



## CHRISTIAN CRUSADE FOR TRUTH

### Intelligence Newsletter

*"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:32.*

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## Empires and Their Demise

When we study the Bible, then the history of all of the civilizations and empires from the earliest of times and then the philosophies which directed all of those people in their actions, we can become confused. The only way we can retain some sense of purpose is to realize that God is in command of all of the history, all of the philosophies and all of the actions of the peoples. The world belongs to Him and it is His footstool! *"Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest? Hath not my hand made all these things?"* ([Acts 7:49-50](#)).

We, back through the pages of time, built many houses (Empires and Civilizations) for Him. But none of those houses suited Him. Thus, they failed. Furthermore, they failed in the same pattern and nearly all of them lasted approximately the same period of time. This issue of the *Intelligence Newsletter* will be a study of the Empires of the near past. We will find the driving forces of human nature. It is the backbone of the Philosophies.

First, we must give some definitions for the theologians, the historians, and the philosophers.

Theology is: 1. The study of God and the relation between God and the universe; study of religious doctrines and matters of divinity. 2. A specific form or system of this study, as expounded by a particular religion or denomination. Among the specific forms or systems of the study of theology are: *ascetical theology, Biblical theology, dogmatic theology, moral theology, natural theology, New England theology, new theology, polemic theology, rational theology, revealed theology, speculative theology, and systematic theology.*

History is an account of what has happened in the life or development of a people, country, institution, etc., and the systematic account of this, usually with an analysis and explanation.

Philosophy is the study of the processes governing thought and conduct; theory or investigation of the principles or laws that regulate the universe and underlie all knowledge and reality; a particular system of principles for the conduct of life; a study of human morals, character, and behavior.

We should readily see that all three of those disciplines, theology, history and philosophy, are making an attempt (some sincere and honest and some politically oriented) to understand why Empires and Civilizations fail. The end desire of all of us is to understand that simple passage, "what house will ye build me? The word "house" is meant to mean Country, Empire or Civilization. That should give us a better understanding of the words of Jesus in [Matthew 23:38](#), *"Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."*

The Empire of that "house" discussed by Jesus in [Matthew 23](#) was destroyed but the philosophies which formed that "house" did not die. Rudyard Kipling wrote in one of his

poems, "The East is East and the West is West and never the twain shall meet." We have an old saying in the West that states this in another way. "The unstoppable has collided with the unmovable!" The net sum of all of the theologians, the historians and the philosophers is encompassed in those two famous sayings.

For a country or nation to have "Empire" status is must either directly control many other countries by possession or by political, judicial, and military means. Thus a single nation of "Super-Power" status, such as the United States can be classified as an Empire. Most all of the empires throughout history have been one, huge land mass without distant, overseas, possessions.

Empires do not suddenly appear out of nowhere, they possess enormous power, and then they mysteriously die. Another empire replaces it, and so on down through history. There is a certain pattern that always seems to follow each empire during its lifetime. None of them disappear mysteriously but have a certain common pattern.

The length of the life time of each empire is surprisingly similar. An empire does not instantly appear and just as instantly, decay and die. However, each empire throughout history has existed for approximately ten generations of human life. We generally think of a generation of a particular people to be about 25 years. That is about the average age when a couple has their children. We know that it can be as short as 14-15 years and as long as 40-45 years but 25 years is the average. History has shown the life of empires to be approximately 250 years or ten generations.

We will show this to be true by giving the life-spans of several well-known empires. Since Empires aren't made instantly and they don't die instantly, we can only estimate the exact life-span. From the series of essays by Sir John Glubb, William Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh Scotland, we find the following time table for the duration of various Empires:

The Assyrian Empire rose to power about 859 B.C. and decayed about 612 B.C. for 247 years. The Persian Empire from about 538 to 330 B.C. for 208 years. The Alexandrian Greece Empire from 331 to 100 B.C.

Continuing: The Roman Republic (as differentiated from the Roman Empire) 260-27 B.C. for 235 years (Of course, there were Roman Kingdoms even before the famous Roman Republic). The Roman Empire from 27 B.C. to 180 A.D. for 207 years. The Arab Empire from 634 A.D. to 880 A.D. for 246 years. Spain became an Empire when the Spanish explorers sailed the world starting around 1500 A.D. and their empire ended around 1750 A.D. for 250 years. Finally, the British Empire began around 1700 and officially ended in 1950, lasting for 250 years. Again, these are approximate dates but the beginning and the end of their empire status was approximately ten generations.

It doesn't seem to make much difference in the type or speed of travel to determine the potential lifetime of an Empire. Early Empires of the past traveled by foot. Later, there was the use of horses and chariots. Then came the use of ocean going sailing ships. The steam ships came into use. None of these made any difference in their life-spans.

The same can be said of the technologies of war or the system of commerce. None of these made much difference. All that did was to increase the carnage in the course of conquest and war. We will quote from Sir John Glubb's essays to make this point.

"Again and again in history we find a small nation, treated as insignificant by its contemporaries, suddenly emerging from its home-land and overrunning large areas of the world. Prior to Philip (359-336 B.C.), Macedon had been an insignificant state to the north of Greece. Persia was the great power of the time, completely dominating the area from

Eastern Europe to India. Yet by 323 B.C., thirty-six years after the accession of Philip, the Persian Empire had ceased to exist, and the Macedonian Empire extended from the Danube to India, including Egypt."

"This amazing expansion may perhaps be attributed to the genius of Alexander the Great, but this cannot have been the sole reason; for although after his death everything went wrong- the Macedonian generals fought one another and established rival empires- Macedonian pre-eminence survived for 231 years."

"In the year A.D. 600, the world was divided between two superpower groups as it has been for the past fifty years between Soviet Russia and the West. The two powers were the eastern Roman Empire and the Persian Empire. The Arabs were then the despised and backward inhabitants of the Arabian Peninsula. They consisted chiefly of wandering tribes, and had no government, no constitution and no army. Syria, Palestine, Egypt and North Africa were Roman provinces, Iraq was part of Persia."

"The Prophet Mohammed preached in Arabia from A.D. 613 to 632, when he died. In 633, the Arabs burst out of their desert peninsula, and simultaneously attacked the two super-powers. Within twenty years, the Persian Empire had ceased to exist. Seventy years after the death of the Prophet, the Arabs had established an empire extending from the Atlantic to the plains of Northern India and the frontiers of China."

"At the beginning of the thirteenth century, the Mongols were a group of savage tribes in the steppes of Mongolia. In 1211, Genghis Khan invaded China. By 1258, the Mongols had established an empire extending from Asia Minor to the China Sea, one of the largest empires the world has ever known."

"The Arabs ruled the greater part of Spain for 780 years, from 712 A.D. to 1492. (780 years back in British history would take us to 1196 and King Richard Coeur de Lion.) During these eight centuries, there had been no Spanish nation, the petty kings of Aragon and Castile alone holding on in the mountains."

"The agreement between Ferdinand and Isabella and Christopher Columbus was signed immediately after the fall of Granada, the last Arab kingdom in Spain, in 1492. Within fifty years, Cortez had conquered Mexico, and Spain was the world's greatest empire."

"Examples of the sudden outbursts which empires are born could be multiplied indefinitely. These random illustrations must suffice." End of quotes.

What can be observed here is that a once great Empire, standing proud over a great expanse of the world, would fall, along with another great Empire, also standing proud beside the first one. These two empires would fall into the hands of a small, insignificant, group of people. They couldn't even have been classified as a sovereign nation in their own right. But they would rise up, out of their once insignificance and conquer these once-thought unconquerable Empires. The question must be—**Why?**

The answer is one of Spirituality—that force within the chests of a people which drives them to a goal with a strength that is otherwise impossible. We will return to this excellent, but brief, essay by Sir John Glubb to explain:

"These sudden outbursts are usually characterized by an extraordinary display of energy and courage ("*Quit ye like men and fight*" [I Sam. 4:9](#); "*stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.*" [I Cor. 16:13](#)-ed.). The new conquerors are normally poor, hardy and enterprising and above all aggressive. The decaying empires which they overthrow are wealthy but defensive-minded. In the time of Roman greatness, the legions used to dig a

ditch round their camps at night to avoid surprise. But the ditches were mere earthworks, and between them wide spaces were left through which the Romans could counter-attack. But as Rome grew older, the earthworks became high walls, through which access was given only by narrow gates. Counter-attacks were no longer possible. The legions were now passive defenders."

"But the new nation is not only distinguished by victory in battle, but by unrelenting enterprise in every field. Men hack their way through jungles, climb mountains, or brave the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans in tiny cockle-shells. The Arabs crossed the Straights of Gibraltar in A.D. 711 with 12,000 men, defeated a Gothic army of more than twice their strength, marched straight over 250 miles of unknown enemy territory and seized the Gothic capital of Toledo. At the same state in British history, Captain Cook discovered Australia. Fearless initiative characterises such periods."

"Other peculiarities of the period of the conquering pioneers are their readiness to improvise and experiment. Untrammelled by traditions, they will turn anything available to their purpose. If one method fails, they try something else. Uninhibited by textbooks or book learning, action is their solution to every problem."

"Poor, hardy, often half-starved and ill-clad, they abound in courage, energy and initiative, overcome every obstacle and always seem to be in control." End of quotes.

The modern politically accepted point of view demands the concept of the "Brotherhood of Man." In modern times it would be improper to say that empires fell at the hands of another race of people solely because it was another race and not because of the underprivileged society of the conquering people.

There is a reason for this viewpoint which has been thrust upon the West and it is a matter of spirituality. It is a matter of the East versus the West and it is God's Providence.