

A New Look a Enigmatic

RUSSIA

In Bible PROPHECY!

What is going on in Russia? Is Vladimir Putin steering Russia once again to a right wing dictatorship? Will a resurgent Russia renounce its growing ties with the West, and turn once again to nationalism, xenophobia, and the path of aggression? Recent trends in Russian politics are very disturbing. What does Biblical prophecy say will happen? What about “Gog and Magog” of Ezekiel 38?

William F. Dankenbring

In October, 2007, Russia’s Vladimir Putin delivered a bombshell little reported in the Western Media. While visiting Iran, and meeting with Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the two men essentially agreed to counteract George Bush’s plan to launch a pre-emptive attack on Iranian nuclear installations. Putin declared, “An American attack on Iran will be viewed by Moscow as an attack on Russia,” says the Asian Times (Oct.26, 2007).

Once again the Russian Bear begins to threaten, swagger, and strut its geopolitical clout. What is going on in the former Soviet Union? Why is Vladimir Putin once again flexing Russia’s muscles, sending Russian bombers to probe America’s air space, and selling missiles and air defense systems to rogue states like Syria and Iran, the enemies of the Western World?

Why is Russia backing and assisting Iran in its development of nuclear energy, and forestalling efforts to bring Iran into compliance with the world’s demands that it forebear its development of nuclear weapons?

Why is Russia joining China in mutual war exercises? Is Russia once again becoming a major threat to world peace?

Writes Thomas K. Grose of *U.S. News & World Report* magazine, “Swelling oil and gas revenues are fueling boom times in Russia. Trouble is, they’re also bankrolling its military resurgence and, as one British diplomat puts it, ‘a deterioration of Russian behavior.’ How to react to a seemingly more menacing Kremlin has the European Union leaders in a quandary.

“European foreign ministers, meeting earlier this month in Portugal, agreed that a unified, tougher line with Moscow is needed. But they’ve yet to agree on just what it will be. ‘It’s a brand-new game, but Europe doesn’t know what the game is yet, and isn’t sure how to play it,’ says Alyson Bailes, an expert on European security at the University of Iceland. One thing’s for certain, however. The Bear is restless and prowling again” (September 24, 2007).

Sean Osborne, Associate Director, Military Affairs, of the Northeast Intelligence Network, declared, “Russia is back to their old tricks. Better still, they never stopped them. In addition to arming our enemies like Iran and Syria, they are now playing dangerous war games reminiscent to the warmer periods of ‘the Cold War.’ Drowned out in the media by tales of O.J. and Brittney, it is probably news to the majority of Americans that as you are reading this, Russian strategic bombers are conducting a series of long-range training flights, complete with aerial refueling, simulating a full-fledged nuclear cruise missile strike on the Continental United States. These exercises, conducted in a time when world tensions continue to mount, are scheduled to continue through September 21st.

Russian strategic bombers Tu-160, Tu-95 and Tu-22M3, and Il-78 aerial tankers are engaged in this exercise, which in all practicality, could ‘go live’ at any time, and the U.S. would have precious little warning should the unthinkable occur. Accordingly, these Russian exercises can and should be viewed as ‘Warning Order’ exercises which could be executed against the Continental United States and our allies imminently – even during the execution of the announced ‘exercises’ themselves. In that case the exercise would no longer be an exercise, but a real-world pre-emptive nuclear strike by Russian cruise missiles.

“It is important to point out that all military forces exercise such capabilities for a variety of reasons. One of the primary reasons, however, is to be able to execute such a mission as effectively as possible when such an order is issued. In August, Moscow announced that flights by strategic bombers have not only resumed, but would continue to be flown on a permanent basis. According to intelligence sources, Russian aircraft equipped with cruise missiles could strike between 172 -192 target locations (depending upon their weapon configuration) inside the U.S. with little warning. They appear to be flying sorties to forward launch points prior to the exercise, then are refueled in-flight to get them within range of the Continental U.S., but remain just outside of our air defense envelope to enable a launch followed by escape and evade back to their home bases.

“In September 2006 Russian strategic aviation conducted simulated nuclear strikes within the contiguous territory of the Russian Federation. That exercise reportedly involved 60 long-range bombers of the same variants seen airborne in the exercise currently in progress. The difference is that in the exercise of 3 and 4 September, as well as the current 18-21 September exercise, the targets of the nuclear cruise missiles are not within Russian territory but are in fact once again real-world locations within the continental United States. To my knowledge,

exercises of this scale with massed strategic, long-range aircraft of 12 or more in a single sortie, accompanied by long-range refueling aircraft, over a period of several days and in such a configuration that the Russian aircraft aloft could strike a couple hundred U.S. cities, military targets and infrastructure with 200 kiloton nuclear weapons evokes images of a modern day, albeit nuclear, ‘Pearl Harbor.’

“This is inherently dangerous business. In fact, it is my opinion that such exercises are a direct threat of nuclear warfare against our homeland by Russia; there is no other way in which to view ‘exercises’ like these” (18 September 2007).

The Russian Heart

The former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics made no bones about its intention someday to rule the entire world. In a prophetic book, Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn says that America is in deadly peril. With the strongest of emphasis, he warns that the Western world has been in retreat before Communism for a long time, but that it cannot go on forever. “The brink may not have been reached,” he says, “but it is already the merest step away.”

In *The Mortal Danger*, Solzhenitsyn warns that detente simply has not worked – except to the benefit of the Soviets. Says Solzhenitsyn, “This is the same detente that the West basked in contentedly while millions were being exterminated in the jungles of Cambodia. The same detente that so gladdened Western hearts at a time when a thousand men, including 12-year old boys, were being executed in one Afghan village. (And this was surely not a unique case!)

“We Russians immediately recognize an episode like this. That’s the Soviet way of doing things! That’s the way they slaughtered us, too, from 1918 on!”

Solzhenitsyn points out that Soviet expansionism will not stop unless threatened by superior force. Since 1939 the Communists have been annexing countries and territories, spreading their propaganda and influence around the world.

Solzhenitsyn believes that the West has tried to “buy” perpetual peace with the Soviets by sacrificing a few million people. He laments, “In this way – and without any real need – the whole of Eastern Europe was sacrificed to Stalin.”

He added, “Now 35 years later, we can sum up the cost of this wisdom: the security of the West today is solely dependent upon the unforeseen Sino-Soviet rift.”

And today, that “rift” is in the process of HEALING! Both nations are extremely jealous of and hate the United States of America!

Alexandr Solzhenitsyn

Says this recognized authority on Communism, there can be no reconciliation with Communism. There are only two alternatives – its total victory, or its total defeat.

What does lie ahead? Is the steady forward march of communism destined to lead to a nuclear war between Russia and the United States? And what about China? Will her rift with Russia lead to a total separation between the two nations? Or will that rift be healed?

Winston Churchill, the great English statesman, knew the Russians could never be trusted. He warned repeatedly that the only thing the Russian Kremlin respects in any encounter is “superior force” and the willingness to use that force, if need be, “ruthlessly.” So said Churchill. And the Soviet bear has not changed its basic nature since the 1940s and 1950s!

Alexandr Solzhenitsyn was born in Russia in 1918 and served in the Red Army during World War II. While serving on the German front in 1945 he was arrested and imprisoned for criticizing publicly Joseph Stalin. He was sentenced to eight years in labor camps. After completing his sentence he was exiled to Kazakhstan. After Stalin’s death in 1953, his standing with the new Russian leaders improved dramatically and he was restored to citizenship in 1956.

His first novels grimly exposed the horrors of life in the Russian labor camps – but since Nikita Khrushchev was denouncing them at the time, the novels were permitted to be published causing a sensation. After Khrushchev’s abrupt departure from in 1964, Solzhenitsyn once again found himself treated as dangerous man and censorship was again tightened. In 1970 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature, and in 1974 he was forcibly arrested, accused of treason, stripped of citizenship, and deported to the West.

From his close, first-hand knowledge of the Soviet system, Solzhenitsyn knows the true nature and character of the Russian leadership. He is shocked at what is happening in the West, and how Western leaders gullibly swallow every tidbit of Soviet propaganda regarding Détente.

In February, 1976, while America celebrated her bicentennial, Solzhenitsyn warned in a BBC interview in England: “Over the years terrible things have happened. The West has given up its world positions. The West has given everything away so impetuously, has done so much to strengthen the tyranny in our country.”

President Ronald Reagan’s policies led to the defeat of the Soviet Union, but today, under Vladimir Putin, a new Russia has risen from the ashes of the Soviet Empire, and it looks remarkably identical in policies and ambitions to the old Empire before its collapse.

Solzhenitsyn declared, “I wouldn’t be surprised at the sudden and imminent fall of West.” Declared Alexander Solzhenitsyn, “The West is on the verge of a collapse created by its own hands.”

How prophetic those words have turned out to be!

Dimitry Z. Manuilsky, who represented the Soviet Union in the United Nations Security Council, told the Lenin School of Political Warfare in Moscow: “War to the hilt between

communism and capitalism is inevitable. Today, of course, we are not strong enough to attack.” He added, “To win we shall need the element of surprise. The bourgeois will have to be put to sleep. So we shall begin by launching the most spectacular PEACE movements on record. There will be electrifying overtures and unheard of concessions. The capitalist countries, stupid and decadent, will rejoice to cooperate in their own destruction. ‘They will leap at another chance to be friends. As soon as their guard is down, we shall smash them with our clenched fist!

Similarities to the Weimar Republic

There are a number of similarities between modern Russia, after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the “Cold War,” and the Weimar Republic in Germany, which followed World War I, and which paved the way for the rise to power of Adolf Hitler.

Consider, for example:

Both countries suffered terrible blows to their national pride and psyche. Germany suffered the humiliating defeat of World War I; Russia lost the Cold War.

Both suffered plummeting industrial production. Germany’s fell by 50% from 1929-1932; Russia's fell 25% in one year.

Both suffered economic collapse and high unemployment.

Both experienced skyrocketing inflation rates. Germany’s was so severe that wheelbarrows full of marks were worth less than the wheelbarrows; Russian prices have gone up more than a thousand-fold since 1989!

Failure of democratic-minded chancellors greased the way for Hitler to take control; failure of democratic forces in Russia to control inflation, improve the economy, and bring stability to the state are likewise alienating many Russian voters.

Both countries have had autocratic, feudal histories with no truly democratic tradition.

A Fearsome Nationalistic Russia!

Since the collapse of Communism in Russia, the German government has provided Moscow with more than \$50 billion in hard currency foreign aid, to help solidify Russian-German links and promote a stable transition to democracy.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn, famous Russian writer and novelist, has bitterly warned that the introduction of capitalism from the West has opened the flood-gates in the former Soviet Union to “plunder of the nation's wealth, the likes of which the West has not known.” Confidential reports being circulated at the World Bank reveal that “in Russia as much as half the nation’s exports – gold, diamonds, oil, furs, even natural gas – is being regularly stolen,” says Gennady Kotlov, former economic adviser to Yeltsin who is now with the World Bank.

Clearly, the brief romantic feelings of love and respect, which the Russians felt for the Western democracies, as Communism failed and collapsed, has begun to turn into a feeling of being “jilted,” with resentment, hatred, and anger spilling over. Russia’s economic troubles are being blamed on profiteers, thieving bureaucrats, and grafting Russian officials in a conniving alliance with a major group of global megabanks.

In a chaotic situation like this, as the Russians wake up from their long slumber, more and more of their hatred – *and fear* – will be turned upon the West. Already, therefore, the stage is being set for the re-emergence of a STRONG MAN in Russia – a *new Stalin* to seize control! Out of the chaos will appear another charismatic, brutal, cruel dictator, as has so often happened in history.

And Vladimir Putin appears to be fulfilling that Role, as Russia once again begins asserting its independence from the West, criticizes America’s foreign policy, and begins to cast a long shadow over the Middle East!

Bible Prophecy Speaks Out

An aggressive Russia allied with an anti-democratic regime in China – think about it! Bible prophecy predicts an immense 200 million man army will mobilize in the East, in the future, and march westward, to devastate and “slay the third part of men” (Rev.9:15-16).

Among the victims of this future onslaught will be “modern Babylon” – including Europe and the United States, and western powers. Germany, a nation composed of the modern descendants in large part of a mixture of Israelites, and the Biblical Assyrians, is one of the prime components of the New World Order. The British royalty also has both Jewish and German blood – a mixture. Former President Clinton, who is related to British royalty, also most likely has both Israelite (Jewish) and Assyrian blood lines – including, therefore, a Germanic or Assyrian “pedigree.”

God says, “Woe to the Assyrian, the rod of mine anger” (Isa.10:5, margin). He says He will “punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high [proud, arrogant] looks” (v.12). The LORD will “kindle a burning like the burning of a fire. And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame: and it shall *burn and devour* his thorns and his briars *in one day*; and shall consume the glory of his forest . . . And the rest of the trees of his forest shall be few, so that a child may write them” (Isa.10:17-19).

Many Germanic people migrated to the United States after the time of Bismark. My own grandfather migrated to the U.S. from Germany in the years before World War I. My great grandfather was the Staff Sergeant to Kaiser Wilhelm.

There are many subtle ties between the United States and Germany. Although the United States is Ephraim in Biblical prophecy, many Germans live in the U.S., so it also could be a mixture of Israelite and Assyrian bloodlines!

Who is this “Assyrian” in end-time Biblical prophecy?

A New Revelation

Many in the past have incorrectly applied this “Assyrian” to modern Germany, and a future leader of Germany. However, this is not correct – not by a long shot!

Almost nobody realizes it, so far as I know, but although some of the tribes of ancient Assyria migrated to the region of modern Germany and Central Europe, the term “Assyria” and “Assyrian” in Bible prophecy refers to the Assyrio-Babylonian-Persian world empires, and their successors on the world scene!

Notice! “Assyria” does not just mean the ancient Assyrian Empire, which took the northern kingdom of Israel into captivity in 721-718 B.C. In fact, in the days of Ezra, a righteous scribe of the Law of God, who lived during the time of the PERSIAN empire, we read in the book of Ezra that the Jews who returned to Israel under his leadership, “kept the Feast of Unleavened Bread seven days with joy for the LORD made them joyful and TURNED THE HEART OF THE KING OF ASSYRIA [that is, PERSIA] toward them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel (Ezra 6:22).

The king referred to in this passage was King Artaxerxes, “king of Persia” (Ezra 7:1).

The Babylonian Empire was also called “Assyrian.” We read in II Kings 23:29, during the days of king Josiah of Judah, “In his days Pharaoh Necho king of Egypt went up against the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates . . .” (II Kings 23:29). This was in 654 B.C. The Assyrians themselves were of Babylonian origin. “The civilization of the Assyrians were derived originally from the Babylonians. They were a Shemitic race originally resident in Babylonia” (Peloubet’s Bible Dictionary, p.55, “Assyria”).

In II Chronicles 33:11 we read, “Therefore the LORD brought upon them [Judah] the captains of the army of the king of ASSYRIA, who took Manasseh with hooks [nose hooks] and bound him with bronze fetters [chains], and carried him off to BABYLON.”

In the end of days, the final world empire would also be called “BABYLON” (Revelation 18), showing it derives ultimately from the same Assyrio-Babylonian-Persian SYSTEM!

Thus the prophesied end-time “king of Assyria” means the king or ruler of the end-time BABYLON – THE WORLD EMPIRE composed of the modern United States and European Union, Great Britain, and all their allies!

Standing against this western world empire, today often referred to as the “American Empire” because of America’s influence upon it, is Russia, and the nation of China, and the bulk of the Muslim nations who abhor “western” influence, hate the West, and have felt subjugated and exploited for centuries, since the rise of the power of Great Britain and America.

Biblical prophecy indicates that the seat of modern “Babylon,” and the nations which will *lead* the “New World Order” – which includes the entire “Western alliance” – primarily the United States, Canada, Great Britain, France, Germany, and Italy – will be attacked from the Eastern bloc of nations, led by Russia and China, which are presently forming an alliance to withstand the projection of American power around the world.

East Versus West – Clash of Civilizations

We read of this fateful encounter in the book of Revelation. God declares, “Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates. So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released to KILL [DESTROY] A THIRD OF MANKIND [over 2 billion people!]. Now the number of the army of the horsemen was TWO HUNDRED MILLION; I heard the number of them” (Rev.9:14-16). These four “angels” could refer to the four great nations of the East – including Russia, China, India, and Japan.

In a similar account, the sixth plague of the final seven last plagues, God says, “Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the WAY of the kings of the EAST might be prepared” (Rev.16:12).

In this conflict, much of the United States, central Europe, perhaps Canada and England, and other nations in Europe, will be devastated – with millions of their inhabitants annihilated.

Thus the prophecy in Isaiah 10 is describing a ferocious *nuclear attack* on the nations of the West! God says, “WOE to Assyria, the rod of My anger and the staff in whose hand is My indignation” (Isa.10:5). “Therefore the Lord, the Lord of hosts, will send LEANNESS among his fat ones; and under his glory will kindle a BURNING like the burning of a FIRE” (V.16).

This “fire” to come upon and consume and devour is no doubt nuclear in origin – the very thing most people fear most! It will destroy many of the cities of these nations “in one day”! No fire could do that, except a massive NUCLEAR attack!

Speaking of the future destruction of the future “New World Order,” led by the United States and Europe – which God calls “Babylon,” as it is the center today of the world’s Babylonish system of government, politics, and finance – God declares: “I will kindle a *fire in his cities*, and it shall devour all round about him” (Jer.50:32).

God thunders: “As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah [fire raining down from the skies – a type of nuclear holocaust!] and the neighbor cities thereof, saith the LORD; so shall no man abide there, neither shall any son of man dwell therein” (Jer.50:40).

Who is going to initiate the massive nuclear attack? Notice what Biblical prophecy says!

“Behold, a people shall come from the NORTH, and a GREAT NATION, and MANY KINGS shall be raised up from the *coasts of the earth* [Russia, China, India, Japan and their allies] . . . they are cruel and will not show mercy” (Jer.50:40-42).

God says to His people, today,

“Flee out of the midst of Babylon [Europe], and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of the LORD’s vengeance; he will render unto her a recompense. Babylon hath been a gold cup in the LORD’s hand, that made all of the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are MAD [crazy, insane, following insane economic schemes and political madness]. Babylon is *suddenly fallen and destroyed: HOWL* for her” (Jer.51:6-8).

What nations will be involved in this final destruction of Euro-Babylon? Says Jeremiah in his prophetic words which apply in anti-type to our end-time generation:

“Set ye up a standard in the land, blow the trumpet among the nations, prepare the nations against her, call together against her the kingdoms of Ararat [the Turkish peoples who range from Turkey to southern Russia, Azerbaijan, Turkestan, Khazakstan, and the other Muslim republics which comprised the former Soviet Union], Minni [Armenia], and Ashchenaz [modern Japan, descended from the firstborn son of Japheth] . . . Prepare against her the nations with the KINGS OF THE MEDES [Ukraine, Russia, and other Slavic peoples], the captains thereof, and all the rulers thereof, and all the land of his dominion” (Jer.51:27-28).

The peoples and nations described in this passage of Scripture are located *IN THE EASTERN BLOC* – they are scattered primarily throughout the whole region of Asia, stretching from Russia and the Ukraine to the coasts of Japan! This vast assemblage of peoples will violently rebel and turn against the “New World Order,” which loots their resources and attempts to bring them into economic slavery.

Bible prophecy says, after Russia attacks and destroys much of Europe, in a massive blitzkrieg, that the hordes will then launch an attack on Israel, in the Middle East, for world dominance and control.

Gog and Magog

Ezekiel foretells:

“Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince [Hebrew, *Rosh*] of Meshech [Moscow] and Tubal [the Asiatic city of Tobolsk], and prophecy against him” (Ezek.38:2).

Who are these nations? Says *Peloubet’s Bible Dictionary*, “In Gen.10:2 Magog appears

as the second son of Japheth; in Ezek.38:2; 39:1, 6 it appears as a country or people of which Gog was the prince. The notices of Magog would lead us to fix a northern locality it is expressly stated by Ezekiel that he was to come up from ‘the sides of the north,’ Ezek.39:2, from a country adjacent to that of Togarmah or Armenia, ch.38:6, and not far from ‘the isles’ or maritime regions of Europe, ch..39:6. The people of Magog further appear as having a force of cavalry, Ezek.38:15, and as armed with the bow, ch.39:3. *Josephus identifies them with the Scythians, and the identification is generally accepted*” (p.379-380).

Josephus wrote in *Antiquities of the Jews*, “Magog founded those that from him were named Magogites, but who are by the Greeks called Scythians” (book 1, chp.6, part 1).

Moffatt translated the passage above, “This word from the Eternal came to me: ‘Son of man, turn to Gog [in the land of Magog], the prince of ROSH and Meshek and Tubal; prophecy against him and tell him this from the Lord the Eternal: ‘O Gog, prince of ROSH and MESHEK and Tubal, I am against you’ (Ezek.38:1-3). Rosh very likely means “RUSSIA,” and “Meshek” is MOSCOW, and “Tubal” could very well refer to “TOBALSCK”, a city in eastern Russia – thus identifying this people as a powerful land extending in the north from Europe to eastern Asia.

Moffatt goes on, “I will bring you along, with all your army, horses and horsemen, in full armor, a mighty host all armed with shields and targes and all wielding swords, and warriors from PERSIA [IRAN], Kush [India], and Put [Africa] . . . all the hordes of the Cimmerians, all the hosts of Armenia IN THE FAR NORTH, and many another nation in your train. Be ready, hold yourself ready, you and all your muster, hold yourself in reserve for me! You [shall be summoned after many a day, and after many a year you] shall attack the land that has been restored from desolation, the nation that has been gathered home from many a people, the uplands of Israel, once a perpetual waste but now held by a nation gathered home from the peoples and living all undisturbed. You shall sweep up like a storm, covering the nation like a storm-cloud, you and all your hordes” (Ezek.38:4-9).

In Ezekiel’s time, a horde of northern Asiatics, termed by the Greeks ‘Scythians’, and probably including Moschi and Tibareni near the Caucasus, here (‘Meshech . . . Tubel’) undertook an expedition against Egypt (*Herodotus*, I, 103-106). These names might be adopted by Ezekiel from the historical fact familiar to men at the time, as ideal titles for the last great antichristian confederacy,” says the Jamieson, Fausset, Brown *Critical-Experimental Commentary* (vo.2, page 349).

The commentary adds, “**the chief prince** – rather, ‘prince of Rosh,’ or ‘Rhos’ (LXX). The Scythian Tauri in the Crimea were so called. The Araxes also was called Rhos. The modern Russians may have hence assumed their name, as Moscow and Tobalsk from Meshek and Tubal . . .”

Says *Unger’s Bible Dictionary*, “Ezekiel 38, 39, which deal with Gog, the prince, and Magog, his land, describe the actual invasion of Palestine by a great northern confederacy, ostensibly headed up by Russia. The scene depicts a gigantic outburst of Anti-Semitism and a colossal attempt to overrun Palestine and annihilate the Jew. Russia and the northern powers

have been persecutors of dispersed Israel . . .” (p.418).

Allied with the Russians will be “Persia [Iran], Ethiopia [Hebrew, *Cush*, a reference to eastern Cush, or *India!*], and Libya with them; all of them with shield and helmet. Gomer [southeast Asia and China], and all his bands; the house of Togarmah of the north quarters [Asiatic Russia], and all his bands; and many people with thee” (v.5-6).

“Gomer” in Hebrew means “completion.” Gomer was the eldest son of Japheth and father of Togarmah and Ashkenaz [the Japanese]. He was the father, therefore, of the oriental races of Asia, the Koreans, Chinese, and southeast Asians.

“The Latter Years”

Ezekiel prophesies that this vast horde will swing down to the Middle East, and seek plunder and spoils, wealth and riches, from the Israelites, recently returned from captivity (vs.8). This will occur in the “latter years” (same verse).

Israel at that time will be a land of “unwalled villages,” the people dwelling “at rest,” who “dwell safely [Heb. “confidently”], all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates” (Ezek.38:11). Russia will seek to “take a spoil, and to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations” (v.12).

With the new “peace treaty” between Israel and the Palestinians, the world will believe that we have finally achieved PEACE! With peace and safety guaranteed by the United States and New World Order, Israel will *think* that they are “dwelling safely,” and let down their guard. They will have a misplaced “confidence.”

The apostle Paul warns about this time frame. He declares, “For when they say, ‘Peace and safety!’ then SUDDEN DESTRUCTION comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape” (I Thess.5:3).

Isaiah prophesies of that time, “Surely your valiant ones shall cry outside, the ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly. The highways lie waste, the traveling man ceases. He has broken the covenant, he has despised the cities, he regards no man. The earth mourns and languishes” (Isa.33:7-9).

Says the prophecy of Ezekiel about this devastating end-time war and attack of the Eastern and Northeastern block of nations, in a massive invasion, which they will launch against the West, and Israel in the Middle East:

“And thou shalt come from thy place out of the NORTH PARTS, thou, and MANY PEOPLE WITH THEE, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army: And thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be *IN THE LATTER DAYS*, and I will bring thee against my land,

that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes” (Ezek.38:15-16).

As the invading forces penetrate into the Middle East, and approach the virgin daughter of Israel, brought back from its dispersion among the nations, God says, “And it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord GOD, that my fury shall come up in my face. For in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be a great quaking in the land of Israel . . . and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep [Heb., “towers, stairs”] places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground” (verses 18-20).

This massive earthquake will be a mighty sign of God’s intervention in this future battle for the supremacy and control of the world. The outcome of this battle is a foregone conclusion. Says the LORD GOD through his prophet:

“And I will call for a SWORD against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord GOD: *every man’s sword shall be against his brother*. And I will plead against him with PESTILENCE and with BLOOD; and I will RAIN upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an OVERFLOWING RAIN, even *GREAT HAILSTONES, FIRE, AND BRIMSTONE* “ (Ezek.38:21-22).

Is this prophecy referred to anywhere else in the Scriptures? A very similar prophecy is found in the book of Revelation, chapter 16.

The Book of Revelation Adds to the Picture

Notice! John writes:

“And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the **KINGS OF THE EAST** might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits . . . go forth unto the **KINGS OF THE EARTH** and of the *WHOLE WORLD, to gather them to the battle of that GREAT DAY OF GOD ALMIGHTY* “ (Rev.16: 12-14).

Doesn't that sound like the *very same battle*?

“And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue *ARMAGEDDON*. And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, *IT IS DONE*. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a **GREAT EARTHQUAKE**, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and

so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell . . . And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And there fell upon men a *GREAT HAIL OUT OF HEAVEN*, every stone about the weight of a talent [60-120 pounds each!]: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great” (Rev.16:16-21).

Now let’s compare these two battles:

Ezekiel’ Account

- 1) the attack is of many nations united together (v.1-8, 15)
- 2) the attack is upon ISRAEL (v.1-8, 12)
- 3) the attack is from the NORTH (v.15)
- 4) God's wrath will be poured out (v.18-19)
- 5) there will be a tremendous earthquake (v.19-20)
- 6) God will plead against him with pestilence and blood (v.22)
- 7) God will rain down great hailstones upon him (v.22)

Revelation’s Account

- 1) the attack is of many nations (v.12-14)
- 2) the attack is on Israel in the Middle East (v.16)
- 3) it is from the north (same verse -- Armageddon is north of Jerusalem!)
- 4) God anger and fury will be poured out (v.1, 14)
- 5) there will be a tremendous, mighty earthquake (vs.18-20)
- 6) God will plead against the enemy with pestilence and blood (vs.2-6, 9-11; see also Zech.14:12-15)
- 7) God will send great hailstones on them (v.21).

Amazing! These two different accounts of a great End-time battle between God and the enemies of Israel are speaking of the SAME CLIMACTIC EVENT! Thus contrary to what many have supposed in the past, the battle of Ezekiel 38 does *not* refer to some battle which occurs *after* the return of Jesus Christ, the Messiah! It is not describing a battle which is prophesied to occur at the END or CLOSE of the Millennial reign of Christ (Rev.20:7-9).

It is the SAME GREAT WAR leading up to that final SHOWDOWN BATTLE known as the “battle of that great day of God Almighty” (Rev.16:14) -- popularly known as “the battle of ARMAGEDDON”

It makes no sense at all to try to apply this titanic battle to something that will happen AFTER the “Day of the Lord,” after the battle of Armageddon, since “ALL NATIONS” will come up to the battle of Armageddon – “the kings of the EARTH and of the *whole world*” (Rev.16:14) – and there they will be DEFEATED, ONCE AND FOR ALL!

The Regathering of “Israel”

Some think this battle must occur AFTER Christ comes, because the prophecy speaks of Israel having been gathered from the nations first, and they claim that does not occur until AFTER Christ comes.

However, that is not the entire truth. Contrary to what many have assumed in the past, there is a tremendous “regathering” of Jews and children of Israel to the land of Israel in the Middle East, at this very moment. Ever since ‘glasnost’ and ‘perestroika’ were introduced, under the former head of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev, hundreds of thousands of Jews have immigrated to Israel from Russia and the republics of the former Soviet Union. A tremendous exodus has been underway for years, and is still continuing. Thousands also of Falasha Jews from Ethiopia have also immigrated to Israel.

Thus when Ezekiel speaks of a time when Israel is “brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people,” and is “brought forth out of the nations” (Ezek.38:8), that description fits the land of Israel *today!* It need not be forced to apply only to Israel *after* the coming of Messiah, when another Exodus will take place, prophetically.

With the advent of a new Israel-Palestinian peace accord, beginning in November 2007 there can be little doubt that the world will soon be entering a relative time of short-lived PEACE. The nation of Israel will soon believe that it is “dwelling safely” or “confidently” (Ezek.38:8, last part), under the auspices of the New World Order, led by the United States and Europe.

We need not assume, as many have in the past, that this description can only apply to the Messianic Kingdom. It makes no sense at all to think that after the awesome intervention of Christ and His angelic armies from heaven, during the Day of the Lord, and their complete victory at “Armageddon” (Rev.16:14-16), more armies from the nations of the world, led by Russia, will make another attempt to invade Israel, shortly *after* Christ assumes power. Their forces will have already been wiped out totally!

When Will It Occur?

In fact, Jeremiah records that when Messiah comes, “he will plead with all flesh; he will give them that are wicked to the sword. . . And the slain of the LORD shall be at *that day* [the “Day of the Lord,” not several “days” or months or years later] from *one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth*: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground” (Jer.25:31-33).

Notice! The time setting for this prophecy is the moment that Christ returns! “The LORD shall roar from on high, and utter his voice from his holy habitation; he shall mightily roar upon his habitation; he shall give a shout, as they that *tread the grapes*, against the inhabitants of the earth” (Jer.25:30).

This great final WAR OF GOG AND MAGOG IS THE SAME AS THE WAR ENDING AT ARMAGEDDON – THE WAR OF “THAT GREAT DAY OF GOD ALMIGHTY” (Rev.16:14-16).

The prophet Joel exclaims, “Proclaim this among the nations: *‘Prepare for war!* Wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near, let them come up. Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears; let the weak say, “I am strong.””

“Assemble and come, all you nations, and gather all around” (Joel 3:9-11).

Joel continues: “Let the nations be wakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; for there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations. Put in the sickle for the harvest is ripe. Come, go down, for the winepress is full, the vats overflow – for their wickedness is great.

“Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision” (Joel 3:12-14).

John in the book of Revelation describes the end result of this awesome battle and war. He writes, “And another angel came out from the altar, who had power over fire, and he cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying: ‘Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine from the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe..’ So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and BLOOD came out of the winepress, up to the horses’ bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs” (Rev.14:18-20).

The Valley of Jehoshaphat lies to the east of Jerusalem, between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives, and a declivity from there extends south and eastward to the Dead Sea, which, overflowing, would drain down through the Araba and into the Red Sea. The distance the blood would flow would be about 180 miles!

It is at the final battle of “Armageddon” that God will say: “It is *done*” (Rev.16:17). There will be no need of another battle *after* that one! So God also says in Ezekiel:

“Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be KNOWN in the eyes of many nations, and they shall KNOW that I am the LORD” (Ezek.38:23).

It is at “Armageddon” then that God will do as He says, and magnify His name among the heathen nations! This final attack will be the last great battle for world supremacy for a long, long time to come! It will be the final conflict before the true beginning of the Millennial reign of Christ.

Keep your eyes open! Watch Russian ploys and posturing in the Middle East. Keep your eyes on the coming China-Russia rapprochement in unity against the West.