

Ezekiel 38-39-The Russian Led Invasion of Israel

Introduction

One of the most fascinating prophecies in the Bible is that of the Russian invasion of Israel during the Tribulation period. This Russian led invasion of Israel will take place during the midway point of the Tribulation period, which is also called by students of biblical prophecy, “Daniel’s Seventieth Week.”

“Daniel’s Seventieth Week” refers to the last seven of the four hundred ninety prophetic years of Israel’s history, which is called by students of prophecy, “The Seventy Weeks of Daniel” and is recorded in Daniel 9:24-27.

A “week” in the prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27 refers to seven prophetic years of three hundred sixty days; therefore, the prophecy of the seventy weeks of Daniel refers to four hundred ninety prophetic years of Israel’s history.

Daniel 9:24, “Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place.”

These “seventy weeks” or 490 years are divided into three periods: (1) 7 weeks=49 years (2) 62 weeks=434 years (3) 1 week=7 years.

Daniel 9:25, “So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.”

“The issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem” refers to the decree issued by Artaxerxes Longimanus’ decree in 444 B.C. (Nehemiah 2:1-8).

“Seven weeks” refers 49 prophetic biblical years beginning with the decree of Artaxerxes in 444 B.C. (Neh. 2:1-8) to the completion of the rebuilding of Jerusalem (Dan. 9:25).

“Sixty-two weeks” refers to 434 prophetic biblical years beginning with the completion of the rebuilding of Jerusalem to Christ’s Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem and crucifixion in 33 A.D. (Dan. 9:25-26).

Daniel 9:26, “Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.”

The statement “after the sixty-two weeks” refers to the completion of 69 of the 70 weeks of Daniel, 483 prophetic years and “the Messiah will be cut off” refers to the death of Christ.

“**The people**” refers to the Romans who destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple in 70 A.D. and the phrase “**the prince who shall come**” refers to the Antichrist.

The Scriptures give the Antichrist many titles and names: (1) “**The beast**” (Revelation 13:1-2) (2) “**The prince that will come**” (Daniel 9:26-27) (3) The “**man of lawlessness**” (2 Thessalonians 2:3-10) (4) The “**scarlet beast**” (Revelation 17:3) (5) The willful king (Daniel 11:36-40) (6) “**The man of sin**” (2 Thessalonians 2:3), (7) “**The son of perdition**” (2 Thessalonians 2:3) (8) The Desolater (Daniel 9:27). (9) The “**little horn**” (Daniel 7:8).

He will not appear until the Day of the Lord has begun (2 Thessalonians 2:2) and his manifestation is being hindered by the Restrainer (2 Thessalonians 2:6-7) and this appearance will be preceded by the rapture of the church (2 Thessalonians 2:3).

Antichrist will be a Gentile since he arises from the sea according to Revelation 13:1 and the sea depicts the Gentile nations according to Revelation 17:15. He will be a Roman since he is a ruler of the people who destroyed Jerusalem (Dan. 9:26).

Daniel 7:21-22 reveals the following regarding the little horn: (1) He will persecute the saints of the Most High and is thus a person and Daniel 7:24 says that he is a king. (2) He will overcome the nation of Israel and will bring that nation under his authority (Revelation 12:13-17; 17:7). (3) He will be judged by God (Revelation 19:19-20) and Israel will thus enter into her millennial reign.

Daniel 7:23 reveals that the little horn will have a world-wide kingdom (Compare Revelation 13:7). Daniel 7:25 and Revelation 13:1-10 reveal the following about the little horn: (1) He will oppose God’s authority as indicated by the phrase “**He will speak out against the Most High**” (Compare Revelation 13:6). (2) He will oppress born-again Israel as indicated by the statement “**wear down the saints of the Highest One**”. (3) He will introduce an entirely new era in which he will abandon all previous laws and institute his own system as indicated by the statement “**he will intend to make alterations in times in law**” (Compare Daniel 11:36-37; 2 Thessalonians 2:4).

Daniel 9:27a indicates that he will pretend to be Israel’s benefactor and make a treaty with her but will turn against her in the mid way point of Daniel’s Seventieth Week and will persecute Israel and occupy Jerusalem for three and a half years.

Daniel 9:27, “And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.”

The statement “**he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week**” refers to Antichrist making a 7 year covenant with Israel, which actually begins Daniel’s 70th week (See 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4).

“But in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate,” refers to the antichrist stopping the Levitical sacrifices that will be reestablished in the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem in the middle of Daniel’s 70th week.

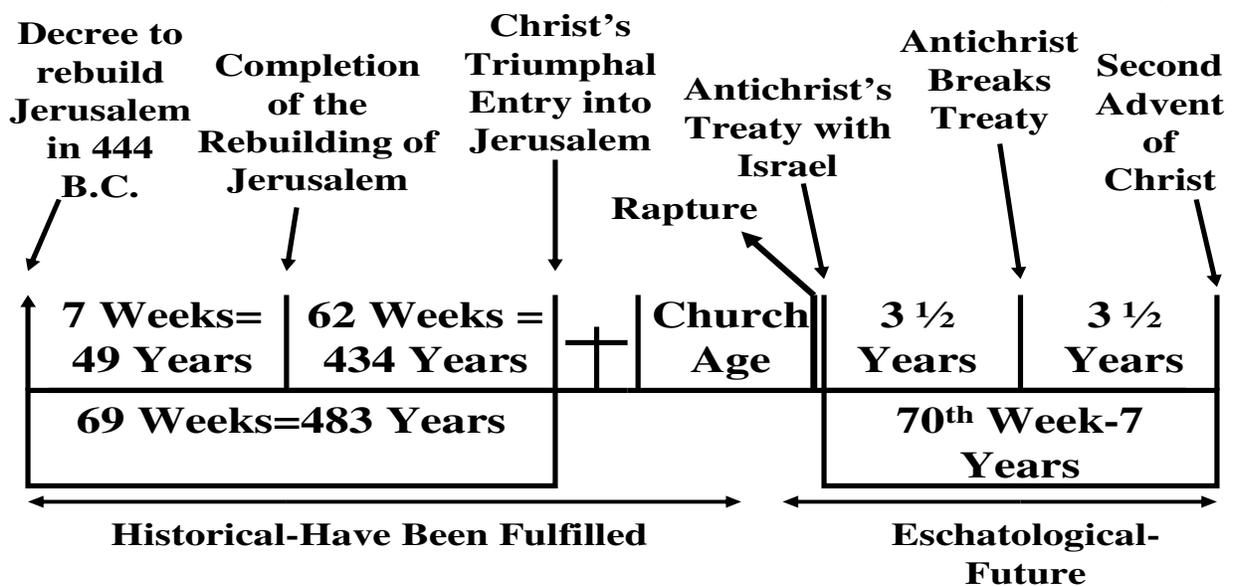
The Russian led invasion of Israel will cause the Antichrist to break his treaty with Israel and occupy Israel according to Daniel 11:41.

Daniel 11:40-41, “At the end time the king of the South will collide with him, and the king of the North will storm against him with chariots, with horsemen and with many ships; and he will enter countries, overflow them and pass through. He will also enter the Beautiful Land, and many countries will fall; but these will be rescued out of his hand: Edom, Moab and the foremost of the sons of Ammon.”

Matthew 24:15-16, “Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains.”

2 Thessalonians 2:3-4, “Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.”

Daniel’s 70 Weeks (Daniel 9:24-27)



Sixty-nine of these seventy weeks, four hundred eighty-three prophetic years, has been fulfilled in human history. However, the seventieth week has not but will

take place after the rapture of the church and will begin with Antichrist's peace treaty with Israel and will last seven years and will end with the Second Advent of Christ.

Daniel's 70th week refers to a 7-year period that extends from Antichrist's peace treaty with Israel after the rapture of the church to the 2nd Advent of Christ and is concerned with the nation of Israel exclusively and will be the worst period in all of Israel's and the world's history.

This 7-year period is divided into two three and a half year periods with the first three and a half years characterized as a cold war (Mt. 24:6) whereas the last three and a half years are characterized as a hot war (Mt. 24:21-22). It will end with the Second Advent of Jesus Christ, which is the visible return of Christ to planet earth with the elect angels and the Church in order to deliver Israel from her enemies and establish Jesus Christ's millennial reign resulting in the fulfillment of the four unconditional covenants to Israel (Dan. 2:44-45; Zech. 14; Mt. 24:29-31; Rev. 1:7; 19:11-21).

The church age takes place between the 69th and 70th Week of Daniel and was a "mystery" (Eph. 3:9) meaning it was not known to Old Testament prophets. God has temporarily set aside Israel because of her rejection of Jesus Christ as Messiah (Rom. 9-11) in order to form the church and to fulfill the Times of the Gentiles so therefore, the last seven years of Daniel's prophecy have yet to be fulfilled but will be fulfilled after the rapture of the church (1 Thess. 4:13-18).

The church is delivered from the wrath to come during this period.

1 Thessalonians 5:9, "For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ."

There are five major events that will take place during the first three and an half years of Daniel's Seventieth Week that lead up to the Russian led invasion of Israel.

First of all, there will be the rise of the Ten Nation Confederacy called the Revived Roman Empire at the beginning of Daniel's 70th week (Dan. 2; 7).

The second major event is that Antichrist rises to power as the King of the Western Confederacy in Europe (Dan. 7:20, 24; 9:27; Rev. 13:1-10).

The third is the rise of the revived form of the Roman Empire under Antichrist during the first three and a half years of Daniel's Seventieth Week will be accompanied by the formulation of a false religious system under the false prophet (Rev. 13:11-18).

Antichrist's peace treaty with the leadership of Israel, which takes place after the rapture of the church and actually begins Daniel's Seventieth Week is the fourth major event.

The rise to prominence of the Antichrist as a man of peace is the result of the breaking of the first seal judgment recorded in Revelation 6:1-2.

Revelation 6:1-2, “Then I saw when the Lamb broke one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying as with a voice of thunder, ‘Come.’ I looked, and behold, a white horse, and he who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.”

Then, the fifth major event will take place in heaven, which is Michael the archangel and his legions of elect-angels expelling Satan and his legions from heaven (Rev. 12:7). Once Satan is thrown down permanently on the earth, he will inspire the leader of Russia and her allies to invade Israel during the midway point of Daniel’s Seventieth Week. This invasion of Israel by Russia and her allies is recorded in Ezekiel 38:1-39:24.

The Prophet Ezekiel

Ezekiel was the younger contemporary of Jeremiah and his name means “may God strengthen” or “God strengthens.” According to Ezekiel 1:3, the prophet Ezekiel was the son of the priest Buzi. So he was from a priestly family as was the case with Jeremiah (Jer. 1:1) and Zechariah (Zech. 1:1; Neh. 12:4, 16).

Ezekiel, Jeremiah and Zechariah were the only prophet-priests and all 3 prophesied during the exilic or post-exilic periods of Israel. He was providentially deported to Babylon in 597 B.C. along with Jehoiachin and several thousand of the upper class citizens of Israel, 11 years before the destruction of Jerusalem according to 2 Kings 24:12-14. Ezekiel was a member of a community of Jewish exiles who settled in a village of Tel-Abib by the river Chebar or what was called the Grand Canal, according to Ezekiel 1:1, 3; 3:15. The settlement was located near the city of Nippur, southeast of Babylon, and Ezekiel’s home was a mecca for the elders of the exiles (3:24; 8:1; 14:1; 20:1).

The prophet was married, but had no children (24:16-18). Ezekiel’s wife died the day the siege of Jerusalem began in 588 B.C. according to Ezekiel 24:1, 15-18,

The date for Ezekiel’s ministry can be determined by noting the chronological notations in his book (1:2; 8:1; 20:1; 24:1; 29:1, 17; 30:20; 31:1; 32:1, 17; 33:21; 40:1). Ezekiel’s ministry began **“in the fourth month on the fifth day”** of **“the fifth year of King Jehoiachin’s exile”** (1:2) in 592 B.C.

Jehoiachin came to the throne in December 597 B.C. after Jehoiakim died (2 Kgs. 24:1-2). After a reign of only 3 months Jehoiachin was captured by Nebuchadnezzar and deported to Babylon. The fifth year of Jehoiachin’s exile was 593 B.C. and the fourth month was the month of Tammuz, which began on July 27 in 593 B.C. Therefore, Ezekiel began his ministry on July 31, 593 B.C. (the fifth day is inclusive counting both July 27 and 31).

Ezekiel said his ministry began **“in the thirtieth year”** (Ezek. 1:1), which refers to his age when he was commissioned as a prophet and was also qualified to

serve as priest at this age. Remember he was from a priestly family. The service of a Levitical priest was 25 years, from 25 to 50 years of age according to Numbers 8:24-28.

Ezekiel began prophesying in 593 B.C. (the fifth year of Jehoiachin's exile, 1:2), and his last dated prophecy was **“in the twenty-seventh year, in the first month on the first day”** (Ezek. 29:17), thus, his prophetic activity spanned at least 22 years (593-571 B.C.) from age 30 to 52.

The Timing of the Invasion

The events of Ezekiel 38:1-39:24 have never taken place in the past since no historical events have matched this prophecy. This invasion of Israel takes place toward the middle of Daniel's Seventieth Week, after Israel and Antichrist have entered into a treaty and prior to Antichrist breaking the treaty since it is preceded by the casting of Satan out of heaven.

Now, the Gog and Magog mentioned here in Ezekiel 38:1-39:24 are not the same Gog and Magog of Revelation 20:7-9 that make war against the Lord Jesus Christ at the end of His millennial reign. The conflict involving the Gog and Magog in Revelation 20:7-9 involves armies from all four corners of the globe and is followed by the Great White Throne Judgment of unbelievers (Rev. 20:11-15). Therefore, the prophecy of Ezekiel 38:1-39:24 will not be fulfilled at the end of the millennium. Nor will it be fulfilled at the end of the Tribulation and the Armageddon campaign since the invasion of Israel at the end of the Tribulation involves the armies from around the world whereas the invasion in Ezekiel 38:1-39:24 only includes a certain group of nations led by Russia.

Also, the object of the Armageddon invasion is to destroy Israel whereas the invasion of Ezekiel is to take spoil. Furthermore, the invasion of Ezekiel 38:1-39:24 will not take place prior to the treaty with Antichrist and thus Daniel's Seventieth Week, i.e. the Tribulation period.

Many contend that the description of Israel found in Ezekiel 38 fits well with the nation of Israel as she is now today, and state that this invasion will take place before the Tribulation and prior to Israel's treaty with Antichrist. They cite that the meaning of *batach* in Ezekiel 38:11 indicates that Israel dwells securely due to confidence in their own strength.

Today Israel is secure, confident that her army can repel any invasion from the Arab states, thus Israel is dwelling securely in fulfillment of the prophecy in Ezekiel 38:11 of Israel dwelling in unwallled villages. This is very descriptive of the present-day *kibbutzim* in Israel, they contend.

These points can also support the position that the events in Ezekiel 38:1-39:24 will take place during the midway point of the Tribulation prior to Antichrist

declaring himself to be God. During the first three and a half years of Daniel's Seventieth Week, Israel will be dwelling securely under the treaty with the Antichrist.

Batach can also support the idea that Israel has placed her confidence on the military might of the Revived Form of the Roman Empire under the little horn, i.e. Antichrist and not just her own military strength. This is supported historically in that Israel throughout her history has continually trusted in Gentile powers rather than God.

The second major point made in support of the Russian Invasion taking place after the rapture and prior to the treaty with Antichrist is that Russia is still a major world power before the Tribulation. This point is rather weak since it can support the position that Russia is a major player during the Tribulation.

Those who believe that the Russian invasion will take place prior to the treaty with Antichrist and after the rapture contend that placing the invasion at this point resolves the problem of the seven years of burning the Russian weapons in Ezekiel 38:9 and the seven months of burying the Russian dead in Ezekiel 38:12. They state that putting this invasion in the beginning of the Tribulation presents no real problem with the seven months, but it does have problems with the seven years. They say that this would put it at a time when Israel would be in flight and would not have time to finish the burning of the weapons. They contend that the middle of the Tribulation view has problems with both the seven months and the seven years. They say that the seven months would extend into the second half of the Tribulation, a time when Israel has to worry about her own dead, let alone the Russians.

Also, they explain that the seven years would extend throughout the rest of the Tribulation and 3½ years into the Millennium, making it inconsistent with the biblical view of the Millennium.

Furthermore, they state if the invasion took place during the midway point of the Tribulation that Israel would need these weapons in the second half of the Tribulation and would not burn them.

Therefore, they contend that the events of Ezekiel 38:1-39:24 must take place before the Tribulation since it is the only interpretation, which has no problems with either the seven months or the seven years. They say that the Jews continue to dwell in the Land after this invasion and remain there until the middle of the Tribulation, thus the seven months of burial is no problem. They state that the seven years also creates no problem since they would begin before the Tribulation and can extend as far as the middle of the Tribulation if at all necessary. According to this view, they state this invasion must take place at least 3½ years or more before the Tribulation starts.

First of all, concerning the burning of the weapons into the Millennium, by placing the Russian invasion of Israel during the midway point of the Tribulation is not a problem since according to Isaiah 2:4 speaking of the Millennium, says, **“They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.”** NIV

Furthermore, the problem of the fuel lasting seven years is not a real prophetic problem because even after the Lord returns at His Second Advent to deliver Israel they will still need fuel for fires in the millennial kingdom as life goes on. Accordingly, the seven year figure should not be considered an obstacle to placing the Magog-Russian invasion somewhere in the mid way point of the Tribulation with the possibility that it may occur earlier in the seven year period and justify the approximate figure of seven years. Thus, the burning of the weapons does not conflict with the idea that the Russian Invasion will take place during the midway point of the Tribulation.

The invasion could take place seven months before Antichrist breaks the treaty. The point that Israel would not burn weapons during the last half of Tribulation when she would need those weapons to fight against the Tribulational armies and Antichrist can be easily answered as well. This invasion from Russia and her allies is massive and thus the amount of weapons left behind will be massive as well.

Israel’s army and population are much smaller than that of the invading armies. Thus, Israel could burn weapons while gathering enough weapons to defend herself from Antichrist and the armies of the world that will be descending upon Israel during the Armageddon campaign.

The burying of the dead is not a problem since the invasion could take place at least seven months maybe more before Antichrist breaks the treaty leaving Israel time to bury the Russian dead.

Another point to consider is that if the Russian invasion takes place after the rapture and prior to the treaty with Antichrist, then why would Israel seek to establish a treaty with Antichrist and his 10-Nation European Confederacy when God has supernaturally intervened and destroyed Russia and her allies? It makes more sense having Antichrist establishing the treaty with Israel prior to the Russian invasion.

Since 1948, the United States has been Israel’s greatest benefactor and yet she is nowhere in end time prophecy. There are several reasons why the United States is nowhere to be found. She could be destroyed militarily, decimated by the rapture since the greatest concentration of Christians and Bible teaching is in America.

Another scenario is that she could have gradually faded from world prominence through economic, social and military problems like Britain did in the 20th century. Thus, a more likely scenario is that Israel will welcome a treaty with Antichrist and

his 10-nation confederacy as a result of losing her greatest benefactor, the United States.

Also, since Russia and her allies will be destroyed supernaturally by God and not by Israel herself, this will give Antichrist an opportunity to take credit for the victory and declare himself to be God in the rebuilt Jewish temple, which will begin the last three and a half years of Daniel's Seventieth Week.

In fact, Daniel 11:40-41 reveals that this Russian led invasion will cause Antichrist to invade and occupy Israel since his treaty with Israel stipulates that he will come to the aid of Israel in the event of an enemy attack.

Daniel 11:40-41, "At the end time the king of the South will collide with him, and the king of the North will storm against him with chariots, with horsemen and with many ships; and he will enter countries, overflow them and pass through. He will also enter the Beautiful Land, and many countries will fall; but these will be rescued out of his hand: Edom, Moab and the foremost of the sons of Ammon."

Therefore, placing the Russian invasion of Israel during the midway point of Daniel's Seventieth Week, prior to Antichrist invading Israel and declaring himself God in the rebuilt Jewish temple is a reasonable interpretation based on the Biblical record.

The events of Ezekiel 38:1-39:24 coincide with second seal judgment recorded in Revelation 6:3-4.

Revelation 6:3-4, "When He broke the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, 'Come.' And another, a red horse, went out; and to him who sat on it, it was granted to take peace from the earth, and that men would slay one another; and a great sword was given to him."

At the time of this invasion, it must be remembered that Michael and the elect angels have just cast Satan and the fallen angels out of heaven. The first thing that Satan and his legions do once cast to the earth is that they influence Gog, the prince of Russia to invade Israel.

Satan wants Israel destroyed in order that Christ will not be able to fulfill the unconditional covenants to Israel (Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic and New), and thus by doing so, he can accuse God of not keeping His promises.

Satan knows his time is short and that Christ's Second Advent and His subsequent millennial reign and his incarceration for a thousand years are imminent.

Ezekiel 38:1-6: Identification of Invaders

The following is an outline of Ezekiel 38:1-39:24: (1) The identification of the invading force (Ezekiel 38:1-6). (2) When the invasion will take place and who

will be attacked (Ezekiel 38:7-9). (3) The objective of the invasion (Ezekiel 38:10-13). (4) The objective of God in permitting the invasion (Ezekiel 38:14-16). (5) The destruction of the northern confederacy by God (Ezekiel 38:17-23). (6) The place of the destruction (Ezekiel 39:1-6). (7) The sanctification of God's Name (Ezekiel 39:7-8). (8) The seven years of burning weapons and the seven months of burying the dead (Ezekiel 39:9-16). (9) The Lord's sacrificial banquet for the bird and animal kingdom (Ezekiel 39:17-20). (10) The eight-fold result of the destruction of the Russian led invasion of Israel (Ezekiel 39:21-24).

Therefore, we will first note Ezekiel 38:1-6, which identifies the countries involved in the invasion.

Ezekiel 38:1-3, "And 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, prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal.'"

The statement "**the word of the Lord came to me**" indicates that Ezekiel 38:1-39:24 is divine in origin and that Ezekiel was inspired to write this passage.

The expression "**son of man**" is a title for Ezekiel.

"**Set your face**" is a phrase used by Ezekiel to express God's anger toward a nation and is used throughout Ezekiel's book as an expression of opposition (cf. 4:3; 6:2; 13:17). It was also part of the Levitical language of warning against idolatry and disobedience and is used by Jeremiah (Jer. 21:10). The Lord is announcing through the prophet Ezekiel His opposition against Gog who is the leader of this Northern Confederacy that will invade Israel during the Tribulation period. This is language the Lord used against Israel (Ezek. 5:8), Tyre (26:3), Sidon (28:22), Pharaoh (29:3) and Edom (35:3).

The name "**Gog**" is the proper noun *gogh* (גֹּג) (*gogh*), which is a title for a ruler like Caesar or Pharaoh and means, "the man on top," i.e. the dictator.

The name "**Magog**" is the proper noun *maghogh* (מַגּוּג) (*maw-gogue*), which means, "land of Gog."

Magog was the second son of Japheth according to Genesis 10:2.

Genesis 10:2, "The sons of Japheth were Gomer and Magog and Madai and Javan and Tubal and Meshech and Tiras."

His descendants inhabited exclusively the region of the Caucasus and of northern Armenia. It is interesting that the name "Caucasus" means, "Gog's fort." Josephus says that Magog "founded those that from him were named Magogites but who by the Greeks were called Scythians."

The Scythians themselves have a tradition that their ancestors originally came forth from Armenia. This agrees with the Scriptures, which places the immediate descendants of Noah in Armenia.

Historians agree that the Magogites were divided into two distinct races: (1) Japhetic or European (2) Turanian or Asiatic.

The Japhetic race comprised those whom the Greeks and Romans called Sarmatians, but who in modern times are called Slavs or Russians. It is interesting to note Jewish commentaries identify Magog as Russia.

Also, the Great Wall of China in the Arabic language means, “the wall of Al Magog” because the Great Wall was built to keep out the invading armies from Russia.

The descendants of “**Magog**” include: Russians, Ukrainians, Hungarians, Finns, Siberians, Yugoslavians, Croatians, Bosnians, Serbians, Slovenians, Slovaks, Bulgarians, Poles, and Czechs.

Therefore, “**Magog**” signifies the nation and “**Gog**” is the title of the ruler of that nation.

Ezekiel 38:2-3 states that Gog, from the land of Magog is the leader of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal.

“**Prince**” is the noun *nasi* (נָסִי) (naw-see), which means, “exalted one” and denotes Gog is the leader of a particular nation.

“**Rosh**” is the proper noun *ro’sh* (רֹשׁ) (roshe), which means, “first, head, chief.”

The well-known 19th century Hebrew lexicographer Gesenius says, “*Rosh* is the proper name of a northern nation...probably equated with the Russians.” But this linguistic evidence is uncertain and presumptive. Therefore, we cannot base our interpretation here that Gog is the prince of Russia. But the geographical and contextual evidence is overwhelmingly in favor that the “**Rosh**” was indeed located in Russia.

The geographic and contextual evidence clearly indicates that “**Rosh**” is Russia since it is said to be located extreme north of Israel. Remember, Ezekiel 38:6, 15 and 39:2 clearly state that these invading armies are coming from the extreme north of Israel.

If one takes any map of the world and draws a line north of the land of Israel he will inevitably come to the nation Russia. As soon as the line is drawn to the far north beyond Asia Minor and the Black Sea it is in Russia and continues to be in Russia for many hundreds of miles all the way to the Arctic Circle. Russia today spreads east and west some 6,000 miles, and one cannot escape Russia if he goes north of the Holy Land.

On the basis of geography alone, it seems quite clear that the only nation which could possibly be referred to as coming from the far north would be the nation Russia. The suggestion that the nation is ancient Assyria revived is rendered improbable by the geographic description.

The ethnic evidence links the prince of Rosh with Meshech and Tubal who like Magog were sons of Japheth according to Genesis 10:2. This is repeated in 1 Chronicles 1:5.

1 Chronicles 1:5, “The sons of Japheth were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech and Tiras.”

These Japhethites (Meshech and Tubal) migrated from Asia and later from Asia Minor to the north beyond the Black Sea, the Taurus Mountains and the Caspian Sea.

The name “**Meshech**” is the proper noun *meshekh* (מֶשֶׁךְ) (meh-shek), which means, “led along.”

The name “**Tubal**” is the proper noun *tuval* (תּוּבַל) (too-val), which means, “you shall be led.”

The meanings of these two proper nouns coincide with the Lord’s intention to put hooks into the jaws of Gog, the leader of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal.

The descendants of “**Meshech**” include Muscovites, Lithuanians, Romanians whereas the descendants of “**Tubal**” include Georgians and Albanians.

Some expositors believe that “**Meshech**” refers to the city of Moscow and “**Tubal**” to the city of Tobolsk but this is not the case since Ezekiel was speaking of countries and not cities.

Ezekiel had historical places in mind when he refers to “**Meshech**” and “**Tubal**.”

Meshech and Tubal are the Mushki and Tabali of the Assyrian monuments (Ezek. 27:13), in the 9th century B.C. located northeast of Cilicia in Asia Minor. By the time of Herodotus they had moved northward to the mountainous region of the Black Sea.

Geographic evidence indicates that the only nation in the territory to the extreme north of Israel and in fact extending to the Arctic circle is Russia! Magog’s land was located in what is called today, the Caucasus and the adjoining steppes. These three, Rosh, Meshech and Tubal were called by the ancients, Scythians. They roamed as nomads in the country around and north of the Black (located directly north of Turkey and along the eastern border of Russia) and Caspian Seas (located directly north of Tehran, Iran and along southern border of Russia) and were known as wild barbarians.

Josephus (Ant. 1.6.1) and Jerome, identify the Magog of Ezek 38:2 Ezek 39:1,6, the land of which Gog was prince, with the land of the Scythians, who in Ezekiel’s time inhabited the region between the Caspian and Black seas.

The Scythians of the time of Herodotus and Ezekiel are believed to have been a Japhetic race. They were backward in civilization so that their name became proverbial for wildness or barbarity much as the Greeks used the epithet “barbarian” (cf. Col 3:11). Thus, Meshech and Tubal were located in area where

several Russian Republics are located, namely Chechnya, Stavropol, Krasnodar, Dagestan, and Rostov as well as the country of Georgia located south of these Russian Republics and the Ukraine.

Therefore, we can conclude that in Ezekiel 38:1-3, the name “**Gog**” is the title of the ruler and “**Magog**” signifies the land, which is composed of three parts, “**Rosh, Meshech and Tubal,**” all of which were located in an area that is now known as Russia.

Russia was once the largest and the most prominent republic of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR, or Soviet Union). In 1991 the USSR broke apart and Russia became an independent country. The Russian Federation became an independent state in December 1991 as a result of the collapse of the USSR.

During the Communist era the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR) was the largest of the USSR’s 15 republics. The present Russian Federation occupies the same territory as the former RSFSR.

Russia today is divided into 89 administrative units: 21 republics, 6 territories known as krays, 10 autonomous national areas called okrugs, 49 oblasts (regions), 1 autonomous region, and the cities of Moscow and Saint Petersburg, which have federal status.

During much of the Soviet period, Russia contained 16 autonomous republics, 5 autonomous oblasts, and 10 autonomous okrugs. In late 1990 the term autonomous was dropped from the names of the republics, and in July 1991 four of the five autonomous oblasts became republics.

The Jewish Autonomous Oblast was the only autonomous oblast not elevated to the rank of a republic. The USSR was a military superpower with a massive nuclear arsenal and millions of troops; in the 1980s the armed forces had more than 5 million members.

Immediately after the dissolution of the USSR in 1991, the armed forces came under the military command of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), an organization comprising most of the former Soviet republics.

In May 1992 Russia created its own military structure in response to the formation of separate armies by several CIS states, notably Ukraine. The CIS military command continued to function for another year, although its power was greatly reduced. It was finally abolished in June 1993 and most of its functions were transferred to the Russian military command.

Under the new Russian military structure, an executive body known as the Security Council formulates defense policy. The Russian president appoints and dismisses members of the council and dominates its proceedings.

In 1999 Russia had 1 million troops in the army, navy, air force, air defense force, and strategic rocket force (which controls the country’s nuclear weapons).

Paramilitary forces, including border troops, numbered an additional 220,000. However, Russia's conventional forces were generally unprepared for combat.

The disastrous performance of the army during the 1995 and 1996 campaign in Chechnya revealed immense deficiencies in command, logistics, training, and morale. Since the collapse of the USSR all nuclear weapons of the former Soviet forces have been concentrated in Russia.

Some have been destroyed, but most remain intact. Western governments have expressed concern over the safety of these weapons and the sale of weapons to unfriendly nations or terrorist movements. In both total area and geographic extent Russia is the largest country in the world.

With an area of 17,075,200 sq km (6,592,800 sq mi), Russia constitutes more than one-ninth of the world's land area and nearly twice the area of the United States or China. From north to south Russia extends more than 4,000 km (2,400 mi) from Arctic islands in the Barents Sea to the southern border along the Caucasus Mountains.

From the eastern coast of the Baltic Sea to Big Diomedes Island (Ratmanov Island) in the Bering Strait, Russia's maximum east-west extent is almost 10,000 km (6,200 mi), a distance encompassing 11 time zones and spanning nearly half the circumference of the Earth.

Russia stretches across parts of two continents, Europe and Asia, with the Ural Mountains and Ural River marking the boundary between them.

During most of the Soviet era religious expression was strictly discouraged and the Communist Party controlled religious institutions. In the late 1980s, however, the government began to ease its restrictions on religion, and a 1990 law granted Russians far more religious freedom.

Since the dissolution of the USSR in 1991, religious following has increased and there has been a resurgence of traditional religions, particularly Orthodox Christianity. The ancestors of today's Russians adopted Orthodox Christianity in the 10th century. It is now the country's primary religion. About one-fourth of the population belongs to the Russian Orthodox Church, and members are dispersed throughout the country. However, the vast majority of Orthodox believers do not attend church on a regular basis. Muslims form the second largest religious group in Russia.

There are also relatively small populations of Jews, Protestants, Catholics, and Buddhists. Jews and Christians are dispersed throughout the country. Buddhists live chiefly in the republics of Buryatia and Tuva on the Russian border with Mongolia and in Kalmykia on the northwest shore of the Caspian Sea.

Despite the reemergence of traditional religions, most Russians do not adhere strictly to a single belief. Instead, they combine traditional faiths with other

alternative beliefs. Witchcraft, astrology and New Age philosophies are popular, especially among young people.

The growing popularity of foreign religions prompted concern among Russian lawmakers. In 1997 the government revised the 1990 religious freedom law to categorize religions into those that were part of Russia's historical development and those that were not. Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Judaism were identified as Russia's only traditional religions. The law limits the activities of organizations that represent any other religious faith. These organizations must register annually with the government for a period of 15 years before they attain the higher status. During this time they cannot publish, distribute, or teach religious material, although they can engage in charitable activities.

Ezekiel 38:4, “I will turn you about and put hooks into your jaws, and I will bring you out, and all your army, horses and horsemen, all of them splendidly attired, a great company with buckler and shield, all of them wielding swords.”

The imagery of “**hooks in your jaw**” is a graphic one that had a literal reality in the way captives were treated as they were taken away to the land of their captors (Ezek. 19:4, Jehoiadah to Egypt and Ezek. 19:9, Jehoiachin to Babylon).

The hook was an instrument of domination or subjugation and is used to parallel the placing of a bit in a horse’s mouth to insure control of the animal. This word is not only used in this manner here in Ezekiel 38:4 of Gog but also of Ezekiel’s prophecy against Egypt in Ezekiel 29:4 where the Lord speaks of putting hooks in the jaws of the great crocodile, which symbolizes Pharaoh.

Isaiah prophesied that Assyria would be led away with hooks in their noses (2 K. 19:28). So Gog, the leader of Russia is described here as a wild animal that is out of control. Consequently, the Lord will turn him around and put hooks into his jaws to bring him to his ultimate destruction on the mountains of Israel.

Ezekiel 38:5-6, “Persia, Ethiopia and Put with them, all of them with shield and helmet; Gomer with all its troops; Beth-togarmah from the remote parts of the north with all its troops -- many peoples with you.

“**Persia**” is the proper noun *paras* (פָּרַס) (paw-ras), which means, “splendid, pure” and was located in what is now known as Iran.

“**Ethiopia**” is the proper noun *kush* (כּוּשׁ) (koosh), which means, “black” and was located in what is now known as modern Ethiopia and Sudan.

“**Put**” is the proper noun *put* (פּוּט) (poot), which means, “a bow” and was located in what is now known as modern Libya.

“**Gomer**” is the proper noun *gomer* (גּוֹמֵר) (go-mer), which means, “completion” and was located in what is now known as modern Ukraine and Georgia, which are south of Russia.

“**Togarmah**” is the proper noun *togharmah* (תֹּגַרְמָה) (to-gar-maw), which means, “you will break her” and was located in what is now known as Turkey.

The expression “**many peoples with you**” indicates that other groups of people that are related to the one’s mentioned will also take part in this invasion since the term *`am* (עַם) (*am*) is used of people in terms of their being kinsmen, relatives or members of a tribe. Therefore, this identification of the invading force is not exhaustive.

Therefore, Ezekiel 38:1-6 reveals that Russia, (Rosh, Meshech and Tubal from the land of Magog), Georgia, and Ukraine (Gomer) and Turkey (Togarmah) will invade Israel from the north, Iran will come from the east, Ethiopia and Sudan from the south while Libya (Put) from the west, thus Israel will be surrounded.



Ezekiel 38:7-9-Time of the Invasion and Who Will Be Attacked

Ezekiel 38:7-9 identifies when the invasion will take place and who will be attacked.

Ezekiel 38:7-9, “Be prepared, and prepare yourself, you and all your companies that are assembled about you, and be a guard for them. After many days you will be summoned; in the latter years you will come into the land that is restored from the sword, whose inhabitants have been gathered from many nations to the mountains of Israel which had been a continual waste; but its people were brought out from the nations, and they are living

securely, all of them. You will go up, you will come like a storm; you will be like a cloud covering the land, you and all your troops, and many peoples with you.”

The statement **“After many days you will be summoned; in the latter years you will come into the land that is restored from the sword, whose inhabitants have been gathered from many nations to the mountains of Israel which had been a continual waste”** refers to the first half of Daniel’s Seventieth Week after Israel has made a treaty with the Antichrist, the leader of the ten nation European Confederacy also called by students of prophecy, the Revived Roman Empire.

Prior to 1948, the land of Israel was a continual waste but has since been restored by the nation of Israel, the land is prospering. Today, the nation of Israel is composed of Jews who have been scattered around the world for centuries or whose grandparents or parents were.

Ezekiel says that Israel will be dwelling securely and that is because of the peace treaty with Antichrist.

In Ezekiel 38:9, the statement **“You will go up, you will come like a storm; you will be like a cloud covering the land, you and all your troops, and many peoples with you”** indicates how massive this invading force is.

Ezekiel 38:10-13-Objective of Invasion

In Ezekiel 38:10-13, we have the objective of this invading force presented to us.

Ezekiel 38:10-13, “Thus says the Lord GOD, ‘It will come about on that day, that thoughts will come into your mind and you will devise an evil plan, and you will say, ‘I will go up against the land of unwalled villages. I will go against those who are at rest, that live securely, all of them living without walls and having no bars or gates, to capture spoil and to seize plunder, to turn your hand against the waste places which are now inhabited, and against the people who are gathered from the nations, who have acquired cattle and goods, who live at the center of the world.’ Sheba and Dedan and the merchants of Tarshish with all its villages will say to you, ‘Have you come to capture spoil? Have you assembled your company to seize plunder, to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to capture great spoil?’”

The scene described here in Ezekiel 38:11 is a modern one for it would be unheard of in Ezekiel’s day to not have walls protecting a city or village. Ezekiel had never seen a village without walls. Yet, in our day, Israel is a land of unwalled villages for the simple reason that modern techniques of warfare (bombs and missiles) make city walls irrelevant and obsolete for defense.

Notice that Israel will be living securely and this is because of her covenant that she made with the Antichrist who is also known in Scripture as the Beast (1st in Revelation 13) and the King of the West in Daniel 11:40.

“**Securely**” is the noun *betach* (בֵּטַח) (beh-takh), which expresses that sense of well-being and security, which results from having something or someone in whom to place confidence. This confidence that Israel has is not in the Lord but in Antichrist whom they have made a treaty with that will ensure them peace from the neighbors and protection from the armies of the Revived Roman Empire.

There are comparative passage, which also speak of Israel being regathered to the land and living securely, which again refers to the first 3 ½ years of the Tribulation period.

Jeremiah 23:7-8, “Therefore behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when they will no longer say, As the LORD lives, who brought up the sons of Israel from the land of Egypt, As the LORD lives, who brought up and led back the descendants of the household of Israel from the north land and from all the countries where I had driven them.’ Then they will live on their own soil.”

Jeremiah 49:31, “Arise, go up against a nation which is at ease, which lives securely, declares the LORD. ‘It has no gates or bars; They dwell alone.”

Ezekiel 28:25-26, “Thus says the Lord GOD, ‘When I gather the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and will manifest My holiness in them in the sight of the nations, then they will live in their land which I gave to My servant Jacob. They will live in it securely; and they will build houses, plant vineyards and live securely when I execute judgments upon all who scorn them round about them. Then they will know that I am the LORD their God.”

The fact that Israel is living securely at this time of the Tribulation period indicates that the attack from Russia will be sometime toward the end of the first 3 ½ years of Daniel’s Seventieth Week while Israel is under the treaty with Antichrist who promises protect to her.

Ezekiel 38:11-12 reveals the motivation of this Great Northern Confederacy headed by Russia. They covet Israel’s great wealth and strategic position in the world since they are at the center of the earth. Israel sits on enormous mineral wealth in the Dead Sea area and has strategic access to the Mediterranean Sea, Suez Canal, and Indian Ocean.

The first hook that the Lord will use to bring Russia to her destruction on the mountains of Israel is that Russia does not possess a warm weather port and needs one to have entrance into the waterways of the world. Israel has this and Russia covets this.

Furthermore, Russia wants oil. The oil in the Middle East is essential for the survival of modern nations and modern militaries. Despite the strained relations between the Arabs and Israel, there is still a great deal of oil going through Israel today. Therefore, one of the hooks that the Lord will use to bring Russia to invade Israel to destroy her is oil.

The third hook is the Dead Sea mineral deposits that are so great that they cannot be evaluated in today's market. It is estimated that the Dead Sea contains approximately 2 billion tons of potassium chloride, which is potash that is needed to sweeten and enrich the soil that is readily depleted around the world. The Dead Sea also contains approximately 2 billion tons of magnesium chloride, 12 billion tons of sodium chloride and 6 billion tons of calcium chloride.

In addition, the Dead Sea contains cerium, cobalt, manganese and even gold! Isn't it interesting that when the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, the cities of the plain, which is now the Dead Sea, He was baiting a hook for Russia?

Sodom and Gomorrah, the cities of the plain are considered by many Biblical archeologists to be under the Dead Sea.

Ezekiel 38:13, "Sheba and Dedan and the merchants of Tarshish with all its villages will say to you, 'Have you come to capture spoil? Have you assembled your company to seize plunder, to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to capture great spoil?'"

"**Sheba**" is the proper noun *sh^eva'* (שֶׁבַע) (she-vaw), which means, "seven" or "oath" and "**Dedan**" is the proper noun *d^edhan* (דֵּדָן) (ded-awn), which means, "low country."

The names "**Sheba**" and "**Dedan**" appear in the Table of Nations in Genesis 10, both were children of Raamah whose grandfather was Cush who was a son of Ham, one of Noah's three sons according to Genesis 10:7.

Genesis 10:7, "The sons of Cush were Seba ("drink up") and Havilah ("anguish, pain") and Sabtah (sab'ta) ("he compassed the mark") and Raamah ("thunder") and Sabteca (sab'te-ka) ("striking"); and the sons of Raamah were Sheba ("seven or an oath") and Dedan (de'dan) ("low country")."

"**Sheba**" was in southwest Arabia in what is now part of Yemen and was once famed as the Land of Spices whose land was extremely fertile, being watered by ingenious irrigation systems that were controlled by a vast dam that once spanned the river Adhanat.

"**Dedan**" was also located in Arabia near Edom according to Isaiah 21:13, Jeremiah 25:23, 49:8 and Ezekiel 25:13 and was associated with "**Sheba**" since they were trade partners with Tyre (Ezek. 27:15, 20; 38:13).

"**Tarshish**" is the proper noun *tarshish* (תַּרְשִׁישׁ) (tar-sheesh), which means, "yellow jasper."

The name “Tarshish” appears in Genesis 10:4 and was a son of Javan who was one of the sons of Japheth, who himself was one of the three sons of Noah according to Genesis 10:1-5.

Genesis 10:4, “The sons of Javan (“one in a state of bubbling heat”) were Elishah (e-li’sha) (“my God is disregarded”) and Tarshish (tar’shish) (“she will cause poverty, she will scatter”), Kittim (kit’im) (“bruisers”) and Dodanim (dod’a-nim) (“leaders”).”

“**Tarshish**” appears frequently in the Old Testament representing a Phoenician copper-smelting center either in “Sardinia” or in “Tartessus” in southern Spain near Gibraltar.

“**Villages**” is the noun *kēphir* (כִּפְיִר) (kef-er), which is a Hebrew idiom referring to nations that have come out of Tarshish.

Therefore, Ezekiel 38:13 indicates that the value of the spoil signifies that Gog’s invasion of Israel will have enormous economic repercussions that commercial nations such as Arab peoples and maritime trading peoples will be excited over the economic prospects for their nations as a result of this invasion.

Ezekiel 38:14-16-God’s Objective

In Ezekiel 38:14-16, the objective of God permitting this invasion to take place presented to us is that He would be sanctified in the eyes of the nations.

Ezekiel 38:14-16, “Therefore prophesy, son of man, and say to Gog, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, ‘On that day when My people Israel are living securely, will you not know it? You will come from your place out of the remote parts of the north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great assembly and a mighty army and you will come up against My people Israel like a cloud to cover the land. It shall come about in the last days that I will bring you against My land, so that the nations may know Me when I am sanctified through you before their eyes, O Gog.’”

Ezekiel 38:17-23-The Lord Destroys the Russian Led Invasion

In Ezekiel 38:17-23, Ezekiel predicts the destruction of the invading force led by Russia.

Ezekiel 38:17-23, “Thus says the Lord GOD, ‘Are you the one of whom I spoke in former days through My servants the prophets of Israel, who prophesied in those days for many years that I would bring you against them? It will come about on that day, when Gog comes against the land of Israel,’ declares the Lord GOD, ‘that My fury will mount up in My anger. In My zeal and in My blazing wrath I declare that on that day there will surely be a great

earthquake in the land of Israel. The fish of the sea, the birds of the heavens, the beasts of the field, all the creeping things that creep on the earth, and all the men who are on the face of the earth will shake at My presence; the mountains also will be thrown down, the steep pathways will collapse and every wall will fall to the ground. I will call for a sword against him on all My mountains,' declares the Lord GOD. 'Every man's sword will be against his brother. With pestilence and with blood I will enter into judgment with him; and I will rain on him and on his troops, and on the many peoples who are with him, a torrential rain, with hailstones, fire and brimstone. I will magnify Myself, sanctify Myself, and make Myself known in the sight of many nations; and they will know that I am the LORD.'"

There are three great judgments against Gog and his armies: (1) Great earthquake (Ezek. 38:19-20) (2) Friendly fire (Ezek. 38:21). (3) Convulsions of nature (Ezek. 38:22).

Notice, that there will be no armies defeating and destroying Russia and her allies on the battlefield. Gog will reap what he sows.

Galatians 6:7-8, "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life."

This passage refers the fact that other prophets of Israel prophesied of Gog's doom as well.

Jeremiah 1:13-14, "The word of the LORD came to me a second time saying, 'What do you see?' And I said, 'I see a boiling pot, facing away from the north.' Then the LORD said to me, 'Out of the north the evil will break forth on all the inhabitants of the land.'"

Jeremiah 4:6, "Lift up a standard toward Zion! Seek refuge, do not stand still, for I am bringing evil from the north, and great destruction."

Jeremiah 6:22, "Thus says the LORD, 'Behold, a people is coming from the north land, and a great nation will be aroused from the remote parts of the earth.'"

Jeremiah 10:22, "The sound of a report! Behold, it comes -- a great commotion out of the land of the north -- to make the cities of Judah a desolation, a haunt of jackals."

Jeremiah 46:20-24, "Egypt is a pretty heifer, but a horsefly is coming from the north -- it is coming! Also her mercenaries in her midst are like fattened calves, for even they too have turned back and have fled away together; They did not stand their ground. For the day of their calamity has come upon them, the time of their punishment. Its sound moves along like a serpent; For they move on like an army and come to her as woodcutters with axes. They have

cut down her forest, declares the LORD; ‘Surely it will no more be found, Even though they are now more numerous than locusts and are without number. The daughter of Egypt has been put to shame, given over to the power of the people of the north.’”

This earthquake in Ezekiel 38:19 is also mentioned in other Old Testament passages.

Haggai 2:6, “For thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘Once more in a little while, I am going to shake the heavens and the earth, the sea also and the dry land.’”

Joel 3:16, “The LORD roars from Zion and utters His voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth tremble. But the LORD is a refuge for His people and a stronghold to the sons of Israel.”

Ezekiel 38:23 reveals that this attack against Israel by confederation of nations led by Russia during the Tribulation will be another means of God’s displaying to the nations His holy and righteous character and sovereign power over human history. This is referred to several times in the book of Ezekiel.

Ezekiel 20:41, “As a soothing aroma I will accept you when I bring you out from the peoples and gather you from the lands where you are scattered; and I will prove Myself holy among you in the sight of the nations.”

Ezekiel 28:25, “Thus says the Lord GOD, “When I gather the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and will manifest My holiness in them in the sight of the nations, then they will live in their land which I gave to My servant Jacob.”

Ezekiel 36:23, “I will vindicate the holiness of My great name which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD, declares the Lord GOD, ‘when I prove Myself holy among you in their sight.’”

Ezekiel 39:27, “When I bring them back from the peoples and gather them from the lands of their enemies, then I shall be sanctified through them in the sight of the many nations.”

Ezekiel 38:23, “I will magnify Myself, sanctify Myself, and make Myself known in the sight of many nations; and they will know that I am the LORD.”

Ezekiel 39:1-6-The Place of the Destruction

Ezekiel 39:1-6 records the place in which this massive invasion led by Russia will be destroyed by God. Chapter 39 is not another invasion by Gog but is inextricably connected with chapter 38. It is an amplification and to some extent, a repetition for emphasis, stressing the importance in biblical prophecy of the attack by the Northern Confederacy during the middle of Daniel’s 70th week.

Chapter 39 also describes the *results* of the destruction of the Northern Confederacy. Ezekiel 38 deals with the composition, motives and defeat of Gog's armies by God's intervention.

Ezekiel 39:1-8 also describes Gog's fall, but the subsequent verses present the aftermath of this failed invasion. Like Ezekiel 38, Ezekiel 39 begins with the opening formulas commonly found in Ezekiel.

Ezekiel 39:1-5, "And you, son of man, prophesy against Gog and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, Behold, I am against you, O Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal; and I will turn you around, and I will drive you forward, and I will cause you to depart from the remotest parts of the north and I will cause you to be brought against the mountains of Israel. I will cause your bow to struck from your left hand and I will cause your arrows to fall from your right hand. You will fall on the mountains of Israel, you and all your troops and the peoples who are with you; I will give you as food to every kind of predatory bird and beast of the field. You will fall on the open field; for it is I who have spoken," declares the Lord GOD."

This imagery of foreign armies being given as food to the birds and beasts of the field also appears in other passages of Scripture: (1) Pharaoh's Egypt (Ezek. 29:1-6); Antichrist and the Tribulation armies (Rev. 19:17-21).

Ezekiel 39:6, "And I will send fire upon Magog and those who inhabit the coastlands in safety; and they will know that I am the LORD."

Ezekiel stating here that the Lord will send fire upon the nation of Russia, which implies destruction and military devastation (Ezek. 30:8; 14, 16; cf. Hosea 8:14; Amos 1:7, 10, 14; 2:2, 5). The Lord Himself will herself destroy Russia who along with her allies invaded Israel.

"**The coastlands**" refers to the lands and islands in the Mediterranean Sea area and is used often by Ezekiel (26:15, 18; 27:3, 6-7, 15, 35).

Ezekiel 39:7-8-The Holiness of God

Ezekiel 39:7-8 reveals that God's purpose for permitting Russia and her allies to attack Israel during the Tribulation was to reveal His holiness to not only Israel but the entire world!

Ezekiel 39:7-8, "My holy name I will make known in the midst of My people Israel; and I will not let My holy name be profaned anymore. And the nations will know that I am the LORD, the Holy One in Israel. Behold, it is coming and it shall be done, declares the Lord GOD. 'That is the day of which I have spoken.'"

This destruction of the Russia led Northern confederacy during the midway point of the Tribulation will have the same affect on the world that the destruction

of Pharaoh's Egyptian army in the days of Moses and the Exodus generation. The Lord is very much concerned about His reputation and holiness and this destruction of the Russian led invasion will vindicate His holy Person.

God's purpose for permitting Russia and her allies to attack Israel during the Tribulation was to reveal His holiness to not only Israel but all the world! This annihilation of the Russian led invasion will serve notice to the nations that the Lord will no longer tolerate His Holy Person to be profaned.

The holiness of God is the aggregate of perfect divine attributes that form the nature of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. Thus, God's holiness is related to all of His divine attributes.

The holiness of God is simply the harmony of all His perfections or attributes. In fact, grace is simply the function of the holiness of God (sum total of His divine attributes) toward undeserving mankind. Holiness is used often to describe the Person of God.

Leviticus 22:2, "Tell Aaron and his sons to be careful with the holy gifts of the sons of Israel, which they dedicate to Me, so as not to profane My holy name; I am the LORD."

1 Chronicles 16:10, "Glory in His holy name; Let the heart of those who seek the LORD be glad."

Psalm 30:4, "Sing praise to the LORD, you His godly ones, and give thanks to His holy name."

Psalm 97:12, "Be glad in the LORD, you righteous ones, and give thanks to His holy name."

This absolute perfection of God's character is celebrated throughout the Scriptures.

Isaiah 6:3, "And one called out to another and said, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts, The whole earth is full of His glory."

Revelation 4:8, "And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within; and day and night they do not cease to say, 'HOLY, HOLY, HOLY IS THE LORD GOD, THE ALMIGHTY, WHO WAS AND WHO IS AND WHO IS TO COME.'"

The holiness or perfect character of God is the perfection of the glory of God and every Person of the Trinity. It is the rule of all His actions and relationships with both men and angels.

The Lord Jesus Christ revealed the holiness or character of God during His 1st Advent.

John 1:18, "No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him."

The term holiness has become an obscure term. Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary defines holiness, "the quality or state of being holy; sanctity." They define sanctity, "sacred or hallowed character."

One of the definitions that Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary gives for the adjective holy is, "entitled to worship or profound religious reverence because of divine character or origin or connection with God or divinity." Therefore, holiness pertains to the absolute perfection of the divine character.

The perfect character or holiness of God is the excellence of the divine nature. It is the very antithesis to sin, evil, moral blemish or defilement. The Word of God devotes many passages to the holiness or righteousness of God since it is the excellency of His divine nature and because it was attacked by Satan in eternity past and continues to be attacked throughout human history, which is the appeal trial of Satan.

The Lord's holiness manifested by His abhorrence of the evil perpetrated by Russia and her allies against Israel will cause Him to destroy their armies. The fact that God is concerned about His holiness not being profaned among the nations is mentioned in Ezekiel 36.

Ezekiel 39:9-10-The Burning of the Russian Weapons

Ezekiel 39:9-10 records that the weapons of the invading force will be burned for fuel for seven years.

Ezekiel 39:9-10, "Then those who inhabit the cities of Israel will go out and make fires with the weapons and burn them, both shields and bucklers, bows and arrows, war clubs and spears, and for seven years they will make fires of them. They will not take wood from the field or gather firewood from the forests, for they will make fires with the weapons; and they will take the spoil of those who despoiled them and seize the plunder of those who plundered them, declares the Lord GOD."

Notice that the prophet Ezekiel states that citizens of the nation of Israel in the aftermath of the destruction of the Northern Confederacy will be using the Russian weapons as firewood. It is interesting that some Russian produced weapons are manufactured with lignostone, a compressed wood product, which was developed in Holland to be used as fuel. However, the Russian weapon scientists found that this unique product was as strong as steel, light, pliable and invisible to radar. These characteristics encouraged Russian military strategists to use this product in many military vehicles and weapons.

One of its characteristics is that it burns at very high temperatures and could be readily used as an alternative fuel. The following is quote from Grant Jeffery's book entitled "Armageddon" (page 105), which I think you will find interesting

and illuminating regarding Russia's intentions toward Israel: "In June of 1982, Israel responded to a PLO artillery bombardment of the villages of northern Galilee from a terrorist base in southern Lebanon. When the Israeli army entered Lebanon to destroy the PLO bases, they expected to uncover substantial arms depots. However, they were astonished at the staggering number of weapons, which Russia had stockpiled in tunnels carved out of rock by an amazing tunneling machine developed in the USSR. Reports from Lebanon stated that there were tanks, anti-tank missiles, and thousands of shells. Huge underground supply dumps contained hundreds of thousands of uniforms, AK-47 assault rifles and millions of rounds of ammunition. These figures are so incredible that I would not have been able to report them without verification. An Israeli colonel (Reserve) Yehuda Levi, who was the Israeli Defense Forces media spokesman during the events in Lebanon, was in a position to know firsthand about these captured Russian supplies. In a conversation I had with him in Vancouver, B.C. after those events, I asked him if the reports were correct. While of course, he would not give additional details, he agreed that the reports were substantially correct."

Jeffery goes on to state on page 106, "The implications of these Soviet weapons in Lebanon are significant regarding the possible timing of this attack. The stored Russian military food rations had a shelf life of only 6 months, which indicates that the massive attack of Israel was planned for the fall of 1982! Israel's "incursion" obviously set back the planned invasion somewhat, but it is clear that the political-military decision to attack Israel and risk a major war with the West has already been taken. In the years since 1982, Russia has had ample time to restore the weapons "lost" to Israel."

Ezekiel 39:11-16-The Burying of the Dead

Ezekiel 39:11-16 records that Israel will be burying the dead from the invading force for seven months.

Ezekiel 39:11-16, "On that day I will give Gog a burial ground there in Israel, the valley of those who pass by east of the sea, and it will block off those who would pass by. So they will bury Gog there with all his horde, and they will call it the valley of Hamon-gog. For seven months the house of Israel will be burying them in order to cleanse the land. Even all the people of the land will bury them; and it will be to their renown on the day that I glorify Myself," declares the Lord GOD. They will set apart men who will constantly pass through the land, burying those who were passing through, even those left on the surface of the ground, in order to cleanse it. At the end of seven months they will make a search. As those who pass through the land pass through and anyone sees a man's bone, then he will set up a marker by it until

the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamon-gog. And even the name of the city will be Hamonah. So they will cleanse the land.”

“**The valley of those who pass by**” is composed of the noun *gay* plus the definite article *ha* and the Qal active participle form of the verb *avar*. The articular expression *ha avar* could be, “the Travelers,” or “the valley of Abarim.” The latter is in view here referring to the mountains of Abarim, which are located east of the Dead Sea that Israel traveled on her way to the land of Canaan (Nm. 33:48).

The burial of the armies of Magog along with her allies will be in the Valley of Abarim just across the Dead Sea from Israel proper in the land of Moab. The valley where the dead will be buried will be on the east side of the Dead Sea, which today is Jordan.

The phrase “**the valley of Hamon-gog**” literally means, “the valley of the multitude of Gog.”

Ezekiel 39:17-20-Banquet for Bird and Animal Kingdom

In Ezekiel 39:17-20, we have the Lord inviting the bird and animal kingdom to a banquet.

Ezekiel 39:17-20, “As for you, son of man, thus says the Lord GOD, ‘Speak to every kind of bird and to every beast of the field, ‘assemble and come, gather from every side to My sacrifice which I am going to sacrifice for you, as a great sacrifice on the mountains of Israel, that you may eat flesh and drink blood. You will eat the flesh of mighty men and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, as though they were rams, lambs, goats and bulls, all of them fatlings of Bashan. So you will eat fat until you are gluttoned, and drink blood until you are drunk, from My sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you. You will be gluttoned at My table with horses and charioteers, with mighty men and all the men of war,’ declares the Lord GOD.”

This imagery of foreign armies being given as food to the birds and beasts of the field appears in other passages of Scripture: (1) Pharaoh’s Egypt (Ezek. 29:1-6); Antichrist and the Tribulation armies (Rev. 19:17-21).

Ezekiel 39:21-24-Eight-Fold Result of the Lord Destroying Russian Led Invasion

Ezekiel 39:21-24 reveals that eight things will result from the Lord destroying this Russian invasion of Israel.

Ezekiel 39:21-24, “And I will set My glory among the nations; and all the nations will see My judgment which I have executed and My hand which I have laid on them. And the house of Israel will know that I am the LORD their God from that day onward. The nations will know that the house of Israel went into exile for their iniquity because they acted treacherously against Me, and I hid My face from them; so I gave them into the hand of their adversaries, and all of them fell by the sword. According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions I dealt with them, and I hid My face from them.”

Ezekiel 39:21-24 reveals at least eight things that will result from the Lord's great defeat over the Russian led Northern Confederacy: (1) It will vindicate God's holiness and magnify Him among the nations by judging Gog's willful pride. (2) It will glorify the Lord in the nation of Israel. (3) It will clarify as to why the Lord sent the nation of Israel out on the 5th cycle of discipline, which expelled them from the land for centuries and dispersed them throughout the nations of the world. Israel failed and not the Lord. (4) It will bring glory to His Holy Person. (5) It will be a magnificent display of the Lord's concern for His reputation among the nations. (6) It will result in the regeneration of Israel. (7) It will result in their trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for security and deliverance. (8) It will result in the Lord being set apart as sovereign over the nations through His restoration of the nation of Israel.