EZEKIEL 38

Gog of Magog: The Last Great Coalition

“I will magnify Myself, sanctify Myself, and make Myself known in the sight of many nations; and they will know that I am the LORD.”
EZEKIEL 38:23

Where Ezekiel has brought us

1. Ezekiel 38 opens a two-chapter oracle (38–39) that carries no date.

2. These chapters stand between the promises of restoration (chapters 33–37) and the temple vision (chapters 40–48).

Who Is Gog?

God sets His face against a new and strange enemy from the far north.

EZEKIEL 38:2

"Son of man, set your face toward Gog of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik calls Gog a 'wholly new and strange enemy,' and quotes Morgan: 'It is a new confederacy and antagonism.'

WHAT IT MEANS

Gog appears nowhere else in the Old Testament as a person. He heads peoples from the far north — descendants of Japheth from Genesis 10 — and God's first word to him settles everything: "Behold, I am against you, O Gog" (v3).

roʾsh (רֹאשׁ)

RO'SH · "HEAD, CHIEF"

Roʾsh means head or chief, and it raises the best-known translation question in the chapter. The KJV reads it as a title, 'chief prince' of Meshech and Tubal.

Hooks in the Jaws

God drags out Gog and his allies from every direction, like a captive led on a hook.

EZEKIEL 38:4

"I will turn you about and put hooks into your jaws, and I will bring you out, and all your army, horses and horsemen, all of them splendidly attired, a great company with buckler and shield, all of them wielding swords;

DAVID GUZIK

The allies come from every direction: Persia (modern Iran) to the east, Ethiopia (Hebrew Cush) to the south, Put (usually Libya) to the west, Gomer and Beth-togarmah from the north.

WHAT IT MEANS

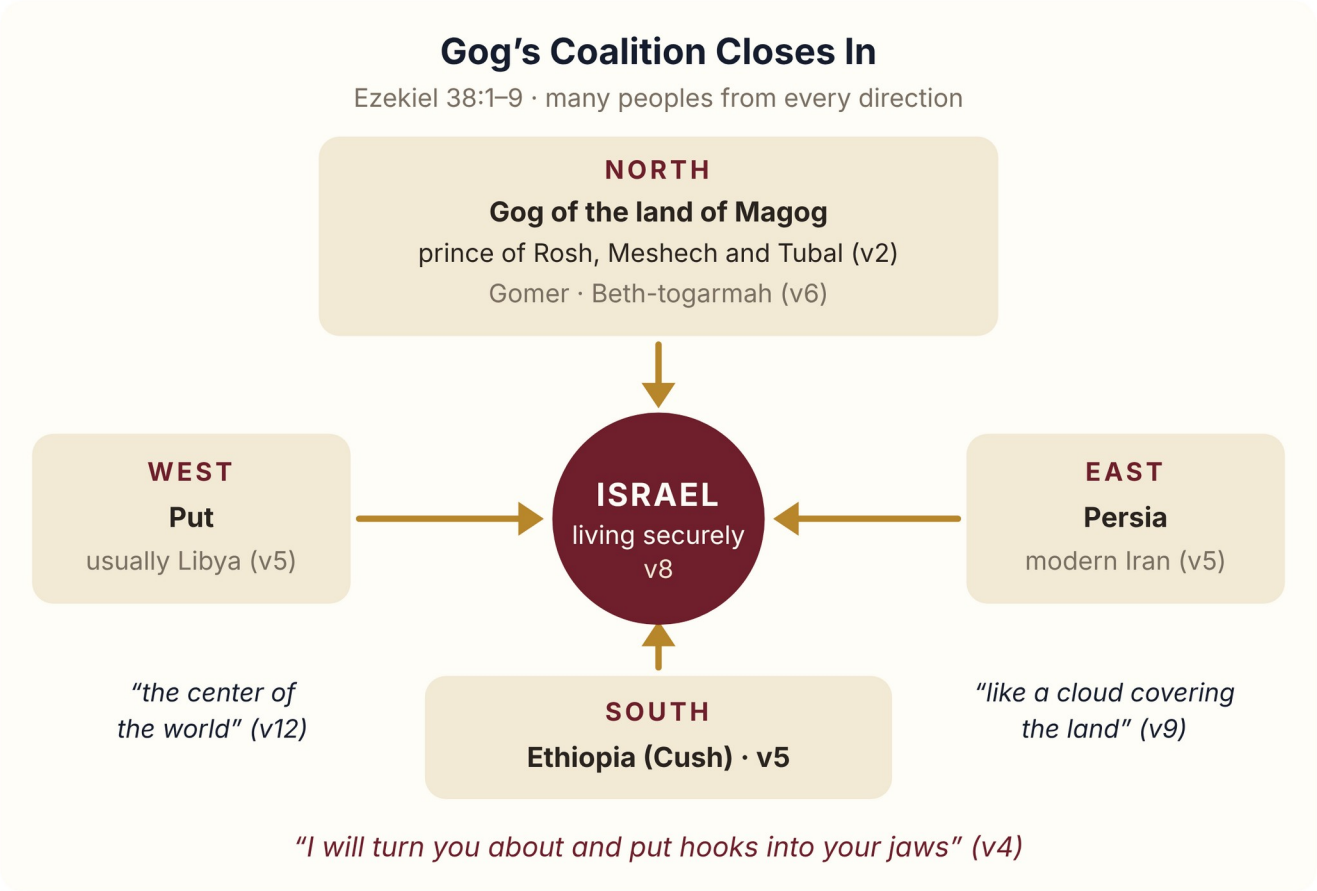
The coalition is huge and it surrounds Israel: Persia, Ethiopia and Put, Gomer and Beth-togarmah — "many peoples with you" (v6). Togarmah is often linked with the Armenians.

chach (חָח)

CHACH · "HOOK"

Chach is a hook or ring put in the nose or jaw — the way you lead a captive, or a beast that does not want to go. Ancient conquerors led prisoners like that, and God used the same picture against Assyria (Isa 37:29).

Gog's Coalition Closes In



Peoples from the north, east, south and west converge on a regathered Israel — but God holds the hook.

Gog's Evil Plan

In the latter years Gog targets a regathered people living securely without walls.

EZEKIEL 38:12

to capture spoil and to seize plunder, to turn your hand against the waste places which are now inhabited, and against the people who are gathered from the nations, who have acquired cattle and goods, who live at the center of the world.'

DAVID GUZIK

God's sovereignty does not erase Gog's guilt; the evil plan is his own. Guzik, quoting Smith: 'Gog calculated that the attack against the people of God would be relatively easy and extremely profitable.'

WHAT IT MEANS

"After many days you will be summoned" (v8). Gog comes in the latter years, after Israel has been gathered from many nations to mountains that had long been waste.

betach (בֶּטַח)
BETACH · "SECURITY"

Betach means safety, security, confidence. It names Israel's condition when Gog comes: "they are living securely, all of them" (v8; again vv11, 14).

In the Last Days

God reveals His purpose: to be sanctified through Gog before the eyes of the nations.

EZEKIEL 38:17

'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Are you the one of whom I spoke in former days through My servants the prophets of Israel, who prophesied in those days for many years that I would bring you against them?

DAVID GUZIK

Quoting Feinberg on the phrase "the latter years": 'No student of prophecy can afford to overlook this phrase.'

WHAT IT MEANS

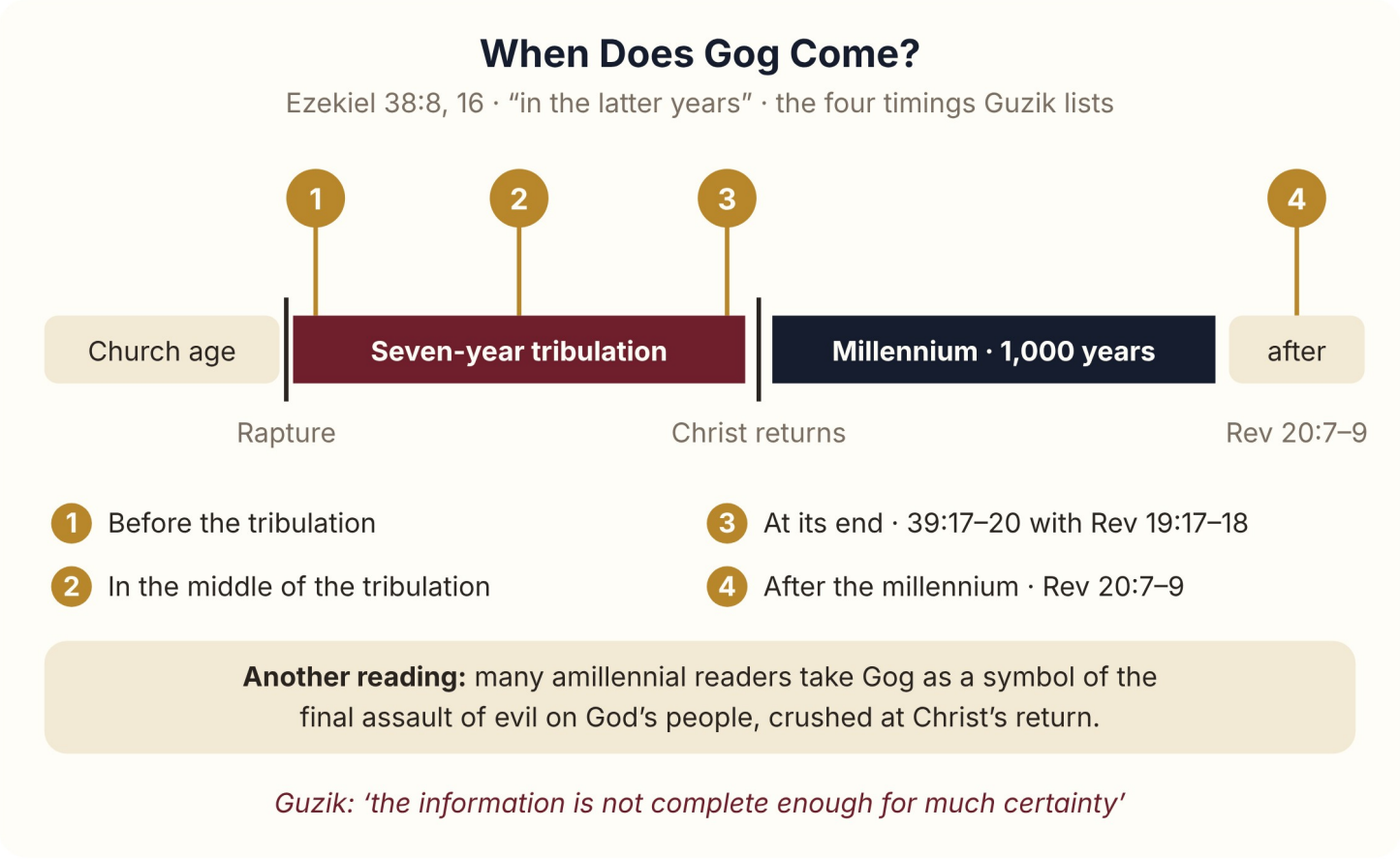
"On that day when My people Israel are living securely, will you not know it?" (v14). Gog comes from the remote north with a mighty army, but God says plainly, "I will bring you against My land" (v16).

ʾacharith (אַחֲרִית)

ʾACHARITH · "THE END"

ʾAcharith means the end, the latter part, the last days. It stands behind "the latter years" (v8) and "the last days" (v16).

When Does Gog Come?



Guzik lists four possible timings for the invasion and declines to choose; many amillennial readers take it as a symbol of evil's final assault.

God’s Fury, Gog’s Ruin

Earthquake, panic, plague and fire from heaven — and Israel never lifts a sword.

EZEKIEL 38:18

“It will come about on that day, when Gog comes against the land of Israel,” declares the Lord GOD, “that My fury will mount up in My anger.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik gathers his sources around the earthquake and the panic. Quoting Wright: ‘The invaders are destroyed by earthquake (cf. Zechariah 14:4-5), by violent distrust of one another.’

WHAT IT MEANS

God’s anger rises “in My zeal” — jealous love for His people and His name. Then everything shakes: fish, birds, beasts, creeping things and every man “will shake at My presence” (v20); mountains fall and every wall collapses.

qinʾah (קִנְאָה)
QINʾAH · “ZEAL, JEALOUSY”

Qinʾah is jealousy, zeal, ardor. God says, “In My zeal and in My blazing wrath I declare” (v19).

What to carry from this chapter

1

Head or place?

Roʾsh can mean ‘chief’ (the KJV’s ‘chief prince’) or the place name Rosh (NASB); the word study allows both.

2

Rosh and Russia, held loosely.

Guzik says ‘the only direct evidence of this is the similar sound of the names.’

3

Surrounded on every side.

Persia, Ethiopia, Put, Gomer and Beth-togarmah come from east, south, west and north (vv5–6).

4

A hook in the jaw.

Chach is the ring used to lead a captive or a beast; God leads Gog out that way (v4).

More to carry

5

Peace looks like weakness to the wicked.

Gog targets people living securely, “having no bars or gates” (v11).

6

Bystanders want the loot.

Guzik, quoting Taylor, says Sheba, Dedan and Tarshish are ‘eager to cash in on the proceeds.’

7

Humble about the timing.

Guzik lists four possible timings and says the information ‘is not complete enough for much certainty.’

8

The goal is God’s name.

“I will magnify Myself, sanctify Myself, and make Myself known in the sight of many nations” (v23).

Talk it through

1. Gog attacked when Israel was “living securely.” Why does the enemy so often strike when life finally settles down?

2. God put “hooks into your jaws” and led Gog out. How does God’s control over the enemy change the way you face your own threats?

3. Gog devised an evil plan, and the merchants of Tarshish asked about the loot. Where do you see the predator or the bystander in yourself?

4. Christians disagree about when this battle happens. How can a man be humble about prophetic details and still certain about the outcome?

5. What does it mean that God will “sanctify Myself” through Gog before the nations?

CLOSING

Gog brought the largest army the world had seen and never got a battle. God had the hook in his jaw from the first verse, and the earthquake, the confusion and the fire from heaven did the rest. Whatever is coming against you, the battle belongs to the LORD — and every nation will know it.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

O·I·A study, slides and reflection journal: see the Ezekiel study page.