

#707 The Defeat of the Spanish Armada – Through the English Channel toward Dunkirk

The commander of the English fleet, Lord Howard of Effingham, decided that the Spanish Armada should be attacked at both ends of its crescent formation. His *Ark Royal* attacked the right wing while Vice-Admiral Sir Francis Drake's *Revenge* and Vice-Admiral Sir Martin Frobisher's *The Triumph* attacked the left. The English ships avoided the close-in combat that the Spanish desired as they sailed up the English Channel.



The battle near Plymouth began on July 31. Two Spanish ships, the *Rosario*, on board which Drake found 55,000 gold ducats, and the *San Salvador*, were captured by the English. Another was sunk. The Duke of Medina Sidonia, commander of the Spanish Armada, announced that if any Spanish ship broke formation, the captain of that ship would be hanged immediately. He told his captains that they must maintain a tight formation in order to prevent further attacks from the English ships. They were headed toward Dunkirk, and this decision meant that they could only sail there at the speed of the slowest ship. Next was a battle near Portland Bill (Portland Bill is the southern most tip of the small island of Portland) on August 2 (N.S.). Sea fights took place off the Needles as ships approached the Isle of Wight, where there was a battle on August 4. That day, a strong wind caused the Channel to become rougher. The smaller English ships suffered,

whereas the Spanish used the wind to move quickly to the European mainland coastline where they would pick up the Duke of Parma's troops at Dunkirk, ready for the invasion of England.



Admiral Lord Charles Howard c. 1620. Detail of a portrait by Daniel Mytens the Elder. (Note: Portrait painted around 32 years after the defeat of the Spanish Armada.)



A contemporary illustration showing the Armada in crescent formation pursued down the Channel by the English Fleet of Lord Howard of Effingham

The Armada, followed closely by the ships of the English fleet, sailed toward the Strait of Dover. As long as the Armada kept its crescent shape it was very difficult for the English fleet to attack successfully. Constantly harassed, the slow moving Spanish Armada eventually reached Calais on August 6 without further loss. **The Duke of Medina Sidonia, commander of the Armada, was now ready to meet up with the Spanish troops of the Duke of Parma at Dunkirk.**

Matthew 7:26 – Church on the Sand

Matthew 7:26 (KJV) And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto A FOOLISH MAN, WHICH BUILT HIS HOUSE UPON THE SAND:

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