

QUESTION RE THIRD WORLD WAR

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The question about a third world war now in the news in the Mediterranean area is a bit involved. I do not know that the Scripture speaks specifically concerning a first world war, a second world war, and a third world war as such, and therefore I cannot speak directly to that, although I do have a conviction that in the future there will be some trouble in the Mediterranean area, and I'd like to look at a passage or two of Scripture with you on that.

For example, **Ezekiel 38:5** -- two tremendous chapters here, Ezekiel 38 and 39, prophecies of Gog and Magog. We'll not go into the details of the chapters, but simply enough to answer, at least in part, this question. We'll not take time to turn to Daniel, but Daniel in chapter 7 speaks of a time when war will devour the whole world. There will be worldwide war. Our Lord, in Matthew chapter 24, speaks about "nation rising up against nation, kingdom against kingdom"; Revelation chapter 6 speaks about peace being taken from the earth, that is, the entire earth. So there is a terrible time yet in the future.

Now, you recognize that I'm speaking from a pre-millennial point of view. Some of you here are a-millennialists, and you'll just have to bear with me a little bit on this, but I think these passages of Scripture have sometimes been attempted to be explained in the sense of generally good overcoming evil in the sense of movements of history. For example, in Ezekiel's day the Scythians had already swept down across a part of that country, but that does not meet the requirements of the chapter. A little later, Alexander the Great comes across there, but again, unless you're going to absolutely blot out the details of the chapter, you do not have anything that in turn matches what this chapter requires.

Having said that, let me look with you at just the first verses in particular of Ezekiel chapter 38.

Verse 2: "Son of man, set thy face against Gog, of the land of Magog, the chief prince of Mesech and Tubal, and prophesy against them."

Various attempts have been made to identify those places. I think the simplest way to do that is to look down in verse 6: "Gomer and all its hordes and the house of Togarmah of the north quarters" [my King James Bible says]. If you turn to your Hebrew Bible, you read there, "the uttermost parts of the north."

Now, you'll have to use your memory on geography. If you start from Palestine (and directions in the Scripture are from Palestine unless it's otherwise indicated) you go north to Lebanon, to Syria, but you go to the uttermost parts of the north and you come to Russia, and that phrase is repeated several times in this chapter. In verse 15 the King James says "the north parts", and again it's "the uttermost

parts of the north"; that's repeated again in chapter 39. So, I'm convinced that we're dealing here with Russia, at least in part. And, the story gives the invasion of the land of Palestine. But in connection with it, and this is to answer the question that was asked, down in verse 5 of chapter 38 you have Persia and Cush (or it's the word that we would translate into English, and some translations do, by "Ethiopia", and "Put", which, according to Josephus, the Jewish historian, is the nation of Libya.

So, I feel that some time in the future, I don't know if it's the third world war, the fourth world war, or the sixth world war -- I don't know just which or when -- but there will be a tremendous invasion of the land of Palestine, and associated with Russia in that invasion will be Ethiopia (they're already Communist) and Libya (and they've been plenty in the news today, I don't need to tell you about them), and also Persia -- so, Persia, Ethiopia and Libya. Depending again on your eschatological outlook, at least chapters 38 and 39, among others, teach of a great worldwide future conflict. Whether this thing we're involved in now is it or not I'm not about to say -- the Lord says we shouldn't count on the times or the seasons. Now, any question or comment?

- Q. In the sixth verse where it says, "Gomer and all of his bands, the house of Togarmah of the north", does that not refer to specific groups of people?
- A. Yes, it does. There's the problem with interpretation. Now, Gomer and Togarmah, I'll leave you to your Bible dictionaries for some discussion, which differs among Bible scholars. But the majority would point out that, for example, Togarmah is now a part of Russia and Turkey. And some see in Gomer a reference to Germany -- I'm not just so sure how much to pound the table on that -- but we know that at least Eastern Germany is associated with the Communist bloc and so on. I think these details, which to us at this point may be a little bit vague, will be clear in the day in which they are fulfilled, and at least it seems to me that we're moving in that direction when "in the latter years", verse 8, they'll come into the mountains of Israel.
- Q. In Revelation 20, verse 8, it says here it is talking about God and Magog.
- A. These are terms used in chapter 38, Gog apparently being the ruler, Magog the land which he rules over. But if you will take the things that happen in chapters 38 and 39 in Ezekiel you'll find that the end is entirely different from that of Revelation chapter 20. So, in my humble opinion, it's referring to the territory but it's not referring to the same events that take place. This takes place in the latter days, verse 8 or chapter 38, verse 16 of chapter 38, and also in chapter 39. So that what actually happens in this destruction is that the Lord apparently sends a great earthquake.

Since you've asked the question, turn to Ezekiel 38:18: "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 shaking in the land of Israel [I understand that to refer to an earthquake -- verse 20], so that fish of the sea and the fowls of the heaven and the beasts of the fields and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down and the steep places shall fall and every wall shall fall to the ground."

And then verse 22, He'll enter into judgment, and He adds to that in verse 22, "I will rain upon him and upon his hordes and upon the many people that are with him an overflowing rain and great hailstones, fire and brimstone."

That seems to be a different ending from that of Revelation chapter 20, so I personally would separate the two.

Q. Did God promise Noah that never again would He destroy the land with a flood?

A. Yes, that's right.

Q. Now, this is overflowing rain -- that certainly is a flood, isn't it?

A. That's right. The Noahic flood was a worldwide flood, and this is referring simply to the land of Israel.

Comment re mud slides, etc.

A. She's saying just in recent events we've seen things like these -- mountains moving, the mud slides, the lava flow in Hawaii some time ago. And in the Pacific Ocean, isn't it?, around the island of Iwo Jima, there's an eruption taking place which already has covered quite a number of square feet -- it's come up right up out of the ocean, and forming a sort of a solid island. That happened quite a number of years ago in another place in the world, I think up in the northeastern section, and scientists followed that with a great deal of interest to see how soon after that took place that things began to grow on that area and explains a part of what we have now along the way.

I might just add that this tremendous slaughter in chapter 39, the last of verse 9, they'll burn those weapons for seven years, and in verse 12, they will bury the dead for seven months. And then after that they assign a regular work project force, verse 14, and they continue to search and bury the dead. It will be a tremendous, tremendous slaughter. Anything else on that?

Q. About arms made from wood.

A. This question about arms made from wood that they'll burn for seven years. A number of years ago, I had the privilege of ministering in a Bible conference in Pennsylvania for about a week, and there was a little gentleman who came to the meetings

very regularly. He was a woodworker and he made some hot plates which we still have. One evening he brought an article on some material which I believe was called "lignite", if I remember correctly -- material that is stronger than steel but will burn like wood. He suggested the article, whether it fits this particular piece or not, but it well could, in which those shields and bucklers and arms would be burned after the tremendous defeat of Gog and Magog.

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