



# Gog's Waterloo\*

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**A**T THE TIME of the end, when the king of the north invades Israel, "he . . . shall overflow and pass through" to Egypt (Dan. 11:40-43). At the point when it appears that the Middle East has been conquered, "tidings from the east and the north shall alarm him, and he shall go forth with great fury to exterminate and utterly destroy many" (v. 44). Somehow intelligence will reach him of a large unidentified army to the east of Egypt that is advancing northwards to Israel. This is the time when Christ and the saints leave Mount Sinai and begin their march through the Trans-Jordan on their way to liberate the remnant of the Jews from imminent annihilation.

It seems likely that, true to the type, Armageddon will take place in the winter season. The advance of Christ and the saints is described as coming from the southwest across into Jordan at Bozrah, where the first blow against the Gogian host takes place (Isa. 34, especially v. 6; cf. 63:1-6; Jer. 49:17-22; Hab. 3:3,7). When Joshua and the Israelites came through the Trans-Jordan on their way to Canaan in the winter months (before Passover) they were accompanied by terrifying storms and earthquakes: "O LORD [Yahweh], when You went out from Seir, when You marched from the land of Edom, the earth shook, the heavens poured, the clouds poured down water. The mountains quaked before the LORD, the One of Sinai" (Judg. 5:4,5, NIV; cf. Ps. 68:7,8).

These are poetic passages with prophetic applications, describing also the conditions at the time of the advance of the greater 'Yeshua' and his 'spiritual Israelites', the newly immortalised saints. "God [Eloah] came from Teman, the Holy One from Mount Paran . . . Plague went before him; pestilence followed his steps. He stood, and shook the earth; he looked, and made the nations tremble. The ancient mountains crumbled and the age-old hills collapsed" (Hab. 3:3-6, NIV; cf. Mic. 1:3,4; Ps. 18:7-15).

The area of the Aravah and the Salt Sea will once again witness the spectacle of a subterra-

nean explosion such as that which destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah—only this time it will destroy Gog and his armies. A great earthquake along the Afro-Asian Rift will spew burning sulphur and asphalt upon the invaders of Israel, along with the water and ice from the heavens:

"I will rain upon him and his hordes and the many peoples that are with him, torrential rains and hailstones, fire and brimstone" (Ezek. 38:22);

"And the streams of Edom shall be turned into pitch, and her soil into brimstone; her land shall become burning pitch" (Isa. 34:9,10);

"Smoke went up from His nostrils, and devouring fire from His mouth; glowing coals flamed forth from Him. He bowed the heavens, and came down; thick darkness was under His feet . . . He made darkness His covering around Him, His canopy thick clouds dark with water. Out of the brightness before Him there broke through His clouds hailstones and coals of fire. The LORD [Yahweh] also thundered in the heavens, and the Most High uttered His voice . . . And He sent out His arrows, and scattered them; He flashed forth lightnings, and routed them" (Ps. 18:8-14; cf. 97:2-5; Isa. 30:27-33).

The extreme weather conditions and eruptions accompanying Christ and the saints into battle against the enemies of Israel are likely to blot out all visibility from above. Cloud, rain, hail, lightning, fire and burning minerals will combine to disturb satellite surveillance, whether by infrared or radar signals. Even the most sophisticated weapons and communications systems of modern warfare cannot perform in such conditions. While Gog's armies are in terror and confusion and the onlooking nations in ignorance and bewilderment, "He Who sits in the heavens laughs" and will "dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel" (Ps. 2:4,9).

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\* Quotations from the RSV unless stated otherwise.