

Mahomet, Saracens, Turks & Ottomans 622-1453

Chapter

3



Key Bible References

Revelation Chapter 9

Overview of Revelation 9

Revelations 9 features angels sounding the fifth and sixth trumpets. The fifth trumpet presents a star falling from heaven to the earth with a key to open the bottomless pit, from which smoke ascends and pours out a cloud of locusts. A king leads them to battle symbolising Mahomet and the Saracens, who attack the Eastern (Byzantine) Empire. The sixth trumpet looses four angels from the Euphrates. The symbols depict the Turkish invasions of the Middle East that would destroy the power of the Byzantine Empire.

Mahomet

Bible Reference:

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. And he opened the bottomless pit; (Revelation 9:1)

History

Mahomet was born in 570 approximately, having his origins in Arabia, the Dead Sea area, which is the lowest point on the earth's surface and he belonged to the Koreish clan that guarded the sacred Black Stone at Mecca. Mahomet enjoyed a position of prominence under the protection of the Prince of Mecca. Mahomet declared that he was a prophet of God and had been appointed to declare to the people the true religion.

The Arabs were Pagans and the people of Mecca made gain from the Black Stone. On the death of the Prince in 622 the people, fearing the effects of Mahomet's claims to be a prophet on their livelihood, drove him from the city and he fled to Medina, which marks the beginning of the Mohommedan era.

Mahomet wrote the Koran and the tenets of Mohommedanism and gradually gained converts to his cause. He established a monotheistic religion. He declared war on the trinitarians of the Greek and Roman Catholics.

Commentary: Revelation 9:1-3

Mahomet had enjoyed a position of prominence in Mecca. The "star" that had fallen from "heaven", can be applied to the position that Mahomet enjoyed under the protection of Mecca's Prince and his fall from favour when the Prince died. Mahomet's flight to Medina in 622 marks the beginning of a movement that would have a momentous influence on Europe and the world.

Mahomet gained the support of the people, represented by the "earth". He was given the "key of the bottomless pit", which has been translated by the R.V as "the pit of the abyss". The "key" represents power and the key also figured as an armorial bearing of the Mohommedans.

The Greek text translated "abyss" is 'phrear abussos' and indicates the shaft that leads to the abyss. The dead sea area is a remarkable depression in the earth's surface being the lowest point below sea level.

Bible Reference:

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. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. (Revelation 9:2-3)

History

Mahomet was ambitious and laid claim to Arabia and prepared to attack the Eastern Roman, or Byzantine, Empire, which he wanted to overthrow including its capital, Constantinople. To achieve this he realised that he needed the support of Arabia, Palestine and Syria to open the way into Europe.

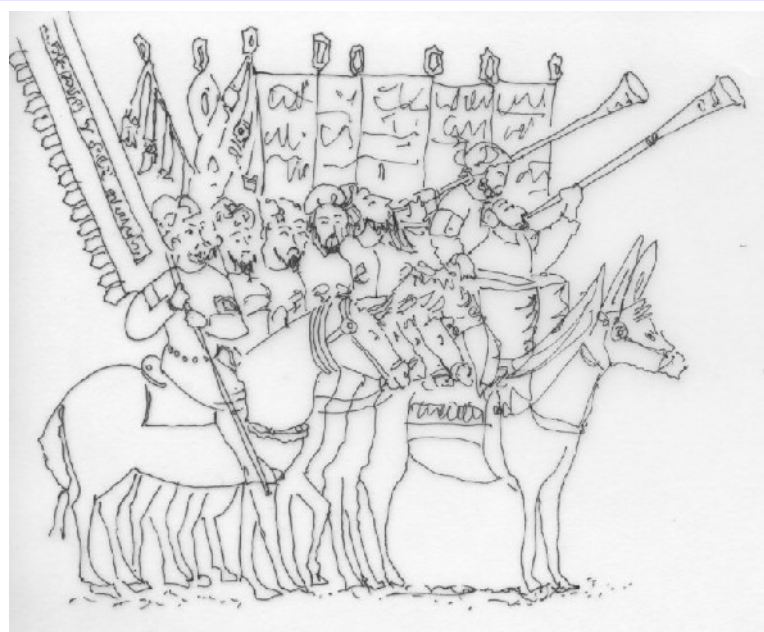
Before he could accomplish his aims of advancing on the Eastern Empire, Mahomet died in 632.

Mahomet began an era of territorial incursions, that within a hundred years resulted in the Muslims sweeping around the southern shores of the Mediterranean sea, and pushing back the borders of the Byzantine Empire. Their reach extended even to Spain and threatened the Franks.

Commentary: Revelation 9:2-3

Arabia is suitably described as the 'pit'. It was out of this 'pit' or region of the world that Mahomet gained converts to his cause to attack the Eastern Empire, which can be identified as the 'abyss'. The 'abyss' in the Septuagint is frequently translated as 'sea' and is a fitting symbol for the countries that surround that great sea, the Mediterranean Sea, and the dominions that were part of the Roman Empire at the height of its power.

Fire and smoke are used in the Bible as symbols of war and anger (Deuteronomy 29: 20, Psalm 74: 1, Isaiah 31: 9). The “smoke ... as the smoke of a great furnace” that arose out of the pit can be seen as the warlike force of the Saracens preparing to attack Europe. It “darkened” or eroded the authority of the Eastern Empire, represented by the “Sun”.



Call To feast Of Ramadan

The Saracen onslaught brought religious, economic, social and political change to the conquered territories.

Out of this smoke came “locusts”. As another identifying symbol, locusts are a familiar plague in the Middle East. They are remarkable for their numbers, which can darken the sky. This is fitting in symbolising the desolation and destruction caused by the all devouring army of the Saracens. The word 'locust' in Hebrew is 'arbeh', which is similar in sound to that of Arab, although there is a difference in spelling. This identifies the armies.

“Scorpions” are also indigenous to Arab lands. They inflict a painful but not fatal sting, which produces a

high temperature and inflammation. This symbol is an appropriate depiction of the invasions from Arabia, where they hurt, but did not destroy the Byzantine Empire.

Bible Reference:

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. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them. And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. (Revelation 9:5-7)

History

Mahomet was succeeded by Abukeker in 632, who became the first Caliph. Under Abukeker, the Saracens began to advance on the Eastern Empire having first gained control of the Middle Eastern nations.

Abukeker's tactics helped to gain the support of the nations. He instructed his troops to avoid injustice, oppression and the shedding of blood of women and children. They were not to destroy trees or fields of grain or to cut down fruit trees. They were take only what they needed for food to eat.

The first Saracen attacks were against towns on the trade route from Damascus to Petra. Jerusalem fell to the Saracens in 637. They then spread northwards to Syria, Asia Minor and Persia and southwards to Egypt by 640 and North Africa. In 711 they crossed into Spain. By the end of the seventh century they had reached Constantinople and Gibraltar and annexed the conquered countries.

Despite two sieges, Constantinople stood firm against the Saracens and defeated them in 717. It retained its political power, although the Eastern Empire had been reduced in size.

From Gibraltar the Saracens entered Spain where they were opposed by Charles, the chief adviser to the Merovingian king of the Franks. He organised an army of Franks and allies and opposed the Arabs at Poitiers in 732 and defeated the Arabs. Having saved Europe, Charles was given the title of Charles the Hammer.

The Saracens took to their conquered territory their learning in the arts and sciences, enriching the culture of those lands.

Commentary: Revelation 9:5-7

Abukeker's instructions to his armies parallel the command that the "grass of the earth" nor "any green thing" would no be "hurt". He also stressed that fruit trees were not to be cut down.

The Saracens saw their mission as the overthrow of systems of government but not the people. Only the men who did not have "the seal of God in their foreheads" were to be slain. The Saracens, who believed there was only one God were instructed to slay the trinitarians of the Catholic church.

In verse 5, a time period is given. A period of five months from May to September is the time of the locust activity in Arabia. The five months represented 5 x 30 days, which is 150 days. The symbol is repeated so that the two locust periods represented 2x150 days, which is 300 days. On a day for a year this is 300 years which is the time of the Arab domination from 632 to 932, when Arab power declined and secular power was taken from the Caliph of Baghdad.

The "torment" is a good description for the two occasions Constantinople was besieged, but was not taken by the Saracens. To achieve peace, the rulers of Constantinople would have had to become Mohommedans or to "die".

The locusts appeared as "horses". The Saracens were skilled horsemen and had horse drawn artillery.

The description of the "crowns of gold" on their heads describes the yellow turbans that the Saracens wore on their heads.

Bible Reference:

And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails:

And their power was to hurt men five months. And 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 tongue has his name Apollyon. (Revelation 9:5-7).

Commentary Continued

Their hair was worn long which is suitably compared to “the hair of women.” They had “teeth as lions” symbolising their strength and ferocity.

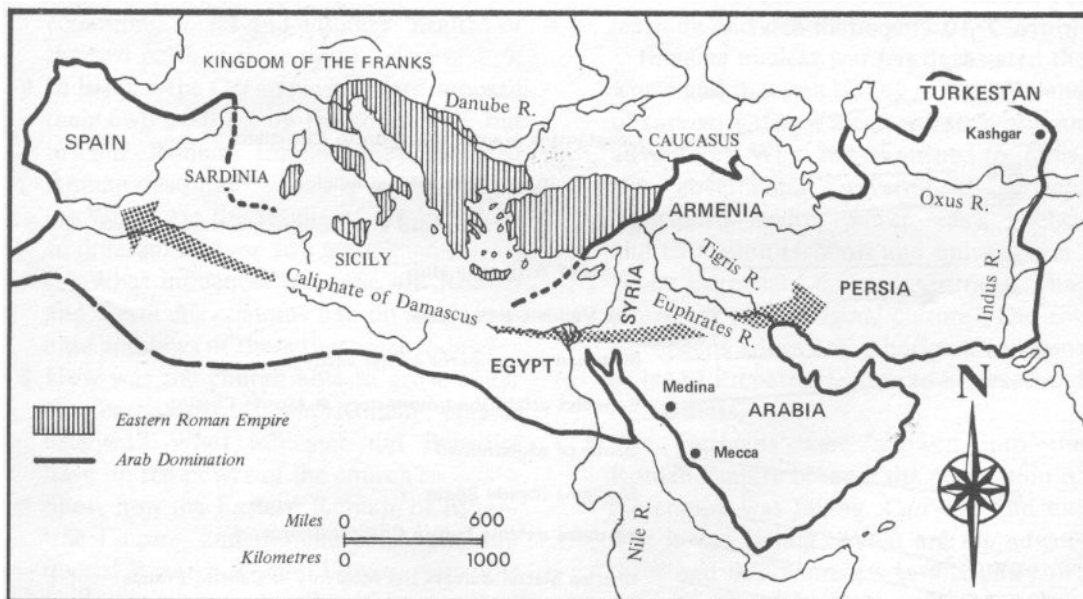
The “stings in their tails” is an image of the Saracen fire. The Arabs dragged their artillery behind their horses into battle and then swung their horses around to bring their cannons to face their enemy. The Arabs were the first to introduce this form of warfare and this is a most recognisable symbol.

The scorpions, which have a hard cuticle on their breasts, can be paralleled to the Saracens, who with their polished steel cuirasses and wearing “breastplates” attacked with a huge cavalry.

The Saracens acknowledged a “king”, the Caliph, who was their religious and secular head, to whom they were subject. The “angel”, or messenger, of the “bottomless pit”, which is the “abyss” (Greek) is sent to the Roman world.

The Caliph demanded that the European world submit to his authority. He is given the name destroyer, which is the Hebrew “Abaddon” and Greek “Appollyon”. Both languages are used to emphasise the meaning of the words as 'destroyer' and indicate the Arab mission of attacking and subjugating firstly the regions of Israel and then the Greek regions of the Empire.

Map of the Caliphate control 750 CE



Togrul Beg, Ghengis Kahn, The Moguls & The Ottomans

Bible Reference:

One woe 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 altar which is before God, 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, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. (Revelation 9:12-16)

History

Significant incursions into the Eastern Roman Empire had been made, but Constantinople, the citadel of the Eastern Roman Empire, still held.

The Turks, or Tartars, migrated from the Far East to the Middle East, after sweeping across the Euphratean lands. They adopted the religion of Islam from the Saracens. There were four major invasions of the Turks.

- (1) The Seljuk from the grasslands ruled from China to the Bosphorus.
- (2) Genghis Khan from Central Asia, ruled to North China, South Russia, India and Mesopotamia.
- (3) Timor, or Tamerlane, established a Mogul empire in India.
- (4) The Ottomans finally came to conquer Constantinople.

The capital of the Eastern Roman Empire had withstood invasion for just over 390 years.

On the 27th April 1062 Togrul Beg established himself as a powerful Turkish leader and an Islamic authority by marrying the Caliph's daughter. He initiated the first determined assaults against Constantinople.

However this city did not fall to the Turks until 28th May 1453 with the attack by Mahomet 11. The time period between these two dates: 28th May 1453 to 27th April 1062 is one month and 391 years.

With the fall of Constantinople to the Turks, the Eastern Empire came to an end and Constantinople became Moslem in religion.

Commentary: Revelation 9:12-16

The events now symbolised came in response to the prayers of the faithful, who had suffered under the persecution of the Byzantine church. The "golden altar" (verse 13) relates to the altar of incense and incense always symbolises prayer. The prayers of the faithful were now to be answered. The Turks regarded Catholics as enemies and by attacking Catholics they avenged the persecution that had been suffered by those opposed to Catholicism at the hands of the Church.

In verse 14 the "four angels" appear as those messengers who are sent to execute this judgement upon the Eastern Roman Empire in response to the prayers. History reveals that there were "four" waves of marauding Turks against the remaining third of the Empire: Seljukians, Moguls, Tartars and Ottomans. The River "Euphrates" provides the geographical location of these powers. The Euphrates was the main river of Turkey and the area from where the Turks attacked the Eastern Roman Empire. The Turks were well "prepared" (verse 15) by capable leaders such as Alp Arslan and Tamerlane. A time period is then given. "An hour, and a day and a month and a year." Using the 360 day for a year pattern, this can be represented in the following way.

A year (360 days)..... 360 years
 A month (30 days).....30 years
 A day.....1 year
 An hour (or 1/12th of a day).....1 month

This gives a total of 391 years and 1 month. The accuracy of this time period reveals a startling affirmation of the accuracy of the prophecies of this book of the Bible.

Bible Reference:

By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.

And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts. (Revelation 9:17-21))

History Con't**First Eastern Invasion**

In the eleventh century, the Seljuk Turks gained supremacy over the grasslands from China to the Bosphorus. In 1058, Togrul Beg, the grandson of Seljuk, from whom the tribe took its name, captured Baghdad, compelling the Caliph to renounce his temporal authority. The Caliph was the only spiritual head of the Mohommadans and Togrul became the Vicar of the Faithful. Togrul advanced to Palestine and captured Jerusalem.

Christian pilgrims to Palestine were taxed heavily and this outraged Christians and resulted in the first Crusades to what was regarded as the Holy Land. These first crusades were successful against the infidels and a Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem was established, which led to the downfall of the Seljukian Empire.

Second Invasion

At the end of the twelfth century, Genghis Khan, whose name means 'universal sovereign' advanced from Central Asia, to North China, South Russia, India and Mesopotamia. Irrespective of race or religion, all fell victim to his attacks. Cities disappeared as he advanced and rich plains were transformed into deserts. The Seljukians were overthrown and the Moguls and Tartars took control.

Octui one of Genghis Khan's sons, with one and a half million Moguls, extended the conquests into Eastern Europe. He celebrated the battle of Lignitz by filling nine sacks with the right ears

of his victims. He warned the pope that he had divine power to wipe out all nations.

Third Invasion

Timor, or Tamerlane, a descendant of Genghis Khan, was the next invader. He established a Mogul empire in India with his capital in Delhi in the fourteenth century. He died in 1405, whilst engaging in an incursion into China.

Fourth Invasion

The Ottomans, who were an offshoot of the Seljuks, advanced into Asia Minor and South East Europe. They had taken their name from Othman, who had united various Turkish tribes, which the Mogul conquests had driven westwards to Asia Minor in the late thirteenth century. They extended their influence throughout the Middle East and then into south eastern Europe, where they came against the remnant of the Eastern Roman Empire and Constantinople, which had remained as a citadel of power against all previous attacks.

The city was besieged by Mahomet 11 in April 1453. Special cannon of unprecedented size were used in the siege and the city was taken on 29th May 1453. Catholicism had suffered a severe blow with the Ottoman success. Churches were converted into Mosques by the Turks and the Patriarch fled to Moscow and set up his power. Moscow became known as the Third Rome.



Mehemet 11

Commentary: Revelation 9:17-21

The reference to the “the third part of men” (verse 15) refers to the Eastern Roman Empire, the Byzantine Empire, which was the Eastern third of the original Roman Empire. It was Constantinople that the Turks wanted to conquer.

In the period of their domination in the east and in their war effort, the Turks used a huge cavalry, which is suitably represented by the suggestion of a huge number of horsemen in the phrase “two hundred thousand horsemen.”(verse 16)

In war, the cavalry dragged cannons into battle, which were then swung around to face the enemy. An image is presented (verses 17-18) of this method of warfare and the effects of cannon fire, as though it proceeds from “breastplates of fire” with the imagery of “jacinth” and “brimstone” suggesting colour, which was the bluish smoke created by gunfire.

The “heads of lions” becomes a metaphor for the “heads of horses”, which are the cannons. This creates the impression of the roar of the cannons and thus it was seen as if “fire and smoke and brimstone” poured out from the mouths of these strange noisy beasts.

The city of Constantinople, impregnable for hundreds of years, was overthrown and fell to the Turks through the use of the cannon. The power of these weapons is described as being in the “tails” (verse 19) of these creatures. This corresponds to the ball being pushed into the “tail” in order to get its spring and the “head” is the muzzle, from which the fire emanated.

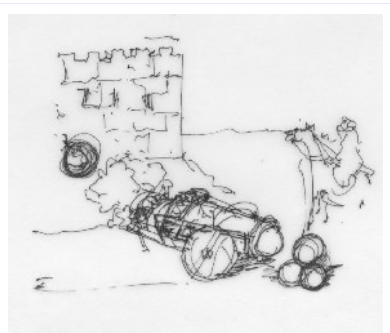
What seems so remarkable in these verses is that hundreds of years before the invention of the cannon, which was destined to change the nature of warfare, there is in this remarkable book, a description of the cannon. Castles and towns, fortified by huge walls were to become indefensible. It was the end of the walled city. This reveals an extraordinary foresight of the detail of human invention and is an amazing testament to the truth of the Bible and its prophecies.

Constantinople fell to the Turks, but western Europe and the Papacy remained relatively unaffected by the Turkish incursions into Eastern Europe.

Western Europe remained in the grip of Catholicism as indicated by the statements related to “the men that were not killed by these plagues.”(verses 20-21) They continued to worship “devils”, that is saints, and “idols of gold and silver and brass and stone and wood.”

This system not only engaged in idolatry, but in “murders”, “sorceries”, spiritual “fornication” and “theft”. History was to reveal the extent of the corruption of the Catholic church, which was highlighted in the French Revolution. The Reformation period showed how the church had completely changed the doctrines of the original faith in Christ.

Each of the three cultural divisions of the Roman Empire had now been destroyed: the Latin western third by the trumpets one to four; the Hellenised east by trumpet five, through the Saracens; and the Hellenic eastern third by the sixth trumpet, through the Turks.



Invention of the Cannon