

# The Bible Speaks of the Next Israel Wars

(Psalm 83 & Ezek. 38-39)

By Dr. D. B. Martin

The eyes of the world are on the Middle-East and especially conflicts between the Muslim nations and Israel. At this time there is a significant war going between Israel and the Hamas of Gaza.

A major war could break out at any moment with several other Muslim countries joining Gaza in attacking Israel. Also Israeli leaders know Iran either has nuclear weapons now, or is near getting them and missiles to "wipe them off the map." It is a crisis time in Israel and with the oil issues; it could affect the whole world.

## The Bible Speaks!

What does the Bible say about it? Many, including this author, think it fits the war against Israel described in Psalm 83. The Psalmist, Asaph, cries out to God to protect Israel from a confederacy ready to destroy their nation.

Psalm 83:1-5: "Do not keep silent, O God! Do not hold Your peace, and do not be still, O God! 2 For behold, Your enemies make a tumult; and those who hate You have lifted up their head. 3 They have taken crafty counsel against Your people, and consulted together against Your sheltered ones. 4 They have said, "Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation, that the name of Israel may be remembered no more." 5 For they have consulted together with one consent; they form a confederacy against You."

Doesn't this sound like what Iran's former President Amadinijab has said many times, "Israel will be wiped off the map"? He and many other Muslim extremists have repeatedly said the Jews have no right to have a nation in the Middle East and must somehow be removed.

## Psalm 83... *not yet!*

This war described in Psalm 83 has not happened yet, but the Bible says it will. Some say it was fulfilled in the Arab/Israel wars of 1948, 1967 or 1973, but those wars were very different. Egypt had a big part in all of them but is not mentioned in Psalm 83. Why not? Apparently Egypt tired of losing to Israel in every modern war they had, and signed a treaty recognizing Israel in 1979. They have not fought Israel since; in fact, they have tried to prevent the Hamas from re-arming in Gaza, and do not trust Iran.

Also, the Nile River is the lifeline of Egypt's economy. In the 60's, the Russians helped Egypt build the Aswan Dam on the upper Nile River, completing it in 1970. 169 Billion Cubic meters of water are backed up in that flood control and hydro-electric project. This forms Lake Nasser, which is the third largest man-made water reservoir in the world. Now if Egypt were to attack Israel, one or two well-placed bombs from an Israeli jet could knock the Aswan Dam out and Egypt would be history. They have a veritable "Sword of Damocles" hanging over their heads. No, Egypt is not mentioned in this Psalm 83 war.

## The Psalm 83 Nations

Who are these countries described in this Psalm 83 confederacy seeking to destroy Israel? They are listed in Psalm 83:6-8. The names of most of them have changed but they are the following countries and people groups in bold type:

1. Edom (6a) - Descendants of Esau (Gen. 36:1)-Land-areas around the southern shores of the Dead Sea, now known as part of Southern **Jordan** and also some land now occupied by the **Palestinians**.
2. Ishmaelites (6b) - Son of Abraham by Hagar (Gen. 25:12ff). **Saudi Arabia**.
3. Moab (6c)-descendants of Lot's older daughter (Gen. 19:30ff), land east of Dead Sea, South **Jordan**.
4. Hagrites (6d) – Children of Hagar, lived east of Gilead. (1 Chron. 5:10, & 18-22). North **Jordan**.
5. Gebal (7a) – Northern coastal area of **Lebanon**.
6. Ammon (7b) – Descendants of Lot's younger daughter (Gen. 19:38), east of Israel –central **Jordan**.
7. Amalek (7c) – A son of Esau whose people lived in the desert between Israel and Egypt.- **Palestinians**
8. Philistia (7d) – Gaza area, where the Hamas enemies of Israel live today. **Hamas Palestinians**
9. Tyre (7e) – An ancient coastal city of what is today **Lebanon**, especially the **Hezbollah in Lebanon**
10. Assyria (8a) –**Syria and Iraq**.

While Iran is Muslim (though not Arabic), and is clearly provoking this Psalm 83 war, it is not listed as a part of the Psalm 83 confederacy. This is surprising! How can they stay out of it?

All these countries in bold type above are filled with Muslim extremists who hate Israel and refuse to recognize it as a Jewish nation with the right to exist in the Middle East. Like Egypt, Jordan has a treaty with Israel, but it does not have the liability of the vulnerable Aswan Dam like Egypt.

Notice that four people groups attacking Israel in Psalm 83 are now part of modern Jordan; Edom, Moab, the Hagrites and Ammon. Jordan cannot stay out of this Psalm 83 war. It has been estimated that more than 70% of the people in Jordan hate Israel and want to destroy the Jews. It is quite possible that there may soon be a regime change in Jordan and the treaty with Israel abrogated.

When Iraq was occupied by American troops some questioned how Iraq could participate in the Psalm 83 war? However, Iraq now has its own government and U.S. troops have virtually been withdrawn. There is no question whose side Iraq would be on in the event of an Arab/Israel war.

## Is the Psalm 83 War “On Hold”?

The modern beginning of the Psalm 83 war was 2006 when both the Hezbollah (from Lebanon) and Hamas (from the Gaza strip) attacked Israel with support from both Iran and Syria. It continued until the U.N. and U.S. forced a cease-fire. It was resumed in late December of 2008 with the Hamas in

Gaza after the Hamas had fired 1700 rocket bombs into Israel. It stopped again in mid-January of 2009.

If Israel takes action to remove Iran's nuclear threat, this could trigger the full resumption of the Psalm 83 war. All the countries in bold type above will participate in this Psalm 83 war against Israel, either directly or indirectly; but the enemies of Israel will fail.

The Bible says Damascus, capital of Syria, will be destroyed. "Behold, Damascus will cease from being a city, and it will be a ruinous heap" (Isaiah 17:1). Damascus claims to be the oldest continuously occupied city in the world. There's no record of it ever being destroyed to the point of not being occupied, but the Bible says it will be utterly destroyed, and it could be in this Psalm 83 war. Israel's victory is described in Isaiah 17:1-5, Jeremiah 49:23-27 and Amos 1:3-5, and Zephaniah 2. These Scriptures record the defeat of the countries named in Psalm 83.

### **Israel's Victory... *Costly*.**

Israel's victory in this war is also described in Psalm 83:9-18. Many of the leaders from earlier

Biblical wars with these countries are mentioned, comparing how this victory will be similar to those victories. God will help Israel, but He will also undoubtedly use the Israel Defense Forces (IDF).

However, Israel will suffer much damage. In Isaiah 17 where the future destruction of Damascus is described, Isaiah goes on to say, "In that day it shall come to pass that the glory of Jacob [Israel] will wane and the fatness of his flesh grow lean" (vs. 4); but God will also give them a great victory (vss. 13-14).

### **Is the Psalm 83 War Also the Ezekiel 38 War?**

Some say that the Psalm 83 war is the same as the Ezekiel 38-39 war of Gog-Magog. Compare the countries listed in the Ezekiel 38-39 war found in Ezekiel 38:2-6.

These countries are Russia (including many of the former USSR republics), plus Persia (now known as Iran, vs. 6), Sudan, Ethiopia, Cush (southern Egypt and Ethiopia), Libya, Turkey (Togarmah) and Gomer, whose people were originally in Turkey but now includes much of central Europe and Eastern Europe.

It is striking that none of the countries listed as Israel's enemies in the Psalm 83 war are mentioned in the Ezekiel 38-39 war and vice versa. This proves that they are not the same war. Why aren't the Psalm 83 enemies of Israel involved in the Gog-Magog war? They may be virtually taken out by God and Israel Defense Forces in the Psalm 83 war, or at least so reduced in power that they are unable to significantly participate in the Ezekiel 38-39 war. Some think Israel will have such a victory in this Psalm 83 war that they may occupy the territories of their Psalm 83 war enemies. This would simply be an expansion of Israel into the land-area God promised Abraham and his covenant descendants in Genesis 15:18, "On the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying: "To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates." How could this be? With God all things are possible.

## Timing of the Ezekiel 38 War

Could the Ezekiel 38 war happen today? Not likely, according to Ezekiel 38:11. God says to Gog and his allies, "You will say, 'I will go up against a land of unwalled villages; I will go to a peaceful people, who dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates.'"

After three recent trips to Israel the author can testify that Israel is not dwelling safely and without walls at this time. The Hamas of Gaza continue to send rocket bombs into Israel. Israel has built many walls to control terrorism and is clearly living in fear today, not in peace. In other words, it does not sound like the Ezekiel 38-39 war is likely to happen at this time. Some suggest that only a great victory by Israel in the Psalm 83 war could produce such a time of peace and safety in Israel as described in Ezekiel 38:11. Accordingly, we suggest the Psalm 83 war will precede the Ezekiel 38-39 Gog and Magog war.

The Bible is not clear when the Ezekiel 38-39 war will happen, but it is future. Some believe it will happen before the rapture of the church. Others believe it will be early in "The Tribulation." We do not know. This war is not Armageddon, but likely a prelude to Armageddon.

### *Ezekiel Cried, "Them Dry Bones..."*

God will help Israel in the Psalm 83 war as described in Psalm 83:9-18, but He will also use the IDF (Israel Defense Forces) to defeat their enemies. This is the mighty Israel army God will raise up from the "dry bones" of Ezekiel 37. The British Balfour Declaration in 1917 created a homeland for Jews in Palestine.

This began a significant re-gathering of the scattered Jews back to their ancient homeland. May 14, 1948 the independent nation of Israel came into existence again after more than nineteen centuries of being scattered. Now, the military prowess of Israel is highly regarded and feared in the Middle East and around the world.

## God Fights the Ezekiel 38 War

However, Ezekiel 38-39 describes an entirely different war. God will do all the fighting, virtually destroying the forces of Gog-Magog and their allies. Ezek. 38:19-23 describes God fighting Israel's enemies. He uses a great earthquake in verse 19. Mountains are thrown down on the invading enemies in verse 20. Then the enemy troops start killing each other in verse 21. Finally, God uses diseases, flooding rain, great hailstones, fire and brimstone in verse 22. Israel will not have to fight in that battle. God will do it all.

The KJV translation of Ezekiel 39:2 quotes God saying to the Gog-Magog forces, "And I will turn thee back, and leave but the sixth part of thee, ..." However, the Hebrew text is apparently not that clear because other contemporary Bible versions do not confirm that translation. However the 5/6<sup>th</sup> casualty rate sounds right in the context of what was described. Ezekiel 39:11-14 clearly states that so many in the armies of Magog and her allies will be killed in this Ezekiel 38-39 war against Israel that it will take seven months for Israel to bury their dead enemies (Ezekiel 39:11-12).

It is interesting that none of these countries attacking Israel in Psalm 83 or in Ezekiel 38-39 have significant roles the rest of the end-time events after those wars. These two wars include almost all the Muslim nations on earth and they lose big. This would appear to refute the position that a Muslim Caliphate take over the world and produce the Beast described in Revelation 13. However, their loss only fulfills God's promise to Abraham and passed to Israel in Genesis 12:3. "...I will bless those who bless you, and will curse those who curse you." We do not rejoice in their loss. God loves all people including the Muslims and they could be delivered from this sad destiny through accepting Jesus Christ as their Savior.

## In Conclusion

We are seeing Scripture fulfilled before our eyes. We must pray for the peace of Jerusalem (Psalm 126:6). However, let me say that Jesus said in Luke 21:28, "Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near." Paul described these end-time events like birth-pangs, coming closer together and with increasing intensity (1 Thes. 5:3). If you are not saved, trust Jesus today. We may well be near His coming. We must be faithful to spread the gospel to the lost. This should also cause us to live righteous lives, lest we be ashamed at His coming (1 John 2:28).

Amen!

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**Note:** The author acknowledges indebtedness to Bill Salus and his book, **Isralestine**, HighWay Publishers, subsidiary of Anomalos Publishing House, Crane, Missouri. Copyright 2008 by Bill Salus.

The author highly recommends this book. It is well done, even though we disagree re: his interpretation that the Hagriles refer to Egypt and that Egypt is in the Psalm 83 war. The Hagriles became a people living east of Gilead.

See what the Bible says about them: 1 Chron. 5:10, "Now in the days of Saul they made war with the Hagriles, who fell by their hand; and they dwelt in their tents throughout the entire area east of Gilead." (Continuing verse 18), "The sons of Reuben, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh had forty-four thousand seven hundred and sixty valiant men, men able to bear shield and sword, to shoot with the bow, and skillful in war, who went to war. 19 They made war with the Hagriles, Jetur, Naphish, and Nodab. And they were helped against them, and the Hagriles were delivered into their hand, and all who were with them, for they cried out to God in the battle. He heeded their prayer, because they put their trust in Him" (1 Chron. 5:10 and 18-20).

These Scriptures say it took three tribes of Israel to defeat the Hagriles in a war. We have heard no other evidence the Hagriles represent Egypt except that the word, "Hagriles" is built on the name Hagar, Egyptian maid of Sarah, who became Abraham's second wife. The Hagriles seem to clearly be part of what is today called Jordan. Egypt has been Egypt most of recorded history. Why should the Psalmist call Egypt Hagriles? (Check Bill's website, [www.prophecydepotministries.net/](http://www.prophecydepotministries.net/) (For Current Bible Prophecy Updates).