

Ezekiel 38:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone.

Analysis

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

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

Revelation 20:12 – Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

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

בְּדַם אֶת־בָּרַע וְבְשָׁפְטָתִי
And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood rain
H853 H1609 H1919 H1652

א ש	אַלְגָּב וְשָׁ	וְאַבְגָּן וְשָׁ	שְׁזִוְּגָן וְשָׁ	תְּזִוְּגָן וְשָׁ
that are with him an overflowing	H68	and great hailstones	fire	H784

וְיָרַן and I will rain	וְיָרַן and I will rain				
H1614	H4305	H5921	H5921	upon him and upon his bands	H5921

עָם יִם	בָּרֶךְ יִם	אֲשֶׁר	אֲתָּה:
people	and upon the many	H834	H854

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 16:21 (Parallel theme): And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

Psalms 11:6 (Parallel theme): Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup.

Isaiah 66:16 (Parallel theme): For by fire and by his sword will the LORD plead with all flesh: and the slain of the LORD shall be many.

Isaiah 28:17 (Parallel theme): Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place.

Jeremiah 25:31 (Parallel theme): A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; for the LORD hath a controversy with the nations, he will plead with all flesh; he will give them that are wicked to the sword, saith the LORD.

Ezekiel 13:11 (Parallel theme): Say unto them which daub it with untempered morter, that it shall fall: there shall be an overflowing shower; and ye, O great hailstones, shall fall; and a stormy wind shall rend it.