

The
Acts
of the Apostles



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Christians are called to the
work of ministry even in
difficult times

Acts 20

Introduction

- Immediately after recording the chaos of chapter 19, Luke reminds his readers of Paul's dedication to his present missionary journey.
- Undeterred by the uprising he experienced in Ephesus, Paul continues to travel throughout the region in fulfillment of his calling to preach the Gospel.
- God continues to work miracles through Paul's ministry, both physically and spiritually.

Introduction

- As Paul senses his time with these churches is drawing to an end, he solemnly calls upon local leaders of the church to continue walking in his pastoral role of preaching the Gospel to the ends of the earth.
- In this passage, we read one of Paul's most eloquent mission statements, one that convicts and inspires us today as we are faithful to carry on his encouraging work of sharing the Gospel.

Ministry grows when we
press on through
opposition

Acts 20:1-12

Paul in Macedonia

- We see Paul's surprising response to the persecution his ministry endured.
- Instead of complaining about his difficulties, Paul uses his time to offer encouragement to the other disciples.
- Three times in this passage, Luke uses the same Greek word translated as “encouragement,” twice in the first two verses and then again in verse 12 as a bookend.

Paul in Macedonia

- Luke records the names of the men who accompanied Paul on his journey (verse 4).
- The relationships with these men were most likely the fruit of previous missionary activity.
- They served now as both companions and firsthand witnesses to the authenticity of Paul's preaching.

Paul in Macedonia

- These names represented the local leaders who would back up his report to the church at Jerusalem (where many Christians were still suspicious of what he was doing).
- Though seemingly a minor fact, this detail helps us witness the ongoing growth of the early church as God raised up new believers and trustworthy leaders who followed in the footsteps of the initial evangelists.

Eutychus

- In verse 7, Luke includes two details about the lives of the early Christians.
- Believers had already established a weekly routine of gathering for a worship service, during which they were obedient to Jesus' command to celebrate His final meal.
- It is at one of these gatherings in Troas that Paul is expounding on the Word of God for several hours into the night (that is the meaning of: *there were many lamps*).

Eutychus

- Eutychus is overcome by sleep and falls out of the window he had been sitting in, and Luke the physician pronounces the young man dead.
- Paul, however, proclaims a resurrection.
- The words he speaks echo Jesus' words to the crowds mourning the death of the synagogue official's daughter (Matthew 9:24).

Eutychus

- Paul returns to the service and breaks bread with the believers, finishing his time of fellowship until it is time to depart.
- Luke concludes this narrative by emphasizing that, one, the boy is alive, and two, the overall experience of this community was one of encouragement rather than fear or despair (verse 12 and verses 1–2).

Faithful ministry guards
the health of God's church

Acts 20:13-38

Cities on his Journey

- Luke records the next portion of Paul's journey as Paul hurries to remain on course for his trip to Jerusalem.
- Verses 13–15 list several of the cities his team passed through.
- In verse 16, Luke emphasizes Paul's urgency to arrive in Jerusalem in time for the Feast of Pentecost.

Ephesian Elders

- When he docks in Miletus, Paul sends for the elders in Ephesus, where he had spent several years discipling new Christians and strengthening the leadership of their church.
- Paul is keeping his eye on the ultimate goal of Jerusalem while ensuring he has a chance to pass on final instructions to the Ephesians.

Ephesian Elders

- Paul recounts important aspects of his missionary work in order to remind the Ephesians of what is essential to maintaining a healthy philosophy and practice of ministry.
- Paul reminds them of his steadfast dedication to them, serving with humility through all suffering and opposition (verses 18–19).

Ephesian Elders

- He speaks of his devotion to preaching the entire message of the Gospel, no matter the circumstances (verses 20–21).
- Paul's delivery of the Gospel remained the same whether he spoke in intimate settings or public venues and whether his audience was made up of Jews familiar with God's Word or Greeks whom God called out of a foreign culture.

Ephesian Elders

- Paul's most significant declaration of faithfulness in God's calling is found in verses 22-24.
- In verses 22–23, Luke writes perhaps with bittersweet hindsight, recording Paul's faithfulness to follow the Spirit's leading, even into a future of uncertainty and possible danger.

Ephesian Elders

- Verse 24 sums up Paul's philosophy: serving Jesus faithfully, even unto death.
- Paul's words in Galatians 2:20 reveal how the knowledge of Jesus' greatest sacrifice fuels his own sacrificial devotion to missions.
- Luke preserves his faithfulness as a witness to future generations.

Ephesian Elders

- Paul continues to exhort the elders by applying his examples of leadership to their calling as shepherds and ministers of God's people.
- Paul reiterates his dedication to preaching the entire message of the Gospel. He references Ezekiel 33 in his defense, declaring his innocence when those he instructed end up rejecting the salvation of Jesus Christ.

Ephesian Elders

- Paul impresses upon the leaders the weight of their responsibility to oversee the flock of God's people.
- In verse 28, Paul employs a beautiful merging of metaphors as he references Jesus' sacrifice, the innocent blood spilled when the Good Shepherd became a spotless Lamb for the wayward flock who refused to follow His voice.

Ephesian Elders

- Paul calls for a fearless proclamation of even the hardest truths. He warns that, when he leaves, others will develop false ideas about salvation and attempt to lead people astray by their teaching (verses 29–30).
- These misleading voices will rise up both inside and outside the church, a truth we read about in his later letters (Galatians 1:6–9; 2 Corinthians 11) and are still experiencing today.

Ephesian Elders

- Paul finishes his exhortation by reminding the Ephesian church of the integrity of his work ethic and his approach to generosity.
- Paul has not used his leadership role for payment for his ministry.
- Instead, he has shown diligence to work just as hard as his church family in the daily responsibilities of meeting needs and finding ways to exercise generosity.

Ephesian Elders

- In the final verses of this passage, Luke records a moving scene between Paul and the Ephesians.
- Paul finishes his instructions by praying with the group of Ephesian elders (verse 36).
- This intimate moment produces a heavy sense of loss as they all feel the finality of his mission (verse 37–38).

Application

Serving the Lord with
humility, tears, and trials

Humility

- Acts 20:19 - “I served the Lord with great humility and with tears and in the midst of severe testing by the plots of my Jewish opponents.”
- Humility is an understanding that God has absolute authority over your life.
- Humility also means feeling indebted to others because of how God has treated you.

Humility

- Humility means he was a debtor to Greeks and barbarians, to the wise and the foolish, to friend and foe.
- Humility means we don't think in term of our rights but are open to what God has planned for our life.
- Humility means we are a servant, not a master.
- We follow God's leading in our life.

Tears

- Acts 20:19 - “I served the Lord with great humility and with tears and in the midst of severe testing by the plots of my Jewish opponents.”
- Tears no doubt came from physical pain but also from frustrations and discouragement in the ministry.
- This is not a weakness or Paul wouldn’t mention tears as part of his credentials for ministry.

Trials

- Acts 20:19 - “I served the Lord with great humility and with tears and in the midst of severe testing by the plots of my Jewish opponents.”
- Trials and testing were a part of Paul’s experience. In 2 Corinthians 11:25 - “Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea.”
- We will face trials and testing in our Christian walk.

Application

Christian topics
in the news

CLAY SEAL



CLAY SEAL

- A very rare seal impression from 2,700 years ago was discovered in Jerusalem's Western Wall Plaza and unveiled to the public Monday. It was presented to the mayor of Jerusalem.
- It bears the inscription: "Belonging to the governor of the city."
- It supports the biblical record of the existence of a governor of the city of Jerusalem 2,700 years ago.

CLAY SEAL

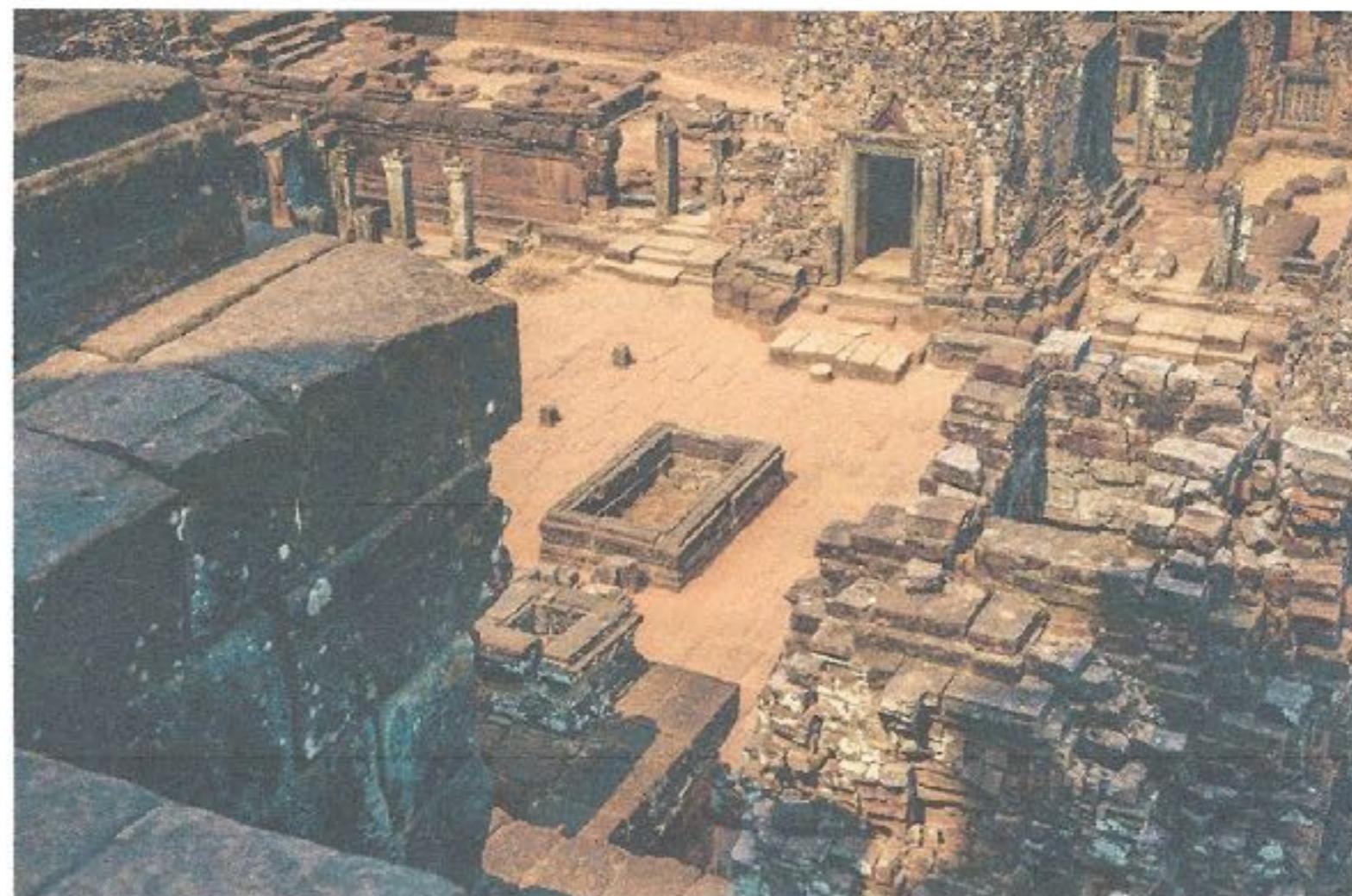
- The Bible actually mentions the names of a few of the king-appointed governors of Jerusalem:
 - Joshua is mentioned as governor in 2 Kings
 - Masseiah is listed as governor in 2 Chronicles



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ISIS ACCIDENTALLY CORROBORATES THE BIBLE

March 19, 2016 — 2 Comments



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CULTURE

Archaeologists find Biblical evidence under Jonah's tomb



Zelda Caldwell / Feb 22, 2018

Incredible treasures from a buried palace see the light of day, thanks to tunnels dug by ISIS

While ISIS was responsible for destroying and selling countless priceless artifacts during their occupation of Iraq, their acts of plunder have led to an important discovery in the ancient Biblical city of Nineveh, according to a report in [Live Science](#).

In four tunnels which ISIS dug underneath the Tomb of Jonah, archaeologists have discovered seven 2,700-year-old inscriptions describing the rule of an Assyrian king mentioned in the Bible.

After the Iraqi army liberated the area from ISIS in early 2017, archaeologists found the tunnels, which ISIS had apparently dug in order to collect and sell artifacts on the black market. Last year, archaeologists announced that while exploring the tunnels they had unexpectedly discovered the site of the [Assyrian palace](#) located under Jonah's tomb.

The inscriptions describe the rule of the Assyrian king, Esarhaddon who reigned between 681 and 669 BC and is mentioned in the Bible in 2 Kings 19:37, Isaiah 37:38, and Ezra 4:2). One is translated :

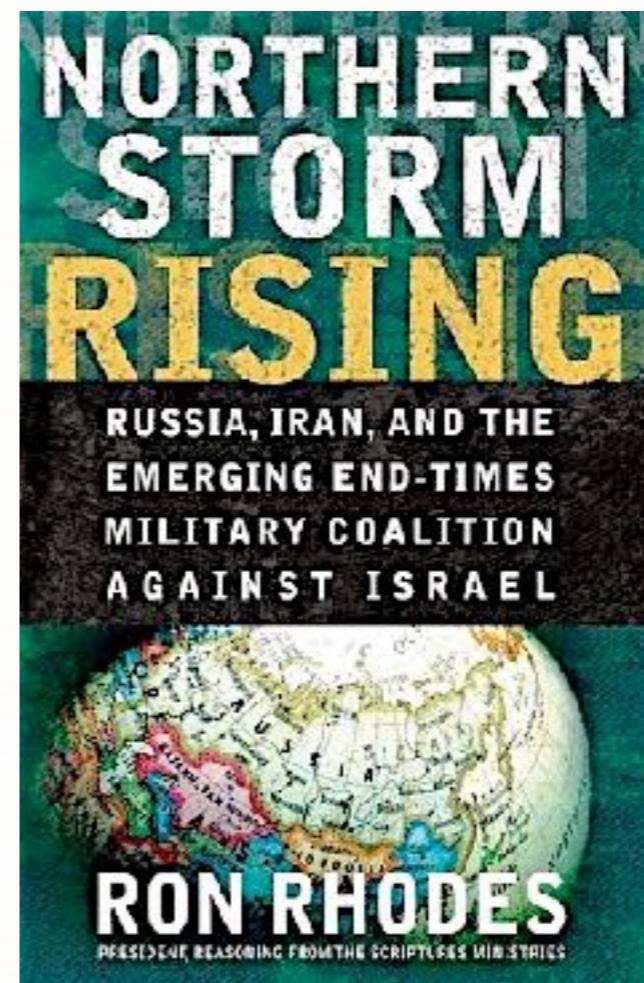
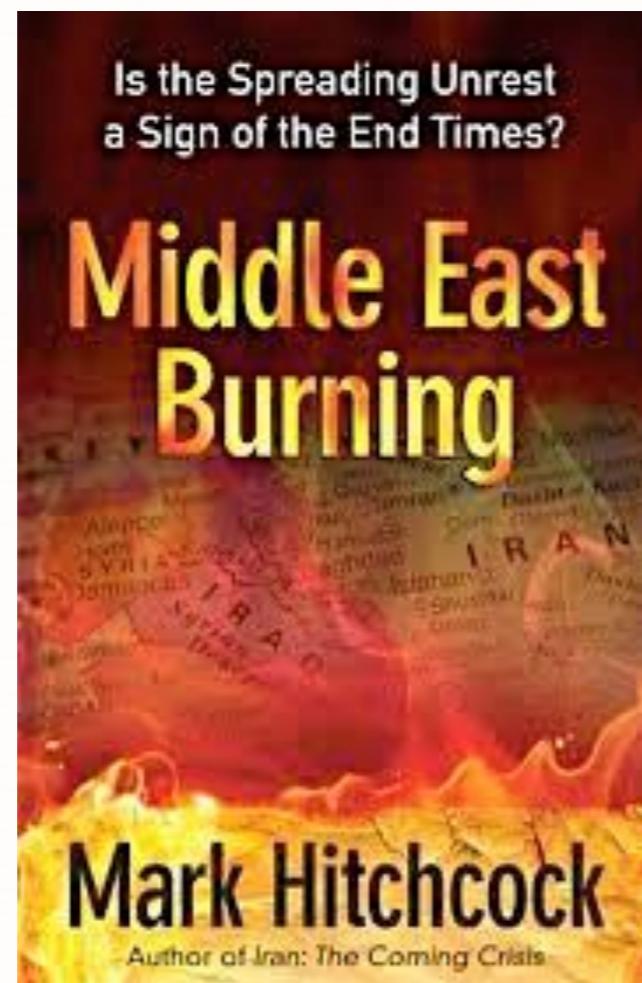
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- When the ISIS terrorists destroyed numerous biblical archaeological sites in Iraq, they unearthed evidence that supports the Old Testament accounts.
- They demolished the tomb of Jonah and dug tunnels looking for treasure and artifacts they could sell.
- When archaeologists returned, the digging revealed an untouched Assyrian palace in the city of Nineveh.

NINEVEH

- According to an article in *Iraq* magazine, they found inscriptions that match with the biblical order:
 - Sargon II (*Isaiah 20:1*)
 - Sennacherib (*2 Kings 18-19, 2 Chronicles 32, Isaiah 36-37*)
 - Esarhaddon (*2 Kings 19:37, Isaiah 37:38*)
 - Ashurbanipal (*Ezra 4:10*)

SYRIA & MIDDLE EAST



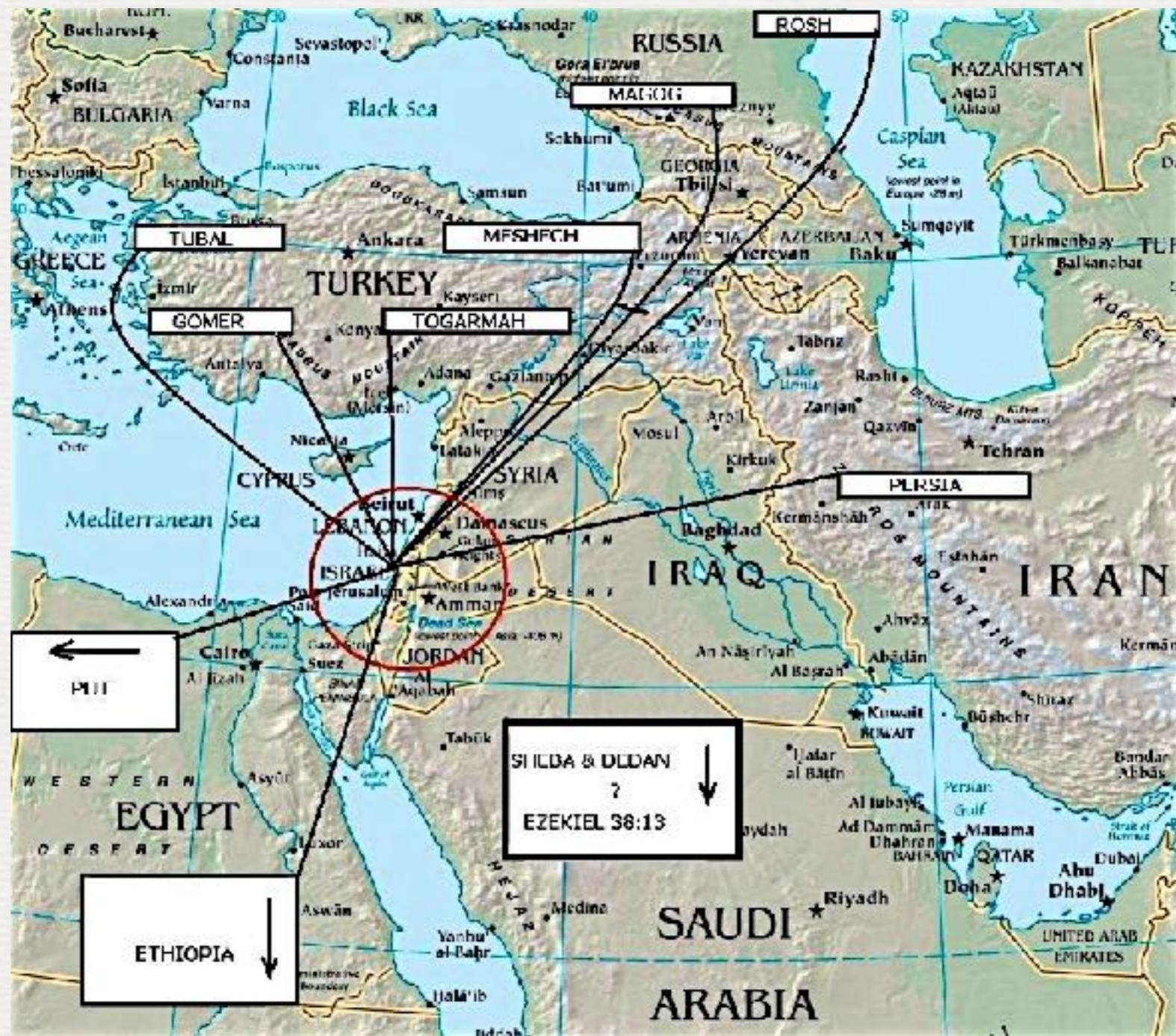
EZEKIEL 38:1-3

“And the word of the LORD came to me saying, “Son of man, set your face toward Gog of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him and say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “Behold, I am against you, O Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal.”’

EZEKIEL 38:4-7

“I will turn you about and put hooks into your jaws, and I will bring you out, and all your army, horses and horsemen . . . Persia, Ethiopia and Put with them, all of them with shield and helmet; Gomer with all its troops; Beth-togarmah from the remote parts of the north with all its troops—many peoples with you.”

EZEKIEL 38



THE PARTICIPANTS

Rosh	Russia
Magog	Central Asia
Meshech & Tubal	Turkey
Persia	Iran
Cush (Ethiopia)	Sudan
Put	Libya
Gomer	Turkey
Beth-togarmah	Turkey

SYRIA?

- Some nations are not mentioned: Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia.
- One explanation: the nations nearest to Israel might be part of the future treaty the Antichrist makes with Israel.
- Another explanation: Ezekiel 38:6 closes with the words “many peoples with you.” The phrase may be a general term to refer to the “near enemies” of Israel.

ISRAEL & SYRIA

