

APPENDIX B

Russia Is Not Magog

From *THE COMETS OF GOD* by Jeffrey Goodman, Ph.D.

www.thecometsofgod.com

Therefore, thou son of man, prophesy against Gog, and say, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal: and I will turn thee back, and leave but the sixth part of thee, and will cause thee to come up from the north parts, and will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel: And I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand, and will cause thine arrows to fall out of thy right hand.

Ezekiel 39:1-3

Ezekiel tells us that Gog, [referring to Magog], the nation that will lead all of the other powers of darkness against Israel, will come out of the north. Biblical

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scholars have been saying for generations that Gog must be Russia. What other powerful nation is to the north of Israel? None. But it didn't seem to make sense before the Russian revolution, when Russia was a Christian country. Now it does, now that Russia has become communistic and atheistic, now that Russia has set itself against God. Now it fits the description of Gog perfectly.”¹

Future US President
Ronald Reagan, 1971

The Native Americans of North America are called Indians, but what do these people have to do with the people of the country India? Absolutely nothing. Hundreds of years ago Christopher Columbus was looking for a water passageway to the country of India as a means of obtaining gold and valuable spices. When he arrived in the islands of the Caribbean, Columbus, seeing dark skinned people, called them Indians and declared his passage a success. However, the people we call Indians were not related to the people of India, and the Caribbean Islands are a very long way from India.

There has been a similar misconception in many Bible prophecy books over the last 100 years. As discussed in Chapter 9, the belief that Russia is the country from the North who is to attack Israel during the end times is a mistake. Although evidence that contradicts this conclusion has become common knowledge within the academic arena, this misconception is still prevalent in end times Bible prophecy books. This misconception short circuits the proper

understanding of end times Bible prophecy. Just as we all know that the “Indians” are not citizens of the country India, we will see that Russia is not the country spoken of in *Ezekiel 38-39*.

Championed by the authors of many Bible prophecy books, the erroneous interpretation of *Ezekiel 38-39* has remained the current and popular belief among many evangelical Christians who associate the Russians with Gog and Magog. This interpretation says that sometime before the great Battle of Armageddon, there will be a Russian invasion and war with Israel. This end times Russian invasion theory is based on faulty eighteenth and nineteenth century references used to determine the identities of the ancient nations of Asia Minor (modern Turkey) which are discussed in *Ezekiel 38:2-6*. It has been mistakenly believed that the ancient nation of “Magog” in western Asia Minor was the ancient “tribal name” of the “Scythians,” a group of Iranian speaking nomadic tribes from Central Asia north of Iran that traveled across the Russian steppes, and came to live in the territory north of the Black Sea. Then, in turn, and again in error, it has been believed that the ancient Scythians were the progenitors of the modern Russians. (*See Illustration E*)

Within academia today, there are no professional archeologists or historians who associate Magog with the Scythians or the Scythians with the Russians. The May 2000 issue of *National Geographic*,² reflecting modern scholarship, explains that a group of **Scandinavian Viking traders called the Rus** began the Russian state around 800 AD. It says, “The Slavs and Finns there (near today’s St. Petersburg) called them **Rus**, after the Finnic term for Swedes, **Ruotsi** . . . These **Rus** eventually **founded the first Russian state** centered in Kiev in today’s Ukraine, and **gave their name to Russia**, a cultural inconvenience the Soviet historians were compelled to

dispute for decades.”² The name “*Rus*” or “*Rhus*” appears in the writings of Bishop Troyes in 839 AD, and according to the 12th century document known as the *Primary Chronicle* the land around Kiev was named “*Rus*” and the inhabitants called “*Russes*” in 852 AD.³ *National Geographic* goes on to tell how *Novgorod* (east of St. Petersburg), was an early Russian capital founded by the *Rus*, and how in the city of Kiev, the *Rus* Prince Vladimir converted to Christianity in 988.⁴ Also, as explained in Chapter 9, the renowned Arab Chronicler Ibn Fadlan tells how in 921 AD he met with a group of blonde haired people of Swedish origin called the *Rus*. He told how he met them on the upper Volga River in western Russia as they came up the river in their ships to trade with the Bulgars.⁵ Even the author’s daughter’s high school history textbook details how Russian origins are Scandinavian.⁶ Simply put, the Scythians were gone for at least 500 years before the Russians came to be a people. There is neither a genetic nor a cultural connection between the Scythians and the Russians. (*See Illustration G*)

Where did the idea begin that Magog begat the Scythians? It began with one *very* questionable sentence written by the First Century AD Jewish historian, Josephus in his book *The Antiquity of the Jews*. The sentence says the Greeks called the “Magogites” the “Scythians” despite the fact that Greeks **did not** call the Magogites the Scythians.* Not only is this statement in conflict with the far more detailed writings of other ancient historians (Greek and none Greek) and with ancient Assyrian texts that provide firsthand information about both the people of Magog and Scythians, but this sentence by

* “Magog founded those that from him were named Magogites, but who are by the Greeks are called Scythians,” from Book 1, Chapter 6, line 123 of *The Antiquity of the Jews* in *The Works of Josephus* translated by William Whitson, Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, Mass., 1987, p. 36.

Josephus, which identifies Magog with the Scythians, is found in a passage where Josephus makes other errors in the identification of other ancient nations of Asia Minor.*

Although Josephus uses the ancient Greek historian Herodotus' book *The History* as a reference on a number of occasions,⁷ in this passage about Magog and the Scythians, Josephus is not only in conflict with Herodotus, but he even conflicts with other statements he made about who he says the Greeks identified as the Scythians. In one line Josephus says the Greeks identified the Scythians with Magog, but then a few lines later Josephus using the Hebrew word for the Scythians, "Ashchenaz," says the Greeks identified "Ashchenaz" with Rhegium, which was a port city of Southern Italy (*Acts 28:13*) known for its rock of Scylla. The names "Scythians" and "Ashchenaz" are just English and Hebrew transliterations (i.e. they spell a word in the alphabet of another language) of the Greek name, *Skythes* for the same nomadic people. To those familiar with Herodotus' book *The History*, it is obvious that the Greeks didn't make either of the identifications Josephus attributes to them.

One can only speculate how and why these obviously wrong statements are in Josephus' book. Were these inaccurate statements the products of Josephus' imagination, or were they the result of

* Josephus' books provide first-hand information about the Jews of the First Century AD but when it comes to earlier periods, such as the Seventh and Eighth Century BC, Josephus usually himself relies on earlier ancient historians. Scholars today, on a case by case basis urge caution in regard to Josephus' historical reliability. Those who **blindly** accept Josephus' apparent association of Magog with the Scythians tend to elevate Josephus' words to the level of Scripture. They do not seem to be aware that Josephus' history of the Jews, *The Antiquity of the Jews* is in direct conflict with Bible scriptures in a number of instances. For example, see J. Miller and J. Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah*, Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1986, pp. 316, 334, 408, and 470.

alterations to the few copies of Josephus' work that existed in the first century? Maybe Josephus was using the word "Magog" as a generic term for any fierce people coming down from the north. Whatever the reason, the statements don't reflect that the ancient Asia Minor nation, referred to as "Ashkenaz" or "Ashchenaz" in the Hebrew of the Old Testament (*Genesis 10:3* and *Jeremiah 51:27*), is in fact the same nation or people the Greeks called the "Scythians" (*Colossians 3:11*)?*

As for identifying Magog with the Scythians, who the Hebrew knew as the Ashkenaz, it is important to note that the Table of Nations found in *Genesis 10:2-3* lists Magog and the Ashkenaz as quite separate entities. Interestingly, the Assyrian word for the Scythians, *Ishkuza* or *Ashguza*, is similar to the Hebrew word for the Scythians – Ashkenaz.⁸ Those who have relied on the erroneous statements found in Josephus about Magog and the Scythians must recognize the simple fact that the Scythians and the Ashkenaz are not separate nations. In truth, they are one and the same.

Further, the erroneous statements by Josephus about the Greeks identifying the Magogites with the Scythians, and the Greeks identifying Ashchenaz with Rhegiun are preceded by yet another erroneous and anachronous statement about the relationship

* Confusion has also arisen among Bible prophecy interpreters because they do not realize that the term "Ashkenaz," in the Old Testament denotes the "Scythians." Oddly enough, in the ninth-century the term "Ashkenaz" also came to be used to refer to medieval German Jewry. Later in time "Ashkenaz" came to denote all Jews whose culture originated and developed in Germany, France, and East Europe, as distinct from "Sephardim," whose culture originated and developed in Spain and the Mediterranean. For example, see Philip Sigal, *Judaism – The Evolution of a Faith*, Eerdman, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1988, p. 298. And *Ashkenaz - The German Jewish Heritage*, Gertrude Hirschler editor, KTAV Publishing, Hoboken, 1989.

between two other ancient nations of Asia Minor. In this statement Josephus writes that the Greeks associated the Gomerites (*Ezekiel* 38:5) with the Galatians, when in fact the Gomerites (Cimmerians) and the Galatians had absolutely nothing to do with each other. The Greeks of Josephus' time simply did not call Gomer the Galatians. The Gomerites (Cimmerians) were invaders from an area around the northeast shore of the Black Sea. They displaced the ancient nation of Meshech in central Asia Minor and occupied this area from around 800 BC – 630 BC before pulling back. The Galatians (Gauls and not the Gauls of Roman France) were migrants from Central Europe, who came to Central Asia Minor as a result of a population explosion during the third century BC. Eventually they won over the local tribes and gained status as the Roman province of Galatia in 25 BC. While the Gomerites and the Galatians both occupied Central Asia Minor, they did so at different times and bear no relationship with each other. Despite what Josephus wrote, Gomer did not found the Galatians, and Magog did not found the Scythians.

One cannot help wondering how and why Josephus made three such totally erroneous statements in a single passage, if in fact he did. Ecclesiastical acceptance of the erroneous connection between Magog and the Scythians traces back to Saint Jerome of the late fourth century AD. It is interesting to note that several other critical statements found in Josephus' book *The Antiquity of the Jews* which was written by Josephus in Greek, and later copied in Greek by Christian copyists, are not found in an Arabic copy of his book. This indicates that the few Greek copies of his book, which were available early on and were in turn copied, were altered in some places to suit prevailing Christian beliefs.⁹

Finally, this deception about the Russian invasion of Israel

was first popularized in the 19th century. A book written by a pastor at the time seems to contain a purposeful misquote of a statement about a city in Magog made by the highly regarded first century AD Roman historian Pliny. In his multi-volume work called *The Natural History*,² Pliny identifies the ancient Lydian city of Hierapolis as being part of Magog. Built atop the cliffs, the city of Hierapolis controlled the water supply of the Lydian city of Laodicea six miles to the south. The city of Hierapolis was built by the Lydians and always under Lydian control until the Lydian Kingdom became part of the Persian Empire in 546 BC and then part of the Greek and Roman Empires that followed. Like Pliny, today's archeologists also identify Magog with the ancient nation of Lydia, which was in western Asia Minor. Indeed, written records from the Assyrian royal court show that the Assyrians used the name Magog as an *eponym* for the nation of Lydia. In his book Pliny writes, "Bambyx the other name of which is Hierapolis, but by the Syrians called Magog."^{*} In other words, Pliny identifies the famed Lydian city of Hierapolis as being part of Magog. In this we see that Magog is another name for the ancient nation of Lydia. However, in the book *The Destiny of Nations* by nineteenth century Pastor John Cummings, one of those credited with being the author and popularizer of the Bible interpretation that calls for Russia invading Israel, we read, "Pliny says 'Hierapolis taken by the Scythians was afterwards called Magog.'" ¹⁰ We can see that Pliny's statement has been misquoted or misunderstood in

* "Bambyx (referring to the western most part of their empire at the time) the other name of which is *Hierapolis* (Holy City) but by the Syrians called *Magog*." *The Natural History of Pliny, Vol. I*, translated by John Bostock, and H.T. Riley, Henry Bohn Publishers, London, 1855 p. 439. This translation of Pliny is consistent with that found in *Pliny Natural History, Vol. II* translated by H. Rackham, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1942, p. 283.

a way that makes it seem that Magog was related to the Scythians rather than the Lydians. Unfortunately, this same misquote of Pliny has been carried forward in time and appears in Hal Lindsey's book *The Late Great Planet Earth*.¹¹ (See *Illustration E*)

It is this error which incorrectly relates Magog to the Scythians, who were erroneously believed to be progenitors of Russia that led President Ronald Reagan and others to refer to the Soviet Union as an "evil empire" and "the focus of evil in the modern world."¹² At a dinner with California legislators in 1971 (before he became president), prophecy student Ronald Reagan concisely summed up his view of Russia's end time role:

"Ezekiel tells us that Gog, [referring to Magog], the nation that will lead all of the other powers of darkness against Israel, will come out of the north. Biblical scholars have been saying for generations that Gog must be Russia. What other powerful nation is to the north of Israel? None. But it didn't seem to make sense before the Russian revolution, when Russia was a Christian country. Now it does, now that Russia has become communistic and atheistic, now that Russia has set itself against God. Now it fits the description of Gog perfectly."¹³

The identification of Magog with Lydia and not Scythia is consistent with the ancient texts of the Assyrians, who at various times were either the allies or the foes of the Scythians yet had peaceful dealings with the Lydians. The identification of Magog as Lydian, and not Scythian is also consistent with the writings of

the ancient historian Herodotus (ca 490-424 BC), a Greek who was born in, lived in, and traveled throughout all of ancient Asia Minor. Herodotus' famed book, *The History*, which gives a detailed history of all the ancient nations of Asia Minor, was written about 100 years after Ezekiel's writings.¹⁴ Herodotus, who is considered the Father of History, wrote detailed information about the three different Scythian tribes and the ten different tribes that neighbored them, including their ever changing and opportunistic alliances. Herodotus also wrote in detail about the Lydian Royal Dynasty. It is clear that Magog (Lydia) and the Scythians were not related. He says that Magog (Lydia), as led by the historical figure Gog (Gyges to the Greek, Gugu to the Assyrians) and the Scythians, were in fact enemies! In Gyges of Lydia we have the leader the Assyrians called "Gugu, King of Ludu," and "Gugu of Magugu," the Bible's Gog of Magog.¹⁵ (See *Illustration E*)

In *Foes From the Northern Frontier* Dr. Edwin Yamauchi, a professor of history at Miami University in Ohio writes that Herodotus' account of the Scythians is our chief literary source about the Scythians. He says that some Bible scholars "seem to be unaware of the numerous archeological confirmations of Herodotus' reports in general, and of his Scythian account in particular."¹⁶ In his book, which contains a great deal of information on the Scythians, Yamauchi makes it clear that modern Russia's origins are not Scythian, and like other historians he explains that modern Russia's origins are Scandinavian (the *Rus*).¹⁷ Also, Yamauchi emphatically explains that **none** of the ancient nations referred to in *Ezekiel* 38-39 can possibly be related to modern Russia. Further, Yamauchi says:

"Even if one were to transliterate the Hebrew *rosh* as a

proper name (as does the NAS) rather than translate it as ‘chief’ (as does the KJV, NIV, and Hebrew *Tanakh*), it can have nothing to do with modern ‘Russia.’ This would be a ***gross anachronism*** for the modern name is based upon the name ***Rus***, which was brought into the region of Kiev, north of the Black Sea, by the Vikings only in the Middle Ages.”¹⁸

This Bible interpretation calling for a Russian invasion of Israel was framed at a time when little was known about Magog, the Scythians, or Russian origins. Many who have held to this interpretation have also tried to understand who the other countries listed in *Ezekiel 38-39* were (Meshech, Tubal, Gomer, and Togarmah). Some have associated Magog and/or *Rosh* with Russia, some also erroneously associate Meshech with the Russian city of Moscow, and Tubal with the Siberian city of Tobolsk. Promoted by the 1909 and 1917 editions of the *Scofield Reference Bible*, these erroneous associations are representative of a type of arm chair “name game” archeology that was quite popular during the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Based on the inappropriate transliteration of the Hebrew word *rosh*, which most translations of the Old Testament (KJV, NIV, and Hebrew *Tanakh*) properly translate as the word “chief”, the NAS translation mistakenly refers to a country called ***Rosh***. Historian Paul Boyer notes that “Scores, and probably hundreds of post war prophecy writers made the Rosh = Russia connection, usually citing Gesenius, Bishop Lowth, Scofield, or all three.”¹⁹ For those who insist on the erroneous transliteration of the Hebrew word for “chief” that yields a nation called ***Rosh***, ancient Asia Minor had several different localities that could answer to this name and fulfill the obvious Asia Minor

context of *Ezekiel* 38:2, 3, and 6 without invoking Russia. It should also be noted again that unlike Magog, Meshech, Tubal, Togarmah and Gomer of *Ezekiel* 38-39, which are **all** mentioned in the Table of Nations in *Genesis* 10:2-3, a nation called **Rosh** is notably absent.

For decades archeologists and historians have known that neither Magog, nor the Scythians, nor any of the ancient nations referred to in *Ezekiel* 38-39, could possibly have had anything to do with the origins of the modern Russians. For example, Daniel I. Block, a professor of Old Testament at Wheaton College in Wheaton, Illinois in *The Book of Ezekiel* says,

“The popular identification of Tubal with Tubolsk in Russia (H. Lindsey, *The Late Great Planet Earth* 1970, p.53) is **ludicrous** . . . The popular identification of Meshech with Moscow (of Lindsey, *The Late Great Planet Earth* p.53) is **absurd**.”²⁰

The first Russians were people of a different racial stock, linguistic stock, cultural stock, and time than the Scythians. Based on excavations and historical records, archeologists and historians are absolutely sure that the progenitors of the modern Russians were the Scandinavians who border the Russians on the northwest. We know that Russia did not develop population centers until around 800 AD. By that time, the Scythians had died out, and the ancient nations of Asia Minor referred to in *Ezekiel* 38-39, (Magog, Meshech, Tubal, Gomer, and Togarmah) all had ceased to exist. It is not possible that any of these nations could be related to the origins of modern Russia. We now have primary evidence that makes this incontestable. Assyrian cuneiform court records cover the time period of *Ezekiel*

and make reference to the nations mentioned in *Ezekiel* 38-39.

It is perplexing that even as some Bible dictionaries reflect changes in their identification of the ancient nations of *Ezekiel* 38-39 based on these Assyrian records, many Bible prophecy books still persist in the incorrect theory that Russia is Magog. In many Bible prophecy books the erroneous theory that Magog and the Scythians are the founders of modern Russia is simply taken for granted, and no references for these connections are given at all. Even more disconcerting are statements made with no connection to reality. Thomas McCall and Zola Levitt in *The Coming Russian Invasion of Israel* write, “secular history books trace the fierce Scythian people . . . as forerunners of modern Russia.” Hal Lindsey in *The Late Great Planet Earth* writes, “Any good history book of ancient times traces the Scythians to be a principle part of the people who make up modern Russia.”²¹ Few within the Christian community seem to be aware of the black eye this kind of “research and analysis” has produced in the secular academic world. Historian Paul Boyer of the University of Wisconsin writes, “So hackneyed had this scenario (Magog and Scythia as Russian) become by the 1980’s that its proponents hardly bothered with the geographic and linguistic evidence marshaled by earlier writers.”²²

In *The Final Curtain* Pastor and author Chuck Smith handles the lack of accepted evidence for Magog and the Scythians connecting to modern Russia in another way. He moves Magog from Asia Minor to Southern Russia. Without giving any references, Chuck Smith writes, “Magog throughout history, has been known as the vast area north of the Caucasus Mountains. Today, it is known as Russia.”²³ This is simply not true; historians and archeologists have never placed Magog north of the Caucasus Mountains. Again, there are

no modern history books, research papers or studies which connect either Magog or the Scythians with the modern day Russians.

Ironically, the correct answer to the origins of modern Russia was available as early as the 1800's. As mentioned, John Cummings, a Doctor of Divinity, was one of the 19th century proponents of the Russian invasion of Israel interpretation of *Ezekiel 38-39*. Cummings was the author of *The Destiny of Nations – As Indicated in Bible Prophecy* published in 1864, a book Hal Lindsey in *The Late Great Planet Earth* quoted from a number of times.²⁴ While Cummings quotes and agrees with Bishop Lowth (1710) who said that the modern Russians were derived from the Scythians, and Reverend Hollis Reade who said the modern Russians have their origins in Magog and the Scythians, he also presents another view. Cummings wrote, “Gibbon (Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, 1776) however, thinks the name (‘Russia’) is of Scandinavian origin, and describes the **Ruses** derived from **Ruts**, the Finnish name of Sweden.”²⁵ Gibbon gives the very same origin of the name and people of modern Russia, the Viking tribe from Sweden, the Scandinavian **Ruses (Rus)**, that archeologists and historians know to be true today. So, unbeknownst to Cummings, his book actually gives the truth about modern Russian origins. (*See Illustration G*)

As stated earlier, over the last couple of decades various Bible Dictionaries no longer associate Gog and Magog with Russia. Dr. Merrill F. Unger, who wrote the preface to the first edition of *The Coming Russian Invasion of Israel* published in 1974 and lent his name to *The Unger Bible Dictionary* published in 1960, had believed the discussion of Gog and Magog identified a Russian led invasion of Israel during the end times. However, *The New Unger Bible Dictionary* published in 1988 (edited by R. K. Harrison) no longer associates

Gog and Magog with Russia. Instead it *correctly* associates Gog and Magog with the ancient western Asia Minor nation of **Lydia**.²⁶ *The New Unger Bible Dictionary* says, “Gog is described by the prophet (Ezekiel) as belonging to the land of Magog, the situation of which is defined by its proximity to the isles of the Aegean. It is clear that **Lydia** is meant and that by Magog we must understand the land of Gog.”²⁷ The capital of Lydia was Sardis.

The New Bible Dictionary, Second Edition published in 1982 says, “The only reasonable identification of Gog is with Gyges, the King of **Lydia** (c. 660 B. C.) – Assyrian Gugu; Magog could be Assyrian *ma(t)gugu*, “land of Gog.”²⁸ *Harper’s Bible Dictionary* published in 1985 also identifies Gog with the historical Gyges of Lydia, and identifies “Magog” as a phrase in the Assyrian language which means ‘land of Gog.’”²⁹ A closer look at Gog and the nation of Lydia, as referred to in other places in the Bible, makes it quite clear that *Ezekiel 38-39* referred to the historical king called Gog and the land of Gog [Magog], that is, the ancient nation also known as Lydia.) *Encyclopedia Judaica* also identifies Gog with Gyges, the historical King of Lydia, and Magog, his country, with Lydia when it says: “Since in the list of the sons of Noah (*Genesis 10:2*), Magog is mentioned, the most reasonable identification put forward is with Gyges, also known as Gugu, King of Lydia; and Magog, was his country.”³⁰

Archeologists know that within the Assyrian cuneiform records which have been translated, there are references to all of the ancient nations listed in *Ezekiel 38-39*. Bible scholars now use these same Assyrian texts and related Babylonian texts to provide independent verification and edification of the Bible’s historical accounts from about 805 BC to 530 BC.³¹ For example, the Bible

(*Ezra 4:15, 19* and *5:17-6:7*) tells how the Jews of the fifth century BC (538 BC – 457 BC) overcame opposition by the local Persian governor to the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem by referring to these *same* Assyrian cuneiform court records. These Assyrian records show that Magog, Meshech, Tubal, and Togarmah (*Ezekiel 38:5*) were all nations of ancient Asia Minor that dealt with the Assyrian court. They stretched across Asia Minor. Gomer (*Ezekiel 38:5* – Gimmiraia = Cimmerians) actually invaded Asia Minor by coming down from an area around the northeast shore of the Black Sea.

These nations all co-existed in Asia Minor (Modern Turkey) at a time when Magog (also known as Ludu or Lydia in both the Bible and the Assyrian texts) was led by a militant leader called Gog (685-652 BC), about 100 years before Ezekiel wrote. Gog is the Hebrew spelling of the name of a militant leader from western Asia Minor known as Gyges of Lydia to the Greeks. This same leader and country was known as Gugu of Ludu to the Assyrians.³² The Assyrians made great use of *eponyms* (i.e. words or names derived from the name of a person) and even published eponym lists. In the Assyrian language “the land of Gugu” is rendered as *Ma-gugu*, just a “the land of Zamua” is rendered as *Ma-zamua*.^{*} The Hebrew spelling of *Magugu* is “Magog,” and thus “Magog” simply means “the land of Gog.”

The ruler referred to in this “land of” eponym format was usually the very first ruler from this land to become known to the Assyrian court. Assyrian court records indeed show that Gyges of Lydia (Gugu of Ludu) was the first ruler from Lydia they ever met,

* In Akkadian the word *mat* means “land.” From *Mat-guggu* we get *ma-guggu* which means “the land of guggu.”

since all dealings with western Asia Minor up to then were mediated by Meshech in central Asia Minor.³³ However, after Meshech fell to Gomer, during the reign of Gyges, direct contact between Lydia and Assyria began, and Gyges became the first Lydian ruler known to the Assyrian Court. Hence, Lydia would have also been known as the “land of Gyges” and from this we get Ma-gog.*

When *Ezekiel* 38:2 refers to Gog from the land of Magog, as the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, the Scripture is referring to a specific geographic area – Asia Minor – and to a specific time period and ruler – when Magog, Meshech, and Tubal were all co-existent. The Assyrian records do speak of such a time period and person, and we now know that this Gog, the King of Lydia (Gugu of Ludu = Gyges of Lydia), led the defensive efforts of Magog (Lydia), Meshech, and Tubal against invading Gomer (the Cimmerians). This was a very narrow time period because Meshech fell to Gomer (the Cimmerians) and was taken over during the reign of Gog.†

From these same cuneiform records, a corroborating inscription found in Magog (Lydia), and from accounts by ancient historians, we also know that this King Gog sent troops to Egypt to serve as mercenaries sometime after 664 BC. He helped Psammetichus I (the son of Necho I of *II Chronicles* 35:20) suppress native rivals, and secure his kingship over all of Egypt.³⁴ The fact that Gog sent troops to help Psammetichus and serve as his personal bodyguard explains the seeming incongruity of a nation of Asia Minor being counted among the north African nations of Ethiopia and Libya as allies of the Egyptians. It also explains why Magog (Lydia) is named in prophecies about the fall of Egypt during the end

* By 540 BC Lydia was incorporated into the Persian empire.

† Magog, Meshech, Tubal, and Gomer are listed together in *Genesis* 10:2.

times. Magog or Lydia is counted among those “in league” with and who “uphold Egypt” in *Ezekiel 30:4-6* and in *Jeremiah 46:8-10*. In *Ezekiel 38-39* we once again see Lydia (Magog), Ethiopia, and Libya as allies (*Ezekiel 38:5*). It is the Lydian army’s expertise with the bow (*Jeremiah 46:9-10* and possibly Lud in *Isaiah 66:19*) that is addressed in *Ezekiel 39:3*, when it says, “I will smite the bow out of thy left hand, and cause thine arrows to fall out of thy right hand.” Magog’s or Lydia’s alliance with Egypt and use of the bow are among the added verifiable insights of the Bible that emerge when knowledge from archeology and history is used as an aid in the interpretation of the Bible. Again, the archeological record shows that Magog, Meshech, Tubal, Gomer, and Togarmah all ended long before population centers began to develop in Russia. Thus, archeologists know that **none** of the nations referred to *Ezekiel 38-39* had anything to do with the origins of modern Russia.

Since the modern day political group or country that is supposed to invade and go to war with Israel is not Russia, what information does the historical record and Bible provide to help identify the mystery leader and his nation that the Bible calls Gog and Magog? The historical King Gog and the nations of Magog, Meshek, and Tubal over which Gog was a “prince” as referred to in *Ezekiel 38-39* served as “historical archetypes” of the antichrist and the multi-national confederacy over which the antichrist is to rule during the tribulation period. The antichrist and his empire will participate in the great end times Battle of Armageddon. The Bible uses the historical Gog as an archetype or model of the antichrist to come in the exact same ways that Bible uses the historical King David as a type or model of Jesus the Christ’s Second Coming (*Ezekiel 34:23*

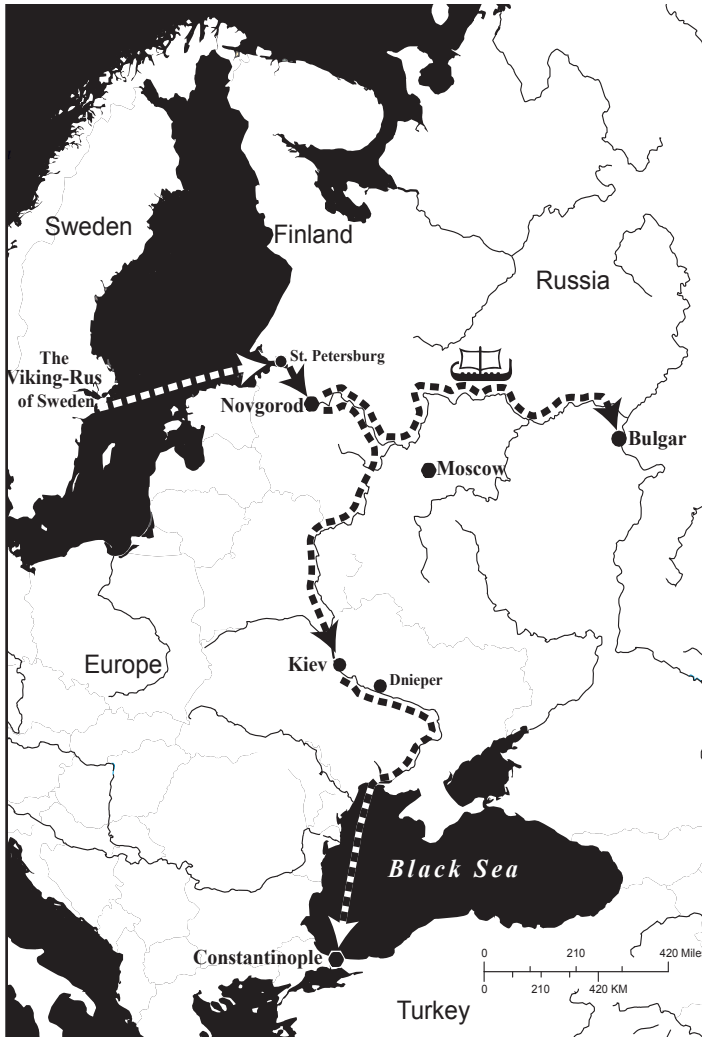
and *Ezekiel 37:22-24*).^{*} More is revealed by examining the Sumerian language used by the Assyrians as a sacred language, much like Latin is used today by the Roman Catholic Church. In Sumerian the word **gug** (Gog) means “darkness.” In the chief prince Gog from Magog in *Ezekiel 38:2*, we have a reference to the chief prince of darkness from the land of darkness, another type of reference to the antichrist and the lands of his kingdom.[†] Chapter 9 reveals the connections between Gog, Magog, and the battle spoken of in *Ezekiel 38-39* to the end times battle spoken of in the *Book of Revelation*.

Beyond the misunderstanding about the Russian invasion of Israel, the entire nature of the Battle of Armageddon has been misunderstood. This misunderstanding includes information about why this battle is to take place and about who will be battling whom. The current understanding of specific events to take place during the battle and even where the battle is to take place must be reevaluated. See Chapter 9 for more details. (www.thecometsofgod.com)

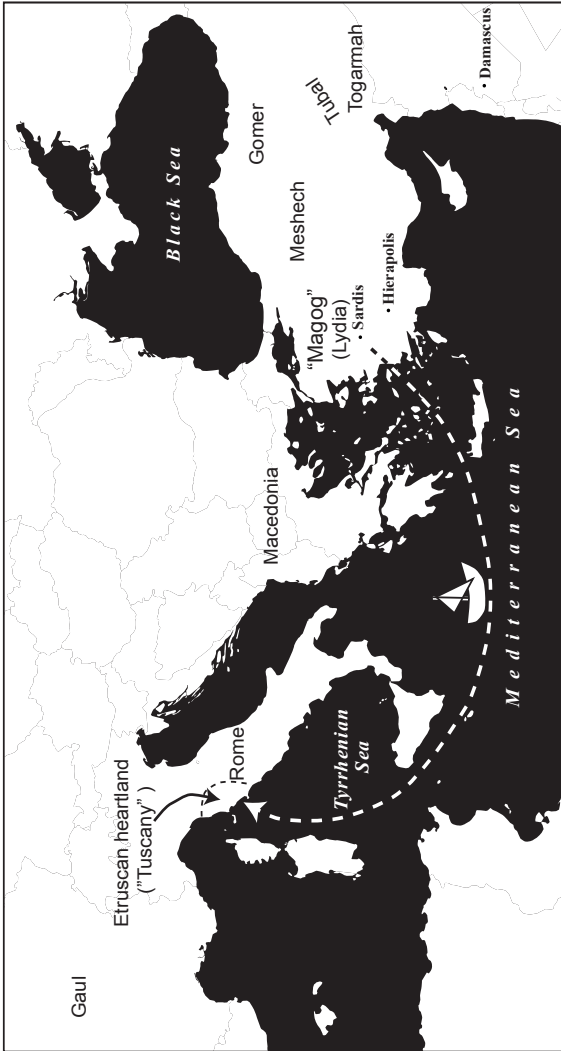
^{*} *Ezekiel 38:17* gives added insight about Gog being a “type” of the antichrist when it asks, “Art thou he of whom I have spoken in old times by my servants the prophets of Israel . . .? And it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord God, that my fury shall come up in my face.” Space does not permit but there are indeed passages in the Old Testament where the antichrist and the Lord saving Israel are spoken about. (There are no passages where Russia is spoken about.)

[†] In the chief prince Gog from Magog leading, Meshech, Tubal and Gomer, we have in ancient terms “the chief prince of darkness from the land of darkness” leading men that “caused their terror in the land of the living” (*Ezekiel 32:26*) and “creatures from hell” (Assyrian term for Gomer).

“Gog and Magog” are also referred in *Revelation 20:8* as opposing the saints of Christ (Messiah) at the end of the Millennium and here “Gog and Magog” (Gog and the land of Gog) in their most basic meaning, are taken to be types or references to any “antichrist” and “the land of this antichrist”; just as *I John 2:18, 22, 4:3*, and *II John 7* all make it clear that “there are many antichrists.”



THE VIKING ORIGINS OF RUSSIA Groups of Viking traders called the “Rus” traveling in shallow draft ships moved along the great rivers of Russia to establish trading posts which became the region’s major cities (for example: Novgorod, Bulgar, Kiev and Moscow). According to the 12th century document known as the *Primary Chronicle* in 852 AD the land around Kiev was named “Rus” and the inhabitants called “Russes.” The renowned Arab Chronicler *Ibn Fadlan* (921 AD) tells how he met a group of tall, blond haired Swedish traders called the “Rus” along the Volga River near the Bulgar capital. The Rus came to rule over the local Slavic people and found the Russian state. The belief that Russian origins involve Magog and/or the Scythians (see previous diagram) is contrary to historical fact. Russia is **NOT** the so-called “*Evil Empire*” of Ezekiel 38/39.



ANCIENT NATIONS OF EZEKIEL 38/39 makes reference to a group of ancient nations that are all found in Asia Minor: Magog (Lydia), Meshech, Tubal, Togarmah and Gomer. The correct identification of these nations comes from the “Royal Court Records of the Assyrians”; the primary source on this subject. These same Assyrian Court records are referred to in the Bible (*Ezra 4:15, 19*). **LYDIAN MIGRATION TO ITALY** An early Lydian dynasty experienced a prolonged famine which caused half of the Lydian population to migrate to the west coast of Italy, just north of Rome. The Romans called these Lydian migrants “Etruscans.” The Etruscans settled in an area called Tuscany and they helped found the city of Rome and jump start the Roman civilization. Hundreds of years after this migration, the Lydian population in Asia Minor came to be ruled by a militant ruler whom the Greeks called “Gyges of Lydia.” To the Assyrians this same leader was known as “Gugu King of Ludu,” and “Gugu of Magugu.” Ezekiel referred to this same leader as “Gog of Magog” where “Magog” means “the land of Gog.”