



15. Revelation - The Gog Magog war – Part 1.

Ezekiel Chapters 38 and 39

'These are the days of Ezekiel!' What an awesome God we serve, He is totally in control of everything in the WHOLE wide world, even though with our small minds it looks such a mess. Even the chaos and lawlessness is part of His amazing plan to open the eyes of His Nation to His Son their Messiah.

We are now going to take some time out from the Book of Revelation itself (although we shall continue to refer to it during this module) in order to discuss what will be happening on earth at the beginning of the

Tribulation period. From **Revelation 6** we looked at the four horses and their riders (often referred to as The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse) who were released as the Lamb opened the first four seals of the Scroll, **Revelation 6:1-8**

The four horsemen represent 1. the antichrist, 2. the banishment of peace from the earth and the bringing of anarchy, war and killing, 3. famine and finally 4. death and hell. These riders were given the control of one quarter of the earth, so in order to find out what they contribute to this part of the Tribulation, we must turn to **Ezekiel Chapters 38 and 39**. To bring these two chapters into context, we should note that the preceding chapter (**Chapter 37**) describes the restoration of the Land of Israel. The first part of the chapter describes the Valley of Dry Bones where God breathes both life and eternal life into what apparently was just a valley full of dry and lifeless bones. The second part describes what will happen to these people and their land as they become a nation, **Ezekiel 37:21-28**. This awesome promise is completely in the character of the Holy God we serve.

So now we know God's intention regarding His people and the land that He has chosen to give them. Perhaps this helps us to make sense of the events occurring in the land of Israel today. It is clear that Satan has absolutely no intention of letting God's people, the Jews enter into their inheritance. He is using and will continue to use every trick he knows to attempt to prevent God's blessing from touching them. His hatred is intense and we can see this as he has attempted and continues to strive to destroy the Jews through the holocaust, acts of terrorism, displacement, hatred and destruction. We can also see that God's hand has been and is continually on them as He delivers them from all that the world is trying to do to them through war, isolation and lying promises of peace.

One day the world will look on in amazement as God delivers His people again in the face of overwhelming odds. He has fought for them in the past at the Red Sea – **Exodus 14:15-31** against the King of Assyria and – **2 Chronicles 32** from King Jabin of Hazor in Canaan and also – **Judges Chapter 4**, in 1948 just after the Nation of Israel had been inaugurated from the Arab nations, in 1967 again from the Arab nations in the Six-Day War; and from many other aggressors and oppressors throughout history. God will fight for them, and all they will have to do is "to stand and see the salvation of their God!" **Exodus 14:13 and 2 Chronicles 20:17**

Looking at **Ezekiel 38 and 39**, some people have said in the past and some say today that these chapters have already been fulfilled in history. However as we go through these chapters we will see that they are prophetic and the events described in them have yet to happen, and this may very well be in the not-too-distant future! In terms of nations, a map at the end of this study shows the parts of the world from which these main players come.

Biblical Nation	Modern Nation	Biblical Nation	Modern Nation
Magog	Russia	Gomer	Ukraine
Meshech	Moscow	Beth Togarmah	Armenia
Tubal	Upper Caucasus	Sheba	Yemen
Persia	Iran	Dedan	W.Coast of Saudi Arabia
Cush	Ethiopia	Tarshish	Coast S. Spain
Put	Libya		

In the past there was major contention about which current nations represent the Biblical nations described here, but as we see the political and military alliances beginning to form in that part of the world, we think that these in the list above are the most likely modern nations to be involved. However, please keep up to date with the news to identify future alliances.

Ezekiel 38:1-14

We should first notice that this prophecy is the Word of God. The Lord is in control of all these nations; in fact He is in control of **every** nation and **every** event on earth. He has not kept quiet about what He is going to do, so anyone from these nations, mentioned above, is without excuse as they should have heard this prophecy in time to return to God. The Word of God says that any person who heeded the prophecy, would have been saved and would have joined all the other Believers in glory

It is God who will call all these nations to band together and it is He who will cause them to ally themselves to come together as a mighty army. They will not be able to resist God; it will be as though He has put hooks in their jaws and drawn them.

Ezekiel saw them fully armed. Their fearsome weaponry was probably not swords, shields, bows and arrows, just as the hooks said to be in their jaws were not real, but their lust for power will be something that they could not resist. Instead the weapons will be modern. Just as the horses described here in some translations will probably be tanks and motorised vehicles. But to a man who was living towards the beginning of the sixth Century BC, these would have been indescribable. Today as we look at the attached map and watch television or read the newspapers, we can see how alliances between all the states described here are beginning to form. Never in history has Russia been an ally of Iran. They have been violently opposed to one another and they have been associates only out of necessity but never openly and distinctly **friends** as they are today. Russia is becoming more and more Muslim and Iran is becoming more and more hard line Muslim as time goes by. We should be looking for events that bring together Saudi Arabia, Ethiopia, Sudan, Libya and Turkey, some former Russian states, Lebanon and Syria. Gog who is the king of Meshech, or the district of Moscow as we know it today, will be their leader. I doubt that this leader will be called (literally) Gog, but watch for a leader to arise from this part of the world, **Ezekiel 38:8-12**

God had made it clear in His Word to Ezekiel that this would not happen for many years, but Ezekiel was still prepared to write it down, in obedience. The 'drawing with hooks,' which God described, will come true in His time and in spite of a very long wait! We do learn who the object of such an attack will be; it will be Israel. At 'that time,' Israel will be at peace, but unprotected. She will be a nation filled with exiled Jews, who have returned from many foreign countries. Israel had been dispersed in AD70, so 'that time' could not occur until she became a nation again on May 14, 1948.

This predicted time has certainly not happened since then as, although there have been attacks on Israel, the peoples described in **Ezekiel 38:1-7** have not yet come together in a political or military alliance.

The founding of the newly formed nation of Israel, which was backed by NATO and the United Nations, was nothing short of miraculous! The history of what happened to the Jews during the Second World War and the three years following that, made what appeared to be a very unlikely situation become possible, and then a reality!

The Arabs hated the new status quo and immediately tried to quash the recently formed nation of Israel by attacking her. At every hostile event since then, God has fought for His people. With what has looked like overwhelming odds, victory has been snatched out of the jaws of defeat. Their restoration is very clear in **Ezekiel 36-39**.

The prophecy contained in **Ezekiel 38 and 39** is yet to be fulfilled. The vast army from the North and from the South will attack Israel like a cloud. What is the purpose of them coming against such a small and otherwise insignificant land? Greed and Jealousy. Israel will be rich. Massive quantities of oil have very recently been discovered in the north of Israel – beneath the Golan Heights, and an almost unlimited amount of natural gas recently. The Bible seems to indicate that there is much more – perhaps even more than Iraq and Saudi Arabia and Iran put together – and that may be sufficient incentive for the alliance to attempt an invasion.

Israel certainly commands much of the world's attention at the moment, most of it negative, as **it** she wrestles with the pro-Palestinian sentiment and Muslim aggression. Yet in spite of much uncertainty and hostility, Israel is one of the world's most productive countries. Many breakthroughs in IT research, security products, military programmes and other commercial applications have originated in Israel, (as well as some of the world's greatest musicians). This Nation, from God's perspective, is the centre of the earth, both in terms of her 'land' and her 'people;' this 'land,' which once was a desert, now supports a nation! The 'people' are God's Chosen, who can trace their lineage back to Abraham, the father of their faith. God promised that every place on which the sole of Abraham's foot trod, He would give to him and to his descendants forever, **Genesis 13:14-18**. Today, we are seeing the fulfilment of that promise before our eyes.

One day, and that day may not be too far off, the temptation to annihilate Israel and make off with the immense wealth of the nation will be just too great for the 'unholy' alliance described in **Ezekiel 38**. The established trading nations indicated by Sheba, Dedan and Tarshish will voice their horror as in effect they say to Gog, "Who are you to usurp our position as the world's trade leaders"? Sheba and Dedan would then join this confederacy. Tarshish was the leading trade centre in the west; many believe it was in Spain, **Ezekiel 38:14-16**.

As if to emphasise what He has already spoken through Ezekiel, God repeats for us the timing and the situation in which Israel finds herself at this time. It will be a time when the people of Israel are living in peace and security, a time when probably the Palestinians and the surrounding Arab nations have formed a peace treaty that will last for more than just a few weeks. To Ezekiel, it is a time that is in the distant future, in the latter years of history. It is a time such as the one in which we are living, a time at the end of history, a time just before the Lord comes again for His people, a time that we have been investigating through the pages of Revelation.

This 'time' will bring the hordes of a mighty army from the north. The army will cover the land of Israel like a cloud, the land God has promised to His people like a cloud so that to human eyes, Israel could no longer exist. It is God Who has brought this army. However it is God Who has gathered and authorised this army; it is He who has planned this attack, and it is entirely for His purpose. So what is His purpose in all of this? It is simply this:

- His holiness will be vindicated. What He has said in His Word will be proven to be true
- Some of God's enemies will be miraculously overcome and destroyed,
- There will be no doubts left in the minds of the rest of the world that God is Who He has always declared Himself to be – the LORD of the entire universe – and the God of His people, Israel.

This is the God of Israel about Whom we are talking. He is the Living God, the Creator of the Universe, the One Who sent Jesus, His only Son, to die in our place so that we might not suffer the penalty that our sinful nature deserves. Instead, we are immediately transformed, forgiven and redeemed, becoming inheritors of the Kingdom of God, through Christ's Death and Resurrection.

Ezekiel 38:16-23

For a third and final time in this chapter and for the avoidance of any doubt, God identifies this army, this aggregation of the nations as the peoples spoken of by His prophets down through the ages; those who would come against Israel far into the future at just such a time as today. This 'time' we are discussing as we study the pages of Revelation, is the time when the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse will ride on the face of the earth.

The LORD now begins to describe how He will deal with those whom He has brought up in judgement. God is a God of Love, but He is also a God of Justice. What He says is Truth, and the penalty for ignoring His call to put oneself right with Him has both temporal and eternal consequences. It is here that we see the horror of both, for in the physical destruction of this mighty army, we can also see the eternal consequences as men and women die and leave this planet for hell.

As this army actually enters the land of Israel, God's fury boils over. There will be a mighty earthquake, a quake so terrible and full of horror that even mountains will come crashing down. This will be a day of chaos, a day when the very elements fight against the forces opposed to God.

Human Generals may plan and can prepare themselves for battle against the finest of human forces, but when Creation fights against them, they have no chance of victory. So it will be at this allotted time and place. There will be an earthquake of mammoth proportions, and the effects of this quake might well be felt around the globe. There will be disease, torrential floods and hailstones as well as fire and pestilence – the destructive matter that destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah – will be poured out again. This is not a fair fight, but those who choose to fight against the Living God will have to prepare themselves for the consequences. Those who are not destroyed by the earthquake and natural events will find that they are fighting against themselves. The army of various nations and factions will be locked in deadly combat – with itself!!

This brings to mind some of the other amazing deliverances that God has wrought for His people. When the Ammonites and their allies came against Judah with Jehoshaphat as King, God said

"Don't be afraid! Don't be paralyzed by this mighty army! For the battle is not yours, but God's! Take your places; stand quietly and see the incredible rescue operation God

will perform for you..... as they walked along praising and thanking the Lord! as far as they could look there were dead bodies lying on the ground - not a single one of the enemy had escaped. On the fourth day they gathered in the Valley of Blessing, as it is called today, and how they praised the Lord!" **2 Chronicles 20:15-26**

God's purpose is to show His authority to an unbelieving world. Although the vast majority of this army will die, the remnant together with the vast majority of people not involved in this battle and alive at this time will have come face to face with the decision they need to make. Joshua put it this way when he spoke to his people at the end of his life, "So revere Jehovah and serve him in sincerity and truth. Put away forever the idols your ancestors worshiped when they lived beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt. Worship the Lord alone. ¹⁵ But if you are unwilling to obey the Lord, then decide today whom you will obey. Will it be the gods of your ancestors beyond the Euphrates or the gods of the Amorites here in this land? ***But as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord.***" **Joshua 24:14-15**

You and I have been given a choice well ahead of this conflict. We do not have to wait and see as the events of this battle are played out for us on the increasing array of multicast and broadcast receivers available to us. We can make Jesus Lord now. Have we gone to Him, declared how sorry we are that we have not responded to Him and instead done things our way? Do we repent of any sins the Holy Spirit highlights to us daily? Have we chosen to live long and live strong – determined that we will follow God whether we see any of these prophecies fulfilled in our lifetime or not? Have we grown weary in waiting and lost the excitement of living daily for Jesus? Let us finish strong in Him!



15. Revelation - The Gog Magog war. – Challenge Questions

- 1. Read the Notes and the Bible Verses** referred to in them. Highlight the points that 'speak' to you and share with the group.
- 2.** Which account of God's supernatural deliverance of His people do you like best and why?
- 3.** Give some characteristics of God shown in these two chapters of Ezekiel?

Read Ezekiel 38 and 39

- 4.** In what ways could this war be considered as remarkable? How does God prove to all concerned that He is the ONLY God and that all other gods are idols and so helpless?
- 5.** The Bible states that Satan has always wanted to demonstrate his power. Does he have any? Explain your answer.
- 6.** Describe what will actually happen as the aggressor nations prepare to attack Israel.
- 7.** What options might Israel consider when facing these warlike hordes? How do you think each side will view the outcome of this war as the aggressors march on Israel?
- 8.** How do you think God feels as He sees each side prepare?
- 9.** How does God warn His people about events to come? Name some of the people He used.

- 10.** The word Prophet when referring to some Christians in the New Testament is used in two different ways. Contrast **Ephesians 4:11-13** with **1 Corinthians 12:10**. How do you see the difference?
- 11.** What was the reaction of the majority of the Jews in the Old Testament when the prophets obeyed God in their gifting? Do you think that is the same in the Church today?
- 12.** Do you believe that the Gog Magog war will happen in your lifetime?
- 13.** Describe the physical effects of God's anger on the followers of Gog.
- 14.** Who and what will clear up the mess? What will happen to the corpses? How long will the clear up take? What will the Israelis do with the weapons of war?
- 15.** The clean up will be necessary for at least two reasons. What are they?
- 16.** Why is it necessary for our own lives to be cleaned up? Whose responsibility is it? Why is it impossible for us to make our lives righteous in God's sight?
- 17.** How does this time (the Rapture and the War of Gog and Magog) mark a turning point in Israel's relationship with God according to **Ezekiel 39**?
- 18.** Is it true that God's plan is to give salvation to Jews and Gentiles alike? Why do you think the Jews have not accepted Jesus as their Messiah?
- 19.** Sum up the Gog Magog war in one short sentence?