RUSSIA, UKRAINE AND BIBLE PROPHECY

Ezekiel 38:1(NASB) “Son of man, set your face toward Gog of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him,”

Are We in the Last Days?

Isaiah 11:11&12(NASB) Then it will happen on that day that the Lord will again recover the second time with His hand the remnant of His people, who will remain, from Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, Cush, Elam, Shinar, Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And He will lift up a standard for the nations and assemble the banished ones of Israel, and will gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

Matthew 24:14 “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.”

Daniel 12:4(NKJV) “But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.”

2 Peter 3:3-6(ESV) knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires. They will say, “Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep; all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation.” For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God and that by means of the these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished.

Is Russia Mentioned in Bible Prophecy?

Ezekiel 38:1-3(NASB) And the word of the LORD came to me saying, “Son of man, set your face toward Gog of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Mesech and Tubal, and prophesy against him and say, ‘Thus says the Lord God, “Behold, I am against you, O Gog, prince of Rosh, Mesech and Tubal.” ‘ ”

Ezekiel 39:1 “And you, son of man, prophesy against Gog and say, ‘Thus says the Lord God, “Behold, I am against you, O Gog, prince of Rosh, Mesech and Tubal:”’ ”

Who is Rosh? The word translated Rosh can be either a noun or an adjective. As an adjective its meaning is chief or highest. Most translations translate it that way, although many of them put “Rosh, Mesech and Tubal” in a footnote. Why should it be translated Rosh? First, grammatically it makes more sense. Second, the translators of the Septuagint, made only several hundred years later, translated it that way. Third, it was, and probably is, the preferred translation of Jewish scholars and has been since it was written.

The primary objection to translating the Hebrew word as Rosh seems to be that those objecting to that translation say there is no historical record of a people called Rosh. But that is simply incorrect. Thomas Ice in an article on Gog and Magog lists numerous references in secular history prior to the first century to a people called either Rus or Ros or Rosh who lived north of the Black and Caspian Seas, which is now called Russia.

Who Is Magog?

The Jewish historian Josephus writes in the “Antiquities of the Jews,” discussing the descendants of Noah and where they settled, “Magog founded those that from him were named Magogites, but who are by the Greeks called Scythians.”

Book One, Chapter 6, Verse 123. Almost any map of Scythia will show it to be north of the Black and Caspian Seas and extending eastward from there.

Is Ezekiel 38&39 Talking about the Last Days?

Ezekiel chapter 34: Israel will be scattered but God will bring them back.

Ezekiel 35: When they come back, there will be a bloody conflict with the descendants of Esau who will have claimed the land in their absence. According to the Jews, the Palestinians and the history books, the descendants of Esau moved into southern Judah after the first dispersion and into what had been Judah, Samaria, and Galilee after the second dispersion.

Ezekiel 36: The land of Israel will once again become fertile when the Jews come back.

Ezekiel 37: The Vision of the Valley of Dry Bones: Verse 11(NASB): Then he said to me, “Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold, they say, ‘Our bones are dried up and our hope has perished. We are completely cut off.’ ”

Ezekiel 37:12 “Therefore prophesy and say to them: ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: My people, I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them; I will bring you back to the land of Israel.’ ”

Who Comes with Russia when It Attacks Israel?

Ezekiel 38:5&6(ESV) Persia, Cush and Put are with them, all of them with shield and helmet; Gomer and all his hordes; Beth-togarmah from the uttermost parts of the north with all his hordes – many peoples with you.

Persia is Iran, Cush is Ethiopia (and probably Sudan), Put is Libya. Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, Book One, chapter six, verses 131&132. The identities of Gomer and Beth-togarmah are much disputed. They are north of Israel.

What Has Russia’s Invasion of Ukraine Got to Do with Bible Prophecy?

Nothing directly, a great deal indirectly. It highlights Russia’s willingness to go to war to gain or reclaim territory, as it did after World War II, in its invasion of Afghanistan and its military invasions to hold on to power in Eastern Europe.

If you look at the nations that refused to vote to condemn Russia in the UN vote, you largely see a block of Communist, Socialist and Muslim countries, very few of which are genuine democracies.

The Unintended Consequence of the Invasion

Daniel 9:26&27 “After the sixty-two ‘sevens’ the Anointed One will be put to death and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed. He will confirm a covenant with many for one ‘seven.’ In the middle of the ‘seven’ he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And at the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.”

This passage makes it clear that the 7-year Tribulation begins when a leader whose people (the Romans) destroyed Jerusalem and the Jewish Temple signs a covenant with the Jews. Most Bible scholars who take the Bible prophecies literally expect this ruler to come out of the European Union.

Today the European Union has no army and depends on NATO, which primarily means the United States, to defend them in case of an attack from Russia. The Russian invasion of Ukraine has dramatically changed European ideas about self-defense and also about depending on the United States and NATO. Countries are assisting Ukraine who have previously said they would never give military aid to another country.

The world seems to be splitting into two major power blocks, Russia, China, North Korea and most Muslim countries on one side and the European Union and the United States on the other, setting the stage for either the Gog and Magog war in Ezekiel 38&39 or the beginning of the Tribulation.

Points to Ponder

Although the Beast described in Revelation 13 will probably come out of the European Union, that does not make Russia the “good guy” in the present conflict.

It repeatedly says God is against Gog of the land of Magog in Ezekiel 38&39. We should think very carefully about that before supporting Putin or Russia.

John 10:10 says Satan (the thief) comes only to “steal and kill and destroy.” There is no better way for that to be accomplished on a large scale than for one country to go to war with another.

Although the present conflict is not a direct fulfillment of prophecy, it has had the effect of moving the players mentioned in the Bible closer to the positions they will take in the future to fulfill Bible prophecy.

We are in the last days. Jesus is coming back. We need to be ready.