

The Coming Middle East War Pt 1

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Bible Text: Psalm 83

Preached on: Sunday, October 23, 2011

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All right. Today, as we said, we are going to start this sermon and this will be part one. Next week will be part two. It was impossible to do it all in one sermon. As a matter of fact, I have felt it is impossible to do it all in two sermons, but that is the way we are going to do it anyhow. And so listen. Listen closely as we read from this text and then the preaching of the Word to follow.

Keep not thou silence, O God: hold not thy peace, and be not still, O God. For, lo, thine enemies make a tumult: and they that hate thee have lifted up the head. They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones. They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance. For they have consulted together with one consent: they are confederate against thee: The tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites; of Moab, and the Hagarenes; Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek; the Philistines with the inhabitants of Tyre; Assur also is joined with them: they have holpen the children of Lot. Selah. [That means think about it]

Do unto them as unto the Midianites; as to Sisera, as to Jabin, at the brook of Kison: Which perished at Endor: they became as dung for the earth. Make their nobles like Oreb, and like Zeeb: yea, all their princes as Zebah, and as Zalmunna: Who said, Let us take to ourselves the houses of God in possession. O my God, make them like a wheel; as the stubble before the wind. As the fire burneth a wood, and as the flame setteth the mountains on fire; So persecute them with thy tempest, and make them afraid with thy storm. Fill their faces with shame; that they may seek thy name, O LORD. Let them be confounded and troubled for ever; yea, let them be put to shame, and perish: That men may know that thou, whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art the most high over all the earth.¹

Now shall we pray?

¹ Psalm 83:1-18.

Father, I pray as we preach this, thy Word, help me to rightly divide it. I do not want to mislead anyone in anyway. Lord, I realize I cannot give understanding to anyone's heart, but you can. And that is what I ask you to do. If there is one in this auditorium today that if this was their last day on earth that their soul would go to that burning lake of fire, then I pray, Father, that that would be the soul that receives Christ as Savior today in Jesus Christ's precious and holy name. Amen.

You have heard me preach about the war with the coming Russian coalition against Israel near the beginning of the tribulation. You have also heard me preach on the battle of Armageddon which is near the end of the tribulation. And that war ends with Jesus Christ literally touching down upon this earth.

Now the Christians will be caught up in what we call the rapture. The rapture will take place and after the rapture will be the war with Russia, the tribulation at the beginning. And near the end a military campaign headed towards Armageddon will see Jesus Christ come and touch the earth.

We miss the tribulation and we will return with Jesus Christ at the end of the tribulation and we will actually touch down on this earth with him when he comes back. We call that time when he comes back and actually touches the earth the second advent. The rapture is not the second advent because we meet him in the clouds and he does not touch the earth.

Now we mentioned the Russian war and we have mentioned the war at the end of the tribulation, the battle of Armageddon.

But Psalms 83 deals with yet another war. Ten nations are listed in this coalition. Some have tried to tie this war with events that have happened in the past. However, those things did not happen in the manner in which Psalms 83 lies out for us.

I searched authors from over 100 years ago as well as present day authors to research this passage. There are some very interesting yet a great array of ideas. I believe that this chapter is showing for us a war that could happen before the rapture or immediately after the rapture, but before the tribulation.

Now, remember. The tribulation does not start with the rapture. The rapture is before the tribulation, but the tribulation starts when the antichrist confirms a covenant with Israel. And that will start the seven years. That could be the day of the rapture. It could be a few years after the rapture. We don't know. The Bible doesn't give us clarity on that, but we do know that is what happens. And this war could happen before the rapture or after the rapture, but it will be before the tribulation that hits this earth.

Now the war spoken of in our text is different than the Russia coalition that comes at the beginning. Notice, first, the identity of this coalition of nations in verses six through eight, because these nations all surround Israel.

Verse six shows us Edom. The geographical location of Edom would be what the world is trying to identify as that of the Palestinians. The Ishmaelites are the Arabs. That would include Moab and Ammon in verse seven. And today we call this place Jordan.

The Hagarines and Amalek in verse seven are on land that is now occupied by Egypt. We remember that Hagar was from Egypt. And then Gebal in verse seven could be part of Jordan or it could be part of Lebanon. It has actually had that name in both places.

And as I would study the scholars, they seem to be divided on which it is, so I will simply say this. Either way, it surrounds Israel. And it fits right in to the coalition.

The Philistines, of course, represented by Gaza and we think of Hamas. It is interesting. Just this week that we find the early part of this week that Israel traded 1000, over 1000 terrorists for one of their soldiers to get them back. And a lot of people said, "Man, they should not have done that."

Many of these terrorists, guilty of murder and already vowing to come back and do the same thing again. And I personally said, "Well, that is a very bad move on Israel's part."

But then Abbas who is the head of Fatah, not Hamas in Gaza in September he tried to go to the UN and speak to the UN about recognizing them as a state. As a matter of fact, there is going to be a vote in this coming November about that.

But when Israel did this with Hamas it gave recognition to Hamas and it weakens Fatah and Abbas in the eyes of his own people and in the eyes of those that would dwell in Gaza. And so what he was doing to get his power over that region has been diminished.

As a matter of fact, there is a counsel of 15 at the UN that is supposed to vote on this, recognizing them as a state and there are going to be several countries, for an example, Brazil was going to vote for them to be a state. All of a sudden Brazil is taken off the counsel and another country that is favorable to Israel is being placed in there. And they may not get the vote now that they thought they were going to get. And this has helped weaken them in the eyes of the nations.

But it says:

"...the Philistines [which is Gaza] with the inhabitants of Tyre."²

Which seems to include Lebanon. And then we think of Hezbollah in Lebanon. Isn't it interesting, also, that just this week, again, this past Wednesday, three members of Hezbollah representing them as a delegation visited the Kremlin in Russia at the invitation of the Russian parliament.

² Psalm 83:7.

Now I think, boy, that is interesting, recognizing this terrorist state. And I have wondered if this is the beginning of Russia building interest in the area so that when they do come down at the beginning of the tribulation as if they have a state in there.

And then there is Asher in verse eight which is Syria, the children of Lot, again. We look at Moab and Ammon which were in Jordan.

Now many seem to think, well, since that is already mentioned this may include Iran or Iraq in that area which was Persia. However, although many of them did m over that way many, many, many years ago, thousands of years ago, it seems like they didn't establish their presence there. And so it is quite likely in my eyes that this is speaking more of the Golan Heights and this might be the Fatah group more so than ever.

Now all these surround and they join in battle against Israel.

You say, "Well, what about that Russian coalition which comes at the beginning of the tribulation."

Now we read in Ezekiel chapter 38 verses two through six—I am just going to read through that quickly of the Russian coalition. And understand back in 1909 C I Scofield, as a matter of fact, in 1905 another author wrote about this, brother Ironside, H A Ironside. Both of them wrote and identified these countries when everybody thought that that was a big horse laugh because Russia was a third rate country that had been defeated by another third rate country, Japan. And they laughed both of these men to scorn.

But now listen as I read about this coalition.

Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him, 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 put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords: Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them; all of them with shield and helmet: Gomer, and all his bands; the house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands: and many people with thee.³

Now, as we have identified these before, Gog is the leader of Magog. Magog is the land which we know as Russia. Meshech is identified as Moscow. Tubal is Tubolse. It is interesting in pointing that out is that this was pointed out before by archaeologists that aren't necessarily Christians, just through archaeology and historical study discovered this. Ethiopia and Libya are still Ethiopia and Libya. Gomer is Germany. Togarmah is Turkey. And already when you see those nations they are pretty well lined up. Germany just seems to grow day after day in their coalition with the Russians.

³ Ezekiel 38:2-6.

But here is the interesting thing. Those nations that come at the beginning of the tribulation in the Russian coalition, not one of them are named here in Psalms 83. Not one. Not one of them are involved.

Do we ever see this coalition working together in war in all the history of man? Not really. Even in 1967 and even at that the destruction does not match that which Psalms 83 is calling.

The whole world knows there is a major war coming in the Middle East. Generals usually keep their mouths shut, you might say, until they are completely retired and off the scene. Some of them will speak up once all their time is over and there is no repercussions. Retired general Paul Bally who is also a Mideast expert made the following statement.

“A major Mideast war is imminent. This war will change our world forever.”

The general went on to warn of possible chemical and nuclear attack attempted against Israel. In this month of October of 2011 Assad of Syria stated that if NATO troops attack Syria they will reign their full arsenal of bombs on Israel.

What some people don't know is that as reported by a Kuwaiti paper, a news organization there, Israel warned Assad all the way back in June of this year that if he attacks Israel he will be targeted to take him out personally, to end his life. And so Israel has already warned Assad.

Now that will be important to remember when we get to next week and you see what happens to Damascus.

Recently, as we mentioned, Abbas of the PLO addressed the UN and in his address he said we ought to go back to the 1947 lines. Now some of the people said, well, he made a mistake. He meant 1967. Why would he say 1947? Because Israel wasn't a state until 1948.

You say, “Well, I think it was just a mistake.”

Well, think of this. And another named Abbas Zaki, Zaki is a senior member of the Fatah central committee. He is under the authority of Abbas. He said on Qatar, which is an Al Jazeera based satellite television, reaches millions of Arabs worldwide. And after Abbas had made his speech his speech was translated by the Middle East Media Research Institute. Now that is a watch dog organization that monitors language media and then lets us know what is going on. But this man, high ranking official in that government under Abbas said, “Final status agreement should be based on the 1967 borders. Everybody knows the greater goal cannot be accomplished in one go. If Israel withdraws from Jerusalem, evacuates the 650,000 settlers and dismantles the wall, it will come to an end.”

That is Jerusalem, Israel will come to an end.

He added, "It would not be smart if we say we want to wipe Israel out. We can't say that to the world. We must keep it to ourselves."

Again, that is a high ranking government official under Abbas.

Now it is quite unfortunate that after our congress both the Democrats and Republicans froze 200 million dollars in assets and money that they would send and aid they would send to the Palestinian Authority, the present administration has decided to work hard to lobby congress to unblock it.

We send approximately 500 million dollars yearly to the Palestinian Authority. That is half a billion every year. It is a good thing we don't have any financial problems in this country, isn't it?

But understand that has been going on under both Republican and Democratic administrations. It is not a Democrat thing. It is not a Republican thing. It has gone on both.

We see not the building of the infrastructure in that place, either, in those places. Many have spoke about the Arab Spring and this democratic movement. Well, wherever they have gone in and they have been successful, do you see the women free? Are they saying what they want to do and going around and doing what they want to do? Are they in some places even able to drive? They still won't let them drive a car. That may be good.

And free religion? Well, their Spring took place in Egypt. What about the Coptic church there, Coptic Christians? I really don't...

You ask me what are Coptic Christians. I really don't know. I really haven't studied them that well as I should have. But I will tell you this. They claim to be Christians. Their churches are being destroyed. They are being killed. A great thing that democracy they have gotten in there is.

They break their treaties and promises with Israel. And the numbers are staggering against Israel. Hezbollah has a 10,000 man brigade armed with 40,000 missiles. Some of those missiles have long range capacity with the capability of carrying heavy payloads along with chemical and biological warheads which they seem to have.

Syria has a 500,000 man army with the latest equipment supplied by Russia. It is also said that Hamas has about 10,000 missiles and it is believed that the Egyptian military has more than all of them with nuclear capability of which they are afraid that in the wrong hands could be big problems and with this Arab Spring it could be a big problem again.

Our government released to Egypt even though they were trying to help the Arab Spring in Egypt, they released to them 200 million just before Mubarak fell for their military use.

Now let's look at those first four verses with that background. I want you to see these first four verses.

“Keep not thou silence.”⁴

Don't be mute about this, is what he is saying.

“...O God: hold not thy peace.”⁵

Don't be deaf to what we are saying and be not still. Don't refrain from helping, Oh God.

Why does he say “O God” twice in here? Because he is approaching the almighty God, not the false gods of those nations that surround them.

And this is a call for God to judge the enemies of Israel.

Now, the theologians call this an imprecatory psalm. An imprecatory psalm is one of prayer to God to invoke his wrath upon the wicked. An imprecatory prayer is vindication of the purpose and will of God, not necessarily a fleshly revenge, but to honor God.

The land belongs to Israel and this called God to defend it.

Now notice in verse two he says:

“For, lo, thine enemies make a tumult: and they that hate thee have lifted up the head.”⁶

Now the tumult is a loud uproar. They want to turn others against them. And so they start speaking to others to turn nations against them. And the rest of verse two says:

“...they that hate thee...”⁷

That is, they that hate God, Jehovah.

“...have lifted up the head.”⁸

That is they exalt themselves over Israel.

But it also has the idea of getting a consensus against the enemy.

⁴ Psalm 83:1.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Psalm 83:2.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

Verse three.

“They have taken crafty counsel against thy people.”⁹

You see, they have not only gone into the UN to get recognition, they have been to Britain. They have been to France and other countries pushing their statehood for the purpose of moving out Israel. And all Israel has required is recognize them as a Jewish state and they won't do it.

Verse three mentions thy hidden ones. That is interesting terminology. It is the idea of a treasure that somebody keeps hid. Maybe they hide it in the ground or in some special place. God has promised Israel unconditionally that she would have a remnant and one day the land would be hers and he even identified the borders for her.

These would destroy all the Jews. They will not acknowledge them in any way as a Jewish state, but God says he will preserve his hidden ones.

Now notice verse four.

“They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation.”¹⁰

Have you ever heard that about Israel? Let's cut them off from being a nation.

“... that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance.”¹¹

That is the desire of Islam. Even their maps will not show them in the land even in their schools. If you look at a map of the area there is no Israel, no more remembrance. They want to completely annihilate them which many of their leaders in various lands have stated. This is not an accusation of a thought or an opinion. That is what their own leaders have said.

Dr. Henry Morris who is with the Lord made this statement on this passage.

“The prophecy primarily applies to the end times since their defeat will be forever as it states in verse 17 and it will end with these Muslim nations acknowledging Jehovah as supreme over the earth.”

Now think about that.

This does not need to happen before the rapture, but it can take place. It very well can take place. There is nothing saying that it won't happen before the rapture. We already

⁹ Psalm 83:3.

¹⁰ Psalm 83:4.

¹¹ Ibid.

see the Russian coalition prophesied 2600 years ago and those nations have never been together like they are today. And they are coming together.

We see these nations that surround Israel getting a consensus with their Arab Spring against Israel to actually attack them. And God told us in Psalms 83, 3000 years ago, that this day was coming and he named the people. He named the land and it is beginning to come to pass.

And the reason I point that out is to say this. Jesus also said in Luke 13:3, he said:

“...except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.”¹²

You need to understand. Jesus Christ was almighty God come in the flesh. He came here for you, for me. As I was just talking to someone this morning, I am a sinner saved by God’s grace, but I am still a sinner. I am not going to have my glorified body and all the sin from me until the day I am caught up to be with the Lord. Till then I am just a saved sinner.

But what I want you to know is that Jesus Christ came to die on a cross so that you could approach God.

Do you realize that if he had not died for us, if he had not come for us, even if we wanted to, we couldn’t have approached unto God. He came to die for us. He died. He died for every sin you or I ever have or ever will commit. He shed his precious blood for you, for me. But three days later he rose up victoriously and bodily from the grave.

And he says:

“...him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”¹³

But what are you doing when you are coming to him? You are turning from. That is what repent means. It means to change the mind and it also means to turn from it. You are changing the mind. You are turning from depending on yourself. If you are depending on Central Baptist Church to get you to heaven, it is not going to happen. If you depending on the Methodist Church, the Catholic Church or some other religion to get you to heaven it is not going to get you there. Only Jesus Christ.

He said:

“I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”¹⁴

¹² Luke 13:3.

¹³ John 6:37.

¹⁴ John 14:6.

You can be baptized 1000 times and all you will be is very wet. But it won't save your soul. You have got to say, "I am a sinner. I can't save myself. I can't take my sin away, but I know Jesus can. I know he paid my penalty."

And believing he did that for you, you are inviting him into your life. You are receiving him as your God and Savior. Instead of you cleaning it up, you let him clean it up. And you are giving him your life and he will do that if you will call upon him. He will do that if you will come with that heart, not that, ok, I will come to Jesus. I will ask him to save me because, hey, I want to just take care of every place.

No, you are trusting him alone. You are trusting Jesus alone. It is not Jesus and this. It is Jesus only. That is his conditions.

My friend, I don't know how else to say it. Without Jesus Christ you are going to land in a lake of fire that never ceases to exist and you cannot cease to exist. You will never escape it. It is forever. And you had the opportunity today to receive him. Won't you come to him? Won't you receive his free offer to save your soul?

Let's bow our heads, please.

Father, I think of these that have raised their hands to say, "I am not sure I am saved," and I thank you of their honesty. I thank you, Lord, that they are concerned about their own soul. And I thank you, Lord, that they realize they need a Savior. And, Lord, I pray that you would prevent anything, anyone from keeping them back to do what is right and come and receive Christ as Savior. And I pray, Father, that for that Christian that needs to get things straightened out with you, I pray that they would come to this altar and make it right today in Jesus Christ's name. Amen.