

Russia

by Welcome Detweiler

The sermon explores Russia's prophetic role in biblical scripture and emphasizes God's ultimate control over world events and His promises to believers.

Duration: 31:29

Scripture: Ezekiel 38:23, Ezekiel 39:6, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 24:6-8, Matthew 24:44

Topics: "Salvation Testimony", "End Times"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares a personal experience of attending a chapel program where a magician performed tricks to attract a crowd. After the magician finished, the speaker's friend, George Stevens, took the opportunity to share his testimony of how he got saved. The speaker emphasizes that God is still in control and will bless those who trust in His Son as Lord and Savior, while also punishing those who reject Him. The speaker encourages the audience to consider the seriousness of rejecting a loving Savior who died on the cross for their sins. Additionally, the speaker suggests reading chapters 38 and 39 of the Bible to understand the end times and the demonstration of God's power.

Transcript

Thank you, Jack. Now you know what you have to look forward on Wednesday night, and I hope you'll be out and hear the rest of his sermon. I didn't mean to overlook Mrs. Murray.

I don't think I mentioned her, but I do know her because Mr. and Mrs. George Stevens, and this goes back to 1943, I had the privilege of going with Mr. and Mrs. Stevens to the army camps to give out Gospels of John to the soldiers who promised to read them. That trip took us to Hattiesburg, Mississippi, just outside of Camp Shelby, and I spent a happy 10 days with them in giving out literature and working with that team. I may have mentioned it before, but when you go to an army camp with a program to lead people to Christ, you can advertise all you want to, and you might get six or seven Christians to come to the chapel.

But George Stevens had a different method. He found a magician from Iowa who would go through the camp during the daytime, and he would show little tricks with his fingers and get the fellows around him. He soon had 25 around him, and he would show the tricks to these fellows.

Then he would say, by the way, tonight we're going to be in chapel six, and I'm going to show you some more of these tricks. Why don't you come? And when we got there, the chapel was filled, and we didn't deceive him. The first portion of the program was the magician, and he had those fellows eating out of his

hands.

And when he was through, 20 minutes or so, George Stevens got up and said, Gene, while you're up here, why don't you tell them how you got saved? Sure, I'll be glad to. And the magician turned into a preacher and told those fellows how he was saved. I can't go into all the details, but it's a very interesting life.

He was a bootlegger and saved out of a wretched life, and a wonderful testimony he had. Well, I had the joy of being with Mrs. Murray's parents on that trip. Now, for the message this morning, I guess you are missing the chart that I usually put up, the two roads chart, and I didn't think it was necessary because most of you are regulars, and I think you remember it from the last time I spoke.

In the center of that chart, we have things that are prophesied in our Bible that are going to happen on the earth, things that are going to happen here. And we are sure that our Bible has still many things that are not fulfilled, that will be fulfilled in God's time. The first of those things, of course, is the second coming of Jesus Christ.

We don't know when that will be. We have no idea. God is going to come at the right time, send his Son back to receive all his people home.

After that, the prophecy clock that has been stopped when Jesus Christ died on Calvary's cross and the age of grace has been set in, after that we can measure things in their consecutive order. After Christ comes back again, there will be days of great tribulation. The last time I spoke here, we read from Matthew chapter 24, where our Lord Jesus says, these times will be worse than ever have been since the world began or right to the end.

And that's a tremendous statement because there have been some very dark days on the face of the earth. When you read about them, you say, thank God I didn't live in those days. However, our Lord Jesus did not exaggerate when he said, darker days than anything you've ever read on the pages of history will settle upon this world during that period of great tribulation.

In that message, I pointed out that one of the major things that will happen will be that Satan will raise up a superman, who many of you call the Antichrist, who will fight against the Lord and set up a kingdom. First of all, he will offer peace to the world. After his coming again, things will be in turmoil.

But a man will rise up and will say, I'm ready to handle the whole world. Please turn the reins over to me. And everyone is at their wits' end, and they say, we've tried everything.

Let's let him try it. And they'll give him the reins, and he will reign in peace for just a short period of time. Then he will go just the same as all dictators do, and he will reign in terror.

And among the things that will happen during that period are the terrible days of God being out of the scene, all his people being gone, and the Holy Spirit being gone, no restraining force on the earth, and the devil will have the earth in his hands. He can do almost everything that he wants to except God's permission. He'll have to get that.

But God will allow him to go to the end of his desire to bring about horrible things on the face of the earth. A second thing that will happen during that period will be the destruction of something that we read about in the book of Ezekiel chapter 38. It speaks about a kingdom that is north of Jerusalem, and whenever you

read about directions in your Bible, you will know that all directions come from God's center of the universe, and that is the city of Jerusalem.

It tells us about a kingdom that is north from Palestine. Someone has said, if you drew a line from Jerusalem to the North Pole, that line would run right through the city of Moscow. And Bible teachers, I've noticed that Schofield says that all Bible teachers agree that this nation is Russia.

Now that's a tremendous statement. I don't know if I can say all Bible teachers agree, but I would rather say most Bible teachers agree that it is speaking about Russia. Russia at the present is probably our number one enemy.

I think Mr. Reagan would agree with that. He is more concerned about that nation than all the other nations that he has conflict with. And that nation was a comparatively weak nation until 1917.

In 1917, which is still in your lifetime, Lenin decided to raise up a Bolshevik revolution, and with a comparatively small company of people, probably only 40,000 people, he overthrew the government of Russia and set up a government of his own. And in that government, one of the first things he mentioned was, we are going to get rid of everything that reminds us of God. Your churches will have to come down.

We're going to turn them into libraries, and we're going to spread the propaganda that you have planned. And the Jews will have to leave this country. That reminds us of God.

We want nothing that will remind us of God. That new Bolshevik revolution has now grown to probably in the neighborhood of one billion people who are under the umbrella of the Russian leaders. He was followed by Stalin.

They were followed by Khrushchev. Do you remember when he was visiting here? He made a threat and said, we're going to bury every one of you by 1980. Well, there's a strange story out, and I don't know if you heard it, that Khrushchev was saved while he was attending a meeting along the Black Sea at some resort, and this conversion story reached us a few years ago.

I don't know whether it's true or not. I hope it is. However, you will know that there was something strange about him slipping out of power, and Kosygin and Brezhnev took their place.

No one explained what happened. He just faded into the insignificance, and it's possible that that story of his conversion is true. If so, we'll meet him in heaven.

Since that time, the last man now is Gorbachev, and I think that he is very similar to all the rest of them, although he tries to use some diplomacy in order to work with all of the nations around him. But this nation is prophesied in our Bible, and it tells us of a day when the nation of Russia, with all of its satellites with him, will go down into the nation of Israel and will seek to overthrow God's people. God will step in at a certain point, and this is at the end of those seven years of tribulation, and God will win that battle which will be fought, the battle of Armageddon.

I want to read from chapter 38 of the book of Ezekiel, and I want to read portions of it, and I think with this introduction, you'll be able to understand what I'm talking about. Chapter 38. "...and I will bring thee forth, and all thine enemy, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armor, even a great company with bucklers and shields, and all of them having swords, Persia, Ethiopia, Libya with them, all of them with shields and helmets, Gomer and all his band, the house of Dagarmah, and it shall come to pass

at the same time when God shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord God, that my fury shall come up in my face, and in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel, so that the fishers of the sea and the fowls of the heaven and the beasts of the field and all creeping things that creep upon the earth and all the men that are upon the face of the earth shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground.

And I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord God. Every man's sword shall be against his brother, 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. Thus will I magnify myself and sanctify myself, and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the Lord." It is about a year ago that I read through the Old Testament, and I noticed the many times you will have this last line mentioned, "...they shall know that I am the Lord." Many occasions the chapter ends just like that.

God is interested in teaching the people of the world, I am the only God, and I will see to it that all of my plans will be carried out. I would like to give you some homework. I want you to read all of the 38th chapter and also the 39th chapter, and devour the things that are in there concerning this end of the tribulation.

Because God has told us there that this demonstration of God's mighty power, I think we have it in verse 20, "...the fishes of the sea, the fowls of the heaven, the beasts of the field, the creeping things, and all men will recognize when God is shaking the world." This may be a great earthquake. We are hearing of devastating earthquakes in Mexico and different places. I don't know that we have ever heard of one in the Holy Land, but I do know that there will be a tremendous shaking.

It may be something different from an earthquake, but it seems that an earthquake is an earthquake. Who has charge of earthquakes? You can be thankful that Russia doesn't have charge, and nor does Washington have charge of earthquakes. Only God can control the elements, and He does.

And it will be a very easy thing for God to take care of His great name and also to bring to pass all the things that He has desired. Now, sometimes we raise the question, how could God, who is a righteous God, allow a man like Lenin to stand up and say, I'm going to remove everything that makes me think of God. And then that nation grow until there are probably one billion people who believe that.

Maybe I should let you know that there are many individuals in Russia who are believers, but they do not have the privileges that we have. I'm talking now about the nation as a whole. And we say, God, why don't you stop them? Why don't you let them get by with it? And in saying that, we are actually saying, you don't know what you're doing.

Why don't you do what I suggest? But it's better for us to be calm and to say, He's going to take care of them. He's not in any hurry. But when His day comes, He will take care of them.

He is going to cause Russia to invade Israel. I don't know why they'll go down there. Some have suggested that probably it will be the oil that is there.

Nations will want to go down there and probably get that oil. But at least there is coming a day when the Russian hordes will go down to destroy that little nation of Israel. They will go with confidence.

They have probably a hundred to one so far as the size of their army is concerned. However, the size of the army doesn't mean anything to God. God will lead them down.

The ruler who will be on the throne on the day that this happens has no choice in the matter. God will send him down and he will love to go down and he will try to destroy the nation of Israel. We are told in the 39th chapter that it will take seven months to bury the dead from that slaughter of that earthquake, hailstones, sulfur, brimstone, whatever it is.

God can use anything. We can't limit Him just to an earthquake. But God will destroy those armies in the nation of Israel.

And He will see to it that these great kings and rulers, that is the military men, will all be slaughtered in the nation of Israel. Also, we are told that they will not have to gather any firewood to heat their buildings. They will have seven years of using up whatever they take down there to heat their homes.

And I don't understand this, but it may be that in that time there will be wooden affairs that will be used so far as weapons. I'm not sure what this means, but at least the word tells us that it will be seven years burning the things that were brought down there. Now, this tremendous devastation is simply a demonstration of God doing what we want Him to do now.

He's going to do it in His time. He's going to demonstrate to the world, I am still God. And that really is the coming of Jesus Christ, I suggested the other Sunday, the third time.

We know when He came the first time. And we know He's coming again to receive His blood-bought people home. That's His second coming.

And I think it would be correct to say that seven years later, He is coming not to the air, but coming to the earth and set up His kingdom. And Jesus Christ will reign over the whole earth in the day that He sets up His kingdom in the city of Jerusalem. Now, all of these details are given to us in the prophetic scriptures.

We turn very often to the book of Daniel and to the book of the Revelation to get details regarding future things. And we are correct in doing that. But we must remember that there are contributions made of all those prophets in the Old Testament, Zachariah, Ezekiel, and many others, who are giving us little details that are not found in the rest of the word of God, giving us once more confidence that the Holy Spirit wrote the scriptures.

And all of these dovetail together, telling us one story of the destruction of a nation. I don't know if it would be necessary for any of us to write a letter to President Reagan and say, maybe you are overdoing this idea of preparing to fight the Russians. God's going to take care of them.

He's going to have His program going on. I don't know if that would be necessary or would accomplish anything, because it may be that God is using President Reagan to forestall that moment. Or, whatever it may be, He is still in control.

It was back in 1968 that two preachers wrote a letter to Alexis Kosygin and said, we want to tell you what the Bible has to say about your nation. And I have a copy of that in my briefcase. And it gives details of telling him exactly, here is what you are going to do someday.

I don't know if that made any impression. I doubt if they ever read it. But at least someone felt it was a responsibility to tell them, this is your end.

You can build up. You can go that far, and then you will have to come to an end. However, those of us who are Christians can completely relax.

Perhaps you will raise the question, what is the benefit of having prophetic scriptures? Well, one thing, I think it promotes respect for the Word of God. If a young student comes to me and says, I have been going to a college where the fellows who don't believe in God have been teaching me and giving me their propaganda, can you prove to me that the Bible is the Word of God? How could I reason with a student? I think the best reasoning is to take the Word of God and show how God has predicted things, and all of them have come to pass with 100% accuracy. And I can say to that man, do you know any other book in the world that has the power to predict future things, and they come to pass exactly, not approximately, but exactly as they are promised? That gives us tremendous confidence in the Word of God.

And I'm ready to meet any student who has difficulty with this problem. I have found that most students who come to me with problems have their mind made up. I don't want you to tell me.

I want to believe what I've been taught because it sets me free. I can sin all I want to. I will never have to meet God.

But when we come to the Holy Scriptures, it gives us the proof that these things are true. One more thing. In Matthew's Gospel, chapter 24, when our Lord Jesus gives these details, He speaks to His own, and He says, When you see these things come to pass, see that you be not troubled.

Troubled Christians? How could we be troubled? Nothing can trouble us as long as God is on the throne. We may be concerned, but nothing can shake us. When the rest of the world is shaking, we can say, I refuse to shake.

I don't have any cause for shaking. When you can prove to me that God is not on the throne, then I probably will start shaking with you. Men's minds failing them for fear, those that are not saved, they are probably are the ones that are shaking and are fearful.

When people ask me, what is this world coming to? Will it get better or will it get worse? I can answer them by saying both. They'll get worse and they'll also get better. And I can emphasize them and say, things are going to get much, much worse, and show them in the Bible.

Also, showing them what follows those days of great tribulation when our Lord Jesus Christ shall reign in peace for 1,000 years. That's tremendous as a prospect. When Jesus Christ will step to the earth and say, all you little dictators sit down.

I'm going to do what you have been experimenting with. I'm going to reign in righteousness on the face of the earth. And of course, before he does, he will have to clean up all those that object to him and all of those who have rejected our Lord Jesus Christ will be sent to hell.

Now, I think that one of the reactions that you will have this morning is, I thank God that I'm not a Russian, that I don't live in Russia. Well, that's something to be thankful for. Even if you were a Christian, you probably wouldn't have the privilege as you have them in this land.

And you need to be thankful each day for having these privileges. It may be that we take them too lightly. There is a good possibility that we would be better Christians if we lived in Russia.

The quality of those Christians who are denied some of the privileges we have probably are taking things much more seriously than we are. However, I have to remind you that the judgment that God will pronounce on that nation, he will also pronounce on people in America who do not receive the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. They don't need to say, I want to blow out everything that reminds me of God.

They don't have to. They can be more intelligent and say, I heard that Jesus Christ died for me. I read in your Bible that if I do receive him as Lord and Savior, I will have everlasting life.

But, I'm not ready for that yet. Remember that God's judgment on a nation is exactly the same as that of an individual. And in the last verse of John chapter 3, I read, He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.

That's wonderful. But the verse doesn't end there. He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.

Did you notice that verse that I read? The Lord God said that my fury shall come up in my face. The wrath of God abideth on him. And I don't want you to be thankful that you're not a Russian if you are not a Christian.

Because the same judgment that will fall upon that nation will fall upon you as an individual. Because you have perhaps very politely turned down God's offer of salvation. And that's a serious matter.

That will take you to hell. And the same hell that the Russians will go to will be your abiding place. In fact, you'll be in the company of all those Russians if you turn down the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior.

I don't know of a better day for any one of you who are still unsaved to recognize the Word of God is going to come to pass. And if I continue to turn down God's wonderful offer of salvation, God's fury, God's wrath will someday be my portion for all eternity to be in a lost and a place where there is no peace, no joy, hell itself. Just this week, I talked to a young man who was raised in Sunday school.

And he is blaming God for all the hard times that he's had. Nothing has gone right. And I pointed out to him, you're fulfilling the Bible.

The Bible says the way of the transgressor is hard. And you will never have peace until you come to know the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. So, I didn't present this subject as a matter of an interesting subject.

But to point out that God is still on the throne. He will stand by His Word. He will bless every man who will trust His Son as Lord and Savior.

And He will punish. He will have to punish all who refuse His Lord and Savior. Think of His wondrous grace.

Also think that in His government, He will see to it that no person that despises His Son will ever be without punishment. How serious it is for you to sit in a meeting like this and say no to a loving Savior who once hung on Calvary's cross and bore your sins and opened heaven's gate for you, if only you will accept Him as your Lord and Savior. If you have some problems with this matter of accepting Him, I would love to have a minute with you after the service and show you just how simple it is.

For a person to come to realize, I know I'm lost. I agree with that. I know that I need to be saved.

And I can trust Him right where I am as my Lord and Savior. I would love to take the Word of God and help you over whatever hurdles there may be that are preventing you from trusting God's Son as your Lord and Savior. Our gracious Father, we thank Thee for the wonderful things Thou hast put in Thy Word.

We thank Thee for the serious things Thou hast put in Thy Word to arrest our attention and to make us aware that Thou art still a God, a holy God, a righteous God. Thou hast provided everything that is necessary for souls to be in heaven, and we thank Thee for Thy Word that tells us Thou wilt deal righteously with all who reject Thy Son. Bless those unsaved ones that have gathered with us this morning.

We pray that Thou wilt give them to see the wisdom of trusting Thy Son as Lord and Savior before they leave this building. We give Thee our thanks for Thy Word in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

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