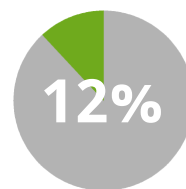


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## Coup Attempt in Turkey



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EUROPE, THE MIDDLE EAST AND LIBERIA

A Turkish Coup! What happened?

It came as a total surprise!

Who? At this time, the coup appears to have been organized by a military faction who are opposed to the current president, Recep Erdogan. Some in the military believe that Erdogan is moving the country in a more Islamic direction and acquiring almost dictator like powers along the way. He has won every election since 2002, but has polarized the country.

Why? Again, it would appear that those behind the coup wanted to move the country back to a more "secular" standing. They want to return to the vision of the Republic of Turkey's founder, Mustafa

Kemal. Kemal wanted a government that was separate from Islamic or Sharia law. Under the government of Erdogan, Turkey is embracing more Islamic principles in its daily life. Those in the press who question Erdogan are arrested, and those in the judiciary who rule contrary to his wishes are removed.

What? What impact will these events have on our brothers and sisters in Turkey? Christians are increasingly seen as "traitors" who do not embrace the growing surge of Islamic faithfulness. Religious minorities like Christians have much more to fear now. As one pastor in Turkey stated, "President Erdogan, around whom the country is polarized (half the country loves him and half despise him), so far having survived the worst challenge to his power last night has, I believe, a choice of two things:

He can choose to be remembered in history as the person 'who dismantled and destroyed the whole country' or 'who helped root democracy by being inclusive to the opposition parties and to freedoms'. The first would be a tragedy the latter a miracle. Let us all please pray for the miracle."

***Please pray for our brothers and sisters in Turkey to stand strong in grace and wisdom in these hard times!***