

**FOCUS #5—THE INVASION OF ISRAEL**  
**Ezekiel 38:1-39:24**

*“Thanks to the Lebanese and Palestinian peoples, the countdown to the destruction of Israel has begun, and we will soon witness the destruction of the Zionist regime.”*

*“We very much hope that in the future we will move together, alongside the Iraqi people, towards Jerusalem. This is the hope of all peoples, and it will come to pass.”*

**Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad**

Both of these statements by the Iranian president highlight the hostile intent of Iran and many of its allies who are bent on the destruction of Israel. So, it is not surprising that at some point in the future there will be an invasion of Israel as described in Ezekiel 38 and 39.

The next event that we will cover on the prophetic timetable is the invasion of Israel as described in Ezekiel 39-39, but what have we covered already that likely precedes this invasion?

**Focus 1-Conditions at the End of the Age:**

*What conditions will likely exist at the end of the age?*

- The Revival of the Nation of Israel Jeremiah 23:7-8
- The Rise of Key End Times Nations (Russia, Turkey, Iran, China, United Europe etc...)
- A Decline of Spiritual Character (e.g. Apostasy; Atheism in Government; Rise of Satanism & the Occult)
- The Development of Globalism (one-world government; one-world church; one world economy)

**Focus 2-The Rapture of the Church:**

The Rapture is the very first event on God’s timetable of end time events. Nothing else has to happen before God’s removal of the saints at the rapture.

Remember that the rapture includes the following:

- Christ will descend from heaven to earth with sounds that will herald His return (John 14:3; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17).

- The souls of dead church saints, Christians who have passed away, will descend with Christ at this coming (1 Thessalonians 4:14). When these church saints died, their souls left their bodies and went to be with the Lord in heaven (2 Corinthians 5:6-8; Philippians 1:21-23).
- The bodies of dead church saints will be raised as immortal, incorruptible bodies and will be reunited with their returning souls (1 Corinthians 15:42-44, 52-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-16).
- The bodies of church saints who have not died before this coming of Christ will be changed instantly into immortal, incorruptible bodies (1 Corinthians 15:51-53).
- Both the resurrected and changed church saints will be caught up together to meet Christ in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:17; John 14:3).
- The church saints will return with Christ to His Father's house in heaven to dwell with Him in living accommodations He has prepared for them beforehand (John 14:2-3).

### **Focus 3-The Rise of the Antichrist:**

The names and titles as well as the description of the antichrist in Scripture reveal him to be an intelligent, arrogant, deceitful, belligerent yet powerful individual. He will sign a covenant with Israel, rise to world dominance, demand the world's worship, persecute the saints, wage war against the Lord Jesus and meet his final doom in the lake of fire for all eternity.

### **Focus 4-The Rise of a New Empire & the Peace Treaty with Israel:**

Remember that Daniel 9:24-27 highlights a future peace treaty between the antichrist and Israel. This seven-year treaty will likely bring about peace to the Middle East; allow the Jewish Temple to be rebuilt and temple worship to be restored. Unfortunately, the antichrist will break that treaty at the mid-point, desolate the temple and proclaim, himself, to be God demanding the world's worship.

This antichrist will rise to power out of a New Roman empire, likely a reunified European power that will have some sort of 10-fold division. This nation could be in the formation stages prior to the rapture and this leader could be coming to power prior to the rapture, but likely it is the rapture event that will secure the dominance of this new empire and allow for the rise of this new world leader that we call the antichrist. Likely, after the rapture, he will restore order to the world and broker a real peace treaty with Israel.

## Back to Focus 5-The Invasion of Israel:

One of the events of the end times is the invasion of Israel as prophesied in Ezekiel 38-39. This invasion is often referred to as the Battle of God and Magog or the Invasion of Israel by Russia. Ezekiel chapters 38-39 describe a future end-times invasion of Israel not only from the North, but from a variety of directions involving several nations. This invasion meets an abrupt end when God intervenes and annihilates the invading force.

It seems apparent from the text that this invading force is acting independently from the new world power (a group of ten/the New Roman Empire). To help us understand this invasion in Ezekiel 38-39 we will turn to the standard observation questions: the five W's and an H; Who? What? When? Where? Why? and How?

### WHO? The Participants of the Invasion (Ezekiel 38:1-7):

- **Ezekiel 38:1-7**, “*And the word of the LORD came to me saying, “Son of man, set your face toward 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. “And 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; **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. “Be prepared, and prepare yourself, you and all your companies that are assembled about you, and be a guard for them.”*”

From this end-times prophetic passage we find the mention of several nations involved in an invasion of Israel. The name Gog is a name or title of the leader of the invasion, not a geographical location. He is directly addressed by God (Ezekiel 38:14; 39:1). He is also referred to as a prince or ruler (Ezekiel 38:2; 39:1). He comes from Magog, but is the prince (or leader) of Rosh. Who are the nine specific nations that join together for this invasion under Gog's leadership?

1) **Magog**—The Jewish historian Josephus reported that the ancient Scythians inhabited the land of Magog. These northern nomadic tribes inhabited the land from central Asia across southern Russia. Magog today probably represents the former underbelly of what was the Soviet Union: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan. Afghanistan could also be part of this territory. [John F. Walvoord, *Armageddon, Oil, and Terror*, p. 89] Of course it is not surprising that these nations would want to invade Israel since each of them are dominated by Islam. And

certainly their combined population in excess of 90 million would prove to be a formidable force.

2) **Rosh**—This has often been identified with Russia. It is true in Ezekiel’s day that there was a group of people known as Rash, Reshu or Ros and they inhabited what today is considered to be southern Russia. This would fit with the phrase from the passage, “the remote parts of the north” Obviously Russia is regaining strength and becoming a major player in modern events. It would not be surprising for them to align themselves with other nations from the former Soviet Union. They also have been aligning themselves with Islamic nations and seem to trend toward an anti-Israeli stance.

3) **Meshech and Tubal**—These refer to the ancient Moschoi and Tibarenoi recognized in ancient Assyrian writings and referring to locations in Asia Minor (modern day Turkey). Turkey also is an Islamic nation playing a major role in the Middle East today.

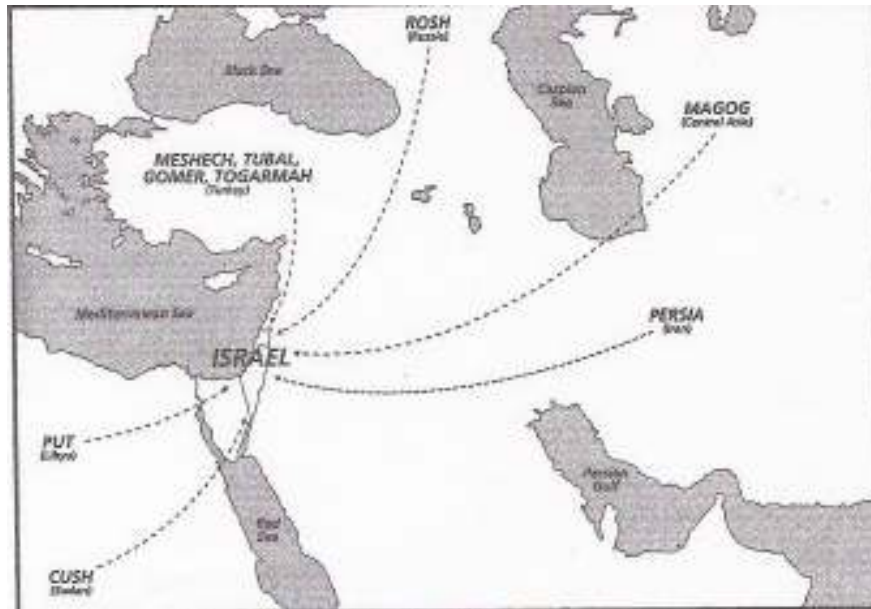
4) **Persia**—Frequently mentioned as a nation during Old Testament times, the ancient land of Persia became the modern nation of Iran in March 1935 and the name was changed to the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979. The population of Iran is up to at least 68 million and is a nation who is hostile toward Israel, a major sponsor of terrorism, and seeking to develop nuclear weapons. Certainly an alignment of this nation with other Islamic nations against Israel would not be surprising.

5) **Ethiopia (Cush)**—Although translated Ethiopia in many English versions, it is literally rendered Cush from the Hebrew. Ancient Cush was called Kusu by the Assyrians and Babylonians, Kos or Kas by the Egyptians and Nubia by the Greeks. Secular history locates Cush directly south of Egypt extending down past the modern city of Khartoum, which is the capital of modern Sudan. Sudan just happens to be a hard-line Islamic nation that supported Iraq in the Gulf War and harbored Osama bin Laden from 1991-1996. It is not surprising that this part of Africa would be hostile toward Israel.

6) **Put**—Some ancient sources indicate that Put or Phut as a North African nation. The Babylonian Chronicles locates this distant nation as being west of Egypt, which could be associated with modern day Libya. The Greek Septuagint renders the word Put as Libues. Modern day Libya is an Islamic nation that has an allegiance to Islamic extremism and a hatred of Israel.

7) **Gomer**—This region is not associated with Germany, as some have attempted to do. It really is a reference to the ancient Cimmerians or Kimmerioi. Ancient history identifies biblical Gomer with the Akkadian Gimirraa and the Armenian Gamir. These peoples occupied the territory of Anatolia, which is modern day Turkey. Josephus noted that the Gomerites were identified with the Galatians who inhabited what is today central Turkey. It is interesting that modern day Turkey has a formidable military force on the northern border of Iraq and has ever-deepening ties with Russia as well as an allegiance to her Muslim neighbors.

8) **Beth-togarmah**—This is literally rendered as the house of Togarmah and is described as a nation that traded horses with ancient Tyre. This ancient nation also occupied a region of modern day Turkey.



All of these nations will come together and participate in a battle/invasion to destroy Israel during the end times.

**WHEN? The Period of the Invasion (Ezekiel 38:8):**

*“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.”*

When will this invasion take place? First of all, it is safe to say that it has not taken place in the past. This prophecy is yet to be fulfilled. In fact, it specifically mentions that it will take place “in the latter years.” In other words during the end times.

However, there are numerous opinions as to the exact timing of this battle. Some suggest that it will take place prior to the rapture of the church, while others connect it to the Battle of Armageddon at the end of the Tribulation period. Because of a reference to Gog and Magog in Revelation 20:8, many also see it as an event of the Millennial Reign of Christ.

But we are given a clue in Ezekiel 38:8. We are told that it will take place at a time when the people of Israel will be regathered into the land of Israel and will be living in security.

From AD 70 until 1948, Israelites have lived outside the land of Israel. They were scattered among the nations of the Earth. However, after World War II, Israel was reestablished as a nation in 1948 and allowed to return to their ancient lands.

However, Israel has not been living in security, but under constant fear and concern from its Arab neighbors, many of who would hope to see Israel destroyed. Israel will be at rest and in complete security during the Millennial Reign of Christ, but according to Isaiah 2:4, there will be no war during this period.

There is only one period in the future that clearly fits the description Ezekiel provides us with. That is the first half of Daniel's seventieth week. After the church has been raptured and Antichrist has signed a covenant with Israel, but prior to Antichrist's breaking of the covenant at the mid-point of the tribulation, Israel will be living in security among its neighbors. It is sometime during this three and one half year period that these nations will invade Israel.

#### **WHY? The Purpose of this Invasion (Ezekiel 38:9-16):**

The next key issue addressed in Ezekiel regarding the invasion of Israel is the purpose of the invasion. Both the human and divine purposes for the invasion are given.

*“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.” ‘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.’ “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.”*

The invading force of nations will have a four-fold goal or four main goals:

1-There will be a desire to acquire more territory or at least the specific territory of Israel.

2-There will be a desire to amass wealth; the wealth accumulated by Israel.

3-There will be a desire to destroy Israel; Israel has always been and always will be hated by the Islamic nations.

4-The divine purpose is so that the nations will know God. They will clearly witness the awesome power of God through this event.

It is interesting that this whole event is planned by God, initiated by God, and thwarted by God as He demonstrates His almighty power through the destruction of this invading force.

### **WHAT? The Proceedings of the Invasion (Ezekiel 38:13-39:20):**

The majority of these two chapters focus on the fate of the invaders and the aftermath of the invasion. When these nations seek to invade Israel, it will look like the biggest mismatch/mistake in history.

The assembly of these nations to go up against Israel will make it look like Israel is finished. Many will think that Israel will be no more. But God will mount up His fury to destroy these godless invaders.

- **The actual Invasion Takes Place (Ezekiel 38:14-17)**

*“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.” ‘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?”*

- **God’s fury boils against these godless invaders (Ezekiel 38:18-19)**

*“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 enemies of Israel are destroyed (Ezekiel 38:19-22)**

*“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.*

God will destroy Israel’s enemies through four different means:

- 1-Earthquake
- 2-Soldiers turning swords against each other
- 3-disease
- 4-a cataclysmic combination of torrential rain, hailstones, fire and burning sulphur

In 1967 Israel participated in the Six Day War. This war will just be the one-day war or even the one-hour war. As soon as the invasion is initiated, it is obliterated.

There are four key events that occur in the aftermath of this invasion:

1-The Birds and the Beasts will have a great feast: (Ezekiel 39:4-5)

*“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.*

The carnage that results from the slaughter will provide a great feast for the birds.

2-It will take 7 months to bury the dead (Ezekiel 39:11-12)

*“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.*

The cleansing of Israel will be so extensive that there will be erected a mass grave in a valley called Hamon-gog: Hamon—Horde; gog-the leader of this invasion. It will from that point forward be known as the burial place of Gog and his horde.



3-There will be the burning of weapons that will last for 7 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.*

This event has led some to speculate that the invasion took place prior to the tribulation period. I think, if anything, this might allude to an invasion toward the very beginning of the tribulation period.

4-The salvation of the nation of Israel (Ezekiel 39:22)

*And the house of Israel will know that I am the LORD their God from that day onward.*

In the midst of His wrath and fury, God will pour out His grace and mercy brining many from His chosen nation Israel to faith in Him.

**WHERE? The Place of the Invasion (Ezekiel 38:8):**

The location is obvious since it is an invasion of Israel. This is made clear in Ezekiel 38:8 or in fact throughout the entire passage. These nations move into Israel, are destroyed in Israel, and are buried in Israel.

**HOW? The Prophetic Stage for the Invasion:**

The final question to consider is how the world stage today is being set for the fulfillment of this incredible prophecy? What are some of the key developments that we are even witnessing today that might point to this invasion? There are 8 events over the last 60 or so years that had to develop for this passage to be fulfilled:

- 1-Israel will be regathered to their homeland. (1948)
- 2-Israel must have possession of the mountains in Israel. (1967)
- 3-Israel must be at peace. (While not yet fulfilled, many Western diplomats have sought to bring peace to the region of the Middle East over the last 30 years or so.)
- 4-Russia must reclaim its lost glory. (In progress)
- 5-Hatred of Israel will Increase. (In progress/daily)
- 6-Iran becomes a key player on the world scene (any doubts here? 2008/2009)
- 7-Turkey aligns itself with Islamic neighbors. (on going)
- 8-Saudi Arabia aligns itself with the West. (on going)

*Valley Bible Church – Adult Class*

Russia and its Islamic neighbors in the Middle East have been rising powers on the world scene. But once this invasion of Israel occurs, the balance of power will shift west and into the hands of a new world leader that emerges out of a European Empire.