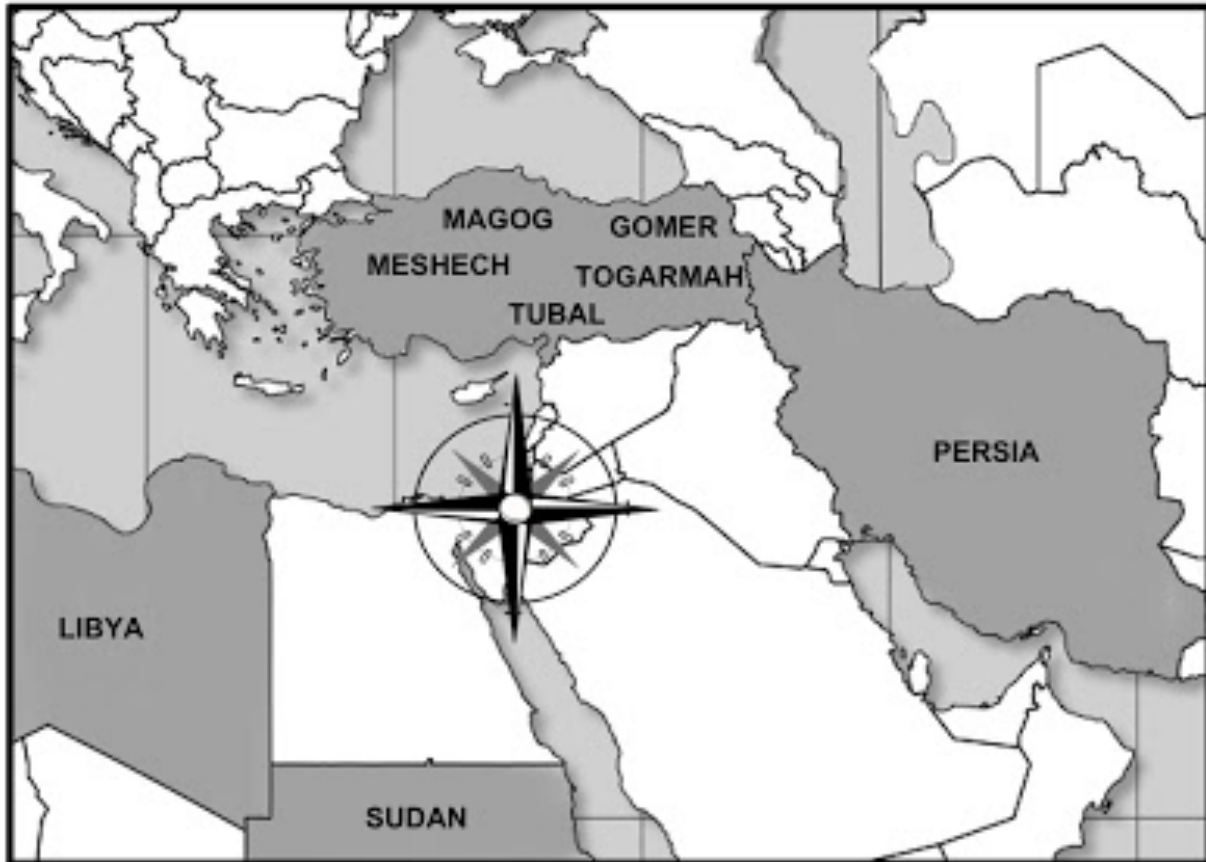


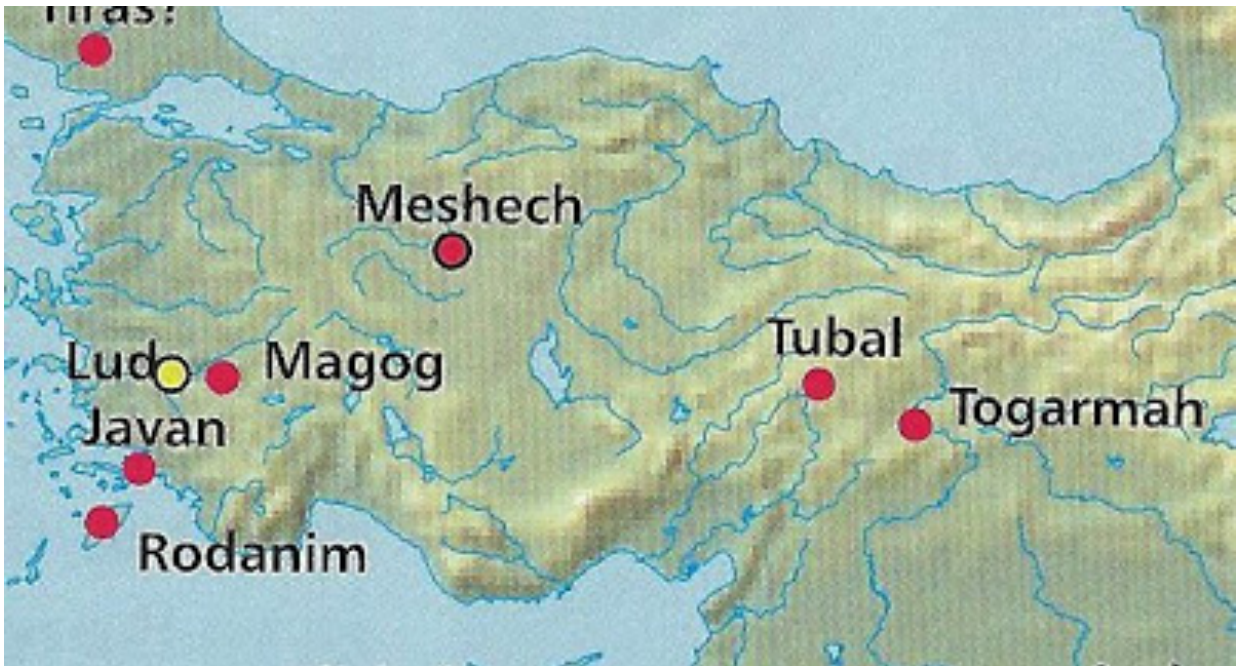
The Nations of Gog and Magog

Joel Richardson

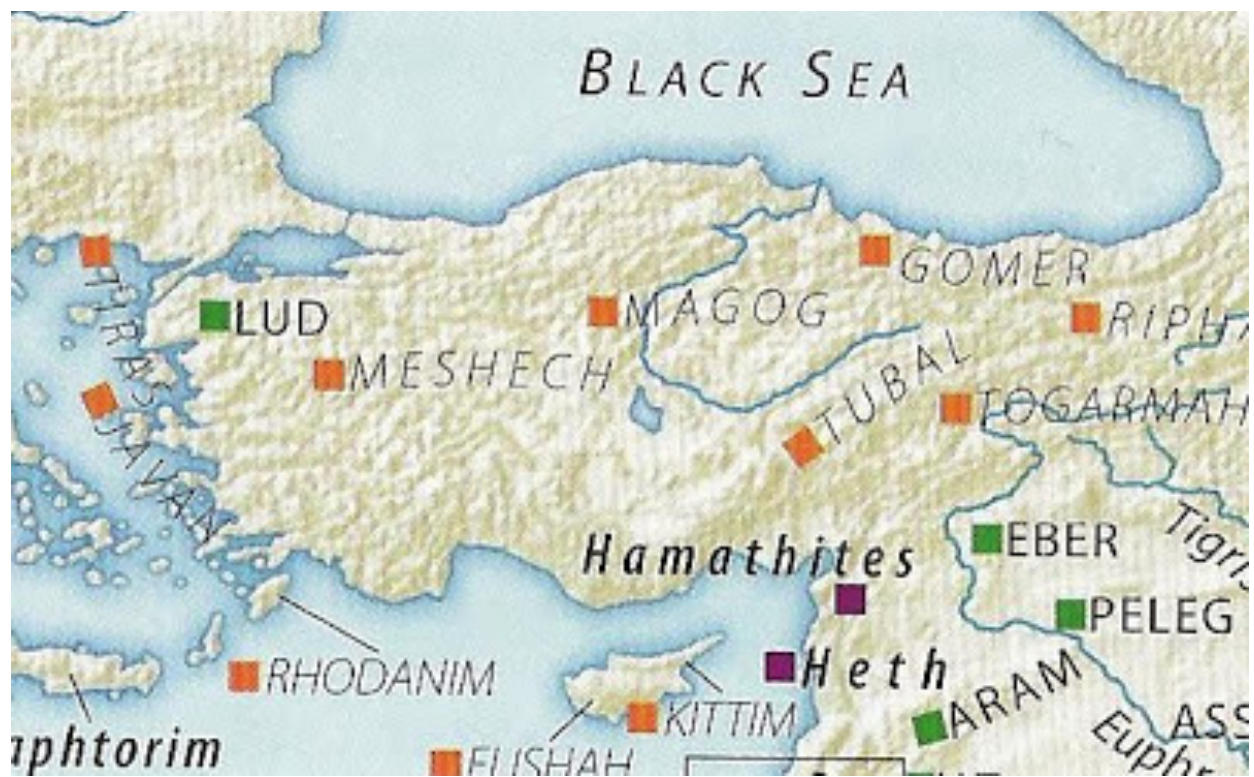
The following article represents a partial catalog of support for the view that Magog, Meshech, Tubal, Gomer and Togarmah are primarily in Asia Minor or modern day Turkey. First, below is the map I created, detailing my identification of the nations listed in Ezekiel 38 & 39.



What follows is a collection of maps from various Bible atlases, as well as other biblical reference works, historians, scholars, and popular prophecy teachers, who offer support for the map above.



IVP Atlas of Bible History



The New Moody Atlas of the Bible



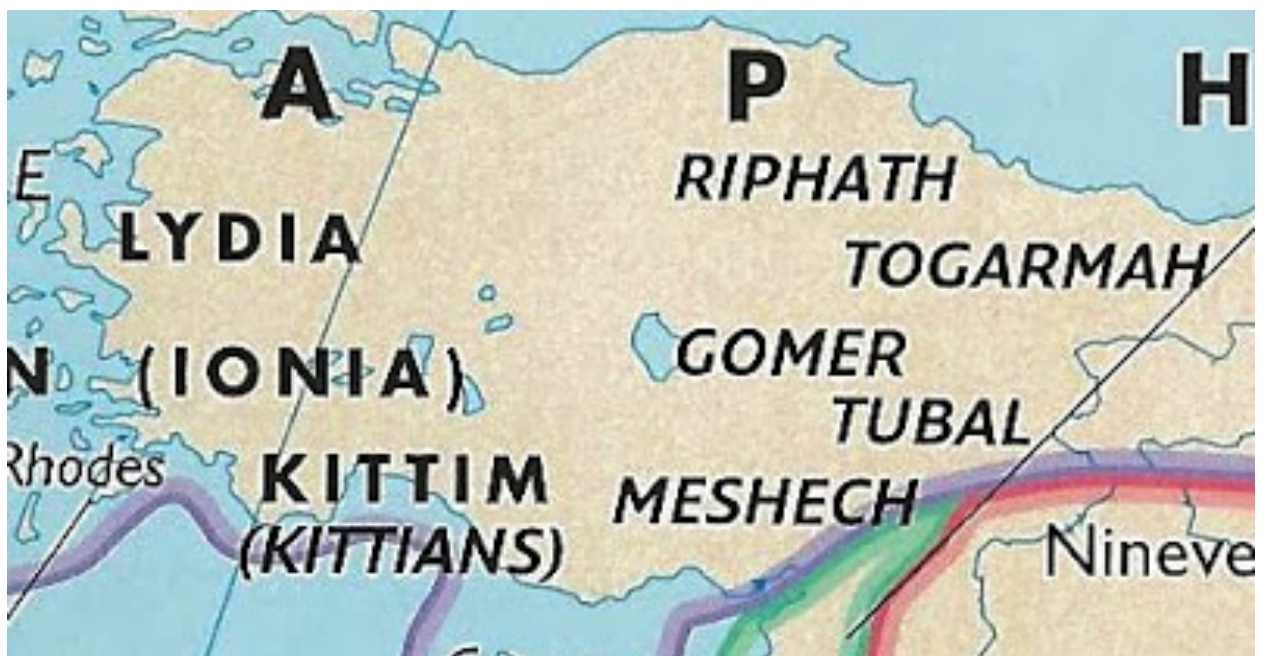
The Holman Bible Atlas



Zondervan Atlas of the Bible



ESV Bible Atlas



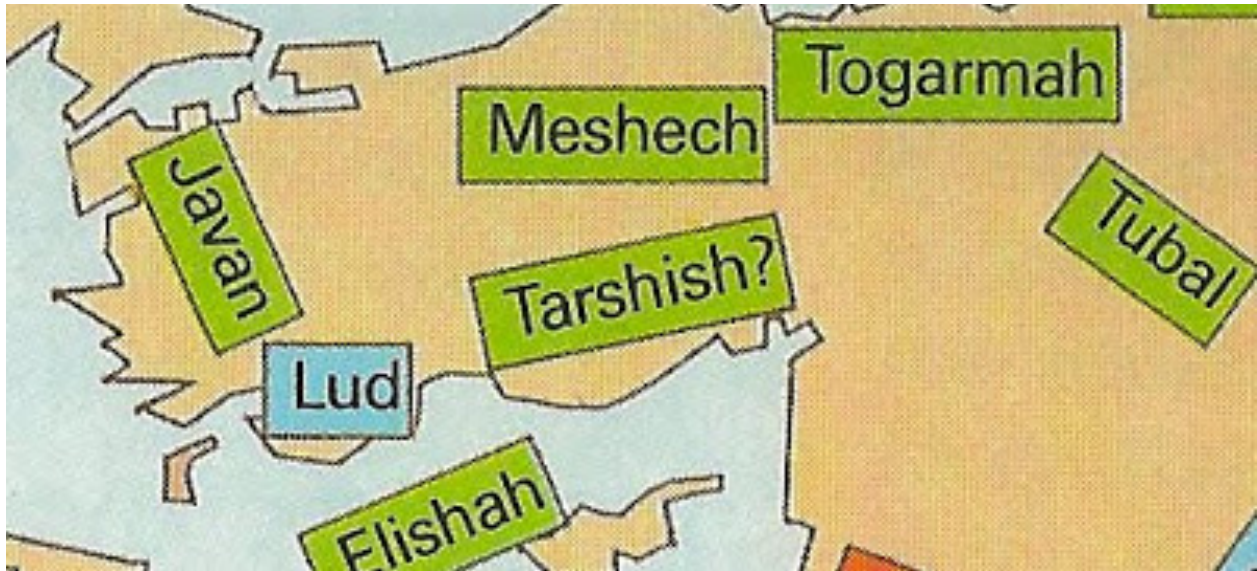
Harper Collins Atlas of Bible History



Baker's Bible Atlas



The Macmillan Bible Atlas



IVP New Bible Atlas

- The Oxford Bible Atlas says of Meshech and Tubal are, “regions in Asia Minor [Turkey].”
- The Zondervan Illustrated Bible Dictionary states, “Magog, possibly meaning ‘the land of Gog,’ was no doubt in Asia Minor [Turkey] and may refer to Lydia.”
- The IVP Bible Background Commentary lists Magog, Meshech, Tubal, and Togarmah as “sections or peoples in Asia Minor” [Turkey].
- The New Unger’s Bible Dictionary, under the entry for “Magog,” states, “It is clear that Lydia [Turkey] is meant, and that by ‘Magog,’ we must understand, ‘the land of Gog.’”
- The Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary places Magog in Anatolia, or modern-day Turkey.
- The New Bible Dictionary places both Meshech and Tubal in Turkey.
- The Catholic Encyclopedia states, “It seems more probable that . . . Magog should be identified with Lydia [Turkey]. On the other hand, as Mosoch and Thubal were nations belonging to Asia Minor, it would seem from the text of Ezechiel that Magog must be in that part of the world. Finally, others with Josephus identify Magog with Scythia, but in antiquity this name was used to designate vaguely any northern population.”

- Herodotus, a Greek historian who wrote roughly one hundred and fifty years after Ezekiel, never once mentions “Magog”, but does discuss the Scythian peoples quite extensively. If one agrees with first century historian Josephus that some or all of the Scythian tribes are from Magogites, then Herodotus provides another Turkish-Magog connection. For after discussing the various theories for the origins of the Scythians, Herodotus expresses his preferred belief that they came from Turkey: “There is also another different story, now to be related, in which I am more inclined to put faith than in any other. It is that the wandering Scythian once dwelt in Asia [The Greeks of this time referred to Asia Minor simply as “Asia” thus modern day Turkey].” Thus, Herodotus placed the origin of the Scythians in Turkey. By Herodotus’ day however, the Scythians had begun their sweep north on either side of the Black Sea, but had barely entered into Russia. As historian Michael Kulikowski, Department Head of History at Penn State University, states, “Herodotus’ Scythians were to be found in a bit of modern Bulgaria and Romania, and across the grasslands of Moldova and Ukraine.” This point is essential: In Herodotus’ day, one hundred and fifty years after Ezekiel’s oracle, the Scythians had barely reached southern Russia. Herodotus’ record establishes that back in Ezekiel’s day, the Scythians still dwelt in Asia Minor, or modern day Turkey.
- Concerning Meshech and Tubal, Herodotus, also identified them with a people named the Sarmatians and Mushovites who lived at that time in the ancient province of Pontus in northern Asia Minor, South East of the Black Sea [Histories IV], again pointing to modern Turkey.
- Hippolytus of Rome, one of the most important Christian theologians of the third century, in his Chronicon, connected Magog to the Galatians in Asia Minor, modern-day Turkey.
- Pliny the Elder a first-century Roman military commander, author, naturalist, and philosopher placed Magog on the border of Syria and modern day Turkey.
- Maimonides, also known as Rambam, the revered Jewish sage, in Hichot Terumot, also identified Magog as being on the border of modern day Turkey.
- Ralph Alexander, Old Testament scholar, in the Expositor’s Bible Commentary says, “Meshech and Tubal refer to areas in eastern Turkey, southwest of Russia and northwest of Iran.”

- Daniel I. Block, Old Testament scholar, in the New International Commentary on Ezekiel, says, “It seems best to interpret Magog as a contraction of an original māt Gūgi, ‘land of Gog,’ and to see here a reference to the territory of Lydia in western Anatolia [Turkey].”
- Edwin Yamauchi, scholar and historian places both Meshech and Tubal in modern day Turkey.
- Dr. Michael Heiser, scholar in residence for Logos Bible software, in several of his works, both written and podcast, repeatedly emphasizes the location of the Gog Magog coalition in Asia Minor, and not Russia.
- Mark Hitchcock, pastor, author and well-known prophecy teacher, places Meshech and Tubal in modern day Turkey.
- Tim Lahaye and Ed Hindson in their Encyclopedia of Popular Bible Prophecies, also place both Meshech and Tubal in Turkey.
- Ron Rhodes, author and teacher in his book, Northern Storm Rising also places Meshech and Tubal in Turkey.
- Dr. Thomas Ice, executive director of the Pre-Trib Research Center says, “Some Bible teachers in the past have taught that Meshech is a reference to Moscow and thus refers to Russia. This is the view of The Scofield Reference Bible, Harry Rimmer and Hal Lindsey... The identification of Meshech with Moscow is merely based upon a similarity of sound. There is not real historical basis to support such a view, therefore, it must be rejected.” Ice thus agrees with Hitchcock and places Meshech and Tubal in Turkey: “The historical record, as was the case with Meshech, is that Tubal and his descendants immigrated to the area southeast of the Black Sea in what is modern day Turkey. Meshech and Tubal clearly provide the population base for the country we now call Turkey.”
- Chuck Missler in his article, “Meshech-Tubal Tensions with Syria” also places Meshech and Tubal in modern day Turkey.
- Assyrian texts & monuments locate Meshech (Mushku) and Tubal (Tabal) in Anatolia (W.Turkey), the areas that became known as Phrygia and Cappadocia.

What follows are some sources which DO NOT support an Ezekielian understanding of Magog as Russia, but which are commonly cited on the internet as if they did. The following three claims in particular are floating around

the internet and have been repeated many times, obviously without anyone ever checking the original sources:

- Hesiod: The claim is that Hesiod, in the 7th Century B.C. linked Magog to the Scythians and southern Russia. This is entirely inaccurate. Hesiod mentions Magog as the real name of Prometheus who lived “near the Caucasus”. Nothing of the Scythians or Russia is ever mentioned by Hesiod in regard to Magog.
- Philo: Another claim holds that Philo in the first century, linked Magog to Russia. I have found this claim in more than one popular prophecy book. This also is a fabricated claim. In all of the works of Philo, he never mentions Magog. There is however, a work called Pseudo-Philo, which mentions Magog, but only as a descendant of Noah. Nowhere does Pseudo-Philo ever make any connection between Magog and Russia, or any other location for that matter.
- Herodotus: The third claim is that Herodotus makes references to a people called “the Gargarians” who lived in or near Russia. No such reference exists in any of Herodotus’ works. Herodotus does make two references to a people called “Gandarians” but they are said to have lived in “Asia” which was the term Herodotus used to refer to Asia Minor, or modern day Turkey.
- Where the false claim above derives from may be a reference found in the works of Strabo, a Greek historian, geographer and philosopher from the first century. Strabo spoke of an all male tribe called the Gargaeans who would once a year mate with the Amazons (a tribe of all women). The two lived on the south of the Caucasian mountains in what would be Turkey, Georgia or Azerbaijan. Strabo lived roughly six hundred years after Ezekiel. Once more, despite its obviously mythological nature, this story does nothing to establish an Ezekielian understanding of Magog as Russia.

Despite the overwhelming evidence, many Christians still hold to the popular view that Ezekiel was speaking of Russia. Of course, this debate is not new. As far back as 1706, Matthew Henry, in his classic Bible commentary, acknowledged this precise difference of opinion among fellow scholars and believers: “Some think they find them [Gog and Magog] afar off, in Scythia, Tartary, and Russia. Others think they find them nearer the land of Israel, in Syria, and Asia the Less [Turkey].”

When one surveys the many efforts to equate Magog with Russia, they almost universally follow the method which attempts to track the blood lines, the lineage, intermingling and migration patterns of the sons of Magog throughout

the centuries. This often becomes chaotic, produces a wide-range of views, and is somewhat impossible for the lay-student to wade through all of the numerous opinions down throughout the centuries. As an example of how absurd this method can become: if one traces the bloodlines and migration patterns of the Gomerites, they eventually become the Celts who came to settle Ireland, England, Scotland etc. Yet how many books have we seen that predict an Irish invasion of Israel?

The historical-grammatical method simply seeks to understand how Ezekiel the prophet would have understood the terms Magog, Meshech and Tubal, etc. This would have been formed through the location of these peoples during Ezekiel's day as well his familiarity with the Table of Nations found in Genesis 10 & 11. Simply stated, Ezekiel would have understood Magog to be equated with Asia Minor in the region of modern day Turkey.