

THE THREE WO TRUMPETS. WO! WO!! WO!!!

FALL OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE, OR OTTOMAN SUPREMACY DEPARTED, AUGUST 11, 1840.

by Josiah Litch

This article uses language and attitudes toward Mohammed and Islam representative of the mid-nineteenth century. Today Seventh-day Adventists would not choose this language and generally manifest friendly attitudes toward Muslims. —The Editors

The book of Revelation has long been looked upon as a book of inexplicable mysteries, altogether beyond the reach of the comprehension of mortals. And this opinion has received too much encouragement from professed teachers and expounders of the word of God, many of them of eminent talents and various learning. . .much evil has been done by their unguarded remarks respecting the obscurity of unfulfilled prophecy in general, and the book of Revelation in particular. . . . The Holy Spirit is grieved, and the God of Revelation slighted and insulted, by such insinuations and remarks. . . . How differently has the author of the book expressed himself in reference to it! He calls it, "The Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass"

If it is a revelation, then it is not an *inexplicable mystery*, but the mind of God made known to man. "Blessed," then "is he that readeth, and they which hear the words of the prophecy of this book." If God, then, has pronounced a blessing on the reader of this book, who shall disannul it?

Rev. 8:13. "Wo [sic], wo, wo to the inhabitants of the earth, by reason of the

other voices of the trumpet of the three angels which are yet to sound."

Rev. 9:1. "And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth; and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit."

A star, in the figurative language of Revelation, is a minister of religion. See Rev. 1:20.... A fallen star, then would signify a fallen or heretical minister of religion. This was undoubtedly the *Arabian imposter, Mahomet*. [Mohammed] There is so general an agreement among Christians, especially protestant commentators, that the subject of this prediction is Mahomedism [Islam], I shall not enter into the argument at large to prove it; but in passing, shall merely give a brief exposition of the emblems used, and their application in the text.

Verse 2: "And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. . . ."

The smoke was the cloud of errors which arose through his

instrumentality, darkening the sun, (*gospel light*), and the air, (*the influence of Christianity on the minds of men*.) In this enterprise, he and his followers were so successful that the light of Christianity almost disappeared wherever he gained an influence; and the smoke of the pit produced nearly total darkness throughout the eastern church.

Verse 3: "And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth; and unto them was given power as scorpions of the earth have power. . . ."

That these locusts were emblems of an army, is clear. . . : "And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were crowns like gold, and their faces were the faces of men. And they had hair like the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions," &c. . . . Such is the description of a Mahomedan [Muslim] horseman prepared for battle. A horse, a rider with a man's face, long flowing beard, woman's hair, flowing or plaited, and the head encircled with a *yellow turban, LIKE gold*.

"Was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. . . ." Martinicus says, "Scorpions have nippers, or pin-cers, with which they keep hold

of what they seize, after they have wounded it with their sting....”

Like the scorpion, Mahomet stung the subjects of his proselytism, and infused the poison of his doctrines, and continued to hold them by the force of arms, until it had affected the whole man, and the subject settled down in the belief of his delusive errors. . . . Wherever his arms triumphed, there his religion was imposed on men, whether they believed it or not. . . .

“The successors of the prophet propagated his faith and imitated his example; and such was the rapidity of their progress, that in the space of a century, *Persia, Syria, Egypt, Africa, and Spain* had submitted to the victorious arms of the Arabian and Saracen conquerors.”—Ruter

Verse 4: “And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.”

“*Grass, green thing, and tree* are here put in opposition to *those men* who have not the seal of God, &c. If so, they must mean those who have the seal of God—his worshippers.

“...—Infidels, who rejected the Christian religion, and also all idolaters, they forced to receive the Mahommedan religion [Islam], upon pain of death. But Jews and Christians, who had their Bibles and their religion, they left to the enjoyment of them, upon their paying large sums, which they exacted. But where the payment of such sums

was refused, they must either embrace the new religion or die.”—Smith’s Key to Revelation.

Verse 5: “And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months.”

As the language thus far has been figurative, so it must be here also. To kill, signifies, a political death, or subjection. The nation of Christians who were the subjects of this plague were to be tormented five months, but not politically slain. Five months is one hundred and fifty days; each day a full solar year; the whole time, one hundred and fifty years.

Verse 6: “And in those days men shall seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.”

This, of course, is the same death as that in verse 5, viz., *political*. Such was the misery of the Greeks, occasioned by the wars in which they were almost continually embroiled with the Mahommedan powers, that very many would have preferred an entire subjection of the empire to them, to the protracted miseries the war occasioned. But this was not permitted; political death fled from them.

THE EXTERMINATOR TORMENTS THE GREEKS ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS

Verse 10: “Their power was to hurt men five months.”

1. The question arises. What

men were they to hurt five months? Undoubtedly the same they were afterwards to slay; (See verse 15.) “The third part of the men,” or third of the Roman empire—the Greek division of it.

2. When were they to begin their work of torment? The 11th verse answers the question:—“They had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is *Abaddon*, but in the Greek hath his name *Apollyon*.”

a. “*They had a king over them*.” From the death of Mahomet. . . the Mahommedans were divided into various factions, under several leaders, with no general civil government extending over them all. Near the close of the 13th century, Othman founded a government, which has since been known as the Ottoman government, or empire, extending over all the principal Mahommedan tribes, consolidating them into one grand monarchy.

b. The character of the king. “*Which is the angel of the bottomless pit*.” An angel signifies a messenger, or minister, either good or bad; not always a spiritual being. “The angel of the bottomless pit,” or chief minister of the religion which came from hence when it was opened. That religion is Mahommedism [Islam], and the Sultan is its chief minister.

“The Sultan, or Grand Signior, as he is indifferently called, is also Supreme Caliph, or high priest, uniting in his person the highest spiritual dignity with the supreme secular authority.”—Perkin’s, “*World as it is*,” p. 361. . . .

3. *His name*. In Hebrew,

"*Abaddon*," the destroyer; in Greek, "*Apollyon*," one that exterminates or destroys. Having two different names in the two languages, it is evident that the character rather than the name of the power is intended to be represented. . . . Such has always been the character of the Ottoman government. . . .

But when did Othman make his first assault on the Greek empire? According to Gibbon ("*Decline & Fall*," &c.) "Othman first entered the territory of Nicomedia on the 27th day of July, 1299. . . ."

"*And their power was to torment men five months. . . .*" Commencing July 27th, 1299, the one hundred and fifty years reach to 1449. During that whole period the Turks were engaged in an almost perpetual war with the Greek empire, but yet without conquering it. They seized upon and held several of the Greek provinces, but still Greek independence was maintained in Constantinople. But in 1449, the termination of the one hundred and fifty years, a change came. Before presenting the history of that change, however, we will look at verses 12-15...: "One wo is past; and behold, there come two woes more hereafter. And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice, from the four horns of the golden alter which is before. Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed which were prepared for an hour, a day, a month, and a year, for to slay a third part of men."

The first wo was to continue from the rise of Mahommedism until the end of the five months.

Then the first wo was to end, and the second begin. And when the sixth angel sounded, it was commanded to take off the restraints which had been imposed on the nation, by which they were restricted to the work of tormenting men, and their commission extended to slay the third part of men. This command came from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God. "The four angels," are the four principal sultanies of which the Ottoman empire is composed, located in the country of the Euphrates. They had been restrained; God commanded, and they were loosed.

In the year 1449, John Paleologus, the Greek emperor, died, but left no children to inherit his throne, and Constantine Deacozes succeeded to it. But he would not venture to ascend the throne without the consent of Amurath, the Turkish Sultan. He therefore sent ambassadors to ask his consent, and obtained it, before he presumed to call himself sovereign. . . . Let this historical fact be carefully examined in connection with the prediction above. This was not a violent assault made on the Greeks, by which their empire was overthrown and their independence taken away, but simply a voluntary surrender of that independence into the hands of the Turks, by saying, "I cannot reign unless you permit."

The four angels were loosed for an hour, a day, a month, and a year, to slay the third part of men. This period amounts to three hundred and ninety-one years and fifteen days; during which Ottoman supremacy was to exist in Constantinople.

Commencing when the one

hundred and fifty years ended, in 1449, the period would end August 11th, 1840. Judging from the manner of the commencement of the Ottoman supremacy, that it was by a voluntary acknowledgment on the part of the Greek emperor that he only reigned by permission of the Turkish Sultan, we should naturally conclude that the fall or departure of Ottoman independence would be brought about in the same way; that at the end of the specified period, *the Sultan would voluntarily surrender his independence into the hands of the Christian powers, from whom he received it.*

When the foregoing calculation was made, it was purely a matter of calculation on the prophetic periods of Scripture. Now, however, the time has passed by, and it is proper to inquire what the result has been—whether it has corresponded with the previous calculation.

1. *Has the OTTOMAN independence in Constantinople departed, and is it in CHRISTIAN HANDS?* Let the following testimony answer the question. . . .

The *London Morning Herald*, after the capture of St. Jean d'Acre, speaking of the state of things in the Ottoman empire, says:—"We have dissipated into thin air the *prestige* that lately invested as with a halo the name of Mehemet Ali. We have in all probability destroyed forever the power of that hitherto successful ruler. *But have we done aught to restore strength to the Ottoman empire?* WE FEAR NOT. WE FEAR THAT THE SULTAN HAS BEEN REDUCED TO THE RANK OF A PUPPET; AND THAT THE SOURCES OF THE TURKISH EMPIRE'S STRENGTH ARE ENTIRELY DESTROYED.

"If the supremacy of the Sultan is hereafter to be maintained in Egypt, it must be maintained, we fear, by the *unceasing intervention* of England and Russia"

2. *When did Mahommedan independence in Constantinople depart?*

In order to answer this question understandingly, it will be necessary to review briefly the history of that power for a few years past.

The Sublime Porte, with a view of putting a stop to the effusion of Mussulman blood, and to the various evils which would arise from a renewal of hostilities, *ACCEPTED the intervention of the great powers*...

Here was certainly a voluntary surrender. . . . [part of the official document reads] "The powers have, together with the **OTTOMAN PLENIPOTENTIARY**, drawn up and signed a treaty, whereby the *Sultan offers* the

"By the French steamer of the 24th, we have advices from Egypt to the 16th. . . . The *Turkish government steamer*, WHICH HAD REACHED ALEXANDRIA ON THE 11TH, WITH THE ENVOY RIFAT BEY ON BOARD, had by his (the Pacha's) orders been placed in quarantine, and she was not released from it till the 16th. . . however. . . on the very day on which he had been admitted to *pratique*, the above named functionary had had an audience of

OTTOMAN SUPREMACY did depart on the ELEVENTH OF AUGUST into the hands of the great Christian powers of Europe.

For several years the Sultan has been embroiled in war with Mehemet [Mohammed] Ali, Pacha [sic] of Egypt. In 1838 there was a threatening of war between the Sultan and his Egyptian vassal. Mehemet Ali Pacha, in a note addressed to the foreign consuls, declared that in the future, he would pay no tribute in the Porte, and that he considered himself independent sovereign of Egypt, Arabia, and Syria. . . . In 1839, hostilities again commenced, and were prosecuted, until, in a general battle between the armies of the Sultan and Mehemet, the Sultan's army was entirely cut up and destroyed, and his fleet taken by Mehemet and carried into Egypt This fleet Mehemet positively refused to give up and return to the Sultan. . . . In 1840, England, Russia, Austria, and Prussia, interposed, and determined on a settlement of the difficulty; for it was evident, if let alone, Mehemet would soon become master of the Sultan's throne. . . .

Pacha, the hereditary government of Egypt, and all that part of Syria extending from the gulf of Suez to the lake of Tiberias, together with the province of Acre, for life; the Pacha, on his part, evacuating all other parts of the Sultan's dominions now occupied by him, and returning the Ottoman fleet. A certain space of time has been granted him to accede to these terms; and, as the proposals of the Sultan and his allies, the four powers, do not admit of any change of qualification, if the Pacha refuse to accede to them, it is evident that the evil consequences to fall upon him will be attributable solely to his own fault.

"His Excellency, Rifat Bey, Musleshar for foreign affairs, has been despatched in a government steamer to Alexandria, to communicate the ultimatum to the Pacha." [—*Moniteur Ottoman*, Aug. 22, 1840.]

The question now comes up, WHEN WAS THAT DOCUMENT PUT OFFICIALLY UNDER THE CONTROL OF MEHEMET ALI?

the Pacha, and had communicated to him the command of the Sultan, with respect to the evacuation of the Syrian province, appointing another audience for the next day, when, in the presence of the consuls of the European powers, he would receive from him his definite answer, and inform him of the alternative of his refusing to obey; giving him the ten days which have been allotted him by the convention to decide on the course he should think fit to adopt. . . ." —*The London Morning Chronicle*, Sept. 18, 1840.

According to previous calculation, therefore, OTTOMAN SUPREMACY did depart on the ELEVENTH OF AUGUST into the hands of the great Christian powers of Europe.

Then the second wo is past, and the sixth trumpet has ceased its sounding; and the conclusion is now inevitable, because the word of God affirms the fact in so many words, "*Behold, the third wo cometh quickly.*" • *The Midnight Cry*, Jan. 6, 1843, pp. 7-10.