

# ISRAEL GRAVEYARD OF NATIONS

CEMETERY OF NATIONS  
The Final Resting Place of all Superpower Nations

“And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal and prophesy against him, and say, Thus saith the Lord God: Behold I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal: and I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armor, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords: Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them; all of them with shield and helmet: Gomer, and all his bands; the house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands: and many people with thee” Ezekiel 38:1-6.

*By Pastor Del Wray*

The news media, journalist and politicians have tabbed the “graveyard of nations” to be the country of Afghanistan because so many nations have invaded her borders to war and have withdrawn defeated. The USSR most recently was defeated there and brought an end to the cold war dividing much of the country from its Western satellite nations. Now, presently being defeated, the USA is in a major turmoil there and unsuccessful because of the many tribal factions there. But as far as being the graveyard of nations God has something to say about that. God says Israel will be the graveyard of nations, the final resting place and cemetery for all nations that come in a siege against her in the last days.

The following is an expose of a small pamphlet that came into my possession while on the mission field over 45 years ago, titled, “The Coming Invasion.” Its author sends a copy of the pamphlet in a letter form every year to the leader of the Soviet Union as a testimony to the validity of God’s Word. Enjoy!

*An open letter to ---*

Mr. Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin, President  
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics  
The Kremlin Moscow, USSR

Dear Mr. President:

Russia's day of destruction and her appointment with destiny or the cemetery of nations, the final resting place of all Superpower Countries is about to be played out right in front of the world in real time. "A Deadly Piece of Dirt" is the title of a book written by *Dr. Peter S. Ruckman* that accentuates the facts contained in this letter and the prophetic truth contained herein. It would be to your own advisability and that of the good people of the Soviet Union that you personally take heed to this letter and to it seriously!

God is in control of history. As the earlier chapters of the Bible demonstrate, some of God's appointments with destiny for Israel and the nations have already occurred. Several additional appointments remain to be fulfilled in the future. Russia and her allies, the former republics of the USSR, Eastern Europe, and the Arabs, still await their appointment with destiny.

The Lord gave the prophet Ezekiel a prophetic warning directed to the nations of the "far north." Ezekiel was raised near the Temple in Jerusalem and had studied to be a priest. He was among those Jewish captives from Jerusalem who were taken to Babylon when Nebuchadnezzar conquered Israel. It was he who wrote "among the captives by the river of Chebar, the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God" Ezekiel 1:1. These prophecies written in Babylon from about 593 B.C. to 570 B.C. were directed to Ezekiel's fellow captives and to those Jews still living in Jerusalem, as well as to the generations that would follow.

Ezekiel was given an astonishingly accurate prophetic vision about the rebirth of the nation of Israel that would occur in the spring of 1948, as detailed in chapter 3. He foretold that Israel would arise miraculously from the graveyard of the nations, where she was buried with the ruins of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 by the Roman army led by Titus. Incredibly, God promised that the Jews, after almost two thousand years of exile, would return to the Promised Land. The ancient prophets also foretold that the Jewish exiles would become "a mighty army" in her ancient homeland. In 1948, Israel triumphed against an invasion by six well-armed Arab armies. Israel's military forces consisted of a small, voluntary citizen army composed of unskilled farmers and scholars who were equipped with inadequate weapons, a few jeeps, and two small airplanes. Israel's armored force consisted of several vehicles captured from her enemies, including trucks with improvised steel plates. Yet, like David's miraculous victory over Goliath, God supernaturally intervened to allow a weak Israel to survive and prosper, defeating her Arab enemies against incredible odds.

Ezekiel's amazing vision depicted the Jewish people as a "valley which was full of dry bones." This certainly described the fate of Israel after its destruction by Rome in 70 A.D. and the centuries of persecution that followed. Israel was buried in the graveyard of the ancient nations. Anyone who has seen the sickening scenes of the huge pits full of emaciated, skeletal remains of victims from Nazi death camps can imagine that this might have formed part of the vision that the prophet saw twenty-five centuries ago. The Lord asked him, "Can these bones live?" and I answered, 'O Lord God, thou knowest' Ezekiel 37:3. Yet God told Ezekiel to watch a miraculous resurrection of these "dry bones." "So I prophesied as He commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army" Ezekiel 37:10. Today, Israel has the world's third most powerful air force and possesses more tanks than any other nation except the United States and Russia. The Israeli Defense Forces have rewritten the military manuals of the world with their audacious and brilliant tactics. Today, according to

many military analysts, the small nation of Israel has the fourth most powerful armed forces on earth after America, Russia, and China.

Geographically, Israel occupies an area of land smaller than the state of New Jersey, only one-half the size of tiny Switzerland. Yet, despite its insignificant size and a population of only five million, Israel has attained a position of prime importance in the global struggle between nations. For the last several years, almost half of all of the resolutions of the General Assembly of the United Nations have concerned Israel. Newspapers throughout the world carry front-page stories about Israel several times a week. This astonishing fact can be explained only by prophecy and the deep hatred for Israel expressed by Russia, the former republics of the USSR, Iran, the Arab nations, and many Third World nations.

The prophet Zechariah prophesied twenty-five hundred years ago, “Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it” Zechariah 12:23. Ironically, the first nation to formally recognize the state of Israel was Russia. In 1948, Joseph Stalin hoped that Israel would become a socialist nation and help offset the growing influence that the Western powers exercised in the Middle East. However, as Stalin soon came to realize, Israel would not become a Russian pawn, so Russia quickly turned to the Arabs and encouraged their hatred toward the Jewish state.

More than twenty-five hundred years ago, Ezekiel prophesied about an invasion by Russia, called “Magog” and her allies that would occur during the last days, “after many days.” He said that after Israel was reborn as a nation, Russia and her allies would attack her in a violent attempt to completely annihilate the Jewish state. Naturally, Ezekiel did not describe the present nations of Russia, Germany, Syria, and Iraq by their modern names. Rather, he referred to them by the names of the ancient tribes that occupied the geographical territories of the present nations at the time of his writing. The prophecies found in Ezekiel, chapter 38 and 39, describe this massive, future Russian-Arab invasion of Israel and the spectacular defeat of the enemies of the Jews by the supernatural act of God.

The Lord warned the leader of Russia in these words addressed to Gog, the ruler of Magog, Russia:

“Be thou prepared, and prepare for thyself thou, and all thy company that are assembled unto thee, and be thou a guard unto them. After many days thou shalt be visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste: but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them. Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee” Ezekiel 38:79.

Many of the tribal names in Ezekiel 38 are recorded in the book of Genesis. Following the Flood, Noah's sons and grandsons dispersed to various parts of Asia, Europe, and Africa. Genesis 10

records the ancient genealogy of the nations, naming the tribes descended from Noah's children, later referred to by Ezekiel. Ancient historians, including Herodotus and Flavius Josephus in his *Antiquities of the Jews*, tell us where most of these tribes ultimately settled. Many Jewish and Christians scholars conclude that the tribes referred to by Ezekiel are those listed in figure 1 and figure 2, which show the ancient name of each tribe and the modern nation that now occupies that particular territory.

“And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him, And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal:

And I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords: Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them; all of them with shield and helmet: Gomer, and all his bands; the house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands: and many people with thee.” Ezek. 38:1-6

## The Nations of Ezekiel 38: 1-6

### The Ancient Nations

The land of Magog  
Meshech and Tubal

Persia  
Ethiopia  
Libya  
Ashkenaz  
Gomer  
Togarmah

"Many people's with thee"

### The Modern Nations

Russia  
Moscow and Tobolsk  
(*Two Russian Capitals*)  
Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan  
Ethiopia and Sudan  
Libya  
Austria  
Germany  
Turkey

Various other nations allied to Russia

## THE IDENTIFICATION OF "GOG AND MAGOG" AS RUSSIA

The names “Gog and Magog” are famous in biblical prophetic literature and in Jewish rabbinical writings because of their future role in the Great War of Gog and Magog predicted by the prophet Ezekiel, chapters 38 and 39. The book of Revelation, chapter 20 also records that an army of millions will once again join with the nations represented by “Gog and Magog” in a final attack, led by Satan, against the “beloved city” and the “camp of the saints” at the end of the Millennium. This final war will be the last battle in human history. Biblical prophecies indicate that three enormous wars will convulse the planet during the apocalyptic period known as “the last days.”

The first war, as described by Ezekiel, is the War of Gog and Magog, a Russian-Arab invasion against Israel, the subject of this chapter. The second war, known as the Battle of Armageddon, will occur a minimum of seven years later. Armageddon is described in the prophecies of Joel, Zechariah, and especially the book of Revelation 16:16. This cataclysmic conflict will involve nations across the entire world as the significant armies of the East battle against the armies of the West under the Antichrist. These titanic armies will be pitted against each other and Israel. During the conclusion of this struggle, Jesus Christ will descend from heaven with His army of angels and heavenly saints, the resurrected Church. Both armies will then turn their fury against Jesus and His saints. The returning King of Kings will utterly defeat them and inaugurate the Millennium of peace under the Kingdom of God. Finally, Revelation 20:8 tells us about a third war, the final battle in human history. This will occur one thousand years after Armageddon, at the end of the Millennium. Millions of people born during the Millennium to those who survive the tribulation period will choose to join Satan in his attack against the future City of God. The prophet John foretold that his army would include the nations of "Gog and Magog," referring to Russia and other nations to the extreme north of the Holy Land.

The question of the proper identification of the nation of "Magog" is of great interest to serious Bible students who wish to clearly understand these great biblical prophecies. "Magog" is a real nation occupying a territory that was known to Ezekiel and his Jewish readers in the fifth century before Christ. I believe the evidence supports the conclusion that Magog refers to the territory that is currently occupied by the present nation of Russia, including several of the southern republics of the Commonwealth of Independent States, formerly the USSR. The majority of prophecy teachers agree with this conclusion. However, a number of biblical scholars have challenged this identification of Magog with the Russian nation. Some scholars suggest that Magog was connected with some small tribal groups in ancient Mesopotamia in the area presently occupied by Iran. Others suggest Magog is connected with the tribes led by an ancient king known as Gyges in the area of ancient Lydia, present-day Turkey to the south of Russia. The ancient historian Pliny claimed the Syrians thought the name Gog was the same as Gyges, a king of Lydia whose country was named from him, Gygea, or Gog's land. King Gyges was the grandfather of King Croesus. Arab writers confirm that in the Arabic language their name for the Great Wall of China is called "the wall of Al Magog" because the Great Wall was built to keep out the invading armies from Magog, Russia.

Many liberal scholars reject Ezekiel's literal interpretation of prophecy, including the identification of Russia. These academics often interpret his prophecy merely as a symbol of the apocalyptic war between good and evil. However, precise descriptions in this prophecy of specific nations, weapons, places, and actions during the war strongly suggest that this is not a symbolic war. If we want to understand this prophetic message of Ezekiel, we must examine its literal implications and determine the correct identification of Gog and Magog. Next is a summary on the identification of Magog.

## JEWISH SCHOLARSHIP AND MAGOG

The passages in Ezekiel 38 and 39 were studied in minute detail for thousands of years by Jewish sages. Consequently, the conclusions drawn by these scholars should illuminate the true meaning of the Hebrew words “Gog and Magog.” Genesis 10 lists Magog as a literal grandson of Noah who ultimately gave birth to a nation. This name, “Magog,” was well known to every Jew who studied this Genesis passage every year as part of the annual Sabbath reading of the Torah. In his prophecy about the future war, the prophet Ezekiel named “Magog,” along with other specific nations such as Libya, Persia, and Ethiopia. This strongly suggests that Ezekiel expected the name “Magog” would be understood by his Jewish readers as a real nation, not as an abstract symbol of evil.

A recent commentary on Genesis, *Bereishis Genesis: A New Translation with a Commentary Anthologized from Talmudic, Midrashic, and Rabbinic Sources*, includes this commentary on Genesis 10:2. “Magog is mentioned several times in Scripture, Ezekiel 38:2; 39:6 as the name of the land of Gog. Kesses HaSofer identified them with the Mongols who lived near China, for in fact the very name Mongol is a corruption of Magog.” The commentary also cites Arab writers who refer to the Great Wall of China as the wall of Al Magog. A 1961 biblical commentary by Dr. J. H. Hertz, the late chief rabbi of the British Empire, called *The Pentateuch and Haftorahs* identifies the Magog of the famous Genesis 10 passage: “Magog - The Scythians, whose territory lay on the borders of the Caucasus.” The Jewish-Christian scholar Dr. Alfred Edersheim in his book, *Bible History, Old Testament*, also identifies Magog as the Scythians.

A fascinating 1980 Jewish commentary, *Daniel*, published by The ArtScroll Tanach Series, makes the following comments on the identity of Magog:

The various traditions concerning the identity of Magog, who in Genesis 10:2 is listed among the sons of Noah's son Japheth, tend to place the land of Magog in what today is southwest Russia, the Caucasian region, which lies between the Black and Caspian Seas. This is in agreement with *Yerushalmi Megillah* 3:9 which render Magog as “the Goths,” a group of nomadic tribes who destroyed the Scythians and made their homes in Scythian territory. Our identification of Magog as Caucasia, which was at one time inhabited by the Goths, is based on the assumption that the land of Magog is named after Japheth's son.

Rabbi Chisdai Ibn Shaprut wrote to the king of Khazaria, a Caucasian kingdom in southern Russia which converted to Judaism in the eighth century after Christ, in which he addresses the king as ‘prince, leader of Meshech and Tubal.’ This salutation, drawn from our verse, indicates that the Gaonim had a tradition that these countries were indeed located in Russia.

This acclaimed commentary concludes this section with a fascinating comment:

In this light one may understand an oral tradition passed down from the Vilna Gaon, that when the Russian navy passes through the Bosphorus it will be time to put on Sabbath clothes, in anticipation of the coming Mashiach, Messiah.

The Bosphorus is the narrow strait in Turkey that links the Black Sea to the Mediterranean Sea through the Dardanelles strait. The Jewish sages warned that the generation who witnessed the Russian preparation to invade Israel should prepare their hearts because the coming of the

Messiah was at hand. The famous Jewish historian Flavius Josephus, who lived at the time of Saint Paul, wrote a definitive history of the Jewish people called the Antiquities of the Jews. Josephus identified Magog as follows. "Magog founded those that from him were named Magogites, but who are by the Greeks called Scythians."

#### CHRISTIAN SCHOLARSHIP IDENTIFYING MAGOG AS RUSSIA

The section of Dr. R. Young's book, Young's Analytical Concordance of the Holy Bible, dealing with Magog speaks of ancient Scythia or Tartary, a name used to describe Southern Russia in past centuries. Professor Young said that the name "Gog" was derived from a phrase that meant a "high mountain" and that the name "Gog" in Ezekiel 38 referred to "A prince of Rosh, Meshech, Tubal, and Tiras, in ancient Scythia or Tartary." Young also refers to "the descendents of Magog and their land, called Scythia, in the N. of Asia and Europe." The authoritative 1973 reference work, Eerdmans Handbook to the Bible, came to the same conclusion, "Magog, Meshech, Tubal and Gomer were all sons of Japheth, Noah's son. They gave their names to Indo-European peoples living in the Black Sea-Caucasus region, on the northern fringe of the then known world."

The Comprehensive Commentary of the Holy Bible, edited by Dr. William Jenks, provides some fascinating information regarding the identity of Magog.

Magog was the son of Japheth, Genesis 10:2, from whence the Scythians are generally supposed to be derived. The Mogul Tartars, a people of the Scythian race, are still called so by the Arabian writers. The Jews of his day thought Magog to be the Scythian nations, vast and innumerable, who are beyond Mount Caucasus and the Palus Maëotis, and near the Caspian Sea, stretching even to India.

The same commentary, quoting Professor William Bochart, gives the following information.

The Koran, and a Christian poet of Syria Ephraem the Syrian, before the Koran was published, both allude to a fable of Alexander's shutting up the barbarous and troublesome nations, Gog and Magog, near the North Pole by an iron and brasen wall. The mountain Scythians extended hence, from the river Araxes to the Caucasus, and those of the plain to the Don, the sea of Azof, and the North Ocean. It is credible, that from the Rosh and Meshech nations dwelling about the Araxes, are descended the Russians and Muscovites.

Dr. Dwight C. Pentecost is the author of an excellent study of the major themes of Bible prophecy entitled Things to Come. Dr. Pentecost quotes Professor Bauman on the identification of Magog as follows:

Magog's land was located in, what is called today, the Caucasus and the adjoining steppes. And the three, Rosh, Meshech and Tubal were called by the ancients, Scythians. They roamed as nomads in the country around and north of the Black and the Caspian Seas, and were known as the wildest barbarians.

One of the most important scholarly tools employed in the exegesis of Scripture is Gesenius' Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon. Numerous scholars utilize this book as an authority on the precise meaning of Hebrew and Chaldee words found in the original languages of the Old Testament. In the section of his definitive work dealing with this identification, Gesenius wrote the following:

Magog a son of Japheth, Genesis 10:2; is also of the region, and a great and powerful people of the same name, inhabiting the recesses of the north, which are at some time to invade the Holy Land Ezekiel 38, 39. We are to understand just the same nations as the Greeks comprised, under the name of Scythian, Josephus Antiquities of the Jews.

It is important to note that Professor Gesenius referred to "Magog" as a real nation that will invade the Holy Land in the future. Gesenius' concluded that "Gog" was a prince of the land of Magog, also of Rossi, Moschi, and Tibareni, who are to come with great forces from the extreme north 38:15; 39:2, after the Exile 38:8 and 12 to invade the holy land, and to perish there, as prophesied by Ezekiel.

In addition, Gesenius described the Revelation 20:8 passage as a reference to a final war involving "Gog and Magog" at the end of the Millennium. However, he correctly concludes this final war will be a totally separate event: "Gog and Magog in the Apocalypse belong to a different time to those spoken of in Ezekiel, so it is in vain to point out a discrepancy."

The literal interpretation of "Magog" by Gesenius and other biblical scholars stands in marked contrast to the allegorical interpretation of many modern scholars who treat Ezekiel 38 and 39 as "apocalyptic literature" referring only to a symbolic war between good and evil. Gesenius identified Magog as a real country, which exists to the extreme north of the Holy Land that will invade Israel in the future. He also identified Magog with the "same nations as the Greeks comprised under the name of Scythians." In light of the many scholastic sources that identify Magog with Scythia, we must answer a critical question: Who were the Scythians and what geographical area did they occupy?

## THE SCYTHIANS

Professor G. Rawlinson wrote a definitive study of the ancient tribes and empires that ruled the Middle East called Five Great Monarchies. Chapter 9 of that work, dealing with Assyria, includes the following footnote: "The Scythians proper of Herodotus and Hippocrates extended from the Danube and the Carpathians on the one side, to the Tanais or Don upon the other." The geographic territories described by Professor G. Rawlinson that were ruled by the Scythians are clearly located in the south of Russia and include the Ukraine, Georgia, and Armenia.

In Ezekiel 38:7 the prophet foretells that in this future conflict Russia, Magog will also be the arms supplier for all of these nations. God says, "Be thou a guard unto them." It is fascinating to observe that the armories of these nations, as listed by Ezekiel, without exception, are filled with Russian AK-47 assault rifles, SAM missiles, RPG7 anti-tank weapons and various other Russian-manufactured arms, exactly as the Bible foretold thousands of years ago. The prophet



described an invasion that would come without warning in which the enemy invaded like a “storm” or “cloud to cover the land.” It is possible that the prophet saw in vision an airborne invasion force, like D day, and used the best language he had available to describe such an event.

## THE COMING RUSSIAN-ARAB INVASION OF ISRAEL

Bible prophecy also provides some insight into the ongoing peace negotiations between Israel and its Arab neighbors. Thousands of years ago the prophet Ezekiel, chapters 38 and 39 predicted that a huge confederacy of Arab nations under Russian leadership would join together to attack Israel in the generation after the Jewish exiles returned to their homeland. Despite massive changes in Russia, the hard-liners in the KGB, the army, and military-industrial complex maintain their solid grip on the levers of power. A recent study of the role of the military in Russia revealed that President Boris Yeltsin secretly appointed over 14,000 senior military generals to assume command of every single department of the Russian government in the spring of 1996. These departments included the health, agricultural, transportation, and mining ministries. Until the recent political changes in Russia, no men could rise above the rank of major in Russia's army unless they were an approved member of the Russian Communist Party. Therefore, the military officers controlling the “democratic” government of Russia are virtually all Communists. By this action Yeltsin has allowed the Communist Party and their military allies to secretly assume control over all major decisions in his government. Although Yeltsin won the June 1996 elections, the Communists hold a clear majority in the Duma, Parliament. Despite all the media hype about Russian democracy, the real leadership of Russia remains firmly in the hands of the resurrected Communist Party, the renamed KGB, now called the Foreign Intelligence Service, and the powerful army generals.

Twenty-six centuries ago the prophet Ezekiel prophesied that a military leader would arise in the land of Magog to lead a Russian-Arab alliance of nations to attack Israel. Ezekiel predicted that this leader would say, “I will go up against a land of un-walled villages; I will go to a peaceful people, who dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates” Ezekiel 38:11. It is interesting to note that, during the lifetime of Ezekiel and throughout history up until 1900, virtually all of the villages and cities in the Middle East had strong walls for defense. Ezekiel had never seen a village or city without defensive walls. Yet, in our day, Israel is truly a “land of un-walled villages” for the simple reason that modern techniques of warfare, bombs, tanks, and missiles make city walls irrelevant for defense. This is one more indication that his prophecy refers to our modern generation.

Since 1948 Israel has been forced to live as an armed camp while surrounded by twenty-one nations with two hundred million Arabs that are publicly committed to her destruction. The Jewish state has not been able to “dwell safely.” This threatening situation compels Israel to spend more of its budget on defense than any other country in the world. However, the present peace negotiations between the PLO and Israel may create a false sense of security during the next few years. The Jewish state will relax its defenses as a result of the misconception that she can “dwell safely.” This present peace process may set the stage for the fulfillment of the Great War of Gog and Magog prophesied by the prophet Ezekiel.

When this Russian-Arab alliance attacks Israel, the prophet declared that God will intervene with supernatural earthquakes, hail, and pestilence to defeat the combined forces of Russian and Arab armies. This miraculous deliverance by the hand of God may set the stage for Israel to build the Third Temple as described in Daniel 9:24-27. These awesome prophetic events concerning the defeat of Russia will prepare the way for the fulfillment of the prophecies of the rise of Antichrist to rule the earth and his seven-year treaty with Israel. This treaty with the Antichrist will commence a seven-year countdown to the return of the Messiah at the Battle of Armageddon to establish His eternal Kingdom on earth.

These critical developments in the Middle East encourage believers to live in constant expectation of the glorious return of our Messiah. Jesus said, “when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh” Luke 21:28. Yet we, as Christians, must live in a spiritual balance during these last days. Although our Messiah may return soon, He may also delay His return for a generation or more because our Lord “is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” 2 Peter 3:9. We must live each day watching for His return. We must faithfully witness to those around us as though His return will occur immediately. Yet we must also plan and work as though we still have a hundred years. Our Lord commanded, “Occupy till I come” Luke 19:13.

#### THE WEST BANK AND THE GOLAN HEIGHTS IMPORTANCE TO ISRAEL:

If Israel's present government under Prime Minister Netanyahu continues the disastrous policies of former Prime ministers Rabin and Peres and surrenders the vital strategic territory in the West Bank and the Golan Heights in its “Land for Peace” negotiations with the PLO and its Arab neighbors, Israel will face military disaster in the next war. The tragic four-thousand-year history of the Middle East indicates clearly that another Arab-Israeli war will occur. It is only a question of timing. Israel requires military control of the land on the Golan Heights, Gaza, and the West Bank in order to provide the strategic depth to defend itself against the overwhelming military force of twenty-one enemy Arab nations. The Arab nations possess territory that is five hundred times the size of tiny Israel. Why do the Arabs need the small strategic territory of the Golan Heights and the West Bank? The real reason that the Arabs need this territory is so they can destroy the Jewish state of Israel. Every single European or American military study in the last thirty years has concluded that Israel cannot be defended by conventional weapons if it surrenders military control over these vital strategic territories. The 1992 study by the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff confirmed that Israel cannot surrender the Golan, Gaza, or the West Bank and expect to survive the next Arab invasion.

History shows that victorious nations have never returned land captured from their enemies following a defensive war in which they were forced to defend themselves against their attackers. The Golan Heights represents less than 1 percent of the territory of the large nation of Syria. The Golan Heights was only controlled by Syria for a few decades after World War I. They lost it to Israel in the Six-Day War in 1967. The only reason Syria needs this small territory is to use it to attack Israel. However, Israel desperately needs the Golan Heights to resist Syria's tanks. Moreover, 30 percent of Israel's water comes from the Golan Heights. If they surrender control of the West Bank territory, Israel will be less than nine miles wide at its center near Tel

Aviv, where almost 80 percent of its population lives. In a future conflict Arab armies could easily cut Israel in two by attacking from the PLO-controlled high ground of Judea and Samaria, West Bank. The Jewish state could then be overrun in a matter of days. Unlike other conflicts in which defeat leads to a loss of territory and political freedom, an Arab conquest of Israel would lead to a massive slaughter of the Jewish population.

In a future war Israel may be quickly forced to resort to nuclear weapons when they find their small diminished territory about to be overcome by Arab armies. The Israeli army describes this desperate scenario as “the Samson Option” because it would lead to the destruction of the whole Middle East; Samson, too, brought down the temple on his enemies and on himself. Despite this grim reality, the Israeli government has agreed to relinquish much of the strategic area of the West Bank and all of Gaza while continuing negotiations with Syria about the Golan Heights. Military and intelligence sources have informed our leaders that if this “Oslo II” peace process continues, for the first time since its creation in 1948, Israel's conventional army and air force will soon be unable to successfully defend its vital territory and population from an overwhelming Arab armed invasion.

The Lord commands all believers to “pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee” Psalms 122:6. However, the current peace process between the PLO and Israel may set the stage for the fulfillment of these tremendous prophecies about the War of Gog and Magog and how they lead to the Messiah's return in our generation. While we long for true peace in the Middle East, we must recognize that the ancient prophets warned that a false peace in the last days would precede the final conflict that would conclude with the Battle of Armageddon. The prophet Jeremiah warned that in the last days men would say, “Peace, peace! When there is no peace” Jeremiah 6:14. Our world will not know true peace until Jesus the Messiah, the Prince of Peace returns. Scriptures reveal that real peace will only come to the Middle East when the Arabs and the Jews finally dwell as brothers in true peace under the rule of their Messiah, who alone can heal the ancient hatred between them.

## ISRAEL SURRENDERING LAND FOR PEACE PROPOSAL

For fifty years, the United Nations and the Arab states have continually demanded that the tiny nation of Israel surrender its vital land to “buy” peace with its Arab neighbors. However, we should consider some questions. How large is Israel compared to her Islamic neighbors? The state of Israel is less than one-tenth of 1 percent as large as the thirty-five Islamic states surrounding her throughout the Middle East. These thirty-five Islamic states possess 8,879,548 square miles of territory and a combined population of 804,500,000. To put this in perspective, the tiny nation of Israel is only 8,020 square miles in size with a population of less than five million people. This means that the surrounding Islamic nations are 1,107 times larger than the Jewish state of Israel. The state of Texas alone is over thirty-two times the size of Israel. The Islamic state of Saudi Arabia is over one hundred and seven times the size of Israel. Islam is the major religion in thirty-five nations, or 22 percent of the 159 member-states of the United Nations. Judaism is the major religion in only one nation on earth, the state of Israel.

In addition, these Arab and Islamic nations are incredibly wealthy as a result of their oil resources. They are also naturally related to the Arab Palestinians by both race and religion. In addition, most of the Palestinian Arabs were born in Arab states surrounding Israel. Why should Israel surrender its incredibly small and strategically vital territory to her Arab enemies when the Islamic states have more than a thousand times the land and their vast oil wealth that can be utilized to absorb the Palestinian Arabs?

## ISRAEL'S COVENANT WITH DEATH

The world was astonished to witness the leader of Israel and its deadly enemy, the Arab PLO, sign an agreement on September 13, 1993, promising to end the brutal warfare that has characterized the Middle East for the last fifty years. PLO leader Yasser Arafat and the late Prime Minister Yitzchak Rabin took the first tentative steps towards a possible peace treaty in the Middle East. Does this mean true peace is at hand? Or, will a false peace set the stage for the War of Gog and Magog prophesied by the ancient prophets of Israel?

The Arab governments and the PLO now claim that they are offering Israel “peace for land.” But what kind of “peace” are they offering? There are two concepts or terms for “peace” in the Arab language. One represents true peace such as the peace between Canada and the United States, where we genuinely wish our neighbors well. The other refers to something more like “an armed truce.” During the Crusades, the leader of the defeated Muslim armies, Saladin, offered the English general, Richard the Lion Heart, a peace treaty. However, two years later, after rebuilding his Arab armies, Saladin suddenly broke his agreement and defeated the English armies in Israel. In Yasser Arafat's speeches to Arab audiences, he boasts that he will offer Israel “the peace of Saladin.” This proves that he is offering Israel “an armed truce” rather than “true peace.” The PLO has not relinquished their commitment to conquer all of the land of Israel, or to destroy the Jewish population. All Arab Palestinian groups use emblems, flags, letterhead symbols, and maps that deny acknowledgement of the existence of the Jewish state.

The PLO has repeatedly declared to Arab audiences that their long-term strategy is to eliminate Israel in a plan called “Liberation in Phases.” Since 1974 Yasser Arafat decreed that during the first phase of his “Liberation in Phases” plan, the PLO would seek to establish a beachhead in Gaza and the West Bank. In the second phase their armies will take over Jerusalem. In the final phase, they will build up their strength in Gaza and the West Bank to join their Arab-nation allies in an invasion to finally conquer all of Israel. On September 1, 1993, Arafat confirmed to an Arab audience that his peace accord was part of his previous “Phases” plan. During interviews, many Arab leaders, as well as individual Palestinians, have declared that they would never be content until they recovered the entire land of Israel from the Jews. In 1980 Yasser Arafat clearly stated, “Peace for us means the destruction of Israel.” One of the problems for Israel is that the Koran teaches that if a land was ever occupied in the past by Muslims, then it must be recovered

by Jihad, or holy war. Although Yasser Arafat has pledged to eliminate the references in the PLO Charter of the Palestine Liberation Organization that call for the destruction of Israel and the Jews, he has consistently refused to fulfill this pledge. Furthermore, most of his Arab allies refuse to relinquish their goals to destroy the Jewish state. The Arab states continue to arm for war against Israel.

## THE PLO CHARTER

Excerpts from the PLO Charter, including the revisions made in 1968 and 1974, still include the following language calling for the destruction of Israel. Article 1 declares that "Palestine is the homeland of the Palestinian Arab people and an integral part of the great Arab homeland, and the people of Palestine is a part of the Arab Nation." Significantly Article 2 of the Charter affirms that "Palestine with its boundaries that existed at the time of the British Mandate is an integral regional unit." This means that the PLO not only claims the West Bank and Gaza plus Jerusalem, but they still demand that the Jews surrender every single inch of Israel also. Article 3 declares, "The Palestinian Arab people possesses the legal right to its homeland, and when the liberation of its homeland is completed it will exercise self-determination solely according to its own will and choice." This means that the Jews will have no rights, no will, and no choice if the Palestinians succeed. Articles 7, 8, and 9 confirm that "armed struggle is the only way to liberate Palestine." Lest anyone misunderstand their intent regarding the Jews who have lived in Israel all their lives, the PLO Charter declares the following in Article 15: "The liberation of Palestine, from an Arab viewpoint, is a national duty to repulse the Zionist, imperialist invasion from the great Arab homeland and to purge the Zionist presence from Palestine . . . until the liberation of its homeland." Finally, the Charter's articles reflect the Arabs' fundamental rejection of any truly peaceful cooperation with the Jewish people to share any portion of the Holy Land. Article 19 states, "The establishment of Israel is fundamentally null and void." In case any reader still wonders if the PLO intends to live in peace with the Jews they should carefully consider the words of Article 22: "The liberation of Palestine will liquidate the Zionist and imperialist presence."

The prospects for lasting peace in the Middle East are remote. Even if Israel recklessly surrenders military control of the West Bank, Gaza, and the Golan Heights, this will still not satisfy the ultimate goals of the Arab nations nor the PLO. Since the Arab's true stated goal as revealed in countless speeches and the PLO Charter is the annihilation of Israel, this preliminary surrender of land simply alters the strategic balance massively and irreversibly in favor of the Arabs. However, the implacable hatred of the Arabs is the true cause of the last four wars against Israel. The Arab nations tried to annihilate the Jewish state in three wars (1948, 1956, and 1967) long before the Jews had occupied the West Bank, Gaza, and the Golan Heights. Obviously, Arab hatred against the Jews will never be satisfied by simply surrendering these territories to the PLO and Syria. These surrenders will simply allow the Arabs to be in a much improved strategic position to launch a final annihilating war against Israel. Despite the current euphoria, Israel's Arab neighbors will continue to harbor thoughts and plans of launching a future war against the Jewish people. Far from leading to a real peace, if Israel does surrender these vital territories, it will make a future war more certain.

## **THE SEVEN-YEAR TREATY WITH ANTICHRIST SETS THE STAGE:**

The United Nations and the Arab states continue to demand the elimination of Israel's nuclear weapons. The introduction of Iranian nuclear weapons and the growing possibility of Libya, Syria, and Iraq joining the nuclear club have seriously altered the strategic balance of the Middle East. It is difficult to see how a balance of nuclear terror could continue for very long between Israel and the Islamic states who remain dedicated to Israel's destruction. United Nations' resolutions to ban nuclear weapons from the Middle East may tempt a future Israeli government to recklessly agree to relinquish their nuclear option. The present leaders of Israel realize that an unstable Arab regime, such as Iraq or Libya, might be tempted to use their nuclear, biological, or chemical warheads even though they know it would result in mutual destruction. In Islamic religious philosophy Muslims believe they will gain paradise if they die in a devastating war to cleanse the "infidels" from Jerusalem. In a few years following the War of Gog and Magog, the defeat of the Arab armies will pave the way for a European superpower to come forward to guarantee Israel's security and borders. Several prophecies describe the revival of the Roman Empire in the end times to dominate Europe and the rest of the world, as it did thousands of years ago in the days of Christ. The rise of the European Union is creating an economic and political superpower that is increasing its involvement in the Middle East peace process. The prophet Daniel wrote that a future Antichrist would arise in the last days to take over the revived Roman Empire, Daniel 7. Daniel predicted that "He shall confirm a covenant with many for one week." The word "many" means the Jews, and the word "week" is commonly used symbolically in Hebrew to refer to a period of seven years. This verse indicates that this future European dictator would confirm a treaty to defend Israel for seven years. The signing of this future treaty will start the final seven-year countdown to Armageddon, the climactic battle when Jesus Christ will defeat the armies of the world and establish His kingdom forever. This interim peace agreement between the PLO and Israel may set the stage for the fulfillment of these tremendous prophecies that lead to Christ's return in our generation.

The prophet Isaiah also spoke of this final seven-year peace treaty based on Israel's false confidence in the Antichrist: "You have said, 'We have made a covenant with death, and with Sheol we are in agreement. When the overflowing scourge passes through, it will not come to us, for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood we have hidden ourselves'" Isaiah 28:15. The leaders of Israel will cynically make this seven-year treaty with the powerful dictator of the European super state believing that he will protect Israel from the overwhelming military force of her enemies during that terrible time. However, the treaty will fail to protect them. In Isaiah 28:18 the prophet reveals God's judgment on Israel's treaty with the Antichrist: "Your covenant with death will be annulled, and your agreement with Sheol will not stand; when the overflowing scourge passes through, then you will be trampled down by it." After three and one half years the Antichrist will betray Israel and break the treaty. He will enter the rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem and claim to be god. When he demands that Israel worships him, most of the Jews will rebel against him. The book of Revelation describes the righteous Jews fleeing into the wilderness for 1260 days, three and one half years after this betrayal.

When the “Gog and Magog” invasion occurs, it appears that the only response from the Western democracies will be a diplomatic protest. Ezekiel 38:13 says that “Sheba and Dedan and the merchants of Tarshish” and “the young lions thereof, probably the United Kingdom, the United States, and the Commonwealth nations shall say unto thee, “Art thou come to take a spoil?” Tarshish, Sheba, and Dedan were ancient trading nations and are believed by many Bible scholars to refer to Spain or Britain and their former colonies “the young lions thereof”. It will not be the Western democracies that respond to this attack. The superpower who intervenes to save Israel in its greatest hour of need will be their great defender, the God of Abraham.

God declares through His prophet Ezekiel that He will defeat Russia and its Arab allies in the greatest military disaster in history. According to Ezekiel 39:2, five-sixth of the Russian-Arab armies, 85 percent will be annihilated by God upon the mountains of Israel. The Lord will trigger the greatest earthquake experienced thus far in history, centered in the mountains of Israel, but affecting the cities around the globe. In addition, the supernatural destruction will be accompanied by God's additional judgments, including “pestilence, overflowing rain, great hailstones, fire, and brimstone” Ezek. 38:22. The Lord will send such confusion and chaos upon the enemy that “every man's sword shall be against his brother,” verse 21. The devastation and loss of human life will be so great that “seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them” Ezekiel 39:12. The captured weapons and fuel supplies will provide fuel for the towns and villages of Israel for seven years following the supernatural victory, verse 9.

In my research, I have found that some new Russian weapons have been produced. These weapons are manufactured using a new material known as lignostone. Prepared from compressed wood-product, this material was developed in Holland to be used as fuel. However, the Soviet weapons laboratories discovered that this unique substance, called lignostone, is as strong as steel, light, pliable, and almost invisible to radar. These unique characteristics encouraged the Russian military to utilize this material in many military vehicles and weapons. One of the characteristics of lignostone is that it burns at very high temperatures and can be readily used as an alternative fuel. The use of lignostone, and the fact that mobile Russian military units can carry large amounts of fuel, in containers 100 yards across, for their tanks and helicopters, may explain the prophecy that the defeat of this army will provide ample fuel for Israel for a period of seven years.

The prophecy recorded in Ezekiel 38:21 and 39:21-22 indicates that God's purpose in this extraordinary intervention in history is to glorify and sanctify His Holy Name in the sight of Israel and the Gentile nations. The awesome destruction associated with this victory over the Russian-Arab armies will not be confined solely to the invading armies. God declared, “And I will send a fire on Magog, and among them that dwell carelessly in the isles: and they shall know that I am the Lord” Ezekiel 39:6. Russia, Magog will be devastated by the wrath of God, as well as those nations “dwelling carelessly in the isles” which may refer to Europe and America.

Russia has prepositioned enormous military supplies in Lebanon, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Egypt in preparation for the coming Russian-Arab invasion of Israel. It is both easier and more efficient for Russia to airlift huge numbers of lightly armed men into Syria, Egypt, and Lebanon to pick up previously positioned weapons, than to airlift the military supplies for them. Military equipment often weighs five to ten times the weight of the soldier who will use that equipment.

The same logic motivates the United States military to preposition enormous amounts of military supplies in Europe to be available for American and Canadian troops who would be flown into France and Germany in the event of a Russian invasion of Western Europe. The PLO, Iraq, Jordan, Libya and Syria are themselves already so heavily armed that they have little practical use for this additional equipment.

God set an appointment more than twenty-five hundred years ago to destroy Gog and Magog on the mountains of Israel: “Thus saith the Lord God; Art thou he of whom I have spoken in old time by my servants the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those days many years that I would bring thee against them?” Ezekiel 38:17. As I mentioned earlier, it is fascinating to read the Jewish commentaries on Ezekiel 38 and 39 that describe an oral tradition recorded from the Vilna Gaon that advises Jews to observe carefully when the Russian fleet, Magog passes from the Black Sea through the Bosphorus to the Mediterranean. “It is now the time to put on your Sabbath clothes because the Messiah is coming.” **For the first time in history, the Russian Navy has surpassed all other navies in the world in size. Russia has moved many of its ships from the Black Sea into the Mediterranean Sea opposite Israel to challenge the former U.S. naval supremacy in that strategic area.**

Although Scripture does not indicate the year in which this future invasion and defeat of Russia will occur, the prophet Haggai gives us a strong indication of what the actual day may be. Haggai reveals that on the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, “Chisleu,” of the Jewish calendar, the day before Hanukkah, God will deliver Israel as He did twice before on this day: First the defeat of the Syrian army and recapture of the Temple in 165 B.C. and Second the British capture of Jerusalem from the Turks in 1917 during the closing battles of WWI.

The prophet Haggai declares: “The Word of the Lord came unto Haggai in the four and twentieth day of the month, Chisleu, saying, Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying, I will shake the heavens and the earth; and I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, everyone by the sword of his brother” Haggai 2:20-22.

This description by Haggai, and the exact language of his prophecy, is uncannily like the language of Ezekiel 38 and 39 that describes Russia's defeat. The interesting point is that Haggai names the exact day of the year on which this will occur. Since so many other prophecies have been so precisely fulfilled to the day, there is a strong probability that this prophetic event will also occur on its appointed anniversary date of the biblical calendar. “Behold, it is come, and it is done, saith the Lord God; this is the day whereof I have spoken” Ezekiel 39:8. God's appointment with Russia is set; it will not be postponed.