

EZEKIEL 35:1-48:35 | THE RESTORATION

EZEKIEL 38:1-39:29 | JUDGEMENT ON ENEMIES

- Verses 1-3 –
 - Yet again, **the word of the Lord came** to Ezekiel, this time with a prophecy toward **Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal**.
 - Before getting into the identities of these figures, a timing issue must be worked out.
 - In chapter 37, there is the prophesied complete restoration of the house of Israel, and God dwelling in their midst. Since this inaugurates the millennium, one could speculate that the battle(s) of [Ezekiel 38-39](#) are the Gog and Magog battles of [Revelation 20:8-10](#).
 - However, the [Revelation 20](#) battle takes place long after the repentance and restoration of Israel, and the [Ezekiel 38-39](#) battle takes place before the repentance and restoration (see [Ezek. 36:25-26](#)).
 - Because the end of [Ezekiel 39](#) has the same characteristics of the end of [Ezekiel 37](#), we can only conclude that [Ezekiel 38-39](#) happen *chronologically* prior to the millennium and somewhat in conjunction with [Ezekiel 36-37](#).
 - To whom is the prophecy directed?
 - A man (it appears) named **Gog** who is of **the land of Magog** and the **chief prince of Meshech and Tubal**. The Lord says, **I am against thee, O Gog** (v. 3).
 - Bullinger suggests that Gog is associated with Og of [Deuteronomy 3:1-13](#) and/or Agag of [Numbers 24:7](#), where the Septuagint reads “Gog” rather than “Agag.”
 - If there is such an association, then Gog is a *representative term* rather than a contemporary of Ezekiel’s day.
 - Both Og and Agag were enemies of Israel. They were also both *Nephilim*.
 - Gog appears to be a *future* king, perhaps even of the Nephilim. He lives and rules in **the land of Magog**.
 - While some take Magog to be the individual and Gog to be the people, I think the text prefers the reverse: Gog is the leader of the people who live in **the land of Magog**, that is, the decedents of Magog, a son of Japheth ([Genesis 10:2](#)).
 - According to Josephus, “Magog founded those that from him were named Magogites, but who are by the Greeks called Scythians.” (Antiquities, I, vi, 1, 123). The Scythians lived mostly north of the Black Sea area.
 - Note that some translations have Gog (or Magog) as the *prince of Rosh* (YLT).
 - These translations choose to transliterate the Hebrew word *Rosh* (head).
 - From this they point to *Russia*, which likely has similar etymological roots.
 - Any direct connection to the country of Russia would be mostly eisegesis, though Russia does currently control much of the Scythian region.
 - Gog appears to lead the people of **Meshech and Tubal** (v. 3). Bullinger makes the likely connection between these names and *Moschi* and *Tibareni*, today Moscow and Tbilisi (in Georgia).

- Verse 4 –
 - God is going to do a supernatural work (likely through natural events) that will cause Gog to prepare for major war.
 - Two observations should be made:
 - The usage of ancient war terminology should not hinder the student from taking this as a *future prophecy*. Surely the metaphor of **hooks into thy jaws** would allow that ancient terms be used for future warfare. The ancient oracles of the Bible use current language for future events (and the current language of the time is the *only language* they had).
 - The fact that this speaks of a *prophetic* war testifies that it is not something that takes place in the *non-prophetic* days of the *mystery age*.
- Verses 5-7 –
 - These lands and peoples are located in a general circumference around Israel, and include descendants of all of Noah's sons:
 - Shem:
 - Persia - descended from the Elamites (according to Josephus)
 - Ham:
 - Ethiopia - descendants of Cush
 - Libya - descendants of Phut
 - Japheth:
 - Gomer - The Galls/Galatians (according to Josephus)
 - Togarmah - The Armenians (according to Bullinger).
 - The Lord warns Gog to **be thou prepared** (v. 7), along with **all thy company** (v. 7). Gog will be **a guard unto them** (v. 7), that is, their military leader.
- Verses 8-16 –
 - This is going to take place **After many days** and **in the latter years** (v. 8). When no further context is given (as here), these two phrases are a reference to the *day of Jacob's trouble* in the Hebrew Scriptures.
 - This prophecy will take place when Israel **shall dwell safely** (v. 8). Our choices for interpretation are as follows:
 - Some time period after the end of the exile and before the destruction of Jerusalem. Yet nothing was fulfilled during that time, and Israel only *arguably* lived in safety during this time.
 - Sometime after 1948 until the present or until the rapture. Again, only *arguably* does Israel live in safety in her cities, and such interpretation would violate the principles of a *rightly divided* interpretation of the Word.
 - Sometime after the millennium, yet chapter 39 will make clear that the spiritual restoration of Israel takes place at the end of this battle, so such a position is untenable.
 - The only option left is that this battle will take place *sometime after the rapture and prior to the midpoint of the tribulation*. It could be that this battle takes place during the time of peace ushered in by the confirmation of the covenant with the Antichrist.

- When the battle begins, it will **ascend and come like a storm** (v. 9).
 - There is no indication that the Antichrist is involved in this battle.
 - Could it be that this battle is what causes the Antichrist to “come out of his shell” and take his place as god?
- The battle will be in Israel and **upon the people that are gathered out of the nations** (v. 12). However, it is *not* required that this is the same gathering as chapters 36-37.
- Israel will not be *totally alone* in this battle. **Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish** (v. 13) will at least protest the invasion.
- One thing that we know will result from this battle is **that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog** (v. 16). The defeat of Gog and his allies will be so miraculous that the nations will be forced to recognize the God of Israel (though nothing is mentioned about worshipping Him).
- Verses 17-23 –
 - Verse 17 is difficult because we know of no other prophecy in which the Lord had **spoken in old time** about Gog. Several possibilities arise:
 - That other Jewish prophets outside the Biblical text made the prophecies (this is the interpretation of Rabbinical tradition, mentioning the names of Jewish prophets Eldad and Medad).
 - That this speaks of a future time, which would work with the wording of verse 18. With this interpretation, this verse *pre-records* what the Lord will say.
 - Those who do not take the word of God in a literal sense use this verse to prove that the prophecy should not be taken to refer to a literal event. Adam Clarke says that the verse shows, “the conflict with Gog does not represent a particular event, but one of which the prophets in general had to speak.”
 - At the end of the conflict (however long or short it may be), God will show His fury upon Gog (v. 18). This is further proof that the events do not happen pre-rapture, for God is not dealing with nations during these days.
 - Verse 20 reiterates the swift, supernatural strength of victory given to Israel. It will be a battle of “Biblical proportions” (see verse 22).
 - At the end of the battle, God **will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the Lord** (v. 23). Once again, this does not mean that they will worship Him, but they will certainly *know* Him.
 - It seems worthy to conclude that this *could* be the events which allow for the reconstruction of the Temple and the rise of the Antichrist as a one-world leader.