



OR who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb? ⁹ When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddlingband for it, ¹⁰ And brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors, * ¹¹ And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed? (Job 38:8-11)

In the year of our Lord, the fifteen hundred and eighty-eighth, Protestant England lay as a near helpless virgin in the path of the ruthless Catholic Ruler of Spain, King Philip II. Following the explorations of Christopher Columbus and others in the New World, the coffers of Spain had grown wealthy in gold and treasure as a result of their oppressive marauding into South and Central America. England, on the other hand, was not so prepared for war. Their war-chests were not bulging with precious metals, nor were their Navies prepared for such a formidable Naval Force as the Invincible Armada of Spain.

Roman Catholicism had been dethroned as the state religion of England by means of the Great English Reformation a few years prior to the Naval engagement that would remain forever as a tribute to the prayers offered up by the English people for the intervention of God to save them from the invading Spanish. Queen Elizabeth I (the virgin Queen), the last of the Tudor monarchy, encouraged fervent prayer in the face of seemingly impossible odds. Along with much of the country folk of England, Queen Elizabeth gathered along the southeastern coast of England to view the approaching danger and the climactic sea battle to ensue.

The intent of the Spanish monarch was to conduct a sea (the Armada) and land invasion (from Flanders) of England and restore the country under the authority of the Pope. It is a matter of speculation as to how it slipped the mind of the Spanish Commander, the Duke of Medina-Sidonio, to fail to carry along sufficient a number of cannon balls, adequate food rations, and a great excess of priests after a two-year preparation.

On the English side the British Navy, commanded by Lord Charles Howard and Sir Francis Drake, was comprised of numerically smaller and structurally smaller ships. The British depended more upon their very effective naval artillery able to stand off from the enemy, whereas the Armada depended upon close order warfare in grappling and boarding the enemy's vessels. The latter was a mistake.

The battle was joined on 21 July 1588 as the Armada slipped into the English Channel. The British Navy, harbored at Portsmouth, slipped anchor and gained tactical advantage of a strong western gale which drove the Armada into Calais. Since the British Navy was west of the Armada, the western gale winds gave England a decided advantage of maneuver. As the Armada lay anchored at Calais and Gravelines, France, the English set fire to transport ships and allowed the winds and current to send them in among the Spanish fleet. The Spaniards panicked and slipped anchor and began their attempted escape to the north of Scotland. Terrible weather continued to hamper the Armada. Many ships were lost at sea or shipwrecked along the coasts of Ireland.

The conclusion reached by both Spain and England is noteworthy. The English attributed their victory to the Sovereign of the Seas – God Almighty. The Spanish, too, attributed their defeat to the intervention of God against them. Both were correct!

The pride and arrogancy of power often leads its victims into dead-end chuchés. God was overly generous in allowing Gideon 300 soldiers against 120,000. In fact, the battle belongs to the Lord. Gideon could have gotten by with none. Neither did the children of Israel in crossing the Red Sea need arms – God was their avenging weapon.

Regardless the giant facing you in your world, call upon the Sovereign of the Universe – the Lord and Master of Land and Sea. He will see you through!