

# Gog and Magog

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The names of Gog and Magog are both historic and symbolic. Magog, son of Japheth and grandson of Noah, is listed in the table of nations (Gen. 10:1-2; 1 Chron. 1:5). Gog was a descendant of Reuben, the eldest son of Jacob/Israel (1 Chron. 5:1-4). The only other occurrences of these names are in Ezekiel 38-39, which portrays the church's struggle against the forces of persecution, and Revelation 20:7-10, which depicts Satan's final assault against the saints.

*Genesis 10:1-2 ... 1 Now these are the records of the generations of Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah; and sons were born to them after the flood. 2 The sons of Japheth were Gomer and **Magog** and Madai and Javan and Tubal and Meshech and Tiras. (NASB95)*

*1 Chronicles 1:5 ... 5 The sons of Japheth were Gomer, **Magog**, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech and Tiras. (NASB95)*

*1 Chronicles 5:1-4 ... 1 Now the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel (for he was the firstborn, but because he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph the son of Israel; so that he is not enrolled in the genealogy according to the birthright. 2 Though Judah prevailed over his brothers, and from him came the leader, yet the birthright belonged to Joseph), 3 the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel were Hanoch and Pallu, Hezron and Carmi. 4 The sons of Joel were Shemaiah his son, **Gog** his son, Shimei his son, (NASB95)*

In Ezekiel 38-39, Gog of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal, represents evil forces marshaled against God. Allies come from North (Gomer and Beth-togarmah), South (Ethiopia), East (Persia) and West (Put). Powerfully armed and prepared for battle, they converge upon Israel, covering the land like a cloud.

Some associate Gog with a specific ruler, realm, or region. Premillennialists often suggest a connection with Russia. However, considering the apocalyptic style of Ezekiel, and scarcity of any king/kingdom that might serve as a literal fulfillment, it is better to view Gog as an eschatological figure, symbolic of the forces of persecution that beset believers in the Messianic era.

Threats to the faith occur in every age and epoch, time and place. However, in Ezekiel 38, trouble arises "after many days" (v. 8) and "in the latter/last days (v. 16), when Israel is living securely, in peace and prosperity (vv. 8, 11, 14). God's people dwell at the center of the world (v. 12), not literally, but figuratively, being the center of everything that really matters.

*Ezekiel 38:8 ... 8 “After many days you will be summoned; in the latter years you will come into the land that is restored from the sword, whose inhabitants have been gathered from many nations to the mountains of Israel which had been a continual waste; but its people were brought out from the nations, and they are living securely, all of them. (NASB95)*

*Ezekiel 38:16 ... 16 and you will come up against My people Israel like a cloud to cover the land. It shall come about in the last days that I will bring you against My land, so that the nations may know Me when I am sanctified through you before their eyes, O Gog.” (NASB95)*

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*Ezekiel 38:11 ... 11 and you will say, ‘I will go up against the land of unwalled villages. I will go against those who are at rest, that live securely, all of them living without walls and having no bars or gates, (NASB95)*

*Ezekiel 38:14 ... 14 “Therefore prophesy, son of man, and say to Gog, ‘Thus says the Lord God, “On that day when My people Israel are living securely, will you not know it? (NASB95)*

*Ezekiel 38:12 ... 12 to capture spoil and to seize plunder, to turn your hand against the waste places which are now inhabited, and against the people who are gathered from the nations, who have acquired cattle and goods, who live at the center of the world.’ (NASB95)*

Yielding to base barbarity, sinners endeavor to destroy the Lord’s plan and purpose. Yet, even when men fight against God, opposing the truth and persecuting the church, divine providence can be observed. The Lord defends His own. Christians will be victorious over all opposition.

Like Pharaoh of old, who hardened his heart, and whose heart was hardened (Exod. 8:32; 9:12), God’s purpose and Gog’s purpose are one (Ezek. 38:10-12; 14-16). Why permit/provoke such an attack? So that Jehovah’s name will be glorified among the nations: “They will know that I am the LORD” (Ezek. 38:23; 39:6, 28).

*Exodus 8:32 ... 32 But Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also, and he did not let the people go. (NASB95)*

*Exodus 9:12 ... 12 And the Lord hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and he did not listen to them, just as the Lord had spoken to Moses. (NASB95)*

*Ezekiel 38:10-12 ... 10 ‘Thus says the Lord God, “It will come about on that day, that thoughts will come into your mind and you will devise an evil plan, 11 and you will say, ‘I will go up against the land of unwalled villages. I will go against those who are at rest,*

*that live securely, all of them living without walls and having no bars or gates, 12 to capture spoil and to seize plunder, to turn your hand against the waste places which are now inhabited, and against the people who are gathered from the nations, who have acquired cattle and goods, who live at the center of the world.’ (NASB95)*

*Ezekiel 38:14-16 ... 14 “Therefore prophesy, son of man, and say to Gog, ‘Thus says the Lord God, “On that day when My people Israel are living securely, will you not know it? 15 “You will come from your place out of the remote parts of the north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great assembly and a mighty army; 16 and you will come up against My people Israel like a cloud to cover the land. It shall come about in the last days that I will bring you against My land, so that the nations may know Me when I am sanctified through you before their eyes, O Gog.” ’ (NASB95)*

*Ezekiel 38:23 ... 23 “I will magnify Myself, sanctify Myself, and make Myself known in the sight of many nations; and they will know that I am the Lord.” ’ (NASB95)*

*Ezekiel 39:6 ... 6 “And I will send fire upon Magog and those who inhabit the coastlands in safety; and they will know that I am the Lord. (NASB95)*

*Ezekiel 39:28 ... 28 “Then they will know that I am the Lord their God because I made them go into exile among the nations, and then gathered them again to their own land; and I will leave none of them there any longer. (NASB95)*

In Revelation 20:7-10, after the thousand years are completed, Satan will again be loosed upon the realm of mankind. Through his deceptive influence, Gog and Magog gather the nations for war against the saints and the beloved city. Yet, once again, God delivers His own. Fire falls from heaven and devours the adversary. Satan’s doom is sealed; the saints’ victory is assured. When will these things occur? No one knows, save the Heavenly Father (Matt. 24:36-39; Mark 13:32-37). Nonetheless, rest assured: it will get worse before it gets better. Let us, therefore, be watchful, steadfast, faithful and true (1 Cor. 15:58; 1 Thess. 5:1-11; Rev. 2:10).

*Revelation 20:7-10 ... 7 When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, 8 and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore. 9 And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them. 10 And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. (NASB95)*

*Matthew 24:36-39 ... 36 “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. 37 “For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. 38 “For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, 39 and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be. (NASB95)*

*Mark 13:32-37 ... 32 “But of that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. 33 “Take heed, keep on the alert; for you do not know when the appointed time will come. 34 “It is like a man away on a journey, who upon leaving his house and putting his slaves in charge, assigning to each one his task, also commanded the doorkeeper to stay on the alert. 35 “Therefore, be on the alert—for you do not know when the master of the house is coming, whether in the evening, at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning— 36 in case he should come suddenly and find you asleep. 37 “What I say to you I say to all, ‘Be on the alert!’ ” (NASB95)*

*1 Corinthians 15:58 ... 58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord. (NASB95)*

*1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 ... 1 Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. 2 For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. 3 While they are saying, “Peace and safety!” then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape. 4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; 5 for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; 6 so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. 7 For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. 8 But since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. 9 For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him. 11 Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing. (NASB95)*

*Revelation 2:10 ... 10 ‘Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. (NASB95)*