

Hello everyone,

PERCENT OF BIBLE COMPLETED: 63.1%

Weekly Readings will cover:

Sunday: Ezekiel 38 & 39

Monday: Ezekiel 32

Tuesday: Ezekiel 33:1 – 20

Wednesday: Psalm 137

Thursday: 1 Chronicles 5 & 1 Samuel 14:24 – 52

Friday: 1 Chronicles 6

Saturday: 1 Chronicles 7 & 8

Current # of email addresses in the group: 627

I hope everyone enjoyed their study this week. I also wanted to apologize that I didn't update my dates correctly the last two weeks and while the number was accurate, the month still said "March". Sorry about that mistake.

Sunday's commentary is very long this week, but then Monday's is very short, as are most of the rest of the weeks'.

Also, please watch closely which chapters we cover each day as we bounce around a bit.

Current and archive of this reading program is available at:

<https://www.ucg.org/congregations/san-francisco-bay-area-ca/announcements/audio-links-re-three-year-chronological-deep>

The audio archive information is also available on our UCG Bay Area YouTube page here:

https://youtube.com/@ucgbayarea5792?si=EA_tacLBfv1XR3jH

You may actually prefer accessing it directly from this Playlist tab:

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3-YEAR CHRONOLOGICAL STUDY: Week 97

Read the following passages & the Daily Deep Dive on the daily reading.

Day 652 – SUNDAY: May 25th

Ezekiel 38 & 39

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading plan states: "We come now to a remarkable prophecy, spanning chapters 38 and 39. It is God's message to Gog of Magog and his allies, who dwell far to the north of the Promised Land and of

Ezekiel's place of exile in Babylon but will one day come down into the land of Israel with a vast invasion force. Notice that Gog's invasion will occur "after many days...in the latter years...in the latter days" (38:8, 16). So we are clearly dealing with an end-time prophecy.

Before more specifically examining the time factor, let's look at the identities of the various peoples mentioned.

"Gog, of the land of Magog," is called the "prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal" (verses 2-3; 39:1). He is allied with "Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya" (verse 5)--or, as Ezekiel actually wrote, "Peras, Cush and Put" (Living Bible)--as well as "Gomer and...the house of Togarmah" (verse 6).

Most of these names can be found in the Table of Nations of Genesis 10, which lists the families of humanity descended from Noah. Notice: "Now this is the genealogy of the sons of Noah: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And sons were born to them after the flood. The sons of Japheth were *Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech*, and *Tiras*. The sons of *Gomer* were *Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah*.... The sons of Ham were *Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan*...." (verses 1-2, 6 emphasis added).

Notice that *Gog* is not mentioned here. That may be because the name *Magog* actually means "land of Gog"--so that perhaps the actual son of Japheth was named Gog and the nation he founded became known as Magog. The name Gog could in a later context designate anyone who was from the land of Gog (i.e., from Magog).

The first-century Jewish historian Josephus wrote: "Magog founded those that from him were named Magogites, but who by the Greeks were called Scythians" (*Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 1, chap. 6, sec. 2). The name *Scythians* denoted a wide array of peoples who ranged

across the Russian Steppes all the way into China. (The Western Scythians were heavily Israelite and Germanic in nationality.)

One researcher writes of the Eastern-ranging Scythians: "The Assyrians called them Mat Gugi (Ma-Gog) which means 'the country of Gog'.... Let Milner, famous for his writings on the Japhetic races, add further to our understanding: 'Magog, as a geographical term used by Hebrews of old and Arabs today (Majaj), denoted that vast stretch of country to the north of the Black Sea, Caucasus, Caspian Sea, Hindu Kush, and Altai, known to the Greek geographers as Skythia'....

"The term Mongol, sometimes written as Mongoul, appears to be directly derived from *Magog*. In India, for example, *Mongol* becomes *Moghul* and a large part of China was known as Mangi when Europeans first visited it. The Arabs called the Scythian tribes of Tartary *Yajuj and Majuj* which is Gog and Magog and the Great Wall of China as the 'wall of al Magog'....

"Where is Magog located today? They migrated via southern Russia to their current homeland, leaving behind such place-names as: Mogliev city, Mogiolistan, Mugojar Mountains, Mogol-Tau Mountains. Among the people of Mongolia, Inner Mongolia, central and much of northern and southern China...and even some Japanese are also descended from Magog. Here are the hundreds of millions of China today. No wonder the name of ancestor Japhet means 'expansion,' implying a large or expanding race. Other peoples descended from Magog [as well]" (Craig White, *In Search of...The Origin of Nations*, 2003, pp. 189-190, available at www.originofnations.org).

Jones' Dictionary of Old Testament Proper Names states in its entry on Magog: "[English biblical commentator Bishop] Lowth on this place says: 'The Mogul Tatars, a people of the Scythian race, are still called so by the Arabian writers.... By Gog and Magog may most probably be meant the Turks, who were originally natives of Tartary, called

Turcheston [Turkestan] by the eastern writers, and whose language is derived from that of the Tartars'" (Alfred Jones, 1997).

Indeed, the Turkish peoples of Central Asia may be included--and are, at the very least, included in the broader alliance, as many of the Eastern Turks appear to derive from Togarmah (see White, p. 198). The Western Turks, as noted in the Beyond Today Bible Commentary on Obadiah, appear to derive from Edom. As also explained there, one such group that appears to have migrated into Central Asia is the Edomite tribe of Amalek (see also White, p. 65). Interestingly, Amalekite kings bore the name *Agag* ([Numbers 24:7](#); [1 Samuel 15:8](#)) and we later see the enemy in the book of Esther, Haman, referred to as an Agagite (3:1, 10; 8:3, 5; 9:24). Josephus refers to him as an Amalekite (*Antiquities*, Book 11, chap. 6, sec. 5). *Agag* is written in the Septuagint as *Agog*, and there could conceivably be some relation to the name Gog--some, such as Milner cited above, suggesting that Agog is a compound of A (number 1) and Gog (great or high), denoting the ruler (see White, p. 65).

Indeed, it is possible that the names *Gog* and *Magog* may be figurative labels on some level in Ezekiel 38-39. *Gog* basically means "rooftop" and is also thought to mean mountain. As it seems to indicate a peak or highest point, some have viewed it as designating a supreme ruler--a despot or dictator. In that case, Gog of Magog becomes "dictator of the dictatorship." That would certainly fit the description given. Perhaps both the figurative and national meanings are intended.

On the other peoples listed, a footnote to [Ezekiel 38:2-3](#) in The Living Bible states: "The names of Gog's confederates (Meshech, Tubal, Gomer, Beth-togarmah) can be identified as Mushki, Tabal, Gimaraya, Tegerama, peoples who lived in the mountainous area southeast of the Black Sea and southwest of the Caspian." This would place them in the region of eastern Turkey and Armenia, just south of the Caucasus Mountains.

The New Unger's Bible Dictionary states in its entry on Tubal: "Tubal and Meschech, the Tabali and Mushki of the Assyrian monuments, were the representatives of eastern Asia Minor. Their territory originally extended far to the S[outh]. In the time of [Assyrian emperors] Sargon and Sennacherib, the territory of the Tabali adjoined Cilicia [in southeast Asia Minor], while the Mushki inhabited the highlands to the E[ast] of them, where they were in contact with the Hittites. In later days, however, Meshech had retreated to the N[orth], and the classical geographers place the Tibereni and the Mushki not far from the Black Sea." Thus we see a clear northward progression.

Meshech evidently "migrated with Tubal up to the Black Sea and into the Russian plains. Dr. Gesenius [the famous Hebrew lexicographer] wrote in the nineteenth century that Meshech became the Moschi.... They dwelt, he said, in the Moschian Mountains. 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 [the Russian capital] and Tobolsk [in West Siberia]) is a very clear mark of identification.... Milner explains: '...The whole district within five hundred miles of Moscow seems to be saturated with the name of Meschech.' He then refers...to the following place names: Moscow; the Moskva River; the Novo-Mosc-owsk on a tributary of the Dnieper; Mosch-Aisk near Borodino; Mosch-ok between Moscow and Nijini Novogorod; Mosch-arki stood on a tributary of the Volga River; Misch-etski stood between Moskow and the Tula...Mesch-a, a branch of the Dwina River; Mesch-Tschowsk near Tula [etc.]...." (White, pp. 178-179).

What about the name *Rosh* in Ezekiel 38-39? This name is not found in the Table of Nations in Genesis 10. Some translators prefer to view the word as the Hebrew word for "head" or "chief" and link it with the word *prince* in the verse as denoting "chief ruler" rather than as a tribal name. However, other translators prefer Rosh as a name. Interestingly,

the Mitanni kingdom in eastern Asia Minor became known as the land of Rashu, "Rash or Rosh meaning 'blond.' Also, nearby dwelt the Urartians [ancient Armenians].... Their last great ruler was Rusa II who built great cities and huge defences. He established the religious center and fortress of *Rusai-urau-turor* Rusa-patari which means 'the small city of Rusa'.... Herodotus wrote that the Matienaians from the land of Rosh were with the peoples of Tubal and Meschech; while Pliny wrote of the Matiani as moving into southern Russia over the Caucasus" (White, p. 267; see also p. 268).

It is commonly believed that the Varangian Rus, Vikings from Sweden, gave their name to Russia. However, "while western scholars accept this as the origin of the Rus, Soviet scholars contend that the Rus were Slavs from the southern steppes. Both are probably correct.... There is no evidence of a tribe from Scandinavia called Ros or Rus. But a tribe of the Antes 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" (White, pp. 268-269).

So far, then, we have an alliance stretching from Russia and Turkestan in Western Asia to Mongolia and China in the Far East. Are other eastern peoples listed in Ezekiel 38-39?

Notice the listing of *Gomer*. This name has caused a lot of confusion as the ancient people near Armenia known as the Gimirrai or Cimmerians migrated around both sides of the Black Sea into Europe--becoming the Celts. For this reason, many equate Gomer with Europe. But the Gimirrai or Cimmerians who migrated into Europe were actually the people known to the Assyrians as *Bit Khumri*, the "house of Omri"--that is, the northern tribes of Israel (once ruled by the dynasty of Omri), who were taken captive to northern Assyria.

The actual people of Gomer (that is, of Japheth's son Gomer), migrated not to Europe but in the exact opposite direction--to southeast Asia.

"Gomer gave rise to the Siamese [Thai], Burmese, Indonesians, Filipinos, Vietnamese, Laotians and Cambodians who all have the same sub-racial anthropological classifications.... The Cambodians' real name is the *Khmer* which is very likely derived from Gomer. Similarly, one of the regions of Burma is known as *Khemarata*. Also, *Kamara* was the original name of Sumatra.... We also find the area of *Kemarat* in Thailand and the *Gimaras* island in the Philippines. Given the aforementioned, it is highly likely that these place and ethnic names are ultimately traceable back to Gomer. While it is impossible to prove, it is most likely and should be included in our list of strong probabilities" (White, p. 194).

Consider next the people of Gomer's son Togarmah, who appears, as noted earlier, to be the progenitor of some of the peoples of eastern Turkestan. "The name may be preserved in the E[ast] Cappadocian city of Til-garimmu, listed in the Assyrian records" ("Togarmah," *New Unger's Bible Dictionary*). This location was in what is now central Turkey.

The Hittite name, given above in The Living Bible footnote, was Tegerama. The people of this region "lived on the border with *Tabal*. Other names for this people were *Tegaram a Tilgarimma*, *Trochmi* and *Trogmades*. The Tegarman or Tegarama migrated from Cappadocia into Armenia.... From there they moved into Turcoman territory (Turkistan) a possible derivation of Tegarama. In Turkistan, among the tablelands of Pamir, rose a great mount, *Tagharma*.... These were the Mongoloid peoples of the eastern division of the Turkic peoples of Central Asia" (White, p. 197).

An apocryphal Hebrew work known as the *Book of Jasher*, though contradictory of Scripture in a number of regards, may nevertheless contain some accurate historical traditions. It states that "the children of Tugarman are ten families, and these are their names: Buzar, Parzunac, Balgar, Elicanum, Ragbib, Tarki [another possible origin of the

name Turk], Bid, Zebuc, Ongal and Tilmaz; all these spread and rested in the north and built themselves cities" (10:10).

"Among the sign-posts indicating where Togarmah settled we find: Tagarchi in eastern Turkestan; Tigranoama in eastern Turkey; Tagarma mountains in eastern Turkestan; the city of Tagarma in western China; Taganrog, Tigeretsk Mountain, Togur town, Turgai province and Turgins, a town in Siberia; many Uighur peoples may be a derivative of Togarmah.

"Tradition speaks in terms of a certain son of Japheth known as Tork [Togarmah or Tarki?]. He in turn had a son Taunak Chan. He was in turn succeeded by Jelza Khan, Dibbakui Khan, Kajuk Khan and Ilingeh (or Alanza) Khan. Ilingeh Khan in turn had two sons: Tatar Khan-progenitor of the Tartars; and Mongul Khan-progenitor of some of the Mongols or Moghuls" (White, pp. 197-198).

If these people did indeed migrate to eastern Turkestan and then up into Siberia and Mongolia, as appears likely, that would certainly fit the biblical description of "the house of Togarmah *from the far north*" ([Ezekiel 38:6](#)).

The only ones left to identify in Gog's confederation are "Peras, Cush and Put" ([Ezekiel 38:5](#), The Living Bible). *Peras* is correctly translated in the NKJV and other versions as Persia. Persia is modern-day Iran. The descendants of the ancient Persians may still be found in their homeland of Iran. They can also be found, as noted in the Beyond Today Bible Commentary on Isaiah 21, in parts of Eastern Europe and of India.

What then of Cush and Put? The NKJV and other translations usually render these as *Ethiopia* and *Libya*. Cush and Put (or Phut) were, according to the Table of Nations in Genesis 10, sons of Ham, father of many of the dark-skinned people of the world. Cush, it is generally

acknowledged, became Ethiopia and other black peoples of East Africa. And the people of Put were indeed the ancient Libyans, whose descendants may be found throughout black Africa (see White, pp. 89-97).

Yet these two would seem to be the odd men out in this prophecy, being African while all the rest of the confederation is Eurasian. Indeed, the alliance thus far appears to include all of Asia north and east of the Euphrates River except for most of the people of the Indian subcontinent. However, when we better understand the identity of Cush and Put, we can see that the people of South Asia are not left out at all (and that the African branch of these peoples are probably not intended by the prophecy).

Concerning the identity of the people of India, 19th-century author George Faber wrote: "Their military nobility is acknowledged to be of the same family as the Sacas or Chasas, who maintain that their great common ancestor was Cusha or Cush... But we read in a special manner of two lands of Cush, the Asiatic and the African. These were by the Greeks called the two Ethiopias...but by the Hindoos [Hindus], as by the sacred writers, they are denominated the land of Cush within and the land of Cush without" (*The Origin of Pagan Idolatry*, 1816, qtd. by White, p. 99).

In *Black Athena: The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization*, author Martin Bernal writes: "The tradition of two Ethiopias is much older than [the 5th-century-B.C. Greek historian] Herodotus. In the *Odyssey* [of the Greek writer Homer], the Ethiopians are described as dwelling 'sundered in twain, the farthestmost of men, some where Hyperion [the sun] sets and some where he rises.' Thus, there were Black men, Aithiopes...from Western Libya (Africa) to Eastern Mesopotamia" (qtd. by White, pp. 100-101).

Those on the east of Mesopotamia evidently migrated further east, giving their name to the Hindu Kush Mountains of Afghanistan and Pakistan. "A few other tell-tale signs of the movement eastwards of the sons of Cush include a land called Kushian, in modern Pakistan. Just to the north of India also lay the land *Kashgana*. And in the south of India ran a river called *Kishna*. All of these names are variously derivatives of 'Cush'" (White, p. 102). Thus, many of the dark-skinned people of the Indian subcontinent are evidently Cushite.

Regarding the people of Put or Phut, historian George Rawlinson wrote: "This term is obscure.... In most {scriptures} Phut is joined with tribes which are distinctively African; but in two of them (Ezek [27].10, and [38].5), the accompanying nations seem to be Asiatic. The explanation of this may possibly be that, as there were two Cushes, so there were two Phuts, one Asiatic, and the other African" (qtd. by White, p. 97).

The eastern branch of Put "may have migrated from the east Mediterranean region as this is where anthropologists trace the northern Indians to. All one can say is that large parts of India were known as *Rajputna* (modern Rajasthan state). *Rajputna* was a group of princely states ruled over by a warrior-caste called the Rajputs (meaning 'chief of Put' or 'chief over Put'). In northern India, near Bhutan, we find the town called Panta, later Patali-putra, the capital city of Maghada State. The Rajputs and others drove the Dravidian Cushites into Central and Southern India. Those Phutites which settled in Central India mixed with the Dravidians. In the east some mixed with the Mongoloids" (White, pp. 97-98).

So rather than present-day Ethiopia and Libya in Africa, it appears much more likely that [Ezekiel 38:5](#) is speaking of the people of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

Consider then: the vast hordes of India, China, Indonesia, Russia, Turkestan and more combined-an unimaginable force and staggeringly formidable foe to be sure...

But no match at all for Almighty God.

When Will Gog's Forces Invade and Be Destroyed?

We have already seen that Ezekiel 38-39 is a prophecy of the latter days ([Ezekiel 8:8, 16](#)). Yet where does it fit in the march of end-time events?

Some, thinking the Israelites brought out of the nations and back to the Promised Land in [Ezekiel 38:8](#) is referring to the Jews who have returned to the land during the past century, conclude that this prophecy concerns an invasion of the modern Jewish state of Israel prior to Christ's return. But this view simply does not fit the picture here. The returned Israelites are described in this prophecy as dwelling in peace and safety--in a "land of unwallled villages...without walls, and having neither bars nor gates" (verse 11). While modern cities don't normally have defensive walls, the image here is mainly a figurative one-of living in complete peace, free from invasion or harm. And that certainly does *not* describe the modern Israeli state. Israel today is constantly under grave threat from hostile neighbors and from terrorists within. In fact, the Israelis are currently building an actual wall or security fence to protect them against Palestinian suicide bombers.

Neither can the prophecy refer to, as some assume, the gathering of forces at Armageddon referred to in Revelation 16 and their destruction in Revelation 19. There is some parallel symbolism, as the sacrificial feast of fallen troops given to birds and beasts is found in both Ezekiel 39 and Revelation 19. However, similar imagery is also used of the defeat of Egypt, as we will next read in [Ezekiel 32:4-5](#). Moreover, the people of Israel will by no means be dwelling safely as the gathering at Armageddon occurs, with the forces of the European-

centered Beast power, end-time Babylon, still occupying the Holy Land. And having just experienced the Great Tribulation, with the cataclysmic Day of the Lord still ongoing, the Israelites will not yet be enriched with "livestock and goods" (compare [Ezekiel 38:12](#)).

Considering these factors, the *only* time that fits what is described is the period *after* the return of Jesus Christ. When He comes, He will defeat Israel's enemies and gather those who are left of all Israel in the Promised Land, where they will at last dwell in peace and safety under His rule.

As that stage of Christ's reign will last 1,000 years (the Millennium), during which time Satan the devil will be imprisoned ([Revelation 20:1-6](#)), the question now becomes: At what point following the commencement of the Millennium will the fulfillment of Ezekiel 38-39 come to pass?

Some think it comes at the end, when there definitely will be a march to battle by Gog and Magog. [Revelation 20:7-9](#) states: "Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, *Gog and Magog*, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them." It is also claimed that because armaments such as shields, bucklers, bows, arrows, javelins and spears will be able to be burned for seven years ([Ezekiel 39:9-10](#)), this must indicate not modern weaponry but wooden implements--fashioned by people at the end of the Millennium who will be without military technology and hardware.

But there are problems with this view. For one, Gog and Magog in Revelation 20 are said to be from the four corners of the earth and therefore apparently represent people of all nationalities. In Ezekiel 38,

it is clear the forces are of specific ethnicities and associated with a particular northern region.

Notice also what God says to Gog in [Ezekiel 38:17](#): "Are you not the one I spoke of in former days by my servants the prophets of Israel? At that time they prophesied for years that I would bring you against them" (NIV). How then could Ezekiel 38 be a postmillennial reference, as none of the prophets appear to have mentioned this in any other prophecy (unless it was simply not recorded)--the only reference being in the New Testament book of Revelation?

(Granted, there do not seem to be any other references to an invasion early in the Millennium either. Yet the destruction of Gog's forces at that point in time may simply be part of the fulfillment of God's general prophecies of calamitous judgment accompanying the Messiah's coming. Indeed, if Gog is a leader of Edom, which seems possible given that the western Turks may have blended to some degree with those of the East and that Gog may be short for Agog or Agag, there may be more specific prophecies regarding him--that is, those that foretell Edom's great downfall at the time of Christ's return.)

A more serious objection to Gog's invasion in Ezekiel being postmillennial is that it evidently occurs *soon* after the return of Israel to the Promised Land--not after they have dwelt there for a thousand years. Notice [Ezekiel 39:7](#): "So I will make My holy name known in the midst of My people Israel, *and I will not let them profane My holy name anymore.*" Clearly, if the Israelites had been living under Christ's rule for a thousand years at this point, this statement would not seem to make any sense.

Notice also: "So the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God *from that day forward*" (verse 22). Yet at the end of the Millennium, Israel will already have been living under God's covenant for a thousand years, wherein "no more shall every man teach his

neighbor, and every man his brother, saying 'Know the Lord,' for they all shall know [Him], from the least of them to the greatest of them" ([Jeremiah 31:34](#)). It thus seems to make more sense to view verse 22 as applying to a time early in the Millennium. (It's interesting that up to this point, many Israelites are still confused about the identity and character of Jesus Christ and the unlimited extent of His power. It appears that up to this time they have not yet fully and reverently submitted to His rule.)

By the end of the Millennium, the gentiles too will know the Lord--indeed, they will know Him throughout *most* of the Millennium, for of Christ's 1,000-year reign we are told that "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea" ([Isaiah 11:9](#)). And yet Ezekiel 38-39 presents the defeat of Gog as resulting in the gentiles coming to know God. It appears, then, that the defeat of Gog described in Ezekiel must come during the *early* part of the Millennium.

Further, God says that in the wake of Gog's defeat "the Gentiles shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity" (39:23)-that is, this is the point at which the nations would come to understand it. "Then," He continues, "they shall know that I am the Lord their God, who sent [the Israelites] into captivity among the nations, but also brought them back to their land...And I will not hide My face from them anymore; for I shall have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel" (verses 28-29). Again, it seems obvious that this is describing events that take place shortly after Christ's return.

Indeed, the arrangement of Ezekiel's final chapters may have some bearing here. God spoke of giving His Spirit to His people after the return of Christ in Ezekiel 36. Ezekiel 37 continues on that theme. Though it briefly flashes forward to the period after the Millennium to show that even all the Israelites who have died will ultimately receive the same opportunity, the story flow then returns to the beginning of the Millennium, when the nations of Israel and Judah are at last fused

together as one nation. Continuing with that flow, it would appear that the fulfillment of Ezekiel 38-39 will come next in time order--followed by that of chapters 40-48, concerning the rebuilding of Jerusalem and its temple and the reorganization of the Promised Land, events that will also transpire early in the Millennium.

Of course, many of Gog's forces will evidently be destroyed when Christ first returns. For [Revelation 16:14-16](#) says that "the kings...of the whole world" will gather at Armageddon for the "battle of that great day of God Almighty." Yet, understanding the fulfillment of Ezekiel 38-39 to come early in the Millennium, it is evident that only part of Gog's army will be present in the Holy Land to be destroyed at Christ's coming. It seems likely that vast numbers will yet be stretched across Eurasia--apparently what remains of the 200-million-man force described in Revelation 9. Sometime after Christ smites the forces gathered against Him (which, again, would necessarily include only part of Gog's forces), perhaps even a few *years* later, the remainder of Gog's forces then marches down for the onslaught described in Ezekiel. (This is consistent with the fact that when Jesus returns, He will not bring the entire world into instant compliance with His way. Rather, [Isaiah 2:2-4](#) and [Zechariah 14:16-19](#) demonstrate that there will be a *period* of bringing the nations into line through both instruction and disciplinary measures.)

What then of the seemingly archaic military equipment? Certainly ancient weaponry has been used in other end-time passages to represent modern war implements. Yet does the fact that these armaments are used as fuel for fire for seven years mean none of them can be metal or modern? Many guns and rifles, and most notably the AK-47 assault rifle so popular in third world nations, have wooden stocks. Consider also that there are many flammable elements to even jeeps, tanks and jet planes--not least of which is their fuel. The fuel and reserve fuel for thousands upon thousands of military vehicles is staggering to contemplate. Small quantities of material can be used as a

fire starter--and there would be vast quantities available. Furthermore, consider *all* the possessions of an enormous military force on the move--this one perhaps two thirds as large as the current U.S. population. There would be an unimaginable amount of burnable material for the few million Israelites then living in the Promised Land. Also, perhaps new technology, whether invented by man or given by God, could allow even metal to be converted to usable energy.

Of course, it should also be mentioned that a vast Eurasian army would have not only well-trained troops with sophisticated equipment but also huge numbers of poorly outfitted infantry and cavalry. Among hordes of Chinese peasantry and third-world Muslim jihadis, it would not at all be surprising to find large numbers of wooden spears, clubs, crossbows, wood-handled machetes and sabers--even hoes and pitchforks.

So if it is describing a later episode than Ezekiel 38-39, why does Revelation 20 mention Gog and Magog? As already noted, these names seem to be used there in a representative sense for a Satan-led force coming from all nations at the end of the Millennium. It may be that the great invasion of Gog and Magog that occurs near the beginning of the Millennium is being viewed as a forerunner of the postmillennial invasion. The first was a multinational force. The later will be as well--though encompassing even more nations. It may even be that Gog and Magog will constitute the largest portion of this final rebellious force. Some, it should be noted, see numerical significance to the use of Gog and Magog in Revelation, explaining that the words numerically add up to 70, a number the Jews see as representative of all nations (as 70 nations are listed in the Table of Nations in Genesis 10). Or given that Gog and Magog can perhaps mean "dictator" and "dictatorship" respectively, perhaps that is the parallel. In any case, the invasion of Ezekiel 38-39 does not appear to be the invasion of Revelation 20,

though there is apparently some tie between them, if only a figurative one.

By the defeat of Gog's forces, God says He will set His glory among the nations--they will know His great power and majesty. The Israelites will come to know Him as their personal Savior and Protector. And the gentiles will see that as well--leading them, at last, to desire to become God's people too." [END]

Day 653 – MONDAY: May 26th

Ezekiel 32

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading plan states: "The next chapter of Ezekiel in time order is not the next one in numerical order. As mentioned before, Ezekiel's arrangement is thematic. The lamentations for Pharaoh and Egypt in chapter 32 have been placed at the end of a whole section of prophecies dealing with Egypt (29-32), part of which we have yet to read.

"The exiles in Babylon had recently learned of Jerusalem's fall when Ezekiel chanted this dirge [in the first half of Ezekiel 32] in March of 585 B.C. Egypt had witnessed the fall of Judah and may have felt proud of her own survival. Ezekiel, however, pictures that great southern land as already dead. God has condemned her, and none of her many gods will be able to help" (*Bible Reader's Companion*, note on [Ezekiel 32:1-16](#)).

The Expositor's Bible Commentary notes: "The lament over Egypt was principally a recapitulation of the judgment messages [already given against Egypt], emphasizing Egypt's false pride and bemoaning the fate of judgment. Once again the double imagery portrayed the Pharaoh's energetic pride but ineffective strength. Hophra was likened to a young lion and a thrashing crocodile that only muddied the streams of the Nile (v. 2; cf. 29:3). The crocodile (Pharaoh) would be captured with a net ([32] v. 3) and hurled on the open field as food for the birds and

animals (v. 4). The carnage would be so great that it would fill every ravine and mountain (vv. 5-6). It would be as if a great darkness covered the land (vv. 7-8), demonstrating that Egypt's great sun gods were impotent to help. Cosmic collapse is a common image with earth-shaking events (cf. [Joel 2:28](#); Acts 2). The nations who sang this funeral dirge would be stunned and horrified that Egypt had fallen in their midst ([Ezekiel 32] vv. 9-10)" (note on verses 1-10). Verse 11 shows that the agent of destruction will be the king of Babylon.

Of course, the heavenly signs could be an indication that this prophecy has some application to the future Day of the Lord, especially as [Daniel 11:40-43](#) shows that the end-time Babylonian ruler of the north will invade and plunder Egypt. Nevertheless, as pointed out in the Beyond Today Bible Commentary on [Ezekiel 29:1-16](#), massive calamity was going to come on Egypt around 568 B.C., 17 years after the lamentation of Ezekiel 32. At that time Nebuchadnezzar invaded the country and laid waste to the entire Nile Valley, evidently deporting most of the survivors for a period of 40 years.

In the latter half of Ezekiel 32, given two weeks after the lamentation of the first half, Ezekiel is told to bewail the fact that Egypt will follow other fallen nations to the grave. "This final prophecy, uttered in April of 585 B.C., sums up God's word concerning contemporary Egypt and concludes Ezekiel's messages concerning foreign nations" (*Bible Reader's Companion*, note on verses 17-32). These other nations have apparently all fallen to Babylon—and so too will Egypt.

It should be noted that though this concludes the prophecies against Egypt in arrangement order, there are two more prophecies regarding Egypt in chronological progression (29:17-30:19). In fact, those two prophecies are the latest dated sections in Ezekiel's book." [END]

Day 654 – TUESDAY: May 27th

Ezekiel 33:1 – 20

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading plan states: "So you, son of man: I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore you shall hear a word from My mouth and warn them for Me" ([Ezekiel 33:7](#)). Some messages in Ezekiel are repeated for emphasis. God had previously assigned Ezekiel to be a watchman—a lookout, sentry or sentinel—for the house of Israel ([Ezekiel 3:17](#)). Interestingly, that initial assignment came before Ezekiel's first warning message and this one now comes after his final one in time order. What follows chronologically in the book of Ezekiel is a glorious picture of the Promised Land under the reign of Jesus Christ (chapters 40-48). In the first case, God privately commissioned Ezekiel as a watchman. Here the prophet is to explain his role to the people and their responsibility once they have been warned. This is interesting considering that no more warnings were given in the book after this point in time. The point seems to be: "Okay, you've been warned—now it's up to you to follow through." When he arranged his book, Ezekiel placed this passage before the announcement of Jerusalem's fall ([Ezekiel 33:21-22](#)) and his final warnings to Israel and its leaders ([Ezekiel 33:23-34:10](#)).

Part of God's standard of fairness is that people should be warned even when those doing the warning don't expect them to necessarily respond and repent. Part of the reason for the warning may be found in [Ezekiel 33:33](#)—"And when this comes to pass—surely it will come—then they will know that a prophet has been among them." They won't be able to say no one warned them. Though they may have suffered terribly for not responding to the warnings, at least they can still repent after the punishments and ultimately receive God's forgiveness and salvation.

God first explains the basis of the analogy—a watchman watching for an approaching hostile army, "the sword" (verses 2-6). Then in verses 7-9 God applies the imagery to how His watchmen are to relay God's

messages that warn people to repent of their sins or else face dire consequences. If God's watchmen—His prophets or His Church—fail to deliver His warning messages of what will befall the nations if they fail to repent, then the watchmen are held largely accountable for the sin and suffering of the people. "His blood I will require at your hand" (verse 8).

The Scriptures make clear that the Church must, until Christ returns, continue to preach the gospel—the good news of the coming Kingdom of God—accompanied by a watchman-type warning message and call to repentance. Plus, the Church must act like a mother to carefully and thoroughly nurture and nourish its members so they can achieve maximum spiritual growth and effectiveness in helping to carry out God's work on earth. Indeed, the elders of God's Church are to "watch" over the spiritual welfare of its members—warning them of outside threats and of sins within (see [Acts 20:31](#); [Hebrews 13:17](#); [1 Peter 5:1-4](#)), rebuking and correcting as necessary (see [2 Timothy 4:1-5](#)).

Like Ezekiel, the Church of God even has a special responsibility to preach to Israel until Christ returns. As Jesus told His disciples, "You will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes" ([Matthew 10:23](#)). Yet the vast majority of the people of the modern nations of Israel do not even know that they are Israelites. Therefore, they don't realize that the prophecies of what is going to befall end-time Israel—such as those in the book of Ezekiel—apply to them. It thus becomes the Church's responsibility, as God enables and empowers it, to inform the Israelites of their identity and point out these prophecies. We have produced a full-color booklet with that very goal in mind—titled [The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy](#).

Of course, all nations should be warned of what's coming on the world. Consider that the prophecy Ezekiel relayed immediately before this chapter concerned the judgment coming on Egypt. Still, since the greatest time of trouble ever, which is yet to come, is referred to as the

time of Jacob's trouble ([Jeremiah 30:7](#)), it should be clear that the nations of Jacob—particularly the *chief* nations of Jacob—are the lands in greatest need of warning. We should also understand this in terms of the fact that the Israelite nations, having a firmer biblical background than the rest of the world, stand more culpable for disobedience than other nations. And, of course, there is the general principle of "the bigger they are, the harder they fall." Those headed for the greater fall are in need of the louder warning. Indeed, even apart from all that, the vast majority of prophetic warnings in Scripture are given to Israel. So in teaching all Scripture and giving weight to those things the Bible does, proclaiming warnings to Israel is a necessary part of the work of God's Church.

In [Ezekiel 33:11](#), God makes it clear that He has no pleasure in death and punishment. His desire is to see people turn—meaning repent—from their evil ways. It's as if God is saying: "Don't you want to live?! Then do the right thing!"

God then addresses what's fair and what's not—a subject also touched on in a previous chapter (Ezekiel 18). God is not trying to make everything "fair" for human beings in every aspect of this mortal life. Life is often very unfair—we don't choose where we're born, our early influences, what we're taught. And much of what we experience in life is the result of choices made by others. But God is promising to be fair about how our ultimate and eternal fate is determined. Each man's fate largely depends on how he concludes his life, either faithful to God at the end or unfaithful. If a man lives righteously most of his life and rejects God at the end, all his righteous acts go down the drain—they won't save him from losing eternal life. But it is never too late to repent if one is capable of repenting. In other words, a man who has lived an evil life can still sincerely repent toward the end of his life and meet God's conditions for living forever in His Kingdom. Of course, a person is foolish to procrastinate about turning to God, partly because he never

knows when his life will suddenly come to an end. Moreover, if we knowingly resist doing what we know is right, we form bad habits that will be difficult to break and damage and sear our consciences so that it becomes increasingly difficult to repent.

The Israelites complain that "the way of the Lord is not fair" ([Ezekiel 33:17, 20](#)). Yet "in punishing Israel God was being faithful to the covenant stipulations. This covenant had been approved by the Israelites. They had agreed to its commands and accepted the consequences of breaking them, corporately and individually (see 5:8-17; 12:15, 16; 16:60, 61; 18:19-32; 20:5; [Exodus 19:1-9](#); Deuteronomy 27). God presents His rationale in these verses for deciding who would be rewarded with life and who would suffer death: He would save those who repent and turn to Him, but would condemn those who trust in themselves and do evil. After presenting His rationale, God declares that His judgment is just and fair—certainly more just [by any standard] than the practices of the Israelites" (*Nelson Study Bible*, note on [Ezekiel 33:12-20](#)). Ultimately, God is perfectly just and fair.

The most common human approach to fairness is like a balancing scale. All the bad acts are put on one side of the scale and all the good acts on the other side. People think that if there is more weight on the good side, God will usher them into eternal glory. This is why many people live a hypocritical double life. They want to do evil, but they think that as long as they do more good than evil, they will escape God's punishment. Naturally people imagine that their goodness outweighs their sins, which they view as minor. In fact, they think of themselves as basically good even if most of their actions and attitudes are bad. They play deceptive games with other people, and it seems they think they can also play games with God—that they can pacify God or buy Him off with their offerings, charitable acts and show of religiosity. Man's approach to fairness leads to hypocrisy and complacency, whereas

God's approach to fairness teaches true heartfelt repentance and spiritual overcoming. Only the latter approach will bring God's blessings and the opportunity for eternal life.” [END]

Day 655 – WEDNESDAY: May 28th

Psalm 137

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading plan states: “Psalm 137 is a song of Zion expressing desire for God's holy city while in exile in the land of Babylon. In that sense, it is reminiscent of the opening of the songs of ascents in Psalm 120, where the desire is to be delivered from a hostile foreign environment to travel to Jerusalem, as expressed in other songs of ascents, to be in fellowship with God. "Here [in Psalm 137] speaks the same deep love of Zion as that found in Psalms 42-43; 46; 48; 84; 122; 126 [these latter two being songs of ascents]. The editors of the Psalter attached this song to the Great Hallel as a closing expression of supreme devotion to the city at the center of Israel 's worship of the Lord" (*Zondervan NIV Study Bible*, note on Psalm 137). This psalm is earlier harmonized with the biblical narratives of the Babylonian Exile and prophecies delivered at that time. We now read it again in the context of the Psalter's arrangement.

Psalm 137, which is not attributed to a particular author, appears to have been composed during the Babylonian exile. Even if it was written afterward, it nonetheless sums up the feelings of many of the Jews in captivity. It is a deeply mournful song, full of longing for their homeland, where they had some semblance of contact with God through His holy city and temple. Now they are far away, adrift, without mooring. They could no longer sing the joyful songs of past days. They "hung up their harps" on the trees--that is, they put away their musical instruments.

The Babylonians, however, asked for some music. While they may have actually wanted to hear some rousing hymns from the famed Jerusalem temple, it is also possible that this was simply a taunt--as in, "Let's hear some victory songs now...ha, ha." Whatever the case, in reflecting on the psalms of past days, recalling the former glory of their nation, all the Jews could do was sit by the great rivers of Babylon and weep. "How shall we sing the LORD's song in a foreign land?" they groaned (verse 4). How could they sing praises to God for His help and deliverance against enemies when their nation and temple lay in ruins and they themselves were captives? Would not this just be more reason for their captors to mock? And were they, unclean sinners banished from God's land, even worthy to sing His songs?

In any case, the psalmist, speaking for the nation, resolves to keep Jerusalem in the forefront of his mind--to never forget and to never cease hoping for restoration. Were the harps retrieved from where they were hung to sing at least this particular song? There is, of course, no way to know. But the sentiment was surely widespread.

In thinking of what had befallen their homeland, the utter horror and misery of what had occurred, there was no way to avoid recalling those who had carried out the destruction--the Babylonians. Moreover, they were urged on by the longtime foe of God's people, Edom. A special plea is made to God in verse 7 to keep in mind Edom's cruel enmity. And a pronouncement is then made against the Babylonians--that God will bring back on their heads what they have done to the Jews. It may well be that when the Babylonians asked for a song of Zion from the exiles, this very one was composed in response. It would have served as a rather shocking rebuke against any mocking and ridicule.

Today many grimace at the ending of this psalm, wondering how it squares with God's loving character. This is due to a misunderstanding of the wording here and of God's plan in general. First of all, the "one" who is "happy" at destroying the Babylonians in verses 8-9 is not

specifically declared to be God. It may simply mean the national power that would later overthrow Babylon--the Persian Empire. The verses would then seem to constitute a prophetic declaration rather than an appeal. In fact, it seems likely that there is even a dual prophetic application here--to ancient Babylon as well as its *end-time* counterpart, the phrase "*daughter of Babylon* " perhaps hinting at this. Edom and Babylon will both play similar roles in the overthrow of Israel and Judah in the last days--and they will both suffer subsequent destruction themselves as repayment.

Of course, it is entirely possible that God *is* meant as the one repaying Babylon with destruction. If so, His being "happy" at doing so would not mean He sadistically relishes punishing human beings. The terminology in that case would have to be understood as His receiving "satisfaction" in a legal sense--that is, God's righteous *justice* being satisfied through just recompense. Babylon's "little ones" or "children," who are to be dashed against the rock, would in this case most likely mean Babylon's citizenry in general (the city or empire being portrayed as a woman, as already noted).

Moreover, being dashed against a rock is likely a figurative, rather than literal, expression denoting destruction. As the book *Hard Sayings of the Bible* notes on these verses: "One thing Babylon was devoid of was rocks or rocky cliffs against which anything could be dashed. In fact there were not any stones available for building, contrary to the rocky terrain of most of Palestine. All building had to depend on the production of sun-dried mud bricks and the use of bituminous pitch for mortar. Therefore when the psalmist speaks of 'dashing...against the rocks,' he is speaking figuratively and metaphorically" (Walter Kaiser Jr., Peter Davids, F.F. Bruce, Manfred Brauch, 1996, pp. 281-282).

Interestingly, "the verb [translated "dashes"] in its Greek form is found only in [Psalm 137:9](#) (in the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew text) and in the lament of our Lord over Jerusalem in [Luke](#)

[19:44](#)" (p. 281). In this verse Christ speaks to Jerusalem as if she is a mother, saying, "They [enemies] will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls." Again, children appear to denote the citizenry in general.

Of course, infants would die too--in both Babylon and Jerusalem . Yet all, children as well as adults, will be raised in the second resurrection to be taught God's ways and given the opportunity for lasting repentance, as explained in the [Beyond Today Bible Commentary on Ezekiel 37](#). Indeed, repentance and conformity with His will, resulting in great blessing, is what God desires--what makes Him truly happy. He assures us in other scriptures that He takes no pleasure in punishing people for sin, but that they would turn and live. This passage is no exception." [END]

Day 656 – THURSDAY: May 29th

1 Chronicles 5 & 1 Samuel 14:24 – 52

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading plan states: "Chapter 5 concerns the tribes who settled east of the Jordan—Reuben, Gad and half of Manasseh.

Notice verses 1-2 in the New Revised Standard Version: "The sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel. (He was the firstborn, but because he defiled his father's bed [when he slept with his father's concubine Bilhah] his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph son of Israel, so that he [Reuben] is not enrolled in the genealogy according to the birthright; though Judah became prominent among his brothers and a ruler ["the chief ruler," King James Version] came from him, yet the birthright belonged to Joseph)."

This passage is important in explaining two things. First, the transfer of the birthright from Jacob's firstborn son. And second, the fact that the birthright and kingship were split up. Reuben, though the firstborn of Jacob by his first wife Leah, was not permitted to receive the birthright

blessing upon his descendants (or the promise of kingship) because of the defilement he brought on himself. Instead the two elements of birthright and scepter were split out and went to the next two in line. The kingship went to the fourth son of Jacob by Leah, Judah, skipping over Leah's second and third sons, Simeon and Levi, presumably because they were not entitled to tribal territory and dominion, having disqualified themselves through their cruelty ([Genesis 49:5-7](#); [Genesis 34:25-30](#)). The birthright went to another firstborn, Joseph—Jacob's firstborn by his other wife Rachel (skipping over Jacob's children by his concubines Bilhah and Zilpah).

This chapter further informs us that in the days of Saul, the Reubenites and Gadites fought against the Hagrites (verses 10, 18-19), perhaps meaning descendants of Hagar (and thus Ishmaelite or related Arab tribes). "The Hagrites and their allies were probably desert peoples who felt increasing pressure from the expanding Israelite population. Their efforts at resisting the Israelites took place in the days of Saul (v. 10), though the narratives of Saul do not mention them" (*Nelson Study Bible*, note on verse 19). We see here in the midst of these genealogies another example of crying out for God's help and His answering prayer (verses 20-22)—though here God answers collective prayer rather than that of an individual, as in the previous chapter with Jabez.

Finally, we earlier read the end of chapter 5, regarding the trans-Jordanian tribes' deportation to Assyria, in harmony with Israel's history in the book of Kings (see *Beyond Today Bible Commentary* on [2 Kings 16:6-9](#); [15:29-31](#); [1 Chronicles 5:23-26](#); [2 Kings 17:1-2](#); [16:6-18](#); [15:38](#); [2 Chronicles 27:9](#)).

Saul's Oath

Once again Saul's rash behavior becomes an issue. He has made his troops swear that they will not eat anything until the battle is over. This weakens the troops, Jonathan inadvertently breaks the oath, and

eventually, in their hunger, the troops ravenously devour the spoil without properly bleeding the animals. When Saul finally attempts to seek God's counsel again, at Ahijah's suggestion (verse 36), God does not answer. Saul concludes that somebody must have sinned in the previous battle (as at Jericho/Ai) and asks God to reveal the culprit by lot. He is surprised to learn it was his own son—whom he then immediately condemns to death.

We can see here the "new Saul," an arrogant, defiant, heartless and self-willed man—quite a long way from the man who hid rather than be proclaimed king. Saul's actions illustrate how bizarre and corrupt his thinking had become. He himself had disobeyed God and yet when his own son disobeys one of his own foolish commands, he decides that his son should die. Saul is prohibited from carrying out his intent because the people insist that this is going too far, and they refuse to let Jonathan be killed. After all, Jonathan had not even heard Saul's oath.

Saul continues to expand the kingdom against the nations around them. The accompanying passage from Chronicles highlights some of the additional wars being fought, during this time of Israelite strength and expansion, by the tribes east of the Jordan.” [END]

Day 657 – FRIDAY: May 30th

1 Chronicles 6

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading plan states: “As *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* explains in its introductory notes on the chapter: "Chapter 6 commences with Pentateuchal citations and concludes with territorial lists taken from Joshua, but it consists primarily of materials not found outside Chronicles. It takes up four major subjects: the line of the high priests (vv. 3-15, 49-53), the three clans of Levi (vv. 16-30), the Levitical musicians (vv. 31-48), and the cities that were assigned for the tribe's use (vv. 54-81). The Levitical organization of David's day receives

further treatment in chapters 23-26" — as has been previously discussed in the Beyond Today Bible Commentary.

Note the distribution of the Levites in the land. The priests were mainly given towns south of Jerusalem, with the remainder of the tribe of Kohath receiving towns just north of Jerusalem. Merari had cities in the Trans-Jordan area east of Jerusalem and in Zebulun in the northwest part of the country. Gershon had cities in the northern part of the country.

Chapter 6 also gives us an interesting detail bearing on biblical chronology: "David's musician Heman, 1000 B.C., is eighteen generations removed from Moses' adversary Korah, in 1445. This poses a problem for those advocating a late date for the Exodus, in the 1200's...let alone those who would place Levi's grandson Izhar within the same period" (note on verses 33-37)." [END]

Day 658 – SATURDAY: May 31st

1 Chronicles 7 & 8

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading plan states: "Chapter 7 contains the genealogies for other tribes of Israel. Not much is said in these chapters of the family of Naphtali (verse 13). And nothing at all is said of the descendants of Dan and Zebulun. The reason for this is not known. *Expositor's Bible Commentary* suggests that "these tribes may simply have had little influence or relevance among the Jews who made up Ezra's community."

Verses 20-27 gives the descent of Joshua from Joseph's son Ephraim. "The fact that there were nine generations between Joshua, the famous successor to Moses, and Ephraim (vv. 23-27) supports the view that the story in vv. 21, 22 [of the men of Gath killing Ephraim's sons] occurred before the Exodus" (*Nelson Study Bible*, note on verse 27).

Chapter 8 gives a more detailed lineage of Benjamin than the one in chapter 7, because this one is concerned with showing the descent of Israel's first king, Saul. *The Nelson Study Bible* notes on verse 32 regarding the mention of Jerusalem: "Since Saul was not yet born at this point in the genealogy, the Jerusalem here is the city of pre-Davidic times. Jerusalem remained under Jebusite control until David conquered it ([2 Samuel 5:6-10](#)). Perhaps at this time the Benjamites lived among the Jebusites."

In verse 33, Saul's youngest son is referred to as *Esh-Baal*, meaning "Man of Baal," perhaps demonstrating Saul's apostasy from God, though *Baal*, meaning "Lord" or "Master," could sometimes refer to the true God. Notice, however, that this son of Saul is referred to in 2 Samuel and elsewhere as *Ishbosheth*, which is probably a euphemistic reference by the biblical writers as it means "Man of Shame."

Also note that in [1 Chronicles 8:34](#) and [1 Chronicles 9:40](#), Jonathan's son is *Meribbaal*, possibly meaning "Opponent of Baal," "Loved by Baal" or "Baal Is My Advocate." As Jonathan was apparently faithful to God, the first meaning here seems likely, though again it may be that the name Baal here is used for the true Lord. We should also consider that *Saul* could have given his grandson this name. Meribbaal's name was later changed to *Mephibosheth*, meaning "Exterminator of Shame" or "He Scatters Shame," the *shame* probably referring to idolatry. After Jonathan's death, Mephibosheth was brought by David to his palace to live there as royalty (2 Samuel 9)." [END]