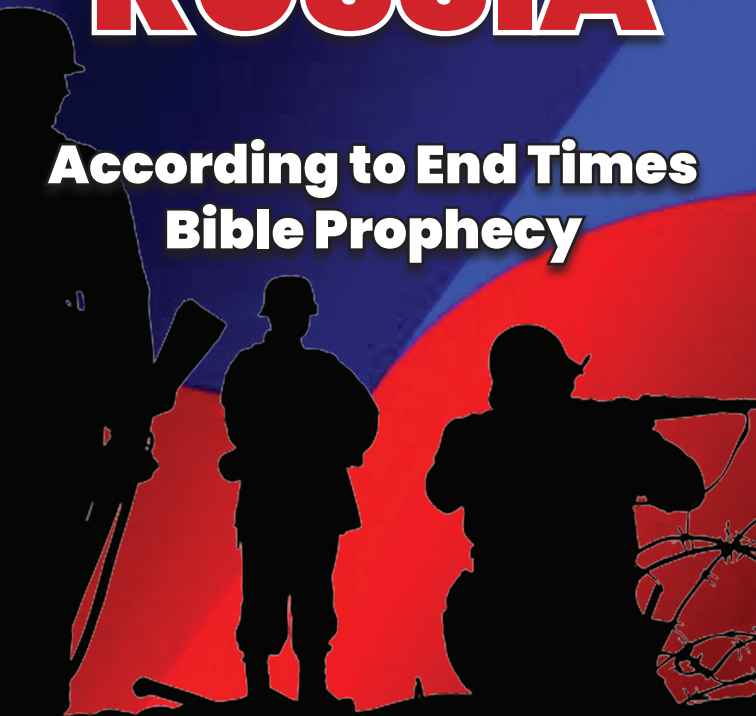




THE RISE OF RUSSIA

**According to End Times
Bible Prophecy**



THE COMING INVASION



THE RISE OF RUSSIA as a dominant world power has caused much alarm in recent years, especially with Russia's increasing readiness to use brutal military force to achieve its strategic ambitions. Recent conflicts include Russia's invasion of Georgia in 2008, the annexation of Crimea in 2014, the support of Russian backed separatists in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine since 2014, and most recently the full-scale invasion of Ukraine. The rise of Russia in our time is significant in the light of Bible prophecy which predicts a much larger Russian led invasion of Israel that will take place in the end times.

The prophecy of this invasion is found in the Bible in Ezekiel 38 and 39. It reveals that a nation to the far "*North*" of Israel will create a military campaign against the nation of Israel. If you look at a map, there is only one nation to the far north of the land of Israel **and that is Russia!** The prophecy also refers to Russia by the ancient name "*Magog*" which in ancient times was known to be located between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea. The Bible says Russia will "*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*" (Ezekiel 38:8).

As shown in the verse above, this invasion can only take place after Israel has been regathered to its land. This is of tremendous importance because it is relatively recently that the people of Israel have gone back to their ancient homeland. Israel was scattered from A.D. 70 and was only recognized as a nation again in May 1948, shortly after World War II. Since its re-establishment as a nation, Israel has advanced greatly in the development of its technological, agricultural and manufacturing industries. With Israel's diamond markets in Tel Aviv and massive gas fields in the eastern part of the Mediterranean Sea, among other industries, **billions of dollars** of wealth is generated every year.

The wealth and productivity of Israel has made it the envy of the world and it will also be a major motivation behind the Russian Invasion (see Ezekiel 38:11-12). The recently discovered (2010) offshore gas fields alone have the potential to make Israel a major distributor of gas to Europe and the world, making her a direct competitor to the nation of Russia. Could this end up being part of the reason for Russia's invasion of Israel?



THE COUNTRIES INVOLVED

With Israel now back in its land and Russia currently rising to greater power, the stage is being set for the fulfilment of this prophecy which was written over 2,600 years ago. The rise of anti-Semitism and greed for wealth and power is ever increasing, so it seems possible that this event could begin in the not-so-distant future. **THE INVASION IS COMING!**

Russia will form a coalition with five other nations which are also hostile towards Israel. It is of interest to note that the majority of the nations mentioned in this prophecy are currently Islamic countries. Much of the Arab world has been in bitter conflict with Israel for over 4,000 years. Russia has had a long history of supporting and arming Israel's enemies (e.g., the Six Day and Yom Kippur wars). With Russia currently becoming more and more isolated from the Western world, it makes sense that it will be pushed towards an even closer alliance with these Islamic, anti-Semitic countries.

EZEKIEL 38:5-6 LISTS 5 NATIONS IN THIS COALITION:

"PERSIA" - This is Iran (the name was changed in 1935). This nation is a friend of Russia but an enemy to Israel. Russia has been providing Iran with nuclear technology and high tech armaments for years.

"ETHIOPIA" - This is the same Ethiopia of today. In 2008, Russia announced that it had strengthened military ties with Ethiopia and other African nations. Some also suggest that the ancient location of Ethiopia is where Sudan is located today. Sudan is a radical, Islamist nation.

"LIBYA" - This is the same Libya of today. Russia regards Libya as one of its strongest allies in the Arab world, both politically and historically. In August 2008, Libya said that it was good for the world and the Middle East that Russia is re-emerging as a military power.



"GOMER" - According to the ancient historian Josephus, "Gomer founded those whom the Greeks now call "Galatians" (Antiquities Book 1, ch. 6). The ancient region of Galatia was located in the region we know today as central Turkey.

"TOGARMAH" - This refers to the former southern republics of the Soviet Union and to Turkey. In 2017, the Turkish president called Israel "a terror state". In recent years, Turkey has changed from being a moderate, democratic country to an increasingly totalitarian, Islamist regime. This is no surprise in the light of Bible prophecy.

THE CONFLICT INITIATED

The invasion will begin when Russia and its allies are united and prepared for the conflict. The Bible gives a vivid description of what this invasion will look like – *“Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land (The land of Israel), thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee”* (Ezekiel 38:9).

WHEN WILL THE CONFLICT BEGIN? The timing of this invasion is not directly stated in Ezekiel but we are given some clues as to when it will take place. The prophecy states the future invasion of Israel will take place *“in the latter years”* and *“latter days”* (see Ezekiel 38:8,16). These phrases refer to the end of the world. Further, it reveals that it will take place during a time when Israel is dwelling *“safely”* in their homeland (see Ezekiel. 38:8,11,14). This certainly does not describe how Israel feels today! Israel does not currently live in a land of peace and safety; it is surrounded by enemy nations with the constant threat of attack. Despite the fact Israel is a small country, it has one of the best equipped and highly trained militaries in the world. But this will change before the invasion begins.

The Bible foretells that one day the Antichrist, a powerful leader, is going to step onto the world stage to create a peace agreement between Israel and their enemies (see Daniel 9:27). A major factor in this agreement will likely be that Israel will have to be disarmed of their military power. Unfortunately for Israel, this peace agreement is false and will not offer Israel any true protection from invading nations. The feeling of safety and security will leave Israel unprotected and vulnerable at the hands of their enemies, and Russia and its allies will take full advantage of its weakness.

God gives us clear insight into the evil intent of Russia at that time: *“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: 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”* (Ezekiel 38:10-11).

When least expected and without the slightest warning, the enemy will swoop down on Israel like a sudden storm. The land will be surrounded by a vast multitude of Russian and allied forces. Israel will be in fear for their lives and will desperately need **Someone** to rescue them!



THE CONQUERED INVADERS

When Russia and its allies have begun the invasion, and Israel is surrounded by their advancing enemies, **THE LORD** will supernaturally intervene to conquer the invaders and rescue Israel from a sure defeat. God will cause a massive earthquake in the land of Israel, the invaders' hearts will be filled with fear and they will turn their weapons against one another (see Ezekiel. 38:19-21). Further, God is going to destroy them by sending *"overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone"* (Ezekiel 38:22). The Bible indicates that only a *"sixth part"* (17%) of the invaders will be spared in this battle and as they return to the land of Magog (Russia), they will be met with fire from Heaven (see Ezekiel. 39:2,6).

The earthly destruction of these invaders will ultimately lead to their eternal destruction. This is because all men are **sinner**s no matter how good they think themselves to be. The Bible declares: *"for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God"*



and the *"wages of sin is death"* (Romans 3:23; 6:23). The sins of covetousness (a lust to have wealth and possessions that are not your own) and murder will be on full display by Russia and its allies. The Bible refers to covetousness as idolatry because the thing desired is made a god in the heart. Further, the Bible tells us that murder begins with an evil heart of hatred, and those who hate will be judged as murderers on the day of judgment (see 1 John 3:15).

For thousands of years now, many have attempted to wipe Israel off the map **with no success**. The reason for their many failed attempts is due to the fact that God has promised in His Word that the Nation of Israel will never be destroyed (see Jeremiah 31:31-40). Israel's continued existence is great evidence for the reliability of the Holy Bible and God's faithfulness to His promises. The defeat of Russia and their allies will be another example of God's protection over Israel and it will be through this conflict that the **WHOLE NATION OF ISRAEL** will turn their hearts back to God:



"So the house of Israel shall know that I am the LORD their God from that day and forward" (Ezekiel 39:22).

The stage has been set. The Russian coalition is coming together and the invasion gets nearer each day. But with all that has been shared so far, there is something that is of far greater importance than just learning about the Rise of Russia. Throughout this whole prophecy found in Ezekiel, God would have us learn some very important lessons:

THE CONCLUDING INSTRUCTIONS

GOD'S HOLINESS IS REVEALED

God's wrath and displeasure towards sin will be displayed in the judgment of Russia and its allies, yet it will only be a foretaste of the judgment to come upon all sinners. Because God is holy, righteous and just, He cannot overlook sin. **SIN MUST BE PUNISHED:** *"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and **murderers**, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and **idolaters**, and all **liars**, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death"* (Revelation 21:8).

GOD'S HOPE IS REVEALED

God certainly does not take pleasure in the death of the wicked, but instead desires for *"all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."* (1 Timothy 2:4). God's ultimate purpose in this conflict is that all of mankind would come to **KNOW HIM AS LORD:** *"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.**"* (Ezekiel 38:23). This invasion will be a part of a much larger event known in the Bible as "The Great Tribulation," when God is going to pour out His wrath and judgment on a world of wicked nations and individuals. Thankfully, the Bible gives a promise to those who are genuine Christians that they will be taken from this earth and raptured to heaven before these events take place (see 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 5:1-9).

GOD'S HEART IS REVEALED

Our sin angers God, and the more we sin, the more wrath we store up for the day of judgment. However, God has provided a way for us to have our sins forgiven. God the Son, Jesus Christ, died on a cross approx 2,000 years ago, paying the penalty we deserve. Rising from the grave, He showed that the payment was accepted by God the Father, and we now can be forgiven. For you to be saved, you must **REPENT** of your sin. This means to agree with God about your sinful condition and to turn from your sin and its destructive path. Then you must put your **TRUST** in what Jesus Christ did for you. *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life"* (John 3:16).

To find out more, watch a 3-part series on "The Rise of Russia". Scan the QR code or visit www.baptistexpositor.com/topical



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