

# You Can't Fight God and Win

On the near horizon is an event which will humble the enemies of Israel so completely and so dramatically as to usher in the final episodes of this age. It was revealed to the prophet Ezekiel some 2600 years ago but has, in the last decade or so, appeared on our radar. It is a war.

Now, stop yawning. I know, I know, you're thinking, 'another war'? And I don't blame you for your under-impression. There have been at least 11 wars or conflicts between Israel and her enemies since she was re-established as a nation in 1948. This, however, will be one of the three big ones that remain. Recent, best-selling books have alerted us to its catastrophic importance, but not many people really understand what the Bible has to say about it.

There is a 'high level' chronology in the last part of the book of Ezekiel. In chapter 36, we read of the mountains of Israel coming alive again and then in chapter 37 we find an eerie resurrection of sorts – a vast valley of dry bones which come together, become covered with flesh and then receive the breath of life – a huge army which pictures Israel becoming a nation again.

Then come chapters 38 and 39 which deal with our war (we'll look at those in more detail) which are followed by detailed instructions

for the millennial temple, its services and divisions of the land for Israel during the 1000 year reign of Christ found in chapters 40 – 48.

So we find this war, commonly known as the war of Gog/Magog, nestled between the time of Israel's rebirth as a nation and the events of the millennium. Some folks get confused by the multiple wars spoken of during the last days and that's understandable.

Briefly, there are three that are blockbusters so to speak and global in impact.

The first is the war of Gog/Magog – details to follow. The second is the Battle of Armageddon, which occurs at the conclusion of the Great Tribulation. This is when Christ returns from heaven with His army. When He does, the Antichrist will rally the armies gathered with and against him there in the Valley of Meggido to fight against the 'alien invaders'. The last war will come at the conclusion of the millennium. At that point, Satan will be released and will soon deceive the nations of the world to fight against the Lord. This will end in their annihilation and Satan's eternal damnation after which the Lord will completely renew both the heavens and the earth.

Among these three there are several distinctives; for instance:

- Gog/Magog – God destroys the armies in the mountains of Israel with fire and brimstone from heaven.

- Armageddon – Christ destroys the gathered armies with the Word of His Mouth
- End of the Millennium – Christ destroys the armies Satan gathered from the four corners of the earth

Now, as we examine chapters 38 and 39, we'll find many strange names and you might wonder why the obscurity? But, actually, the use of these names allows us to most clearly identify the places and players. You see, my great, great, great uncle Ivan lived in Petrograd which was known as St. Petersburg but then became Leningrad which then became St. Petersburg again, but my great, great, great uncle Ivan was always Ivan.

People move and the places they move to are always getting their names changed so if you want to be most accurate about the location of a future event, you nail it to the name of someone way, way back and to his descendants. The task then becomes one of tracing his descendants to the time of the future event.

So let's consider now our two chapters and we'll cover each name in some detail as we proceed.

## Ezekiel 38

**Now the word of the LORD came to me, saying, "Son of man, set your face against Gog, of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal,**

**and prophesy against him,... (v1,2)**

First we have someone called Gog. He is the leader of the horde. In Amos 7:1 (KJV) we read, "*Thus hath the Lord GOD shewed unto me; and, behold, he formed grasshoppers in the beginning of the shooting up of the latter growth; and, lo, it was the latter growth after the king's mowings.*"

Here is the same verse from the Septuagint: "*Thus the Lord showed me, and behold a swarm of locusts were coming, and, behold, one of the young devastating locusts was Gog, the king.*" The cause of the difference is in the translation results from a little mark from the original that was overlooked.

And referring to this king, we read in Revelation 9:11, "*And [the locusts] had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.*"

From this, we can see that Gog is probably a demonic entity.

Now for Magog. Though it is the name of a land in the prophecy, it was originally the name of a grandson of Noah. His descendants are often referred to by their Greek name, the Scythians. Early historians identified Magog with southern Russia. "Scythian designates a number of nomadic tribes from the Russian steppes. Many of the later Scyths settled in the fertile

area of the Ukraine north of the Black Sea while other related tribes occupied the area to the east of the Caspian Sea. The Scythian language belonged to the Iranian family of the Indo-European languages. The Ossetian dialect of central Caucasus appears to be a survivor.” (Chuck Missler)

The latter part of verse two above should read more accurately, “the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.” In more than 420 other instances in the Bible, that is the way the word Rosh is handled. So where are Meshech and Tubal?

Meshech was the sixth son of Japheth, the son of Noah. He is identified with the ancient Mushki of the Assyrians and the Muschoi of the classical Greek writers. Assyrian inscriptions describe them as inhabiting Phrygia in northern Anatolia (modern Turkey). Herodotus identifies the Mushki with the mountains southeast of the Black Sea, the northeast part of modern Turkey. Josephus also identifies the descendants of Meshech as dwelling in eastern Turkey.

Some later writers identify the name of Meshech as preserved in the old tribal name of the Muscovites of Russia, after whom Moscow is named. This is not at all unlikely, especially when we consider their historically close association with the people of Tubal.

Tubal was the 5th son of Japheth and a brother of

Meshech. The descendants of Tubal first come to our notice in the inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser I, king of Assyria in about 1100 BC. He referred to them as the Tabali whose original area of settlement was adjacent to that of Tegarama. Their land, in Josephus' day, was called by the Romans Iberia, and covered what is now the country of Georgia whose capital still bears the name of Tubal as Tbilisi. The scriptures continue:

**...and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I am against you, O Gog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal. I will turn you around, put hooks into your jaws, and lead you out, with all your army, horses, and horsemen, all splendidly clothed, a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords. (v3,4)**

From this passage, it is clear that it is the Lord who is behind this whole event. Gog is “turned around” and led out by hooks in his jaws. The ancient Assyrians led their captives out in a similar way. So the picture is that Gog and his horde, though they think they're acting on their own, are actually the prisoners of the Lord's will. It is a large, well armed host. Next, are Gog's allies:

**Persia, Ethiopia and Libya are with them, all of them with shield and helmet; Gomer and all its troops; the house of Togarmah from the far north and all its troops—many people are with you. (v5,6)**

Persia includes the descendants of Elam, the first son of Shem and is now modern Iran. Iran was known as Persia until it changed its name in 1935. The name Iran is derived from the term airyana; Middle Iranian, 'ry'n, "Aryan" or in New Persian, Iran. Iran is the leading ally in the Ezekiel list and the present major exporter of "Islamic Fundamentalism". Persia covers present day Iran and Iraq.

The original language for the next name is Cush and refers to the land lying to the south of Egypt, usually translated in English Bibles as "Ethiopia". Originally Cush referred to a piece of territory lying between the second and third cataracts of the Nile. Later it came to refer to a broader area known as Nubia. Today, this land is occupied by Sudan. Sudan is home to the National Islamic Front, is ruled by an Islamic military dictatorship, home to Osama bin Laden from 1991-1996 and harbors countless Islamic terrorist groups. It also trades military supplies with Iran for docking rights on the Red Sea shipping routes.

The next name, in the original language, is Put. Put was the third son of Ham, the son of Noah. Josephus identified him as the founder of Libya, whose inhabitants were called Putites. Put, however, is associated with all North Africa, also populated by the Berbers and tribes distinct from Cush. Put encompassed the area from present day Libya to

Mauritania and the Mahgreb, that is, Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco.

The next ally mentioned is Gomer. In the Babylonian Talmud the Biblical Gomer, the father of Ashkenaz, is rendered "Germania." Gomer is also associated with the Cimmerians who were expelled in 700 BC from the southern steppes of Russia into what is today Turkey but eventually established themselves in the Rhine and Danube valleys. So Gomer potentially covers area from eastern Turkey to as far north as present day Germany and Austria.

Togarmah was one of the sons of Gomer. The Assyrians called them Til-Garimmu, a name derived from the Hittite city Tegarama and carried into classical times as Gauraema, presently known as Gurun, 70 miles west of Mylayta. The city was destroyed by Sennacherib in 695 B.C. The Armenians still refer to themselves as "The House of Togarmah" even to this day. So Togarmah is the present day area that covers part of eastern Turkey, Armenia and Azerbaijan. Nearly all of the allies of Magog have in common that they are Muslim.

**Prepare yourself and be ready, you and all your companies that are gathered about you; and be a guard for them. After many days you will be visited. In the latter years you will come into the land of those brought back from the sword and gathered from many people on the mountains of Israel, which had**

**long been desolate; they were brought out of the nations, and now all of them dwell safely. You will ascend, coming like a storm, covering the land like a cloud, you and all your troops and many peoples with you. (v7-9)**

Here in verse eight, we have an additional clue – this massive army will march against the regathered nation of Israel whose people are dwelling safely. Thus, something has to happen to give the Israelis this sense of peace. It may be a peace covenant.

So Gog and his hordes come against Israel and this is God's reaction:

**“And it will come to pass at the same time, when Gog comes against the land of Israel,” says the Lord GOD, “that My fury will show in My face. For in My jealousy and in the fire of My wrath I have spoken: ‘Surely in that day there shall be a great earthquake in the land of Israel, so that the fish of the sea, the birds of the heavens, the beasts of the field, all creeping things that creep on the earth, and all men who are on the face of the earth shall shake at My presence. The mountains shall be thrown down, the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground.’ (v18-20)**

First, there will be an enormous earthquake – seemingly ‘off the scale’ and extremely wide impacting. Next...

**I will call for a sword against Gog throughout all My**

**mountains,” says the Lord GOD. “Every man’s sword will be against his brother. And I will bring him to judgment with pestilence and bloodshed; I will rain down on him, on his troops, and on the many peoples who are with him, flooding rain, great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. (v21,22)**

Gog's armies, a Muslim brotherhood, will turn on each other perhaps using not only conventional weapons but bacteria and/or viral agents. Meanwhile, the Lord will rain down huge hailstones, fire and brimstone.

Later, in the next chapter of Ezekiel, the Lord says that He will completely disarm these assailants and adds, **And I will send fire on Magog and on those who live in security in the coastlands. Then they shall know that I am the LORD. (v39:6)**

We know where Magog is but the “coastlands” is somewhat of a mystery. Typically, they represent areas quite distant from Israel. That they “live in security” may speak of people who simply don't expect to have any trouble perhaps because they have stayed out of the conflict. In this passage, Israel is seen as being basically on her own in the world. A few countries seem to give Gog a verbal slap on the wrist, but no one acts to defend God's people except God. Could these coastlands refer to the US? Possibly.

**“Then those who dwell in the cities of Israel will go out and set on fire and burn the weapons, both the shields and bucklers, the bows and arrows, the javelins and spears; and they will make fires with them for seven years. They will not take wood from the field nor cut down any from the forests, because they will make fires with the weapons; and they will plunder those who plundered them, and pillage those who pillaged them,” says the Lord GOD. (v39:9,10)**

These verses make me think that this cataclysm will take place before or at the beginning of the seven year long tribulation. It won't be during because that would not give enough time to burn all the left over weapons nor afterwards as there will certainly be no plundering or pillaging under the righteous rule of Jesus Christ.

Scriptures which follow state that the people of Israel will be burying the bodies of the dead for seven months and indicate by way of their procedure that the bodies may be radioactive. Though translations differ, verse two of chapter 39 indicates that these enemies of Israel will be annihilated leaving as little as one sixth of them alive.

Now, current events are quite sobering for just this week we saw the leader of the land of Magog attack the very place where the ancient Magogian language is still spoken – Southern Ossetia in the country of Georgia, the home of

the descendants of Tubal. There's a clearing of the way going on for if Russia is to sweep south it must pass through Georgia. It cannot allow Georgia to become an active part of NATO.



In addition, Russia only a couple years ago created a historic treaty with Iran, providing advanced nuclear and military technology and supplies. Syria has opened its ports on the Black Sea to Russian naval vessels and is also being supplied militarily from Moscow. Libya and Sudan are also now formally tied to Russia via treaties and myriad agreements. As you can see, nearly all the players are in place and for the first time in history are allied with each other. Iraq may pose a problem for them if the US is still in place so look for America to vacate Iraq fairly soon. Turkey is also a part of NATO but has been cozying up to Russia very significantly in recent days.

So an amazing display of the power and authority of God Almighty foretold 2600 years ago is about to take place in the Middle East. Keep your eyes open and be in prayer!