

God's Eternal Plan #23
When Russia Invades Palestine
Ezekiel 36:20-23

No people can reject God, ignore the truth of God, and walk independently of God, without inviting the divine judgment of God! In the Tribulation Period, which is that seven-year period that will follow the translation of the Church, nations will walk in disobedience. They will ignore the truth of God, they will shake their fists in the face of God, and they will defy God to do anything about it.

The prophet Ezekiel gives us a divine judgment of which God will pour out, perhaps, the mightiest, the most numerous nation that has existed on the face of the earth. As well as the strongest coalition of nations that will have existed on the earth. And God will move in such a singular and spectacular way that the entire world shall have evidence that God is God, and beside Him there is no other.

God not only desires to control the life of an individual, so that we can say to a man, "God has a plan for your life," God also desires to control nations. And He controls people and nations through our obedience to Him. For example, when Israel, in the Old Testament, walked in disobedience against God, they fell at the hands of the Assyrians. And then God turned, through the prophets, to the little nation of Judah, and said to them, "Didn't you see what happened to Israel, and how their disobedience caused them to fall at the hands of the Assyrians? Won't you obey me?" **But Judah refused to obey Him.** And as a result the Babylonians over-ran Judah and took them captive. And the process goes on down through history.

And, in the end time, God is still seeking to do for His people what He did for them of old. He wants them to commit to His sovereign authority over the nations, and to avoid the catastrophic destruction on a vast portion of the earth's surface. But Bible prophecy tells us that history will repeat itself, and their disobedience will bring about vast destruction. And some of this destruction will come in the form of *wars*.

The Bible tells about three great end-time battles. The first one is depicted in Ezekiel 38 and 39. It is an invasion of Palestine by a coalition of nations from the far north. The second battle predicted in connection with the coming of Christ is one in which "all nations" gather specifically against Jerusalem. **It is described in a number of Old Testament passages and in the book of Revelation.** This is the "**Battle of Armageddon.**" The third and last conflict of biblical prophecy is depicted in Revelation 20:7-10. **It will take place after the millennial reign of Jesus Christ comes to a close and just before the**

eternal order is established. Our understanding of the prophetic scriptures will be greatly enhanced by a clear picture of these three battles as they relate to one another.

In this study we are going to look at the first of these battles that has to do with “Gog” and “Magog.” Ezekiel 38:1-6 gives us this insight, “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, 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. 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.”

Verses 2 and 3 contain some proper names, which we believe establish the identity of the leading nation in this attack as modern Russia. I will examine each of these proper nouns, and will ask that you consider them carefully with me.

The first is “Gog” and is the symbolic name of the man who heads this northern confederacy of nations. By itself it tells us nothing about the identity of the nations involved.

The second is “Magog” and is the symbolic name of his people, the land over which he rules. There is almost universal agreement that *Magog* refers to the land area north of the Caucasus Mountains. A look at any world map will clearly identify this area as present-day Russia.

The third is “Rosh.” This word is not found in our King James Version, because the King James translators took this word as an adjective meaning “chief.” Many of the finest grammarians, however, insist this is a proper noun, and therefore, should read, “...Gog...prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal...”

The fourth is “Meshech” and appears in the Bible first as one of the sons of Japheth (Genesis 10:2). It is an ancient tribal name for Moscow. Many linguistics feel it is related to the “Moschi” (Moske), a people who inhabited part of the country between the Black and Caspian Seas. From this word “Moschi” came a later designation of these people as Muscovites, and from this the name “Moscow.”

The fifth is “Tubal and is often regarded as an ancient tribal name from which the former eastern capital of Russia, “Tobolsk,” is derived. Tobolsk was one of Russia’s most famous cities.

In all of these passages, “Gog” is said to be north of Palestine. Once more let me remind you that directions in the Bible are always given in relation to Palestine. Palestine is the geographic center of the earth’s surface, and all directions start in this land, so that south in the Bible always means south of Palestine, north is always north of Palestine, and so was east and west. In the Bible, “Gog” and the land of “Magog” are located north of Palestine, and can refer to nothing else than Russia and her allies. If you were to draw a straight line from Jerusalem to the North Pole on your world map or globe, this line will pass right through the city of Moscow.

Both Moscow and Jerusalem are located in the same meridian, just a few seconds west of the fortieth meridian. The northern armies, who will meet their “waterloo” when they invade Palestine in the latter days, can be none else then the communistic bloc under the leadership of Russia.

Look again at Ezekiel 38:14-16, 22-23, “Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say to Gog, Thus says the Lord God: On that day when My people Israel dwell safely, will you not know it? Then you will come from your place out of the far north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great company and a mighty army. You will come up against My people Israel like a cloud, to cover the land. It will be in the latter days that I will bring you against My land, so that the nations may know Me, when I am hallowed in you, O Gog, before their eyes...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. 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.”

We know this prophecy has not yet been fulfilled. Nothing like this has taken place, and the time for its fulfillment is designated as “in the latter days.” The “latter days” of Israel will not arrive until the Church is raptured, and God once again takes up His dealing with this nation. In addition to that, the conditions at present do not meet the requirements of this prophecy, for Israel is not “dwelling in peace and safety.” A quick look at the News will reveal that Israel is maintaining a standing army, and must be ever ready to ward off an invasion by Arab or Egyptian forces. The situation in the Middle East must change radically from what it is today before the prophecy of Ezekiel 38 and 39 can be fulfilled.

In order to determine the time these northern powers will invade Palestine, we must study the prophetic Scriptures to see when the Jewish people living in Palestine will no longer feel the need to be on guard for fear of hostile neighbors. This situation will prevail only when present enemies become friendly, or when some great world power, feared by all the nations, gives Israel absolute assurance of protection. Daniel clearly teaches us that the second of the alternatives will take place. In his prophecy of the “seventy weeks” which are determined on the Jewish people and their holy city, he tells us that after the Messiah has been “cut off” (by crucifixion) “...the people of the prince shall come destroy the city and the sanctuary...” **This prediction that Jerusalem and the temple would be destroyed was literally fulfilled by the Romans in 70 A.D.** However, a careful study will reveal the prophets make it clear that this “prince who shall come” was *not* Titus, the man who led the Romans in 70 A.D. Often in the prophetic Scriptures we find a double reference. **The prophet saw two future events, the first one a shadow of the greater and final fulfillment of this prophecy.** Notice the wording that says, “the people of the prince,” (that is the Romans) did destroy the city and temple. The “prince” in view, however, did not appear on the scene when this took place in 70 A.D. **This “prince that shall come” is the man who will be the end-time world ruler, the head of the Federation of Western Nations, which shall constitute the revived Roman Empire.** Looking forward to the activity of this Roman prince in the latter days of Israel’s history, Daniel says in Daniel 9:27, “Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week (seven years); but in the middle of the week (three and one half years) he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate.”

The Scripture clearly teach the seven-year Tribulation Period will be divided into two segments of three and one half years each. For about three and one half years the world ruler will pose as the best friend the Jewish people have ever had. However, he will suddenly turn against them and inaugurate a period of bitter persecution, which Jeremiah called “the time of Jacob’s trouble.” **Israel certainly will not be dwelling in peace and safety once this “beast” of the prophetic Scriptures turns against them.** However, the first half of this seven-year period will meet the requirements of Ezekiel’s prophecy very well, for Israel will then be living with a false feeling of peace and security. Therefore, we conclude that this invasion from the far north will occur at some time after the Church is raptured, but before Antichrist turns against the people of Israel.

With those truths behind us, I want you to look at Ezekiel 38:5-6 and notice the list of nations that will be allies with Russia when she launches this invasion, “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.”

The first nation mentioned here is “Persia.” The **Davis Dictionary of the Bible**” points out that Persia is present-day Iran.

Moscow knows how important the oil-producing countries on the Persian Gulf are to the United States and to Western Europe. It also knows that Iran is the key to the Persian Gulf and its future conquest of the Middle East. And that is why in our present-day events we see Russia supplying the nuclear fuel for Iran’s nuclear reactor. So Persia, or Iran, leads the list of nations allied with Russia as it embarks on this invasion that is destined to end in Israel.

The second nation mentioned seen marching with Russia toward Israel is “Ethiopia.” It wasn’t too long ago that Ethiopia was friendly to the West. Ethiopia was once ruled over by Emperor Haile Selassie, the Lion of Judah, who traced his lineage back to the time of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. He occupied the throne as the country’s 225th Emperor in a monarchy that extended on for 3,000 years.

But God foresaw the day coming when Ethiopia would be in the Russian Camp. So on December 23, 1974, a newspaper headline declared, **Ethiopia plunges to the left!**” Once considered a Christian nation, Ethiopia is today Marxist ruled and will be found marching with those who one day will be advancing toward Jerusalem.

The third nation seen allied with Russia is “Libya.” Libya, you will recall, recently merged with Syria to form an 11 million strong Arab state pledged to renew the fight against Israel and **“liberate”** all of Palestine. So it is only natural that Libya should be included in the Russian camp. Libya has a huge arsenal supplied by Russia plus a \$35-billion-dollar-a-year oil income to holster its military machine.

The fourth nation mentioned as allied with Russia is “Gomer.” Gomer is almost universally among Jewish historians looked on as present-day Germany. Again we see how Germany was divided following World War II, and although the **“Berlin Wall”** has fallen, part of Germany along with Poland was a part of Russia’s domain.

Finally, mention is made of “Togarmah.” This is a name that is usually identified as Turkey. Although Turkey is still somewhat friendly with the West, how long it will remain so is anyone’s guess. But the instability of the

government, along with the nearness to Russia, offers an opportunity to ally herself with Russia.

So what we are seeing is God fulfilling His Word. The stage is set for this dramatic role prophesied to take place in the end-time. **And it is a fact that time is running out!**