

The Amalek Pattern

The Biblical Theological Story of Gog and Magog

38:1 The word of the LORD came to me: ²“Son of man, set your face toward Gog, of the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him...

Ezekiel 38:1-2

The Prophecy of Baalam

Paul reminds us that **our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness (Eph 6:12)**. So even when flesh and blood are deceived or manipulated into doing evil against God’s people, we need to remember what’s really behind it. Today, I’m going to tell you **the story of Gog and Magog**. Next week, we turn our attention to exegeting the passage as it comes to us in **Ezekiel 38-39** and **Revelation 20**.

In the Old Testament, centuries before Ezekiel spoke of Gog, a pagan prophet named Balaam was hired to curse Israel. But God took control of the mouth of a prophet whose name means **“Destruction of the people”** or **“the disturber**

of the people.” The Spirit of God came upon him, and instead of curses he delivered one of the most remarkable messianic prophecies in the OT: “Water shall flow from his buckets, and his seed shall be in many waters; his king shall be higher than *Agag*, and his kingdom shall be exalted” (Num 24:7). Just a few verses later he says, “I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near: *a star* shall come out of Jacob, and *a scepter* shall rise out of Israel; it shall crush the forehead of Moab and break down all the sons of Sheth” (17). Finally, he adds, “Then he looked on *Amalek* and took up his discourse and said, ‘*Amalek was the first among the nations, but its end is utter destruction*’” (20).

Why would I begin a sermon looking at the story of Gog by going to this obscure prophecy from a pagan prophet way back in the days of Moses? Because just here, at the very beginning, our story becomes deeply relevant in some unexpected ways. First, vs. 7 is rendered this way in the LXX: “There shall come a man out of his seed, and he shall rule over many nations; and the kingdom of Gog shall be exalted, and his kingdom shall be increased.” *Agag* is translated as “Gog.” It is also relevant, as we will see later, that some of the manuscripts we have actually render this as *Og*—as in King Og, the giant Amorite of Bashan whose bed was 13ft

x 6ft in size. Curiously, in several places it is reversed and Og becomes Gog.¹

Second, Targum Jonathan of **vs. 17** in its paraphrastic commentary reads, **I see him, but he is not here now; I observe him, but he is not near:** *When the strong King from those of the house of Jacob shall rule and the Messiah and the strong rod from Israel shall be anointed, he will kill the leaders of the Moabites and make nothing of all the children of Seth,² the armies of Gog, who in the future will make war against Israel, and all their dead bodies shall fall before him.*³ The “**star**” becomes a strong King identified as the **Messiah** (see **Rev 22:16**) who will destroy all the world’s powers, while **Sheth/Seth** turns again into the armies of **Gog!**⁴

¹ Dt 3:1, 13; 4:47 LXX.

² Some fragments read “**people of the east**” rather than “Seth.” This seemingly interprets these “sons of Seth” as a corrupt seed, rather than a godly seed of Seth! So much for the Gen 6:1-4 Sethite interpretation. The idea seems to be that there was always a corruption in the line of Seth too, and this corruption followed the “sons of Seth” through the Flood and down into Babel and its “people of the east.”

³ Kevin **Cathcart**, Michael Maher, and Martin McNamara, eds., *The Aramaic Bible: Targum Neofiti 1: Numbers and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Numbers*, trans. Martin McNamara, Ernest G. Clarke, and Shirley Magder, vol. 4 (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1995), Nu 24:17-18.

⁴ **Going Deeper.** There is a fascinating side reason why the Targum may have done this. In my *Giants* book, I note a direct connection between the Anakim of **Deut 1:26** and **9:1-2** and how the Egyptians knew these people as “*Iy’anaq*,” and more importantly, “*Shasu*.” (*Giants: Tenths*, 110). The Anakim are, of course, giants. Amar Annus, who seems unaware of these lines of thought, nevertheless directly links the “**sons of Sheth**” **Num 24:17** passage to the same Shasu nomads, peoples whom he says were chaotic nomads associated with the south wind, witchcraft, and disorder. See **Amar Annus**, “[Sons of Seth and the South Wind](#),” in *Mesopotamian Medicine and Magic: Studies in Honor of Markham J. Geller*, ed Strahil V. Panayotov and Luděk Vacín, Ancient Magic and Divination 14 (Leiden: Brill, 2018): 9-24.

Finally, we want to think about **Amalek**, “the first of the nations.” This is a very strange thing to say and many commentaries are confused.⁵ They think this to be **Esau’s grandson** Amalek (**Gen 36:16**), but then rightly become befuddled with how a grandson of Jacob’s brother could be considered the first of the nations? But they have not read their Scripture carefully enough. For in the days of Abraham, centuries before Esau was born, there was a coalition of four kings that waged war against a confederation of five kings—including the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah (**Gen 14:1-2**). As this battle raged near the Dead Sea, the four kings defeated the *Rephaim*, the *Zuzim*, the *Emim*, the *Horites*, the *Amorites*, and ... the *Amalekites* (3-7).

Who are these foes? If you go and read your **Deuteronomy 2 history**, you will find that **five of the six** of these are mentioned (Rephaim; **Deut 2:11, 20-21**; Zuzim/Zamzumim, **20-21**; Emim, **10-11**; Horites, **12, 22**; Amorites **24-25, 34-35**). That chapter explicitly says that these were

⁵ On the Jewish confusion that likely gave rise to the same confusion in the church see: <https://www.sefaria.org/topics/amalek?tab=notable-sources>. Virtually every time the Jews discuss Amalek and it is even sometimes in the context of Satan, they still only go back to Esau.

Going Deeper. It has long been befuddled at why the Rabbis saw Samael-Satan as the Prince of Rome and yet call him the patron prince-angel of *Edom* (see my paper on [Satan, Baal, and Zeus](#), pp. 8-9). Clearly, there are ties between Esau-Edom and the more ancient Amalekites, which is why his grandson is named after him. But it seems to me that the whole Amalek, Agag, Gog, Og interchange may be the way to explain this, especially when we consider that **Revelation 20:7** says that Satan is the one who gathers Gog and Magog and their armies to battle against the Saints. The overlap between Satan and Edom with the Rabbis as prince of Rome aligns with Satan gathering Gog, who is related to Agag and Amalek in the matrix of ideas.

all nations of giants,⁶ Og, whose bed is mentioned in the next chapter, was among the last remnant of the Amorites whom Amos says were tall as the cedars ([Amos 2:9](#)). The land was once filled with giants, just like the spies told Moses ([Num 13:33](#)). The reason they got into so much trouble wasn't because they were lying or exaggerating, but because they were *faithless*. They did not believe God could wipe them out. The only group not listed in that chapter is the Amalekites, and before today is over, you will learn why that is. And in fact that story goes to show just **how faithless those** 10 spies actually were.

But why might *Amalek be the first of the nations?* We can't be entirely certain, but a good guess is that these Amalekites were a fierce tribe whose roots likely went back to not long after the Table of Nations where we find the children of Japheth mentioned such as Gomer, Magog, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Togarmah (Beth-togarmah). In fact, Josephus says that *Magog was the ancestor of these Amalekites* ([Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews 1:123](#)), while other Jewish traditions say that Gog and Magog are from the offspring of Amalek.⁷ So he's been around for a very, *very* long time and was

⁶ That they were giants is quite explicit—"tall as the Anakim" in [Deut 2:10-11, 20-21](#); cf. [Num 13:33](#); [Deut 9:2](#); etc.

⁷ See [Pri Tzaddik, Nasso 15:2](#), of which this statement is a direct quote. Also, [Esther Rabbah 7:11 \(13\)](#) has Haman the Amalekite saying, "Even Gog and Magog in the future are destined to say: 'Those who preceded me were fools, as they engaged in counsel with the kings against Israel, but they did not know that they have a patron in heaven.'"

clearly somehow related to Gog. Amazingly, *all of those names* find their way one way or another into the Gog prophecy in Ezekiel 38. They are Gog's armies. Importantly, all of these places are known and they were all located *south* of the Black Sea in eastern Anatolia, also called Asia Minor or Galatia or Turkey, near the ancient peoples called Cimmerians and Sythians⁸—all places and peoples that are also associated in ancient literature with giants.⁹



⁸ **Javan** is only one not named, but these are the **Greeks** and they are identified by Ezekiel as the coastlands; **Ezek 39:6**. See the discussion in **Michael S. Heiser**, “[Naked Bible Podcast Transcript Ep. 152: Ezekiel 38-39, Part 1](#),” *Naked Bible Podcast* (April 1, 2017). A good repository of various maps like mine below is Joel Richardson, “[The Nations of Gog and Magog](#),” *Joels Trumpet* (Apr 2018).

⁹ I've written about this in several places, including *Giants: Sons of the gods*, and *Galatians: A Supernatural Justification*.

Finally, the word “first” in **Num 24:20** is the Hebrew word “*rosh*,” which means “head” or “chief.” It can mean first in time, or first in rank — like the head of the line or the head of the class. Very interestingly, the exact same word appears in **Ezek 38:1**. Many translations read: “Son of man, set your face toward Gog... the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.” But some (like the NKJV) say “the prince of *Rosh*, Meshech, and Tubal.” During the Cold War, some took that word “Rosh” and turned it into “Russia” while Meshech became Moscow. But there is no ancient place called “Rosh” anywhere near Meshech and Tubal. Russia itself wasn’t called Rus until the Vikings.¹⁰ Meanwhile, the closest actual ancient city name to this would be Ra'shi or Ara'shi in Elam, far away to the east of Babylon. The geography simply doesn’t work. And we know that Meshech is actually in Turkey. Thus, most translations today recognize *rosh* as a title, not a place: the chief or head prince of those northern peoples¹¹ — the very same word used of Amalek being the “first” or “chief” of the nations. Gog isn’t just a

¹⁰ See for example **Edwin Yamauchi**, *Foes from the Northern Frontiers: Invading Hordes from the Russian Steppes* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1982); **J. Paul Tanner**, “Daniel’s ‘King of the North’: Do We Owe Russia an Apology?” *JETS* 35.3 (Sept 1992): 326; Heiser, “[Naked Bible Podcast Transcript Ep. 152: Ezekiel 38-39, Part 1.](#)”

¹¹ This kind of translation has exactly OT parallels. For example **1Chron 7:40**, “All of these were men of Asher, heads of fathers’ houses, approved, mighty warriors, chiefs of the princes. Their number enrolled by genealogies, for service in war...”

prince, he is *a king* (chief prince). This small linguistic connection is one more thread tying Amalek, Agag, and Gog together.

Let's *summarize*. We have a cryptic prophecy from a pagan prophet that the Jews before the time of Christ were blending and mixing Agag, Gog, Og, and Amalek and the belief was that in the future, the Messiah would utterly destroy him.

Now, I'm sure you know that the interpretation of just who and when the Gog prophecy is fulfilled has very many interpretations, from Russia in the future, to a more supernatural fulfillment associated with Satan or the Antichrist, to even some speculation that it is already past history. It was this last one that caught my attention and became the source of this sermon. I do a once-a-month podcast called *Iron and Myth* where four dear friends—all in very different eschatological camps, (seriously: pre-trib Premill, historical Premill, Amill, and Postmill; some futurists, some partial preterists, some a mixture), get together to talk about all kinds of strange things like this very prophesy of Gog. These are not things worth dividing the kingdom over. I asked my friend Brian Godawa a couple of weeks ago when he thought this prophecy would be fulfilled. He quickly said,

“[in the book of Esther.](#)” I had [not heard that one before.](#) So I had to do some research. That research became the root of this sermon. Near the end of a piece by James Jordan,¹² where he apparently thought he was the first to think about this, but it turns out the Jews had long before saw many of the same ideas, he goes into several paragraphs of what he calls “[The Amalek Pattern](#)” in the Bible. That’s what I want to spend the rest of our time talking about.

The Amalek Pattern

Abraham (Gen 12-15)

What is the Amalek pattern? I’m going to argue that it is actually *the Gog* pattern, because Gog substitutes for Agag and Agag is a descendant of Amalek. They’re all related. It begins with Abraham. I’ve already told you that in the days of Abraham, there was a coalition of four kings that waged war against a confederation of five kings, and that as the battle raged the four kings defeated the Rephaim, the Zuzim, the Emim, the Horites, the Amorites, and the [Amalekites](#) (3-7). Here is how Jordan summarizes the first of the pattern.

¹² [James B. Jordan](#), “[The Battle of Gog and Magog](#),” *Biblical Horizons Newsletter* No. 2 (Feb 1989).

Note in Genesis 12-15 that Abram moves into the land after escaping Pharaoh (ch. 12), settles down and experiences peace and prosperity (ch. 13), and then faces an invasion of a worldwide alliance of nations (ch. 14). This alliance captures Lot, but Abram rescues him, after which a Gentile priest blesses Abram (ch. 14). Finally, after this, God appears to Abram in a vision and makes covenant with him (ch. 15), guaranteeing him a “house.”

You recall the story. God has called Abram out of Ur of the Chaldees (**Gen 11:28, 31**).¹³ He is then in Haran which is quite near to that most ancient and strangest of all cities **Gobekli Tepe** which also just happens to be quite near **Beth-togarmah** and not far (relatively speaking) from Meshech, Tubal, Magog, and Gomer—all enemies found in Ezekiel 38.

Right after the **initial covenant promise** of Gen 12, Abram finds himself in **Egypt** because of a famine. Here, the Pharaoh falls in love with Sarai. Abram tries desperately to get out of the predicament by telling the Egyptians that she is his sister rather than his wife, lest he be killed. She obliges. Abram prospers. But the LORD afflicts Pharaoh with

¹³ While most scholars place this in southern Iraq, a few—including my friend Dr. Judd Burton, places it right near **Haran**. See also **Cyrus H. Gordon**, “Abraham and the Merchants of Ura,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 17.1 (1958): 28–31.

plagues because of Sarai. When Pharaoh finds out, he becomes furious with Abram and sent them all packing, back to the land of Canaan.

Once [he returns](#), Abram and his nephew Lot look upon the land. Abram asks Lot which part he wants, and he chooses the part that looks like “[The Garden of the LORD](#)” ([13:10](#)), the Jordan Valley before the LORD destroyed it.¹⁴ Abram for his part moves north and west deeper into Canaan where he settles and prospers even more.

It is at this point that our [giant-war](#) breaks out. And where does it erupt? Right where Lot is living. Now, two of those four kings that march down into the Promised Land are actually from our same region. [Arioch](#), king of Ellasar, whose name means “[tall](#)” and so the Targum calls him “[tall among the giants](#)” is from very near where Abram came from, while [Tidal](#), king of Goiim (the nations), whose name can mean “[knowledge of elevation](#)” or “[You shall be cast out of from heaven](#),” reminding us of Satan in Ezekiel 28, clearly represents the rest of those Ezek 38 nations.

After the four kings representing [a world-wide alliance](#) defeat the five local kings, including the kings of Sodom,

¹⁴ Curiously, the Garden of Eden is often associated with Turkey as well, because this is the source of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers ([Gen 2:14](#)).

Gomorrah, they also **take Lot captive**. But after one man escapes, Abram finds out. He gathers **his allies Mamre the Amorite and Eschol and Aner** his brothers. Eschol means “**a cluster of grapes**,” reminding us of the later spies unfaithfulness as they brought back a cluster so large from this land that it had to be carried by many men. Meanwhile, they are living in Hebron, formerly named **Kiriath-arba**, named after Arba, the giant ancestor of the Anakim (**Josh 14:15**).

The coalition takes **318 men**, a number reminding many of Gideon’s 300 defeating the massive Midianite army or even of the 300 Spartans who become legendary for holding off a huge Persian force. The number very clearly **emphasizes divine victory** was needed and such a small force as this should hardly have succeeded. But it did, because God was with him. Abram rescues Lot and upon his return, he comes to Salem where the very strange **Melchizedek** the priest-king of Salem meets him, blesses him, and they share a covenant meal together (**Gen 14:18**), and in the very next chapter, Abram is given his great covenant promise of a seed and a land. Jordan emphasizes the “**house**” can therefore be established. I will emphasize also the great promise given in ch. 22 that his descendants would be like the “**sands of the seashore**” (**22:17**). This then becomes the Amalek Pattern.

Moses (Ex 1-24)

It picks up next in the days of Moses. Jordan again says,

After escaping Pharaoh (Ex. 1-14), the people are given food and water in the wilderness (Ex. 16). Then Amalek attacks and kills many Lot-like stragglers (Ex. 17; Dt. 25:17-19). Moses defeats Amalek, after which a Gentile priest (Jethro) blesses the people, and then God appears in the Cloud and makes covenant with them (Ex. 18-24), including the building of a “house” (the Tabernacle).

Let’s unpack this.

You all know about the [Exodus](#). Moses is born in Egypt and is adopted into the family of the Pharaoh. But after the Pharaoh becomes evil and Moses is cast out of Egypt, he is told to return to deliver the people. The great Exodus occurs, the armies of the pagan king are hurled into the sea, while the people walk across on dry land.

At this point, they find themselves in the middle of the wilderness. They camp at a place called Elim ([Ex 15:27](#))—with 70 trees and 12 springs of water. An oasis of rest. They are led into the wilderness of Sin where they are tempt God and manna from heaven (“the bread of angels”) begins to

fall. In Ch. 17, they are thirsty, and Moses strikes the rock at Sinai, causing water to gush out.

Immediately after this, we learn that “**Amalek came and fought with Israel at Rephidim**” (**Ex 17:8**). This becomes the **first military conflict** after leaving Egypt. This is what caused the Targum to interpret “**Amalek, first of the nations**” as “**The first of the nations *who made war against those of the house of Israel,***” although the Scripture does not actually say that. This is the giant tribe of Gen 14. And think about how Moses defeats them. It is not with might or power, but only by **the power of God**. In fact, literally by holding his arms out in **the sign of the cross**, and many church Fathers preached. For example, Tertullian said, “**While Joshua was fighting Amalek, Moses was praying, his hands extended, because wherever the Lord fought against the devil [that is Amalek], the form of the cross was necessary—the cross by which Jesus was to win the victory**” (**Tertullian, *Against Marcion* 3:18**). Did you note the devil language there? Meanwhile, Justin Martyr said something similar,

“**When the people waged war with Amalek, and the son of Nave (Nun) by name Jesus (Joshua), led the fight, Moses himself *prayed to God, stretching out both hands,* and Hur**

with Aaron supported them during the whole day, so that they might not hang down when he got wearied. For if he gave up any part of this sign, *which was an imitation of the cross*, the people were beaten, as is recorded in the writings of Moses; but if he remained in this form, Amalek was proportionally defeated, and he who prevailed prevailed *by the cross* ... How great will *the fulfilment of Scripture* be which says, ‘*God will wage war against Amalek with concealed hand!*’ You can perceive that the concealed power of God was in Christ the crucified, before whom **demons, and all the principalities** and powers of the earth, tremble.

(Justin, *Dialogue* XC; XLIX)

After defeating Amalek, in Ch. 18, Moses meets with his father-in-law Jethro, a God fearing Gentile priest who blesses him (**Ex 18:10**). They then have a long discussion about how to govern this rabble of people, and Jethro tells Moses he needs to appoint faithful, wise men. That later gets turned into 70 elders (**Ex 24, Num 11**). Immediately after all this, of course, Moses carries out his plans and builds **the house** of the LORD which takes us to the end of Exodus. Here then we have seen the same pattern: Deliverance, settlement, attack from Amalek, defeat of enemy in a divine reversal, blessing, house and seed. And all this leads, as it did,

to worship of God for his great victory, protection and glorious providence in their midst (Ex 40).

Saul (1Sam 15)

Jordan next moves to David, and I understand why. But it strikes me that this moves our story just a bit too quickly. He forgot king Saul. You remember king Saul? He was anointed as king by the people in defiance of the LORD who was their king (1Sam 8:7). And they chose a man a head taller (9:2; 10:23) than all the other people, just like the kings of the nations around them (8:5, 20).

The man was anointed to deliver the people from the Philistines and other enemies so that they might escape their tyranny. And he had a few initial victories and brought some measure of peace to the land. Then appears Amalek. But now, right where we expect Amalek to attack, no, Saul goes on the offensive! He goes after Amalek (1Sam 15:5). Is the pattern about to be fulfilled? Will this be the fulfillment of the great prophecy of Balaam? Will Saul usher in the end times kingdom?

It says, “And he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive and devoted to destruction all the people with the edge

of the sword” (8). Now, it is important to understand what he was doing. This devoting to complete destruction is called *Cherem* (חֶרֶם). Why and who was Israel supposed to completely exterminate? Many people do not realize this, but it was *not* all peoples indiscriminately. We learn this in the days of Moses when God would not let the Israelites touch the Moabites (Deut 2:9) or the Ammonites (2:19), or importantly, the Edomites (2:4-5; importantly, because the Amalekites are often confused with the sons of Esau; if this is true, then these Amalekites can’t be the descendants of Esau). And we learn that in the very same chapter where we learn that those nations drove out the giants!

Rather, they were *only allowed to destroy the giant clans or people associated with them*. How interesting then, when you know your Genesis 6 history, that *Cherem* is the same root as Hermon (הַרְמוֹן), the mountain upon which all ancient traditions say the sons of God descended and creating the Nephilim giants. Hermon means: “the devoted place,” “the consecrated place,” or “the place under the ban.”¹⁵

¹⁵ For much more on this see especially Michael S. Heiser, *Reversing Hermon: Enoch, The Watchers & the Forgotten Mission of Jesus Christ* (Crane, MO: Defender Pub., 2017), 172-78.

So it seems like Saul is doing all the right things. But then we realize that he refuses to devote Agag to destruction. *Agag*? Yes, the same name that Balaam centuries earlier had prophesied “his king shall be higher than *Agag*” which as we’ve seen becomes “*Gog*” and “*Og*” in the LXX. Agag is likely a dynastic throne title like Pharaoh or Abimelech. Are you starting to get a sense for why all of these names and ideas are interchanged for one another? Why did Saul keep him alive? Josephus records, “He also took Agag, the enemies’ king, captive;--the beauty and tallness of whose body he admired so much, that he thought him worthy of preservation” (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 6.7.2).

You may remember how this story ends, and it becomes the reason why Jordan likely did not include it in the pattern. It *doesn’t fit* the pattern, precisely because at just the moment we think Saul may be fulfilling the prophecy, he utterly *fails*. Samuel gets wind of it and comes to Saul who is busy worshiping God for the great victory he has had. But the LORD had told Samuel, “I regret that I have made Saul king, for he has turned back from following me and has not performed my commandments” (1Sam 15:11). As Samuel arrives, Saul is sacrificing sheep and cattle.

Samuel says, “What then is this bleating of sheep in my ears” (14). Saul desperately tries to justify his corrupt and disobedient worship, saying he’s obeyed the Lord in everything. But Samuel says, “Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD. Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and presumption is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the Word of the LORD, he has also rejected you from being king” (22-23). And Samuel promptly takes the happy unsuspecting king Agag and “hacked Agag to pieces before the LORD in Gilgal” (33).

David (1Sam 30)

Jordan picks up the Amalek pattern again with David.

After escaping Pharaoh Saul (1 Sam. 18-26), David finds a place of rest in the "wilderness" at Ziklag (ch. 27). Then Amalek attacks and steals David’s wives (ch. 30), but David defeats them. Following this, a Gentile priest-king (Hiram of Tyre, whose as a Gentile king was also a priest) blesses David (2 Sam. 5:11-12), and then God appears to David in a vision, promising him a "house" (2 Sam. 7).

Saul who looked the part but failed the Amalek test, has turned against David. For years David is **hunted like an animal**, fleeing from place to place. He even ends up living among the Philistines for a time, pretending to serve their king while actually raiding Israel's ancient enemies. Finally, he finds a measure of **rest** in the wilderness town of Ziklag, a place given to him by the Philistine king Achish. There, in that insignificant space, he begins to gather around him his **mighty men** — a ragtag but fiercely loyal band. These are not giants, though the word is the same (*gibborim*). That's the irony of it all. God will get the victory. But I get ahead of myself.

Just as he seems to have found a fragile peace, **Amalek strikes again**. While David and his men are away, the Amalekites raid Ziklag (**1Sam 30:1**), burn it to the ground, and take captive all the women and children — including David's two wives. This is the classic Amalek/Gog move: a sudden, vicious attack on the vulnerable when the leader is away. But unlike Saul, **David does not hesitate**. He inquires of the Lord, pursues the Amalekites with his 600 men, and in a great reversal, defeats them completely. He recovers everything that was taken — not one person is missing.

Right after this victory, a **Gentile priest-king**, Hiram of Tyre, hears that David has been anointed king over all Israel. He sends messengers and builds David a palace, blessing him with materials and skilled craftsmen (**2 Samuel 5:11-12**). Then, in one of the most pivotal moments in the entire Old Testament, God appears to David through the prophet Nathan in a vision and promises him a **house** — not just a physical palace, but a dynastic house, an eternal throne, a kingdom that will never end (**2 Samuel 7**). This is the Davidic Covenant, the great “house” promise that will ultimately point forward to the greater Son of David.

So once again we see the full **Amalek pattern**: Deliverance (escaping Saul), settlement and rest (Ziklag), attack by Amalek, divine reversal and decisive defeat of the enemy, blessing from the nations (Hiram), and finally the guaranteeing of the house and seed.

Esther

Jordan’s entire Amalek Pattern culminates in **Esther**—the last history book of the OT and the last book of the Tanak (the Jewish canon), making this in some ways the very last inspired word from God that we get prior to Matthew’s

Gospel. By the time of Esther, many Jews had returned to the land, the Temple had been rebuilt, and they were living with a measure of peace under the Persian Empire. But then, just as in every previous chapter of the pattern, the ancient enemy rises again — this time in the person of **Haman the Agagite** (curiously rendered “Gogite” in some LXX manuscripts)¹⁶ Five times we are told that he is an Agagite (**Est 3:1; 10; 8:3, 5; 9:24**) which is overkill galore, unless you are trying to make a *theological* point. Haman is the direct spiritual descendant from the same line as Agag the Amalekite whom Saul failed to destroy. The repercussions now because deadly serious.

Haman becomes the second-highest official in the Persian Empire and, filled with irrational hatred toward Mordecai, convinces King Ahasuerus to issue a decree for the total extermination of the Jewish people on a single day.

But God is not caught off guard. He had already positioned **Esther** (whose Hebrew name Hadassah means “**myrtle**” (reminding us of **Zechariah 1:8**’s myrtle trees which is a divine council scene, but whose Persian name Esther means “star,” the title the sons of God are given in **Job 38:7**) as

¹⁶ **William A. Tooman**, *Gog of Magog*, Forschungen zum Alten Testament 2. Reihe 52 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 140.

queen in the royal palace. Mordecai, her cousin and guardian, refuses to bow to Haman. His name, **Mordecai**, means “**little man**.” Oh, the irony. It’s David’s mighty men all over. It is the classic reversal: a “little man” and a human “star” are used by God to defeat a towering enemy.

Through a series of perfectly timed providential events, the tables are turned. Haman the Amalekite is hanged on the very **giant gallows** (fifty cubits high — about 75 feet tall) that he had built for Mordecai. The Jews are given the right to defend themselves, and they defeat their enemies across the empire. The very people who came to plunder them are plundered instead. Curiously, **Ezekiel 39:11** and **15** tells us that Gog and his vast army will be buried in a place called the Valley of Hamon-Gog. Hamon means “**horde**” or “**multitude**,” but the name sounds remarkably like Haman the Agagite (Gogite) — as if the final enemy carries the same name as the one who tried to destroy the Jews in Esther’s day. The spoils are so great that they are used to glorify the Temple and support the Jewish community. The victory is commemorated forever in the Feast of Purim.

So once again we see the full Amalek/Gog pattern: Deliverance (preservation in exile), settlement and rest (peace

under Persia), attack by the Agagite (the ancient enemy), divine reversal and decisive defeat of the enemy (Haman on his own giant gallows), blessing from the nations (the Persian king's favor), and the continued preservation and strengthening of God's house and seed.

Jesus: Part I

But this is not the final fulfillment of the Gog-Magog Amalek war. We know this because Revelation says something is still future. For these have been *patterns*, and as patterns they are **types and shadows** of the greater fulfillment in Jesus Christ.

It picks up again in the fullness of time with the coming of the true Star and Scepter, the Messiah whom Balaam predicted would be greater than Agag and put an end to Amalek. The pattern reaches its **decisive turning point** in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

After escaping the murderous "Pharaoh" Herod (Matthew 2), the holy family returns from Egypt and Jesus grows up in the land. He is baptized in the Jordan, the Spirit descends upon Him, and He is driven into the wilderness

where He is tested for forty days. There, in that place of divine preparation and rest, **the serpent** attacks Him directly in the wilderness temptation. I'll bring this out more next time, but notice for just a moment how in **Ezek 38:4**, “I will turn you about and put hooks into your jaws, and I will bring you out, and all your army.” Hooks in jaws? That's the language of **Leviathan**—the **Devil!** “Can you draw out Leviathan with a fishhook ... can you put a rope in his nose or piece his jaw with a hook” (**Job 41:1-2**)? You can't. But God can. As it is predicted in Isaiah, “In that day the Lord with his hard and great and strong sword will punish *Leviathan* the fleeing *serpent*, Leviathan the twisting serpent, and he will slay the *dragon* that is in the sea” (**Isa 27:1**). Who is this? As **Revelation 20:2** calls him, “He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the *devil and Satan*, and bound him for a thousand years.” Are you getting the picture of Gog more firmly solidified in your mind?

Jesus defeats the enemy, reversing the failure of Adam and Israel. Throughout His ministry Jesus confronts the powers of darkness head-on. Demons cry out, recognizing Him as the Son of God and the Holy One. These are the unclean spirits that all ancient people said were the disembodied giants. He casts them out with a word, demonstrating

that the kingdom of God has arrived and the strong man (Satan) is being bound as he says in Matthew 12. The forces behind the ancient Amalek/Gog hostility tremble before Him. Yet the ultimate attack comes **at the cross**. The rulers of this age, both human and supernatural, conspire together. Satan enters Judas, the religious leaders hand Him over, and the Romans crucify Him. It looks like the final victory of the serpent's seed.

But then comes **the great reversal**. From the jaws of defeat, on the third day God raises Jesus from the dead. The sign of the cross defeats Amalek, for the resurrection is the ultimate defeat of the ancient enemy. Christ disarms the principalities and powers, making a public spectacle of them (**Col 2:15**). He proclaims victory to the spirits in prison (**1Pet 3:19**), those ancient hostile powers connected to the giant clans and the rebellious order. After His resurrection, a Gentile blessing begins as the gospel breaks out beyond Israel. Finally, Jesus pours out the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and establishes His House — the Church, **the new Temple** where God dwells by His Spirit. The promised Seed has come, and through Him a new people is being formed.

Thus we see the full pattern fulfilled in Jesus: Deliverance (from Herod and ultimately from sin and death), settlement and rest (in His ministry and Sabbath rest), attack by the ancient enemy (Satan and his demonic hordes), divine reversal and total defeat of the enemy (the cross and resurrection), blessing to the nations (the gospel going to the Gentiles), and the establishment of God's House and Seed (the Church as the new Temple filled with the Holy Spirit).

Jesus: Part II

It does not end here, though, as climactic and neglected as this part of the story is. For the Pattern has not yet reached its cosmic conclusion at the end of the age. What began with Amalek, continued through Agag and Haman, and was decisively defeated at the cross, finds its final expression in the last rebellion.

After the thousand years, Satan is released from his prison. He goes out to deceive the nations at the four corners of the earth, gathering Gog and Magog for battle (Rev 20:7). Ezekiel says they are hordes from the nations apparently lead by some kind of supernatural prince. But John replaces hordes, saying, "Their number is like the sand of the

sea” — a deliberate and ironic echo of God’s promise to Abraham that his descendants would be as numerous as the sand on the seashore (**Genesis 22:17**). Satan attempts to create a counterfeit Abrahamic multitude, the final organized expression of the ancient serpent-seed rebellion.

They march against the camp of the saints and the beloved city. But fire comes down from heaven and consumes them. Satan, the head and ultimate power behind all these armies — the one who has empowered every Amalek, every Agag, every Haman, and every Og and every Gog — is thrown into the lake of fire. The ancient enemy is defeated once and for all. Gog is no more.

Then comes **the final divine reversal and the ultimate blessing**: the New Jerusalem descends as a bride. Every nation is represented, and the kings of the earth bring their glory into it. Death, mourning, and the curse are gone forever. God Himself dwells with His people in the perfected House — the true Temple where there is no need for a separate building, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The promised Seed has brought forth a multitude greater than the sand of the sea, and the serpent’s seed is no more.

So **the pattern is completed**: final deliverance, eternal rest and security, the last attack by the ancient enemy under Satan's leadership, total divine reversal and victory, blessing to all the nations, and the establishment of God's eternal House where He dwells forever with His people.

Brothers and sisters, do you see it? From the very beginning, the same ancient hostile power — the serpent's seed, the giant-clan rebellion, the Amalek/Gog spirit — has risen again and again against the people of God. From Abraham to Moses to David to Esther to Jesus, it has attacked. And one day it will make **one final, desperate stand as Gog and Magog** under the direct leadership of Satan himself.

But every single time, the Lord turns the tables. This is so **that he alone might be glorified** for defeating our ancient foe by the power of Christ.

He called Abraham out of the very region that would later become the heartland of Gog's coalition. He delivered Israel from Egypt and crushed Amalek with the sign of the cross. He raised up the horn of David after Saul failed the test. He used a "star" named Esther and a "little man" named Mordecai to hang the enemy on his own giant gallows. And then the true Star and Scepter appeared — Jesus Christ. And

he will appear again to finally once-and-for-all defeat the satanic supernatural enemy of God's people. Satan, the head and power behind every Amalek, every Agag, every Haman, every Gog, will be thrown into the lake of fire. Forever. **Then the final reversal will be complete.**

This is our hope.

This is why we do not lose heart when the ancient enemy seems to rise again. This is why we do not fear when the nations rage and the rulers plot together. The same God who turned the tables on Amalek, on Agag, on Haman, on the cross itself — that same God will have the final word.

So stand firm. Hold fast to the Star and Scepter. The prophecy of an ancient pagan prophet has and will be finally fulfilled. God's word is true. Live as those who belong to the victorious King. Because the pattern is clear:

The Lord always turns the tables.

And one day soon, He will turn them for the last time.

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