

God's Plan for the Ages - Part 2

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I. Introduction.

- A. Justice will be swift in the last days.
- B. There is something about swiftness of justice that deters crime.

II. The times of the Gentiles.

- A. It is an expression from Christ himself. (Luke 21:24)
- B. It is a division of the world into two groups: Jews and Gentiles.
- C. It roughly started 600 BC and is extending to the conclusion of this age.
 - 1. It began with the Babylonians, succeeded by the Medo-Persians, followed by the Macedonians, and finally completed by the Romans.
 - 2. There is a parenthesis in the last period of time. God's purpose in this age is to take out of the Gentiles a people for His name. (Acts 15:14)

III. What God revealed about these times to five different people about the establishment of Christ's kingdom. As a precursor Christ's kingdom will be established forever and the kingdom will be at the end of the Gentile dominion. (Daniel 2:44; 7:13-14, 27)

A. Nebuchadnezzar. (Daniel 2:28-29)

- 1. Daniel learned the dream of this king and interpreted it for him.
- 2. The dream involved a statue composed of different materials at different places.
- 3. Four empires are identified through the statue that correspond exactly with history. The fourth empire is best seen as the Roman Empire. (Luke 2)
- 4. There is to be no empire after the Romans - some have been comforted by this.
- 5. In summary, there would be four empires and the form of the empire in the last days would be a mixture of ten kingdoms. Many believe it is a mixture of democracies and dictatorships that will compose the last world government.

B. Daniel. (Daniel 7)

- 1. Four beasts would come out of the sea. They would resemble a lion, a bear, a leopard and an indescribable one.
- 2. These beasts would be kings that would rule in the earth.

3. Out of the worst fourth kingdom ten kings would arise. The rest of Gentile history deals with the most prominent king that will arise out of the ten.

4. This king will blaspheme God and his tabernacle. He will persecute the saints and gain great power over the nations. (Revelation 13:6)

5. Beast is used to express the idea that the man will force his will upon the world. He will be admired, feared, and worshipped.

C. What Christ has to say.

1. Not a stone of the temple would remain standing, he said. (Matthew 24)

2. Titus destroyed the temple when he set fire to Jerusalem in 70 AD.

3. Jesus was specific as to when He would return - when the abomination of desolations was desecrating the Holy Place, he would return. (Daniel 9:27)

D. Paul.

1. Paul believed Christ would return in his lifetime. (2 Thessalonians 2:22)

2. When the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel is in the temple telling the world that he is God, get ready to run. This is the Anti-Christ and the end has arrived. Christ will usher in his reign after this.

3. There are three streams of prophetic truth: the Jews, the Gentiles, and the church.

4. Many today are looking forward to a world confederation. It is a world confederation, however, that will give birth to the Anti-Christ. The age of the Gentiles will end the same way it began with one world ruler forcing his religion upon the whole world.

E. John.

Application questions.

1. When will Christ return?

2. What is peculiar to you about the age of the Gentiles and why does it stand out?

3. The message was detailed concerning the difficult times that are ahead in the age of the Gentiles. What hope can you take from this message? What warning is implicit in it as well?
