

God Intervenes

(When Russian Attacks Israel)



"14 Therefore, son of man, prophesy against Gog. Give him this message from the Sovereign Lord: When my people are living in peace in their land, then you will rouse yourself. 15 You will come from your homeland in the distant north with your vast cavalry and your mighty army, 16 and you will attack my people Israel, covering their land like a cloud. At that time in the distant future, I will bring you against my land as everyone watches, and my holiness will be displayed by what happens to you, Gog. Then all the nations will know that I am the Lord." Ezekiel 38:14-16 NLT

Russia has invaded Ukraine and many have questioned whether this has significance to end times prophecy, especially Ezekiel 38-39. According to Ezekiel, Russia, in a coalition with several other nations, will eventually invade and overwhelm Israel. However, God intervenes and rescues Israel.

In the same way, the troubles and disappointments of life can sometimes overwhelm us. But the good news is that God is never overwhelmed. He often intervenes for us, but when He does not for reasons that may not be known until we are in heaven, He nevertheless strengthens us by His grace and power and walks with us through our dark valley.

Central lesson

God is never overwhelmed with life's problems - He can take care of you.

1. **WHO** Is Gog? Is It the Soviet Union?

We must look on an ancient map at the nations mentioned in Ezekiel 38 and compare it to a modern map. Ezekiel was referring to historical locations and nations. What we discover is: (1) Some of the nations identified by Ezekiel are located in modern Russia. (2) Ezekiel identified the attacking armies from "the north" of Israel which would be modern Russia (Ezek. 38:6, 15; 39:2). (3) A coalition of nations is described by Ezekiel which are countries aligned with the Soviet Union today (38:2-3, 5-6). These nations include Persia (modern **Iran**), Ethiopia (modern **Sudan** and **northern Ethiopia**), **Libya**, and Meshech, Tubal, Gomer, and Beth Togarmah (all in **modern Turkey**). These details seem to point to modern Russia.

2. **WHEN** Will This Attack Be Made?

No past historical aggression against Israel matches this prophecy. It is **still a future event**. Israel did not become a nation again after their dispersion through the world until **1948**. Therefore, it must be in the future. Three views are:

- **The end of the Millennium** - the war of Gog and Magog in Revelation 20:7-9). However, Revelation 20 describes several details that do not fit with Ezekiel. (See *The Bible Knowledge Commentary, Old Testament*, Ezekiel 38-39, for an explanation of the details).
- **The beginning of the Millennium** - again, the details do not match Ezekiel 38-39.

- **Before or at the beginning of the 7-Year Tribulation.** This view is the best match. Israel will be at **peace** (**Ezekiel 38:8, 11**) and the tribulation begins when the Antichrist makes a covenant with Israel promising them peace (**Daniel 9:27a**). Furthermore, **Ezekiel 39:9** states that after God destroys the attacking armies that the Israelites will burn the weapons for **7 years**, which matches the Tribulation period which is 7 years. *"Then the people in the towns of Israel will go out and pick up your small and large shields, bows and arrows, javelins and spears, and they will use them for fuel. There will be enough to last them **seven years!**"*

David Jeremiah summarizes three prerequisites that must be in place before Israel is invaded. (1) Israel will be **PRESENT** in her land. This took place in 1948 when Israel became a nation again. (2) Israel will be **PROSPEROUS** in her land (36:11). (3) Israel will be at **PEACE** in her land (38:8).

3. **WHAT** Will Happen?

1. The Antichrist will make a covenant with Israel promising them peace (Daniel 9:27)
2. The tribulation begins sometime soon after the covenant with Israel.
3. Russia, and a coalition with Iran, Libya, Turkey, Sudan, and North Ethiopia, will attempt to invade Israel.
4. God will rescue Israel with—earthquakes (38:19-20); hailstones: fire, and brimstone (38:22) just as God rained down on Sodom and Gomorrah; confusion will cause the armies to turn on each other and self-destruct (38:21); and, pestilence and disease. Unburied bodies will lay across the land causing the spread of disease (38:22).
5. Divine Clean-up detail. Again, David Jeremiah describes the final disposal of the corpses of the invading army in three ways:
 - (1) the **birds** and the **beasts** (39:17-20),
 - (2) the **burials** (39:14-15), and
 - (3) the **burnings** (39:9-10).

[The primitive rather than modern weapons? One explanation - Ezekiel is describing the weapons of his time so his readers would understand them. They would not comprehend modern weapons. Second, if oil is cut off, the armies may have to revert to horses, wagons, etc.]

4. **HOW** Does This Apply to Us Today?

1. Know that the world is moving toward God's judgment of sin.
2. Be sure you are in Christ so that you will be saved from God's various judgments - the judgments of the coming tribulation period and the judgment of sin at the Great White Throne judgment (Rev. 20)
3. Comfort yourself in life's problems and disappointments with the knowledge that God is never overwhelmed. He can and often intervenes. He will take care of you regardless of what path life takes you.

Conclusion:

God is never overwhelmed with life's problems - He can take care of you.

Action Steps: ► Receive Christ as your Savior. ► As a Christian, dedicate your life to Christ. ► Invite someone to next Sunday's Bible study. ► Attend a small group. ► Pray for friends that need Jesus. ► Read Revelation 5. *What do you learn about Jesus?*