

Prophecy in Perspective

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An email newsletter

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The Coming Russian Invasion

In the last few days we have seen an amazing series of events that have put some clear Bible predictions into the spotlight for students of prophecy. The world was horrified at videos of Syrian children, women and men being carried and treated for chemical attacks maliciously perpetrated against them by the Syrian president, Assad. No doubt, Russian Premier Vladimir Putin was aware of these attacks and probably sanctioned them. These actions prompted President Donald Trump to take retaliatory action. This action was proportional and practical by ordering American destroyers in the Mediterranean Sea, and off the coast of Syria, to fire 59 Tomahawk cruise missiles into Syria. The target of these missiles was the airbase from where these chemical attacks originated.



These events should get the attention of every student of prophecy! Israel quickly applauded this action against its ancient neighbor to the north. The Bible predicts that Israel's enemies, originating from the north, namely, Russia, and her allies, will attack Israel in the latter days in a great battle called Gog and Magog (Ezekiel 38-39:16). There is ample evidence to support the idea that this attack by Russia and its Islamic allies can occur at any time. It may occur prior to the rapture, but more likely, it will happen just after the rapture of the church but before the beginning of the Tribulation.

Ezekiel 37, the vision of "dry bones," predicts the calling together of the Jews from the nations to gather as one people back in the land of Israel once again. This regathering of the dry bones of Israel has already begun and in 1948 the land of Israel was reborn. Now there are over 6 million Jews living in the Promised Land of Israel. These dry bones will one day be given the new breath of life in the Lord during the tribulation days ahead. This will happen when Israel will be converted to faith in Jesus Christ as a nation when He returns to the Land of Israel as their Messiah (Ezekiel 37:6,8-10).

With recent events in Syria, we should watch carefully and prayerfully as future dealings and reactions unfold. Russia will not take America's actions lightly, but will seek ways to "teach us a lesson." Russia is warlike as a nation, and their alliance with the Islamic nations, such as Iran and Syria, may easily and quickly develop into a pretext for them to attack Israel. I believe that the ultimate goal of the Russians being in Syria is perhaps already to position themselves for the purpose of their future incursion into Israel to steal their wealth (Ezekiel 38).

In reality, this attack by Gog and Magog, and Rosh (Russia, Ezekiel 38:1-2) could happen at any time. But, remember that this does not happen at the same time as the battle of Armageddon and is not the same battle. Prophecy scholar, Arnold Fruchtenbaum, summarizes the important distinctions between the battle of Gog and Magog, and the battle of Armageddon:

First, in Ezekiel (The battle of Gog and Magog) there are definite allies mentioned and they are limited in number.... In the Campaign of Armageddon all nations are allied together against Jerusalem without exception. **Secondly**, the Ezekiel invasion comes from the north, but the Armageddon invasion comes from the whole earth. **Thirdly**, the purpose of the Russian (38:6) invasion is to take spoil; the purpose of the Armageddon Campaign is to destroy all the Jews. **Fourthly**, in the Ezekiel invasion there is a protest against the invasion; in the Armageddon Campaign there is no protest since all the nations are involved. **Fifthly**, the Ezekiel invasions is destroyed through convulsions of nature; the Armageddon invasion is destroyed by the personal second coming of Jesus Christ. **Sixthly**, the Ezekiel invasion is destroyed on the mountains of Israel; the Armageddon Campaign is destroyed in the area between Petra and Jerusalem. **Seventh**, the Russian invasion takes place while Israel is living securely in the land; but the Armageddon Campaign takes place while Israel in flight and in hiding. (Charting The Times, by Lim LaHaye and Thomas Ice, p. 93)

Today, Israel continues to regather as a nation. At this time also, Christians anticipate the coming of Christ to rapture the church to heaven. Therefore, we should view these current events with great interest as likely indicating the definite unfolding of Bible prophecy and the soon coming of Jesus Christ.

Our amazing God knows just what He is doing. Our expectation for His soon coming should motivate each of us to holy living and active witnessing for Christ! Further, the coming of the Lord should encourage every local church to seek revival in prayer, preaching and missions. Today, do you know Jesus Christ as your personal Savior? Are you watching for His return? Are you a faithful part of a Bible teaching church to encourage your pastors and other believers to live and witness for Christ? Are you a "faithful and sensible steward?"

And the Lord said, "Who then is the faithful and sensible steward, whom his master will put in charge of his servants, to give them their rations at the proper time? "Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so doing when he comes." (Luke 12:42-43, NASB)

Prophecy in Perspective, Copyright, vol. no. 115 - April 8, 2017

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