

ROME — OR ISLAM?

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Last week I started another review of prophecy. It's a good idea to keep our eye on the signs of the times.

Prompted by Turkey "re-converting" the Hagia Sophia from a museum into a Mosque.

President Erdogan announced it heralded "The Liberation of Al-Aqsa Mosque" ... was a sign to Muslims of the "coming out of the Interregnum". (A gap between one period of reigning to another period of reigning). The only way the former could happen is probably by driving the Jews out of Jerusalem.

Another indication of Mr Erdogan's desire to revive the old Ottoman Empire.

History tells us that the Ottoman Empire

- "An Islamic Superpower"
- "One of the mightiest and longest-lasting" empires in world history.

The original Ottoman Empire ruled for nearly 700 years — over millions of people. It officially "died" having suffered a deadly wound — after the First World War — in 1922. Turkey became a secular republic in 1923.

The ruler at that time converted the Hagia Sophia to a world-famous museum in 1935 as a symbol of Turkey's new secular status.

Now — that is being reversed. And that is hugely symbolic.

If the Ottoman Empire is revived ... it may fulfil Revelation Chapter 13 ("whose mortal wound is healed")?

When Jesus gave us the key sign of His return ... He pointed us to Daniel ("when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet standing in the Holy Place ... flee"). Matthew adds "make sure you understand".

It seems that Daniel may be “The Manual for the End-Times”. The go-to book.

And ... in Daniel ... a very specific end-time prophecy points at Turkey.

Daniel 8:2-8

2 I saw in the vision, and it so happened while I was looking, that I was in Shushan, the citadel, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in the vision that I was by the River Ulai.

3 **Then I lifted my eyes and saw, and there, standing beside the river, was a ram which had two horns, and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher one came up last.**

4 **I saw the ram pushing westward, northward, and southward,** so that no animal could withstand him; nor was there any that could deliver from his hand, **but he did according to his will and became great.**

5 And as I was considering, **suddenly a male goat (*He Goat*) came from the west, across the surface of the whole earth, without touching the ground; and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes.**

6 **Then he came to the ram that had two horns,** which I had seen standing beside the river, and ran at him with furious power.

7 **And I saw him confronting the ram;** he was moved with rage against him, **attacked the ram, and broke his two horns. There was no power in the ram to withstand him, but he cast him down to the ground and trampled him; and there was no one that could deliver the ram from his hand.**

8 **Therefore the male goat grew very great;** but when he became strong, **the large horn was broken, and in place of it four notable ones came up toward the four winds of heaven.**

The Ram and the He-Goat.

The Ram charges around the Middle East — westward ... northward ... and southward.

When does it happen? People tell us over 2,000 years ago. No! The Angel Gabriel tells us — “The time of the end” — still future!

It will involve Iran (Persia) and Javan. The latter is principally Turkey today.

Major regional conflict.

So ... among the signs of the times we can look for!

For all of these things to come into play ... it probably requires the Ottoman Empire to be revived ... as per Revelation Chapter 13?

But when we're looking at end-time prophecy ... watching for the "signs of the times" — should we be looking at Europe (Holy Roman Empire) ... or at the Islamic world centred around the Middle East and Jerusalem (as Turkey and Iran are)?

Most of us are very familiar with the idea of a revived Holy Roman Empire in Europe. Germany will lead 10 nations and link up with the Roman Catholic Church.

This is a commonly held view — popularised by Mr HWA and the Worldwide Church of God.

Where does it come from? Is it Biblical?

Two or three alleged Biblical reasons. We'll look at a couple today — put to scrutiny.

Daniel 2:31-45

31 "You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! **This great image, whose splendour was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome.**

32 **This image's head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze,**

33 its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.

34 **You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces.**

35 Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. **And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.**

36 **"This is the dream.** Now we will tell the interpretation of it before the king.

37 **You, O king, are a king of kings.** For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory;

38 and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given them into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all—**you are this head of gold.**

39 But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, **a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth.**

40 **And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others.**

41 Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay.

42 And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile.

43 As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay.

44 **And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.**

45 **Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. **The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure.**"**

Irrespective of our interpretations ... we should always be familiar with the text.

GOLD: BABYLON (today's Iraq — Muslim)
SILVER: PERSIA (Iran — Muslim)
BRONZE: GREECE (Huge ... geographically — mostly Muslim)
IRON: ??
STONE: JESUS' RETURN AND KINGDOM OF GOD

Why choose Rome for the Iron Empire?

The first reference to Iron being Rome ... circa 200 AD ... Hippolytus ... Bishop of Rome: “the legs of iron ... expressed the Romans ... who hold sovereignty at the moment”.

The next person to come along to suggest Rome was Jerome. He was hugely influential. His commentary (408 AD): “Now the 4th Empire ... which clearly refers to the Romans ... is the Iron Empire which breaks in pieces and overcomes all others”.

The reformers (such as Martin Luther ... Calvin etc) ... and most Bible commentaries ... have maintained this view ... though there is a growing awareness of its problems in the last 20-30 years.

Daniel 2:40

40 And **the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others.**

The 4th Kingdom — the Iron Kingdom — will “break in pieces and crush all the others”.

“Break in Pieces” = Deqaq = shatter ... pulverise ... smash to smithereens.

Here’s the catch? **ROME NEVER DID THIS!!**

- **NEVER CONQUERED PERSIA**
- **NEVER PULVERISED ALEXANDER’S GREEK EMPIRE** It defeated their military ... but happily absorbed their literature ... philosophy ... culture ... language ... religion.

The Roman approach to their conquests was basically to leave countries largely as they were. Defeat their militaries ... demand taxes and loyalty to Caesar — then “carry on” as before. That approach worked very well.

We can see “Deqaq” used in the following verses.

Daniel 2:44-45

44 And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other

people; **it shall break in pieces** and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.

45 Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that **it broke in pieces** the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure.”

“Break in pieces” used twice.

And God’s Kingdom will smash and pulverise — totally!

So Rome fails the Biblical test.

Also ... the Roman Empire is not even in the same part of the world as the earlier Empires.

Babylon ... Persia ... “Greek” Empires ... are based in the Middle East and Eastwards ... as far as India.

The Roman Empire is a European Empire ... based to the West. It would have been of no interest — prophetically — to Nebuchadnezzar?

The Islamic Empire and Caliphates? Defeated Persia in 5 years and swallowed up the entire Middle East. Destroyed existing religions ... culture ... language — even the alphabet. Islam pulverised everything in its path.

So — if you want to use Daniel 2 as your grounds for a 10 nation European Beast — you’re on pretty shaky ground?

Where else does the Roman Empire come from in the Bible?

Revelation 17:1-3

1 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, **“Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters,**

2 with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.”

3 So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. **And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.**

Harlot on a Beast Empire.

Revelation 17:6-9

6 **I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.** And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement.

7 **But the angel said to me, “Why did you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns.**

8 **The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition.** And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

9 **“Here is the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits.**

The 7 heads = 7 mountains.

Rome is a city of 7 hills ... so the harlot is based in Rome — clearly the Vatican!

That is a very popular view.

Dave Hunt: Book “A Woman Rides The Beast” — says of Revelation 17:9: “This merits our careful and prayerful attention. The Woman is THAT GREAT CITY ... furthermore she is built on 7 hills. Only one city has for more than 2,000 years been known as the city on 7 hills, the city is Rome”.

Or GTA in “Who is The Antichrist?” Referring to Revelation 17:9: “Notice the incontrovertible evidence of her location, in Revelation 17:9. Rome is famous for its 7 hills. Rome calls itself the Eternal City”.

This is really weak!! Lots of cities are on 7 hills — dozens in Wikipedia: San Francisco ... Seattle ... Istanbul ... Mecca ... Jerusalem.

You can't choose Rome unless you've already decided!

But Revelation 17:9 says 7 MOUNTAINS — NOT “HILLS”.

The Greek word is “Oros” (not hill ... which is “Bounos”).

Compare:

Luke 3:4-6

4 as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, saying:

“The voice of one crying in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the LORD;

Make His paths straight.

5 Every valley shall be filled

And every mountain and hill brought low; (*Oros and Bounos*)

The crooked places shall be made straight

And the rough ways smooth;

6 And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’ ”

Rome isn't built on 7 mountains!

Mountains are used symbolically in the Bible to picture Kingdoms (even the Kingdom of God).

Re-read:

Revelation 17:9-10

9 “Here is the mind which has wisdom: **The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits.**

10 There are also seven kings. **Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come.** And when he comes, he must continue a short time.

It tells us there are 7 Kingdoms. Five fallen ... one is ... one to come — rather odd if they are physical mountains!

Revelation 17:9-10 (NASB)

9 **The seven heads are seven mountains** on which the woman sits, **and they are seven kings.** (*Kingdoms*)

Revelation 17:9 is not identifying any city! It's referring to Kingdoms over which the Great Harlot has ruled.

Revelation 17:11

11 **The beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven**, and is going to perdition.

To pluck Rome out of these verses is foolish.

I think it's fair to say that Rome fails the Bible test of Daniel 2:40 ... and doesn't appear in Revelation 17.

It may be a long-held belief of Bible scholars for 1,800 years. But ... they also believe in the Trinity ... and Xmas — so you can't just rely on their opinions.

Among the biggest threats to the world today are not Germany ... or France ... or Italy. **It's Islamic Jihad — it's militant Islam we need to watch!**

One other passage occasionally used to “support” the end-time Roman leader:

Daniel 9:26

26 **“And after the sixty-two weeks (of this 70 week prophecy)**

Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself;

And the people of the prince who is to come

shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.

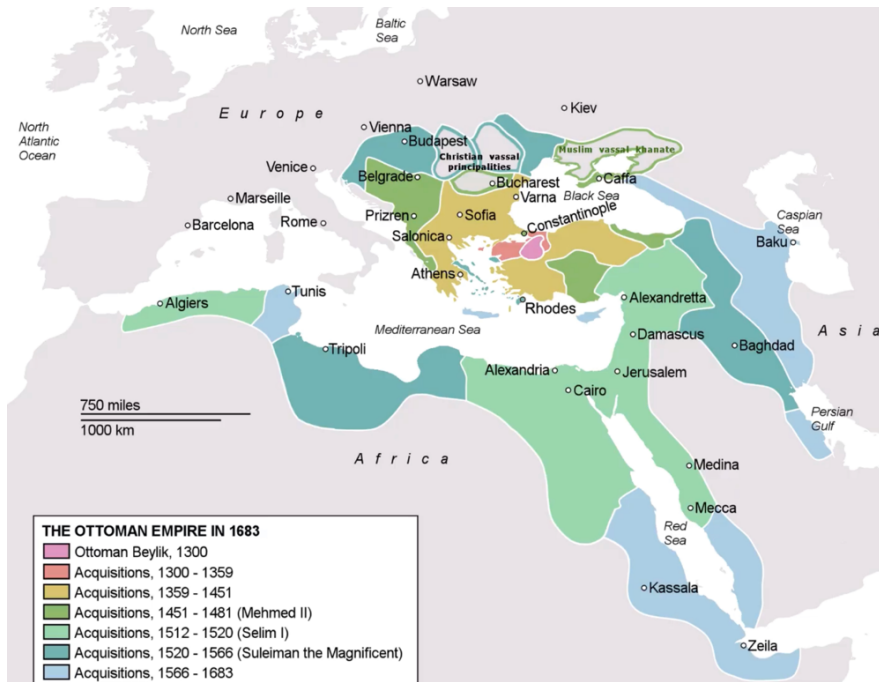
The destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD by Rome. Therefore “the prince” to come will be a Roman Antichrist.

Who is he and where does he come from?

So the Antichrist is a Roman. Not so!!

But we'll look more closely at Daniel Chapter 9 in a future study.

GRAPHICS AND MAPS AT THE END OF THE DOCUMENT



OTTOMAN EMPIRE

CREATED IN
1299AD

2 MILLION SQ MILES

DISSOLVED BY
KEMAL ATATÜRK
IN 1922



- ← **HEAD OF GOLD**
BABYLONIAN EMPIRE
- ← **CHEST/ARMS OF SILVER**
MEDO-PERSIAN EMPIRE
- ← **BELLY/THIGHS OF BRONZE**
GREEK EMPIRE
- ← **LEGS OF IRON**
?????
- ← **FEET OF IRON & CLAY**
?????



A FEW OF THE CITIES ON 7 HILLS

**MECCA - JERUSALEM - ROME - ISTANBUL - NEW YORK -
CINCINNATI - SAN FRANCISCO - WASHINGTON DC - TEHRAN -
EDINBURGH - MOSCOW - MADRID - PRAGUE**

