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MOW - God's Rule of Nations



Part 31 (061019 MOW WNS)

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One of the most powerful truths to strengthen and guide you through life is found in **Jeremiah 1:12**. The Creator and Redeemer, the Lord God Almighty who is the Sovereign Ruler of the Universe tells us that there is something He is very focused upon.

The Book you hold in your hands this morning, the Bible God's Word is like none other—because God says, "I am watching over my Word—to perform it!"

Perhaps the greatest way that you and I can affirm the reality of God today is through this facet of His Sovereignty. God's rule over the nations is the context of this claim—and the clearest way to see God's Rule over the nations is through Biblical Prophecy.

This book is unique in that God has mapped out specific events in the future. Only the Living and True God of Heaven and Earth has ever dared to say, "Let me tell you the future". In fact, He said that was the way you could know that He was real, and that you and I could place our faith and trust in Him.

God declares the future in His Word because He "watches over His Word to perform it!"

- **Jeremiah 1:12** Then the Lord said to me, "You have seen well, for I am ready to perform My word." NKJV
- **Jeremiah 1:12** The LORD said to me, "You have seen correctly, for I am watching to see that my word is fulfilled." NIV
- **Jeremiah 1:12** Then the Lord said to me, "You have seen well, for I am watching over My word to perform it." NASB

No where is God's Rule over the nations seen more clearly than in prophetic Scriptures!

In the 15 years since Jerry Bridges wrote the words of chapter 5 of his book *Trusting God* (1991)—**God's Rule over the Nations is only getting clearer and clearer. What is the simplest and yet most profound evidence the Bible offers concerning God's Rule over the Nations? It is prophecy fulfilled—the irrefutable verification reserved to the Scriptures alone.**

Prophecy is the missing element in all other sacred scriptures of the world's religions; It is not to be found in the Koran, the Hindu Vedas, the Bhagavad-Gita, the Book of Mormon, the sayings of Buddha, the writings of Mary Baker Eddy (Christian Science). **By contrast prophecy comprises about one third of the Scriptures!**

So the huge amount of prophetic verses in our Bible can become another strong support for our understanding God's Sovereignty and are a great and comforting place to encourage our trusting God. There are daily benefits of trusting God that I want to apply this morning. But first, the God who rules the Nations!

As we begin this morning open with me to [Isaiah 41:21](#):

- "Present your case," says the LORD. "Bring forth your strong [reasons,] says the King of Jacob. (NKJV)

PROPHECY IS THE TEST TO SHOW WHO IS GOD. The true God rules over the nations!

1. **TRUST THE ONLY GOD WHO ACCURATELY KNOWS THE FUTURE.**

Part: 16	What is Jesus Doing Today?
Part: 15	The Prophetic Precision of Palm Sunday
Part: 14	Folly of Date Setting
Part: 13	Jesus Explains Hell
Part: 12	Signs We Are At the End of Days
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Part: 7	A Tribulation Survival Guide
Part: 6	Jesus Explains the Tribulation
Part: 5	Earth's Final Day
Part: 4	Standing Before Jesus
Part: 3	When is the End?-2
Part: 2	Appearing at Christ's Throne
Part: 1	When is the End of the World?

- **Isaiah 41:23** *Show the things that are to come hereafter, That we may know that you are gods; Yes, do good or do evil, That we may be dismayed and see it together.*

2. PROPHECY PROVES GOD IS REAL.

- **Isaiah 42:5-9** *Thus says God the Lord, Who created the heavens and stretched them out, Who spread forth the earth and that which comes from it, Who gives breath to the people on it, And spirit to those who walk on it: 6 "I, the Lord, have called You in righteousness, And will hold Your hand: I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people, As a light to the Gentiles; 7 To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the prison, Those who sit in darkness from the prison house. 8 I am the Lord, that is My name; And My glory I will not give to another, Nor My praise to carved images. 9 Behold, the former things have come to pass, And new things I declare; Before they spring forth I tell you of them."*

3. PROPHECY PROVES GOD IS RELIABLE.

- **Isaiah 46:9-10** *Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure.'*

4. PROPHECY REVEALS TO US THE GOD WE CAN TRUST.

- **Isaiah 48:3-5** *"I have declared the former things from the beginning: They went forth from My mouth, and I caused them to hear it. Suddenly I did them, and they came to pass. 5 Even from the beginning I have declared it to you; Before it came to pass I proclaimed it to you, Lest you should say, 'My idol has done them, And my carved image and my molded image Have commanded them.'*

5. TRUSTING GOD DETERMINES OUR ETERNAL DESTINY.

- **Isaiah 48:17-18, 22** *Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, The Holy One of Israel: "I am the Lord your God, Who teaches you to profit, Who leads you by the way you should go. 18 Oh, that you had heeded My commandments! Then your peace would have been like a river, And your righteousness like the waves of the sea. 22 "There is no peace," says the Lord, "for the wicked."*

We are to trust the God who is ruling over the nations by giving us the Word He is watching over to fulfill! **Jeremiah 1:12** Then the Lord said to me, "You have seen well, for I am watching over My word to perform it." **NASB**

In our brief moments together today let's dive into what made up 1/3rd of the Bible as it was written and still makes up almost 1/5th of God's Word today. The Rule of God over the Nations as seen in Biblical Prophecy.

God has already described in detail what will happen in the future. Every time what He has declared will happen—happens, it is literally just what He said. But when examined closely, those involved make their own decisions and have no intention or awareness of following God's plan!

We live in the most written about period of time, from God's perspective. Fully 20% of the Bible is consumed with describing the events that God calls the end of days. These end of days are more described and detailed for us—than even the days when Christ walked the shores of Galilee.

The end times Biblical prophecies that are powerful pictures of God's Rule over the Nations are many, here are just a few:

Trust the God who promised Israel would return as a nation in Ezekiel 36-37.

In Ezekiel 36-37 the God who rules tells us that Israel will one day be reborn as a modern country, that Jews will pour back into the Holy Land after centuries of exile, that Jews will rebuild the "ancient ruins" and make the deserts bloom, that Israel will develop a vast and powerful military, and that Israel will become remarkably wealthy.

These prophecies have all come true in our lifetime. They began to be fulfilled in the early 1900s, accelerated in 1948 and 1967, and continue to come true to this day. [1]

To benefit from the power of the God who rules, we are asked to see what He has done. Note with me the predictions found in Ezekiel 36-37 that have already come true. These are the famous prophetic chapters that foretell the future of Israel as a nation, that were written almost 600 years before Christ's birth!

- **The rebirth of the State of Israel in the end times** (both chapters): Did the British politicians and early Zionists that fought for the establishment of the nation of Israel do all that because they wanted to or because God ruled over them? Both of course. That is how God works. God was watching over His Word to fulfill it!
- **The return of the Jews to the Holy Land after centuries in exile** (36:10-11, 36:24, 36:37-38, 37:12, 37:21): Did the countless thousands of Jews all over the world (100 nations and counting) get up one morning and each decide to obey God's Word that said they would return? No they just had a longing to be safe, to be free, to have a land of their own—and in all that they obeyed the God who rules over the nations by watching over His Word to fulfill it!
- **The rebuilding of the ancient ruins in Israel** (36:36): Did God make the early settlers name their cities after the Biblical sites they were building upon? No, they wanted to tie themselves to the past, their heritage and God's Word! God was watching over His Word to fulfill it!
- **The re-blossoming of desolate, desert lands to produce abundant food, fruit and foliage** (36:8-9 and 36:30-35): Did those agricultural engineers, irrigation

pioneers, and desert scientists devote their lives to Israel in its wasteland condition just to make Ezekiel come true? No. God was watching over His Word to fulfill it!

- **The creation of an "exceedingly great army"** (37:11): Did the atomic scientists, the military weapons engineers and the businessmen that listened to them all want to fulfill Ezekiel? No, they were trying to protect themselves, defend themselves and make a living. But in the process became the third or fourth most powerful military in the world when the atomic weaponry is factored in. God was watching over His Word to fulfill it!

Trust the God who declares Russia is the leader of the anti-Israeli coalition described in Ezekiel 38-39.

True, Ezekiel never uses the word Russia. Instead, he says a dictator referred to as "Gog" will arise in the land of "Magog," and will be the "prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal." The first century historian Josephus wrote in his classic work, *Antiquities of the Jews*, that the "Magogites" are the people that the Greeks refer to as "Scythians." Study the history of the ancient Scythians and you will quickly discover that these were a brutal and bloodthirsty people that settled north of the Black Sea in the area we now call Russia and the former Soviet republics.

In Moscow the State Historical Museum on Red Square has numerous Scythian artifacts prominently displayed. Russia is proud of its Scythian tradition, and this helps us pinpoint Russia as the modern country to which Ezekiel was referring. Other Bible scholars note that when Ezekiel mentions "Rosh" he is using the root word for Russia. Others believe "Meshech" refers to Moscow and "Tubal" refers to the Tubal River in Siberia and the Siberian city of Tobolsk. Numerous leading Bible scholars agree that Russia will certainly be the leader of the anti-Israel coalition in what Ezekiel describes as "the last days."

Russia Sells Arms to Iran

Just a few days after Ahmadinejad's inflammatory remarks about Israel, these headlines appeared around the world:

- Iran and Russia in \$1 Billion Arms Deal—*Aljazeera.Net* (12/2/05)
- Moscow Inks Arms Deal with Tehran—*Moscow Times* (12/5/05)
- Russia Agrees to Sell Missiles to Iran—*Associated Press* (12/5/05)

The Lens of Scripture

Russia's enormous military sales to Iran—especially on top of its sales of nuclear technology to Iran and training of more than 1,000 Iranian nuclear scientists—do not make classic geopolitical sense. But, chapters 38 and 39 of the Book of Ezekiel speak of a dictator "who would one day take over Russia, form an alliance with Iran and the radical Islamic world, and take up arms against a modern State of Israel."

For those viewing current events through the lens of Scripture, the fact that Russia is building a military alliance with Iran for the first time in human history is actually not so bewildering. For them, the real question is not whether a Russian-Iranian alliance will emerge but whether such an alliance, when it does form, means the fulfillment of the rest of Ezekiel's dramatic prophecy is imminent.

Trust the God who declares the destruction of the entire Russian, Iranian, Syria, Lebanese and other Islamic military forces will come "like a storm" against Israel (38:9).

Since the Islamic Revolution of 1979, Iranian leaders have uttered a seemingly endless series of curses against Israel, calling the Jewish people evil, insisting that the Holocaust never happened, and threatening to wipe Israel "off the map."

- **Sovereignty of God over the Nations:** In [Genesis 12:1-3](#), the Lord is crystal clear that He will bless those who bless Israel, and curse those who curse Israel.
- **Sovereignty of God over the Nations:** In Ezekiel 38-39, God specifically vowed to subject the leaders and military forces of Iran (among other enemies of Israel) to a massive earthquake, torrential rains, killer hailstorms, rampant pandemic diseases, and even hellfire and brimstone.

Iran Threatens Israel

- Ahmadinejad: Wipe Israel Off Map—*Aljazeera.Net* (10/26/05)
- Wipe Israel "Off The Map" Says Iranian—*New York Times* (10/27/05)
- Israel Should Be Wiped Off Map, Says Iran's President—*The (U.K.) Guardian* (10/27/05)

"Referring to comments by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the leader of the Islamic revolution, [Iranian President Mahmoud] Ahmadinejad said, 'As the imam said, Israel must be wiped off the map,'" reported the *New York Times*. The Iranian leader went on to say that "anybody who recognizes Israel will burn in the fire of the Islamic nation's fury" and any Islamic leader "who recognizes the Zionist regime means he is acknowledging the surrender and defeat of the Islamic world."

When Ezekiel lists Persia (the name of Iran up until 1935) he was recording the words of the God who sees and knows exactly what will happen in the future. Amazingly today's news bears witness to Persia (Iran's) deep hatred of Israel.

In September [2005], when Ahmadinejad took the podium to address the United Nations in New York City, he felt surrounded by light. It wasn't the stage lighting, he said. It was a light from heaven.

Ahmadinejad's "vision" at the United Nations could be dismissed as pure political posturing if it weren't for a string of similar statements and actions that clearly suggest he believes he is destined to bring about the return of the Shiite messiah.

The mystical 12th imam, who is venerated by many in Iran, disappeared as a child in the

year 941. Shiite Muslims believe he will return and rule for seven years in perfect justice. [2]

"While it may be tempting to some to dismiss such language as overly dramatic, it is worth keeping in mind that Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has told colleagues that he believes the end of the world is just two or three years away. He believes that the way to hasten the coming of the Islamic Messiah known as the "Twelfth Imam" or the "Mahdi" is to launch a global jihad to destroy the Jews of Israel and the Christians of the United States. What's more, Ahmadinejad is feverishly trying to build, buy or steal the nuclear weapons to bring his Shiite end times beliefs to fulfillment." [3]

Interestingly enough, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad used the same word that God used in his speech in April 2006:

"Like it or not, the Zionist regime is heading toward annihilation," Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said at the opening of a conference in support of the Palestinians. "The Zionist regime is a rotten, dried tree that will be *eliminated by one storm*." [4]

[Ezekiel 38:9](#) specifically says that God's enemies will "come like a storm" to destroy Israel, but are destroyed by a supernatural earthquake and firestorm unleashed by God Himself. Could

When Jesus explained the entire scope of end times events, He paused and concluded with two commands in v. 36 for us who listen to Him. We can learn what Jesus said were our responsibilities as believers ([Luke 21:29-38](#))

"Watch therefore, and pray always..." ([Luke 21:36](#)) Pray is the word for beg, implore and beseech, it is an intense word!

Jesus revealed that all of the magnificent buildings of Herod would become rubble. . . and that nothing on earth ever lasts; but Jesus came to His disciples with an offer of something they could become a part of that never ends.

What are you intensely asking (begging) God to be doing through your life that will last forever?

Christ said here is something anyone in my family can do! Here is what you do that I love, and I make your investments in these areas last forever. Jesus said:

- **I collect all of your prayers - PRAY!** [Revelation 5:8](#) And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints. (KJV)
- **I multiply sacrificial gifts - GIVE!** [Mark 12:42](#) And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. (KJV) **do rest**
- **I count souls you lead to me - WIN!** [Daniel 12:3](#) And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever. [Proverbs 11:30](#) The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise. [1 Corinthians 3:10](#) According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. (KJV)

I Thess. 2:19

- **I remember humble service - SERVE!** [Mark 14:3](#) And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head. (KJV) **do rest**
- **I love missionaries that do outreach - GO!** [Matthew 19:29](#) And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. (KJV)

To obey Jesus we must "watch and pray". That is how we can resist the temptations that lure us. Then we will be ready when our Lord returns.

Watch Your Theology

- When I understand His Omnipresence-- then I am never really to be lonely or ever alone.
- When I understand His Omniscience-- then I am really never to be frustrated or confused.
- When I understand His Omnipotence-- then I am never really to be threatened or afraid.
- When I understand His High Priesthood-- then I am never really to be fearful of His wrath or condemnation.
- When I understand His Sovereignty-- then I am never really to be helpless or despairing.

What else does God invite us to do?

Trust the God who declares the Apocalyptic battles for control of Jerusalem.

Next year, 2007, will mark the 40th anniversary of the Six Day War, Israel's stunning military victory over the Islamic world's armies, and the longed for reunification of Jerusalem under Jewish control. Since that day known across the Moslem world as an-Naksah or the setback, there have arisen many radical Islamic leaders who have publically vowed to "liberate" Jerusalem and liquidate the Jews.

If you spend much time in the news you have heard these names: Hezbollah leader Sheik Hassan Nasrallah, Iranian leader Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the leaders of Hamas, and Osama bin Laden, to name just a few.

The 34 day war (7.12.06 to 8.14.06) in Lebanon and Israel was merely the opening skirmishes in a new bid for Islamic control of the Holy City as described in great length by the Hebrew prophets Ezekiel, Daniel, Zechariah and John the Apostle. Each warned about and described with many details a violent struggle for Jerusalem in the End of Days—that would continue until the physical return of Jesus to the earth.

- **Sovereignty of God over the Nations:** The Prophet Ezekiel, for example, foresaw a multinational force in Ezekiel 38-39 led by Russia, Iran, Turkey, Armenia, Lebanon, Syria, Sudan, Libya, Central Asia and several others that will seek to destroy or capture Israel and Jerusalem. Does that sound like today's headlines? Yes. Are they doing all that because they are reading the Bible and wanting to prove God is true? No.
- **Sovereignty of God over the Nations:** The Prophet Daniel warned that the Antichrist will one day seize control of Jerusalem and desecrate the Jewish Temple that will be built there in the end times (see Daniel 9). European Union and the United Nations both want to have international control brought over Jerusalem just like God's Word says will happen in the Tribulation. Are they doing all that because they are reading the Bible and wanting to prove God is true? No.
- **Sovereignty of God over the Nations:** The Prophet Zechariah warned that the Lord is going to make Jerusalem "a cup that causes reeling to all the people around" and that God will make Jerusalem "a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it will be severely injured." (see [Zechariah 12:1-3](#)) That is, numerous world leaders will get drunk on the dream of controlling Jerusalem and will do themselves and their countries severe damage in the process of trying to accomplish such dreams. Saddam Hussein was one, Yasser Arafat was another, and the list is only growing and now includes the Presidents of Syria, Iran, and probably even Russia. Are they doing all that because they are reading the Bible and wanting to prove God is true? No.
- **Sovereignty of God over the Nations:** The Apostle John warned that Jerusalem will be attacked by all the nations of the earth in the battle of Armageddon (see [Revelation 16:12-16](#)). Does that sound like today's headlines? Yes. Are they doing all that because they are reading the Bible and wanting to prove God is true? No.

Appendix—Some helpful resources

UNDERSTANDING[5] "THE WAR OF GOG AND MAGOG"

Gog's Plan

38:7 – Gog will build a military coalition and "be prepared" to strike

38:8 – Gog will deploy the coalition against Israel

39:9 – Gog will use overwhelming force against Israel; he and his coalition will "come like a storm....like a cloud covering the land"

God's Plan

38:2 – The Lord God will bring judgment upon the enemies of Israel, beginning with Gog, the dictator of Russia

38:20 – The Lord will trigger a massive earthquake in which "all the men who are on the face of the earth will shake at My presence"

38:21 – The Lord will turn Gog's forces against one another

38:22 – The Lord will subject Gog's coalition forces to:

* pestilence

* blood

* torrential rains

* hailstones

* fire from heaven

39:6 – The Lord will "send fire upon Magog" itself and others

39:9 – Israel will capture her enemies weapons and burn them for 7 years

39:12 – It will take 7 full months to bury all the bodies of Israel's slain enemies

39:17-20 – Birds and beast will feast on the bodies of Israel's slain enemies

WHEN

38:8 – Israel will be a country again and Jews will be regathered to the Holy Land

38:11, 14 – "My people Israel are living securely" before the "War of Gog and Magog"

38:12-13 – Israel will have economic prosperity

38:16 – "It will come about *in the last days*" (before the return of Christ)

**** NOTE:** The Scriptures are not clear as to whether this war will happen before or after the Rapture of the Church.

WHY

39:21 – "I shall set My glory among the nations; and *all* the nations will see My judgment"

39:22 – "the house of Israel will know that I am the Lord their God"

39:29 – "I shall have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel"

These events will not only be a judgment of Israel's enemies in keeping with [Genesis 12:1-3](#), in which God says those who bless Israel He will bless, and those who curse Israel He will curse.

The events will also be the beginning of a great spiritual awakening. God will literally and metaphorically shake people out of spiritual apathy and lethargy to realize there is a God in heaven. He will also shake people who are following false religions and turn them to Himself. Moreover, He will shake those who are followers of Christ but not serious about their faith. It should be noted that ours is the first generation in human history in which *all the nations* on earth will be able to watch the "War of Gog and Magog" unfold because of the emergence of television and satellite technology.

That said, it is worth keeping this intriguing thought in mind. More than two millennia ago, Ezekiel chapters 36 and 37 foretold the dramatic rebirth of modern State of Israel in the last days of history and described how Jews would pour back into the Holy Land after centuries of living in exile. Remarkably, these prophecies have come to pass in our lifetime. Is it really inconceivable, then, that the fulfillment of Ezekiel 38 and 39 could happen soon? Maybe not. Time will tell.

Twenty six hundred years ago, the prophet Ezekiel predicted clues to identify when

this would happen, "After many days you will be summoned; in the latter years you will come into the land that is restored from the sword, whose inhabitants have been gathered from many nations to the mountains of Israel which had been a continual waste; but its people were brought out from the nations, and they are living securely, all of them." (Ezek. 38: 8 NAS)

Note this would happen in "the latter years" after the Israelites were scattered throughout the world and the land of Israel became a desolation for a long time. History is witness to all of this. The important factors that Ezekiel brings out in chapters 36-39 are these:

- **Sovereignty of God:** First, God warns that He will judge the surrounding nations (which are all Muslim today) that have "appropriated My land for themselves as a possession with whole hearted joy and with scorn of soul ..." (It is important to note here that God says it is "His land.") (Ezek. 36: 5)
- **Sovereignty of God:** Second, God predicts that he will restore Israel to the land He promised them even though they do not deserve it, "... It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act ... For I will take you from all the nations, gather you from all the lands, and bring you to your own land." (36:22, 24)
- **Sovereignty of God:** Third, God predicts that Israel's return will finally provoke a conflict that will end with the 'war of Armageddon.' The attackers will be led by a nation from Israel's extreme north (Russia) that will lead a confederacy of surrounding nations and that chief among them will be Persia (modern Iran).
- **Sovereignty of God:** Fourth, God promises that even though Israel will go through this holocaust, a believing remnant will be delivered and given all the covenants God unconditionally swore to them through their fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
- **Sovereignty of God:** Fifth, God promises that this restored nation of Israel will never again be destroyed, "They will live on the land that I gave to Jacob My servant, in which your fathers lived; and they will live on it, they, and their sons and their sons' sons, forever; and David My servant (The Messiah) will be their prince forever." (Ezek. 37: 25)

[1] Joel Rosenberg blog 5.5.05

[2] <http://www.newsmax.com/archives/articles/2006/1/23/173442.shtml?s=Ih>

[3] Joel Rosenberg blog, 7.23.06

[4] <http://www.smh.com.au/news/world/ahmadinejad-israel-a-rotten-dried-tree/2006/04/15/1144521534197.html>

[5] Joel Rosenberg blog 5.5.05

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