

The Third World War




Ezekiel Chapters 38-39



Israel

ARAMAIC BIBLE COMPANION

THE ADVANCE OF PROPHETIC TRUTH

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In issuing this rather truncated study I need to ask the Reader's indulgence if he or she had hoped for a wide range of source material. These two chapters of Ezekiel are amongst the most quoted parts of the bible today-they are the key to extrapolating the political and military developments of our time. Prophetic scholars are not fully agreed as to when the "Ezekiel War" as it is popularly called will take place. My view for what it is worth is that it will follow the Rapture of the Church. Like all wars it will necessitate a peace treaty and the sequence of (a) the upward call or out-redemption of Christians (b) economic austerity and (c) this "nuclear exchange" means that those who gain control will apply a mix of draconian measures and an imperfect peace treaty in an endeavour to control economic levers of power and neutralize the world's No.1 political and religious issue-Jerusalem and its hegemony. The economic crisis of which we read in the Apocalypse and of which we have had a foretaste together with the two-state peace plan for the Middle East (Israel with the Palestinian people) which is already under way fit into a sequence which also features this war. The war cannot fit the kingdom of God realised but it would quite precisely damask into a setting immediately prior to the LORD'S glorious return to rule in the fashion the ancient prophets proclaimed. So reasonably advanced are a number of the factors in the development of the political and economic history and power play of our day as predicted in these that scholars are looking in the early decades of the 21st century for the sudden outbreak of this war. My view is as ever to "be ready" for we know not the time when our LORD may come-whether at midnight or at cock-crow.

The last best advice of scripture is "The Spirit and the bride say 'Come'" so let all who take seriously the state of the world and your own heart *look to Jesus Christ by faith* and all who trust Christ "*look up*" *'for your redemption draweth nigh.'*(*Luke 21.28*)

"In days when the world is uncertain and the power of the atom unknown
A far greater power up yonder still watches and cares for His own"

BOB COFFEY

ARAMAIC BIBLE COMPANION

MAY 31, THE DAY OF PENTECOST 2009

COMMENTARY ON EZEKIEL 38 THE NORTHERN LAND 1-3

And "it happened " *in a word of action*(*akin to Luke's εγενετο*) that the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **Son of man, set your face against or in the direction [Hebrew *la*]of Gog of the land of Magog.** *Now Magog was the firstborn son of Japheth whose descendants peopled the extreme recesses of the north. Similar but distinctly different terminology is applied to the Chinese race which is called "Chin and Machin". The prefix "Ma" denotes place of Residence. It is fairly clear that this nation is Russia.*

*Ezekiel like the original Adam is God's representative and no doubt when taken to Babylon during the early captivity he was in the flower of his youth. God shared his future plans with this young man; these were plans about His temple of the latter day-about the revival of the nation of Israel (the dry bones prophecy) and about this significant war that was to herald a sudden drastic change to the world as it was known since creation. The LORD speaks to Ezekiel about a "captain [Hebrew *vnr myv* - "one who lifts up the head or becomes mighty"] who makes Russia great again and grows in power as a "lifter" of Rosh Meshech and Tubal-notable centres of the northern or Russian race. Russians as "Rosh"[*οι Ρως*] according to Greek writers were from the 10th century a people who dwelt along the Volga. Meshech were the Moschi-a people of the mountains between Iberia and Armenia and Colchis. Tubal, the 5th son of Japheth belonged to a people who took the name Tibareni and are currently represented by the northern settlement of Tobolsk. Cause yourself to foretell future events about him and say,'Thus says the LORD God, "Behold me against you O lifter of Rosh Meshech and Tubal."As in numerous scriptures God invites those He speaks with to get a clear view of what He will do. The*

LORD Who is "lifting Israel" states plainly that He will come into collision with the leader of Russia in the latter day. The LORD proceeds to make eight prophetic statements about latter day Russia.

RUSSIA -EIGHT PROPHECIES

(1) **I will keep turning you back with intensity (Hebrew Pilel of בּוּר) to your former state** [*not "drive back"(Hiphil) but rather restore Russia after the revolution and communism to a greatness beyond that of the Czars much like Israel was brought back. The idea of reversing the revolution and the poverty of communes with intensity is inherent*] It may be that Russia will reclaim lost lands to the south which she formerly held in emigrating north.

(2) **I am permitting or imposing (Hebrew יָטָה "impose" with ב "in") hooks in your jawbones or handsome cheeks** I am sure that God is showing that just as **Leviathan** was too much for Job in Job 41.2 He is saying that Russia is not too much for Him as He supports Israel in its latter day throes. God knew that Job unaided could not deal with the monster of the deep and here the LORD who knows that Russia is also powerful in the sea and has a Leviathan-like submarine fleet which the LORD is able to neutralise. "Oil" is one interpretation of the "hook"-Jack van Impe's fascinating suggestion -Russia certainly has large natural gas resources-but not so much oil. This "hook" must be related to restrictions of the time with respect to life-giving resources as in the fish.

(3) **And I will have you brought out to war.** Russia will take the lead in promoting a third world struggle.

(4) **And all your expeditionary soldiers** (Hebrew לַיָּם meaning attack and defensive capability- especially army divisions)

(5) **Horses that draw chariots and pairs of riders** (Hebrew שִׁס and צִרְפָּא speak of military expeditionary forces as organised in earlier ages but apply well today for the wheeled vehicles still depend on power which we call horsepower or cubic capacity and the drivers still spread their legs and use their feet to propel the vehicles forward. I understand the same principle may apply to interpreting the "locusts and scorpions" of the Apocalypse)

(6) **All protected and supplied with weapons** (Hebrew יָלַק "arms" |כִּלְכִּל "uniform, protection")

(7) **A great assembly of nations Persia Cush & Put** (Hebrew הִקָּה "called" together) **arrayed with full cover shield and small protective shield.** This description fits a modern army better than an earlier one. Ancient forces usually bore one shield. In any future war the soldiery would be supplied with total body protection for fall-out and also have their body armour or "smaller shield" for defence against conventional armed conflict.

(8) **All of them handling swords** each modern soldier has a bayonet and probably a knife besides.

EZEKIEL 38

NT References REVELATION 20.8 (2); 11.13(19-20); 8.7, 14.10, 20.9, 20.10, 21.8(22)

ANALYSIS OF NT REFERENCES

FIRST REFERENCE

(1) Gog and Magog according to the Apocalypse 20 dwell in the four corners of the earth and they are numerous as the sands of the sea. In later time the terms are used of world-wide antagonistic powers

(2) A great earthquake in the land of Israel is referred to by Ezekiel. In the Apocalypse 11.13 it occurs in the 4th part of that book (7.9-15.4) following the arrival of the church in heaven 5.11 and its sequel

(a) After **the seals**: 1.white horse conqueror, 2.red horse warrior with broad sword of world war 3. black horse rider with scales of a broken world economy, 4.pale horse of death of one quarter of men by war hunger "death" and animal virus, 5.great persecution of Christians and heavenly appeal, earthquake with a morbid sun and bloody moon star fall and hiding from the wrath of the lamb

(b) After the "half hour silence" & church triumphant praying comes the earthquake heralding the trumpets with Seal No.7and fire on earth. **Then trumpets**: 1.hail &fire-**burning a third of grass & trees** 2.A Great Mountain thrown in the sea -**a third of sea becomes blood** and creatures in sea die and **a third of ships destroyed**. 3. A torch like star called "bitter" destroys **a third of rivers and water sources** 4. Sun, moon and stars are struck. **The light of night and day reduced by a third percentage**.5 Bottomless pit (oil) opened with Apollyon's troops (locusts from air and & scorpions from land)-killing in a 5

month war, (**Woe 1**) 6. On an hour in a day in a month in a year when *a 200,000,000 strong army crosses the Euphrates* it brings about *the death of one third of mankind*. Still men (i) worship demons (ii) wealth (iii) acts of murder (iv) Pharmaceutical or chemical wrong-doing (v) sexual sin and (vi) clandestine stratagems (of war and theft)

(3) The angel with the little book or bound book stands up suddenly at an *unknown* time of the "**seven thunders**" and proclaims "No more delay" The messages of the thunders remained unwritten.

We know from Daniel 8.26 that it relates to the "vision of the evening and morning"(the rapture and the return) and from Daniel 12. 4 & 9 that it relates to "the time of the end" when Michael stands and there is great tribulation and "resurrection of the just" and after that three and a half years till the scattering of Israel's power and another three and a half till Daniel is back in his rest in the kingdom. This is echoed in the Apocalypse 11. 2 where forty two months and 1260 days or three and a half lunar years pass as two witnesses testify.

SECOND REFERENCE

The slaying of the two witnesses who had power to avenge evil in the tribulation period is followed by a their resurrection within three and a half days and an earthquake in which 7000 die in Jerusalem (**Woe 2**) then (**Woe 3**) followed by the 7th trumpet and **the kingdoms of earth being taken over by Christ** The tabernacle where Christ was is opened and the covenanted return takes place.

THIRD REFERENCE

The avenging of Gog involves 5 references which straddle four sections of the Apocalypse.

(1)8.7 THE FIRST TRUMPET-hail and fire mingled with blood and a third of the trees and grass burned up

(2)14.10 THE FALL OF BABYLON with divine wrath and the worship of the beast is visited with fire and brimstone in the presence of angels and the worshippers who receive the mark of his name have no rest day or night

(3)20.9 EXPIRY OF 1000YEARS Satan released and God and Magog feature again surrounding the camp of the saints Jerusalem and fire from heaven devours them

(4)20.10 THE LAKE OF FIRE the devil is cast into the lake of fire -preceded (long ago by the beast and the false prophet

(5)21.8 NEW HEAVEN AND NEW EARTH Eight groups who are headed for the lake of fire-or the second death are "The cowardly, unbelieving abominable murderers sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters and all liars.

THE TRUTH ABOUT "GOG"

*A most useful comment of **Chuck Missler** which he came upon in working on the Hebrew text of Amos 7 for a commentary he subsequently issued on Amos leads me to make the following comments.*

*"Gog" has proved a mystery but light shines on the topic of Gog's person through the prophecy of Amos (7.1) where we read "And from the east a breeding swarm of locusts was coming and behold one caterpillar, king **Gog**". The Hebrew has "**Gizi** king"("mowings of the king") the LXX has "Gog the King" who is described as a "locust without wings" (Greek Βρουχος). The LXX was based on the Hebrew text which was earlier than the work of the Massorites. (2nd cent BC-minor prophets by various translators added to the volume which was originally Torah about 117BC) The Massorites worked from 500AD but the completion of their work came with Aaron ben Asher in the 10th century. Five generations of his family had worked on the Hebrew text. In Revelation 9.3 & 11 we learn the "Locust have a king over them" although in Proverbs 30.27 it is written "the locusts have no king". So the Massora translate "Behold one wingless locust or cutter, their king" as "behold a mowing after the King's mowings". It appears the Massora uncharacteristically stumbled over this verse.*

Thus the presence of Gog at this ancient time and again in the latter day demands that a being of great antiquity and a great devastator who is the unseen king of war-Apollyon!

IDENTIFICATION OF THE NORTHERN LAND 1-4

And "it happened" a word of action of the LORD came to me saying, "Son of Man, set your face against or in the direction of Gog (Hebrew *g*) of the land of Magog... Now Magog was the firstborn son of Japheth whose descendants peopled the extreme recesses of the north Similar but distinctively different terminology is applied to the Chinese who are called "Chin and Machin". The prefix "Ma" denotes "place of residence.

It is to be taken that this nation is Russia. Ezekiel like the original Adam is God's representative and no doubt when taken to Babylon in the early captivity he was in the flower of his youth. His loveliness was also of Spirit since God shared His forward plans with this young man. **Chief Prince** v3 The captain or leader (Hebrew *var* *ajm* literally "One who lifts up the head or becomes mighty" so a leader who makes Russia great and who grows in power-"a lifter".) **of Rosh Meshech and Tubal** these are notable sections of the Northern race. Rosh the Russians mentioned in the 10th century as dwelling on the Volga and known in Greek writings as *ot Pwz*, Meshech were the Moschi-a people of the mountains between Iberia and Armenia and Colchis. Tubal would be the 5th Son of Japheth whose people developed as the Tibareni and are currently represented by the northern settlement of Tobolsk ... **and cause you (Ezekiel) to foretell "future events" about him. And say, "Thus says the LORD God, 'Behold me against You O lifter of Rosh Meshech and Tubal As in numerous scriptures God invites those he speaks with to get a clear view of what He will do. The LORD states plainly that He will come into direct collision with the leader of Russia. The LORD proceeds to make seven statements about latter day Russia.**

RUSSIA'S ALLIES 5-6

Persia and Ethiopia with Southern Egypt and Libya complete with body armour and helmet. Gomer (Ukraine "east of the Don"-the original seat of Gomer i.e Crimea) and all its armed wings; the house of Togarmah (Turkey-now in the pocket of Russia) the remote regions of the obscure north and all its armed wings (Hebrew *pga*), great peoples with you. The Russian leadership is assured of Persian, Ethiopian Sudanese and Libyan support and just south of its borders it can count on Turkey, Crimea and the back-up of strong northern support. Viewed from 2018 these pieces of the jig saw are not all gathered-but until recently neither was Crimea.

RUSSIA'S NEW LEADERSHIP & CONSTITUTION 7

Establish yourself (Hebrew Niphal of *mmk*) and be constituted (Hebrew Hiphil of *mmk*) with a leader; you and all the assemblies that are assembled about you or under your command and you be for them "a watcher." This command of God has to do with the area of influence and in our time it can have to do with treaties and international alliance and even satellite surveillance-cum- protection

THE TIME FACTOR OF THESE EVENTS 8

From "the time of many days" you will be visited with punishment. In "the uttermost of years" or latter time (Hebrew *mymvh tyrja*) you will come to a land "after its return from sword"(Roman overthrow); after its "quibbutz gathering"(!948-1990 when Yashevs replaced Quibbutzes from many peoples upon or over the mountains of Israel, which were continually desolate and she has been caused to come back and they were all "dwelling in a condition of security" (Hebrew *j fbl*)

The time factor is:

(a) Subsequent to the Roman captivity-one spaced from Ezekiel's time by 600 years

(b) Subsequent to the quibbutz movement when the modern state was founded

(c) Subsequent to the establishment of many mountain settlements

(d) Subsequent to the effecting of peace and emergence of security. It has to be subsequent to the 1950's and in the "uttermost of the years" suggests the last days of the times of the Gentiles.

A SURPRISE AERIAL ASSAULT 9

You (Rosh) will rise against her (Israel), coming like a noisy wasting tempest; you will be as a cloud to cover the land. You will rise and all your armed wings and great peoples with you. Here aerial attack –unknown to Ezekiel as a mens of warfare-is proposed by the symbols and the effect of

modern warfare is easily understood by billowing smoke of explosions. The operative word in the assault is "wing" (Hebrew *pga* or *pg*) The root meaning of the Hebrew word "cloud" is both "spreading over to cover" and also "covert" or "mysterious" as if it were out of joint with precedent and immediately provoked an international outcry as to "Why?" it was mounted.

GOD PREDICTS THE STRATEGIC THINKING OF RUSSIA 10-12

[*]Thus says the Lord Yahweh; "It will come to pass in that day that affirmations or words of action will come up over your intellect or will and you will devise an evil scheme." It is important to note the unusual terms and expressions here. The first term is the Hebrew *rbd* which means "action taken simultaneous with speech"-with haste. The second term is "**computed design**"-Hebrew *bvj*-which emphasises the accelerated plan-to-operation execution of this attack; even the use of "computer" facilitating

(1) **You will say, "I will go up over a land of open villages or scattered towns" or "soldier-leaders" ...**The nature of the modern state of Israel is not only characterised by open settlements but by "national service" so that each man and woman of military age has seen service.

(2) **"I will go to the undisturbed settlers" who have security; "all of them dwelling without fortresses or walls with neither bars nor gates" ...**To do so overland without meeting stiff opposition would be impossible-besides the attack has already been described as sudden

(3) **"To strip off (Hebrew *lv*) what can be stripped from (Israel) and to pull to pieces (her wealth) (Hebrew *zb* used of "dissipating" cf. kindred roots *azb qzb rzb* "to divide" "to disperse" to put to flight")** It is in the precise usage here that the desired effect of the assault presents and this is not well translated by current versions. It is in my view a little time ahead that this assault occurs but the seeds of a failed Russian economy and the burgeoning Israeli economy with its new off shore oil and gas reserves minerals fruit high tech exports and potash create within a time whether during a conventional war or subsequent to limited nuclear exchange a residual "world garden" and the ultimate strategic bride to the continents.

(4) **"...and to turn my hand against the wastelands that have turned themselves around and unto a people after they have added to their numbers from gentile nations who have made wealth and made (their) possession dwelling upon the height (Hebrew *rwb*) of the earth or "the best of the earth."** The ease of the offensive encourages Russia. The perceived aerial vulnerability of the nation makes attack attractive and the benefit that would result from engagement with Israel's enemies is another incentive. The recognition that Israel's statecraft is irrevocably linked to the obvious fact that over time there will have been a very considerable brain drain from Russia to Israel. The ultimate objective is to halt the progress and growth of Israel. The war would be conceived to weaken Israel militarily and pocket economic benefits and might well interface with the failure of a two state solution to the Israel/Palestine issue. At the time of richest development and promise which lies ahead Israel will enter its most dangerous period since 1948 excepting perhaps the 6 day war.

ISRAEL'S FRIENDS 13

Sheba and Dedan (the Saudis and Emirates), the travelling merchants of Tarshish ("smelting") and all their young lions will say to you, (a) "Is it to take prey you have come and to get spoil and have you assembled your gathering to carry off silver and gold, to take livestock goods and gain and to gain possession of great wealth? Clearly there is wealth in Israel and this will increase but the representatives of the rich oil states and great merchant economies of western nations which formed the "iron and steel community" or the European nations and the blood thirsty young states (Perhaps we have here one of the few possible allusions to the United States of America) that represent military power greater still will unite to contest the Russian action. The involvement of the Arab states with what we now call "the West" suggests they fear a wider agenda promoted by Russia.

THE TRUE REASON FOR RUSSIA'S STRANGE MOVE 14-16

Therefore, prophecy Son of Man (here Ezekiel is God's representative and in that long distant future day "the man whom God strengthens" who represents the LORD is to speak) and say to God,

[](b)"Thus says the Lord Yahweh, "In that day when my people Israel Sabbath** *(the context is a peaceful period and it is hard to avoid the implication of a 7 year pact which is a temporal marker putting this time a distance ahead- scripture relates that such an agreement will be breached after 3.5 years so marking another time factor)* **in safety will you not know it?" And you will come from your place***(where you rose and were established)* **from the great distances or "far reaches of the north" and many peoples with you-all manning swift armed military vehicles, a great gathering of troops and a mighty force** *(The Hebrew SWS meaning "swallows" or "horses" or "that which leaps" or "that which flies" suggests an emphasis on aircraft but not excluding ground hardware)* *The nation of Russia appears to develop antipathy towards Israel prior to this time-which we await to see. It is not alone the exponential development of Israel but clearly alliance factors(supremely the Iran link up) play into this stand off. If we were to assume the previous occurrence of the rapture (i.e. biblical "one shall be taken one shall be left" action of Christ with the subsequent retrenchment of materialist power the question of the nations leagued with Russia is more readily understood. You will come up against my people* **"like a cloud to cover" the land. It will be in "the latter days" I will cause you to come upon my land in order that the nations may know me in my setting myself apart as alone "holy"***(that is, "to be worshipped")* **through or by you, O Gog, before their eyes.** *So the LORD has determined to use Russia to teach nations that He is Israel's God and that the absolute final days of the Gentiles when it seemed possible to pull true faith down prove are to be the days and the chosen time when a far reaching lesson on God's sovereignty is impending. It would seem that the "cementing of the covenant with Israel which is shortly broken" and the rapture spoken of by Christ fit together (cf Daniel 9 26-7)in this period.*

THE JUDGEMENT OF GOD 17-23

[*]Thus says the Lord Yahweh, "Are you the 'He' of whom I spoke about while indicating my action** *(in my "act-word")* **in ancient days or former days by the hand of my servants the prophets of Israel who prophesied year on year or repeatedly** *(Hebrew mymv)* **in those days to foretell that you would come against them?" And it will happen in that day-"that very day" when Gog comes upon my fertile land of Israel in judgement, whispers** *(a form of speech used in the Hebrew often when God is determined and enraged)* **the Lord Yahweh, that my hot rage will arise in my breathing** *(Hebrew pa "hard breathing" or "nose"). God's "breathing" speaks of His patience or otherwise. His longsuffering will have come to an end with the Gentile nations at this time and He stands squarely in the way of their proudest representative and chief antagonist"Rosh". For in my burning zeal or jealousy of rival* *(Hebrew atq)* **and "in the fire of my passing by" I have spoken amid step by step action** *(Hebrew rbd meaning "in act-word" and rbd has the root meaning "in a strictly ordered manner")* **beyond question there will be a great earthquake upon or above** *(Hebrew l [])* **the fertile land of Israel. And the fish of the sea and birds of the heavens and beasts of the field and every creeping thing that creeps upon the fertile earth shall shake or quake** *(every single insect shall be affected)* **from my face and every man who is upon the fertile earth shall quake** *(every single man shall "jump" or "shake" or "tremble" Hebrew [vr])* **at my presence and the mountains or "mountain tracks"** *(meaning organised land holdings)* **shall be broken** *(Hebrew srh "like broken teeth")* **and all the ascents or steps** *(Hebrew grd which is related to Jrd meaning "routes" or "roads"-so there will be destruction of infrastructure)* **shall fall and every wall shall fall to earth. And "I will call** *(Hebrew atq as a preacher)* **for a sword against him" on account of all my mountains (or tracts of land) whispers** **the Lord Yahweh-the sword of a soldier will be against his confederate and I will set myself up as his judge** *(Hebrew Niphal)* **by deadly plague or "destruction"** *(It is hard to avoid the verdict that military and natural and "act of God" phenomena are in combo here); and by bloodshed and inundating violent rain* *(Hebrew mvj)* **and stones of ice** *(great hail)* **fire and flammable material** *(Hebrew tyrpq)* **I will cause it to pour down heavily** *(Hebrew rfm)* **upon him and upon his army wings and all the great peoples who are with him** *(an expression almost exclusive to Ezekiel and used only once elsewhere in Isaiah 8.8 of the "wings" of the Assyrian army-and probably indicative of paratroopers who were flown in to the high ground)* *These assault troops will encounter conditions worse than those of the first world war. They will engage their own confederates in action and be defeated both by aerial destruction and appalling weather conditions so that the advantage sought through disruption of Israel's road systems in order to gain a foothold will be neutralised. Over*

and over I will have magnified myself, I will have set myself apart and I will have made myself known before the eyes of great nations and they will know that I am the LORD Yahweh. *It would seem that the LORD Himself acts as Judge in this overthrow that the nations are to witness in this latter day tribunal of war.*

EZEKIEL 39 NT REFERENCES: [1] Rev20.9 (6) [2] Rev19.17-18 (17-20) [3] Rev19.21(17 & 20)

ANALYSIS OF NT REFERENCES

(1)The end of the Millennium is envisaged here and another **Gog of the four winds** which Satan stirs up towards the end of the earthly kingdom of Christ belongs to that later age that is to be summarily judged by the LORD *prior to* the appearance of the New Heavens and New Earth

(2)& (3) An angel in the Sun gathers all the "fowls that fly" in heaven" The coming of Christ as king (the rider on the white horse) is here the context and setting. The end of the deception of the false prophet and the end of the financial stranglehold of the beast is envisaged at this time also. All of this is linked to the sequel in Chapter 20 where the Devil is bound 1000 years when nations go free from deception.

EXPOSITION-RUSSIA'S MILITARY CAPACITY NEUTRALISED

And you son of Adam cause yourself to speak prophetically against Gog and speak luminously, "Thus says the Lord Yahweh, 'Behold I am against you, O Gog, prince or leader or lifter up of Rosh Meshech and Tubal. The "leader" involved as previously stated is the one who lifts up the head of Russia-who restores her confidence. Now it is very significant that God speaks **a second time on the very same theme. Why is this so? It clearly stresses the confirmed intent of God to act against Russia and like Deuteronomy it gives greater detail and clarity in respect of the events. I will keep turning you round(Hebrew *blw*) and give you a sixth part(cf Ez 45.13-this is a special grace of God sparing a part of the host)and I will cause you to come up or be strong and elevated from the remote recesses of the north and I will bring you up over or upon the mountains or mountain areas of Israel. And I will beat down or smite (Hebrew *hkn*) your bow (Hebrew *yvq* meaning "that which is "fired" and "smiting the bow" means "breaking or overcoming Russia's power) from your north quarter(cf Job23.19)or from your covered places (silos?)We are to assume that the weapons involved are stored in the north of the country. The act of this war of attrition between the Almighty and Russia which is complementary to the act in the former prophecy of drawing her powerful Leviathan from the sea is to wipe out her land-based rocket facility. In both cases the most significant Hebrew exclamatory word *ymlh* is used. This word is employed by God when he wants undivided attention-as when he speaks to Ahaz or when he speaks of the virgin birth or the atoning death of his Son. This word therefore entails an Act of God for which the world is waiting. And I will cause the arrows (Hebrew *xj* meaning "iron heads" attached to flight bases-an uncanny manner of describing rockets) to fall (Hebrew *lpn* as in the case of Satan can mean "to fall from heaven"-either by sovereign or "iron shield" type protection) from your right hand. And you will fall upon the mountains of Israel and I will give you for food to all the fierce rapacious small circling or revolving birds, to every sort of wing There is something of a give-away in this prophecy because small birds (Hebrew *rpq*) are not compatible with the furious carrion like character (Hebrew *fy*) of eagles. The disposition of an invading army of paratroops and aircraft is being given to the air force of Israel for "as birds flying" the Lord will defend His people (Isaiah 31.5). The Russian forces will be given to every sort of attack aircraft in the skies. The sense in which **Israel's airforce resembles the sparrow** is in their being attached to the territory at this period and flying sorties day and daily. They qualify equally as fierce birds that devour by their redoubtable modern armour **and to the beasts of the field.** This expression does not suit Israel today insofar as there are few wild beasts except a few foxes. The engagement of other world powers (elsewhere as in Daniel described as "beasts") is implicit... **to be destroyed** (Hebrew *lka* is often used of fire and slaughter and of "diminishing") **You will fall on the faces of the fields (Hebrew *hdv*) ploughed and sown (The vital give-away seasonal factor-October November December) for persist or continually order it whispers the LORD.(Notice that God whispers-God is speaking to a prophet and allowing a great secret to become known-one given from a faithful God a faithful hearer) The****

time of this battle is after ploughing and sowing-these farming tasks are executed from October to December. The heavy rains fall in January. It is at or beyond year's end or towards the beginning of the year that this event is to be expected to culminate in slaughter. **And I will send** (Hebrew *hl v* as if to "send out a finger" or "to let go" as if a judgement held back was released) **fire** (Hebrew *ba* used of "war") Here one must pause for there are but two interpretations-either (a) Elijah's action as described in the Apocalypse or (b) a nuclear exchange as is virtually impossible to rule out in view of the sequel. **On Magog** (the region of the Russian or Northern power) **and on those who "have been settlers" /who "dwell secure" in the trans-marine lands or islands** (Hebrew *mya*) **who fear nothing for themselves** (Hebrew *j fbl*) These "settlers" are best understood as Norman & Anglo Saxon British and the Europeans who originally settled the Americas-travelling overseas to do so. These "secure coasts" are marked for "fire" by Almighty God is solemnising. **Then they shall know that I am the LORD.** This additional personal experience is to be understood perhaps in two ways. The people of Russia and of Europe will have had a traditional faith-but in days of tribulation their nations will suddenly be catapulted into a very different situation. I strongly suspect that the bulk of the faithful is taken home "as a thief in the night" and that the rump endures a visitation such as in the Christian centuries has been unknown. For the detail it is necessary to consult the Apocalypse.

THE RELEVANCE OF PAROUSIA AND THE RAPTURE (PARENTHESIS ON "PEACE")

It is consequently of greater interest whether the Church will be withdrawn before this day. The Ezekiel war issues in tribulation or devastation that necessitates a peace treaty which in turn is broken mid-way through its duration (cf Daniel 9.27). That a somewhat earlier exigency promotes that peace cannot however be ruled out. We do well to observe with Dwight Pentecost's doctoral thesis "Things to come" statement (pp197) that those that "dwell in the land" are *κατοικοι* not *παροικοι* -in other words people who have invested all in the earth as opposed to "strangers and pilgrims who have been taken to glory. The "Hereafter of Revelation 4.1 *μετα ταυτα* presents THE CHURCH IN GLORY.(a) 24 elders who serve the tabernacle in heaven till Christ returns in Glory.(b)They are enthroned as Christ promised Matthew 19.28(c)They have white robes as promised the church (d) they have victor's crowns so they have been in conflict conquered and been judged and awarded (e)they worship the LORD AS creator Redeemer Judge and King(f)They know the economy of the king Rev 5.5 & 7.13-14 and (g)They are associated in prayer with the LORD Rev5.8. A study of MATTHEW 24; DANIEL 12; LUKE 21; MARK 13; JEREMIAH 30; REVELATION 7 AND 1THESS. 4 16-18 may help confirm or at least elucidate this fact. The current rush to contrive a peace plan for the Mid-East has lost momentum. The question of the moment is, "How will the unsettling Iranian push for nuclear military prestige be resolved if the current treaty breaks down?" Any sequel will demand intensified diplomacy but in face of the growing danger of the mini world proxy conflict in Syria and the cornering of the Russian bear is there any longer a path to peace? Scripture states "Damascus will be a heap of rubble!" and that oracle gives one little confidence of an easy halt to atrocities in that land. Again can the growing ambitions of Russia be trammelled?

THE NAME OF JESUS IN ISRAEL

So I will make known the name of my holiness in the midst of my people Israel and I will not shine (Hebrew *l ha* like the moon) **the name of my holiness still or any more or daily** (Hebrew *dl*) This could equally mean "I will not pitch the tent of the name of my holiness". To put this positively it means that there will be "sunlight revelation" or it will become clear that the LORD Jesus Christ who tabernacled in Israel 2000 years ago was not coming back to stay at this time but instead had taken His people from the midst of Israel and all the earth to the bridal feast. **And the Gentiles shall know from experience (of me) that I am Yahweh the Holy One "with" or "for" Israel** (Hebrew *l arvyb*) **Behold it comes and "let it come" or "desire its coming"** (the Niphal "tolerative" speaks of the Lord's tolerance of such judgement in the light of His and His people (both in heaven and on earth) desiring the home coming and resolution of things on earth) **whispers the LORD. This is the day I have spoken of** (38.16 and in prophecy generally) The word *rbd* in Hebrew means that it was in the mind of God and it was spoken of by God and it will happen as God said.

THE TELL-TALE SEVEN YEAR CLEAR- UP

And those who dwell in the cities (Hebrew ר[not ריך- because the enemy has come at a time of un-walled conurbations not in ancient but by our standards and era modern "cities" and towns) of Israel will go out and remove or burn them (Hebrew ר[b I prefer the 2nd sense of "remove"[ר[b] because the word "burn" [Hebrew qvn] follows. The first word for "burn" means "to consume" and the second "kindle" The stress is on the clearance and burning of battle dress and ordinance. weapons, small body armour, "bow and arrow (hand held rocketry)" and "rod of the hand(guns)" and "that which elevates or kills"(levered weaponry)and they will burn or dispose of them by burning through them for seven years Here the "bow and arrow" are further described as a rod in the hand with something that kills that lifts up or shoots like an arrow. Now by virtue of the greater imminence of the day prophesied, whilst "speaking as a man", I suggest the ordinance involved includes guns and other assault weaponry of the modern arsenal. The high significance of "seven years" may well be that the effects of this assault will not last into the days of Messiah's kingdom when earth will be renewed for an era. **They will not take wood from the field nor hew timber from the forest because they will make fire with the weaponry and they will skin those who skinned them and pull to pieces those who pulled them to pieces** whispers the Lord Yahweh This expression assumes that in modern history of the end times Jewish people will have been stripped of their clothing, treated as beasts would treat their prey. **This latter day war is pay back time for Gentile nations.** The blood of Jewish persons slaughtered in pogroms and the horrid inhumane and unpardonable treatment of years gone by comes to remembrance. Gomer (originally Ukraine east of the Don and motherland from which even the German nation Askenaz originated).

AN INTERNATIONAL CEMETERY FORETOLD BY GOD.

And it will come to pass in that day that I will give to Gog a burial place in Israel. A Russian cemetery will be built to accommodate the soldiers who fall in the land. **The valley of "passing along" or "overwhelming" or of "passers by" to the east of the sea** (The "Dead Sea " has the Kings Highway which fits the description as does the road east of the sea of Galilee along a section where few people stop even today. A location on the east bank of the Dead Sea would require Israeli-Jordanian accord or a future realignment of borders). The crux is the route employed to approach Israeli armour and defences during the invasion whether the lower Golan and southwards or the Sinai and southern nuclear facilities. **And it will tie up or restrict (Hebrew SSj)travellers and they will bury there Gog and all his multitude and they will call the valley "Hamon Gog" or "humming Gog"** Testimony to the sighs of expiring men and the melancholy of the Galilean harp or the tumult of its passing armies or even a latter day re-enactment of the fire and the cries of Sodom.

For seven months the house of Israel (The name for the nation-for the LORD foreknew that modern settlers would call their nation "Israel") **will be burying them to cleanse the land ritually** (again the custom of burial and scrupulous attention to the detail of fallen bones will be employed. Today around Jerusalem this religious routine is enforced. **And all the people of the land will bury them and it will be to them the occasion of great reputation on the day I gain myself honour** whispers the Lord Yahweh. Though Israel was treated with contumely by other peoples she typically treats the dead with the full honour of Levitical burial of a righteous Jew.

A PERMANENT TEAM OF OSSUARY SPECIALISTS APPOINTED

And "men of continuance" will be selected or after Levitical custom separated to travel through the land burying those remaining who were passed over (in searching) the face of the earth. **In order to purify (the earth) from the end of seven months they will continue their search.** The implication seems to be that the "day of Atonement" September/October marks the war's end. Beginning December /January it would seem to conclude at latest by September/October when the search gets under way. Thereafter the process would continue until Messiah's reign. By implication there is **no validity in urging a general resurrection in this era** which reaches into the tribulation-else bones would be no longer gathered. This Russian cemetery will remain into the golden Messianic age-hence

the significance of its prophetic mention in such detail. The searchers will pass through out the land and a man who sees a bone or a skeleton shall place a "no trespass"(Hebrew lxa "reserve") notice there until those who are engaged in burying bury it in the valley of Hamon Gog. And also the famous name of the walled cemetery will be Hamonah (Hebrew "warm and sunny") and they will cleanse the land. This location may well demand the development of an adjacent city but the text does not warrant this in and of itself. The Hebrew ry[simply means a walled encampment and I would translate this a "walled cemetery" Just as there are famous war graves of the allies in France and a beautiful American cemetery on the outskirts of Cambridge in England, so in future time there will be an international cemetery of excellence on the east bank of the Sea with the mass graves of Russians and people of other nations.

THE BANQUET THAT SATISFIES ANTAGONISTS OF RUSSIA IN THE END DAYS

And you, son of Man; thus says the Lord Yahweh, say to the sparrow of every wing (the ground protecting planes that fly) and to every beast of the field "gather yourselves together"[Hebrew Qibbutz] and come and add to your numbers from all around to my sacrificial meal which I am sacrificing for you-a great sacrifice on the mountains of Israel and eat flesh and drink blood. This call to the nations is stark and startling. This feast is a one off but highly exciting celebration and an exhilarating victory that the LORD shares with nations who had no part in this onslaught and who called for reasons why it was suddenly undertaken. cf 38.13 You shall consume the flesh of warriors and the blood of the chiefs of the earth; you shall banquet on rams(Heb lya metaphor for "leaders") and lambs (Hebrew rk of "the young prepared & fattened" and metaphor for "engine of war" or "assault troops") and goats (Hebrew dwt[metaphor for "fighting leaders")and bulls (Hebrew rp of the "fierce young" and metaphor for sacrifice) all of them fatlings (Hebrew ayrm with the metaphorical meaning "causing rebellion") You shall eat flesh till you are satiated and drink blood till you are intoxicated from my sacrificial meal. You will be filled at my table with horses (Hebrew sws "that which goes swiftly") and riders (Hebrew bkr drivers of war machines) with a "warrior" and "every man of war" whispers the Lord Yahweh. Throughout this passage the subdued but smouldering rage of the Almighty is addressing the prophet quietly with utmost determination that this denouement shall not just punctuate but judicially conclude the age of militarism.

LESSON 1 THE GLORY OF CHRIST AMONG ALL NATIONS-FOUR PROMISES

And I will give my glory among nations and all the Gentiles will see prophetically (by scripture and its fulfilment) my judgement(singular) The Hebrew term fpv has the root meaning "set up" or "defence and deliverance"-so there will be a worldwide re-assessment of God in history and of the divine reality in the constitution of man's future. This would plainly be sharpened by the occurrence of the rapture in this period. This is specifically the knowledge of the divine judgement and the hand of God seen in very much the same way as the Egyptians saw similar events in Moses' time. We are not to assume that the understanding included a turning to the "grace of God" which I have executed and my hand which I have imposed or placed upon them. This is indicative of the manner in which the LORD ordained or disposed the war.

LESSON 2 ISRAEL COMES TO RESPECT YAHWEH AS MESSIAH JESUS (CF 39.7)

And the house of Israel shall know that I am Yahweh from that day and into the remote distance. (Hebrew hal h meaning that although the events unfolded here are for the apex of the "latter days" the divine economy continues on earth to days yet distant. This expression admits of a millennial era when the LORD'S kingdom shall come on earth-God's "set-up")

LESSON 3 GENTILE AWARENESS OF ISRAEL'S RUIN

And the Gentiles shall know that the house of Israel were carried away captive or naked on account of their iniquity on account of that (in) which they acted treacherously towards me (The Hebrew l[m means ""an act of stealth" or a "covert action" but there is a second root where the Hebrew is pointed with a double "pathah" instead of a "comes" and "pathah" and this means ""to possess within one's power". So the issue of Israel's sore plight in history is well understood among

Gentile peoples as following the rejection of Jesus at His first advent. The Tanach states, "The future of Gog will prove that the fall of Israel was not because of God's weakness" The carrying away to Rome and the utter end of that era is indeed well documented by Josephus who was Roman governor at the time. His full history of the siege is widely distributed among the nations and can be obtained through any reputable bookshop today. His narrative contains frank comments of a Roman general Titus, "We have certainly had God for our assistant in this war, and it was no other than God who ejected the Jews out of these fortifications; for what could the hands of men, or any machines, do towards overthrowing these towers" (Josephus 6:9:1) Josephus quotes the sad account rendered by Manneus son of Lazarus to Titus, "Through one gate entrusted to his care were no fewer than a hundred and fifteen thousand eight hundred and eighty dead bodies carried out between Nisan and Tammuz-i.e. between March and June (Josephus 5:13:7)"The number of those carried captives during this whole war was collected to be ninety seven thousand, as was the number of those who perished during the whole siege eleven hundred thousand"(Josephus 6:9:3) **And I hid my face from them and I gave them into the hand of their enemies and they all fell by the sword.** The Romans made full use of the sword .Even those they crucified were despatched by the sword.

THE LORD DEALS WITH ISRAEL IN HIS MOST ZEALOUS ACT OF THE LATTER DAYS.

According to their uncleanness (Hebrew *afm* barred worshippers from the LORD'S presence) **and according to their rebellion or defection I have done to them and hidden my face from them.** The standard of Levitical purity is actually applied to the cleansing offered by the sacrifice of Christ. Through failure to accept this they could not enter His presence. **Therefore thus says Adonai Yahweh, "Now I will return the captives of Jacob and have mercy on the whole house of Israel".** Modern Jews who even today are settled and unable to release themselves from distant lands-people who have supplanted themselves among Gentiles will be brought back. This favour has to do not with a remnant but the "whole house" of Israel. This would appear to result in great numbers of Jews leaving the UK and USA-though divine mercy may have attended them in dispersion too. **And I will be excited or zealous and jealous for the name of my holiness. But they have borne the burden of their shame and their hiding or rebuke in which they were hidden or rebuked "on account of" or "by me" before** (possible use of Hebrew *b* used as in Genesis 23.18) **or "while" they rested on their own fertile land with confidence and none terrifying them** The hand of the LORD'S rebuke did not cease in 1948 and will continue till the end of the times of the Gentiles. Israel even as the 21st century opens is not dwelling with absolute security nor free from terror as regular BBC news casts frequently illustrate.

A STILL LARGER IMMIGRATION OF JEWS IN THE LATTER DAY WILL TAKE PLACE AT LEAST DOUBLING THE NATION'S STRENGTH

When I have brought them back from the nations and gathered them in Quibbutzes from the lands of their enemies and I make myself to be sanctified in them before the eyes of great nations. The LORD speaks here of nations such as are now in the full flourish of political power-i.e. modern nations. **And they will know that I am Yahweh Elohim...** This suggests a new conception of the "power" of GOD if not a beginning of understanding of the Triune God revealed in Father Son and Holy Spirit which is the pure meaning of ELOHIM [cf Rabbi Samuel ben Naham when he came to the verse, "And God said, Let us make man" he said, "Why dost Thou furnish an excuse to heretics?" (for maintaining the plurality of deity)]The use of plural as a form of respectful address in what we call "the royal 'we' is quite foreign to Hebrew. (The Elohim of Genesis and the Penteteuch is a "plural of self-deliberation" and "self-manifestation" not a plur. Majesticus-besides the original Aramaic Qnuma debate of the erly church reflected in John5.21&26 in which Polycarp convinced Bishop Anicetus of Rome against Valentinus of Alexandria that God has "One QNUMA or soul in which exists three Spirits The Father of Spirits, the Holy Spirit and the Spirit of Jesus is at the root of the Greek concept of the hypostatic union)... **in my carrying them away captive and in my gathering them up as treasure** (Hebrew *Sik*) **to their fertile land and without remainder still from their number there.**

PENTECOSTAL RENEWAL OF ISRAEL

And I will not hide my face any longer (*Hebrew rts meaning "veil my face" or hide one's person. We have to envisage the return of Christ as king as one interpretation of this passage*) **from them I who am pouring out My Spirit in profusion upon the house of Israel, murmurs the LORD in prophetic voice.** *Ezekiel finishes this chapter telling us that this nation will be gathered much as the church at Pentecost but gathered with some permanence and then a great outpouring of God's Spirit in the latter day which produces the greatest outreach in history following the most troubled time in all history will be sent by God. This is the final preparation for the return of the King which spells the end of the period of God's "hidden face" The picture of course is derived from the story of Joseph in Egypt and after long patience when the noble Lord of Egypt had tested the hearts of the brothers he "revealed" himself to them face to face and without interpreter.*

THE END

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