

24. Jesus in Ezekiel - Part 3

September 1, 2016

If you are into biblical prophecies, you have heard "Ezekiel 38 and 39" enough. Many Bible scholars and students consider this section of Ezekiel to rank among the most difficult prophetic passages in Scripture for a couple of reasons:

- 1) Identity of the place names
- 2) Timing of the battle

Some have identified this invasion by Magog with the Battle of Armageddon, described in the Book of Revelation 16 and 19, but the contrasts between these two events are too obvious and they are NOT the same battle.

Others spiritualize Ezekiel 38-39 that it will not be an actual event, rather something the church will face during the Great Tribulation period. Of course, they are making two major eschatological misinterpretations:

- 1) The church, the body of Jesus Christ will not go through the Tribulation.
- 2) The event in chapters of 38 and 39 of the Book of Ezekiel will be an actual event, not a spiritualized one.

A. GOG OF MAGOG

Ezekiel 38:1-6 Now the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 2 "Son of man, set your face against Gog, of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, and prophesy against him, 3 and say, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I am against you, O Gog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal. 4 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. 5 Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya are with them, all of them with shield and helmet; 6 Gomer and all its troops; the house of Togarmah from the far north and all its troops—many people are with you.

Obviously, Gog is the king or ruler of the land of Magog which is located between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea. Many believe that Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal are the regions of Magog.

The coalition force of Magog is quite impressive in human eyes:

- Magog – the modern day Russia
- Persia – the modern day Iran
- Ethiopia – the modern day Sudan
- Libya – Libya
- Gomer and Togarmah – the modern day Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan

Historically, Persia and Russia did not get along well at all. As a matter of fact, they were enemies. Persia had some axes to grind with Russia for a long time. Nobody ever thought that they would join the force together except the Lord. Now Russia and Iran are practically bosom buddies since 2003 when Iran decided that they wanted to have nuclear weapons to wipe Israel off the map. I wouldn't be one bit surprised if Russia and Iran develop a full-blown military alliance in the not-too-distant future.

In addition to Russia and Iran joining their forces together, Russia has been lending their bear paws to Syrian president Bashar al-Assad and his bloodthirsty military who practically is destroying the whole nation to remain in power. This is the precursor to the prophesied war of Gog and Magog.

Amongst the coalition force, we don't find Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt. For some unknown reasons, they will not be part of the force against Israel.

I believe that Russia will invade Israel, not because I can see and know what is going to happen through the current events, rather the Bible says so. Furthermore, Israel has something Russia would like to get their hands on.

From the Dead Sea water, Israeli companies generate around \$3 billion USD annually from the sale of Dead Sea minerals and from other products that Russia would like to have.

In addition to that, in 2012 BusinessWeek estimated there was \$240 billion worth of natural gas reserves available in Israel.

Some Bible critics say, "If this prophecy is real, why in the world is this army carrying swords, shields, and riding on horses?" This can be understood easily in a couple of explanations:

1) Yes, these are not the weapons of a modern army, but Ezekiel used language the people of that generation could understand as well as something he could describe. If he had written about jet planes and rockets, he would have been a poor communicator.

2) It has been said that if someone can detonate a neutron bomb from 250 miles above Kansas City which is located in the middle of the U.S., this will create enough electromagnetic pulse to wipe out every single electronic equipment, from a watch to vehicles, to computers, to airplanes that have power on, in the U.S. It means that no one can contact you unless that person uses smoke signals. If this battle that is mentioned in Ezekiel 38-39 happens during the 7 year Great Tribulation, there will be so much destruction and loss of civilizations around the world that mankind might have to use ancient style weapons as well as the modern day infantry weapons.

By the way, in 2010, the U.N. Security Council unanimously announced that they want to see "full implementation" of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), requiring a "nuclear free Middle East zone." To the uninformed people, that may sound good on the surface, but it's actually a direct attack on the State of Israel.

With the help from the Obama-brokered deal with Iran over its nuclear program, Iran is only a few steps away from becoming a nuclear weapon armed nation. But the Jewish State is currently believed to be the only country in the region that actually has nuclear weapons. While Israel is believed to have had an arsenal of 150-200 or so nuclear warheads since the 1960s, the country has never formally acknowledged having them, a policy it calls "strategic ambiguity." But no one has ever truly worried about Israel having nuclear weapons because everyone knows the weapons are for defensive purposes only. Israeli leaders have never threatened to annihilate its neighbors, much less do so on a daily or weekly basis like Iran.

What makes the new U.N. announcement so dangerous is that it does nothing to stop Iran from continuing to build its own nuclear weapons. Rather, it turns the world's attention away from stopping Iran from getting offensive nukes and towards pressuring Israel to give up its defensive nukes. The world will now ramp up unbearable pressure on Israel first to disclose and second to dismantle all of its nuclear arsenal, and claim that no more action can be taken to stop Iran until the "double standard" of Israel is dealt with.

B. THE INVASION OF THE COALITION FORCE

Ezekiel 38:7-13 "Prepare yourself and be ready, you and all your companies that are gathered about you; and be a guard for them. 8 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. 9 You will ascend, coming like a storm, covering the land like a cloud, you and all your troops and many peoples with you." 10 'Thus says the Lord God: "On that day it shall come to pass that thoughts will arise in your mind, and you will make an evil plan: 11 You will say, 'I will go up against a land of unwalled villages; I will go to a peaceful people, who dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates'- 12 to take plunder and to take booty, to stretch out your hand against the waste places that are again inhabited, and against a people gathered from the nations, who have acquired livestock and goods, who dwell in the midst of the land. 13 Sheba, Dedan, the merchants of Tarshish, and all their young lions will say to you, 'Have you come to take plunder? Have you gathered your army to take booty, to carry away silver and gold, to take away livestock and goods, to take great plunder?'"

I know what you are thinking. You've been wondering, "OK, Preacher, when is this going to happen?" Here is the answer: I don't know. It can happen before the rapture or during the Great Tribulation.

Many Biblical scholars believe that the Antichrist is currently living in Europe and already positioning himself to be the next leader. He is the kind of guy who can fit a square peg into a round hole with his slick diplomacy.

Did you notice that no country will come to help Israel when they will be invaded by the coalition force of Magog, except the Lord? I really don't believe that there is one single nation around the world that cares for Israel. And if the Iranians and Russians take complete control of Israel, it is no skin off the European nose. Besides, many European politicians are influenced by their vast muslim voters.

Whatever king Gog's thinking might be, it's clear that it is the Lord who brings this army out against Himself. King Gog thinks he has worked out the whole scheme, but it is God who is in charge. I don't know whether that Gog is Putin or not. But the northern coalition comes into the land of Israel with confidence of victory, but they are walking into a trap made by the Lord.

C. JUDGMENT ON GOG

Ezekiel 38:18-23 "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. 19 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, 20 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.' 21 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. 22 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 hail-

stones, fire, and brimstone. 23 Thus I will magnify Myself and sanctify Myself, and I will be known in the eyes of many nations. Then they shall know that I am the Lord.”

It doesn't matter what decisions will be made in the war room of Magog, but it only will conform to the will of the Lord who planned this invasion before the creation of the universe for His own purposes.

Proverbs 21:1 The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, Like the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes.

I am sure that in the minds of Gog and the coalition force leaders, the victory will be a done deal, because they have such a big force and Israel would be all alone if Hillary Clinton becomes the next President of the United States

But before Gog's coalition force will start to destroy Israel, the Lord will intervene in His wrath and faithfulness to protect His own people Israel and wipe out the invading forces with the divine arsenals that no human military can fight against – earthquake, plague, flood rain, great hailstorm, fire and brimstone from the sky. If that is not bad enough, the Lord will put panic in the minds of the invading soldiers that they will begin to kill one another in suicidal strife. There will be so many dead bodies that it will take 7 months to bury them all, according to chapter 39 of this Book.

D. DESTRUCTION OF GOG'S COALITION FORCE

Ezekiel 39:6-10 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. 7 So I will make My holy name known in the midst of My people Israel, and I will not let them profane My holy name anymore. Then the nations shall know that I am the Lord, the Holy One in Israel. 8 Surely it is coming, and it shall be done," says the Lord God. "This is the day of which I have spoken. 9 "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. 10 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.

Instead of slaughtering the Jews, Gog's soldiers will themselves be slaughtered and become food for the vultures and the beasts of the field. But the Lord won't stop with His judgment of the armies that invade Israel; He will also send a fiery judgment on the land of Magog itself. So much for the great forces of Russia and its allies. No more.

I find two reasons for the Lord to bring Gog's coalition forces to Israel and defeating them so dramatically:

1) The victory will reveal the greatness of the Lord as He will display His power before all nations.

Ezekiel 38:23 Thus I will magnify Myself and sanctify Myself, and I will be known in the eyes of many nations. Then they shall know that I am the Lord.

There is no evidence that the Israel Defense Force will ever get to fire a shot. The Lord will use His weapons – earthquakes, hailstone, fire and brimstone from sky, diseases, and utter confusion to kill one another.

2) The victory will reveal the holiness of the Lord to Israel and be convicted of her own sins.

In chapter 36, the Jews profaned the name of the Lord while they were dispersed all over the world before. Though the Lord has gathered them back into their own land, they still are not the followers of their God. However, they will start to realize that the Lord is real and their Protector, and the Holy One of Israel.

E. APPLICATIONS

1) We don't need to fear anything or anyone, because we are His children and He will not be defeated.

2) We do need to remember all the time that God is faithful.

3) The world event is moving very fast in our eyes. But it is falling into its place according to the Lord's time exactly.

Luke 21:28 Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.