



A BIBLICAL VIEW OF THE END TIMES
Week 30: Understanding the Rise of the Antichrist, Part 12
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Review:

- Let's step back a pace or two, and see how the last few lessons connect together.
- We're presently studying the rise of the antichrist. We've been studying the development of his career prior to, and going into, the Tribulation.
- We've looked at the antichrist's absence of any conventional religious heritage. We've looked at his occultic affections and his associations with the dark supernatural world.
- We've studied his political ideals and how he will become the world's ultimate socialist.
- More recently, we've started looking at some specific wars and conflicts that will characterize the antichrist's rise to power.
- We've seen how he will be successful in these conflicts. He will be so successful, in fact, that the world at that time will exclaim, "Who can make war against him?" (***Cf. Revelation 13:4***)
- However, there is an exception to the antichrist's ability to defeat other nations and his pattern of sweeping through other territories.
- There is a little region within the wilderness of the middle east that somehow inexplicably escapes the antichrist's array of conquests.
- This little area is mentioned in ***Daniel 11:41*** as being "*Edom, Moab, and the leaders of Ammon.*" It's a little region within modern day Jordan. This area does not fall to the antichrist's conquests like every other region does.

NOTE: Naturally, that raises a key question, "How does this specific area of Jordan manage to survive the antichrist's otherwise highly successful war agenda?"

NOTE: To answer this, we stepped back a few paces so we could take in the big picture and responsibly answer this question.

- We looked at conditions in the Middle East today. We saw how Israel is currently anticipating a war that will come at her from all fronts.
- The Israel Defense Force has been training for a war on all sides, and Israel's longtime enemies are talking about the very same thing. It is going to happen, and given developments in that part of the world, I believe it will happen relatively soon.
- So, we looked at the prophetic implications of ***Psalms 83***. That was last week's lesson, and it was a long one. We learned the following:
 - This prophetic Psalm was written during a time of great peace and prosperity in Israel under King David.
 - Several of the territories and foes mentioned in ***Psalms 83***, were, at that time, already under the control and rule of Israel.
 - We looked at the main points of ***Psalms 83***, namely:

- Israel will, in the future, be attacked by a coalition of ten territories or people groups that immediately surround her.
- These ten people groups are referred to in their Biblical terms, but they can be traced to current territories and populations that exist today. We identified them.
- In a nutshell, we saw that ***Psalms 83*** states how Israel's foes want to wipe her off the map, to utterly destroy Israel so that her name is remembered no more. They want to take the 'pasturelands of God' for themselves.
- The point of ***Psalms 83*** is this: Israel will be successful in defeating all these foes that simultaneously come against her.
- More significantly, Israel's enemies in ***Psalms 83*** will be so soundly defeated that two key things will happen:
 1. These enemies of Israel will basically disappear. They will never bother Israel again. They will be completely destroyed.
 2. Secondly, Israel will gain a great deal more land as a result of this conflict. She will gain all of Gaza and the West Bank. She will gain portions of Syria and the Sinai. She will acquire a good deal of southern Lebanon, and - - she will gain a large part of modern-day Jordan.
- It's this last bit of information that ties back into ***Daniel 11:41***. Those three regions that the antichrist cannot conquer: "*Edom, Moab, and the leaders of Ammon*" will be a wilderness area within Jordan that Israel, during the time of the Tribulation, will already own.
- Israel will already own it, having annexed it, as a result of her military successes in the ***Psalms 83*** conflict which could erupt any day now.

NOTE: If you've ever tried to swat moths as they circle and swarm around a summer night's light source, you can more or less understand what I am feeling right now. There are a series of important prophetic issues that are all circling one main point. It's a bit chaotic, but I am trying to deal with each one in a systematic and purposeful fashion.

I. THE IMPLICATIONS OF OUR STUDY THUS FAR:

- A. You and I are standing right now on the threshold of prophetic events in Israel that will reshape the Middle East as we currently know it. We will see these things happen unless the Lord takes us out of here first in the Rapture.
- B. These events will see Israel's longstanding foes, which immediately surround her, utterly destroyed in an upcoming conflict.
- C. Israel will gain a large amount of land because of this conflict. This will not only reshape the current status quo in that part of the world, but it will impact the future war campaigns of the antichrist.
- D. There are six conditions which exist now for this ***Psalms 83*** event. These conditions have only existed since 1948, when Israel became a nation (From Bill Salus):
 1. Israelis being in the land (***Psalm 83:3***)
 2. The Nation of Israel being an official nation (***Psalm 83:4,12***)
 3. An Israeli Defense Forces; the IDF (***Psalm 83:9-11***)

4. Palestinian Refugees; i.e. “*the tents of Edom*” (***Psalm 83:6***)
5. An Arab League that is mutually cooperative (***Psalm 83:6-8***)
6. A unified and passionate Arab hatred of Israelis (***Psalm 83:3***)

NOTE: Some of you are already thinking about some things, and are getting ahead of me here, and so I want to move the various points of this lesson into some firm conclusions.

- E. Jesus instructed the faithful Jewish believers that will see the abomination of desolation at the midpoint of the Tribulation to “*flee to the mountains*” (***Cf. Matthew 24:16 Et al***)
1. It is an emergency moment. The antichrist will, at the midpoint of the Tribulation, be prepared to swiftly come against and kill the Jews.
 - a. This will catch many of the Jews by surprise.
 - b. I believe the antichrist will have prepared a genocidal plan that he will put into motion promptly after entering the temple and declaring himself to be ‘God.’
 2. That is why Jesus, in ***Matthew 24:15***, appeals to the faithful remnant of Jewish believers at that time to “*understand what is written,*” **and to notice, in the book of Daniel:**
 - a. Jesus wants this faithful remnant of Jews at that future time to comprehend what is happening at the midpoint of the Tribulation.
 - b. Jesus calls attention to the things Daniel has already written.
 3. There are two specific things Daniel wrote about which are especially poignant at this juncture:
 - a. **First**, Daniel identifies the event known as the “abomination of desolation” in ***Daniel 9:27***. It takes place at the halfway point of the Seven-Year Tribulation.
 - Jesus refers to this event by the same term that Daniel uses.
 - He expects the faithful remnant of Jews at the midpoint of the Tribulation to NOT BE FOOLED.
 - Jesus expects these faithful Jews to obey His instructions PROMPTLY. In fact, it is their obedience which PROVES their faith, and which PRESERVES them.
 - b. **Secondly**, Daniel identifies which mountainous area will be safe from the antichrist.
 - That is mentioned in ***Daniel 11:41*** as the region of “*Edom, Moab, and the leaders of Ammon.*”
 - This is the area Daniel states the antichrist will be unsuccessful in conquering.
 - It is a region that will already be part of Israel by that future point in time, as a direct result of the pending ***Psalms 83*** conflict which I expect to happen very soon.

- The faithful Jews during the Tribulation, that remnant which has come to saving faith after the Rapture, will “*read and understand*” according to the words of Jesus in **Matthew 24:15-16**, WHAT is happening and WHERE they should flee.

F. Let’s look at this very same event from another perspective found in **Rev. 12:6 (READ)**.

NOTE: Several things to note here:

1. The “woman” in this passage is clearly identified as the nation of Israel within the context.
2. She is protected for 1,260 days. That is 3 ½ years. It is the second half of the Tribulation - - that timeframe following the abomination of desolation.
3. Israel is noted to flee from the dragon (AKA Satan, the source of the antichrist’s power) by going “*into the desert to a place prepared for her by God.*”
4. So here in **Revelation 12:6**, we know that the mountainous area that Jesus instructed the faithful Jews to flee to is **also** a desert area.
5. **Revelation 12:14-16** adds more to this picture.
 - c. There is some sort of aid given to the faithful Jews that flee (We don’t know what that is). **See Revelation 12:14-16**
 - d. It may be a supernatural occasion (with the Jews ‘flying’ into the wilderness) with Satan spewing water like a river to overtake the Jews, and the earth opening up (suggests a ground-based escape by the Jews).
 - e. So now, in five different passages: **Daniel 11:41, Psalms 83, Matthew 24:15-16, Revelation 12:6, and Revelation 12:14-16**, we gain a series of insights. They all support the same conclusion.
 - Very soon Israel will face a war from all her foes which essentially share a border with her. Israel’s enemies want to exterminate Israel, but Israel will completely destroy them instead.
 - In this conflict, Israel will annex a great deal of land and territory that once belonged to her enemies. That will include a large portion of Jordan.
 - Jesus instructs a future faithful remnant of Jews to flee the antichrist, and to escape to the mountains of Israel at the halfway point of the Tribulation.
 - He draws attention to the book of Daniel where it is also noted that there is a territory within the annexed land of Jordan that will be safe from the antichrist’s conquests.
 - **Revelation** identifies this area as being “wilderness or desert,” and it is an area that has been specifically and uniquely prepared by God. It is in modern-day Jordan - - (and, BTW, will soon be in modern-day Israel).
 - The faithful Jews that read and understand what the book of **Daniel** says, and that heed Jesus’ instructions in **Matthew**,

know exactly where to go. In the words of Jesus, they “*read and understand.*”

NOTE: We started with a unique insight in ***Daniel 11:41***. We saw how the antichrist is highly successful in all his war campaigns, except for one little obscure territory in modern-day Jordan. Now we have the backstory, and now we understand the bigger picture.

We’ve successfully swatted down a couple of those moths that are erratically circling the light bulb. Still, there are still more moths to swat down. In other words, there is more to understand about all of this. Time to add some additional interesting information:

- G. Within that area of Edom which lies within modern-day Jordan, there is the ancient city of Petra carved into the sandstone cliffs and rocks of that desert wilderness area.
 - 1. It is accessible only by a narrow crevice called the Siq which meanders through the mountainous area for about a mile. It makes the ancient city of Petra highly defensible.
 - 2. Petra is located about fifty miles south of the Dead Sea and 170 miles southwest of modern Amman, Jordan.
 - 3. The area in and around Petra is also known as “Sela” which means “rock,” or even ‘cleft in the rock.’”
 - 4. This area is also referred to in the Bible by the ancient Hebrew name of “Bozrah,” which literally means “sheepfold.” Here is where everything gets really interesting.

- H. It’s here where I need to pause for a moment and try to swat another moth. What would your response be if I asked you to describe the Second Coming of Jesus Christ?
 - 1. Would you say Jesus Christ will appear as King of kings and Lord of lords in the air, riding a white horse with the armies of heaven behind him?
 - 2. Would you say He would come in the clouds to defeat the armies of the antichrist at the Battle of Armageddon?
 - 3. Would you say He is going to descend on the Mount of Olives which will then split in two by a major earthquake?
 - 4. What would your response be? I’m guessing most, or part, of these things would be in your reply.

- I. But what if I told you that Jesus, at the time of His physical Second Coming at the end of the Tribulation, does not first appear in the air with the armies of heaven with Him? Nor does He descend first to the Mount of Olives.
 - 1. Jesus Christ – at His physical Second Coming, goes to Bozrah first! To Edom. To Petra! That’s the first place he goes, and it’s not an event that is witnessed on the same scale as His arrival at the Battle of Armageddon.

2. **The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ FIRST returns to Bozrah, to the ancient city of Petra.** NOTE: Something happens there first, and it's not until AFTER this event that He then arrives in the air with the armies of heaven to fight the Battle of Armageddon (*Cf. Isaiah 63:1-6*). Let's point out several things about this passage:
 - a. It is a prophetic passage about Jesus Christ's Second Coming in judgement
 - b. Isaiah, as a 'watchman on the wall of Jerusalem' in *Isaiah 62:6*, has a vision of Jesus Christ striding towards Jerusalem.
 - c. Several things are said about Jesus in this passage:
 - He is a mighty warrior King who is returning from Bozrah in Edom.
 - He single-handedly defeated his enemies, the nations of the world.
 - His garments are soaked with the blood of His enemies. (remember that point)

3. The question is, "Why is Jesus Christ coming from Bozrah?"
 - a. The answer is He goes there FIRST to rescue and lead out of Petra - from Bozrah, the faithful remnant of Jewish believers who properly heeded His advice in *Matthew 24:15-16* to flee to the mountains.
 - b. These Jews have been protected from the antichrist for 3 ½ years, and *Isaiah 63:1-6* make it clear that the nations of the world have surrounded them and isolated them in this location.
 - c. Jesus Christ goes there and defeats all the armies that have besieged Petra and he PHYSICALLY FIGHTS THEM AND KILLS THEM.
 - d. This is conventional combat. It's a different view of Jesus Christ as a baby in a manger. It's a view of Him as a warrior king, as a judge, and the Bible has much more to say about this than it does about the events of Bethlehem.
 - e. As a result of this battle, the blood of Christ's enemies spatters his garments (*Isaiah 63:3b*). It's important to grasp what the details are saying here. It is a scene of REAL carnage and violence.

4. Following the defeat of the world's armies (UN?) that are besieging Petra / Bozrah, Jesus Christ leads the faithful Jewish remnant OUT of this fortress and towards Jerusalem as Isaiah saw in *Ch. 63*.
 - a. These events are noted in detail in *Micah 2:12-13*.

"I will certainly assemble all of you, Jacob, I will certainly gather the remnant of Israel. I will put them together like sheep in the fold (NOTE: The KJB uses the phrase 'sheep of Bozrah' here. Remember what Bozrah means; Like a flock in the midst of its pasture They will be noisy with people. "The one who breaks through goes up before them; They break through, pass through the

gate, and go out by it. So their king passes on before them, And the LORD at their head.” **Micah 2:12-13**

5. So what’s the summary here?
 - a. At the midpoint of the seven year Tribulation, at the time of the abomination of desolation, there will be a faithful remnant of Jews that heed Jesus’ instruction to ‘flee to the mountains.’
 - b. They will recognize the antichrist’s intentions because of the words of Daniel. They also knew from **Daniel 11:41** what place would be safe to go to.
 - c. They flee, aided somehow, to Bozrah, to the ancient city of Petra. This is a territory which is part of Israel, and which Israel acquired in the **Psalms 83** conflict.
 - d. The thousands of faithful Jews here result in a noisy and chaotic situation, “like a herd of sheep in a sheepfold.”
 - e. This becomes the only region the Bible states the antichrist will not be able to conquer.
 - f. We know why, because **Revelation Ch. 12** tells us that God will supernaturally protect and provide for this faithful remnant of Jews in that location.
 - g. At the very end of the Tribulation, BEFORE Jesus Christ appears at the Battle of Armageddon, He FIRST goes to Bozrah, to Petra, where He singlehandedly defeats the world’s armies which have laid siege to this location.
 - h. He leads the faithful Jews out of Bozrah and they all head to Jerusalem.
 - i. The battle at Petra is a violent and messy one. Jesus’ garments get soaked with the blood of His enemies as He physically fights them and destroys them.
 - j. It is why He is later seen riding a white horse with the armies of heaven following Him. He is approaching the scene of the Battle of Armageddon and He is noted to be wearing “a robe dipped in blood” (**Cf. Revelation 19:13**).
 - k. It is the same blood that spattered his garments in Bozrah – in Petra. He hasn’t changed His clothes. He is returning to earth as a warrior king bent on judgment, and His garments show evidence of His physical battles and victories.