

American Minute with Bill Federer Four Voyages of Columbus to the New World - and Hurricanes in the Caribbean

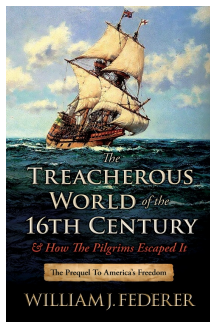
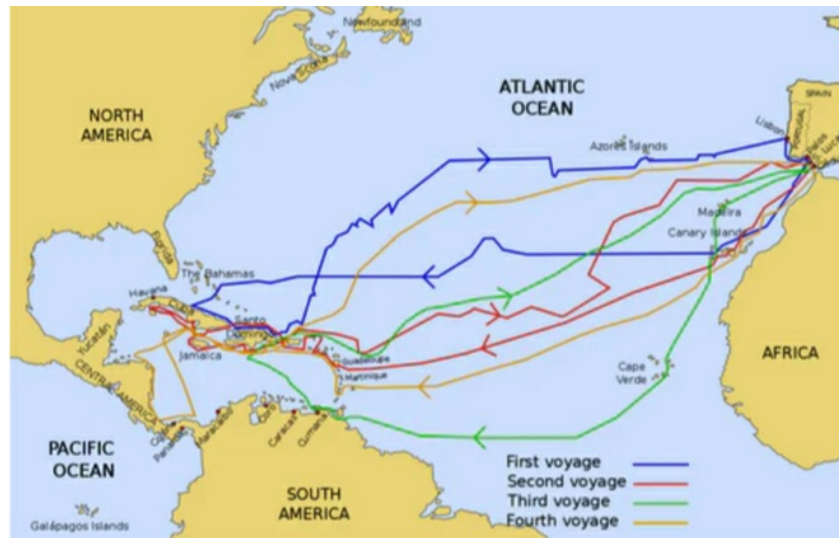
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Mehmet II succeeded his father, Murad II, to rule the Muslim **Ottoman Empire**.

After killing his brothers, he later formalized this practice into law, stating:

"Whichever of my sons inherits the sultan's throne, it **behooves him to kill his brothers** in the interest of the world order" ... [continue reading American Minute here ...](#)

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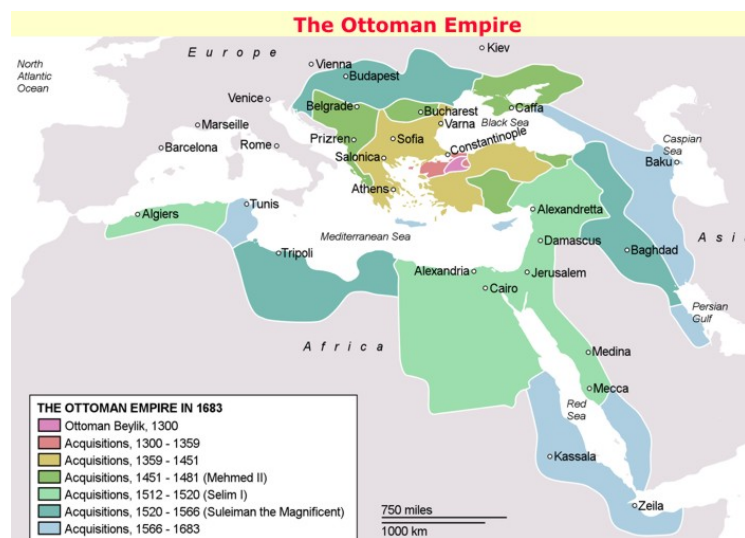
[The Treacherous World of the 16th Century and How the Pilgrims Escaped It: The Prequel to America's Freedom](#)

On May 29, 1453, at the age of 21, **Mehmet II** conquered the Byzantine city of **Constantinople**, the **largest and richest city in Europe**.

Located on the **Bosporus**, where **the East and West met**, it largely served as the capital of Christendom for over a thousand years.

Mehmet had stated:

"The ghaza (holy war) is our basic duty, as it was in the case of our fathers ... **The conquest of (Constantinople)** is ... essential to the future and the safety of the Ottoman state."



The fall of **Constantinople** ended the Byzantine Empire and permanently altered **trade routes from Europe to Asia**, which had been traveled for centuries by

merchants, such as **Marco Polo**.

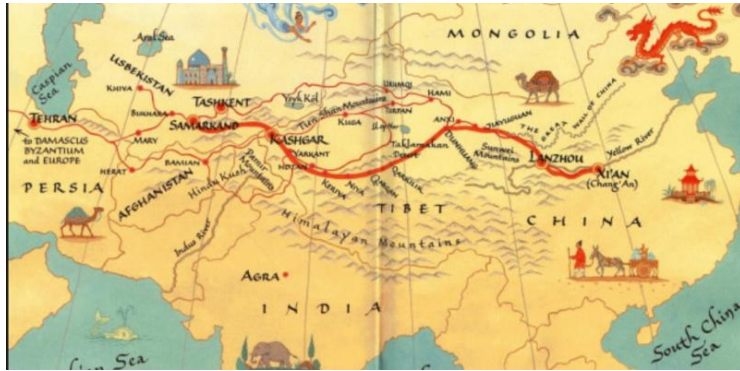
Detractors of **Columbus** should turn one chapter back in the history books and lay blame for **his voyages** on the expansionist policies of **Sultan Mehmet II**, who blocked Western access to the **land trade routes to India and China**.

Even socialist historian **Howard Zinn** admitted in *A People's History of the United States* (1980):

"Now that the **Turks had conquered Constantinople** and the eastern Mediterranean, and **controlled the land routes to Asia**, a **sea route was needed**.

Portuguese sailors were working their way around the **southern tip of Africa**.

Spain decided to gamble on a long sail across an unknown ocean."



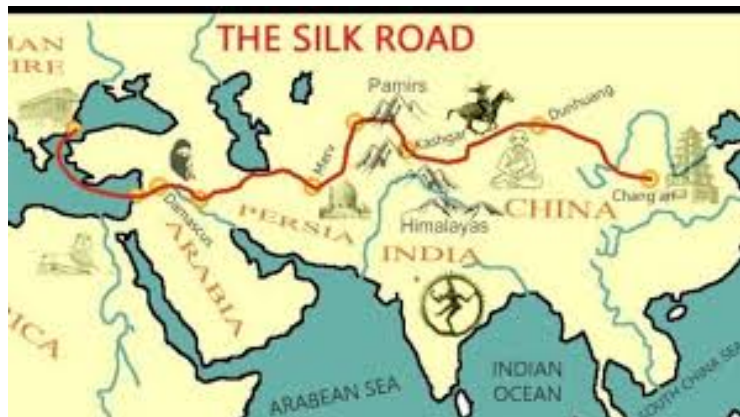
William Lawson Grant, Professor of Colonial History at Queens University, Kingston, Ontario, wrote in the introduction to

Voyages and Explorations (Toronto, The Courier Press, Limited, 1911, A.S. Barnes Company):

"The history of Western Civilization begins in a **conflict with the Orient**, a conflict of which it may be the end is not yet.

... The **routes between East and West** have been trodden by the **caravans of trade** more often even than by the feet of armies.

... The treasures of the East were long brought **overland** to Alexandria, or **Constantinople**, or the cities of the Levant, and thence



distributed to Europe by the galleys of Genoa or of Venice.

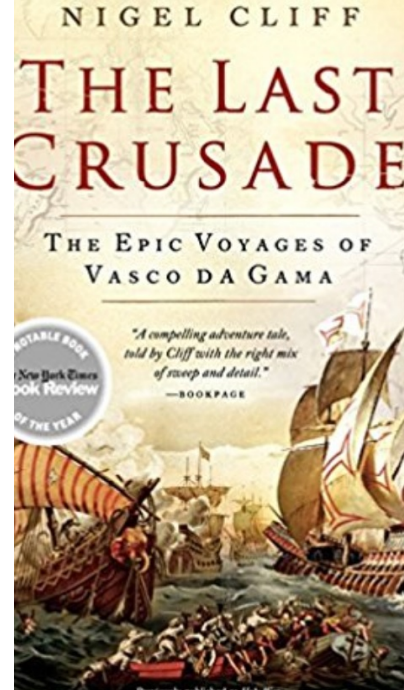
... But **when the Turk placed himself astride the Bosphorus**, and made Egypt his feudatory, **new routes had to be found.**"

Grant continued in *Voyages and*

Explorations:

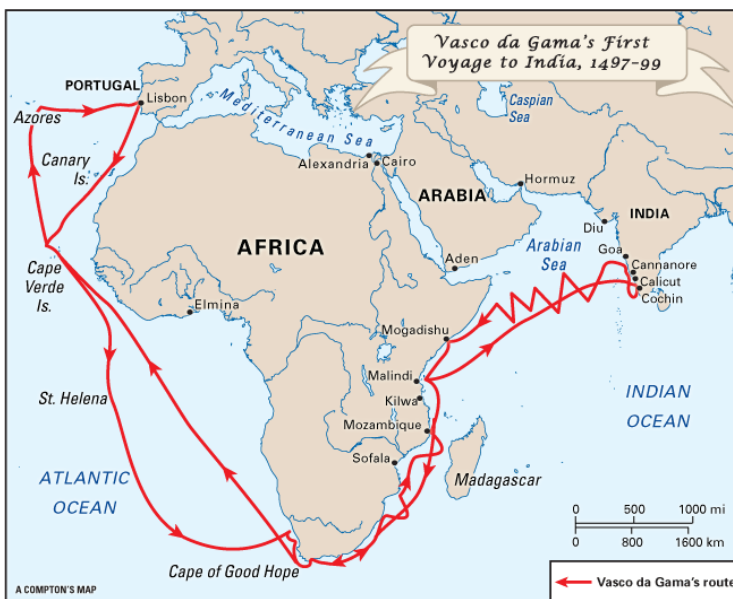
"In the search for these were made the three **greatest voyages in history**, those

of **Columbus**,
of **Vasco da Gama**, and
greatest of all of **Magellan** ...



... In his search for the riches of Cipangu (Japan), **Columbus** stumbled upon America.

The great Genoese lived and died under the illusion that **he had reached the outmost verge of Asia.**"

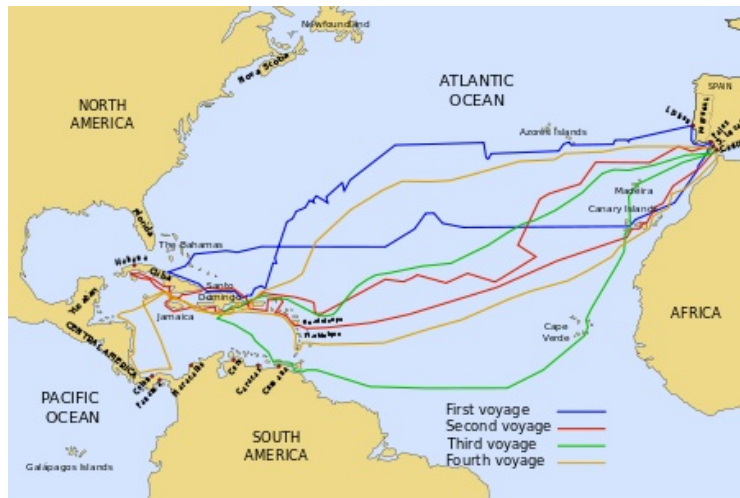


In 1498, Portuguese explorer **Vasco da Gama** successfully sailed around **South Africa to India.**

But six years earlier, **Columbus** proposed another **westward SEA route.**



Beginning in 1492, **Christopher Columbus** took **FOUR VOYAGES** to the New World:

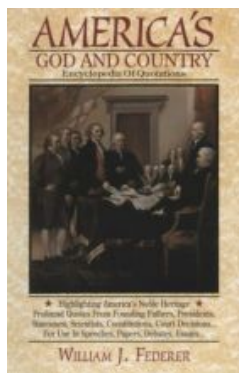


1ST VOYAGE (1492-1493), he **DISCOVERED** land;

2ND VOYAGE (1493-1496), he encountered a hurricane, malaria, and **CANNIBALS**;

3RD VOYAGE (1498-1500), he faced doldrums, rebellion, and was **ARRESTED**;

4TH VOYAGE (1502-1504), he survived another hurricane, explored Panama, and was **SHIPWRECKED** on Jamaica for a year.



[America's God and Country Encyclopedia of Quotations](#)

1ST VOYAGE (1492-1493) was truly historic.

Columbus used his knowledge of the "trade winds" to make **the longest voyage ever out of the sight of land**.

Thinking he had made it to **India**, he referred to the inhabitants as



"Indians," and the name stuck.

It is interesting to consider that native Americans might never have been called **"Indians"** had it not been for **Islamic jihad** cutting off the land

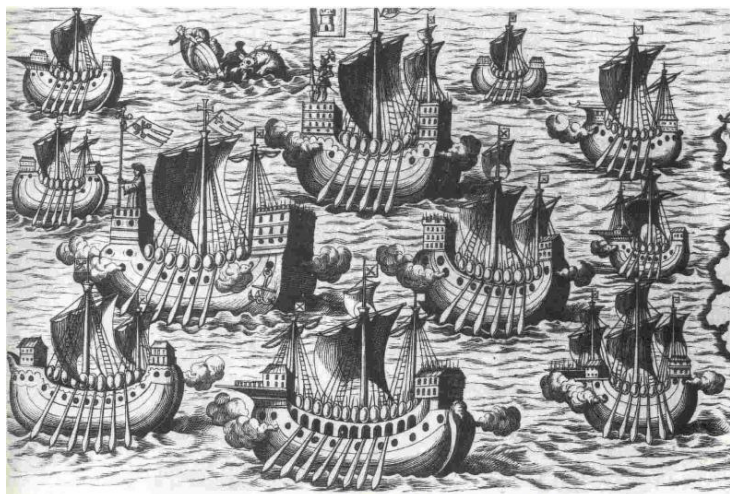
trade routes to **India**.

These first inhabitants were peaceful **Taino Arawak natives**.

Columbus thought that **Cuba** was the **tip of China** and that **Hispaniola** (Dominican Republic/Haiti) was **Japan**.

Returning to Europe, **Columbus'** ship, *Santa Maria*, hit a reef off the coast of Hispaniola and wrecked on December 24, 1492. He left 39 sailors in a make-shift fort named **La Navidad**.

2ND VOYAGE (1493-1496), **Columbus** was frustratingly saddled with 17 ships and 1,500 mostly get-rich-quick Spanish opportunists.



This was the doings of the jealous **Spanish Bishop Juan Rodriguez de Fonseca**, who continually



undermined **Columbus** at the royal court.

Fonseca thought it was a mistake that the **Spanish Monarchs**, Ferdinand and Isabella, gave so much authority to a "**non-Spaniard**" -- **Columbus**

being just a low-class **Genoese**, from the rival Italian city-state of **Genoa**.

In this sense, **Columbus** was the victim of racial discrimination.

Bishop Fonseca is to be blamed for altering **Columbus'** goal from finding **India** and **China** to managing hundreds of ambitious settlers. **Columbus** was an amazingly gifted explorer, but unfortunately failed miserably as a governor.

Looking for a location for a settlement, **Columbus** explored **Puerto Rico** and **Jamaica**.

Arriving at **La Navidad, Hispaniola**, they were shocked to find that the sailors **Columbus** had left the previous year were all **killed by natives**.



Reality set it. Instead of finding a paradise, **Spaniards** were shocked to discover the



existence of aggressive **Carib natives**.

Caribs would land on an island inhabited by the peaceful **Taino Arawak natives** and proceed to emasculate,

sodomized and cannibalized them.

Columbus had them establish the settlement of **La Isabella** on **Hispaniola**, but shortly after it was **destroyed** in a **hurricane**, a storm of unbelievable intensity which none of them had experienced before.

They abandoned **La Isabella** and founded a new settlement named **Santo Domingo**, presumably in honor of **Columbus' father Domenico**.

After the **hurricane**, followed by **malaria**, together with the fear of **cannibals**, the **Spanish settlers** began to feel **Columbus** misrepresented this new world "paradise."

They began to grow impatient at having to obey **Columbus**, who, after all, was **not even Spanish**, but rather **an Italian of low birth** from **Genoa**.

Columbus unfortunately yielded to their greedy demands and allowed them set up **European-style feudal plantations**, called



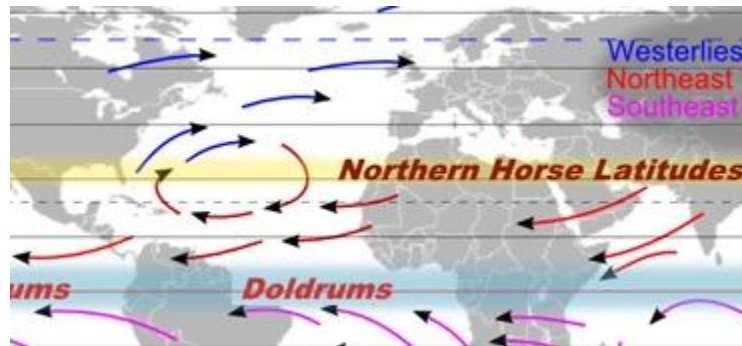
"mayorazgos."

This tragically set a precedent for generations of mistreatment of native populations.

Columbus sailed back to Spain, leaving his two younger brothers **Bartholomew** and **Diego (Giacomo)** in charge of **Santo Domingo**.

3RD VOYAGE (1498-1500), **Columbus** sailed across the Atlantic further south, closer to the equator.

This brought him through a stretch of sea called "**the horse latitudes**" and "**the doldrums**," where there is no wind for weeks at a time.



Parched in the windless heat of the blazing sun, **Columbus** prayed that if the winds returned, he would name the first land he saw after the **Trinity**.

When the winds picked up, **Columbus** named the first land he saw "**Trinidad**."

Columbus then set foot and planted the Spanish flag on the **Paria Peninsula** of present-day **Venezuela**, August 1, 1498, making him the first European to set foot on South America.

He explored the beautiful **Orinoco River**, speculating that it could be **the outer regions of the Garden of Eden**.

When **Columbus** arrived back at his settlement of **Santo Domingo**, he found that the **greedy Spanish settlers had rebelled** against his brothers, **Bartholomew** and **Diego**.



In despair, **Columbus** sent a **letter** to the King, pleading for help.

The plea was intercepted by the ambitious **Bishop Fonseca**, who **convinced the King** that, instead of sending help, he should **replace Columbus** as governor.



The King sent a replacement governor named **Bobadillo** in 1500.

Bobadillo arrested **Columbus and his brothers**, and sent them back to

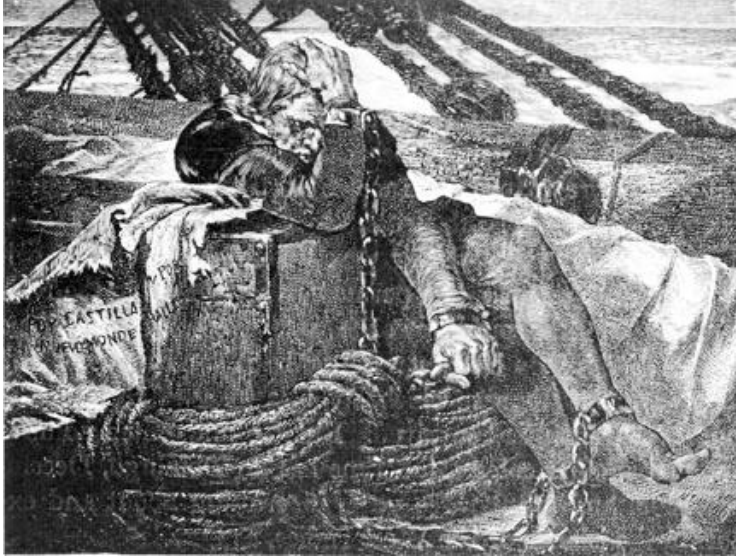
Spain in chains.

Columbus wrote to a friend and confidante of the Queen, **Dona Juana de Torres**:

"I undertook a

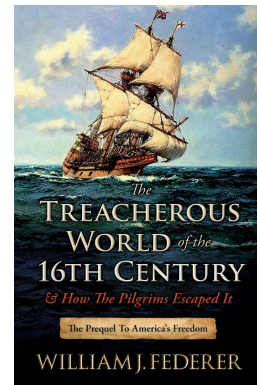
new voyage to the **New World** which hitherto had been **hidden** ...

They judge me there as a governor who had gone to Sicily or to a city or town under a regular government ...



I should be judged as a **captain** who went **from Spain to the Indies.**"

[The Treacherous World of the 16th Century and How the Pilgrims Escaped It: The Prequel to America's Freedom](#)



4TH VOYAGE (1502-1504).

After a two year delay, Ferdinand and Isabella finally permitted **Columbus** to sail on May 12, 1502, from Cadiz, Spain, on his **last voyage**.

Columbus was forbidden to visit his settlement of **Santo Domingo**, but upon reaching the Caribbean, he was alarmed to see **another hurricane brewing**, similar to the one experienced at **La Isabella**.

Weighing the risk, he entered the harbor of **Santo Domingo** to warn them of the

approaching danger and to seek shelter for his ships.

He anchored and rowed ashore.



A second **replacement governor** had arrived named **Orvando**.

He ignored **Columbus**.

Orvando was preoccupied in preparing to **send back to Spain the previous governor, Bobadillo**, along with a treasure fleet of **30 ships** filled with **gold and native slaves**.

Unwittingly, the ships would be **heading directly into the path of the hurricane**. **Columbus' warning** was completely **spurned**, as he was considered an **unwelcome persona-non-grata**.

Orvando ordered **Columbus** to immediately leave the harbor.

With the **hurricane** now fast approaching, **Columbus** did not even take the time to pull aboard his row boat.

He sailed as fast as he could to **seek shelter** from the wind on the **far side of the island**.

The **hurricane** hit around July 1, 1502, with such **fury** that it almost



completely destroyed Santo Domingo.

Of the **treasure fleet**, 4 ships returned to Santo Domingo, and **25 sank**, with the loss of approximately 500 lives, **including**

Bobadillo.

The one ship that survived and made it to **Spain** was the *Aguja*. It was so old and slow that it had not yet cleared the island **mangroves** when the **hurricane hit**.

When the ship arrived in **Spain**, to everyone's amazement, it was found to be the one **carrying Columbus' portion of the gold**, per his initial agreement with Ferdinand and Isabella.

The **providential nature** of this incident vindicated **Columbus'** reputation, though **he did not find out about it for over a year**, as he was **blown around the Caribbean**.

Describing the violent weather, **Columbus** recorded:

"The **tempest arose** and wearied me so that I knew not where to turn, my old wound opened up, and for 9 days I was lost without hope of life; **eyes never beheld the sea so angry and covered with foam ...**"

He continued:

"The **wind** not only prevented our progress, but offered no

opportunity to run behind any headland for shelter; hence we were **forced to keep out in this bloody ocean, seething like a pot on a hot fire.** The people were so worn out that they longed for death."



OF THE CARAVEL SANTA MARIA, COLUMBUS'S SHIP, ON THE COAST OF HISPANIOLA, 1492. 24. 1492.

After a day and a half of continuous lightning, **Columbus'** 15-year-old son, **Ferdinand**, recorded that on December 13, 1502, a **waterspout passed between the ships:**



"... the which had they not dissolved by **reciting the Gospel according to St. John**, it would have swamped whatever it struck ... for **it draws water up to the clouds in a column thicker than a waterbutt, twisting it about like a whirlwind.**"

Columbus'
biographer,
Samuel Eliot
Morrison
described
**Admiral
Columbus:**

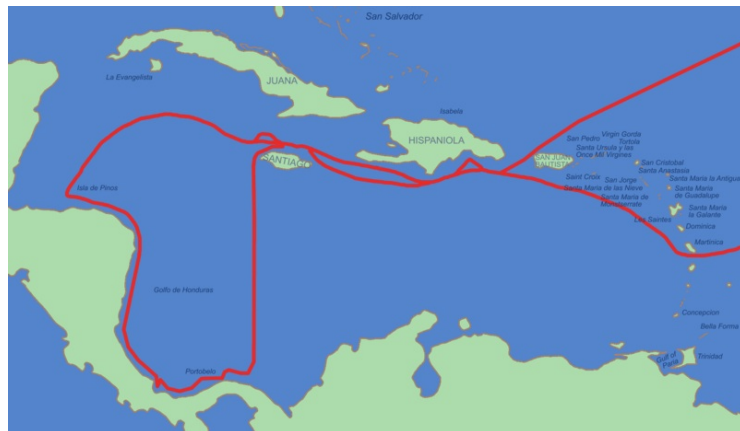


"It was the **Admiral** who exorcised the waterspout. **From his Bible** he read of that famous **tempest off Capernaum**, concluding, 'Fear

not, it is I!'

Then **clasping the Bible in his left hand, with drawn sword he traced a cross in the sky and a circle around his whole fleet.**"

Columbus explored the coasts of **Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica.**



He briefly landed in **Panama**, but

was **too ill and too suspicious of the natives** to cross the 50 mile-wide **isthmus** on foot to the **Pacific side**, where he could have **seen the real route to India and China.**

As it was, they were **attacked by Indians**, and barely made it out of a shallow Belen River at low tide with 3 of his 4 ships. Another ship was lost in a storm off Cuba.

With **his last two ships worm-eaten and taking on water**, he beached them on the **Island of Jamaica at St. Anne's Bay**, on June 25, 1503, marooned for the next year.

Natives at first accommodated



them, but the situation deteriorated when some sailors began an **unruly mutiny**.

Fearing an attack, **Columbus** had to act fast.

An accomplished explorer, **Columbus** had been diligent to keep track of the position of the moon and stars in the night sky of the Western Hemisphere, something that had never been observed before.

Using **astronomic tables** made by **Rabbi Abraham Zacuto** of Spain, **Columbus** summoned the chiefs to his marooned ships **on the specific night of February 29, 1504**.



When he **correctly predicted a lunar eclipse**, the natives became afraid and convinced **Columbus had divine favor**.

They abandoned their plans of attack and continued to provide for them.

Finally, **Columbus'** captain, **Diego Méndez de Segura**,

purchased a canoe from the natives and set off with several of them from **Jamaica** toward **Hispaniola (Haiti)**, crossing 450 miles of open sea.



Arriving there, **Méndez** found **Governor Ovando** in the jungle, subduing the **Taino Arawak** natives.

Ovando was not thrilled to hear that **Columbus** was still alive and waited months to send help.

Being rescued at last, **Columbus** returned to **Santo Domingo** for a final visit, then to **Spain**, arriving on November 7, 1504.

Three weeks later, his chief patron, **Queen Isabella**, died.



Columbus died a year and a half later at the age of 55.

Though unsuccessful as a governor, **Columbus** was nevertheless **one of the world's most**

accomplished sailors and explorers, and though he **did not reach India or China**, he did change history.

Back during his fourth and final

voyage, when he was in **Panama**, trapped on the **Belen River at low tide**, he was **incapacitated with physical pain**.



On July 7, 1503, not knowing if anyone would ever read it, he wrote his *Lettera Rarissima*:

"The Indians were many and united and attacked ... I was outside very much alone, on this rude coast, with a high fever and very fatigued.

There was no hope of escape. In this state, I climbed painfully to the highest part of the ship and cried out for help with a fearful voice ...

... At length, **groaning with exhaustion, I fell asleep**, and heard a compassionate voice saying,

'O fool, and slow to believe and serve thy **God**, the **God of every man!** ... From thy birth He hath ever held thee in special charge ...

Of those barriers of the Ocean Sea, which were closed with such mighty chains, **He hath given thee the keys** ...

Turn thou to Him and acknowledge thy faults; His mercy is infinite; thine old age shall not hinder thee from performing mighty deeds ... **Whatever He promises He fulfills with interest; that is His way."**

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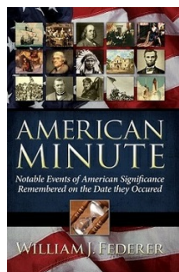
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