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The Literal Interpretation of the Bible

M. R. DeHaan, writing in 1951, identified “the sign of Gog and Magog” to be one of the “three most outstanding signs of the coming of Christ.”¹ He’s not alone. Nearly every book being published today points to the Gog and Magog alliance as evidence that we are living in the last days and the world is on the eve of destruction. Ezekiel 38 and 39 are being used by today’s prophecy writers as a modern-day prophetic blueprint for our time. As we’ll see, these same prophecy writers almost never tell their readers that there has been a long history of failed predictions based on these two chapters and other prophetic texts.² While the world is a dangerous place, this does not mean that Ezekiel was predicting prophetic events 2600 years removed from his time. As I hope to show, Ezekiel’s prophecy had a more immediate fulfillment. The accomplishment of this prophecy was to demonstrate to “the nations” at the time that “the house of Israel went into exile for their iniquity because they acted treacherously against” God (Ezek. 39:23; cp. 38:23). These witnessing nations are described by Ezekiel as Israel’s “adversaries” (39:23). Applying the prophecy of Ezekiel 38 and 39 to modern-day nations is contrary to the historical context. No nation today had any part in Israel’s exile 2600 years ago.

The prophecy begins with instructions given to Ezekiel to set his “face toward Gog of the land of Magog” (38:2). Who is Gog and what is the land of Magog? The most popular interpretation is that Gog is modern-day Russia. Magog, a people group that first appears in Genesis 10:2, is thought to be an alliance of nations that join Russia in

a failed end-time invasion of Israel. Added to the mix, a leader of this confederation is said to be the “prince of Rosh,” the leader of Russia. In 1972, Carl Johnson wrote *Prophecy Made Plain for Times Like These*,³ in which he includes a lengthy quotation from a message Jack Van Impe gave at Canton Baptist Temple in Canton, Ohio, sometime in 1969. Like so many who claim to know what’s on the prophetic horizon, Van Impe made his case for an imminent war with Russia on what the newspapers of 1969 were reporting. This war was so close, he charged, “that the stage is being set for what could explode into World War III *at any moment*.”⁴ The passage of four decades hardly seems like “at any moment.”

When a President Spoke, the World Listened

Politics and the Gog and Magog Alliance were topics of discussion in the 1970s when the Cold War was hot. The Russian Bear was showing its teeth, and there was an attempt to explain its aggression in prophetic terms. At a 1971 banquet for California state senator James Mills, then-Governor Ronald Reagan (1911–2004) followed a similar prophetic script. Guided by popular prophecy books of the day, most likely Hal Lindsey’s *Late Great Planet Earth* (1970) that included a chapter with the title “Russia is a Gog,” Reagan said:

In the 38th chapter of Ezekiel, it says that the land of Israel will come under attack by the armies of the ungodly nations, and it says that Libya will be among them. Do you understand the significance of that? Libya has now gone Communist, and that’s a sign that the day of Armageddon isn’t far off. 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 communist and atheistic, now that Russia has set itself against God. Now it fits the description of Gog perfectly.... For the first time ever, everything is in place for the battle of Armageddon and the Second Coming of Christ. It can’t be

too long now. Ezekiel says that fire and brimstone will be rained upon the enemies of God's people. That must mean that they will be destroyed by nuclear weapons.⁵

Actually, it was thought to "make sense" to generations of prophecy writers. Like Reagan, they applied the prophecy to the adversary of their day and proclaimed that Gog was about to strike. Reagan's borrowed interpretation of Ezekiel 38 and 39 has been repeated so often by contemporary prophecy writers that it is now an unquestioned tenet of prophetic orthodoxy akin to believing in the deity of Jesus. Even so, his advisors got nervous every time Reagan addressed the subject.⁶ This didn't stop the future president from pulling out the prophecy card when he was before a receptive audience.

Ron Rhodes begins his book *Northern Storm Rising: Russia, Iran, and the Emerging End-Times Military Coalition against Israel* with Reagan giving a similar speech at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas. Here's how end-time writer Rhodes describes Reagan's interest in the subject and his enthusiasm for addressing prophetic themes, especially Ezekiel 38 and 39:

Reagan was a big fan of the biblical prophet Ezekiel. In fact, Ezekiel was Reagan's favorite book of prophecy. Like many other Christians, Reagan believed that the fierce Old Testament prophet foretold that God would one day gather the children of Israel who were scattered among heathen nations back to the promised land. He also believed, based on his reading of Ezekiel 38 and 39, that atheistic Russia—along with various Arab nations of the Middle East—would one day lead an invasion into Israel from the north and that God would intervene and utterly destroy this military coalition. He understood that not everything had fallen precisely into place, but he nevertheless believed the stage was being set for the fulfillment of end-time prophecies. Reagan believed he might even witness the second coming of Jesus Christ in his own lifetime.⁷

Reagan knew his audience. He understood that evangelicals made up a large percentage of his base. He knew their theological leanings, their

concern that the Soviet Union would export atheist Communism around the globe, and their commitment to Israel's always tenuous security. These views would prove advantageous to him when he ran for president in 1980 against incumbent Jimmy Carter who was more enamored with liberal and neo-orthodox theologians.⁸

Reagan told the late Jerry Falwell that he believed that "we are approaching Armageddon.... Maybe not in my lifetime or yours, but in the near future."⁹ At the August 1980 Religious Roundtable's National Affairs briefing held in Dallas, Texas, Reagan said the following to the 15,000 newly politically involved evangelical crowd: "I know that you can't endorse me. But ... I want you to know that I endorse you,"¹⁰ and that included their views of the end times.

Still Right Around the Corner

Prophecy writer Ed Hindson, who co-authored *Global Warning* in 2007 with Tim LaHaye, confirms how important the subject of Gog and Magog is to modern-day prophetic speculation: "Without question," he wrote, "these two chapters offer the most detailed biblical prophecy outlining a future war. It is also the timeliest indication that we are living in the very period the Bible speaks of just prior to the return of Christ." He is sure that the fulfillment of this two-chapter prophecy refers to a "forthcoming attack on Israel ... [that] could be right around the corner."¹¹

The August 2008 invasion of Georgia by Russia has re-energized the Gog-Magog alliance theorists. Hal Lindsey, who argued that a Russian-led invasion would take place before 1988,¹² has readjusted his prophetic calendar by arguing that a "Russian-led alliance of nations" will "sweep suddenly down upon Israel in a surprise invasion that evokes only a weak diplomatic response from the West."¹³ In a later article, he writes that "the first domino has already been pushed over. Now, it's just a matter of time until the rest of them start to fall."¹⁴ Still later, Lindsey argues, "Twenty-five centuries ago, the Hebrew prophetic Ezekiel predicted the rise of a vast, Russian-led Islamic alliance cryptically called 'Gog and Magog.'"¹⁵ If it is cryptic, then how does Lindsey know Ezekiel was referring to Russia, Iran, modern Georgia,

parts of Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Armenia since none of these names are mentioned anywhere in Ezekiel's prophecy? The burden of proof rests with those who are making these claims, and as I hope to show, the burden is big and heavy.

In earlier prophecy works, Russia was linked with European nations, now it's Syria, Iran, Iraq, and Turkey that mount an aggressive attack on Israel with God miraculously rescuing His people by destroying the presumptuous invaders. (Those who teach this view then claim that just a few years after God turns back this multi-national assault and rescues Israel, millions of Jews will be slaughtered by the forces assembled by antichrist.) Timothy J. Dailey writes in *The Gathering Storm* that the Gog/Magog prophecy in Ezekiel 38 and 39 of a "Russian-led invasion of the Middle East" is "so commonly held as to be almost taken for granted.... So ingrained is this theory that books on biblical prophecy have assumed routinely over the years that it was beyond doubt. Without discussing the evidence, for example, John F. Walvoord simply concludes that the description in Ezekiel 38 and 39 'could only refer to what we know today as Russia.' What is the evidence for this commonly held belief? In truth, the Russian invasion theory rests upon scanty foundations indeed."¹⁶

A History of Interpretation

Chuck Missler writes in his book *Prophecy 20/20* that "the apparent use of nuclear weapons has made this passage appear remarkably timely, and some suspect that it may be on our horizon."¹⁷ Prophecy writers have made similar pronouncements, of course, without the reference to "nuclear weapons." The latest argument for a wholesale invasion of Israel by modern-day nations is that Israel is sitting on a pile of oil. A quick but careful reading of Ezekiel 38 and 39 will show that there is no direct or indirect mention of nuclear weapons or oil. These new arguments only confirm that current events are guiding interpreters rather than Scripture.

Before we make a detailed study of Ezekiel 38 and 39, it will prove helpful to identify some of the more popular interpretations. Many will be surprised that the Gog-Magog alliance theory isn't the only

one that has support among evangelical scholars and commentators. Thomas L. Constable lists seven popular views.

1. The invasion is only symbolic of the attempts of evil forces to overcome God's people.
2. It will occur before the Tribulation, either before or at the time of the Rapture or just after it.
3. It will happen during the Tribulation (cf. Dan. 11:40–41; Rev. 14:14–20).
4. It will take place at the end of the seven-year Tribulation (the battle of Armageddon; cf. Zech. 12; 14:1–4; Rev. 19:11–21).
5. It will happen between the end of the Tribulation and the beginning of the Millennium.
6. It will happen at the beginning of the Millennium.
7. It will occur at the end of the Millennium (see below).¹⁸

In addition to the ones mentioned by Constable, a long held interpretive approach understands the prophecy to be a battle fought by ancient peoples around the second-century B.C. William Hendriksen is a good representative of this view:

The expression “Gog and Magog” [in Rev. 20:8] is borrowed from the book of Ezekiel [38:2]... Now, in Ezekiel the term undoubtedly indicates the power of the Seleucidae especially as it was revealed in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes, the bitter enemy of the Jews. The centre of his kingdom was located in Northern Syria. Seleucus established his residence there in the city of Antioch on the Orontes. To the east his territory extended beyond the Tigris. To the north the domain over which the Seleucidae wielded the scepter included Meshech and Tubal, districts in Asia Minor.... Accordingly, Gog was the prince of Magog, that is, Syria. Hence, the oppression of God's people by “Gog and Magog”

refers, in Ezekiel, to the terrible persecution under Antiochus Epiphanes, ruler of Syria.¹⁹

The above interpretation understands that the prophetic battle is being fought with weapons as they were described by Ezekiel. While this view is attractive, and it's true that Antiochus was an evil ruler who persecuted the Jews, there is no indication that his actions compare well with the details of Ezekiel 38 and 39.

A more recent interpretation holds that Ezekiel's Gog and Magog battle is fulfilled in the details of Revelation 20:7–10 when Rome and its international armies attacked Israel and destroyed the temple in A.D. 70. This approach is difficult to comprehend since the 1000 years of Revelation 20:4 would have to be contracted into a 40-year period between A.D. 30 and 70. Then there's the interpretive problem that Israel's rescue is in focus and not her judgment. The destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 was a judgment and not a rescue.

Still others teach (Constable's number 7 above) that Ezekiel's prophecy takes place near the end of the 1000-year period mentioned in Revelation 20:7–10 and applies it to the church and the forces of evil. Instead of a real battle.²⁰ It's more likely that John's use of the Gog and Magog imagery is symbolic, similar to the way Babylon (Rev. 14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:2, 10, 21), Egypt (11:8), and Sodom (11:8) are used in Revelation.²¹

Most interpreters have tried to find the fulfillment in events of their day using current events as the interpretive grid. For example, in the fourth and fifth centuries, Gog was thought to refer to the Goths and Moors. In the seventh century, it was the Huns. By the eighth century, the Islamic empire was making a name for itself, so it was the logical candidate for fulfillment. By the tenth century, the Hungarians briefly replaced Islam as a Gog candidate. But by the sixteenth century, the Turks and Saracens seemed to fit the Gog and Magog profile with the Papacy thrown in for added prophetic juice. In the seventeenth century, Spain and Rome were the end-time bad guys.²² In the nineteenth century, Napoleon was Gog leading the forces of Magog-France.²³ For most of the twentieth century, Communist

Various Gog & Magog Candidates	
Century	Candidates
Fourth	Goths
Fifth	Goths and Moors
Seventh	Huns
Eighth	Islamic Empire
Tenth	Hungarians
Eleventh	Avars (Turkish Speaking Tribes)
Fourteenth	Tartars (Mongols)
Fourteenth	Persecutors of the Lollards
Sixteenth	Ten Dispersed Tribes of Israel
Sixteenth	Turks and Saracens
Sixteenth	Mohammedans & the Papacy
Seventeenth	Pope and Spain
Seventeenth	Native Americans
Twentieth	Political Leader of Russia

Russia had been the logical pick because of its military power, its atheistic worldview, and its designation of being “far north” of Israel.

History shows that when the headlines reflect a change in the political climate, many of the interpretations of the prophetic parts of the Bible change with them. The repeated *failure* of the interpretive history of Ezekiel 38 and 39 over the centuries is prime evidence that modern-day prophecy writers are not “profiling the future through the lens of Scripture” but through the ever-changing headlines of today’s news. This is why *revised* prophecy books continue to be published.

Searching for Jets Fighters in an Ancient World

A lot has to be read into the Bible in order to make Ezekiel 38 and 39 fit modern-day military realities that include technologically ad-

vanced jet fighters, “missiles,” and “atomic and explosive” weaponry. Those who claim to interpret the Bible literally have a problem on their hands. For example, if Tim LaHaye is true to his adoption of a “plain and common sense” literalism, then the Russian attack he and Jerry Jenkins describe in the first volume of their *Left Behind* series should be a literal representation of the actual battle events as they are depicted in Ezekiel. There should be a one-to-one correspondence between Ezekiel’s description of the battle and modern-day weaponry. This assessment is based on LaHaye’s own interpretive methodology:

The best guide to Bible study is “The Golden Rule of Biblical Interpretation.” To depart from this rule opens the student to all forms of confusion and sometimes even heresy.

When the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense, but take every word at its primary, literal meaning unless the facts of the immediate context clearly indicate otherwise.²⁴

The “Golden Rule of Interpretation” is not found in the Bible but is proposed by David L. Cooper and can be found in his book *When Gog’s Armies Meet the Almighty in the Land of Israel*.²⁵ It should be noted that he does not apply his Golden Rule of Interpretation to the weapons described by Ezekiel. He writes that “it becomes very evident that Ezekiel had to speak of the future weapons of warfare in terms of those with which his auditors [first hearers] were familiar. Had he spoken of airplanes or machine guns, he would have had to speak of them in known terms, comparing them with familiar objects, or the Lord would have had to coin names for them, which still could have been unintelligible. This He did not choose to do.”²⁶ God didn’t choose to do it because He did not have a distant future battle in view. God described a battle fought with ancient weapons because He had an ancient battle in view, one that would take place in a future not too far removed from the time He revealed the prophetic future to Ezekiel. Using futuristic terms and descriptions of mechanized weapons unfamiliar to the readers of Ezekiel’s day would have left no doubt that the prophecy was not for them.

The first readers of Ezekiel's prophecy would have envisioned a battle fought as Ezekiel described it with the weapons as they are depicted, because that would have been the "plain sense." There is no way around this simple truth. They would have had justification for taking this approach because they had other Scriptures to confirm what they were reading about Magog, the list of nations, and the armaments being used. Horses, bows and arrows, war clubs, shields, and chariots had been used in previous battles. There was no good reason to understand the battle in any way other than what Ezekiel was describing at God's direction.

The Plain Sense

Ron Rhodes is another example of someone who claims to follow the plain sense approach but fails to apply it in terms of the primary audience. "Here is a basic rule of thumb for interpreting the Bible: When the plain sense of Scripture makes good sense, seek no other sense."²⁷ Rhodes, in a book he co-authored with Norman Geisler,

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—Ron Rhodes

expands on the "plain sense" interpretive approach. They say that literal "refers to the understanding of a text that any person of normal intelligence would understand without the help of any special keys or codes." The literal meaning of Scripture "embraces the normal, everyday, common understanding of the terms of the Bible. Words are given the meaning they normally have in common communication." The interpreter should

be mindful of the "historical setting." Sentences of Scripture "should not be taken out of the space-time, cultural context in which they were uttered." This next point is important: "It is the means by which the interpreter mentally transfers himself into the context in which the author uttered the words. This guards against the interpretive error of making the *reader's* historical or cultural context the norm for understanding the text."²⁸ But this is exactly what Rhodes does

when he interprets Ezekiel's two chapters in terms of today's historical and cultural context.

LaHaye insists that the interpreter, following Cooper, is to "take every word at its primary, literal meaning unless the facts of the immediate context clearly indicate otherwise." We learn from LaHaye that the prophecies found in Ezekiel 38 and 39 "are among the most specific and easy to understand in the prophetic word."²⁹ If this is true, then why do LaHaye and those who follow his interpretive methodology force a less than literal interpretation on Ezekiel's two-chapter prophecy? As Joel Miller argues, "A better hermeneutic than 'The Golden Rule of Biblical Interpretation' is 'Scripture Interprets Scripture Better than do Newspapers.'"³⁰

There are numerous qualifiers to the so-called plain sense/literal approach that applying the methodology consistently becomes nearly impossible for the average student of the Bible. That's why many Christians are dependent on Bibles loaded with notes to tell them what the Bible means even though the text is right before their eyes and is clear enough on its own! Eager Bible students read bows and arrows, and someone's note tells them it's really missiles and launching pads.

The Bible is the Best Interpreter of Itself

The interpretive solution to what Ezekiel 38 and 39 are describing is found within the pages of Scripture. The Holy Spirit revealed to Ezekiel a prophecy that his first readers could and did understand.³¹ Those who first read or listened to the prophecy read and heard familiar place names that are mentioned elsewhere in Scripture. There was no need to have a scholar's understanding of ancient languages or knowledge of distant geographical hot spots. These first readers could comprehend the rudimentary elements of the prophecy if they had only a basic knowledge of the Bible. The same is true for someone studying the Bible today. Setting, language, grammar, context, audience, and author perspective are all very important when interpreting the Bible, but these elements only take on meaning when they are compared with other Scripture passages. The biblical writers did not write in a vacuum. They wrote against the backdrop of what was written before, and in the case

of the prophetic books, of what was to come. If you want to know what a word or phrase means in one passage, you will need to find other passages that use the same word or phrase. It's not always this simple, but it's the best place to start. The Bible is one book with a unified message. This is why the Bible is the best interpreter of itself.

Notes

1. M. R. DeHaan, *Signs of the Times and other Prophetic Messages* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1951), 74.

2. Stafford North, *Armageddon Again?: A Reply to Hal Lindsey* (Oklahoma City, OK: Oklahoma Christian University, 1991).

3. Carl G. Johnson, *Prophecy Made Plain for Times Like These* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1972).

4. Jack Van Impe, *The Coming War With Russia* (Old Time Gospel Hour Press, n.d.). The quotation is taken from a message that Van Impe gave at Canton Baptist Temple, Canton, Ohio. The talk was recorded on a vinyl record. Quoted in Johnson, *Prophecy Made Plain for Times Like These*, 82–83.

5. <http://tinyurl.com/5qa28b>. A shorter version of Reagan's address is found in Paul Boyer, *When Time Shall Be No More: Prophecy Belief in Modern Culture* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1992), 162. Lindsey's views on Russia as an end-time prophetic player have changed with the headlines. In 1981 he wrote, "Today, the Soviets are without question the strongest power on the face of the earth." (*The 1980's: Countdown to Armageddon* [New York: Bantam, 1981], 68). Compare this with what he wrote in 1994: "We see Russia as no longer a world threat, but a regional power with a world-class military—exactly what Ezekiel 38 and 39 predicted it would be." (*Planet Earth 2000 A.D.* [1994], 216).

6. Paul Kengor, *God and Ronald Reagan: A Spiritual Life* (New York: Harper-Collins, 2004), 194

7. Ron Rhodes, *Northern Storm Rising: Russia, Iran, and the Emerging End-Times Military Coalition against Israel* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2008), 11.

8. Steven F. Hayward *The Real Jimmy Carter: How Our Worst Ex-President Undermines American Foreign Policy, Coddles Dictators and Created the Party of Clinton and Kerry* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing, 2004), 43–46.

9. Jerry Falwell quoted in Deborah Hart Strober and Gerald S. Strober, *The Reagan Presidency: An Oral History of the Era*, rev. ed. (Dulles, VA: Potomac Books, 2003), 31.

10. "A Tide of Born-Again Politics," *Newsweek* (September 15, 1980), 36. Quoted in Bruce J. Schulman, *The Seventies: The Great Shift in American Culture, Society and Politics* (New York: The Free Press, 2001), 216.

11. Ed Hindson, "Is War with Iran Inevitable?," *National Liberty Journal* (March

2007), 9. Also see Tim LaHaye and Ed Hindson, *Global Warning: Are We on the Brink of World War III?* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2007), 127.

12. Hal Lindsey interview with W. Ward Gasque, "Future Fact? Future Fiction?" *Christianity Today* (April 15, 1977), 40.

13. Hal Lindsey, "Oh, My Gog!" (August 22, 2008): <http://tinyurl.com/5a688p>

14. Hal Lindsey, "The Gog-Magog Alliance" (August 29, 2008): <http://tinyurl.com/6qldbh>

15. Hal Lindsey, "While we're not looking" (September 5, 2008): <http://tinyurl.com/5pw6tw>

16. Timothy J. Dailey, *The Gathering Storm* (Tarrytown, NY: Revell, 1992), 157–158.

17. Chuck Missler, *Prophecy 20/20: Profiling the Future Through the Lens of Scripture* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2006), 155.

18. Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on Ezekiel" (2008), 185: <http://tinyurl.com/nd3t6>

19. William Hendriksen, *More Than Conquerors: An Interpretation of the Book of Revelation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, [1939] 1967), 233. Also see Ralph Woodrow, *His Truth is Marching On: Advanced Studies on Prophecy in the Light of History* (Riverside, CA: Ralph Woodrow Evangelistic Association, 1977), 43 and T. Boersma, *Is the Bible a Jigsaw Puzzle: An Evaluation of Hal Lindsey's Writings?* (St. Catherines, Ontario: Paideia Press, 1978), 106–125. For a description of other views, see G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: The New International Greek Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 1024–1025.

20. For a description and critique of this view, see Douglas Berner, *The Silence is Broken: God Hooks Ezekiel's Gog and Magog* (2006), 283–289. Berner believes that Ezekiel 38 and 39 are describing an end-time battle where Russia is the major prophetic player. It's more likely that John is using Gog and Magog as Old Testament symbols similar to the way he uses Jezebel (Rev. 2:20), Babylon (14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:2, 10, 21), Sodom and Egypt (11:8), and other Old Testament symbols.

21. Even futurist Mark Hitchcock understands Gog and Magog in Revelation this way: "The words Gog and Magog in Rev 20:8 are probably used as someone today would apply the word 'Waterloo' as a shorthand way to signal a crushing military defeat. During the millennium, the defeat of Gog and Magog in Ezek 38–39 will apparently become legendary among the nations. John applies this overwhelming defeat to a new historical situation. Satan will lead this final invasion and will meet his 'Waterloo'—his 'Gog and Magog.'" ("The Battle of Gog and Magog": <http://tinyurl.com/6lhe7x>). Also see Mark Hitchcock, *The Complete Book of Bible Prophecy* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1999), 214–215.

Henry Morris takes a similar approach: "Despite the duplication of names, this Gog and Magog incursion after the thousand years does not seem to be the same as the invasion of Israel by Gog and Magog before the thousand years, as described in Ezekiel 38 and 39. The combatants in the two battles are quite different from each other and the outcomes are drastically different, as is obvious from even a casual reading of the two accounts. It may be that the names are the same because the

new leaders of the rebellion (human leaders, that is) come from the same northern regions of Eurasia as the leaders of that earlier invasion of Israel. They may even have deliberately appropriated these Biblical names as a statement of their intent to avenge the defeat and death of their ancestors when they invaded Israel." (*The Defender's Study Bible* [Grand Rapids, MI: World Publishing, 1995], 1463).

22. Francis X. Gumerlock, *The Day and the Hour: Christianity's Perennial Fascination with Predicting the End of the World* (Powder Springs, GA: American Vision, 2000), 68.

23. T. R., "Commentary on Ezekiel's Prophecy of Gog and Magog," *The Gentleman's Magazine* (October 1816), 307.

24. Tim LaHaye, *No Fear of the Storm: Why Christians will Escape All the Tribulation* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 1992), 240. *No Fear of the Storm* has been republished as *Rapture Under Attack* (1998).

25. David L. Cooper, *When Gog's Armies Meet the Almighty in the Land of Israel: An Exposition of Ezekiel Thirty-Eight and Thirty-Nine*, 3rd ed. (Los Angeles, CA: Biblical Research Society, [1940] 1958), [i].

26. Cooper, *When Gog's Armies Meet the Almighty in the Land of Israel*, 104.

27. Rhodes, *Northern Storm Rising*, 20.

28. Norman Geisler and Ron Rhodes, *Conviction without Compromise: Standing Strong in the Core Beliefs of the Christian Faith* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2008), 196.

29. Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins, *Are We Living in the End Times?: Current Events Foretold in Scripture ... And What They Mean* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1999), 84.

30. Joel Miller, "Israel and End-Time Fiction" (April 5, 2002): <http://tinyurl.com/3lwny5>

31. There are things in the Bible that are "hard to understand" (1 Pet. 3:16), but not everything is of the some complexity