

“World War III (Part 1)”

(A verse-by-verse analysis)

Ezek. 38:1-20

Verses 1-3

Notice the last phrase of verse two, “*prophesy against him*” and the last phrase of verse three, “*the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal*”. Gog is a man, the ruler of the land of Magog.

According to ancient historians Jerome and Josephus, Magog, is a general designation for the many ancient Scythian tribes of the north that settled Russia.

In the Ezekiel 38:2 passage, in Russian, Ukrainian and other Slavic Bibles, the word *Russ* is written in front of the word depicted for Magog, Russ being the root for Russia, which further identifies Magog as Russia. It is also of interest to know that the Russ river lies just west of the Ukrainian city of Kiev.

In Genesis 10:2, Tubal and Meshech are listed as younger brothers of Magog. In Ezekiel 38:2-3 and 39:2, Tubal and Meshech depict major cities of Russia over which Gog, the ruler of Russia, governs.

Meshech was pronounced Mushki in Assyrian and Moschi or Moschoi in Greek. (In Ps. 120:5 Meshech appears in the form *Mesech*.) It is easy to trace the genealogy of the *Slavic form of the word* from Meshech, to Mushki, to Moschi, to the name *Moskvi* in modern Russian.

Many English names are derived from Greek roots. In English we can trace the name *Meshech*, from the Greek form *Moschoi*, to the modern English name *Moscow*. Meshech, is the ancient root for the modern name, Moscow, in English and, Moskvi, in Russian.

Put the Slavic “*sk*” suffix on Tubal and it is easily recognized as the southern Russian city of Tubalsk where the American U2 pilot, Gary Powers, was shot down by the Soviet military in 1968.

Verse 4

The phrase “*horses and horsemen*” means the army will be mechanized, meaning *they will ride on vehicles to Israel rather than walking*.

The phrase “*all sorts of armour*” is a reference to the many varied weapons used in modern warfare.

The phrase “*all of them handling swords*” is simply a reference to hand held or hand operated weapons. Modern day swords would be a basic reference to rifles and other hand held weapons. In the case of the Russian army, their main weapons (swords), would be Kalashnikov rifles.

The following names *who are referenced in verses two through four*, identify the countries that will form an axis of evil with the Russians, to come against Israel.

Verse 5

Persia: Persia is Iran. In 1932 Iran changed its name from Persia to Iran.

Ethiopia: (1) The original ancient biblical Ethiopia, referred to in Genesis 2:13, should not be confused with what was known in biblical times as Nubia or Cush.

The Old Testament Hebrew word "*Cush*" has been traditionally translated as "*Ethiopia*," following the Septuagint, or earliest Greek translation. The country of Cush, known as Nubia, was not identical with Ethiopia as presently known. Nubia was the region beyond the first cataract of the Nile south, or upstream, of Egypt. The modern day Ethiopia, located on the Horn of Africa, is much further southeast from where ancient Nubia was situated. Nubia was known to the Egyptians as Cush and was occupied by them during periods of Egyptian strength. During one such period Egypt ruled Nubia through an official called the "Viceroy of Cush".

The Ethiopia referred to in verse 5 could be a reference to the modern day Ethiopia but is more likely a reference to the original Ethiopia which is referred to in Genesis 2:13.

Where is the original Ethiopia?

Gen. 2:10-14, lists four rivers that originated in the Garden of Eden. The thirteenth verse of that passage says, "*And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia*". This is a reference to the original Ethiopia from which the Ethiopia south of Egypt got its name as people began to disperse through the world after God confused their languages at Babel.

The Garden of Eden was located in east-central Turkey. The Gihon river flowed east out of the Garden of Eden. Verse two says the Gihon river "*compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia*". The word "*compasseth*" means it circled or went around the land of Ethiopia. Therefore the Gihon river was probably the northern boundary of Ethiopia because the Gihon went around Ethiopia instead of flowing through it.

It's difficult to know the exact boundaries of the ancient original Ethiopia but it probably was the region that is currently occupied by the Kurdish people. Kurds are an Indo-Iranian, non-Arab population that speak a Persian dialect with archaic features. They have inhabited the transnational region known as Kurdistan, a plateau and mountain area in southwest Asia including parts of northern Iraq, a small area of northeastern Syria, southeastern Turkey, northern Iran, and a small area of southern Armenia, for thousands of years. The Kurds are widely thought to be descended from the Medes, who are descendents of people who were the inhabitants of the original Ethiopia. Medes migrated to the land just east of Ethiopia and north of Persia, now the territory of northern Iran.

In Exodus 3:1 and 18:1, we are told that Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, was "*the priest of Midian*". Midianites are descendents of the Medes. Even the spelling of the words Mede and Midian are similar. When Moses fled from Pharaoh, in the book of Exodus 2:15-16, he married Jethro's daughter, Zipporah and lived on the back side of the desert for 40 years with Jethro's family. This area where he lived was in northwestern Saudi Arabia where Mount Sinai was located. Paul, in Gal. 4:25, confirms that Mt. Sinai was in Saudi Arabia, "*For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia*". Mount Sinai was not in the Sinai peninsula but in a region of northwestern Saudi Arabia, known as Midian, which lay along the northeastern coast of the Gulf of Aqaba. The Midianites who inhabited northwestern Saudi Arabia had migrated from the original Midian hundreds of miles to the north. The original Midian was part of, and in close proximity to the original Ethiopia.

In Exodus 18:2, we are told that Moses' wife, Zipporah, was an Ethiopian. In Numbers 12:1, "*Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman.*" If Moses' father-in-law, Jethro, was a Midianite, then why is his daughter, Zipporah, an Ethiopian? She is called an Ethiopian because the Midianites were from the ancient land of Ethiopia, northeast of Israel.

Zipporah was not from the Ethiopia south of Egypt. In those days the land south of Egypt was known as Nubia or Cush, not Ethiopia. The Midianites, over which Jethro was priest, were called Ethiopians, because the Midianites were immigrants from the original Ethiopia. The people of Nubia who were south of Egypt, and the people of Midian in northwestern Saudi Arabia, are both descendents of the inhabitants of the original Ethiopia referred to in Genesis 2:13. Zipporah was called an Ethiopian because she was a descendant of Midianites which were Ethiopians from the original Ethiopia, not because she was from the Ethiopia south of Egypt, even though both peoples are related.

In Judges 6-8, the Midianites came from the East and stole the crops and livestock of Israelites during the leadership of Gideon. When Gideon and his small army defeated the Midianites, the remnants of the Midianite army fled across the Jordan river to the east to go back to their homeland, which was east-northeast of Israel. The Midian to which they were fleeing was the same approximate region as the original Ethiopia.

In Judges 7:24, Gideon asked the men from the tribe of Ephraim to help stop the Midianites from escaping back across the Jordan to their eastern homeland. We should also take note of the towns of Succoth and Penuel, in Judges the eighth chapter. These towns were located east of the Jordan river close to the route of the fleeing Midianites. This shows that the Midianites, descendents of Medes and original Ethiopians, but known in modern times as Kurds, were trying to escape to their ancient homeland east-northeast of Israel.

The Ethiopia referred to in Ezekiel 38:5 is probably the land of Kurdistan where the Kurds now live. It is easy to see that on any modern map of southwestern Asia that any mechanized Russian army, traveling by land, would have to pass through this ancient region of Ethiopia, later known as Midian, and now known as Kurdistan, on their way to Israel.

Libya: This refers to modern day Libya on the southern coast of the Mediterranean sea over which the evil Moammar al-Ghadafi rules. He is a hater of Israel. It could include more than just the modern day country of Libya. In Genesis 10:6 we find the son of Ham, Phut, also known as Put, whose descendents inhabit the entire southern Mediterranean coast of north Africa from Egypt to the Atlantic ocean. This area would include the countries of Libya, Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco.

Verse 6

Gomer: Shem, the eldest son of Noah, wrote a genealogy of nations that was recorded by Moses in Genesis 10-11. Gomer is listed in Genesis 10:2-3. After the confusing of languages at Babel the descendents of Gomer migrated north from Turkey around the western side of the Black Sea eventually to Germany. Gomer undoubtedly is a reference to Germany. Gomer's oldest son, Ashkenaz, is listed in Genesis 10:3. Jewish people intermarried with the descendents of Ashkenaz and lived in medieval Jewish communities in the area along the Rhine river where the German Almanni tribe once lived. Even now many German Jews are called Ashkenazis.

Togarmah: Notice verse 6 reads, "*Togarmah of the north quarters,*" meaning, north of Israel, north of Jerusalem. The last five letters of the name Togarmah are "*armah*" which is the root for the name *Armenia*. Togarmah is a reference to Armenia but also includes the other countries of the Caucasus region, Georgia and Azerbaijan, which are partially inhabited by descendents of Togarmah. Much of the Russian army will cross the Caspian sea and through the Caucasus region on their way south to attack Israel.

Many descendents of Togarmah also inhabit Turkey, especially central and northeastern Turkey. Turkey is a large Muslim country and is directly in the path of Russian troops that will cross the Black Sea or pass through the Caucasus region in transit to Israel. So the reference to Togarmah also refers to Turkey, as well as the Caucasus countries of Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan.

Study Tip:

World War III will be an attack against the nation of Israel.

Verse 8

Ezekiel 38:8 has the phrase, "latter years," and verse 16 says, "latter days". These phrases refer to the end of the last days of the dispensation before Christ returns. They show that this war against Israel isn't a reference to World War II or anything that has happened previously.

Verse 8 emphasizes and verse 12 re-emphasizes that this war will take place after the Diaspora. This is after the Jews return to their homeland and reestablish the nation of Israel.

"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". Ezek.38:8

"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". Ezek.38:12

Verse 11

At the time of this war the cities of Israel will not be constructed with walls. This is further evidence that this is modern Israel, not ancient Israel.

Beginning with verse 13 we have the list of nations that will be allied together in defense of Israel against the nations coming against Israel.

Verse 13

Sheba: The Queen of Sheba came to visit Solomon from this country also known as Saba or Abyssina located in southwestern Arabia on the eastern tip of the Red Sea where present day Yemen is located. The tribes that once inhabited Sheba are now scattered throughout the southern Arabian peninsula. This reference to Sheba in Ezekiel 38:13 is a reference to modern day Saudi Arabia, especially to the southern part of Saudi Arabia.

Dedan: Dedan can be traced to the nomadic tribes of the northern Saudi Arabian peninsula and the area known as Kuwait today. Dedanites settled among the sons of Cush, on the northwest coast of the Persian Gulf. The Dedanites were preceded by a Menian (Armenia) settlement. The Menians established a center at a desert oasis, later known as Dedan, in order to protect the incense trade. Dedan, the town of Al Ula today, is situated between Medina and Tabuk in central Saudi Arabia.

Nomadic Dedanites ranged as far north as Edom and lived even as far north as the southern border of Syria. Dedan is a reference to the northern tribes of Saudi Arabia, to the modern day country of Kuwait situated between Saudi Arabia and Iraq, and in combination with the reference to Sheba, would include the Persian Gulf countries of Bahrain, home of the American Navy's fifth fleet, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.

Tarshish: There is much confusion about what country Tarshish is referred to in Ezekiel 38:13. There was a Phoenician settlement called Tartessus, in Spain, at the mouth of the Guadalquivir river that probably existed at the time of Solomon. Phoenicia and Tartessus engaged in a substantial reciprocal trade. But some of the information God gave to help us identify Tarshish, in verse thirteen, doesn't fit Spain. The described land has to fit all identifying information.

The phrase, *"the merchants of Tarshish,"* refers to a seafaring people. The name *Tarshish* means "land of tin". Tin is an alloy and was one of the only things imported to Rome from England during the time of the Roman empire. In Old Testament times Tarshish was referred to as the island farthest to the west. To further verify that Tarshish is England, we can look at the phrase *"with the young lions thereof"*. The identifying symbol known world wide to recognize England is a lion. There is only one country that fits all the information about Tarshish in Ezekiel 38:13. Tarshish has to be a reference to England.

The phrase *"the young lions thereof"* would refer to the younger colonized and English speaking countries such as America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

Verse 15

The phrase, *"all of them riding upon horses,"* points out that this army from the north will be mechanized, meaning they will be transported by vehicle, the modern day horse, the long distance from Russia to Israel.

Verse 17

Israeli prophets prophesied about this war in ancient times long before the writing of Ezekiel, which was after 570 B.C.

Verse 18

The facial expressions of most people change when they get angry. When some people get angry their face turns red because of their anger. In verse 18, God says that he will be so angry because of the army preparing to attack Israel that, *"my fury shall come up in my face"*.

Verses 19-20

These two verses refer to a great earthquake.

Study Tip:

Saudi Arabia backs Israel during World War III.

This section comes from author and pastor

Phillip Barnett while editing this project

in Spring of 2006.

Sometimes to understand what God is saying we need to ask what is not said instead of what is said. The question here is, "Why is Israel's most vehement enemy, Syria, not included in the list of aggressor nations?" The fact that Syria is left out tells us something. Syria would not be left out unless they are not able to participate. Therefore, something will happen to Syria before this war begins which prevents them from participating.

Israel will undoubtedly do something, causing Russia to attack Israel. We must pay attention to the fact that no weapons of mass destruction were found in Iraq by the coalition forces at the conclusion of the war against Iraq in 2003. A book written after the war by one of Saddam Hussein's former generals states that he helped load the weapons of mass destruction into large trucks and that the weapons were taken to Syria to be hidden at the outset of the war. If Syria possesses these weapons, she will one day use them against Israel and kill more Israelis than have been killed at any other time in modern Israeli history. Israel, as it's long standing policy dictates, will retaliate by either destroying Syria or attacking and occupying Syria which will cause the retaliatory attack by Russia, portrayed in Ezekiel 38 and 39. It is interesting to note that Russia is under treaty with Syria and Iran to defend them in case they are attacked and America is under treaty with Israel to defend her in case she is attacked. It is more easily understood how all of these nations will be dragged into this devastating world war.

As stated earlier in regard to Syria, sometimes to understand what God is saying we don't ask the question, What is said? But, What is not said? The question must be asked. Why is Egypt not included in the list of aggressor nations? The fact that Egypt is left out tells us something.

The Old Testament Hebrew word for Egypt is Mizraim. In Genesis 10:6, Mizraim is listed as the second son of Ham. In Genesis 10:1, Ham is listed as Noah's second son. Mizraim was the father of the Egyptian nation. Mizraim is not listed in the Ezekiel 38 list as one of the nations that will attack Israel.

To answer the question as to why Egypt is not included in the list of nations that will attack Israel, we can examine a few events in the modern history of Egypt.

Modern Egyptian History:

May 14, 1948:

War of Independence: Israel declares independence. Within 24 hours Egyptian and Arab armies attack Israel. Israel defeats all Arab armies.

February 24, 1949:

Egypt signs peace treaty with Israel.

July 23, 1952:

Lieutenant Colonel Gamal Abdul Nasser, Lieutenant Colonel Anwar el-Sadat and other Egyptian Communist party leaders, backed by Moscow, lead a coup which overthrows Egyptian King Farouk I, the pro-British Egyptian monarch.

July 26, 1952:

King Farouk of Egypt abdicates.

November 14, 1954:

Gamal Abdul Nasser, backed by Moscow, ousts President Naguib and becomes Prime Minister of Egypt. Nasser negotiates the withdrawal of British troops who leave after 72 years of occupation.

June 23, 1956:

Nasser officially becomes President of Egypt.

July 26, 1956:

Nasser orders Egyptian military to seize control of Suez Canal from Britain and Nasser nationalizes Suez Canal.

October 29 –November 4, 1956:

Sinai Campaign: Tripartite invasion of Egypt by British, French and Israeli forces. Israel captures Gaza and the Sinai peninsula. As Israeli troops approach the Suez Canal the British air force bombs and destroys most of the Egyptian air force. British and French paratroopers parachute into two Egyptian ports, Port Said and Port Fuad, to recapture the Suez Canal. Britain and France give Egypt ultimatum concerning freedom of transport in Canal Zone. The Soviet Union threatens missile attack on England, France and Israel. America pressures the English, French and Israelis to withdraw their forces from Sinai to avoid World War III. As a result of the war Soviet arms sales to Egypt, financial assistance, and influence increases in Egypt and Egypt becomes the cornerstone of the Soviet Union's Middle East policy.

November 6, 1956:

Cease fire in 8 day Suez campaign. Israel begins withdrawal from Sinai in stages.

December 22, 1956:

Final evacuation of French and British troops.

March 8, 1957:

Israel completes withdrawal of troops from the Sinai peninsula and Gaza.

January 5, 1957:

The Eisenhower Doctrine is laid out in a speech to Congress. President Eisenhower declares the United States will provide military and economic assistance in the Middle East to protect against Communist aggression. Under the doctrine, Saudi Arabia becomes the primary beneficiary of American aid.

June 5–June 10, 1967:

The Six-Day War: Egyptian air force and army are defeated and humiliated in 6 Day War with Israel.

September 28, 1970:

Nasser dies. Vice-President, Anwar el-Sadat, is elected new Egyptian president in October.

May 15, 1971:

Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat orders the arrest of over 100 pro-Soviet Egyptians and charges them with plotting a coup against his government.

July 18, 1972:

Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat expels over 20,000 Soviet advisors and experts from Egypt.

October 6, 1973:

Yom Kippur War. The Egyptian army and air force, trained by Soviet military advisors, are defeated in war against Israel. After the war Egypt steadily moves away from the Soviet Union (USSR) and into a closer relationship with the United States.

March 26, 1979:

Under the leadership of Sadat, Egypt signs peace treaty with Israel.

September 16, 1981:

Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat expels Soviet ambassador to Egypt, six members of his staff, two Soviet journalists and more than one thousand Soviet technicians working throughout Egypt.

October 6, 1981:

Anwar el-Sadat assassinated.

Terrorists have tried to destabilize Egypt, but peace between Egypt and Israel has held since the signing of the peace treaty in 1979.

Several considerations as to why Egypt is not mentioned in Ezekiel 38:

- Anti-Russian sentiment in Egypt since the ousting of the Soviets
- Over 160 thousand Americans living and working in Egypt
- Thousands of British and other western Europeans living and working in Egypt
- Western tourism to Egypt is substantial

Therefore, it is not likely that Egypt would involve itself in any attack on Israel with the Russian, German, or Arab *axis of evil* countries that will attack Israel.