

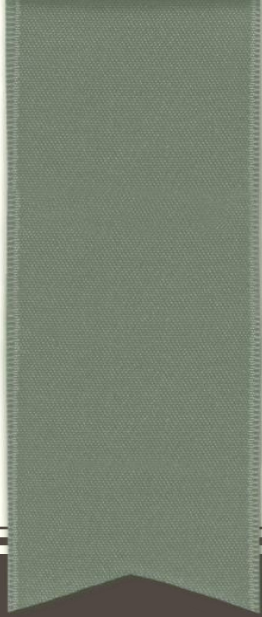


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# Exploring the Book of Revelation: Verse by Verse

## Chapter 9





# CHAPTER 9

Fifth and Sixth trumpets

# Chapter 9

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Primary purpose of our Bible study is to understand each message as it applied to the church to which it was given AND its personal application for us today

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Introduction

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The fifth trumpet

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Recap

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The sixth trumpet

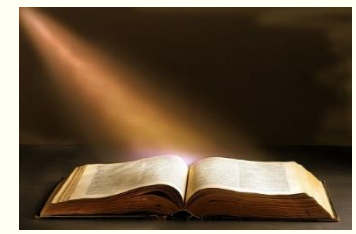
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Reflections

# Revelation 9:1-6

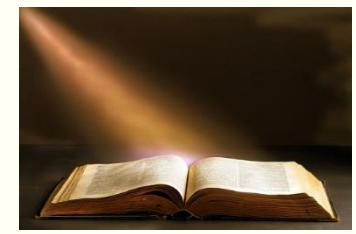
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**1** Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit. **2** And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So, the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit. **3** Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. **4** They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. **5** And they were not given authority to kill them, but to torment them for five months. Their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man. **6** In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them.

# Revelation 9:7-12

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7 The shape of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. On their heads were crowns of something like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men. 8 They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth. 9 And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots with many horses running into battle. 10 They had tails like scorpions, and there were stings in their tails. Their power was to hurt men five months. 11 And they had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon. 12 One woe is past. Behold, still two more woes are coming after these things.

# Introduction – The Three woes

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Many conflicting interpretations from Bible Commentators of the 7 Trumpets

1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> trumpets – judgment on the Jewish nation and Roman Empire (two nations that crucified Jesus)

3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> trumpets – judgment on Apostate church (Papal Rome) and the consequences of apostasy

5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpets – judgment ushered as woes with a **loud voice** from a vulture flying in **midheaven**. Vultures symbolize impending judgment.

Eagle (Greek – aetos) is probably vulture since eagles do not gather around carcass to devour (similar to Matt 24:28)

“**Set the trumpet** to your mouth! He shall come like an eagle against the house of the Lord, because they have transgressed My covenant and rebelled against My law.” – Hosea 8:1

Judgment is targeted to “those who dwell on the earth” (those who are hostile to God’s people and the gospel)

Three angels fly in **midheaven** announcing final proclamations with a **loud voice** to those who dwell on earth (Rev 14:6-11)



# The Fifth Trumpet

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The fifth trumpet is the first of the 7 woes in Revelation in contrast to the 7 beatitudes of Revelation

Intensification of the divine warnings to those who are spiritually dead as a result of apostasy and persist hostility to the true gospel

Recall the fallen star “Wormwood” which fell from heaven” in the 3<sup>rd</sup> trumpet (past tense) symbolizes the fall of Satan to earth

The word “**abyss**” (Greek – abyssos) refers to the chaotic state of the earth before creation (formless, void and dark)

Stronghold and chaotic prison of the fallen angels (demons) – Luke 8:31

Demonic forces of darkness are confined by God to the abyss as they await the day of their judgment – Isa 24:21-22, Jude 6, 2 Pet 2:4

A key represents power and authority to unlock, free and release

While **Jesus possesses the key of the abyss** (bottomless pit), He authorizes Satan, the angel of the abyss, to unlock it. The powers of evil are now given the chance to do their harmful work (Rev 9:1)

Beginning of the 1000 years (millennium), an angel from heaven will be given the key of the abyss (bottomless pit) to chain Satan on earth (Rev 20:1,3)





“Many Christian expositors, including Martin Luther, the great Reformer; Sir Isaac Newton, the famous scientist; and the historian, Edward Gibbon; have seen in the fifth and sixth trumpets the rise and progress of Islam. In view of the tremendous military, religious, economic and cultural impact Islam has had on the Christian world in the nearly fourteen hundred years since its rise in the 600s, this interpretation deserves our serious attention. Islam, the religion of the followers of Mohammed, originated around A.D. 612.”

Amazing Discoveries - Walking through Revelation (Ch 9)



# Introduction - History of the rise of Islam

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Islam is a monotheistic religion based on the teachings of Prophet Muhammad

Born in 570 AD, Prophet Muhammad Abdullah was orphaned at an early age

Raised by his uncle, he became a trader and was known for his honesty

At 25, he married a wealthy widow (Khadija) who was 15 years older than him

He began worshipping in seclusion in a cave called Hira near Mecca. In 610 AD, the Angel Gabriel is said to have approached him with a revelation from Allah. His initial reaction was negative until he accepted his call as a prophet.

Muhammad's message of the oneness of God brought him in conflict with the Meccans in polytheistic Arabia. He fled Mecca in 622 AD to Medina after the death of his wife and uncle, and from the persecutions in Mecca

After the victory of the Muslims at Badr against the oppositions from the Meccans, the Muslims became a military force to be reckoned with

By his death in 632 AD, Muhammad was the most powerful religious and political leader in all of Arabia. He died in Medina. His tomb is visited by millions of Muslims every year.

At its peak, the Islamic empire stretched from Pakistan in the east to Morocco in the west. Initially spread by conquest, Islam later flourished through trade.

There are about 2 billion Muslims in the world today, second only to Christians



<https://www.worldhistory.org/islam/>

“The **Byzantine Empire** was a vast and powerful civilization with origins that can be traced to 330 A.D., when the Roman emperor Constantine dedicated a “New Rome” on the site of the ancient Greek colony of Byzantium. Though the western half of the Roman Empire crumbled and fell in 476 A.D., the **eastern half survived for 1,000 more years**, spawning a rich tradition of art, literature and learning and serving as a military buffer between Europe and Asia. The Byzantine Empire finally fell in 1453, after an Ottoman army stormed Constantinople during the reign of Constantine XI. Even after the Islamic empire absorbed Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem in the seventh century, the Byzantine emperor would remain the spiritual leader of most eastern Christians. During the seventh and eighth centuries, attacks from the Persian Empire and from Slavs, combined with internal political instability and economic regression, threatened the vast empire. A new, even more serious threat arose in the form of Islam, founded by the prophet Muhammad in Mecca in 622. In 634, Muslim armies began their **assault on the Byzantine Empire** by storming into Syria. By the end of the century, Byzantium would lose Syria, the Holy Land, Egypt and North Africa (among other territories) to Islamic forces.

The fall of Constantinople marked the end of a glorious era for the Byzantine Empire. Emperor Constantine XI died in battle that day, and the **Byzantine Empire collapsed**, ushering in the long reign of the Ottoman Empire. ”

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[HTTPS://WWW.HISTORY.COM/TOPICS/ANCIENT-MIDDLE-EAST/BYZANTINE-EMPIRE](https://www.history.com/topics/ancient-middle-east/byzantine-empire)

# The Fifth Trumpet

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Powers inspired from God come from above. Powers inspired by Satan come from beneath (bottomless pit – abyss)

“Then he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain; and he saw, and behold, the smoke of the land which went up **like the smoke of a furnace.**” – Gen 19:28

The smoke which arose from the bottomless pit changes the partial darkness of the 4<sup>th</sup> trumpet to total darkness, darkening the sun and air

**Jesus is the Sun of Righteousness**, the Light of the world and Source of the true gospel. Darkness symbolizes a lack of spiritual enlightenment from the Prince of the power of the air (Eph 2:2)

The bottomless pit is represented by the vast desolate wastelands of Arabia

As the Arabian army spread and conquered, they brought the Islamic religion, converting large areas of the world from Christian beliefs

“It spreads over 60 different countries – over North Africa, up to Spain in the west, northward into Asia Minor (Turkey) in the east, and eastward through Iran into Pakistan and India.”

**Revelation Speaks, page 66**

Islam spread in a raging flood until 732 AD when they were narrowly defeated at the Battle of Tours in France. This victory saved Western Europe from conversion to Islam.



# The Fifth Trumpet

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The fifth trumpet introduces 4 symbolic creatures: locust, horse, lion and scorpion whose natural habitat is Arabia

**Midanite & Amalekite Arabs:** “For they would come up with their livestock and their tents, coming in as numerous as locusts; both they and their camels were without number; and they would enter the land to destroy it.” – Judges 6:5

Now the Midianites and Amalekites, all the people of the East, were lying in the valley as numerous as locusts; and their camels were without number, as the sand by the seashore in multitude. – Judges 7:12

“...the east wind brought the locusts...” – Exodus 10:12-15

“Onward and still onward, like swarms from the hive, or flights of locusts darkening the land, tribe after tribe issued forth and hastening northward, spread in great masses to the East and to the West.”

**William Muir, The Caliphate: Its Rise, Decline and Fall**

However, the cloud of locusts emerging from the smoke do not harm the green grass or tree (faithful and sealed people of God) just as the plagues of Egypt

They torment as scorpions those without the seal of God on their forehead with their tail (metaphor for false teachings) – Isa 9:15b, Rev 12:4



“Remember,” said the successor of the prophet [Abu Bakr], “that you are always in the presence of God, on the verge of death, in the assurance of judgment, and the hope of paradise. Avoid injustice and oppression; consult with your brethren, and study to preserve the love and confidence of your troops. When you fight the battles of the Lord, acquit yourselves like men, without turning your backs; but let not your victory be stained with the blood of women or children. **Destroy no palm-trees, nor burn any fields of corn. Cut down no fruit-trees,** nor do any mischief to cattle, only such as you kill to eat. When you make any covenant or article, stand to it, and be as good as your word. As you go on, you will find some religious persons who live retired in monasteries, and propose to themselves to serve God that way: let them alone, and neither kill them nor destroy their monasteries. **And you will find another sort of people that belong to the synagogue of Satan, who have shaven crowns; be sure you cleave their skulls, and give them no quarter, till they either turn Mahometans or pay tribute.”**

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EDWARD GIBBON, THE HISTORY OF THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

“The “locusts” were not to hurt these pure commandment-keeping people. The Islamic conquerors did not destroy property wantonly or kill Christians and Jews so long as they agreed to pay tribute. They did, however, relentlessly attack the remainder of the Roman Empire centered in Constantinople, at whom this judgment is directed. The “locusts” are given power to “torment” like the sting of a “scorpion” for 5 months, or 150 literal years. **Starting in 1299** at the Battle of Bapheum, the Turkish Muslims began a persistent assault on the eastern Roman Empire. **In 1449, after 150 years of conflict**, the Eastern Roman, or Byzantine, Empire became a vassal state, subordinate to the Ottoman Empire. At that time Constantine XI needed the permission and backing of the Ottoman Empire to outmaneuver the other claimant to the throne, so as to become emperor. During this time period the Byzantine Empire was “tormented” by the Ottoman Empire but not yet destroyed.”

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WALKING THROUGH REVELATION, REV 9 COMMENTARY

# The Fifth Trumpet

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Rise of the Ottoman Empire (Turks): 1299 AD

Power to hurt men for 5 prophetic months => 150 literal years (using the one prophetic day = one literal year principal) lasted until 1449 AD

Edward Gibbon (skeptical and unbeliever) stated that it was on July 27, 1299 that the Ottoman Turks first invaded the Byzantine Empire which was significant to start 150 years of almost continual warfare

The fifth judgment resulted in the fall of the Byzantine Empire, which was the **eastern continuation of the Roman Empire** after the Western Roman Empire fell in the 5<sup>th</sup> century. The Byzantine Empire lasted for 1000 years until 1449 AD

“I cannot reign unless you permit”, were the words of Constantine to the Turkish Sultan in 1449 AD when he succeeded his brother as Greek emperor

The locust wings symbolize speed (like the leopard wings of Dan 7:6)

The characteristics of the locust fitly describe Arab (**Saracen**) warriors:

“The Muslim warriors were expert horsemen. With hair flowing from under their turbans, they would ride straight towards their enemies, turn around and pretend to retreat. Just as the opposing force dropped their guard, the Arabs would unleash a devastating barrage of arrows over the tails of their horses.” **Revelation Speaks, page 67**

The cavalry was a prominent feature of the Arabian and Turkish military. Their horsemen rode with strength and rapacity of lions and were seemingly unstoppable



# The Fifth Trumpet

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The Turks introduced the use of armor made of overlapping rows of small rectangular plates of **metal** or horn. This contributed to the Saracen warriors (Arabs) tactical speed and mobility.

“...Sabeans (Arabs) were brought from the wilderness with men of the common sort, who put bracelets on their wrists and **beautiful crowns** on their heads.”  
Eze 23:42

Mohammed referred to Sabbath keeping Christians and Jews the “People of the Book” 31 times in the Quran. The Quran speaks respectfully about the **People of the book** and they were spared during the dominance of the Ottoman Empire. They were not persecuted by the Muslims and allowed to practice their religion, trade freely, and enjoyed security.

The rise of Islam was for the protection of the true church. The gospel spread throughout the eastern world, even as far as China

In all their ambitious conquests, the Arabs were not able to destroy the Roman Empire. God has decreed that their role was to hurt and torment the apostate power. When they attempted to end the Roman empire, they were signally repelled, which historians still find remarkable and perplexing.

The bitterness of the Wormwood and Destroyer of Abaddon (Hebrew) or Apollyon (Greek) aptly conveys the signature of Satan’s reign



The 5<sup>th</sup> trumpet  
spanned from  
612 AD to 1449 AD



# Recap of the fifth trumpet

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The trumpets are an answer to the prayer of the saints who are being oppressed

The 5<sup>th</sup> trumpet is the period of the Dark Ages, following the prophetic cycles of the 7 churches and 7 seals, pointed at the papacy

The locust army, represented by Islam, are raised up to chastise the apostate church, the Papacy, who were persecuting God's people

Muslim armies riding on horses torments the Eastern Empire through invasions and conquests

Those with the seal of God are protected. They are God's faithful followers who are settled in the truth by the Holy Spirit and reflect the character of Jesus

Satan is the fallen star who has weakened the nations (Isa 14:12). He is given the key to the abyss - bottomless pit (control over the nations) for a time

The state of the earth during the Dark Ages is likened to the darkness over the face of the deep before creation (Gen 1:1-2)

During the Dark Ages, the devil weakens the nations resulting in the absence of the Holy Spirit (air darkened) and the Light of Jesus (sun darkened)

The Eastern Empire seeks for help from the Papacy to fight the Muslim forces. The Papacy's attention is now diverted from the Protestant Reformation to the Crusades. The rise of Islam diverts the flood and helps God's people to be nourished and strengthened (Rev 12:16)

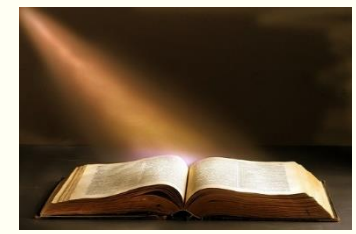
By the 13<sup>th</sup> century, Islam organizes under one leader – the Ottoman Empire



The 5<sup>th</sup> trumpet  
spanned from  
612 AD to 1449 AD

# Revelation 9:13-17

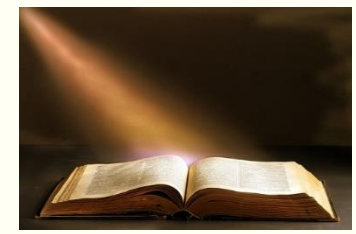
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**13** Then the sixth angel sounded: And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, **14** saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, “Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates.” **15** So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released to kill a third of mankind. **16** Now the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them. **17** And thus I saw the horses in the vision: those who sat on them had breastplates of fiery red, hyacinth blue, and sulfur yellow; and the heads of the horses were like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and brimstone.

# Revelation 9:18-21

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**18** By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed—by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which came out of their mouths. **19** For their power is in their mouth and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents, having heads; and with them they do harm. **20** But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. **21** And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.



“The Byzantine Empire had been holding the Muslims in check, now that they were no longer a threat, the Ottoman Empire turned its attention to Papal-dominated Europe, the target of this (6<sup>th</sup>) trumpet’s judgment.

The Islamic wars played a key role in helping Protestantism thrive by diverting the attention of Papal persecution long enough to help it become established.”

“From the death of Mohammed until near the close of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the Mohammedans were divided into various factions under several leaders, with no general civil government extending over them all. Near the close of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, Othman founded a government which has since been known as the Ottoman government, or empire, extending over all the principal Mohammedan tribes, consolidating them into one grand monarchy. But when did Othman make his first assault on the Greek (Roman) empire? According to Gibbon, Decline and Fall etc., Othman first entered the territory of Nicomedia on the 27<sup>th</sup> day of July, 1299. Commencing July 27, 1299, the one hundred and fifty years reach to 1449. During that whole period the Turks were enraged in an almost perpetual warfare with the Greek empire, but yet without conquering it. They seized upon and held several of the Greek provinces, but still Greek independence was maintained in Constantinople. But in 1499, the termination of the 150 years, a change came, the history of which will be found under the succeeding trumpet.”

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DANIEL AND THE REVELATION, URIAH SMITH, PAGE 390

# The Sixth Trumpet

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Each woe seem to be more severe than the one before

Arabs in their conquest of the Roman Empire were able to conquer most of the Roman territory including all of Eastern Roman Empire and a large section of Western Rome

The Ottoman Empire sets its eyes in taking over the seat of the Roman Empire in Constantinople after Constantine the 13<sup>th</sup> relinquished authority to Ottomans in 1499

The 5<sup>th</sup> trumpet ends in 1499 AD as the 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet begins

John hears a voice from the four horns of the golden altar indicating that Jesus is still ministering at the altar of incense in the Holy place

During the first six trumpets, the **daily ministration of Jesus in the Holy place** was still in progress, as He had not yet entered the last phase of His priestly ministry represented by the yearly service of the Day of Atonement

Therefore the 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet occurred before the anti-typical Day of Atonement when the High Priest moved into the Most Holy Place

Release of the four angels bound at the great river Euphrates refers to the same four angels of Rev 7 holding the four winds of the earth. The destructive demonic forces restrained by the four angels are released and localized

The woe of the 6<sup>th</sup> angel trumpet was a command beyond the tormenting restrictions of the 5<sup>th</sup> trumpet, now with permission to kill 1/3 of men



Euphrates was the eastern boundary of the Roman Empire

# The Sixth Trumpet

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The Ottoman empire can be traced back to the Turkmen nomads who migrated from Asia and established themselves in Mesopotamia (Euphrates) in the mid-11<sup>th</sup> century

Euphrates is a great river which rises in the mountains of Armenia, flows through Assyria, Syria, Mesopotamia and Babylon, and empties into the Gulf

**Babylon** is a code name for the apostate church through to the end of time

“So Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil that would come upon Babylon, all these words that are written against Babylon. Now it shall be, when you have finished reading this book, that you shall tie a stone to it and throw it out into the Euphrates.” – Jeremiah 51: 60, 63

Destructive forces have no freedom to act until God allows them

The four angels were loosed for 1 hour + 1 day + 1 month + 1 year => **391 literal years and 15 days** to execute judgment against Babylon (Papacy)

**Sultan Mehmed II captured city of Constantinople**, the Byzantine Empire’s capital in May 29, 1453 using cannon and gun powder and renamed it Istanbul. With the death of the last Constantine, the eastern city of the Caesars became the seat of the Ottoman’s empire.

The great city of Constantinople had stood for 1100 years through eight determined but vain attempts to capture it. However, Mehmed II succeeded, who renamed himself Hunkiar “the slayer of men.”



The 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet spanned 391 years from 1449 AD to 1840 AD

# Ottoman Empire



<https://www.britannica.com/place/Ottoman-Empire>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Ottoman\\_Empire\\_Administrative\\_Divisions.png](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Ottoman_Empire_Administrative_Divisions.png)



# The Sixth Trumpet

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John hears the number of the army **200,000,000**, a counterfeit of God's people. In Rev 7, John hears the symbolic number of the church militant, the **144,000** sealed saints

Edward Gibbon commenting on the invasions of the Turks states, "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...200,000 soldiers marched under his banners." – The History of the Decline and Fall of The Roman Empire, Vol 6, page 252, 260

Ottoman cavalry "**Sipahi**" of horsemen was the swiftest and most mobile of their military. An army of 200 million is symbolic of an innumerable host of cavalry.

Red, blue and yellow were the colors of the uniforms of the Turkish army. They destroyed with the fierceness of a lion and filled Europe with fear and terror. This indisputably identifies the Turks who destroyed 1/3 part of the Roman Empire

The horse's tail was the Turks' badge of authority and symbol of office and power

The symbolism of fire, smoke and brimstone fits perfectly with the Ottoman Turks. The Ottoman Empire was called a Gunpowder Empire because their strong military conquered using the Chinese invention – gunpowder. The Turks were the first to use artillery, rifles and gunpowder in cannon and bombs.

From history, we see an **amazing prophecy which was fulfilled** when the Ottoman Empire who was in control for 391 years and 15 days submitted back to the Christian nations (July 27, 1449 through August 11, 1840)



As the Turks discharge their firearms on horseback, it would appear to the distant beholder that the fire, smoke, and brimstone, issued out of the horses' mouth."

Daniel and the Revelation, page 392

“In 1838, Turkey suppressed a rebellion by Egypt, who then offered to pay the Turkish sultan tribute of \$750,000,000. This was obviously a stalling tactic because Egypt successfully attacked the Turks the next year (1839), captured its naval fleet, and decimating its army. With only three ships left and a greatly weakened army, battles in 1840 would obviously witness the complete destruction of the Ottoman Empire and new dominance by Egyptian extremists, that is, unless God moved upon Christian nations to help the Ottomans. England, Russia, Austria and Prussia, four Christian nations with their massive fleets, came to Turkey’s assistance and established ultimatums against Egypt. They reduced the boundaries of Egyptian rule and forced the Pasha of Egypt, Mehemet Ali, to return the fleet to the Turkish Sultan. The weakened Ottoman Empire legally admitted that their existence depended upon the support of Christian nations when this ultimatum took effect, as it was hand delivered to the Egyptians by the Turkish envoy on August 11, 1840, in fulfillment of Bible prophecy. The humbled Sultan of the Ottoman Empire saved his reign and probably his life by accepting this protection from those Christian powers. The Turkish Sultan then watched the dismemberment of his weakened Empire as his “protectors” appropriated parts of his dominion to their own use, piece by piece.”

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[HTTP://WWW.REVEALED.ORG/JOSIAHLITCH.HTML](http://www.revealed.org/josiahlitch.html)

# Reflections

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Two years before 1840, in 1838, a Methodist Episcopal minister, Josiah Litch, predicted that the Ottoman Empire would fall in August 11, 1840 based on the Revelation 9

Protestantism had risen in 1517 and millions of the people had left the apostate church to become Protestants. History is clear that had it not been for the Turks, Protestantism would have never survived.

“In the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, support and encouragement for Protestants and Calvinists was one of the fundamental principles of Ottoman policy.”  
The Ottoman State and its place in world history, page 53

“There would have been no Protestantism had there been no Turk.” – A Brief Historical Background to the Religion and Thought of the Moslem World, page 72

The judgment by the Turks was ineffective in bringing the apostate church to repentance

The 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet shows the **reliability of Bible prophecy**. The Arabs of the 5<sup>th</sup> trumpet protected the Church of the East from the attacks of the Papal apostasy. The Turks of the 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet protected the Protestant Reformation from the assaults of the Papal apostasy.

After the 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet, the Turks never again play come in the prophetic picture. The conflict moves westward to Europe, involving the papacy, the United States and finally the whole world

The **worship of devils** (demons and dead men deified), the worship of saints and images point to the apostate church failure to repent indicating the approaching cessation of intercession



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