

# The Rise of Russia Part 2

## *A study of the Ezekiel 38-39 conflict*

**Text:** Ezekiel 38:1-23

### **Introduction:**

1. Review: We believe this invasion takes place in the first half of the tribulation period when Israel feels she is safe due to the peace treaty she has signed with Antichrist (Dan. 9:27). This battle is just one facet of God's judgment upon the nations during the tribulation period when His wrath is poured out upon the ungodly (Rev. 3:10).
2. Remember that it is important to see world events through the lens of Bible prophecy, not the Bible through the lens of world events.
3. Review: Outline for Ezekiel 38.
  - The Invaders in this Battle (Vs. 1-6)
  - The Invasion of this Battle (Vs. 7-9)
  - The Intention in this Battle (Vs. 10-13)
  - The Interrogation about this Battle (Vs. 14-17)
  - The Intervention in this Battle (Vs. 18-23)
4. We will briefly review the first two points we covered in part 1 and the proceed to the study of the rest of the chapter.

### **I. THE INVADERS IN THIS BATTLE (VS. 1-6)**

#### **A. The Principal Invader (Vs. 1-4)**

#### **B. The Participant Invaders (Vs. 5-6)**

### **II. THE INVASION OF THIS BATTLE (VS. 7-9)**

Further details of the coming invasion are given prophetically in these verses:

#### **A. The Leadership of the Invasion (Vs. 7)**

#### **B. The Location of the Invasion (Vs. 8)**

#### **C. The Likeness of the Invasion (Vs. 9)**

### **III. THE INTENTION IN THIS BATTLE (VS. 10-13)**

God unmasks the evil heart motivations of Gog and his allies for coming against Israel.

#### **A. The Plan of Gog (Vs. 10-12)**

They desire to exploit:

1. The Weakness of Israel (Vs. 10-11)

- a. Israel is described as being without walls, bars and gates. In Ezekiel's day a city's gates and walls were there for defense and protection against invaders. So, this is a description of a nation that has given up its defenses to deter aggressors from attack.
  - b. This certainly does not describe Israel at the present time which bristles with military capability to deter countries even much larger than her from daring to attack.
  - c. It is very possible that disarmament may be a requirement as a part of antichrist's peace treaty. Israel will trade her arms for peace.
  - d. There is also a complacency in Israel at this time and a false sense of security – "go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely".
  - e. Whatever the case may be, Russia and its allies clearly do not see any significant possibility of resistance on Israel's part to the planned invasion so they plan to exploit this vulnerability.
2. The Wealth of Israel (Vs. 12)
- a. The underlying desire is to rob the land of its resources and the people of their wealth. Note the words 'spoil' and 'prey'.
  - b. There is an interesting reference to "the desolate places that are now inhabited." Israel has masterfully transformed desolate places in Israel into habitable, productive areas. One article notes, "Desert agriculture in Israel is one of the country's greatest successes, and something at which Israel leads the world. The Negev Desert which covers over 60% of the country has actually shrunk in size over the past century as agricultural activity has turned sand into green fields, the opposite to the desertification trend which much of the rest of the world is battling to prevent. Even in the depths of Israel's Negev Desert are gems of agriculture amid the harsh, dry conditions, and relatively mineral-deprived sandy soil."<sup>1</sup>
  - c. Of particular interest to Russia is Israel's development of the Leviathan gas fields off the coast of Haifa in the Mediterranean Sea. There is an estimated 16 trillion cubic feet of natural gas in the Leviathan field.<sup>2</sup> According to the Times of Israel, "Leviathan, discovered 130 kilometres (81 miles) west of the Mediterranean port city Haifa in 2010, is estimated to hold 535 billion cubic meters (18.9 trillion cubic feet) of natural gas, along with 34.1 million barrels of condensate."<sup>3</sup> This gives Israel the potential to become a major competitor to Russian gas into

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ecoisrael.com/desert-farming/> Viewed 18/3/22.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.cronustec.com/projects/shallow/Leviathan%20Gas%20Field/details.php> - Viewed 18/3/22.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-to-build-new-natural-gas-pipeline-from-its-offshore-rig-direct-to-egypt/> - Viewed 18/3/22.

markets like Europe. Could this end up being part of the catalyst for Russia's invasion of Israel?

#### **B. The Protest against Gog (Vs. 13)**

There are certain nations which appear to protest this Russian lead invasion. They are identified as:

1. Sheba and Dedan = modern Saudi Arabia and probably other Arab peoples allied with Israel.
2. Tarshish = "generally identified with the lands of the far west of Europe, including perhaps a part of Spain but very definitely Great Britain. It was from Tarshish of old that the Phoenicians obtained tin, and the word *Britannia* means "the land of tin"." (H.A. Ironside)
3. Young lions of Tarshish = these nations are the offspring of Tarshish. It could well refer to nations that were British colonies as Australia and America.
4. Note that a protest is made against the invasion but there is no direct intervention by these countries to try and stop the Russians and their allies.

### **IV. THE INTERROGATION ABOUT THIS BATTLE (VS. 14-17)**

God addresses Himself again to the leader of the hostile confederacy through Ezekiel in the form of two main questions. God questions:

#### **A. Gog's knowledge of Israel's Safety (Vs. 14-16)**

1. The question (Vs. 14). This is a rhetorical question with an implied answer. Gog will be aware of Israel being defenceless and will take advantage.
2. The prediction (Vs. 15-16).

In these verses there is essentially a repetition of what has been discussed in the earlier part of the chapter. We note:

  - a. The source of Gog's army – "the north parts" (Vs. 15a)
  - b. The size of Gog's army – "many people...a great company" (Vs. 15b)
  - c. The strength of Gog's army – "a mighty army" (Vs. 15c)
  - d. The symbol of Gog's army – "as a cloud to cover the land" (Vs. 16a).
  - e. The season of Gog's army – "in the latter days" (Vs. 16b)
  - f. The sanctification of God through Gog's army – "that the heathen may know me" (Vs. 16c) God's sovereign dealings are highlighted:
    - i. God will draw Gog into this conflict.
    - ii. Notice the reference to "my people" (also Vs. 14) and "my land". God will defend His people and His land. Israel is called "the apple of His eye" (Zec. 2:8).

- iii. God's purpose is that the heathen know that He is God. This is the grand purpose that God is working towards in this whole affair.
- iv. "The thought is not that the earthly ruler in any way will add to the character or attributes of God. But in the Lord's dealings with him, the God of all the universe will be recognized as holy. Just as circumstances lay bare the wickedness and godlessness of men, so the same conditions reveal in a blaze of glory the blessed God whom we delight to worship in Christ our Lord."<sup>4</sup>

#### **B. Gog's Knowledge of Divine Prophecy (Vs. 17)**

1. What prophecies are being referred to exactly is not clear but apparently this had been a frequent theme of God's prophets of old. "When the Russian invasion comes to pass, God will in some way remind them that He had long ago foretold their invasion by the prophets of Israel."<sup>5</sup>
2. God's sovereignty is again highlighted – "that I would bring thee against them".

### **V. THE INTERVENTION IN THIS BATTLE (VS. 18-23)**

God now intervenes supernaturally against the invaders in judgment.

#### **A. The Passion of God Described (Vs. 18-19a)**

1. The fury of God's Wrath (Vs. 18)
  - a. Gog's invasion of Israel will provoke the white heat of God's righteous wrath. The word 'fury' literally means 'heat'. God's anger will wax hot against the invaders and righteous vengeance will be released against these nations with their long and bitter history of persecution of God's chosen people.
  - b. The expression, "my fury shall come up in my face," when used of men conveys the idea that a man's anger can be seen in his face. In the case of Jehovah the evidence of His anger is in the severity of His actions and that the events come about by His sovereign power. The jealousy of God tells of His Holy zeal concerning His people Israel." (D. Stevely)
2. The fire of God's Wrath (Vs. 19a)
  - a. The jealousy of God for His people describes his Holy Zeal for them.
  - b. The wrath of God is now described as a burning fire.

#### **B. The Plagues of God Detailed (Vs. 19b-22)**

The actions of God's fury are described in these verses. God will use a combination of natural disasters and Gog's army turning on itself to

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<sup>4</sup> Feinberg, p. 225.

<sup>5</sup> Sorenson, p. 731.

bring about this destruction. Only one-sixth of the soldiers will survive (Ez. 39:2). There will be:

1. The Shaking of the World (Vs. 19b-20)
  - a. Israel will be the epicentre but so great will this earthquake be that the shock waves will be felt throughout the globe. Why? Because God's purpose in this supernatural intervention is that the world know He is God (Vs. 23).
  - b. The animal kingdom will shake at God's presence (Vs. 20a).
  - c. The earth's inhabitants will shake at God's presence (Vs. 20b).
  - d. The magnitude of this earthquake is seen in the fact the mounts will be thrown down, the steep places will fall and every wall will fall to the ground (Vs. 20c).
2. The Slaughtering of the army (Vs. 21). God will employ a method He has used before in defence of His people and cause Gog's army to turn against itself. God did something similar with a battle between Israel and the Midianites (Judges 7:22 - "and the LORD set every man's sword against his fellow") and Saul against the Philistines (1 Sam. 14:20).
3. The Sending of Pestilence (Vs. 22a).
4. The Shedding of Blood (Vs. 22b). Note the phrase "and with blood".
5. The Showering of rain, hailstones, fire and brimstone (Vs. 22c).

**C. The Purpose of God Declared (Vs. 23).**

1. God is going to magnify Himself.
2. God is going to sanctify Himself.
3. This is a reoccurring theme in these chapters.
  - a. God will be magnified in the eyes of the heathen (38:16).
  - b. God will be magnified in the eyes of the nations (38:23; 39:7, 13 21-23).
  - c. God will be magnified in the eyes of Israel (38:16; 39:22).

**Conclusion:**

1. Are you ready for the rapture? Have you trusted Christ as your personal Saviour?
2. How important is it to you that God be glorified in your life as a Christian? The chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.

## THE RISE OF RUSSIA PART 2

### Intro:

#### I. The \_\_\_\_\_ in this Battle (Vs. 1-6)

- A. The P\_\_\_\_\_ Invader (Vs. 1-4)
- B. The P\_\_\_\_\_ Invaders (Vs. 5-6)

#### II. The \_\_\_\_\_ of this Battle (Vs. 7-9)

- A. The L\_\_\_\_\_ of the Invasion (Vs. 7)
- B. The L\_\_\_\_\_ of the Invasion (Vs. 8)
- C. The L\_\_\_\_\_ of the Invasion (Vs. 9)

#### III. The \_\_\_\_\_ in this Battle (Vs. 10-13)

- A. The P\_\_\_\_\_ of Gog (Vs. 10-12)  
They desire to exploit:
  - 1. The W\_\_\_\_\_ of Israel (Vs. 10-11)
  - 2. The W\_\_\_\_\_ of Israel (Vs. 12)
- B. The P\_\_\_\_\_ against Gog (Vs. 13)

#### IV. The \_\_\_\_\_ about this Battle (Vs. 14-17) God questions:

- A. Gog's Knowledge of Israel's S\_\_\_\_\_ (Vs. 14-16)
  - 1. The question (Vs. 14)
  - 2. The prediction (Vs. 15-16)
    - a. The s\_\_\_\_\_ of Gog's army – "the north parts" (Vs. 15a)
    - b. The s\_\_\_\_\_ of Gog's army – "many people...a great company" (Vs. 15b)
    - c. The s\_\_\_\_\_ of Gog's army – "a mighty army" (Vs. 15c)

- d. The s\_\_\_\_\_ of Gog's army – "as a cloud to cover the land" (Vs. 16a)
  - e. The s\_\_\_\_\_ of Gog's army – "in the latter days" (Vs. 16b)
  - f. The s\_\_\_\_\_ of God through Gog's army – "that the heathen may know me" (Vs. 16c)
- B. Gog's Knowledge of Divine P\_\_\_\_\_ (Vs. 17)

#### V. The \_\_\_\_\_ in this Battle (Vs. 18-23)

- A. The P\_\_\_\_\_ of God Described (Vs. 18-19a)
- B. The P\_\_\_\_\_ of God Detailed (Vs. 19b-22)  
There will be:
  - 1. The Sh\_\_\_\_\_ of the world (Vs. 19b-20)
  - 2. The S\_\_\_\_\_ of the army (Vs. 21)
  - 3. The S\_\_\_\_\_ of pestilence (Vs. 22a)
  - 4. The Sh\_\_\_\_\_ of Blood (Vs. 22b)
  - 5. The Sh\_\_\_\_\_ of rain, hailstones, fire and brimstone (Vs. 22c)
- C. The P\_\_\_\_\_ of God Declared (Vs. 23)

### Conclusion: