

CHAPTER 38

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 38

This chapter gives an account of an enemy of the Jews, under the name of Gog, that shall invade their land, and disturb their peace, after they are settled in it; who is described by the countries over which he rules; and against whom the prophet is bid to set his face, and prophesy of him, the Lord being against him; and who would cause him to return from Judea unsuccessful, (²³⁰¹Ezekiel 38:1-4), the number of his confederates, their warlike accoutrements and preparations for the invasion of the land of Israel, are foretold, (²³⁰⁴Ezekiel 38:4-9), his wicked designs and intentions to spoil and plunder the inhabitants of it, (²³¹⁰Ezekiel 38:10-12), the notice taken of his projects by the merchants of Tarshish and others, (²³¹³Ezekiel 38:13,14), his coming up to invade the land is again observed for the certainty of it; and the place from whence, and the time when he should come, are mentioned, as well as God's design in it, and which had been before predicted by his prophets, (²³¹⁴Ezekiel 38:14-17), and the chapter is concluded with a denunciation of divine wrath, which shall be terrible to all the inhabitants of the earth, and to all creatures in heaven, earth, and sea; when he and his forces shall be destroyed by the sword, by pestilence, and by dreadful storms and tempests, (²³¹⁸Ezekiel 38:18-23), of which destruction a fuller account is given in the next chapter.

Ver. 1. *And the word of the Lord came unto me,* &c.] At the same time as the preceding prophecy did, as the copulative and shows; which predicts the restoration and conversion of the Jews; the union of their tribes under the King Messiah; and their settlement in their own land: and this respects some disturbance they should meet with upon it, for a short time, by a powerful enemy hereafter described:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 2. *Son of man, set thy face against Gog,* &c.] Of the phrase, “setting the face towards”, or “against”, (See Gill on “²³⁰⁶Ezekiel 6:2”) (See Gill on “²³¹⁰Ezekiel 21:2”) (See Gill on “²³¹⁰Ezekiel 25:2”) but who this Gog is the prophet is bid boldly to face, and intrepidly declare the wrath of God

against, interpreters are divided about. Calmet^{f632} thinks that Cambyses and his army are meant by Gog and Magog, which to mention is enough; and it is the opinion of St. Ambrose^{f633} that the Goths who ravaged the Roman empire in the fifth and sixth ages are meant: others, who suppose this prophecy was fulfilled after the Jews' return from the Babylonish captivity, and before the coming of Christ, take Gog to be a common name of the kings of the lesser Asia and Syria, or the Seleucidae, who distressed the Jews in the times of the Maccabees; the chief of whom was Antiochus Epiphanes, who is supposed, to be more especially designed, and was a type of antichrist; and they are the more strengthened in this opinion, because they find, in Pliny^{f634}, that the city of Hierapolis in Syria was called by the Syrians Magog; and they fancy the name of Gog is the same with Gyges a king of Lydia, whose country was called from him Gygea, or Gog's land, who was grandfather to Croesus; and which country came into the hands of Cyrus, and from the Persians into the hands of the Greeks, and so to the Seleucidae; for which reason they may bear this name in this prophecy; but it is certain that the prophecy refers to what should be in "latter years", and in the "latter days", (²⁵⁸⁸Ezekiel 38:8,16), phrases which respect the times of the Messiah, the Gospel dispensation, and oftentimes the latter part of that; and even those times when the Jews shall return to their own land, and continue in it for ever, as the preceding prophecy, with which this is connected, shows; and so the Jews always understand it of an enemy of theirs yet to come. Cocceius is of opinion, that the Romish antichrist is meant; and that Gog signifying the covering or roof of a house, fitly points him out; who puts himself between God and man, as the roof is between heaven and earth; and who keeps out the light of divine things, the heat of love, and rain of spiritual blessings, from the church; and compares with this the veil over all nations, (²⁵⁸⁷Isaiah 25:7) and the covering cherub, (²⁵⁸⁴Ezekiel 28:14,16), but I rather think the Turk is here meant, the eastern antichrist, in whose possession the land of Judea now is; and which, when recovered by the Jews, will greatly exasperate him, and he will gather all his forces together to regain it, but in vain. The learned Vitringa^{f635}, though he is of opinion that this prophecy, according to its first and proper sense, respects the kings of Syria, the persecutors of the church, that should bring large and well disciplined armies into the land of the people of God, gathered out of the northern nations, and Scythians, and would be defeated in the land of Canaan; yet mystically intends the Turks, the Scythian nation and northern people, who, by a like attempt, will infest the church of the people of God, and invade their country; and this he makes

no doubt of is the proper aspect of Gog and Magog: and Samuel Dauderstat, a Lutheran divine, has wrote a dissertation, “Deuteronomy Antichristo Orientali”, concerning the eastern antichrist, which he explains of Gog and Magog: and Michael Buckenroder, another Lutheran, has written upon the irruption to be made by Gog and Magog into the mountains of Israel^{f636}. Osiander thus explains the several names mentioned; by Gog I think the Turk is meant, by Magog the Tartarian, by Meshec the Muscovites, and by Tubal the Wallachians; and Starckius on the place observes, that if this prophecy is yet to be fulfilled, we shall easily find our Gog, and point out his metropolis Constantinople; so that I am not singular in my opinion. Gog signifies “high”^{f637} and eminent, one in a very exalted station: it comes from the same root, and has the same signification, as Agag, to whose height and exaltation there is an allusion in (~~Q247~~ Numbers 24:7), where the Samaritan and Septuagint versions read Gog: it is the same with <Arabic>, “Jagog”, by which name the Arabians called the Scythians that lived far east, particularly those that were situated to the north of China beyond Imaus, as Golius^{f638} observes; and Josephus^{f639} says that the posterity of Magog are called Scythians, and these inhabited Tartary; and there, as Paulus Venetus^{f640} affirms, are the countries of Gog and Magog, which they call Gug and Mungug now; from hence came the Turks, even from Tartary, which is called by the eastern writers Turchestan, whence they had their name; and so may with great propriety be called by the name of Gog; their emperor also being a high and mighty one, whose empire must be destroyed; and which is signified by the passing away of the second woe, and the drying up of the river Euphrates, (~~Q214~~ Revelation 11:14 16:12), upon which passages this and the following chapter may be thought a good commentary: and so the Jews^{f641} make Gog to be the general of the Ishmaelites or Turks, as Armillus of the Christians, and who shall reign in the kingdom of Magog or Scythia. Gog is the name of a man, (~~Q204~~ 1 Chronicles 5:4), as it is here, and not of a country. The country of Gog is called, as follows,

the land of Magog, of which Gog is king, as Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it: it may be supplied in connection with the former clause,

set thy face against Gog, in the land of Magog; or, “against Gog”, against “the land of Magog”, so Kimchi. The countries of Jagog and Magog, according to the Arabic geographer^{f642}, are surrounded by Mount Caucasus, which Bochart^{f643} conjectures has its name from thence; it being in the Semi-Chaldee language, the language of the Colchi and Armenians,

שׁג גׁג, “Gog-hasan”, or Gog’s fortress. This land of Magog is the same with Cathaia or Scythia, that part of Tartary from whence the Turks came; and which perhaps may come into their hands again before this prophecy is fulfilled; and even now the Turk calls himself king of Tartary; and the Magog of Pliny in Syria, the same with Aleppo, is in his dominions; which Maimonides^{f644} also takes notice of as in Syria, though he seems to distinguish it from Haleb or Aleppo; however, according to him, they were near to one another; though some^{f645} think the place in Pliny is corrupted, and that it ought to be read Magog, as it is, by Maimonides, Magbab. Gog is further described as

the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal: some render it, “prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal”; taking Rosh, as the rest, for the name of a place, a part of Scythia, from whence the Russians came, and had their name. So it is rendered by the Septuagint, Symmachus, and Theodotion; and some later Greek writers^{f646} make mention of a country called Ros, which, they say, is a Scythian nation, situated between the Euxine Pontus and the whole maritime coast to the north of Taurus, a people fierce and wild. Meshech and Tubal were the brethren of Magog, and sons of Japheth, (Genesis 10:2), whose posterity inhabited those counties called after their name; who, according to Josephus^{f647}, are the Cappadocians and Iberians; and among the former is a place called Mazaca, which has some affinity with Meshech; and there was a country called Gogarene^{f648}, a part of Iberia. According to Bochart^{f649}, these are the Moschi and Tybarnes, people that dwell near the Euxine sea, and under the dominion of the Turk; wherefore the Grand Turk may be called the chief prince of them:

and prophesy against him: foretell his ruin and destruction, which is hinted before. Mention is made of his invasion of the land of Judea, and that for the comfort of the Jews, that they might have nothing to fear from this formidable army.

Ver. 3. *And say, thus saith the Lord God, behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.*] Which is repeated for the confirmation of it, that so it would certainly be; that the Lord, the mighty God, and King of kings, would in his providence frown upon him, and appear against him; and his titles are repeated also, to show that all his greatness, grandeur, and power, would not protect him from the vengeance of God.

Ver. 4. *And I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws, &c.*] Or, I will put hooks in thy jaws, and with them turn thee back; or rather, “turn thee about”^{f650}; and lead thee where and as I please; for this is not to be understood of God’s putting hooks into his jaws, and leading him back from his enterprise of invading the land of Judea; as he put a hook in the nose and a bridle in the lips of the king of Assyria, and brought him back from Jerusalem, (²³⁷²Isaiah 37:29), but of his using him thus in his providence to draw him to the land of Israel, out of his own land, as fishes are drawn with the hook out of the water. The sense is, that he would so work upon and influence the heart of Gog, that he should be inclined to come out of his own land and invade Judea; just as the Lord is said to draw Sisera and his army, (¹⁰⁴⁷Judges 4:7), as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe. So the Targum,

“I will persuade thee, and put hooks in thy jaws;”

that is, incline his heart to take such a step, which should be to his destruction:

and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army; all his janizaries, and large army out of Turkey, and other parts of his dominions:

horses and horsemen; the Turkish armies, chiefly consisting of cavalry; (See Gill on “⁶¹⁶Revelation 9:16”):

all of them clothed with all sorts of [armour]; or completely clothed, as the Targum; for the word “armour” is not in the text; and besides, their armour is particularly mentioned afterwards; and so Kimchi has it, with all kind of ornaments, richly clothed and decorated, especially the principal officers, and, so made a fine show: even a

great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords; or large armies, as the Targum; the Turks have always been used to bring prodigious large armies into the field; (see Gill on “⁶¹⁶Revelation 9:16”).

Ver. 5. *Persia, Ethiopia, and Lybia with them, &c.*] These are the confederates or auxiliaries of the Turks, which shall join with them in this expedition. Persia is a neighbouring kingdom to the Turks, and may fall into their hands before this comes to pass; and is in a fair way for it at this time, through the internal divisions in it; however, it will be confederate with them. Ethiopia or Cush does not design the country of the Abyssines in the dominions of the Great Mogul, but Arabia Chusea, which lay

between Judea and Egypt, and is now in the hands of the Turks; and Lybia or Phut is the name of one of the sons of Ham, (^{<Q106>}Genesis 10:6) who, according to Josephus^{f651}, founded Lybia; and from him the inhabitants of it were called Phuteans (as they are here by the Targum); and he observes that there is a river of his name in Mauritania. Lybia is a country in Africa, to the west of Egypt and subject to the Turks:

all of them with shield and helmet; the Lybians are described by Jeremiah, (^{<2410>}Jeremiah 46:9), as

those that handle the shield; and the Egyptians, to whom the Lybians were near neighbours, and whom they might imitate in their warlike arms, as in other things, wore shields down to the feet, as Xenophon^{f652} relates.

Ver. 6. *Gomer, and all his bands, &c.*] Or all his army, as the Targum. Gomer was the eldest son of Japheth, (^{<Q102>}Genesis 10:2), from whom descended the people called by the Greeks Galatians, or Galio-Grecians, as Josephus^{f653} says, who before were from him called Gomarians: others think that Phrygia, and the inhabitants of it, are meant; but, whether one or the other, they were both people of the lesser Asia, which is now in the hands of the Turks:

the house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands; Togarmah was one of the sons of Gomer, (^{<Q103>}Genesis 10:3) whose posterity, according to the Greeks, as Josephus^{f654} says, were the Phrygians; but others rather think the Cappadocians descended from him; and that Togarmah designs their country, which also is a part of the Turkish dominions; (see Gill on "^{<3274>}Ezekiel 27:14"). Several moderns, as Calmet^{f655} observes, believe that the children of Togarmah peopled Turcomania in Tartary, and Scythia, and which he approves of; and the Turks are mentioned by Ben Gorion^{f656} as one of the ten families of Togarmah. The Targum renders it here the province of Germany; as it is also interpreted in the Talmud^{f657}, but wrongly:

and many people with thee; from other places and nations, besides those named; especially out of the lesser Asia, as Pamphylia, Cilicia, and other places; and perhaps from Tartary, and elsewhere,

Ver. 7. *Be thou prepared, and prepare for thyself, &c.*] All warlike stores and provisions: this is ironically said; and suggests that he would do so, and yet all would be in vain, and to no purpose:

thou and all thy company, that are assembled unto thee; or all thine armies, as the Targum, gathered out of his dominions, and made up of his auxiliaries and allies; let them all be furnished with arms, and everything proper for the expedition designed:

and be thou a guard unto them; the general of them; let them observe and obey thy word of command; guide and direct, guard and protect them in their march; and take care of them when entered the land of Judea, that they are not exposed to any unnecessary danger, or cut off by any stratagem or ambush: this is also sarcastically said; signifying that let him use all the care and caution that a wise and prudent general can do, yet he and his army should perish.

Ver. 8. *After many days thou shalt be visited*, &c.] After the Ottoman empire has stood a long time, as it has already; when the many days will be ended that Israel should be without a king and a prince, &c. (²³⁷⁰Hosea 3:4), then shall Gog or the Turk be visited of God, not in a way of grace, but vengeance; he shall be punished for all his iniquities, and his punishment or destruction will be brought about in the following manner:

in the latter years thou shall come into the land that is brought back from the sword; that is, into the land of Judea, the right owners of which shall now be returned unto it; who have been for many years drove and kept out of it by the sword of their enemies; (see ²³⁷⁰Jeremiah 31:2) and these “latter years” are the same with the “latter days”, in which these people shall seek the Lord and the Messiah, and fear him and his goodness, and return to their own land, (²³⁷⁰Hosea 3:5 1:11), when the Turks, enraged at it, will raise a numerous army, and enter it, in order to repossess it. The description of the Jews, who are most manifestly pointed at, is continued: and

is gathered out of many people against the mountains of Israel; or rather, “to the mountains of Israel”^{f658}; for it seems to design the land of Judea, that is, the people of it; who shall be gathered out of the several nations where they are now dispersed, and brought into their own land; described by the mountains of Israel, because a mountainous country, and a very fruitful one; (²³⁷⁰Ezekiel 34:13,14), and not the army of Gog gathered out of many nations, as before observed, to march against the people of the Jews; though this seems to be the sense of the Targum,

“in the end of years thou shalt come into the land, against which are turned those that slay with the sword, who are gathered out of many people against the mountains of the land of Israel:”

which have been always waste: of a longer time than the seventy years' captivity, even ever since the destruction of it by the Romans; and if the time of the carrying captive of the ten tribes by Salmanezer is respected, it is longer still:

but it brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them; that is, the people of the Jews, the proprietors of the land of Israel, shall now be brought forth out of each the nations where they are scattered, and shall inhabit their own land, and dwell in the utmost security, having nothing to fear from their most potent enemies, even Gog himself; and though he shall come against them in the following manner.

Ver. 9. *Thou shall ascend and come like a storm*, &c.] That comes suddenly, looks black and terrible, and causes darkness and horror; makes a great noise, and is very threatening of danger; signifying, that the Turks will come into the land of Judea suddenly to surprise it, and with great wrath and fury, and threaten them with utter destruction; so the king of the north is said to come like a whirlwind, which many interpret of the Turk also, (²⁷¹⁴⁰Daniel 11:40):

thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land; with darkness and distress; suggesting the vast number of his army, which should overspread the land of Judea, as it follows:

thou and all thy bands, and many people with thee; his own army should be very numerous, and this increased by his confederates, or such who will voluntarily join him in this expedition.

Ver. 10. *Thus saith the Lord, it shall also come to pass*, &c.] Who is the Lord God omniscient, and knows the thoughts of men's hearts afar off; which, though they are contingent and voluntary, yet certain to the foreknowledge of God; who knows them before they are conceived, and can foretell what they will be, and which come to pass accordingly: it is now above two thousand years ago since this was said, and as yet is not fulfilled, but certainly will be: that

at the same time shall things come into thy mind; when the Jews shall be in their own land, dwelling in great security; and when Gog or the Turk shall

make preparation to disturb them, and shall enter into their land suddenly and furiously; many thoughts shall come into his mind, many schemes and devices, but not good ones:

and thou shall think an evil thought; to do mischief to the Jews; to disturb their peace, to dispossess them of their land, and plunder their substance.

Ver. 11. *And thou shall say*, &c.] What came into his mind, and what he thought of; this he shall say to his privy counsellors and ministers of state; or to the generals and officers of his army; or to his confederates and allies, and even to them all, to have their opinion and approbation of it; and to encourage them to join him, and go with him:

I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; a land which has nothing but villages in it, and those no walls about them to protect them: this he said by way of contempt; and the Septuagint and Arabic versions render it “the abject land”; and to observe how easily he could conquer it, there being nothing in his way to hinder him, or give him trouble:

I will go to them that are at rest, and dwell safely: as the Jews will do in the latter day, when they shall own and acknowledge the Messiah, (^{<2275>}Jeremiah 23:5,6), and dwell in their own land, where they will be quiet and peaceable, and think and do no harm to any, nor mistrust their neighbours doing any harm to them; but shall live in the utmost tranquillity and security; and which Gog or the Turks will take the advantage of; and from hence promise themselves an easy conquest of them:

all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates; no walls to their cities; no gates to walls; nor bars to gates; but without either; being under the protection of God, and putting their trust in him, who is a wall of fire round about his people; and is better to them, than gates with bars.

Ver. 12. *To take a spoil, and to take a prey*, &c.] These are the words of Gog continued; suggesting that he should have no occasion to fight; should have nothing else to do but to seize upon the goods and plunder the substance of these people:

to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited: such as were before desolate, and had lain long so, but now peopled and cultivated; these he would attack and demolish, and make a spoil and prey of:

and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations; a description of the Jews, as before; (²³⁸⁸Ezekiel 38:8)

which have gotten cattle and goods; so that it should seem that Gog or the Turks will not immediately attack the Jews upon their possession of the land of Judea; but some time after, when they have settled in it, and have acquired much wealth and riches in cattle and goods, and then think to have a fine booty of them:

that dwell in the midst of the land; or, “the navel of the land”^{f659}; which may design Jerusalem, situated in the midst of the land of Israel, and so called the navel of it, as that is in the midst of the body; as Enna is said by Cicero to be the navel of Sicily: or, as Kimchi thinks, the land of Israel itself is meant; which is in the midst of the world, and so the navel of it; though the former seems best.

Ver. 13. *Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, &c.*] These are not any of the people that shall come along with Gog on his expedition; but some neighbouring nations bordering on Judea, who will address him in the following manner, as he passes through them, or by them. Sheba and Dedan design the Arabians inhabiting that part of Arabia which lay near to Judea, even Arabia Petraea and Felix; and the merchants of Tarshish are the Tyrians and Zidonians that traded by sea, as Tarshish sometimes signifies; or to Tartessus in Spain, where they had much traffic; and may design the people of those places that will at this time be living in Palestine, that trade by sea to foreign parts. The Septuagint and Arabic versions render it the “Carthaginian merchants”, or “the merchants of Carthage”:

with all the young lions thereof; which some interpret of sea pirates, for their cruelty and voraciousness. The Targum paraphrases it, all the kings thereof; and so Kimchi thinks kings and princes are meant; but the Septuagint version renders it, all their villages; and so the Syriac version, all the cities:

shall say unto thee, art thou come to take a spoil? either out of compassion to the people of the Jews; or rather by way of congratulation, and as expressive of joy at it; or else out of envy that they have no share in it; suggesting that they would gladly join with him, and partake of the booty:

hast thou gathered thy company together to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil? all

which it is supposed might easily be done; only they might wonder that so rich a potentate as the Turk should give himself the trouble to raise such an army, and come so far, for cattle and goods, and silver and gold of which he had such plenty. Gog gives no answer, but God does.

Ver. 14. *Therefore, son of man, prophesy, and say unto Gog, &c.*] Since these are his thoughts and designs, and those his big words, and which he will endeavour to put in practice, and be applauded for it by others; deliver this prophecy to him, or concerning him:

thus saith the Lord God, in that day when my people of Israel dwelleth safely, shall thou not know it? that Israel are returned to their own land? that they dwell in it safely? that they have abundance of cattle, gold, and silver that they have no walls, gates, and bars to protect them? that they live without fear or suspicion of any enemy to annoy them, and therefore may be easily surprised and taken? this, when it comes to pass, will soon be known by the Turks, through their spies and informers: or, “shall thou not know?”^{f660} or experience the divine vengeance for thy wicked thoughts, intentions, and attempts against Israel? he should. So the Targum,

“shalt thou not know the vengeance of my power?”

or shalt thou not know that all attempts to make them uneasy and uncomfortable will be in vain?

Ver. 15. *And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, &c.*] Whose original was from Scythia, or Cathaia in Tartary, that lies to the north of China; and who will bring with him many people from the Euxine and Caspian seas, and from the northern parts of lesser Asia; and the Turk is, by many interpreters, thought to be the king of the north, in (²⁷¹⁴⁴Daniel 11:44) as before observed:

thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses; the Turkish armies consisting chiefly of horse, as has been observed on (²⁵⁸⁰⁴Ezekiel 38:4):

a great company, and a mighty army; for quantity many, for quality strong and mighty. The Targum is, “many armies, and much people;”

the Turks usually have large armies; (see Gill on “²⁵⁸⁰⁴Ezekiel 38:4”).

Ver. 16. *And thou shall come up against my people of Israel, &c.]* Which is repeated for the certainty of it; and not for his comfort, but his ruin; not to the terror of Israel, but for the glory of God:

as a cloud to cover the land; the land of Israel, so great should be his army; (see Gill on “²⁸⁸⁹Ezekiel 38:9”),

it shall be in the latter days; of the Gospel state, or kingdom of the Messiah, when the Jews shall be converted, and are returned to their own land, (³⁸⁵Hosea 3:5):

and I will bring thee against my land; not to possess it, nor to hurt it, or to any injury to the people of it: but

that the Heathen may know me; the Pagan kingdoms of China, and others; who by God’s judgments on the Turks will come to the knowledge of the true God, and acknowledge him, and will become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, (⁶¹¹⁵Revelation 11:15 16:12):

when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes; that is, when God shall appear to be a holy and just God, in inflicting deserved punishment on the enemies of his people; when his omniscience and omnipotence, his power and faithfulness, and other perfections of his will be displayed, in fulfilling those prophecies concerning Gog or the Turks; infidels will be convinced of the truth of divine revelation; of the God of Israel being the true God; of Jesus being the Messiah; and of the Christian religion being of God, and shall profess the same. The, Targum is,

“that the people may know the vengeance of my power, when I shall be sanctified in thee, who shall see thy vengeance, O Gog.”

Ver. 17. *Thus saith the Lord God, &c.]* Putting the question that follows:

art thou he of whom I have spoken of old time by my servants the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those days many years that I will bring thee against them? certainly thou art he: but who were the prophets that prophesied of Gog before Ezekiel, since he is the first that makes mention of him? to this it may be replied, that though he is not mentioned by name, yet he might be prophesied of under other names, as by Isaiah under the name of Leviathan, (²⁷⁰¹Isaiah 27:1) and by Micah under the name of the Assyrian, (³⁰⁸⁵Micah 5:5). The Jews^{f661} say that Eldad and Medad prophesied of him, which Jarchi, Kimchi, and Abendana remark; who all

observe, agreeably to the Talmudists in the place referred to, that these two are the prophets meant; and therefore it is directed to be read not “shanim”, years, but “shenaim”, two; namely, those two prophets prophesied one prophecy at one time, or together; but this is not to be depended upon: it should be observed, that this must be considered as spoken at the time of the accomplishment of this prophecy, and so may have respect to the Prophet Ezekiel himself, or to Joel, (^{<290E>} Joel 3:1,2), and to Zechariah, (^{<384E>} Zechariah 14:1,2), and even to the book of the Revelation, (^{<664>} Revelation 16:14,16 19:19).

Ver. 18. *And it shall come to pass at the same time, when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord God, &c.*] As before prophesied of and described:

that my fury shall come up in my face; as a man’s blood rises up in his face, and his colour appears, when he is wroth and angry: or, “in my nose”^{f662}; as men when they are angry puff and blow, expand their nose, breathe through it; but against whom is all this wrath and fury? Starckius, a modern interpreter, thinks it is against the land of Israel, against the church; but it rather seems to be against Gog himself; the Lord being provoked at his attempt against the land of Israel, and the wicked designs he had to spoil and plunder it.

Ver. 19. *For in my jealousy, and in the fire of my wrath, have I spoken, &c.*] Not against his people Israel, but against Gog, who had thought evil against them, and now was about to put it in practice; and therefore in zeal for his own glory, and for the good of his people, and in indignation against his and their enemies, he declares, resolves, and determines:

surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel; not a consternation among the people of Israel frightened at the armies of Gog, and the terrible appearance they shall make, and the devastations they threaten; but in Gog himself, and his army, through the wrath of God upon them, and the vengeance he will take of them in the land of Israel, they will enter upon to destroy; not but that there may be some dread in the minds of the Jews upon the appearance of so formidable an army in their land: this shaking, according to Jarchi, will be by thunder and lightning. Kimchi understands it of an earthquake, in a literal sense, and compares with it (^{<384E>} Zechariah 14:4,5), see also (^{<668>} Revelation 16:18), which speaks of an earthquake that will be about this time.

Ver. 20. *So that the fishes of the sea shall shake at my presence, &c.]*

From whence it appears that this great shaking shall not be on account of the army of Gog, and the devastations that it shall make; but on account of the powerful presence of God, which will be manifest in the destruction of his army: and what is here said of the shaking of the fishes of the sea,

and the fowls of the heaven, and the beast of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the earth, must be understood figuratively and hyperbolically, as Kimchi observes, and in allusion to earthquakes, which both shake and terrify all kind of creatures; the blow given to Gog will be so terrible, that all nature will seem to be thrown into a convulsion and agitation by it; (see ^{<2024>}Jeremiah 4:24,25):

and the mountains shall be thrown down; as they are sometimes by earthquakes; and as the mount of Olives will at this time cleave asunder; and perhaps other mountains will, as Kimchi observes, (see ^{<3842>}Zechariah 14:2-4 ^{<2022>}Isaiah 2:12-15 30:25):

and the steep places shall fall; the Targum renders the word “towers”; and so the Syriac version, and Piscator: the word signifies stairs or steps^{f663}, such as in a ladder; and is translated “stairs”, (^{<2024>}Song of Solomon 2:14) it seems to me to design such mounts as are raised by besiegers of a city, by means of which they may be able to scale the walls of it, which Jarchi suggests; though he says he had heard it said that these, are rocks bending over and hanging, and appear as if they were falling; which agrees with our version; and it may be observed, in some of those precipices, there are like stairs or steps to go up them:

and every wall shall fall to the ground: this shows that the words are not to be taken literally, but figuratively; only to express how sensibly the power of God should be felt and perceived by all creatures, and in all parts of the land; since now the Jews will dwell in a land of unwalled villages, and in cities without walls, bars, and gates; (see ^{<2581>}Ezekiel 38:11).

Ver. 21. *And I will call for a sword against him, &c.]* That is, against Gog; or, as I would choose to render the words, “for I will call for a sword”, so the particle is rendered, (^{<2589>}Ezekiel 38:19) and which Noldius^{f664} agrees to; and this gives a reason why there should be such a commotion in the land of Israel; because the Lord, who has the swords of

princes at his command, will call for the Christian kings to come to the assistance of the Jews, and fight against the Turk: who will pursue him

throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord God; throughout the land of Israel, which is mountainous; and is called the Lord's, because he hath chosen it for his people, given it to them, and now dwelt among them; and in all parts of it where the enemy is, the sword of the Jews, and of those princes that should come in to their assistance at the call of God, shall be sent against them, and cut them off: and not only so,

but every man's sword shall be against his brother; as the swords of the Midianites were, (^{<0722>}Judges 7:22), and of the enemies of Jehoshaphat, (^{<1022>}2 Chronicles 20:22,23). The Turkish army will consist of a mixed people of many nations, who will quarrel among themselves, and destroy one another.

Ver. 22. *And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood, &c.]* Not only the sword of the Jews and the sword of Christian princes shall be drawn against him, and the sword of Gog's soldiers against one another; but the Lord himself would plead with him by his judgments, or take vengeance on him, as the Targum; and send a pestilence in his army, which should destroy vast numbers of it; as the army of Sennacherib was destroyed by one when before Jerusalem; and make a great slaughter among them by that and other judgments:

and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain; a horrible tempest of divine wrath, (^{<1916>}Psalm 11:6) as he came into the land of Israel like a storm, so he shall be destroyed by one much more terrible:

and great hailstones; such as were cast upon the Canaanites, (^{<6601>}Joshua 10:11) and as there will be on men, the enemies of the church of God, at the pouring out of the seventh vial, (^{<6602>}Revelation 16:21):

fire and brimstone; as God rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah, (^{<0124>}Genesis 19:24), signifying that in like manner will God deal with those enemies of his people; so at the battle of Armageddon, which seems to be the same with this here, the beast and the false prophet will be taken alive, and cast into a lake of fire burning with brimstone, (^{<6620>}Revelation 19:20), and to this rain or tempest of fire and brimstone upon Gog there is an allusion in (^{<6609>}Revelation 20:9).

Ver. 23. *Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself,* &c.] Show the greatness of his power, and the strictness of his justice and holiness, and glorify these, and all other of his perfections, in the destruction of the enemies of his people:

and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the Lord; Heathen nations shall now come to the knowledge of the true God, and his Son Jesus Christ, and of the Christian religion, and shall embrace and profess it; (See Gill on “²³⁸¹⁶Ezekiel 38:16”), the kingdoms of the world will now become the Lord’s, (⁶¹¹⁵Revelation 11:15).