

FAQ VOL II

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Frequently Asked Questions

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Abbreviations and Special Terms

The following is a list of abbreviations for reference works and special terms which are used in publications by Outreach Israel Ministries and Messianic Apologetics. Please familiarize yourself with them as the text may reference a Bible version, i.e., RSV for the Revised Standard Version, or a source such as TWOT for the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, solely by its abbreviation. Detailed listings of these sources are provided in the Bibliography.

ABD: <i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i>	IVPBBC: <i>IVP Bible Background Commentary (Old & New Testament)</i>
AMG: <i>Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament, New Testament</i>	Jastrow: <i>Dictionary of the Targumim, Talmud Bavli, Talmud Yerushalmi, and Midrashic Literature</i> (Marcus Jastrow)
ANE: Ancient Near East(ern)	JBK: <i>New Jerusalem Bible-Koren</i> (2000)
Apostolic Scriptures/Writings: the New Testament	JETS: <i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
Ara: Aramaic	KJV: King James Version
ASV: American Standard Version (1901)	Lattimore: <i>The New Testament</i> by Richmond Lattimore (1996)
ATS: ArtScroll Tanach (1996)	LITV: <i>Literal Translation of the Holy Bible</i> by Jay P. Green (1986)
b. Babylonian Talmud (<i>Talmud Bavli</i>)	LES: <i>Lexham English Septuagint</i> (2019)
B.C.E.: Before Common Era or B.C.	LS: <i>An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon</i> (Liddell-Scott)
BDAG: <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> (Bauer, Danker, Arndt, Gingrich)	LSJM: <i>Greek-English Lexicon</i> (Liddell-Scott-Jones-McKenzie)
BDB: <i>Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon</i>	LXE: <i>Septuagint with Apocrypha</i> by Sir L.C.L. Brenton (1851)
C.E.: Common Era or A.D.	LXX: Septuagint
CGEDNT: <i>Concise Greek-English Dictionary of New Testament Words</i> (Barclay M. Newman)	m. Mishnah
CGL: <i>Cambridge Greek Lexicon</i> (2021)	MT: Masoretic Text
CHALOT: <i>Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> (Holladay)	NASB: <i>New American Standard Bible</i> (1977)
CJB: <i>Complete Jewish Bible</i> (1998)	NASU: <i>New American Standard Update</i> (1995)
CJSB: <i>Complete Jewish Study Bible</i> (2016)	NBCR: <i>New Bible Commentary: Revised</i>
DRA: Douay-Rheims American Edition	NEB: <i>New English Bible</i> (1970)
DSS: Dead Sea Scrolls	Nelson: <i>Nelson's Expository Dictionary of Old Testament Words</i>
EDB: <i>Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible</i>	NETS: <i>New English Translation of the Septuagint</i> (2007)
EJ: <i>Encyclopaedia Judaica</i>	NIB: <i>New Interpreter's Bible</i>
ESV: <i>English Standard Version</i> (2001)	NIDB: <i>New International Dictionary of the Bible</i>
Ger: German	NIV: <i>New International Version</i> (1984)
GNT: <i>Greek New Testament</i>	NJB: <i>New Jerusalem Bible-Catholic</i> (1985)
Grk: Greek	NJPS: <i>Tanakh, A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures</i> (1999)
HALOT: <i>Hebrew & Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> (Koehler and Baumgartner)	NKJV: <i>New King James Version</i> (1982)
HCSB: <i>Holman Christian Standard Bible</i> (2004)	NRSV: <i>New Revised Standard Version</i> (1989)
Heb: Hebrew	NLT: <i>New Living Translation</i> (1996)
HNV: <i>Hebrew Names Version of the World English Bible</i>	NT: <i>New Testament</i>
IDB: <i>Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i>	
IDBSup: <i>Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible Supplement</i>	
ISBE: <i>International Standard Bible Encyclopedia</i>	

OT: Old Testament
REB: Revised English Bible (1989)
RSV: Revised Standard Version (1952)
t. Tosefta
Tanach (Tanakh): the Old Testament
Thayer: *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*
TDNT: *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*
TLV: Messianic Jewish Family Bible—Tree of Life Version (2014)
TNIV: Today's New International Version (2005)

TWOT: *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*
UBSHNT: United Bible Societies' 1991 Hebrew New Testament revised edition
v(s). verse(s)
Vine: *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*
Vul: Latin Vulgate
YLT: Young's Literal Translation (1862/1898)
WMB: World Messianic Bible (2020)

Islamic Beast Theory

What do you think of the Islamic Beast Theory?

a Messianic Apologetics episode, 03 November, 2021

There have been many different proposals made throughout religious history, regarding the identity of the final world empire or beast.¹ This regime will give rise to the anti-messiah or antichrist, a world empire which will be defeated by Yeshua the Messiah when He returns to Planet Earth. Many of the proposals made throughout history, have been affected by the then-current events, or current politics, of those who have made such proposals. And, it is not a huge surprise why today, particularly in the past several decades, the beginning of the Twenty-First Century, why there are new proposals being made regarding the identity of the end-time beast.

A significant passage which is often appealed to, and I believe rightly, is Daniel 7:1-8. This is the Prophet Daniel's vision of the four beasts, the last beast or the fourth beast being the final world empire:

“In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel saw a dream and visions in his mind as *he lay* on his bed; then he wrote the dream down *and* related the *following* summary of it. Daniel said, ‘I was looking in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea. And four great beasts were coming up from the sea, different from one another. The first *was* like a lion and had *the* wings of an eagle. I kept looking until its wings were plucked, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man; a human mind also was given to it. And behold, another beast, a second one, resembling a bear. And it was raised up on one side, and three ribs *were* in its mouth between its teeth; and thus they said to it, “Arise, devour much meat!” After this I kept looking, and behold, another one, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird; the beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it. After this I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong; and it had large iron teeth. It devoured and crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet; and it was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. While I was contemplating the horns, behold, another horn, a little one, came up among them, and three of the first horns were pulled out by the roots before it; and behold, this horn possessed eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth uttering great *boasts*” (Daniel 7:1-8, NASU).

¹ This has been adapted and edited from the textual transcription provided by YouTube.

The four beasts of Daniel 7 1-8, are customarily interpreted as representing the world empires of: Babylon, Persia, Greece, and finally Rome. I suspect that many, or most of you, who have examined prophecy from a pre-millennial perspective in any detail, have encountered this interpretation. And indeed, it passes into many study Bibles, and other commentaries and publications. It is certainly something which I have been exposed to, and in many ways have taught and repeated, to various degrees, over the years. Frequently what we find, with that fourth beast or fourth world empire which will give rise to the anti-messiah or antichrist—frequently identified as the little horn—is that people have been looking for a revived Roman Empire. They have naturally been drawn to Europe or the European Union.

Many have looked to the European integration project. This includes things like the E.U., the Euro currency, and a future United States of Europe, which is going to be a model for other world regions to consolidate their national borders—and things like that. Many people have been looking to the E.U. or the European Union as being that final world empire—or, they at least have been looking to areas settled or colonized by the old European imperial powers. So, for example, if perhaps the final world empire is not just Europe, it could also be Europe and America. So, they look to things like the old Spanish, French, Portuguese, and most especially British Empire. And I think some of us have have been exposed to this so much, that we are accustomed to looking at different European political leaders, different obscure members of a royal family or a deposed royal family, many people of Italian ancestry—as perhaps being the future beast or the antimessiah/antichrist. These are some of the factors many of us, in the pre-millennial world of eschatology, have been exposed and been accustomed to

But then, over the past several decades—especially since 9/11, the Iraq War, the conflict in Afghanistan, ongoing things in the Middle East—there is a growing trend which one does encounter. There have been some significant books written, which say: *Now hold on! Time out! Wait a moment! The old Roman Empire, which you believe is the final beast, the final world empire which is going to be defeated by the Messiah when He returns—the old Roman Empire itself did not just cover Western Europe or big parts of Western Europe. It also covered North Africa, parts of the Middle East, Asia Minor (modern Turkey). It covered many of areas which are actually Muslim or Islamic today.*

Perhaps many, in their quest to look for the antimessiah or antichrist within the old Roman Empire—have thought of the old Roman Empire almost exclusively in terms of Western Europe, and by extension areas where Western Europe has colonized. Perhaps we have not put as much attention as we should, to areas of the old Roman Empire, which today are Muslim. And so there has been a shift among some, in contemporary eschatology, to wondering how whether we really know that the future antimessiah or antichrist is going to come out of a revived Roman Empire—especially when it seems like the E.U. cannot get its proverbial act together. How do we know that the final world empire, is not going to come out of some kind of an Islamic empire—which territorially would have been part of the old Roman Empire, every bit as much as France, Spain, or Portugal.

This is something which does create a stir in some quarters, as I have encountered it infrequently over the years. *I have got two books here, which are resources I have in my library. I have not read them recently, so I am not going to comment on how this phenomenon has developed—* because I know some people get really divisive, or they get really perturbed, or they get really antagonistic, and think that it must be Western Europe. And then others are like, *No I think you're wrong.* But here are two resources which I have. This is from 2009 and is called *The Islamic Antichrist* by Joel Richardson,² and then 2012 the book *Mideast Beast*, with the subtitle *The Scriptural Case for an Islamic Antichrist*.³ I have encountered Joel Richardson in person before, and we had a very nice exchange (MJAA Heartland Regional 2015, Grapevine, TX). We did not actually talk about the end-times, and he apparently encountered some of my books before.

I remember how during his presentation, he was basically saying that customarily you find a lot of people looking for a European Union-based antimessiah. But all of these Muslim or Islamic countries were part of the old Roman Empire as well. He stressed how perhaps one did not need to put all of their eggs in one proverbial basket. Perhaps one needs to put some feelers out there for a possible Islamic antimessiah or antichrist to arise. To be perfectly honest, I went in hearing his case and hearing some of the evidence which he presented—and I have not kept up to date with the current state of this debate, because it has become a debate for some. But, I certainly appreciated what he had to say in 2015. I have not closely followed where the debate presently stands, but an Islamic antimessiah is a possibility which possesses merit. *It is hardly something which is all wet.* Richardson's case was well made. To those who look at the old Roman Empire and a place such as Great Britain—so are Turkey, Tunisia, Egypt, parts of Syria and Iraq for that matter. So perhaps we need to be looking at some of these other areas, for a possible place for the origin of the antimessiah or antichrist.

Now I am the kind of person who believes in putting all possibilities on the table. I am not antagonistic to the idea of an Islamic antimessiah, or a European antimessiah, or an American antimessiah because of the expanse of old European colonial empires. In putting all possibilities on the table, my issue with the Islamic Beast Theory is not with the presumed future development of the Islamic world into some kind of a major end-time player. There are many developments taking place in the Arab world, the Islamic world, which mirror many of the developments which perhaps were taking place at the end of World War II in Europe. So, if, if there is going to be an Islamic antimessiah, and not a European antimessiah, we would expect there to be a greater degree of synergy in the Islamic world in the future. Along with that, we should expect it to become more technologically and industrially advanced.

My issue, which does not get raised enough—and I think this is where we need to pause for a moment, and not get too over anxious or overexcited or overpredictive, regarding what is going to happen in this political entity or that political entity—is that all of us have seen

² Joel Richardson, *The Islamic Antichrist* (Washington, D.C.: WND Books, 2009).

³ Joel Richardson, *Mideast Beast: The Scripture Case for an Islamic Antichrist* (Washington, D.C.: WND Books, 2012).

Islamic Beast Theory

new interpretations of prophecy and the end-times, emerge out of current events. First, you had the European Coal and Steel Community develop (1952), and then you had the Treaty of Rome (1957), and you had the European Economic Community. Later, this all became the European Union (1993), and then the Euro (€) got launched (2000, 2002). And now, many are wondering. *What is next in the European Union, because of Brexit (2020) and other countries wanting to leave?* Perhaps the final world empire is not the European Union.

At the same, time because of 9/11, the invasion of Afghanistan, the Iraq War, and other things taking place in the in the Middle East—with people paying close attention to what goes on in the Middle East—perhaps it is useful to put some feelers over there, in terms of: *What if the antimessiah or antichrist arises out of the Middle East?* But it is no secret that people paying attention to the Middle East, as a place for the antimessiah/antichrist to arise, with the final world empire possibly being an Islamic beast, came out of current events. We need to remember how throughout religious history, people have been affected by current events and the politics of their day.

Think about all of the different figures, and certainly offices of political power, which people have appealed to as: *that person is going to be the antimessiah, or it is from this political position, this political office, this place of importance where the antimessiah or antichrist is going to come forth.* Many, many many popes of the Roman Catholic Church, have been proposed as being the antimessiah or antichrist, especially during many of the years of the early Protestant Reformation. If you were part of the American Revolution, there were people who thought George III was the antimessiah or antichrist. People thought Napoleon Bonaparte was the antimessiah or antichrist, Kaiser Wilhelm during the First World War, and later Adolf Hitler.

I have talked about this in other presentations, there are people today, especially in parts of our Messianic community at least, who believe that Prince Charles is the antimessiah or antichrist (2021).⁴ You have got people like Joel Richardson who believe that it is going to be an Islamic antimessiah or antichrist. I know someone who believes that the antimessiah/antichrist is going to be a Jewish Israeli. And, I have even heard the possibility that the antimessiah/antichrist is going to be a member of the Nephilim, or perhaps some kind of an extra-terrestrial.

So, we have to keep in mind that the Islamic Beast Theory is not illegitimate; it is not all wet; it has got some significant points which need to be put on the table. But it still arises out of an interpretational history of people who are affected by current events and current politics. They read the Scriptures, and they are like, *OK, well, maybe this is it. Maybe this is what other people before us have been missing, and now we have got it right.*

I have little issue with the proposal that, perhaps, the antimessiah or antichrist will come from an end-time Islamic beast. But this is a possibility; it is not a certainty. Now, rather than get all antagonistic and unnecessarily divided—because I have seen people who have put

⁴ Tim Cohen, *The AntiChrist and a Cup of Tea* (Prophecy House, 1998).

together studies like “50 Reasons Why the Antichrist is Going to be a Roman,” and I am sure people have also put together studies like “50 Reasons Why the Antichrist is Going to be a Muslim”—and they spend a huge amount of their time debating things like that. Let us be perfectly honest: they ultimately do not know, because the very nature of our world is that politics changes, current events change, and I think we all need to exhibit a little bit of humility sometimes. We do not have all the information, and we are mortals looking at a supernaturally inspired Holy Scripture. There are some things which we will, because of that, get upside down and backwards.

In principle, I have nothing wrong with people proposing an Islamic end-time beast, an Islamic antimessiah or antichrist, as a significant possibility. I have no problem with that. But I do not believe that it is appropriate for us to be unnecessarily divided over what are admittedly future events, subject to human error, regarding their interpretation. We simply need to put the possibilities out there, have some friendly discussions, constructive discussions about them, and recognize that whoever or whatever is going to be: it will be **the final** end-time beast and antimessiah/antichrist, **and it is going to be extremely deceptive.**

To me, the only way you cannot get swept up in deception, in apostasy or falling away from the faith, is putting all possibilities out there and not discluding anything as it concerns the Last Days. This is intended to be a very very difficult time for Planet Earth, so much so that as Yeshua said in His teachings, if it were possible even the elect could be deceived (cf. Matthew 24:24). So, one significant way of avoiding deception, is to be aware of all of these possibilities. Rather than look at the Holy Scriptures from the perspective, *Well I'm a prophet, and God has given me insider information*—we should look at it from the analyst's standpoint. Here is the information, the data as we have it today. *Here are some things which might be possible, and I am going to be on alert regardless of whether it is a European antimessiah or antichrist, or an Islamic antimessiah or antichrist, or something which we have not yet thought through or considered as of today.*

I hope you find the answer which I given you, to what I think of the Islamic Beast Theory, to be constructive.