

Gog-Magog Battle - During the Tribulation

By Nathan Jones

In an attempt to pinpoint the exact timeframe for the occurrence of Ezekiel's prophecy, we looked at two arguments that placed the Gog-Magog Battle before the 7-year Tribulation. Next, we'll look at the possibility of it occurring during the Tribulation.

I'll glean some ideas from what I believe is the best written book on the subject ? Northern Storm Rising by Dr. Ron Rhodes.

In the First Half or Middle of the Tribulation

Supporters of this view are John F. Walvoord, J. Dwight Pentecost, Charles Ryrie, Herman Hoyt and Mark Hitchcock.

Pros:

1) The fifth general timing clue that requires Israel living unsuspecting and in peace before the Gog-Magog Battle (Ezek. 38:11) could easily be attained by the peace covenant the Antichrist makes with Israel that starts the seven year countdown of the Tribulation (Dan. 9:27). Israel would feel at peace backed by the Antichrist. Gog in response would then raise an alliance so massive that they believe even the Antichrist's might couldn't stop them from destroying Israel.

2) With the more Christianized nations in tatters due to a Pre-Tribulation Rapture and the Islamic world in ruins from the Gog-Magog Battle, the remaining European world power could fill the vacuum in the Middle East and fully revive the Roman Empire. The only remaining world powers would be East-Asian, and the Bible records their continued existence (though under the control of the Antichrist) until the end of the Tribulation (Rev. 16:12). Russia and its defeated allies would be ripe pickings for the Antichrist, who would plunge the world into the first four Seal Judgments.

3) The Rapture would remove the strength of Christianity, and the Muslim defeat in the Gog-Magog Battle would destroy the strength of Islam. These occurring at the very beginning of the Tribulation would take the remaining polytheistic and pantheistic religions and integrate them easier into the apostate one-world religion that the False Prophet promotes (Rev. 13:11-15). The only monotheistic religions left to reject the Antichrist would be Judaism and the newly growing Jesus movement, both of which are known to be greatly persecuted by the Antichrist during the second half of the Tribulation (Rev. 6:11).

Cons:

1) Ezekiel 39:9 describes Israel burning the invading enemies' weapons for seven years. Placing the Gog-Magog Battle at any time other than the exact beginning of the Tribulation would push the burning timeline right into the Millennial Kingdom. With Jesus then present to provide everyone's needs and the curse partially lifted (Isa. 11:8) and the Earth reformatted by earthquakes (Rev. 6:12-14; 16:17-21), there would be no need for Israel to have to burn any weapons for fuel. Only an attack simultaneous with the beginning of the Tribulation would allow for the proper amount of time, precluding any other intra-Tribulational date.

2) The tremendous persecution of the Jews during the second half of the Tribulation would not grant them the freedom to bury the invaders dead bodies for seven months unless the Gog-Magog Battle occurred more than seven months earlier than the mid-point (Ezek. 39:12).

3) If the Gog-Magog Battle happened closer to the mid-point, the question is raised as to why God would rescue Israel so dramatically from the Gog-Magog nations only to hand Israel immediately over to the intense persecution by the Antichrist.

At the End of the Tribulation (Armageddon)

Supporters of this view tend to be Post-Tribulation Rapture supporters and believe the Gog-Magog Battle and the final battle of

Armageddon are one and the same.

Pros:

1) Both the Gog-Magog Battle (Ezek. 38-39) and the Battle of Armageddon (Rev. 19:19) are described as taking place during the first general timing clue "latter years" (Ezek. 38:8) and "last days" (Ezek. 38:16) of the Tribulation.

2) Ezekiel 39:4,17-20 and Revelation 19:17-18 both describe dead invaders being eaten by birds and wild animals.

3) Ezekiel 39:22,29 declares at the defeat of the Gog-Magog invasion Israel will again acknowledge God. These references if coupled with Zechariah 12:10 explaining an acknowledgment by Israel of their true Messiah at the end of the Tribulation would make the Gog-Magog Battle and Armageddon one and the same, if the acknowledgment of God the Father and Jesus the Messiah are also one and the same.

Cons:

1) The peaceful precondition of Ezekiel 38:11 in which Israel has to be living unsuspecting and in peace before the Gog-Magog Battle (Ezek. 38:11) cannot exist under the Great Tribulation by the Antichrist.

2) Ezekiel 39:9 describes Israel burning the invading enemies' weapons for seven years. Placing the Gog-Magog Battle at the end of the Tribulation would push the burning right into the Millennial Kingdom. With Jesus then present to provide everyone's needs and the curse partially lifted (Isa. 11:8) and the Earth reformatted by earthquakes (Rev. 6:12-14; 16:17-21), there would be no need for Israel to have to burn any weapons for fuel.

3) The players in the two battles do not match. The Gog-Magog Battle involves the specific nations of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Russia, Turkey, Iran, Sudan, Libya, and possibly Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Algeria and Tunisia against Israel (Ezek. 38:1-6). The references to Armageddon include all the nations from the entire earth against Israel (Joel 3:2; Zeph. 3:8; Zech. 12:3; 14:2).

4) The leaders of the invasions are not the same. Gog is the prince and ruler of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal (Ezek. 38:3). The invading leader at Armageddon is the Beast who controls the whole earth. While it is known that Satan the Dragon possesses the Antichrist (Rev. 13:2), it is unknown if Gog is possessed by Satan.

5) The armies find themselves fighting two different opponents. The Gog-Magog invaders look to conquer a peacefully unsuspecting Israel (Ezek. 38:11). The Armageddon invaders gather to make war against the returned King ? Jesus Christ (Rev. 19:19).

6) Ezekiel 38:13 describes some nations questioning the Gog-Magog invasion. At Armageddon, all the nations are involved in the invasion so none protest (Joel 3:2; Zeph. 3:8; Zech. 12:3; 14:2).

7) The locations described for the two battles do not match. Ezekiel 38:8 describes the Gog-Magog Battle taking place on the mountains ? the "mountains of Israel." Armageddon takes place in a valley ? the Valley of Jezreel by the plain of Megiddo (Judges 5:19; 2 Kings 23:29; 2 Chron. 35:22; Zech. 12:11).

8) The account of the defeat of the invaders does not match. The Gog-Magog invaders are defeated by God who uses "torrents of rain, hailstones and burning sulfur" as well as in-fighting (Ezek. 38:22). The invading nations at Armageddon are defeated by Jesus who uses "a sharp sword" from His mouth, meaning mere words (Rev. 19:15).

In the next part of this "Impending Invasion of Israel" series we'll analyze the possibility that the Gog-Magog Battle could happen during the Millennial Kingdom.

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