

Identifying the major “latter day” participants in “the time of the end” drama of Armageddon

The world is in fear and anxiety about what is coming upon the earth. It is a comfort to remind ourselves of the **broad outline** of what we have been shown through the prophets at this time, so we are not carried away by the world’s madness. We are not informed of all the detail of how the Lord Jesus, having been given all power in heaven and earth, will manipulate the nations to take up their final stance at the coming crisis, when “the Ancient of Days came, and judgement was given for the saints of the Most High, and the time came when the saints possessed the kingdom” (Daniel 7: 22). We do not know for example how Putin’s present invasion of the Ukraine will ultimately contribute to the divine preparations of the coming crisis. We do not know whether this break out of war in Europe— the likes of which has not been seen in 77 years— will even meet the Russian autocrat’s goals. What we may be sure of is that current events represent a turning point for Russia, Europe and ultimately for Israel, and that current events will ultimately play their part in developing the divine plan Yahweh has long foretold (Isaiah 25: 1).

To the watchmen upon the walls of Jerusalem “all the day and all the night shall never be silent”; the eternal Christ spirit urges “You who put Yahweh in remembrance, take no rest, and give him no rest until he establishes Jerusalem and makes it a praise in the earth”. These watchmen keenly scan the political horizon for the movements of the latter-day Assyrian and the confederacy of nations he is destined to influence and control when he comes against the mountains of Israel, as coinciding with what the sure word of prophecy actually reveals. They do not allow current events to sway them to misread and ultimately be taken unawares. There have been occasions during the decades since the beginning of the **epoch** of “**the time of the end,**” in which Yahweh has been preparing the principal nations that will play a crucial part at last at that time’s impending crisis, to allow current world events to influence interpretation of bible prophecy.

During the early years of WW2, Nazi Germany’s military victories brought Hitler’s armies of the Third Reich to the out skirts of Moscow and threatened the demise of its equally authoritarian autocrat Stalin and the subjection of Rus. It was argued by some that the Gog of Ezekiel 38-39 was the central European power of Magogue, that the then current events proved this hypothesis. Likewise, the Soviet Union’s invasion of Afghanistan 1979 - 1989 prompted some to maintain that the Gog and his host of Ezekiel 38-39 was predominantly Russian and its satellites, and did not include the central European powers. In both cases these events marked turning points for all the major powers involved in their divinely controlled “time of the end” development, which in fact **necessitated the destruction of Nazi Germany and the end of the Soviet Union!**

Current world events must therefore be viewed against what the sure word of prophecy actually reveals that constitute the divine markers, along which all things are tending. At any given time we may not be able to appreciate how the divinely controlled geopolitics—shrouded by the fog of war, exasperated and inflamed by famine, disease, pandemics, pestilence, social and economic upheavals of God’s judgement upon sin—serve as the means by which the Lord manipulates the nations to belligerently come to the great crisis of the ages. Let us therefore remind ourselves who are the divinely identified powers being prepared by current events for the coming crisis of “the time of the end”.

Ezekiel as a man of sign commanded to set his face against Gog

Ezekiel 38-39 is a divine prophecy against “Gog” and is summarized in 39: 1-2. Yahweh addresses this power “Gog” through his prophet Ezekiel as a man of sign who **represents the multitudinous, resurrected, glorified “Son of man”** whom Yahweh “strengthens” (meaning of Ezekiel) to be his Elohist mighty ones. He is, says bro. Thomas “**the representative of Him who is to vanquish Gog**” (Exposition of Daniel Section 2). We can confirm this by comparing other well-known prophecies that deal with the same time period, preliminary events to, and the crisis itself. Ezekiel’s contemporary Daniel, in his last great prophecy (chap. 10-12) was caused to see a vision of a certain “man” or “man of the one” the sound of whose voice was like **a multitude** (10:6). Daniel saw this vision along with his own personal experience of resurrection to be a part of this **resurrected glorified multitudinous man of the one**, who will take his place in those divine events which are to “happen to **his people (the Jews) in the latter days**” (10:14). In “the glorious land” “between

the sea and the glorious holy mountain” when Michael—“he who is like God”—shall “stand for the children of your people (Israel)” (Daniel 11: 41, 45; 12: 1).

Similarly, the Lord Jesus, through his apostle John immediately after the salutation of the Apocalypse, announces “**Behold, he is coming with clouds**” (amongst this immortal multitude will be Ezekiel, Daniel and John – Hebrews 12: 1). This “coming” is so arresting that the prophet Habakkuk describes these mighty ones coming from “Teman, and the Holy one from Mount Paran ... Before him went pestilence, and plague followed at his feet. He stood and measured the earth; he looked and shook the nations” (Hab. 3: 3-6). David, moved by the spirit in Psalm 68, **beholds this coming of Christ with clouds** and their objective, “Elohim (mighty ones) arise” and their “enemies scattered; and those who hate him shall flee before him...The chariots of God are twice ten thousand, thousands upon thousands; The Lord (Yah) hath come from Sinai (the location of the judgement seat of the responsible), **into his sanctuary**” (**Jerusalem, the judgement seat of the nations** – Daniel 7: 9-10) (Psalm 68: 1,17 ESV & Rotherhams translation).

This coming of Yahweh (Zechariah 14: 1-5), terrible in manifestation against Israel’s enemies, consuming in its destruction, will be witnessed by the whole world as John testifies “every eye will see him, even those who pierced him (the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem – Zechariah 13:6; 12:10), and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him” (Revelation 1: 7; 16: 14-16). It is therefore significant that Yahweh commands **Ezekiel as the representative of this multitudinous “Son of man” to “set your face against Gog,”** (Ezekiel 38:1) clearly implying that when the power referred to as “Gog “with his confederacy, comes against Israel, the judgement seat of Christ has concluded its work in preparing his “mighty ones” for the great day of God Almighty that he might “**set his face against Gog**”. Ezekiel 38:1-6; 39: 1-2 also **informs us what part of the earth this power “Gog” will be militarily engaged when the multitudinous Son of man is caused to antitypically prophesy against him.**

“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**. And I will **turn you about** and drag you along and bring you up **from the uttermost parts of the north**, and lead you against the mountains of **Israel**” (Ezekiel 39: 1-2 ESV).

The reader will note that when we refer to a map of the Mediterranean, Europe and the Middle East (below) the nations immediately **north** of Israel are **Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus and Russia**. God’s word tells us plainly the “**prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal**” will be turned about from his **military, political and empire building desires NORTH of Israel** when he is “dragged” or compelled by events, which Yahweh will cause in the middle east, to be turned south from these **northern** pursuits—**northern pursuits from Israel** which must include all the nations we have noted above, and many others. These chapters in Ezekiel and Daniel imply that the power referred to as **Gog is in fact prepared by Yahweh** by these **northern military, political and empire building** pursuits– **North of Israel**. This divinely controlled preparation will at last enable “Gog” to form a great confederacy that will **unite Europe east and west** with the “**ruler of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal**” so as to come against the mountains of Israel (Ezekiel 38: 1-12). Current events and the form of the “peace cry” (1 Thessalonians 5: 1-10) that follows will compel **all Europe** (with the exception of Great Britain) to unite with the “**ruler of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal**”. **This may seem impossible at this juncture, but the sure word of prophecy reveals this to be the inevitable outcome.** The events occurring in Ukraine, as we write, are **precisely in the very northern area from Israel** that Yahweh has informed his servants through Ezekiel that Gog will be dragged from when he invades the middle east.

At present however, we are witnessing a united Europe, the Tarshish power of Britain, it’s young lions and the latter-day Tyre – USA, against Russia. This will dramatically change as the result of unfolding providential events in Russia, Europe, the Middle East and the “United States so called”. The sure word of prophecy has long foretold of the decoupling of the Tarshish power and its allies from Europe. This commenced with Brexit but must ultimately lead to the demise of NATO. Europe will be forced to accept that its only means of sustainable **PEACE, reliable energy and economic security** lies in permitting **Russia** to act as **Europe’s “guard”** (Ezekiel 38:7), or in the words of bro. Thomas a “sentinel, shepherd, or supervisor”. This process will accelerate, leading to a crisis, we believe between 2025 – 2034, as the writer has discussed with many of our brethren and interested friends since our earliest visits to PNG.

Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East



Bro. Thomas provides us with an important diagnostic principle of prophetic interpretation for the powers of the latter days, by the territories they will occupy, **geographically identified by the ancient names of those lands** familiar to the prophets:

*“... so that the prophecies treating of those lands at the time, are really delivered concerning that power; for the prophets speak not so much of races and individual potentates, as of **powers on the territories named from the ancient founders of states upon them**”* (Exposition of Daniel – Section 27).

We can certainly apply this principle to the nations designated by their ancient names in Ezekiel 38 & 39 to understand the territories or modern-day nations that will make up the Gogian confederacy that is to invade the middle east at the time of the end. We are not however left with even having to perform this exercise, for as a **general unmistakable geographic indicator** already noted, the power designated by “Gog” will be “dragged” from **“the uttermost parts of the north” (north of Israel)**, to be led “against the mountains of Israel”. If “dragged” we may assume that those activities preoccupying him are seen by him as most important to Gog’s ambitions, and indeed to his very identity. Therefore, we would expect that in the **preliminary** events leading to this crisis, the power that Yahweh through his prophet refers to as “Gog” must either control, occupy, or be in alliance with the territories **NORTH** of Israel i.e., **Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus and Russia**, for him to be dragged from these **northern parts**. As mentioned above it is a characteristic of “Gog” that this power will act as a “guard” to the great confederacy he eventually heads when it invades the middle east from these **northern parts**.

Is there such a power **NORTH** of Israel, which either controls, occupies, influences, or has historical designs on the nations listed above, that constitute these **northern** parts the very area Gog’s military forces may be found engaged **NORTH of Israel** when the multitudinous Son of man is caused to antitypically prophecy against him? Let us review these countries north of Israel in their current state with what the sure word of prophecy reveals concerning “Gog”.

Lebanon

Lebanon is a failed state with one quarter of its population made up of refugees from its neighbouring similarly failed state of Syria. It is **controlled by Russia’s Middle Eastern ally Tehran through Hezbollah**, Israel’s inveterate enemy which calls for the destruction of Israel. Hezbollah is the most influential political

organization in Lebanon, but operates largely without accountability. Even after recent parliamentary elections where it has lost its majority, it will still manage to pursue its goals domestically and regionally as it has done in the past, according to political commentators on Lebanon. In fact, Lebanon's political and economic morass offers plenty of opportunity for Hezbollah; it is skilled in taking advantage of this crisis in order to grow stronger.

*"Despite political setbacks in the past **Hezbollah** were still able to retain their arsenal, grow their organizational infrastructure, and embark upon adventures in Syria, Iraq, and Yemen,"* David Daoud, Lebanon expert pointed out. It facilitates advanced training regimens for Shi'a militias aligned with **Iran (or Persia)**— which is the **first** nation named as being **with Gog in their latter day "mustering" to go against the mountains of Israel (Ezekiel 38: 5-8)**. It is noteworthy that **Putin's first trip outside of Russia since Moscow's Feb. 24 invasion of Ukraine was to Iran. This coincides with souring of relations between Russia and Israel. Yahweh has providentially caused Russia to draw even closer to Israel's arch-enemy Iran as the Kremlin battles against the impact of unprecedented sanctions imposed by the US and other western countries over the war in Ukraine.**

The Jerusalem Post notes that Iran has *"positioned its constellation of 'Resistance Axis' proxy militias on three of Israel's borders, upgrading their arsenals with increasingly accurate and longer-range missiles, and pursuing its capability to reinforce these militias with a nuclear umbrella. The Islamic Republic and its proxies have also sought to develop the ability to operate behind Israeli lines, including sowing chaos within the West Bank—which overlooks Gush Dan, Israel's vital nerve and population centre—and igniting ethno-religious violence between Arab and Jewish Israelis"*.

Iran's expeditionary forces such as Hezbollah has expansive illicit financing activities across the region to such an extent that Hezbollah has become a regional player acting at Iran's bidding. Hezbollah controls the border with Syria and uses the Port of Beirut to transport drugs, weapons, and explosive material in and out of Lebanon with no state oversight or intervention. This port was destroyed in 2020 by the detonation of illegally stock piled ammonium nitrate. One of the largest non-nuclear explosions in history was the result—far bigger than any conventional weapon—made an estimated 300 000 people homeless and further exasperating Lebanon's descent into anarchy.

Russia refuses to designate Hezbollah as a terrorist organization, and in fact says it "fights terrorism" while supplying it with weapons! Since the USA's retreat from the Middle East, **successive Democrat and Republican administrations** have allowed **Russia's intervention in the Syrian** civil war, backing its long-time ally Bashar al-Assad and his regime. Russia has **provided decisive air power to Syrian and Iranian-backed ground forces**, Hezbollah, which has been Iran's proxy in the Syrian civil war. This has enabled the expansion of Bashar al-Assad's territorial control and solidifying the regime's hold on power.

Syria

As the result of national unrest resulting from "the Arab spring" fomenting into civil war, **Syria**, since 2011, has had an estimated 13 million of its people uprooted either as internal refugees or have fled the country—more than half of the estimated pre-war population. Of those who remain, more than 80% require humanitarian assistance. Local infrastructure, including water, sanitation and hospitals, is also crippled. Over 12 million Syrians are in need of healthcare. Of the displaced Syrians, 6.6 million are living as refugees in neighbouring countries — namely Turkey (3.8 million), Lebanon (nearly 840,000), Jordan (675,000), and Iraq (over 250,000). The Syrian regime remains in power only because of its **Russian and Iranian** allies. **Russia has established military bases in Syria**, which was a direct result of the USA's diminishing interest in the middle east, so that **Russia has been acknowledged as "the king maker" of the region**. When Russia re-entered the region as a major player with its 2015 incursion into Syria, **Russia in fact became Israel's de facto newest neighbour.**

"The invasion of Ukraine demonstrates", says an anonymous Israeli official, that **"Putin is not an easy neighbour to have."** Unlike Ukraine "Israel is a small and narrow country whose very existence has long been rejected—often violently—by its neighbours. What acceptance it has achieved has been recent and largely with autocratic regimes of dubious durability, while people-to-people ties have lagged. The volatility that has rocked the Middle East over the past decade has only heightened Israel's fears, with two concurrent factors

proving the most concerning for Jerusalem: accelerated Iranian expansionism and **American contraction**". Israel was in fact in secret alliance with their **southern Arab neighbours** well before the much-lauded Abraham Accords in an attempt to counter the threat posed by Iran. Israel knew they could **not** trust the **Russia-loving, Autocrat-embracing, isolationist Trump, or his faction of the Republican party who oppose democracy in their own country**. Nor could Israel trust the liberal policies of the Democrats under Biden, though he, unlike Trump, has reinforced the importance of NATO and other international relationships— something Trump continually attempted to undermine and that Russia warmly applauded. With the coming to power of the Biden administration Russia's applause has been replaced with the bitterest contempt! We believe this was a necessary temporary reprieve to unite Europe and strengthen it militarily for the part it will play when it will no longer oppose Russia but be confederate with her.

This current policy of "the United States, so called," which has unified Europe against Russia, will in all probability suffer a major reversal assisted by American isolationism which will be reasserted after the 2024 presidential elections. The Jerusalem Post sums up Israel's relationship as follows: "***the United States—Israel's traditional guarantor and central ally—has been reducing its global and regional footprint, which have historically been a central pillar of Israeli security. Israel is concerned that the rise of the progressive left and isolationist right in US politics—each with their own negative dispositions towards the Jewish state—will fundamentally weaken the US-Israel relationship***". This is the reason a paranoid Israel, the only truly democratic country in the middle east, initially refused steadfastly to support Ukraine in the fear of upsetting their "**Russian neighbour**".

Syria, Lebanon and Iraq

Syria and Lebanon, though ancient territories, are not mentioned by name in Yahweh's prophecy against Gog for a most important reason. In Daniel's parallel prophecy of this power's invasion of the middle east at "the time of the end", Gog is referred to significantly by the title, "The king of the **North**" (Daniel 11: 40-45). This was the title given to the ancient **Greek** Seleucid power **North of Israel** whose territory included **Syria, Lebanon and Iraq** (Daniel 11: 5-32). "Gog" as "**the king of the North**" must totally control Syria and Lebanon, and as the head of the **kingdom of Babylon** in its final "**time of the end**" manifestation, it must also **occupy the ancient territory of Babylon or modern Iraq**. As Daniel 11: 40-45 depicts this power as a **revival** of this ancient **Greek Seleucid** (Daniel 11: 22-32) with its allies, the **first** of which is **Iran** (Ezekiel 38:5), it must be "particularly hostile to Judah, as was Antiochus Epiphanes". In returning from an invasion of Egypt in 167 B.C., which was frustrated because of Rome's intervention, Antiochus took Jerusalem by storm, tens of thousands of Jews were massacred (Daniel 11: 30-33), and as the **guardian** of this power's Hellenizing policies, enforced these on the Jews, forbidding the worship of Yahweh and all Jewish rites. In their temple, he erected an altar to Zeus, with sacrifice made at the feet of an idol in the image of the King!

Antiochus Epiphanes, bro. Thomas reminds us, "was a type of the violence of **the Little Horn** (of the goat Daniel 8: 8-12 or **Roman** power) that should come against Jerusalem (AD70) **out of his (the northern or Seleucid horn's) territory**" (Exposition of Daniel Section 9). Furthermore, bro. Thomas emphasizes the significance of the extraordinary identification between this Northern Grecian horn and the Roman power, noting that by "the absorption of the northern (Greek Seleucid) kingdom into the Roman empire, a union was formed between it and the Graeco-Babylonian power of the Seleucidae; so that as these were heirs of Alexander's kingdom of Babylon, the Romans inherited it from them. Hence **the power peculiar to this territory**, styled "the whole earth", may very properly be called the **Romano-Greek Babylonian**; or the Latino-Greek Babylonian. **This name is descriptive of it in its relation to the Holy Land, in all its future phases until its utter destruction by Messiah the Prince and his holy ones**" (Exposition of Daniel Section 9).

Daniel 8 shows us it will be this same **Roman** power—the **little horn of the goat**, following the type of the Greek Seleucid, Antiochus— "without warning shall destroy many" (Daniel 8:25) that will become "the ruler of Egypt's treasures of gold and of silver and all the precious things" i.e. He will do what Antiochus was prevented from doing in AD167, for "the land of Egypt will **not escape**" (Daniel 11: 42-43). "And he shall go out with great fury to destroy and **set apart (devote) as an offering to the Lord** many to destruction. And he shall pitch his palatial tents between the sea and the glorious holy mountain" (Daniel 11: 44-45 ESV). This **latter-day Antiochus** will consider his taking of Judah and Jerusalem as having **religious** significance as **the guardian of Greek Orthodoxy!** As the latter day political and military component of Daniel's Roman 4th beast

system it will “stamp what is left with its **feet**” which are noted as “claws of **bronze**” (Daniel 7: 7, 19 ESV). Daniel’s **Roman** 4th beast, with its 10 horns **and brazen claws**, must have as its political and military head a power that is the revival of the **Greek Seleucid king of the north** which will not be frustrated by a Roman rival in the **latter days** because it will be **the military head of that system, unique in history**. It will not be frustrated by the Roman power, for **the king of the north will have become the little horn of the goat and will be in alliance with the 4th beast’s 11th or papal horn** (Daniel 11:30, 40-41; 8: 23-26; 11: 38-39).

Bro. Thomas in comparing the visions of Daniel chapters 2 & 7 at the crisis of the kingdom of Babylon about to be smitten by the little stone power at the coming of “the ancient of days” states:

*“These ten horns thus conditioned, **with the brazen-clawed feet**, represent the **same things as the iron-clay feet and toes of the Image** (Daniel 2). When the Russo-Greek elements (clay and brass) are combined with the Gomerians (iron) in the Gog confederacy, **the feet of the Graeco-Roman Dragon will be manifested**; and it will then “stamp the residue with the feet of it”. Hitherto the Dragon has destroyed with its “great iron teeth”; **hereafter it will use its feet and claws**. The Feet of the Image, and the Feet of the Dragon, have **yet to be formed out of existing elements**; and it is **the King of the North’s mission to accomplish the work**.” (Exposition of Daniel Section 6)*

Bro. Thomas reminds us that of the divisions that the Grecian empire was divided into, only **two** “were indispensable to the representation of the Eastern Question of our day, called ‘the Time of the End’”. These divisions, though absorbed into the territory of the Roman empire, are therefore introduced again in Daniel 11: 40 to mark **the beginning of the epoch of “the Time of the End”**. The Ptolemaic “king of the **south**” (again so designated in relation to Israel) or a **foreign** power (the Tarshish power of Britain) occupying Egypt, in marking **the commencement of this epoch**, was to “thrust” at the power occupying the territory of “the little horn of the goat” or Turkey so as to displace it from the middle east, and in particular from the territory of Israel. This occurred in 1917 and commenced the epoch of the time of the end. For a long period of 2500 years of Jewish dispersion from the time of Ezekiel and Daniel, Israel was preserved as a separate and distinct people,—though suffering the most horrendous persecution—so that there could be a partial latter-day “*pre-advantural colonization of Palestine on purely political principals*”; as bro Thomas writing in 1848 understood, “the Jewish colonists will return in unbelief of the Messiahship of Jesus” (Elpis Israel) to the very land promised to their fathers. This provides **the key** to the extraordinary prophecy of Ezekiel 38 & 39. Of all the territories that are named and the powers that will occupy them at the crisis of the ages, “in the latter days”, the victim of the **northern** aggressor **alone** still bears its ancient name—**ISRAEL** (Ezekiel 38, 39).

Israel

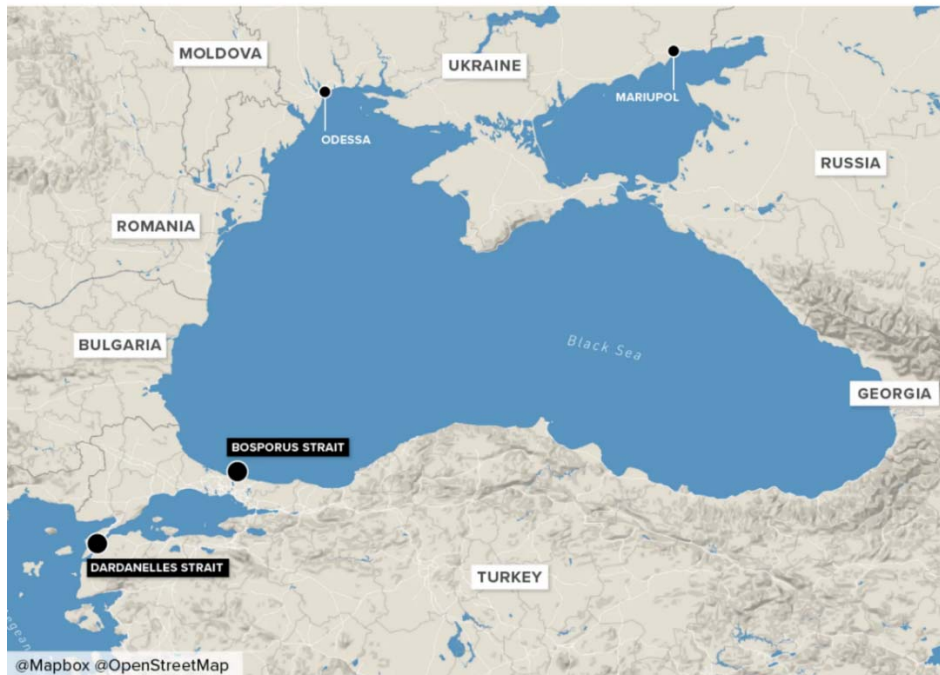
It is significant that this name **Israel** is used in a national sense, for it was only in May 1948, when the leader of the Jews, David Ben-Gurion declared that the new state in the Middle East would be called Israel, for the first time since the destruction of the nation by the Little horn of the goat (Daniel 8: 9-12) or Romans in AD70. The Southern horn, having driven the Turks out of Palestine in 1917, Palestine was given to Britain under a mandate from the League of Nations, and in issuing the Balfour Declaration to make Palestine a National home for the Jews, this **southern horn of the British power disappears** from **Daniel’s** “representation of the solution of the Eastern Question...called the Time of the End” (Daniel 11: 40-45). The fact that in noting that “the land of **Egypt** shall not escape” (verse 42) from the northern invader with no reference to “the king of the south”—or even that the king of the north shall “come into the south” (Daniel 11: v’s 25, 29) as in the historical type of the Syrian wars (Daniel 11: 5-29)— indicates at the time of this “latter-day” crisis, **Egypt will be an independent nation**. Though the southern horn disappears from this Time of the End representation in Daniel, one horn, says bro. Thomas – “*the northern, is kept in view to the end of the chapter, being inseparable at last from the Little Horn of the Goat which came up out of it and merges again into it; so that the fate of the one becomes the fate of the other, which is to be broken without help*” (Daniel 8: 25; 11: 45) (Exposition of Daniel Section 9).

Turkey

This brings us to the next nation immediately **north of Israel** from which the power “Gog” is destined to be “dragged” from, to invade the middle east at the Time of the End – **Turkey**.

Turkey borders the Mediterranean on the south and the black Sea on the north, and is strategically the most important country in the worlds most troubled region. Istanbul, the old capital of the Ottoman Empire, is positioned like a bridge between the European and Asian continent.

The Black Sea



Turkey’s control of the straits between Europe and Asia gives it unique maritime power. The Bosporus and Dardanelles are the only water routes in or out of the Black Sea. That gives Turkey influence over how Russia’s navy can move.

Its true significance, however, lies in its ancient **Roman** antecedents and its **Roman destiny**. In AD324 Constantine, the first **Christian emperor**, became sole ruler of **the Roman Empire**. He set up his Eastern headquarters at the ancient **Greek colony of Byzantium** in AD330. The etymology of Byzantium suggests that the name is of Thracian origin. It may be derived from the Thracian personal name Byzas which means "**he-goat**"– the Greek king of the Megarian colonists and founder of the original city. The city, renamed Constantinople after its **Roman** founder, was also known as the "**new Rome.**" With Constantinople as its imperial centre the empire extended from the Atlantic Ocean across the entirety of the Mediterranean Sea, including what we consider today to be northern Africa, the Middle East, Turkey, and eastern and western Europe, extending to the Black Sea. Constantinople became the capital of the Byzantines after the Roman Empire was formally divided. In **1453**, when the Ottoman Turks conquered the Byzantine Empire, Constantinople became the capital of the new Ottoman Empire. (The city’s name was changed to Istanbul in 1930.) Situated on the Bosphorus, Istanbul has always been the centre for trade but is most disastrous during war. During the Turkish independence war (1923), Istanbul was occupied via ships and is one of the reasons after the democratic revolution of the 1920’s that the capital was moved to Ankara. Although Ankara is Turkey’s political capital, the de facto capital for everything else is most definitely Istanbul to this day. **Constantinople has been eyed covetously by Russia for a millennium and has been providentially denied her prize but not for much longer.**

The author Cyrus Hamlin writing in **1886** stated:

"For a thousand years, Russia has had a vision of Constantinople as the centre of Russian power. Her first descent upon it was made in the ninth century, while still a heathen nation; and her latest in the nineteenth. Can any parallel instance be found, in which a nation has **held fast to one great idea for a thousand years, through all vicissitudes of fortune, and all changes in government, religion, and civilization? It has been called the dream of Russia, — is it not a marvelously prophetic dream?"**

Prophetic indeed!!!

The first announcement to the world of Russia's intentions was made in 1472 by Ivan III when he married the **Princess Sophia, niece of Constantine Palæologus, the last of the Greek emperors**, and assumed the **double-headed eagle of the Byzantine Empire**. The Byzantine symbol emphasized that the empire **united both East and West under its wings**. As the symbol— especially of **Putin's Russia** (adopted again after the fall of the Soviet Union)— it emphasizes **Russia's link to antiquity, it's purpose among the nations that it views as its sphere of influence, its status and very soul. The double headed eagle uniting East and West under its wings symbolizes Russia's destiny in reclaiming the legacy of Byzantium and of its Roman guardianship of Orthodox Christianity.**

The Orthodox tradition developed from the Christianity of the **Eastern Roman Empire**, and was shaped by the pressures, politics and peoples of that geographical area. The Greek word "orthodox" simply means "correct belief" and at the same time, "correct worship" as has been the claim of all the harlot daughters of "Babylon the great". It became the name applied to the Christian Church that grew and flourished in the eastern, predominantly **Greek-speaking** regions of the late Roman Empire. The nominal head of the Eastern Orthodox Churches is the **Patriarch of Constantinople**. However, he is only regarded as first among equals of this eastern leg of "Babylon the great". The Eastern Orthodox Church is decentralised, having no central authority, earthly head or a single bishop in a leadership role. Nonetheless the Greco/Roman Orthodoxy acknowledges **in order of precedence**: the Church of **Constantinople, Turkey**; Church of **Alexandria in Egypt**; Church of **Antioch**¹; Church of **Jerusalem**. The majority of Orthodox Christians under the Jerusalem patriarchate are Palestinians and Jordanians, with significant minorities of Russians, Romanians, and Georgians. However, the church's hierarchy is dominated by **Greek** clergy, which has been a source of recurring tension and dispute. The Church of **Russia** is the largest autocephalous Eastern Orthodox Christian church.

The primate of the **Russian Orthodox Church (ROC)** is "the Patriarch of Moscow and all Rus". The ROC, as well as its primate, officially ranks fifth in the Eastern Orthodox order of precedence, immediately below the four **ancient patriarchates** of the Greek Orthodox Church: **Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem**, but is destined to control all these territories and therefore **the religious politics of them all**. The "Christianisation of Kievan Rus", widely seen as the birth of the ROC, is believed to have occurred in AD988 through the baptism of the Rus' **prince Vladimir** and his people by the clergy of the **Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople**: "the Metropolitan of **Kiev and all Rus**" remained in the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate until 1686 when he was pressured into transferring the Metropolitan of Kiev and all Rus' from the jurisdiction of Constantinople to that of Moscow. The handover brought millions of orthodoxy and half a dozen dioceses under the ultimate administrative care of the Patriarch of Moscow and all Rus', leading to the significant Ukrainian presence in the Russian Church. **The ROC currently claims exclusive jurisdiction over the Eastern Orthodox Christians who reside in the former member republics of the Soviet Union, irrespective of their ethnic background.**

Putin saw the necessity of **harnessing Orthodoxy which had been so repressed during the Soviet era to form the fabric of a resurrected Czarist Russia**, and projects himself as an historian on the subject. Putin shares the same political goals as Patriarch Kiril, head of the Russian Orthodox Church, and his distorted and perverse views make him a close ally. Any supporter of **liberal democracies** are **NAZIS and apostates** and are the enemies of this Russian autocracy, to be mercilessly eradicated from sacred Russia and its Czarist empire, even if you are Jewish and most of your family died in the holocaust and your relatives fought with Russia against Hitler's Germany during WW2!!!

With these historical perversions as the basis of your national theology, we can understand why at the centre of "the Russian dream" political, strategic and religious, all lead inevitably to **Constantinople and finally Jerusalem**. The future of **Ukraine** is an example. It simply does not matter how long or how many Russians must die to achieve its sacred destiny, no matter how many atrocities have to be perpetrated or who the autocrat that rules Russia is, **Ukraine will fall under Russia's control as must Constantinople.**

Ukrainian Orthodox Church

¹ The seat of the patriarchate was formerly Antioch, near the current city of Antakya, Turkey; in the 14th century, it was moved to Damascus, modern-day **Syria**.

In October 2018, the **Ukrainian Orthodox Church** officially split from its Russian counterpart, after more than 300 years. The decision, which was **approved by the Patriarchate of Constantinople**—the symbolic “first among equals” of the world’s Orthodox churches—triggered a major fallout within the Orthodox world, possibly the most serious in 1,000 years! The same month the declaration was made, the Russian Orthodox Church announced that it would break off relations with the Ukraine Patriarchate. The independence of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church was ratified in a ceremony in Istanbul on Orthodox Christmas Eve 2019, when the Metropolitan of Kyiv, the young Epiphanius I received Tomos². The document granted autocephaly to the newly-formed and newly-recognised Orthodox Church of Ukraine.

For Ukraine, this was a major moment, as it represented another step in **breaking away from political, economic and religious subservience to Russia**. In Russia meanwhile the decision caused great consternation. **Ukraine has the world’s third largest Orthodox Christian population**, followed by Russia and **Ethiopia**; approximately 12,000 of the Russian Orthodox Church’s 36,000 parishes were in Ukraine.

As a result of the split, the Russian Orthodox Church stands to lose much of its territory, believers and, crucially, its **spiritual and symbolic authority over Ukraine**. Both **Russian President Vladimir Putin and Patriarch Kirill made strong statements condemning the schism**. The Russian Orthodox Church, along with the Russian government, has been actively subverting the newly-established church. To this day, other than **the Constantinople Patriarchate** which bestowed Tomos in the first place, only **the Patriarchate of Alexandria** (Egypt) and the Orthodox churches of Greece and Cyprus have recognised the Ukrainian Orthodox Church’s dominion over Ukraine’s parishes. After the ratification of Russia’s occupation of **Crimea**, the Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill publicly supported Russian separatists in **Donbas**. During the Battle of Ilovaisk, the bloodiest engagement of the war, he admonished Ukrainian “Uniates and schismatics” for fighting against “their fellow Orthodox brethren” in the ranks of the separatists and their supporting force. Patriarch Kirill, and the Russian Orthodox Church, are but the religious mouth piece to the political objectives of Russian powers.

Constantinople

In returning to Russia’s historical intentions with respect to Constantinople, the Russian prince Ivan III saw himself as the heir of Byzantium because of **his** marriage to the **Princess Sophia, niece of Constantine Palæologus, the last of the Greek emperors** in 1472. He assumed the **double-headed eagle of the Byzantine Empire** despite Mehmed the Conqueror having ascended the throne of the Ottoman empire, having successfully conquered Constantinople in 1453, bringing to an end the Byzantine Empire and **claiming the title “Caesar of the Romans”**. Mehmed’s claim as Caesar rested principally with the idea that Constantinople was the rightful seat of the Roman Empire, as it had indeed been for more than a millennium since its consecration in AD330 by Emperor **Constantine I**. Contemporary scholar George of Trebizond wrote **“the seat of the Roman Empire is Constantinople ... and he who is and remains Emperor of the Romans is also the Emperor of the whole world”**. In 1454, Mehmed ceremonially established Gennadius Scholarius, a staunch antagonist of Catholicism and of the Sultan’s European enemies, as Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople and ethnarch of the Greek Orthodox Christians within the Empire. In turn, Gennadius endorsed Mehmed’s claim of Imperial succession. **Mehmed II viewed the Ottoman state as a continuation of the Roman Empire** for the remainder of his life, seeing himself as “continuing” the Empire rather than “replacing” it. By this means the Ottoman Turkish power assumed the mantle of “the little horn of the goat” and is the “him” of Daniel 11: 40 against whom “the king of the south thrusts” (British power who occupied Egypt in 1917) and against whom the King of the north is destined to rush like a whirlwind (Daniel 11: 40).

By marriage and by the decree of “THE Most High who rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will”, **Ivan III** united the **Greco/Roman and Russian destiny**. Ivan III’s claim as the **rightful heir of the Byzantine Empire** has been prosecuted for five centuries, says Hamlin writing in **1886**.

“Russia was then an unknown, insignificant power, but just casting off the trammels of the Tartar domination, and slowly gathering the elements of that mighty strength of which she alone was conscious.

² A tomos is a scroll or a small book which codifies a decision by a Synod, or council of Orthodox bishops or from the **Constantinople Patriarchate**

*She is now the terror of the world. Her territory was then about 740,000 square miles; it is now more than eight millions! Every square foot of it has been won by **the sword and stained with human blood**".*

Between the 16th and 20th centuries the world witnessed one of the longest series of military conflicts in European history – the Russo-Turkish wars (or Ottoman–Russian wars), a series of **twelve wars** fought between the Russian Empire and the Ottoman Empire. Except for the war of 1710–11 and the Crimean War, the conflicts ended disastrously for the Ottoman Empire in accordance with the divine decree, that the waters of the Turkish power must be dried up (Revelation 16: 12); conversely, they showcased the ascendancy of Russia as a European power particularly after the modernization efforts of Peter the Great in the early 18th century.

In the working out of Yahweh's long anticipated plan, bro. Thomas in viewing it's end from where he providentially stood in the same 19th century as Hamlin wrote:

*"The Ottoman nation is more Greek than Turkish, with but little of the Latin element; but when the **Latins and Greeks come to form a confederacy under Russia** (when Russia like Mehmed II takes Constantinople) as the fragile medium of combination, the **Latino-Greek Babylonian power** will be in full "blossom", when the sour grape is ripening for the vintage (Isa. 18:5; Rev. 14:18). **If these things be apprehended, the reader will be prepared to read the destiny of Russia and the nations in the solution of the Eastern Question; for, the working of it out is the manifestation of the Gogian Image, or Latino-Greek Babylonian power** in consummation for its signal and final overthrow by the hand of Deity" (Exposition of Daniel Section 9). "When the Autocrat **gains Constantinople**, and Russianizes Italy and the West; and having superseded the Ottoman regime in Asia, **comes as Gog** to invade the Holy Land and to besiege Jerusalem, **the Little Horn of the Goat will again represent the power of the whole dominion briefly united under one chief**, and he the proudest that ever exalted and magnified himself above all the rulers upon earth. In that near future **the Little Horn of the Goat** will be "exceeding great", overshadowing all the sovereignties represented by the Two-Horned, and Ten-Horned, Beasts, and the Pseudoprophet of the Beast" (Exposition of Daniel Section 18).*

*"During its enthroned existence (in Constantinople) it (the Autocrat of Russia) will be all that is affirmed of the Little Horn of the Goat and of 'the King that does according to its will', in the eighth and eleventh chapters of Daniel. At this crisis, its power will be mighty, and it will destroy wonderfully, and prosper, and practise. As Lord of Europe and Asia the continental dynasties of the West will be gathered unto it. They will acknowledge its supremacy, and seek to it as the shadow and strength of their dominions. The **Constantinopolitan Little Horn Power** will then be in **final fourth-beast manifestation**, "dreadful, and terrible, and strong exceedingly; having great iron teeth; devouring and breaking in pieces, and **stamping the residue WITH THE FEET of it; and having ten horns**". It is while the **post-Ottoman dynasty occupies the throne** that the "**stamping the residue with the feet of**" the beast is accomplished. **The Feet represent a power, a stamping or conquering power, which subjects "the residue" to its dominion.** The claws of these feet are of **brass**, while the feet themselves are part of iron and part of clay; for **the feet of Nebuchadnezzar's Image, and those of the Fourth Beast, are representative of the same power.** The brass, the iron, and the clay, then, are representative of the **national elements constituting the power.** The Greeks, and the Latins, mixed up with the heterogeneous peoples **under the guardianship of the Czar**, moulded into form under his imperial sceptre, are the Feet-power that stamps the residue. The residue may be discerned in **the names of countries and races hereafter to be confederated under Gog** as their appointed "**guard**" (Exposition of Daniel Section 20)*

*"But when it is "broken in pieces without help" it appears no more as a symbol upon the prophetic page. **Its mission in the Holy Land and against Judah ends with its own Pharaoh-like destruction;** and the East delivered, future events re-open in the West, where **only a Beast, the False Prophet, and the Ten Horns, their Russian Constantinopolitan confederacy** being dissolved, remain to be ground to powder, and destroyed by fire and sword" (Exposition of Daniel Section 18).*

The Serpent's head

Bro. Thomas reminds us of the importance of correctly identifying who Gog is and those nations that will comprise his confederacy:

"Son of Man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Thuval, and prophesy against him". In this title to the prophecy the antagonists are indicated, namely, the Son of Man (ben-adam) or seed of the Woman, on the one side; and the Prince of Rosh, the Head of the Serpent Confederacy, on the other. Hence, by understanding Gog's title, the reader may know which of "the powers that be" is chosen of God to personate the Serpent's Head when it is bruised by the Women's Seed".

Ukraine

In reviewing the nations **north of Israel** from which Gog is "**turned about**" and to "**bring you out**" from, we come to **Ukraine** and **Russia** itself—which as we speak is engaged in what Yahweh clearly intends to be a **protracted war** to ultimately control what historically Putin's Russia considers it's spiritual, economic and strategic heartland. Thirty years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Putin's attempt to bring back some of those key countries under Russia's control is now occurring at a most compelling period with respect to the epoch of "**the time of the end**". With very little discussion with the Russian political elite, many of whom were caught by surprise by Putin's decision to, at this time, attempt to extend Russia's seizing of the **Crimea** in 2014 to eventually control all of Ukraine. Putin's support from average Russians in seizing the Crimea and the present war is very high. This fact makes historians such as Serhii Plokhy, acknowledge that the situation is "*very serious and dangerous and goes **far beyond Putin***". "*What you see in Putin's language in his July 2021 History Eassy or his justification since the invasion of Ukraine is the replication of the thinking of the **Russian Imperial View** of the big Russian nation, the thinking of the Russian **Imperial elite from the mid-19th Century to the revolution of 1917** which was replaced with different policies introduced by the Bolsheviks that **Putin does not like***". Putin paid tribute recently to Tsar Peter the Great on the 350th anniversary of his birth, drawing a parallel between what he portrayed as their twin historic quests to win back Russian lands. "*Peter the Great waged the **Great Northern War for 21 years**. It would seem that he was at war with Sweden, he took something from them. He did not take anything from them, he returned (what was Russia's),"* Putin said after visiting an exhibition dedicated to the tsar. In televised comments on day 106 of his war in Ukraine, he compared Peter the Great's campaign with the task facing Russia today. "*Apparently, it also fell to us to return (what is Russia's) and strengthen (the country). And if we proceed from the fact that these basic values form **the basis of our existence, we will certainly succeed** in solving the tasks that we face."*

Peter the Great, an autocrat, ruled for 43 years and gave his name to a new capital, St Petersburg – Putin's hometown – which he ordered to be built on land he conquered from Sweden. It was a project that cost the lives of tens of thousands of serfs, conscripted as forced labourers to build Peter the Great's "window to Europe" in the swamps of the Baltic Sea coast. Prior to Putin's visit to the exhibition, state television aired a documentary praising Peter the Great as a tough military leader, **greatly expanding Russian territory** at the expense of **Sweden** and **the Ottoman Empire** with the modernized army and navy that he built.

Historian Serhii Plokhy states:

"Russians and Ukrainians belong to the eastern Slavs and in particular Belarusians, the linguistic barrier between Russia and Ukraine is not huge. Russians would not normally understand Ukrainians only with some effort. Therefore, this war is being fought in two languages. Most Ukrainians are bilingual, president Zelinski in fact speaks Russian better than Ukrainian. Ukrainians however understand Russians because of the dominance of the Russian culture for so long over Ukraine. There is a commonality and is the reason why this war came as such a major surprise to many Ukrainians".

Though this may be the case with the Ukrainians it most certainly is not so with the student of Bible prophecy who have been informed that it is from these **northern parts in relation to Israel** that Gog must be "turned about" to be joined by his Confederacy to at last invade the Middle East. Polkhy continues:

*"Historically however the differences between Russia and Ukraine are very visible. The war which commenced in 2014 started with the excuse of **protecting Russian speakers** and it is the Russian speaking areas of Ukraine that are being completely destroyed like Mariupol. Ukraine is not united around language they are united around **democratic institutions**, the **European choice** that they are trying to protect. Where else in the world would you see people dying under the EU banner? So, in*

historical terms it is all about the different projectory of the development of regions and nations after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Ukraine is looking west to European values”.

But what of Ukraine’s religion we might ask, does not Ukraine look to the east? Polkhy answers:

*“Ukrainians look to the east but not to Moscow! **To Constantinople** this is where their Christianity came from, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church jurisdiction was under the Church of Constantinople until the late 17th century then Ukraine was taken over by Moscow and the Russian Empire and the switching of the centre first to Saint Petersburg and then to Moscow. What we’re seeing now are major cracks in the Orthodox unity of the last few centuries to the degree that the leader of the Ukrainian Orthodox church has issued an appeal to Putin talking about ‘the sin of Cain’ – turning Putin’s argument about and talk of brotherly nations turning against its brother nation. Putin gave as one of the alleged goals for this war as **denazification!** There is **no historical basis** to Putin’s claims whatsoever in relation to Ukraine today, it is **pure propaganda** to say that Ukraine has in some way been taken over by Nazis, it is **pure nonsense!** In terms however of **what is happening in Russia** there are many definitions of what is **fascism** and many historians say there is elements of **fascism** in Russia”.*

Significantly Plokhy draws our attention to the **striking parallels between Nazi Germany and Russia’s** philosophy and ambitions as being executed under Putin:

“I would draw parallels between the history surrounding the start of WW2 and the Nazis attempt to build a greater Germany – collect the German speaking lands under the control of Berlin which is exactly what Putin did in 2014 in Crimea and what he is doing right now. There are the most striking parallels between Putin’s attempt to build a greater Russia and Nazi Germany.”

Not only is Ukraine fundamental to the origins, identity and religion of Russia and therefore its importance at this crucial juncture of time in preparing Gog, but the very war now being played out in this most important historical region which defines the king of the uttermost parts of the north in relation to Israel, has fundamentally changed Putin’s attitude to **Russian Jews and the Jewish state itself**. Putin has had strong emotional ties with Russian Jews throughout his life and his policies have reversed the persecution they suffered under the Soviet era and assisted in a cultural and religious revival in Russia. The war against Ukraine however has been used by Putin to flame a Russian religious nationalistic identity crisis that demands absolute loyalty to its sacred cause! Putin has long courted Jewish community leaders in Russia. Some are now getting out of Russia while they still can amid the escalating tensions over the war. The chief rabbi of Moscow was stood down from his position after he left the country in March following what he says was pressure on him to publicly support Russia’s invasion. The worsening relations between Israel and Russia, he said, **“will of course have an impact on the attitude to Jews inside Russia”**.

Gog and the land of Magog

“Son of man, set your face towards **Gog and the land of Magog, ruler of Ros, Mosoch and Thobel**, and prophesy against him and say to him, This is what the Lord says: Behold, I am against you, O **Gog, ruler of Ros, Mosoch and Thobel**, ... **I will round up you and all your force... Gomer and all around him, the house of Thegrama (Togarmah or Turkey) from the extreme north parts and all those around him** and many nations shall be with you” (Ezekiel 38: 2-4, 6 New English Translation of the Septuagint). Gomer, Magog, Meshech and Tubal named in Ezekiel 38 were all the sons of Japheth, son of Noah, while Togarmah was the son of Gomer. They are the progenitors of the races whose ancient territories are named in this prophecy so as to identify Gog as the **ruler** and guard over these lands when the prophecy is about to be fulfilled. Here is an extended family whose descendants, as we shall see, occupied those areas **north** of Israel and migrated into central Europe. The descendants of **Magog** originally settled in the **North and Eastern parts of the Black Sea**. They inhabited the country of the **North Caucasus in southern Russia** bordering Georgia and the north-east shore of the Black Sea and **all around the mouths of the rivers Don and Dnieper**. The mouth of the **Don River** empties into **the sea of Azov** (right side of map below) which is **bounded by Russia on the south-east and by Ukraine on the north-west**. The **Dnieper River** flows through Russia, Belarus and Ukraine, the mouth of which empties into the **Black Sea** near the Ukrainian city of **Odesa** which is **a key objective of the current Russian invasion**.



Russia is aiming to take full control of southern Ukraine as well as the eastern Donbas region, a senior Russian commander says. Maj Gen Rustam Minnekayev was quoted in state media as saying that goal would allow Moscow to form a land bridge to Crimea, which it annexed in 2014. He also said it would give Moscow access to the Russian-backed separatist region of Transnistria in Moldova. Transnistria is a small region that borders Ukraine's west.

The Jewish historian Josephus notes that "**Magog** founded the Magogians, thus named after him, but who were by the Greeks called **Scythians**", concerning whom, the ancient Greek historian Herodotus wrote: "They spread **from** the river Tanais, or **Don**, **westward** along the banks of the Ister, or **Danube**".

Along with this quotation from Herodotus Bro. Thomas states:

*"The Greeks", observes Major Rennel, "appear to have first used the term Scythia in its application to their neighbours the Scythians of **the Euxine (the Black Sea)**, who were also called Getae, or Gothi; and were those who afterward subdued the Roman empire: and from which original stock the present race of people in Europe seem to be descended".*

The Danube's mouth empties into the Black Sea (note map below, lower left between Romania and Bulgaria near to the borders of Moldova and Ukraine). The Danube is the longest river in the **European Union** passing through **ten** countries, more than any other river in the world, and played a vital role in the settlement and political evolution of Central and south-eastern Europe. Its origins are in the Black Forest region of Germany. It is most interesting that **the descendants of Magog originally occupied the very area that Russia now is so ruthlessly determined to take back from Ukraine between the Don and Danube, i.e., the Donbas, Luhansk, Mariupol, Kherson, Odesa along with Crimea which they annexed in 2014. As if right on queue, Yahweh is inviting those who are students of bible prophecy to ponder who is Gog, his origins and destiny. These descendants of Magog journeyed west along the Danube as far as East Germany where the present Russian autocrat was stationed during the breakup of the Soviet Union—what he refers to as "The greatest geopolitical tragedy of the 20th century."**

Brethren and sisters, let us remember **our task is to ascertain where the lands identified in the prophecy by their ancient names were and apply the divine predictions to whatever power occupies those lands at the time the prophecy is preparing to be fulfilled.**



One of the earliest references to Magog was by Hesiod, "the father of Greek didactic poetry," who **identified Magog with the Scythians and southern Russia in the 7th century B.C.** Hesiod was, in effect, almost a contemporary of Ezekiel. The evidence of the geographic areas the descendants of **Magog** settled extends from writers predating Ezekiel to Russian archaeologists.

Historians inform us that the "**Cimmerians**" are the oldest of the European tribes living **north of the Black Sea and Danube**. The Cimmerian period in the history of **southern Ukraine began in the late 11th century B.C.** The Cimmerians were the **first specialized horse-nomads to make their name in history**. The earliest archaeological evidence of the domestication of the horse occurs **south of Kiev** about 2500 B.C. Historians estimate that their nomadic lifestyle, including mounted warriors, fully developed between the 9th and 7th centuries B.C.. It is significant that **Gog's army**, like the ancient name of the lands, are described in terms that the prophet and his contemporaries could understand. Most generations during the last 2500 years could identify the power north of Israel whose armies were characterized by "horses and horsemen, all of them clothed in full armour, a great host, all of them with buckler and shield, wielding swords" (Ezekiel 38:4). They are first mentioned in secular literature in Homer's *The Odyssey* and *The Iliad* (8th century B.C.), and in Assyrian cuneiform texts from the 8th century B.C. (before Ezekiel), and especially in Herodotus (5th century B.C.). Herodotus indicates that the whole North Pontic steppe region, occupied in his time by the **Scythians**, belonged **earlier** to the **Cimmerians**. Some scholars derive the name of "**Crimea**" from the Cimmerians (Strabo 7.4.3.). In the 7th century B.C., the **Scythians** swept across the area, **displacing the Cimmerians from the steppes of the Ukraine east of Dnieper River**, who fled from them across the Caucasus—a chain of mountains separating Circassia - North Caucasus from Georgia, the south-eastern part of Russia. Even the name "Caucasus" appears to have been derived from Gog-hasan, or Gog-Cassam, Cassam meaning, in Arabic, **a fort or stronghold**; therefore "**Gog's Fort**." (Dr. John Gill, *A Commentary on the Old Testament*, 1748). The descendants of Magog's ancient ruler named Gog used Mount Caucasus as his stronghold, and was called Gog's Cassam (eventually corrupted to Caucassam and Caucasus).

The Scythians = Magog

We know **the descendants of Magog by their Greek designation as the Scythians**. The name **Scythian designates a number of nomadic tribes from the Russian steppes**, one group of which invaded the Near East in the 8th and 7th centuries B.C. After being repulsed from Media, many of the later Scyths settled in the fertile area of the **Ukraine north of the Black Sea**. Other related tribes occupied the area to the **east of the Caspian Sea**.

Herodotus describes them **living in Scythia (i.e. the territory north of the Black Sea)**. He describes Scythia as encompassing the **lower reaches** of the Dniester, Bug, Dnieper, and Don Rivers where they flow into the **Black Sea and the Sea of Azov**. (B.A. Rybakov, Rus: Herodotus's Scythia, Nauka, Moscow, 1979, p. 19). The Scythians, as bro. Thomas shows in quoting Herodotus, also **migrated west** so that the name of Scythae or Magog was **not** to be confined to the area north of the black sea i.e., Crimea and Ukraine, but to **Germany** and those nations around her, penetrating even to the Baltic that is geographically connected with Galatae, or **Gomer (France)**. Bro. Thomas quotes Diodorus Siculus, who lived about a century before Josephus, and describes the Scythia as "above Gaul (or France) extending towards the Baltic" In presenting an over view of the Scythians bro Thomas then quotes the historian Strabo. "The ancient Greeks", says he, "at first called the **northern nations by the general name of Scythians**; but when they became acquainted with the nations **in the west**, they began to call them by the different names of Celts, and Celto-Scythae"; and again, "the ancient Greek historians called the northern nations collectively Scythians and Celto-Scythae". The latter name plainly denoted the most **western portion of the Scythae, adjoining Gaul (France)**; among whom were the "Scythae on the north of the Galatae".

In Exposition of Daniel bro. Thomas states: "In this **general description** may be easily discerned that extended portion of **the West of Europe**" (Exposition of Daniel Section 24). It is therefore most significant that Ezekiel as **the representative of Him who is to vanquish Gog** is asked not only to set his face towards him, but immediately adds, "**and the land of Magog**". Bro. Thomas in quoting J D Michaelis, a Prussian biblical scholar of the 1700's, notes: "*Whoever reads Ezekiel can hardly entertain a doubt that **Gog is the name of a sovereign, and Magog that of his people**; the prophet speaks of the former, not as a people, but as an Emperor*".

If Gog is destined to be the supreme ruler of the nations whose ancestors inhabited those lands stretching from southern Russia and Ukraine to the Baltic, where is this Sovereign's throne situated? On **three** occasions in Ezekiel 38-39 he is emphatically said to be the "**ruler of Ros, Mosoch and Thobel**".

Archaeology reveals the extent of the Scythians

It has been demonstrated that Scythian culture extended not only into western Europe but more than 2,000 miles **east** from Ukraine. There has been discoveries of tombs in the Chilikta Valley of East Kazakhstan, which show that Scythian culture had spread to the Mongolian border as early as the 6th century B.C.. Countless Scythian burials, ranging from the 6th - 2nd century B.C., have been uncovered in the areas to the north and east of the **Black Sea**—in many cases beyond the limits of what Herodotus demarcated in his day as "Scythia" proper. More than 1,200 graves were investigated by A. Leskov in **the Crimean area** between 1961 and 1972. Hundreds of Scythian graves from the 4th and 3rd centuries have been discovered since the 1930s by B. Grakow, A. Trenoschkin, and E. Tschernenko, in the **Ukraine**. One of the many implications of these discoveries is the authentication of the reliability of Herodotus as a source of knowledge of the Scythians.

In July 1995, Russian archaeologists found a 2,500-year-old Scythian horseman under more than seven feet of ice in **Siberia** near the Chinese and Mongolian borders. The frozen conditions marvellously preserved textiles, remains of horses, human skin and hair, entrails, undigested food, etc., for more than 2,300 years! According to Herodotus and archaeological evidence, the Scythians not only occupied territory from the Danube to the Don, their northern boundary extended not only beyond the latitude of Kiev, but also far beyond these original ancestral lands. It has long been generally understood by many Russian academics that much of their population is descended from a branch of the Scythians. The Russian poet and translator, Alexander Blok, noted such in one of his poems, "The Scythians". Also, Russian historian Alekseyev, in his work, "In Search of Our Ancestors", writes that **the Russians are a branch of the Scythians**.

Rosh

Dr Gesenius in his Hebrew and English Lexicon wrote that "**Rosh** was a designation for the tribes then north of the Taurus Mountains, dwelling in the neighbourhood of the Volga" (Gesenius 1872: 534, 626, 955, 1121). He concluded that **in this name we have the first trace, historically, of the Rus or Russian state**.

Dr Daniel Schenkel's Bible-Lexicon: "**Rosh** in Heseq (Ezekiel) 38:2, 3; 39:1, **is the name of a people of the north, named along with Meschech and Tubal, and all together as subject people of Gog**...Rosh was a proper name for a people and was used by Byzantine and oriental writers; but the statements concerning the same people, dwelling in northern Taurus, as also towards the Muscovite Mountains," or, as some other

authors maintain, “on the Taurian Peninsula (Crimea), and still further to the north **along the Volga, - agree in a most striking manner with the combination of Rosh, Meschech, and Tubal..Rosh is the oldest historical name to designate the tribal peoples of the Russians of history.**” Soviet scholars contend that tribes of the Antes who lived on the lower Danube River, in the north western Black Sea region, (present-day Moldova and central Ukraine), and in the regions around the Don River (in Middle and Southern Russia) was known as the '**Ros' and later modified to 'Rus'** which resided along **the river Ros, a tributary of the Dnieper in the southern Ukraine**, just north of the Black Sea.

TUBAL

In discussing Tubal, Gesenius noted that Tubal was the founder of the Tiberani, "a nation of Asia Minor dwelling by the Euxine (or Black Sea) to the West of the Moschi". He concluded that there should be no doubt that **Tubal and Meschech comprise the modern Russian people** (Gesenius 1872 : 858). The people of Tubal were variously known as Tubla, Tabal or Tabali by the Assyrians who refer to them giving tribute of "great horses" to Ashurbanipal; Tiberani or Tibarenoi by the Greeks; and Thobelites by Josephus (Josephus Antiquities 1: 6:1). They were always identified with the Moschi in Asia Minor. The Septuagint version translates "Meschech and Moschi" as "Mosoch and Thobel". Historians can trace two branches of the descendants of Tubal: one migrated northward, the other westwards. The branch of the Toboli which migrated northwards, perhaps gave their name to Lake Bataton Balta and the Baltic Sea. They are today settled north-east of Moscow around Tobolsk.

MESCHECH

The descendants of Meschech are noted to have migrated with Tubal up to the Black Sea and into the Russian plains. Gesenius states that "*Meschech became the Moschi, a very barbaric people. They dwelt, he said, in the Moschian Mountains*" (Gesenius 1872 : 534, 626, 955, 1121). The Moschian Mountains were the connecting chain between the Caucasus and Anti Taurus Mountains. The Scofield Reference Bible says that the "reference to Meschech and Tubal (Moscow and Tobolosk) is a **clear mark of identification**". Strabo, whom bro. Thomas often quotes, claimed that here was a district named "Moschice", a very barbaric people, while Lempriere stated in his dictionary that the Moschi were a people to the west of the Caspian Sea. Milner explains: "The whole district within five hundred miles of Moscow seems to be saturated with the name of Meschech" (Milner, W. (1941) The Russian Chapters of Ezekiel).

Bro. Thomas in surveying what Yahweh reveals through his prophets constitute "the territory of the **Kingdom of Babylon as it is destined to exist in its last form** under the **King of the North** in his **Gogian** manifestation" will historically be **unique**, for "**Besides 'All the Russias'**, it will take in **Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Prussia** (the territory of Prussia was absorbed following WW 1 and II into Poland and Germany and minor portions into Belgium, Denmark, Lithuania and Russia), **Austria, Turkey, Persia, Tartary³, Greece, the Roman Africa, and Egypt**. This will be a dominion of great magnitude, extending from the North Sea to the Wall of China and Afghanistan, and from the Ice-Sea to the Deserts of Africa and Arabia" (Exposition of Daniel, Section 25. - Future Magnitude of Gog's Dominion).

As Yahweh lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the north country

In concluding our review of the latter-day participants that will comprise Gog's confederacy, especially those nations which lie directly **North** of Israel, it is worthy of note that the **2nd exodus**, subsequent to the smiting of the Russo/Greek Babylonian Image at Armageddon, is characterized as a deliverance peculiarly "out of the **north** country". An estimated 1 million Jews live in Russia, according to the Federation of Jewish Communities of Russia, who have been alarmed by the fallout from growing nationalist sentiment following Putin's invasion of Ukraine. Their continued presence in Russia is necessary that scripture may be fulfilled, many of whom will be trapped and no doubt face Nazi like persecution as "the time of the end" crisis unfolds:

"Therefore, behold, the days are coming, declares Yahweh, when it shall no longer be said, 'As Yahweh lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt,' but '**As Yahweh lives who brought up the**

³ The countries of central Asia from the Caspian Sea to China and Mongolia from Afghanistan and Iran to Russia including the 5 "Stan" ex-soviet republics – Kazakhstan etc.

people of Israel out of the NORTH country and out of all the countries where he had driven them.’ For I will bring them back to their own land that I gave to their fathers. Behold, I am sending for many fishers, declares the Lord, and they shall catch them. And afterward I will send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain and every hill, and out of the clefts of the rocks. For my eyes are on all their ways. They are not hidden from me, nor is their iniquity concealed from my eyes. But first I will doubly repay their iniquity and their sin, because they have polluted my land with the carcasses of their detestable idols and have filled my inheritance with their abominations.”

“O Yahweh, my strength and my stronghold, my refuge in the day of trouble, to you shall the nations come from **the ends of the earth** and say: “Our fathers have inherited nothing but lies, worthless things in which there is no profit” (Jeremiah 16: 14-19).

As we have already noted it has been recently reported by numerous media organizations that after three decades of increasingly friendly ties, tensions over Putin’s invasion of Ukraine are triggering the worst rift in relations between Russia and Israel since the Soviet Union’s collapse when Mikhail Gorbachev opened up the country. The falling-out between Israel and the Kremlin represents a **providentially** dramatic turnaround after Putin cultivated ties with Israeli leaders for years as part of a wider Russian push for Middle East influence. Putin had been feted in Jerusalem as recently as 2020 at a ceremony marking the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Nazi Germany’s Auschwitz death camp by the Soviet Red Army. Since the beginning of the Ukraine war however Russian Jewish emigration has dramatically increased. After Russia invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24th 2022 Israel became one of the main destinations for a wave of emigration, an exodus that included many workers from Russia’s technology industry. About 16,000 Russian citizens have registered as immigrants in Israel since the start of the war, **more than three times as many as in the previous year**; another 34,000 arrived as tourists. In Volgograd in **southern Russia**, a Jewish community leader, said that the rate of emigration to Israel from their city appeared to have doubled in recent months. Putin sees those trying to abandon Russia at this time as traitors—raising echoes of the Soviet era, when Jews suffered from being seen as having dual loyalties.

In this further clear evidence of the crisis of the time of the end building, **the Kremlin’s deteriorating relationship with Israel**, as a direct result of the far-reaching consequences of the war in Ukraine, Russia is threatening to ban the **Jewish Agency for Israel**. This agency was founded nearly a century ago, which was instrumental in helping establish Israel in 1948, and has facilitated the emigration of millions of Jews from around the globe. About one million immigrants from the former Soviet Union arrived in Israel from the late 1980s to the end of the 1990s. Jewish negotiators have disclosed that Russia is using spurious legal claims against the agency and that its real complaint is that Israel has been taking some of the best minds out of Russia, which is home to hundreds of thousands of people of Jewish descent. The push to close the Jewish Agency is a **warning to Israel not to align itself with the Tarshish power and its young lion allies against Russia over the war in Ukraine**.

Prime Minister Yair Lapid of Israel has warned Russia that shuttering the agency would be a “grave event” that damages diplomatic relations. “The attempt to punish the Jewish Agency for Israel’s stance on the war is deplorable and offensive,” Israel’s minister for diaspora affairs, Nachman Shai, recently stated. “The Jews of Russia cannot be detached from their historical and emotional connection to the State of Israel.”

Israeli delegates who visited Moscow to discuss the case have to date made no progress in averting the Russian threat. “The Jewish community in Russia is deeply connected with Israel,” Mr. Lapid said in a statement. “We will continue to act through diplomatic channels so that the Jewish Agency’s important activity will not cease.” These attempts must ultimately fail, Russia will be compelled to see Israel as the ally of its democratic enemies led by the Tarshish power who along with the southern Arab allies will oppose Gog (Ezekiel 38: 13).

Yahweh created Israel as His witness to all the nations of the veracity of all Yahweh has said through his prophets concerning His purpose with the earth (Isaiah 43: 15, 10-12; 44: 6-8). Accordingly, Yahweh has also used the Jewish people as the means of a blessing for the sake of the promises made to His friend Abraham (Genesis 12: 2-3) amongst the nations where they have been scattered. They have been transformative, providing the disrupting influence in directing Science, Technology, Arts, Business, Commerce and Democracy, completely changing the world in which we live. Russia hating what they represent nonetheless values how they can be used to enrich themselves, and if this means keeping them as captive slaves then so be it. This will

form a part of Gog's "evil scheme" when he "turns his hand against the waste places that are now inhabited, and the people who were gathered from the nations, who have acquired livestock and goods, who dwell at the centre of the earth," "to seize spoil and to carry off plunder" (Ezekiel 38: 10-12). No wonder Yahweh through His prophets state that an essential aspect of the vindication of His holiness in the sight of many nations on the mountains of Israel when He draws Gog out of **his place** out of the **uttermost parts of the north**, will then extend to **Israel's 2nd exodus**. By this means, "through them", Yahweh will "vindicate His holiness in the sight of many nations". "Then they shall know that I am Yahweh their God because I sent them into exile among the nations and then assembled them into their own land. **I will leave none of them remaining among the nations anymore**". It will not be as the result of Israel's secular government but Yahweh through His Anointed addressing Israel's **northern captors** "to the **north, Give up**, and to the south, Do not withhold; bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the end of the earth" (Isaiah 43: 6).

Current events ensure Russia's growing hatred of Israel and everything Jewish

The war in Ukraine has caused Putin to seek for allies in his escalating conflict with the West, while feeding an expanding campaign against anyone inside Russia with suspect loyalties. Putin's recent visit to Iran, Israel's archenemy, celebrated a rapidly tightening relationship in a meeting with the country's supreme leader which providentially has coincided with a growing hatred for Israel and all that is Jewish. It is truly remarkable that Yahweh has provided a nemesis for Putin in the Ukrainian president who is not only Jewish but much of whose family were victims of the Nazi holocaust.

Also in Israel, a politics long influenced by a large and influential Russian-speaking diaspora comprising 13% of the population has been caused to begin moving away from the Kremlin. Naftali Bennett, Israel's prime minister when the war broke out in February, avoided direct criticism of Russia, citing Israel's security interests in Syria as well as the need to protect the safety and free movement of Jews in both Ukraine and Russia. But Yahweh intervened to ensure this appeasement did not continue.

The Israeli government initially went out of its way not to offend it's Russian/Syrian King of the North neighbour trying to tread a diplomatic middle path with its former prime minister, offering to mediate between Putin and Zelensky, his Jewish Ukrainian counterpart. Russian disgruntlement with Israel over a variety of other matters were then used by the Kremlin to put pressure on Israel not to be swayed by the US to support Ukraine with military weapons. These ongoing tensions include Israeli military activities in Syria targeting Iranian arms supplies to the Hezbollah group in Lebanon, and reported plans by Israel to attack Iranian nuclear installations.

Israel has also recently confirmed a report that Russian anti-aircraft batteries in Syria fired at Israeli air force jets. There is also an unresolved dispute over ownership of church property in Jerusalem. The then prime minister Bennett tried to stall any decision on this ongoing dispute involving Russian church property near the so-called Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem which had been registered to the Russian Imperial government during the Otterman empire. Putin who "by his cunning has made (religious) deceit to prosper under his hand and in his own mind has become great" (Daniel 8: 25) as Czar Peter, claims the church as a holy site and he, the holy sites of Jerusalem and orthodoxy in general, ordained "Guard" (Ezekiel 38: 7).

The growing crisis in Russian/Israel relations worsened when the Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov caused an uproar by suggesting that Adolf Hitler was part Jewish. This tied conveniently with Putin's excuse of invading Ukraine to save it from its Nazi/Jewish-led government. Tensions deepened after Lapid switched from foreign minister to acting prime minister when Naftali Bennett's government collapsed along with his policies of Russian appeasement, triggering parliamentary elections set for Nov. 1.

At a July 14th press conference with US President Joe Biden in Jerusalem, Israel's acting Prime minister Lapid condemned "Russia's unjustified invasion of Ukraine," two days after Israel sent a second batch of non-lethal military aid including helmets and protective vests to the government in Kyiv. Lapid, who took over as prime minister, has largely abandoned former prime minister Bennett's attempts at mediating in the war and has said that Russia has committed war crimes in Ukraine. Israeli officials have also become increasingly outspoken in their criticism of Russia's war in Ukraine, after initially trying to tread a diplomatic middle path.

Girding up the loins of our minds

At the beginning of this article to scripturally identify Gog we noted Ezekiel as the representative of the **multitudinous** "Son of man" was commanded to "set your face against Gog," (Ezekiel 38:1), clearly implying that when the power referred to as "Gog" with his confederacy, comes against Israel, the judgement seat of Christ must have already concluded its work in preparing his "mighty ones" for the great day of God Almighty. This judgement process commencing at the household of Christ will have in all probability occupied a period of some 10 years. These preliminary movements of Russia, **north of Israel**, may be the final indications of that impending startling cry at the midnight hour of Gentile darkness, "Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him" (Matthew 25: 6). The virgins who were found ready by their Lord, having ensured they had prepared extra oil in their flasks with their lamps, went in **with** their Lord into the marriage, "until the day breaths and the shadows flee" (Matthew 24: 4-13; Song of Songs 4: 6). This multitudinous "son of man" will be commanded to "**prophesy against Gog** and say, thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am against you, O Gog, **prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal**. And I will **turn you about** and drag you along and bring you up **from the uttermost parts of the north**, and lead you against the mountains of **Israel**" (Ezekiel 39: 1-2 ESV).

Amongst those nations **north of Israel** which we have reviewed, from which the "**prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal**" will be turned about from his military, political and empire building pursuits to come against the mountains of Israel, is the nation of Turkey. In the most significant bible prophecy for the generation that stands related to the crisis of "the time of the end" — Revelation 16 turns our attention to the significance of the drying up of the Euphratean power (verse 12) a process that must conclude in Constantinople falling to Russia. This indispensable element in the forming of the feet of Nebuchadnezzar's image so that it might stand in defiance against Yahweh on the mountains of Israel must, as we have already noted in this article, have its preparation in the king of the North's coming against the present occupier of the ancient Roman military capital like a whirlwind (Daniel 11: 40). It is in the context of this unexpected sudden extension of current military activities **North of Israel** that the Lord Jesus warns his household, "**Behold, I am coming like a thief! Blessed is the one who stays awake, keeping his garments on, that he may not go about naked and be seen exposed!**"

To this generation the author of Elpis Israel appeals:

"When Russia makes its grand move for the building-up of its Image-empire, then let the reader know that the end of all things, as at present constituted, is at hand. The long-expected, but stealthy advent of the King of Israel, will be on the eve of becoming a fact; and salvation will be to those who not only looked for it, but have trimmed their lamps by believing the gospel of the kingdom unto the obedience of faith, and the perfection thereof in 'fruits meet for repentance'" (Jas. 2:22; Heb. 9:28). (Preface Elpis Israel)