

A BOOK YOU CAN TRUST



Part 7

The Seventh World Power

This is the final article in a series of seven in consecutive issues of "Awake!" that discuss the seven world powers of Bible history. The objective is to show that the Bible is trustworthy and inspired of God and that its message is one of hope for an end to the suffering caused by man's cruel domination of his fellow man.

WE LIVE in a very special and momentous time—that of the appearance of the seventh world power of Bible history. Moreover, this power is the only one mentioned in the Bible purely as prophecy, for the previous six were woven into the Bible's historical record. Concerning the seven powers, or "kings," the Bible foretold: "There are seven kings; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet arrived, but when he does arrive he must remain a short while."*—Revelation 17:10.

A little over 1,900 years ago, when those words were written, five of the seven "kings," or political empires, 'had fallen.' They were Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece. The expression "one is" referred to Rome. But Rome would not last forever. There would be one more empire, but the prophecy stated: "[It] has not yet arrived." True to Bible prophecy, the seventh 'king' did arrive on the world scene! What did this empire prove to be? Will it exercise its dominion

indefinitely? If not, how will it exit the world stage? The Bible leaves us in no doubt.

Reliable Prophecy

The seventh power began to take shape when England rose out of obscurity in the northwestern corner of the Roman Empire. By the 1760's, this island nation had become the mighty British Empire. Britain continued to grow in wealth and power, and in the 19th century, it was the richest and most powerful nation on earth. "The British Empire," states one reference work, "was the largest the world had ever seen." It "included 372 million inhabitants and extended over 11 million square miles [28 million sq km]."

However, the first world war (1914-1918) moved Britain to embark on a special relationship with the United States, a previous colony. The result? The British Empire gave way to the Anglo-American alliance, in many respects a dual English-speaking world power that has lasted until the present.—See the box "A Noteworthy Alliance."

The prophecy at Revelation 17:10 complements another prophecy found in the book

Time line: Egyptian wall relief and bust of Nero: Photograph taken by courtesy of the British Museum; Persian wall relief: Musée du Louvre, Paris

* Because the empires mentioned in the Bible were usually ruled by a king, the empires themselves are often referred to as "kings," "kingdoms," or both.—Daniel 8:20-22.

Babylon

Medo-Persia

Greece

Rome

Britain and the United States



of Daniel. Daniel wrote about an “immense image” that Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar saw in a vision given him by God. (Daniel 2:28, 31-43) Daniel revealed to the monarch that the sections of the body of the image represented the succession of political empires that began with Babylon, the world power at the time. (Egypt and Assyria had already come and gone.) History now confirms the following:

The **head** of gold represented the Babylonian Empire.

The **breasts and arms** of silver depicted Medo-Persia.

The **belly and thighs** of copper pointed to ancient Greece.

The **legs** of iron pictured the Roman Empire.

The **feet**, an amalgam of iron and clay, symbolize the politically and socially incohesive state of affairs during the time of the Anglo-American world power.

According to Revelation 17:10, the seventh world power “must remain a short while.” How long will that prove to be? How will it disappear from the world scene? And what will happen thereafter? Daniel sheds much light on these questions.

A Hope You Can Trust

After describing the aforementioned image, Daniel wrote: “A stone was cut out [of a mountain] not by hands, and it struck the image on its feet of iron and of molded clay and crushed them.” (Daniel 2:34) What did this awesome spectacle portend?

Daniel continued: “In the days of those [final] kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be brought to ruin. And the kingdom itself will not be passed on to any other people. It will crush and put an end to all these [earthly] kingdoms, and it itself will stand to times indefinite.”* (Daniel 2:44, 45) Note these important points:

1. The victorious Kingdom, represented by a large stone, is “set up” by God himself, not by human “hands.” Hence, it is rightly called *God’s Kingdom*.

2. God’s Kingdom “will crush” all human rulerships, including the seventh world power. Why? All these will refuse to relinquish power and will face off against God in a final great war at a figurative place called Har-Magedon, or Armageddon. The Bible makes clear that this war involves “the kings of the entire inhabited earth.”—Revelation 16:13, 14, 16.

* For more information about God’s heavenly Kingdom, see chapters 8 and 9 of the book *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* published by Jehovah’s Witnesses.

3. Unlike transitory human governments, including the seven world powers, God's Kingdom "will *never* be brought to ruin." Also, it will rule over the entire earth.—Daniel 2:35, 44.

The final destruction of God's opposers will be a spectacular fulfillment of the prophecy at Genesis 3:15, mentioned in the first article in this series. The Seed of the woman, Jesus Christ, would crush the symbolic serpent, Satan, and his seed. (Galatians 3:16) Satan's seed includes all humans who adopt his wicked ways and who promote human self-determination as opposed to rule by God and Christ.—Psalm 2:7-12.

This brings us to a very important question: When will that final destruction occur? Yes, when will the "stone"—God's Kingdom—remove every trace of human rulership? The Bible answers that question by way of a "sign" that would identify the last days.—Matthew 24:3.

Recognize "the Sign"!

The sign of the end includes global war, "great earthquakes," "pestilences," and major "food shortages." (Luke 21:10, 11; Matthew 24:7, 8; Mark 13:8) Also marking the "last days" would be a serious moral and spiritual breakdown in society. (2 Timothy 3:1-5) Have "all these things" occurred? (Matthew 24:8) Yes—to the point that many people fear the future. The newspaper *The Globe and Mail* stated: "Some of the most respected thinkers about science and society are issuing alarming prognostications about humanity coming to an end."

In one very important respect, however, those prognostications are wrong—humanity itself will not end. In fact, the intervention by God's Kingdom guarantees it! When giving the sign of the end, Jesus Christ stated: "This *good news* of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will

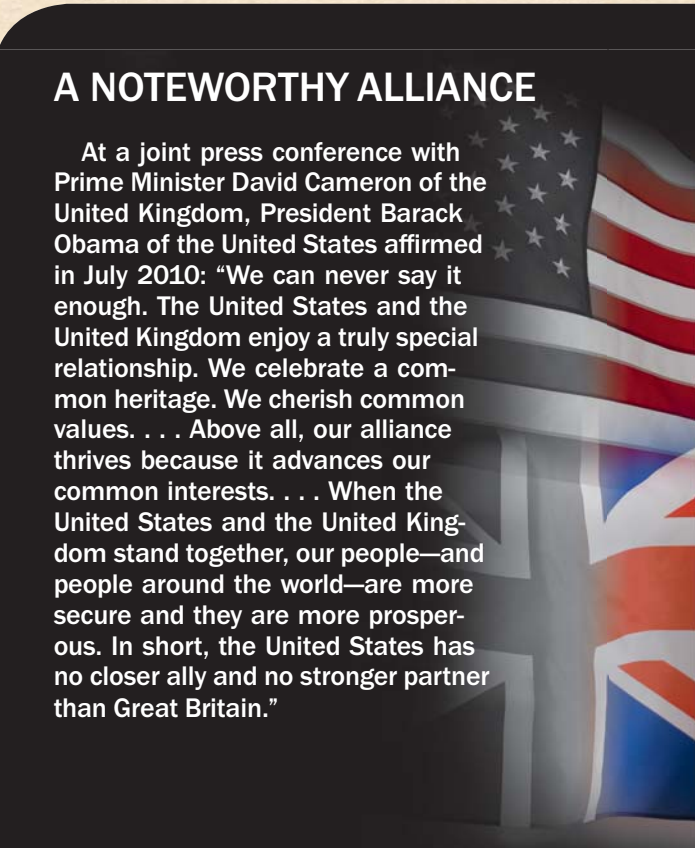
come." (Matthew 24:14) How has this prophecy unfolded?

In over 230 lands, Jehovah's Witnesses are proclaiming the Kingdom of God. Indeed, the title of their primary journal is *The Watchtower Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom*—Jehovah being God's personal name. (Psalm 83:18) The Witnesses' program of Bible education is helping countless individuals and families to replace harmful lifestyles with clean and peaceful conduct that conforms to God's standards. (1 Corinthians 6:9-11) As a result, millions of people worldwide are confident that they will gain God's protection when his Kingdom intervenes in mankind's affairs.

Indeed, they will see with their own eyes the fulfillment of Christ's model prayer, sometimes called the Lord's Prayer, which states, in part: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will

A NOTEWORTHY ALLIANCE

At a joint press conference with Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom, President Barack Obama of the United States affirmed in July 2010: "We can never say it enough. The United States and the United Kingdom enjoy a truly special relationship. We celebrate a common heritage. We cherish common values. . . . Above all, our alliance thrives because it advances our common interests. . . . When the United States and the United Kingdom stand together, our people—and people around the world—are more secure and they are more prosperous. In short, the United States has no closer ally and no stronger partner than Great Britain."





The Bible promises that genuine peace will prevail under the rule of God's Kingdom

be done in earth, as it is in heaven.” (Matthew 6:10, *King James Version*) Have you wondered what life on earth will be like when all humans love and obey God? The following Bible passages may help you to understand why the expression “good news” is fitting.

When God's Will Is Done on Earth . . .

- **There will be genuine peace, not just the absence of war.** “Jehovah . . . is making wars to cease to the extremity of the earth. The bow he breaks apart and does cut the spear in pieces; the wagons he burns in the fire.” (Psalm 46:8, 9) “The meek ones themselves will possess the earth, and they will indeed find their exquisite delight in the abundance of peace.”—Psalm 37:11.

- **All will have an abundance of food.** “There will come to be plenty of grain on the earth; on the top of the mountains there will be an overflow.”—Psalm 72:16.

- **Perfect health will prevail.** “No resident will say: ‘I am sick.’”—Isaiah 33:24.

- **Everyone will have a comfortable home.** “They will certainly build houses and have occupancy; and they will certainly plant vineyards and eat their fruitage. They will not build and someone else have occupancy; they will not plant and someone else do the eating.”—Isaiah 65:21, 22.

- **All forms of suffering will end.** “The tent of God is with mankind, . . . and he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away.”—Revelation 21:3, 4.

Do those promises appeal to you? If so, Jehovah's Witnesses encourage you to look further into the Bible. Indeed, by doing so you will see even more evidence that man's cruel domination of his fellow man is about to end. You will also see that the Bible is deserving of your full trust, that it truly is inspired by God.—2 Timothy 3:16.*

* To learn more about the Bible, feel free to contact Jehovah's Witnesses locally, write to the appropriate address listed on page 5, or visit our Web site www.watchtower.org.