Chapter 1: Who Are Gog and Magog? (38:1-2)
Chapter 2: Preparation for Invasion of Israel and the Mid East (38:3-6)
Chapter 3: Israel's Role in Bringing about Her Own Downfall (38:7)
Chapter 4: Prophecy Pinpoints Our Present Historical Situation (38:8-12)
Chapter 5: Role of America and Britain (38:13)
Chapter 6: How God is Honored in this Mess (38:14-16)
Chapter 7: God Fights Against Gog – Armageddon! (38:17-39:8)
Chapter 8: Clean-Up Campaign (39:9-20)
Chapter 9: Israel's Purging Results in Final Blessing (39:21-29)

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https://endtimeupgrade.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Ezk-38-39-3.mp3

Verse 7 **Prepare yourself and be ready, you and all your companies that are gathered about you; and be a guard for them.**

Strangely, just as happened in verse 4 (*"I will turn you around, put hooks into your jaws, and lead you out."*), it sounds as if the Lord is telling Gog what to do. That is because the Antichrist, in the initial stages of his rule, will actually be fulfilling God's will and, without realizing it, working for Him. At this point Gog the Antichrist is acting as a *"guard"* to these nations, protecting them, it would seem, from the belligerent actions of certain other powers.

In particular, Israeli and American forces have been waging aggressive campaigns to subdue the nations in the Middle East that are aligned against Israel (Iran, Iraq, Syria, Libya, Hezbollah in Lebanon). Most of these campaigns have been justified under flimsy pretexts: to protect the world against "weapons of mass destruction", "terrorism" and/or "oppressive governments". These excuses have worn pretty thin now, and one wonders, what is the real reason for these war campaigns? Is it really to protect the world against these evils, or does it have more to do with

gaining control in this oil-rich region of the world? Or perhaps it has something to do with protecting Israel's security against her hostile neighbors?

Anyway, regardless of whether or not there is justification for intervention in the Mid East, it is obvious now that America's intrusions into Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya have backfired, destabilizing the region and alienating these peoples instead of winning their favor. These misguided military maneuvers have, in fact, created the conditions that enabled the rise of ISIS in northern Syria and Iraq. Instead of containing the terrorism threat, America's blundering Mid East policy has only managed to increase it.

Now, regarding Gog's role as a *"guard"*, a specific example of this came up in November-December, 2007. At that time America was threatening to invade Iran, and it looked as if another American/Israeli-inspired war would break out in the Mideast. But then, at a crucial moment the Russian leader Putin paid a timely visit to Iran. It was a diplomatic way of warning that Russia would not be happy if Iran, a nation right on Russia's doorstep, were invaded. Russia would not stand by as she had done in Iraq and Afghanistan but would be willing to protect her. This action forced the U.S. into a standoff for the time being while Russia played the very role described here in verse 7 of being a *"guard unto them".* It was a sort of glimpse into the future, a mini-version of what Russia is going to do in the Mid East more and more as time goes on.

(This does not mean to suggest that Putin is the Antichrist, by the way. To some extent he is playing the same role, in this case at least, but in other ways he is very different. He does not seem to fit the role of the eloquent, anti-religious world leader that is portrayed in the Scriptures.)

In more recent history, Russia has played the same *"guard"* role in the Syrian conflict. Because of Russia's support and intervention, Syria was protected from invasion by American forces in the year 2013. And in October, 2015, Russia again entered the Mid East arena more directly by sending arms and equipment to its longtime ally, Syria, even sending in its air force to empower the Syrian army.

It may seem unusual that God would use a nation like Russia as a sort

of check against those who claim themselves to be God-fearing nations. (See Appendix 1: News Article.) But this is not without precedent.

In the Old Testament there are examples of this very thing: whenever ancient Israel fell away from the worship of God and forgot His precepts, or became a poor example to surrounding nations and carried out all sorts of oppression against the poor of her own land, almost always the Lord allowed Israel's enemies to rise up against her. In Isaiah 7:20 the Lord referred to the Assyrians as *"a hired razor"* that He would use to chastise His wayward people of that era.

Then about 100 years later, the Lord again withdrew His protection, this time from Judah, and allowed the Babylonians to invade. *"Because you have not heard My words, behold, I will send and take all the families of the north and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land."* (Jeremiah 25:8-9) In that passage the Lord even referred to Nebuchadnezzar as His *"servant"*.

In the same way this *"Gog"* figure is also God's *"servant"*, at least in the initial stage of his rule when God will use him to chastise the Israeli regime for their failure to give heed to God's ways, manifested especially in their oppression of the Palestinian people.

This point appears also in the Book of Revelation where we learn about a dreadful war coming at the End of the Age – the *Beast* against the *Harlot.* (Symbolic portrayal of the Russian versus the American empire? See *Fall of the Great Harlot* series.) In its rise to power, the *Beast* is joined by an alliance of 10 nations.

Regarding this, the angel makes a peculiar observation: *"God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled."* (Revelation 17:17) Again, God is letting us know that He is in control, causing nations to do His bidding – which, in this case, is for the *Beast* and his *Ten Horns* to deliver chastisement – needed in this case for a wayward and oppressive empire, the *Harlot*.

Getting back to the subject of what is going on within the borders of Israel and Palestine nowadays, the following news article will shed some

light on that::

The silent destruction of Palestine
By Rev. Sandra Olewine, *CounterPunch* (May 31, 2002)

So much of the destruction against Palestinians which happens here is silent destruction. News cameras seldom catch the stories of land confiscation, crop destruction, or barrier construction that happens day in and day out across the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem. Such stories don't seem to make "exciting" or compelling video segments.

Yet, on and on it goes. More olive trees uprooted, more farmland confiscated, more areas declared "fit for only settler or Israeli military use." The prison called Palestine gets smaller and smaller each day. The pressure builds and builds.

And with the new system being put in place by the Israeli government, the prison is about to get even smaller. Palestinians will soon need permits to travel between Palestinian areas. If someone from Bethlehem wants to travel to Ramallah, already a journey that takes a couple of hours on a good day, they will have to apply to the Israeli Civil Authority for a permit. The permits will be valid from 6 am to 6 pm only. No traveling at night, no emergency trips, no evening meetings, no weddings or funerals to go to. And in many instances the road will be blocked—one will not be able to take a private car—but will have to walk through barriers on the road, getting into taxi after taxi trying to get to one's destination. As one of my colleagues said, "This will end our life completely. No one will tolerate this."

There will be no direct delivery of goods either—whether food, medicine, building material—all of it will have to be moved "back-to-back," meaning a truck has to back up to the roadblock and unload to the back of a truck on the other side. This is already the case in most Palestinian areas, increasing the cost of items due to the increased cost of delivery.

Electric gates are being constructed across Palestinian roads.

Barbed-wire fences are being put up around Palestinian cities, along with patrol roads for the Israeli military. While the answer to a query about these fences will be that they are in response to suicide attacks inside Israel, they have slowly been constructed throughout the last 20 months. They didn't just appear overnight.

During the Israeli invasion into Bethlehem in early March, a trench was already being dug across the northern edge of Bethlehem from the road into Bethlehem across to the settler bypass road. During the 40-day siege of the city in April and May, work went on 24 hours a day. On one of the instances when I snuck back home during the siege, the family I live with asked me exactly where the trench was being dug. I knew instantly why they were worried. Many of the olive trees between Bethlehem and Tantur Ecumenical Institute are theirs. "They're gone. I'm sorry. The trench and road has cut you off from the trees," was all I could say.

This silent destruction is the creeping hand of occupation. It is what has everyone here held in a death grip. Without removing its stranglehold from the lives of Palestinians, Palestinians and Israelis here will tragically and brutally continue to die.

(Rev. Sandra Olewine is with the United Methodist Liaison in Jerusalem.)

The above news article is referring to events that happened back in 2002. Since then, the situation has only gotten worse. The "silent destruction" of the last several years has erupted into some shocking outbreaks of oppression: the massacre of 1,300 Palestinians in Operation Cast Lead in December, 2008, and the killing in May, 2010, of 10 humanitarian aid workers who were trying to cross Israel's blockade and bring much-needed supplies to the war-ravaged Palestinians in the Gaza strip; in the summer of 2014, Operation Protective Edge caused the massacre of 2,000-plus Palestinians, mostly civilians, along with much destruction of Gaza's infrastructure. And then most recently (2024), the world is witnessing the brutal "ethnic cleansing" of the Gaza Strip.

A commentary on the Israeli reaction to these periodic atrocities is worth noting:

> **Cast Lead was an unrestrained assault on a besieged, totally unprotected civilian population which showed almost no signs of resistance during this operation. It should have raised an immediate furor in Israel. It was a Sabra and Chatila, this time carried out by us. But there was a storm of protest in this country following Sabra and Chatila, whereas after Cast Lead mere citations were dished out.**
>
> **It should have been enough just to look at the horrendous disparity in casualties–100 Palestinians killed for every Israeli–to shake the whole of Israeli society.**
>
> **(See full article "Disgrace in the Hague" by Gideon Levy, 17 Sept 2009, *Haaretz.*)**

Sabra and Chatila is a reference to what happened during the 1982 Lebanon War when, as a result of the policies of Ariel Sharon, the Israeli Defence Minister at the time, a brutal massacre of occupants in two Palestinian refugee camps was carried out.

Israeli citizens were horrified at these massacres and came out to protest en masse about it. But today? The voices of protest are feeble and unnoticed; Israeli society seems to be hardening itself to the voice of conscience and growing ever more insular and incapable of living peaceably with its neighbors. (See Appendix 2: news article excerpts for some further insight into these present day trends in Israeli society.)

To sum it up: the whole world has been horrified at some of the things Israel has done to little defenceless countries like Lebanon and a poor little handful of Palestinians from whom they stole not only their homes, but their whole country away from them and are still going on arrogantly. So it is no wonder that the Lord says further ahead,

> **In the latter days I will bring you against my land, that the nations may know me, when through you, O Gog, I vindicate my holiness before their eyes. … I will not let them profane My holy name anymore. Then the nations shall know that I am the LORD, the Holy One in Israel… all the nations shall see My judgment which I have executed, and My hand which I have laid on them. …The Gentiles shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity; because they were unfaithful to Me, therefore I hid My face from**

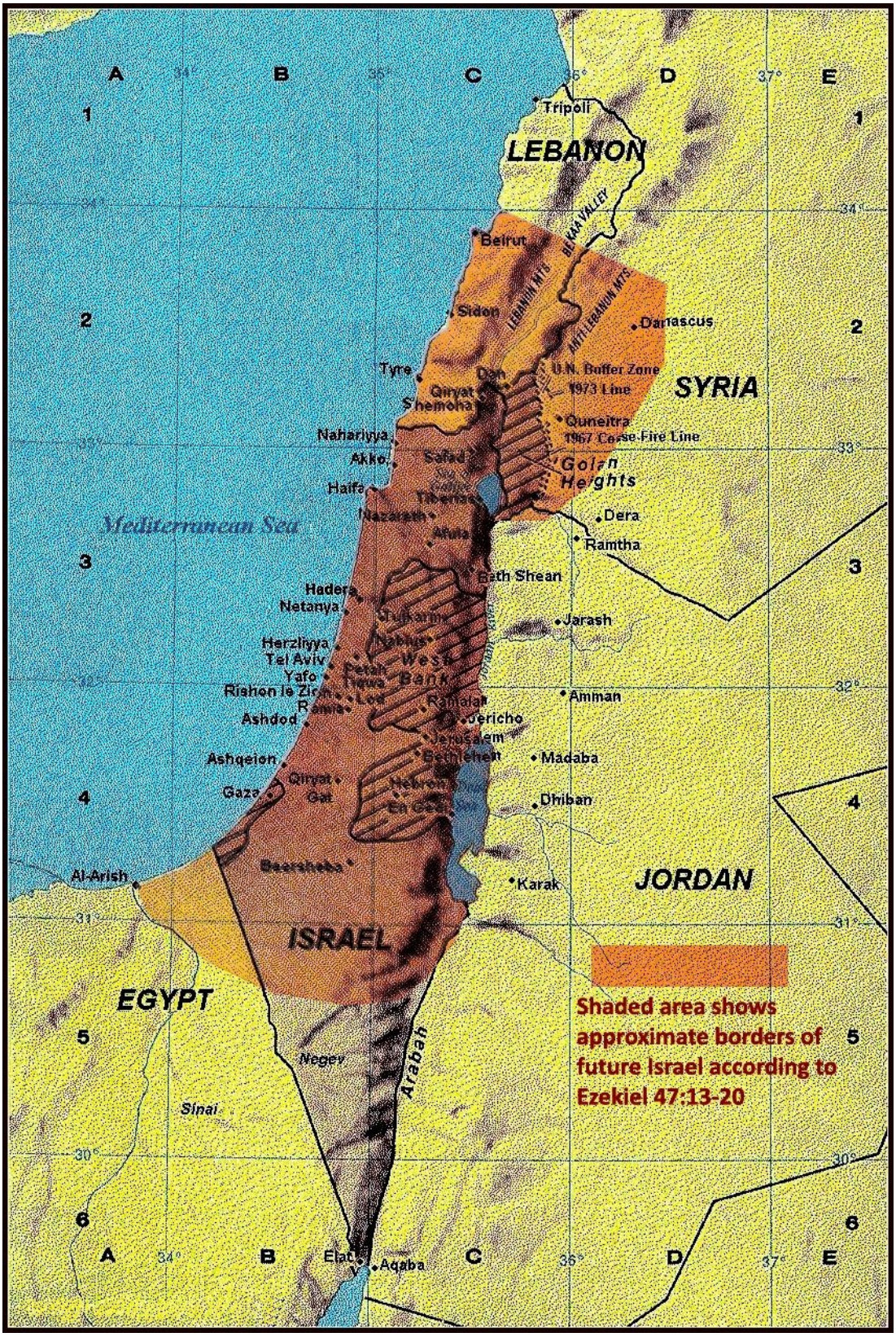
them. I gave them into the hand of their enemies, and they all fell by the sword. According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions I have dealt with them, and hidden My face from them." ' (Ezekiel 38:16, 39:7,21,23,24 – RSV)

The world is going to know that God is just and it was right to let Gog invade the land and that Israel deserves the retribution that Ezekiel's prophetic message foretells is going to come her way.

One may wonder, what is it that makes Israelis, supposedly a God-fearing people, feel justified in committing such crimes? There are perhaps two main assumptions on which Israelis base their thinking and policies along these lines:

First of all, they will always say it is in retaliation for militant attacks that the Palestinians make against them. Ideally, yes, the non-violent, passive-resistance approach would be the better reaction from the Palestinians. But what the Israeli and international media ignore and fail to mention is the long history of "silent destruction" (as outlined in the above article) that has already transpired. Inevitably, the accumulation of a long string of provocative acts like this will result in the militants finally taking some kind of action, such as suicide bombings or other types of raids. Then whenever the Israelis are met with any of this kind of violent resistance, they latch on to and publicize it, point the finger at the Palestinians, and use it as their excuse to mete out ten times worse punishment on them.

A second justification used by Israelis is their belief that it is God's plan or God's will for them to expand the borders of their nation. The basis for this belief may be found in Ezekiel 47:13-20. Here, certain borders are outlined that would appear to include parts of Syria, Lebanon, the east bank of the Jordan (not to mention the West Bank), and the Mediterranean coast (including the Gaza Strip). To understand these few verses well, it will help to see them in context as an excerpt from a longer passage, chapters 40-48 in the Book of Ezekiel. This passage comes directly after the ones we are now studying about the destruction of Israel at the hands of the Antichrist in the End Time.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Tripoli
Beirut
Sidon
Damascus
Tyre
Qiryat Shemona
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Quneitra 1967 Cease-Fire Line
Golan Heights
Nahariyya
Akko
Safad
Haifa
Tiberias
Nazareth
Afula
Dera
Ramtha
Beth Shean
Hadera
Netanya
Jarash
Herzliyya
Tel Aviv
Yafo
Rishon le Zion
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Ramalah
Amman
Jericho
Jerusalem
Bethlehem
Madaba
Ashqelon
Gaza
Qiryat Gat
Hebron
En Gedi
Dhiban
Beersheba
Karak
Al-Arish
Negev
Arabah
Sinai
Eilat
Aqaba
Shaded area shows approximate borders of future Israel according to Ezekiel 47:13-20

Chronologically, this passage would appear to dwell on the era known as the Millenium that follows the return of Christ, not this present era prior to His return. For example, in chapter 47, just prior to this mention of the new borders of Israel, there is also mention of a river leaving the newly-built temple in Jerusalem. Along its banks grow trees whose *"leaves will not wither, and their fruit will not fail. They will bear fruit every month, because their water flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for medicine."* (47:12) Clearly, the setting is not our present day but some future time – namely, the era following Messiah's return when He will re-establish such Eden-like conditions in the earth.

Another clue along this line appears immediately after the passage about Israel's new borders and outlines how the land is to be governed:

> ***"It shall be that you will divide it* (the land) *by lot as an inheritance for yourselves, and for the strangers who dwell among you and who bear children among you. They shall be to you as native-born among the tribes of Israel. And it shall be that in whatever tribe the stranger dwells, there you shall give him his inheritance, says the Lord God."* (47:22-23)**

Judging by their mistreatment of the Palestinians, there seems not to be the slightest hint that the present day Israelis are obeying this admonishment to show consideration to the *"strangers who dwell among you".* It seems like that won't happen until the heavy hand of Antichrist persecution has humbled and brought the Israeli nation back into God's favor. Only then will she learn to adopt her proper role as a wise and benevolent ruler over the territory that apparently God intends to give to her in the future.

Regarding this issue of just and fair dealings with her neighbors, even back in 1929 Israeli policies were heading for trouble. As eminent Jewish physicist and Zionist, Albert Einstein, noted when he caught an ominous glimpse of what could happen in the future,

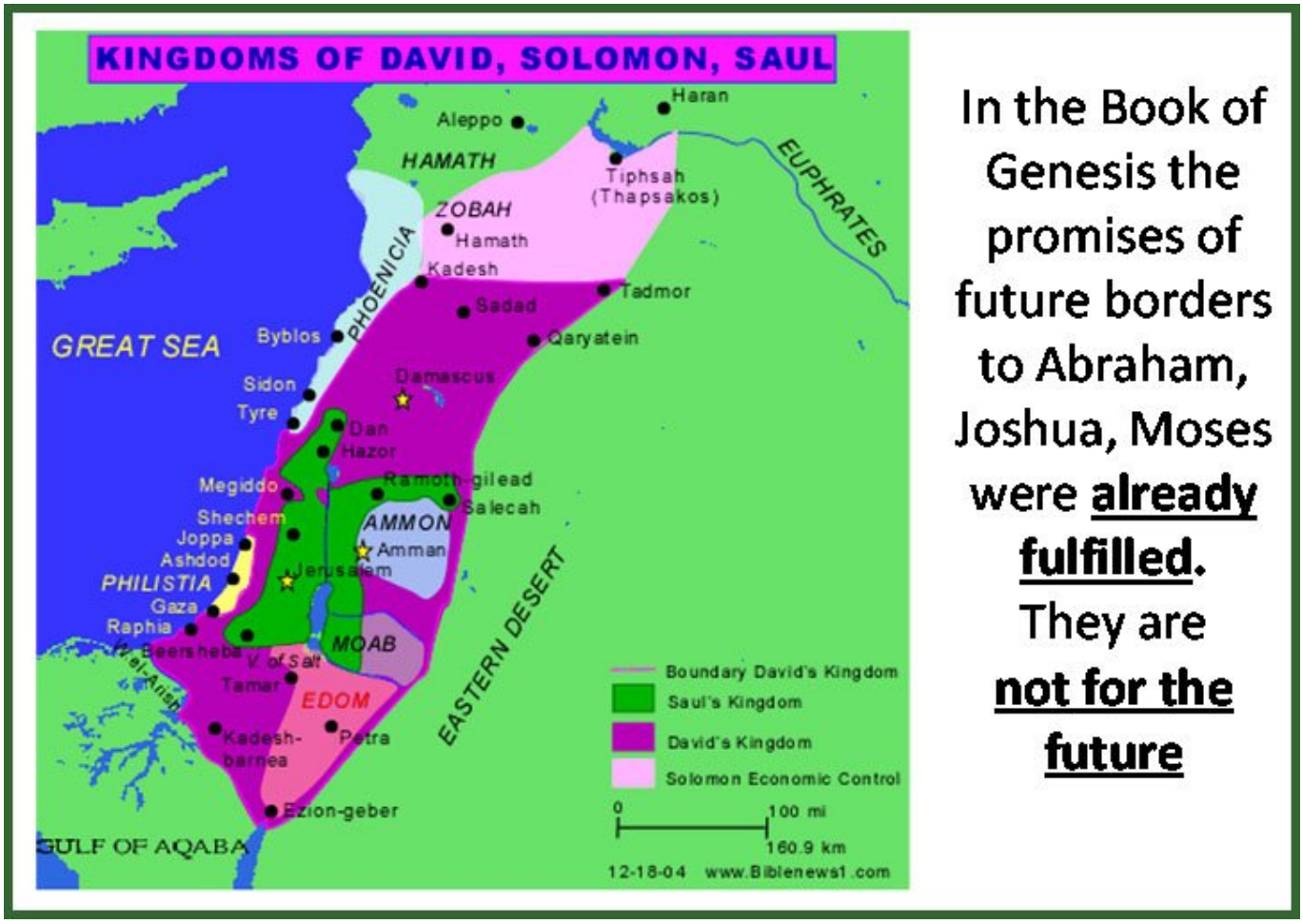
> **"Should we be unable to find a way to honest cooperation and honest pacts with the Arabs, then we have learned absolutely nothing during our two thousand years of suffering and deserve all**

that will come to us."

The stumbling-block for Israelis, at least in this present era, was that they could not bring themselves to move beyond the moral code of the Old Testament – *"an eye for an eye".* They have not adopted the moral code introduced by the greatest Israeli of all, Jesus Christ, who taught the principle of loving one's neighbor as oneself. The Israelis will eventually adopt this code of conduct – in the future after the Battle of Armageddon – at which time they will re-claim their nation from the Antichrist's occupation. (Well, we're getting a little ahead of the story here, but more will be explained further ahead on these matters.)

There are other references in the Old Testament to some enlarged borders of Israel – promises given to Abraham, Moses, and Joshua – but these were fulfilled during the reigns of King David and King Solomon around 1000 B.C. During that era, Israel was a powerful nation and held sway over the territory stretching from the Euphrates River to the *"river of Egypt"* (the river Sihor on the border between Sinai and Israel).

> ***"And he*** **[King Solomon]** ***reigned over all the kings from the river*** **[Euphrates]** ***even unto the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt."*** **(2 Chronicles 9:26)**



To conclude, the idea that Israel is destined to occupy this enlarged territory in our modern times is based on a misinterpretation of certain Biblical passages, a misapplication of them to the wrong historical epoch. Modern day Israelis have usurped these passages and made them a handy excuse for much land-grabbing and oppression against their Palestinian neighbors.

Certainly, it would not be the first time in history that the "will of God" has been invoked as justification for all sorts of murderous schemes and oppression. A nation, for a time, may presume to use its own version of "God's will" as veneer for its schemes, but in the end God Himself will have the final say, weigh up the balances, and mete out His judgments accordingly.

It is a sad testimony against the Christian world nowadays to observe

how the majority of it, who ought to be standing up against the injustices going on in the Mid East, are instead cheering things on, convinced that all is covered under the umbrella of "God's will". They are convinced that Israel has special rights as "God's chosen people" and is allowed to do whatever it wants.

Well, in the days of the Old Testament they were God's chosen people. Even then however, God didn't let them get away for too long with disobedience to his rules of conduct. Anyway, we are not living in those days anymore. All nations and peoples are now equal in God's sight, and no one particular group can claim special priority or think it can be an exception to the New Testament principles of love and fairness.

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Continue to Chapter 4: Prophecy Pinpoints Our Present Historical Situation (38:8-12)

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Appendix 1: News Article about Russia as a "Guard"

Make no mistake. Behind the relentless demonization of Putin and the myriad attempts to delegitimize Russia's presidential elections, lie some very angry and powerful sections of Washington and Anglo-American elites.

They know Putin will be an ultra tough negotiator on all fronts. They know Moscow will apply increasingly closer coordination with China; on thwarting permanent NATO bases in Afghanistan; on facilitating Pakistan's strategic autonomy; on opposing missile defense; on ensuring Iran is not attacked.

He will be the devil of choice because there could not be a more formidable opponent in the world stage to Washington's plans—be they coded as Greater Middle East, New Silk Road, Full Spectrum Dominance or America's Pacific Century. Ladies and gentlemen, let's get ready to rumble.

(Excerpt from "Why Putin is Driving Washington Nuts" By Pepe

Escobar, *Asia Times*, 8 March 2012)

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Appendix 2: Present day trends in Israeli Society – New Article Excerpts

Israel's Fading Democracy
By Avraham Burg, *NY Times*, August 4, 2012

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My generation, born in the '50s, grew up with the deep, almost religious belief that the two countries shared basic values and principles. Back then, Americans and Israelis talked about democracy, human rights, respect for other nations and human solidarity. It was an age of dreamers and builders who sought to create a new world, one without prejudice, racism or discrimination.

…My children… are convinced that what ties Israel and America today is not a covenant of humanistic values but rather a new set of mutual interests: war, bombs, threats, fear and trauma. How did this happen? Where is that righteous America? Whatever happened to the good old Israel?

….

…My father, one of the founders of the state of Israel and of the National Religious Party, was an enlightened rabbi and philosopher. Many of the younger generation are far less open, however; some are ultra-Orthodox or ultranationalist settlers.

….

…we never predicted the evil effects of brutally controlling another people against their will. Today, all the things that we neglected have returned and are chasing us like evil spirits.

The winds of isolation and narrowness are blowing through Israel. Rude and arrogant power brokers, some of whom hold senior positions in government, exclude non-Jews from Israeli public spaces. Graffiti in the streets demonstrates their hidden dreams: a pure Israel with "no Arabs" and "no gentiles." They do not notice what their exclusionary ideas are doing to Israel, to Judaism and to Jews in the diaspora…

If this trend continues… It will not be possible to define Israel as a

democracy when a Jewish minority rules over a Palestinian majority between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea—controlling millions of people without political rights or basic legal standing.

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Ceasefires in which Violations Never Cease
By Noam Chomsky, *TomDispatch*, September 9, 2014

On August 26th, Israel and the Palestinian Authority (PA) both accepted a ceasefire agreement after a 50-day Israeli assault on Gaza that left 2,100 Palestinians dead and vast landscapes of destruction behind…

…The regular pattern is for Israel, then, to disregard whatever agreement is in place, while Hamas observes it—as Israel has officially recognized—until a sharp increase in Israeli violence elicits a Hamas response, followed by even fiercer brutality. These escalations, which amount to shooting fish in a pond, are called "mowing the lawn" in Israeli parlance...

….

[The Agreement on Movement and Access Between Israel and the Palestinian Authority in November 2005] was reached shortly after Israel withdrew its settlers and military forces from Gaza… "The significance of the disengagement plan is the freezing of the peace process," Weissglass informed the Israeli press. "And when you freeze that process, you prevent the establishment of a Palestinian state, and you prevent a discussion on the refugees, the borders, and Jerusalem…

…Israeli hawks also recognized that instead of investing substantial resources in maintaining a few thousand settlers in illegal communities in devastated Gaza, it made more sense to transfer them to illegal subsidized communities in areas of the West Bank that Israel intended to keep.

The disengagement was depicted as a noble effort to pursue peace, but the reality was quite different. Israel never relinquished control of Gaza and is, accordingly, recognized as the occupying power by the United Nations, the U.S., and other states … Israeli scholars Idith Zertal and Akiva Eldar describe what actually happened when that country disengaged: … After the disengagement, "Israel left behind scorched earth, devastated services, and people with neither a present nor a future. The settlements

were destroyed in an ungenerous move by an unenlightened occupier, which in fact continues to control the territory and kill and harass its inhabitants by means of its formidable military might."

[The article contains many other key points well worth considering. Anyway, here is the conclusion:]

Like other states, Israel pleads "security" as justification for its aggressive and violent actions. But knowledgeable Israelis know better. Their recognition of reality was articulated clearly in 1972 by Air Force Commander (and later president) Ezer Weizmann. He explained that there would be no security problem if Israel were to accept the international call to withdraw from the territories it conquered in 1967, but the country would not then be able to "exist according to the scale, spirit, and quality she now embodies."

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Continue to Chapter 4: Prophecy Pinpoints Our Present Historical Situation (38:8-12)