

# Ezekiel 38:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them; all of them with shield and helmet:

## 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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**1 John 4:8** — God is love

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

**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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ס	פּ	וּשׁ	כּ	וּפּ	וּט	אֶתְּ	דּ	כָּלְ	דּ	מִגְ	וּ
Persia	Ethiopia	and Libya								with them all of them with shield	
H6539	H3568	H6316				H854		H3605		H4043	

  

וְכִבְּרָהּ:	
and helmet	
H3553	

## Additional Cross-References

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**Ezekiel 27:10** (Parallel theme): They of Persia and of Lud and of Phut were in thine army, thy men of war: they hanged the shield and helmet in thee; they set forth thy comeliness.

**Genesis 10:6** (Parallel theme): And the sons of Ham; Cush, and Mizraim, and Phut, and Canaan.

**Ezekiel 30:5** (Parallel theme): Ethiopia, and Libya, and Lydia, and all the mingled people, and Chub, and the men of the land that is in league, shall fall with them by the sword.

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