

Ezekiel 38:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee.

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

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

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

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|-------------------|---------------|-------------|----------------------------|------------|--------------|------------|
| וְעָלָה יְתָ | כַּשֶּׁמֶט הַ | תָּבֹא וְאֵ | כְּעָנָן | לְכַסּוֹת | | |
| Thou shalt ascend | like a storm | and come | thou shalt be like a cloud | to cover | | |
| H5927 | H7722 | H935 | H6051 | H3680 | | |
| הָאֲרֶץ | תְּהִי הַ | אֶתָּה | וְכָל | אֶגְפֶּיךָ | וְעַמֵּי יִם | רַבִּי יִם |
| the land | | | thou and all thy bands | people | and many | |
| H776 | H1961 | H859 | H3605 | H102 | H5971 | H7227 |
| אוֹתָךְ: | | | | | | |
| H854 | | | | | | |

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 28:2 (Parallel theme): Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one, which as a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, shall cast down to the earth with the hand.

Jeremiah 4:13 (Parallel theme): Behold, he shall come up as clouds, and his chariots shall be as a whirlwind: his horses are swifter than eagles. Woe unto us! for we are spoiled.

Joel 2:2 (Parallel theme): A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations.

Isaiah 25:4 (Parallel theme): For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall.

Ezekiel 38:16 (Parallel theme): 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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