

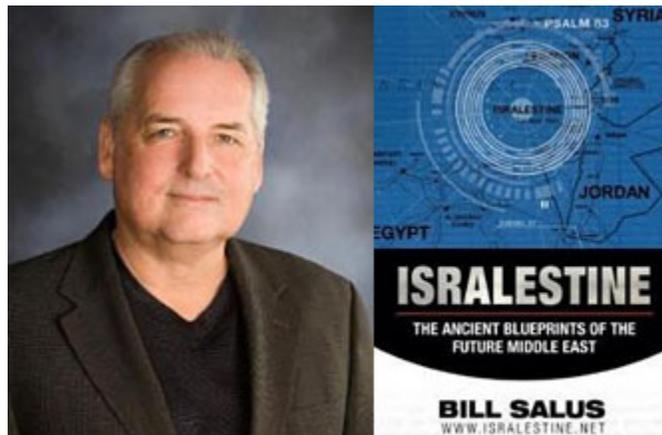
[Jones Interview: Timing the Coming Middle East Wars](#)

(<http://www.lamblion.us/2010/02/jones-interview-timing-coming-middle.html>)



By [Nathan Jones](#)

In December 2009 I was interviewed by Bill Salus, author of the popular Psalm 83-themed book *Isralestine*, host of the radio program "Prophecy Update," and evangelist on the end times website [Prophecy Depot](#). Bill and I spent much of the interview discussing the Rapture, Middle East politics and my "left behind" video "[Jesus Came. What's Next?](#)"



Bill Salus, host of "Prophecy Update"

Bill has been kind enough to allow The Christ in Prophecy Journal to reproduce the "Caught Up in the Pre-Trib Rapture" interview in transcript form, edited into an article series. To listen to the original radio program in mp3 format, I invite you to visit [Prophecy Depot](#) or [KWBB](#).

In this segment, Bill and I will be discussing the possible timings of the upcoming Middle East wars in relation to the Tribulation.

Timing the Coming Middle East Wars

Bill Salus: A lot of people put the Psalm 83 War before the Tribulation and the Rapture before the Tribulation. Some put the Ezekiel 38-39 Gog-Magog Battle before the

Tribulation. Some don't know exactly where to put it. There are good reasons it could happen before and there are good reasons it could happen after.

Dr. Ron Rhodes wrote a book titled *Northern Storm Rising*. Didn't you interview Ron Rhodes on the "Christ in Prophecy" television show?

Nathan Jones: Yes, we did, and we talked about *Northern Storm Rising* ([see show](#)). He believes the Ezekiel 38-39 Gog-Magog Battle could either occur before the Tribulation or just into the Tribulation. Dr. Rhodes gives a lot of excellent details, going through every possible time period that this battle could possibly happen and shows how some time periods just couldn't work. For instance, the biggest prerequisite for the Gog-Magog Battle is that Israel has to be dwelling in safety. It's hard to argue that Israel is currently dwelling unwarred and in safety, so they have to do something between now and then before Ezekiel 38-39 can happen. Israel needs that peaceful precondition.

Another example, once those invading armies are defeated by God miraculously, Israel burns the weapons as fuel for seven years. We know 3 1/2 years into which is the middle of the Tribulation the Antichrist will drive the Jews out and they will flee to Jordan. How could they so easily enter Jordan unless they have some control over it as the result of a previous war? Anyway, that would only give Israel 3 1/2 years to burn the fuel, so we have to back the Gog-Magog battle seven years from that point — at least 3 1/2 years before the Tribulation.

Dr. David Reagan was the first I've heard bring this possible scenario up. I never had thought about it that way, in that more than likely Ezekiel 38-39 will happen at least 3 1/2 years before the Tribulation begins so they can have the full seven years to burn those weapons. Now, maybe they take the weapons with them down to Petra and burn them along the way. It is open to interpretation.

Bill Salus: Jordan is the nation where Israel flees to when they are being persecuted by the Antichrist; Petra being in modern-day Southern Jordan. And so, your argument is that the Jews are going to burn some weapons' fuel along the way, or take them with them for fuel conversion in Petra, though not likely.

Nathan Jones: Probably not. It'd be hard to flee carrying 3 1/2 years worth of fuel.

Bill Salus: So, therefore, what Dr. Reagan is saying and I've heard Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum say this and I concur with them, is that the conclusion and not the commencement of

Ezekiel 38-39 will have to conclude three and a half years prior to the commencement of the Tribulation since Israel will be burning weapons for seven years and not likely burning weapons into the second half of the Tribulation.

Nathan Jones: A few extra years before the Tribulation would give the Antichrist time, too, to rise to power. If you think about it, if Israel subjugates their surrounding countries and eventually all the rest of the oil rich countries and Russia who is one of the biggest gas producers in the world is knocked out of the picture, Israel will become exceedingly rich. Once Israel owns most of the oil of the world, of course the nations of the world are going to try make peace with them. You would certainly want to, especially when God has made Himself know that He defends Israel. The Antichrist would be a smart man to make a treaty with Israel. That would give some time for the Antichrist to rise up enough in world prominence to make a treaty with Israel and move forward in that relationship just as Daniel foretold in chapter 9.

Bill Salus: Right. So, Israel is very possibly going to preempt a strike against Iran?

Nathan Jones: They have no choice. I mean, what can they do? Obviously the UN isn't doing anything about Iran's nuclear ambitions and desire to "wipe Israel off the map." They wag their fingers at Iran and say, "Stop it. Stop it. Stop it." And then the next month, "Stop it. Stop it. Stop it." But, they aren't doing anything about Iran. Israel is the world's only hope in stopping Iran.

Role of the United States

Nathan Jones: In reading Ezekiel 38-39 we see that Saudi Arabia (Sheba and Dedan) are one of the nations that dwell in safety, sitting out and watching the Gog-Magog invasion. I believe the United States is one of those nations that sit it out and see if Israel is going to rescue us or not. We are looking to Israel (although the whole world condemns Israel), we are looking for Israel to save us all in the Middle East.

Bill Salus: That's would make sense because we want to have international relationships and commerce, especially if Israel becomes the wealthy Israel that Russia will greatly desire to invade. Whether Israel become prominent because they find oil under their own turf or they conquer nations that already have it, Israel will become exceedingly wealthy. Israel has actually found natural gas off of Haifa via the Tamar-1 site. I heard you talk about that

in a radio interview. Israel could also get gas and oil from Arab resources from the aftermath of Psalm 83.

Here the United States is possibly connected with the *"young lions"* of Tarsus. It also uses the word *"merchants"* in [Ezekiel 38:13](#). We will be wanting to have an economic relationship with a prosperous Israel, the very Israel that Russia comes against.

We could be one of the ones like you say who ask Gog, "What are you guys doing? We are trying to establish some stability here and have a financial and economic relationship here with the nation of Israel." Now, it does pose a good point that you bring up. That verse could in part be the United States saying, "What are you guys about to do?"

Nathan Jones: Yes, it's always better to let someone else do your dirty work, and the Bible shows that the nations are lazy and are sitting back and letting Israel do their dirty work for them. And, if Israel is destroyed in the process, I don't think the world would bat an eye because they don't really want Israel to exist anyway. For example, UN after UN resolution and a day of morning when they regret ever granting Israel access to the land shows the world's dislike of Jewish existence. But, we know prophetically that Israel's total destruction will never happen. Israel will exist and God's promises will exist. We are talking about blessings that we can trust in. God will fulfill His promises to Israel and He will fulfill His promises to the Church. One of those promises is the Rapture.

Bill Salus: Absolutely! Should we be here as a Church and the Rapture does not occur prior to these prophetic Middle East battles of Psalm 83 and Isaiah 17 and Ezekiel 38-39 (should it be a Pre-Trib event), then we need to have courage.

The way we could see this play out is that Israel could make a preemptive strike on Iran. Iran's proxies Hezbollah, Syria, and Hamas could retaliate and come against Israel. Israel would then have to act decisively and do something devastating to Damascus. This could easily get the Arab League to convene and draw lines in the Mid-East sand and ask, "Jordan, Egypt, all you Arab League nations, what side of the sand are you on? Israel just did something devastating to Damascus." We could have Psalm 83 actually come right out of that.