

IS GOG OF MAGOG THE FINAL ANTICHRIST?

Ezekiel received his vision about Gog of Magog in about 593 B.C.E. However, there is great uncertainty as to whether Gog is another name for the Antichrist or an entirely different invader, often proposed to be a leader of Russia.

THE PASSAGE CONCERNING GOG

Below is set out the full passage concerning Gog of Magog as detailed in Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39 and with highlighted phrases so that reference can be made to them in context as necessary by the reader.

GOG AND HIS ALLIES

❖ **CHAPTER 38** “The word of the LORD came to me: ² Son of man, set your face toward Gog, of the **land of Magog**, the *chief prince* of **Meshech** and **Tubal**, and prophesy against him ³ and say, Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I am against you, O Gog, **chief prince** of Meshech and Tubal. ⁴ 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 clothed in full armor, a great host, all of them with buckler and shield, wielding swords. ⁵ **Persia, Cush, and Put** are with them, all of them with shield and helmet; ⁶ **Gomer** and all his hordes; **Beth-togarmah** from *the uttermost parts of the north* with all his hordes—many peoples are with you.” ⁷ “Be ready and keep ready, you and all your hosts that are assembled about you, and be a guard for them.

INVASION OF ISRAEL

⁸ After many days you will be mustered. **In the latter years you will go against the land that is restored from war**, the land whose people were gathered from many peoples upon the mountains of Israel, which had been a continual waste. **Its people were brought out from the peoples** and now **dwell securely**, all of them. ⁹ You will advance, coming on like a storm. You will be like a cloud covering the land, you and all your hordes, and many peoples with you. ¹⁰ “Thus says the Lord GOD: On that day, thoughts will come into your mind, and you will devise an evil scheme ¹¹ and say, ‘I will go up against the **land of unwalled villages**. I will fall upon **the quiet people who dwell securely**, all of them dwelling without walls, and having no bars or gates,’ ¹² **to seize spoil** and carry off plunder, to turn your hand against the waste places that are now inhabited, and the people who were gathered from the nations, who have acquired livestock and goods, who dwell at the center of the earth. ¹³ Sheba and Dedan and the merchants of Tarshish and all its leaders will say to you, ‘Have you come to seize spoil? Have you assembled your hosts to carry off plunder, to **carry away silver and gold**, to take away livestock and goods, to seize great spoil?’ ¹⁴ “Therefore, son of man, prophesy, and **say to Gog**, Thus says the Lord GOD: **On that day when my people Israel are dwelling securely**, will you not know it? ¹⁵ You will come *from your place out of the uttermost parts of the north*, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great host, a mighty army. ¹⁶ **You will come up against my people Israel**, like a cloud covering the land. **In the latter days** I will bring you against my land, that the nations may know me, when through you, O Gog, I vindicate my holiness before their eyes.

ARMAGEDDON- LIKE SCENARIO

¹⁷ “Thus says the Lord GOD: **Are you he of whom I spoke in former days by my servants the prophets of Israel**, who in those days prophesied for years that I would bring you against them? ¹⁸ But on that day, the day that ***Gog shall come against the land of Israel***, declares the Lord GOD, my wrath will be roused in my anger. ¹⁹ For in my jealousy and in my blazing wrath I declare, On that day there shall **be a great earthquake in the land of Israel**. ²⁰ The fish of the sea and the birds of the heavens and the beasts of the field and all creeping things that creep on the ground, and all

the people who are on the face of the earth, shall quake at my presence. And the **mountains shall be thrown down**, and the cliffs shall fall, and **every wall shall tumble to the ground**. ²¹I will summon **a sword against Gog** on all my mountains, declares the Lord GOD. Every man's sword will be against his brother. ²²With **pestilence** and **bloodshed** I will enter into judgment with him, and I will rain upon him and his hordes and the many peoples who are with him **torrential rains and hailstones, fire and sulfur**. ²³So I will show my greatness and my holiness and make myself known in the eyes of many nations. Then they will know that I am the LORD. ²⁴”

DESTRUCTION OF GOG

CHAPTER 39 “And you, son of man, prophesy against Gog and say, Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I am against you, O Gog, **chief prince** of Meshech and Tubal. ²And I will turn you about and drive you forward, and bring you up *from the uttermost parts of the north*, and lead you against the mountains of Israel. ³Then I will strike your bow from your left hand, and will make your arrows drop out of your right hand. ⁴ **You shall fall on the mountains of Israel**, you and all your hordes and the peoples who are with you. I will give you to **birds of prey** of every sort and to the beasts of the field to be devoured. ⁵You shall **fall in the open field**, for I have spoken, declares the Lord GOD. ⁶I will send **fire on Magog** and on those who dwell securely in the coastlands, and they shall know that I am the LORD.

THE AFTERMATH

⁷“And 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 shall know that I am the LORD, the Holy One in Israel. ⁸Behold, it is coming and it will be brought about, declares the Lord GOD. That is the day of which I have spoken. ⁹“Then **those who dwell in the cities of Israel** will go out and **make fires of the weapons** and burn them, shields and bucklers, bow and arrows, clubs and spears; and they will make fires of them **for seven years**, ¹⁰so that they will not need to take wood out of the field or cut down any out of the forests, for they will make their fires of the weapons. They will seize the spoil of those who despoiled them, and plunder those who plundered them, declares the Lord GOD. ¹¹“On that day **I will give to Gog a place for burial in Israel**, the Valley of the Travelers, east of the sea. It will block the travelers, for **there Gog and all his multitude will be buried**. It will be called the Valley of Hamon-gog. ¹²**For seven months** the house of Israel will be **burying them**, in order to cleanse the land. ¹³All the people of the land will bury them, and it will bring them renown on the day that I show my glory, declares the Lord GOD. ¹⁴They will set apart men to travel through the land regularly and bury those travelers remaining on the face of the land, so as to cleanse it. At the end of seven months they will make their search. ¹⁵And when these travel through the land and anyone sees a human bone, then he shall set up a sign by it, till the buriers have buried it in the Valley of Hamon-gog. ¹⁶(Hamonah is also the name of the city.) Thus shall they cleanse the land. ¹⁷“As for you, son of man, thus says the Lord GOD: Speak to **the birds** of every sort and to all beasts of the field, ‘Assemble and come, gather from all around to **the sacrificial feast** that I am preparing for you, a great sacrificial feast on the mountains of Israel, and you shall eat flesh and drink blood. ¹⁸ You shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the **princes** of the earth —of rams, of lambs, and of he-goats, of bulls, all of them fat beasts of Bashan. ¹⁹And you shall eat fat till you are filled, and drink blood till you are drunk, at the sacrificial feast that I am preparing for you. ²⁰And you shall be filled at my table with horses and charioteers, with mighty men and all kinds of warriors,’ declares the Lord GOD. ²¹“And I will set my glory among the nations, and all **the nations shall see my judgment** that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid on them. ²² The house of **Israel shall know** that I am the LORD their God, **from that day forward**. ²³And the nations shall know that the house of Israel **went into captivity** for their iniquity, because they dealt so treacherously with me **that I hid my face from them** and **gave them into the hand of their adversaries**, and they all fell by the sword. ²⁴I dealt with them according to their uncleanness and their transgressions, and hid my face from them.”

RESTORATION OF ISRAEL

²⁵ “Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: **Now I will restore the fortunes of Jacob** and have mercy on the whole house of Israel, and I will be jealous for my holy name. ²⁶**They shall forget their shame and all the treachery they have practiced against me**, when they dwell securely in their land with none to make them afraid, ²⁷ **when I have brought them back from the peoples and gathered them from their enemies’ lands**, and through them have vindicated my holiness in the sight of many nations. ²⁸Then they shall know that I am the LORD their God, **because I sent them into exile** among the nations and then assembled them into their own land. I will leave none of them remaining among the nations anymore. ²⁹And **I will not hide my face anymore from them**, when I pour out my Spirit upon the house of Israel, declares the Lord GOD.””

REASONS WHY THE GOG INVASION DESCRIBED BY EZEKIEL DOES
NOT OCCUR AT THE END OF THE MILLENNIUM

Revelation 20:7, 8 sets a Gog *and* Magog attack at the end of the Millennial Kingdom:

- ❖ “When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, **Gog and Magog**, to gather them for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore.”

However, the Ezekiel 38-39 passage concerns “Gog of the land of Magog” and a close study of the Scriptures demonstrates it does not refer to the same people and events as in Revelation 20:7, 8.

The setting and chronology of Revelation 20 are different to that of Ezekiel 38-40. Revelation 20 describes events at the end of the Millennium; whereas Ezekiel describes events prior to that. If the “Gog of Magog” invasion was at the end of the Millennium then the end of the book of Ezekiel would be out of sequence because chapters 33-39 detail Israel’s restoration and are followed by chapters 40-48 which describe Israel during the Millennial Kingdom.

There is a mismatch between the Ezekiel and the Revelation descriptions of the invading forces. Ezekiel describes a relatively local coalition of Middle-Eastern nations attacking Israel. Revelation 20:8 describes invaders as coming from the “nations in the four corners of the earth.”

There is a mismatch between the Ezekiel and the Revelation descriptions of the battlefields. Ezekiel describes the Gog of Magog attack as taking place on the “mountains of Israel,” while the Revelation 20:9 account shows the march as being “on the broad plain of the earth.”

There is a mismatch between the Ezekiel and the Revelation descriptions of Israel’s condition. Ezekiel 36-37 first describes the rebirth of Israel which is then followed by the Gog events of chapters 38-39; whereas Revelation 20 shows Jesus as having already ruled from Jerusalem for 1,000 years.

There is a mismatch between the Ezekiel and the Revelation descriptions of the rulers of the invading forces. “Gog” leads the coalition against Israel in the Ezekiel account, whereas Satan leads the nations against Jesus in the Revelation account.

Because the “Gog and Magog” invaders of Revelation 20 will be incinerated by fire from heaven there wouldn’t be anything left of their bodies for Israel to spend seven months burying (Ezek. 39:12).

There would be no point for Israel to waste seven months burying the dead invaders (Ezek. 39:12) (if they had any bodies left) if they are just about to be resurrected at the end of the Millennium then judged at the Great White Throne Judgment, and then, if unrepentant, thrown into the Lake of Fire.

In the immediately following eternal kingdom Israel would have no need of fuel and so would not spend seven years burning weapons.

Immediately after Gog's defeat "many nations" as well as the Jews will know and continue to know their God (Ezek. 38:23) "**from that day forward** for ever" (Ezek. 39:22). This is a Millennial rather than a post-Millennial description so that throughout the Millennium all the nations will already "Know Yahweh" showing that the Gog of Magog invasion does not apply to the end of the Millennium.

However, in Revelation 20:7-10 "Gog and Magog" represents rebellious nations that Satan misleads after the completion of the millennium.

THE MAJOR QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE GOG OF MAGOG INVASION

Having demonstrated that the Gog invasion described in Ezekiel is not the same invasion as that which is described in Revelation 20 we now need to examine the three major questions concerning Gog, as described in the prophecies of Ezekiel:

1. What is the **identity of Gog**? Is Gog a symbolic name for:
 - Satan, or
 - Satan working through the Antichrist, or
 - Only the actual final Antichrist even though Satan works through him, or
 - An individual different to the Antichrist but antagonistic toward God's people – Israel.
2. What is Gog's **land of origin**? Will he be from Russia or Turkey or from another country located near the Caucasus or Syria?
3. **When does this invasion take place**?
 - Is it a past event?
 - If future then will it occur: before, or in the middle of the 70th 'seven', or at its end?
 - Could it occur after the end of the 70th 'seven' but before the Millennium begins?
 - Could it occur just after the Millennium has begun?

If Gog is the Antichrist, then we need to know how the Ezekiel account of Gog's invasion fits in with other biblical descriptions of Antichrist's invasion or invasions of Israel in this end-time scenario of approximately seven years of the 70th 'seven'?

REASONS WHY GOG IS NOT ACTUALLY SATAN

The proposal that Gog is a symbol of only Satan was developed at a time prior to 1948 when the state of Israel did not exist and so Israel/Judah was taken by some as a symbol for the church and comes from an allegorical interpretation. However, the earlier prophecies in the book of Ezekiel are of literal events, so why should there be a switch when we come to Ezekiel 38 and 39? So when God refers to Magog, Persia, Jerusalem and Judah, he actually means those literal places and so there is no reason to imagine that Gog is anyone other than a human leader. Furthermore, although Gog is clearly under the dominion of Satan he cannot actually be Satan because of the many descriptions of human activity.

REASONS WHY GOG IS NOT RUSSIA OR A LEADER OF RUSSIA

GOG IS A PERSON

Gog, is described as "the chief prince," who will invade the land of Israel, and that Magog is simply a "land" or nation of people whose soldiers will be one of the many armies under the direct command and leadership of Gog. Also God asks:

- ❖ "Are you not **the one** I spoke of in former days by my servants the prophets of Israel?" (Ezek. 38:17).

Therefore Gog is a person and cannot be the Russian nation.

DOES GOG LEAD RUSSIA?

Because Ezekiel 38:15 says that Gog comes “*from your place out of the uttermost parts of the north*” some have concluded that this must mean Russia. However, when Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, invaded the land of Israel in the 6th century B.C., the biblical prophecies described him as being an invader **from the north** because he came down toward Israel in his invasion even though he had first travelled up the Fertile Crescent from Babylon itself actually located east of Israel. So the phrase ‘*out of the uttermost parts of the north*’ may, in ancient times, have meant no further than Turkey. But *doesn’t the name ‘Rosh’ mean Russia.*

❖ “Gog of the land of Magog, the prince of **Rosh, Meshech and Tubal**” (Ezek. 38:2 NASB).

In the past some scholars have concluded that the Hebrew word “Rosh” means Russia. However, most translations render this as “**chief** prince of Meshech and Tubal” rather than “prince of **Rosh**” because in the 456 occurrences of the word “rosh” in the Hebrew Scriptures it is never used as a proper noun! It means “**chief**,” whereas the word ‘Russia’ is of Finnish origin and means “rowers” (of a boat). Furthermore, the *Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible* notes that:

Rosh (Rishu/Reshu)...was a well-known land in antiquity on the banks of the Tigris River, bordering on Elam” and “Russians are mentioned for the first time in the 10th century AD...under the name of Ros.

Therefore, Ezekiel could not have had Russia in mind and so Russia is simply not involved in the Gog attack.

THE GOVERNING FACTORS FOR ASCERTAINING THE TIME OF GOG’S INVASION

Only if the events of the book of Ezekiel are chronological then Gog’s invasion would be shown to occur after Christ’s return. However, it is more likely that the book is either laid out in the often used Hebrew literary style of synoptic/resumption/expansion.

GOVERNING FACTORS FROM THE INTERNAL CONTEXT

1. Gog’s invasion occurs in the “latter days” (38:16) i.e. the “last days,” but are these days more than the timings given in Daniel and Revelation i.e. 1260 to 2,300 days.
2. Israel is experiencing a state of peace before the invasion (38:11).
3. Gog dies on “the mountains of Israel” after his defeat by God’s “sword.” (39:4).
4. Israel is to bury the dead invaders bodies over a period of seven months (39:12-16).
5. Fuel from the leftover weapons lasts Israel seven years (39:9), but this does not necessarily have to coincide with the 70th ‘seven.’

The known end-time time-line is:

- Antichrist makes a treaty with Israel at the beginning of the 70th ‘seven.’
- Antichrist breaks the treaty after 3½ years into the 70th ‘seven.’
- Jerusalem is invaded (Zech. 12-14, Luke 21).
- The Great Tribulation lasts for the second 3½ years up to the end of the 70th ‘seven.’
- Jesus returns at the end of the Great tribulation i.e. at the end of the 70th ‘seven.’
- The “Day of the Lord” including the Armageddon gathering of armies.
- The 2,300 days begin with the removal of the regular sacrifice (Dan. 8:11-14).

THE VARIOUS ALTERNATIVE POSSIBILITIES FOR THE TIMING OF GOG'S INVASION

1. DOES THE INVASION BEGIN BEFORE THE 70th 'SEVEN' BEGINS?

Against:

- The governing factor of the timing being in "the latter days" means that it could not occur before the 70th 'seven' begins.
- This could not be the right time because Israel has been suffering a complete lack of security until Antichrist **signs the peace treaty with her**.

2. DOES THE INVASION BEGIN WHEN THE 70th 'SEVEN' BEGINS?

Against:

- Again this could not be the right time because Israel has been suffering a complete lack of security until Antichrist **signs the peace treaty with her**. There are no biblical indicators that this treaty would be broken so soon after its agreement by the occurrence of an invasion near the beginning of the seventieth 'seven'. In fact, the treaty doesn't get broken until half way through the seventieth 'seven' i.e. until 3½ years have transpired.

3. DOES THE INVASION OCCUR IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE GREAT TRIBULATION BEGINS AT THE MID-POINT OF THE 70TH 'SEVEN'?

Against:

- If Gog's complete invasion occurs at this time then his destruction also occurs at this time rather than after the Great tribulation so that he could not be the Antichrist who is destroyed in the Armageddon scenario.
- While this timing gives Israel the seven months to bury the dead invaders (Ezek. 39:12), would they have the freedom to do it during the tremendous persecution of the Jews by the revealed Antichrist during this time?
- Does Israel acknowledge God at this time just as the Great Tribulation begins or is it after as is suggested in 39:22-29?

A LESSER PROBLEM:

This timing would make the 7 year gathering of weapons for fuel stretch from the middle of the seventieth 'seven' to 3½ years after Jesus has returned. Is this likely?

For:

- This invasion comes after the time of peace and security (Ezek. 38:8, 11) because of the treaty between Antichrist (incognito as Gog) and Israel. This is the only proposal which fits with this fact.
- Ezekiel 39:23-29 shows that there was an exile of Jews at this time. This parallels the description of exile triggered by Antichrist in both Zechariah 14:2 and Luke 21:24.

Conclusion: Only if Ezekiel 38:8-16 is understood to refer to a first phase of the invasion before the Great Tribulation and 38:17-29 as a second phase at the end of the Great Tribulation would this timing be correct and for Gog to be revealed as the Antichrist. This allows for Gog's destruction and the activity of the burying of bones as beginning after the Armageddon scenario as in #4 below.

4. DOES THE INVASION BEGIN IMMEDIATELY WHEN JESUS RETURNS (**Armageddon**)?

Against:

- To set the complete invasion immediately after the Great Tribulation would violate the statement that Israel is living in peace and security, a condition which would be impossible under the intense persecution by the Antichrist during the Great tribulation.

- There is a complete mismatch between the nationalities of the armies in the two battles. The attack by Gog may involve the nations of Turkey, Iran, Sudan, Libya, Azerbaijan, and Armenia against Israel (Ezek. 38:1-6). The references to Armageddon include “all the nations of the earth (Heb. *eretz land*)” against Israel (Joel 3:2; Zech. 12:3; 14:2). However, this does not mean all the nations of today’s world, but all the nations surrounding Israel - “all the surrounding peoples” (Zech. 12:2). These would be those nations of Psalm 83:3-8 which are different to those listed above.
- There is a mismatch between the locations of the two battles. Armageddon takes place in the Valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel 3); whereas the Gog attack of Ezekiel 38:8 concludes on the “mountains of Israel.”
- The invaders fight against two different opponents. The Gog attack is against peaceful unsuspecting Israel (Ezek. 38:11). The Armageddon invaders gather to make war against the returned King - Jesus Christ (Rev. 19:19).

For:

- There are many factors common to both general scenarios in the descriptions of Gog’s invasion and Armageddon (Compare: Ezekiel 38:17-23, 39:1-20; with Zechariah 14:3-16; Zechariah 12:1-6, 9-11; Joel 3:2-17; Revelation 19:11-21). Please note the following details:
 1. The warrior enemies of God’s people are struck with madness and fight each other (Ezek. 38:21 and Zech. 14:13).
 2. There is great “shaking” of the earth; extraordinary earthquakes (Ezek. 38:20 and Rev. 16:18).
 3. There is a raining down of fire and sulphur from Heaven; flesh of the soldiers literally consumed away (Ezek. 38:22; Zech. 16:12 and Rev. 16:8).
 4. The bird-feast upon the dead invaders (Ezek. 39:4, 17-20 and Rev. 19:17-18).
 5. After Gog’s defeat, Israel will again acknowledge God. (Ezek. 39:22, 29 and Zech. 12:10).
- Because the 2,300 days begin with the removal of the regular sacrifice they extend beyond the time of Christ’s return from between 965 and 1,040 days before the holy place is restored. And so this reduces the seven years of fuel burning by the amount of those days.
- There is no real mismatch, as is supposed, concerning how the invaders are defeated. Gog’s hordes are defeated by God who uses “torrents of rain, hailstones and burning sulfur” as well as in-fighting (Ezek. 38:22). The invading nations at Armageddon are defeated by Jesus who uses “a sharp sword” from His mouth (Rev. 19:15), yet Revelation also shows God’s use of excessive natural phenomena as weapons of destruction. So these may simply be two aspects of the same event.
- God’s promises to Israel in Ezekiel 39:21-29 are to be fulfilled AFTER the invasion is over not from 1948.

Conclusion: The common factors here present a very strong case for this timing. However, as above, only if Ezekiel 38:8-16 is understood to refer to a first phase of the invasion before the Great Tribulation and 38:17-29 as a second phase at the end of the Great Tribulation would this timing be correct and for Gog to be revealed as the Antichrist. This allows for the statement that Israel is living in peace and security immediately before the invasion. The apparent mismatches regarding armies and locations can be resolved because they simply show several different aspects of the same total event.

5. DOES THE INVASION OCCUR AT ANY TIME DURING THE MILLENNIUM?

Against:

- It does not serve God's purpose of waking up Israel from their spiritual sleep and acknowledging God (Ezek. 39:22, 29) and Messiah (Zech. 12:10, 11). This has already been done either by Antichrist at Armageddon or earlier.
- It does not fit the scheduled timings for biblical events i.e. from 1,260 to 1,335 days. These are all related to the Antichrist event because "They will trample on the holy city for 42 months. And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth" (Rev. 11:2, 3).
- No wicked people will have survived the Sheep/Goats Judgment (Jer. 25:32-33; Matt. 25:31-46; Rev. 19:15-18) to enter into the Millennial Kingdom to start a war. So a wicked Gog will not exist.
- No weapons would be available because Isaiah 2:4b states, "They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks." There could be no "sword" raised against Gog unless it is Christ.
- In the Christian Scriptures there are no wars scheduled to occur until after the millennial period is completed (Rev. 20:7-9). The promise is: "Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore" (Isa. 2)
- With Jesus reigning directly over the Kingdom from Jerusalem with "a rod of iron" (Ps. 2:9), and Satan and his demons bound, no opposing satanic forces will exist to unite the mortal nations for war during the Millennium.

For:

- At this time, after Christ's return, Israel could be living unsuspecting and in peace allowing a short period of time for Gog's invasion.
- There is no problem with the idea that Israel will be burning the invading enemies' weapons for fuel during the early part of the Millennium, because "the latter days" do seem to extend into the early part of the Millennium (Isa. 2:2).

Conclusion: Because this can be only a single invasion it would occur too late for the above reasons presented against this proposed time. Clearly the reasons against far outweigh any reasons for this proposal.

THE MOTIVES FOR INVASION

1. Gog's motive for invading Israel is stated to be to "**seize spoil** and carry off plunder ... to **carry away silver and gold**" (38:12-14).
2. Antichrist's motive is stated to be the desire to be worshipped (2 Thess. 2:4; Rev. 13:4).

However, if they are one and the same individual could both motives be attributed to him? Or could the Gog motive be an initial motive which later changes to the Antichrist motive? Please note that Isaiah 10:5-11 speaks of "**the Assyrian**" whose motive is the same as Gog's i.e. "**to seize loot and snatch plunder**" but also, "*his purpose is to destroy...nations.*"

SUMMARY

When all the major chronological details are taken into account there appears to be no timing for Gog's invasion, if completed in one go, which fully matches the biblically scheduled timing of the Antichrist's events. However, if, as with other prophecies, this one concerns the two end-time invasions of the Assyrian as described in Isaiah 10:5-11 and 31:4-32:4 and so is meant to present the invasion in

two phases then the first phase would occur immediately before the Great Tribulation at the mid-point of the 70th ‘seven’ and the second phase would begin around the time of Christ’s return and involve the battles in the Valley of Jehoshaphat and around Jerusalem. In other words it would be the Armageddon scenario. If this two phase scenario of Gog’s invasion is correct then we have some evidence that Gog is the Antichrist, yet incognito before the invasion begins. However, before coming to a final conclusion we must examine the descriptions of the end-time battles.

IDENTIFYING GOG’S LAND OF ORIGIN AND SUPPORTING NATIONS

Some scholars of the past have attempted to identify the peoples from these lands and have discovered that they have migrated over the centuries to places such as Germany and parts of Asia. However, the Scriptures are concerned with the peoples who inhabit these lands in the time of the end fulfilment of Ezekiel’s prophecies. So the question to be asked is: What were the geographical locations of these nations in Ezekiel’s time? Naturally the borders of the modern nations only approximate those of the ancient nations.

FIRST INVASION

Magog = **ARMENIA** and surrounding countries.

Meshech and **Tubal** = **TURKEY**

Gog is also supported by **IRAN** (*Persia*), **ETHIOPIA** (*Cush*), and **LIBYA** (*Put*), then by (*Gomer*) **Cappadocia** in central Turkey and (*Togarmah*) in S.E. Turkey. These are entirely from the Japhetic and Hamitic branches of mankind. This block of nations is different from those listed in Psalm 83 which may describe the 10 horns associated with antichrist i.e. the “**many nations with you**” (Ezek. 38:6).

THE PROTESTORS AGAINST GOG’S FIRST INVASION

❖ “*Sheba and Dedan [Saudi-Arabia]*, the merchants of *Tarshish* and all her *young lions* will ask you [*Gog*]: Have you come to plunder? (Ezek. 38:13).

SECOND INVASION

PSALM 83: Edom, Moab and Ammon = **JORDAN**. These 3 are noted in Daniel 11:41 re: the King of the North.

Ishmaelites, Amalek = within the borders of modern Israel

Gebal, Tyre = **LEBANON**

Philistia = **GAZA STRIP**

Hagrites (possibly from Hagar) = **SYRIA**

Assyria = **IRAQ** and Syria—the King of the North

These *Semitic* nations conspire to wipe out Israel (Ps 83:3, 4). The King of the South as *Egypt* is not mentioned within either block of nations but 4 chapters of Ezekiel are devoted to the prophetic details of God’s judgment of Egypt and her demise at the hands of the King of Babylon (30:10, 25; 32:11) in Ezekiel chapters 29 to 32.

COMPARING THE ORIGINS OF GOG AND ANTICHRIST

Whereas Gog arises from Magog, which appears to be Armenia or Turkey, the “small horn” as Antichrist originates from the nearby ancient Grecian-Seleucid Empire as described by Daniel:

❖ “Out of one of them [*the 4 conspicuous horns*] came another horn, which *started small* but grew in power to the south and to the east and to the beautiful land” (**Dan. 8:9** NIV).

This area of the ancient Grecian-Seleucid Empire encompasses ancient Mesopotamia from which antichrist gains his titles of: “The Assyrian,” “the King of the North,” and “the king of Babylon.” So is it possible that Antichrist (incognito) originates from within the area of ancient Assyria/Babylon as the “small horn” but later becomes the head of kingdoms encompassing the areas of Turkey and leading those nations against Jerusalem.

BACKGROUND TO IDENTIFYING GOG

It is possible that the historical name of the tyrant king Gyges, who lived 50 or more years before Ezekiel’s time, is preserved in the Scriptures as Gog. With reference to the name Gog:

The most likely explanation is that the name is a derivative of Gyges, who was a Lydian king mentioned in Assyrian and Greek sources. In the former he is called Gugu... *IVP Bible Background Commentary – Old Testament* p.722.

In harmony with the above land of origin for Gog we find that Lydia was a kingdom within the borders of modern-day Turkey. So having examined the possible timing of Gog’s invasion and having examined the location from where Gog launches this invasion against Israel, we now need to examine whether Gog is the actual final Antichrist or an individual different to the Antichrist but antagonistic toward God’s people – Israel.

REASONS OFFERED FOR GOG AS NOT BEING THE ANTICHRIST

Possibly the Ezekiel 38/39 passage concerning the invasion of Gog of Magog is not that of the Antichrist but of some other antichrist-like person who is a precursor to the final Antichrist’s coming for the following reasons:

The flow of Ezekiel from chapter 25ff indicates that antichrist’s confederacy (Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia and Tyre) has already been judged. Also Pharaoh of Egypt (King of the South) is warned of the Assyrian’s fate (31:3) and is finally lamented (32:2) at a time of darkened sun, moon and stars (32:7).

RESPONSE: Ezekiel’s book may not be set out in chronological order. It either may be laid out in the often used Hebrew literary style of synoptic/resumption expansion or these be judgments may be prophetic because God foreknows that these nations will be allied to Antichrist.

Egypt (Mizraim) as the **king of the south** is a key player in the Armageddon passages, **yet** is not listed in the Gog account. Egypt is mentioned in chapters 29-32.

RESPONSE: This focus on antichrist as Gog concerns his relationship with Israel rather than the focus being on the King of the South as in Daniel 11.

Ezekiel 39:11 states that: “On that day I will give Gog a **burial** ground in Israel.” But antichrist goes into the lake of fire (Rev. 19:20).

*RESPONSE: Isaiah 14:18-20 notes concerning the King of Babylon: “but you have been **cast out of your tomb**...you will not be united with them [the kings of the nations] in burial.” Alternatively, and more likely, because the lake of fire is simply symbolic of final annihilation, Gog’s “place for burial” will simply be a marked area as a lesson to all concerning his wickedness in much the same way that Auschwitz still remains. He certainly will not be resurrected after the Millennium.*

Because Gog is supported by **Ethiopia** and **Libya** (Put) which are seen in Daniel 11:43 as “at his feet” i.e. “with the Libyians and Nubians in submission” to the King of the North, Gog cannot be the K. North.

RESPONSE: Just because these two countries are in submission to the King of the North does not mean that they do not work with him albeit reluctantly.

Jeremiah chapters 50 and 51 show that the destroyer of Antichrist's capital city, Babylon, comes from the north (50:3, 41). Could this refer to Magog and therefore Gog? Yet Babylon is ruled by the King of Babylon (Antichrist) and so making it impossible for Gog to be the Antichrist.

RESPONSE: This first fulfilment involved, not Gog of Magog, but the kings of the Medes and Persians, and so sets the pattern for the same armies to destroy Babylon in the future as is shown in the prophecy:

❖ "The LORD has stirred up the spirit of the kings of the Medes, because his purpose concerning Babylon is to destroy it, for that is the vengeance of the LORD, the vengeance for his temple"
(Jer. 51:11).

So it is the Medes and other nations who are classified in this instance as "a people coming from the north" and not Gog.

REASONS OFFERED FOR GOG AS BEING THE ANTICHRIST

It may be that Ezekiel is using factors about the tyrant Gyges as types of the future final Antichrist under the name of Gog.

1. Ezekiel 38:17 says: "It was *of you* that I spoke **in the past** through my servants the prophets." This indicates that we must look for alternative terms for Gog in the **writings prior to Ezekiel**. It would be a very powerful leader who would attack Israel in the end-time. Who could this be? Such a leader is described as "the Assyrian" in Isaiah 10, 14, 30, 31 and Micah 5:5, 6.
2. Both Gog and Assyria are shown to serve as God's **rod of anger** against Jerusalem (Isa. 10:5, 6) and to punish Israel.
3. There is much end-times language in Ezekiel 38,39: "in the final part of the days" (38:16); "my furious wrath will boil up" (38:18); "a huge earthquake in the land of Israel" (38:1); "mountains will fall, all walls collapse" (38:20); "punish him with plague" (38:2); "torrential rain, hailstones, fire and brimstone on him" (38:22); "This is the Day I predicted" (39:8).
4. Many of the details of the battle for Jerusalem as described in Revelation, Zechariah, Joel, and Daniel can be found in Ezekiel 38/39 and so indicating that they refer to the same invasion.
5. Ezekiel 39:23-29 describe events that occur after the exile of Israel during the Great tribulation so that: "the house of Israel **went into captivity** for their iniquity." This fits well with texts concerning Israel's exile under the Antichrist.
6. Ezekiel 39:4 and Isaiah 14:25 show that both Gog and Assyria fall or are **trampled "on the mountains** of Israel" after the second phase of the invasion of Israel.
7. The temple will have been built early in the Millennium. So Gog's invasion, being sequentially before that, would make Antichrist and his invasion of Jerusalem the more likely scenario.
8. In Ezekiel 39:17-20 the gathering of the birds to God's sacrifice = the great supper for the birds in Revelation 19:17, 18. *This occurs after the Day of the Lord.*
9. Ezekiel 39:22 says: "The house of Israel **shall know** that I am Yahweh their God **from that day forward for ever.**" This must refer to the time from the judgment in the Valley of Jehoshaphat and onward into the Millennium and therefore, not during or earlier than the 70th week when God "hides his face from them" (39:29).

ANSWERS TO FURTHER ISSUES

- When Daniel 9:26 informs us that “*even to the end there will be war, desolations are determined*” this means *the wars of Antichrist* which are *significantly against the King of the South* rather than war and desolations for Israel at a time when Israelites are ‘living securely.’
- The work of collecting the bones during the 7 months after the Great Tribulation will be completed well within the remainder of the 2,300 days.
- The burning of the weapons of Gog’s horde appears to present no problem in lasting for the first seven years or so of the Millennium.
- The fact that the Great Tribulation is not mentioned in the Gog scenario is most likely because this factor of the end-times scenario was only first revealed later to Daniel.

CONCLUSION - A POSSIBLE SCENARIO

It appears that the most likely understanding of the Ezekiel passages concerning Gog is that he is **simply another representation of the Antichrist** and based on the tyrant Gyges. However, the resolution of the various problems in relating Gog to Antichrist concerns the two invasions by the Assyrian depicted in Isaiah 10 and 31, and Zechariah 12 and 14; so that the Ezekiel passages present the two phases of the invasion of Jerusalem in a single picture:

- The **first** phase of the **invasion** occurs after the time of Jewish security (38:8, 11) when Israel had been protected by Antichrist according to his treaty with her. So the invasion occurs in the middle of the 70th ‘seven’ when Gog/antichrist breaks the treaty. This first invasion is detailed in Chapter **38:1-16**, involving Meshech and Tubal, Persia, Cush, Put, Gomer and Beth-togarmah and resulting in the fall of Jerusalem and the exile of half the Jewish population. This same invasion is detailed in Zechariah 14:1, 2, and Luke 21.
- The **second** phase of the **invasion** would be at the close of the 70th ‘seven’ and is detailed in Chapter 38:17-23 involving the nearer neighbouring nations detailed in Ps. 83, and resulting in the destruction of Gog/antichrist in the Valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel 3). This same invasion is detailed Zechariah 14:3-14.

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