



## Lesson 89

### The Taliban and the Formalization

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Two recent events have taken place, the formalization of the message, and the events in Afghanistan. While they seem to be separate topics, they are connected in a way. In this lesson, we'll look at the Taliban, and their actions in Afghanistan. We'll also look at some events in Millerite history which connect to recent events, then we'll see how the recent events connect with the formalization.

## The Taliban

### The Soviet-Afghan war

Afghanistan has played a major role in our reform line long before recently. Afghanistan first appeared in the ten years from 1979 to 1989. This was the time of the Soviet war in Afghanistan or Soviet-Afghan war. In 1978 the president of Afghanistan was overthrown and killed by the army in what is called the Saur Revolution; this happened because he had started distancing himself from the USSR and persecuting the Marxist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA)- who the army was sympathetic to. Nur Muhammad Taraki became the new leader, he was a part of the PDPA. The PDPA had two factions: one that wanted to quickly, and possibly violently, make Afghanistan communist and the other, which wanted to change Afghanistan slowly. Taraki was part of the faction that wanted to do things quickly; he started to make changes to Afghanistan and the mostly Muslim population didn't like that, so they began to rebel. He also persecuted the other faction of the PDPA, and signed the Soviet-Afghan Friendship Treaty of 1978 (one of the things the treaty said was that Afghanistan could ask the USSR for military help). But in September of 1979 Taraki was killed by Hafizullah Amin (the second in command) and Amin became the one in charge of Afghanistan. Things got no better in Afghanistan and rebellion spread. The USSR didn't want to give the leaders of Afghanistan any help (even though they kept asking) but they did start sending a few things. Then on December 24, 1979 the USSR flew some of their troops into Kabul at night. On December 27<sup>th</sup>, also at night, the soldiers attacked the palace where Amin was and killed him. They then made Babrak Karmal the leader of Afghanistan. Karmal was the leader of the faction of PDPA that wanted to change Afghanistan slowly and he had been exiled when the other faction was in power. The Soviets told the people of Afghanistan that Karmal had asked for them to send in military aid. Also on the 27<sup>th</sup> soldiers crossed the border into Afghanistan. Over 100,000 Soviet soldiers ended up in Afghanistan. They thought they would help the problems in Afghanistan, but they just made it worse. The regular people of Afghanistan didn't like the Soviet soldiers and they attacked them when they could. The Soviets took control of the cities, but they could not control the country. They were resisted by Afghan fighters called the Mujahideen (there were many different groups who took on that name)- they believed that they were fighting to free Islamic Afghanistan from the atheists and Christians: the Soviets. The Mujahideen fought the USSR guerrilla style all over the country. They were supported by many countries including the US, the UK, Saudi Arabia and even China. The Soviets did whatever they could to try to stop them from leveling villages (where they could stay) to sending spies to infiltrate the groups and stop them from fighting. In 1986, the Soviets replaced Karmal with Mohammed Najibullah, but not much changed. The Soviet Union was severely weakened by the Mujahideen and in 1987 the current leader: Gorbachev decided they would leave. In 1988, the USSR started to withdraw their troops, and the last soldiers left Afghanistan on February 15, 1989. The USSR's defeat in Afghanistan contributed to the fall of the Berlin wall on November 9<sup>th</sup> and its full collapse in 1991. But the civil war in Afghanistan continued between the

communist government of Afghanistan (under Najibullah) backed by the Afghan army and the citizens until 1992. In March of 1992 some Mujahideen groups took over the country (and they began to fight between themselves).

## **Who is the Taliban?**

The Taliban is a Sunni Islamic group that focuses on religion and power within Afghanistan. They were formed in September 1994 because of the 1989 Soviet troop withdrawal. It was formed by Mullah Mohammad Omar and fifty of his students. (Within months, that number had grown to 15,000.) Omar was a former Mujahideen fighter during the Soviet-Afghan war and the civil war that continued from 1978 to 1992 where he lost an eye in an explosion. After the war, he taught in a school in a small village. The Taliban holds conservative views regarding the role of women; women are to cover their heads, stay home, and not have jobs. The Taliban is not a terrorist organization, however, they can resort to brutal methods to get their way.

## **The Taliban takes control of Afghanistan**

The Taliban took control of Afghanistan in 1996. In 1979, The Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan to support communism in the country; they set up a new government with a new president. A war soon broke out between the USSR and Mujahideen guerrilla rebels. Millions of Afghans fled the war to Pakistan; and Islamic sects took the opportunity to set up religious schools in these areas. It was in these schools where thousands of refugee children were indoctrinated and went on to form the Taliban. As the Afghan-Soviet war continued, the US began funding the Mujahideen. In 1989, the US, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and USSR signed peace accords that guaranteed Afghanistan's independence and began the withdrawal of Soviet troops. The Mujahideen and other rebels took advantage of this and in 1992 they stormed Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, and ousted the Soviet backed president from power. The Mujahideen then established the Peshuwar accord, which formed the Islamic State of Afghanistan and united all Afghan parties except for one: the Hezb-e Islami. Kabul then came under attack by forces loyal to the Hezb-e Islami. The sudden onset of war left the new government unprepared, and left Kabul unprotected, with southern and eastern Afghanistan under the control of local commanders. In 1994 the Taliban comes in. They began taking control of southern Afghanistan- forcing the local leaders to surrender. The Taliban promised to bring peace, which Afghans wanted after living during years of war. On the other hand, though, the Taliban imposed harsh interpretations of Islam; but since they were bringing about peace in the territories they controlled, and since Afghans were so tired of war, they were willing to obey the strict laws- so support of the Taliban quickly spread. In 1995, the Taliban was determined to take control of Afghanistan's capital- Kabul. But they suffered a devastating defeat by the Islamic State of Afghanistan's forces. In 1996, the Taliban rallied support from both Pakistan and Saudi Arabia for another attack on the capital. Before the fighting started, the Islamic State of Afghanistan's leader Massoud ordered a full retreat from Kabul. The next day, on September 26, 1996, the Taliban entered Kabul and established the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. Although the Taliban brought peace to Afghanistan, they are not good people. They publicly executed and beat people, as well as publicly humiliated people for small crimes- like stealing candy. They committed massacres against Afghans civilians, denied much needed UN food supplies, and much more; particularly their extreme sexism. So, in 1996 the Taliban began their strict rule over Afghanistan for 5 years.

## **September 11, 2001**

The terrorist attacks on the United States on 9/11 were carried out by Al-Qaeda (Al-Qaida). Osama bin Laden (Al-Qaeda's leader) and his group were in Afghanistan at that time because the Taliban had allowed them to stay there. Bin Laden had even made friends with the leader of the Taliban (Mullah Mohammad Omar). After the terrorist attacks, the United States told the Taliban to hand over Osama bin Laden, but they would not. So on October 7, 2001 the US and allies invaded Afghanistan. The US called the mission Operation Enduring Freedom and this all happened under former president George W. Bush. On November 9<sup>th</sup> the US and its allies took control of a major city in northern Afghanistan: Mazar-e Sharif (the Taliban's first major defeat). By November 13<sup>th</sup> they had entered Kabul. Shortly thereafter, by December, the Taliban was officially overthrown.

## **The Afghanistan war**

On October 7, 2001, George W. Bush launched an attack on Afghanistan after they refused to hand Osama bin Laden over. However, the war against Afghanistan started shortly before that in September; on September 26<sup>th</sup>, the first US troops (US Special Forces) covertly enter Afghanistan. Over the course of the war, the US and its allies built many military bases, however, they failed to capture many Taliban or Al-Qaeda fighters. While in Afghanistan, the United States didn't know how to separate Al-Qaeda from the Taliban. The Taliban was ruling Afghanistan at the time. The US viewed them as terrorists and began attacking them, removing them from power; most of the fighters went to Pakistan. In 2003, the Taliban returned to Afghanistan. They set up a base and gathered a thousand fighters there. In the few years following, Navy SEALs and US Marine Corps launched several attacks against the Taliban in order to keep them at bay and give the country time to form a new government. The war only escalated and NATO members got more involved. On May 2, 2011, Osama bin Laden's compound in Pakistan was raided by Navy SEALs in an operation code-named Operation Neptune Spear; he was killed and his body was dumped into the sea. That was when the US should have left Afghanistan: they'd accomplished the mission they set out for. But instead, they stayed for a decade longer.

## **Withdrawal from Afghanistan**

The withdrawal of American troops from Afghanistan didn't happen at once, but was a string of events that took place over two years. On February 29, 2020, the US (under Trump) and the Taliban signed an agreement that set the terms of the US's withdrawal from Afghanistan, which was set to be complete by May 1, 2021. There were about 13,000 troops in the country at this time. The deal also included the release of 5,000 Taliban fighters from Afghanistan's prisons even though Afghanistan's president never agreed to this. On March 10, 2020, Afghanistan's president, under pressure from the US, began releasing the prisoners, 1,500 a day. The deal in February also stated that the Taliban had to fight against terrorist organizations, but on August 18, 2020, the US's Department of Defense stated that the Taliban wasn't distancing itself from terrorist organizations. By June of 2020, the US had reduced its troop numbers from 13,000 to about 8,600. On September 12, 2020, Taliban representatives and Afghan government officials met for peace talks, but even

still, days later the Taliban continued its attacks on the government. On November 17, 2020, the US Secretary of Defense announced that the number of troops would be reduced to 2,500 by January 15, 2021. And just as he said, on January 15, 2021, troop levels were at 2,500. On January 19, 2021, which was the day before he was inaugurated as president, Biden reiterated his promise to bring all of the American troops in Afghanistan back home. As president, Biden continued to follow through with the Trump administration's withdrawal even though violence from the Taliban in Afghanistan continued to spike. On April 14, 2021, President Biden extended the deadline for withdrawal from May 1<sup>st</sup> to September 11<sup>th</sup>. On July 6, 2021, the US military confirmed that it had pulled out of its largest airfield in Afghanistan- Bagram. Two days later, on July 8<sup>th</sup>, President Biden moved up the deadline from September 11<sup>th</sup>, to August 31<sup>st</sup>. On July 24, 2021, Trump went to a rally and commented on the withdrawal; he claimed that the Taliban "had a real understanding" while he was in office, but now that Biden was handling things they were "going wild over there." On August 31, 2021, the final Military C-17 carried the last troops out of Afghanistan, marking the end of the 20-year long war. But they still left 100-200 Americans in the country and thousands of Afghans who helped the US, that the Taliban may take revenge on. So, the withdrawal began in the Trump Administration on February 29, 2020, and ended in the Biden administration on August 31, 2021.

## Significant Dates

### May 2 and July 21, 1844

One of the most important parts in Millerite history is the time from April 19 to October 22, 1844. That corresponds roughly to the dispensation from 2014 to November 9, 2019 on the line of the Priests. From that portion of Millerite history we can also get the pattern: Boston, Concord, Exeter. Those dates are all about Samuel Snow. After Jesus didn't come in 1843 the Millerites were disappointed and they began to study. One of those people was Snow. On February 16, 1843, he began a series of letters about why the 1843 disappointment happened and when Jesus would actually come. On May 2<sup>nd</sup> he published his most important letter in the Millerite periodical *The Midnight Cry*. In that letter Samuel Snow said that the 2300 days had to end in the fall of 1844 if you look at the last week of the Jews. He also said that because of the types in the services God gave to the Jews, Jesus has to come back in the 7<sup>th</sup> month of the Jewish year. This letter on May 2, 1844 is an important waymark in the time leading up to October 22<sup>nd</sup>- here we can clearly see the message developing. After the letters, Samuel Snow began to present the truths he found- the Midnight Cry message. He first presented it on July 21, 1844. That happened in Boston and the Millerites began to believe him (he later presented in Concord and then Exeter). So the development of the Midnight Cry message can be marked beginning on May 2, 1844 and continuing through July 21<sup>st</sup> to August 15<sup>th</sup> (and beyond).

### The Taliban begins to re-take control

On April 14, 2021, President Joseph R. Biden announced that he would begin removing all US troops from Afghanistan and would be finished by September 11, 2021. Previously, US troops were to be removed by May 1<sup>st</sup> but the Taliban allowed that deadline to be extended. But in the first few days of May, as the US began removing its troops, the Taliban began a lightning-speed takeover of Afghanistan. In the Millerite history, May 2<sup>nd</sup> began the development of the Midnight Cry message which parallels what happened in early May in Afghanistan when the Taliban began taking over.

### The Taliban takes half of Afghanistan

July 21<sup>st</sup> can be seen as a waymark in Afghanistan. Previously we saw how in Millerite history, May 2 and July 21, 1844 were important waymarks in Millerite history. These waymarks can parallel what has happened in the recent months. On May 2, 1844, Samuel Snow published a significant letter, and in early May 2021 the Taliban began to take control of Afghanistan. On July 21, 1844, Samuel Snow preached in Boston. The date July 21, 1844 is midway between two other significant dates in Millerite history: April 19, 1844 and October 22, 1844. This parallels an event in the recent months. By July 21, 2021, the Taliban had taken control of half of Afghanistan's district centers. There are 419 district centers in Afghanistan and the Taliban had taken control of over 200 of them. This can parallel July 21, 1844 because Boston was Midway, and the Taliban had taken control of half. But we aren't making this a primary application. We know that July 21, 1844's primary application is that it parallels 2014 on the Priests' line; in this lesson, we're just recognizing the significance of the dates that major events today are taking place on.

## Internal and External

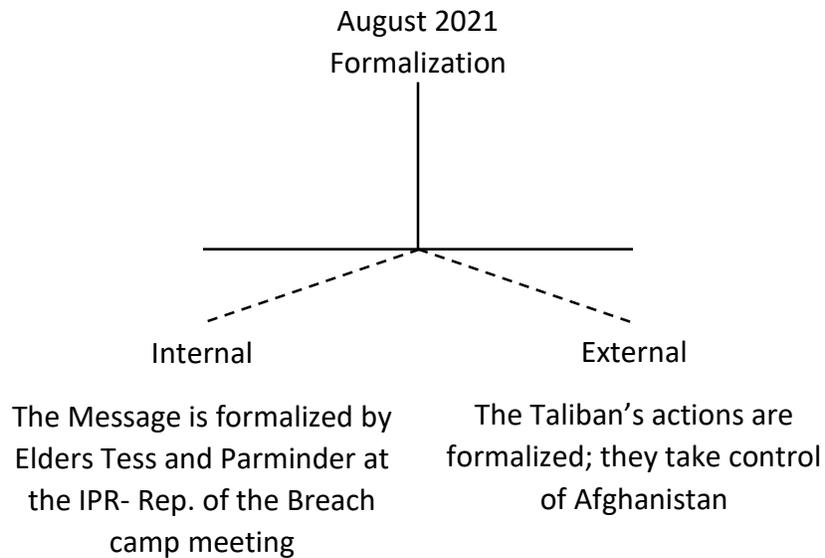
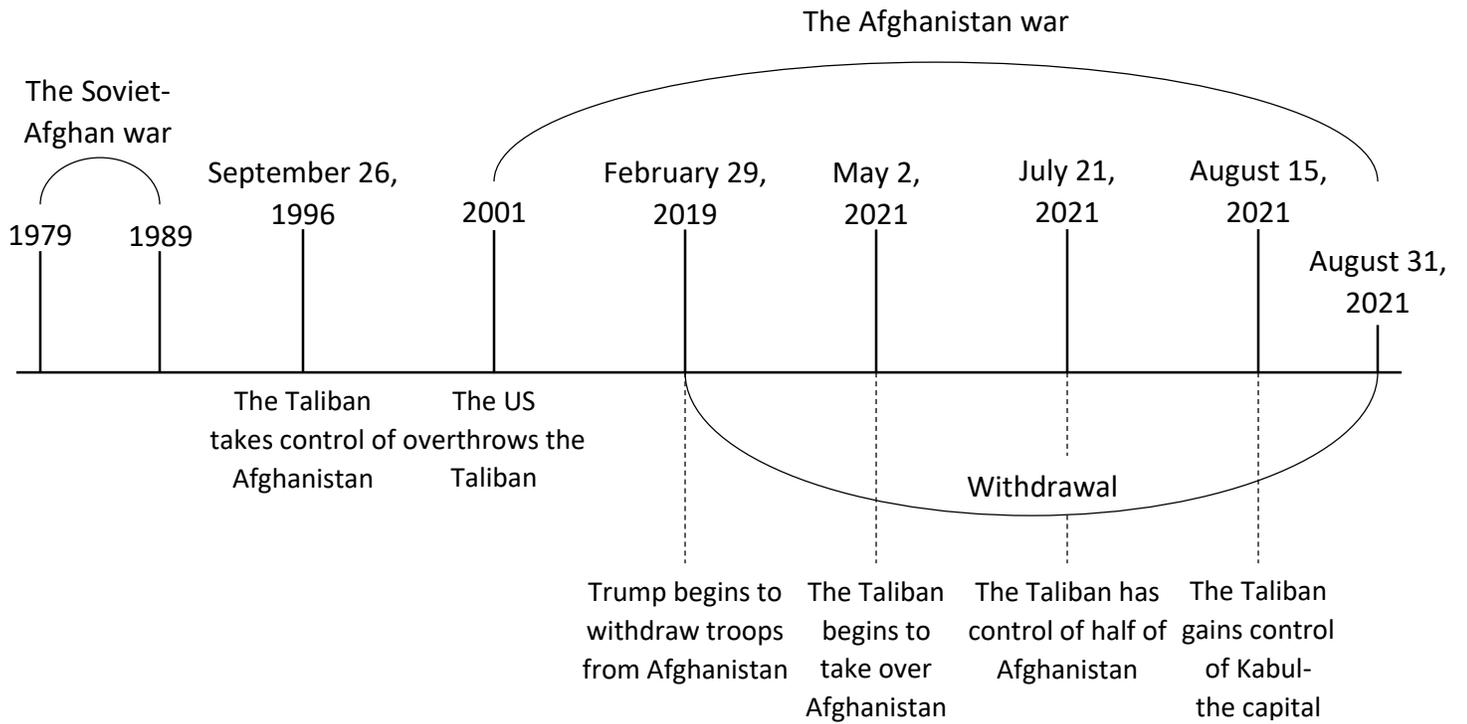
### The Taliban re-takes control of Afghanistan

On August 15, 2021, a major event in the fall of Afghanistan took place. The Taliban took the capital city: Kabul. The United States predicted the week before that Kabul wouldn't be taken over by the Taliban for at least 30 days, some officials even said 90 days. The President of Afghanistan, Ashraf Ghani, fled the country on August 15<sup>th</sup> as the Taliban was approaching the capital. That day Taliban fighters entered the city. Many foreigners as well as Afghans fled to the airport to try to get out of the country because they feared the Taliban. That led to all of the problems at the airport that we have heard about. Some prisoners- mostly Taliban fighters- broke out of the main prison in the city. All of the police disappeared and the Taliban fighters took their place. They even entered the presidential palace- where the president had been. They entered the capital unresisted and by sunset there were tons of them. The Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan culminating with them entering the capital city happened much faster than everyone else thought possible.

### The Formalization

August 2021 was the formalization- both internally and externally. Externally, we know this from the Millerite history. The dispensation from July 1844 to October 22, 1844 has two waymarks in the middle: Concord and Exeter. Concord was August 1<sup>st</sup> and Exeter was August 15<sup>th</sup>. On the priests' line, we are in the dispensation from November 9, 2019 to sometime in the near future this year (2021). Like all dispensations, there are two waymarks in the middle; the first was May 25, 2020, and the second was August 15, 2021- just like the Millerite history. On August 15, 2021, the Taliban took control of Afghanistan, again. During this time leading up to 2021 (Panium), we know that we are to see the activities of Islam, and while the Taliban is not a terrorist organization, they have provided protection for actual terrorist groups like Al-Qaeda in the past. Internally, the formalization happened a little bit later, but during the same month. During the end of August (25<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>) the Institute of Prophetic Research in connection with the Repairers of the Breach held a Zoom camp meeting in which Elders Tess and Parminder formalized the message. So in August 2021, the message was formalized with both the camp meeting and the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan.

**In summary:**



If you have any questions or comments on any of the material contact us (YPG) at:  
[youthprophecygroup@gmail.com](mailto:youthprophecygroup@gmail.com)

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Link to YPG Zoom meetings which are at 10:00am Pacific Time on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays of the month:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87170293849>