

ISRAEL'S "COME TO JESUS" MOMENT

In the last days, a powerful leader from the north (Russia) will bring a great coalition against the land of Israel, as seen in Ezekiel 38-39. But God will miraculously intervene and CRUSH them. This deliverance of Israel from Gog and Magog will mark a major turning point in the nation of Israel. From that time on, they will recognize God's covenant relationship with them is that which has preserved them.

Ezekiel 39:22 (NKJV)

22 So the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God from that day forward.

The name LORD here is "YHWH", which is God's covenant Name. It is considered to be the most sacred Name for God in the Old Testament. Inherent in this Name, as revealed by God, is His special covenant relationship with Israel (cf. Ex. 6:3-7, Zech. 13:7).

The straightforward reading of this verse (Ezek. 39:22) makes the war of Gog and Magog impossible PRIOR to Israel's covenant with the Antichrist.

Israel's covenant with the Antichrist will be the HEIGHT of their apostasy. Isaiah 28:15 refers to it as their covenant with death. Jesus described this height of apostasy by saying that the people rejected Him when He came in the Father's name, but when Antichrist comes in his own name, him they will receive (cf. Jn. 5:43). In other words, Christ came with all the credentials of the OT Scriptures, but when Antichrist comes he will come with no credentials but his own EXTRAVAGANT claims.

How could it possibly be said that Israel will know YHWH as their God from that day forward and then afterward betray YHWH by entering into a covenant relationship with Antichrist? That is totally inconsistent – a total non sequitur.

Consistency is that Israel in apostasy makes a covenant with Antichrist and then afterwards realizes their horrendous mistake at the time of Gog and Magog. And then from that day forward, they will faithfully know YHWH as their God. The event of Gog and Magog forever changes national Israel's relationship with their covenant God YHWH.

This day sets in motion Israel's conversion. Indeed, Israel's conversion is a process that culminates in them looking on the One Whom they pierced and mourning for Him as one mourns for his only son, in conjunction with the Second Coming (cf. Zech. 12:10).

Knowing YHWH as their God Who preserves and protects them is totally inconsistent with looking to Antichrist to protect them. It therefore seems totally inconsistent to place ***“shall know that I am the LORD their God from that day onward”*** prior to the time of Israel signing a strong covenant with Antichrist (cf. Dan. 9:26-27, Joel 2:1, 20, 21, 27-28).

Footnote:

Because Ezekiel 39:9 says Israel will burn the war machinery of defeated Gog for seven years, some have reasoned that this implies that this war must take place prior to the Tribulation Period. This would allow the burning to be completed before the middle of the Tribulation.

This position assumes Israel will not be able to continue the burning in the last half of the Tribulation Period because they will then be on the run from the Antichrist. However, Zech. 12-14 is very clear that throughout the entire Tribulation Period, a remnant of Jews will continue to be represented throughout the land of Israel.

It is also argued that if the war of Gog and Magog happens in the first half of the Tribulation, that would push the 7 years of burning into the early part of the kingdom.

However, Isaiah 2:4 and Micah 4:3 make it clear that even in the kingdom, people will make use of and utilize what formerly were weapons of war. So, there is no reason stated saying that the burning must be completed before the kingdom is inaugurated.

A further argument is that the burning must be completed prior to the kingdom in order to cleanse the land. However, the text itself never equates cleansing the land with burning the war weaponry. Note carefully that the cleansing of the land is tied ONLY to the burial of the people and not to the burning of the war equipment (cf. Ezek. 39:12, 14, 15-16).

My conclusion is that the exegetical evidence leans strongly in the direction of this war happening within the Tribulation Period. Very possibly it transpires early in the Tribulation Period, in conjunction with peace being taken from the earth, as seen in Rev. 6:3-4.

Zechariah 12:10 (NKJV)

10 “And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me

whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.