

# Ezekiel 38:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thus saith the Lord GOD; Art thou he of whom I have spoken in old time by my servants the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those days many years that I would bring thee against them?

## Analysis

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This prophetic word demonstrates God's sovereign control over history and nations. Even pagan empires and hostile coalitions serve God's purposes while remaining morally accountable for their actions. This Reformed understanding of providence affirms that nothing occurs outside God's decree, yet human agents bear full responsibility for their choices. The prophecy serves pastoral purposes: assuring God's people of His protection, warning enemies of certain judgment, and demonstrating that history moves toward God's appointed end. These prophecies find layered fulfillment—immediate historical, ongoing spiritual, and ultimate eschatological.

## Historical Context

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This passage was delivered during the Babylonian exile (c. 586-571 BCE) after Jerusalem's destruction. The exiled community grappled with theological and practical questions: Why had judgment come? Would restoration occur? How should they live in exile? The historical context of ancient Near Eastern covenant patterns, conquest and exile practices, and prophetic literature provides essential background. Archaeological discoveries from this period illuminate the exile's realities and the return's historical fulfillment. Yet Ezekiel's prophecies extend

beyond immediate historical context to find fuller realization in Christ and the church, with ultimate consummation in the new creation.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

## Study Questions

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1. How does this verse deepen your understanding of God's character, purposes, or ways of working in history?
2. What specific application does this passage call you to make in your current circumstances or spiritual life?
3. How does this Old Testament passage illuminate New Testament teaching about Christ, salvation, or the church?

## Interlinear Text

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אָשָׁר הָאָתָה יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים רְכָב  
H3541 Thus saith the Lord GOD H859 H1931 H834  
H559 H136 H3069

עֲבָדִים בְּיִד קָדְמוֹן יָמִים בָּם יָמִים  
Art thou he of whom I have spoken in those days in old by my servants  
H1696 H3117 H6931 H3027 H5650

שָׁנִים יָמִים בָּתָה מִתְּנִבְאָה יָמִים שָׁנִים יָמִים  
the prophets of Israel which prophesied in those days many years  
H5030 H3478 H5012 H3117 H1992 H8141

לְבָב יָא אֶתְחָב עַלְיָהֶם  
that I would bring H853 H5921

## Additional Cross-References

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**Ezekiel 38:16** (References Israel): And thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land, that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes.

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