

Ezekiel's Prophecy Against Gog

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Introduction

The present paper lays the foundation for a later discussion of Dan 11:40-45. A major point emphasized below is that end time prophecies are not self-contained. They cannot be understood in isolation from each other. There is a synergy among them such that one can only grasp the Holy Spirit's intent adequately when all expressions of it have been studied together.

Both Ezek 38-39 and Dan 11:40-45 are written with memories of actual historical events in view. But the events remembered are not the same ones. What this means in the present context is that the historical matrix from which the language for a given prophecy is drawn must not be confused with the application made with it. Ezekiel draws heavily on events that took place in seventh century Anatolia, while Daniel draws to an equal degree on the experience of his own captivity under Nebuchadnezzar, but there is only one application in the end time. In both cases the prophecy's setting is in the past from the writer's point of view but the application remains future from our point of view. There are two different timeframes here, which must be distinguished.

The above concept strikes at the root of literalism, from which we get the popular notion that Russia will attack modern Israel and that the ensuing conflict will be Armageddon.¹ In this paper I argue that we cannot speak of "Russia" until those people arrived who gave that land its name. The people in question were Norsemen known as Rus (Byzantine authors called them Rhos, a word that could also be spelled Ros). The establishment of a Russian state is a datable event and we know that it occurred in the ninth century A.D. This is a problem for the Evangelical who wishes to see Russia in Ezek 38:2, 3 and 39:1 since all the rest of Ezekiel's historical imagery is drawn from a period some fifteen hundred years earlier. We are not yet talking about how to apply this imagery. All agree that the application is future. The question is whether, within the language that an application must be drawn from, there is a reference to Russia. If there is not, it is a fact that will have wideranging implications.

The Narrative Context

The immediate narrative context of Ezek 38-39 is found in Ezek 36-37. We might summarize the contrast between these two prophecies by saying that in chaps.36-37 bones are transformed into men, whereas in chaps.38-39 men are transformed into bones. Gog and all his horde go down to destruction. Their number is so great that it takes seven years to bury them all. The end of Gog and his horde is the opposite counterpart of Ezekiel's oracle in the valley of dry bones (see 37:1-14).

The contextual background for chaps.38-39, however, is broader than just chaps.36-37. We could generalize that Ezek 38-39 is to chaps.40-48 as Ezek 35 is to chaps.36-37. Together the last fourteen chapters of Ezekiel all contribute in some way to our understanding of the prophecy under review.

Ezek 35 is an oracle against Edom, which must be studied together not only with Ezek 25 but also with the book of Obadiah.² When the Babylonian army overran Jerusalem, presumably during the third attack on the city in 586 B.C., the Edomites gave the Babylonians their support and lay in wait for those Jews who escaped. Thus, the Babylonians were the ones who devastated Judea but they did so with Edomite complicity. The vision of dry bones is a promise that the Jewish nation would come back to life again after this seemingly final crushing defeat.

We should not lose sight of the fact that the above promise was fulfilled. The Jews of Ezekiel's day did not have to wait more than two thousand years for their temple to be rebuilt, as Daniel at first assumed in Dan 8, or for the people to return to their homeland.³ Indeed those few who chose to return were under a curse at the time of Haggai's ministry (520 B.C.) because they would not participate actively in the restoration that was going on all around them.

This is what the Lord Almighty says: "These people say, 'The time has not yet come for the Lord's house to be built.'"

(3) Then the word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggai: (4) "Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house remains a ruin?" (Hag 1:2-4)

These people thought more time would have to pass before it would be necessary or even appropriate to finish rebuilding the temple. Evidently what they had in mind was the seventy year time prophecy of Jeremiah. Assuming that this period was a description of the exile, and counting it from the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.,⁴ seventy years would bring them to 516 B.C.⁵ It was now 520 B.C.⁶ Thus, there could be no restoration for four more years and they would expend no effort on the temple until then. But the restoration had already taken place. The Jews were living in their own land again and had been for nineteen years, ever since Cyrus had allowed them to return. That was the problem. They were content to live on in relative comfort while the house of God was in ruins. God wanted to act through them and they wanted to wait for Him to act later in some undefined manner. But it was no longer a matter of waiting. By 520 B.C. it was well past time to get on with the work at hand and rebuild the temple.

This is not to say that all of what God had in mind for the Jews was accomplished immediately after the exile or at any subsequent time. It was not His will, for example, that after this first set of promises had seen almost six centuries of fulfillment another set, which the earlier ones had the sole purpose of introducing, should be so largely frustrated. It was not God's will that His Son should be hated and crucified by His own people, although He knew that this would happen. It was not His will that the Jewish nation should disown their Messiah by asking that first Barabbas (see Luke 23:18-19) and then Caesar be allowed to take His place:

"Shall I crucify your king?" Pilate asked.

"We have no king but Caesar," the chief priests answered. (John 19:15)

Requesting even a native Israelite king was considered an act of rejection in Samuel's day: "Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected as their king, but me" (1 Sam 8:7). At that earlier time the people might have been acting in ignorance, but what defense can we bring forward in the latter case?⁷

God had better things in mind for His people than the destruction of Jerusalem and their forced expulsion from Palestine would imply (see Matt 23:37-39). As in the parable of the king and the wedding banquet, however, those who were at first invited did not come. So He took His invitation to those who would. The promise of a banquet would be fulfilled, whether or not those it was originally intended for had any part in it (see Luke 14:15-24). So when God said through Zechariah, "'The Lord will inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land and will again choose Jerusalem'" (Zech 2:12), He meant it literally--and fulfilled His promise more than half a millenium before Christ.⁸

In Ezek 38-48 we have a counterpart during the end time to what happened to the Jews long ago in Ezek 35-37. Thus, chaps. 38-39 state that Israel is once more to be attacked. And in chaps.40-48 there is yet another restoration afterward. But when speaking of "Israel" in the end time we must define our terms carefully, realizing that it would be possible to misunderstand them. There is no benefit to be gained by studying the prophecies of the Old Testament as though Christ never came. He did come and one implication of His coming is that Israel today is that body of people who have the faith of Abraham--not the blood of Abraham (see Rom 2:28-29). Those who crucified Christ had the blood of Abraham, but it will not help them in the judgment. Nor will it help anyone who rejects Him now. There is no special fund of insight to be discovered by ignoring the spiritual dimension of God's promises. On the contrary, the reverse is true. It is by acknowledging Christ's role in the prophecies that their true meaning and import are revealed.⁹

If Ezek 35 recalls a historical attack and if Ezek 36:37 promises a historical restoration, which did in fact occur right on schedule, Ezek 38-39 describes an eschatological attack (one which is unsuccessful) and Ezek 40-48 describes an eschatological restoration.

A Problem Word: *rōʾš*

A major problem confronting the exegete of Ezek 38-39 is to correctly translate, and interpret the implications of the word *rōʾš* in Ezek 38:2, 3; and 39:1. In each of these passages the Hebrew says *nʿšî rōʾš mēšek wʿtûbāl*. Some translations render this phrase as, "prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal" (see JB, Mof, NASB, NEB, NKJV, RV). Others render it as, "chief prince of Meshech and Tubal" (see KJV, MLB, NIV, RSV). Thus, the readings "prince of Rosh" and "chief prince" have both been proposed by competent scholars.

It might not be clear at the outset which of the two readings is preferable, but at least it is clear that they are different. From this I draw that if the prophet's intent corresponds to either of them, it will not correspond to both. If one is right, the other is wrong. Thus, whereas in fairness we must say that different people hold different opinions about the passage, this does not mean the opinions they hold have equal exegetical value. They do not. We must choose between them.

At issue is whether Russia (as Rosh, Ros, Rus, or whatever) has any identifiable role in the prophecy. Whatever position one takes on Russia in Ezek 38:2 (and its parallels in Ezek 38:3 and 39:1) will dramatically influence his understanding of all the other symbols in the prophecy, his concept of literalism in the Old Testament, the relationship between the Old Testament and the New, and ultimately what direction to look for prophetic significance in current events.¹⁰ The implications of a wrong conclusion here are serious because one's concept of current events is directly related to his concept of current responsibility. A lot rests on

how we understand Ezek 38:2. That part of the verse which is especially germane to the present discussion is now quoted, clause by clause:

1. Hebrew: ben-ʾādām śīm pānēkā ʾel-gôg
Literal gloss: "Son of man, set your face against Gog, of"
2. Hebrew: ʾéreṣ hammāgôg
Literal gloss: "the land of Magog,"
3. Hebrew: n^éśîṙ rōʾš
Literal gloss: "the chief prince of"
4. Hebrew: mēšek w^étúbāl
Literal gloss: "Meshech and Tubal." (NIV)

Alternatively, phrases 3 and 4 could be rearranged in the following manner:

3. Hebrew: n^éśîṙ
Literal gloss: "the prince of"
4. Hebrew: rōʾš mēšek w^étúbāl
Literal gloss: "Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal."

Problems raised by treating *rōʾš*
as a noun in Ezek 38:2

"Rosh" gives the sound and "chief" gives the meaning of the Hebrew word in question. In clause 3, to ask whether *rōʾš* should be transliterated as "Rosh" or translated as "chief" is to ask whether that word should be understood as a noun or an adjective. If it is a noun, it joins "Meshech and Tubal" as part of a list of other nouns. If it is an adjective, it joins "prince" as a modifier. There is room for genuine disagreement on this matter and yet I hope to show that on close examination the latter interpretation is preferable. NIV has given the passage its correct sense ("chief prince of Meshech and Tubal"). Grammatically there are two main reasons for this.

The first reason for taking *rōʾš* as an adjective modifying *n^éśîṙ* (thus, "chief prince") is that, according to Gesenius, in the syntax of construct phrases Hebrew "prefers to avoid a series of several co-ordinate genitives depending upon one and the same *nomen regens*..."¹¹

To illustrate this rule consider Gen 24:3, which says in part: *ʾlōhê haššāmáyim wēʾlōhê hāʾāreṣ* ("[the] God of heaven and [the] God of earth"). This verse does not teach that there are two Gods--one of heaven and one of earth. But the word for "God" is repeated in Hebrew to avoid what that language regards as an awkward syntactic construction. Thus, when a given thought would otherwise place more than one genitive (*nomen rectum*) in construct with a single *nomen regens*, the preferred solution is to repeat the *nomen regens* before each genitive, as in Gen 24:3. An exception to the above rule is found in Num 20:5.

"Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to this terrible Place? It has no grain or figs, grapevines or pomegranates [*lôʔ m^eqôm zéra^c ût^eênâ w^egépen w^erimmôn*]. And there is no water to drink!" (Num 20:5)

The middle clause could be literally translated to read: "It is not a place of grain or of figs or of grapevines or of pomegranates." Because this sounds repetitive to speakers of English, our tendency is to leave out words for the sake of good style. Thus, "no grain or figs, grapevines or pomegranates" (NIV). But Hebrew, unlike English, uses "and" (*w^e*, also translated "or") wherever possible. In clauses such as the one quoted above from Num 20:5 it is not repeated "and"s that Hebrew tries to avoid, but repeated "of"s.¹²

The second reason for taking *rôš* as an adjective modifying "prince" is that, as mentioned above, Hebrew is fond of the particle *w^e* ("and"). This is an element the language does not try to avoid but uses whenever it can.

The passage from Gesenius quoted in an earlier paragraph lists a number of examples where there is more than one genitive in construct with a single *nomen regens* (Gen 14:19; Num 31:54 (=1Chr 13:1); 1 Sam 23:7; 2 Sam 19:5 (MT 19:6); Isa 22:5; Ps 5:7; 8:3). Now under any interpretation Ezek 38:2 will also have more than one genitive. If we read "chief prince of Meshech and Tubal" (NIV), the number of such genitives is two. If we read "prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal," the number is three. Because our purpose here is to choose between the above readings, no example with only two genitives is relevant. In the above list only Isa 22:5 has three genitives. All the others have two. Isa 22:5 is quoted below. Bear in mind that what we are looking at here is not how the multiple genitives relate to their head noun (their "of" relationship). Instead we are looking at how they relate to each other (their "and" relationship).

Hebrew: *kî yôm m^ehûmâ ûm^ebûsâ ûm^ebûkâ* (Isa 22:5)

Literal gloss: for [it is] a day of tumult and of trampling and of terror

This is what the passage says. Let me restate it in order to illustrate a point. It does not say:

Hebrew: **kî yôm m^ehûmâ m^ebûsâ ûm^ebûkâ* (Isa 22:5)

Literal gloss: for [it is] a day of tumult, trampling and of terror

Notice that the syntax of Isa 22:5 is already unusual because of the construct chain with three genitives. It is not rendered even more unusual by failing to link those genitives with "and." There are certainly cases where "and" is left out. For example in Ezek 38:6 the Hebrew says *pāras kûš ûpûṭ* ("Persia, Cush, and Put"). But in this case the nouns linked in this unusual way are not part of a construct chain.¹³ What we are talking about in Ezek 38:2--under the assumption that *rôš* functions there as a noun--is the prospect of combining both features. If there is any precedent for such syntactic usage, Gesenius does not tell us about it.

Examples of *rôš* used as an adjective

The word *rôš* is seldom used as an adjective and this could be one reason why more scholars have not given it that sense in Ezek 38:2. Consider the following remarks by C.F. Keil:

It is true that Ewald follows Aquila, the Targum, and Jerome, and connects *rōš* with *nēšî* as an appellative in the sense of *princeps capitis*, chief prince. But the argument used in support of this explanation, namely, that there is no people of the name of Rosh mentioned either in the Old Testament or by Josephus, is a very weak one; whilst, on the other hand, the appellative rendering, though possible, no doubt, after the analogy of *hakkōhēn rōš* in 1 Chron xxvii.5, is by no means probable, for the simple reason that the *nēšî rōš* occurs again in ver.3 and ch.xxxix.1, and in such repetitions circumstantial titles are generally abbreviated.¹⁴

Keil has argued well for his position, but I think he is wrong. There are three other examples, apart from 1 Chr 27:5, that he could have been mentioned. These are Exod 30:23; Num 1:4; and Josh 22:14. Below I quote all four passages.

Hebrew: *b^ešāmîm rōš* (Exod 30:23)

Literal gloss: fine spices

Hebrew: *יִישׁ רֹשׁ לְבֵית־אֲבוֹתָיו הוּא* (Num 1:4)

Literal gloss: a prominent man [belonging] to his father's house

Hebrew: *וְיִישׁ רֹשׁ בֵּית־אֲבוֹתָם הֵמָּה* (Josh 22:14)

Literal gloss: and each was a prominent man of his father's house

Hebrew: *hakkōhēn rōš* (1 Chr 27:5)

Literal gloss: the chief priest

Here Exod 30:23 is correctly translated, "Take the following fine spices [*b^ešāmîm rōš*]: . . ." Here *rōš* ("fine") is treated as an adjective modifying *b^ešāmîm* ("spices").

In Num 1:4, however, *rōš* is made to modify "family" rather than "man" (omitted). Thus, "One man from each tribe, each the head of his family, is to help you" (Num 1:4). The word "man" is expected to occur again after "each," but does not. It is the omitted word "man" that *rōš* modifies. Otherwise, in view of the preposition *l^e-* (*rōš l^e bêt-^abōtāyw*, "a head of his father's house"), "a head" would be a more accurate rendering than "the head" (NIV). How many heads are there in a given family? This awkward result is avoided by allowing *rōš* to modify *יִישׁ* ("man"). In this case the sense of the passage is that each man chosen to assist must be a prominent man within his family line, whether or not he is also the most prominent.

The situation in Josh 22:14 is roughly equivalent to that in Num 1:4 and need not be discussed separately here.¹⁵

Keil mentions 1Chr 27:5 in the paragraph quoted above. In NIV the rendering suggested is, "The third army commander, for the third month, was Benaiah son of Jehoiada the priest. He was chief and there were 24,000 men in his division" (1 Chr 27:5). Such a rendering sounds plausible, but there are three problems with it. First, the second clause lacks an "and" on its first word (*rōš*) but has one on its second word (*w^eal*). This in itself is a very broad hint that something is wrong. Second there is no copula, i.e., the words "He was" have to be supplied. There is no problem with supplying a copula in translation if the conditions are right, but here

they are not. The word *rōš* ("chief") is not a complete clause. NIV treats it as though it were. And third, there is the matter of context.

The clause which mentions Benaiah is one in a series of twelve such clauses dealing with military leaders, each of whom is to serve for one month out of the year. In eleven cases the month is named, the leader is named, and then we read, "There were 24,000 men in his division" (vss.2, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15). In this case there are some extra words: "He was chief and there 24,000 men in his division [*rōš w^eal mah^aluqtô ešrîm w^oarbā'â 'ālep*]" (vs.5). Why does only one example out of twelve add "He was chief" before saying "There were 24,000 men in his division"? And why does that one example immediately follow the statement that the father of the commander in question was a priest? Putting it there makes barbarous Hebrew syntax and it breaks the formulaic pattern established by the eleven clauses that are parallel to this one. If, however, Benaiah's father were not a common priest but a high priest, all difficulty vanishes. The word *rōš* serves as an adjective modifying "priest" rather than as an impossible predicate.¹⁶ Besides, there were many common priests. Why would it be considered unusual that someone was the son of a priest? But if he were the son of a high priest, that would be worth mentioning.

Returning now to Keil's argument, notice that the discussion so far has been confined to the text. I have not yet made any appeal to historical evidence. Keil's assumption was that the syntax of Ezek 38:2 could support either reading ("chief prince," "prince of Rosh") with equal facility and that any evidence which could tip the balance in favor of one or the other would have to be external in nature. I disagree. The text contains ample information to allow us to decide between the two main interpretations under review. There will be occasion to discuss historical evidence below, and it supports the view I advocate, but let each thing be done in its proper order. First we must understand the text, then we will be able to apply it responsibly.

When the geographical and historical context for Ezek 38-39 has been discussed it will be possible to offer a substantial answer to the vexed question of whether Ezekiel is talking about Russia and hopefully lay the matter permanently to rest. The evidence from history is just as damning for the Russia hypothesis as the evidence from syntax. Both lines of argument converge to support one and the same conclusion: *rōš* is not Russia. I return to this matter in a later section of the paper.

The Geographical Context

Ezek 38-39 provides a table of nations for the end time, just as Gen 10 contains a table of nations for an earlier age. See table 1.

Table 1
Nations Mentioned in Ezek 38 and 39:
Text References

Nation	Ezek 38	Ezek 39	Gen 10
Cush	5		Ham
Dedan	13		Ham
Gomer	6		Japheth
Magog	2	6	Japheth
Meshech	2, 3	1	Japheth
Persia	5		. . .
Put	5		Ham
Sheba	13		Ham
Tarshish	13		Japheth
Togarmah	6		Japheth
Tubal	2, 3	1	Japheth

Note: "Gog" is mentioned in Ezek 38:2, 3, 14, 16, 18, 21; 39:1, 1, 11, 11.

Below I discuss the regions mentioned by Ezekiel in a rough approximation of geographical sequence. We start in the North (Togarmah), go clockwise in a circle around Ezekiel's homeland (Persia, Sheba and Dedan, Cush and Put, Tarshish), and finally return to the North (Meshech and Tubal, Magog), where the geographical focus of the prophecy lies.

Gomer represents a special case. The history of the wild and unruly Cimmerians was written piecemeal by those whose territories they invaded, so none of the accounts is favorable. They were pushed down out of the Asian steppes into Mesopotamia by the equally uncivilized Scyths at the end of the eighth century B.C.¹⁷ After the Cimmerians had once arrived in Anatolia they moved restlessly from place to place, always volatile and aggressive. They are not clearly or permanently associated with any one region, although at different times they controlled Tabal (Cappadocia), Mushku (the area that borders on the Black Sea as far west as the Aegean), and Luddu (or Lydia) farther south. Thus, at one time or another during the seventh century B.C. they roamed and raided through much of Anatolia. There is no separate discussion of the Cimmerians in this paper.

Togarmah

"... also Gomer with all its troops, and Beth Togarmah from the far north with all its troops—the many nations with you." (Ezek 38:6)

In Gen 10:3 Togarmah is a son of Gomer, and Magog is a brother of Gomer (Gen 10:2). Here Ezekiel is not making any direct reference to this biblical figure but rather speaks of "Beth Togarmah" (the House of Togarmah) (Ezek 38:6), i.e., the descendents of Togarmah, associated with the city by that name.

During the 2nd millennium BC Old Assyrian and Hittite texts locate Tegarama near Carchemish and Harran on a main trade-route. It was called Til-garimmu in the Annals of Sargon and Sennacherib, and was the capital of Kammanu on the border of Tabal (*Tubal), until destroyed in

695 BC. Perhaps to be identified with classical Gauraena, modern Gürün, 120 km W of Malatya.¹⁸

Notice two things about the ancient city of Togarmah. First, as nearly as I can determine, Gu | ru | n is located in the mountainous Kayseri province of modern Turkey, about a third of the distance from the Gulf of Alexandretta, to which the island of Cyprus points, due north toward the Black Sea. And second, if Togarmah was destroyed in 695 B.C., the prophecy which refers to it must be doing so from a perspective no later than that date. After the seventh century there was no Togarmah to refer to. The fact that Ezekiel mentions this city is therefore important from a chronological point of view.

The association of Togarmah with Gomer in vs.6 deserves special comment. When the Cimmerians first came down from the steppes of Asia, they "entered Urartu from the north, defeated Argistis in his attempt to stop them, and passed westwards to Cilicia."¹⁹ Urartu (Armenia) was not under tribute to Assyria but Cilicia was. So when the Cimmerians overran Cilicia, Sargon II (721-705) raised an army against them. He marched to Tabal (Tubal) in 706 B.C. and died, presumably fighting the Cimmerians there, in 705 B.C. After this encounter the Cimmerians went north as far as Sinope on the Black Sea. But they did not stay there.

A few years later the Cimmerians were back in Cilicia. One reason for this, which Ezekiel does not mention, may have to do with the Scyths.²⁰

Probably under pressure from these Scythians, groups of Cimmerians again appeared in the area of Tabal and the province of Hilakku. In 679 B.C. the Assyrian governors undertook successful action against them, but the pressure intensified and by 673 B.C. they were threatening the province of Shupria. By the end of the reign of Esarhaddon the provinces of Hilakku and Tabal were definitely lost.²¹

It is not clear whether the Cimmerians controlled Togarmah before fighting Sargon, or after doing so, or at all, but there can be no doubt that they contested its possession. How else can we explain the city's destruction at this particular time in history? It would be reasonable to think of Togarmah as one of the first parts of Anatolia to be overrun by the Cimmerians--their point of entry into Anatolia as it were--and Ezekiel's reference to "Beth Togarmah" as a token of that entry.²²

Persia

"Persia, Cush and Put will be with them, all with shields and helmets, . . ." (Ezek 38:5)

The inclusion of Persia in the present list could be misunderstood.²³ The problem is that, under Cyrus, Persia became a great empire--one of only four in the book of Daniel that enjoyed such stature. This makes Persia unique among the other nations mentioned in Ezek 38-39 and therefore out of place.

The solution lies enfolded within the problem. It was under Cyrus that Persia achieved greatness and Cyrus lived in the sixth century B.C. Here we are talking about the seventh century. The Cimmerians entered Urartu from the North in 707 B.C.²⁴ and were pushed back as far as the Black Sea by the Assyrians in 705 B.C.²⁵ They were finally defeated by the Lydian king Alyattes (grandson of Gyges) in about 637 or 626 B.C.²⁶ Thus, unless we assume that

Ezekiel is bringing together a collage of historical tidbits culled indiscriminately from different centuries, we must focus on the seventh century and not allow ourselves to be distracted from that timeframe.

Seventh century Persia and Persia as it was eventually ruled by Cyrus the Great (558-529) and his successors are not the same thing at all.²⁷ The geographical features will have remained the same, but the degree of military and cultural influence that Persia would eventually exert bears no comparison to the relative obscurity from which it rose to such later prominence. Even during the height of its power Persia was a land of villages.²⁸ There were few cities of any size apart from the various royal residences.²⁹ While these must have been very impressive, before there were kings to live in them Persia was better known for its great salt desert, the Dasht-i Kavir.³⁰ In Ezek 38:5 Persia is a source of auxiliary troops for an Anatolian king, just as in Ezek 27:10 Persia was a source of auxiliary troops for a Tyrian king. We must not read our memories of later Persian greatness back into this earlier period.

Notice also that in the above passage Ezekiel is speaking of Persia rather than Media.³¹ Media (in the West) did not share Persia's early obscurity. According to Polybius,

It is difficult indeed to speak in adequate terms of the strength and extent of the district. Media lies in central Asia, and looked at as a whole, is superior in size and in the height of its mountain-ranges to any other district in Asia. Again it overlooks the country of some of the bravest and largest tribes. For outside its eastern border it has the desert plain that separates Persia from Parthia; it overlooks and commands the so-called Caspian Gates, and reaches as far as the mountains of the Tapyri, which are not far distant from the Hyrcanian Sea. Its southern portion extends as far as Mesopotamia and the territory of Apollonia and borders on Persia, from which it is protected by Mount Zagrus, a range which has an ascent of a hundred stades, . . .³²

With the Indus River valley (i.e., India) on one side and Media on the other, Persia during the seventh century B.C. must have appeared--from both directions--as a culturally backward frontier region. This is the point to notice in Ezek 38:5. Maintaining a clearly defined concept of the timeframe Ezekiel has in mind as he writes will contribute materially to our understanding of what he says at this point.

For now it is enough to observe that no nation of superpower status is mentioned in Ezek 38-39. There are hints that Ezekiel may have been both interested and well read in matters pertaining to Assyria.³³ But he does not mention that country here, or Egypt either, and his reference to Persia points to a time before it achieved any international stature. A pattern as consistent as this one cannot have happened by accident. We must assume that Ezekiel confines himself to nations of middle rank by choice and that he did not merely forget to say anything about Assyria or Egypt. Correctly understood, his mention of Persia confirms and illustrates this point.

Sheba and Dedan

"Sheba and Dedan and the merchants of Tarshish and all her villages will say to you, "Have you come to plunder? Have you gathered your hordes to loot, to carry off silver and gold, to take away livestock and goods and to seize much plunder?" (Ezek 38:13)

Sheba. In Gen 10 there is a Seba (*s^ebā^ʔ*) son of Cush (vs.7), a Sheba (*š^ebā^ʔ*) grandson of Cush (vs.7), and a Sheba (*š^ebā^ʔ*) son of Joktan (vs.28). Cush descended from Ham in the first generation and Joktan descended from Shem in the fifth generation. Ezekiel, however, speaks of Sheba (not Seba), so that narrows the list of biblical prototypes to Gen 10:7 or 28. And the association of Sheba with Dedan in both Ezek 38:13 and Gen 10:7 shows that, of these two, he has in mind the grandson of Cush.

By the tenth century B.C., when a queen of Sheba pays court to Solomon (see 1Kgs 10:1-13), the inhabitants of Sheba were called Sabaeans. ("Sabaean" is easier to say than "Sheba-ite" but it means the same thing.) Thus, we would expect to find Sheba in southernmost Arabia (modern Yemen). But the problems mentioned above will not entirely go away.

The relationship between the Sabaeans and the three Shebas mentioned in Gn.10 is by no means clear. They may be distinct tribes, but the similarities among the groupings are striking: Raamah's sons (Gn.10:7), Hamites, bear the same names as Abraham's grandsons--Sheba and Dedan (25:3); both Cush, the Hamite (10:7), and Joktan, the Semite, have descendants named Sheba and Havilah (10:28-29). The Table of *Nations in Gn.10 may reflect both the Semitic origin of the Sabaeans and also the fact that they settled in close proximity to Hamitic groups, i.e. Egyptians and Ethiopians. Indeed, classical Abyssinian culture testifies to a blending of Hamitic and Semitic elements, and the role that S Arabians who crossed the Bab al-Mandab as traders and colonists played in shaping this culture is impressive.³⁴

Linguistically Sheba can be studied in terms of two sets of relationships, both of which are briefly summarized below. On the one hand the Sabaeans--from approximately the eighth century B.C. to the sixth century A.D.--spoke what is known as Old South Arabian,³⁵ an ancient dialect of West Arabic. On the other hand there are a number of similarities between the Semitic speech of southern Arabia and that of northern Ethiopia.

As regards the relationship of Old South Arabian to its linguistic neighbors inland, the most significant split within Arabic is that which divides the language into an Eastern group of dialects and a Western group. Chaim Rabin states that,

The Eastern dialect group, comprising Tamim, Rabica, ʔAsad, ʔUqail, Ghani and some other Qais tribes, has a considerable number of distinctive features. Upon closer consideration it appears that these are mostly comparatively recent linguistic developments, and that basically the Eastern dialects are the same as the Classical Arabic of the poets. Not so the dialects that were spoken along the great watershed of the peninsula and on its western slope. The common features of these dialects are less obvious--most of them became clear to me only after I had studied the material for over five years--but affect much more deeply the structure of the language.³⁶

After the sixth century A.D. Old South Arabian becomes merely the southernmost part of West Arabic.

As regards the relationship of Old South Arabic to its southern neighbors across the narrow southern end of the Red Sea, there are close similarities between it and the Semitic languages of Ethiopia. According to August Dillmann,

Of Semitic languages Arabic is the one with which Ethiopic has the most numerous and close affinities. Nothing else could have been expected, when regard is had to the derivation of the Abyssinian Semities from Southern Arabia, and to the active intercourse which they long maintained with it.³⁷

Dillmann goes on to assure us that "Ethiopic is far from being a mere dialect of Arabic, especially if we understand by that the ordinary Literary or Middle Arabic."³⁸ Nor are those Ethiopic dialects spoken in the district of Tigre- (which derive from Gecez) the same as Amharic farther inland to the south.³⁹ So a worst case linguistic comparison across the Red Sea would be between Classical (East) Arabic and modern Amharic. A much closer comparison would be between Old South Arabian and classical Gecez.⁴⁰

Dedan. Dedan was a brother of Sheba in Gen 10:7 (=1 Chr 1:9), a grandson of Abraham in Gen 25:3 (=1 Chr 1:32), and a geographical district in five other passages (Jer 25:23; 49:8; Ezek 25:13; 27:20; 38:13).⁴¹ There is a question where geographical Dedan was located. In Jer 25:23 ("Dedan, Tema, Buz and all who are in distant places") and again in Ezek 25:3 ("I will stretch out my hand against Edom and kill its men and their animals. I will lay it waste, and from Teman to Dedan they will fall by the sword") Dedan is associated with the Edomite city of Tema (Teman) in northern Arabia. And yet in Ezek 38:13 ("Sheba and Dedan and the merchants of Tarshish and all her villages will say to you, 'Have you come to plunder?") it is associated with Sheba, a place which, as we have seen, lay in southern Arabia. According to the *New Bible Dictionary* Dedan is:

A city and people of NW (Arabia, famous for its role in the caravan trade (Is.21:13; Ezk.27:20—the reference in MT of v.20 is probably due to a textual error—cf. RSV), since it lay on the well-known 'incense route' from S Arabia to Syria and the Mediterranean. It is mentioned in close association with Sheba in the Table of Nations (Gn.10:7—cf. 1 Ch.1:9) and elsewhere (Gn.25:3; 1 Ch.1:32; Ezk.38:13), and probably played a part in the trading relations established by Solomon with the queen of Sheba (1 Ki.10). But it only comes into prominence in OT texts in the 7th century BC (Je.25:23; 49:8; Ezek.25:13; 27:20), when it may have been a Sabaean trading colony (von Wissman); this would help to explain why, in the biblical genealogies, it is associated with both N and S Arabian peoples.... The site of the city of Dedan is that now known as al-'Ula, some 110 km SW of Taimac.⁴²

That Dedan was not immediately adjacent to Teman is clear from the oracle against Edom in Ezek 25:13 (quoted above), where God says, "I will lay it waste, and from Teman to Dedan they will fall by the sword." Here Teman is at one extremity of Edom's territory and Dedan is at the other. The expression "from Teman to Dedan" in this verse has the same force as saying "from Dan to Beersheba" (Judg 20:1; 1 Sam 3:20; 2 Sam 3:10; 17:11; 24:2, 15; 1 Kgs 4:25), or "from Beersheba to Dan" (2 Chr 30:5), in other passages.⁴³ Thus, Dedan is mentioned together with Teman not because the two cities are geographically close to each other but precisely because they are far apart. Just as the latter expression describes the full extent of Israelite territory, the former describes the full extent of Edomite territory.

Notice that in whatever degree the city of Dedan is remote from Teman southward, in that same degree it is closer to Sheba. Thus, there is nothing unusual in the fact that the one city has associations with both countries if it occupies a location midway between them. The uniqueness of Dedan's location may well be the reason why it is mentioned in the Bible as often as it is. It appears to have provided a link between the commercial interests of the

southernmost and northernmost parts of Arabia, drawing its wealth from the trade between them.

The northernmost parts of Arabia, at least as we approach them along what Rabin calls "the great watershed of the peninsula and...its western slope,"⁴⁴ are adjacent to Israel. But the Jewish merchants who traded in goods from Sheba were themselves only middlemen. The great object of all such traffic must have been the Mediterranean coast and more specifically that part of it which was dominated by the Phoenician port cities of Tyre and Sidon.

Cush and Put

"Persia, Cush and Put will be with them, all with shields and helmets,..." (Ezek 38:5)

Cush. The identity of Cush is noncontroversial. It lay in what we would now call northern Sudan.

The region S of Egypt, i.e. Nubia or N Sudan, the 'Ethiopia' of classical writers (not modern Abyssinia). The name Cush in both Heb. and Assy. derives from Egyp. *Kš* (earlier *Kʿs*, *Kʿš*), 'Kush'. Originally the name of a district somewhere between the second and third cataracts of the Nile c.2000 BC, 'Kush' became also a general term for Nubia among the Egyptians, which wider use Hebrews, Assyrians and others took over (G.Posener, in *Kush* 6, 1958, pp.39-68).⁴⁵

Put. Some have tried to show that Put lies south of Egypt, in the direction of Cush. Others have identified Put with Libya, west of Egypt. In my view the latter position is preferable, but not without clarification.

Put is certainly African, but its location is disputed. Claiming that Lubim (Lybians) and Put are distinct in Na.3:9, some wish to equate Put with *Pw(n)t* (E Sudan?) of Egyp. texts. But Old Persian *putiya* and Bab. *puṭa* (=Heb. *pûṭ*) become *T^c Tmhw*, 'Libya', Egyp. thus making Put Libya (G.Posener, *La Première Domination Perse en Égypte*, 1936, pp.186-187). Lubim and Put in Na.3:9 are like Lubim and *Sukkiim in 2 Ch.12:3. Also, Tyre would employ Libyan rather than Somali auxiliaries. *pûṭ* may derive from Egyp. *pḏty*, 'foreign bowman', or similar; especially as the Libyans were archers (W.Hölscher, *Libyer und Ägypter*, 1937, pp.38-39).⁴⁶

But there is middle ground between making Put the same as Libya on the one hand and, if the two cannot be identical, placing it in another direction altogether. The term "Libya" was used very broadly in antiquity to refer to the whole southern coast of the Mediterranean apart from Egypt.⁴⁷ So why could we not think of Put as the easternmost part of Libya, or the westernmost part of Egypt, or, if it is separate from both (which is more likely), the territory between them? In Nah 3:9 Put and Libya are separate places, in the same manner and in the same degree that Cush and Egypt are separate places:

Cush and Egypt were her boundless strength;
Put and Libya were among her allies. (Nah 3:9)

In Ezek 27:10, where the reference is to soldiers hired by Tyre to serve as auxiliaries, it is grossly improbable that Put would be so far inland as Cush. A location on the Mediterranean

coast, between Egypt and Lybia broadly defined, would explain not only that passage but also the one just quoted, where Put bears the same relation to Libya that Cush bears to Egypt.

Tarshish

"Sheba and Dedan and the merchants of Tarshish and all her villages will say to you, "Have you come to plunder? Have you gathered your hordes to loot, to carry off silver and gold, to take away livestock and goods and to seize much plunder?"' (Ezek 38:13)

Tarshish, a son of Javan in Gen 10:4, is also the name of a place. But there is disagreement as to which place and even which direction to look for it. Some argue that Tarshish was in India, others that it was in Spain. Below I argue for a western or Spanish Tarshish.

The case for an eastern Tarshish. In terms of the etymology of the word, "Tarshish" can refer to any place known for its smelting of metals.⁴⁸

An old Semitic root found in Akkad. *rašašu* means 'to melt', 'to be smelted'. A derived noun *taršišu* may be used to define a smelting-plant or refinery (Arab. *ršš*, 'to trickle', etc., of liquid). Hence any place where mining and smelting were carried on could be called Tarshish.⁴⁹

Places known for their mining activity and mineral wealth in antiquity include Armenia, Cyprus (copper), and Spain (silver, iron, tin, and lead). Some, however, set the idea of smelting entirely aside.

References [to Tarshish] are made on several occasions, notably I Kings X:21, 22, and in II Chronicles IX:20, 21. These mention a land called Tarshish, a source of gold, silver, ivory, peacocks and apes, which most authorities identify with south India rather than Tartessos in Spain. After all, apes and peacocks were obtainable only in the Orient, and since the ships were described as sailing from the port of Akaba on the Red Sea, they could hardly have voyaged to the west. Whether or not Tartessos was later confused with Tarshish is irrelevant.⁵⁰

The texts referred to in the above quotation occur in parallel passages within their respective books. Both are now quoted.

The king had a fleet of trading ships [*ʾnî taršîš*] at sea along with the ships of Hiram. Once every three years it returned carrying gold, silver and ivory, and apes and baboons. (1 Kgs 10:22)

The king had a fleet of trading ships [*holʾkôt taršîš*] manned by Hiram's men. Once every three years it returned carrying gold, silver and ivory, and apes and baboons. (2Chr 9:21)

It may be that the compiler of Chronicles understood the compiler of Kings to mean something along the lines that Harrison has suggested. Hebrew *ʾnî taršîš* is literally "ship of Tarshish" (i.e., a "Tarshish ship," a ship capable of making Tarshish-class voyages), whereas *ʾniyyôt . . . holʾkôt taršîš* (one expects *taršîšâ* "to Tarshish") means specifically "ships going [to] Tarshish." But in 1Kgs 10 the association between Tarshish and Solomon's eastward bound ships could be quite reasonably explained to mean large ships capable of sailing any distance

however great.⁵¹ It will be easier to explain how the term could be generalized in this way than why Jonah would wish to sail from Joppa if his destination were India (see Jonah 1:3).

The case for a western Tarshish. Jonah's Tarshish was by no means the only Mediterranean city by that name. There was probably a Tarshish on the island of Sardinia and there were others elsewhere.⁵² But here one particular Tarshish is in view and I submit that it was located in southwestern Spain--on the Atlantic rather than the Mediterranean side of Gibraltar. Spanish Tarshish can be identified with Phoenician Gadir or Gades, Greek Tartessos, and modern Ca'diz. The great attraction that made sailors willing to come all the way from Phoenicia--the full length of the Mediterranean--to get there was silver.

Mining and agriculture [in ancient Spain] are two promising areas to study where new work has enlightened us in some unexpected ways. The most radical reappraisal concerns the silver mines of the Ri'o Tinto, a magnet for the Phoenicians from their earliest voyages, and the reason for the precocious orientalizing of the southwest.⁵³

Ri'o Tinto (the Dyed River) gets its name from the strange red color produced by iron salts leaching out of rich lodes up stream. The concentration of iron in the water is sufficient to poison the water over its entire course.⁵⁴ Along the same river there were immensely rich silver deposits. Some areas were mined continuously as late as the nineteenth century A.D. More recently archeologists have examined the slag heaps from these old mines to determine what methods were used in extracting the silver and also just how rich the assays were in ancient times. What they have learned is germane to this discussion.

The mineral bodies from which the ores were dug comprise a thick mantle of gossan (*ill. 103*), originally up to 30 m in depth, covering a massive sulphide deposit (gossan is the cap on an ore deposit formed of rust-coloured oxides, with a preponderance of iron and lesser amounts of silver, gold and other minerals). Where the two met lay a zone of secondary mineral enrichment, at the base of the gossan, which held the silver ores. These were brightly coloured earths of yellow, red, grey, and black layers classified as argentiferous jarosites; rare minerals of predominantly yellow-brown colour with a brilliant lustre, composed of iron, hydrous potassium and aluminium sulphate with irregular quantities of silver minerals. Directly beneath them lie the layers enriched with copper, which only began to be mined in the first century AD. Other metals existed too: gold, arsenic, antimony, and lead. Today, none of the silver-rich jarositic earths are left, and hardly any were left in 1887, when the last pocket of 30,000 tons was mined. This means that the original richness cannot be assayed exactly, but the samples from the pocket showed that the silver content was extremely variable, from 3.1 kg per ton of ore to nothing at all. Figures as high as 10 kg per ton could well have occurred in the richest spots. These assays are extraordinarily high and compare with modern ones which consider 0.6 kg of silver per ton to be among the richest still being mined today.⁵⁵

Tarshish was a place of fabulous mineral wealth. Indeed, the steady stream of Phoenician silver shipments from Tarshish gave Assyria a stable economy,⁵⁶ thus making possible the military accomplishments which terrorized Mesopotamia and its surroundings for centuries.

But, as useful as Tarshish was as a source of precious metals for nations located on the other end of the Mediterranean, this is only one factor that contributed to its importance. In

addition to having its own mines Spain was a natural shipping hub for metals coming in from places even farther away.

Drawn by Etruscan naval activity, the men of Tyre, in 814, had founded Carthage, which, in less than one century, became the mistress of navigation on the Tyrian Sea all the way to the Pillars of Hercules. Spain came to life [*s'animai*]. Along the Guadalquivir valley, Tartessos became an important point of trade for silver and tin brought from Great Britain.⁵⁷

Discussion. The proposed fact that Ezekiel's Tarshish lay in the West has implications that materially affect our exegesis of Ezek 38:13. As I have pointed out elsewhere, the history of Spain is largely a record of foreign exploitation.⁵⁸ It is not the case that Spanish sailors established outposts up and down the Mediterranean as far as Tyre. On the contrary, Phoenicians were the ones who established those outposts up and down the Mediterranean as far as Tarshish. And notice that Ezekiel does not just say "Tarshish" in vs.13; he says "the merchants of Tarshish." This is altogether different. The "merchants of Tarshish," who exploited the Spanish silver mines and enriched Assyria so greatly in the process, were not Spaniards but Phoenicians.

There is an important point to draw from what has been said so far, over and above establishing where Tarshish is or who the prophet has in mind in this passage. Ezekiel's focus of attention generally is on the Mediterranean in the vicinity of his ancestral homeland. What he calls distant is distant from Judea. And when he says "north" he means north from Judea. He does not have so global a view of the impending conflict as we might assume with hindsight aided by the brilliant discoveries of explorers such as Columbus (1492) and Magellan (1519).⁵⁹ The limits within which he is working appear to be the near side of the Indian Ocean on the East, the Red Sea on the South, the far end of the Mediterranean on the West, and the near shores of the Black and Caspian Seas on the North. The application takes in a truly global conflict, but the historical framework on which it is based is confined to an area broadly encircling Judea.

Meshech and Tubal

"Son of man, set your face against Gog, of the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal; prophesy against him (3) and say: 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: I am against you, O Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.'" (Ezek 38:2-3)

"Son of man, prophesy against Gog and say: 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: I am against you, O Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.'" (Ezek 39:1)

If Meshech is the same as Assyrian Mushku and if Tubal is the same as Assyrian Tabal,⁶⁰ as they surely must be, then Ezekiel is once more referring to places in Anatolia. Tabal can be identified with Cappadocia and Mushku with Phrygia, which extended along the Black Sea westward to the Aegean.⁶¹ The border between Mushku and Luddu (Lydia) was poorly defined, or at least we do not know where it was.⁶² Regardless of its northern border, however, we know that under Gyges (687-652) Lydia expanded his realm as far as the sea both southward into Caria (along the Mediterranean) and westward into Ionia (along the Aegean).

I should clarify that Gyges never attempted to rule Mushku and Tabal. But if this evidence is considered damaging, much more is true. No king ever ruled both Mushku and

Tabal. The two countries were always separate and distinct. Nor does the text say, "Meshech or Tubal," as though we could choose between them. It says, "Meshech and Tubal," linking the two together. So if we look for a person who lived in either of these two countries and ruled both, thus qualifying as a prototype for Ezekiel's Gog, we will never find one. And if we found a person who ruled either Mushku or Tabal separately, that would not satisfy the requirements of the text--if native rule is the criterion to be met.

It would be equally futile for look to a foreign suzerain who may be said to have ruled both "Meshech and Tubal" because both paid tribute to him. Before the Cimmerians took it away, Tabal, on the western boundary of the Empire, was indeed under tribute to Assyria. But Mushku was not. It stood in the same relation to Assyria in the West that Urartu did in the North.⁶³ It was always a competitor, a foreign enemy, by contrast with Tabal, which (along with Qu[^]e and Hilakku) was considered a province.⁶⁴ So that is not a solution either. One country was inside and the other was outside the Empire. Tabal, together with Q[^]ue and Hilakku, was eventually lost to the Empire and Mushku once made a treaty with it.⁶⁵ But my point remains that Mushku and Tabal had substantially different relationships with Assyria.

If we do not try another approach, all interpretations of Ezek 38:2 will be ruled out and not only the one I propose. Equating Tabal with Cappadocia and Meshech with Phrygia one could generalize that together these two areas represented most of Anatolia. The remainder was Cilicia along the coast in the Southeast and especially Lydia in the Southwest, including its newly acquired coastal territories in Caria and Ionia. Thus, when Ezekiel speaks of "Meshech and Tubal" (always together) in Ezek 38:2, 3; 39:1 he is inviting an inference from the part to the whole. If the parts are most of Anatolia, the whole is all of Anatolia. During the seventh century B.C. Gyges was clearly the dominant political figure there and this explains why Ezekiel speaks of "Meshech and Tubal" as he does. He is directing our attention to the rest of Anatolia--those parts of it that were not already included within Magog, the land of Gog.

Another reason why Ezekiel speaks of "Meshech and Tubal" as he does may have had to do with trade in precious metals.

The great industry of Urartu, of Mannai, of Tubal and of Meshech, i.e. the regions of Armenia, was to provide the neighboring areas with copper and also iron. Because of copper they were brought in contact with Cyprus. We noted that Ezekiel informs us that, if Tarshish (southern Spain) provides Tyre with silver, iron, tin and lead, Tubal and Meshech sent copper. The imprecations that the prophet hurls against Gog and his place are better understood if they are the echo of the economic preoccupations which concerned the Near East. We reproach Gog for seizing Tubal and Meshech because he thus puts his hand on the commerce in metal. And this remark is the best argument in favor of identifying Gog with Gyges.⁶⁶

In any event, the issue in regard to Gog or Gyges is his influence in international rather than strictly local affairs. He is used in this prophecy to prefigure someone whose influence would be truly global in scope. What I have said about "Meshech and Tubal" in Ezek 38:2 is in character, therefore, with the rest of what Ezekiel is saying.

Magog

"Son of man, set your face against Gog, of the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal; prophesy against him . . ." (Ezek 38:2)

"I will send fire on Magog and on those who live in safety in the coastlands, and they will know that I am the Lord." (Ezek 39:6)

At the end of the last section I imply that Magog is to be identified with Lydia. This proposed fact now needs to be firmly established. To do this we must ask what Ezekiel means when he uses the expression "land of Magog" (38:2), where that place was, and also we need to be very sure in our assertion that the prototype for Gog was Gyges. Let us consolidate these positions before going on.

Who was Gog? Linguistically there is no substantial difference between Assyrian "Gugu"⁶⁷ and Greek "Gyges,"⁶⁸ or between either of these names and Hebrew "Gog." See table 2.

Table 2
The Name Gugu/Gyges/Gog
(First Statement)

Language	Name	Derivation
Assyrian	Gugu	Gug + u
Greek	Gyges	Gyg + es
Hebrew	Gog	Gog +

The above comparison is already close but let us examine it in greater detail. In Greek another way to spell the name "Gyges" would be "Guges" (*gugēs*). This is how it would be transcribed today if we were encountering the name for the first time in a newly discovered text.⁶⁹ In Hebrew also the consonants used to spell *gôg* ("Gog") could just as easily have been vocalized *gûg* ("Gug"). See table 3.

Table 3
The Name Gugu/Gyges/Gog
(Second Statement)

Language	Name	Derivation
Assyrian	Gugu	Gug + u
Greek	Gyges	Gug + es
Hebrew	Gog	Gog +

Moreover, Gyges reigned during the height of the Cimmerian presence in Anatolia. His dates are generally given as 687-652 B.C. As for the Cimmerians, their first appearance in Urartu was in 707 B.C. and they were destroyed by Alyattes of Lydia (a grandson of Gyges) in about 626 B.C.⁷⁰ Thus, Gyges was in power during thirty-five of the eighty-one years when the Cimmerian problem was most acute, or about 43.2 percent of that time. Thus, the name is right, the place is right, and the events are right. We can have every confidence that the historical prototype for Ezekiel's Gog was Gyges.

One might wish to argue that the events are wrong. Gyges did not lead the Cimmerians into battle, nor did he ever attack Israel, as Gog is depicted as doing in Ezek 38:6. The Cimmerians captured the Lydian capital of Smyrna in 652 B.C. and Gyges lost his life trying to

prevent that from happening. But this merely confirms that Ezekiel is writing a prophecy rather than a history. He is not saying that what happened before will happen over again in the end time, but is drawing on past events to help us understand a different set of future events.

Who or what was Magog? There are two directions we might look for insight into the meaning of the term "Magog." One is Gen 10:2 (=1Chr 1:5), where Magog is a brother of Gomer and son of Japheth. The other is Assyrian historical records, where the term ^{mat}*gūgu* (or ^{mat}*guggu*, lit."Land of Gugu") sometimes designates Lydia.⁷¹ Similarly, the Assyrian chroniclers called Israel "Land of Omri" (or "Omri Land") during and after Omri's momentous reign (880-874/73).⁷² In both cases a country is known by the name of one of its outstanding rulers.

The *t* of the Assyrian determinative *mat* ("land [of]") drops away as it is borrowed into Hebrew and, by a normal phonological process, the vowel is lengthened to compensate for its loss.⁷³ Thus, ^{mat}*gūgu* becomes *māgūg* and finally *māgôg* in Ezek 38:2 and 39:6.⁷⁴

Ezekiel is giving us a play on words at this point, since Magog could with equal plausibility refer either to the descendants of biblical Magog or have an Assyrian etymology related to the name "Gugu" (or "Gog"). It is likely that Ezekiel had both meanings in mind as he wrote. If this is the case, then it is not necessary to choose one meaning at the expense of the other. Both must be appreciated before we can fully understand the writer's intent.⁷⁵ Magog provides a link between Gog, whose name does not appear in Gen 10, and the nations under his command, whose names for the most part do appear there.⁷⁶

Where was Magog? When the text says, "Gog, of the land of Magog" (vs.2), that is where Gog comes from. He does not merely have influence there; it is his home. Thus, Magog is the land of Gog independently of my argument that the word itself also means "Land of Gog."

Emil G.Kraeling places the descendants of Magog, son of Japhet, in Armenia.⁷⁷ But, if the Magog of Ezekiel is the same as the Magog of Genesis, there is an important piece of evidence against this position in Ezek 39:6.

"I will send fire on Magog and on those who live in safety in the coastlands, and they will know that I am the Lord." (Ezek 39:6)

""Magog"" and ""the coastlands"" are probably not different places. ""The coastlands"" are themselves ""Magog."" Otherwise they are inseparably linked to it and the result in either case is the same. Magog either is, or is immediately associated with, a coastal area in Ezek 39:6. This cannot be Armenia. Ezekiel is not talking here about the shores of Lake Urmia or Lake Van. He is talking about the Mediterranean.

One of the major accomplishments of Gyges' thirty-five year reign was to change Lydia's relationship to the sea. Before Gyges, Caria had separated Lydia from the Mediterranean and Ionia had separated it from the Aegean. Both Caria and Ionia were narrow strips of land along their respective bodies of water. Gyges conquered both and transformed Lydia into a naval power. It is in this context that Ezek 39:6 should be studied.

Discussion. "Magog" is Lydia. But another term was available for that country if the prophet had chosen to use it. He could have said "Lud." Both terms occur in Gen10 and Ezekiel

uses the latter term elsewhere (see Ezek 27:10; 30:5).⁷⁸ Here, however, the reference is to Lydia as ruled by Gyges.

Ezekiel is drawing on a body of actual events that occurred shortly before his own lifetime as a historical background for the present prophecy. But he does so in a way that carries the reader back to the early events of Bible history.⁷⁹ The application leads in the opposite direction. It carries the reader forward to the very end of human history. As a literary document this is a carefully crafted piece of work.

The expression "Gog and Magog" is brought into the New Testament by John as part of his description of events after the millenium.

When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison (8) and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth--Gog and Magog--to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore. (Rev 20:8)

In Rev 20:8 it could be that "Gog and Magog" is simply a collective designation for all those people who remain unrepentant and unsaved in the end. But it could also be that they are separate entities, in which case Gog represents Satan, who is "released from his prison" in vs.7, and Magog refers to those from his land (this earth) who have accepted his authority and fight under his command.

If the latter interpretation is accepted, it comes very close to Ezekiel's original intent and clarifies for us what sort of meaning John saw in the earlier prophecy. Magog, in both Testaments, is the Land of Gog--whether Lydia as opposed to the rest of Anatolia (where Gog was a dominant figure even if not all of it belonged to him) or the whole earth in rebellion against its Creator.

Discussion

There are two groups of nations in Ezek 38-39. ""Persia, Cush and Put"" (38:5); ""Gomer with all his troops, and Beth Togarmah"" (vs.6) are all under the command of Gog and go forth to war on his behalf. Then there are ""Sheba and Dedan and the merchants of Tarshish, "" who merely ask about Gog's intentions (""Have you come to plunder?""") (vs.13).

The first group (Persia in the East, Cush in the South, Put in the West, and both Gomer and Beth Togarmah in the North) encircles Israel. Here the emphasis is military. The second group (Sheba, Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish) forms a line extending through Israel from the Indian Ocean up to the Mediterranean coast. The ""merchants of Tarshish"" are those who trade with Tarshish. I argue above that Tarshish is in Spain. The merchants who exploit the mineral resources of that region, however, are not Spanish but Phoenician. As such their home base would be in the area of Tyre and Sidon. Here the emphasis is commercial.

When Ezekiel speaks of ""the far north"" in 38:6 what he has in mind is the area around Togarmah--a city whose ruins lie almost due east of Athens. (The two cities lie at approximately 38.5 and 38.0 degrees north latitude respectively.) This only makes sense in the context of allowing the Black Sea to define one of the northern limits of the Mediterranean world. There were Greek colonies in the Crimea, it is true. But the fact remains that the Black Sea was a formidable natural barrier dividing a world which was well known from one which was almost wholly obscure. Because Togarmah was so near the Black Sea it was in the ""far north"" from

Israel. The similar statements in Ezek 38:15 ("You will come from your place in the far north, you and many nations with you") and 39:2 ("I will bring you from the far north and send you against the mountains of Israel") must taken in this same context.

Another point to bear in mind is that we are still dealing with the geographical setting for Ezekiel's prophecy. No application has yet been proposed. The military circle around Israel is part of the setting from which the prophet's language is drawn. It is the nature of literalism to ignore the distinction between a prophecy's setting and its application. But we must keep these things separate or risk getting them confused, thus losing the prophet's intent in the name of preserving it.

That there really are two things to keep separate here is demonstrated by the fact that God states Himself to Ezekiel in terms drawn from actual historical events which happened more than a century before the prophet's lifetime. (After 695 B.C., for example, there was no Togarmah to refer to.) The prophecy's setting is firmly anchored in time. If the setting is the same as the application, then Ezek 38-39 is not a prophecy of the future. If it is a prophecy of the future, the setting is different from the application.

Does Ezekiel Say Anything About Russia?

For several centuries, both Rabbis and Christian theologians have identified the great northern power named in Ezekiel as being the Soviet Union. Three times in Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39 it is forecast that Israel's great enemy will come from the "extreme" or "utmost" north. Just take a globe and run your finger due north from Israel; you'll find yourself smack in the middle of Russia.⁸⁰

The above quotation by Hal Lindsey, an immensely popular Evangelical writer, raises two important questions. The first--familiar to any reader of Hans K.LaRondelle's book, *The Israel of God in Prophecy*⁸¹--is, What is Israel? LaRondelle argues that, in the Old Testament as well as the New, definitions of "Israel" always contain a spiritual component. Thus, spiritual Israel is not a New Testament innovation. We can discuss whether the covenant was conditional or unconditional but whatever we may say in this regard it was not unilateral. That is not the nature of a covenant. Right from the start there was an element of mutuality in it. And since one of the parties to the covenant was God, all those factors that make it mutual make it spiritual as well.

I submit that "Israel" at the present time is made up of those people, wherever found, who are in covenant relationship with Christ. By combining divinity and humanity in His person Christ is Himself the best evidence we could ever have that the purpose of the covenant is to bring together two widely different parties. He is the embodiment of God's covenant with Israel. How then can we exclude Him from consideration when discussing it? And if we do not, how can we limit the covenant's blessings to physical or literal Israel?⁸²

The second question mentioned above is, What is Russia? Is Russia the great land mass of the Soviet Empire comprising a number of incorporated republics and more or less loosely affiliated satellite nations? And if so, what is the number of those republics? Is it four (as in 1922), eleven (as in 1939 at the beginning of the war), or fifteen (as at present)?⁸³ If land is the main issue, how much land are we talking about?

Before there was a Soviet Empire there was a Russian Empire. How far back in history does it go? I have sometimes said, in casual conversation, that there never was a Russian czar. The house of Rurik was Swedish⁸⁴ and the Romanovs were of German extraction.⁸⁵ While such a claim does not bear rigorous scrutiny, it does illustrate an important fact. The earliest rulers of Russia were foreigners. This fact is important because if we know who they were, we can date their arrival. By this I do not mean we can say with any certainty when the first individuals arrived. It is not necessary to do that. The important thing is to realize when their presence achieved critical mass politically, as it were, and came together in the form of a Russian state. Let me comment briefly on the people who did this.

The Swedish presence in Russia

From the earliest known times Scandinavians have been attracted to Russia on commercial enterprises, especially in search of furs for clothing and, for a long period, of slaves. This traffic originated mainly in Sweden, the country with the most direct access to Russia, especially from Uppland, East Götland and the island of Gotland; the maritime districts of Uppland and East Gotland being known in early times as *Rother* or *Rothin*, and later as *Roslagen* (W. Norse *Rodhrslög*), and the inhabitants were named *Rodhskarlar*, *Rodhsmen*, and lastly, *Rodhspiggar*. These people formed the bulk of the Russia traders and they began in time to form settlements in the East; thus the part of the Finnish coast nearest to Sweden was originally settled from there, and is still the Swedish-speaking portion of Finland, whose inhabitants are known in Finnish as *Ruotsalaiset*, and in Swedish as *Ruotsi*. As time went by their numbers increased in Russia proper so that Norse writings refer to the northern and central parts of Russia as *Svithjodh en mikla* (Great Sweden) or *Svithjodh en kalda* (Cold Sweden) to distinguish them from Sweden proper. The Slavonic peoples in Russia then took up this name for the Norsemen from the Finns, and called them *Rus*, and from this form it came into Mediaeval Greek as *Rhos*, and found an Arabic form as *Rûs*.⁸⁶

C. F. Keil argues from the Byzantine term *Rhos* that there really was a group of people by that name and that Ezekiel might therefore have had them in mind as he wrote.⁸⁷ But these are two entirely separate issues. The terms were used, just as Keil points out, the people existed, and the place where they lived was Russia. But assuming that Ezekiel says anything about them raises an important chronological problem.

The Vikings of Denmark and Norway, at the end of the eighth century, started their plundering expeditions westward, whereas the Vikings of Sweden turned east, hoping to establish contact with the wealthy Arabian sphere. The Swedish expeditions were inspired by a desire for trade, but trade in those times easily turned into plundering. The traders who traveled over the great eastern route, called Varangians in Russia, founded colonies of their own along the way and formed the ruling class among the Slavic and the Finno-Ugrian peoples. The enterprise of the Varangian chiefs led to the founding of a Russian state in, according to tradition, the year 862 A.D.⁸⁸

The year 862 A.D. could be wrong by a margin of however many years and we might quibble over the historicity of Rurik, the Norse ruler who is thought to have come to power at Kiev during that year. But the fact remains that somebody established a Russian state and they did so in about the ninth century A.D. Ezekiel draws his historical background materials from the seventh century B.C. When both of these chronological facts are understood, there is no way to

confuse them with each other. They are entirely separate and distinct. Even if other evidence should allow it, on chronological grounds Russia simply does not fit alongside the other figures used in Ezekiel's prophecy.

The linguistic argument

The population of the Soviet Union today is about evenly divided between Russians, narrowly defined, and the approximately 100 linguistic minorities within its borders—including Slavic minorities.⁸⁹ The Slavic branch of Indo-European has three main divisions (East, West, and South). In the South we find Bulgarian, Macedonian, Serbo-Croatian, and Slovenian; in the West, Czech, Polish, Slovak, and Wendish. East Slavic is made up of Byelorussian (or White Russian), Great Russian (this is what most people mean by "Russian"), and Ukrainian.⁹⁰ One of the best known facts about Russian is that it is a Slavic language.

But when Byzantine writers use the term *rōsisti* ("in Russian") the language they have in mind is not Slavic. An intriguing proof of this fact comes to us from the Byzantine emperor Constantine VII (913-59).

Along the lower part of the Dnieper, to the south of Ekaterinoslav, are mighty waterfalls which are named *porogi* ('thresholds') in Russian if they extend right across the river, and *zabori* ('fences') if they only straddle a part of it. There are in all eleven of these 'thresholds' and six of the 'fences' over a distance of some fifty miles, and in the last fifty years they have been harnessed by the Soviet authorities to supply driving-power for great hydroelectric works. In the Middle Ages, however, they were regarded as great traffic hazards. Constantine VII makes several references to them in *De Administrando Imperio*, where he gives the names of the principal ones *rōsisti* ('in Russian', i.e., Norse) and *sklabisti* ('in Slavonic', i.e., in Old Russian), and his evidence removes all doubt as to what people are meant when at that time a reference is made to the Rhos.⁹¹

My reason for citing the above argument is not to show that the Rus (or Rhos) were Swedish, but that they were foreign. These people gave Russia its name and eventually borrowed the language of its predominantly Slavic population, but came from elsewhere. Before the advent of the Rus any reference to "Russia" must be viewed as an anachronism. The term "Russia" properly comes into existence only in the ninth century A.D., or shortly earlier, with the political advent of the Rus.

Notice that a period of no less than 1487 years separates the final defeat of the Cimmerians (626 B.C.) from the traditional date for Rurik's rise to power in the city of Kiev (A.D.862). The interval between the death of Gyges (652 B.C.) and the founding of a Russian state is 1513 years. From the destruction of Togarmah (695 B.C.) to the founding of a Russian state is 1556 years. Thus, the mean minimum interval that separates these two periods is 1519 years. We are not dealing here with one timeframe but two--the one (in the ninth century A.D.) for the founding of Russia and the other (in the seventh century B.C.) for everything else that Ezekiel talks about.

Discussion

I do not say that Ezekiel, under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, could not have written a prophecy which applies to Russia during the end time. But at this point the prophecy's application is not yet under review. That comes in a later section. My argument here is that

Russia is out of place alongside Gog, Magog, Gomer, Togarmah, and Persia before the time of Cyrus when we try to make it one of the figures in terms of which this prophecy is stated. Russia has nothing in common with Meshech and Tubal either.

In view of the above facts I propose that we give the Russians a rest. They are not referred to in Ezek 38:2, 3; or 39:1. The expression $n^{\prime}šî\tilde{?} r\bar{o}^{\tilde{?}}š$ does truly mean "chief prince" and nothing more. In translating, "Gog, of the land of Magog, the chief prince [$n^{\prime}šî\tilde{?} r\bar{o}^{\tilde{?}}š$] of Meshech and Tubal" (Ezek 38:2), NIV has given the passage its correct sense.

Eschatological Context

Having examined the geographical and historical setting for Ezek 38-39 in some detail, it will now be appropriate to sketch the main features of an application.

I assume in what follows that human history only ends once. There is only one final conflict and one second coming. These things have been described for us "at many times and in various ways" (Heb 1:1), but the events themselves are wholly unique. Thus, it is important that all of what the Bible says about last events be studied cohesively as one unified body of information. Hindsight, which has served us on other occasions, will be of no value here. None of what we are studying will be repeated. We must understand the events before they occur.

Prophecy generally has the function of confirming faith or demonstrating the truth of what was predicted for those who might be in doubt. Jesus says, "I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe" (John 14:29). But in the case of last events, while the "kings of the earth" (Rev 19:19) are being destroyed at Christ's coming, for example, it will be too late for such a response to benefit them. "I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor 6:2).

It would seem that, in view of the gravity of the situation, literalism is the safest course. If we do any interpreting at all, there is a danger that we will interpret incorrectly. So instead of doing any exegesis whatever, why not just take what the prophet says the way He says it and stop there? There are two problems with such an approach. First, there is no such thing as the absence of interpretation. Some sort of model will emerge from one's study, whatever principles one begins with, and that model will serve as a lense through which any additional facts are seen. It serves no useful purpose to be unaware that this is happening.

The second problem is that rigorous verbalism makes it difficult to see the element of unity which binds together all the prophecies on a given topic. The biblical prophets express themselves differently and yet each one speaks from God as he is "carried along by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet 1:21). If there is only one set of last events, and if more than one prophecy describes them, we are going to have to study the prophecies as the work of one and the same Holy Spirit in order to understand any of them correctly. Their unity does not lie in the way they are worded.

Consider the prophecies of Ezek 38-39; Dan 11:40-45 (with 12:1-3); and Rev 19:11-21. These have substantially different settings and are stated in different terms. If we adopt a hermeneutic of literalism (i.e., if we assume that a prophecy's application must be the same as the language in which it is stated and allow no latitude between the two), then either three different sets of events occur or there is one set on which the prophecies

disagree. If we wish to avoid the implications of this dilemma, we must first reject the assumption which brings us to it. By assuming that the setting and the application of a given prophecy are not necessarily the same (i.e., by rejecting literalism), we become able to see the underlying unity of the various accounts. The three prophecies mentioned above are now briefly reviewed and compared with this object in view.

Ezekiel

In Ezek 38-39 it is an irony that Gog should lead the Cimmerians into battle (see Ezek 38:6), because in history he lost his life fighting them. But Ezekiel is not merely projecting the past forward into the future.⁹² He is giving us an inspired prophecy of future events. It is imperative that we understand the prophet's historical allusions, but we must also realize that he is using them to communicate a message about the end time. Thus, we read expressions such as, "After many days" (Ezek 38:8), "In future years" (vs.8), "In days to come" (vs.16), and "in that day" (vs.18). "Are you not the one I spoke of in former days by my servants the prophets of Israel? At that time they prophesied for years that I would bring you against them." (vs.17).⁹³ "This is the day I have spoken of" (Ezek 39:8).

The nations under Gog's command form a broad circle around "Israel" (Ezek 38:8), but there is an emphasis on the North as well (see 38:6, 15; 39:2) because that is where Gog comes from. His army is vast, "like a cloud covering the land" (Ezek 38:9), "like a cloud that covers the land" (vs.16).

One noteworthy feature of the prophecy is that Gog takes the field under duress: "I will turn you around, put hooks in your jaws and bring you out with your whole army" (Ezek 38:3). "I will bring you from the far north and send you against the mountains of Israel" (39:2). Another such feature is that Gog is not defeated by any external enemy. Instead his horde turns upon itself. "Every man's sword will be against his brother" (38:21).

That these events occur at the time of the second coming is confirmed by the statement that everyone will tremble "at my presence" (Ezek 38:20).⁹⁴

Daniel

In Dan 11:40-45, as in Ezek 38-39, there are historical memories of actual events. The final aggressor in Dan 11, however, is not "Gog" (modeled on Gyges from Lydia), but the "king of the North" (modeled, in my view, on Nebuchadnezzar from Babylon, as in chap.1 of the same book).

A difference between Ezek 38-39 and Dan 11:40-45 concerns the object of the campaign. In Ezekiel it is Israel; in Daniel it is Egypt. Here, as elsewhere in Dan 11, the primary opponent of the king of the North is the king of the South. The king sweeps down out of the North, marches through Judea and appears to carry all before him, but does so while pressing on southward toward Egypt. Once there, "He will gain control of the treasures of gold and silver and all the riches of Egypt, with the Libyans and Nubians in submission" (vs.43).

It is only when Egypt has been conquered that the king realizes there is still a pocket of resistance behind him in territory he thought was completely subdued. "But reports from the east and the north will alarm him" (Dan 11:44), i.e., reports from the Northeast will alarm him. So the king retraces his steps northeastward from Egypt back to Jerusalem, at the head of his

own troops and those of all the countries he has recently brought under his command. They are so numerous that not all of his forces can even approach the city they are supposed to be besieging. "He will pitch his royal tents between the sea and the beautiful holy mountain" (Dan 11:45, margin), i.e., his camp extends outward from Jerusalem reaching all the way to the Mediterranean. Everyone is gathered against this one city--this last challenge to the king's universal authority. Such is the language Daniel uses.

What he is using it to describe are events at the end of the judgment in heaven. "At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will arise" (Dan 12:1). Previously He is spoken of as being seated (see Dan 7:9-10; 8:14). The events of Dan 11:44-45 and 12:1-3 happen simultaneously. The reason why the king "will come to his end, and no one will help him" (11:45) is that Michael arises to take the field against him (see also Dan 7:26-27). No one will be able to help the king because of Michael and no one will want to do so because they see that their cause is lost and begin fighting each other. It is not stated in Dan 11 that the king's army would destroy itself, although what vs.45 says is consistent with the assumption that it would.

Let this much suffice concerning Dan 11:40-45. That prophecy will be discussed separately in a later paper.⁹⁵ My point here is that the battle scene in Daniel parallels that found in Ezekiel, although the two accounts are by no means identical. The single most important difference is whether the goal of the final attack is portrayed as being Israel or Egypt.

Revelation

The same battle imagery that we have encountered in Ezek 38-39 and Dan 11 appears again in Rev 19. In fact John draws directly from Ezekiel's prophecy in writing his own.

"Son of man, this is what the Sovereign Lord says: Call out to every kind of bird and all the wild animals: 'Assemble and come together from all around to the sacrifice I am preparing for you, the great sacrifice on the mountains of Israel. There you will eat flesh and drink blood. (18) You will eat the flesh of mighty men and drink the blood of the princes of the earth as if they were rams and lambs, goats and bulls--all of them fattened animals from Bashan. (19) At the sacrifice I am preparing for you, you will eat fat till you are glutted and drink blood till you are drunk. (20) At my table you will eat your fill of horses and riders, mighty men and soldiers of every kind,' declares the Sovereign Lord." (Ezek 39:17-20)

And I saw an angel standing in the sun, who cried in a loud voice to all the birds flying in midair, "Come, gather together for the great supper of God, (18) so that you may eat the flesh of kings, generals, and mighty men, of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, small and great." (Rev 19:17-18)

The comparison between Ezek 38-39 and Rev 19:11-21 is as instructive as it is unavoidable. Here the emphasis is on the Rider of "a white horse" (vs.11), who leads all the angel armies of heaven into battle (vs.14). Arrayed against him are "the beast and the kings of the earth" (vs.19). The Rider's weapon is "a sharp sword [*romphaia*]," which is not held in His hand but comes out of His mouth (vss.15, 21). A different word for "sword" is used in Heb 4:12 ("The word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword [*machairan*], it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and

attitudes of the heart"). In 2Thes 2:8 there is no sword. What comes from Christ's mouth is "breath"--words.⁹⁶ The meaning of all three passages is the same.

The key to understanding the above show of force on Christ's part is that the world's hostility toward Him cannot be directed against Him personally. Christ can only be attacked in the person of His saints (see Matt 25:40, 45). There have been sporadic attempts to do this before. But by this time the world has done more than go astray (see Isa 53:6); it has rejected the claims of God's law without being ignorant of what those claims imply. The Ten Commandments--including the one which sets the seventh day apart as a memorial of God's creatorship--are a transcript of His own character and the constitution of His government. When these issues are correctly understood, rejecting the law of God will be tantamount to rejecting His authority. It will be the same as saying, ""We don't want this man to be our king"" (Luke 19:14). The above facts have implications for public policy. Those who do not reject the binding claims of God's law will not be popular with those who do. By mounting a global attack on the few who keep all ten of God's commandments, the world arrays itself against Christ. And when this finally happens, He leads out all the armies of heaven for their defense.

Then they gathered [*sunēgagen*] the kings together to the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon. (Rev 16:16)

Then I saw the beast and all the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together [*sunēgmena*] to make war against the rider on the horse and his army. (Rev 19:19)

As regards the other side of the conflict, the question which kings are gathered to Armageddon in Rev 16:16 is answered in Rev 19:19--the kings of the earth, i.e., all the kings of the earth, the kings of the whole earth.⁹⁷ These passages should be compared with each other and also with the following passage from Ezekiel, quoted earlier:

"I will turn you around, put hooks in your jaws and bring you out with your whole army--your horses, your horsemen fully armed, and a great horde with large and small shields, all of them brandishing their swords." (Ezek 38:4).

When Satan mounts so concerted an attack against the saints that their complete destruction seems possible, there is no more reason for delay and Christ intervenes personally to save them.⁹⁸ Here is what the word "salvation" means in the passage from Hebrews which says, "Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him" (Heb 9:28). When He comes to earth again, Christ is accompanied by His Father and all the angels of heaven. Before He arrives there can be no battle. When He does arrive, that is the second coming. Armageddon and the second coming are not two events but one. They are identically the same.

Discussion

Notice three additional points. First, those to whom Christ brings salvation in Heb 9:28 are not all residents of literal Jerusalem, although some indeed might be. Christ's command is to "go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt 28:19). "Then I saw another angel flying in midair, and he had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth--to every nation, tribe, language and

people" (Rev 14:6-7). "After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb" (Rev 7:9). People in covenant relationship with Christ are scattered all over the earth. The Holy Spirit in Ezek 38-39, Dan 11, and Rev 19 is showing what dangers these people will encounter just before the end. He has only one message to convey, but it is expressed differently on each telling. It is imperative that we develop some method for seeing past such differences. The most natural way to do this is to study all of the end time prophecies as a single body of inspired instruction. When this is done it becomes clear that the one message referred to above has been given to all of God's people in the end time, wherever found.

Second, bear in mind that the events of Dan 11:40-43 precede those of vs.44-45. First the king of the North brings everyone under his control. Then he launches his final attack in concert with them. It is a point that deserves careful attention. The religious world is expecting a war between this power and that in the Middle East. But what is the special significance of the words "gathered" in Rev 16:16 and "gathered together" in Rev 19:19? What sort of historical process would be required for this part of John's prophecy to be fulfilled? These are questions that we should not only be asking ourselves but pressing on people's attention. They are issues that confront us now.

It would be possible to read the military language of Dan 11:41-45 and become distracted by the force with which the last king of the North asserts his authority, losing sight of the result he obtains by such means. The result is that everyone, apart from one small pocket of resistance, yields to his authority and unites under his command. If this is true, we should be giving careful study to any movements that promise global peace purchased at the cost of religious principle. As we have seen from Rev 16:16 and 19:19, the real prelude to Armageddon is a gathering of earth's kings. Nor are "the kings of the whole world" (Rev 16:14) the only parties involved. Together they make up only half the cast of characters required for Armageddon. They constitute only one of two armies. The other comes from heaven and, according to Rev 19:14, is under Christ's personal command. In this context the "kings from the East" (Rev 16:12) are the Father and the Son. Until we understand these fundamental biblical facts about Armageddon we will never understand Armageddon or the part we must play as the events surrounding it unfold.

And third, when earth's kings have been gathered in the above manner and they finally see that their cause is lost, they turn on each other. ""Every man's sword will be against his brother"" (Ezek 38:21). This sort of skirmishing is a tangible part of Armageddon, but we should not mistake the half for the whole. The second coming of Christ will make any war we can conceive of--atomic or otherwise--seem very small by comparison. So is Armageddon a spiritual conflict? If by "spiritual" we mean something having to do with Christ, then yes it is. He comes in person to rescue His saints. Is Armageddon also a real war? According to Ezek 38:21 (quoted above), it will be. These two facts do not contradict each other. But Ezek 38:21 does not say that every nation's swords would be against those of some other nation. It says, ""Every man's sword will be against his brother."" In this verse I see a world that has sunken deeply into anarchy. All have united in rejecting God's law and this gathers them together for the final conflict. But now, extending the same principle one step further, they reject all law--whether human or divine. The result is not war in the classical sense of the term but a sea of violent disorder.⁹⁹

A more significant answer can now be given to the question concerning the tangible reality of Armageddon. We have focused on the relationship of people to other people. But my

whole point in this part of the paper has been that people are only half of what we should be talking about here. Christ and the armies of heaven are the other half. Armageddon will be just as real as Christ's birth, or His crucifixion, His resurrection from the dead, or His high priestly ministry in heaven for us now--just as real as any other thing He has ever done.

Conclusion

The prophecy of Ezek 38-39 is perhaps best known for what Evangelical expositors draw from it in regard to Russia and modern Israel. The passages urged in support of such an interpretation are Ezek 38:2, 3 and 39:1, where the Hebrew word *rōš* ("head, chief") occurs. Nowhere else in the Old Testament does anyone suggest that *rōš* might mean "Rus" (i.e., Russia and, by a further extension, the Soviet Union). And all of Ezekiel's own historical allusions are, without exception, drawn from a single century in what was the recent past from his point of view. Thus, the only justification expositors have ever had for making *rōš* into Russia in Ezek 38:2, 3 and 39:1 (i.e., the argument from context) is in fact one of our best reasons for not doing so.

Paul warned that a time would come when there would be "all sorts of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders" (2 Thes 2:9). The establishment of a modern state of Israel has become a sign and lying wonder for Evangelical expositors of prophecy. By reading prophecy through the lense of a global or Middle Eastern war we render ourselves unable to appreciate the prophetic significance of its opposite counterpart--global peace. But Paul's warning must be taken seriously: "While people are saying, 'Peace and safety,' destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape" (1 Thes 5:3).¹⁰⁰ How many people would be willing to purchase global peace at the cost of religious principle? What sort of wrath would come on those who refuse to do so?

At one level Rev 19:19 teaches that all the kings of the earth will fight. That is one lesson to learn from the verse. But another equally important lesson is that they all fight on the same side. The final conflict is not primarily between some kings here and other kings there but between all the kings as led by Satan on the one hand and all the angels of heaven as led by Christ on the other hand.

There is nothing remarkable about war (see Matt 24:6). But a time will come when the end of such madness appears to be within grasp, and that would be remarkable indeed. When people reach that point they will be willing to accept any form of leadership that promises to bring about such a result (see Rev 13:3-4). I do not wish to be misunderstood. There is nothing wrong with peace. But there is something wrong with apostasy. If and when global apostasy is made a precondition for global peace, that is the gathering that leads to Armageddon.

The Evangelical model for Armageddon is fundamentally misconceived. The modern state of Israel is not a fulfillment of prophecy nor are the Jews God's covenant people today. Ezekiel does not say anything at all about Russia's attitude toward Israel. Armageddon is not one group of earth's kings fighting another group (those in Russia against those in Israel, for example). It is the second coming of Christ as seen from the perspective of those who have no reason to welcome it.

The present discussion of Ezek 38-39 should be seen as a preface or introduction to our later discussion of Dan 11:40-45. The language is different but the events are most assuredly the same.

Note: All Scripture quotations in this paper, except when noted otherwise, are from the Holy Bible, New International Version. Copyright (c) 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society.

¹Three papers on Armageddon have appeared in recent years in *Andrews University Seminary Studies*. The first of these was by William H. Shea ("The Location and Significance of Armageddon in Rev 16:16"), who argues that "Armageddon" means "Mount Megiddo" (*har m^giddôn*) rather than "Mount of Assembly" (*har mō^ēd*). The only mountain anywhere close to ancient Megiddo is in fact Mount Carmel, where Elijah called the people to decision as regards whom they wished to serve (see 1 Kgs 18:16-46). The second paper ("'Har-Magedon' According to the Hebrew in the Setting of the Seven Last Plagues of Revelation 16") was published posthumously from the notes of Roland E. Loasby by his former student Leona G. Running. Loasby argues that Armageddon does mean "Mount of Assembly" (*har mō^ēd*), with Greek gamma for Hebrew ayin, and uses that argument to move the venue for the conflict from Megiddo to Jerusalem. The third paper, by Hans K. LaRondelle ("The Etymology of *Har-Magedon* [Rev 16:16]"), places the others in perspective. LaRondelle accepts Shea's reading "Mount Megiddo" but places that term in contrast with "Mount Zion," showing that the issues have a spiritual component and are not primarily geographical in nature: "Just as 'Mount Zion' (Rev 14:1) is defined by the gospel as the place of Messianic salvation (Heb 12:22-24), so 'Mount Megiddo' must be similarly defined as the place of curse and doom for the antichrist" (*ibid.*, p. 73). Actually I think this comes close to Shea's original point. But what Loasby says about Jerusalem is useful, if we take it in the context of LaRondelle's paper, because the king of the North's final attack on Jerusalem in Dan 11:44-45 can only be a description of Armageddon.

²See Hardy, "Obadiah in Relation to Other Old Testament Prophets," to appear in *Historicism* No. 24/Oct 90.

³This assumption is the only one capable of explaining Daniel's response. A promise that the temple would be restored in 2300 literal days (approximately six years and four months) would be cause for joy, and if, as some suggest, this prophecy refers to the amount of time that would elapse while 2300 sacrifices were offered (one in the evening, one in the morning) rather than 2300 days, the period would be cut in half with only 1150 days or three years and two months before the restoration would not only begin but come to full completion. (This cannot be, however, because the morning and evening sacrifices are precisely "morning and evening" sacrifices [see 1 Chr 16:40; 2 Chr 2:4(3); 13:11; 31:3; Ezra 3:3]; they are never referred to as "evening and morning" sacrifices. For the latter sequence--but not in regard to sacrifices--see Gen 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31.) Under either set of circumstances, but especially the latter, Daniel should have been ecstatic. But that is not what the text says. "I, Daniel, was exhausted and lay ill for several days. Then I got up and went about the king's business. I was appalled by the vision; it was beyond understanding" (Dan 8:27). The 2300 evening-mornings were indeed 2300 days and Daniel correctly understood them as a figure representing 2300 years. What he failed to understand was what would happen at their close. A similar mistake would be made by others at a later time.

⁴Neither Ezekiel nor Daniel counted the exile from Babylon's third and final attack on Jerusalem in 586 B.C. For Ezekiel the exile began in 597 B.C. with Babylon's second attack and the deportation of Jehoiachin. Events in the book of Ezekiel are consistently dated with reference to the end of Jehoiachin's reign (see Hardy, "The Context for Ezra's Use of a Fall-to-Fall Calendar," *Historicism* No. 8/Oct 86, p. 27). For Daniel the exile began in 605 B.C.

with Babylon's first attack, as for example in Dan 9:1-2 where we are told the timeframe in which the prophet looked for a fulfillment of God's promise of restoration.

⁵This is not what the seventy years were about. They were a time set apart for Babylon, not for Israel (see Jer 27:7; 29:10; 25:11-12; 2 Chr 36:20b-21; Dan 9:2). And they were a time of success rather than failure. Babylon would prosper until the seventy years had ended. No set of dates relating solely to the Jewish exile add up to seventy years (605 - 539 = 66; 597 - 539 = 58; 586 - 539 = 47; 586 - 70 = 516, but nothing happened in 516). If, however, we start counting with the fall of Assyria and end with the fall of Babylon, the numbers add up perfectly. The last Assyrian king, Assur-uballit II, was defeated at Haran by a Babylonian army in 609 B.C. The city of Babylon fell to the Persians in 539 B.C. The time between these two dates is exactly seventy years and, more than this, the events that occur during that time, correspond perfectly to what Jeremiah was saying when he predicted that "these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years" (Jer 25:11). Ross E. Winkle has provided an excellent two-part survey of this topic: "Jeremiah's Seventy Years for Babylon: A Re-Assessment. Part I: The Scriptural Data," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 25 (1987): 201-14; "Jeremiah's Seventy Years for Babylon: A Re-Assessment. Part II: The Historical Data," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 25 (1987): 289-99.

⁶Haggai is an elaborately dated book. The prophet records messages received from the Lord on August 29 (Hag 1:1), September 21 (1:15), October 17 (2:1), and three times on December 18 (2:10, 18, 20)--all within the year 520 B.C. (see Hardy, "Fall-to-Fall Calendar," *Historicism* No. 8/Oct 86, p. 36). Zechariah's ministry began around the time of Haggai's third oracle (Hag 2:1), i.e., in October/November 520, and extended at least until December 16, 518 B.C. (see *ibid.*, p. 37). (Please notice that the date of Zechariah's second oracle [1:7] should be corrected to February 15, 519 B.C.).

⁷The defense brought forward by the early church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, was precisely that, i.e., that the people had failed to understand the true import of their actions. Peter says, "Now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did your leaders" (Acts 3:17). And so for three and a half years more, until A.D. 34, the Jews continued to receive God's undivided attention until it was clear that their rejection of Christ was intelligent and resolute. The Anointed One was not "cut off" at the end of Daniel's seventieth week (Dan 9:26), but in the middle of that week, leaving the rest of the time "decreed for your people and your holy city" (vs. 24) as a period of reflection and review. Only after the stoning of Stephen did persecution break out, scattering believers everywhere among the Gentiles (see Acts 6:8-8:3).

⁸The Jews were allowed to return home by Cyrus in 539 B.C. At a later time--starting with Simon (142-134), brother of Judas Maccabeus (d. 160), the ruler who gave the Hasmonean dynasty its name--the Jews became politically independent: "When Hyrcanus [134-104] died he left his son and successor, Judah Aristobulus, a territory which stretched from the north of Galilee to Masada, and from the sea to the Jordan" (Elias Bickerman, *From Ezra to the Last of the Maccabees: Foundations of Post-Biblical Judaism* [New York: Schocken, 1962], p. 151; see pp. 136-39). "Aristobulus reigned for only one year (104 to 103, and was succeeded by his brother, Alexander Jannaeus. Jannaeus continued his father's policy and waged incessant war against the neighboring cities and princes. At his death (76 B.C.E.) the entire coast, with the exception of Ascalon, from the border of Egypt to Carmel was under his sway. He won Trans-Jordan, which at that time contained numerous flourishing Greek settlements. 'The land between Gaza and Lebanon is called Judea,' wrote a Greek geographer of the time. Palestine, 'from Dan to Beersheba,' was Jewish again" (*ibid.*, p. 152).

⁹The vision of dry bones should be seen as having individual and spiritual as well as national significance. It was hardness of heart that brought about the nation's fall in the first place. And so any promise of restoration must imply more than removing the effects of disobedience; it also takes in a removal of the cause. This was not half a promise but a restatement of God's full and original purpose for His people. The promise of a new covenant in

Jer 33:31-34 (quoted in Heb 8:8-12 and 10:16-17) and Ezek 36:24-36 should be studied in this context. I want to thank my mother for urging me to include the above point in this paper.

¹⁰See Hans K. LaRondelle, Review of Vern S. Polythress, *Understanding Dispensationalists*, *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 27 (1989): 151-53.

¹¹A. E. Cowley, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910), 128a (p. 414). The entire passage reads: "The language also prefers to avoid a series of several co-ordinate genitives depending upon one and the same nomen regens (such as occur in Gn 14¹⁹, Nu 20⁵, 31⁵⁴ [1 Ch 13¹], 1 S 23⁷, 2 S 19⁶, Is 22⁵, Ps 5⁵, 8³), and rather tends to repeat the nomen regens, e.g. Gn 24³ *ʾēlohê haššāmáyim wēlōhê hāʾāreš* *the God of heaven and the God of the earth* (so in Jer 8¹ the regens is five times repeated" (ibid.). The editors do not italicize *nomen regens*.

¹²The word "of" is required in English, but Hebrew construct syntax lacks any such word or particle.

¹³In vs. 13 the expected pattern *šēbāʾ ūdʾdān wʾsōhʾrê taršîš* occurs (lit., "Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish"). Here an "and" (which can take the form *wʾ*- or *ū-*) links all the nouns in the list.

¹⁴C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament in Ten Volumes* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, n.d.), Vol. 9: *Ezekiel, Daniel*, p. 159.

¹⁵In Josh 22:14 the preposition *lʾ*- "(pertaining) to" is not used. The intent of both passages, however, is the same.

¹⁶In 2 Chr 31:10 (*ʾzaryâhû hakkōhēn hārōʾš* "the chief priest") and Ezra 7:5 (*ben-ʾahʾrôn hakkōhēn hārōʾš* "the son of Aaron the chief priest") an article precedes *rōʾš*.

¹⁷Contrary to some later writers, V. Gordon Childe (*The Aryans: A Study of Indo-European Origins* [New York: Dorset, reprint ed. 1987]) argues that the Cimmerians come from the North rather than the East (see ibid., pp. 39-40, 203).

¹⁸*New Bible Dictionary*, 2nd ed., s.v. Togarmah.

¹⁹H. W. F. Saggs, *The Greatness That Was Babylon* (New York: Mentor, 1962), p. 126.

²⁰"People of a new racial element were now over-running much of the territory of Urartu. This new element was the Scythians, known in cuneiform sources as Ashguzaya and in the Old Testament (*Jeremiah* ii.27 and elsewhere) as Ashkenaz. (The latter represents Hebrew *ʾšknz*, an ancient 'misprint' for *ʾškuz*, to be pronounced Ashkuz.)" (ibid., pp. 132-33).

²¹Ibid., p. 133.

²²Their presence there was memorable. To this day the Armenian name for Cappadocia is *Gamir* (see *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1964 ed., s.v. Cimmerians).

²³See also Ezek 27:10, which says: ""Men of Persia, Lydia and Put served as soldiers in your army. They hung their shields and helmets on your walls, bringing you splendor.""

²⁴See Saggs, *Babylon*, p. 126.

²⁵See ibid., p. 127.

²⁶See *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1964 ed., s.v. Cimmerians. There is a good deal of confusion about how these events are to be dated. Alyattes' dates are given in one place as 609-560 (ibid., s.v. Lydia).

²⁷See Max Mallowan, "Cyrus the Great (558-529 B.C.)," *Iran* 10 (1972): 1-18. The personal names "Cyrus" and "Cambyses" derive from the tribal names of groups which lay to the East over against India (see Ernst Herzfeld, *The Persian Empire: Studies in Geography and Ethnography of the Ancient Near East* [Steiner: Wiesbaden, 1968], pp. 344-46).

²⁸"With no city (in the Greek sense) nearby, this palace [Dascyion, the residence of a Persian satrap in northwestern Anatolia] and hunting park must have looked to the Iranians like Persia in miniature—a copy on a small scale of a world made up not of cities but of palaces and villages and occasional city-like agglomerations" (Ehsan Yarshater, ed., *The Cambridge History*

of Iran, 3 vols. [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968], vol. 3(1): *The Seleucid, Parthian and Sasanian Periods*, p. 103).

²⁹The economist John Kenneth Galbraith has an illuminating chapter on cities ("The Metropolis") in his book, *The Age of Uncertainty* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977), pp. 303-23. He speaks of four different types of city. Of special interest here is the "Political Household"--the extended dwelling of a ruler (see *ibid.*, pp. 303-6). The other three types of city that he discusses are the Merchant City, the Industrial City and the Camp (see *ibid.*, p. 303). In seventh-century Persia the only kind of city available was the Political Household.

³⁰See Richard N. Frye, *The Heritage of Persia* (New York: Mentor, 1963), plate 1, opposite p. 64.

³¹In Gen 10:2 one of the sons of Japheth is Madai, probably the ancestor of the Medes.

³²W. R. Paton, trans., *Polybius: The Histories*, 6 vols., Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1929), vol. 3, 5.44.2-7. Another resource Media enjoyed was horses. In an age when horses were important instruments of military policy this in itself gave the region great importance.

³³See my earlier remarks about Ezekiel's awareness of the meaning of ^{mat}*gūgu* (Land of Gugu) in the section on Magog. Also notice that, by a double metathesis, the Assyrian word ^{til}*garimmu* ("Togarmah") becomes ^{til}*gimarru* ("Cimmerian Ruin"). It would be as hard to claim that these things occupied Ezekiel's thinking as it would be to say that they escaped his attention.

³⁴*New Bible Dictionary*, 2nd ed., s.v. Sheba.

³⁵"Epigraphic or Old South Arabian is the language, dialectally variegated, of the ancient South-West Arabian city-states (approx. eighth century B.C. to sixth century A.D.), whose vast inscriptional resources have been unearthed during the past 150 years. Although the absence of vowel notation and of certain morphemes that are unlikely to occur in this lapidary style has unhappily placed marked limitations upon our knowledge of the language, scholars like Ryckmans, Beeston, Hofner, and others have greatly enhanced our understanding of Sabaeen, Minaean, Qatabanian, Hadrami, and Awsanian. As far as can be judged from the appearance of the consonantal skeleton, these dialects are likely to have remained within the range of mutual intelligibility" (Edward Ullendorff, "Comparative Semitics," in Thomas A. Sebeok, ed., *Current Trends in Linguistics* [The Hague: Mouton, 1970], vol. 6: *Linguistics in South West Asia and North Africa*, p. 267).

³⁶Chaim Rabin, *Ancient West-Arabian* (London: Taylor's Foreign Press, 1951), p. 1.

³⁷Dillmann, *Ethiopic Grammar* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1907), p. 4.

³⁸*Ibid.*, p. 5.

³⁹In origin Amharic was the language of Shoa and the area between *Takazzē* and *Abāwī* (see *ibid.*, pp. 2-3).

⁴⁰The main points of linguistic similarity are: "in the alphabetical system--the division of the old Semitic h and s each into two separate sounds; in the structure of words and inflections--the frequent endings in a short vowel, the greater multiplicity of conjugational forms in the Verb, and the fuller development of Quadriliteral and Multiliteral roots,--the Inner Plural or Collective formation in the Noun, the regular distinguishing of the Accusative, as also of the Indicative and Subjunctive in the Imperfect, the capability of attaching two Pronominal suffixes to one verb, and a host of other scattered and subordinate phenomena; in the vocabulary--an unmistakable array of roots which are elsewhere developed or preserved in Arabic only, and not in the more northerly Semitic languages" (*ibid.*, pp. 4-5).

⁴¹In Ezek 27:15 KJV, along with the Revised Version of 1901 and the Jerusalem Bible, following the Hebrew Massoretic Text, has "Dedan" (*dēdān*), while Moffat, RSV, and New English, following the Greek Septuagint, have "Rhodes" (*rodiōn*). Hebrew dalet (*d*, MT) is similar in appearance to resh (*r*, LXX).

⁴²*New Bible Dictionary*, 2nd ed., s.v. Dedan.

⁴³2 Chr 30:5 does not parallel any earlier passage (see William Day Crockett, *A Harmony of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles: The Books of the Kings of Judah and Israel* (Grand Rapids: Baker, reprinted 1987), p. 313).

⁴⁴Rabin, *Ancient West-Arabian*, p. 1.

⁴⁵*New Bible Dictionary*, 2nd ed., s.v. Cush.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, s.v. Put, Phut.

⁴⁷See Michael Grant, *Atlas of Ancient History*, rev. ed. (New York: Dorset Press, 1971), p. 21.

⁴⁸The same word *taršiš* was also used to designate the gem stone beryl: "Beryl (*taršiš*, Ex. 28:20; 39:13; Ct. 5:14; Ezk. 1:16; 10:9; 28:13; Dn. 10:6) was associated with Spain (Tarshish), and was probably Spanish gold topaz, known to the ancient world as chrysolith. In Rev. 21:20 (*bēryllos*) ordinary green beryl is meant" (*New Bible Dictionary*, 2nd ed., s.v. Jewels and Precious Stones).

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, s.v. Tarshish. In the case of Arabic, "trickle" lies at one end of a spectrum of meanings, of which most have more forceful connotations. According to Maan Z. Madina, *Arabic-English Dictionary of the Modern Literary Language*, Pocket Books (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1973), s.v. *rašša* (*rašš*), the meaning is "to splash, spurt, spray; sprinkle." The "spray" of a watering can or a light drizzle is one example (*raššat*) and, by metaphorical extension, "machine gun" is another (*miraššat*).

⁵⁰Richard J. Harrison, *Spain at the Dawn of History: Iberians, Phoenicians and Greeks* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1988), p. 55.

⁵¹There is some evidence that Solomon was not able to harbor the above fleet at Ezion-Geber, but rather--in harmony with Phoenician practice (alluded to by the reference to Hiram)--built his port on the nearby island of Jezirat Faraun (Alexander Flinder, "Is This Solomon's Seaport?" *Biblical Archaeology Review*, July/August 1989, pp. 30-43). At Ezion-Geber the sea would have been too shallow to accommodate Solomon's ocean-going vessels. If Flinders is correct, the harbor at Ezion-Geber was merely a place to transfer merchandise inland from ships anchored a short distance away at Jezirat Faraun.

⁵²Cross thinks that the Tarshish of the Nora Stone was probably a metal-refining town in Sardinia, since the Semitic root means 'to smelt.' There were, in fact, many places known as 'Tharsis' or 'Tarsis' or 'Tharros' or 'Tarshish' in the ancient world. Other scholars, too, have noted that these places take their names from the Semitic root--that they were the 'Smelt-towns' of the ancient world" (Joan G. Scheuer, "Searching for the Phoenicians in Sardinia," *Biblical Archeology Review*, January/ February 1990, p. 59).

⁵³Harrison, *Spain*, p. 149.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, p. 150.

⁵⁶"One powerful attraction of the west lay in its untapped metal lodes, especially tin, silver, and gold, for which there was an inexhaustible demand in the Orient. Silver, especially, was needed since the Assyrians used a silver standard for many commercial transactions, including credit and loans, which lay at the heart of their economy. This expanded greatly in the late eighth century BC after Assyrian victories over the Uartians who had controlled trade routes to Syria and the northwest for more than a hundred years" (*ibid.*, p. 41).

⁵⁷Jacques Pirenne, *Histoire de la civilisation de l'Égypte ancienne*, 3 vols. (Neuchâtel: Éditions de la Baconnière, 1963), vol. 3: *La XXI^e Dynastie aux Ptolémées (1085-30 av. J.-C.)*, pp. 85-86.

⁵⁸See Hardy, "Paul's Intention to Go to Spain," *Historicism*, No. 17/Jan 89, p. 42.

⁵⁹For Columbus see Luis Marden, "The First Landfall of Columbus," *National Geographic*, November 1986, pp. 572-77).

⁶⁰See Saggs, *Babylon*, p. 126.

⁶¹Streck places Mushku east of Tabal (*Assurbanipal*, vol. 1: *Einleitung: Das urkundlich Material, Chronologie und Geschichte*, p. ccclii); both Kraeling and Saggs, on the other hand, identifies it with Phrygia (see previous above). Here I accept the latter interpretation of the geographical data, and yet it should be pointed out that one district of modern Turkey is called *Muş* (pronounced [*muʃ*]). It is located just below the eastern end of the Black Sea. Whether this is an argument in Streck's favor I cannot say.

⁶²See Emil G. Kraeling, *Rand McNally Bible Atlas* (New York: Rand McNally, 1956), map XI, p. 244.

⁶³It is true that the king of Mushku at one time approached Sargon II (721-705) for an alliance of some sort, as Gyges (687-652) would do later for help against the Cimmerians. But as far as any regular tribute is concerned, there was none. See Saggs, *Babylon*, pp. 126-27.

⁶⁴"The 'Hilakku' of the cuneiform documents is not in any way identical with the 'Cilicia' [Kilikien] of the classical writers, but denotes the mountainous region north of the Taurus, especially the territory of Mazaka on the Argaeus, and thus corresponds to part of southern Cappadocia; one should probably also include Trachaiotis (the so called Rough Cilicia) within it. The coastal plain with Tarsus (Cilicia Pedias) was called *Qûe* (*Qaue*) by the Assyrians" (Streck, *Assurbanipal*, 1:cccl).

⁶⁵Saggs, *Babylon*, pp. 133, 137. See also n. 63 above.

⁶⁶René Dussaud, *Préydiens, Hittites et Achéens* (Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1953), p. 160. Of these four regions Mannai (or Minni) was the farthest east. Both it and Urartu were below and between the Black Sea and the Caspian but Mannai was closer to the Caspian Sea and Urartu was closer to the Black Sea. Urartu is generally the area identified with Armenia. Tabal was next beyond Urartu as one travels west and finally there is Mushku, which in the seventh century B.C. extended all the way to the Bosphorus. Not coincidentally, these four regions together represent the northernmost extremity of land below the great Black and Caspian Seas.

⁶⁷See Streck, *Assurbanipal*, 2:21-22 (1.2.95-120a).

⁶⁸See *Herodotus*, 1.8-15.

⁶⁹"The Latin alphabet originally did not contain the letter *y*. Early loan words from the Greek represented Gk. *υ* by Lat. *u*, as is shown by many epigraphical instances, . . . Some of these words were probably taken from Greek dialects which had normal *u* [u] in place of Attic-Ionic [y], but many of them doubtless came from the Hellenistic dialect, which had [y], although other transcriptions were sometimes used . . ." (Edgar H. Sturtevant, *The Pronunciation of Greek and Latin*, William Dwight Whitney Linguistic Series [Philadelphia, Linguistic Society of America, 1940], p. 22). Now we have gone full circle because when transcribing Greek words in English letters modern scholars (Sturtevant is an exception) pass over English *y*, despite its origin as an upsilon, in favor of the letter *u*. And the reason for rejecting *y* now is the same as that which caused it to be borrowed initially, since the goal is to represent the sound of a Greek word as accurately as possible. English *y* has lost its sense of being a borrowed letter with a distinctive sound (French *u*, German *u*) and has taken on, by convention, an arbitrary set of entirely native sounds (usually [ay] or [i]). English *u*, although the correspondence is not exact, comes much closer to conveying what words spelled with upsilon really sounded like.

⁷⁰See Saggs, *Babylon*, p. 126; *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1964 ed., s.v. Cimmerians.

⁷¹*New Bible Dictionary*, 2nd ed., s.v. Gog and Magog.

⁷²"The Assyrian designation for northern Israel from the ninth to the seventh century B.C. was 'the house (or land) of Omri', the term being used both for the dynastic line of Ahab and, as more probably here since Jehu was a usurper, for the territory governed from Samaria as the city founded by Omri (1 Kings xvi.24)." (D. Winton Thomas, *Documents from Old Testament Times*, Harper Torchbooks [New York: Harper & Row, 1958], p. 49). Notice that this last remark

has relevance for Dan 5. See also James B. Pritchard, ed., *The Ancient Near East: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958), pp. 192-96.

⁷³Hebrew prefers syllables that are either closed (CVC) or have a long vowel (CV:). This fact is captured with the notation CVX, where X is either a final consonant or vowel length. If nothing is available to close a given syllable (such as the first consonant of the following syllable, sometimes doubled for this purpose), its vowel reduces to shewa (CV - Cv) and is written above the normal line of print. Open syllables in Hebrew are therefore vulnerable to what we might call an all or nothing rule that either lengthens a full vowel or reduces it. But vowel lengthening or reduction does not occur in closed syllables. So as long as the *t* of Assyrian *mat* ("land [of]") remained, the vowel could remain full but short (*a*). When its protecting consonant fell away it lengthened to *ā*.

⁷⁴The above process could be taken as supporting evidence that Assyrian determinatives, such as the *mat* in *mat gūgu*, were pronounced as Assyrian words even though they were commonly written as Sumerian logograms. See David Marcus, *A Manual of Akkadian* (Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1978), pp. 36-37 (6.20).

⁷⁵Another example of a biblical writer using one word to convey two meanings is Paul's word *hamartia* in 2 Cor 5:20, which can mean both "sin" and "sin offering."

⁷⁶An exception is Persia, which does not appear in Gen 10, although Madai, the patronymic ancestor of the Medes, does (see Gen 10:2).

⁷⁷*Bible Atlas*, map IV (B6).

⁷⁸The term "Lud" occurs in Gen 10:13 (=1 Chr 1:11), 22 (=1 Chr 1:17); Isa 66:19; Jer 46:9; Ezek 27:10; and 30:5. Ezek 27:10 says: ""Men of Persia, Lydia and Put served as soldiers in your army. They hung their shields and helmets on your walls, bringing you splendor."" Ezek 30:5 says: ""Cush and Put, Lydia and all Arabia, Libya and the people of the covenant land will fall by the sword along with Egypt.""

⁷⁹See Warren Austin Gage's illuminating book entitled, *The Gospel of Genesis: Studies in Protology and Eschatology*, Carpenter Books (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1984).

⁸⁰Hal Lindsey, *The 1980's: Countdown to Armageddon* (New York: Bantam, 1981), p. 67.

⁸¹Andrews University Monographs, Studies in Religion, vol. 13 (Berrien Springs: Andrews University Press, 1983). See especially pp. 81-91.

⁸²Physical descent brings us into relationship with our human fathers. "Moreover, we have all had human fathers" (Heb 12:9)--all except Adam, and from him we inherit the weaknesses of our human nature. This is not the basis for a covenant with God. Only faith brings us into relationship with God. If this vital distinction is missed and we proceed solely and exclusively on the basis of physical descent, how can we keep the covenant with Israel from also being a covenant with Ishmael (the son of Abraham) and Esau (the son of Isaac)? It is true that Isaac was a son of promise. But what was the nature of that promise and how does Paul apply it? "The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. The Scripture does not say 'and to seeds,' meaning many people, but 'and to your seed,' meaning one person, who is Christ" (Gal 3:16). From this I draw that rejecting the proffered covenant relationship with the Son is tantamount to rejecting one's covenant relationship with the Father. A corollary is that anyone at all who accepts the Son is, by virtue that fact, in covenant relationship with the Father--on the basis of the promises made to Abraham. I mean this in a plenary sense. "If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal 3:29). All of what Paul says about Israel must be understood in this context.

⁸³In 1922 the Soviet Union of Socialist Republics began as an agglomeration of the Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic (S.F.S.R.) and the Ukrainian, Byelorussian, and Transcaucasian Soviet Socialist Republics (S.S.R.). By 1939 there were eleven republics: the Ukrainian, Byelorussian, Azerbaijanian, Georgian, Armenian, Turkmen, Uzbek, Tajik, Kazakh, and Kirghiz S.S.R.s, in addition to the Russian S.F.S.R. In 1940 four new republics were added:

Karelia (from Finland, March 12), Lithuania (August 3), Latvia (August 5), Estonia (August 6). Bessarabia, which had formerly belonged to Russia, and northern Bukova, which had not, were occupied June 27, 1940 and officially annexed September 15, 1947 at Rumania's expense. Bessarabia was allocated partly to the Moldavian S.S.R. and partly to the Ukrainian S.S.R. At present the Soviet Union, in addition to the Russian S.F.S.R., contains the Armenian, Azerbaijan, Byelorussian, Estonian, Georgian, Kazakh, Kirghiz, Latvian, Luthuanian, Moldavian, Tadzhik, Turkmen, and Ukrainian S.S.R.s.

⁸⁴"It is usually reckoned that the Norse states in Russia began with the coming of Rurik and his brothers to Novgorod in 862, but there are various bits of evidence to show that Norse-ruled petty states existed along the great rivers long before then" (Sigfús Blondal, *The Varangians of Byzantium: An Aspect of Byzantine Military History Translated, Revised and Rewritten by Benedikt S. Benedikz* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978], p. 3). The presence of Norsemen in Russia before A.D. 862 can be readily acknowledged without compromising my central claim that it is anachronistic to speak of "Russia" before the Rus came and established a state by that name. "According to the *Primary Chronicle*, Rurik died in 879, leaving the conduct of state affairs to his relative, Oleg, in view of the infancy of Rurik's son, Igor. Oleg was the first nonlegendary ruler of Russia" (Serge A. Zenkovsky, trans. and ed., *Medieval Russia's Epics, Chronicles, and Tales* [New York: Dutton, 1963], p. 51).

⁸⁵"The Romanovs were not of Rurik's stock, nor were they even of very ancient lineage. They descended from a German nobleman who had emigrated to Moscow early in the 14th century. His fifth son, nicknamed Koshka ('the Cat'), became head of the family of Koshkins, many of whom were prominent at the court of Moscow in the 14th and 15th centuries. Early in the 16th century one of them, whose first name was Roman, called himself Romanov. His daughter, Anastasia, was Ivan the Terrible's first wife; it was her son, Theodor, who was the last tsar of the Rurik dynasty" (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1964 ed., s.v. Romanov. "It must be admitted that this circumstance [personal mediocrity] had influenced the election of Michael in 1613, together, or course with the prominent position of his family and its kinship to the Ruriks. This appealed to the conservative members of the Sobor and helped to eliminate the candidacies of foreigners such as Władysław of Poland, or of Swedish or Habsburg princes" (Francis Dvornik, *The Slavs in European History and Civilization*, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1962], p. 490). By this time the Romanovs were no longer considered foreigners, although their family had its origins elsewhere.

⁸⁶Blondal, *Varangians*, p. 1.

⁸⁷See Keil, *Ezekiel*, pp. 159-60.

⁸⁸Eino Jutikkala with Kauko Pirinen, *A History of Finland*, 2nd ed., Paul Sjoblom, trans. (New York: Dorset, 1988), p. 16. The tradition that Jutikkala and Pirinen refer to in the above quotation has been preserved in a document known as the Primary Chronicle: "The tributaries of the Varangians drove them back beyond the sea and, refusing them further tribute, set out to govern themselves. Discord thus ensued among them, and they began to war one against another. They said to themselves, 'Let us seek a prince who may rule over us, and judge us according to the law.' They accordingly went overseas to the Varangian Rus: these particular Varangians were known as Rus, just as some are called Swedes, and others Normans, Angles, and Goths, for they were thus named. The Chuds, the Slavs, and the Krivichians then said to the people of Rus, 'Our whole land is great and rich, but there is no order in it. Come to rule and reign over us.' They thus selected three brothers, with their kinfolk, who took with them all the Rus and migrated. The oldest, Rurik, located himself in Novgorod; the second, Sineus, in Beloozero; and the third, Truvor, in Izborsk. On account of these Varangians, the district of Novgorod became known as Russian (Rus) land. The present inhabitants of Novgorod are descended from the Varangian race, but aforetime they were Slavs" (Zenkovsky, *Russia's Epics*, p. 50).

⁸⁹Based on 1983 census data the Soviet Union has a total population of 271,200,000, of which 52% are Russian, 16% Ukrainian, and 4% Byelorussian. Thus, approximately 72% of the population are Slavic by race. But there are more Uzbeks (5%) than Byelorussians (4%) and "over 100 other groups of Turkic, Finno-Ugric, Caucasian, and Indo-European origin; Russian is the official language but over 200 languages and dialects are spoken" (David Munro, ed., *Chambers World Gazetteer*, 5th ed. [Edinburgh: Chambers, Ltd. and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988], s.v. Soviet Union). See also the National Geographic Society map entitled, "Peoples of the Soviet Union," which accompanied the February 1976 issue of *National Geographic Magazine*.

⁹⁰See R. G. A. de Bray, *Guide to the Slavonic Languages* (New York: Dutton, 1951), p. xxv.

⁹¹Blondal, *Varangians*, p. 9. There have been posthumous attempts to rid Russia of its Norsemen. The Soviet scholar J. D. Bruckus, for example, proposes a Turkish etymology for the word "Varangian." For comment on this proposal see *ibid.*, p. 7.

⁹²The Assyrians saw history as being cyclic in nature. But biblical writers do not necessarily adopt this view when they allow the past to inform their views of the future, as in the present case. John Briggs Curtis, in "A Suggested Interpretation of the Biblical Philosophy of History," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 34 (1963): 115-23, implies that they do because there are cycles in biblical history as well. But the two positions are not mutually exclusive. The question is not whether history appears to repeat itself. That it does is an important exegetical tool for prophetic exegesis, used both in this paper and a future one on Dan 11:40-45. A larger question is whether such cycles lead to an end or goal. In view of the second coming of Christ it is unbiblical to suggest they do not. And if they do, that is a teleological view of history. Events do not have to be isolated to be meaningful.

⁹³I leave it as a project for future research to assemble a catalogue of the other earlier prophecies that Ezekiel might have had in mind here.

⁹⁴This account appears to collapse the distinction between events before and after the millenium.

⁹⁵See Hardy, "The Case for a Typological Interpretation of Dan 11:40-45," to appear in *Historicism* No. 22/Apr 90.

⁹⁶The comparison is between *ek tou stomatos . . . romphaia* (lit., "a sword out of his mouth") (Rev 19:15) and *tō pneumati tou stomatos autou* (lit., "by the breath of his mouth") (2 Thes 2:8). Compare Ps 33:6 ("By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth"). Another link between the two passages is the word *sēmeiois* ("signs") in 2 Thes 2:9 and *ta sēmeia* ("signs") in Rev 19:20. These are not merely stray lexical correspondences but rather indications that the two passages are closely parallel.

⁹⁷The word *sunēgagen* (Rev 16:16) is singular in most manuscripts (thus, "he gathered"). Manuscript support for the plural form *sunēgagon* ("they gathered," NIV) is confined to Codex Sinaiticus, one copy of the Vulgate, and the Harclean recension of the Syriac.

⁹⁸This statement does not contradict Christ's words, "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" (Matt 24:14). Above I stated that the whole world would intelligently reject God's law. To do this they must understand its claims. To have this knowledge they must be told about them. Nor is knowing the law unrelated to knowing the gospel. There is no reason for grace where there is no disobedience. And there can be no disobedience where there is no standard of behavior against which human actions can be measured. The law and the gospel are inseparable. The ultimate question is, Will you be reconciled to God (see 2 Cor 5:20)? Will you accept His Son? Will you accept His will? These are not three different questions but one question stated in three different ways. Nor is it in any way peculiar that this should be so. "For I am a great king," says the Lord Almighty, "and my name is to be feared among the nations" (Mal 1:14). It is not

unbiblical to assert that the Creator of heaven and earth wishes to be obeyed as well as loved, loved as well as obeyed.

⁹⁹The work of the Seventh-day Adventist church has gone most rapidly in areas of political instability (Central America is one example) and I suspect this is true for other churches as well. People under such conditions are looking for answers and are open to those supplied by the gospel. When Ellen White writes that "the final movements will be rapid ones" (*Testimonies for the Church* [Mountain View: Pacific Press, 1948], 9:11), here is one element of the context for her remark.

¹⁰⁰This issue of *Historicism* is being published almost three months late. And, from listening to the news, I will always be grateful for that. The present footnote is being written on the morning of December 22, 1989.