

Russia on the Move

Commentary for March 17, 2014 — Although Gog and Magog Are Not Moving

The nation of Russia has been in the news with its political pressure on the nation of Ukraine. Specifically as of this date, Russian troops have effectively occupied the peninsula of Crimea in the north of the Black Sea. International tensions have increased while political and economic effects are felt in the region and across Europe.

When such situations arise, it is important to remember who determines the fluctuating boundaries of nations, empires, and who commands the movements and flow of peoples around the world:

“God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, ... And [God]

- [1] **has made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and**
- [2] **has determined the times before appointed, and**
- [3] **the bounds of their habitation.”**

• **Acts 17:24, 26**

Why has God done these things?

“That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; ... For we are also his offspring.”

• **Acts 17:27–28**

God has a purpose — a reason — for doing what He has done in history, and what He is doing now with nations and peoples. He is in complete control, however much we may not like that fact. This reality is true for your nation and mine.

Russia Is Not Gog or Magog

Many prophetic writers and speakers, mostly evangelical, remain fixed on the idea that Russia is the land of Gog and Magog. They feel that a coalition of nations will rise and attack Israel as spoken of in Ezekiel chapter 38. Supposedly, those nations will be led by Russia. God will defeat the armies of the coalition, a period of peace and prosperity for Israel will occur, the antichrist will arise, will attack Israel, and be defeated when Christ returns. This scenario is wrong.

Gog and Magog have no relation to Russia, except perhaps in some minor way. They will not lead armies to attack Israel. If you want to understand who Gog and Magog are, review three articles by Dr. Ernest L. Martin: “[Afghanistan \(Gog and Magog\)](#),” “[The Breakup of the Soviet Union](#),” and for a full understanding of ancient nations and their future, just before Christ returns, see the article “[Prophetic Geography and the Time of the End](#).”

Russia, Present and Past

Russia controlled the former Soviet Union. In 1989 the Soviet Union had a population (286 million people) greater than that of the United States (248 million).¹ Today Russia currently has a population of 142 million people, the sixth largest in the world, and less than half the population of the United States (at 318 million). Taxes of 100 million people no longer funnel to the Russian government. Even worse, the population of Russia is not replacing itself and has decreased since 1989. This is a very unhealthy situation.²

In land area Russia is the largest nation in the world. The land area of the Soviet Union was 8.65 million square miles, which was diminished to Russia's current 6.60 million square miles. In addition, Russia lost the security of a buffer zone of friendly (and subservient) border countries of Eastern Europe.

Most do not realize that Russia is considered the largest producer of crude oil in the world,³ although Russia has difficulties with its oil production. First, the quality of its crude oil is not very easily transportable. Second, the oil must be transported vast distances overland. The vast territory of Russia makes it more expensive to get its oil from production sites to users around the world. The most cost efficient method of oil transport is by ocean-going ships. The next most efficient methods of oil transport are by pipeline, railroad, and then by truck.

Russia has built and sponsored construction of a vast system of pipelines to transport oil and natural gas from Russia to various countries in Europe. This is a major source of revenue for Russia and helps greatly to create a positive trade balance. Many of those pipelines go through the Ukraine. If oil stops flowing, the Russian economy would be severely damaged. The economic impact of shutting down the pipelines on Europe will be far worse. While Russia is still a major world power with missiles tipped with hundreds of nuclear weapons, it struggles to retain (and regain) its former prominence. A political failure could cause further political fragmentation of Russia, and that fragmentation could happen quickly.

In my opinion, the scene is being set for a further power vacuum which will eventually lead to the rise of regional powers. This will result in the rise of the first King of the North, the precursor to the Antichrist. The Antichrist will be the second (and third) King of the North spoken of in the Book of Daniel. He is the person called Gog in Ezekiel chapter 38. He will invade Israel (although Russian allies may assist). Christ will defeat his armies and rescue Israel.

The territory of Gog and Magog remains where it always had been. It is not Russia.

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¹ See "[Soviet Census \(1989\)](#)."

² China has a population of 1.3 billion people. In the future China may seek Russian territory, particularly if the Russian population continues to decrease. Both are nuclear powers.

³ See the Wikipedia article "[List of countries by oil production](#)" and judge the sources listed there. It is uncertain whether Russia or Saudi Arabia is truly the largest crude oil producer because data supplied from each government may be politically motivated.