

Eschatology 101
Week 6
The Magog Invasion of Israel

Although there is some debate about this, I believe the next event after the rapture of the Church on God's timeline is the Invasion of Israel by Magog and its allies.

This event is recorded in Ezekiel 38&39 right after the prophecy of the dry bones that represent the rebirth of the nation Israel.

During this event, Magog and allied nations are brought against Israel by God and then supernaturally destroyed by God.

This is a key event in end-times prophecy and I believe that if we look at the world stage today, we can see the clouds of this coming storm starting to form.

As I said, the timing of this event is not certain and there is some debate about it, but if you study it carefully, you will see distinctions between this event and others like it described in the end-times.

Tim LeHaye and Jerry Jenkins, in their book series *Left Behind*, have this event taking place just before the Rapture of the Church as kind of a last ditch effort by God to display his power and turn people to Himself. LeHaye though has said that though they placed the event prior to the Rapture in the books, he believes it will take place sometime after the Rapture but before the covenant between the Anti-Christ and Israel.

This is also the view held by Chuck Missler, Thomas Ice, and many others also hold this view.

There are key details in the text that indicate to me that it is likely to happen in the undetermined interval between the Rapture of the Church, and the beginning of the 70th week.

We will take a look at these details as we get into the text.

"I have always thought that one of the strengths of this view is the way in which it could set the stage for the Biblical scenario of the tribulation. If the tribulation is closely preceded by a failed regional invasion of Israel, in other words Russia and her Muslim allies, then this would remove much of the Russian and Muslim influence currently in the world today and allow a Euro-centric orientation to arise. So the tribulation is preceded by a failed regional attack on Israel and this is why the tribulation ends with all the peoples of the world attacking Israel at Armageddon. It could also set the stage for the rebuilding of the Temple as a result of Islamic humiliation." - Thomas Ice

Another widely held view among dispensationalists is that this event takes place somewhere around the middle of the 70th week. This view ties the invasion here with one by the king of the north in Daniel 11:40. One of the Key factors in this view is that the text of Ezekiel states that Israel will be living securely and in peace. Those that believe this event happens in the middle of

the 70th week point to this and say that it speaks of the false peace brought by the Anti-Christ as a result of the covenant.

This view does have a lot going for it.

Another view is that this event and the battle of Armageddon are one in the same. Armageddon is a huge battle and invasion of Israel by all nations of the world that happens at the second coming of Jesus.

A similar view is that this event takes place between the second coming and the start of the millennium.

The last major view is that this event is the same as the one described in Revelation 20:7-9:

[Rev 20:7-9 NKJV] 7 Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison 8 and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number [is] as the sand of the sea. 9 They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them.

The obvious strength of this view is that Gog and Magog, who are the significant players in Ezekiel 38 & 39 are mentioned by name.

The Bible does not clearly define the timing of this event, but there are clear clues in the text that lead people to lean one way or another.

Lets take a look at the text itself and see what it says.

Verses 1-3

First who are these guys?

Gog? Magog? Rosh? Meshech? Tubal?

Why the weird names?

The Bible uses the original names. They named countries after the people who founded it. We change the names of places all the time i.e. Istanbul was Constantinople was Byzantium. We don't change the names of our ancestors.

Lets start with Gog who seems to be a person, not a place. He is described as the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal.

There was a person named Gog and he is mentioned in 1 Chron 5:4 as a son of Joel. That is the only mention of that name until it appears here and there is no evidence that it is the same guy.

We also know from the passage we just read in Rev 20, that Gog shows up again at the end of the millennium.

That leads me to believe that this is not a human that we are talking about.

We have talked in previous weeks about how the Bible shows us in several places that there are spiritual beings behind the nations of the world.

Take a look at Daniel 10:12-13 and verse 20.

[Dan 10:12-13, 20 NKJV] 12 Then he said to me, "Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. 13 "But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia.

... 20 Then he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? And now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come.

Lets take a look at another interesting passage:

[Amo 7:1 NKJV] 1 Thus the Lord GOD showed me: Behold, He formed locust swarms at the beginning of the late crop; indeed [it was] the late crop after the king's mowings.

The Septuagint version of the Bible is a greek version of the Old Testament that was finished around 132 BC.

It is what is quoted from in the New testament when they quote scripture.

Here is the septuagint version of that Amos passage we just read:

Amos 7:1(LXX) Thus has the Lord God shewed me; and, behold, a swarm of locusts coming from the east; and, behold, one caterpillar, king Gog.

The Locusts mentioned here have a king named Gog and yet in Proverbs we read:

[Pro 30:27 NKJV] 27 The locusts have no king, Yet they all advance in ranks;

It appears that Gog is a demonic entity of some sort.

So who are the rest of the players?

Magog is the land of Gog.

Jerome, Josephus and others tie Magog to the land of the ancient Scythians. The Scythians are the modern-day Russians.

Rosh - There is some debate about how the words are translated here. Some say it should be translated "The Chief Prince of Meshech and Tubal" rather than "The prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal."

From the little study I have done I believe there is sufficient evidence to go with the translation as it is in the New King James with Rosh listed along with Meshech and Tubal.

In my opinion it is not a big deal either way because if Rosh is supposed to be here we understand Rosh to be Russia from many ancient sources, and we have already determined that Magog is also a reference to Russia.

Joe Fotch deals with this in his audio commentary on this chapter which I highly recommend you go listen to.

Also you can find articles by Thomas Ice dealing with this subject on his website <http://www.pre-trib.org> entitled "Ezekiel 38 & 39 part 3", "Ezekiel 38 & 39 part 4", and "Ezekiel 38 & 39 part 5".

Meshech and Tubal -

These guys are recognized from the table of Nations in Genesis 10.

[Gen 10:2 NKJV] 2 The sons of Japheth [were] Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras.

Allen Ross,, in his book "The Table of Nations in Genesis" says thus about them:

"Tubal and Mesek are always found together in the Bible. They represent the northern military states that were exporting slaves and copper (Ezekiel 27:13, 38:2, 39:1, 32:26 and Isaiah 66:19). Herodotus placed their dwelling on the north shore of the Black Sea (III, 94). Josephus identified them as the Cappadocians. . . . Mesek must be located in the Moschian mountains near Armenia. Their movement was from eastern Asia Minor north to the Black Sea."

Meshech and Tubal inhabit the area we know today as the country of Turkey.

Verses 4 - 9

God is going to bring these countries down from the north to invade Israel.

Here are the rest of the players listed in the chapter:

Persia = present day Iran

Cush = Sudan area

Phut = North Africa

Gomer = Germany (Turkey?)

Togarmah = Turkic tribes

Meschech and Tubal = Modern day Turkey
 Sheba and Dedan = Saudi Arabia and Jordan
 Tarshish = The British isles

Notice the countries who are missing. Before 2001 and the second Iraq war, it was Saddam Hussein who was rattling his sword and boasting of driving Israel into the sea. Many thought it was strange that they were not in this list of nations.

It is not strange to us because they have become, for the most part, irrelevant.

Syria is not mentioned and neither are the Palestinian people. There are some who believe there will be a preceding event that will wipe out those nations. They believe that Psalm 83 predicts this event.

It may be. We know from the book of Isaiah that Damascus will be utterly destroyed at some point and never inhabited again also.

I encourage you to go and study Psalm 83 and the other passages dealing with Damascus and come to your own conclusions. There are some compelling arguments on both sides of the issue.

(8)

Israel dwelling safely - confidently

These armies will be like a cloud or storm covering the whole land.

The only way Israel survives this is supernatural intervention by the Lord.

This will happen in the latter days, in the latter years, after Israel has been reborn in the land.

Since 1948, nothing like what is described here has happened, so we can conclude that these events are yet future.

Verses 10-17

During this time, they are dwelling in unwalled villages as a peaceful people and they are dwelling safely (Confidently).

Israel today is a land of unwalled villages with the exception of the old wall around Jerusalem.

In the Old Testament times, every village or town had a wall for protection. We do not see that today.

Some argue that Israel is not dwelling securely or safely today because of the pressures of Syria, Lebanon, and the Palestinians.

Here in verse 12, they come to take plunder and booty. The purpose of the invasion is to steal wealth of some sort. Israel's major enemies today are opposed to her for spiritual reasons.

Israel today has no desired natural resources, no oil that they are telling anyone about, no diamonds, no gold.

We are not sure what booty or plunder is being spoken of here but evidently they become a wealthy nation at some point with goods that these nations coming against them desire.

Sheba and Dedan - Saudi Arabia

Tarshish and her young lions - Many believe that Tarshish represents Britain. There is evidence that the peoples of the middle east traded with Britain for tin. Stone Henge has a lot of archeological evidence supporting this.

Tarshish is not explicitly defined in other writings but it is said to be across the Mediterranean past the straights of Gibraltar.

Some believe the young lions are the younger countries who were born out of Britain. Possibly the US and Canada.

Verses 18 - 23

As this great army of Gog and Magog is invading, God intervenes and supernaturally destroys them.

There is a great earthquake that levels the area and God sends a flooding rain as well as fire and brimstone.

This will be a great sight to see.

The Lord will magnify Himself through this event and make Himself known in the eyes of many nations.

It will be evident to those who witness this event what happened.

Chapter 39

Verses 1-8

Bows and Arrows - Launchers and Missiles.

Ezekiel was using ancient language to describe modern weaponry.

Verse 6 reiterates that God is going to send fire on Magog, but it also mentions those who dwell in the coastlands.

There is a lot of speculation over who these people are. Some think it could be a reference to the U.S.

Again, we see the purpose of all of this is to make the name of the Lord known among many nations, but especially among His people Israel.

Because this event is dealing specifically with the nation and people of Israel, I believe it takes place post-rapture.

Another example of why it is important that we keep Israel and the Church separate when we are studying the scriptures.

This event seems to be the beginning of Israel turning back to their God and will begin their walk toward recognizing Jesus as their messiah.

Verses 9-10

They are going to burn the weapons for 7 years.

This is why I believe this event happens before the 70th week/tribulation period.

It could happen at the end of the 7 year period and they could be using the weapons for fuel for the first 7 years of the millennium, but I believe it fits best right before the 7th week.

It definitely does not fit at the end of the millennium because that is the point where we enter eternity with a new heaven and a new earth and the old heaven and old earth are past away.

These verses along with some other we are about to read lead many to believe that these are nuclear weapons.

Verses 11-16

The steps taken here to bury the dead sound almost identical to the steps outlined by the Dept. of Defense on how to deal with a nuclear or biological attack.

There is a team of professionals hired that are responsible for burying. If an untrained person runs across a dead body they are not to touch it or bury it themselves but to set a marker and let the professionals handle it.

More evidence for this being some type of nuclear exchange.

Just as a side note that is fun to look at...

We are seeing what we believe to be nuclear weapons described here by Ezekiel. Did you know that what we call smart weapons or guided missiles are also found in scripture?

Jer. 50:9 ¶ For, lo, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country: and they shall set themselves in array against her; from thence she shall be taken: their arrows shall be as of a mighty expert man; none shall return in vain.

In this passage the expertise is in the arrows(missiles) none of them miss their targets.

Verses 17 - 20

Here we see what becomes of the men who came up against Israel.

Again remember that Ezekiel is using ancient language and experience to describe what He is seeing.

Soos – translated horse, literally means leaper. Also translated bird (Jer8:7), or chariot rider (Ex14:9). This is 2500 yr old language trying to describe a mechanized force. We call mechanized infantry today calvalry.

Chereb – means sword (Ezek38:21) has become a generic term for any type of weapon.

Khayts – arrow – can mean something that pierces or a javelin. Occasionally translated thunderbolt. We might use the word missile.

qeh-sheth – bow – literally launcher – what launches the Kayts.

Verses 21-29

God is now dealing with Israel again as His people. They have paid the price for turning their back on Him. He has set them aside for a time and worked in and through the gentiles, but now He is beginning the process of wooing His chosen people back to Himself.

This will culminate at the Second coming when they finally recognize Jesus as their Messiah!

Where are we at today?

Russia today:

Just a short time ago for many of us Russia was irrelevant on the world stage. The Soviet Union fell and many thought that was the end of Russia as a world power.

Today they hold the worlds largest natural gas reserves, the 2nd largest coal reserves, and the 8th largest oil reserves.

Russia is also the largest exporter of natural gas, the 2nd largest oil exporter, and the 3rd largest energy consumer.

They are reaping the benefits of high energy costs.

Russia-Israeli relations:

Russia was an ally to Israel in 1948 when they became a nation. They provided Israel with weapons to fight the contingent of hostile countries including Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and Jordan.

Since then however, the relationship has soured with Russia threatening to attack Israel in 1956 and 1973 and after the 1967 six-day war, Russia severed diplomatic relationships with Israel and aligned itself with Israel's enemies.

The relationship has thawed slightly since the collapse of the Soviet Union, but Russia remains tightly aligned with Israel's enemies, providing advanced weapons to Syria, and providing nuclear technology to Iran.

Russia is also providing the palestinians with rockets and other weapons.

Russia is no friend to Israel.

What can/should we do?

raise the bar on your personal walk.

Commit to learning as much about God's plan as you can from studying and really learning His word.

Pay attention to current events and understand their relevance to what the word of God says. This can be one of your most powerful witnessing tools.