



### The Eastern Question.

THE eleventh chapter of Daniel entire is a literal historical prophecy, the longest and most remarkable of its kind in all the Scriptures. Beginning with the first year of Darius the Mede, it passes through the remainder of Persian history (verse 3), the brief reign of Alexander the Great (verses 3, 4), followed by the long contests between the kings of Syria and Egypt, the former called "the king of the North," and the latter, "the king of the South," these countries being respectively north and south from Jerusalem (verses 5-15); then passes into Roman history (verses 16-29), notices the crucifixion of Christ (verse 22), touches upon the work of the papacy (verses 30-33), the great Reformation (verse 34), the end of papal supremacy in 1798 (verse 35); then introduces, and ends with, the closing portion of the history of the Turkish empire, this empire now including, as a part of its domain, the identical territory of the old Assyrian kingdom, and for this reason receiving also the name, "The king of the North." Verses 40-45. It is this introduction of the Turkish empire that connects the prophecy with the "Eastern Question;" for the Eastern Question is simply the question of how the remains of the now nearly defunct Turkish empire shall be disposed of. A definite point in the prophecy, sufficiently far back to include all that is said about the Eastern Question, is found in verse 35. With that we therefore commence the investigation.

- I. What are the three prominent things brought to view in verse 35?
  - (1.) A period of persecution; (2.) The fact that this persecution is measured by a prophetic period—"a time appointed;" and (3.) That this prophetic period brings us to a season called "the time of the end."

2. What time of persecution is thus limited in the Scriptures by a prophetic period?

There are but two instances of such a nature. The first is the persecution under Diocletian, from A. D. 302 to 312, "ten days" (*years*. Rev. 2:10); but this is too far in the past to reach anywhere near to the "time of the end," and consequently cannot be the one here intended. The second is the great period during which the papacy was to make war upon, and wear out, the saints of the Most High (Dan 7:25; Rev. 13:7), — a period which the prophets five times mention as containing 1260 years. Dan. 7:25; 12:7; Rev. 12:6, 14; 13:5. Papal supremacy commenced in A. D. 538, and ended in 1798. Thus we find ourselves located by verse 35, in the year 1798, at the end of the 1260 years, and at the beginning of a period called "the time of the end."

3. What does the prophecy next bring to view?

A "king," or nation, which in its national capacity should take upon itself the profession of atheism. Verses 36, 37

4. What nation has ever taken such a position?

France, and it alone of all nations of which any mention is made in history; and this was during the great French Revolution, — the "reign of terror," — 1793 to 1798. Both the nature of the Revolution, and the date, compel us to apply verses 36 and 37 to the French nation at that time.

5. Having thus introduced France, how long does the prophecy dwell upon that power?

Down to, and including a portion of, verse 40.

6. What change is noticed in verse 38?

The introduction of a new worship and a strange god whom their fathers knew not.

7. How was this fulfilled?

By the introduction of the "worship of Reason," in the person of a lewd woman; which the historian calls another "insane feature of those insane times."

8. What unique transaction is noticed in the last clause of verse 39?

"And shall divide the land for gain."

9. How was this fulfilled?

It was literally fulfilled in the confiscation of the estates of the nobility by the revolutionists, and in the selling out of these estates in small lots, to a multitude of Frenchmen. The result was to place more than seven hundred million pounds sterling, or over three billion, five hundred million dollars, in the depleted French treasury. See Alison, vol. 4, p. 151.

10. What time is introduced in verse 40?

The time of the end — 1798. See remarks on verse 35.

## 25. What takes place in connection with this downfall of Turkey?

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." Dan. 12:1.

## 26. Who is Michael?

Christ. Jude 9; 1 Thess. 4:16; John 5:25, 28.

## 27. What is meant by his "standing up"?

To "stand up," as applied to a king, signifies in scripture phraseology, to ascend the throne, or to reign. Dan. 11:2-4. When the Turk comes to his end, the prophecy declares that "at that time" Michael shall stand up. Thus the downfall of Turkey, which every intelligent person will not hesitate to admit is inevitable in the very near future, becomes the signal for the beginning of the reign of Christ, his advent in the clouds of heaven, the time of trouble, the resurrection of the dead, and the end of all things.

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WATCHMEN on the walls of Zion,  
What, O tell us, of the night?  
Is the day-star now arising?  
Will the morn soon greet our sight?  
O'er your vision  
Shine there now some rays of light?

Tell, O tell us, are the landmarks  
On our voyage all passed by?  
Are we nearing now the haven?  
Can we e'en the land descrie?  
Do we truly  
See the heavenly kingdom nigh?

Light is beaming, day is coming!  
Let us sound aloud the cry;  
We behold the day-star rising  
Pure and bright in yonder sky!  
Saints, be joyful;  
Your redemption draweth nigh.

We have found the chart and compass,  
And are sure the land is near;  
Onward, onward we are hastening,  
Soon the haven will appear;  
Let your voices  
Sound aloud your holy cheer.

## 11. Who is the "king of the South," now again brought to view?

Egypt. Verses 5-15.

## 12. Against whom does this "king of the South" "push," or make a feeble resistance?

Against "him;" that is, the atheistical king of verses 36-39, or France.

## 13. Who is the "king of the North," now also introduced?

Turkey, because it occupies the *same territory* everywhere else in the prophecy called the "king of the North." See verses 6-15, and introductory remark.

## 14. What movements, then, does verse 40 call for, according to the application here made?

The breaking out of hostilities between Egypt and France, and between Turkey and France, all in the year 1798.

## 15. What is the testimony of history on this point?

It testifies that these very events did occur in that very year. Napoleon, on the strength of fancied Egyptian provocations, entered upon his Egyptian campaign in the spring of 1798, and was making an easy conquest of the country, when Turkey, through jealousy of the French, and through opposition to their designs in Egypt, fostered by English diplomats, declared war against France on the 2d of September of that year. England and Russia were in alliance with Turkey in this struggle, and their navies furnished the "many ships" of the prophecy, while their aid added to the "whirlwind" onset of the Turks.

16. What is indicated by the closing declaration of verse 40, that "*he* shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over"?

That one of the parties engaged in this conflict would emerge from it in great triumph. The victorious party in this struggle was the Turks. The French, under Napoleon, found the Turkish forces strongly entrenched at Acre, in Palestine, on the Mediterranean. After sixty days spent in fruitless efforts to dislodge them, Napoleon was obliged to sound the note of retreat, and lead his forces back to Egypt. Additional reverses soon compelled the French to retire to their own country, leaving Egypt in possession of the Turks. In the light of these facts, it is impossible to apply the latter part of verse 40 to any but the Turks. Egypt, twice prostrated,—by the French first, then by the Turks,—certainly did not "overflow and pass over." The French, ignominiously retracing their steps to their own land, did not fulfill this specification. But the Turks, victorious over the French, and lords of Egypt, certainly did. The Turks thus came to take the leading position in the occurrences of those times, and now the prophecy drops the French, transfers the burden of its testimony to the victorious Turk, and traces his history from this point on to the end.

## 17. To what do verses 41-43 relate?

To the advantages and prestige gained by the Turks in that war of 1798-1801. They recovered all the places taken by the French in the "glorious land,"—Palestine; they did not turn aside eastward to overrun Edom and Moab and Ammon; but did enter Egypt, put it under heavy tribute, and received embassies of friendship and congratulation from the Libyans and Ethiopians, located southward in the interior of Africa.

## 18. To what does the testimony of verse 44 point?

To another war, in the present century, excited by the threatening attitude of nations on the east and north of Turkey.

## 19. In what has this been fulfilled?

In the Crimean war of 1853-56, which originated from the threatening attitude of Persia on the east of Turkey, and Russia on the north. Dr. Clarke, closing his commentary on the Old Testament in 1825, foreshadowed this movement when, commenting on this verse, he said, "It may mean that the Persians on the east, and the Russians on the north, will at some time greatly embarrass the Ottoman government." Twenty-eight years elapsed, and the Crimean war sustained the application of Dr. Clarke, and fulfilled the prophecy. England and France came to the help of Turkey, and Russia was compelled to subscribe to the humiliating conditions of the treaty of Paris in 1856. By this she was obliged to disarm her ships of war, and dismantle her fortresses on the shores of the Black Sea.

## 20. What move on the part of the Turkish power does the prophecy next indicate?

"And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas, in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him." Dan. 11:45.

## 21. What is meant by the "tabernacles of his palace"?

The seat of government.

## 22. Where is this now?

At Constantinople, on the banks of the Bosphorus.

## 23. To what place does the prophecy point for its future location?

"Between the seas, in the glorious holy mountain," an expression which Bishop Newton says "must denote some part of the holy land;" and if so, it can be none other than Jerusalem. We must therefore look for the Turks to remove their seat of government from Constantinople to Jerusalem. They will never do this till they are obliged to leave Europe; and this will be their last move. They then come to their end, and none help them. Thus the prophecy points to a movement on the part of Turkey which lies at the very center of the Eastern Question,— "driving the Turk into Asia, and scrambling for his territory," as Carleton, the Boston *Herald* correspondent, expressed it.

## 24. What is the prospect that such a move is inevitable in the near future?

To answer this, it is only necessary to consider briefly the relation of Turkey to other European powers, particularly to Russia. It has been the dream of Russia, ever since the days of Peter the Great, who died in 1725, to secure Constantinople, and control the important outlet from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean. Peter left a last will and testament enjoining upon his successors on the Russian throne, a policy to be pursued in the extension of the empire. Among its provisions, one was to "take every possible means to secure Constantinople;" another, to "stir up strife between Turkey and Persia," and to "hasten the decay of Persia," so as to open a way through the East to India, the great store-house of the world. The unremitting effort to carry out this policy has made Russia for the past hundred and fifty years what it is today, a standing menace to the peace of Europe and the East. Napoleon Bonaparte understood this policy, and when a prisoner on St. Helena, told his keeper, Gov. Hudson, that Alexander once proposed to him that they divide the map of Europe between them, he (Alexander) to have Constantinople, and Napoleon to take his choice of any remaining territory. "I would not do it," said Napoleon; "for I foresaw that if Russia once gained control of the Mediterranean, she would become a great maritime power, and thus the equilibrium of Europe would be destroyed."

It was in the line of this Russian policy that the Crimean war occurred, which closed in a manner to check for awhile Russian advancement. Russia watched her opportunity to break away from that treaty of 1856, and found it in 1870. Great Britain and France were parties to that treaty. But in 1870 France was paralyzed by the Franco-Prussian war; and England was powerless to enforce the treaty without the aid of France. Then Russia boldly announced that that treaty was at an end, and she should regard it no longer. All her warlike preparations were resumed in the Black Sea, and the Russo-Russian war of 1877 followed. Other nations again helped the Turks, and the treaty of Berlin again restrained for a time the Russians. But Russia is now trampling upon that treaty. That treaty made Batum, on the Black Sea, a free port. Russia, in defiance of that stipulation, has closed it. All Russia's trouble about "rectifying the boundary" in Afghanistan, arises from her policy to open a path in that direction to India. Her recent interference in the case of Prince Alexander and the Bulgarians, comes from her fixed determination to secure Constantinople. The nations have heretofore combined together to keep the Turks in their place, because no one of them has been willing that any other one should gain Constantinople, as that would destroy the "equilibrium," or the "balance of power." But in every conflict the Turks have grown weaker; and it only remains for the nations to come to some agreement as to the disposal of the remains of the "sick man," which may be reached almost any day, and Turkey in Europe will cease to exist. Then they must move the seat of government into Asia, and every probability would point to Jerusalem as its location.

Her end speedily follows. Other nations have helped her,—in her war with France in 1798; with Egypt in 1838-40; with Russia, 1853-56; and with Russia again in 1877. But the prophecy says the time will come when none will help her. Dan. 11:45.