sup> Chuck Missler, Notes on Ezekiel, Khouse.org

**McGee 6-7:** Is God going to destroy Russia? He says that He will send fire on Magog and among those that dwell securely in the coastlands. The question is: Where is God today? Why doesn't He move in defense of His people in our day? I shall never forget watching a newscast on television several years ago when a group of Christians appeared at the American Embassy in Moscow and appealed, actually weeping, for permission to leave Russia because of being persecuted. Our country did nothing. And the Russian soldiers came and took these people away. I waited for a long time to hear what had happened to them, but there was never a further word in the media. The Soviet authorities were never dealt with. And Russia has been guilty of more anti-Semitism than any other nation over a period of years. Oh, the injustice in the world! I see very little fear of God throughout the world. The feeling is that He is a jolly old Man who shuts His eyes to the injustice in the world. Why doesn't God move against injustice? Well, He *will* move when it is time. He will vindicate His glory, but He will not do it in a vindictive, revengeful, and petulant manner. He will judge, and when He does, there will be a respect and reverence for God in this world, and little man will bow before Him.

**Romans 2:3** tells us, "And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?" Man is not going to escape judgment. He thinks he will get away with his sin, but he will not. In **Hebrews 2:3** we read, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him." My friend, do you realize that this is a question which even God cannot answer? How *shall* we escape, if we neglect so great salvation? Well, we can't escape. There is no answer to that question.

Now let me use an old-fashioned expression that gags the liberal preachers (and also some evangelicals who are attempting to make the world a better place for people to go to hell in). Here it is: Hell, my friend, is an awful *reality*. You can interpret it any way you want to, but it is a place where a holy God puts those who are in rebellion against Him, those who sin with impunity, those who blaspheme God and His holy name at will, those who live like animals in the name of freedom but who are indulging in gross immorality. My friend, God's holy name is going to be vindicated.

How will God's holy name be vindicated? In love? He is demonstrating His love today in giving His Son. Those of us who name His name need to learn a lesson. We need to learn that we cannot trifle with Him. We cannot get familiar with Him. We cannot live as we please and then get buddy-buddy with Him. Our God is holy. Neither can we presume upon Him. We cannot sin and get by with it. If that were possible, then God would be no better than we are. Man is only a creature. The will of God will prevail, and our proper position is to bow before Him. Our only liberty today is in the will of God. He remembers that we are dust, but I can say with Paul, "... I obtained mercy ..." (**1 Tim. 1:13**). My friend, if you deny Him, He will trample you under His feet. He has loved you enough to give His Son, but if you reject His mercy and grace He will reject you. This is His universe, this is His earth, and He is running it according to His perfect plan. My friend, we need to get in step with Him.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). Thru the Bible commentary. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (Eze 40:1). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Gog would fall in the open fields because the Lord had decreed His judgment. Yahweh would also destroy Gog's homeland, Magog, and the remote homelands of his allies (the coastlands, cf. 26:15, 18; 27:3, 6-7, 15, 35), and those who safely inhabited these regions. This would teach them that He is God.

### **Ezekiel 39:7**

**So will I make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel; and I will not let them pollute my holy name any more: and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, the Holy One in Israel.**

**Missler:** This is the event that God uses, that Chapters 36 and 37 anticipated, to shake up Israel spiritually. When this is over, they are going to understand that they were delivered, but not by their wits or military prowess or their training, or their technology, but by the Hand of God. Everybody is going to be aware of what will be going on.<sup>11</sup>

**Dake:** [will I make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel; and I will not let them pollute my holy name any more: and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, the Holy One in Israel] Three results of Armageddon:

1. I will make My holy name known in the midst of My people Israel.
2. I will not permit them to pollute My holy name anymore.
3. The heathen will know that I am the Holy One in Israel.

Unlike man's popular use of the term "name" as a label of reference, God's very essence is bound up in His "name." The invader, by his attack upon an innocent people, is profaning God's "name." Because of their helplessness, the people will know that God is their deliverer.

Some of the heaviest prophecies in the Bible. God says, "All right, that's it. It's done. This is the day that I have spoken about."

### **Ezekiel 39:8**

**Behold, it is come, and it is done, saith the Lord GOD; this is the day whereof I have spoken.**

**Dake:** [the day] "The day" should be taken literally instead of being counted as a period (a number of days), for in Zech. 14:7 it is definitely stated as "one day," meaning the battle of Armageddon will last only that long.

Yahweh would also proclaim His holy reputation among the Israelites and the other nations. They would no longer regard Him as just another local deity but would recognize Him as the Holy One of Israel, the only true God who was Israel's God. This day of

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<sup>11</sup> Chuck Missler, Notes on Ezekiel, Khouse.org

judgment of which the Lord had formerly spoken would surely come and what He had predicted would indeed happen (cf. 38:17).

### **Ezekiel 39:9**

**And they that dwell in the cities of Israel shall go forth, and shall set on fire and burn the weapons, both the shields and the bucklers, the bows and the arrows, and the handstaves, and the spears, and they shall burn them with fire seven years:**

**Missler:** This seems ridiculous. First of all, how do you “burn” shields and swords? But you are going to burn weapons for 7 years!

**Dake:** **they that dwell in the cities of Israel shall go forth, and shall set on fire and burn the weapons, both the shields and the bucklers, the bows and the arrows, and the handstaves, and the spears, and they shall burn them with fire seven years]** After the one-day battle of Armageddon Israel will begin the work of burying the millions of men slain on the battlefield (Ezekiel 39:9-16). The prediction is that no wood will be needed from the forests to be used as fuel for seven years, because there will be enough material collected from the battlefield to provide fires that long (Ezekiel 39:9-10). In modern life most of those in the cities will no doubt burn the natural gas or use electricity, but there will still be many others depending on wood and other materials for warmth and cooking.

**BKC: 39:9-11.** Those who will come to plunder Israel (38:12) will themselves be plundered. Israelites will use the fallen soldiers’ weapons for fuel. . . . for seven years. Should the weapons of war—horses, swords, shields . . . bows . . . arrows . . . clubs . . . and spears (38:4-5; 39:9)—be understood literally or do they refer figuratively to modern-day weaponry? The text itself can allow for both interpretations, but the normal meaning of the words would lead one to see Ezekiel referring to literal horses, etc. With the other worldwide catastrophies evident during the first three and one-half years of Daniel’s 70th Week (Matt. 24:6-8; Rev. 6), a reversion to more primitive methods of warfare might become possible.

Throughout the remainder of the Tribulation period and into the beginning of the Millennium, as Israel will be burning those weapons, she will not need to cut down trees. This will be an amazing reversal of Gog’s fortunes. Israel will plunder those who plundered her and loot those who looted her.

After the battle Israel will also bury Gog’s dead. The burials will take place in the valley of those who travel east toward the Sea. This translation is somewhat confusing as “toward” was supplied by the translators, and the “east” (qid\_mat) should be translated “on the east of” (cf. Gen. 2:14; 1 Sam. 13:5). The valley where Gog’s army will be buried is “on the east side of” the Dead Sea (NIV marg.) in what is today Jordan. The phrase “those who travel east” (hamôoꝑb\_érÆm) could be taken as a proper name. It might refer to the “mountains of Abarim” (hamôaáb\_apurÆm) east of the Dead Sea that Israel traversed on her way to the Promised Land (cf. Num. 33:48). If so, Gog’s burial will be in the Valley of Abarim just across the Dead Sea from Israel proper in the land of Moab. Yet the burial will be in Israel because Israel controlled that area during some periods of her history (cf. 2 Sam. 8:2; Ps. 60:8).

The number of corpses will be so great that the way of travelers will be blocked. "The way of travelers" could again be translated "Abarim." The valley will be clogged with the bodies of soldiers. The name of the valley will be changed to the Valley of Hamon Gog, meaning "the Valley of the hordes of Gog."<sup>12</sup>

### **Ron Daniel 9-16: Weapons And Bodies After The War**

Once God supernaturally intervenes and destroys this army in the land of Israel, then the Jews will be dealing with the aftermath. The armies weapons will be burned. Interestingly, there will be so many of them that there will be no need to collect firewood from the forests for seven years!

There will also be so many bodies that burying them will take seven months, and there will still be bodies found after that. There have been numerous claims that the weapons described here are nuclear, which provide Israel their power for seven years, and that it is because of radiation that professionals have to bury the bodies, making sure that travelers mark the spot but leave the body alone. Although it sounds intriguing, I don't see the passage insinuating that.

### **Ezekiel 39:10**

**So that they shall take no wood out of the field, neither cut down *any* out of the forests; for they shall burn the weapons with fire: and they shall spoil those that spoiled them, and rob those that robbed them, saith the Lord GOD.**

**Missler:** So not only are 5/6ths of the Russians and their allied forces going to be wiped out, but the weapons left over are going to be gathered by Israel to provide all the energy they will need for seven years! The implication is that these could be nuclear weapons. (Note, nuclear weapons could provide more than seven years worth of energy, but perhaps after seven years they will not need any; i.e., Daniel's 70th week.) [It is interesting to note that the shelf life of a production Soviet nuclear warhead is seven years.]<sup>13</sup>

After the Lord destroyed the forces of Gog, the Israelites would use the enemy's numerous implements of warfare for fuel for seven years. The Israelites would not need to burn traditional fuel because there would be so many old weapons and implements left to burn. They would also take as spoil what the invaders had brought into the land when they came to despoil the Israelites. God would turn the tables on the invaders. As in much apocalyptic prophecy (cf. the Book of Revelation), the Lord revealed to His prophet what would take place in pictures that were familiar to him (i.e., contextualized revelation). This language does not preclude the use of modern implements of warfare in the fulfillment. Here the meaning seems to be that there would be so much combustible material utilized in the invasion that the Israelites would burn it for seven years.

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<sup>12</sup>Walvoord, J. F. (1983-c1985). The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures (Eze 39:9). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

<sup>13</sup>Chuck Missler, Notes on Ezekiel, Khouse.org

1. First of all, here is another reason why I feel this war with Magog and her allies must take place prior to the start of the tribulation period. Verse 9 tells us that the immense weapons that have been left by the destruction of this massive army will burn for seven years. If this took place during the battle of Armageddon, then these seven years would extend into the millennial kingdom, which doesn't make sense to me. But, if this war started at the start of the tribulation period, these weapons could be burned for the entire seven years of the tribulation period.

Also, to try to fit these nations here in Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39, into the battle of Armageddon spoken of in Daniel chapter 11, you will find different nations. So I view these two wars as separate. Ezekiel 38 and 39 occurs just prior to the tribulation period, while the battle of Armageddon occurs at the end of the tribulation period.

2. Now, when you think about it, not too many weapons are made of wood today. That has caused many to speculate this is just symbolic and not literal. The Pulpit Commentary said this: "...Schroder, as indicating that for Israel these warlike instruments should then so completely lose their power to terrify that they might be looked upon simply as so much firewood; and by Keil, as designer to annihilate the enemy and remove every trace of him."

3. I disagree. I do take this very literally even though this does not sound like conventional weapons! David Hocking, from his April, 2000 newsletter, Hope for Today, said this: "...Russians are manufacturing weapons made out of wood. It is a product developed by Dutch scientists called Lignostone. It is stronger than steel, is very elastic when heated and molded, and burns better than coal." And I guess it does, for the weapons that have been left over from this battle will burn for seven years!

### **Ezekiel 39:11**

**And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* I will give unto Gog a place there of graves in Israel, the valley of the passengers on the east of the sea: and it shall stop the *noses* of the passengers: and there shall they bury Gog and all his multitude: and they shall call *it* The valley of Hamongog.**

**Dake:** [in that day, that I will give unto Gog a place there of graves in Israel, the valley of the passengers on the east of the sea: and it shall stop the noses of the passengers] In that day—after Armageddon, Gog and his armies (that is, five-sixths of his armies) will be buried. It will take seven months to bury such a vast multitude of bodies and dispose of every bone in all the land (Ezekiel 39:12-14). Before the most of them are buried men will stop their noses as they pass through the land because of such a stench coming from the decaying bodies.

**[Hamongog]** *Hamon-gog*, the multitude of Gog (Ezekiel 39:11,15).

So they will be buried over in the area of Jordan on the east of the Dead Sea, the valley of passengers.

The Israelites would also bury Gog and his soldiers in a valley east of the Mediterranean Sea. This probably means that multitudes of the enemy would be buried there, not necessarily Gog personally (cf. Rev. 19:20-21; 20:10). The slaughter would be so great that it would take a large valley to accommodate all the corpses. This valley would become known as "The Valley of the Multitude of Gog." This cemetery would be so large that travelers would not be able to pass through that part of the land. Probably the Esdraelon Valley is in view since it is east of the Mediterranean Sea and since many travelers normally passed and still pass through it. Furthermore it is the only major east west valley in Israel. Some commentators argued for the valley being east of the Dead Sea, but that location seems unlikely. In biblical times a major highway connecting Egypt and Mesopotamia ran through the Esdraelon (Jezreel) valley. The Apostle John identified this valley as the location of the battle of Armageddon (Rev. 16:13-16).

### **Ezekiel 39:12**

**And seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them, that they may cleanse the land.**

**Life Application Bible: 39:12-16** Two themes are intertwined: God's total victory over his enemies, and the need to cleanse the land to make it holy. After the final battle, teams will be used to give proper burial to the bodies of the dead enemies in order for the land to be cleansed. The land would have been defiled by unburied corpses. Those who would come in contact with the corpses out in the open would become ceremonially unclean (according to Numbers 19:14-16). Yet there will be so many that all kinds of birds will be called in order to help dispose of the corpses (Ezekiel 39:17-20). The message for us is an exciting one: with God on our side, we are assured of ultimate victory over his foes because God will fight on our behalf (see also Zeph. 3:14-17; Romans 8:38-39).

**BKC: 39:12-16.** The number of soldiers killed will be so great that for seven months the house of Israel will be burying them. Even after the initial cleanup, squads of men will be employed to search the land for additional remains. As they go through the land and one of them sees a human bone, he will set up a marker beside it. Then as gravediggers see the markers they will take the remains to the Valley of Hamon Gog for burial. The operation will be so vast that a town will be set up in the valley at the gravesites to accommodate those cleansing the land. It will be named Hamonah—a form of the word "hordes."<sup>14</sup>

It would take seven months to bury all the corpses and so clean up this valley (cf. Lev. 5:2; 21:1; Deut. 21:1-9). Taylor assumed that the recurrence of the number seven is a sure sign that we are not to interpret this prediction literally. But because seven has symbolic significance some places in Scripture does not rule out its literal meaning in others. All the Israelites would get involved in burying the corpses, and this would receive worldwide attention and result in glory for God.

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<sup>14</sup>Walvoord, J. F. (1983-c1985). The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures (Eze 39:12). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

### **Ezekiel 39:13**

**Yea, all the people of the land shall bury *them*; and it shall be to them a renown the day that I shall be glorified, saith the Lord GOD.**

### **Ezekiel 39:14**

**And they shall sever out men of continual employment, passing through the land to bury with the passengers those that remain upon the face of the earth, to cleanse it: after the end of seven months shall they search.**

Now it is interesting to me that they do not touch the bones. They have professional buriers to bury these bones. When they find bones, they just set signs by them. There could be a fear of radioactivity. Especially in that they do not begin the search until seven months are over. So it could be that there is a real fear of radioactivity, and thus the burying is left to professional buriers. The people that discover the bones only set a sign by it so the professional buriers can come along and bury them.

### **Ezekiel 39:15**

**And the passengers *that* pass through the land, when *any* seeth a man's bone, then shall he set up a sign by it, till the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamongog.**

Special men would be responsible to search the land after seven months. When they discovered an exposed bone they would mark it so others could bury it. The name of the nearby city would then be called "The Multitude" as a tribute to Yahweh's victory.

### **Ezekiel 39:16**

**And also the name of the city *shall be* Hamonah. Thus shall they cleanse the land.**

**Missler:** Now what is not obvious here, unless you study it carefully, is that they wait seven months before entering the area, and then they do not go in casually. The King James reads, "they ever out men of continual employment." That is the King James way for calling them "professionals." These will not be amateurs; these will not be part-timers, they will know what they are doing.

These will be professionals called in to bury the bones, downwind, east of the Dead Sea. If someone traveling through spots a bone that was missed, he is not to touch it, but to put up a sign by it so the professionals can bury it downwind!

This was interesting technology for Ezekiel. I would not get hung up with the language. 2600 years ago, a Hebrew Prophet moved by the Lord, saw a day when the Nation Israel would be regathered in the land after it had lain waste for a long time. They were gathered in unbelief, and so God takes such an interest in Israel, that He stages an event to get their attention and show everyone who is really in charge.

The event He is going to stage is to have Russia, with a most interesting list of allies, move against the land, and get clobbered with a technology that shakes the whole earth, and fire will fall upon Magog and a lot of other people as well. Then they are going to spend seven months before they even go into that battle area, after which they will send professionals to bury the dead carefully by special procedures.<sup>15</sup>

**[Hamonah]** *Hamonah*, to the multitude.

### **Feast of Predators**

Next, we come to one of those passages that so often shows up both here and in Revelation, and elsewhere, where we see the Feast of predators, scavengers cleaning up, who feast on the carrion.

### **Ezekiel 39:17**

**And, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD; Speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, *even* a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh, and drink blood.**

**Dake: [Speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field]** This is exactly the same command and concerns the same thing as in Rev. 19:17-18,20). It refers to the calling of all the birds and beasts of the field to eat of the dead bodies of men and animals killed in the battle of Armageddon. Both passages speak of the supper, the great sacrifices, and "My table" that God will make upon the mountains of Israel where the birds and beasts may come to eat until they are full and drink until they are drunken. Jesus referred to this same thing when He said, "wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together" (Matthew 24:27-31; Luke 17:34-37, notes; see also notes on "Matthew 24:40-42; Rev. 19:17-21). This could not possibly refer to any war before Armageddon between Russia and Israel; it refers only to the time of the battle of Armageddon when Christ comes literally to the planet earth with His angels and resurrected saints to take over the governments of this world and reign over them eternally, as described in many scriptures (Joel 2-3; Zech. 14:1-15; Matthew 24:29-31; 2 Thes. 1:7-10; Jude 1:14-15; Rev. 11:15; Rev. 19:11-21).

**Dake: [feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field]** This should settle the matter beyond all question as to what is referred to here. Some hold the idea that Matthew 24:27-28 and Luke 17:34-37 refer to the rapture of saints to meet Christ in the air; but this is impractical, for no amount of explaining could make the "feathered fowl" and "beast of the field" mean saints. How simple and clear the verses become though when we take them literally—the birds and beasts eating the dead bodies of those slain at Armageddon (Rev. 19:17).

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<sup>15</sup> Chuck Missler, Notes on Ezekiel, Khouse.org

**BKC: 39:17-20.** Another result of Gog's defeat will be a feast for the wild animals. (These vv. expand v. 4 where God announced that the corpses of those who fall will be food for birds and beasts.) God will reverse the roles of animals and people. Usually people slaughtered and ate sacrificed animals. Here, however, the men of Gog's armies will be sacrifices; they will be eaten by animals. In addressing the birds and animals God said that at this great sacrifice they will eat flesh and drink blood . . . as if they were . . . fattened animals from Bashan. Bashan, east and northeast of the Sea of Kinnereth (later the Sea of Galilee) was known for its fertile land and fat cows (cf. Amos 4:1). At God's table the animals will eat their fill of horses and riders, mighty men and soldiers of every kind.<sup>16</sup>

The Lord also instructed Ezekiel to prophesy to the birds and beasts to come and feast on the flesh of the invaders who had died (cf. v. 4; Isa. 34:6; Jer. 46:10; Zeph. 1:7-8; Rev. 19:17-21). It would be like eating a great sacrifice for them, but those offered as sacrifices to the Lord would be great people of the earth rather than fat rams, lambs, goats, and bulls. Bashan, to the east of the Jordan River, consistently produced fat cattle because there was so much good pasture there.

#### **On Daniel: 17-20 A Feast For The Birds And Beasts**

One of the reasons I don't think these bodies are radiated is that God invites the birds and beasts to come eat their flesh. God uses this figure of speech on more than one occasion to feed His creatures with those who were judged by Him (Psalm 79, Rev. 19, etc.). Notice also that verse 20 clearly states that the horses were edible, which should cause us to lean more towards the literal interpretation of them, rather than reading planes and helicopters into the text.

#### **Ezekiel 39:18**

**Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of bullocks, all of them fatlings of Bashan.**

**Dake: [Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of bullocks, all of them fatlings of Bashan]**

The 8-fold menu of birds and beasts:

1. Flesh of the mighty (Ezekiel 39:18,20)
2. Blood of the princes of the earth
3. Flesh and blood of rams
4. Of lambs
5. Of goats
6. Of bullocks
7. Of horses (Ezekiel 39:20)
8. All men of war

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<sup>16</sup>Walvoord, J. F. (1983-c1985). The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures (Eze 39:17). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

### **Ezekiel 39:19**

**And ye shall eat fat till ye be full, and drink blood till ye be drunken, of my sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you.**

These animals would be able to gorge themselves on the sacrifice that God would prepare for them. They would be able to eat the flesh of horses, chariot drivers, commanders, and soldiers. Normally people offered animals as sacrifices, but God would turn the tables and sacrifice people for the animals showing how little He regarded these enemies of Israel.

### **Ezekiel 39:20**

**Thus ye shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and with all men of war, saith the Lord GOD.**

### **Ezekiel 39:21**

**And I will set my glory among the heathen, and all the heathen shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them.**

**[I will set my glory among the heathen, and all the heathen shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them]** The four-fold purpose of God in Armageddon:

1. I will set My glory among the heathen.
2. All the heathen will see My judgment that I have executed upon them (Ezekiel 39:21).
3. The house of Israel will know that I am Jehovah their God from that day and forward (Ezekiel 39:22).
4. The heathen will know that the house of Israel was defeated and went into captivity for their sins, and that I dealt with them accordingly (Ezekiel 39:23-24).

God's judgment of Gog would glorify Him greatly in the eyes of the rest of the world. Israel too would learn in a fresh way that He was their God (cf. the Exodus).

### **Ron Daniel 39:21-29: Israel Will Know**

Everyone in the world will have seen this judgment take place, but the people of Israel will have a turning point - they will know that the Lord is God. They will realize that their time of exile was well-deserved, and God will pour out His Spirit on them.

With all of this now in our understanding, I just have to wonder about the timing. After all, if this is going to happen between the regathering of the nation of Israel in 1948 and the Great Tribulation, then it could happen any time!

But I also have to wonder why the United States doesn't intervene when Russia attacks. Could it be because once the rapture takes place, the United States has no vested interest in strongly allying herself with Israel? I have often said - based on my understanding of the prophetic significance of the seven feasts - that I believe the rapture will take place two years before the beginning of the tribulation period (Lev. 23:24-28). Could that be the time frame of this invasion? Could that attack against Israel be just what the antichrist uses to initiate his covenant of peace (Dan. 9:27; Rev. 6:2)?

Or we just might watch these events unfold before our own eyes. Truly, we are concerned today about Russia's President Vladimir Putin, who is consolidating power and crushing dissent after 14 years of democracy has left Russia financially weak and internally troubled. We are concerned about Magog's relationship with Persia, and other nations who support terrorism and the total destruction of Israel. Yes, we just may see these things happen after all...

### **Ezekiel 39:22**

**So the house of Israel shall know that I *am* the LORD their God from that day and forward.**

**Missler:** Has that happened yet? There are some who say that this refers to an attack by the ancient Scythians back whenever. Nonsense. It does not fit the conditions. It has to be after they have been regathered from many nations. I have not seen any Scythians attack Israel since 1948, so far.

But furthermore, as a result of this battle, "Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God from that day and forward." Do they know that today? Not nationally.<sup>17</sup>

### **Ezekiel 39:23**

**And the heathen shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity: because they trespassed against me, therefore hid I my face from them, and gave them into the hand of their enemies: so fell they all by the sword.**

Then the nations would understand that it was not out of weakness that Yahweh permitted the Israelites to go into exile and die but because He was punishing them for

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<sup>17</sup> Chuck Missler, Notes on Ezekiel, Khouse.org

their sins. That is why they had suffered as they had and the Lord had not responded to their cries for deliverance.

### **Ezekiel 39:24**

**According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions have I done unto them, and hid my face from them.**

Two results will come from the battle: (a) **the nations** will see God's glory (cf. comments on 1:28) and (b) Israel will turn back to her God (39:22; cf. v. 7). God's stunning defeat of Gog will force Israel to acknowledge His power.

### **Ezekiel 39:25**

**Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel, and will be jealous for my holy name;**

**Dake:** Now (after Armageddon and at the second coming of Christ) will I bring the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel, that is, those of all 13 tribes that have not yet been gathered from all nations (Ezekiel 39:25-29; Ezekiel 37:1-28; Isaiah 11:10-12; Matthew 24:31).

**BKC: 39:25-29.** The defeat of Gog will also hasten God's plans to restore the other Israelites from other nations. Verses 25-29 look ahead to the end of the Tribulation when God will restore the nation from her final dispersion. God will . . . bring Jacob back from captivity and will have compassion on all the people of Israel. God will show Himself holy through them (cf. 20:41; 28:22, 25; 36:23; 38:16), acknowledging them as His people. Also He will pour out His Spirit on the house of Israel (cf. 36:27; 37:14; Joel 2:28). The ultimate result of the battle with Gog will be Israel's national repentance and spiritual restoration. This will be fulfilled in the millennial kingdom.<sup>18</sup>

The Lord promised to restore the fortunes of Jacob, namely, the descendants of the devious patriarch who anticipated the corporate character of the Israelites. Obviously not all Jewish people are devious, but Scripture indicates that many of Jacob's descendants behaved as he did. The Lord promised to have mercy on all of them. He would do this because He wanted to maintain His reputation for holiness (uniqueness as the only true God). When He restored them to security in the land following this invasion they would forget their former disgrace and treachery against Him. Similarly it was when Jacob returned to the Promised Land from Paddan-aram that he experienced a life-transforming experience (Gen. 32).

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<sup>18</sup>Walvoord, J. F. (1983-c1985). The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures (Eze 39:25). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

### **Ezekiel 39:26**

**After that they have borne their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me, when they dwelt safely in their land, and none made *them* afraid.**

**Dake:** [After that they have borne their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me, when they dwelt safely in their land, and none made them afraid] This explains the "now" of Ezekiel 39:25. After Israel has borne her shame and her people have reaped for all their sins, when they dwell safely in their own land, when none will make them afraid, and when I have brought them again from all the people among whom they have been scattered (Ezekiel 39:26-27), then shall they know that I am the Lord their God, who caused them to be led away captive among the heathen, and gathered them again to their own land, leaving none of them among the heathen. Neither will I hide My face from them anymore, for I have redeemed them and poured out My Spirit upon them (Ezekiel 39:28-29).

### **Ezekiel 39:27**

**When I have brought them again from the people, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations;**

**Dake:** [again from the people, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands] The word "again" proves that this is the second gathering of Israel and that they were gathered once before this. The first gathering was after the Babylonian captivity; the second is now taking place and it will continue until all the Israelites are finally and completely gathered or regathered at the second coming of Christ (Ezekiel 39:27-29; \*Isaiah 11:10-12, notes).

**Dake:** [sanctified in them in the sight of many nations] Here again God speaks of Himself as being sanctified in Israel, meaning that He is revered by them and they have set Him apart as their only true and living God—not that He has been cleansed from sin, for He has no sin.

When God would bring the Israelites back into the land the other nations of the world would recognize that He was different from all other gods. Also Israel would acknowledge Yahweh as her God. She would see what God had done in sending her out of the land for her sin and bringing her back permanently by His grace.

### **Ezekiel 39:28**

**Then shall they know that I *am* the LORD their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen: but I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them anymore there.**

## **Ezekiel 39:29**

**Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD.**

**Life Application Bible:** Both in this prophecy and in Joel 2:28-29, God promises to pour out his Spirit on mankind. The early church believed this began to be fulfilled at Pentecost, when God's Holy Spirit came to live in all believers (Acts 2:1-18).

**Missler:** The concept of the Russian republics moving against Israel at some point in time is not at all far-fetched, even just from secular perspectives. But then when you step back and read Ezekiel 38 and 39 again, it ought to catch your breath, because everything Ezekiel talks about could happen today, or next week, or next year. It has all been moving into place in our recent history. The technology is there, the political motivations are there, the time is ripe.

If that is true, it removes Bible studies from the academic to the immediate. It raises the question, *Is God who He said He was? Is He about to intervene in man's history in a dramatic way?*

This should cause us to dig into this and see if it is just possible that that which the Prophet wrote 2600 years ago is about to happen. Some think the Ezekiel 38 and 39 battle is part of the Armageddon scenario. Others reason that it is a precedent condition to the rise of antichrist who will enter into a seven-year peace treaty with Israel, Daniel's 70th week being ready to unfold.

Now if that is true, the Church won't be here, because I believe that you and I, if we receive the Lord Jesus Christ, that we are a part of a special group that God has a plan for; and according to prophecies in Isaiah as well as in the New Testament, the Church will be watching this battle from the mezzanine!

Now there are scholars on both sides of this debate, so I am not here to make this a big point. Check it out for yourself. The important thing is that you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as your savior. This prophecy should not scare you, but rather give you a new awareness of the urgency of our time.<sup>19</sup>

### **There are at least eight views as to the time of this future invasion. (Dr. Constable)**

1. The invasion is only symbolic of the attempts of evil forces to overcome God's people. It does not describe a real battle but in the language of warfare pictures the triumph of good over evil, the forces of God over those of Satan. The amount of detail and specific references to places and times in this prophecy argue against this view.
2. It will occur before the Tribulation, either before the Rapture or at the time of the Rapture or just after the Rapture. But the prophecy sets the time of this invasion after God has restored Israel to her land (cf. 38:8, 16). Ezekiel 36:26-28 and 39:26-29 indicate that Israel's restoration will involve spiritual regeneration as well as physical return, so the present return of Jews to the State of Israel cannot be the fulfillment.

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<sup>19</sup> Chuck Missler, Notes on Ezekiel, Khouse.org

3. It will happen during the Tribulation (cf. Dan. 11:40-41; Rev. 14:14-20). For three and a half years Antichrist will encourage the Jews to return to Palestine, but then he will break his covenant with them and begin to attack them (Matt. 24:15-22; Dan. 9:27; 11:40-41). Thus Israel will enjoy a period of peace in the Tribulation. It is during the first half of the Tribulation, toward its end, that advocates of this view place the fulfillment of this prophecy.<sup>538</sup> Ezekiel 39:7 says that following this battle the Lord's name will be profaned no longer, but during the second half of the Tribulation it will be profaned (cf. Rev. 13; 16:9, 11, 21). It also seems unlikely that the Jews could bury corpses for seven months and burn weapons as fuel for seven years following an invasion in the middle of the seven-year Tribulation. The last half of the Tribulation will involve unparalleled persecution for the Jews (Dan. 9:27).

4. It will take place at the end of the seven-year Tribulation (the battle of Armageddon; cf. Zech. 12; 14:1-4; Rev. 19:11-21).<sup>539</sup> Some advocates equate Gog with the king of the North (Dan. 11:40). Some of Ezekiel's descriptions of Gog's invasion recur in Revelation 19:17-21, which describes the end of the Tribulation. However other aspects appear in Revelation 20:7-10, which describes the end of the Millennium. Israel is dwelling securely in the land that Gog will invade, but at the end of the Tribulation Israel will have been under intense attack for three and a half years (Dan. 9:27).

5. It will happen between the end of the Tribulation and the beginning of the Millennium. Since Jesus Christ's return to the earth will end the Tribulation and begin the Millennium, it does not seem that there will be enough time for the invasion of Gog and its consequences then (cf. 39:1-16; Matt. 13:41). Furthermore some of the allusions to this invasion in Revelation suggest a time at the end of the Millennium (Rev. 20:7-10). John F. Walvoord believed that the rebellion of Gog will occur before the Millennium, but did not say exactly when.

6. It will happen at the beginning of the Millennium. This seems highly unlikely since all who enter the Millennium will be believers who have assisted the Jews (Matt. 25:31-46). Moreover all weapons of war will be destroyed at the beginning of the Millennium (Mic. 4:1-4).

7. It will occur at the end of the Millennium. Revelation 20:8 refers specifically to Gog and Magog in a context describing the end of the Millennium. Israel dwelling in safety in her land, the situation described repeatedly in Ezekiel 33—39, fits conditions at the end of the Millennium. Rabbinic writers identified Gog and Magog as the final enemy that will attack Israel in the messianic age. Critics of this view say, Why bury the dead for seven months following the battle when the resurrection of the unsaved will follow immediately (cf. Rev. 20:11-13)? This objection assumes that these events will follow one another immediately, but the text does not say so explicitly. Why would the Israelites burn the weapons for seven years since it appears that God will create a new earth immediately after He quells the rebellion described in Revelation 20:7-10 (cf. Rev. 21:1-4)? Again, there may be time between these events that the Bible does not reveal anywhere but here. Another problem with this view is the description of the Lord calling the birds to a great feast in Revelation 19:17-21, which occurs at the end of the Tribulation.

8. The best solution seems to me to be a combination of views 4 and 7. Apparently the fulfillment will take place in two phases, first at the end of the Tribulation and

then at the end of the Millennium, when Israel is dwelling securely (cf. Rev. 19:17-21; 20:7-8). Ezekiel evidently described the invasion of Israel's enemies into the Promised Land as a single event, but later revelation clarifies that it will happen on two separate occasions. Part of Ezekiel's prophecy describes one of these invasions, part the other, and some of it describes both incidents. Gog then does not describe a single individual but two people both of whom share similar plans. In the first fulfillment Gog is the king of the North. In the second he is the human leader who will lead the rebellion at the end of the Millennium.

It seems unnatural for God to describe as one battle one that will have two parts separated by 1,000 years, and there is certainly no indication in Ezekiel that Gog's invasion will have two phases. However, in view of later clarification in the Book of Revelation, we apparently have another instance of two events widely separated in time viewed by a prophet as one. The prophets' descriptions of the near and far destructions of Babylon (Isa. 21; Jer. 51), the two advents of Messiah (Isa. 61:1-2), and the coming of two persecutors of the Jews (Antiochus Epiphanes and Antichrist; Dan. 11:21-35, 36-44) are other examples of this "foreshortened" view of the future.