

Exploring Revelation 17:

The Triumph And Tragedy Of The Turk

Why Was He Included In Bible Prophecy?

An Exposition of the Sixth Trumpet of Revelation 9:12-21

“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 man. And the number of the army of 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. 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.” Revelation 9:12-19.

The sixth trumpet is also called the second “woe”. The final three trumpets are classed as the woe trumpets”. Each woe appears to be more severe than its predecessor. The first woe was the Arab invasion represented by the locusts tormenting for five months. (Austin Cooke) It was not limited to “one third of men”, like the rest of the trumpets. The reason is that the Arabs in their conquests of the Roman empire conquered not just one third of it but overran almost two thirds of the empire - Eastern Rome and a large section of Western Rome.

The second woe, the sixth trumpet is to slay or kill “the third part of men”. The first woe tormented men, the second woe is more severe. In this woe a voice comes from the horns of the golden incense altar, in the first apartment of the heavenly temple. What is the significance of the voice sounding from this altar?

First, it locates the timing of this trumpet. The ministration in the heavenly sanctuary from 31 AD to 1844 was in the first apartment of that temple. There Jesus ministered at the incense altar. The fact that the voice is heard from the altar indicates that the priestly ministry is still located there, thus the period in which the sixth trumpet sounds must be prior to 1844. It is claimed by some on the basis of Hebrews 9:3-4 that the golden altar and the censer belonged to the second apartment of the sanctuary and that therefore the period indicated for the trumpets must be after 1844 A.D.

The answer to this claim is given in Hebrews 9:6. ‘When these things were thus ordained the priests went always into the first tabernacle [apartment] accomplishing the service of God.’ Involved in this daily first apartment service was the offering, morning and evening, of the incense on the golden incense altar which stood before the veil in the first apartment. (Luke 1:8,9 & Exodus 30:1-8) The fact that the common priests performed the daily service proves that the altar and censers were located in the first apartment because into the second apartment, only the high priests could enter, and that was only on one day of the year.

The second significance of the voice from the altar is that sometimes in scripture, the location where

the voice is heard, represents the area where transgression prevails. For instance in Genesis 4 when God came to Cain, he said to him, "Where is Abel thy brother?" Cain said, "Am I my brother's keeper?" In response the Lord said to Cain, **"The voice of thy brother's blood cries to me from the ground"** **Genesis 4:10**. The ground was where Abel's blood had been spilt. Again in Habakkuk it speaks of the sins of Babylon and how judgment would come on her, **"The stones shall cry out of the wall and the beam out of the timber shall answer it."** **Habakkuk 2:11**.

That was the location in Babylon where she had committed her crimes. The altar of incense that is brought to view under the sixth trumpet represents the intercession of Christ. That was the area where the professed church of the day had become so apostate. God's professed people had become deeply involved in the intercession of saints and martyrs. This voice was from the place of true intercession which they had so seriously neglected or rejected.

In the exposition of the first four trumpets it was revealed that they were the judgments of God upon apostasy in response to the prayers of his true people. (Austin Cooke) The sixth trumpet is a judgment upon the apostate Christians of that day who had given themselves over to a false form of intercession, and as a result the command is issued, **"...loose the four angels that are bound in the great river Euphrates."** **V14**.

This term, "the four angels", has been a problem through the years to most scholars. It has been their main objection against the Turks as fulfilling the sixth trumpet. Nothing in the Turkish power correctly corresponded to the four angels. One attempt to explain the four angels is that they were the four Turkish caliphates. (Uriah Smith 'Daniel & Revelation' page 506) But the four Turkish caliphates were not yet in existence, and when they were finally formed, most of them were not connected with the Euphrates. The four Turkish caliphates it is claimed, were at Baghdad, Aleppo, Damascus and Iconium in Asia Minor. However it appears that there were at least five caliphates, as follows:

- 1 Baghdad on the Tigris - in Iraq
- 2 Aleppo - in Syria
- 3 Damascus - in Syria
- 4 Roum (Nice & Iconium) - in Asia Minor
- 5 Kerman - South Persia (R.A. Anderson "Unfolding Revelation" page 92)

Now Iconium and Nice in Asia Minor could never be considered to be in the region of the Euphrates. Baghdad was situated on a canal from the Euphrates where it joined the Tigris. Therefore it is questionable whether the caliphate of Baghdad could be counted as being in the region of the Euphrates. Aleppo was about 60 miles from the Euphrates so its inclusion could also be doubtful. Damascus was many more miles across the desert from the Euphrates and its caliphate was not united to the Ottoman Turks until 1517 A.D. (i.e. well after the fall of Constantinople in 1453 A.D.). Only the Roum caliphate in Asia Minor was involved with the downfall of Eastern Rome. (E.B. Elliott 'Horae Apocalypticae' ch VIII, page 487-489)

But the prediction declared that four angels are "loosed". What then could the four angels represent? Let scripture interpret scripture. Does scripture, especially the book of Revelation, reveal any clues concerning the four angels? Yes, in Revelation 7. This latter-day prophecy pictures four angels holding the four winds that they should not blow on the earth until the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads. This is a latter-day prophecy depicting heavenly agencies holding back the judgments of

God until a special work is completed.

We suggest that the four angels of the sixth trumpet are the same four angels. We believe that they are the agents of God, controlling the powers that would bring judgments or punishments upon the world. The six trumpets were judgments on the Roman empire and the four angels could be the same divine agents that were to release the powers that would bring punishment upon that empire. Some authorities claim that the term "four angels" in some manuscripts reads "four winds". (Griesbach, Heinrichs, Knittel, Primasius & Ambrose Ansbert. See Elliott ch VIII page 495 footnote) If this were so, then the command would be more understandable, "Loose the four winds in the great river Euphrates." This we suggest makes better sense, especially when associated with the Euphrates.

What is represented by the Euphrates? Generally, in the past, a literal interpretation has been given to this word and it has been claimed that the Euphrates represents the country through which it flows. (Austin Cooke) But the difficulty with this interpretation is that the area where the Turks existed at that period was way beyond the Euphrates. It would be more correct to conclude that the Euphrates was the western boundary of the area where the Turks then resided. This fact will be confirmed below.

When we turn to the Old Testament upon which the book of Revelation is based, the Euphrates is seen to have a much greater significance. The term Euphrates is employed in two different ways. First, it was the designated boundary of literal Israel. (Genesis 15:18-21; I Kings 4:21,24-25) Any power invading Israel from the North must pass over the Euphrates. The second way the Euphrates is employed, is as an invading destroying power. The word "Euphrates" according to Dr. Strong, means "to break forth, rushing". It seems that this meaning was based on the fact that when the snows of Mt. Ararat melted, the Euphrates became a roaring raging torrent which often overflowed its banks. This phenomenon was employed in the Old Testament to represent an overflowing, invading power.

Isaiah declares: **"Woe to the multitude of many people which make a noise like the noise of the seas; [or waters] and to the rushing of nations, that make a rushing like the rushing of mighty waters! The nations shall rush like the rushing of many waters: but God shall rebuke them, and they shall flee far off, and shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like a rolling thing [margin: thistledown] before the whirlwind."** Isaiah 17:12-13.

Again the actual river Euphrates is referred to as representing the Assyrians when they invaded Israel: **"Now therefore, behold the Lord brings up upon them, [Israel] the waters of the river, strong and many, even the king of Assyria, and all his glory: and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks: And he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck; and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel [or Israel]."** Isaiah 8:7-8.

The prophet likens the Assyrian power to the overflowing of the Euphrates in flood. Thus the Euphrates represents a rushing invading power. This is how the term is employed in the sixth plague of Revelation 16. When the supporters of spiritual Babylon are inspired by their leaders to rise up and overflow or destroy the saints of God; Heaven in response, dries up "the waters of the Euphrates" it turns aside the invading destroying peoples and delivers His people. (Austin Cooke): Likewise with the sixth trumpet in Revelation 9:14, the Euphrates represents a rushing invading destroying power. The command is given, "Loose the four angels [or the four winds] which are bound in the great river Euphrates", that they might perform their work of destruction.

In the following two verses such an invasion is described. **“And the four angels were loosed ... 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.” Vv 15-16.**

Here then is presented an army of horsemen poised to invade the third part of the Roman empire. Who were these horsemen? There are at least eight points of identification.

1. The type of army, horsemen or cavalry.
2. The way they are numbered.
3. The color of their uniforms.
4. Their courageous and destructive spirit.
5. Their destroying power would appear to issue from the horses' mouths.
6. Their power is in their mouths and tails.
7. Their tails are like serpents, they had heads, and with them they hurt.
8. An allotted period of time is given in which they kill or slay.

After the reign of the Arabs of the fifth trumpet, what power invaded Eastern Rome and destroyed it? What power fits exactly the eight points of the prediction? There is only one, and that is the Turkomans or Turks.

Whence came the Turks? They were a numerous people situated in central Asia. They were descendants of Japheth, of the family of Magog. The Turkish race was comprised of five branches: the Kipchaks, Uigurs, Kanklis, Kalaches, and Kariuks.

There were three language groups and six different alphabets. They were closely related to the Mongols whom they considered as brothers. Four times the Mongols were involved with them in their career of conquest. The Greeks called them Scythians, and they formed a loosely knit empire from the Volga River (at their peak) north of the Caucasus and the Caspian Sea, right across to the East, to Lake Baikal and North China. The Oxus River North of Persia was their Southern boundary. That vast expanse of country was the area in which they resided.

In 308-589 A.D. north China was under Turkish control. In 562 Mogan, a Turkish ruler, ruled from the Volga river to Lake Baikal, a distance of about 6,000 miles, Edward Gibbon says that from Samarkand (North of Persia) to Northern China involved 6 months travel in their famous caravans. In 800 A.D. Turkish soldiers were employed as mercenaries by the Arabian caliphs, then situated in Baghdad. Before long Turkish officers took control of the territory where the caliph reigned. This is how the Turks are first introduced into the Middle Eastern scene. (“Historians’ History of the World’ Volume 24 page 257-272. Encyclopedia Britannica. 1911 Ed. Volume 27 page 468-472 ‘World Classics’ Ed.)

In 960 A.D. they became established in Persia, and set up in East Persia an empire which extended even into India. They conquered a large section of India where was formed the famous Mogul empire - a Moslem state under Marmoud, a famous and remarkable ruler. Around Delhi one may see remains of the Mogul empire, including the beautiful Taj Mahal. By 1030 A.D. the Seljuk tribe of the Turks migrated into Khorasan (the north eastern province of Persia) because their relatives who were already settled there invited them in.

The Seljuks developed into a dominant power. They overthrew the Turks who had previously occupied the area and ere long they were invited by the Arabian caliph at Baghdad to aid and protect him in

retaining his office. In this manner the leader of the Seljuks, a man called Togrul Beg became the First Lieutenant of "the prophet", and a controlling power in Persia. From this position they prepared their mission of invading and destroying the Roman empire. They were poised in the area, east of the Euphrates. That river could correctly be classified as the boundary between the Turks and the Roman empire. Edward Gibbon, speaking of the beginning of the Turkish invasion under the nephew of Togrul Beg declared, "Alp Arslan passed the Euphrates at the head of the Turkish cavalry." Edward Gibbon 'Decline & Fall of the Roman Empire' vol VI page 253.

The initial Turkish conquests embraced Armenia and Georgia. The Turks then met head on the great Roman army from Constantinople led by the emperor. This was the decisive battle of Melazkerd, 1071 A.D. (now Malazgirt), near the headwaters of the Euphrates river. The army of Eastern Rome was soundly defeated and the Seljuks took control of the Middle East. They conquered Syria and Asia Minor, setting up their capital at Nice, the birthplace of the Nicæan Creed. Professor Davis in his history declares, "The Turks in the 10 years following 1071 burned their way clear across Asia Minor almost to within sight of Constantinople." Professor Davis "A Short History of the Near East!" page 78.

The Seljuk Turks then conquered Arabia, Yemen, Egypt, West Africa, and extended their empire eastward to the Indus river, the border of India. Northwards they conquered right across to Cashgar on the Chinese border. That was the vast empire of the Seljukian Turks. It was while the Seljuks controlled the Middle East that appeals were made to Europe to deliver Palestine from the Turks. This resulted in the Crusades. The crusaders drove the Turks out of much of Asia Minor, forcing them to remove their capital from Nice to Iconium. Later the Seljuk power was well nigh destroyed by the Tartars or Mongols or Eastern Turks, under Tamerlane, when they overran the Middle East. The Monguls empire reached from the sea of Japan in North China right across to the Caspian Sea. In Moscow today you can see memorials of mighty battles that were fought by the Russians against the Tartars or Eastern Turks.

The Mongols soon disappeared under Tamerlane but they had driven out many other Turkish tribes from Turkestan. One tribe migrated to Asia Minor, under the leadership of Othman. This tribe joined a remnant of the Seljuk Turks at Iconium and soon developed into the dominant power of Asia Minor reconquering that territory. Othman and his successors soon set their sights upon Constantinople, the capital of Eastern Rome. It was the Ottoman Turks in particular, that fulfilled the specifications of the sixth trumpet. The Seljuk Turks prepared the way, but it was completed by the Ottomans. The eight points of identification especially the latter points, apply to them.

Notice what some historians say concerning the Turks in their attacks upon Eastern Rome. Finlay, the historian of Greece notes the similarity of the Turkish attacks to the attacks of the Goths upon Western Rome and it was the Goths who fulfilled three of the four first trumpets. The Turks in Asia Minor acted a part not unlike that, which the Goths had acted in the history Of the Western Empire. (Finlay "A History of Greece" Volume III page 89.)

Professor Vambery, a historian of the Levant says, "Alp Arslan was the first Turkish chieftain who led Turkish cavalry across the Euphrates and brought the classic and sacred ground of Western Asia under the dominion of the race which rules it to this day." Professor Vambery "History of Bokhara" page 96.

The first point of identification was that the invading army would comprise numerous horsemen. So numerous were they that the prophet declared, "I heard the number of them in vision", indicating their vast number. Edward Gibbon, the skeptic and "unconscious commentator of the Apocalypse",

described the invasion of the Turks in the following manner: "The myriads of Turkish horse overspread a frontier of 600 miles from Taurus to Azeroum and the blood of 130,000 Christians was a grateful sacrifice to the Arabian-prophet. [i.e. to the Moslem religion]" Gibbon "Decline & Fall!" Volume VI page 252.

Notice that the Turkish horsemen spread over a 600 mile frontier, from Taurus [near Tarsus] in the south east corner of Asia Minor, right up to the Black Sea. For 600 miles, the Turkish horse extended. Gibbon continues, "200,000 soldiers marched under his banners" Ibid Volume VI page 260

And they were all horsemen. A French writer who visited Asia Minor in 1433 speaks of the "innumerable host" of cavalry of the Turks. Hezekiah Holland, who published a book in 1650 on the sixth trumpet, made the following observation: "I well remember that living in the University of Ireland, a gentle man that newly came from Scangrown or Alexandretta, told me he saw the Turkish army march by to recover Bagdet or Babylon, and that the army was over a week marching by, consisting of fifteen hundred thousand men." William Spicer "Beacon Lights of Prophecy" page 238

1,500,000 horsemen! No wonder the prophet said "I heard the number of them". But were not all armies of that day on horses? Was not that the usual type of warfare in that era? It is true that there were numerous armies in the world of that day, but none possessed the numbers of horsemen as did the Turks. In contrast to the Turkish armies the European armies consisted mostly of foot soldiers, the cavalry were comparatively few compared with the rest of the army.

The second point of identification is the method of numbering. **"...the number of the army of the horsemen were 200,000 thousand thousand." V16.**

In the Greek it reads, "myriads of myriads". Various scholars confirm this view on external and internal evidence. In the Old Testament this was one way of numbering. **"Be thou the mother of thousands of millions." Genesis 24:60.** The original is "thousands of myriads".

"Return now to the many thousands of Israel." Numbers 10:36. (margin. "ten thousand thousands") The Hebrew reads, "myriads of thousands".

"Thousand thousands ministered to him and ten thousand times ten thousands stood before him." Daniel 7:10. The Hebrew reads "myriads of myriads stood before him".

What is the significance of this in the sixth trumpet? It was the Turkish method of numbering! They numbered by to tomens". A tomen is ten thousand people or the number ten thousand, or myriad. Gibbon himself uses this very term when he describes the Turks. Alluding to Timur the Lame, the leader of the Tartars or Eastern Turks from Mongolia, he says, "The sea [the Bosphorus] rolled between the two continents of Europe and Asia and the lord of so many tomens or myriads of horse was not master of a single galley." Gibbon "Decline & Fall!" Volume VII page 72.

Of the Turkish invasion of Asia Minor he says, "The myriads of Turkish horse overspread a frontier of 600 miles from Taurus to Azeroum." Ibid Volume VI page 252. "This way of numbering was peculiar to the Turks." E.B. Elliott "Horae Apocalyptica" Ch VII page 506.

The third point of identification was the colour of their breastplates and uniforms. **"...of fire and of jacinth and brimstone." V17** The word "Jacinth" is "Jacinthine" in the Greek, and denotes the colour blue. Thus when it speaks of "fire and jacinth and brimstone" it means red, blue and yellow. Fire is red,

jacinthine is blue and brimstone or sulphur is yellow. Red, blue and yellow! Were they the colours of the uniforms of the Turkish army? Daubuz, an English scholar writing of the time, says, From their first appearance the Ottomans have affected to wear warlike apparel of scarlet, blue and yellow: a descriptive trait the more marked from its contrast to the military appearance of Greeks, Franks or Saracens [Arabs] who were contemporary. (Daubuz Quoted By Elliott "Horae Apocalyptica" ch VII page 508) This third point indisputably identifies the Turks. The fourth point is: **"...that the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions."**

The "heads" no doubt refers to the Turkish leaders who are described as lion-like. The lion is symbolic of courage and destructiveness. It is significant to notice that the Turkish leaders in their titles, as well as their character often used the term "lion". "The name of Alp Arslan, the valiant lion, is expressive of the popular idea of...the fierceness and generosity of the royal animal." Gibbon Volume VI page 253.

Alp Arslan's successor was named "Kilidge Arslan!" which means "the noble lion". Another writer says, "The Turks compare the grand Seignior [their king] to the lion and other kings [of other nations] to little dogs." Ibid Volume VII page 72.

Gibbon again declares, "It would be superfluous to praise the valour of a Turk." Ibid Volume VI page 248. The Anzacs in 1915 were very much aware of the courage and fighting qualities of the Turk even in these modern times.

The fifth point, is that the agent that would be used to kill, appears to issue from the horses' mouths.

"Thus I saw the horses ... and the heads of the horses as the heads of lions and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three was the third of men killed. By the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone which issued out of their mouths." V 17-18.

"The third of men [were] killed". The third denoted the third part of the Roman empire. (Austin Cooke) At this time it was, the Eastern division of the Roman empire, Eastern Rome. Under the fifth trumpet the Arabs were to torment Eastern Rome but under the sixth trumpet the Turks were to slay or kill Eastern Rome. That meant to destroy it as a political power. To accomplish that, it would mean striking at the heart of the empire - the capital, which was Constantinople. This great city had stood for 1100 years; eight determined attempts had been made to capture it, but in vain. It seemed as if it would last forever. However the Turks, when they conquered Asia Minor, being, Moslems and fanatically opposed to Christianity, especially the apostate Christianity centred in Constantinople, determined to capture Constantinople. Because of this they became a terrible threat to Europe. Initially the Turks crossed the Bosphorus, bypassed Constantinople, and ravaged the territories of Greece and beyond. J.H. Newman in his lectures on Greece said: "No race cast so broad and dark a shadow on the page of ecclesiastical history." Cardinal Newman "Lectures on the History of the Turks" page 122.

A Turkish historian wrote, "The Turkish invasion was a scourge far heavier than that of the Saracens. While the latter when bent on permanent conquest offered the tribute as alternative to the 'Koran or the sword', the Seljouks were mere savages who slew for the pleasure of slaying... Never, probably even in the thick of the Teutonic [Gothic] invasions of the fifth century, was so much harm done in ten short years, as in Asia Minor during this period of 1071-1081. By the end of the latter year the flourishing themes [areas] which had been for so long the core of the East Roman realm had been reduced to mere wastes. Thirty years after [the battle of] Manikert, when the armies of the crusaders

marched from Nicaea to Tarsus, right across the ancient heart of the empire, they nearly perished of starvation in a land of briars and rivers." Oman "Art of War" page 222.

This reveals the destructiveness of the Turks. They destroyed like the lion. As Lord Houghton wrote, "Think of that age's awful birth,
When Europe echoed, terror-riven,
That a new foot was on the earth,
And a new name came down from heaven."

The Turks certainly filled Europe with fear and terror. "For many a year the church bells often called the people to pray for deliverance from the Turks." William Spicer "Beacon Lights of Prophecy" page 239.

It is fascinating to learn that the Ottoman Turks in particular, were a great aid to the Protestant Reformation. When Turks were invading Europe, King Charles V of Spain was Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. This was the Roman Catholic political empire of the Middle Ages. Protestantism had risen in 1517 and thousands of people had left Mother Church to become Protestants. Charles V, being a devout Roman Catholic was fervently persuaded by his church, not only to oppose the Protestant faith, but to destroy it (Eugene Lawrence "Historical Studies" page 96.) But whenever he advanced to attack the Protestants, so often tidings would come that the Turks were on the attack and Charles would be forced to turn away from the Protestants and march against the Turks. History, is very clear that had it not been for the Turks, Protestantism would never have survived. As one scholar says, "In the 16th and 17th centuries support and encouragement for Protestants and Calvinists ... were one of the fundamental principles of Ottoman policy." Halil Inalcik "The Heyday & Decline of the Ottoman Empire!" in "History of Islam" page 325-329.

Another declared, "There would have been no Protestantism had there been no Turk." Kenneth Oster "Islam Reconsidered" page 72. Quoted by Mervin Maxwell "God Cares II" page 255-256.

It has since been revealed that there was an agreement between the Turkish sultan and some of the minor powers of Europe including German barons. It was agreed that whenever Charles V would exert his political strength, especially against Protestants, the Turks would attack Europe and divert Charles' attention. No wonder Charles in utter frustration finally buried himself in the monastic life and handed over the kingdom to his son, Phillip III His last words to Phillip were "Take care that the heretics... were repressed... without regard to any plea in their favour." (Ibid) Phillip certainly endeavoured to fulfill the wishes of his father and also of his church.

We now return to the early fifteenth century of Turkish times. There finally ascended to the Turkish throne a sultan named Mahomet II. He named himself "Huukiar" which means "the slayer of men". This he proved to be for he was responsible for the final destruction of Eastern Rome. His unrelenting resolve was to take Constantinople. "I ask a present far more valuable and important, Constantinople." he proclaimed. (Gibbon "Decline & Fall!" Volume VII page 192.)

In inspiring the Turkish armies to capture Constantinople he assured them that "...the door would open to them by its capture, to conquer the whole of the Greek empire." [i.e. Eastern Rome] (Sir Edwin Pears "The Destruction of the Greek Empire!" page 324.)

How correct his words proved to be. In preparation for the fulfillment of his heart's desire he studied the latest instruments of destruction with which he might bring Constantinople to its knees. Especially did he concentrate upon gunpowder and artillery. . Not that any European powers had yet used it successfully, but they were progressing. Ere long a constructor or founder of cannon, because of improper treatment by the Roman emperor at Constantinople, deserted to the Turks. What a windfall! Mahomet's first question to him was, "Are you able to cast a cannon capable of throwing a ball that would batter the walls of Constantinople?"

The answer was in the affirmative. As a result, a foundry was immediately established and within three months a cannon was produced with a bore of five feet. It was able to blast a 600 lb. missile for several furlongs and bury itself in the earth. (Gibbon "Decline & Fall" Volume VII page 193-195.) Now the prophecy stated that, "**...fire, smoke and brimstone came out of the horses' mouths**"

With the invention of muskets [or rifles] the Turkish horsemen acquired the skill of using them while riding or charging on horseback into battle. As they charged they fired their muskets and we believe that to the prophet in vision gazing at these horsemen in the distance, it appeared as if "fire and smoke and brimstone came out of the horses months". Through the years many scholars have seen this new type of warfare as a perfect fulfillment of the prediction. But were not other nations also using gunpowder? They were experimenting, but the Turks were the first to successfully employ gunpowder in the prosecution of warfare. Maybe this is one reason why this detail is featured in this prediction.

We pass to the seventh point of identification. "**Their power [or authority] is in their mouths, and in their tails.**" In other words, their authority "**was in their tails and their tails were like unto serpents and had heads.**" V19.

In scripture the word "power" may signify authority (Romans 13:1). The word "heads" could indicate rulers or leaders in association with the horse tails. This is a puzzling symbolism and it has challenged many students through the years. How could a horse's tail be associated with a head or a leader? Normally the tail would represent the rear, those who follow or those in subjection. In this puzzling symbol we are given remarkable evidence of Turkish identity. The Turks' peculiar ensign, the standard that they used to represent authority was a horse's tail! From prime visior to the governors of provinces, the horse's tail was the badge of authority. As Elliott says, "The ensign of one, two, or three horse tails that marks distinctively the dignity and power of the Turkish Pasha." Elliott ch VII page 514.

According to their history, a Turkish "general, not knowing how to rally his troops who had lost their standard, cut off a horse's tail, fixed it to the end of a spear. The soldiers rallying at that signal gained the victory". Thereafter the horse's tail was used as a symbol of office. (Ibid Footnote)

A writer on Turkish history in 1842 stated, "The recent overthrow of the Mameluc power [in Egypt] by the Ottomans [Turks] had extended the shadow of the horsetails far along the coast of Africa." Ibid Footnote.

When France occupied North Africa, one of its generals summoned a certain tribe to submit to the French. The tribe had been under Turkish rule. In response the tribe stated that, "The horse of submission has no tails." (Ibid) This meant that the Turks no longer had any authority. What a clear mark of identity of the Turkish power? The prediction then continues, "**... with them they do hurt.**"

With their tails they do hurt. Here is a seeming contradiction. They have lion-like heads from which issue fire and smoke and brimstone, that kill the third part of men, or by which they were to destroy Rome. In this verse it speaks of “heads” that are connected with the tail which do hurt. The Greek word for “do hurt” means “doing injustice”. We believe that this represents the oppression by the Turkish leaders on those whom they conquered, especially Christians in Greece and elsewhere. History records the truth of this. Knolles says, “His Bassaes like ravening harpies, as it were, suck out the blood of his poor subjects. (referring to the Turkish Pashas or leaders) (Knolles “Sketch of the Turkish Greatness”)

The following is an eyewitness account of Turkish oppression. “And where is the traveler through European Turkey ... that has not with his own eyes witnessed the same? Even now the scene rises in memory before the author, of the long train of a Turkish Pasha proceeding to his Pashalik [or governorship] in Greece; which passed him by,... And bright, he remembers, shone the sunbeams on the varied colourings, the ‘red, blue and yellow’ of the horses, horsmen and foot-retainers, in the procession; and proudly the ensign was borne before the Turkman of two horsetails, to mark his dignity.

“But associated with the remembrance there rise up other recollections also: the scene of a village which, on entering it a few days before with his companions, he had found deserted, though with marks of recent habitation; and from which, a straggler emerging from his hiding place informed them, men, women, and children had fled to the mountains, to escape from the visit, on some errand of oppression, of one of the officers of a neighbouring Pasha. Nor again can the scene be forgotten of other permanently deserted villages ... and often with nothing but the silent graveyard in its loneliness, to tell the tale of former life and population. Thus was there set before his eyes how the inhabitants had failed before the oppressions of the Pashas.” Elliott Ch VII page 515-516. The Turkish “heads” associated with “the tails” certainly “hurt” those whom they conquered.

We now come to the siege of Constantinople, the final “killing “ or slaying” of the Eastern Roman empire. On April 6, 1453 Mahomet II assembled 258,000 men to commence the attack. The city was 13 miles in circumference, with 7,000 - 8,000 men to defend it. Its people implored the virgin Mary for deliverance, a token of their apostasy. The city was in the form of a triangle, two sides ran along the sea [the Black Sea and the Bosphorus] and the base of the triangle was protected by a double wall and a trench, 100 feet deep and six miles long. This part was attacked by the Turks. Edward Gibbon describes the attack, and reveals how the prediction was fulfilled that “by fire, by smoke and by the brimstone” was the empire killed.

“The volleys of lances and arrows were accompanied with the smoke, the sound, and the fire of the musketry and cannon ... the long order of the Turkish artillery was pointed against the walls; fourteen batteries thundering at once on the most accessible places ... the fortifications which had stood for ages against hostile violence, were dismantled on all sides by the Ottomen cannon, many breaches opened, and, near the gate of St. Romanus, four towers levelled with the ground...from the lines, the galleys and the bridge, the Ottomam artillery thundered on all sides, the camp and city, the Greeks and the Turks, were involved in a cloud of smoke, which could only be dispelled by the final deliverance or destruction of the Roman empire ... the double walls were reduced by the cannon to a heap of ruins’...the Turks at length...” rushing through the breaches ... Constantinople was subdued, her empire subverted and her religion trampled in the dust by the Moslem conquerors” Gibbon Volume VII page 203.

A Turkish historian writing of the same event declared, "The Moslems placed their cannon in an effective position. The gates and ramparts of Constantinople were pierced in a thousand places. The flame which issued from the mouths of those instruments of warfare, of brazen bodies and fiery jaws, cast grief and dismay among the miscreants. The smoke which spread itself in the air rendered the brightness of day as somber as night; and the face of the world soon became as dark as the black fortune of the unhappy infidels." Saadeddin's "Diadem of Histories" Cited by Dr. Keith (Apoc. Volume 2, page 46.

Thus as the prophet declared, "by these three, by fire and smoke and brimstone was the third part of men killed". The Roman empire was no more. There was now no independent Greek state left. E.H. Freeman "The Ottoman Power in Europe" page 116

The eighth and final point of identification is in the period of time allotted for the slaying or killing of the third part of men. It was to be for "an hour, a day, a month and a year". The third part applied at this particular time to Eastern Rome alone. One interpretation through the years has been that this description of "an hour, day, month and year" means an appointed time. The margin reads "at-an hour, day, month and year". Some versions confirm this reading. (Revised Standard Version & The New International Version.) Are we justified in holding that the above expression represents a period of time and not an appointed time? In other places in scripture time periods are expressed in a similar way as in Revelation 9:15.

In describing the 1260 year time period of Papal supremacy, Daniel says, it is "for a time, times, and half a time". (Daniel 12:7) This equals three-and-a-half prophetic years or 1260 days, and represents 1260 years, on the Bible principle of a day equaling a year in prophecy. E.B. Elliott, the Cambridge lecturer on the book of Revelation in his "Horae Apocalypticae" has closely examined this expression in the original Greek and he has concluded that it represents a period of time - not an appointed time.(Elliott chapter VII page 516-522.) This being so, it means that the period allotted amounts to 391 years and 15 days if we include the "hour". Let us reverse the order for the sake of clarity: a year, month, day, an hour. A Bible year is 360 days which equals 360 years. A Bible month is 30 days which equals 30 years. A day is 1 year. The total is 391 years plus the "hour" which is a 24th part of a year or 360 days. That equals 15 days. Altogether the time period is 391 years 15 days.

One year = 360 Bible Days = 360 solar years
One month = 30 Bible Days = 30 solar years
One day = 1 Bible Day = 1 solar year
One hour = 1/24 of a day = 1/24th of a year
Or one hour = 1/24 of 360 days = 15 solar days
Total = 391 years, 15 days

In 1840 Josiah Litch, a noted preacher associated with William Miller in The Great Second Advent Movement of 1833-1844, predicted on the basis of this time period, that the Ottoman empire would come to its end on the 11th August, 1840. He and William Miller believed that both the fifth and the sixth trumpets applied to the Ottoman empire; that the fifth trumpet applied to the rise of the Ottomans and the sixth applied to the domination of the Ottoman Turks. (S.D.A. Bible Commentary Volume VII page 795.) Litch believed that the five month period of torment of the fifth trumpet (i.e. 150 years) began with the first king of the Ottomans, who was Othman.

Othman began his career of conquest on July 27, 1299 according to Gibbon. By adding 150 years to July 27, 1299 Litch obtained the date of July 27, 1449. On that date John Palaeologus, the Roman Emperor died and his brother Constantine XI was elected in his place. However he could not be crowned except by permission of the Turkish sultan. This revealed that the Eastern Roman empire had lost its power and independence. It meant that the Turks were now in control. By adding 391 years and 15 days to July 27, 1449 Litch obtained the date of August 11, 1840.

His conclusion was historically correct as far as the dates were concerned, and it was fulfilled to the very letter. Josiah Litch proclaimed to the world several months before August 11, 1840 that the infamous Ottoman empire would end. The world waited and watched. When it was fulfilled to the very day, hundreds of infidels were converted to the Christian faith. It was a dramatic fulfillment of Litch's prediction.

The author of Great Controversy refers to this event in the year 1840, as "another remarkable fulfillment of prophecy ... at the very time specified Turkey through her ambassador accepted the protection of the allied powers of Europe and thus placed herself under the control of Christian nations. The event exactly fulfilled the prediction. When it became-known, multitudes became convinced of the correctness of the principles of prophetic interpretation adopted by Miller and his associates and a wonderful impetus was given to the advent movement." "The Great Controversy" page 334-335.

Josiah Litch's conclusions were based on the year/day principle, the same as William Miller's.

However since then, as a result of continued study, some problems have been discovered in certain parts of Josiah Litch's interpretation of the fifth and sixth trumpets. Litch held that the fifth trumpet applied to the Turks at their rise, but the current position is that the fifth trumpet applied to the Arabian conquests commencing with Mahomet, not the Ottoman Turks. (Austin Cooke) This being so, the period of torment of the locust power as understood by Litch needs to be re-examined. The 150 years were not connected with the Turks but with the Arabs, and the first king was not Othman the Ottoman, but Mohomet, the Arabian. The 150 years of torment fitted exactly, the period of the Arab conquests. They commenced in 612 A.D. when the Arabian armies sallied forth to invade Eastern Rome. From that point the period of torment of the apostate Christians of Eastern Rome began. Exactly 150 years later, in 762 A.D. the Arabian caliph moved his capital from Damascus to Baghdad, outside the boundary of the Roman empire and this ended the period of conquest of the Arabs and the period of torment. (Austin Cooke)

But what of the 391 year period of the sixth trumpet? When did this period commence and close? We suggest that that period commenced on the same date that Josiah Litch commenced it. That was July 27, 1449 A.D. When the Eastern Roman emperor, Constantine XI, was elected, he could only take office with the approval of the Turkish sultan. This meant that the Turks now controlled the empire. Its power and independence were gone - it had been killed. At the fall of Constantinople four years later, the last vestige of the empire was annihilated. With July 27, 1449 as the starting date for the 391 period, the termination, as with Litch's calculation was August 11, 1840 A.D. when the Ottoman empire lost its independence at the Treaty of London. Thus the final date of Josiah Litch's prediction is confirmed. The eighth specification of the prophecy was fulfilled. The time period of 391 years satisfactorily fits the Ottoman power.

We now come to the conclusion of the sixth trumpet. What are the main points of significance that we should note for our benefit? First, God's punishment of apostasy. All the trumpets were judgments on apostasy but it is significant to note that after the judgment of the sixth trumpet it says,

"...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 silver and gold and brass and stone and 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 9:20-21.

In other words the terrible judgment of the Turks was completely unavailing. It did not bring the apostate Christians to repentance. What a powerful lesson is in that for the church today? When Christians apostatize, very seldom do they turn back from their apostasy. Very seldom is there true repentance. This is a solemn lesson to those in responsibility. When apostasy raises its head, it is vital that it receive immediate and correct attention, otherwise the damage will seldom if ever be rectified.

The second point of significance concerning the sixth trumpet is that it introduces the Turks, for the first time into the prophetic picture. That vast multitude of peoples that inhabited the central Asiatic mainland, play a part in divine providence. Through two groups the Seljuks and the Ottomans - the Turks took control of Asia Minor and destroyed Eastern Rome. This remarkable fulfillment of Bible prophecy by the Turks confirms the accuracy of scripture.

The final and important point of significance is that the Turks were used by heaven to safeguard the Protestant Reformation. As one historian declared, "There would have been no Protestantism, had there been no Turk." (Kenneth Oster "Islam Reconsidered" page 72. Quoted by Mervin Maxwell "God Cares II" page 255-256.) Is it not awe-inspiring to consider that one reason God moved the millions of Turks out of Asia into the Middle East was to employ them as protectors of His people and to keep at bay the powers of apostasy? The Arabs of the fifth trumpet, protected the Church of the East from the attacks. of the-Papal apostasy. (Austin Cooke) The Turks of the sixth trumpet protected, the Protestant Reformation from the assaults of the Papal apostasy.

The sixth trumpet concludes the part that the Turks and Turkey played in the panorama of prophecy. In the great controversy between Christ and Satan, as portrayed in the book of Revelation, the Turks never again come into the picture. The conflict from here on moves westward and involves the European powers, the Papacy, the U.S.A. and finally the whole world. This will be unveiled in chapters 10-18 of Revelation.