

Ezekiel 38-39: Battle of Gog, God's great rescue of Israel in the Tribulation.

The defeat of Gog is vital to uphold Israel on to the Millennium and is depicted here.

A. Summaries of background information from related passages: It should *not* be confused with the battle of a similar name in Rev. 20:8-9 at the end of the Millennium, in which Gog and Magog is one entity, while in Eze. 38:2, Gog is the leader of the land of Magog. Then all weapons are destroyed in the Millennium (Isa. 2:4) but they are used in the present battle (Eze. 38:4). It is also *not* Armageddon at the end of the Tribulation, for then Israel will be persecuted, while here she lives in peace and prosperity (Eze. 38:8;12).

B. Summary of the background in Ezekiel 37: It is on Israel's restoration as a nation, just like dead bones coming alive. Thus, the OT saints are resurrected in v13-14 to possess their land for the Millennium. Israel and Judah will be reunited as one (19), with David their king (24), while Christ will rule as Lord of the entire world (Zech. 14:9).

Explaining the Passage: Ezekiel 38: God announces the battle in v1-9 and the prince is Gog. Some takes "rosh" to mean Russia (2) but in Hebrew, it means "head" and so Gog is the prince and head of Meshech and Tubal, located around the Caspian and Black Sea. It is linked to the Muslim nations of central Asia and in v5-6, Gog seems to be leading an Islamic Union of 7 nations: Meshech, Tubal, Persia (Iran), Ethiopia, Put (Libya), Gomer and Beth-togarmah (last two in Turkey) against Israel. Gog is told to be prepared (7), for he will be summoned to lead this army like a cloud against Israel (9). God will bring this to pass in v10-16, planting the evil plan in Gog's mind (10). The Jews have been gathered from the nations (v8; v12) and have acquired much wealth, a fitting description of Israel today. But they are dwelling securely without walls, which is not the present scenario. Since this will be in the last days (16), it *must be in the first 3½ years of the antichrist's peace treaty* (Dan. 9:27), giving the impression of pseudo peace. Gog's attack is done with ancient weapons (4) but Ezekiel may just be at a loss of words for the armaments of today. Then in v17-23, God will totally destroy Gog in one day, by a great earthquake (19) when He will be magnified before the nations (23). Is Gog Russia? It is uncertain, except for a hint in v15 that he is from the remote parts of the north. Israel is portrayed as a nation of immigrants (8; 12) but this cannot last for long and so the event will not tarry. **Ezekiel 39:** God's demise of Gog is repeated in v1-6 and the purpose of this battle is now revealed in v7-8, namely to magnify His name to Israel and through them to the nations. It is vital for at that time, probably many Jews will believe to ensure the realization of the 144,000, who uphold His holy name in the Tribulation and ensure that it will not be profane anymore. In v9-16 is the post war clean up with weapons burning and complete burial of Gog's armies. The invitation in v17-20 for wild creatures to feast on the corpses after their burial seems illogical. But it's so similar to Rev. 19:17-18, a call to feed on the armies of Armageddon that it must be a prophetic leap to that battle. After this begins the Millennium and so, it harmonizes very well with the subsequent verses of v21-29 on a secured Israel, fully restored under God. The battle of Gog must be that vital link to complete the 144,000, who will uphold Israel onto the final restoration and it is inserted here before Ezekiel moves to chapter 40-48, which is all about Israel in the Millennium. **Linking to Dan. 11:40-41:** Gog is probably the same as the king of the north, as no other storming armies on Israel is found in the OT for the end time. It perhaps account for the antichrist breaking his covenant and entering Israel in the middle of the Tribulation.