



Book of Ezekiel

Chapter 38

*Theme: Russia's (Gog's)
Invasion of Israel*

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McGee Introduction: If there is any section in the prophecy of Ezekiel that is familiar, it is chapters 38 and 39. These two chapters tell of the repudiation of Gog and Magog. I am going to attempt to handle these chapters just a little differently than I generally do because I am anxious to lift out certain great truths for our consideration. Unfortunately, these chapters have been interpreted by men who apparently have no knowledge of the prophecy of Ezekiel and what goes with it. As a result they have come up with some very odd interpretations. They remind me of the advertisement that was put in the *Mines Magazine* in El Paso, Texas, by some fellows who were mining experts and engineers. They put an ad in that magazine in a deadpan way, as though it was serious. "Wanted: Man to work on nuclear fissionable isotopes, molecular reactive counters and three-phased cyclotronic uranium photosynthesizers. No experience necessary." Well, it is equally as humorous to try to interpret Ezekiel without knowing what the entire book is about.

We saw in chapter 37 that God has a definite purpose for Israel in the future, and these two chapters deal with that subject. They tell about the final enemy that will come against Israel in the last days.

In chapters 38 and 39 I believe that the enemy mentioned is Russia. When I entered the ministry, I did not believe that it referred to Russia. I refused to accept that interpretation because I had attended my denominational seminary which taught amillennialism. They did not believe that Russia was being referred to in this portion of Scripture. Even after I had worked for my doctoral degree, even at the time of my graduation, I still had not accepted it. Finally I came to the conclusion that I had better study the subject on my own, and I am convinced that the enemy of chapters 38 and 39 is Russia. Three points of contact make me know this in my own heart and mind: You have here what is known as the linguistic phenomenon, the geographic phenomenon, and the philosophical or ideological phenomenon.¹

LAN (Life Application Notes): In Ezekiel 37, Ezekiel revealed how Israel (God's people) would be restored to their land from many parts of the world. Once Israel became strong, a confederacy of nations from the north would attack, led by Gog (see also Rev. 20:8). Their purpose would be to destroy God's people. Gog's allies would come from the mountainous area southeast of the Black Sea and southwest of the Caspian Sea (central Turkey), as well as from the area that is present-day Iran, Ethiopia, Libya, and possibly the Soviet Union. Gog could be a person (he sometimes is identified with Gyges, king of Lydia in 660 B.C.), or Gog could also be a symbol of all the evil in the world. Whether symbolic or literal, Gog represents the aggregate military might of all the forces opposed to God.

Many say that the battle Ezekiel described will occur at the end of human history, but there are many differences between the events described here and those in Rev. 20. Regardless of when this battle will occur, the message is clear: God will deliver his people—no enemy can stand before his mighty power.²

¹ McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed.) (Eze 37:28). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

² Life Application Bible Notes on Ezekiel, Life Application Bible

Constable: Future invasion of the Promised Land chs. 38—39

This is the sixth and last message (a proof oracle) that Ezekiel received from the Lord the night before the refugees reached the exiles with the message that Jerusalem had fallen (cf. 33:21-22). It too deals with God's plans for Israel in the distant future, when He would restore her to her land. It answers the question, What about future enemies of Israel? This message guarantees Yahweh's protection of Israel. This section of the book consists of seven messages each marked by the introductory phrase, "Thus says the Lord God" (38:3, 10, 14, 17; 39:1, 17, 25). This is another apocalyptic passage.

In Ezekiel 38—39 the prophet used parallels from Israel's first Exodus to describe God's 'new' exodus preceding the kingdom era. All that God intended for Israel during the first Exodus will be accomplished in the 'new' one.

- Destruction of Gentile oppressors (Exod. 5—12; Ezek. 38—39)
- Plans for building God's house (Exod. 20—40; Ezek. 40—43)
- Climax: God's glory enters His house (Exod. 40:35; Ezek. 43:5)
- Instructions for worship (Leviticus; Ezek. 43-46)
- Land boundaries for Israel (Num. 34; Ezek. 47)
- Division of land among the tribes (Josh. 14—21; Ezek. 48)³

Missler Introduction: Before we get into this chapter, let us remind ourselves that what sits in our laps is a collection of 66 books, written by some 40 penman, and accumulated over many thousands of years. Our conclusion is that it is a singular message, written by a Single Author, fundamentally, and the message we have emerges from these 66 books. This singular message manifests a common theme, common idioms, a common structure, and substantial evidence of design. Those are the concepts that underlie our review of the Bible in general, and of prophecy in particular.

What makes this message so fascinating is that it clearly has its origin outside our time domain, and it authenticates itself by presenting to us things that were written before they happened. The primary event or issue or visibility it gives us before the fact is, of course, of Jesus Christ. We saw that when we studied the Book of Daniel. We saw that in a number of places as we studied the Book of Genesis.

We are going to have one of those opportunities to see history written in advance, but history that has a high likelihood of unfolding before our very eyes.

Ezekiel was trained as a priest; so he was a mystic of sorts. But he was called to the office of a prophet. He wrote some 2600 years ago. The Book of Ezekiel was part of the so-called Septuagint translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek, which was completed about 270 B.C. In other words, approximately three centuries before Christ was born, that collection of books that we know as the Old Testament were translated into Greek.

Ezekiel 36 and 37 focused on the restoration of Israel Nationally. The famous Vision of the Dry Bones, was in effect the national resurrection of Israel, and it was interpreted for us in those passages, showing that Israel was to be regathered in the land. But remember, that it was without the Spirit, in other words, Israel was to be regathered in unbelief.

³ Dr. Thomas Comstable's Expository (Bible study) Notes, <http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes.htm>

Ezekiel 38 and 39 will show us that there is to be a singular event which God carefully maneuvers which will startle Israel into the recognition that God's Hand is once again upon the Nation Israel, as it was so many years ago.⁴

Wycliffe Introduction: These chapters describe in apocalyptic manner God's deliverance of his people from an unparalleled invasion by a dreadful foe. Israel has been restored to her land (34:12, 13, 15, 23, 27) and converted (36:24-28). God's dwelling is in her midst (37:21-28), and she is living in prosperity and security (38:8, 11, 12, 14). Her neighboring foes no longer molest her (25-32; 36:36). Then in the far distant future (38:8, 16), an invasion previously predicted (38:17; 39:8) is made by nations dwelling in the outskirts of the world (cf. Isa 66:19). They come like a cloud (38:9, 16)—Gog of the land of Magog, and his allies, Rosh (?), Meshech, and Tubal (38:2, 3), from the uttermost parts of the north (38:15; 39:2), along with Persia, Cush, and Put (38:5), and Gomer and Beth-Togarmah, with their hordes from the north (38:6). The commercial nations, Sheba, Dedan, Tarshish and its villages (38:13), are interested in this invasion, too. Gog comes at the direction of the Lord (38:4-7, 16; 39:2, 3), as well as at his own initiative, spurred on by his greed (38:10-14). Ezekiel only of the prophets places "that day" (38:10, 14, 18, 19; 39:11) after Israel has long enjoyed restoration and prosperity in her land. See also Rev 19:11; 20:7.

Israel is miraculously preserved, but Gog's hordes are destroyed by earthquake, internecine strife, plagues, torrential rains, fire, and brimstone (38:19-22), as well as rendered helpless in battle (38:3, 4). Their discarded weapons will supply fuel for Israel for seven years (39:9, 10). Seven months will be required to bury their corpses (39:11-15), and also their bodies and blood will become a feast for birds and beasts (39:17-20). The outcome of this battle will be that the nations shall know that God is the Lord (38:16, 23; 39:6, 7, 21, 23; cf. Isa 45:23), while Israel need nevermore doubt the protection of her God (39:22; cf. 39:25-29).

There are three divergent views of these chapters.

(1) They present a literal description of a future attack on Israel. From Jerome to our day, Gog has been variously identified as the Babylonians, the Scythians, Cambyses king of Persia, Alexander the Great, Antiochus the Great, Antiochus Epiphanes, Antiochus Eupator, the Parthians, Mithridates king of Pontus, Suleiman's Turks, the Turks and the Christians, the Armenian descendants of the Scythians, and a confederation of northern European powers including Russia (Rosh; Meshech and Tubal as Moscow and Tobolsk) and Germany (Gomer).

The following objections to the literal interpretations are raised (cf. Fairbairn, 414-431, esp. p. 421; Keil, II, 432; Faussett, JFB, IV, 348ff.): (a) The impossibility of identifying Gog and Magog with a historical person or place. (b) The improbability of such a conglomerate army forming a military coalition. (c) The disproportionate size of the invading army in comparison to Israel and its products. (d) The problems involved in burying corpses for seven months and using discarded weapons as fuel for seven years. (e) The gross carnality of the scene as being inconsistent with Messianic times.

(2) They are a symbolic description of some future event. Some scholars adopt Hengstenberg's view that this section pictures the final conflict of the nation Israel with

⁴ Chuck Missler, Notes on the Book of Ezekiel, khouse.org

unidentified foes. The more traditional interpretation of Havernick and Keil sees this as the final catastrophic struggle between the Church and the forces of the world, and the triumph of God's truth over all forms of ungodliness. This view allows the narrative to be a source of comfort to Israel and the Church but restricts it to far distant fulfillment.

(3) They constitute a prophetic parable illustrating a great truth rather than referring to any specific historical event.

Ezekiel's illustrations frequently have details that cannot be literally pressed (e.g., 16:46-51, 53-56, 61) but are part of the drapery of the story. Here the elaborate and weird imagery expresses a great truth. To Israel in Babylon this prophecy gave assurance that, once she was restored to her land, the power of God would protect her from the worst foes imaginable. To the Church suffering at the hands of its most relentless persecutors, this is a promise of God's deliverance. The final triumph of the Messiah at the end time is also implicit in this parable. This view makes the passage pertinent to every period of history. The purpose of apocalyptic writing such as this is the "unveiling" of the future, showing God's Lordship over it. Thus it guides and strengthens the people of God in times of darkness (e.g., Daniel, Revelation. Cf. H. H. Rowley, *The Relevance of Apocalyptic*).

In the synagogue, 38:18–39:16 is the *haphtarah* for Ex 33:12–34:26 and Num 29:26-31 for the Sabbath within the festival of Sukkoth.

The chapters contain seven oracles introduced by the formula, "Thus saith the Lord" (see Introduction below, 38:1, 2; also vv. 3-9, 10-13, 14-16, 17-23; 39:1-16, 17-24; conclusion, vv. 25-29).⁵

Old Testament Survey Introduction: Chapters 38–39 correct the mistaken notion that God's people would face no further difficulty after the restoration. Indeed, Ezekiel painted a picture here of the intense danger to which the people of God would be subject. At some point the territory of Israel would be invaded by hordes from the north intent on destroying God's people completely. These chapters are apocalyptic, i.e., highly symbolic.

At least four very different attempts have been made to solve the difficult questions posed by these chapters. (1) Some hold the historical or preterist view which identifies the attacking force with some great enemy of Israel during the restoration or intertestamental periods. Though not too popular today, this approach to the chapter is not easily refuted. (2) Others take a literal futuristic view of the passage. Ezekiel is describing an invasion which has not yet occurred. Usually this invasion is placed after the Millennium by these writers. They frequently identify *Rosh* here as Russia, and Gog as some leader of Russia. They contend that this prophecy depicts a Russian invasion of the modern state of Israel. A number of writers, however, have pointed out that hard etymological evidence linking Russia and *rosh* is lacking. (3) According to the prophetic parable view, chapters 38–39 illustrate a great truth. No specific invasion is intended. The chapters should be viewed as a general promise of God's deliverance of his people from any and every attack by external enemies. (4) In the future idealistic view Ezekiel is here describing a final climactic struggle between the forces of good and evil. The notes which follow are based on this fourth approach to these difficult chapters.⁶

⁵ Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). *The Wycliffe Bible commentary : Old Testament* (Eze 38:1). Chicago: Moody Press.

⁶ Smith, J. E. (1992). *The Major Prophets* (Eze 38:1–23). Joplin, Mo.: College Press.

Ryrie Introduction: Chapters 38-39 describe a future attack on Israel and God's deliverance of His people. The invading armies come *out of the remote parts of the north* (38:15) to invade Palestine but are destroyed by supernatural intervention (39:3). Seven months will be required to bury their corpses (39:11-15), and their weapons will supply fuel for Israel for seven years (39:9-10). The time of the battle is unclear. Israel will be living in security, whether real or imagined (38:11-12), which might indicate that the battle takes place before the middle of the Tribulation, while Israel feels secure under a treaty with Antichrist. But the consummation of the battle involves birds and beasts eating the flesh of the warriors, a scene similar to the description of Armageddon at the end of the Tribulation (39:17-20; Rev. 19:17-18). Also, at the conclusion of the conflict the nations will understand the judging hand of God, and Israel will know that the *LORD* (Yahweh) is their God (Ezek. 39:21-22). Perhaps the first thrust will begin just before the middle of the Tribulation, with successive waves of the invasion continuing throughout the last part of that period and building up to Armageddon. John envisioned a battle of Gog and Magog at the conclusion of the millennial kingdom (Rev. 20:7-9), but this is different in time and characteristics from the one Ezekiel describes. The common use of Gog and Magog does not equate the two battles. Here those words refer to a definite area, but in Revelation they refer to enemies of Christ worldwide.

Ron Daniel: When we left off in Ezekiel 37, the Lord had promised Ezekiel that the Jews will one day be restored to the land, being brought back to life, as illustrated in the vision of the valley of dry bones. The people of Israel would no longer be split into Judah and Israel, but would be one nation. In the day of their restoration, Jesus Christ, the root of David, will rule as king over them. God Himself will dwell with them on the earth, and Israel will be the nation above all others.

All of this future prophecy sounds quite exciting for the people of Israel. However, there are some nations whose future will not be so positive or peaceful. That is the subject which chapter 38 brings before us...⁷

ESV; 38:1–39:29; Gog of Magog. These initially obscure chapters, which form a single unit, deliver a powerful assertion of God's sovereignty. The prophet addresses the mysterious Gog, ruler of the equally mysterious Magog (see note on 38:2). Gog commands his own army and a legion of allies (38:4–6). Ezekiel's oracle pronounces judgment on him for attacking renewed Israel (38:1–3, 7–13). However, there is a power greater than Gog: the sovereign God of Israel reigns over Gog's plans, which will be used to vindicate God's holiness (38:14–16). Gog and his hordes attack, bringing peril to God's people and convulsions to the natural world. But they meet the wrath of God, who vindicates himself before the nations (38:17–23). God's judgment against this latter-day enemy results in Gog's complete destruction. His army falls (39:1–6), an event that galvanizes God's people as they see the greatness of their God (39:7–8). So great is the number of the dead, and so complete the victory, that Israel will use the weapons taken from Gog as fuel for seven years (39:9–10) and take seven months to cleanse the land of the dead (39:11–16). This "sacrifice" will yield a feast for predators (39:17–20). No question will remain about the reason for Israel's earlier exile: the all-powerful God

⁷ <http://www.rondaniel.com/library/26-Ezekiel/Ezekiel3801.pdf>

withdrew from them because of their treachery, but this final victory displays God's supremacy (39:21–24) and marks the final restoration of his people (39:25–29). Sketched thus, the contours of Ezekiel's prophecy against Gog are clear, but obscurity remains at the level of detail. The structural signals that usually mark Ezekiel's oracles are of less help here, as the introductions and conclusions often do not coincide. Another problem for interpretation is the shifting viewpoint taken at different points in the oracle (somewhat like the parable of ch. 17). As the vantage point shifts from prophet to observer to an overtly theological outlook, so too the reader's perception of the narrative alters. The setting of this oracle in the context of restored Israel remains clear, and theological lessons emerge. The security Israel enjoys is not the result of a lack of threats but of an indissoluble bond between God and people. Nor is the presence of threat a sign of God's absence: the human, animal, and natural worlds are all under God's control.

The enemy of restored Israel 38:1-9

Ezekiel 38:1

And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

BKC 1-6: On the identification of the proper names in these verses see the preceding paragraphs under “6. The Attack by Gog Repulsed (chaps. 38-39).” Gog’s attack on Israel will actually be orchestrated by God. The LORD said, I will turn you around, put hooks in your jaws, and bring you out with your whole army—your horses ... horsemen ... a great horde with ... shields and swords. On whether the horses and weapons are literal, see the comments on 39:9. God will use Gog and all his allies as pawns in His larger plans for Israel. Yet the idea for attacking Israel also will originate with Gog. Gog will act freely to accomplish his own evil goals. He “will devise an evil scheme,” 38:10.⁸

Ron Daniel; 1-6 Who Are They?

There are a number of places in this passage that practically cry out to be identified. Normally, when we are seeking to track down people groups in history, we turn to the "table of nations." This is found in both Genesis 10 and 1Chronicles 1. By using the genealogies listed in these chapters, we are often able to trace the history of various people groups of the world.

However, this is not always as easy or simple as it sounds. Because of things like migrations, wars, and intermarrying of people groups, very often the details and simplicity are lost in history. Fortunately, we are able to trace some of these places that are listed. Saving you all of the bookwork, I'll abbreviate:

- Magog is Russia, along with other northern regions formerly part of the USSR the Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, etc.
- Persia is Iran, and some of eastern Iraq.
- Cush and Put encompass Black Africa and North Africa.
- Gomer is the Slavic countries, including Germany, Poland, the Czech Republic, etc.

⁸ Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (Eze 38:1–6). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

- Beth-torgarmah is the area of Turkey, Armenia, and Azerbaijan
Since Gog is of the land of Magog, then it stands to reason that Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal are cities or provinces of Magog. There have been many who suggest that Rosh is Russia, Meshech is Moscow, and

Tubal is Tobolsk. However, I have not been able to verify those claims through any outside sources.

God Against Gog The Lord, speaking to Gog through Ezekiel, says, "I am against you, and these are my plans for you." Gog will be leading not only Russia, former Soviet republics, as well as Iran, Egypt and the other African nations, the Slavs, Turks, and Armenians. He will be leading them to war.

Ezekiel 38:2

Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him,

Missler: These characters, along with others appearing in these two chapters, are labels extracted from Genesis 10, The Table of Nations, where we find the genealogy of Noah and his sons. Genesis 10:1-2. Genesis 10 dealt with the ancient tribal names. But who are these people in terms of modern society? Madai you may recognize as the Medes; we talked about them when we were in the Book of Daniel. Javan was the predecessor of the Greeks.

We won't take the time to go through all 70 listed in Genesis 10. Genesis 10:6 speaks of the sons of Ham. Mizraim is Egypt, Cush and Phut we are going to talk about shortly.

Magog ... Russia: Gog is the leader of the group called Magog. You and I may not have heard of Magog, but we probably have heard of the Scythians, which was the Greek label for this ancient tribe. In the 5th century before Christ there was a historian, a Greek philosophy by the name of Herodotus. In his 4th book of his history, he is quoted as mentioning Meshech and Tubal, who he identifies with the people named Sarmatians and Mushovites who lived in the ancient province of Pontus in Northern Asia Minor.

Josephus, a famous Hebrew historian of the First Century, he points out in Antiquities I.6 that the Muscovy and the Thobelites were founded by Meshech and Tubal, and that Magog is called the Scythians by the Greeks. And according to Josephus, the Scythians settled north of the Caucasus Mountains. Pliny, the noted Roman writer of the early Christian Era, also linked the Scythians with Magog. Your encyclopedias will reveal that the Scythians were the forebearers to what you and I would know as the Russians.

Archaeological studies have revealed that the Scythians peopled most of Western Siberia. They had no alphabet nor coinage. They were apparently the earliest tribe that we know of that mastered the use of horses. They were horsemen. When one of the men died, the Scythians put to death his wives (plural), and his horses, and buried them with him. That was part of their cultural heritage.

A German scholar by the name of C.F. Keil (Keil & Deilachure have a 10-volume commentary set on the Old Testament), pointed out that by grammatical analysis, the word "chief" in our King James Translation of Ezekiel 38:2, should more properly be

translated as a proper name, and that it should be “Rosh” or “Ros.” He said that the Byzantine and the Arabic writers frequently mentioned a people called the Ros dwelling in the country of Tarus, and reckoned among the Scythian tribes.

Wilhelm Gesenius was a Hebrew scholar of about the 19th century, who developed a lexicon of the Hebrew language. Gesenius points out that Meshech was the barbarous people known as the Moschi who dwelt in the Moschian Mountains. In his writings he also linked the Moschi as the root from which the city of Moscow gets its name.

Gesenius highlighted the fact that Rosh, or Ros, referred to those dwelling north of the Tarus Mountains near the Vulga River. Some of our more modern translations of this passage read, “Gog the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal.” We all know Russia as a superpower, but it was not that long ago that it was sort of a backward country.

Now something else that is interesting, at least four writers I have been able to find that wrote prior to 1900. Bishop Lowth of England wrote in 1710 that the Rosh were the Scythians and were Russia. Doctor John Cumming in London in 1864, and Reverend Walter Chamberlain in 1854, over 100 years ago, identified Magog with Russia. J.A. Seiss in his commentary on the Book of Revelation who wrote before the Civil War in 1860, spoke of the Scythians, or the Russians as the forebearers linked to Magog.⁹

Missler: To Russia With Love

So, this passage here in Ezekiel 38:1-2 is addressed through Ezekiel by God to Gog, the leader of Magog. In other words, this passage is addressed to Russia.

Nelson: Son of man is a title for Ezekiel emphasizing his humanity, even though his message was from God. The proper names in this prophecy do not have to be specifically identified for an understanding of the main message. The term **Gog** appears in only one other place in the Old Testament (1 Chr. 5:4), but not in reference to the same person (compare Rev. 20:8). The term could be a name or a title. **Magog** (or the “land of Gog”; see Gen. 10:2; 1 Chr. 1:5) is usually understood to be an area near the Black Sea or the Caspian Sea. In Gen. 10:2, Magog is one of the sons of Japheth, whose descendants occupied lands from Spain to Asia Minor, the islands of the Mediterranean to southern Russia. Some connect Magog with the Scythians. **Rosh:** There have been some expositors in recent years who have argued that the word Rosh means “Russia.” However, this is highly unlikely, for usually the Hebrew word means “head” or “chief.” The phrase could be read “the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.” Concerning **Meshech** and **Tubal** we also have no knowledge. Geographically, these last two are thought to be near Magog. All that is known is that Gog, from Magog, was the leader over two or three regions or countries located near the Caspian or Black seas.¹⁰

⁹ Chuck Missler, Notes on the Book of Ezekiel, khouse.org

¹⁰ Nelson Study Bible Notes on Ezekiel

Constable: The Lord commanded Ezekiel to utter an oracle of judgment against Gog (cf. 1 Chron. 5:4; Rev. 20:8), who was the prince (king) over Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal. His land was Magog (cf. Gen. 10:2; Rev. 20:8).

The identity of this ruler has been the subject of much study and speculation. The possibilities include a Reubenite prince (1 Chron. 5:4), a former king of Lydia named Gugu (or Gyges), an unknown "dark" figure (from the Sumerian word *gug*, meaning "darkness"), a man named Gagu who ruled over Sakhi (an area north of Assyria), an unspecified official ruler (taking "Gog" as a title) of a particular land (Magog), a general personal name for an otherwise unidentified enemy of Israel, or a code name for Babylon. It is probably safe to say at least that "Gog" refers to the name or title of a ruler who will be active in history while Israel is dwelling safely in her land (cf. v. 8). Perhaps Ezekiel referred to this unnamed future enemy of Israel as a dark figure (unknown and evil) calling him "Dark" much as we might refer to such a person as a new Hitler. This may be the future "king of the North" (cf. Dan. 11:40-45). I think it is here, but Gog also represents another important eschatological figure.

The land of Magog probably refers to the former domain of the Scythians, who lived in the mountains between the Black and Caspian seas. Gog will also have authority over Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal. Rosh (lit. "head" or "chief") has not been identified either by biblical or extrabiblical references. The idea that it refers to Russia rests on etymological similarities, but the name Russia only came into existence in the late eleventh century A.D. Thus a linguistic connection between Rosh and Russia is very tenuous. Rosh may be an adjective describing the ruler of Meshech and Tubal. Meshech and Tubal occur together in Scripture (27:13; 32:26; Gen. 10:2; 1 Chron. 1:5) and apparently refer to regions of Anatolia (modern western Turkey), the areas that became known as Phrygia and Cappadocia. Some writers have connected Meshech and Tubal with the Russian cities of Moscow and Tobolsk. Another writer concluded that Gomer referred to Germany. But again the connection is only etymological similarity. There is no literary or historical support for these identifications. The whole region would be what is now parts of southwestern Russia, Georgia, eastern Turkey, Armenia, and Azerbaijan¹¹.

Dake: Gog Gog means roof or mountain. It is found 11 times: once of a Reubenite (1 Chron. 5:4); once in Rev. 20:8 with Magog which is representative of the nations from the four quarters of the earth that will rebel against Christ at the end of the Millennium; and 9 times of the chief prince of Mechech and Tubal (Ezekiel 38:2-3,14-16; Ezekiel 39:1,11).

Dake: [Magog] Magog, Mechech, and Tubal were sons of Japheth from whom came the Scythians, Russians, Muscovites, Tibareni, Cappadocians, and other people who predominate in modern northern Europe and Asia. See Sons of Japheth. The Septuagint adds Rosh to this list, which is followed by Young, Rotherham, Moffatt and some others who claim that Russia is referred to thus. Be that as it may, even if Russia is mentioned in particular along with these other people who will be under Gog, it does not prove that Russia will be the predominating power in the last days, that Antichrist or Gog will come from Russia, or that Russia will fulfill the many prophecies of the last days, as some

¹¹ Dr. Thomas Comstable's Expository (Bible study) Notes, <http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes.htm>

teach. All it could prove is that Russia is merely one of many nations which will be conquered by Gog and be under him at the battle of Armageddon. Daniel 11:44 plainly predicts the defeat of Russia and other northern and eastern nations outside the Roman Empire, and it can be only then that Russia will have a part under the Antichrist to fulfill Ezekiel 38-39.¹²

Chuck Smith: And the word translated chief is the word Rosh. And most Bible scholars say that the Rosh translated chief should be translated in modern English, Russia, for Rosh is a reference to the modern Russia, the word chief there. Meshech is the ancient name for Moscow, Tubal of Tobolsk, the Russian cities.¹³

Wycliffe: Gog (in chs. 38; 39; Rev 20:7), not based on Gogaia of the Amarna Letters, nor Gyges, king of Lydia (670–652) but on prophecies handed down. The land of Magog. The location of this place is unknown. Perhaps it lay between Cappadocia and Media; or the term may refer to the Scythians (Jos *Antiq.* 1. 6. 1.) Chief prince of Meshech and Tubal (cf. 27:13). Read the MT *nfsî rô.sh* in apposition, *prince of, head of Meshech and Tubal*. The word *rô.sh* means “head,” or “chief.” The MT can also be read, “prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal.” Rosh (ASV) has not been identified. Possibly it refers to some Scythian tribe in the region of the Taurus mountains.

On the last battles with Gog and Magog, see Enoch 56, 57; Sibylline Books (Oracles), III, 319, 320; II Esd 13; Babylonian Talmud, *Aboda Zara*, 3b; *Berakoth*, 7, 8; G. F. Moore, *Judaism*, II, 344, 348. Cf. the bloody battles of Anat, ANET, 136, 137.¹⁴

McGee: Linguistic Phenomenon: God is a word for ruler, meaning roof, which actually means “the man on top.” I can’t think of a better name for a dictator than Gog. If he is not on top, he is not a dictator, and if he is on top, he is a dictator.

Magog means “head” it is the Hebrew word *Rosh*, which means head. Dean Stanley, in his exhaustive *History of the Eastern Church*, published half a century ago, has a note founded on Gesenius, the great Hebrew scholar, to the effect that the word *Rosh* should be *Russia*. Then Dean Stanley adds that this is the only reference to a modern nation in the entire Old Testament. This is indeed remarkable.

Bishop Lowther made the statement that, *Rosh* taken as a proper name in Ezekiel signified the inhabitants of Scythia from whom the modern Russians derive their name. You see, Russia was first called Muscovy, derived from Meshech. Ivan the Fourth, a czar of Russia, who was called Ivan the Terrible, came to the Muscovite throne in 1533. He assumed the title of Czar, which was the first time the title was used. I am sure you detect that the names Meshech and Tubal certainly sound like Moscow, and Tobolsk, which is way over in Siberia. The linguistic phenomenon certainly leads us to believe that Ezekiel is talking about Russia in this passage.¹⁵

¹² Dake Study Notes, Dake’s Study Bible

¹³ Chuck Smith, Pastor Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa CA, Notes on Ezekiel

¹⁴ Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). *The Wycliffe Bible commentary : Old Testament* (Eze 38:2). Chicago: Moody Press.

¹⁵ McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed.) (Eze 38:2). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

McGee; Geographic Phenomenon: Now the second proof that identifies Russia is the geographic position. Here we have mentioned the nations which will be with Russia in the last days: “Gomer, and all his bands: the house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands: and many people with thee” (v. 6). “Gomer” is Germany, and “the house of Togarmah” is Turkey. “Of the north quarters” gives us the geographic location. Again in verse 15 we read: “And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts,” and in chapter 39 verse 2 the same location is given: “and will cause thee to come up from the north parts.” Whenever I give an illustrated message on this passage in Scripture, I always show a map of Israel and Russia. The literal meaning here is the “uttermost parts of the north.” If you look at a map, you will find that Russia is directly north and northeast. In fact, it covers Israel just like that picture you have seen of the fellow under a great big sombrero. That hat covers him just like Russia covers the nation Israel. When you start going north of Israel, you end up in Russia, and when you get through Russia you will be among the icebergs. You and the polar bears are going to be the only ones there.

Directions in the Bible are in relation to the land of Israel. North in the Bible does not mean north of California or north of where you live. In the Bible north is north of the land of Israel. South is south of the land of Israel. West is west of the land of Israel, and east is east of the land of Israel. In other words, Israel is the geographical center of the earth as far as the Word of God is concerned.¹⁶

OTS: The leader of the invading forces is called Gog. He is from the land of Magog. He is “chief prince of Meshach” (NIV). Meshach has been identified as the country of Lydia (in Asia Minor) whose first king was Gyges (Midas). Gog is also leader of the country of Tubal which likewise is situated in Asia Minor. The exact meaning of the name *Gog* is unknown. Gog is probably best not identified with any specific individual past, present or future. He is simply the leader of the last all-out effort to exterminate God’s people.

After introducing the leader of the forces opposed to God’s people, the lengthy Gog oracle proceeds through seven thought units each of which begins with the messenger formula “Thus says the Lord God.”¹⁷

Nelson: Son of man is a title for Ezekiel emphasizing his humanity, even though his message was from God. The proper names in this prophecy do not have to be specifically identified for an understanding of the main message. The term **Gog** appears in only one other place in the Old Testament (1 Chr. 5:4), but not in reference to the same person (compare Rev. 20:8). The term could be a name or a title. **Magog** (or the “land of Gog”; see Gen. 10:2; 1 Chr. 1:5) is usually understood to be an area near the Black Sea or the Caspian Sea. In Gen. 10:2, Magog is one of the sons of Japheth, whose descendants occupied lands from Spain to Asia Minor, the islands of the Mediterranean to southern Russia. Some connect Magog with the Scythians. **Rosh:** There have been some expositors in recent years who have argued that the word Rosh means “Russia.” However, this is highly unlikely, for usually the Hebrew word means “head” or “chief.” The phrase could be read “the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.” Concerning **Meshech** and **Tubal** we also have no knowledge. Geographically, these last two are thought to be

¹⁶ McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed.) (Eze 38:2). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

¹⁷ Smith, J. E. (1992). *The Major Prophets* (Eze 38:1–2). Joplin, Mo.: College Press.

near Magog. All that is known is that Gog, from Magog, was the leader over two or three regions or countries located near the Caspian or Black seas.

ESV: Gog, of the land of Magog. These two names have been the focus of extensive investigation and speculation in both Jewish and Christian literature, but there is no consensus on their meaning. Some interpreters think “Gog” is a veiled reference to a historical figure, such as Gyges, a seventh-century b.c. king of Lydia in Asia Minor, in which case the prophecy would be about a future attacker similar to Gyges. Others have thought it was a prediction of Alexander the Great (356–323 b.c.). But elsewhere Ezekiel was willing to make firm identifications or use more obvious symbols, and a connection with Alexander would be anything but obvious. Therefore many interpreters understand this passage to be a prophecy concerning an attack against Israel in a more distant future. In rabbinic literature and the Targums, Gog and Magog are often seen as leaders of a great attack on Israel in a future messianic age. In particular, Magog is seen as representing the Scythian people (see Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* 1.123), who ruled vast regions of Asia north of the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea (modern Russia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan) and who also conquered peoples east and south of the Black Sea (modern Georgia, Armenia, and Turkey). In the NT, Gog and Magog are the names of the nations led by Satan to attack Jerusalem at the end of the “thousand years” (Rev. 20:8). Although the other geographical names in this passage can be identified (see notes on Ezek. 38:5; 38:6), “Gog” and “Magog” remain enigmatic, perhaps because the intention of the prophecy is simply to point to a yet-unknown future leader of a great attack against God's people, one whose identity will not be known until the prophecy is fulfilled. No time is specified in the prophecy either, except the vague “In the latter years” in v. 8 and “In the latter days” in v. 16. (As the esv footnote indicates, an alternative translation of v. 2 is “Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal,” but no place named “Rosh” can be clearly identified either.) **Meshech** and **Tubal**, first named in Gen. 10:2, are in Asia Minor (see note on Ezek. 27:13).

Ezekiel 38:3

And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal:

Tubal was the son of Raphath, founder of the Taborini, a people dwelling on the Black Sea west of the Moschi tribes.

Missler: Now I am sure that does not particularly panic Russia today. But, by the time we finish Chapter 39 and we read the technology that is described, if you were a Russian person reading this, you ought to get a little concerned.

Constable 3-4: Ezekiel was to announce that Yahweh was opposed to Gog. The Lord would reverse the fortunes of this ruler, take him captive, and bring him and his vast, impressive army out of his homeland. Putting hooks in his jaws pictures control that he would not be able to resist. The Lord would be the first cause of this action, but doubtless

there would be secondary causes as well, such as Satan's influence and human decisions (cf. 2 Sam. 24:1; 1 Chron. 21:1; Isa. 10:5-19; Hab. 1:5-11).¹⁸

Chuck Smith: So now the prophecy turns and is directed towards Magog, which is the ancient name for those people who lived in the area of the Caucasus and the mountains north of the Caucasus, which is the present day area of Russia, along with Meshech and Tubal, which people were the ancient Scythians that inhabited the area known as Russia today.

Along with Persia, which, of course, Russia, part of Russia is a part of the ancient Persia along with Iraq and Iran. Ethiopia and Libya, along with Gomer, which is Germany, but mainly eastern Germany and Poland. Along with Togarmah, which are your Balkan States: Turkey, and Yugoslavia, Romania.¹⁹

McGee; Philosophical Phenomenon: Finally we come to the philosophical or ideological phenomenon, which helps us identify Gog and Magog with Russia. This is strange language. Here in the Book of Ezekiel God has said several times that He is against certain nations. He said it about Babylon; He said it about Egypt; and He said it about the nations which were against His people and against His person. Now here is a nation that is to arise in the last days, a nation which is against God. The reason we know it is against God is because God says, "I'm against you." This makes it different from any other nation, because God has said this about nations already in existence that have exhibited enmity and rejection of Him, but this nation hadn't even come into existence when Ezekiel gave this prophecy. Yet God says he is against it.

My friend, you and I have seen something that no generation in the past has seen. We have seen a nation arise whose basic philosophy is atheism. The political economy of Russia rests upon the premise that there is no God. It is atheistic. No other nation has assumed the dominant position of atheism.

Someone may be thinking, "What about the heathen, pagan nations of the past? Weren't they atheistic?" No, they were not. They were polytheistic. They believed in many gods. In the beginning men went off the track, but they did not become atheists. The reason they did not become atheists is, I think, easy to understand. They were too close to the mooring mast of revelation. After all, in Noah's day you did not have atheists. That was not the problem with that crowd at all. The problem with them was that they had gone off into sin, and they worshiped many gods. Man at that point was polytheistic. All the great nations of the past were polytheistic, and the judgments God has pronounced in this book are against polytheistic nations. He said of Memphis that all of the idols would disappear, and they have disappeared. There were probably no people so given over to idolatry—with the possible exception of the Babylonians. Polytheism characterized the ancient world. But Russia is a nation whose basic philosophy is atheistic, a nation that is against God.

Do you realize that God did not give a commandment against atheism at the beginning? He did, however, give the first two commandments against polytheism: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exod. 20:3); and "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in

¹⁸ Dr. Thomas Comstable's Expository (Bible study) Notes, <http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes.htm>

¹⁹ Chuck Smith, Pastor Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa CA, Notes on Ezekiel

the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth” Exod. (20:4). So, you see, there are commandments against polytheism, but none against atheism.

When you reach the time of David, atheism is beginning to appear. In Psalm 14:1 we read, “The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.” How ridiculous atheism is! It is almost an untenable position for little man, and here is a *nation* that says there is no God! Concerning Russia, men in high places have warned, “You cannot negotiate with them.” Mr. Churchill said of Russia, “A riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma.” Rube Goldberg, who drew one of those crazy cartoons years ago, called Joe Stalin, “The Great Upside-down Philosopher.” Underneath the cartoon was written: “Top is bottom, black is white, far is near, and day is night. Big is little, high is low, cold is hot, and yes is no.” Unreasonable? Insane? But that has been the basic philosophy of Russia, and it is a nation that has risen in our day.

Mr. Stalin once said, “We have deposed the czars of the earth, and we shall now dethrone the Lord of heaven.” When Russia put a rocket past the moon, called the *Sputnik*, and when it was nearing the sun, the following was heard on the radio in Russia: “Our rocket has bypassed the moon. It is nearing the sun. We have not discovered God. We have turned out lights in heaven that no man will be able to put on again. We are breaking the yoke of the gospel, the opiate of the masses. Let us go forth and Christ shall be relegated to mythology.” I have often wondered what they had in mind when they said that. Did they think that God was playing peekaboo on the other side of the moon? Because they got a glimpse of the other side of the moon and did not see God, did that prove He did not exist? That is the reasoning of the upside-down philosopher. God, however, has beaten them to the draw. Before Russia even came into existence, God said, “I am against thee.”

You can see how Gog and Magog may be identified with Russia by this threefold reason: (1) the linguistic phenomenon; (2) the geographic phenomenon; and (3) the philosophical or ideological phenomenon. These are the three points of identification, and when we get to chapter 39 of Ezekiel, God repeats once again that He is against Russia.

This chapter will tell us that this nation in the north with other nations with him will come down against Israel.²⁰

OTS: The Lord declared his hostility to Gog. This invader would be forcibly turned back like a wild beast (cf. 29:4). The same was true of Gog’s handsome, well-equipped allies. Gog’s army was made up of contingents from all over the known world. This was probably intended to symbolize the world as it opposes the people of God. Thus the prophet announced the result of Gog’s plan even before he describes the invasion itself (38:3–6).

These forces were commanded to prepare themselves. “After many days” they would be summoned by the Lord. They were merely pawns in his hand. In “the latter years” this force would undertake the invasion. The land which they would attack is described as one that had been “rescued from the sword,” a land that had suffered greatly already, a land which enjoyed serenity. The Lord gathered this force to the mountains of Israel. Gog and his troops would cover the entire land like a threatening storm cloud (38:7–9).²¹

²⁰ McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed.) (Eze 38:3). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

²¹ Smith, J. E. (1992). *The Major Prophets* (Eze 38:3–9). Joplin, Mo.: College Press.

Ezekiel 38:4

And I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords:

Missler: Does Russia want to get involved? It doesn't matter. They may, they may not. With the "hooks in their jaws" they will be brought into this battle, whether they like it or not. We are going to see that they do have a motive, and they will be going, but the point is that God is maneuvering them there.

Remember Ezekiel's phrase (54x) "They shall know that I am the Lord." The Russians are going to find out. More importantly, Israel is going to find out, but so are a lot of us bystanders. We are all going to sort of take notice, because unlike the Six Day War which was the miracle of this little Israel surviving that onslaught, it became an ego trip. "Hey, look what we did."

Move from 1967 to the Yom Kippur War of 1973. Both were miracles, but those miracles did not shake them from their secular humanism. If you go to Israel and speak to the military or the leadership, you see their pride in their armed forces. It is deserved in a sense, I do not want to knock them. They are probably the best trained defense force on the planet. They really are good, but that blinds them so that they cannot see the Hand of God dealing with them. This time they will. Now we get into who some of the allies of Magog are going to be.²²

Dake: [turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth] This very first statement of God dealing with Gog proves that when these chapters (Ezekiel 38-39) are fulfilled he will be turned back from taking Jerusalem and be destroyed. In this first invasion of Palestine some three and a half years before this he will take the whole city of Jerusalem and make it his capital city and the temple his capital building, placing the abomination of desolation in the temple to remain for about three and a half years (Daniel 9:27; Daniel 11:40-45; 2 Thes. 2:3-4; Rev. 11:1-2). At the second and last invasion of Palestine, after he has conquered Russia and her allies north and east of his ten kingdoms, he will surround Jerusalem to take it again but will not succeed; he will be turned back, being able to take only half of the city before Christ suddenly comes with the armies of heaven to stop him from taking the rest of it (Zech. 14:1-15; Rev. 19:11-21).²³

Dake: [thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour] Here the army of Gog or Antichrist is predicted as consisting of a great company of horses and horsemen with all sorts of weapons and armor. Ancient weapons are mentioned as they were the only kind known and understood at that time. It is to be expected that the future Antichrist will equip his men with all kinds of modern weapons—all sorts as stated here.²⁴

²² Chuck Missler, Notes on the Book of Ezekiel, khouse.org

²³ Dake Study Notes, Dake's Study Bible

²⁴ Dake Study Notes, Dake's Study Bible

Ron Daniel: It sounds like they will not initially be interested in this war, but they will be forced into it by God Himself. He will basically be dragging them into it.

Now, I don't know what form that will take. The hooks in their jaws might be any number of things - a desire to expand their empire, a political alliance that forces them into a situation, a greed for oil or other natural resources... We do see in verse 11 that part of the invaders' desire has to do with spoil and plunder.

But whatever the hooks are, God will use them to draw Gog and his allies into this battle.

I will turn thee back. The figure is that of turning a wild beast from its meaningless inclinations to fulfill the divine purposes.²⁵

McGee; Why Russia will invade Israel: Now the question is: Why will they come against the land of Israel?

God says, "I will ... put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth." This has been interpreted to mean that God was going to put hooks in their jaws to get them *out* of Israel after they had invaded it. But that is not what He says. He makes it clear that He is going to judge them *in* the land of Israel, and that they will not come out alive. In chapter 39, verse 11, He says, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will give unto Gog a place there of *graves in Israel.*" As we read this section, it becomes obvious that God is not going to lead out the invading nations, but there will be a slaughter the like of which probably has not been seen in the history of the world.

Then what does God mean by saying that He will put hooks in their jaws? Well, it seems obvious to me that He is saying, "I am going to put hooks in your jaws and bring you down into the land of Israel." When this time comes, Israel will be back in their own land. For centuries that land was not occupied by them. After the destruction by Titus the Roman in A.D. 70, the Jewish people were sold into slavery throughout the world, and they were scattered throughout the world.

The land was no longer a land of milk and honey. We have seen in the Book of Ezekiel that even the Negev was at one time covered with forest. God said that He was going to burn that out, and He did. That is the place where Elijah went when Jezebel threatened to kill him. He kept going until he was so tired he stopped and crawled under a juniper tree. If Elijah were here today, he would have trouble finding a juniper tree to crawl under; he would have to find something else. The forests are gone.

Mark Twain said concerning the land of Israel, "Palestine sits in sackcloth and ashes, desolate and unlovely. It is a hopeless, dreary, heartbroken land. And why should it be otherwise? Can the curse of the Deity beautify a land? Palestine is no more of this work-day world. It is sacred to poetry and tradition. It is dreamland."

Dr. Theodor Herzl, the playwright from Austria who began the tremendous Zionist movement back to the land of Palestine, made this statement: "There is a land without a people. There is a people without a land. Give the land without a people to the people without a land."

²⁵ Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). *The Wycliffe Bible commentary : Old Testament* (Eze 38:4). Chicago: Moody Press.

Dr. Chaim Weizmann, the first president of Israel, speaking before the Anglo-American Commission of Inquiry, said, “The Jewish nation is a ghost nation. Only the God of Israel has kept the Jewish people alive.”

David Ben-Gurion, the first prime minister and minister of defense in Israel, made this statement: “Ezekiel 37 has been fulfilled, and the nation Israel is hearing the footsteps of the Messiah.”

Today Israel has turned from this thinking. I have a picture, taken on Israel’s twenty-first anniversary, of a motto in the auditorium at Tel Aviv, written in Hebrew and English. It said, “Science will bring peace to this land.” The Old Testament says that Messiah will bring peace to that land, so apparently they are chasing a new messiah today.

Russia will invade the land of Israel. Lord Beverly made the statement that Russia would not move into western Europe but would move into Asia and the Near East. General Douglas MacArthur concurred with him in that viewpoint. At the time Lord Beverly made that statement almost everyone thought that Russia would move into western Europe after World War II, but they did not move into that area at all. In fact, up to this day they have not moved into that area.

God says, “I will put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth.” Today I believe that we can already see three of the hooks that God could use to bring them down into that land:

1. Russia needs a warm-water entrance into the waterways of the world. Israel offers that, and Russia is moving in this direction. A few years ago I sat in the dining room on the top floor of the Hilton Hotel in Istanbul and watched Russian ships coming out of the Black Sea, moving through the Bosphorus, and heading for the Mediterranean Sea. This took place after the Six-Day War, and Russian naval strength had increased tremendously. What are the Russians looking for? They are looking for a warm-water port. Admiral Sergei Gorshkov made this statement, “The flag of the Soviet navy now proudly flies over the oceans of the world. Sooner or later the United States will have to understand that it no longer has mastery of the seas.” Russia is looking for a warm-water port. Where are they going? All I know is that they are headed for the Mediterranean Sea. What nation along the east side of the Mediterranean would be suitable as a port? Israel certainly would be. Russia is interested in moving southward today. God has put a hook in their jaw.

2. God has a second hook—oil. The oil deposits of the Near East are essential for the survival of modern nations. Russia needs oil. Today we are being constantly reminded that the world is running short of energy. Oil is one of the resources in short supply. As a result, the world is turning to the places where they can get oil. There is oil in the Near East. Whether or not the oil is actually in the land of Israel is not the important thing. The important consideration is that, in spite of the strained relations between the Arabs and the Jews, a great deal of that oil is going through the land of Israel. When ships were not able to go through the Suez Canal, they put the oil off at a port which had been taken by Israel, and then the oil was taken across the land of Israel to the Mediterranean ports. As far back as 1955 I delivered a message stating that Russia was hungering for the Arabian oil. An editor of a paper in downtown Los Angeles heard my message and disagreed with it. Sometime later he made a trip over to the Near East area. When he returned, he wrote an article (and I have a copy of it) in which he said, “Russia hungers for Arabian oil.” He

changed his viewpoint after he had been to the Near East and had seen things with his own eyes. It is a pretty good hook God has in Russia's jaws, because any modern nation must have oil.

3. The third hook concerns the Dead Sea. The mineral deposits in the Dead Sea are so great that they cannot be evaluated on today's market. Chemicals saturated in the water represent untold wealth. It is estimated that the Dead Sea contains two billion tons of potassium chloride, which is potash—needed to sweeten and enrich the soil that is readily being depleted around the world, including our own area. The Dead Sea also contains twenty-two billion tons of magnesium chloride, twelve billion tons of sodium chloride, and six billion tons of calcium chloride. The Dead Sea, in addition to all of this, contains cerium, cobalt, manganese, and even gold. Believe me, friend, there is much effort being made today to extract this wealth from the Dead Sea.

If you had been around a few million years ago and had seen the Lord forming this earth, particularly the Dead Sea, you would probably have asked Him, "Why are you damming up that sea? You are going to have a pretty salty place." He would have replied, "I am baiting a hook." Then you would have said, "Baiting a hook for what?" Then the Lord would have said, "In a few million years there will be a nation in the north that I am going to bring into the land of Israel. I am just baiting one of the hooks a little ahead of time." And that is what God has been doing—baiting a hook.²⁶

McGee; When Russia will invade Israel: The question is: When will Russia come down? This is where many expositors disagree. There are those who believe that Russia will invade the land of Palestine at the end of this age, before the church is raptured. Others believe that Russia will come against Israel at the beginning of the Tribulation Period, and others believe it will be at the end of the Tribulation. There are some who believe this will take place at the beginning of the Millennium. I am not going to discuss these different viewpoints in detail. My particular viewpoint is this: Russia will come in the "latter days" (v. 16); these "latter days" (as we have seen in the other prophets) is a technical term that specifically refers to the Tribulation Period. These will be the days when the Antichrist comes to power, and he is going to come to power on a peace platform. As a result there will be a false peace for the first part of the Tribulation Period; then in the midst of the seven years, Russia will come down from the north into the land of Israel. Russia will trigger the *Great* Tribulation by breaking the false peace made by the Antichrist and invading Israel.²⁷

Nelson: God is sovereign over the invasion (see vv. 14–17). hooks into your jaws: Here Gog is portrayed as a huge animal, perhaps a crocodile, that will be controlled by hooks, horses, and horsemen: When the biblical prophets speak of battles in the distant future, they use descriptions of weaponry and tactics known to them (see "sword" in v. 8; "bow arrows" in 39:3).

Ryrie: Though many find it hard to believe that actual *horses* will be used in this battle, remember that, during the Tribulation, production and the movement of goods will be greatly restricted by the judgments of that time.

²⁶ McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed.) (Eze 38:4). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

²⁷ McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed.) (Eze 38:4). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

I will bring you out. From the beginning, God's initiative in rousing Gog's hordes is apparent.

Ezekiel 38:5

Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them; all of them with shield and helmet:

Elam: Persia See Genesis 10:22. Gesenius says that Elam was a province of Persia, in which stood the capital city Susa (Ezra 4:9; Daniel 8:2); perhaps to ancient writers it included the whole of Persia. Elam is important to us today as being Iran.

Cush: Ethiopia Cush and Phut are two tribal names that we may not be familiar with. In some Bibles, Cush is translated Ethiopia, and that is with some justification; however, it is misleading, because what we think of as Ethiopia is too denotative.

Cush, Moses refers to him in Genesis 2:13. Showing that he is adjacent to the Tigris and Euphrates. Gesenius points out that the Cushites were the black men. They initially populated the Arabian peninsula, and then migrated to Africa. Ethiopia implies part of Africa, but the term in its tribal sense is broader than what we would think of Ethiopia today. Cush was the first son of Ham listed in Genesis 10:6.

Phut: Libya Now Phut, was the third son of Ham in Genesis 10:6, Phut refers to Arabic Africa. It is translated in some Bibles as 'Libya.' But, again, what you and I would think of as Libya is too narrow: it really includes Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco. So, Cush and Phut together make Black Africa, and North Africa: North Africa being the Berbers; Phut being Arabic Africa; and Cush being Black Africa.

Constable 5-6: Along with Gog, the Lord would take Persia, Ethiopia, Put, Gomer, and Beth-togarmah captive. This would involve vast numbers of soldiers. Persia lay to Israel's northeast, Ethiopia to her southwest, Put to her southeast (on the African coast of the southern Red Sea), Gomer to her northwest (in the Taurus mountains of Anatolia and possibly farther northwest in modern western Europe), and Beth-togarmah to her northwest (southeast of the Black Sea). Thus peoples all around Israel would unite against her under Gog's leadership. As Babylonia sought to destroy Israel in the past, so this latter-day Babylon will seek to destroy her in the future (cf. Rev. 16:13-14; 17:5). Ezekiel pictured a large alliance of nations against Israel.²⁸

Nelson 5-6: Nations will ally with Gog from all directions: from the east—Persia; south—Ethiopia; west—Libya; and north—Gomer. The people of Gomer were the Cimmerians, a people from what is now southern Russia. Togarmah was near the Black Sea (see Gen. 10:3; 1 Chr. 1:6).

²⁸ Dr. Thomas Constable's Expository (Bible study) Notes, <http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes.htm>

Ryrie: Other allies will include *Persia* (modern Iran), *Ethiopia* (northern Sudan), *Put* (Libya), *Gomer* (probably the eastern part of Turkey and the Ukraine), and *Beth-togarmah* (the part of Turkey near the Syrian border)

ESV: For Persia (modern Iran), cf. 27:10; Cush is in the region of Ethiopia (cf. 29:10); Put is identified with Libya (27:10; 30:4–5). Gog's allies are described in terms analogous to those of Tyre in 27:10. Together with 38:2, 6, this passage depicts enemies coming against Israel from all sides: Meshech, Tubal, Gomer, and Beth-togarmah from the north (vv. 2, 6), and here Persia, Cush, and Put from the south.

Ezekiel 38:6

Gomer, and all his bands; the house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands: and many people with thee.

Gomer is a bit easier, as Gomer was the eldest son of Japheth. He was the father of Askenaz, see Genesis 10:3. Gesenius points out that the Cimmerians lead us to the fact that Gomer is the predecessor to the Cimmerians who were indeed the predecessors to the Germans. The Cimmerians were known to have settled north of the Black Sea, in the Rhine and Danube valleys. So Gomer includes, although not limited to, Germany.

Josephus points out that Ashkenaz became what was in the Roman Empire called “the Reginians” which today would derive to Poland, Czechoslovakia and East Germany. Also, the Hebrew Talmud references support the same concept. So when you say “Gomer and all of his hords,” you include East Germany and the Slavic countries.

Isn't it fascinating that the prophet Ezekiel 2600 years ago speaks of a time of a world power, lead by the Russians, but includes as allies East Germany and the Slavic countries. And, by the way, North Africa and a good part of Black Africa.

Togarmah: Turkiman Tribes Togarmah is one of the easiest because if you are of Armenian background, they still refer to themselves today as the “House of Togarmah.” Togarmah itself doesn't limit itself just to the Armenians, but also includes according to some references, the Turkiman tribes of Central Asia. [Note, CNN will refer to the Turks as “arabs”; however, they are not the sons of Ishmael. The Turks are descendants of Japheth!]

“Out of the North Quarters” We see this phrase, “out of the North quarters” twice, once here in 38:6 and again in 38:15 (also 39:2 says “the north parts.”)

In the Hebrew, the word for North has been modified to imply the extreme or uttermost parts of the North. That is why, if you have a modern English translation, or an Amplified, you may see it read a little differently. It is not just the north parts, but from “the uttermost parts of the north” is the way it is usually rendered. Now that is why you really do not have to know anything about Gesenius or Pliny or Herodotus to figure out who Magog is; all you need to do is put your finger on Israel on a globe and move to the extreme north, and you come to the conclusion that Magog is Russia.

Some Bible scholars refer to this collection of characters as “the Northern Confederacy.” There is a king of the south, speaking of Egypt and some other characters.

And there is a Western Confederacy; i.e., the European former Roman Empire group. And there are the kings of the East. So you have a north, south, east and west cluster in prophecy.

I happen not to believe that this particular northern confederation is part of the Armageddon scenario. Some people weave all these together. But as you really get into the technicalities it becomes clearer to see this battle as occurring prior to some other events. Don't take my word on this, study it on your own, and remember Acts 17:11.²⁹

Gomer (Gen 10:2). The Gimirrai of the Assyrians; the Cimmerians of the Greeks, living south of the Black Sea, probably in Cappadocia. Togarmah (cf. 27:14), in the uttermost parts of the north (RSV). Similarly Rome in Ps of Sol, 8:16.³⁰

ESV: Gomer probably refers to the Cimmerians, who had lived north of the Black Sea (modern Ukraine and the southern part of Russia) but were expelled by the conquering Scythians and migrated to an area south of the Black Sea, in Anatolia (modern Turkey). For Beth-togarmah, see note on 27:14. The uttermost parts of the north seems to refer to enemies that will come from regions to the far north of Israel, without specifically identifying these enemies. This phrase (repeated in 38:15; 39:2) has led some interpreters to understand this as a prediction of a future attack against Israel by Russia (Russia is the country farthest north of Israel, and Moscow is directly north of Jerusalem). But others see it as a general prediction of invaders from the north (see note on 38:2). In other places in the OT, this phrase describes the place where God reigns (Ps. 48:2) or where God will set his throne (Isa. 14:13), which would suggest a more symbolic interpretation of this oracle.

Ezekiel 38:7

Be thou prepared, and prepare for thyself, thou, and all thy company that are assembled unto thee, and be thou a guard unto them.

Missler: I want you to catch what this is saying. Who is equipping these characters? Gog, the leader of Russia. So who is giving Persia, Cush, Phut, Gomer and Togarmah their arms? Russia. Isn't that interesting? Don't just take that for granted because it is happening. Give Ezekiel a little credit, he wrote this 2600 years ago!

Constable 7-9: The Lord told Gog to be ready with his allies. He would summon Gog to attack the Promised Land when the Israelites were back in it having been re-gathered in the end times (cf. Jer. 32:14; Dan. 8:26). The Israelites would be living securely in their land at this time enjoying peaceful conditions (cf. 37:26). Gog and his allies would descend on the land like a storm cloud.³¹

Be thou a guard or leader for invading hosts.

²⁹ Chuck Missler, Notes on the Book of Ezekiel, khouse.org

³⁰ Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). *The Wycliffe Bible commentary : Old Testament* (Eze 38:4). Chicago: Moody Press.

³¹ Dr. Thomas Constable's Expository (Bible study) Notes, <http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes.htm>

BKC 7-9: This attack will be against Israel, whose people will be gathered from many nations and will be living in safety. Gog and his allies will go against Israel in massive strength, advancing like a storm and a cloud (cf. v. 16).³²

The phrase "be a guard" is the Hebrew word "mish-MAWR." It refers to a place of confinement, like a prison. It sounds to me like Gog's allies will be stuck in this with him. As if they're obligated to go along with the invasion. But the question is, where are they headed? Who will they be invading?

Ezekiel 38:8

After many days thou shalt be visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste: but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them.

“In the latter years,” are at the End Times, the last days. They are coming against the mountains of Israel which have been always waste. How long? 1900 years, since Israel was dispossessed. All the other characters that traipsed through that land before Israel returned, described it as desolate. But now that Israel is back in the land it is blooming.

Dake: Pointing to a future time when Israel will have been partially gathered, but not fully restored. It is called the latter years here and the latter days when the gathered Jews will dwell safely (Ezekiel 38:8,16).³³

Chuck Smith: Now, God is predicting that when Israel is gathered back into the land, that there will come an invasion by these nations. Combining themselves together in a massive invasion of the land of Israel. Russia, eastern Europe, the Balkan States, Iraq, Iran, Libya, and Ethiopia.³⁴

After many days ... in the latter years. An expression used of the eschatological future (cf. introd. remarks on chs. 38; 39). 9. Gog and his allies advance ... like a storm ... like a cloud (cf. v. 16; Isa 21:1; Jer 4:13) against a peaceful and prosperous Israel (cf. vv. 8, 11, 12).³⁵

McGee: When Israel is back in the land, they will be under the domination of the Antichrist, who will make them believe that peace has come to the earth, that all of the problems of the earth are settled and they are entering the Millennium. But this is not

³² Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (Eze 38:7–9). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

³³ Dake Study Notes, Dake's Study Bible

³⁴ Chuck Smith, Pastor Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa CA, Notes on Ezekiel

³⁵ Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). *The Wycliffe Bible commentary : Old Testament* (Eze 38:8). Chicago: Moody Press.

true, and they will find in the midst of the Tribulation Period that out of the north will come their enemy, Russia.³⁶

Nelson : dwell safely: This phrase (see vv. 11, 14) indicates that the Israel of this passage is secure; the nation is not safe from attack, but it is safe from defeat. The time of the invasion is suggested by two temporal phrases—After many days ... In the latter years—and the overall context. The second phrase appears only here in the Old Testament. The first phrase usually denotes an indefinite time period, sometimes extending into the distant future or the end times (see Dan. 8:26). See also v. 16, where “the latter days” is used, a phrase that frequently points to messianic times or to the times when Israel is regathered. From Ezekiel’s viewpoint, he was predicting a time in the very distant future—the *end times*. Unless the passage refers to spiritual warfare, the invasion of Israel and the subsequent time of confident and carefree peace are still future events.

Believers Study Bible: This battle is to be in the distant future, “after many days.” It is to be a visitation, which probably indicates a special judgment from God (cf. Ex 32:34). The phrase “latter years” (“latter days” in v. 16) can hardly be anything but exclusively eschatological (2 Tim 3:1; 2 Pet 3:3). The invasion is to be into a specific land “brought back from the sword.” This land is filled with those gathered from many nations (cf. 36:24). The conflict will take place on the “mountains of Israel” where they shall dwell in supposed security.

Nelson: dwell safely: This phrase (see vv. 11, 14) indicates that the Israel of this passage is secure; the nation is not safe from attack, but it is safe from defeat. The time of the invasion is suggested by two temporal phrases—**After many days ... In the latter years**—and the overall context. The second phrase appears only here in the Old Testament. The first phrase usually denotes an indefinite time period, sometimes extending into the distant future or the end times (see Dan. 8:26). See also v. 16, where “the latter days” is used, a phrase that frequently points to messianic times or to the times when Israel is regathered. From Ezekiel’s viewpoint, he was predicting a time in the very distant future—the *end times*. Unless the passage refers to spiritual warfare, the invasion of Israel and the subsequent time of confident and carefree peace are still future events.

Ron Daniel: Now God says clearly where Gog will be leading this invasion force - it will be against the Jews living in the land of Israel after they are gathered from many nations.

Gathered From Many Nations

Remember, there are three instances when the Jews were or will be regathered from the nations:

- 1) Returning from the Babylonian Captivity;
- 2) Returning from the diaspora after World War II; and
- 3) The future regathering from the nations at the end of the Great Tribulation.

This army from the north will be coming after one of these regatherings.

³⁶ McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed.) (Eze 38:8). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

A Continual Waste

How can we figure out which regathering will be followed by this attack? Another clue we have is that the land will have been a "continual waste." This word "waste" (khor-BAW) speaks of a place being desolate and ruined - a complete desert.

This eliminates the possibility of it referring to the regathering after the tribulation. As we see from the book of Revelation, that seven-year period will see Jerusalem inhabited, with a functioning temple. Even after the earthquakes and judgments which will cripple the city during that seven-year period, the destruction could not be spoken of as "continual waste."

After Many Days

There are only two times of which I'm aware that Israel was a "continual waste." The first time was during the 70 years of the Babylonian captivity. And the second time was after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD by the Roman Empire. For a lot of the last 2,000 years, the former land of Israel became a desert wasteland. It wasn't until the Jews re-inhabited the land in the mid-1900's that the land began to be restored to its former condition.

Now, the Lord said that this was going to happen "after many days, in the latter years." But the Babylonian Captivity would end soon enough, and certainly would not qualify as being in the last days. Plus, there is also the fact that we have not seen this attack happen yet in history. And so it would seem that this prophetic event is still in our future. But I don't believe it is in the too distant future, for more reasons that we will see shortly...

ESV: Locating this episode in the **latter years** in the land that is restored casts this oracle into the future. See the "latter days" in v. 16 (cf. note on Isa. 2:2); thus, it is not necessarily the absolute end of time.

Ezekiel 38:9

Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee.

Or into a land that really is not able to defend itself against my great power.

Ron Daniel 9-12 Unwalled Security

When these nations set out to attack Israel, the force will be massive. And they will be headed towards "unwalled villages," those who are at rest, living securely. "Living securely" literally means "sitting in confidence." But these words have been translated elsewhere in the Scriptures as "unsuspecting," "careless," and "complacent."

Why would the Israelis think that they were dwelling in security? Well, we see today that no cities are encompassed by walls anymore. Their protection is not from bars and gates, but from weapons. And in 1968 - just 20 years after Israel became a nation again, the CIA concluded that Israel had begun to produce nuclear weapons. Today, they are believed to be sixth in the list of nuclear powers, with about 200 warheads. Their nuclear deterrent allows them to believe that they are quite safe from invasion.

But they are not the only ones with weapons. Notice in verse seven that it is the Russians who are equipping the other nations for this battle. It is truly amazing to think that Ezekiel, writing more than 2,500 years ago, could know that Russia would become so strapped for cash that they would begin selling:

- nuclear technology to China and Iran,
- missile technology to North Korea,
- armored personnel carriers to the Palestinian Authority,
- anti-aircraft missiles to Syria,
- and that in 2004 alone Russian arms exports (at least the ones we're aware of) totaled \$5.6 billion.

Russia and her allies could certainly be convinced to attack Israel, especially with God drawing them in.

The enemy's intention 38:10-13

Ezekiel 38:10

Thus saith the Lord GOD; It shall also come to pass, *that at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought:*

Constable 10-12: At that time Gog would devise an evil plan against the Israelites. He would plan to invade the Israelites while they are at rest and plunder them. Israel would seem to be completely defenseless relying on her God to protect her and not fortifying herself. Israel has never in her past or present history enjoyed such an ideally peaceful situation. She would be living then at the center of the world as far as God's purposes for the world are concerned (cf. 5:5; Deut. 32:8), namely, the Promised Land.³⁷

Dake: [evil thought] The evil thought of Gog will be that of going up against the Jews who dwell safely and are at rest in their own land, "to take a spoil" (Ezekiel 38:11-13).

Into thy mind. Man's plans are but part of God's overreaching purposes. See, for example, 39:2; Isa 10:5, 6. 12. In the midst (lit., *navel*) of the earth. Cf. 5:5.³⁸

BKC 10-13: Gog's purpose in the attack will be to plunder and loot unwalled and unsuspecting Israel, which will be rich in livestock and goods, living at the center of the land. Israel's importance geographically, politically, and economically will be noticed. She will be a strategic target for any power wanting to control commerce between Asia and Africa.³⁹

³⁷ Dr. Thomas Comstable's Expository (Bible study) Notes, <http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes.htm>

³⁸ Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). *The Wycliffe Bible commentary : Old Testament* (Eze 38:10). Chicago: Moody Press.

³⁹ Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (Eze 38:10-13). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

OTS: Ezekiel described the planning which went into Gog's attack against the people of God. Gog would devise an "evil plan." The plan was militarily feasible. The tyrant anticipated sweeping down upon a people who are both defenseless and unsuspecting. He believed that such an attack was potentially rewarding. He anticipated confiscating all the wealth which those who had been gathered out of the nations had acquired. Furthermore, to conquer this people would place Gog at "the center of the world," i.e., in a strategic position. In this endeavor Gog was encouraged by other nations of the area which hoped that some of the plundered wealth would rebound to them. To summarize, Gog calculated that the attack against the people of God would be relatively easy and extremely profitable.⁴⁰

Nelson 10-13: Gog's evil plan will be to attack an unsuspecting, unprepared, and peaceful people in unwalled villages. I will go up demonstrates that Gog will decide to attack Israel even though God foresees, predicts, and controls Gog's evil actions. On Sheba, Dedan ... Tarshish, see 25:13; 27:12, 15, 22. Young lions represent their rulers; however, a few ancient versions translate the Hebrew as "villages."

ESV 10-13: The clear insistence that Gog remains firmly under God's control and, in fact, acts at God's behest (vv. 4, 16), does not preclude Gog from forming plans to plunder the now-fertile land of restored Israel (the quiet people who dwell securely, v. 11) and being held responsible for those plans.

Ezekiel 38:11

And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates,

Missler: There are no literal walls there today, but they do have electronic fences in terms of radar sweeps and the IDF is kept busy. If some are sleeping well, it is because an awful lot of people aren't; they work at it. It might be that they are lulled into a false sense of security.

Chuck Smith: Sheba and Dedan are Saudi Arabia. Tarshish is England. The young lions could conceivably be the United States, Canada, Australia. Are going to object to this invasion. Now the interesting thing to me is that Saudi Arabia is one of those that objects to the invasion of Russia. Big flack recently over the sale of these AWACS to Saudi Arabia. Israel sought hard to lobby against the sale of these radar-gear planes to Saudi Arabia. I really didn't get troubled or involved in the issue because knowing the scriptures I know that when the real showdown comes, Saudi Arabia will be an ally of sorts to Israel. So Israel really doesn't need to be worried or concerned about the AWAC sale to Saudi Arabia. And if they'd only read their own Bible they'd discover that. So that there will be an objection to this invasion by, first of all, Saudi Arabia, England, and the young lions thereof, which again could conceivably be the United States.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Smith, J. E. (1992). *The Major Prophets* (Eze 38:10-13). Joplin, Mo.: College Press.

⁴¹ Chuck Smith, Pastor Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa CA, Notes on Ezekiel

Ezekiel 38:12

To take a spoil, and to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places *that are now inhabited*, and upon the people *that are gathered out of the nations*, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land.

Ryrie: The wealth of Israel is the prize the invaders will seek. *the center of the world.* Lit., the navel of the earth (cf. 5:5).

Ezekiel 38:13

Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil? hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil?

Sheba and Dedan We get the impression, and we might be wrong, that Sheba and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish with all its young lions are bystanders. They are not joining the Soviets in this attack; nor do we really have visibility that they are opposing the Soviets in their attack. The impression that I get as I read this is that they are standing, watching this going on and saying, “Hey, guys, what are you doing? Are you doing that?”

Sheba and Dedan, modern Saudi Arabia, are not shown here as an ally of the Soviet Union. Remember that this was written 2600 years ago, so imagine even predicting that Russia would be a major world power, and that Saudi Arabia would be just sitting on the sidelines.⁴²

Tarshish Tarshish is a real problem. All kinds of scholars have had all kinds of theories, everything from Spain to Sardinia, to Britain. Tarshish was apparently a source of tin. One of the most famous early sources of tin was Brittania, it was named after that. So some scholars believe that the ‘merchants of Tarshish’ might have been the British Isles.

There are all kinds of theories, by no means conclusive. But the most convincing arguments would point that Tarshish might have been the British Isles. Now many would say that the British Isles were not so active during that period. However, at the time of Joseph in Egypt, there was world trade out of the British Isles. At Stonehenge there is evidence of commerce with Greece. So the role of Britain in the ancient, early period is hard for us to really document so far.

If Tarshish is Britain, they love to point out that “with all its young lions” implying English-speaking derivatives; i.e., maybe the United States. I don’t know if that is true; it is on pretty shaky ground. At this point that is really in the realm of speculation.⁴³

Constable: Other nations would also inquire about Gog's intentions and clarify his purpose to take much spoil from the Israelites. Sheba was in eastern Arabia, Dedan in Arabia, and Tarshish was in southern Spain or Sardinia.

⁴² Chuck Missler, Notes on the Book of Ezekiel, khouse.org

⁴³ Chuck Missler, Notes on the Book of Ezekiel, khouse.org

[Sheba, and Dedan] Sheba, Dedan, and Tarshish were all traders among the nations on land and sea.

[young lions] The young lions referred to were the rulers of these trading nations.

LAN: Sheba and Dedan, great trading centers in Arabia, would in effect 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 center in the west; many believe it was in Spain.⁴⁴

Sheba and Dedan ... merchants of Tarshish. Cf. 27:22, 12. And all its villages (RSV). So the LXX and the Syriac, reading *kparîm* instead of MT *kpîrîm*, "young lions." The cry of the commercial nations may be ironical or perhaps in approval of anticipated gains for themselves.⁴⁵

Ron Daniel; Protests From Some

When the invasion is undertaken, there are some who will simply watch, and maybe will protest. Sheba, Dedan, Tarshish, and its villages, or literally, "young lions," as the King James translates.

Sheba and Dedan are modern-day Saudi Arabia. But Tarshish is mostly a mystery. There is a very good possibility that Tarshish refers to the area of the British Isles. If that is true, then its young lions would probably be nations like Australia and the United States.

Could verse 13 refer to the USA making protests at the United Nations? It's always possible...

The invasion of the enemy from the north 38:14-16

Ezekiel 38:14

Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord GOD; In that day when my people of Israel dwelleth safely, shalt thou not know it?

There is the preamble again. When a prophet put in that phrase, "Thus saith the Lord God," it was not to be taken lightly. Heavy duty stuff to follow.

Constable: The Lord wanted Ezekiel to tell Gog that on the day the Lord would call him up for service (v. 4) he would know that Israel dwelt securely in her own land.

Chuck Smith 14-15: Now take the map, look at Israel and go straight north from Jerusalem. And you find you come right on in to Russia and Moscow lies almost due north of Jerusalem. "Thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts,"⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Life Application Bible Notes on Ezekiel, Life Application Bible

⁴⁵ Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). *The Wycliffe Bible commentary : Old Testament* (Eze 38:10). Chicago: Moody Press.

⁴⁶ Chuck Smith, Pastor Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa CA, Notes on Ezekiel

When ... Israel dwelleth safely. Cf. verses 8, 11, 12, 16. My people ... my land. An attack against the Lord's land is an attack against him.⁴⁷

BKC 14-16: Gog's attack against Israel will come from all sides. Gog will come from the far north. With him will come his allies from the east (Persia=Iran), the south (Cush=Sudan, southern Egypt, and northern Ethiopia), and the west (Put=Libya). They will advance against ... Israel like a cloud (cf. v. 9) that covers the land. This awesome army will overrun all obstacles as effortlessly as a cloud sailing across the sky.

This attack will be another means of God's displaying to the nations His holy character and sovereign power. In going against Israel, the nations will come to know God for He will show Himself holy (cf. 20:41; 28:22, 25; 36:23; 39:27). As a result of the unsuccessful attack Israel will be delivered and God glorified.⁴⁸

OTS: God's people would be enjoying peace and serenity at the time Gog and his forces swooped down upon them "out of the remote parts of the north." Ezekiel represented the final attack against God's people as coming from the north because that was the direction from which the enemies of Israel traditionally came. The invaders would move with lightning speed for all of them would ride upon horses. This vast army would cover the land of Israel like a cloud. The situation would seem desperate. Yet Gog would not realize that Yahweh was maneuvering him into a situation which would rebound to the recognition of God. "In the last days" the Lord would be "sanctified," i.e., recognized as God and treated with reverence, by the Gentiles because of what he would do to the forces of Gog.⁴⁹

Ron Daniel: 38:14-39:8 Weapons And Soldiers

Some commentators protest the interpretation of these chapters as being modern. They point out that the weapons are swords, bows, and arrows, and that the transportation used is horses.

Interestingly, two months after the 9/11 attacks, the USA didn't question the fact that the Afghan Rebels we were aiding were all on horses. Military experts say that in country like that, horses are better than a four-wheel drive. In mountainous terrain, the only better vehicle is a helicopter.

But before you begin to think that this sounds like an excuse, it is important to point out that linguistically, the word used for "horse" here (soos) literally means "leaper." It is used in Jeremiah 8:7 to describe a bird of some sort.

The word for "riders" (REH-keb) literally means "drivers that are carried," as in a chariot. By literal definition, this could certainly be helicopter or fighter pilots who are being carried in cockpits.

The "arrows" (khayts) are sharp, piercing missiles, and the "bows" (KEH-sheth) are launchers - from a root meaning "severe, fierce, harsh." And of course the term "sword"

⁴⁷ Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). *The Wycliffe Bible commentary : Old Testament* (Eze 38:14). Chicago: Moody Press.

⁴⁸ Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (Eze 38:14-16). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

⁴⁹ Smith, J. E. (1992). *The Major Prophets* (Eze 38:14-16). Joplin, Mo.: College Press.

is used in Scripture to describe all sorts of destroying weapons, and sometimes entire armies.

We would certainly be justified in translating this as God saying, "when your army comes riding or flying all your various forms of transportation, I'm going to wipe you out - I'm going to knock your missiles and launchers right out of your hands."

This will be accomplished through an earthquake, raining down fire and brimstone, and the army turning against one another. Even those in the lands who stayed home in safety will have fire sent down upon them. There will be no doubt that this was a supernatural occurrence.

Nelson 14-17: On far north, see v. 2. riding on horses: In early biblical history, horses were not ridden in battle, but were used to pull chariots (v. 4). may know Me, when I am hallowed in you, O Gog: These words show that God is determined to bring glory to His name in this unusual battle and even in this evil person. The question are you he suggests that previous prophets had foretold Gog's invasion. The prophecies in mind could be general references to a time when enemies of God and His people would be defeated (see v. 21; Deut. 30:7; Isa. 26:20, 21; Jer. 30:18–24; Hag. 2:20–23; Zech. 14:12–15).

Ezekiel 38:15

And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army:

Remember that God is speaking to the Russians here.

The Hebrew word for horse means "leaper." While it is usually translated "horse" it can also mean bird (Jeremiah 8:7), or even chariot-rider (Exodus 14:9). This description is simply 2,500 year old language which describes a mechanized force. We still call motorized infantry "cavalry" even today. Israel's main battle tank is the *Merkeva*, or Chariot.⁵⁰

Constable 15-16: He and his allies would descend on Israel from the north and cover her like a storm cloud (cf. v. 6; 39:2; Dan. 11:40-45). Coming from the north recalls the earlier invasions of the Assyrians and Babylonians, but this will be a future invasion. God would bring Gog against His people "in the last days" (cf. vv. 8, 14, 18; 39:8, 11) to teach the nations to acknowledge Yahweh. They would do this when God used Gog to demonstrate His holiness (unique deity) in their eyes. Yahweh would raise up Gog as He had raised up the Pharaoh of the Exodus to demonstrate His power when He overthrew him.⁵¹

Dake: [north parts] Gog or Antichrist will come from Syria, and by this time he will have conquered the countries north and east of this ten-kingdom empire, and will lead

⁵⁰ Chuck Missler, Notes on the Book of Ezekiel, khouse.org

⁵¹ Dr. Thomas Comstable's Expository (Bible study) Notes, <http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes.htm>

them all against Israel at Armageddon (Ezekiel 38:14-15; Daniel 11:44; Rev. 16:13-16; Rev. 19:19).

Dake: [many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army] By the time this is fulfilled Antichrist will have become ruler of one of the ten kingdoms inside the Roman Empire; will have conquered three others of the ten kingdoms (Daniel 7:8-9,21-25); will have gained control of the other six of the ten kingdoms without war (Rev. 17:9-17); will have conquered Russia and the countries north and east of the ten kingdoms (Daniel 11:44); and will have gathered many other nations through the ministry of the three unclean spirits of Rev. 16:13-16. All these nations will make the many people be under him at the Battle of Armageddon when Christ comes (Zech. 14:1-5; Rev. 19:11-21).⁵²

Chuck Smith 15-16: Now let me say that there has nothing been taken place in history that can be related to these particular prophecies, so let no man tell you that these prophecies have already been fulfilled in some historic experience of the past. For there is nothing in history that can be fitted into these predictions. But the very fact that it says it's in the latter days when Israel has become a nation again and is dwelling in the land puts it in the days in which we presently live.⁵³

Ezekiel 38:16

And thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land, that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes.

God is setting up a grandstand play. He did that before in Egypt with Pharaoh. He didn't have to go through all that rigamarole to get the Israelis out of the hand of Pharaoh. He predicted to Moses when He first called him that they first wouldn't hear and what He was going to. He set the whole thing up to dramatize His power on behalf of Israel.

When you read the Book of Exodus it is interesting when you study it carefully, the relationship of God and those plagues. He is setting it up to demonstrate His Hand on Israel. And again we have the same thing happening here.⁵⁴

McGee: Since Israel is dwelling in peace, and Antichrist has deceived everyone, God is Israel's only source of help. He Himself will deal with Russia. War will break out. The *Great Tribulation* will begin (which is the final three and one-half years of the Tribulation Period) in all of its frenzied fury. The whole earth will be a holocaust. Judgments, one right after the other, will come upon the earth. War will reign. Christ said concerning this brief period, "... except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved ..." (Matt. 24:22).

I recommend that you read in your Bible the remainder of this chapter. This is God's judgment upon the invading armies of Russia.⁵⁵

⁵² Dake Study Notes, Dake's Study Bible

⁵³ Chuck Smith, Pastor Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa CA, Notes on Ezekiel

⁵⁴ Chuck Missler, Notes on the Book of Ezekiel, khouse.org

ESV like a cloud. The vastness of Gog's hordes that come against Israel is a theme repeated throughout these chapters. Once again, God's sovereignty over Gog's actions is asserted (I will bring you), as Gog is a tool used to vindicate God's holiness. In this, Gog evokes Pharaoh in the exodus narratives (see Ex. 7:3–5; 14:4).

Yahweh's judgment of the enemy 38:17-23

Ezekiel 38:17

Thus saith the Lord GOD; Art thou he of whom I have spoken in old time by my servants the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those days *many* years that I would bring thee against them?

The obvious prophet is Ezekiel. What God is saying to the Russians is “who was one of the prophets of old?” This guy. I do not know if you ever studied the time-warp literature, but that is exactly what we have here, God speaking to the Russians, about today’s events, through Ezekiel 2600 years ago.⁵⁶

Constable: The Lord asked rhetorically if it was Gog about whom He had spoken through His other servants the prophets many years earlier. "Are you he of whom the prophets spoke?" Yes, he was. This was not the first revelation of a powerful enemy whom God would bring against the Israelites (cf. Deut. 31:17; Ps. 2:1-3; Isa. 14:24-25; 26:20-21; 29:1-8; Jer. 4:5; 6:26; 30:18-24; Joel 2:20; 3:9-21; Zeph. 1:14-18; 3:8, 15-20; Zech. 12:2-3; 14:2).⁵⁷

Chuck Smith 17-21: Very interesting prophecy. There will come an internal revolution in the Russian forces. Now we know that there's a lot of problems presently in some of the satellite countries of Russia. Poland, real problem; Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and the prediction here is that part of the destruction will come from a civil war as men begin to turn their swords against their brothers.⁵⁸

The prophets ... which prophesied. This invasion was foretold, either in the preceding prophecy of Ezekiel, or in prophecies no longer extant (cf. 39:8; Zeph 1:14ff.; Jer 3–6; Joel 3; Zech 14). 19-22. Gog’s destruction is accomplished by an earthquake (v. 19) that terrifies all nature (v. 20), by a supernatural panic among his soldiers (v. 21), by pestilence and bloodshed and visitations of nature (v. 22). 23. Cf. 36:23.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed.) (Eze 38:16). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁵⁶ Chuck Missler, Notes on the Book of Ezekiel, khouse.org

⁵⁷ Dr. Thomas Comstable’s Expository (Bible study) Notes, <http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes.htm>

⁵⁸ Chuck Smith, Pastor Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa CA, Notes on Ezekiel

⁵⁹ Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). *The Wycliffe Bible commentary : Old Testament* (Eze 38:17). Chicago: Moody Press.

BKC 17-23: Gog's attack will be crushed by God Himself. God asked Gog, Are you not the one I spoke of in former days by My servants the prophets of Israel? This has caused some confusion among interpreters because no direct reference to Gog is made by any of the previous writing prophets. Perhaps this means earlier prophets had predicted the coming of invading armies against Israel in the last days, which Ezekiel now associated specifically with Gog (cf. Joel 3:9-14; Zeph. 3:15-20).

When the armies reach Israel, God's anger will be aroused against them. He will cause a massive earthquake in ... Israel that will interrupt Gog's invasion plans and spread fear and confusion throughout the ranks of the invading forces.

In the pandemonium, communication between the four invading armies will break down and they will begin attacking each other. Every man's sword will be against his brother (Ezek. 38:21). Fear and panic will sweep through the forces so each army will shoot indiscriminately at the others.

The slaughter of the armies will be aided by additional "natural" catastrophes, including torrents of rain, hailstones, and burning sulphur (v. 22). The rain will combine with dirt and debris from the earthquake to produce massive mud slides and floods. Large hailstones will pelt the survivors, killing many (cf. Josh. 10:11). The "burning sulphur" might be volcanic ash.⁶⁰

OTS 17-23: Ezekiel next explained how Yahweh would be sanctified in the destruction of Gog. A question was directed to Gog, the implication of which is that this invasion had been anticipated by the prophets of God who spoke "in former days." The reference is probably to the predictions of Isaiah (34:2; 66:15-18), Jeremiah (e.g., 4:5ff.) and Zephaniah (chap. 1). The point is that this invasion would not take God by surprise. He was waiting for Gog's advance with "fury," "anger" and "blazing wrath." In his zeal to defend his people the Lord would unleash against Gog a great "earthquake." Mountains would be thrown down, every wall would crumble. All creation, and especially all the men who were on the face of the earth, would tremble in the presence of the Lord (38:17-20).

The Lord would enter into judgment with Gog with other weapons in addition to earthquake. God would call for a "sword" against the invaders. The result would be that "every man's sword will be against his brother," i.e., the enemy would fight against one another. The Lord would bring pestilence and bloodshed against the armies of Gog. He would rain hailstones, fire and brimstone upon them. In these mighty acts the God of Israel would "magnify" and "sanctify" himself, he would make himself known in the sight of "many nations." Gentiles would come to know that Yahweh alone is God (38:21-23).⁶¹

Ryrie: God Himself will defeat the attackers by means of an *earthquake* (v. 19), soldiers killing each other (v. 21), and a horrible *rain* (v. 22).

⁶⁰ Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (Eze 38:17-23). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

⁶¹ Smith, J. E. (1992). *The Major Prophets* (Eze 38:17-23). Joplin, Mo.: College Press.

ESV: The Septuagint understands this sentence as an assertion rather than a question (though the Hb. is more naturally a question). Either way, it probably relates to the mysterious “foe from the north” tradition linked especially to Jeremiah (e.g., Jer. 4:6; 6:22).

Ezekiel 38:18

And it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord GOD, *that my fury shall come up in my face.*

We glibly talk about God, the Creator of the universe. If you are on a sailboat during a storm, or near the epicenter during an earthquake, you become suddenly sensitive to the great power of God. But can we imagine what it would be like to experience God getting angry? “My fury shall come up in my face.”⁶²

Constable 18-19: God would become very angry with Gog when he attacked Israel (cf. Gen. 12:3). He would send a great earthquake in the land that would express His anger (cf. Rev. 16:18).

Yahweh's emotional reaction to Gog's invasion is obvious as he explodes, heaping up expressions for anger unparalleled in the book, if not in the entire OT.⁶³

Dake: [at the same time] "At the same time," when Gog comes into the land of Israel at the battle of Armageddon, after he has already conquered the countries north and east of his ten kingdoms which are inside the old Roman Empire territory, and not in some previous war in Palestine. This is the only time that God will supernaturally destroy the armies of Gog and the many nations with him. This fact is confirmed by the phrase "in that day," in Ezekiel 38:19.⁶⁴

Nelson 18-23: These verses speak of God defending His nation against Gog and his army with supernatural and earthshaking methods. Unusually strong language concerning the wrath of God is found in these verses. The piling up of intense phrases indicates more than an “ordinary” future battle. fire ... brimstone: A rare phrase, reserved only for the greatest catastrophes (see Gen. 19:24 when a similar phrase is used for the destruction of Sodom). This judgment would rival the magnitude of the judgment Sodom experienced. Then they shall know: This terrible battle will reveal God’s might to the entire world and His concern for His people (see 39:6).

⁶² Chuck Missler, Notes on the Book of Ezekiel, khouse.org

⁶³ Dr. Thomas Comstable’s Expository (Bible study) Notes, <http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes.htm>

⁶⁴ Dake Study Notes, Dake’s Study Bible

Ezekiel 38:19

For in my jealousy *and* in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel;

This might mean an earthquake, or it might derive from other things that are happening.

ESV 19–20: Upheaval in nature, reflecting the cosmic outpouring of God's wrath, consequently affects God's own people. Such phenomena are also part of Jeremiah's vision of the future (cf. Jer. 4:23–26).

Ezekiel 38:20

So that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that *are* upon the face of the earth, shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground.

I do not know what this would measure on our Richter scale... We are going to see in Chapter 39 a little more definition of what is being mentioned here. Obviously, it will make an impression on everyone.⁶⁵

Constable 20-21: Every living thing on earth would feel this earthquake, the sign of God's presence. Mountains would fall down, as well as cliffs with their steep pathways, as would the walls that people had erected. Gog's allied forces would even turn on each other and fight one another (cf. Judg. 7:22; 1 Sam. 14:20; Hag. 2:22; Zech. 14:13; Rev. 19:19-20). Apparently the sword that God would call for to defeat Gog would be that of his own allies rather than that of Israel (cf. Rev. 20:9).⁶⁶

Ezekiel 38:21

And I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord GOD: every man's sword shall be against his brother.

In other words, part of what will be defeating them will be the confusion among themselves. By the way, that happened frequently in Biblical battles.

LAN: God will directly intervene in the defense of Israel, unleashing severe natural disasters on the invaders from the north. In the end, the stricken pagan nations will turn on themselves in confusion and panic. All those who set themselves against God will be destroyed.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Chuck Missler, Notes on the Book of Ezekiel, khouse.org

⁶⁶ Dr. Thomas Comstable's Expository (Bible study) Notes, <http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes.htm>

⁶⁷ Life Application Bible Notes on Ezekiel, Life Application Bible

Ezekiel 38:22

And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that *are* with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone.

Who will God enter into judgment against? Gog, the leader of Magog.

Constable 22-23: The Lord would shower hailstones, lightning, and burning sulfur, probably from erupting volcanoes, on Gog and his allies (cf. Gen. 19:24; Rev. 19:21). He would also attack his armies causing bloodshed and disease (cf. Rev. 19:15). This would result in great glory for God among the nations (cf. Rev. 19:6). They would recognize Him as the only true God when He revealed Himself this way. The Lord had used Nebuchadnezzar as His sword against Israel, but He would wield this sword against Gog Himself.⁶⁸

Chuck Smith: God has wiped out enemies of Israel in the past with these same types of weapon, raining upon the enemies of Israel the fire and brimstone from heaven. You remember Joshua at the battle at Ajalon where God rained down these rocks and fire from heaven upon their enemy.⁶⁹

ESV 22–23 This battle is God's. So too the greatness belongs to him alone.

Ezekiel 38:23

Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

When you finish Chapter 39, you will see why “they will know that I am the Lord.” This act will impress Israel. It is obviously going to impress what remains of Magog. And I suspect, if you and I are still around, we would take notice too. Now Chapter 38 is just the introduction. We are going to learn most about this event by the cleanup of the mess afterwards, and that is in Chapter 39.⁷⁰

[Thus will I magnify myself] By the supernatural destruction of Gog and his mighty armies at Armageddon God will be glorified.

[will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the LORD] Three results at Armageddon:

1. God will be magnified (glorified).
2. God will be sanctified (set apart).
3. God will be made known in the eyes of many nations as Jehovah.⁷¹

⁶⁸ Dr. Thomas Comstable's Expository (Bible study) Notes, <http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes.htm>

⁶⁹ Chuck Smith, Pastor Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa CA, Notes on Ezekiel

⁷⁰ Chuck Missler, Notes on the Book of Ezekiel, khouse.org

⁷¹ Dake Study Notes, Dake's Study Bible

[sanctify] Here again, sanctify means solely to set apart, not to cleanse from sin.

Chuck Smith: So a tremendous earthquake, a great shaking, civil war, or internal discord along with this heavy rain, hailstones, fire and brimstone, God will destroy this invading army. Will it involve atomic warfare? Will the United States be involved? This could only be speculation. We don't know. Could the fire and brimstone, the rain of fire and brimstone be atomic warfare? Possibly. Could it be that there will be an atomic exchange between Russia and the United States? Quite possibly. It could be that he is describing the effects of a nuclear holocaust. And it is quite possible that there will be a massive exchange of nuclear weapons between Russia and the United States. The Bible doesn't say that. That's only speculation as far as, yes, it is possible that that would take place.

I do believe that the rapture of the church is going to be taking place simultaneously with these events, as we will point out as we get into chapter 39. It would be very interesting indeed if there was a nuclear holocaust and the church was translated out of the earth during the time of the nuclear holocaust. They would surely be able to explain the disappearance of many people in a very natural way without causing, really, too much great alarm. Something to think about. The Bible doesn't say. It is only speculation and something to consider, something to think about. However it happens, by whatever means it takes place, these will be the events: a great shaking, even the mountains and the steep places being shaken, so tremendous avalanches, this heavy rain, great hailstones, the fire and the brimstone, plus the civil war. And thus, God will deal with this great invading army of Russia.⁷²

⁷² Chuck Smith, Pastor Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa CA, Notes on Ezekiel