

End Time Wars - #1 War of Extermination



By [Dr. David R. Reagan](#)

Every time a war breaks out in the Middle East, I receive a flurry of phone calls and email messages asking if it could be the War of Armageddon. This question is prompted by the fact that most people are familiar with only one end time war — the one that has been popularized in movies and novels as the "Battle of Armageddon."



The Valley of Armageddon looking east from the top of Mount Carmel

The concept comes from the book of Revelation where it says that armies will gather in the end times at a place "*which in Hebrew is called Har-Magedon*" ([Revelation 16:16](#)). This term literally means the Mount of Megiddo and refers to the ancient fortress of Megiddo that controlled the Valley of Jezreel. In English the word was transliterated as Armageddon, and the term came to be applied to the Valley of Jezreel which lies in front of Har-Magedon, running diagonally across Israel from Haifa to the Jordan River.



The Valley of Jezreel, also known as the Valley of Armageddon

Most people are surprised to discover that there is no reference in the book of Revelation, or any other place in the Bible to the "Valley of Armageddon," nor is there any reference to the "Battle of Armageddon" — but more about that later. People are even more surprised to learn that Bible prophecy reveals nine wars in the end times and that Armageddon relates to only one of these.

The Next Prophetic War

Most prophetic scholars have long believed that the next great end time war will be the War of Gog & Magog that is described in Ezekiel 38 and 39. This, for example is the stated position of Joel Rosenberg in his popular book, *Epicenter*. This war will start when Russia invades Israel with certain specified allies, all of whom are Muslim nations today.

But I seriously doubt that the conflict described in Ezekiel 38 and 39 will be the next war of end time Bible prophecy. There are two reasons why I feel this way.

First, there is a condition for the war of Ezekiel 38 and 39 that has not been met. Three times in Ezekiel 38 — in verses 8, 11, and 14 — it states that the war described in that chapter will not occur until the people of Israel are living "*securely*" in "*unwalled villages*."

Israel is not living in security today. It is bombarded daily by missiles from Gaza, and it is constantly under the threat of missile attacks from Hezbollah in Lebanon. There is also the ever present threat of terrorist attacks, a threat that has forced Israel to construct a 400 mile long wall down the center of the country. In short, it is laughable today to even think of the Jewish people of Israel as living "*securely*" in "*unwalled villages*."

The second reason I doubt that the war of Ezekiel 38 and 39 will be the next end time war of Bible prophecy is because the nations mentioned in [Ezekiel 38:5-6](#) as the allies of Russia do not include a single Arab state with a border adjacent to Israel. The nations identified are Persia (Iran), Cush (most likely modern day Sudan), Put (Libya and possibly Algeria and Tunisia), and two regions that lie within modern day Turkey (Gomer and Bethogarmah). There is no mention of the nations that share a common border with Israel — namely, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Egypt, and Gaza.

Why are the nations located next to Israel not mentioned as allies of Russia? I believe the best explanation of this mystery is the one supplied by Bill Salus in his book, *Israelestine*. He proposes that the next end time prophetic war will be the one described in Psalm 83, a war between Israel and its neighbors. He believes this war will produce the conditions that are necessary for the war of Ezekiel 38 and 39, and I agree with that conclusion.

With that point clarified, let's now take an overview of the end time prophetic wars in their likely chronological sequence, starting with the first in this series.

1) The War of Extermination — Psalm 83

The psalm states that the immediate neighbors of Israel will launch a war for the purpose of "*wiping out Israel as a nation*" (verse 4). The nations described as being a part of this nefarious effort are those with a common border with Israel today (verses 6-8). The rest of the psalm is a prayer for the victory of Israel (verses 9-18).

The outcome of the war is not stated, but we know from other scriptures that Israel will be victorious. For example, in [Zechariah 12:6](#) we are told that in the end times Israel will be

like *"a firepot among pieces of wood and a flaming torch among sheaves, so they will consume on the right hand and on the left all the surrounding peoples..."* Also, in [Amos 9:15](#) we are told that once the Jews are re-established in their land, *"they will not again be rooted out from their land."*

Bill Salus believes this war will result in an overwhelming victory for Israel, resulting in great territorial expansion and enhanced national resources. It will also produce the security spoken of in Ezekiel 38.

In the second installment of this "End Time Wars" series, we will look at the second war in the end times sequence — the First War of Gog & Magog.