

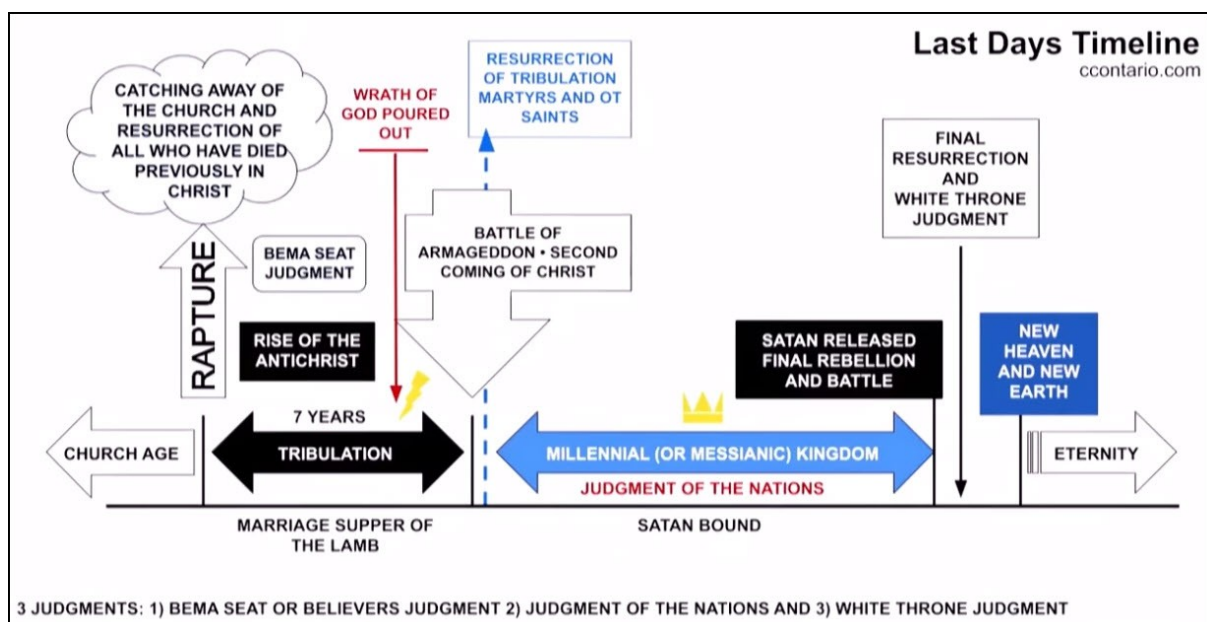
Ezekiel 38-39 • In a great battle the Lord will fight for Israel

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Life Bible Ministry

As we study the two chapters that we're going to hear tonight in Ezekiel, which are chapters 38 and 39, we're going to be talking about prophecy and a prophecy about a particular battle that is going to take place. And as this text says, "the latter years," and these are very fascinating chapters, but they require you to have a kind of knowledge of last day's events.

And that's why I'm having Aaron pass those out to you guys tonight because, without a sense of direction here, it's just really easy to get lost in a study of this kind. And while he's passing that out, I'll just tell you that when we get done tonight, you're going to feel more like you were in a college class than you were in a Bible study because it's just kind of the way it goes.

I mean, I'm not trying to be heady or anything like that. I'm just saying that there are a lot of details, and in order to really read these chapters and understand what they're saying, we have to get into it. I mean, we really have to kind of get into the details and the timeline that Aaron is passing out. We're going to also put it up on the screen here for you.



So, those who are watching us online can also be looking at that. Those who are watching us live, you might want to take a quick screenshot of what you're seeing on your device, and then you can go back and look at it later and refer to it. So I'm going to wait for Aaron to get those passed out here, and then we're going to get into it here. So let's go ahead and pray.

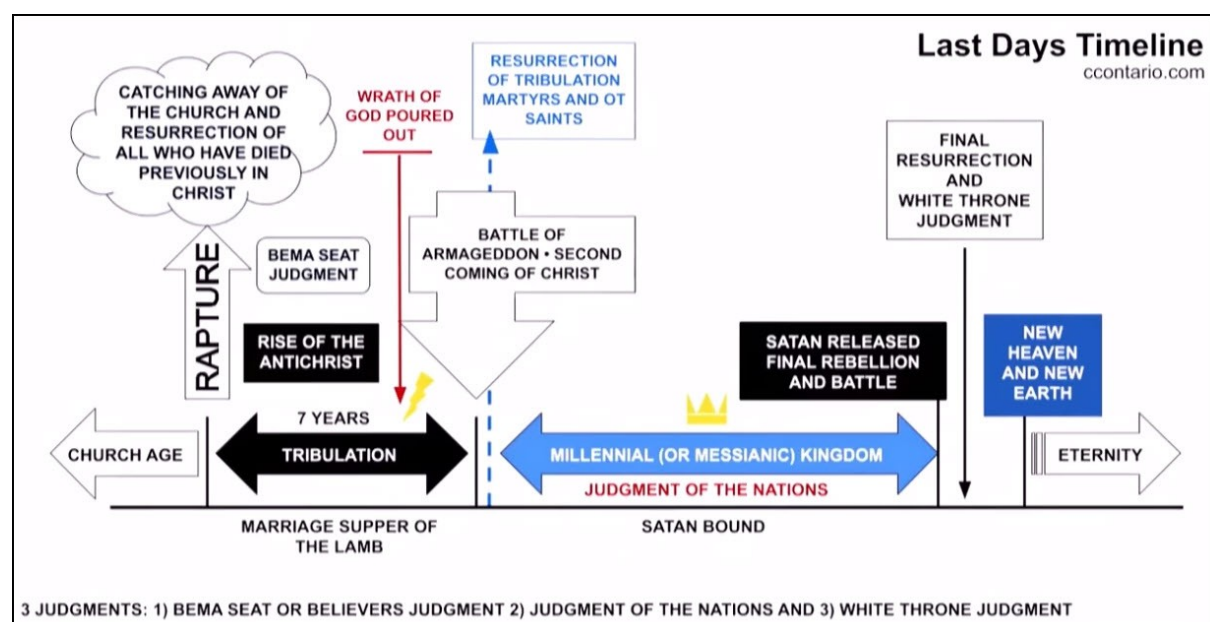
Heavenly father, as we dig into the scriptures tonight here in Ezekiel, as we talk about prophetic events, as we talk about things that are still yet to come, we just pray Lord for your Holy spirit to lead us because Lord, we so desperately need you to make sense of the Bible.

And we believe Lord and confess even today that without you, we can't make sense of it. We believe that it is your Holy Spirit who is the true teacher. And you teach us Lord, according to our faith and our level of understanding. And you speak to us about the things that are needful.

And Lord, you put this in the word in these two chapters of Ezekiel and I believe Father God that you place them here so that we would know and understand what's going on. And even though these are challenging chapters to make sense of, we pray that you'd help us to do that tonight.

We pray for illumination, turn the light on in our hearts and minds, that we might receive the revelation of truth that you desire to convey to us tonight. For we ask it in the name of Jesus, our Savior, amen. Amen.

Now, as you look at that last day's timeline that is both up on the screen and in your hand now, and by the way, that of course, obviously is yours to take home.



You can see that on the left-hand side, we have the church age. We are in the church age.

Do you guys also know that the church began... in fact, I had a young kid, I didn't see him, but we...you know, we did our 'New to Calvary Lunch', this last Sunday. And we had a bunch of families who are kind of new to our fellowship and, you know, that were there having lunch.

And at the end of the...well it kind of towards the end of the lunch, I was up talking a little bit about our history, and I was asking people if they had any questions, and there was this little kid who kept raising his hand and I didn't see it.

And I guess his dad kept kind of putting his hand down. Every kid was like, you know, his dad would put it down, you know, and stuff. And Aaron was actually sitting at the table, that's how I found out about this at the same table.

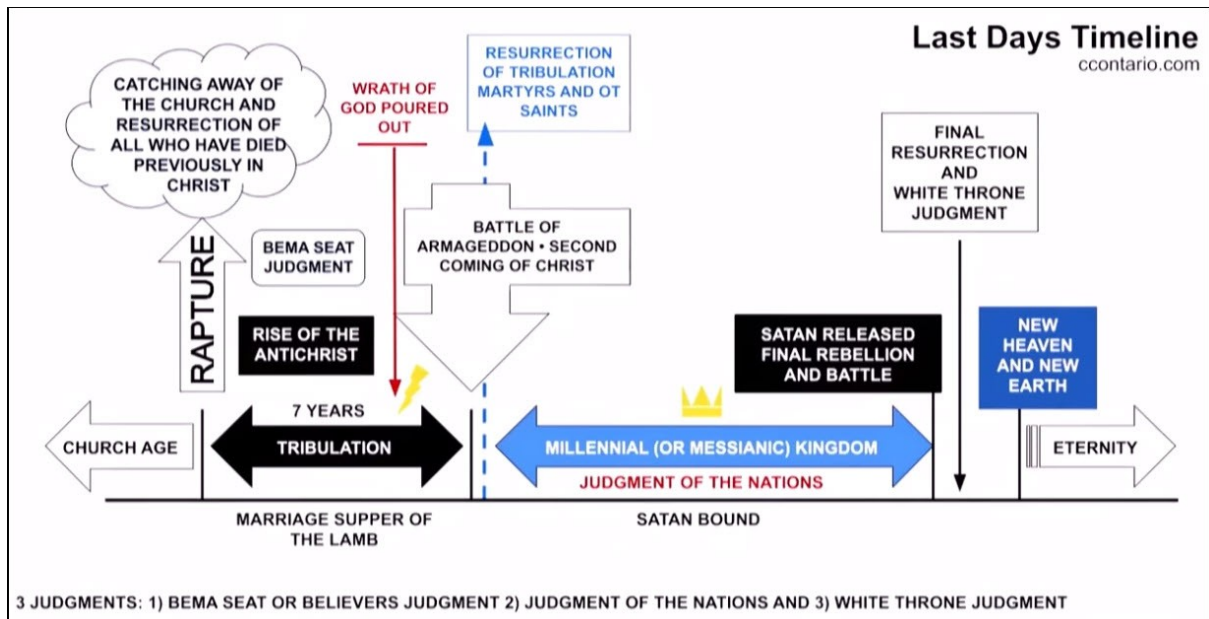
And so as soon as we kind of dismissed it, Aaron looked at the little kid is like seven years old or something and he said, "What was your question?"

Anyway, he goes, 'I want to know who started the church'? And he wasn't talking about this church. I think he's talking about the church. You know.

Now the thing that you guys need to understand about the church, we have in the Bible the beginning of the church, and that is in Acts chapter 2. And that happened when the Holy Spirit fell upon the assembled believers. The Spirit empowered them and really the church was inaugurated on that day. It was Pentecost Sunday. Pentecost was an Old Testament feast, but we've now taken that name and we've made reference to it as it relates to the beginning of the church and the giving of the spirit to empower at that time.

Do you guys understand that when the church began in Acts chapter 2, we entered into a period of time, not only called the church age but called the last days.

We've been in the last days for 2000 years. And that is this period of time, the church age, where the Lord is using the body of Christ made up of believers who've been born again and are trusting Jesus for salvation to go into the world and to share the gospel and to make disciples of all nations. And, hopefully we've been actively doing that. But we are in the last days, we've been in the last days for a long long time. But again, we also call it the church age.

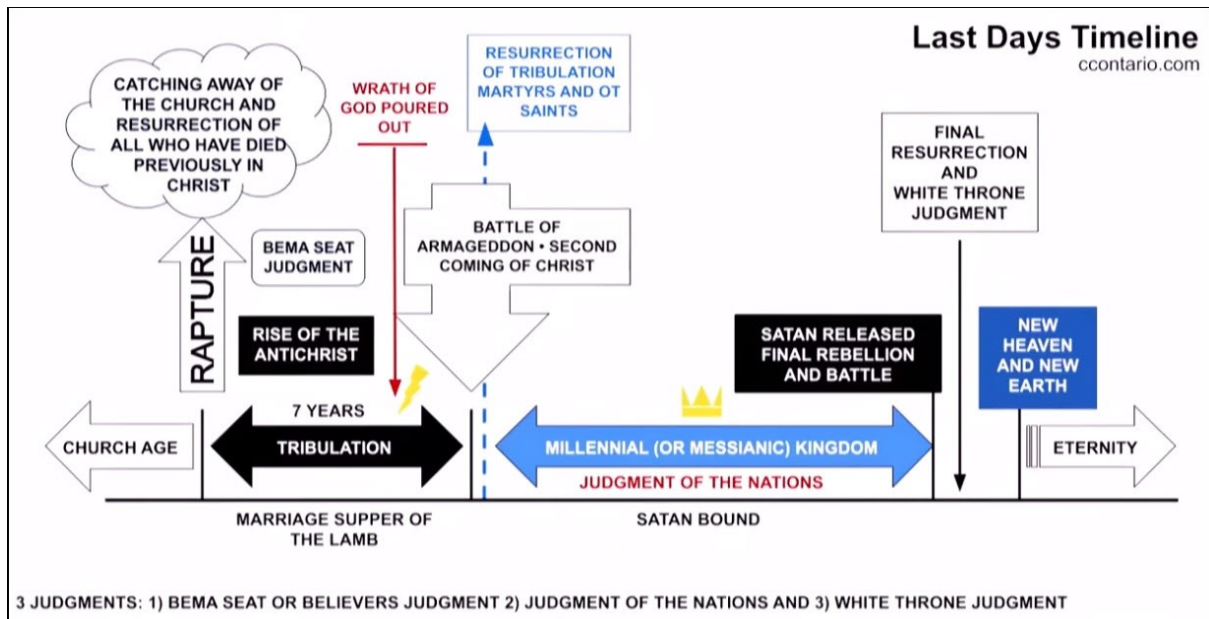


That's why that arrow on the left lower side of your timeline there points into time past because we've been in the church age for a long time.

Now, you'll notice on that timeline that the next prophetic event in God's timetable is the catching away of the church. We refer to that as the rapture. And the word 'rapture' simply comes from a Latin pronunciation of the word that is translated to be caught up and it's 'rapturous'. And that's where we get our word 'rapture'. Technically the word rapture, you know, in the English version of it isn't in the Bible, but the idea is there.

And Paul talks about that in his letter to the Thessalonians saying 'That we will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air'. (1 Thessalonians 4:17)

Now, this is not the second coming. This is when Jesus comes for the church, right? And the church is caught up to be with the Lord. That's the next thing we're waiting for. There's nothing else that needs to happen prior to the catching away of the church.



Now, if you look at what happens here on that timeline, as soon as the church is caught up, we enter into that seven-year time period called the Great Tribulation. And during that time, as you look above that black arrow that says 'tribulation' again, that's a seven-year period of time.

There's several things going on during that time. One is the Bema Seat Judgment, which is the judgment of rewards for believers, okay. You guys, I hope you know that believers in Jesus will not stand in judgment for their sins.

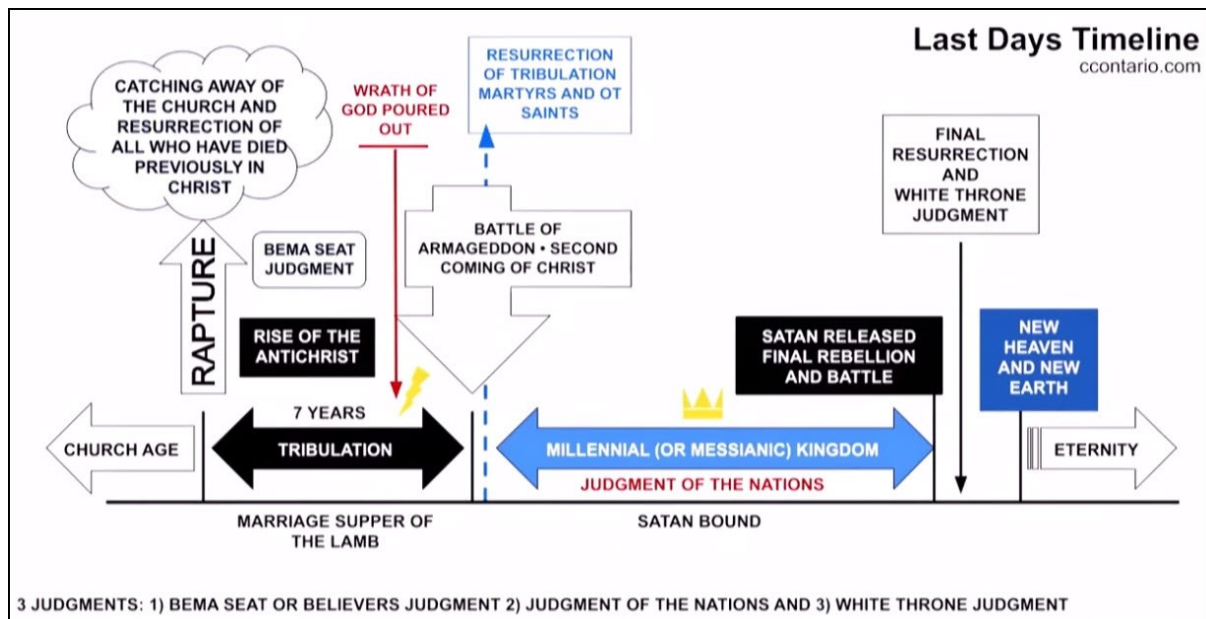
I get this question all the time from Christians who are confused and they'll say, when I stand before God and am judged for my sin and... And I go, whoa, whoa, whoa, what are you going to do? You're going to stand before God and get judged for your sins? Why wasn't Jesus judged for you on the cross? Isn't that what He did on the cross? Took your judgment? And they stop and think about it for a minute and they say, well, I guess He did.

Well, there's something else you need to know about that the very last thing Jesus said before he dismissed his spirit was He said, "It is finished." And in Greek, that literally means, paid in full. He did it all for you and me. He paid our sin. He paid the penalty of our sin on the cross.

So what judgment remains for believers? Because the Bible does say, "We will all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." (Romans 14:10)

For you, it's the Bema Seat Judgment, that's a judgment of rewards. And that is where God rewards you for how you've taken what he gave you and used it during this life. And Jesus told parables about the Bema Seat Judgment.

That's going to be going on during that seven-year period of time. But there's also going to be things going on here on earth. And one of them you'll notice here on your timeline is the rise of the Antichrist.



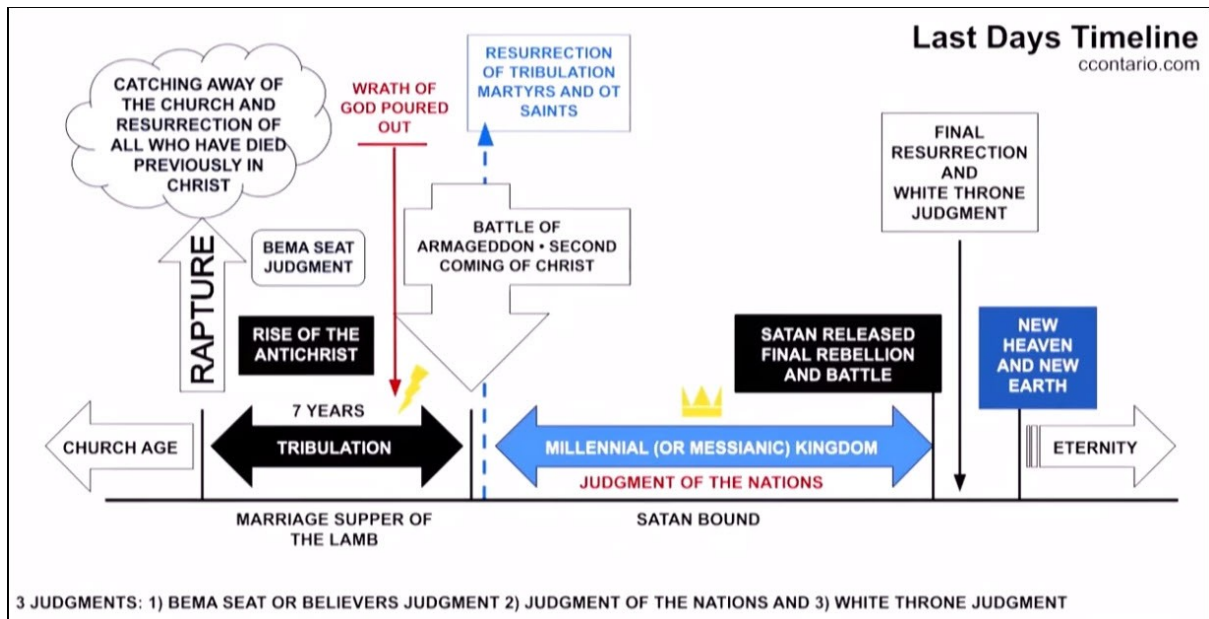
And that will actually signal the beginning of the Great Tribulation when the Antichrist rises to power. And the Bible says, 'that he's going to enter into an agreement or a covenant with Israel.' And that is going to be a seven-year covenant. But midway through that covenant, he's going to renege on it. (Daniel 9:27)

And they're going to think their savior arrived for the first three and a half years, but then once the temple is rebuilt during that time he is going to set up his own image in the temple and demand that the Jews and the rest of the world worship him as God.

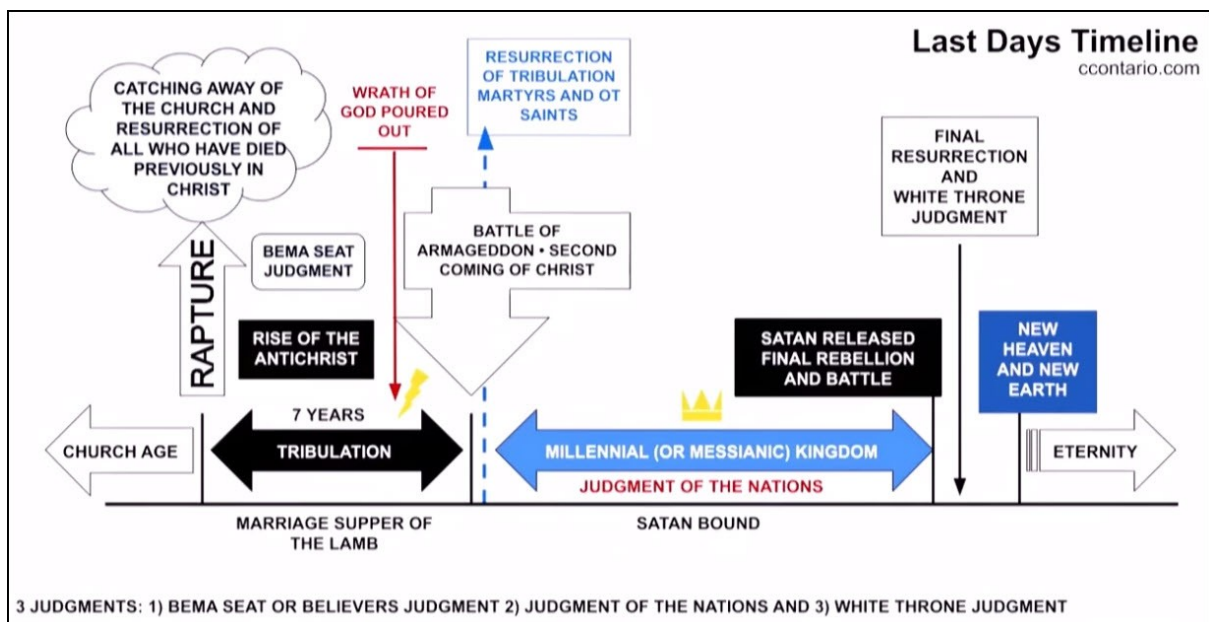
That's when the mark of the beast is going to be given out and those who do not receive the mark won't be able to buy and sell, and so forth, and they will be killed. And the Antichrist will systematically eliminate those who refuse to take the mark.

This all happens during the Great Tribulation period. You're not going to be there, okay? Because the church is caught up, which, and that's what ushers in the Great Tribulation period. I believe the church has to be out of the way in order for the antichrist to rise to power. But these are things that are going on.

Now, also going on during the Great Tribulation, you'll notice toward the end of it there, is that the wrath of God is poured out.



Beginning about midway through the Tribulation period toward the end. And right at the end of the Great Tribulation, the Bible says, "that the nations of the world are going to gather against Israel to destroy her." (Zechariah 12:2-3) And they're going to be doing a pretty fine job of it. But that is when Jesus is going to return to this earth.



And that's why you see that the next event right after the Great Tribulation is the second coming of Christ, which is tied together with the Battle of Armageddon. And that's what takes place at the end of the Great Tribulation. Then you see that there's a resurrection of the tribulation martyrs because many many many people are going to come to Christ during the Great Tribulation and they will be martyred for their faith, and then they will be raised after the Great Tribulation.

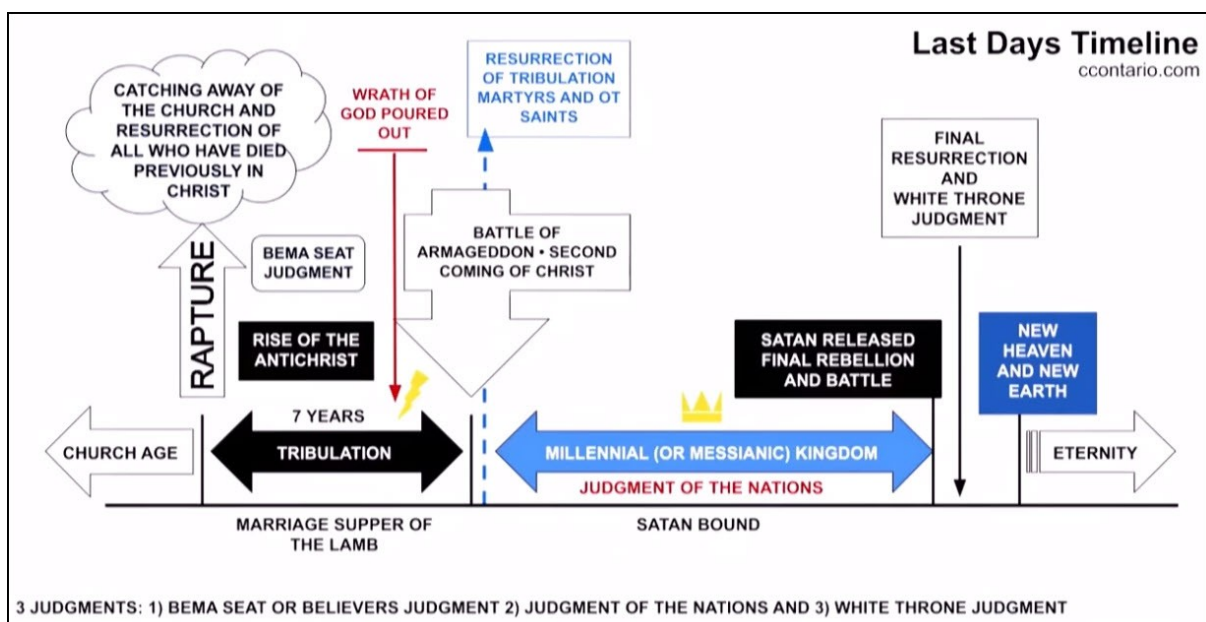
And after the nations that come against Israel are destroyed, Jesus is going to establish his kingdom upon this earth. And that will last for 1000 years.
(Revelation 20:4-6)

Now you can see on your timeline, this is what the Bible or what we call the Millennial or Messianic Kingdom. During that time, there is a judgment of the nations, but this is by and large going to be a time of great peace upon the earth. Lives are going to be extended. People will be born, live and die during the Millennial Kingdom.

But not you, because when the Lord returns for the church, that's when you receive, as Paul the apostle says, "*Your incorruptible body or your resurrection body.*" So you will have that for you, death will no longer be an issue. (1 Corinthians 15:51-54)

But people will be born, live and die during the tribute or during the Millennial Kingdom, but their lives will be greatly extended. It says, '*that a man who dies at a hundred will be considered a young man.*' (Isaiah 65:20)

So, this is going to be a wonderful time on the earth during this Messianic Kingdom, but we're told that at the end of that 1000-year period, that Satan is going to be released from the abyss. And I guess I failed to mention that at the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom, that is when Satan is bound and cast into the abyss.



And it says on the very bottom, "Satan bound during that time." But then he is released to deceive the nation's one final time. It is a very quick put down by the

Lord who destroys those enemies and casts Satan finally into his destiny, which is the lake of fire.

And then there is the Final Resurrection and what we call the White Throne Judgment, which is when the rest of the people will be raised and judged. And then the Bible tells us, *‘that the old earth and the old heaven will be destroyed, and a new heaven and a new earth will be created that will be merged together, heaven and earth will be merged.’* (Revelation 21:3)

And the Bible says at the very end of the book of Revelation, God says, “Now the kingdom of God is with man.” (Revelation 21:3-4) And so God brings it back to the beginning, right? And then, we enter into that time period, which is referred to on the far right hand side of your timeline as ‘eternity’.

All right, so this is the timeline, and it's important that you know this timeline as we get into Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39, because these are going to talk prophetically about a great battle that is going to take place. And we're going to talk obviously about the timing of those events as we go through here.

But there's a lot of things that I need to show you and we're going to begin. So if you have your Bible open to Ezekiel chapter 38 read with or follow along as I read verses 1 and 2 it says, “ *The word of the Lord came to me: ²“Son of man, set your face toward Gog, of the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him...”*”

Well, right there, you understand what's going on when the Lord says, “I want you to prophesy against this person.” We know that this is an enemy. But I need you to stop there because we need to identify a few things before we even move on.

First of all, you can see that this prophecy is directed toward Gog, crazy name, huh? Don't name your kids Gog. And it says ‘that he is of the land of Magog.’ Now, as we get into this prophecy, we're going to be seeing that this Gog is a prince, all right. Some kind of a leader who is going to attack Israel, that's what this prophecy is all about. That this Gog along with the confederation of other nations is going to attack Israel at some time in the future.

Now, here's an interesting thing to note. This Gog kind of comes out of nowhere. Because there's nowhere else in the Bible that we read about this prince or world leader named Gog, who is an enemy of Israel. He kind of comes significantly out of nowhere.

Now, the name Gog does appear in a couple of other passages. For example, in 1 Chronicles 5:4, when they're outlining the descendants of Reuben, look on the screen.

1 Chronicles 5:4 (ESV)

The sons of Joel: Shemaiah his son, Gog his son, Shimei his son,

These are the sons of Reuben, who is the son of Jacob. And it says, “*The sons of Joel: Shemaiah his son, Gog his son, and Shimei his son.*” So you got the name Gog that appears in the Bible, but this seems to be completely unrelated. This is not the Gog we're talking about. It's just a coincidence that the name happened to be used.

Now, Magog is a name or a title that we have heard before because Magog is a descendant of one of the sons of Noah after the great flood. Let me put that on the screen.

Genesis 10:2 (ESV)

The sons of Japheth: Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras.

Genesis 10:2, “*The sons of Japheth...*” And it names some of them there and it talks about “...*Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan...*” Look at these two names, “...*Tubal (and) Meshech...*” Those are the people groups that Gog is going to bring with him to attack Israel. As you noticed there in verses 1 and 2.

So we do know that Magog was a son or a descendant, if you will, of one of the sons of Noah and became a people group located in a particular area of the world.

Now there's something else you need to know. And what I'm going to do in order to make you aware of this is I'm going to show you the first 2 verses that we just read on the screen in the ESV. But then right below that, I'm going to show you those same 2 verses in the new American standard Bible.

Ezekiel 38: 1-2 (ESV)

*The word of the Lord came to me: “Son of man, set your face toward Gog, of the land of Magog, the **chief prince** of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him*

Ezekiel 38: 1-2 (NASB)

And the word of the Lord came to me saying, “Son of man, set your face toward

Gog of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him

Because here in the ESV, it says, “*The word of the Lord came to me: “Son of man, set your face toward Gog, the land of Magog (look at this, and I highlighted this on the screen), the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal and prophesy against him.”*”

Now, notice what the new American standard Bible says, “*The word of the Lord came to me saying, “Son of man, set your face toward Gog of the land of Magog (and here's the difference), the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him.”*”

Now, I highlighted it there. So obviously you see the difference between those two passages. The ESV says ‘Chief Prince’, that's how they translate that Hebrew word, ‘Rosh’. They translate it as kind of an adjective, But the New American Standard Bible translates ‘Rosh’ literally as a people group, all right, which would make a 4th ally that's mentioned here in these first 2 verses.

And you know, this isn't a big deal, but I wanted you to know the difference because some of you might have a different Bible translation that you read from. And if you saw this in there, you might kind of go, ‘What's that all about?’

And I think the reason that the word ‘Rosh’ is translated ‘chief’ in the ESV is because it, first of all, it can be translated as that. But second of all, it's because we don't know of any ‘Rosh’. We've never heard of it before. And so, it's hard to maintain that it is actually a people group since it's the first time we've ever heard of it.

So the ESV chose to translate it ‘chief,’ the New American Standard Bible says, ‘no, I think it's a people group.’ Right?’ Either way, I thought it was important to point out.

But as a side note, you need to know something. There are people who see that word ‘Rosh’ in the New American Standard and other Bible translations and they believe that is an ancient form of Russia. And there are many people that believe that and believe it very sincerely. And they believe that Russia is going to be involved with this confederation. Maybe even leading it. Who knows? And we'll come down, you know, from the north and attack Israel.

Here's the deal though: we don't have any proof of that. There's zero proof. The only reason people believe that is because 'Rosh' sounds similar to Russia. That's the only thing we're going... well and the fact that the enemies come down from the north, that's the other thing, but that is not convincing. I mean, it's not authoritative.

So Russia could be involved—could very well be involved—or they might not. All I'm saying is, if you like to talk about Ezekiel 38 and 39 to other people, don't act like a know-it-all and say 'Russia', it says in the Bible, "Russia is going to be involved in this." Because you don't know for sure and you're guessing. And it's possible, and that's probably the thing to say: 'It's possible.' Okay.

Anyway, let's keep reading. We're in verse 3, "*... and say (This is what Ezekiel was to say in his prophecy toward Gog.), Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am against you, O Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. ⁴ And I will turn you about and put hooks into your jaws, and I will bring you out and all your army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed in full armor, a great host, all of them with buckler and shield, wielding swords.*"

And then some of the other nations that are going to be involved in this confederacy are named in verses 5 and following, "*Persia, Cush and Put are with them, all of them with shield and helmet; ⁶ Gomer and all his hordes; Beth-togarmah from the uttermost parts of the north with all his hordes— many people are with you.*" So you can see there's this confederation, a confederation of armies that are being prophesied who will come down to attack Israel.

Now, I need to stop for just a moment. And I'll just tell you right now that some people who believe, first of all, that this is a future event—or they take it as a future event—are bothered a little bit about the description of how these people are going to be arrayed and with what they're going to come down. You'll notice it talks about all these ancient forms of military implements, you know, like armor and buckler and shield and sword and helmet. Well, I guess we even wear helmets today in modern warfare.

But I dare say some of these other things we don't, and there are other references that are going to be made to horses. And people wonder, how can that be accurate if we're talking about a future warfare, that obviously these ancient forms of battle are no longer used? And so it kind of creates an issue in some people's hearts.

But you know, when you think about it, this is exactly the way I would expect God to reveal to a primitive man about a future war, because he's a primitive man, and I would expect God to convey warfare to him in terms that he would understand in primitive forms of warfare. And so when you stop and think about it, it really does, it really makes a lot of sense.

And I think, it's just best to accept the essence of what is being conveyed here, which is, this is warfare. However, you know, I mean, obviously Ezekiel wouldn't have known a jet fighter or a bomb if he'd have seen one in a vision. And so God just was satisfied to let him understand warfare in terms that he could understand.

Verse 7, *“Be ready and keep ready, you and all your hosts that are assembled about you, and be a guard for them.”*⁸ *After many days you will be mustered.”* And then take note of this here in the middle of verse 7 (8), it says, *“In the latter years (that's a very important reference to time) you will go (out) against the land that is restored from war...”* Now, it's talking about Israel, but it's telling you the condition of Israel at the time of this attack is that it will have gone through warfare, but it will have been restored by this time, all right.

And it says, he goes on to describe it as, *“...the land whose people were gathered from many peoples upon the mountains of Israel, which had been (past tense) a continual waste.”* And then I want you to pay close attention to this next statement, *“Its people were brought out from the peoples (meaning the nations) and now dwell securely, all of them.”*

Did you catch that? So, we learned some important things about when this attack is going to take place. We still haven't placed it yet on our timeline, but we know that it's going to be at a time after Israel has been restored and when they're living in a time of peace and safety. Okay? Very important that we understand that because that's going to play into our talking about the timing of this attack at the end.

Verse 9, *“You (and he's talking to Gog now) you will advance, coming on like a storm. You will be like a cloud covering the land, you and all your hordes, and many peoples with you.”*¹⁰ *Thus says the Lord God: On that day, thoughts will come into your mind, and you will devise an evil scheme*¹¹ *and say, ‘I will go up against the land of unwalled villages. I will fall upon the quiet people who dwell securely...’* Again, that's telling us something about the state of Israel at the time of this attack.

He's going to be saying to himself, 'Ah, these people are dwelling securely. Now I'm going to attack "*...all of them dwelling without walls, and having no bars or gates,*"¹² *to seize spoil and carry off plunder, to turn your hand against the waste places that are now inhabited, and the people who were gathered from the nations, who have acquired livestock and goods, (and then look at this statement), who dwell at the center of the earth.*"

Isn't that a fascinating statement? Israel is referred to in the Bible as the center of the earth. Well, I'll tell you one thing: it's the center of God's timetable. It's the center of God's activity.

You want to know what's going on in the world? Check Israel. You want to know what's happening and as it relates to prophecy? Check Israel. Everything you want to know or need to know concerning the timeframe of the things that we're talking about and what God is doing, watch Israel, because they are the center of what God is doing, particularly in those times. So very very interesting.

Verse 13, "*Sheba and Dedan and the merchants of Tarshish and all its leaders will say to you (will they're going to be talking to Gog and they're going to say), 'Have you come to seize spoil? Have you assembled your hosts to carry off plunder, to carry away silver and gold, to take away livestock and goods to seize great spoil?'*"

¹⁴ *Therefore, son of man, prophesy, and say to Gog, Thus says the Lord God: On the day (and here it is again) when my people Israel are dwelling securely, will you not know it?* ¹⁵ *You will come from your place (and then look at this) out of the uttermost parts of the north, (so this is where Gog is coming from), you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses (there's that reference to horses I told you about), a great host, a mighty army.* ¹⁶ *You will come up against my people Israel, like a cloud covering the land. In the latter days I will bring you against my land, that the nations may know me, when through you, O Gog, I vindicate my holiness before their eyes.*

¹⁷ *"Thus says the Lord God: Are you he of whom I spoke in former days by my servants the prophets of Israel, who in those days prophesied for years that I would bring you against them?"* ¹⁸ *But on that day, the day that Gog shall come against the land of Israel, declares the Lord God, my wrath will be roused in my anger.* ¹⁹ *For in my jealousy and in my blazing wrath I declare, On that day there shall be a great earthquake in the land of Israel...* "

Now I want you to stop there for a moment because that's another interesting little tidbit. This reference to a great earthquake is significant because, you know, there are other prophetic references to a great earthquake which might help us to place this. In fact, there's a great earthquake that is going to happen when Jesus returns at the end of the great tribulation. Let me put this on the screen from Zechariah.

Zechariah 14:4 (ESV)

On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives that lies before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley, so that one half of the Mount shall move northward, and the other half southward.

Look what it says, it says, “*On that day* (this is talking about the return of the Lord at the end of the tribulation) *his feet* (talking about Jesus will) *stand on the Mount of Olive* (we even know where Jesus is coming back) *that lies before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley, so that one half of the Mount shall move northward, and the other half southward.*”

So there is going to be such an earthquake and a shifting of the tectonic plates when the Lord returns that the mountains are literally, Mount of Olives, is literally going to be split in two. That is mind numbing.

Well, interestingly enough, during the Bowl Judgments in the book of Revelation, it also speaks of a great earthquake. Let me show you this from Revelation 16.

Revelation 16:17-18 (ESV)

The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple, from the throne, saying, “It is done!” And there were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, and a great earthquake such as there had never been since man was on the earth, so great was that earthquake.

Well, that one trumps all the rest of them because this one just got done telling you that this earthquake is going to be bigger and badder than any other earthquake that has ever been experienced on planet earth.

So it's interesting, isn't it, that we have these references to earthquakes. That seemed to be happening at slightly different times on the timetable. So, the earthquake doesn't give us a perfect time reference. Okay? There's probably

going to be several earthquakes during that time. Obviously, the one during that bowl judgment is the worst of them.

Let's keep reading, we're in verse 20, *"The fish of the sea and the birds of the heavens and the beasts of the field and all creeping things that creep on the ground, and all the people who are on the face of the earth, shall quake at my presence."* Oh, now there's an interesting tidbit. The presence of the Lord is going to be known and felt, possibly seen. *"And the mountains shall be thrown down, and the cliffs shall fall, and every wall shall tumble to the ground."*

So there's going to be these earthquakes and all these other cataclysmic activities and events are going to cause great damage to homes and buildings. The sides of mountains cliffs—you know, we've seen some of that in California, haven't we?

You know, you get these people who build their houses on the edge of a cliff and suddenly the cliff gives way, you know, and their house tumbles down into the ocean. Well, that's going to be happening during this particular time, during this particular battle, when it says the cliffs are going to fall away.

Verse 21 goes on to say, *"I will summon a sword against Gog on all my mountains, declares the Lord God. Every man's sword will be against his brother."*²² *With pestilence and bloodshed. I will enter into judgment with him, and I will rain upon him and his hordes and the many people who are with him torrential rains and hailstones, fire and sulfur."*

So the Lord is going to be literally raining down these things upon the enemies of God. And He says in verse 23, *"So I will show my greatness and my holiness and make myself known in the eyes of many nations."* That's significant. God is going to reveal himself. And we'll talk about that later. He's going to reveal himself to the nations, not just the nation of Israel. And He says, *"Then they will know that I am the Lord."*

You know, most nations on the face of the earth deny that there is a God, even if they give some kind of credence to the possibility of some divine deity or deities, at this time, God says, 'they will know that I Am the Lord.' All right.

Chapter 39. This really just continues on. I don't think there should even really be a chapter division here. So chapter 39 goes on and says,¹ *"And you, son of man, prophesy against Gog and say, Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am against you, O Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal."*² *And I will turn you*

about and drive you forward, and bring you up from the uttermost parts of the north, and lead you against the mountains of Israel.”

Now, what we see in these first 2 verses of chapter 39 is that the moving of Gog and his hordes against Israel is at the sovereign bidding of the Lord. Earlier in the other chapter, He said, *“I’m going to put a hook in your mouth. And I’m going to drag you out of the north and I’m going to bring you to Israel.”*

Here, He basically repeats the same thing. He says, *“I’m going to bring you out of the uttermost parts of the north and I’m going to lead you against the mountains of Israel.”* So the Lord is going to sovereignly be moving in this situation.

Verse 3, *“Then I will strike your bow from your left hand, and will make your arrows drop out of your right hand.”* And that’s just really a poetic way of the Lord saying that ‘their military efforts against Israel are going to be useless.’ He says, ‘I’m literally going to knock your weapons out of your hand.’

Verse 4, *“You shall fall on the mountains of Israel, you and all your hordes and the peoples who are with you. I will give you two birds of prey and every sort and to the beasts of the field to be devoured. ⁵ You shall fall in the open field for, I have spoken, declares the Lord. God. ⁶ I will send fire on Magog and on those who dwell securely in the coastlands, and they shall know that I am the Lord.”*

⁷ *“And my holy name I will make known in the midst of my people Israel, and I will not let my holy name be profaned anymore. And the nations shall know that I am the Lord, the Holy One of Israel.”* (Boy, He just repeats that over and over again) *“Behold (God says), it is coming and it will be brought about, declares the Lord God. That is the day of which I have spoken.”*

Verse 9, *“Then those who dwell in the cities of Israel will go out and make fires of the weapons and burn them, shields and bucklers, bow and arrows, clubs and spears; and they will make fires of them for seven years, ¹⁰ so that they will not need to take wood out of the field or cut down any of the forests, for they will make their fires of the weapons. They will seize the spoil of those who despoiled them, and plunder those who plundered them, declares the Lord God.”*

Now, I want you to stop there for a moment. I want you to remember what we just read. What we just read is that after this war is over, the Israelites are going to go out onto the fields and hills, and they’re going to pick up the implements of war and they’re going to use them for fuel. And it says ‘that they’re going to

be able to fuel their country for seven years with what the enemy left behind.’ All right.

Now, the reason that's an important thing to remember is that we know that after this battle, there's going to be a seven-year period at least. Well, that ought to tell you something about what this battle could not be. And we'll talk about that in just a little bit.

Verse 11, this is interesting, “ *On that day I will give to Gog a place for burial in Israel, the Valley of the Travelers, east of the sea. It will block the travelers, for there Gog and all his multitude will be buried. It will be called the Valley of Hamon-gog* (or that means basically the valley of the hordes of Gog, or if you will, the multitudes of Gog).

And then check this out. Check this out, ¹² “ *For seven months the house of Israel will be burying them, in order to cleanse the land.* ¹³ *All the people of the land will bury them. and it will bring them renown on the day that I show my glory, declares the Lord God.* ¹⁴ *They will set apart men to travel through the land regularly and bury those travelers remaining on the face of the land, so as to cleanse it. At the end of seven months, they will make their search.* ¹⁵ *And when these travel through the land and anyone sees a human bone, then he shall set up a sign by it, till the buriers have buried it in the Valley of Hamon-gog.*

And it goes on to say kind of parenthetically in verse 16 that ‘*Hamonah is also the name of the city.*’ And again, that really just means horde. So imagine that they're going to actually have a city called horde. Yeah, that's kind of crazy, but it goes on to simply say at the end of verse 16, “*Thus shall they cleanse the land.*”

And so they're going to go through this elongated burial process for all these slain warriors who came against Israel.

Verse 17, “*As for you, son of man, thus says the Lord God: Speak to the birds of every sort and to all beasts of the field: ‘Assemble and come, gather from all around to the sacrificial feast that I am preparing for you, a great sacrificial feast on the mountains of Israel, and you shall eat flesh and drink blood.*

Pretty gross, huh? But this is obviously going to be happening prior to this long burial process. So we've kind of gone back in time, just a short time, and it says, ¹⁸ “*You shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth—of rams, of lambs and, of he-goats, of bulls, all of them fat beasts of*

Bashan. ¹⁹ And you shall eat fat till you are filled, and drink blood till you're drunk, at the sacrificial feast that I am preparing for you. ”

So these predatory animals, birds and so forth are going to feed upon these slain warriors. And it says, ²⁰ *“And you shall be filled at my table with horses and charioteers, with mighty men and all kinds of warriors, ’ declares the Lord God.”*

Now, this is interesting because this is similar to something that we read in the book of Revelation. Let me show you this on the screen. from the 19th chapter of Revelation.

Revelation 19:19-21 (ESV)

And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against him who was sitting on the horse and against his army. And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur, And the rest were slain by the sword that came from the mouth of him who was sitting on the horse, and all the birds were gorged with their flesh.

So you can see there's a great similarity here to what we're reading now. This in Revelation 19, is talking about the conclusion of the Battle of Armageddon, okay.

When Jesus returns to the earth to fight on behalf of Israel, putting down the enemies of Israel that are gathered against her, but you can see the similarities here, can't you, between what we've just read in Ezekiel and what is actually prophesied in Revelation 19.

Verse 21, *“And I will set my glory among the nations, and all the nations shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid on them. The house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God (look at this), from that day forward.”*

Well, this is a huge statement right here, guys, verse 22. Don't overlook it too quickly, because verse 22, God says, *“They're going to know (The house of Israel shall know) that I am the Lord from that day forward.”* Okay, that's a timing statement. That's a timing statement, right?

Verse 23, *“And the nations shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity, because they dealt so treacherously with me that I hid my face from them and gave them into the hand of their adversaries, and they all fell by the sword. ²⁴ I dwelt with them according to their uncleanness and their transgressions, and hid my face from them.”*

This is God talking about Israel. He's saying that the nations are going to be given a spirit of revelation and they're going to open up the scriptures and they're going to realize that this is what's been happening to Israel all this time. God has been disciplining Israel all this time because they fell into sin and idolatry. And because they refused to obey God, He allowed them to fall by the sword. And they're going to realize that everything that's happened to Israel up to this point was because God was disciplining Israel. And they're simply going to be given that understanding.

Now, these last verses of the chapter, these are all about God's restoration of Israel. It says, ²⁵ *“Therefore thus says the Lord God: Now I will restore the fortunes of Jacob...”*

Remember Jacob, right? Remember who Jacob is? The grandson of Abraham—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob. Jacob is renamed Israel by the Lord. So He says, *“... I will restore the fortunes of Jacob and have mercy on the whole house of Israel, and I will be jealous for my holy name. ²⁶ They shall forget their shame and all the treachery they have practiced against me, when they dwell securely in their land with none to make them afraid, ²⁷ when I have brought them back from the peoples and gathered them from their enemies' lands, and through them have vindicated my holiness in the sight of many nations. ²⁸ Then they shall know that I am the Lord their God, because I sent them into exile among the nations and then assembled them into their own land (which, by the way, we've mentioned before, has happened to no other nation on the face of the earth). I will leave none of them remaining among the nations anymore. In other words, God saying, ‘I'll bring every single one back to their land.’ ²⁹ And I will not hide my face anymore from them, when I pour out my spirit upon the house of Israel declares, the Lord God.”*

So these are incredible chapters. I mean, they're just incredible in their scope and in the revelation of what is happening here. But the big question here is when does this happen? When do these events happen?

I gave you the timeline that I laid out. That is the best I can come up with based on what I see in the Word of God. And so our question is ‘When does all this happen?’

Well, one of the things you got to be really careful about when you're dealing with end times, prophetic events is what I call speculative guessing.

I'm not the one who coined that phrase. It's a common phrase. But it happens a lot. There's a lot of speculative guessing by people. And it just, it gets weird even sometimes. People just go off the rails. Guessing about this and that and the other thing. So one of the things I like to do when I read through a passage is I like to outline, 'okay, what do I know? What do I know for sure based on the scripture?'

So I'm going to read through these and put them up on the screen as I do. All right, here we go.

(Ezekiel 38:1-6) A leader from the north known as Gog from the land of Magog, will lead a group of allied nations to war against Israel. prophesy against him

(Ezekiel 38:10) Gog will be motivated by his own evil plans but the attack will be in keeping with the will of God.

(Ezekiel 38:8) The attack will happen in "the latter years."

We know from Ezekiel 3 or 38:1- 6 that a leader from the north known as Gog. Gog from the land of Magog is going to lead a group of allied nations to war against Israel. We know that.

Next from Ezekiel 38:10, we know that Gog will be essentially motivated by his own evil plans, but the attack will be in keeping with the sovereignty and the will of God.

Then Ezekiel 38:8, we know that the attack will happen in the "latter years," which is a biblical term for the final times, if you will.

(Ezekiel 38:1-6) The nations accompanying God will include Persia (modern Iran), along with people from modern Turkey, Libya, Ethiopia and may include some other nations as well.

(Ezekiel 38:4-6) Gog along with his allies will attack swiftly with a massive and well-equipped army.

(Ezekiel 38:8, 12) This battle will occur AFTER the people of Israel are gathered back to their homeland.

Then Ezekiel 38: 1- 6, we know that the nations who accompany Gog will include nations like Persia, which is modern Iran, along with people from modern Turkey, Libya, Ethiopia, and may include some other nations as well.

We know from Ezekiel 38: 4 - 6, that Gog along with his allies are going to attack very quickly, very swiftly, and it's going to be massive and very well organized and very well equipped.

From 38 verses 8 and 12, we know that this battle is going to occur after the people of Israel are gathered back to their homeland. And then when the land is restored after a time of war.

(Ezekiel 38:8, 14 -16) The attack will take place when Israel is enjoying a time of safety and prosperity.

(Ezekiel 38:16) The Lord God will defend His people and hand a resounding defeat to Gog and his allies, bringing glory to Himself among the nations.

In also 38:8, 14 and 16, we know that the attack will take place when Israel is enjoying a time of safety and prosperity.

We know for sure from 38:16 that the Lord God will defend Israel, His people and hand a resounding defeat to Gog and his allies. Thus bringing glory to His name right among the nations.

(Ezekiel 38:17) This victory will be in fulfillment of several prophecies that God has spoken to Israel in the past.

(Ezekiel 39:22) Following the defeat of Gog and his horde, the people of Israel will know the Lord their God,

We know for sure from 38:17 that the victory will be in fulfillment of several prophecies that God had spoken to Israel in the past.

We know, finally from Ezekiel 39:22, that following the defeat of Gog and his horde, the people of Israel will know the Lord their God. We know these things because we read them. These are non-negotiables, if you will, all right.

So when we take all the things that we know for sure and then we put it to the timeline that I gave you, well, I'll still tell you that people have come up with essentially four scenarios. As far as when these things are going to happen, and there's probably some more out there, but these are probably the biggies.

Let me put these on the screen for you. Four scenarios:

Four scenarios that have advanced

This battle happens before the beginning of the Great Tribulation.

Problem 1: This would be a battle that is nowhere else spoken of.

Problem 2: This battle is seen as resolving many issues between God and His people which we know won't happen until the end of the Great Tribulation.

First one, this battle is going to happen sometime before the beginning of the great tribulation. And that means sometime between now and before Jesus comes for his church. I personally don't believe this. And here are the problems with this particular thing.

Problem number one is that this would be a battle that is nowhere ever spoken of in the Word, anywhere else.

Problem number two is this battle, the battle that we read about here in Ezekiel, is seen as resolving a whole lot of issues between God and his people. And we know that doesn't happen until after the Great Tribulation period. So it can't be before the Great Tribulation.

Well, the next scenario is that this battle happens in the middle, sometime in the middle. And that's another scenario that's been advanced, but there's a problem with that too.

Four scenarios that have advanced

This battle happens in the middle of the 7 year Great Tribulation.

Problem: Again, that would make this battle virtually unknown to all other prophecies and would be in addition to the Battle of Armageddon and the Final Rebellion.

And the problem is again that would make this battle virtually unknown to all the other prophecies, and would be an addition to the battle. It would be another battle on top of the Battle of Armageddon and the Final Rebellion that happens at the end of the millennial kingdom.

So you see that would add another battle that we've never heard about anywhere else. It's like, where'd that come from? And why is it happening right there, all right?

Then we have the scenario that the battle is speaking of Armageddon, which as I've told you guys, takes place at the end of the Great Tribulation.

Four scenarios that have advanced

This battle happens is speaking of Armageddon

Problem: When this battle takes place, Israel is said to be dwelling in safety and prosperity. (Ezekiel 38:8, 14-16) That hardly seems impossible at the end of the Great Tribulation when the Antichrist is murdering everyone who won't take the mark of the beast and cataclysmic judgments are falling from the heavens.

And there are people who believe this is very likely since we, you know, we talked about some passages that are very similar between Armageddon, like the birds feeding on the flesh of the slain, which we read about in both Revelation and in Ezekiel.

We know in the book of Revelation as referring to Armageddon. Ezekiel is a little bit more challenging, but even so, there are problems with this because when this battle takes place, which is Armageddon, Israel is said to be living in safety and prosperity. That's what Ezekiel said, that Israel is living in safety and prosperity.

Well, that hardly seems possible because at the end of the Great Tribulation, the Antichrist is literally going to be murdering anybody he can look at who doesn't want to do his will. And there's going to be all these cataclysmic judgments that are literally falling from heaven during that time. So there is a problem with that.

And then we have this last scenario, which is this battle is the Final Rebellion as cited in Revelation 20 at the end of the millennial kingdom. Actually this has a lot of problems.

Four scenarios that have advanced

This battle happens is the Final Rebellion as cited in Revelation 20:7-9

Problem 1: In the battle of Ezekiel 38-39, the armies come primarily from the north and involve only a few nations of the earth (Ezekiel 38:6, 15;39:2). The battle in Revelation 20:7-9 will involve all nations, so armies will come from all directions, not just from the north.

Number one problem in the battle of Ezekiel, the armies come primarily from the north and involve just a few nations. But in Revelation at the end of the Millennial Kingdom, it involves all nations from the earth, and they literally come from everywhere, not just the north.

Four scenarios that have advanced

This battle happens is the Final Rebellion as cited in Revelation 20:7-9

Problem 2: Ezekiel 39:11-12 states that the dead will be buried for seven months. But there would be no need to bury the dead if the battle in Ezekiel 38-39 is the one described at the end of the Millennial Kingdom, since we're told that the present heaven and earth will be destroyed and replaced with a recreated heaven and earth (Revelation 21:1).

Problem number two is that Ezekiel 39 states that the dead are going to be buried for seven months. And we also know that they're going to have enough fuel for seven years. But at the end of the Millennial Kingdom the earth and the heavens are going to be destroyed, and a new earth and a new Heaven are going to be created. They don't have 7 years because there's going to be the Great White Throne Judgment, and then we're going to have a new heaven and earth. Why would you need seven years of fuel? You know, it doesn't make sense.

Four scenarios that have advanced

This battle happens is the Final Rebellion as cited in Revelation 20:7-9

Problem 3: The battle in Ezekiel 38-39 is used by God to draw Israel back to the Lord (Ezekiel 39:21-29). But by the end of the Millennial Kingdom Israel will have been faithful to God for 1,000 years! The final battle of Revelation 20 is made up of rebellious people who are destroyed without any further opportunity for repentance.

And then problem number three is that the battle in Ezekiel 38 and 39 is used by God to draw Israel back to the Lord. But that doesn't seem to be a need at the end of the Millennial Kingdom. At the end of that kingdom, that thousand years, Israel will have been faithful to God for the last 1000 years.

So the final battle in Revelation 20 is not fought in such a way that it's going to bring Israel back to the Lord. It's going to be fought very simply to destroy those whom Satan has deceived among the nations. And there will be no opportunity for repentance among those people because it'll be a completely different scenario of life on earth.

So you can kind of see that everything that's been advanced as far as when this is going to happen has some problems to it. And that's one of the reasons why this is such a hotly debated couple of chapters in the Bible. I mean, if it just came out and just said, 'all right, here's the deal,' and it just lined it up perfectly, we would all just say, 'well, there you go then,' but it doesn't. And I want you to know two things about this.

Number one: This doesn't bother me. The fact that we're struggling, perhaps, to really zero in on exactly the timing of this particular battle, doesn't bother me because there's so many things that we still don't know.

I mean, there's a lot we do know, but there are many more that we don't know. And I'm personally okay with looking at things in the Word and going, 'Yeah, well, we'll see.' I mean, literally, we'll see.

If you guys were around when I taught through the book of Revelation, I said that every message, I said, 'Well, we'll see.'

You know, I never in my life said, 'Well, maybe,' or 'could be,' or 'this might happen' or 'whatever,' as I did through the book of Revelation, because there's a lot of things we don't know and may not know until they actually take place.

If you're going to ask me which one, which scenario I think lines up the best, I'm going to have to say Armageddon. I think Armageddon lines up better than any of the other scenarios. It's not without its challenges, but I think it does the best. And personally, I think Ezekiel 38 and 39 are talking about the battle of Armageddon, but that's just me.

Don't go telling people that's what Paul says. And so that's what it is. Just, you can, you have my permission to tell them it's my opinion, and you know what my opinion is worth, right? Nothing.

Let's pray. Father, thank you for Your Word. You know, when we go back and just look at what we do know for sure from these passages, there's a great deal that we know.

We know that in these latter years, there's going to be a great battle and it's going to be attended by incredible earthquakes and cataclysmic events. And then Lord, we know that you're going to fight for your people. And you're going to be glorified, and you're going to put down the armies that come against your people, and your people are going to know you, and they're going to know that you are the Lord their God. And really, that's the most important thing for us to know.

And so, Father, I thank you for what you have told us. And I thank you, God, that some of these things are still shrouded in some mystery because that's just kind of you. And you have a desire for people who will seek out to know the truth and not just sit back and hear it from somebody else but search it out to know what the Bible says. Lord, I believe that Your Spirit is there to help us do just that.

So as we continue to study the Bible here at Calvary Chapel, I pray, my Father God, that you would aid us and help us as we seek to know you and your plan better. We thank you for this time tonight in Jesus' precious name, amen.