



Ezekiel 38-39

Tape #7333
Ezekiel 38-39
By Chuck Smith

The events of chapter thirty eight are twice declared to be in the last days. So that would preclude any historic interpretation of these passages. They are in the last days, and we will point that out as we get to those scriptures. Second, there are many who believe that the battle, and the, that is described here, is the battle of Armageddon.

I personally do not believe that it is the battle of Armageddon. These are the reasons why I do not believe that. First of all, the participants. The battle of Armageddon as I understand it, will be more or less a world wide war. The chief participants will be the Antichrist, and the western powers, versus the powers from the east that will come to fight against the Antichrist and the western powers.

As we get into Daniel, we find that the Antichrist is leading the western powers down into Africa, probably for the purpose of conquering that continent, when tidings out of the east trouble him, and out of the north. The river Euphrates is dried up to make way for the kings of the east, and as the eastern nations band together, and come to stop the power of the western expansion, they meet in the valley of Megiddo for that final conflict, which is actually halted by the return of Jesus Christ. We will get that as we move into Daniel, and then later as we move into Zechariah.

So in this battle described, it is a limited participation. The, the object of the battle is Israel itself. The aggressors will be limited in that they are more or less those Islam nations that have already threatened to try to destroy Israel. The place of the battle, of course Armageddon, tells you that it is the valley of Megiddo. Here, the corpse will be buried in the valley of the Passengers which is east of the Dead sea. So the, the placement of the battle is different.

I am not really going to try to interpret Ezekiel thirty eight and thirty nine. I am going to only try to identify for you some of the names of the nations that are involved. We'll just read what the scripture has to say. We will define a few Hebrew words for you so that you can then just see what the scripture says and make up your own mind concerning it. I think that when you try to interpret things, you begin to get into the spiritualizing of it, and you can make it really meaningless. I think that it is very clear in what it declares, and so let's just see what Ezekiel has to say about this.

Now remember, chapter thirty six dealt with the restoring of the nation, as far as agriculture. "The mountains will be covered with trees, they'll be tilled and sown, they will produce an abundance of fruit, an abundance of corn. The land that was so barren and desolate has become like a garden of Eden." That has happened. Chapter thirty six, for the most part, is fulfilled.

Chapter thirty seven dealt with the rebirth of the nation. That God would gather them back into the land. They had been scattered all over the world, but God would gather them back into the land, make them one nation, and that has been fulfilled, as of May 14, 1948, the nation of Israel was reborn.

Now having developed the land, having brought them back into the land, we come into chapter thirty eight.

And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, set your face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him (38:1-2),

Gog is the chief prince of Magog. Gog is not a, not a land or territory in this sense, but is the chief prince of Magog. Now Magog has been identified by the historians as the Scythians. They were the ones who occupied the area in the Crimea, north of the Crimea. They were of course, this time when Ezekiel was writing, a very insignificant race of semi-wild people. They dwelt mainly in that area north of the Caucasuses, and between the Black sea, and the Caspian.

So that is the area that would today be the southern provinces of the former Soviet Union. These provinces have come into the news lately, because there seems to be an alliance being made between Iran,

and these southern provinces of the former Soviet Union, which are, for the most part, Moslems.

So Meshech and Tubal have been thought to be the ancient Tibareni, and Moschi, which of course is more or less known as Moscow and Tobolsk. That is not for certain. You can leave that as a question mark, a possibility for sure, but a question mark. God's word...

Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal: And I will turn you back, and put hooks in your jaws, and I will bring you forth, with all your army, horses, horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armor, a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords (38:3-4):

So the description of the army that is coming. Of course Ezekiel is describing in words that were familiar to those days and the type of weapons that would be used.

But now the nations, and I think that it is significant, the nations that are named, but I think also is significant are the nations that are not named. Nations that we would in our own minds, be certain that would be allied with this group, because of their past history, recent history in their attempt to exterminate Israel.

But the nations that are involved in this war, along with Magog, are...

Persia (38:5),

which of course today is Iran. We know the militancy of the Iranians. We see the demonstrations. The current government has no real love for the west, for the United States, and certainly not for Israel. In fact, they are constantly rallying their troops with the goal of taking Jerusalem back for Islam. They are constantly making threats and announcing their intentions of invading Israel.

Ethiopia (38:5),

Was part of the communist block. It is very strong Muslim centered today, as is...

Libya; all of them with their shields and their helmets: [Now Ethiopia and Libya, you don't need identification for that.] Gomer, and all of his bands (38:5-6);

Gomer was in the area sort of north of Turkey, and you can find it in your Bible maps, along with...

Togarmah (38:6),

Which is the area of Turkey. These again are Moslem nations. Thus, the nations that are allied together seem to be predominantly Moslem nations, which would indicate the possibility of sort of a announced jihad against Israel.

The interesting thing to me is that Egypt is not named. However, Ethiopia, south of Egypt, and Libya, west of Egypt is named. Egypt is not named with these nations. Now whether the omission is just an omission, or whether it is by God's design is something that we'll discover after the fact. Anything that we would suggest would be speculation. It is interesting to me that Syria is not mentioned, though Syria has been a perennial foe of Israel. Jordan is not mentioned.

Now it is interesting that Egypt has made a peace treaty with Israel, and because of their peace treaty with Israel, Israel of course you remember, gave them back a large portion of the Sinai to create this peace treaty. It could be, you remember the rest of the Islam nations have been angry at Egypt for making a treaty with Israel, because it recognizes it as a nation.

Syria is in the, at the very moment, negotiating a peace treaty with Israel. You read about it in the paper, and there is even talk of the Israelis returning a part of the Golan Heights to Syria in order to facilitate a peace treaty. It's just significant to me that neither of these nations, or the three, if you want to include Jordan, plus Babylon, or Iraq is not listed, and yet, if you and I were setting up the scenario, surely we would've included these nations that have expressed their desire to destroy Israel. Some of them have of course even attempted to do so, since the birth of this nation. So fascinating that Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Jordan are not mentioned as aggressors with this consortium of nations that will be joining together for the invasion. So in verse seven...

Be thou prepared, prepare for yourself, you, and all of your company that are assembled unto thee, and be thou a guard unto them. For after many days, [The time of the battle.] thou shalt be visited: in the [last days, the] latter days [is again translated, "last days"] you shall come into the land that has been brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people against the mountains of Israel, [Chapter thirty six was of course prophesied to the mountains of Israel, now they're gonna come against these mountains of

Israel.] *which have always been waste (38:7-8):*

That is, since Israel was dispersed by the Romans in 70 A.D., the mountains of Israel became wasted, wilderness area. Of course the prophecy was that they would be replanted, and fruitful again. So, “you will come against these mountains of Israel, which have been always waste”, for those almost two thousand years.

but has been brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them (38:8).

Now some of the, some people say, “Well Israel isn’t dwelling safely, has never dwelled safely since it has become a nation. They’ve already had three wars with the surrounding nations. So how can you say they are dwelling safely?” If you will look up the Hebrew word, “safely”, in your lexicon, you will find that the word literally means, “confidently”. Now they may not be safe, but they’re confident! You talk to them and you’ll find they are very confident. They are dwelling confidently, though perhaps not safely as we would think of safely. But who in the world dwells safely pray tell, in these days anywhere in the world?

Yesterday, right up here on Warner, and Broadway in Santa Ana, a young man stabbed to death, stabbed some eighteen times. There was a big rumble right at the corner of Bristol, and Warner about the same time! So you can’t really say that you’re dwelling safely! But, confidently, “and they will be dwelling confidently”.

Thou shalt ascend and come like a [Cloud, that is, or like a,] storm, and thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, [A large number of personnel involved in this invasion.] you, and all of your bands, and many people with you. [The chief aggressor will be Magog, but with all of these other nations combining with them.] Thus saith the Lord God; It shall also come to pass, that at the same time shall things come into your mind, and you’re going to think an evil thought: You will say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell confidently, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates (38:9-11),

Now the only walled city that you’ll find in Israel today, is the old city of Jerusalem, with the walls that were built by Solomon that are still intact. You have this small section of Jerusalem, a very small section that is walled. But the major part of Jerusalem is outside of that whole walled area. So it’s just sort of decorative really, it’s a great tourist attraction because it’s interesting to see the walls of the old city of Jerusalem. But it, it, if you’d say, “Well Jerusalem is a walled city”, to a Jew, they would laugh at you because it’s such a small portion, and it’s just that portion within. But all around it for miles, and miles stretches the city of Jerusalem. When you come to the outskirts, you don’t find walls! So, “they are dwelling confidently without walls”.

And you’ve come to take a spoil, to take a prey; to turn your hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, [The land that has been recovered, and redeveloped.] and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations, [As in chapter thirty seven, God would gather them out of the nations.] which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land (38:12).

Now what is one of the major problems in Russia today? Lack of food. We have been sending over food to the people. You’ve seen the pictures of them standing in line to get food. In fact they say that there in Moscow, people will be standing in line, and you go up and say, “Well what’s for sale? What are you waiting for?” “Don’t know, we’ll find out when we get there.” Because sometimes they’ll run out of one item, and so by the time they get up there, they’ve got something else. But they’ll buy whatever’s there because of the scarcity.

Here is Israel as small as it is, it’s extremely productive. It is the fourth largest exporter of produce of all of the nations of the world. So they’re coming to take of the spoil, speaks of the cattle, and of the goods.

Now here’s an interesting thing. For...

Sheba, and Dedan (38:13),

Are going to object to the invasion. Who is Sheba and Dedan? Saudi Arabia. Now can you imagine any kind of a scenario where Saudi Arabia would be speaking up for Israel? Would be objecting to an invasion? The only scenario I could imagine is that Saudi Arabia feels threatened by the invasion, and that they are perhaps a target also of the invaders, for the tremendous wealth of the oil reserves that they have. The valley of Passengers is in the area of Saudi Arabia, east and south of the Dead sea. So that, it is quite possible that

this is an attempt to take over the oil reserves.

The interesting thing is that Saddam Hussein had a goal of taking Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia, he was stopped by the combined forces that joined in the Desert Storm operation. Had he taken Saudi Arabia, it would be a different story today, because we are so dependent upon the oil that we are getting out of the Middle East, that we could not survive as a industrial nation, unless we have the oil that we are getting from that area. That is why we stepped in. That is why we intervened. Because if they can control the oil, they can control the world at this time. The world's economy. They are very well aware of that. They are aware of the power of oil.

They became aware of that in 1973, with the oil embargo, and when they doubled, and quadrupled the prices of oil, and they realized what a bargaining chip they had. They've been using it ever since upon the western nations. They have us sort of "over a barrel", so to speak! Because we are dependent upon their oil. They are masterfully using that as a pawn in this giant game of chess, international game of chess.

The interesting thing is that Iran has been training their troops for a land invasion from the sea. The only place that Iran could possibly think of invading would be Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait. So it is possible that Iran will seek to do what Hussein failed to do, and that is to gain and control the wealth of Saudi Arabia's oil.

Now that is the possible reason why they are objecting to this whole invasion. It could be that Saudi Arabia's being invaded by Iran, Persia, as the troops from Russia, the north, are coming on against Israel, so that the whole thing could be just an attempt to gain world control, and world power.

the merchants of Tarshish (38:13),

There is a difference of opinion among Bible commentators of who Tarshish is. Some say, Spain, some say England. If it be England, then...

the young lions thereof, [Could possibly include the United States, as we are sort of established as an English colony, and then broke off, so, "the young lions thereof",] shall say unto you, Are you come to take a spoil? have you gathered your company to take a prey? to carry away the silver and gold, and to take away the cattle, and the goods, and a great spoil (38:13)?

"Is this your object?" That sounds like a appeal to the U.N. to sanction these nations for invading Israel. It doesn't say that we are going to be moving forces. It just is a verbal kind of an objection. Filing a paper with the security counsel asking them to condemn these nations for this aggression.

Now that sets up the scene of the battle.

Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord God; In that day when my people Israel dwell confidently, shall you not know it? And you shall come from your place out of the north parts (38:14-15),

Just get your map out, and look at Jerusalem, and look directly north of Jerusalem and find out what you see. Moscow's just about due north of Jerusalem. "You come out of your north parts"...

you, and many people with you, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, a mighty army: And you shall come up against my people Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the last days, and I will bring you against my land, that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes (38:15-16).

The Lord is saying, "This is it! The nations will know that I am God, when I am sanctified before their eyes!" This phrase, "sanctified before their eyes", we're gonna get that two or three more times, and you'll see the importance of it. Just make a note in your mind now, we'll be back to that.

Thus saith the Lord God; Are you he of whom I have spoken in old time by my servants the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those days many years that I would bring you against them? It shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord God, that my fury shall come up in my face (38:17-18).

Now in its history, God fought for Israel. Many of the Bibles describe, or many of the biblical battles describe God's divine intervention, destroying their enemies with hail stones, fire and brimstone coming down from heaven, destroying their enemies with plagues, driving out the inhabitants from before them. How God was with them in battle, putting to confusion their enemies. God is once again gonna manifest

Himself in this battle, in a supernatural intervention. He will describe to us the supernatural events by which the invading army will be destroyed. God said, "When you do this, my fury is going to come up in my face".

For in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel; [Tremendous earthquakes] So that the fish of the sea, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the field, and all of the creeping things that creep upon the earth, all of the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground (38:19-20).

A severe earthquake shaking that whole area, all of those that are in it. There is something awesome about a major earthquake. Now we've had some minor earthquakes, but there is something rather awesome about major earthquakes that you feel so totally helpless. You just wonder, "When's this thing gonna quit shaking?" My thought whenever I feel the beginning of an earthquake, my thought is always, "How hard is the main jolt gonna be?" You feel it swaying, swaying, swaying, but you're waiting for that, "snap". You wonder how hard it's gonna snap when it hits. This is gonna be a major earthquake.

Now you go to the area of Israel, especially down into the Jordan valley, and you see these sheer cliffs along the Jordan valley. There are many landslides down in that area, and I can imagine what it will be in a tremendous earthquake. Actually, the whole valley was formed, they believe, by an earthquake years ago. The Syro-African rift they feel was caused by a giant earthquake. So can you imagine an earthquake of say an, 8, 8.2 magnitude, what it would do in the destruction over there. The walls, most of them are, are not, they do not use the reinforced steel. They're, in so many of the buildings they're just rocks upon rock. Without reinforced steel, it's gonna be devastating. So the Lord describes the whole place being shaken, the walls falling to the ground.

And I will call for a sword [The Lord said] against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord God: every man's sword shall be against his brother (38:21).

When this earthquake, and these cataclysmic things begin to happen, there will be such confusion that there will become, there will come actually a inner strife among these nations, and they'll begin to fight each other, and they will begin to destroy each other. You know that of course, the area of Russia is completely divided now. There is all kinds of ethnic strife that is taking place in Russia. This will just trigger ethnic strife throughout that whole area, like we've not seen yet.

And I will plead [God's intervention] against him with pestilence with blood; I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. [So God's intervention, earthquake, hailstones, fire, and brimstone.] And thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself (38:22-23);

Now God said, "I'll be sanctified", and this is how, in the destruction of this overwhelming force that is coming against Israel. It seems that Israel doesn't have a chance against these overwhelming odds. Armed with the latest type of weapons, Israel won't seem to have a chance, and yet, God is gonna miraculously intervene, supernatural events.

Now interestingly enough, and I guess for our benefit, Newsweek magazine this week had a very fascinating article on the peril of the world being destroyed by an asteroid, or a comet. The article is very interesting reading when you, when they describe what happens when say a asteroid the size of, of a building, say the size of this building, if an asteroid would hit the earth, it would leave a giant hole, it would vaporize the dirt which would go up into the atmosphere, the rocks and all, and then they'd begin to fall back like fiery rain. Because, as they're falling back through the atmosphere, the speed and so forth, they would turn into fire. Read it! You'd think that the scientists are reading out of Ezekiel, or Revelation, when they describe what would happen if we had a collision with an asteroid.

We have, according to the article, about ten possibilities a year, of an asteroid hitting us. They seem to be developed out there near Jupiter someplace, and then they get kicked out of orbit, and they come into orbit, and you never know when it's gonna happen! A lot of them, well, we had one just a year or so ago, and it came within ten million miles, and we didn't even know it, until after it was passed. But it was a close miss, ha, ha! They say that one that was, say a mile square would actually destroy mankind. We, we wouldn't survive. So who knows what God will use! Maybe He'll toss an asteroid over in that direction you

know, and surely the article does describe the exact kind of a scenario that you read here in Ezekiel, and in Revelation. But you know, however God does it is something that's in His domain, and we can only guess.

Chapter 39

Now he continues this same prophecy. He said...

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: And I will turn thee back, and leave but a sixth part of thee, and will cause you to come up from the north parts, and I will bring you upon the mountains of Israel (39:1-2):

God said, "I will turn you back, and leave only a sixth part". That is, five out of six of the invading troops will be destroyed. Pretty heavy casualties!

I will smite your bow out of your left hand, and I will cause your arrows to fall out of your right hand (39:3).

You might take a look at the Hebrew word, and the "arrows" are just flying missiles. So what are they? Who knows.

Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy bands, and the people that are with you: and I will give you unto the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field be devoured. You will fall upon the open field: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God. [Their destruction is certain, their destruction is sure.] So I will make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel; and I will not let them pollute my holy name any more: [Yet future, Israel has not yet really turned to God as a nation.] and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, the Holy One in Israel. [The Lord said,] Behold, it is come, it is done, saith the Lord (39:4-5, 7);

That's it, it is done. It's a done deal, it's, it's going to be. The Lord puts His seal to it.

this is the day whereof I have spoken (39:8).

God's spoken of this day for Israel for a long time. God is going to again work directly with the nation of Israel.

Now as we get into Daniel, the next book we move into, when we get into the ninth chapter, we will find that there have been seventy sevens that have been determined by God, upon the nation of Israel, and the holy city of Jerusalem. To finish the transgressions, to make an end of sin, to make reconciliation for sin, to establish the covenant, to finish the prophecies, and to anoint the most Holy.

From the time the commandment would go forth to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, to the coming of the Messiah, the Prince, there would be sixty nine sevens, or four hundred and eighty three years. There were seventy sevens determined. Sixty nine were fulfilled to the coming of the Messiah. But the prophecy in Daniel goes on to say, "The Messiah would be cut off, and not received for Himself", that is, would not receive the kingdom. Four hundred and eighty three years after the commandment to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, Jesus came, made His triumphant entry. He was crucified within the week without receiving the kingdom.

Then there was going to be a prince of the people that would come and destroy the city, and set up an abomination and all. But the seventieth seven is yet to be fulfilled. That is, God has an unfulfilled seven year covenant with the nation of Israel in which God is going to work. At the end of that seven year covenant, "your prophecies will be sealed", or that is, completed. They will then bring in the Messiah, the reign of Jesus Christ, the second coming of our Lord to reign in power and glory.

So this event in Ezekiel thirty eight is tied with this covenant that God made with Israel. This defeat of their enemies will trigger the beginning of the last seven years. As we will move on, and we will discover Ezekiel speaking of that. So, "It is come, it is done, this is the day whereof I have spoken". The day when God would restore His Spirit upon Israel, and work with them again. Peter makes reference to how all of the prophets spoke of the final restitution of all things, and that is the restitution of God's work among the people of Israel, and their being restored as God's people.

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

seven years (39:9):

They will go out and take the spoils of war, the implements that have been brought in for this war. Probably the fuel and will actually have a seven year, interesting number of years, a seven year supply of fuel that they won't really have to worry.

You know the interesting thing is, that in the previous wars how Israel has gained from the implements and weapons of war. When that had that intrusion into southern Lebanon to create this bumper zone, they discovered these caves loaded with all kinds of Russian equipment, tanks, mortars, all kinds of weapons, rifles. In fact they were three months removing all of the weapons out of these caves, in these huge semi trucks, some twenty six of them, working day and night for three months to transfer these weapons. They put them on display there in Israel for a time. All of the weapons that Russia had moved into southern Lebanon, and had stored in these caves in preparation for an invasion. So again they're going to profit from these spoils of war.

It shall come to pass in that day, [verse eleven] that I will give unto Gog a place there of graves [God's gonna bury him there in Israel.] the valley of passengers on the east of the sea: [And it'll stink.] it'll stop the noses of the passengers: and there shall they bury Gog and all of his multitude: and they shall call it The valley of Hamon-gog. And seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them, that they may cleanse the land. Yea, all of 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. 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: and after the end of seven months shall they search (39:11-14).

In other words, they will be searching for seven months for the, the bodies that have been destroyed by the hand of God throughout the area.

Now the interesting thing to me is found in verse fifteen. Verse fourteen tells us there'll be professional buriers. But, verse fifteen says...

And the passengers that pass through the land, when any sees a man's bone, he will set up a sign by it, until the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamon-gog (39:15).

They'll take it across the other side, and bury it on the east side of the sea, in this valley known as the valley of passengers, or Hamon-gog. But notice the people don't touch the bones. They set up a flag near it, so that the professionals come and handle the bones.

Turn to Zechariah, chapter fourteen, and in conjunction with this, we have an interesting verse twelve. Zechariah also speaks about the rebirth of the nation of Israel, and about how, "the enemies round about are going to seek to fight against her. And this shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all of the people that have fought against Jerusalem. Their flesh shall consume away while they stand on their feet. Their eyes will be consumed in their sockets, and their tongues shall consume away in their mouth." It sounds like death from severe radiation. I will let you to draw your own conclusions as to what that implies. But it would imply that people are afraid to touch the bones, perhaps because of radiation. They don't touch the bones, they just set up flags, and the professionals come to bury them. It could indicate that definitely nuclear devices will be involved in this war, and in the destruction of Israel's enemies.

And also the name of the city shall be Hamonah. Thus shall they cleanse the land. And, thou son of man, saith the Lord God; Speak [Speak] unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come; and gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that you might eat the flesh, and drink the blood. And you shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of the rams, and lambs, and of the goats, and bullocks, all of them fatlings of Bashan (39:16-18).

Now this is why many people, many commentators believe that this perhaps is also the battle of Armageddon, because in chapter seventeen in Revelation, you find that the battle of Armageddon, the birds are all invited to come, and feast at the feast that God prepares. But in both battles there are gonna be plenty of bodies to feed upon for the vultures, and all. So the invitation to come.

Incidentally, a few years ago there was some tract about vultures multiplying in Israel, but no real fact to it. You know, they like, you hear these crazy rumors. They seem to spread you know like these scientists

that were drilling this hole down in Siberia, or upper Russia or something, put a microphone down, and heard you know all of these groans, just, and they have, these stories that circulate you know. Madeleine O'Hare is now petitioning the FCC to cut off all Christian radio. That's not true. But it's just, but these petitions, they're, they're like chain letters, they just keep coming around. People go out and get all these things, and the FCC has pleaded, they've sent us letters and said, "Please tell the people don't send any more petitions! We've got so many bundles and we don't know what to do with them, and there's nothing to it! We have no intention of, of taking Christian radio off, and all". But these petitions they get circulated again. There's just a lot of these you know, a couple that picked up a hitchhiker, and he sat in the back seat, and warned them Jesus was coming soon. Then, he disappeared! These stories they just have a way of recirculating. I heard that one first back in the forties! So, and I've heard versions of it since. Someone took a picture of a cloud, and there was Jesus standing in the formation in the cloud, you know, and all of these things. So don't be dismayed at the stories you may hear. There are no increase of vultures in Israel.

Ye shall eat the fat till ye be full, [Talking to the birds, and vultures and all.] you'll drink the blood till you're drunken, of my sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you. Thus you will be filled at my table with horses chariots, the mighty men, with the men of war, saith the Lord God. And I will set my glory among the heathen, and the heathen shall see my judgment when I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them. ["The nations will see my power."] So the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God from that day forward. [This marks the day, the day, the Lord said, of which He has spoken, the day in which they again turn to God.] And the heathen shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity because of their iniquity: because they had trespassed against me, therefore I hid my face from them, and gave them into the hand of their enemies: and so they fell by the sword. Because of their uncleanness, and according to their transgressions have I done unto them, and I have hid my face from them. [But He will no longer hide His face, He is going to again reveal Himself to them.] Therefore (39:19-25),

Paul said, "Blindness is happened in part to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles come in, but then all Israel shall saved". So right now, they are in that national blindness, they're blind to the Jesus Christ, to the truths of God. But there will come that day when God will work again. "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; After that they have borne their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me, when they dwelt confidently in their land, and none made them afraid. When I have brought them again from the people, gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and I am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations (39:25-27);

Go back to verse twenty three of chapter thirty eight, when He destroys this invading army. "I will magnify myself, and sanctify myself, and will be known in the eyes of many nations." So that day when He destroys these invading armies.

Then [He said] shall they know that I am the Lord their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the nations: but I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there. [Then, this is the key verse.] 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 (39:28-29).

Joel's prophecy, partially fulfilled in the church. "It shall come to pass in the last days, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, your son's and daughter's shall prophesy, young men shall see visions, old men shall dream dreams. Upon my servant's and handmaidens will I pour out my Spirit in that day, saith the Lord. And there shall be blood and fire, and vaporous smoke, moon turned into blood, the sun into darkness, before the great day that the Lord comes." So you're entering here then into that period, when God pours out His Spirit. The great tribulation, when God judges the world, because of the sin, and then, the glorious return of Jesus Christ, and our being gathered together unto Him.

So we're, we're in between chapter thirty seven, and chapter thirty eight, as far as looking at the world today. Chapter thirty six was fulfilled. It began at the turn of the century, the redevelopment of the land. Chapter thirty seven was fulfilled in May of 1948. I pray that thirty eight and thirty nine will be fulfilled before we hit the end of the century. Who knows though when God is going to work. But this is the next major event to come along.

So watch for a continued romance between the southern provinces of Russia, and Iran, as they are joining together. They need the Iranian money that Iran of course has as a result of her oil reserves. Iran desires their military equipment, which they are anxious to sell because they need the cash. So there is a marriage that is taking place now, and the development of military weapons by Iran. They have hired over five thousand of the Russian nuclear scientists. They are seeking to develop their own nuclear capability, besides having purchased nuclear weapons from Kazakhstan.

So the whole thing is shaping up now before our very eyes! Keep alerted when you see articles in Newsweek, Time, and so forth on the middle east, upon Iran and so forth. Pour over them, because you'll find that what Ezekiel said, told us about, is really shaping up now.

The thing is, it is my belief that when God puts His Spirit again upon Israel, and the Spirit of God is working among the people of Israel, that the church will have departed. I believe that right now the Spirit of God has been poured out upon the church, and upon the Gentile believers. I believe that God's Spirit is working basically among the Gentile nations. As Paul said, "Blindness is happened in part to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles come in". That, we as a wild branch, have been grafted in, to partake of the, of the fatness of the promises of God and all. But don't boast against the true branch, because God is able to graft the true branch back in, which He will, and God will again work with the nation of Israel. But when He does, the church will have been removed.

We know that the Antichrist cannot be revealed until that which hinders is taken out of the way. "That which hinders shall hinder until it is removed, and then shall the Antichrist be revealed".

I believe that, that which hinders the revelation of the Antichrist is the power of the Holy Spirit within the church, the witness of the church through the Spirit. That's the thing that's holding back the Antichrist today. When the church is removed, then God will no longer leave Israel in blindness, will reveal Himself to Israel, His Spirit will be poured out upon Israel, and you will enter into that final seven year scenario that is described through many places in the Bible, as God seals the hundred and forty four thousand of the Jews, to preserve them. They will be His primary witnesses here on the earth during that seven year period of time. The church? Outa here!

So it's sort of like when you see the Santa Clauses and reindeer going up you know that Thanksgiving is getting close! Because you know that Thanksgiving comes before Christmas. When you see these signs of the return of Jesus Christ, you realize that the rapture of the church is getting very close, because it precedes the return of the Lord in glory. For when Jesus comes again, then Paul said, "When Christ, who is our life shall appear, we shall also appear with Him in glory". Coming with Him to establish God's kingdom upon the earth. "Behold, He cometh with ten thousands of His saints."

So as Jesus said in Luke, "When you see these things begin to come to pass", now do you think they have begun to come to pass? I mean can you see any hints that Iran is sort of getting chummy with Russia, at least with the southern provinces there? Can you see Libya sort of antagonistic towards Israel? You know is, has it begun to come to pass? I think so, myself. Jesus said, "Look up, and lift up your head, because your redemption is drawing nigh".

Really, as I look at the world today, as I look at our United States today, none too soon! None too soon. I look at the moral conditions of our nation. We have a president who vows to open up the military to the homosexuals, to the gay community. We have a president who says he's gonna enact special legislation for them. A president who said he is going to seek to get a law that will allow abortion, so that it won't be a matter of the court, but it would become the law of the land. I'd say we're in big trouble! I would, I would, well, let me rephrase that! I'd say the United States is in big trouble, I'd say, we're outa here! So look up! Lift up your head, it's getting close! Shall we pray?

Father we thank You for Your word, a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path, a map whereby we can follow. A map that leads us Lord in the right path, Your path. May we walk Lord in Your ways. May we be obedient unto Your Word, and Lord help us to so live in these days. When the enemy is going about as a roaring lion, seeking who he may devour, Lord may we be steadfast, and unmovable, abounding in the work of the Lord. So Father we thank You again, for the Word of God, a guide for our lives. May we follow its precepts, in Jesus' name, Amen.