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Here Comes the King of the South The Rise of the Islamic Caliphate



Rushidun Caliphate at the height of its expansion¹.

Dear Friends and Fellow Laborers,

The prophecy of Daniel 11 talks about an ongoing fight between a “King of the North” and a “King of the South.” At the time of the end, this rivalry will lead to the King of the North coming south with an army to make war against the King of the South. It is the Holy Land and the city of Jerusalem that is in the middle between both antagonists. It is important to keep in mind that it is Jerusalem that becomes the capital of the world-ruling Jesus the Messiah.

The Churches of God believe that this messianic world-ruling empire will begin with the return of Jesus who will be King in his capital at Jerusalem. But other religions have other ideas.

Muslims have their own idea. They too believe in a world ruling empire, but it is ruled by a figure known as a Caliph (successor to the Islamic Prophet Mohammad). This caliph, or ruler of all Muslims worldwide, will then subjugate all other nations and bring them under Islamic rule.

¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rashidun_Caliphate#mediaviewer/File:Mohammad_adil-Rashidun-empire-at-its-peak-close.PNG

This is not as far-fetched as you might think. Historically there have actually been four caliphates that ruled vast areas of the world, sometimes across three continents!

They were as follows:

- Rashidun Caliphate (632–661 A.D.)
- Umayyad Caliphate (661–750 A.D.)
- Abbasid Caliphate (750–1258 A.D.)
- Ottoman Caliphate (1517–1924 A.D.)

For over a thousand years, Islamic caliphates dominated and controlled the Middle East, and with it, control of the land trade routes between East and West. Their control of trade routes propelled Europeans (like Columbus, Bartolomeu Dias, and da Gama) to look for sea routes for the riches of India, Ceylon, and China—which resulted in the Age of Discovery. Meanwhile, the Muslim caliphs were looking for a way to break into Europe, the land they called the “Golden Land.”



Satellite image of the Bosphorus, taken from the International Space Station in April 2004.

Constantinople was the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire, also called the Byzantine Empire. Today, Constantinople is called Istanbul. This great city guarded the Bosphorus Straits, a thin waterway connecting the Black Sea and the Sea of Marmara, which is then connected by the Dardanelles to the Aegean. The Bosphorus blocked the land route between Asia and Europe. Constantinople was founded by Emperor Constantine who made it the Capital of the Roman Empire and, of course, named it after himself. The Roman Empire was later divided between the Western Roman Empire (with its capital at Rome) and the Eastern Roman Empire².

Constantinople was famous for its impregnable double walls called the Theodosian Walls, named after the Byzantine Emperor Theodosius II who build them. The Byzantines remained in an almost constant state of war with the caliphs over land in Asia Minor. The ruling Caliphs tried several times to lay siege to Constantinople without success.

674-678 A.D. First Siege of Constantinople was by the Umayyad Caliphate. The Byzantines were able to destroy the Arab fleet and defeat the land army of the caliph.

² The 2 iron legs of the image of Daniel 2

717-718 A.D. Second Siege of Constantinople by Umayyads. Again the Arab navy and land army were defeated. Constantinople continued to block the way of the Muslims into Europe from the East.

Realizing it was futile trying to break through the walls of Constantinople, the Umayyad Caliph decided to try another route. This time, they tried to break into Europe from the West.

From 711 until 732, Muslim soldiers (called Moors) conquered the southern part of the Iberian Peninsula (Spain today). From Al Andalus, or the Caliphate of Cordoba as it was called, they launched attacks northward into the Christian kingdoms of Gallecia, Castile, Pamplona, and Gascony.

The Muslim forces continued on into Aquitaine and on toward the Frankish Kingdom, until they were stopped at the decisive Battle of Tours by a Frankish general called Charles Martell (grandfather of Charlemagne).

The famous historian Gibbon called the Battle of Tours a landmark event that marked the high tide of the Muslim advance into Europe. Another historian named Leopold von Ranke said that “Pontiers {Tours} was the turning point of one of the most important epochs in the history of the world.³” Europe remained Christian.

The Muslims did not give up. Since the Western attempt to break into Europe failed, the Muslims—this time the Turks—went back to assaulting Constantinople. This time they were successful.

The Theodosian Walls were impregnable to direct assault and needed to be brought down. In 1453, the Turks cast giant cannon on sight and used them to pound down the walls. With Constantinople breached, the Turks entered Europe and began a series of protracted wars with the goal of conquering all of Christian Europe.

Ottoman generals were able to conquer Hungary and the Balkans, and continued their inroads into Europe until they reached the gates of Vienna. Here they were stopped. Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent led the siege of Vienna in 1529. The city held out because heavy rains stopped Suleiman from bringing his heavy artillery to bear. After his Janissary troops began to voice their disillusionment over the lengthy and unsuccessful siege, Suleiman retreated back to Constantinople. The Siege of Vienna marked the high tide of the Eastern invasion of Europe by the Muslims.

For over 150 years, Ottoman armies continued to battle against European forces until, in 1683, the decisive Battle of Vienna took place. Once again the Ottomans besieged Vienna. But a relief force of Polish and German troops under the command of King Jan Sobieski of Poland arrived. The Battle of Vienna commenced with Holy Roman forces and the Polish forces joining together against the Turks and their auxiliaries.

³ Ranke, Leopold von. “History of the Reformation”. Vol. 1 5

The Turks were defeated. The Habsburgs were then able to retake Hungary, but the Balkans remained in Ottoman hands. This decisive battle ended further Muslim advances into Europe.

We all need to study history to understand prophecy. Remember, Daniel was looking forward when writing Daniel 11. We have the advantage of looking backward. Most of us are familiar with the Crusades, when European armies invaded the Middle East with the goal of recapturing Jerusalem. There was even a Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem that lasted from 1099-1187, until it was re-conquered by Saladin.

Many are also familiar with the division of the Ottoman Empire at the end of World War 1. The Ottoman Empire had fought on the side of Germany and other Central Powers. The Ottomans lost much territory to the control of France and England as new Arab states were created and controlled by these two great European powers. Another consequence of the defeat of the Ottomans was the abolishment of the office of caliph by Mustafa Ataturk, founder of the Republic of Turkey.

So we see that the rivalry between a King of the North consisting of European powers and a King of the South made up of Muslim nations has continued for hundreds of years. Most of this time, the Muslims have been united under the political leadership of a caliph.

In a *Reuters* report dated June 29, 2014, posted on the *Time.com* website⁴, we see the declaration of a new caliphate:

The extremist Sunni group known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Greater Syria (ISIS) on Sunday declared a new caliphate—or an Islamic state to claim dominion over Muslims across the globe.

An online statement declared the group’s shadowy leader, known as Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the Caliph, or successor to the Prophet Mohammed . . .

The article goes on:

Restoring the caliphate, and with it a measure of the glory that attended Islam’s golden age, has been the stated goal of Sunni Muslim activists for decades, from the Muslim Brotherhood to Hizb ut-Tahrir to Osama bin Laden’s al-Qaeda. But al-Baghdadi’s group is the first to assert it. “The time has come for those generations that were drowning in oceans of disgrace, being nursed on the milk of humiliation, and being ruled by the vilest of all people, after their long slumber in the darkness of neglect — the time has come for them to rise,” said the statement.

Abu Bakr was the first caliph to succeed Muhammad. It is interesting to note that this new caliph calls himself Abu Bakr. The flag this first Caliphate chose was a completely black one. The present flag of ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) and other radical jihadists is also black. While some may not see the significance of these two interesting observations, the symbolism is not lost on the Muslim world.

⁴ <http://time.com/#2938317/isis-militants-declare-islamist-caliphate/>

Muslim tradition states that Mohammad said the advent of the Mahdi (Muslim Redeemer) would be preceded by the flying of black standards in Khorasan (modern day Iraq).

As you can see, this new caliph is using all the signs and symbols that establish his authority as the end-time ruler of the Muslim people. The call is going out for all Muslims everywhere to gather together under the leadership of Caliph Abu Bakr. The more who do so, the more his legitimacy will be established and the more power he will accumulate.

Some analysts say that this new Caliph will be just a flash in the pan and come to nothing. But this may well be the rise of the King of the South that Daniel prophesied to emerge at the end of days. Maybe the black flags are more significant than we might realize.

Daniel prophesied that at the end of the age, a powerful King of the South will “push at” the King of the North, who will then respond with an invasion of the Middle East.

Daniel 11:40-43

And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of The north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps.

Things continue to build toward an end-time crescendo. As I write this to you, the Israeli Defense Force has invaded the Gaza Strip and it doesn't look like the war will be over quickly. Hamas continues to fire missiles into Israel and have ignored the several recent ceasefires. The civil war in Syria continues and has now expanded to Iraq with the ISIS leader declaring himself caliph. America is in rapid decline and its foreign policy is in shambles. Also, the U.S. dollar's days are numbered as the world reserve currency. Could it be any clearer that the end of the age is now upon us?

Pray that we will be counted worthy to escape what is about to take place.

Pray for the safety of Gods people everywhere,

In service to the soon coming King Jesus the Messiah,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Leon Sexton', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

T. Leon Sexton

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