

# Russia pushes the boundaries

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*Bible prophecy shows that Gog will expand its borders at the time of the end. Three recent examples have shown that, even now, Russia is looking beyond its borders.*

**I**N DANIEL 11:40 it is said of the latter-day king of the north that “he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over”. Whilst this is referring to the yet future invasion of the Middle East, Russia is even now beginning to show the potential for moving beyond its borders. In the following article three examples of this will be provided. Two of these are the resumption of bomber patrols and a desire to have a naval presence in Mediterranean, but the first we consider concerns the North Pole.

## The North Pole

In Ezekiel 38 Togarmah is said to be “of the north quarters” (v. 6). This country corresponds to modern Armenia. Later in the chapter Gog is also said to come from the north: “And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army” (v. 15). Gog is from “the land of Magog” (v. 2), corresponding to the territory of the ancient Scythians, territory which includes southern Russia today. This is even further north from Israel than Armenia. In Daniel 11 the Gogian power is referred to as “the king of the north” (v. 40).

We might conclude that “north” in the above contexts simply fixes the position of Gog in relation to the Land of Israel. However, recent events have shown that Russia regards itself as the “king of the north” in the ultimate sense. At the beginning of August, two manned Russian submarines, Mir-1 and Mir-2, descended to the Arctic Shelf at the North Pole. When Mir-1 reached the sea bed, the crew collected samples of rock and water. Using a mechanical arm, they also planted a Russian flag on the sea bed.

The sea bed beneath the North Pole is part of a mountain range known as the Lomonosov Ridge. Russia claims that this ridge is an extension of its territory. In addition to national pride, another motivation behind claiming this territory is that it is thought that huge oil and gas reserves are located in the Arctic area. Anne Penketh, the

Diplomatic Editor of the British newspaper the *Independent*, noted that the area “could hold as much oil and gas as Saudi Arabia”.<sup>1</sup> That is why other countries such as Canada, Denmark,

Norway and the United States are also claiming rights to this territory. The words of Habakkuk concerning the latter-day invader of Israel are relevant to Russia’s claim to the Lomonosov Ridge: “shall not all these take up a parable against him, and a taunting proverb against him, and say, Woe to him that increaseth that which is not his!” (2:6). The nations just listed would claim that the Lomonosov Ridge “is not his”.

Interestingly, Penketh also comments that “The new oil rush has been galvanised by the accelerated shrinking of the polar ice cap because of global warming, which has allowed exploration that had been previously unthinkable because of the extreme conditions”. If climate change

1. Penketh, A. (2007), “A giant leap for the Kremlin, a big headache for mankind”, *Independent*, 3 Aug., p. 2.



Map showing the North Pole region and countries claiming rights to this territory.

is occurring, it may be that this is being used by the angels to prepare and gather the nations for Armageddon. The development of Russia is clearly a key factor in this respect.

### Bomber patrols

In July of this year, two Russian aircraft, Tupolev 95s, were flying an apparently routine flight near the Norwegian coast. But then they suddenly changed course and headed for Scotland. Two British RAF Tornados were sent to intercept them and they turned back. The following month, two Tupolev 95 aircraft flew across the Pacific towards the US military base at Guam while the Americans were holding military exercises.<sup>2</sup> These two incidents were not without significance. Shortly afterwards, President Putin announced that Russia was to resume bomber patrols, something she has not done since the end of the Cold War.

On 17 August a Russian bomber was intercepted by two RAF Typhoons as it headed for Britain. The bomber then turned back.<sup>3</sup> On 6 September eight Russian bombers entered NATO airspace and were tracked first by Norwegian aircraft and then by British F3 Tornados.<sup>4</sup>

The Russian patrols have not been regarded as a serious military threat. Rather, they have been interpreted as a symbolic gesture, indicating, as the BBC's Gordon Corera stated, "a new, more provocative Russian foreign policy" (see footnote 3). These gestures reflect a more confident Russia seeking to assert itself on the world stage. This is in line with what would be expected from the way in which Gog is depicted in prophecy.

### In the Mediterranean

In Daniel 11 the King of the North comes "with many ships" (v. 40). This will involve Russian ships entering the Mediterranean. Admiral

Vladimir Masorin, the commander of the Russian Navy, has recently indicated that Russia intends to increase its influence in the Mediterranean. According to the *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, he said that Russia "must restore a permanent naval presence in the Mediterranean Sea".<sup>5</sup> It is thought that Russia plans to use ports in Syria. The BBC commented, "The Russians have also been making noises about re-establishing a naval presence in the Mediterranean, probably utilising Syrian ports" (see footnote 2).

If the statement by the admiral is acted upon, then the presence of the Russian navy will obviously be an important factor when the invasion of the Middle East begins. What is particularly significant, though, is the evidence it provides that Russia is once more looking south towards the Mediterranean.

### Conclusion

The examples cited above relating to the North Pole, bomber patrols and a desire to have a naval presence in the Mediterranean all point to Russia seeking to push the boundaries. Whilst these might be regarded as simply gestures, there should be no doubt that Russia is serious about developing its military power. In September of this year Russia tested a new so-called fuel-air bomb, which is reportedly the largest non-nuclear explosive device yet developed.<sup>6</sup> When Russia begins to "overflow" its borders it will do so with devastating force.

2. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/6952008.stm>.
3. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/6957589.stm>.
4. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/6981541.stm>.
5. [http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article\\_id=2372359](http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article_id=2372359).
6. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/6990815.stm>.

### A correction

At the conclusion of the article "When was the Apocalypse written?" readers were invited to email the author for a fuller version of the article. Unfortunately the email address given was incorrect; it should be [taanathshiloh@yahoo.com](mailto:taanathshiloh@yahoo.com). We apologise for this error.

### The book of Job

A 417-page commentary on the book of Job by Brother Andrew Perry. This book presents an additional (rather than alternative) view of Job as also providing a parable about Hezekiah and Judah at the time of the Assyrian crisis, using detailed comparisons with Isaiah and other prophecies. The book is available from Brother Andrew Perry 13 St Georges Terrace, East Bolden, Tyne and Wear, NE36 0LU, at £7.92, plus £2.50 postage and packing in the UK. Can also be ordered by email from [Andrew.Perry@christadelphian-ejbi.org](mailto:Andrew.Perry@christadelphian-ejbi.org) or online from [www.lulu.com/willowpublications](http://www.lulu.com/willowpublications). This Website also gives details of other publications.