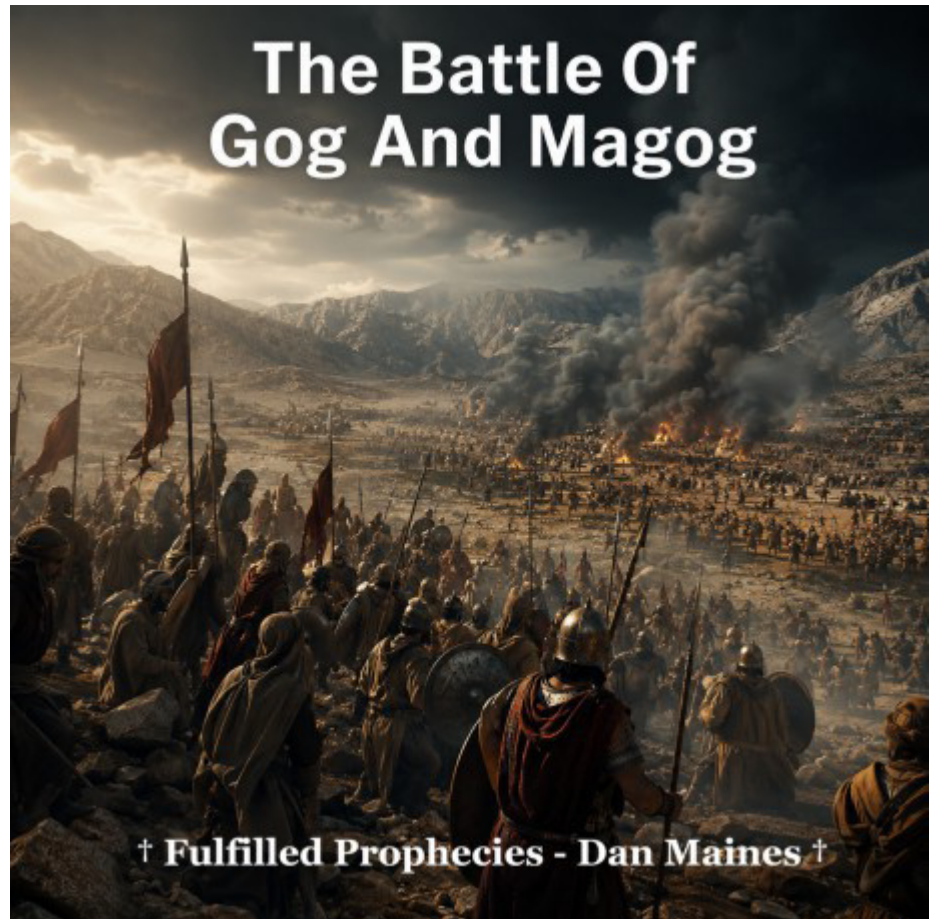


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The Battle Of Gog And Magog



By Dan Maines

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Introduction

† The battle of Gog and Magog has become one of the most misunderstood prophecies in the Bible. Many assume it describes a future world war at the end of human history, even though the Bible never speaks of an end to human history. Instead, the Scriptures place this prophecy within the context of God's covenant dealings with Israel.

† The Bible consistently teaches that God's prophetic timetable was "at hand," "near," and would be fulfilled in the generation that heard Jesus and His apostles. Gog and Magog must be understood within that same covenant framework.

† When we compare Ezekiel 38-39 with Revelation 20, we find that John uses the familiar names of Gog and Magog symbolically, just as he does throughout Revelation, to describe the final rebellion against God's covenant people before the complete establishment of the New Covenant.

Ezekiel's Prophecy Against Gog

Ezekiel 38:1-4

Now the word of the Lord came to me, saying, Son of man, set your face toward Gog of the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him, and say, This is what the Lord God says: Behold, I am against you, Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. So I will turn you around and put hooks into your jaws, and I will bring you out, and all your army, horses and horsemen, all of them magnificently dressed, a great contingent with shield and buckler, all of them wielding swords;

† Ezekiel was addressing Israel's covenant future after the exile, not outlining military events thousands of years later. (Ezekiel 38:1-4)

† Gog represents the enemies who oppose God's covenant people. The emphasis is on God's judgment against those enemies. (Ezekiel 38:1-4)

† The Lord Himself draws Gog into the conflict, demonstrating that God remains completely sovereign over the events being described. (Romans 9:17)

Israel Dwelling Securely

Ezekiel 38:14-16

Therefore prophesy, son of man, and say to Gog, This is what the Lord God says: On that day when My people Israel are living securely, will you not know it? You will come from your place out of the remote parts of the north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding horses, a large assembly and a mighty army; 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 show Myself holy through you before their eyes, Gog.

† The expression "latter days" refers to the last days of the Old Covenant, not the end of world history. (Hebrews 1:1-2)

† Israel's security ultimately finds its fulfillment in Christ and His covenant people rather than in earthly political borders. (Ephesians 2:14-18)

† God's purpose was to reveal His holiness through judgment and deliverance, themes that continue throughout the New Testament. (Luke 21:20-22)

The Prophecy Was Against Israel's Enemies

Ezekiel 38:17

This is what the Lord God says: Are you the one of whom I spoke in former days through My servants the prophets of Israel, who prophesied in those days for many years that I would bring you against them?

† God says Gog was already spoken of by the earlier prophets, showing this wasn't a brand-new end-of-world prophecy.

(Ezekiel 38:17)

† Ezekiel connects Gog to Israel's long history of covenant enemies rather than identifying a future nation unknown to Scripture. (Jeremiah 25:15-33; Joel 3:1-2)

† The focus remains God's judgment against those opposing His covenant people. (Isaiah 34:1-8)

The Great Slaughter Of Gog

Ezekiel 39:21-22

And I will place My glory among the nations; and all the nations will see My judgment which I have executed, and My hand which I have laid on them. And the house of Israel will know that I am the Lord their God, from that day onward.

† God's judgment always serves the purpose of revealing His glory. (Ezekiel 39:21-22)

† After judgment comes the acknowledgment that the Lord alone is God. (Isaiah 45:22-23)

† This points beyond a single military battle to God's complete covenant victory over His enemies. (Hebrews 12:26-29)

John Uses Gog And Magog Symbolically

Revelation 20:7-10

When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, and will come out to deceive the nations which are at 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. 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. 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.

† This is where many futurist pastors take Gog and Magog and turn it into a future event, even though Revelation places it within a prophecy that was about to be fulfilled. (Revelation 1:1-3; Revelation 22:10)

† John deliberately borrows the names Gog and Magog from Ezekiel to portray a final covenant rebellion. (Revelation 20:7-10)

† Revelation consistently uses symbolic language drawn from the Old Testament rather than introducing entirely new prophetic characters. (Revelation 1:1)

† The beloved city is covenant Jerusalem, the central focus of Revelation's judgment narrative. (Revelation 11:8)

† The battle ends immediately with divine judgment, showing God's complete victory without a prolonged earthly war. (Revelation 20:9)

Revelation Was Signified

Revelation 1:1

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must soon take place; and He sent and communicated *it* by His angel to His bond-servant John,

† John says the Revelation was "signified," meaning it was communicated through signs and symbols. (Revelation 1:1)

† That prepares the reader to understand Gog and Magog as symbolic covenant imagery rather than a newspaper prophecy. (Revelation 20:7-10)

† Revelation repeatedly draws its symbols from the Old Testament, and Gog and Magog are no exception. (Daniel 7:1-8; Ezekiel 38-39)

The Time Was At Hand

Revelation 1:1-3

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must soon take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John, who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, everything that he saw. Blessed is the one who reads, and those who hear the words of the prophecy and keep the things which are written in it; for the time is near.

† John opens Revelation by declaring that its prophecies would happen shortly and that the time was at hand. (Revelation 1:1-3)

† We shouldn't ignore these inspired time statements in favor of modern speculation. (Revelation 22:6-10)

† Gog and Magog must fit within the same inspired time frame as the rest of Revelation. (Matthew 24:34)

The Prophecy Was Not Sealed

Revelation 22:10

And he said to me, Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near.

† Unlike Daniel, John was specifically told not to seal the prophecy because its fulfillment was near (Revelation 22:10)

† The same time statement applies to Gog and Magog since it is part of the same Revelation. (Revelation 20:7-10)

† Ignoring John's time statements forces Gog and Magog thousands of years beyond the audience to whom Revelation was written. (Revelation 1:1-3)

Jesus Said It Would Happen In That Generation

Matthew 24:34

Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.

† Jesus included all the events He described within the lifetime of His own generation. (Matthew 24:34)

† Revelation expands upon the same covenant judgment that Jesus predicted on the Mount of Olives. (Luke 21:20-22)

† Gog and Magog cannot be separated from the time framework Jesus established for the fulfillment of end-time prophecy. (Revelation 1:1-3)

Historical References

† Josephus described the Jewish War as a time when Jerusalem was surrounded by enemies from many regions, resulting in unparalleled devastation that fulfilled Jesus' warnings. Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Books 5-6.

† Eusebius recorded that the Christians escaped Jerusalem before its destruction, demonstrating God's preservation of His covenant people during the judgment. Eusebius, Ecclesiastical

History, Book 3, Chapter 5.

† Irenaeus recognized that Revelation was filled with symbolic imagery and Old Testament language, reminding readers to interpret its visions carefully. Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, Book 5.

How It Applies To Us Today

† We don't live in fear of a future Gog and Magog invasion because Christ has already established His everlasting kingdom.

† Our confidence rests in the finished work of Christ rather than in newspaper headlines or geopolitical speculation.

† God's covenant promises have been fulfilled, giving believers peace instead of fear.

† We can boldly proclaim the gospel because Christ reigns now and His kingdom cannot be shaken.

Q & A Appendix

Q: Is Gog a specific future political leader?

A: Scripture never identifies Gog as a modern political leader. Ezekiel presents Gog as the leader of the enemies opposing God's covenant people, and Revelation uses Gog and Magog symbolically within its prophetic vision. (Ezekiel 38:1-4; Revelation 20:7-10)

Q: Does Revelation teach a future world war after Christ's kingdom?

A: No. Revelation says these events would shortly come to pass and that the time was at hand. The battle ends

immediately by God's judgment and fits the first-century fulfillment of Revelation. (Revelation 1:1-3; Revelation 20:9; Matthew 24:34)

Q: Why does John use the names Gog and Magog?

A: John frequently borrows Old Testament imagery to communicate New Covenant realities. Gog and Magog represent the final organized opposition to God's covenant people before the complete transition into the fully established New Covenant age. (Ezekiel 38-39; Revelation 20:7-10)

Q: Should Christians fear Gog and Magog today?

A: No. Christ has already triumphed over His enemies, established His kingdom, and fulfilled His promises within the time He declared. Our focus is on living faithfully in His present kingdom. (Hebrews 12:28; Revelation 1:1-3; Matthew 28:18-20)

Q: Why are Gog and Magog mentioned again in Revelation if Ezekiel already prophesied about them?

A: John often uses Old Testament names and imagery to explain New Covenant realities. Just as he uses Babylon, Jezebel, Balaam, and Sodom symbolically, he also uses Gog and Magog to represent covenant opposition rather than reviving an unfinished prophecy. (Revelation 11:8; Revelation 17:5; Revelation 20:7-10)

Q: Does Ezekiel ever say Gog is Russia or any modern nation?

A: No. The text never identifies Gog with Russia or any modern country. Those ideas come from modern speculation, not from Scripture. The Bible identifies Gog only within Ezekiel's prophetic context and John's symbolic use in Revelation. (Ezekiel 38:1-17; Revelation 20:7-10)

Q: What was the actual battle of Gog and Magog?

A: The battle of Gog and Magog was not a future world war. Ezekiel prophesied of a great covenant enemy coming against God's people, while Revelation uses the names Gog and Magog symbolically to describe the final organized rebellion against the saints before God's covenant judgment reached its climax. The battle ended with God's complete victory, not a prolonged military campaign. (Ezekiel 38-39; Revelation 20:7-10; Luke 21:20-22)

Q: If Gog and Magog was fulfilled, who were Gog and Magog?

A: Gog and Magog are not identified as specific modern nations. In Ezekiel they represent the enemies gathered against God's covenant people, and in Revelation John borrows those same names as symbolic imagery for the nations deceived into opposing the saints during the closing days of the Old Covenant age. The emphasis is on God's victory over covenant opposition, not on identifying a future political alliance. (Ezekiel 38:1-17; Revelation 1:1; Revelation 20:7-10)

This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies. †

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Source Index

† Ezekiel 38:1-4, 14-16, 17, 39:21-22; Revelation 1:1, 1-3, 20:7-10, 22:10; Matthew 24:34

† Historical writers: Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Books 5-6; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, Book 3, Chapter 5; Irenaeus, Against Heresies, Book 5

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