

Perspective

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“Islamic NATO” in prophecy?

It has been a topic long debated among Bible students, is it now possible we are seeing this prophecy unfold before our eyes? We simply could not have anticipated it would begin to happen in the midst of the U.S.-Iran War and that our strategic allies would be involved. Turkey, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia yet have strategic ties with the United States. However, their recent trilateral defense pact, reflects a growing regional autonomy, which raises eyebrows, since it also includes Iran, and possibly Egypt. Could this new Islamic alliance create the long-debated king of the South mentioned in Daniel 11? What else should we look for in the future?

Ancient kings of the North and South

In ancient times, the “king of the North” mentioned in Daniel 11 is actually a series of Greek kings in Syria of the Seleucid Empire. Syria is located north of Israel, so is identified as the “king of the North.” Egypt is to the south of Israel, so a series of Egyptian kings of the Ptolemaic dynasty is the “king of the South” in this passage. It just so happens that Israel was the bridge between these powers. Israel, being in-between, was dominated at different times by either of these two competing powers.

In the modern sense, these two kings are symbolic of what will occur in the end-time. As Daniel 11:40 clearly states, this prophecy is intended for the end of this age. The prophet Daniel was very anxious about what would happen to Israel: *“Although I heard, I did not understand. Then I said, ‘My lord, what shall be the end of these things?’ And he said, ‘Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.’”* (Daniel 12:8-9)

Daniel could not possibly understand the prophecy revealed to him. He lived in captivity in the 6th century BC in Babylon during the Persian period. Historical and textual evidence points to his death long before the emergence of the Ptolemaic and Seleucid empires came on the scene in the early 3rd century BC, following the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BC. Alexander the Great was born in July of 356 BC in Pella, the capital of the ancient kingdom of Macedon. He died at the age of 32 after conquering most of the known world. Upon his death, the Greek Empire was divided into four regions by his generals. Two generals became dominate, and it was divided into the Seleucid Empire to the North and the Ptolemaic Empire became the king of the South.

Wikipedia states about these two great empires: “The Ptolemaic Kingdom of Egypt and the Seleucid Empire fought frequent and protracted wars over control of the Levant, especially the region known as Coele-Syria (modern Israel, Palestine, and parts of Lebanon), which was a vital trade and military corridor between Asia and Egypt.”

Modern king of the North

The Bible reveals the Holy Roman Empire will have one last resurrection in the end time. In Daniel 7:3, the prophet Daniel describes four great beasts, each one diverse, emerging from a turbulent sea, which pictures the teeming millions of peoples on Earth. These beasts are symbolic of successive world ruling empires that would rise and fall in history. Who are these mysterious beasts in history?

The 1st beast to arise is a lion with eagle’s wings. It pictured the Babylonian Empire, which also is the head of gold in Daniel 2. The lion symbolizes power and majesty; the eagle’s wings represent the ability of the empire to swiftly conquer their enemies (Daniel 7:4). The plucking of its wings and transforming into a man who was given a man’s heart pictures the vain, arrogant King Nebuchadnezzar. God humbled him by causing him to act as an animal. He was driven from people, and he lived like an animal eating grass and growing nails like bird claws. When the king came to himself and recognized God, he was restored as king and was given a human heart (Daniel 4:32-34).

The 2nd beast is represented as the bear with three ribs in its mouth (Daniel 7:5). The bear symbolizes the Medo-Persian Empire. The Medes and Persians are compared to a bear because of their cruelty and thirst after blood; a bear is a most voracious and cruel animal.

The 3rd beast is pictured as a leopard with four wings and four heads (Daniel 7:6). It represents the Greco-Macedonian Empire. When Alexander the Great ruled the Greek Empire, his style of warfare was with a leopard’s speed. The four heads symbolize four of his generals, who divided up the empire after Alexander’s death.

Daniel 7:7 prophesied a 4th beast which would emerge from this world. It is quite different than the previous three in its government. *Wikipedia* says, “The Roman Empire began in 27 BC when Octavian, later known as Augustus Caesar, was granted supreme power by the Roman Senate.” *Britannica* continues, “This marked the official end of the Roman Republic and the start of imperial rule. After years of civil wars in the 1st century BC, Octavian defeated his rivals, including Mark Antony and Cleopatra, at the Battle of Actium in 31 BC, securing control over Rome and its provinces. In 27 BC, the Senate bestowed upon him the title princeps (“first citizen”), and he assumed full authority, establishing the principate — a system blending elements of monarchy and republicanism.”

Revelation 17:3 pictures a harlot woman riding this 4th beast, and it says, “...*And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.*”

The woman symbolizes the great false church which exercises control over the beast. The beast she sits on with seven heads represents seven successive revivals of the Holy Roman Empire influenced by the Roman papacy. This began in AD 554 under Roman Emperor Justinian I, after his re-established Byzantine control over Rome.

The apostle John was shown a vision way forward into our time in Revelation 17:10: “*There are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come.*” So, John saw a time when six resurrections of the Holy Roman Empire have already happened. Revelation 17:12-14 then says, “*The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet...*” They join a short while with the beast and they will fight Jesus Christ at His return; they will be utterly defeated. The Holy Roman Empire has always been in Europe, and that is where we expect the king of the North will emerge when the final seventh resurrection occurs.

What is the potential of the Mecca Pact?

This Islamic pact between Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan has been somewhat of a surprise; yet not surprisingly, it is ignored by most of the mainstream media. The ramifications of this pact are many, especially since the members are strategic allies of the U.S., and Turkey is a NATO member which even hosts NATO nukes.

Newsonline24.com gives us more information about the pact: “The new defence pact between Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkey could expand beyond its three founding members. The agreement, signed in Mecca, has opened the possibility of other countries joining the new regional security framework.”

The *Washington Examiner* reported in an article, “An ‘Islamic NATO’ is born,” “Calling the pact an ‘Islamic NATO’ may be premature. But it is not an absurd comparison. Together, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Pakistan represent roughly 375 million people and spend more than \$120 billion annually on defense. More important than the numbers, however, is what each country brings to the arrangement. Saudi Arabia brings money, energy leverage, and a commanding geographic position in the Gulf and Red Sea. Turkey brings NATO’s second-largest military and a rapidly expanding domestic defense industry capable of producing drones, missiles, armored vehicles, electronic warfare systems, and aerospace technology. Pakistan brings one of the world’s largest militaries, decades of combat experience, and an estimated nuclear arsenal of roughly 170 warheads...” Also, interestingly, Iran has already been invited to join this pact, and possibly Egypt will be invited. Bangladesh is open to join the Mecca Pact but is carefully weighing its national interests before making a decision.

Is this the modern-day king of the South rising?

We cannot be absolutely sure, but it is quite interesting what Daniel 11 says about the nations of this region of the world. As we have witnessed, things can rapidly change in the world! What does Daniel’s prophecy say?

Daniel 11:40 says the king of the South pushes at the king of the North, and the northern king comes at him with fury and tears through them, like a hot knife slicing through butter. He swiftly enters the Holy Land and Judea. Notice it says Edom, Moab, and Ammon escape, but Egypt does not. Edom is modern Turkey, and Moab and Ammon are modern-day Jordan. Maybe, the beast overlooks Turkey, because they are a part of NATO.

Daniel 11:43 says, “*He shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; also, the Libyans and Ethiopians shall follow at his heels.*” The *Vulgate* renders the rest of the verse, “*And he shall pass also through Libya and Ethiopia.*”

In verse 44, the king of the North then storms off to fight a menace emanating from the Northeast---the area known as Gog and Magog, which is likely Russia and China. Europe has historically fought with Russia, and it is likely to be an issue in the end time.

We are living in very troubling times, but remember what Jesus said, “*And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.*” (Matthew 24:6). Other prophesied events are yet to come. He that endures to the end shall be saved! (Matthew 24:13)