
EZEKIEL 39: 1 You, son of man, prophesy against Gog, and say, Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I am against you, Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal:

The prophet goes on to denounce the Divine judgments against Gog and his army, Eze 39:1-7; and describes their dreadful slaughter, Eze 39:8-10, and burial, Eze 39:11-16, in terms so very lofty and comprehensive, as must certainly denote some very extraordinary interposition of Providence in behalf of the Jews. And to amplify the matter still more, the prophet, with peculiar art and propriety, delays the summoning of all the birds and beasts of prey in nature to feast on the slain, (in allusion to the custom of feasting on the remainder of sacrifices), till after the greater multitudes are buried; to intimate that even the remainder, and as it were the stragglers of such mighty hosts, would be more than sufficient to satisfy their utmost rapacity, Eze 39:17-20. The remaining verses contain a prediction of the great blessedness of the people of God in Gospel times, and of the stability of the kingdom of Christ, Eze 39:21-29. It will be proper to remark that the great northern expedition against the natural Israel, described in this and the preceding chapter, is, from its striking resemblance in the main particulars, put by the writer of the Apocalypse, (Eze 20:7-10), for a much more formidable armament of a multitude of nations in the four quarters of the earth against the pure Christian Church, the Mystical Israel; an event still extremely remote, and which it is thought shall immediately precede the destruction of the world by fire, and the general judgment.

EZEKIEL 39: 2 and I will turn you around, and will lead you on, and will cause you to come up from the uttermost parts of the north; and I will bring you on the mountains of Israel;

Verse 2

And leave but the sixth part of thee - The margin has, strike thee with six plagues; or, draw thee back with a hook of six teeth.

EZEKIEL 39: 3 and I will strike your bow out of your left hand, and will cause your arrows to fall out of your right hand.

Verse 3

I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand - The Persians whom Antiochus had in his army, Eze 38:5, were famous as archers, and they may be intended here. The bow is held by the left hand; the arrow is pulled and discharged by the right.

EZEKIEL 39: 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 to the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the animals of the field to be devoured.

EZEKIEL 39: 5 You shall fall on the open field; for I have spoken it, says the Lord GOD.

EZEKIEL 39: 6 I will send a fire on Magog, and on those who dwell securely in the islands; and they shall know that I am the LORD.

Verse 6

I will send a fire on Magog - On Syria. I will destroy the Syrian troops.

And among them that dwell carelessly in the isles - The auxiliary troops that came to Antiochus from the borders of the Euxine Sea. - Martin.

EZEKIEL 39: 7 My holy name will I make known in the midst of my people Israel; neither will I allow my holy name to be profaned any more: and the nations shall know that I am the LORD, the Holy One in Israel.

Verse 7

In the midst of my people Israel - This defeat of Gog is to be in Israel: and it was there according to this prophecy, that the immense army of Antiochus was so completely defeated.

Ands I will not let them pollute my holy name any more - See on 1 Maccabees 1:11, etc., how Antiochus had profaned the temple, insulted Jehovah and his worship, etc. God permitted that as a scourge to his disobedient people; but now the scourger shall be scourged, and he shall pollute the sanctuary no more.

EZEKIEL 39: 8 Behold, it comes, and it shall be done, says the Lord GOD; this is the day about which I have spoken.

EZEKIEL 39: 9 Those who dwell in the cities of Israel shall go out, and shall make fires of the weapons and burn them, both the shields and the bucklers, the bows and the arrows, and the war clubs, and the spears, and they shall make fires of them seven years;

Verse 9

And shall set on fire - the weapons - The Israelites shall make bonfires and fuel of the weapons, tents, etc., which the defeated Syrians shall leave behind them, as expressive of the joy which they shall feel for the destruction of their enemies; and to keep up, in their culinary consumption, the memory of this great event.

They shall burn them with fire seven years - These may be figurative expressions, after the manner of the Asiatics, whose language abounds with such descriptions. They occur every where in the prophets. As to the number seven it is only a certain for an indeterminate number. But as the slaughter was great, and the bows, arrows, quivers, shields, bucklers, handstaves, and spears were in vast multitudes, it must have taken a long time to gather them up in the different parts of the fields of battle, and the roads in which the Syrians had retreated, throwing away their arms as they proceeded; so there might have been a long time employed in collecting and burning them. And as

all seem to have been doomed to the fire, there might have been some found at different intervals and burned, during the seven years here mentioned. Mariana, in his History of Spain, lib. xi., c. 24, says, that after the Spaniards had given that signal overthrow to the Saracens, a.d. 1212 they found such a vast quantity of lances, javelins, and such like, that they served them for four years for fuel. And probably these instruments obtained by the Israelites were used in general for culinary firewood, and might literally have served them for seven years; so that during that time they should take no wood out of the fields, nor out of the forests for the purpose of fuel, Eze 39:10.

EZEKIEL 39: 10 so that they shall take no wood out of the field, neither cut down any out of the forests; for they shall make fires of the weapons; and they shall plunder those who plundered them, and rob those who robbed them, says the Lord GOD.

EZEKIEL 39: 11 It shall happen in that day, that I will give to Gog a place for burial in Israel, the valley of those who pass through on the east of the sea; and it shall stop those who pass through: and there shall they bury Gog and all his multitude; and they shall call it The valley of Hamon Gog.

Verse 11

The valley of the passengers on the east of the sea - That is, of Gennesareth, according to the Targum. The valley near this lake or sea is called the Valley of the Passengers, because it was a great road by which the merchants and traders from Syria and other eastern countries went into Egypt; see Gen 37:17, Gen 37:25. See Calmet here.

There shall they bury Gog and all his multitude - Some read, "There shall they bury Gog, that is, all his multitude." Not Gog, or Antiochus himself, for he was not in this battle; but his generals, captains, and soldiers, by whom he was represented. As to Hamon-gog, we know no valley of this name but here. But we may understand the words thus: the place where this great slaughter was, and where the multitudes of the slain were buried, might be better called Hamon-gog, the valley of the multitude of God, than the valley of passengers; for so great was the carnage there, that the way of the passengers shall be stopped by it. See the text.

EZEKIEL 39: 12 Seven months shall the house of Israel be burying them, that they may cleanse the land.

Verse 12

And seven months - It shall require a long time to bury the dead. This is another figurative expression; which, however, may admit of a good deal of literal meaning. Many of the Syrian soldiers had secreted themselves in different places during the pursuit after the battle, where they died of their wounds, of hunger, and of fatigue; so that they were not all found and buried till seven months after the defeat of the Syrian army. This slow process of burying is distinctly related in the three following verses, and extended even to a bone, Eze 39:15; which, when it was found by a passenger, the place was marked, that the buriers might see and inter it. Seven months was little time enough for all this work; and in that country putrescency does not easily take place: the scorching winds serving to desiccate the flesh, and preserve it from decomposition.

EZEKIEL 39: 13 Yes, all the people of the land shall bury them; and it shall be to them a renown in the day that I shall be glorified, says the Lord GOD.

EZEKIEL 39: 14 They shall set apart men of continual employment, who shall pass through the land, and, with those who pass through, those who bury those who remain on the surface of the land, to cleanse it: after the end of seven months shall they search.

EZEKIEL 39: 15 Those who pass through the land shall pass through; and when any sees a man's bone, then shall he set up a sign by it, until the undertakers have buried it in the valley of Hamon Gog.

EZEKIEL 39: 16 Hamonah shall also be the name of a city. Thus shall they cleanse the land.

EZEKIEL 39: 17 You, son of man, thus says the Lord GOD: Speak to the birds of every sort, and to every animal of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice on the mountains of Israel, that you may eat flesh and drink blood.

Verse 17

Gather yourselves - to my sacrifice - This is an allusion to a custom common in the east: when a sacrifice is made, the friends and neighbors of the party sacrificing are invited to come and feast on the sacrifice.

EZEKIEL 39: 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 goats, of bulls, all of them fattings of Bashan.

Verse 18

Ye shall - drink the blood of the princes of the earth - I need not mention the custom of the Scandinavians: they were accustomed to drink the blood of their enemies out of the skulls of the dead. But this is spoken of fowls and beasts here - rams, lambs, and goats. The feast shall be as grateful and as plenteous to the fowls and beasts, as one made of the above animals, the fattest and best of their kind, (because fed in the fertile fields of Bashan), would be to the guests of him who makes a sacrifice.

EZEKIEL 39: 19 You shall eat fat until you be full, and drink blood until you are drunk, of my sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you.

Verse 19

And ye shall eat fat - and drink blood - Who shall eat and drink, etc.? Not the Jews: though Voltaire says they ate human flesh, and are invited here by the prophet to eat the flesh and drink the blood of their enemies; which is a most unprincipled falsehood. It is the fowls and the beasts that God

invites, Eze 39:17 : "Speak to every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, assemble yourselves - that ye may eat flesh and drink blood;" nor are the persons altered in all these Eze 39:17-20 : so the assertion of Voltaire is either through brutish ignorance or Satanic malice.

EZEKIEL 39: 20 You shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and with all men of war, says the Lord GOD.

EZEKIEL 39: 21 I will set my glory among the nations; and all the nations shall see my judgement that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid on them.

EZEKIEL 39: 22 So the house of Israel shall know that I am the LORD their God, from that day and forward.

EZEKIEL 39: 23 The nations shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity; because they trespassed against me, and I hid my face from them: so I gave them into the hand of their adversaries, and they fell all of them by the sword.

EZEKIEL 39: 24 According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions did I to them; and I hid my face from them.

EZEKIEL 39: 25 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Now will I bring back the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy on the whole house of Israel; and I will be jealous for my holy name.

Verse 25

Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob - Both they and the heathen shall know that it was for their iniquity that I gave them into the hands of their enemies: and now I will redeem them from those hands in such a way as to prove that I am a merciful God, as well as a just God.

EZEKIEL 39: 26 They shall bear their shame, and all their trespasses by which they have trespassed against me, when they shall dwell securely in their land, and no one shall make them afraid;

Verse 26

After that they have borne their shame - After they shall have borne the punishment due to a line of conduct which is their shame and reproach, viz. idolatry.

EZEKIEL 39: 27 when I have brought them back from the peoples, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations.

Verse 27

When I have - gathered them - Antiochus had before captured many of the Jews, and sold them for slaves; see Dan 11:33.

EZEKIEL 39: 28 They shall know that I am the LORD their God, in that I caused them to go into captivity among the nations, and have gathered them to their own land; and I will leave none of them any more there;

Verse 28

And have left none of them any more there - All that chose had liberty to return; but many remained behind. This promise may therefore refer to a greater restoration, when not a Jew shall be left behind. This, the next verse intimates, will be in the Gospel dispensation.

EZEKIEL 39: 29 neither will I hide my face any more from them; for I have poured out my Spirit on the house of Israel, says the Lord GOD.

Verse 29

For I have poured out my Spirit - That is, I will pour out my Spirit; see the notes on Eze 36:25-29 (note), where this subject is largely considered. This Spirit is to enlighten, quicken, purify, and cleanse their hearts; so that, being completely changed, they shall become God's people, and be a praise in the earth. Now, they are a proverb of reproach; then, they shall be eminently distinguished.