

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

Jill Morikone

### Lesson 5—The Nations: Part 2

Sunday: The Very First Commandment

April 27, 2025

- **Last Week:** “The Nations: Part 1”
  - Human nations & kings & how they work against God
  - OT – Israelites failed in their mission to represent God & bring salvation to the Gentiles
  - NT – Christian Church failed in their mission – compromise crept into the church, union with state (true believers persecuted)
  - God’s purpose for His church – be a light to the world
- **This Week:** “The Nations: Part 2”
  - The consequences caused by the entrance of sin
    - Lesson: “The rebellion of Satan, and then of humanity, was a tragedy of immense consequence.”
    - Fear & guilt
    - Pride & selfishness
    - Envy & Jealousy
    - Death & Destruction – Cain killing Abel
  - Humanity looked to earthly rulers
    - Israel – “give us a king, so we can be like the other nations”
      - Despised God’s rulership, sought earthly, instead
    - Sinners ruling over sinners = recipe for disaster
  - Great Controversy
    - In spite of chaos in the world, God is in control
      - Worked out through the rise & fall of nations
    - Prov 21:1 – “The king’s heart is in the hand of the Lord, like the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes.”
    - Dan 2:44 – “And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.”
      - At the end (back of the Book) – God wins

**Memory Text:** “Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!” (Ps 46:10, NKJV)

The week in brief:

- 1. **Sunday:** The Very First Commandment (Jill)
  - Gen 2 – prohibition to eat of the tree of knowledge in the Garden of Eden; since humanity sinned, new classroom emerged (learn under difficulty & trial)

- 2. **Monday:** Daniel 2 (Daniel)
  - Dan 2 – progression (degression / regression) of the world kingdoms
    - Advances in technology, while morality still declines
- 3. **Tuesday:** Daniel 7 (John D)
  - God's people coming under human rule; the progress of nations – from one dictator to another, because all under sin
- 4. **Wednesday:** Between Land and Sea (James)
  - Rev 12 & 13 – the sea & land beast (America in Prophecy)
- 5. **Thursday:** Prophecy Again (SQ)
  - Rev 10 – birth of the SDA Church; Millerite Movement – understanding of Daniel

## Sunday: The Very First Commandment

Gen 2:9 - 17

- **4 things present in the Garden of Eden**
  - **1. Perfection** – land, animal, human perfection & beauty
    - 1<sup>st</sup> day of creation (light) – Vs 4 – “And God saw the light, that it was good...”
    - 3<sup>rd</sup> day of creation (dry land) – Vs 10 – “... God saw that it was good.”
    - 6<sup>th</sup> day of creation (animals / man) – Vs 31 – “Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good.”
      - Good = Heb, *tobe* (good, beautiful, noble)
        - Referred to Rebekah in Gen 24 (she was “beautiful”)
  - **2. Communication** – daily communion with God
    - Gen 3 – heard the voice of God walking in the garden in the cool of the day
      - Hid themselves, afraid
      - Indicates it was a daily occurrence before
  - **3. Education (Gen 2)**
    - God's role:
      - Created Adam & Eve
      - Placed Adam & Eve in the Garden of Eden
      - Taught them the care of the plants, trees, flowers
      - Taught about His character & law
    - Adam's role:
      - Placed in the garden to tend & keep it
      - Gen 2:15 – “Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to **tend** and **keep** it.”
        - Tend = to work, serve, labor, worship”
          - Work = a blessing b4 the entrance of sin
        - Keep = “to guard, keep”
        - 2 affirmative commands = “tend” and “keep” the garden
        - Next, a prohibitive command (testing human obedience)
  - **4. Obedience**
    - Enter a prohibitive command of God

- Gen 2:16, 17 – “And the Lord God **commanded** the man, saying, ‘Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; (17) but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it, you shall surely die.’”
      - Commanded = Heb, *tsaw-vaw*’ = to command, to charge” – often used in the context of God giving commandments to His people, emphasizing the importance of obedience to the given command
        - First time this root word is used
      - What was the command?
        - Don’t eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil
- Is all knowledge wrong?
  - How can some knowledge be forbidden?
  - Is it good for us not to experience some things?
  - If you’ve ever –
    - Experienced abuse or neglect
      - \*You’d know that some knowledge is hurtful / harmful
    - Fought in a war
    - Walked through a famine
    - Been raped
    - Watched your child die
  - If you’ve ever –
    - Questioned God and lost your faith
      - \*You’d know that some reasoning is hurtful
    - Studied intellectual infidels
    - Put man’s reasoning above the Word of God
  - God wanted to educate His people, while sparing them from the lifelong suffering that some knowledge would cause
    - Some knowledge is evil
    - Some knowledge brings pain
    - Some knowledge creates chaos and confusion
- **Israel’s history**
  - **1. Perfection** – started with a calling & high ideals
    - God called Abram
      - Gen 12:2, 3 – “I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. (3) I will bless those who bless you. And I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”
    - Calling on Israel
      - Be a light to the Gentiles
      - Represent the character of God to the world
  - **2. Communication**
    - He spoke with His people
      - Gen 12 & 17 – God spoke with Abraham
      - Gen 26 – spoke with Isaac

- Gen 35 – spoke with Jacob
- Ex 3 - spoke to Moses
- Ex 20 - spoke to Children of Israel from Mt Sinai
  - 10 commandments
- God spoke through judges & later, prophets
  - Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel
  - Hosea
- **3. Obedience**
  - Thousands of years later, God’s people asked for a king
    - God explained the consequences
  - God’s people walked in disobedience
    - Toward other idols
    - Lost their mission & purpose to share Christ with the world
      - Salvation of the Gentiles
  - God gave them what they wanted: human government
    - Later, experienced Babylonian captivity
  - Isa 48:18, 19 – “Oh, that you had heeded My commandments; then your peace would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea. (19) Your descendants also would have been like the sand, and the offspring of your body like the grains of sand, his name would not have been cut off nor destroyed from before Me.”
    - The promises given to Abram would have been fulfilled
    - God’s people would have been a light on the hill – to the Gentiles
- **4. Education**
  - Prophets & judges
    - Called to the people
  - Study of the Torah & Hebrew Scriptures
  - Later, schooled in discipline & affliction
    - Heb 12:11 – “Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.”
    - 5-fold cycle of disobedience (Neh 9:26 – 31)
      - Disobedience
      - Judgment
      - Repentance
      - Mercies
      - Deliverance
- **Lesson #6: “Understanding Sacrifice”**