

# Satan Released Again

## Revelation 20:7-8

Are you one of those people who always read the last chapter before they start a book? It is always nice to know how things end, is it not? God has been gracious to us, and though He does not give us every detail, He certainly lets us know how time ends. Today we will see another piece of the puzzle as given to us in the Book of Revelation.

We looked at the first six verses of Revelation 20 last time and will pick up today beginning at verse seven.

Revelation 20:7-10 NAS:

<sup>7</sup> When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison.

<sup>8</sup> and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, **Gog and Magog**, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore.

<sup>9</sup> And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them.

<sup>10</sup> And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

We have seen that Satan was locked in the abyss for a thousand years, and you may have thought we were finally rid of him. However, we see that after the thousand years are over, Satan gets out of his prison and seems to be back in business as he resumes deceiving nations and particularly stirring up Gog and Magog.

Now you are probably wondering who Gog and Magog refer to. There has been a lot of speculation regarding the identity of **Gog and Magog**. We have found a few explanations that seem quite similar and which should at least satisfy our curiosity. However, I will let you know from the get-go that the Gog and Magog mentioned in Revelation 20:8 is a reference to the force that comes against Christ at the end of the Millennium. This is not the same **Gog and Magog** that we find mentioned in Ezekiel 38 and 39 and elsewhere referring to the force that comes against Israel during the **Tribulation**. Let us look at both of these references because they both certainly are applicable to this section we are studying.

“Gog” sometimes refers to a place and sometimes refers to a person. “**Gog** has been reported to be the name of a district in the wild north-east steppes of Central Asia, north

of the Hindu-Kush, now a part of **Turkestan**, a region about 2,000 miles north-east of Nineveh.”<sup>1</sup> Today this area is occupied partially by **Russia** and partially by **China**.

When the term “Gog” is used in reference to a person or king, it is very possible that **Gog** is not the actual name of this king, but a representation of who will be the leader of this force at the time of the Tribulation. “**Magog**” is probably equivalent to a phrase in the Akkadian language, **mat Gog** (‘land of Gog’).<sup>2</sup> “Whatever his origin, he has been transformed in Ezekiel 38-39 into an apocalyptic (End Times) figure who comes from the far north.”<sup>3</sup> Let us first look at the **Gog of the Tribulation** as he is described in Ezekiel 38 and 39.

Ezekiel 38:1-23 NLT:

<sup>1</sup> *This is another message that came to me from the LORD:*

<sup>2</sup> *“Son of man, turn and face **Gog of the land of Magog**, the prince who rules over the nations of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him.*

<sup>3</sup> *Give him this message from the Sovereign LORD: **Gog**, I am your enemy!*

<sup>4</sup> *I will turn you around and put hooks in your jaws to lead you out with your whole army—your horses and charioteers in full armor and a great horde armed with shields and swords.*

<sup>5</sup> *Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya will join you, too, with all their weapons.*

<sup>6</sup> *Gomer and all its armies will also join you, along with the armies of Beth-togarmah from the distant north, and many others.*

<sup>7</sup> *“Get ready; be prepared! Keep all the armies around you mobilized, and take command of them.*

<sup>8</sup> *A long time from now you will be called into action. In the distant future you will swoop down on the land of Israel, which will be enjoying peace after recovering from war and after its people have returned from many lands to the mountains of Israel.*

<sup>9</sup> *You and all your allies—a vast and awesome army—will roll down on them like a storm and cover the land like a cloud.*

<sup>10</sup> *“This is what the Sovereign LORD says: At that time evil thoughts will come to your mind, and you will devise a wicked scheme.*

<sup>11</sup> *You will say, ‘Israel is an unprotected land filled with unwallied villages! I will march against her and destroy these people who live in such confidence!’*

<sup>12</sup> *I will go to those formerly desolate cities that are now filled with people who have returned from exile in many nations. I will capture vast amounts of plunder, for the people are rich with livestock and other possessions now. They think the whole world revolves around them!’*

<sup>13</sup> *But Sheba and Dedan and the merchants of Tarshish will ask, ‘Do you really think the armies you have gathered can rob them of silver and gold?’*

<sup>1</sup> Easton’s Bible Dictionary.

<sup>2</sup> Harper’s Bible Dictionary.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

*Do you think you can drive away their livestock and seize their goods and carry off plunder?’*

<sup>14</sup> *“Therefore, son of man, prophesy against Gog. Give him this message from the Sovereign LORD: When my people are living in peace in their land, then you will rouse yourself.*

<sup>15</sup> ***You will come from your homeland in the distant north** with your vast cavalry and your mighty army,*

<sup>16</sup> *and you will attack my people Israel, **covering their land like a cloud.***

*At that time in the distant future, I will bring you against my land as everyone watches, and **my holiness will be displayed** by what happens to you, Gog. Then all the nations will know that I am the LORD.*

<sup>17</sup> *“This is what the Sovereign LORD asks: Are you the one I was talking about long ago, when I announced through Israel’s prophets that in the future I would bring you against my people?*

<sup>18</sup> *But this is what the Sovereign LORD says: **When Gog invades the land of Israel, my fury will boil over!***

<sup>19</sup> *In my jealousy and blazing anger, I promise a mighty shaking in the land of Israel on that day.*

<sup>20</sup> *All living things—the fish in the sea, the birds of the sky, the animals of the field, the small animals that scurry along the ground, and all the people on earth—will quake in terror at my presence. **Mountains will be thrown down; cliffs will crumble; walls will fall to the earth.***

<sup>21</sup> *I will summon the sword against you **on all the hills of Israel**, says the Sovereign LORD. Your men will turn their swords against each other.*

<sup>22</sup> *I will punish you and your armies with disease and bloodshed; **I will send torrential rain, hailstones, fire, and burning sulfur!***

<sup>23</sup> *In this way, I will show my greatness and holiness, and **I will make myself known to all the nations of the world.** Then they will know that I am the LORD.*

Ezekiel 39:1-29 NLT:

<sup>1</sup> *“Son of man, prophesy against Gog. Give him this message from the Sovereign LORD: I am your enemy, O Gog, ruler of the nations of Meshech and Tubal.*

<sup>2</sup> ***I will turn you around and drive you toward the mountains of Israel,** bringing you from the distant north.*

<sup>3</sup> *I will knock the bow from your left hand and the arrows from your right hand, and I will leave you helpless.*

<sup>4</sup> ***You and your army and your allies will all die on the mountains. I will feed you to the vultures and wild animals.***

<sup>5</sup> *You will fall in the open fields, for I have spoken, says the Sovereign LORD.*

<sup>6</sup> *And **I will rain down fire on Magog** (their homeland)<sup>4</sup> and on all your allies who live safely on the coasts. Then they will know that I am the LORD.*

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<sup>4</sup> Parentheses mine.

<sup>7</sup> *“In this way, I will make known my holy name among my people of Israel. I will not let anyone bring shame on it. And the nations, too, will know that I am the LORD, the Holy One of Israel.*

<sup>8</sup> *That day of judgment will come, says the Sovereign LORD. Everything will happen just as I have declared it.*

<sup>9</sup> *“Then the people in the towns of Israel will go out and pick up your small and large shields, bows and arrows, javelins and spears, and they will use them for fuel. **There will be enough to last them seven years!***

<sup>10</sup> *They won’t need to cut wood from the fields or forests, for these weapons will give them all the fuel they need. They will plunder those who planned to plunder them, and they will rob those who planned to rob them, says the Sovereign LORD.*

<sup>11</sup> *“And I will make a vast graveyard for Gog and his hordes in the **Valley of the Travelers**, east of the Dead Sea. It will block the way of those who travel there, and they will change the name of the place to the **Valley of Gog’s Hordes**.*

<sup>12</sup> *It will take seven months for the people of Israel to bury the bodies and cleanse the land.*

<sup>13</sup> *Everyone in Israel will help, for **it will be a glorious victory for Israel** when I demonstrate my glory on that day, says the Sovereign LORD.*

<sup>14</sup> *“After seven months, teams of men will be appointed to search the land for skeletons to bury, so the land will be made clean again.*

<sup>15</sup> *Whenever bones are found, a marker will be set up so the burial crews will take them to be buried in the **Valley of Gog’s Hordes**.*

<sup>16</sup> *(There will be a town there named Hamonah, which means ‘horde.’) And so the land will finally be cleansed.*

<sup>17</sup> *“And now, son of man, this is what the Sovereign LORD says: **Call all the birds and wild animals**. Say to them: Gather together for my great sacrificial feast. Come from far and near to the mountains of Israel, and there eat flesh and drink blood!*

<sup>18</sup> *Eat the flesh of mighty men and drink the blood of princes as though they were rams, lambs, goats, and bulls—all fattened animals from Bashan!*

<sup>19</sup> *Gorge yourselves with flesh until you are glutted; drink blood until you are drunk. This is the sacrificial feast I have prepared for you.*

<sup>20</sup> *Feast at my banquet table—feast on horses and charioteers, on mighty men and all kinds of valiant warriors, says the Sovereign LORD.*

<sup>21</sup> *“In this way, I will demonstrate my glory to the nations. Everyone will see the punishment I have inflicted on them and the power of my fist when I strike.*

<sup>22</sup> *And from that time on the people of Israel will know that I am the LORD their God.*

<sup>23</sup> *The nations will then know why Israel was sent away to exile—**it was punishment for sin**, for they were unfaithful to their God. Therefore, I turned away from them and let their enemies destroy them.*

<sup>24</sup> *I turned my face away and punished them because of their defilement and their sins.*

<sup>25</sup> *“So now, this is what the Sovereign LORD says: **I will end the captivity of my people**; I will have mercy on all Israel, for I jealously guard my holy reputation!*

<sup>26</sup> ***They will accept responsibility for their past shame and unfaithfulness after they come home to live in peace in their own land,** with no one to bother them.*

<sup>27</sup> *When I bring them home from **the lands** of their enemies, I will display my holiness among them for all the nations to see.*

<sup>28</sup> *Then my people will know that I am the LORD their God, because I sent them away to exile and brought them home again. I will leave none of my people behind.*

<sup>29</sup> *And **I will never again turn my face from them,** for I will pour out my Spirit upon the people of Israel. I, the Sovereign LORD, have spoken!”*

Gog ravages Israel before being destroyed by God. If you would like to learn more about the Gog of the Tribulation you may go to Jeremiah 1:14; 4:6; 6:1, 22; 10:22; 13:20 and Isaiah 14:24-25; 17:12-14; 31:8-9.<sup>5</sup>

Here is yet another explanation from the *Tyndale Bible Dictionary*, which describes **Gog** as the **prince of Meshech** who ruled over the land of **Magog**. “Magog was evidently a territory located far from Palestine whose inhabitants would attack Jerusalem in an attempt to overthrow God’s people. The Lord, through Ezekiel, promised Gog a catastrophic defeat. **Gog** is depicted as leading an alliance of world powers in opposition to God. **Gog** also appears in Revelation (20:7–9), where Satan mobilizes Gog and Magog in a final battle.”<sup>6</sup>

Then Jesus **will come down from Heaven**, where He has been since His ascension. You may remember that at his trial before the Sanhedrin, Stephen cried out, “*Behold, I see the heavens opened up and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God*” (Acts 7:56). The writer of Hebrews said of Christ, “*When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high*” (Hebrews 1:3).

When Jesus comes down from Heaven, He will come down with a shout. This would be kind of like the captain of the cavalry troop yelling “**Charge!**” Or The Lord’s shout of command at His raising of Lazarus, when “*He cried out with a loud voice, ‘Lazarus, come forth!’*” (John 11:43). Only this shout will be heard all over the world. The dead saints in their resurrected bodies will join the living believers in the ranks as they are raptured and brought up to Heaven. This is the hour “*when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live*” (John 5:25). These saints will then receive new glorified bodies that are exactly like the resurrected body of Jesus. Of course they will not be like Jesus who is God, but their bodies will be the same as His body the day He was resurrected.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> *Tyndale Bible Dictionary.*

It is when living believers are **brought up** to Heaven that they are transformed and receive their glorified bodies.

Philippians 3:20-21 NLT:

<sup>20</sup> *But we are citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives. And we are eagerly waiting for him to return as our Savior.*

<sup>21</sup> *He will take our weak mortal bodies and change them into glorious bodies like his own, using the same power with which he will bring everything under his control.*

1 Corinthians 15:52 NLT:

<sup>52</sup> *It will happen in a moment, in the blink of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, those who have died will be raised to live forever. And we who are living will also be transformed.*

After a thousand years of relative peace during the Millennium we see a confirmation of just how evil the human heart can be when Satan is released and allowed to tempt mankind once again. While Satan is locked in the **pit (abyss)**, there will be many people born into the world whose faith in Christ is only faked. When Satan is released and comes up out of the pit **for a short time** at the end of the Millennium, it will not be difficult at all for him to assemble a large army that is willing to join him in the last great effort to unseat Christ as King. An effort that will end in sudden failure. The Bible has spoken of such people who live for their own glory.

Romans 8:7 NAS:

<sup>7</sup> *because **the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God;** for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so,*

2 Peter 3:7 NAS:

<sup>7</sup> *But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.*

Now you might be wondering just who will be around during the Millennium. We find a clue in 1 Thessalonians 4.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 NAS:

<sup>16</sup> *For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and **the dead in Christ will rise first.***

<sup>17</sup> *Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with **them** in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.*

Now before going on let me just say that there are several different positions concerning who will be resurrected from the dead and when that will happen. Some say that only those who expressed faith in Christ from the time of Christ's death until the time of the Rapture, who are referred to as "*New Testament saints*" and are now dead, along with those believers in Christ who are alive when the Rapture occurs, will be taken to Heaven. Those holding this position then say that the "*Old Testament saints*," who lived before Christ, will not be resurrected until the end of the Tribulation, along with those who came to faith in Christ from the time of the Rapture until the end of the Tribulation. They are referred to as "*Tribulation saints*."

I cannot find any biblical references to support the position that the Old Testament saints will not be resurrected until the end of the Tribulation. So until somebody shows me some concrete evidence to the contrary, I must stick with the position that both Old and New Testament saints who are in their graves, along with those believers who are alive at the time, **will all be raptured together**. The Tribulation saints will still be resurrected at the end of the Tribulation.

Revelation 20:7-8 NAS:

<sup>7</sup> *When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison,*  
<sup>8</sup> *and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore.*

Here in verse eight we see the last rebellion of Satan and man against God. As soon as Satan is released, a vast number of people who have been living in the Millennium under the rule of Christ, under ideal circumstances, join in Satan's rebellion against Christ. He could not bring it off a thousand years before and Satan will not be able to bring it off at the end of the Millennium. He and his entire army will be instantly fried by fire coming down from Heaven. You might be asking how he could raise an army of such magnitude.

Well not only do a large number of people enter the Millennium alive, but a large number are also born during the Millennium.

Isaiah 65:20 NAS:

<sup>20</sup> *"No longer will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, Or an old man who does not live out his days; For the youth will die at the age of one hundred And the one who does not reach the age of one hundred will be thought accursed.*

This will be the time of the earth's greatest population explosion. Disease will have been eliminated. Food will be available in abundance. Only the human heart will remain unchanged under these circumstances, and many will turn their backs on God and will follow Satan when the opportunity presents itself.

Because the rebellion at the end of the Millennium is labeled "*Gog and Magog*," many Bible students identify it with the Gog and Magog of Ezekiel 38 and 39. This is not at all possible, for the two descriptions are not similar in relationship to time, place, and participants. Only the names are the same. The invasion from the north by Gog and Magog in Ezekiel 38 and 39 **breaks the false peace of the Antichrist** and forces him to take action in the midst of the **Great Tribulation**. That rebellion of the godless forces from the north will have made such an impression on mankind during the Tribulation that after one thousand years the last rebellion of mankind will carry the same reference, **Gog and Magog**.<sup>7</sup>

We experienced a similar situation in the first half of the twentieth century. World War I was so devastating that when war again broke out in Europe, involving many of the same nations and even more, it was also regarded as a World War, thereby calling it World War II.<sup>8</sup>

“The war in Ezekiel 38 and 39 relates to **Gog and Magog I**, and the reference here in Revelation 20:8 is to **Gog and Magog II**. Although the names are the same, this is a different war, the last rebellion of Satan. Just because the two events involve the same names does not mean they are the same. It is the finality of man's rebellion. Nothing remains now but the final judgment.”<sup>9</sup>

What a glorious future to look forward to! What a blessing to know how everything will eventually end? Our concern now is to do what we can to be prepared for it.

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<sup>7</sup> J. Vernon McGee, – *Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee*, (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1983), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: "Chapter 20".

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.