

EZEKIEL

Hard to Heart

“Quake Boss”

38:14-23

You gotta love submarine movies. *The Hunt for Red October*. *K19*. *Run Silent, Run Deep*. *U-571*.

Crimson Tide is certainly one of the best. I’m pretty sure it’s in *Crimson Tide* where there is some dialog between characters about what is the best submarine movie.

Then there’s *Das Boot*. I heard from experts it was a classic. We rented it. Didn’t know it was in German with sub-titles (no pun intended!). To this day Pam won’t let me forget that I fell asleep during most of it.

The parts I recall are of a German sub trying to complete it’s mission in WWII. They go from a storm to depth charges to a surface attack by a fighter plane. At one point they dive and cannot surface. Just before reaching crush depth they land on a shelf. Just before running out of oxygen they resurface and limp home.

They return on Christmas Eve to an attack on their facilities. Finally the captain, suffering from multiple bullet wounds, watches as the sub sinks. He collapses and dies.

Reading about what is going to happen to the armies of Gog when they invade from the north reminded me of the futility of *Das Boot*. Before ever getting near Israel there is a mighty earthquake. It’s so disorienting that the soldiers turn upon one another and kill one another. If you think you can

escape the earthquake or being hacked to pieces, you're wrong, because next comes "pestilence and bloodshed" and "flooding rain, great hailstones, fire, and brimstone" from out of the sky.

God will defeat Gog and all the world will watch in awe.

Ezekiel 38:14 "Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say to Gog, 'Thus says the Lord God: "On that day when My people Israel dwell safely, will you not know it?"

The idea here seems to be that you will know this invasion is imminent when Israel is dwelling "safely" in her land. This idea of her safety has been our litmus test for when this invasion might occur. It doesn't mean Israel will be without enemies. It means she will have a sense of safety. That's why I tend to think the invasion is after the world leader we know as the antichrist enters into a peace treaty with Israel guaranteeing her safety.

The only other time this would make sense is at the end of the Millennial Kingdom, just before the final revolt against God led by Satan. Indeed, some scholars see this invasion by Gog as the one spoken of in the Revelation at the end of the Millennium. But we reject that for reasons we've already discussed, e.g., the opposition is much more broad and inclusive at the end of the Millennium than the invasion described here.

Ezekiel 38:15 Then you will come from your place out of the far north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great company and a mighty army.

Gog's "place, we learned earlier, was the remotest parts of the north. I'm told that if you draw a line from Jerusalem to the North Pole it will come very close to modern Moscow.

Do you know that the North Pole is shifting? The magnetic North Pole, that is - not the geographical one. Listen to this quote from National Geographic:

Over the past century the pole has moved 685 miles (1,100 kilometers) from Arctic Canada toward Siberia, says Joe Stoner, a paleomagnetist at Oregon State University.

At its current rate the pole could move to Siberia within the next half-century, Stoner said.

"It's moving really fast," he said. "We're seeing something that hasn't happened for at least 500 years."

Lorne McKee, a geomagnetic scientist at Natural Resources Canada, says that Stoner's data fits his own readings.

"The movement of the pole definitely appears to be accelerating," he said.

Another NatGeo article said, "Earth's magnetic North Pole is racing towards Russia at almost 40 miles a year due to magnetic changes in the planet's core."

I'm not making this stuff up!

In fact, the only possible country that is to the extreme north of Israel is Russia. The country of Russia begins north of the Black Sea in Southern Russia and is the only country north of the Black Sea. Since we do not have many choices, one out of one, it is clear that Gog is Russia!

We've already talked about the size of the invading force that comes against Israel and why we believe they will literally be on horseback.

Ezekiel 38:16 You will come up against My people Israel like a cloud, to cover the land. It will be in the latter days that I will bring you against My land, so that the nations may know Me, when I am hallowed in you, O Gog, before their eyes."

God claims ownership of the land and relationship to the Jews. Both are His.

Let me go off on a tangent here for a minute. It's suggested by the fact that Israel plays so prominent a role in the Bible.

Israel is one of the Bible's main subjects, mention well over 2500 times. Any system of theology that suggests God is through with Israel as an ethnic people, or that another group has somehow replaced Israel, is

wrong. And if it is wrong on Israel, such a huge and important subject, it will be wrong in other areas as well.

Paul says of Israel in the New Testament, "God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew" (Romans 11:2). The nation of Israel is described as God's elect (e.g., Isaiah 45:3).

Baker's Evangelical Dictionary has this entry regarding Israel and predestination:

From the call of Abraham his descendants, in particular the progeny of Jacob/Israel, are predestined to fulfill the purpose that God has for them. They are to be seen in the world as his people (Psalm 33:11-12), holy and obedient to him, living to his praise, a priestly nation bringing the knowledge of God to other nations.

There are systems of theology that focus on very particular definitions of predestination, election and foreknowledge. Those same systems of theology deny or ignore the place of Israel as a nation in God's plans.

If they are clearly wrong about Israel's predestination, election and foreknowledge, **then why would we think they are right when discussing those doctrines?**

Ezekiel 38:17 Thus says the Lord God: "Are you he of whom I have spoken in former days by My servants the prophets of Israel, who prophesied for years in those days that I would bring you against them?"

Ezekiel 38:18 "And it will come to pass at the same time, when Gog comes against the land of Israel," says the Lord God, "that My fury will show in My face."

Hmm. This begs the question, 'Where in the Old Testament has God spoken of this before?'

Truth is, Gog isn't directly mentioned in any other Old Testament passages, so scholars have a hard time with this. I haven't found their answers very satisfying. They say, for example, that other nations in other prophecies are 'typical' of Gog. Seems a stretch.

My own suggestion would be this. There are a lot of prophets and their prophecies that did not make their way into the Old Testament. For example: We know that Enoch prophesied, but we don't know everything he said.

The text may be referring to an oral tradition of prophecy that would have been well known to the Jews in exile that Ezekiel was addressing.

How is God going to show His wrath and defeat this invading army?

Ezekiel 38:19 For in My jealousy and in the fire of My wrath I have spoken: 'Surely in that day there shall be a great earthquake in the land of Israel,

Ezekiel 38:20 so that the fish of the sea, the birds of the heavens, the beasts of the field, all creeping things that creep on the earth, and all men who are on the face of the earth shall shake at My presence. The mountains shall be thrown down, the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground.'

Ezekiel 38:21 I will call for a sword against Gog throughout all My mountains," says the Lord God. "Every man's sword will be against his brother.

A divinely appointed earthquake will be so severe as to disorient Gog's forces and cause them in the confusion to fight each other. Remember that they come from many nations and it's not at all hard to envision them turning on one another.

The earthquake will apparently set off volcanic deposits in the region, bringing down on Gog's army a hail of molten rock and burning sulfur (volcanic ash).

It is clear from this passage that Israel and their excellent, modern military (including nuclear weapons) have nothing to do with the destruction of Gog and his allies.

In addition to the earthquake and all that goes with it, the Lord will use other means of defeating Israel enemy as indicated in verse twenty-two.

Ezekiel 38:22 And I will bring him to judgment with pestilence and bloodshed; I will rain down on him, on his troops, and on the many peoples who are with him, flooding rain, great hailstones, fire, and brimstone.

The first half of the verse tells us that the Lord will bring a pestilence that will cause the bloodshed or death of those in Gog's army. The second half of the verse describes things raining down on them.

Likely hailstones will target certain individuals. You wouldn't want to be anywhere near that field of battle! Everywhere you turn there is some terrible way of being killed.

Ezekiel 38:23 Thus I will magnify Myself and sanctify Myself, and I will be known in the eyes of many nations. Then they shall know that I am the Lord." '

Three things will result from God's defeat of Gog:

1. First, God shall "magnify" Himself. It will focus the attention of the nations of the world on Israel and when the invaders are miraculously defeated God will suddenly be magnified.
2. Second, God will "sanctify" Himself. He will demonstrate to all the watching world that He is separate from the laws of nature and rules over them to affect history in our space and time.
3. Third, the nations shall "know" the God is the Lord. In context it means that everyone on earth will know that God is the God of Israel, the Lord of the earth, just as He's been revealed through the Bible.

Though we don't anticipate being around to see this massacre, believing we will be resurrected and raptured long before it occurs, we can still see signs it is drawing near.

These are the last days. God is getting nations lined-up according to His centuries old prophecies.

Keep looking up!