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Dear Associates and Friends,

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“[The Breakup of the Soviet Union](#)” is this month’s ASK article by Dr. Ernest L. Martin. This wide-ranging presentation begins with a discussion about how the political situation of the old Soviet Union could not be present in the generation before Christ’s return. The points Dr. Martin makes about the Soviet Union are also relevant to the current situation in Communist China, North Korea, Cuba, and in other communist or even repressive countries, including intolerant Muslim ruled countries.

Freedom of religion, freedom of thought and expression are necessary for the propagation of the Gospel of God to the world before Christ returns, as Dr. Martin will show. God will bring about changes for each country and people, and He shall do so in a unique way for each of them to have those freedoms. When God starts to open the minds of the people of the world (beginning in Jerusalem) to allow the message of His Gospel to be received, studied, and discussed, nothing can prevent His actions.¹

After showing why it was impossible for major countries like the Soviet Union to remain religiously repressive, Dr. Martin discusses the individual called Gog in the Book of Ezekiel. The place of Gog in the end-time prophetic sequence of events is set forth, while presenting clear evidence that Gog has no relationship to Russia or the old Soviet Union.

What does God care about? Does He care about whether populations live or die, grow or shrink? He does, but differently than you might think. God controls all factors of the life of nations. Events on the world stage do not just “happen.” God regulates the life cycle of nations, just as He regulates the life cycle and processes of individuals.² So it is with nations, God controls their life spans and their boundaries.

“God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, ... he gives to all life, and breath, and all things; And has made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and [God] has determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; [Why? For what purpose?] That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us.”

• Acts 17:24–27

Paul’s statement conforms with what Job wrote: **“He increases the nations, and destroys them: he enlarges the nations, and straitens them again [leads them away, into exile]”** (Job 12:23). God is not only responsible for such occurrences, He directs them. God does all this — but why? As Paul wrote, He does this so all nations **“should seek the Lord.”** That has not happened in history. All nations have not yet sought God. But God is arranging the nations of the world on the stage and they are being prepared to play their part as witness to God’s sovereignty.

God can change any aspect of the lives of nations or individuals when it suits His purpose. He can cause the death of individuals and nations. As individuals, death is our great enemy (1 Corinthians 15:26), but it is one tool of many for God to use to fulfill the counsel of His will. When you have the power to resurrect the

¹ I believe we are seeing the beginnings of that “opening-up” process going on in the Arab Middle East at the present time.

² Your heart could stop at the very next beat if He wishes. Your brain could stop now if He wishes. He who creates life and controls death and who will bring ALL people back to life (at a time of His choosing, 1 Timothy 2:4, 6: **“Who [Christ] will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. ... Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time,”** or better, “the testimony in its own eras”). God is not overly concerned with death.

dead [as God does, being the creator of that life], death itself is not a great problem. God does such things to what ultimate purpose, to what end? Paul tells us:

“That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who works all things after the counsel of his own will.”

• *Ephesians 1:10–11*

God has done, God does, and God will do many things that we might ask the question: why is He doing that? Let me give you an example. God will send His spirit of grace and supplication upon Israel and upon all the people in Jerusalem to repent and accept Christ Jesus as their resurrected Messiah and Savior. They will energetically proclaim God to the world. Then, except for a remnant God will cause many if not most of those in Jerusalem who repented to believe the lie and accept the Beast, the antichrist, as the true Messiah. In other words they will accept the Beast and the False Prophet and reject God’s two witnesses (Revelation 11:1–11). God causes an earthquake that kills thousands. Later God allows the Beast to attack, conquer, and sack Jerusalem — all before Christ returns.³

The thought of God doing that is distasteful to me. God will allow people who have repented to later be deceived? Why? Perhaps it will be because they were not sincere in their repentance. God knows their hearts. Perhaps they will repent only to escape judgment, and not for the right motives. Yet eventually we must and should trust God to do what is right and good, for the benefit of all men through Christ. God will not only save all men, but He will provide all with the full knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:4–6). All human beings will be informed when He chooses to impart that full knowledge of the truth, not before. We will find that everything regarding nations or individuals will be done **“after the counsel of His own will.”**

The information Dr. Martin gives in this article is very involved, yet it moves quickly from one piece of evidence to another. Russia will not be a major player of Gog’s invasion of the Middle East. Its geography is outside the biblically identified areas. They will play a role, as will all nations, or so the Bible says, but not a major roll. Gog is not from Russia, but he is identified by many other names to give us a full understanding of the Beast, the antichrist, Gog, who portrays himself as “the man who would be God.”

Thank You

As we get closer to the time of Christ’s return — day by day, hour by hour — the events of our everyday lives crowd our thoughts about the big picture. Keep in mind what God desires for us. He wants to:

“... give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power.”

• *Ephesians 1:17–19*

We thank you for your contributions that financially enable us to teach you and others about the subtle and sublime truths of God, hard as some of those truths may be. It is not our purpose to change the world. That is God’s job through Christ. It is our job to provide the best information about Him from His Word, the Bible, and present it to you in the clearest manner possible, so that His Word is an open book. Thank you.

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³ God will induce people to accept the lie. Yet people will be willing to do so. Perhaps the reason people will turn away from their repentance to God has been already explained. Read the messages of 1 and 2 Peter and Jude of a prior “falling away” just before Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 AD. It happened before. It will happen again, and God will allow horror to occur.