

What Are the Mysterious “Times of the Gentiles”?

“And there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people . . . UNTIL the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled” (Luke 21:23-24). When did the times of the Gentiles begin? What are they? When will they come to an end?

William F. Dankenbring (Updated September 2017)

In the Mount Olivet prophecy, Jesus Christ said to His disciples concerning the onrushing “Great Tribulation” which looms before us, “For there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations, and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, UNTIL *the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*” (Luke 21:23-24).

What are these mysterious “Times of the Gentiles,”? And when do they occur? And when do they end?

All Biblical prophecy revolves around the descendants of Abraham and Israel – primarily the twelve tribes of Israel. Also, the focus of most Biblical prophecy is the geographical region of the Middle East, the region of modern “Israel” and Jerusalem in particular. Thirdly, the focus of 90 percent of all Biblical prophecy is the “time of the end” – that is, the time we are living in, today!

This being understood, what is the meaning of Jesus' cryptic words concerning the “times of the Gentiles”? Notice that this expressly relates to the Gentile possession or dominance over the city of Jerusalem, and over the people of God – Israel.

Jerusalem was first captured by Gentiles, and its inhabitants taken into captivity by Gentile nations, in 604-607 B.C., when Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, conquered it. In a subsequent conquest, he razed and burned the Temple in 586 B.C.

Nebuchadnezzar's Strange Dream

During his reign, a strange dream came to the king at night, troubling him greatly. It seemed like a nightmare, and he knew it had some divine or supernatural origin, so he called on his soothsayers and mystics to explain the dream to him. None could do so, until the Jewish lad Daniel was brought before him. We read in the Scriptures:

“Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. Daniel answered and said, “Blessed by the name of God for ever and

ever: for wisdom and might are his: And he changeth the TIMES and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom to them that know understanding: He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him” (Daniel 2:19-22).

Daniel then told king Nebuchadnezzar that his dream centered on “what shall be in the LATTER DAYS” (Daniel 2:28). Daniel then revealed to the king that his dream was of a great image with a golden head, breast and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass, and legs of iron, and feet of iron and clay (verses 31-33). The king saw the image being smitten by a stone which struck the image on the feet and destroyed it (v.34-35), and then the stone became a great mountain and filled all the earth (v.35).

What was the significance of this awesome dream? Daniel explained:

“This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. . . Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter’s clay and part of iron, the kingdom [in the end-time] shall be DIVIDED: but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.

“And in the DAYS OF THESE KINGS shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume ALL these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever” (Daniel 2:36-44).

In essence, this awesome dream describes the fullness of the “times of the Gentiles” – that is, the "TIMES" and seasons when GENTILE KINGDOMS, or Gentile- influenced kingdoms, would rule over the world, or vast sections thereof. In other words, from the time of king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, till the present time, today, the world has been living under or within the “times of the Gentiles” – the times GENTILE KINGDOMS would dominate and have the supremacy over the nations of the world!

The “head of gold” referred to the Babylonian Empire, which reigned over the world from 604-607 B.C. till its fall in 539 B.C. It was replaced by the Persian Empire, the "silver" empire, which ruled from 539 B.C. till its fall in 331-334 B.C., when it was conquered by Alexander the Great. The Grecian kingdom, compared to “brass,” ruled from 331 B.C. till the death of Alexander, when it was divided up into four kingdoms by four generals who succeeded him – Macedon and Greece under Cassander, Thrace and

Bithynia under Lysimachus, Egypt under Ptolemy, and Syria under Seleucus (compare Daniel 7:6; 8:8, 22). This version of the world kingdom continued down to the fourth world kingdom – the ROMAN EMPIRE, a kingdom compared to “iron” because of its hardness, cruelty, strength, and power.

Rome conquered Greece and the Mediterranean world and became an empire in 31 B.C. and lasted till about 476 A.D., when barbarians from northern Europe and Africa began overrunning the empire. The Heruli, Vandals, and Ostrogoths briefly ruled Rome, till the "Imperial Restoration" by Emperor Justinian. In a weakened form "Rome" continued through successive but smaller kingdoms, in Europe, in restorations, beginning with Justinian in 554 A.D., later Charlemagne, the Hapsburgs in Austria, Otto the Great in Germany, and Napoleon of France. The sixth restoration was Hitler- Mussolini in 1936-1945, which crashed in flames. Mussolini proclaimed his kingdom the “Roman Empire,” and Hitler proclaimed the Third Reich as the “New World Order.”

The seventh and final restoration (the “seventh horn” of the Beast, historically – see Rev.13:1-2) is still FUTURE, but will occur within *OUR LIFETIME*.

The Beasts of Daniel 7

To understand what Biblical prophecy foretells for the future of our planet, and the next few years ahead of us, we need to go back to the intriguing prophecies of the book of Daniel. Daniel lived in the seventh century before Christ, during the time of the Babylonian Empire (607-539 B.C.).

In the book of Daniel, we read about a strange dream the prophet of God had in the first year of Belshazzar, king of Babylon. He saw the four winds of heaven stirring up the great sea, and four creatures arising out of the sea.

Daniel describes it thus: “The first was like a lion and had eagle’s wings. Then, as I watched, its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a human being; and a human mind was given to it. Another beast appeared, a second one, that looked like a bear. . . After this, as I watched, another appeared, like a leopard. The beast had four wings of a bird on its back and four heads; and dominion was given to it. After this I saw in the visions by night a fourth beast, terrifying and dreadful and exceedingly strong. It had great iron teeth and was devouring, and breaking in pieces, and stamping what was left with its feet. It was different from the beasts that preceded it, and it had *ten horns*. I was considering the horns, when another one appeared, a little one coming up among them; to make room for it, three of the earlier horns were plucked up by the roots. There were eyes like human eyes in this horn, and a mouth speaking arrogantly” (Dan.7:3-8, NRSV).

In other articles, I have identified these four beasts prophetically as four end-time world kingdoms to arise. Many have thought these four beasts were the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman Empires in ancient history. However, notice! An angel

told Daniel specifically, “As for these four beasts, *four kings [or kingdoms] shall arise out of the earth*” (v.17). “But,” he continues, “the holy ones of the Most High shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever – forever and ever” (v.18).

Since these four beasts were to arise *in the future*, then they could NOT include the Babylonian Empire which was then *already in existence!* Notice, too, that the kingdom of the LORD would replace these kingdoms – indicating that they exist just prior to the coming of the Messiah! This is not a prophecy for olden days and ancient empires. It is a prophecy for the dynamic, pulsating PRESENT TIME!

The Four Beasts

Daniel wanted to know specifically about this strange fourth beast “which was different from all the rest, exceedingly terrifying, with its teeth of iron and claws of bronze, and which devoured and broke in pieces, and stamped what was left with its feet; and concerning the *ten horns* that were on its head, and concerning the other horn, which came up . . . the horn that had eyes and a mouth that spoke arrogantly, and that seemed greater than the others.” He goes on, “As I looked, this horn made war with the holy ones, and was prevailing over them, until the Ancient One came; then judgment was given for the holy ones of the Most High, and the time arrived when the holy ones gained possession of the kingdom” (Dan.7:19-22).

What are these four beasts? In my article “Daniel 7 and the New World Order,” I explain that these are four latter-day kingdoms in the earth that rise up. The “lion” kingdom refers to the great power of the Anglo-Saxon countries, America and Great Britain. We have all heard of the “British lion” and the “American eagle.” Our nations are descended from ancient Joseph, the birthright holder of ancient Israel, who was prophesied to become great and multitudinous in the earth. Write for my article, “The United States in Bible Prophecy!”

The kingdom of the “bear” refers to Russia and her allies. Modern geopolitical thinkers refer to the Russian “bear,” and Russia has been characterized by Winston Churchill and others as a rambling “bear” which aggressively moves in and takes what it wants, until it is opposed (as by the “lion”).

The “leopard” in this prophecy, in my opinion, refers to Germany and continental Europe. Germany struck like a leopard, suddenly and without warning, in World Wars I and II. It was famous for its “blitzkrieg” warfare and the “leopard tank.” It struck quickly and fatally, but could not stand up to the combined forces of the lion and the bear. The four “horns” would be the strongest powers in continental Europe – Germany, France, Italy and Spain.

But what about the fourth beast? It follows the other three. It is the FINAL beast power in existence before the coming of the “Ancient One” – the Messiah Himself – and it is a kingdom composed of ten horns. A “horn” in prophecy is a kingdom or war-

making power, so this beast is a kingdom composed of ten leading military powers united together – a composite “beast,” as it were!

Revelation 13

The identity of this beast is explained more fully in the Bible itself, the New Testament book of Revelation – the final book of the Bible – a book containing amazing and mysterious prophecies for the “end of days” leading up to the coming of the Messiah!

The apostle John writes, in chapter 13 (13 is the number of “rebellion”) about a great end-time BEAST which will rise up and rebel against God. Notice his amazing words.

“And I saw a *beast* rising out of the sea, having *ten horns* and *seven heads*; and on his horns were ten diadems (crowns), and on its heads were blasphemous names. And the beast that I saw was *like a leopard, its feet were like a bear’s, and its mouth was like a lion’s mouth*. And the dragon [Satan the devil – see Rev.12:9] gave it his power and his throne and great authority” (Rev.13:1-3, NRSV).

Notice that this final “beast” kingdom will have ten horns – just like the fourth “beast” of Daniel 7! Notice, too, that it has “seven heads.” And that it appears like a lion (Daniel’s first beast), a bear (Daniel’s second beast), and a leopard (Daniel’s third beast). In other words, this beast is composed of all three of Daniel’s beasts – it incorporates them into its own bestial nature and authority! Since Daniel’s third beast, the leopard, had four heads, then all together this composite beast would possess those four heads, plus the head of the lion, the head of the bear, and its own head – or *seven heads combined!*

What is this strange beast yet to rise up?

Prophetic Error Compounded

Evangelical Christians all seem to speak with one voice and erroneously believe that the Beast of Revelation will rise up in Europe and will be formed by ten nations of Europe.

However, one good look at Europe today reveals that it is not a mighty military power of itself; nor is it comprised of “ten horns” or possess “seven heads”!

It should be obvious that Europe will not and cannot fulfill this prophecy of a Beast or World ruling Kingdom composed of “ten kings” or kingdoms. Europe cannot be the fourth “Beast” of Daniel or the Beast of Revelation 13. They both have “ten horns,” representing ten kingdoms. A quick tally reveals that the European Union today already has over 25 *nations* in its membership, and Turkey, a Muslim nation, is knocking at the doors. And even so, Europe is nowhere near a great military power, as the fourth Beast of Daniel’s prophecy and the Beast of Revelation are so clearly depicted to be! Europe doesn’t hold a candle to either the United States, or Russia, today, in military power.

A New Look at the United Nations

For years I have been predicting that the final world body or government which will rule the earth will be a revamped, revised, strengthened UNITED NATIONS!

Let’s take a look at the United Nations. It is a truly *global* governing body, and it is rapidly moving towards a revamped leadership of TEN permanent nations in its governing body, the Security Council! *This TEN Nation Group* will control virtually every aspect of life on planet Earth! A revamped “Security Council” of the United Nations, with TEN permanent members, would surely constitute a TEN HORNED BEAST!

Ever since the founding of the United Nations, in 1945, at the end of World War II, there have been 5 “permanent members” of the UN Security Council, which is to bring worldwide security, and intervene when necessary to preserve the “peace” of the world. These are the United States, France, Great Britain, Russia (formerly the Soviet Union) and China.

However, in 1997, the present Security Council agreed to add another five members to the favored permanent member list.

Very few teachers of Bible prophecy today even noticed that in September, 2004, 5 nations practically demanded they be included in an already approved expansion of the present Security Council of the UN. With 5 new members added to this body, there would be a total permanent membership of the UN Security Council of *10 members!*

Notice again what Scripture foretells for the last days: “And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, having TEN HORNS and seven heads” (Rev.13:1, NRSV). A “horn” represents a war-making power. This is a single “beast” but it is comprised of “ten horns” or military powers which are used to corral the nations and “gore” the nations, and keep them under control – to put out conflagrations and civil wars and prevent nations from attacking other nations, worldwide.

But what are the “seven heads” of this end-time New World Order?

I believe that the “seven heads” of the “beast” are the seven primary nations that govern world finance and the global economy. There are seven nations which lead and

dominate the world financially. These nations are the famous “Group of Seven” – that is, the United States, Canada, Great Britain, France, Germany, Japan, and Italy. Although Russia has been invited to attend their meetings, as a diplomatic courtesy, in the interests of world peace, remember that Russia is an economic basket case, and is really NOT one of the “Group of Seven.”

I submit, therefore, that those who look to Europe for the arising of the final “beast” of Revelation, are *looking in the wrong place!* And while they are still waiting for the Beast to arise, it will arise suddenly elsewhere – in the form of the revamped UNITED NATIONS, with its Secretary-General, Security Council, and General Assembly of nations!

The Man of Mystery, Intrigue

This person will be arrogant. He will boast against God.

We read of this individual also in II Thessalonians, chapter 2. The apostle Paul wrote, “As to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we beg you, brothers and sisters, not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed . . . Let no one deceive you in any way; for that day will not come unless the REBELLION comes first and the *lawless one* is revealed, the one destined for destruction. He opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the *Temple of God, declaring himself to be God*” (II Thess.2:1-4).

This proud and arrogant individual will claim that HE is the long-awaited, promised ‘Messiah’! And Satan the devil will back him up in this deception. Paul went on, “The coming of the lawless one is apparent in the working of Satan, who uses all power, signs, and lying wonders, and every kind of wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion, leading them to believe what is false, so that all who have not believed the truth but took pleasure in unrighteousness will be condemned” (II Thess.2:9-12).

Daniel also described the character of this individual who is coming soon. He wrote, “When the transgressions have reached their full measure, a king of bold countenance shall arise, skilled in intrigue. He shall grow strong in power, shall cause fearful destruction, and shall succeed in what he does. He shall destroy the powerful and the people of the holy ones [true saints of God]. By his cunning he shall make deceit prosper under his hand, and *in his own mind he shall be great*. Without warning he shall destroy many and shall even rise up against the Prince of princes [the true Messiah!]. But he shall be broken, and not by human hands” (Dan.8:23-25).

The Amplified Version goes into more graphic detail. It records, “And at the latter end of their kingdom, when the transgressors [the apostate Jews] have reached their fullness [of their wickedness, taxing the limits of God’s mercy], a king of fierce countenance and understanding dark trickery and craftiness shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power; and he shall corrupt and destroy

astonishingly and shall prosper and do his own pleasure, and he shall corrupt and destroy the mighty men and the holy people (the people of the saints). And through his policy he shall cause trickery to prosper in his hand; he shall magnify himself in his heart and mind, and in their security, he will destroy and corrupt many. He shall also stand up against the Prince of princes, but he shall be broken and that by no [human] hand” (Daniel 8:23-25).

Daniel 11 also speaks of this great “seducer.” Daniel declares, “Forces sent by him shall occupy and profane the temple and fortress. They shall abolish the regular burnt offering and set up the abomination that makes desolate. He shall seduce with intrigue those who violate the covenant [God’s commandments]; but the people who are loyal to their God shall stand firm and take action. The wise among the people shall give understanding to many” (Dan.11:31-33).

Again, let’s look at this in the Amplified Version. Here we read this king will appear with armed forces in the Holy Land, Israel, “and shall pollute the sanctuary, the [spiritual] stronghold, and shall take away the continual [daily burnt offering]; and they shall set up [in the sanctuary] the abomination that astonishes and makes desolate [probably an altar to a pagan god]. And such as violate the covenant he shall pervert and seduce with flatteries, but the people who know their God shall prove themselves strong and shall stand firm and do exploits [for God]” (Dan.11:31-32).

Daniel continues, “And the king shall do according to his will; he shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god and shall speak astonishing things against the God of gods and shall prosper until the indignation be accomplished, for that which is determined [by God] shall be done” (v.36).

The NRSV has this, “The king shall act as he pleases. He shall exalt himself and consider himself greater than any god, and shall speak horrendous things against the God of gods. He shall prosper until the period of wrath is completed, for what is determined shall be done. He shall pay no respect to the gods of his ancestors, or to the one beloved by women [Tammuz, the world’s imitation Christ]; he shall pay no respect to any other god, for he shall consider himself greater than all” (Dan.11:36-37).

This man of intrigue and mystery will be cunning, crafty, wise, and Ezekiel even says he will be “wiser than Daniel” in his political machinations and Machiavelli instincts. Ezekiel declares, “Thus says the Lord GOD: Because your heart is *proud* and you have said, ‘I am a god; I sit in the seat of the gods, in the heart of the seas,’ yet you are but a mortal, and no god, though *you compare your mind with the mind of a god*. You are *indeed wiser than Daniel*; no secret is hidden from you; by your wisdom and understanding you have amassed wealth for yourself, and have gathered gold and silver into your treasuries. . .” (Ezek.28:2-4, NRSV).

“The Seven Heads”

John in the book of Revelation declares, “Here is the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits. There are also seven

kings. Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time” (Rev.17:9-10). “The BEAST that was, and is not, is himself also the EIGHTH, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition” (v.11).

Remember, this beast represents world governments down through the ages. The final one, the fourth beast of Daniel 7, has seven heads. What are they?

The fourth beast of Daniel 7 also relates to the kingdom of iron of Daniel 2 – the ancient Roman Empire. That “kingdom” had seven resurrections, or “heads,” in history, down to our age.

Notice!

In this scenario, the ancient Roman Empire fits the description of the fourth beast of Daniel 7. It was a vast empire and had the characteristics of the “lion” – it included ancient Judea, the Celts of Europe (members of the Lost Ten Tribes of Israel), who were the “lion”, as well as elements of the “bear” and “leopard” (Central and Eastern Europeans).

Rome itself fell in 476 A.D., and from it, down through history, there were prophesied to be seven successive ‘heads’ – or seven revivals of the “Roman Empire.” These were as follows:

Head	Date	Kingdom
1st head	554 A.D.	Emperor Justinian of Rome
2nd head	800 A.D.	Charlemagne of the Franks
3rd head	961 A.D.	Otto the Great of Germany
4th head	1519 A.D.	Charles V of Austria
5th head	1804 A.D.	Napoleon Bonaparte of France
6th head	1929-45 A.D.	Mussolini/Hitler of Italy and Germany
7th head	NOT YET COME	United Nations NWO

In A.D. 554, Emperor Justinian cobbled together what was called “the Imperial Restoration of the Roman Empire.” This was the first revival, or first “head” to spring out of the ancient Roman Empire, successively.

Another, second revival, or “head,” was accomplished by the Frankish king Charlemagne, on Christmas Day, the year 800 A.D., when he was crowned as Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire by Pope Leo III. He was the son of Pepin the Short, who founded the Carolingian dynasty. Pepin became king in 751 A.D. and Pope Steven II

gave his approval when he anointed Pepin and his sons in 754. Charlemagne created a vast empire in the west including much of the old Roman Empire. “He was the first Germanic ruler to assume the title of emperor, and the ‘empire’ he *revived* lasted in one form or another for *a thousand years*” (“Charlemagne,” *Worldbook Encyclopedia*, vol.3, p.291). Did you notice? The *Worldbook* plainly says that his kingdom was a “revival” of the Roman Empire!

The third revival or “head” was the German King Otto I, the Great. Otto “was the first king to become Holy Roman Emperor. . . In 941 he crossed the Alps and declared himself the king of Italy . . . In 961, Otto crossed the Alps to put down an uprising in Rome. For this service, Pope John XII crowned him emperor of what was later known as the Holy Roman Empire” (“Otto I, the Great,” *Worldbook*, vol.14, page 666-667).

The fourth revival or “head” was the Hapsburg dynasty. Rudolf Hapsburg became the first member of the Hapsburg family to be elected Holy Roman Emperor in 1273. From 1438 until 1806, when Napoleon conquered Germany and the Hapsburgs, and their Holy Roman Empire, most of the emperors were Hapsburgs. Charles the Great, of the Hapsburg dynasty, was also known as Charles V (1500-1558) and ruled over more countries than any other European monarch. He became King Charles I of Spain in 1516, and was made Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire in 1519.

The fifth head of the revived Roman Empire was none other than Napoleon Bonaparte of France, who ended the Hapsburg dynasty. Napoleon conquered all continental Europe. He triumphed in Italy, invaded Egypt, conquered Austria, and in May, 1804, the French senate voted him the title of Emperor. “The coronation ceremonies took place at Notre Dame cathedral on December 2. As the pope prepared to crown him, Napoleon snatched the crown from the pontiff’s hands and placed it on his own head, to show that he had personally won the right to wear it” (“Napoleon,” *Worldbook*, vol.14, page 14).

Interestingly, from the Imperial Restoration of the Roman Empire, in 554 A.D., till the fall of Napoleon, in 1814 A.D., lies a period of 1,260 years exactly. The “beast” was prophesied to rule for a period of “42 months” (Rev.13:5), speaking “blasphemies,” and this certainly occurred during the Middle Ages, throughout the time when the Roman Catholic Church sat astride all these revivals of the Roman Empire! 42 months, in prophecy is a term of 42 30-day months, or 1260 days. In Bible prophecy, a “day” often equals a literal “year” in being fulfilled (see Num.14:34; Ezek.4:4-6). Thus, the Beast throughout the Middle Ages reigned from 554 to 1814 – a period of *1260* consecutive years, before its reign was terminated by the British conquest of Napoleon Bonaparte and the French “head” of the Beast! “So, closed a government that dated from Augustus Caesar” (West, p.337).

The sixth revival of the “Holy Roman Empire” was attempted by the Fascist dictator of Italy, Benito Mussolini (1883-1945). Mussolini founded Fascism and ruled as dictator of Italy for almost 21 years. He attempted to build Italy into a great empire and

took the title *Il Duce* (“the leader”). He signed a concordat with the Vatican in 1929, giving the Pope temporal powers in Vatican City. Mussolini urged the people of Italy to rebuild the glories of ancient Rome. He invaded and conquered Ethiopia in 1935-36. His reign ended, however, with the Allied victory over Italy in 1945. Associated with him in his “New World Order” was Adolf Hitler, of Nazi Germany. Both of them died in 1945.

The seventh and final resurrection, revival, or “head” of the Roman Empire is “yet to come.” And when it does come, it will “continue a short space” (Rev.17:10). This final resurrection will apparently last only seven years – the final seven years before the coming of the Messiah to bring it to its final debacle. This revival will rule with “ten horns” and will be the final resurrection of this ancient world-ruling system of government which in one sense dates back to ancient Nimrod, who founded the first world government this side of the Flood, in ancient Babylonia.

“The Eighth”

This final revival is also called “the eighth” (Rev.17:11) but “belongs to the seven.” How will this system be different, so that it is called “the eighth”?

Unlike the previous empires, which were all nations grown to great power, this final resurrection will be a *system of nations*, where the “ten kings” or “kingdoms” GIVE (willingly) THEIR POWER AND AUTHORITY to one man – the “Beast.” He will not be ruler over a particular country, but will be different, in that he will be the Head of the entire group of countries – that is, the United Nations – the New World Government! That will be the “eighth” system but the “seventh” head of the revived “Roman Empire”!

The Seventy Weeks Prophecy

In another amazing prophecy of the time of the end, Daniel was told, “Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy.” The prophecy continues:

“Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks [seven sevens, or 49 years], and threescore and two weeks [an additional 62 sevens, or 434 years, which makes a total of 483 years] . . . And after the threescore and two weeks [that is, after these periods of time which total 483 years, when the 434 years are finished] shall MESSIAH be CUT OFF [be killed], but not for himself [he was to be killed for our sins – see Isaiah 53:1-12]: and the people of the prince that shall come shall DESTROY the city and the sanctuary; and the END thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the END of the war desolations are determined” (Daniel 9:24-26).

Notice the amazing fulfillment of these prophecies! In the seventh year of king Artaxerxes, king of Persia, which was 457-8 B.C., he issued a decree that fulfilled this

prophecy (see Ezra 7:6-26). If we count 483 years from 457 B.C., we come to the year 27 A.D. -- the very year that Jesus Christ (Yeshuah the Messiah) began His incredible ministry!

The first part of this incredible prophecy, therefore, points directly to the **FIRST COMING OF THE MESSIAH, YESHUAH**, who began His ministry in 27 A.D., and was "cut off" or crucified three years later, at Passover, 30 A.D.

But there is yet a final portion of this prophecy to be fulfilled. Notice how it points to the **SECOND COMING OF THE MESSIAH**, and completes the final seven years of this prophecy, which tells us when the Kingdom of God will be established!

"And he [the prince of the people who will destroy Jerusalem and the temple] shall confirm the covenant [a treaty, agreement, probably over the Old City of Jerusalem, giving its control to the Vatican and United Nations] for **ONE WEEK [SEVEN FINAL YEARS]**: and in the midst of the week [the final seven years of this age -- so, after 3 ½ years] he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease [he will cut off sacrifices from the Temple, even as Antiochus Epiphanes did in 167 B.C., and pollute the sanctuary], and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, **EVEN UNTIL THE CONSUMMATION**, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate" (Daniel 9:27).

This final week of years is in a very special sense the final fulfillment of the "TIMES OF THE GENTILES" -- it is the final attempt by Satan the devil to establish **HIS KINGDOM**, a counterfeit of the Kingdom of God, with his **FALSE MESSIAH** or Deliverer at its head, who will claim to be God, and the true Messiah (see II Thess.2:3- 12; Dan.7:23-25; Dan.11:30-39; Matt.24:15-21). And in a very special sense, the **REALLY EMPHATIC "Time of the Gentiles"** will be the **FINAL THREE AND ONE-HALF YEARS OF THIS AGE -- THE TIME OF GREAT TRIBULATION!**

The Last 3 1/2 Years

The final 3 and 1/2 years of this false rule of the false Messiah will be the cruelest, wickedest, most sadistic and horrible time of all human history. Jesus Christ referred to it as "great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be" (Matt.24:21).

The gospel of Mark records His words, "For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be. And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved [alive -- see Moffatt translation]; but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath

shortened the days” (Mark 13:19-20). Luke adds, “For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled” (Luke 21:22).

Daniel's prophecies culminate in this same hectic, terrifying, awesome period of time. He wrote, “And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a TIME OF TROUBLE, SUCH AS NEVER WAS since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book” (Daniel 12:1).

Jeremiah also foretold this same incredible tumultuous time of prophetic fulfillment. He wrote:

“Alas! for that day is great, so that NONE IS LIKE IT: it is even the TIME OF JACOB'S TROUBLE; but he shall be saved out of it” (Jeremiah 30:7).

Apparently, the coming Beast-Dictator-Tyrant, predicted by Biblical prophecies, will attempt to “shnitz” the world and the nations for the first 3 1/2 years of his reign, as the most influential LEADER IN THE WORLD. But his real authority will not be given to him until midway through the final “week of years.” He will rule over the whole world for the *final three and one-half years* – governing the whole world, perhaps dividing the world into ten regions of government (Rev.13:1). Thus, the first 3 1/2 years of the final “week” of years, there will be a time when the world will experience the birth pangs of the formation of a one-world government – turbulent times, increasing international chaos, misery and world trouble – including the overhaul of the world financial system, and growing threat of war and terrorism – and this will lead the nations to pick a man who will usher in a one world government.

All will seem well for a while. The changes will appear beneficial. Crisis will appear to be averted. The world will appear to aright itself and regain stability. During this relative “peace,” he will gain the confidence of the world leaders, but then he will change his visage. That is, in the middle of the final week of years, his “true colors” will begin to come out, and manifest themselves – his countenance will darken, and another side of his personality will come to the forefront! The benign lamb will metamorphose into a diabolical ogre, a scowling tyrant – a ravenous wolf, hungry and rapacious!

“For when they say, ‘Peace and safety!’ then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman, and they shall not escape! (I Thess.5:3).

John says of this coming king of the world, “And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to *continue forty-two months*. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make WAR AGAINST THE SAINTS, AND TO OVERCOME THEM: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall WORSHIP HIM, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain

from the foundation of the world. If any man have an ear, let him hear” (Rev.13:5-9).

The prophet Daniel also tells us more about this incendiary individual and his true bestial nature. He recorded:

“And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of FIERCE COUNTENANCE, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. And through his policy also he shall cause craft [witchcraft] to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by PEACE [hypnotizing the world, by his magnetic personality and glowing promises] shall he destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand. . . . And the vision . . . is true: wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days” (Daniel 8:23-26).

The Hebrew word for “fierce countenance” is *az* and means “strong, vehement, harsh.” It is from the root *azaz*, a primitive root meaning “to be stout, harden, impudent, prevail, strengthen, be strong.” *Gesenius Hebrew-Chaldee Dictionary of the Bible* has it, “(A) adj. (1) strong, vehement, spoken of a people, Num.13:28; of a wind, Exod.14:21; of the waves, Neh.9:11; Isa.43:16; of anger, Gen.49:7; Prov.21:14. (2) strong, fortified, Nu.21:24. (3) harsh, cruel, hard, of a king, Isa.19:4. 'hard of face,' i.e., impudent, shameless, Deut.28:50; Dan.8:23. (B) subst. strength, mighty, Gen.49:3.”

Who will this man be?

Of course, time itself will reveal the final answer to those who are close to God and who are studying the prophecies of God's Word and watching world developments carefully.

The Times of the Gentiles – Ended!

John also records in prophetic revelation, in chapter 11 of the book of Revelation, that the temple of God will be rebuilt in Jerusalem during these “end times” (Rev.11:1). He is told, “Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: *and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months*” (Rev.11:2).

At the end of this seventieth week, this final seven years, the “time of the Gentiles” will come to its abrupt close. It will be cut short. How? The apostle John declares, “The angel whom I saw standing on the sea . . . swore by Him who lives forever and ever . . . that there should be TIME NO LONGER, but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as he declared to His servants the prophets” (Rev.10:5-7).

This seventh angel refers to the seventh and final trumpet blast, John goes on, “Then the seventh angel sounded [his trumpet]: and there were voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdoms of the world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever’ (Rev.11:15). At this time Christ will return, when “The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged. And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, and those who fear Your name, small and great, and should destroy those who destroy the earth” (Rev.11:18).

Zechariah declares, “Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations as He fights in the day of battle. And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives. . . . Thus the LORD my God will come, and all the saints with You. . . . And the LORD shall be King over all the earth” (Zech.14:3-4, 5, 9).

The “times of the Gentiles” will be ended – by FORCE!

The Last Days

Although we cannot state with certainty when these events will occur, AND I DO NOT INTEND TO SET DATES, BUT LOOK AT THE GROWING EVIDENCE OF ESCALATING WORLD WOES!

The very fact that these prophecies are finally being understood at this time proves that we are living in the “last days.” As Daniel was told: “And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed TILL THE TIME OF THE END. Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the WISE shall understand” (Daniel 12:9-10).

Nevertheless, even though we live in the “time of the end,” when these prophecies would be revealed, these dates are not set in concrete. We do not know the exact date or hour of the return of the Messiah. That is why Jesus tells us, “But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. WATCH YE THEREFORE: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, WATCH” (Mark 13:32-37).

Are YOU really watching? Are your eyes wide open, and are you keeping abreast of world events and political developments? Jesus warns us very clearly that we must WATCH – be on our spiritual toes – and be VIGILANT! He declared, “Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man” (Luke 21:36). Are your eyes peeled? Are you awake? Meditate on it. Think about it! NOW!