



The Year of the Elephant

Now, you have to imagine how terrifying the scene must have been: a large army of soldiers and elephants marching onto a peaceful land; men brandishing all kinds of weapons, sounding war cries and beating loud drums. Yet, when Abraha stood before ‘Abd al-Muttalib, this noble chief of the Quraysh was perfectly calm, seemingly unafraid and unworried about the city’s pending doom. Stranger yet, ‘Abd al-Muttalib asked Abraha about some camels which the invading army had unjustly seized. Abraha was perplexed, exclaiming, “I am about to destroy your very honour, yet you speak to me about camels?”

“I am the lord of these camels,” replied ‘Abd al-Muttalib. “And I have learned that the House which you are intent on destroying has its own Lord which will prevent you from it.”

‘Abd al-Muttalib was right and his trust well-placed; Allah did protect the Ka’ba. When Abraha approached the sacred House, his elephants refused to move. What’s more, Allah sent birds carrying stones in their beaks which they dropped onto the soldiers. Allah’s just punishment was delivered and Abraha’s army destroyed. Abraha brought this upon himself because he defied Allah by killing so many people and attempting to desecrate Allah’s House.