

Gog and Magog

Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Art thou not he of whom I have spoken in old time through my servants the prophets of Israel, who prophesied in those days, for many years, that I would bring thee against them? - Ezekiel 38:17

This Lesson Outline was prepared by John M. Wharton

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Sources -

All bible text, unless otherwise indicated, is the Darby Translation. ASV indicates the American Standard Version, with KJV indicating the King James Version. Quotations are often included from various classic christian commentaries such as John Gill's Expositor, Jamieson, Fausset and Brown, Robertson's New Testament Word Pictures, and others. Greek and Hebrew word definitions are often included from the Strong's Concordance and sometimes from other sources as indicated. Unless otherwise indicated all of these sources, both the bible text's, commentaries, and Strong's definition's are taken from the e-Sword Bible Program or sometimes from THE WORD from Online Bible.

Part 2 of Ezekiel Chapter 38

Introduction -

In chapter 38 of Ezekiel we see a description of the land of Israel being invaded by a confederacy of peoples from far to the north of them. This northern confederacy isn't alone in the attack but has several middle eastern countries in league with them. However, Ezekiel sees in the vision that they won't succeed but will be destroyed by God Himself. We may also learn in this lesson in which prophetic time the prophecy places the invasion. Ezekiel was also shown that Gog is one whom God had prophesied against many times through the Old Testament Prophets. But who were these prophets and by what name(s) was Gog or his people known at these earlier times? These last are questions not often mentioned or answered in studies of these prophecies.

The lesson text is Ezekiel 38:14 through 23 -

And thou shalt come from thy place out of the uttermost north, thou and many peoples with thee...

The two chapters 38 and 39 of Ezekiel are sometimes called the Russian Chapters because of the popular interpretation of Rosh as an early form of the modern name Russia and the places Magog, Meshech and Tubal as areas there. Many modern popular prophecy writers as well as some more classic commentators have both used this identification or mentioned it as possible. Why would the prophet Ezekiel mention Russia in a Bible prophecy and in any respect what is it that Gog does in the prophecy? In this study we'll look at these chapters to see if we can get some insight on these points.

Eze 38:14 Therefore prophesy, son of man, and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: **In that day when my people Israel dwelleth in safety**, shalt thou not know *it* ?

Comments -

In that day when my people Israel dwelleth in safety— showing that at the time of these prophecies the people of Israel will dwell in the land of Israel in peace and safety for a period of time. We have seen in modern history the beginning of the return of the Jewish people to the new nation of Israel. The question then is, when since Judah started returning (right after World War II) have they known any significant period when they were really at peace and felt truly safe? It doesn't seem that they have known true peace since the start of modern Israel

when they declared independence on May 14, 1948 and were immediately invaded by 4 of the surrounding countries Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Iraq. Since then they've had several major conflicts with those same neighbours. In recent times we've seen the Israeli's continuously guarding against terrorism waged by the Palestinian's who are supported by many of their neighbours. They haven't had any significant period of true peace and safety yet. Israel though small is very powerful militarily and has support and military aid from several powerful western nations such as the United States and Great Britain. But it is indicated in Daniel 11 that they will know a short time when they feel truly safe as a powerful new leader arises in the Middle East called the *little horn* (and known in John's Revelation as the *beast*) who will negotiate a peace accord with them for a period of time. But he will break the accord with Israel after this short period of seeming peace and will invade. Many commentators have seen the Syrian Seleucid Greek King Antiochus Epiphanes as the true fulfillment of all of this prophecy. Antiochus may be viewed as a precursor or early typification of the *little horn*. But he did not accomplish all of the criterion mentioned by Daniel so there must still remain a future complete fulfillment of all the prophecy by the *little horn* of Daniel 11. Since the little horn is seen as having a peace accord with Israel and Gog out of the uttermost north invades Israel in just such a time of peace it would seem reasonable that these two events may occur at the same time. This situation is similar to that of Antiochus Epiphanes who had only the power allowed by God who used other nations such as the Romans to also impact the course of affairs in the area and to prevent him from growing to powerful. He also was friendly at the start to those among the ancient Judeans who supported him. But upon returning from Egypt (being forced out by the threat of the Romans) he unleashed his fury with devastating results on the people in Judea. That is a type of power struggle predicted for the *little horn* in Daniel chapter 11.

Daniel 11:42 And he shall stretch forth his hand upon the countries; and the land of Egypt shall not escape. 43 And he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps. 44 But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him; and he shall go forth with great fury to exterminate, and utterly to destroy many. 45 And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the sea and the mountain of holy beauty; and he shall come to his end, and there shall be none to help him.

Eze 38:15 And thou shalt come from thy place out of the uttermost north, thou and many peoples with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great assemblage and a mighty army.

Comments -

And thou shalt come from thy place out of the uttermost north would seem to place Gog of Magog, Rosh, Meshech and Tubal in an area far to the north that apparently wasn't well known by Ezekiel. He could only describe it as being in the *uttermost north*. It wouldn't seem likely that he would mean only as far north as the area where the tribes of Magog, Meshech, Tubal and Gomer did exist at that time (being in our modern Turkey). That was the area of the old Hittite empire which the ancient Israelites did know about. Their own scriptures told them that their forebearers were from the areas of northern Syria and the land of the Hittites, these same general areas where Magog and company existed at the time that Ezekiel received this prophecy.

Eze 16:3 and say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah unto Jerusalem: Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of the Canaanite: thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother a Hittite.

Eze 16:45 Thou art the daughter of thy mother that loathed her husband and her children; and thou art the sister of thy sisters, who loathed their husbands and their children. Your mother was a Hittite, and your father an Amorite.

The Amorites were known to live in the area of northern Syria and the Hittite Empire was based in central Anatolia (modern Turkey). It would seem that Ezekiel, being a priest in the southern kingdom of Judah, would have been educated and would have surely known this whether or not he had ever been that far into the north himself.

Eze 1:3 the word of Jehovah came expressly unto Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and the hand of Jehovah was there upon him.

To make the point further, Ezekiel begins his prophecies in Mesopotamia, the land of the Chaldeans, well

outside of the land of Israel. The expression *out of the uttermost north* given in the spirit of prophecy seems surely to indicate a future area much farther north than the Anatolian Plateau which was not well known to Ezekiel. Once past northern Turkey on the other side of the Black Sea is the open steepe land of southern Russia which is why many scholars and writers have seen this prophecy as pointing to the modern Russians who they believe derived the name from the area name Rosh hinted at in verse 2 of Ezekiel 38. Writers have pointed out that the modern map shows many place and town names very similar to the names of these tribes mentioned by Ezekiel. It would seem possible that these tribes and others feeling pressure from the breakup and fighting of the larger empires in the area might have sought safety and room by migrating out. The best paths from there would have lead west to Thrace and north to the steepe lands.

Eze 38:16 And thou shalt come up against my people Israel as a cloud to cover the land--it shall be at the end of days--and I will bring thee against my land, that the nations may know me, when I shall be hallowed in thee, O Gog, before their eyes.

Comments -

*it shall be at the end of days...*and we are still waiting to see this invasion of Gog from the uttermost north and his defeat on the mountains on Israel. It will be in the latter days at *the end of days* of the prophetic timeline. We haven't seen an invasion of Israel quite like this by peoples from the northern steps and beyond. That is a persuasive indication that this fulfillment is still future. It did not occur in the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes. He was warned by Chittim which the old Jewish Sages viewed as symbolic of Rome and they also believed that Rome was in essence an Edomite empire founded by elements of old Edom. But they came in more from the west than from the north.

and I will bring thee against my land, that the nations may know me, when I shall be hallowed in thee, O Gog, before their eyes abstract thought perhaps to think about here would be this, why would God choose the people of Gog from so far to the north to defeat in the land of Israel and thereby use their defeat to prove that the land of Israel is His to give to His people as He chooses? The significance is this, wouldn't the point - that this is God's chosen land which He can give it to His chosen people the Israelites if He wants - be made to the world much more clearly and dramatically by simply defeating the Islamic countries surrounding them? They are the ones who in their religious faith draw inspiration from the connection to Ishmael the rival half brother of Isaac. And they have vowed to drive the Israelis into the sea. The battle for the land was started between them almost 4000 years ago. Today, 4 millenia later those same distant relatives, the children of Isaac and those of Ishmael's heritage, struggle over that same piece of land. What does the defeat of Gog from so far away in the uttermost north, from a completely different part of the world, have to do in any respect with the land of Israel? If we answer, "Oh well, they will invade the land of Israel!" That's true. They will...but only after God specifically puts the thought into their minds to invade..and not before that. So once again, the question is, how is it that the defeat of Gog of the land of Magog, of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal from the uttermost north have a clear symbolic significance to the issue of who lives in the land of Israel? It almost seems as if there is an ancient but not clearly known connection of Gog and Magog to the land and people of ancient Israel...a grudge that has lingered for a long time...and God plans to settle the matter.

Eze 38:17 Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Art thou not he of whom I have spoken in old time through my servants the prophets of Israel, who prophesied in those days, for *many* years, that I would bring thee against them?

Comments -

Art thou not he of whom I have spoken in old time through my servants the prophets of Israel... has had a contention with this leader from before the time of Ezekiel and has prophesied against him. Presumably the prophets who spoke out against Gog had some idea of who they were prophesying against and where he was located. Ezekiel seems to know here and places Gog in the uttermost north which seems to move him out of the area of the Middle East into Russia. The name only occurs once before this in 1 Chronicles 5:4 where it is the name of an Israelite man who doesn't seem to have anything to do with the prophecy. The word is used in Ezekiel Chapter 38 5 times in verses 2, 3, 14, 16 and 18. After that it occurs three times in Ezekiel Chapter 39 in verses 1 and 11, and as part of a compound name Hamon-gog in verse 15. After that it is used only one more time in the Revelation Chapter 20 verse 8 where Gog and Magog are pictured as coming up against

the land and people of Israel a final time at some time after the millenium at which point they are utterly destroyed by God.

Eze 38:18 And it shall come to pass in that day, in the day when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord Jehovah, *that* my fury shall come up in my face;

Eze 38:19 for in my jealousy, in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Verily in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel;

Eze 38:20 so that the fish of the sea, and the fowl of the heavens, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things which creep upon the earth, and all mankind 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.

Eze 38:21 And I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord Jehovah: every man's sword shall be against his brother.

Eze 38:22 And I will enter into judgment with him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many peoples that are with him, overflowing rain and great hailstones, fire and brimstone.

Comments -

A terrible judgement rained down upon Gog and his forces by God Himself emphasizing the deep atagonism that exists between God and His people on one side and the forces united under Gog of the land of Magog on the other. Gog seems to be representative in respects of all of the hatred existing in the world against the people of God.

Eze 38:23 And I will magnify myself, and sanctify myself, and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I *am* Jehovah.

Summary -

In Ezekiel Chapter 38 we saw an incredibly large invasion of the land of Israel at a time when they are at peace which has not been the case since they started coming back to the Promised Land. The invasion is lead by Gog the ruler of Magog, Rosh (possibly), Meshech and Tubal. Most of these names are areas known to have been in northern Turkey during Bible times. Some see the references as to areas further north on the other side of the Black Sea in the step lands of southern Russia if not even further north. If these are any element of the same people known by those names in Ezekiel's time then they must have migrated north out of the area at some point in the past. Many peoples did move across that area in those ancient times. We have also seen that ancient Jewish tradition held that Gog was of Edom, the ancestral enemies of Israel, and that explained the wrath God feels toward them here. God put the idea into Gog's mind, compelling him to invade Israel. The invasion, however, will fail because God will enter into the fight for Israel and destroy the invading hordes as we will see in the lesson on Ezekiel Chapter 39.