

Ezekiel Prophecy Reveals Major Future Alliance Against Israel

Ezekiel 38-39 foretells a massive future invasion of Israel by the armed forces of six nations. Five of those nations are identified in Ezekiel 38:5-6 with the names they bore in Ezekiel's time.

The first nation, Persia, is now the modern state of Iran. It is currently ruled by an Islamic fundamentalist government that is building significant military power, including the development of nuclear weapons. It has openly declared its commitment to the annihilation of the Jewish state of Israel.

The second nation, Ethiopia, was not the same as modern Ethiopia. Instead, it occupied the area later known as Nubia. Today it is known as Sudan and is dominated by an Islamic fundamentalist government that is using brutal means, including crucifixion of Christians, to attempt to establish a pure, Islamic state.

The third nation, Libya, the western neighbor of Egypt, is also an Islamic nation today. It is strongly anti-West and anti-Israel, and Western intelligence has been informed that Libya has hired Eastern European and former Soviet military scientists to aid its development of military power.

The people of the fourth nation, Gomer, were also known as the Cimmerians. They originally lived north of the Caucasus Mountains in the southern part of what is modern Russia. In Ezekiel's time, they had settled in what is now central Turkey.

The people of the fifth nation, Togarmah, were identified by Josephus as the Phrygians (Antiquities, I. 6, 1 [126]), who

settled in Cappadocia, now eastern Turkey.

Considering the location of the fourth and fifth nations in Turkey, it should be noted that the present secular government of Turkey is being threatened by Islamic fundamentalists. As a result, some leaders fear that Turkey could become another Iran. If that happens, all the nations named in Ezekiel 38:5-6 will be characterized by a militant Islamic hatred of Israel.

The Identity of the Leader of the Invasion

The five nations of Ezekiel 38:5–6 will be led by a sixth in the future attack against Israel. God gave three identifying marks for that leader.

The Leader's Name

The leader will be “Gog, of the land of Magog” (see Ezek. 38:2). Jerome, a prominent church leader (345-420 A.D.), declared that Magog was located north of the Caucasus Mountains, near the Caspian Sea. Josephus (Antiquities, I. 6, 1 [123]) and Greek writers associated the name “Magog” with the Scythians. According to the revised International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, the major group of Scythians lived near the Black Sea “from the Caucasus around to the Danube.” It appears, then, that the land of Magog was located near the Black and Caspian Seas north of the Caucasus Mountains, in the southern part of 20th-century Russia.

The Leader's Political Position

The leader is identified as “the chief prince” or ruler “of Meshech and Tubal” (see Ezek. 38:2; 39:1). Classical Greek writers called the people of Meshech the “Moschoi,” and Assyrian records referred to them as the “Muski.” This group settled in the area of Armenia, “where the borders of Russia, Iran and Turkey converge.”

The people of Tubal were located in the central part of Turkey immediately west of Togarmah.

The Leader's Geographical Location

Gog's location is "the north parts" (see Ezek. 38:15; 39:2). The Hebrew word translated "parts" means "extreme or uttermost parts." Since Ezekiel was a Hebrew prophet, he would refer to geographical locations from the vantage point of his homeland. Thus, his statement in 38:15 indicates that when Gog leads the six-nation attack against Israel, he will come from his location in the extreme or uttermost parts directly north of Israel. Russia is the nation situated in the extreme or uttermost parts directly north of Israel.

From what has been observed, it appears that Russia will lead the future invasion against Israel foretold in Ezekiel 38-39. Why would Russia do this? One reason is anti-Semitism. Before Communism, Russia was notorious for brutal persecution of Jews. While Communism held an iron grip on the government of that nation, it suppressed the outward expression of hatred for Jews. Now that Communism has lost that grip, at least for a while, anti-Semitism has been allowed to raise its ugly head again.

Some members of Pamyat, a strongly anti-Semitic organization that wants to rid Russia of all Jews, blame all of that nation's problems on the Jews. Some have even accused Jews of being the source of the AIDS virus. As a result of these ominous trends and the lifting of Communist rule, a mass exodus of Jews from the former Soviet Union has been taking place since the early 1990s, with the majority returning to their ancient homeland of Israel.

There is another reason for Russia to lead the future invasion—a desire for status. According to an independent secular intelligence agency, officers of the armed forces of the former Soviet Union believe that Russia can still have superpower status, even without Communism, if it will ally itself with Islamic nations against Israel.

In line with this, early in the 1990s, an official Soviet

government spokesman stated that young people in the nation's schools are being required to learn Arabic as their second language because his government had concluded that the future of their nation lies with the Islamic nations of the world.

The Time of the Invasion

In Ezekiel 38:8-16, God declared that this future invasion of Israel would take place "in the latter years" and "latter days." That would be after Israel has been regathered from the nations to its homeland and feels so safe and secure that it will have no defenses of its own (see verses 8, 11-12, 14). There has been an amazing regathering of Israel to its homeland since its re-establishment as a nation state in 1948, but certainly Israel does not feel so safe and secure there today that it has no defenses of its own.

Since the Scriptures indicate that there will be no warfare during the future reign of the Messiah (see Ps. 72:7; Isa. 9:6-7; Mic. 4:3-4), this invasion cannot take place during the Millennium. Is there any time between now and Christ's Second Coming to establish the Millennium when Israel will feel so safe and secure that it will not maintain its defenses? It appears so.

According to Daniel 9:27, at the very beginning of the future seven-year Tribulation period, the Antichrist will enforce a strong covenant with Israel. It will so strongly bind Israel to the Antichrist that he will regard that nation as an extension of himself and his empire in the Middle East. As a result, through that covenant, the Antichrist will guarantee Israel's national security. This guarantee will cause Israel to feel so safe and secure that it will discontinue the costly burden of maintaining its defenses.

This feeling of security will not last long, however. In the middle of the Tribulation, the Antichrist will begin to decimate Israel (see Dan. 9:27; Matt. 24:15-21); thus, the nation will feel safe and secure only during the first half of

the seven-year Tribulation. It appears, then, that the invasion of Israel by Russia and its Islamic allies will take place during the first half of the Tribulation, perhaps shortly before its midpoint.

The Invader's Attitude and Actions

The invaders will think that since Israel has let down its military guard, it will be their opportune time to strike and plunder its resources (see Ezek. 38:10-13). As a result, they will launch such a large invasion force that it will seem like a massive cloud covering the land (see Ezek. 38:9, 15-16).

God's Attitude And Actions

God's initial action will be to pull these invaders into Israel for His own sovereign purpose (see Ezek. 38:4, 16; 39:2). When they attack, His attitude toward them will be characterized by fury, jealousy, and fiery wrath (see Ezek. 38:18-19). He will then actively intervene to destroy the massive invading force through a fierce earthquake, landslides, self-destructive panic, pestilence, excessive rain, great hailstones, fire and brimstone (see Ezek. 38:19-22).

The destruction of the invading army will be so extensive that the mountains and open fields of Israel and a valley near the Dead Sea will be congested with corpses. God will bring fowl and beasts to eat many of them. It will take the Jews seven months to bury the remainder of the dead and seven years to destroy their weapons (see Ezek. 39:3-5, 9-20). If this invasion takes place shortly before the middle of the Tribulation, this destruction of weapons will continue into the early part of the Millennium.

God's purpose for all of this will be to glorify Himself before Israel and all the nations—to so impress them with His existence and power that He will have life-changing influence on them (see Ezek. 38:16, 23; 39:7, 13, 21-22). Many Jews and Gentiles will be saved during the Tribulation (see Rev. 7). No

doubt the fulfillment of the Ezekiel 38-39 prophecy will be one of the means through which God will bring people of that time to Himself.

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