

Quarter Two: Allusions, Images, Symbols: How to Study Bible Prophecy

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Lesson 4—The Nations: Part 1

Thursday: A Light to the Gentiles

April 24, 2025

- **Last Week:** “Images from Marriage”
 - The marriage relationship & it’s comparison to Christ and His bride, His people
- **This Week:** “The Nations: Part 1”
 - History, with rise & fall of kings, is the human outworking of the Great Controversy. Nothing will be right until God’s everlasting kingdom is established.
 - Revelation, in some ways, is Genesis in reverse

Memory Text: “‘Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed’” (Dan 7:14, NKJV)

The week in brief:

- 1. **Sunday:** “Nimrod and Nineveh” (Daniel)
 - Gen 10 – the entrance of rulers who stood in pride against God
- 2. **Monday:** Abraham’s Call (James)
 - Gen 12 – the call of Abraham to establish a nation that would be in contrast to the human kingdoms; this nation would exhibit the character of God to the world
- 3. **Tuesday:** Given What You Asked For (John D)
 - 1 Sam 8 – Israel’s rejection of God & desire for a king; failed in their mission; the problem with a king: “sinners governing other sinners”
- 4. **Wednesday:** The Rulers of the Gentiles (Kenny)
 - Matt 20 – pride & compromise in the NT Church & how they failed in their mission
- 5. **Thursday:** A Light to the Gentiles (Jill)
 - The purpose of Israel & the NT Church – witness of God’s love and character to others

Thursday: A Light to the Gentiles

Rev 14:6, 12; John 3:16 – 21; Num 14:17 – 21; Isa 42:6, 49:6, 60:3; Rev 18:1 - 4

- The church failed in its mission
 - **The Israelites**
 - Instead of being God’s chosen, set-apart witnesses of Him
 - Became like the nations around them
 - Became the tails, not the head
 - Followed other gods, idolatry, intermarriage with heathens, child sacrifice
 - The result?
 - Babylonian captivity
 - Rejection of Christ when He came

- **The NT Church**
 - Instead of being God's chosen, set-apart witnesses of Him
 - Jews rejected Christ
 - Christians compromised in the 4th century
 - Adopted pagan practices into the church
 - Encouraged the state's intervention
 - The result?
 - Dark Ages – church / state oppression of God's people
 - Persecution
- **Today's church**
 - Laodicean
 - Rev 3 – rich & increased with goods & have need of nothing
 - Don't know we're wretched, miserable, blind & naked

What is God's purpose for His people?

- Rev 14:6 – “Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue and people.”
 - **Takeaway #1: Preach the gospel**
 - Proclaim the “everlasting gospel” to all
 - Nation = Gk, “race / nation”, esp Gentiles
 - Tribe = Gk, clan, tribe, race, esp. Jews
 - Tongue = Gk, language
 - People = Gk, people, crowd, populace
- Rev 14:12 – “Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.”
 - **Takeaway #2: Practice His law and possess His faith**
 - Keep the commandments of God
 - Believe in His law & His character
 - Practice what they preach – live the gospel
 - Have the faith of Jesus
 - Possess & receive His faith
- 1 Pet 2:9, 10 – “But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light, (10) who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.”
 - **Takeaway #3: Share your personal testimony**
 - Used to be in darkness – now in marvelous light
 - Used to not belong – now the people of God
 - Used to be cast off – now received mercy
- Isa 43:10 – “‘You are My witnesses,’ says the Lord, ‘And My servant whom I have chosen that you may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He, before Me there was no God formed, nor shall there be after Me.’... (12) ...’Therefore you are My witnesses,’ says the Lord, ‘that I am God.’”
 - **Takeaway #4: Proclaim God's character**
 - Cannot witness if we don't know Him
 - *We share what we love, what we know and understand, what we've experienced

- Isa 49:6 – “Indeed He says, ‘It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved ones of Israel, I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, that You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.’”
 - Talking of Jesus, the suffering Servant
 - Restore those in Israel (God’s people)
 - Bring salvation to the Gentiles (those who don’t walk with God)
 - **Takeaway #5: Preach the message of salvation**
 - The church doesn’t bring salvation – but proclaims where that salvation can be founds
 - Acts 4:12 – “Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven, given among men, by which we must be saved.”
 - Peter & John arrested – speaking to the Sanhedrin
 - NT Church proclaimed this salvation through Jesus to the entire world
- Isa 60:3 – “Arise, shine; for your light has come! And the **glory** of the Lord is risen upon you. (2) For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people; but the Lord will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you. (3) The Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.”
 - Glory = character
 - John 8:12 - Jesus = the Light of the world
 - **Takeaway #6: Present Jesus**
 - Uphold Jesus so others are drawn to Him
 - John 12:32 – “I, if I am lifted up, will draw all men / peoples to Myself.”
- Rev 18:1 – 4 – “After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory. (2) And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, ‘Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every unclean and hated bird!’ ... (4) And I heard another voice from heaven saying, ‘Come out of her, My people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues.’”
 - **Takeaway #7: Urge people to leave false systems of worship and follow Jesus and His Word**
 - Don’t be afraid to speak the truth
 - God has people in all churches – our job is to proclaim the truth so others are called out

What is the purpose of God’s people?

- 1. Preach the gospel
- 2. Practice His law & Possess His faith
- 3. Share your personal testimony
- 4. Proclaim God’s character
- 5. Preach the message of salvation
- 6. Present Jesus
- 7. Urge people to leave false systems of worship and follow Jesus and His Word