Note: Chapters 38 and 39 of Ezekiel present enormous interpretive challenges—from the identification of the nations involved to the precise timeframes involved. Let it be stated at the outset, however, that these two chapters deal with the End-Times events and that they deal with the following timeframes: (1) the Tribulation period; (2) the thirty days between the end of the Tribulation and the bodily return of Christ to the earth; (3) the forty-five days between the bodily return of Christ to the earth and the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom; and (4) the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom itself. Moreover, these timeframes do not necessarily follow chronologically in Ezekiel’s presentation, but must be determined by an evaluation of the context.

I. God tells Ezekiel to prophesy against Gog, the leader of the land of Magog

EZE 38:1 And the word of the Lord came to me saying,
EZE 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,

[vv.1-2: “Magog” was one of Japheth’s seven sons. According to anthropologists, most or all of Japheth’s sons live north of the Mediterranean (distributed there by the Lord at the Tower of Babel judgment) (Genesis 11:1-9). Hence, the “land of Magog” is north of Israel. Ezekiel 38:15 states that Magog is located in “the remote parts of the north.” “Meshech” and “Tubal” were also sons of Japheth; these two also were distributed north of the Mediterranean. “Gog” is the “prince”—or the leader—of Magog’s three leading tribes-nations: Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal. Some scholars identify “Meshech” as the source of the name Moscow, though other scholars discount such a position. Nevertheless, Moscow and Leningrad (St. Petersburg) are due north of Jerusalem—and Russia itself extends to the remote parts of the north, thus lending strong support to the view that “the land of Magog” is or includes Russia (particularly that part of Russia west of the Ural Mountains).]

[continued on the next page]
II. Ezekiel prophesies that God is going to bring Gog, his armies, and his allies into Israel during the End-Times

EZE 38:3  and say, 'Thus says the Lord God, "Behold, I am against you, O Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal.
EZE 38:4  "And 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;
EZE 38:5  Persia, Ethiopia, and Put with them, all of them with shield and helmet;
EZE 38:6  Gomer with all its troops; Beth-togarmah from the remote parts of the north with all its troops—many peoples with you.  
EZE 38:7  "Be prepared, and prepare yourself, you and all your companies that are assembled about you, and be a guard for them.  
EZE 38:8  "After many days you will be summoned; in the latter years you will come into the land that is restored from the sword, whose inhabitants have been gathered from many nations to the mountains of Israel which had been a continual waste; but its people were brought out from the nations, and they are living securely, all of them.

[v.3:  God is against “Gog”—the leader of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal (and the leader of an array of nations including—from vv. 5-6—Persia, Ethiopia, Libya, Gomer, and Beth-togarmah)]

[v.4:  God Himself will bring Gog and his allies—a great company arrayed for battle—out of their respective countries]

[vv.5-6:  Additional allies of Gog are listed.  These include troops from nations which are fairly close geographically to Israel: Iran (Persia), Ethiopia, and Libya (Put).  Also, “Gomer” (another son of Japheth) and his troops as well as “Beth-togarmah” (a son of Gomer and a grandson of Japheth) and his troops.  Gomer has often been identified as Germany or East Germany by anthropologists.  In short, Gog and his assorted allies most likely depict an anti-Semitic alliance of several members of the former Soviet Union—including Russia, East Germany, some Slavic nations, Iran, Ethiopia, and Libya]

[v.8:  The expression, “In the latter years,” in this context means “in the end times.” In other words, during the end times, God is going to bring Gog into “the land that is restored from the sword” [Israel], “whose inhabitants [the Jews] have been gathered from many nations to the mountains of Israel which had been a continual waste” [until the early twentieth century].  Verse 8 clearly depicts the rebirth and restoration of Israel during the “latter years.” It also reveals that, during the end times, the Jews will be living securely in the land.  As of this writing, the Jews indeed—despite periodic terrorist attacks—are living (for the most part) securely, in part because Israel has the strongest military in the region.
Thus, the thrust of verse 8 is that God will bring Gog and his hordes into Israel during the end times. At this point of the prophecy, however, the timing of Gog’s descent into Israel is not yet definitive.

III. Ezekiel prophesies that Gog, his armies, and his allies will come into Israel like a storm and will cover the entire land

EZE 38:9  "And you will go up, you will come like a storm; you will be like a cloud covering the land, you and all your troops, and many peoples with you."

[v.9: Here the prophet Ezekiel describes the approach of “Gog’s” armies into Israel—they will come “like a storm” into Israel and will be “like a cloud covering the land,” i.e., Gog’s troops and his allies’ troops will take positions throughout Israel]

IV. Ezekiel prophesies that Gog, before he enters Israel with his hordes, will have devised an evil plan against Israel

EZE 38:10  'Thus says the Lord God, "It will come about on that day, that thoughts will come into your mind, and you will devise an evil plan, EZE 38:11  and you will say, 'I will go up against the land of unwalled villages. I will go against those who are at rest, that live securely, all of them living without walls, and having no bars or gates, EZE 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.'"

[v.10 & v.12: Here the prophet Ezekiel describes, parenthetically, the mindset of Gog (v.10) before he and his armies enter the land. The evil plan itself is to go into Israel and to capture spoil and to seize plunder and to kill those living in Israel (“to turn your hand against the people who are gathered from the nations”) (v.12).

[v.11: Ezekiel in verse 11 gives the *timeframe* of Gog’s entrance into Israel. Israel at the time will be a “land of unwalled villages.” The Jews will be at rest and will be living securely in the land. Israel’s cities, towns, and villages will have no walls, nor will Israel have any of the customary bars and gates which accompany a city or town’s walls.

So the obvious question is what part of the End-Times timeframe is being described? *When*, during the End-Times events, will Gog descend upon Israel? Two possibilities typically are proposed by commentators. The first scenario
suggests that Gog descends into Israel before the Tribulation period, only to be defeated supernaturally by God (Ezek. 38:21-23; 39:3-5)—so that Israel and the nations know that God is real and is for Israel (Ezek. 39:7). The only problem with this scenario is that Ezekiel 38:18-20 shows Gog to be in Israel on the final day of the Tribulation period, not before the Tribulation begins (see the analysis of vv. 18-20 below).

The second possibility (and the prevalent view among commentators) is that Gog descends into Israel before the mid-point of the Tribulation period, only to be defeated supernaturally by God (Ezek. 38:21-23; 39:3-5)—so that Israel and the nations know that God is real and that He supports Israel (Ezek. 39:7). The problem with this scenario is identical to the proposed timeframe described previously: Ezekiel 38:18-20 shows Gog to be in Israel on the final day of the Tribulation period, not at or near the mid-point of the Tribulation period (see the analysis of vv. 18-20 below).

Consequently, this writer will suggest a third possibility—though perhaps difficult at first to envision—which correlates perfectly with Ezekiel 38:18-20 (i.e., Gog being in Israel on the final day of the Tribulation), Zechariah 14:1-4, and Revelation 16:14. This third scenario proposes that Gog and his hordes descend into Israel during the final month of the Tribulation as part of the sixth Bowl judgment (Rev. 16:14), when God allows three sign-performing demons to “go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty.” This gathering would include any remaining kings from the Western world (which has taken over the Islamic Middle East and Africa earlier in the Tribulation), the kings from the East (Rev. 16:12), and the king (Gog) from the North (and his hordes).

The obvious problem with this scenario at first glance is this: How is Israel at the end of the Tribulation period “living securely, all of them” (v.8)? How can Gog, at the end of the Tribulation, go up against Jews “who are at rest” and who “live securely, all of them living without walls, and having no bars or gates” (v.11)? Wasn’t Israel, according to Joel 2:1-8, overrun and denuded by the Antichrist? The answer to this puzzle is found in Matthew 24:15-22 and Revelation 12:12-17. In the Matthew passage, Jesus exhorts all Jews in Israel who hear of the Antichrist’s temple desecration at the mid-point of the Tribulation to flee to the mountains of Israel and Jordan (the latter being, in God’s eyes, part of the land promised to Abraham; hence, all of these Jewish refugees will in fact be living in Israel). By faith, the Jews are to flee immediately and are to take nothing with them to the mountains of Israel and Jordan. Indeed, those who, by faith, heed this admonition and flee will be protected supernaturally by God. Revelation 12:12-17 pictures God’s supernatural protection of these Jewish refugees for the entire second half of the Tribulation period. Thus, believing Israel—i.e., those who have heeded Christ’s admonition to flee from the Antichrist (no doubt an admonition previously taught to them by the 144,000 in many synagogues around the world)—will be living securely in their mountain and Jordanian hideaways (e.g., Petra). They will be secure because God Himself will shelter them and provide for them just as He provided for the Israelites who fled into the wilderness from Egypt 3,500
years ago. Believing Israel will be living “without walls, having no bars or gates” because, by faith, they are living in hideouts and hideaways—not cities, or towns, or villages—and are being fed and protected by God Himself.

It is even possible or probable that God’s human instruments for this supernatural protection of believing Israel are His two witnesses in Jerusalem who are given the power “to turn the water into blood, and to smite the earth with every plague, as often as they desire” (Rev. 11:6). Accordingly, should the Antichrist’s armies desire to hunt down and harm those Jews who have fled to the wilderness, the two witnesses could readily send some type of plague upon any such armies, eventually causing them to give up their efforts to find and kill these Jews. [Note: those Jews who refuse to flee when the Antichrist desecrates the temple will not be protected by God and will be easy prey for the Antichrist and his armies.]

How will Gog (1) know to go up against “the land of unwalled villages” at this point in the Tribulation period and (2) know that these Jews are “living securely” at this late hour of the Tribulation? Though Scripture does answer the question directly, we can suggest the following: at least one of the three sign-performing demons who goes out to the kings of the earth at the sixth Bowl judgment (in this writer’s view approximately one month before the end of the Tribulation) will convince Gog that the “Bible” of the “Jews and Christians” teaches that these two witnesses are about to be killed by the Antichrist immediately after the end of this seven years of “judgment” from their “God.” Thus, the implication for Gog is that, shortly, it will be safe to enter the land, to kill all the Jews once the two witnesses are out of the way, and to take as much spoil and plunder as he wants. The demon obviously will not tell Gog the rest of the story—i.e., that he and all the other kings of the earth are being gathered into Israel by God in order to judge them and to slay them for their rejection of Christ and for their evil intentions toward the Jews. Satan and his demons, of course, are master deceivers; and they will have no trouble convincing Gog to descend into Israel “to capture spoil and to seize plunder” and “to go up against those who are at rest, that live securely” (i.e., the believing Jews in the mountains and in Jordan being protected by the two witnesses) after the two witnesses are slain.

[Note: when Ezekiel gave his prophecy, cities were defended by walls, bars, and gates. Today (at the doorstep of the end times), nations and cities are protected by militaries and sophisticated weapons and alliances and treaties, rather than walls. During the first half of the Tribulation period, Israel will be protected by its own military plus the Antichrist’s peace treaty (backed, no doubt, by peace-keeping troops from the Antichrist’s ten-nation core). During the second half of the Tribulation, the Antichrist and his armies will overrun, slaughter, and denude much of Israel (Joel 2:1-8). Only those Jews who, by faith, flee to the eastern mountains of Israel and to Jordan will be saved from the Antichrist’s onslaught. No unbelieving, faithless Jew, if he survives the initial onslaught, will be able to live securely in Israel; he will be hunted down and killed. Thus, the Jews of Ezekiel 38:11 “who are at rest, that live securely, all of them without walls, and having no bars or gates” are the Jews who have fled into the eastern
mountains of Israel and into Jordan at the mid-point of the Tribulation and who are now being protected supernaturally by the Living God.]

V. Ezekiel prophesies that Sheba, Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish will catch wind of Gog’s plot either ahead of time or as he begins to descend into Israel

EZE 38:13 "Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all its villages, will say to you, 'Have you come to capture spoil? Have you assembled your company to seize plunder, to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to capture great spoil?'"

[v.13: “Sheba” and “Dedan” are great grandsons of Ham. Ham and his descendants settled largely to the south of the Mediterranean. “Tarshish” is a grandson of Japtheth; many of the earth’s coastlines (particularly in the Western world) were settled by the offspring of Japheth’s son Javan (Gen. 10:2), including Tarshish himself (Gen. 10:4-5). Given the geographic area of Gog’s allies, however, the “merchants of Tarshish” expression perhaps refers to merchants and traders living in the coastal regions of the Black Sea and (possibly) the Caspian Sea. Thus, in verse 13 Gog’s plan of evil is recognized by two hard-to-identify nations (Sheba and Dedan) and by some of the trading merchants, probably north of Israel, doing business in Israel (“the merchants of Tarshish”). Once again we see the end-times context of the prophecy, because Israel, until perhaps sixty to seventy years ago, had been a wasteland for centuries. Here Israel is described as having spoil to capture and plunder to seize and silver and gold and cattle and goods—a condition which every contemporary reader knows to be true of Israel today.]

VI. Ezekiel prophesies that God, in His sovereignty, will make sure that Gog knows that his time to invade Israel is at hand

EZE 38:14 "Therefore, prophesy, son of man, and say to Gog, 'Thus says the Lord God,' On that day, when My people Israel are living securely, will you not know it?"

[v.14: The sovereign God of the universe will make sure that Gog, during the end-times, knows of the time when God’s people, Israel, are living “securely.” God, in His sovereignty, is going to bring Gog and his allies into Israel in order (1) to accomplish His purposes for Israel, (2) to judge Gog’s evil action against Israel (vv. 21-23), and (3) to make Christ known to Israel and the nations (v.16).]
VII. Ezekiel prophesies that Gog will come into Israel from the remote parts of the north—and that Gog and his hordes will be like a cloud covering the entire land

EZE 38:15 "And you [Gog] will come from your place out of the remote parts of the north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great assembly and a mighty army;
EZE 38:16 and you will come up against My people Israel like a cloud to cover the land. It will come about in the last days that I shall bring you against My land, so that the nations may know Me when I shall be sanctified through you before their eyes, O Gog."

[vv.15-16: The sovereign God of the universe will Himself bring Gog “out of the remotest parts of the north”—an apparent reference to Russia, whose capital (Moscow) is due north of Jerusalem—into Israel. Gog and his allies will represent a “great assembly” and a “mighty army.” Gog’s armies will come into Israel like a “cloud” to cover the land—“in the last days” (i.e., during the End Times). The purpose of God bringing Gog into Israel and against “My land” is to allow God to sanctify Himself—through God the Son, Jesus Christ (Ezek. 39:21) (“and I shall set My glory [Christ] among the nations”)—before the nations when Christ judges Gog for his evil.]

VIII. Ezekiel explains that Gog has been prophesied against previously by earlier prophets of Israel

EZE 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?"

[v. 17: The sovereign God of the universe has Ezekiel remind Gog, that his evil plan, his descent into Israel, and his inevitable demise have already been described previously by other prophets of Israel. Once such prophet and prophecy is the prophet Isaiah in Isaiah 10:1-34 and 37:36, a prophecy of Sennacherib and Assyria, which seems to prefigure Gog and his destruction.]

IX. Ezekiel prophesies that God will respond with fury against Gog when he has completed his entry into Israel

EZE 38:18 "And 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."
X. Ezekiel prophesies that, once Gog is in Israel, God will bring forth a **worldwide** earthquake, the highest magnitude Richter-scale event in human history [at the seventh Bowl judgment]

_EZE 38:19_  "And in My zeal and in My blazing wrath I declare that on that day there will surely be a great earthquake in the land of Israel.
_EZE 38:20_  "And the fish of the sea, the birds of the heavens, the beasts of the field, all the creeping things that creep on the earth, and all the men who are on the face of the earth will shake at My presence; the mountains also will be thrown down, the steep pathways will collapse, and every wall will fall to the ground.

[vv.19-20: The timeframe of God’s judgment against Gog is now given. This judgment against Gog begins on the **final day of the Tribulation** at the seventh Bowl Judgment (Rev. 16:17-20). Revelation 16:18-20 describes the greatest earthquake in human history, when (1) “the cities of the nations fall” (therefore, it is **worldwide** in scope, just as the earthquake described here by Ezekiel is **worldwide** in scope: “all the men who are on the face of the earth will shake at My presence” and “every wall will fall to the ground”—Ezek. 38:20) and when (2) “every island fled away and the mountains were not found” (just as the mountains of Ezekiel 38:20 are not found: “the mountains also will be thrown down”). In this writer’s view, God’s judgment of Gog continues for the thirty days before Christ’s bodily return to the earth and for perhaps another ten days after His return (Ezek. 38:21-23; 39:3-5).]

XI. Ezekiel prophesies that the Lord God—through Christ upon His return—will magnify Himself among the earth’s remaining nations by the judgments Christ brings upon Gog and his armies

_EZE 38:21_  "And I shall call for a sword against him on all My mountains," declares the Lord God. "Every man's sword will be against his brother.
_EZE 38:22_  "And with pestilence and with blood I shall enter into judgment with him; and I shall rain on him, and on his troops, and on the many peoples who are with him, a torrential rain, with hailstones, fire, and brimstone.
_EZE 38:23_  "And I shall magnify Myself, sanctify Myself, and make Myself known in the sight of many nations; and they will know that I am the Lord.”’
[Note: it is important at this point to recognize both the timeframe and the context of the judgments portrayed in vv.21-23. Let us review the context. First, as we have just seen in vv. 18-20, Gog and his hordes are pictured in Israel on the final day of the Tribulation period—the seventh Bowl judgment. Gog has likely entered into Israel thirty days earlier in conjunction with the sixth Bowl judgment (Rev. 16:12-14), when three sign-performing demons “go out to the kings of the whole world to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty (i.e., for the Battle of Armageddon).” The “kings of the east” (i.e., China, India, and others) also descend into Israel at this time (Rev. 16:12,14). The Antichrist—the leader of the Western world and the West’s conquered territories (Africa and the Middle East)—has already been positioned in Israel (with his armies) for nearly three and a half years. Second, the Antichrist, after the end of the Tribulation period (i.e., after the seventh Bowl) makes his way into Jerusalem from his Middle East headquarters between Jerusalem and the Mediterranean (Dan. 11:45) in order to slay the two Jerusalem witnesses who have been prophesying for three and a half years. After the witnesses are slain and then rise from the dead three days later (and ascend into heaven), all the armies positioned in Israel—Western (the Antichrist’s), Northern (Gog’s), and Eastern (“the kings of the east”)—begin their onslaught of Jerusalem in an effort to obliterate it. At first these armies hold the upper hand and half of Jerusalem is cut off (Zech. 14:2).

Soon, however, God begins to show Himself strong on behalf of His people, Israel. God’s initial action against the world’s gentile armies overrunning Jerusalem is pictured in Zechariah 12:2-4, including: “In that day, declares the Lord, I will strike every horse with bewilderment, and its rider with madness. But I will watch over the house of Israel, while I strike every horse of the peoples with blindness.” This action from God is noted by the Jews, who muse: “Then the clans of Judah will say in their hearts, ‘A strong support for us are the inhabitants of Jerusalem through the Lord of hosts, their God’” (Zech. 12:5-6). All fighting thus becomes far more difficult for the invaders when their horses are blinded and their best troops are struck with madness.

As this Gentile confusion reaches its peak (perhaps three weeks after the end of the Tribulation) and Jerusalem truly has become the “heavy stone” for the invaders, God intervenes in the heavens in a way that gets the jaw-dropping attention of every person remaining on the earth: “But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken” (Matt. 24:29). All fighting stops as terrified earthlings witness the might of God over the sun, moon, and stars: the sun will go dark, the moon will not reflect any light, the stars will fall from the sky, and orbital laws in the solar system will be shaken—as God turns mankind's attention heavenward for the return of Christ. Once this utter darkness has covered the earth for a day or so (the timeframe is unspecified), Jesus Christ—on the thirtieth day after the Tribulation period ends (Dan. 12:11-12)—returns bodily to the earth (Rev. 19:11-16).

At His first advent, Jesus Christ offered salvation to any person who would receive Him. At His second advent, Christ will execute judgment on all remaining
persons who have refused Him: “in righteousness He judges and wages war (Rev. 19:11); His eyes are a flame of fire (Rev. 19:12); and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty (Rev. 19:15).” As the Lord descends from heaven and gets closer to the earth, the earth becomes increasingly illumined: “For it will be a unique day which is known to the Lord, neither day nor night, but it will come about that at evening time there will be light” (Zech. 14:7). Zechariah's prophecy pictures the entire earth being illumined by the Lord's return, thus allowing us to speculate that the Lord's angels (themselves being able to give off enormous amounts of light [Luke 2:9 and others]) will encircle the globe at Christ's return. The Apostle Paul gives us a further description of the Lord's return (and the brightness of His angels) in II Thessalonians 1:6-7: “For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire.” Thus, at His return to the earth—on this unique day in human history—the Lord and His mighty angels will themselves illumine the whole earth. The Apostle John gives us additional insight into the event: “Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him, and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him” (Rev. 1:7). God is going to extinguish the sun, moon, and stars immediately before the return of His Son, because He wants the undivided attention of all who remain on the earth—so that every person will see the power and the glory and the majesty of Jesus Christ at His return.

The Lord is not alone when He returns. Not only does He return with His holy angels (Matt. 25:31 and II Thess. 1:7), but He also returns with all resurrected or translated believers (I Thess. 3:13)—including all Old Testament believers, Church Age believers, and Tribulation martyrs (Rev. 20:4). And finally, when the Lord descends through the clouds over Jerusalem (Acts 1:9-11) and sets foot on the Mount of Olives (Zech. 14:4), he will be greeted by the 144,000 Jewish witnesses who will joyously escort Him into Jerusalem (Rev. 14:1). From here, Christ begins to judge Gog and his hordes (as well as all others gathered against Israel) in the passage at hand, Ezekiel 38:21-23.

[vv.21-23: After His return to the earth, Christ will cause Gog’s armies to kill each other on the mountains of Israel. Christ will also bring disease (“pestilence”) upon Gog’s troops and all peoples traveling with him. It seems, in fact, that the pestilence will be so severe that the troops will want to kill each other to be put out of their pestilence-caused misery. This pestilence judgment correlates perfectly with the one described in Zechariah 14:12: “Now this will be the plague with which the Lord will strike all the peoples who have gone to war against Jerusalem: their flesh will rot while they stand on their feet, and their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongue will rot in their mouth.” Zechariah 14:13 further describes the event: “And it will come about in that day that a great panic from the Lord will fall on them; and they will seize one another’s hand, and the hand of one will be lifted against the hand of another,” i.e., to kill one another. In addition, Christ will send “hail, fire, and brimstone” upon Gog, his armies, and all who are with him in Israel. This judgment is reminiscent of the judgments which Jehovah God brought against...
Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19:24-25). Christ brings these judgments against Gog and his cohorts in order to “make Myself known in the sight of many nations, and they will know that I am the Lord.” Because all television broadcasting capability will have been destroyed at the seventh Bowl Judgment before the time the destruction of Gog in Israel, only those peoples (1) left in Israel from among the nations and (2) who are not numbered among Gog’s cohorts will witness Christ’s supernatural destruction of Gog’s forces and will know that Christ indeed is Lord.

XII. The Lord God tells Ezekiel to reiterate his prophecy against Gog, the leader of the land of Magog—specifically, that He (the Lord God) is going to bring Gog, his armies, and his allies into Israel

EZE 39:1 "And you, son of man, prophesy against Gog, and say, 'Thus says the Lord God,' Behold, I am against you, O Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal;
EZE 39:2 and I shall turn you around, drive you on, take you up from the remotest parts of the north, and bring you against the mountains of Israel.

[vv.1-2: Ezekiel recapitulates the prophecy that God is against Gog and that God Himself is going to bring Gog out of the remotest parts of the north (Russia) into the mountains of Israel during the End Times—specifically, according to the context of Ezekiel 38:18-20, near the end of the Tribulation]

XIII. Ezekiel again prophesies that God—through Christ—will cause Gog and his armies to be defeated in Israel and that Gog’s dead armies will be food for predatory birds and wild beasts

EZE 39:3 "And I shall strike your bow from your left hand, and dash down your arrows from your right hand.
EZE 39:4 "You shall fall on the mountains of Israel, you and all your troops, and the peoples who are with you; I shall give you as food to every kind of predatory bird and beast of the field.
EZE 39:5 "You will fall on the open field; for it is I who have spoken," declares the Lord God.

[vv. 3-5: Christ Himself will defeat Gog (“I shall strike your bow from your left hand, . . .”) and his allies (“your troops, and the peoples who are with you”) on the mountains of Israel (v.4) and on the open fields of Israel (v.5). Furthermore, Christ will cause the bodies of Gog and his defeated allies to be eaten by the birds and the wild beasts which God gathered, according to Revelation 19:17-21, at or immediately after the Lord’s Second Coming to the earth. The judgments pictured in vv.
3-5 take place immediately after Christ’s return to the earth as part of the Battle of Armageddon.

XIV. Ezekiel prophesies that God—through Christ—will send fire upon the lands of those who followed Gog’s treachery in Israel

EZE 39:6 "And I shall send fire upon Magog and those who inhabit the coastlands in safety; and they will know that I am the Lord.

[v.6: Ezekiel prophesies that Christ will bring down fire upon the land of Magog and “those who inhabit the coastlands in safety.” Up until the fifth Trumpet judgment the expression “those who inhabit the coastlands in safety” would have described persons living along the coastlines and in the major coastal cities of the Western world. The Antichrist’s Western world, during the second half of the Tribulation (at the second through fourth Seal judgments), has been the aggressor against Africa and the Middle East (including their coastlands)—and few in those regions would be living “in safety.” However, because (1) the northern portion of the Western world is largely obliterated during the fifth Trumpet’s nuclear holocaust, because (2) the entire Western world sinks to the bottom of the earth’s oceans at the seventh Bowl judgment, never to be found again, and because (3) the remaining world lies in rubble due to the seventh Bowl’s most massive earthquake in human history (worldwide in scope), it is clear that no gentile nations will be living “in safety” after the seventh Bowl judgment (see pp. 217-222). Thus, it appears that God will bring down the fire on the land of Magog (Russia) and the “coastlands” (e.g., the northern and eastern coasts Africa [and its smallish number of remaining inhabitants] and the coastal inhabitants of the Black and Caspian Seas) a few days before the seventh Bowl judgment—but after Gog and his hordes have entered Israel (the event which causes God’s fury [Ezek. 38:18]).]

XV. Ezekiel prophesies that God will make Himself known to Israel and to the nations (by Christ’s actions against Gog, Magog, and the earth’s coastlands)—when He places the resurrected Christ in the midst of the Israel upon Christ’s return

EZE 39:7 "And My holy name I shall make known in the midst of My people Israel; and I shall not let My holy name be profaned anymore. And the nations will know that I am the Lord, the Holy One in Israel.

[v.7: Ezekiel prophesies that the judgments which Christ brings upon the Gentiles gathered against Israel (including Gog)—in full view of the 144,000 Jewish evangelists and perhaps another million or so Jews gathered in Jerusalem (from the mountains of eastern Israel and Jordan)—upon His return to the earth will make Christ’s holy name “known in the midst of My people Israel.” The judg-
ments which Christ brings against the earth’s remaining Gentiles living outside of Israel—including the fire sent down from heaven (Ezek. 39:6)—will cause these Gentiles to know that Christ is “the Lord, the Holy One of Israel.”]

XVI. God confirms to Ezekiel that all these events will take place in exactly the manner which He has spoken

EZE 39:8 “Behold, it is coming and it shall be done,” declares the Lord God. “That is the day of which I have spoken.”

[v.8: God confirms that the events prophesied by Ezekiel will take place exactly as He as spoken them]

XVII. Ezekiel describes some of Israel’s activities during the first seven years of Christ’s Millennial Kingdom—including the burial of Gog and his hordes

EZE 39:9 "Then those who inhabit the cities of Israel will go out, and make fires with the weapons and burn them, both shields and bucklers, bows and arrows, war clubs and spears and for seven years they will make fires of them.

EZE 39:10 "And they will not take wood from the field or gather firewood from the forests, for they will make fires with the weapons; and they will take the spoil of those who despoiled them, and seize the plunder of those who plundered them,” declares the Lord God.

EZE 39:11 "And it will come about on that day that I shall give Gog a burial ground there in Israel, the valley of those who pass by east of the sea, and it will block off the passers-by. So they will bury Gog there with all his multitude, and they will call it the valley of Hamon-gog.

EZE 39:12 "For seven months the house of Israel will be burying them in order to cleanse the land.

EZE 39:13 "Even all the people of the land will bury them; and it will be to their renown on the day that I glorify Myself," declares the Lord God.

EZE 39:14 "And they will set apart men who will constantly pass through the land, burying those who were passing through, even those left on the surface of the ground, in order to cleanse it. At the end of seven months they will make a search.

EZE 39:15 "And as those who pass through the land pass through and anyone sees a man's bone, then he will set up a marker by it until the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamon-gog.

EZE 39:16 "And even the name of the city will be Hamonah. So they will cleanse the land." '
[vv. 9-16: Ezekiel now prophesies of the Millennial Kingdom, which begins forty-five days after Christ’s bodily return to the earth (Dan. 12:11-12). First, Ezekiel proclaims that Israel will spend the initial seven years of the Millennial Kingdom burning and melting the weapons of the armies who came against her during the sixth Bowl and who were defeated supernaturally by Christ immediately after His bodily return to the earth. Second, Israel, during the beginning of the Millennium, will retake the spoil and the plunder taken from them during the Great Tribulation (v. 10). Third, Israel will bury Gog and all who came with him against Israel (v.11) in the land itself. Fourth, it will take seven months for the Jews who enter the Millennial Kingdom to bury the bones and remains (Ezek. 39:17-20) of Gog and his hordes (vv.12-14). Fifth, teams of Jews will pass through the land of Israel at the end of the seven months one final time to make sure that all remnants of Gog and his armies have been buried (in order to cleanse the land) (vv14-16).]

XVIII. Ezekiel interjects parenthetically that God will gather predator birds and wild animals into Israel before Christ judges the Gentiles (including Gog) who have gathered maliciously in Israel at the end of the Tribulation. These birds and beasts will feast on the sea of bodies after Christ’s judgments against the Gentiles.

EZE 39:17 "And as for you, son of man, thus says the Lord God, 'Speak to every kind of bird and to every beast of the field,' Assemble and come, gather from every side to My sacrifice which I am going to sacrifice for you, as a great sacrifice on the mountains of Israel, that you may eat flesh and drink blood.

EZE 39:18 "You shall eat the flesh of mighty men, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, as though they were rams, lambs, goats, and bulls, all of them fatlings of Bashan.

EZE 39:19 "So you will eat fat until you are glutted, and drink blood until you are drunk, from My sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you.

EZE 39:20 "And you will be glutted at My table with horses and charioteers, with mighty men and all the men of war," declares the Lord God.

[vv. 17-20: Ezekiel prophesies that the Lord God will gather predator birds and wild beasts from all directions into Israel to feast on the sacrifice which He is going to provide them. This sacrifice (of the world’s remaining armies, including Gog and his hordes) will take place in Israel. The birds and the wild beasts will be instructed to eat the flesh of “mighty men” and to drink the blood of “the princes of the earth”—all who have foolishly rejected God and who have gathered into Israel at the sixth Bowl.]
XIX. Ezekiel prophesies that the Lord God will send His Son back to the earth to judge the world—and that all the earth’s remaining nations will see the hand of God’s judgment against them

EZE 39:21 "And I shall set My glory among the nations; and all the nations will see My judgment which I have executed, and My hand which I have laid on them.

[v. 21: Ezekiel prophesies that God is going to send His Son (“My glory”) back to the earth and set Him “among the nations.” All persons remaining on earth four weeks after the end of the Tribulation will see Christ return bodily to the earth; and all persons who have gathered in Israel (most having malicious motives) will witness Christ’s supernatural judgments against Israel’s enemies (“will see My judgment which I have executed”). All survivors—Jew and Gentile—who enter the Millennial Kingdom will worship, honor, and fellowship with Christ (God’s “glory”), who has been “set among the nations” in Jerusalem.]

XX. Ezekiel prophesies that the Jews will finally recognize their Messiah after witnessing Christ’s actions against the world’s remaining armies in Israel, Gog and his hordes

EZE 39:22 "And the house of Israel will know that I am the Lord their God from that day onward.

[v. 22: Ezekiel prophesies that all Jews who enter the Millennial Kingdom (“the house of Israel”) will know from the beginning of the Millennium onward that Christ indeed is Israel’s Messiah.]

XXI. Ezekiel prophesies that the nations (i.e., those post-Rapture Gentiles who enter the Millennial Kingdom) will finally understand God's previous dealings with Israel

EZE 39:23 "And the nations will know that the house of Israel went into exile for their iniquity because they acted treacherously against Me, and I hid My face from them; so I gave them into the hand of their adversaries, and all of them fell by the sword.
EZE 39:24 "According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions I dealt with them, and I hid My face from them." ""

[vv. 23-24: Ezekiel prophesies that all Gentiles (“the nations”) who come to faith during the Tribulation, who survive the Tribulation judgments, and who enter the Millennial Kingdom will know why God temporarily set Israel aside during the Church Age (Romans 11).]
XXII. Ezekiel prophesies that God will have mercy on Israel, will restore the fortunes of Israel, and will enable them to live securely in Israel—with no one to make them afraid.

EZE 39:25 Therefore thus says the Lord God, "Now I shall restore the fortunes of Jacob, and have mercy on the whole house of Israel; and I shall be jealous for My holy name.

EZE 39:26 "And they shall forget their disgrace and all their treachery which they perpetrated against Me, when they live securely on their own land with no one to make them afraid.

[vv.25-26: Ezekiel prophesies that God, during the end times, will have mercy on the whole house of Israel and will restore the fortunes of His people—because of His holy name (which He now vindicates). Ezekiel also prophesies that Millennial Israel will forget her former disgrace and past transgressions—and will live securely in the land with “no one to make them afraid.”]

XXIII. Ezekiel prophesies that God will be sanctified among the remaining gentiles because of His radical spiritual transformation of the earth’s remaining Jews who enter the Millennial Kingdom.

EZE 39:27 "When I bring them back from the peoples and gather them from the lands of their enemies, then I shall be sanctified through them in the sight of the many nations.

[v. 27: Ezekiel prophesies that the Jews who enter the Millennial Kingdom will bring great honor to Christ ("I shall be sanctified through them") in the eyes of the Gentiles who enter the Millennial Kingdom. These Jews will have been radically transformed into the image of Christ (Isa. 61:6; 62:1-9).]

XXIX. Ezekiel prophesies that Israel will know her Messiah, will be the object of God’s perfect love, and will be filled with the Holy Spirit.

EZE 39:28 "Then they will know that I am the Lord their God because I made them go into exile among the nations, and then gathered them again to their own land; and I will leave none of them there any longer.

EZE 39:29 "And I will not hide My face from them any longer, for I shall have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel," declares the Lord God.

[vv.28-29: Ezekiel prophesies that the Jews who enter the Millennial Kingdom will know that Christ is their Messiah and will finally understand God’s previous
dealings with them. Furthermore, Ezekiel prophesies that no Jews will live outside of Israel during the Millennium and that all Jews will be the recipients of the fullness of Christ’s Holy Spirit (Ezek. 36:26-27).

**Conclusion:** Ezekiel’s prophecy in Chapters 38 and 39 clearly states that a leader (“Gog”) from a nation north of Israel—and assorted nations with him—will descend into Israel during the end-times for the purpose of destroying the Jews and seizing plunder in the land. Most commentators suggest that Ezekiel has in view modern-day Russia and nations sympathetic to Russia and Gog. Moreover, most commentators place this descent into Israel either immediately before the Tribulation period or early in Tribulation. While this writer agrees with the analysis that Ezekiel has Russia and sympathetic nations in view, this writer does not agree with a pre-Tribulation or early Tribulation descent of Gog into Israel. Ezekiel’s proclamations in Ezekiel 38:18-20 show Gog present in Israel on the final day of the Tribulation—i.e., during the seventh Bowl judgment (Rev. 16:17-20) when God (1) brings forth the most massive earthquake in human history (a worldwide earthquake which levels every city, town, and village on earth) and (2) causes the disappearance of the earth’s islands and the removal of the earth’s mountains. In addition, the judgment against Gog described in Ezekiel 39:3-5 and 39:17-20—when Christ (1) causes Gog and his troops to fall on the mountains of Israel and (2) then gives their bodies to predatory birds and wild beasts—correlates perfectly with Revelation 19:17-21. Revelation 19:17-21 occurs immediately after the Second Coming of Christ (Rev. 19:11-16). Accordingly, the bodies of Gog and his troops are eaten by the birds and the wild beasts after Christ’s return. Thus, in view of Ezekiel 38:18-20 and Ezekiel 39:3-5;7-12;17-20, this writer would contend that Gog’s descent into Israel takes place during the latter stages of the Great Tribulation, perhaps during the final thirty days of the Tribulation (during the sixth Bowl judgment), when the living God brings all the earth’s remaining kings and armies into Israel—including Gog and his hordes—for their destruction during the Battle of Armageddon.