

Gog and Magog

- I. This study is meant to set forth an alternative to the popular assumption among some Christians that Gog and Magog (as depicted in **EZE 38-39**) could not have had an ancient historic fulfillment but rather refer to a culminating battle at the end of time as noted in **REV 20:8-9**.
 - A. It should be remembered that certain names in the Book of Revelation which appear in O.T. writings are not the same entities.
 - B. The Babylon of Revelation is not the ancient Babylon of the O.T. but rather a spiritual whore which dallies with kings of the earth. **REV 17:1-5**.
 - C. The Jerusalem of Revelation is not the earthly Jerusalem which featured so prominently in history but rather is the heavenly city. **REV 3:12**.
 - D. The use of historic names of earthly and carnal people, things or places in Revelation is helpful in discerning the nature and application of things in Revelation since there are characteristics of the former which may be applied to the latter.
- II. An investigation into Gog and Magog is difficult, owing to the limited amount of information about those names in Scripture.
 - A. The names are conspicuously noted in **EZE 38-39** and **REV 20:8-9**, both passages setting forth certain enemies of God which assault the people of God.
 - B. There are eleven occurrences of Gog in Scripture, ten are in the O.T.
 1. A descendant of Reuben was Gog (**1CH 5:4**), hundreds of years before **EZE 38-39**.
 2. Gog is of uncertain derivation and means *mountain*, per Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew dictionary. This may be significant since *mountain* sometimes figuratively describes a ruthless expansionist government like Babylon. **JER 51:25**.
 3. Historically, Gog has been speculatively associated with an ancient Lydian king, Gyges or Gu-gu, such names appearing in monuments.
 4. In **EZE 38:2-3**, Gog is a *chief prince* but in **REV 20:8-9** is noted as a nation.
 - C. There are five occurrences of Magog in Scripture, four are in the O.T.
 1. Noah had a grandson, Magog (**GEN 10:2**), thousands of years before **EZE 38-39**.
 2. Magog also means *land of Gog*.
- III. Current events have stirred a number of Christians to conclude that the end of all things is at hand, Gog and Magog are Russia (and others) which have designs to attack Israel.
 - A. There is a “Gog and Magog” final assault on the *camp of the saints and the beloved city* in **REV 20:8-9**.
 1. Mind that this attack is at the end of the famous “thousand year” kingdom-age fancied by premillennial interpretation.
 2. Thus, if current events are **REV 20:8-9** in motion, the millennial kingdom-age must be on the verge of expiry (according to the premillennial scheme), yet some seem to be flirting with the notion that these things are the immediate harbingers of the beginning of the “millennium.”
 - B. Gog and Magog are mentioned as enemies of God and His people in **EZE 38-39**.
 1. Gog there troubles Israel greatly but is decisively destroyed by God.
 2. The events would take place in the *latter years / latter days* (**EZE 38:8, 16**) upon a regathered Israel.
 3. Some (particularly futurists, premillennialists) therefore affirm that the battle of **EZE 38-39** must be the same as the final assault of **REV 20:8-9**, and that both passages are treating of modern times after Israel reclaimed Palestine (ca. 1948).
 - a. Scofield’s footnotes on **EZE 38:2** describe “...the last mad attempt to

- exterminate the remnant of Israel in Jerusalem,” associating it with **REV 20:7-9**.
- b. Mind that this implies that the “camp of the saints” (**REV 20:9**) is equated with Israel.
 - (1) If so, there is going to have to be a super-conversion of presently antichrist Jews to bring them up to N.T. standards of “saints.”
 - (2) Simply being “of Israel” does not mean one is “of God’s Israel” as a saint in His eyes through Christ.
ROM 9:6-8; GAL 6:16; ACT 9:13; 26:10.
 - (3) Dispensational premillennialism accommodates this inasmuch as it supposes a massive conversion of Jews somehow after the church and the spirit are raptured out of the earth at the beginning of the supposed millennial kingdom-age.
 - c. Scofield’s footnotes preceded 1948 by decades. He anticipated a regathering of Israel to Palestine based upon his faulty interpretation of certain “regathering” passages of O.T. prophecy, and somehow things curiously panned out along the lines he anticipated.
- C. Gog and Magog are assumed to be modern Russia (and possible allies).
1. Meshech and Tubal (**EZE 38:2-3**) are assumed to be modern Moscow and Tobolsk.
 2. Since Gog & Co. come upon Israel from the north (**EZE 38:6, 15; 39:2**), Russia’s location of being north of Israel only adds to the assumptions.
 3. Russia’s current militarism is assumed also to be a prelude to a move against Israel, and some Christians (based upon their eschatology) might not only deem these events as foreshadowing the final conflict of **REV 20:8-9**, but also that Russia must be opposed at all costs since it represents an imminent threat to “God’s chosen people” (equated with the modern State of Israel).
 - a. NOTE: The militarism of Russia may indeed be a concern from the standpoint of geopolitics but to associate its current moves with prophecy concerning Israel is a different story.
 - b. This stirring up of Christians against Russia based upon a futurist interpretation of **EZE 38-39** has happened previously (e.g. 1968).
 - c. But what’s the worry? If **REV 20:8-9** is about to occur, and Russia is involved in the Gog and Magog assault, the attackers are destroyed by God and so is the devil (**REV 20:10**)! Maybe Christians should be praying for and pushing politically for Russia’s haste to Israel?
- D. The futurist/premillennial interpretation of **EZE 38-39** and **REV 20:8-9** has a number of problems, including:
1. Scofield’s footnotes affirm that the chapters of **EZE 38-39** (and following) are a prophetic outline of sequential events that pertain to the final days, **EZE 40** denoting “ISRAEL IN THE LAND DURING THE KINGDOM-AGE” (i.e., during their “millennium”). The pattern: Gog’s assault and defeat, then “kingdom age.”
 2. “Premillennialists insist that the establishing of the millennium is to follow God’s judgments upon evil. One of the signal proofs of this to which they appeal is the fact that the overthrow of Gog and Magog described in Ezek. xxxviii.-xxxix. immediately precedes the description of the establishment of a kingdom which apparently is to have no end. Yet in Rev. xx. the millennium is followed by a world-wide revolt of which Gog is definitely declared to be a leader... The question as to where Gog, whose armies were utterly destroyed BEFORE the kingdom age, is to raise up a multitude ‘the number of whom is as the sand of the sea,’ with which

to attack ‘the camp of the saints and the beloved city,’ has been a stumblingblock to Premillennialists...”

(Oswald T. Allis, *Prophecy And The Church*, pp. 239-240, Caps mine).

3. “Is Gog to be destroyed for ever, and then brought to life again to fight a last great battle against Messiah and the saints? Or, are there two Gogs? Or, are we to reverse the sequence of events in Ezekiel? or in Revelation?” (Ibid., p. 28)

IV. Futurists/Premillennialists have had a habit of unnecessarily assuming that certain prophecies must have a future fulfillment rather than an historical fulfillment since such fit better with their scheme of prophetic interpretation.

- A. They assume that certain prophecies of Israel’s regathering and rebuilding in their land have a distant fulfillment but Scripture shows a satisfaction of such prophecies in history. **EZR 1:1-3.**
- B. They assume that 70th week of Daniel’s prophecy did not immediately follow the 69th week but was put off until the distant future (one of Scofield’s gaps), yet the 70th week was required in history for the cutting off of Messiah. **DAN 9:24-26.**
- C. They assume that the O.T. prophecies of a coming kingdom of God (e.g. **DAN 2:44**) were were meant for a future dispensation, yet Scripture shows the kingdom of God to have been a present reality into which men were pressing by faith in Christ’s days. **LUK 16:16; MAT 21:31-32 c/w LUK 7:29-30.**
- D. With such a sketchy track record of overlooking historical fulfillment of prophecies, it would be advisable to think twice about concluding that the “Gog and Magog” battle of **EZE 38-39** must be referring to something that awaits fulfillment.