

STUDY IV

THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES

What are Gentile Times?—Their Beginning; Their Length; Their End A.D. 1914—Attendant Events—Events to Follow—Literal and Symbolic Time—A Remarkable Type—Present Indications—God’s Kingdom to Overthrow Gentile Rule—Therefore Organized Before It Ends—Before A.D. 1914—Why Opposed by Gentile Kingdoms—How and Why All will Finally Accept it Joyfully—“The Desire of All Nations Shall Come.” [Since the topic considered in this chapter is very closely related to that of chapter xiii of Vol. I, the reader will be greatly assisted by a review of that chapter before commencing this.]

“JERUSALEM shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.” Luke 21:24

The term “Times of the Gentiles” was applied by our Lord to that interval of earth’s history between the removal of the typical Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of Israel (Ezek. 21:25-27), and the introduction and establishment of its antitype, the true Kingdom of God, when Christ comes to be “glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day.”

During this interval, the dominion of earth was to be exercised by Gentile governments; and Israel, both fleshly and spiritual, have been and are to be subject to these powers until their time is expired. While God does not approve of nor commend these governments, he recognizes their dominion. In other words, he has for wise ends permitted their dominion for an appointed time.

The dominion of earth was originally given to Adam, to subdue and possess and rule it in righteousness. (Gen. 1:28) Adam failed, and the dominion forfeited by sin was taken from him. Angels were next permitted to have the control. Instead, however, of lifting up the fallen race, some of them “kept not their first estate,” but fell into transgression. After the flood, God declared to Abraham his purpose to bring the needed help for the sinful, dying race through his posterity, by raising up from among them a great deliverer, ruler and teacher, saying, “In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.”

This was the earliest suggestion of a national, universal dominion over earth. And this suggestion, coming from God, implied a special fitness, a peculiar superiority of this ruler over and above all others, and that it would be to the advantage of all mankind to be subject to such

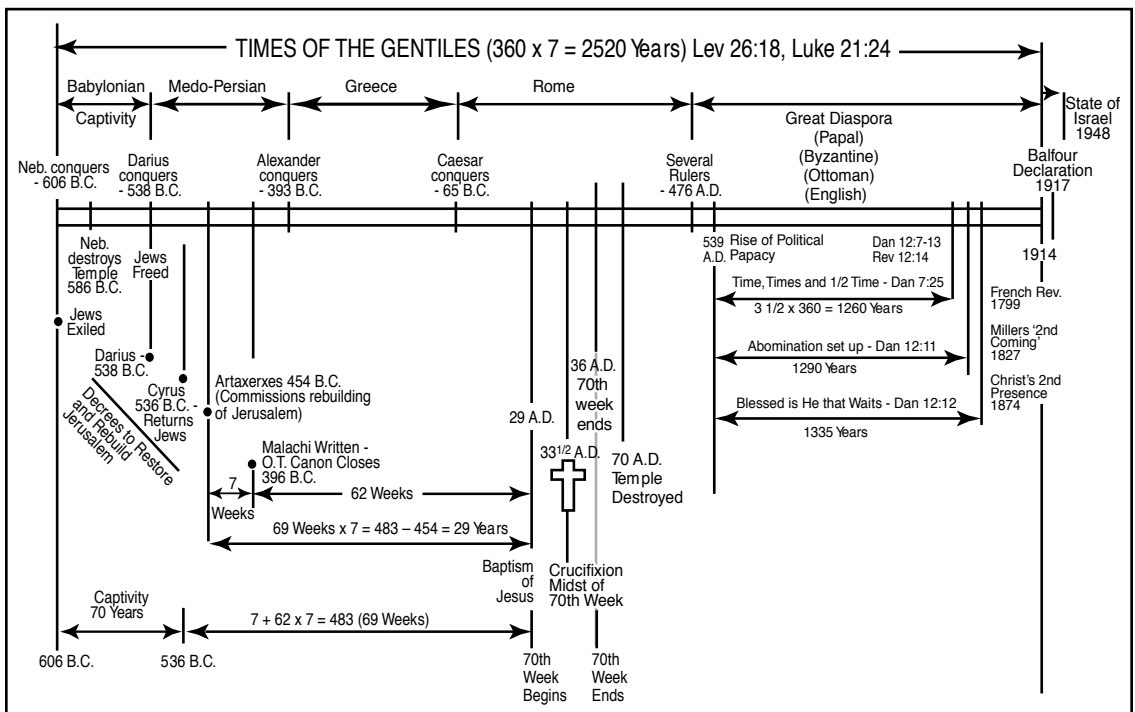


Figure 4.1 – Times of the Gentiles from 606 BC to 1914 AD.

a ruler. That this promise to Abraham filled the hearts and minds of his posterity, Israel, and was well known by their relatives, the Moabites and Edomites, there can be no doubt. That such a national hope would become known to other nations is probable; and, if known, we cannot doubt that pride would beget in them the desire to be the chief nation, and to have universal dominion, as being in every way as able and as fit to rule, and teach, and thus bless the nations, as any of Abraham's posterity.

What is the ultimate dominance on earth?

Israel's hope of attaining universal dominion, not by the choice of the nations to have it so, but by God's choice and power manifested in their favor, seems to have spread to other nations also. At all events, we find that these Gentile kings and peoples accepted their dominions as favors from the gods whom they worshiped. And the same thought still clings to every petty ruler and prince, as well as to the more powerful kings and emperors. No matter how weak mentally or physically, and no matter how vicious and unfit to rule either themselves or others, they possess to an almost insane degree the idea that God specially chose them and their families to rule over and "BLESS" (?) all the earth. This theory, accepted by the masses of the people, is blazoned forth on medals, coins and papers of state in the words, "King _____ by the grace of God."

Thus, while Israel was waiting and hoping for the promised dominion of earth, and often supposed they were just within reach of its realization, particularly under kings David and Solomon, the desire for universal empire became general among other nations. And when God was about to remove the crown from Israel until the true seed of promise should come to take the dominion, he determined to let the Gentile kingdoms take control and try the experiment of ruling the world, that thus the world might also learn the futility of its own efforts at self-government while in its present sinful condition. As he had given the dominion forfeited by Adam to the angels, to demonstrate their inability to rule and bless the world, so he now delivered that dominion over to the Gentiles, to let them try their various methods, unaided by him. These various experiments God permits, as so many

valuable and necessary lessons, filling the intervening time until the Lord's Anointed, whose right it is, shall come and take the dominion and accomplish all his gracious purposes.

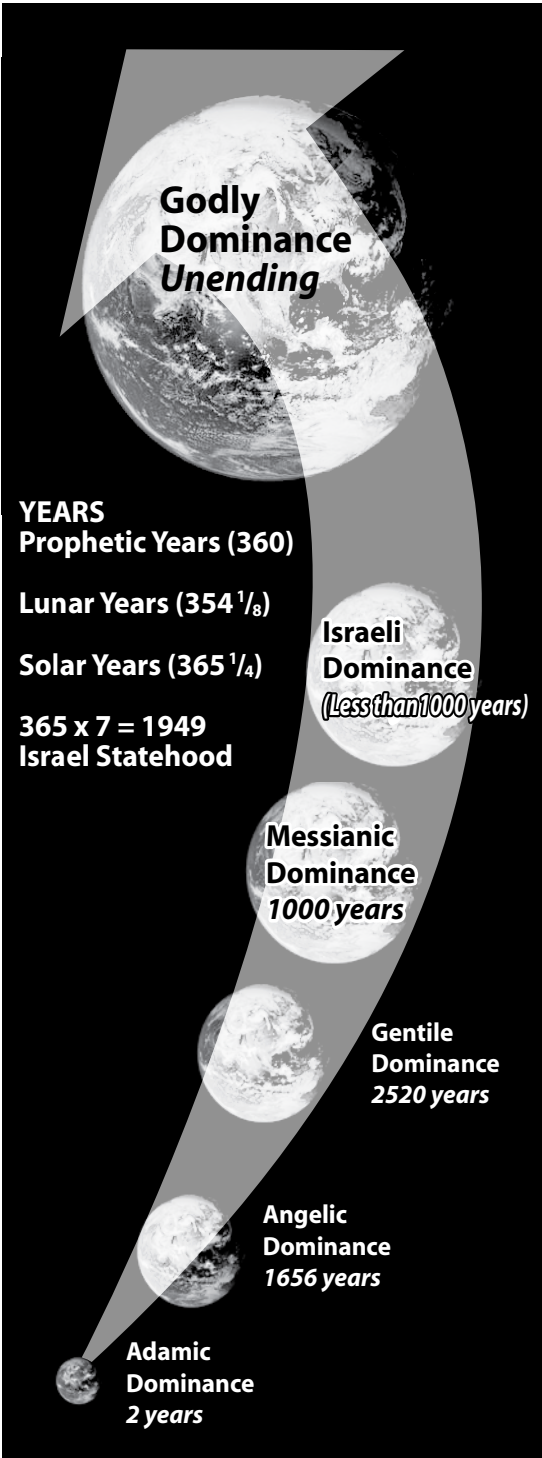


Figure 4.2 – The changing dominance over earth's affairs in history.

Why is natural Israel in study important?

Since Israel after the flesh was typical of spiritual Israel, the Gospel Church, which is also called in this higher sense “a royal priesthood and holy nation” (1 Pet. 2:9), and which in due time is to rule and bless all nations, so their kingdom was typical in some respects of the Kingdom of Christ. Consequently, when God’s time came to turn over the dominion of earth to Gentile rule, it was appropriate that he should first remove the typical crown from Israel, and that the typical kingdom should no longer be recognized. This he did, declaring that they had proven themselves unfit for exaltation to universal dominion, having become corrupt, vain and idolatrous in proportion as they had attained national distinction. This was in the days of King Zedekiah; and the divine decree was expressed in the words of the prophet: “Thus saith the Lord God, remove the diadem and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more until he comes whose right it is, and I will give it him.” Ezek. 21:24-27

This overturning of the crown, or dominion, has been accomplished. It was first turned over to Babylon, then to Medo-Persia, then to Grecia, and then to Rome. The character of these empires, as recorded on the pages of history, we have found to agree perfectly with the prophetic descriptions, as portrayed in Nebuchadnezzar’s vision of the great image and in Daniel’s vision of the four beasts. This overturned condition of Israel’s dominion was to continue until Christ, the rightful heir to the throne of Israel and all the earth, who purchased it with his own precious blood, would come and take control. His, as we have seen, will be the fifth universal empire of earth, the Kingdom of God under the whole heavens. But unlike the preceding four dominions which were permitted for an appointed time, and therefore recognized, though not approvingly, this one will be approved and established by God, as his representative in the earth. It will be God’s Kingdom, the Kingdom of Jehovah’s Anointed. It will be established gradually, during a great time of trouble with which the Gospel age will close, and in the midst of which present dominions shall be utterly consumed, passing away amid great confusion.

EFFECTS OF WWI ON SOCIETY 1914

RELIGION

1. Vast Ottoman Empire (Islam) came to an end after 500 years. Radical Clerics emerged. Koran debated.
2. Jerusalem no longer controlled by Gentile empires or nations.
3. United States urges freedom of religion.
4. Messianic dominance begins; Israel becomes a nation.
5. Time of Trouble starts in spasms: War of Independence (1948); Sinai campaign (1956) 6 Day War (1967); Yom Kippur War (1973); Lebanese War (1982); Scud attack (1991) Intifada (1990).
6. Israel begins to accept Jesus as a great person but not as Messiah.

GOVERNMENTS

1. End of one-rule Monarchies. 19 kings erased.
2. Gentile empires dashed to pieces.
3. Treaties among nations dissolved.
4. Constitutional Governments formalized.
5. League of Nations begins alliances, UN follows.
6. U.S. promotes freedom of religion.

ECONOMICS

1. Cost of WWI largest in history – 340 billion dollars.
2. Ottoman empire plunged into huge debt.
3. Technology important in war and living rises.
4. Large centralized corporations emerge.
5. Communist revolution begins.

SOCIAL/POLITICAL

1. Participation and representation of people in gov't formalized.
2. League of Nations functions on behalf of nations.
3. Higher empowerment of women in the home and workplace commences.
4. Anarchy about human rights commences.
5. Democracy rises to new level of popularity.
6. Europe will never be the same.

Figure 4.3 – The rapid and permanent changes in society as a result of WWI.

What evidence is there that the Gentile Times have ended?

In this chapter we present the Bible evidence proving that the full end of the times of the Gentiles, i.e., the full end of their lease of dominion, will be reached in A.D. 1914; and that that date will see the disintegration of the rule of imperfect men. And be it observed, that if this is shown to be a fact firmly established by the Scriptures, it will prove: Firstly, That at that date the Kingdom of God, for which our Lord taught us to pray, saying, “Thy Kingdom come,” will begin to assume control, and that it will then shortly be “set up,” or firmly established, in the earth, on the ruins of present institutions.

Secondly, It will prove that he whose right it is thus to take the dominion will then be present as earth’s new Ruler; and not only so, but it will also prove that he will be present for a considerable period before that date; because the overthrow of these Gentile governments is directly caused by his dashing them to pieces as a potter’s vessel (Psa. 2:9; Rev. 2:27), and establishing in their stead his own righteous government.

Thirdly, It will prove that some time before the end of the overthrow the last member of the divinely recognized Church of Christ, the “royal priesthood,” “the body of Christ,” will be glorified with the Head; because every member is to reign with Christ, being a joint-heir with him of the Kingdom, and it cannot be fully “set up” without every member.

Fourthly, It will prove that from that time forward Jerusalem shall no longer be trodden down of the Gentiles, but shall arise from the dust of divine disfavor, to honor; because the “Times of the Gentiles” will be fulfilled or completed.

Fifthly, It will prove that by that date, or sooner, Israel’s blindness will begin to be turned away; because their “blindness in part” was to continue only “until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in” (Rom. 11:25), or, in other words, until the full number from among the Gentiles, who are to be members of the body or bride of Christ, would be fully selected.

Sixthly, It will prove that the great “time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation,” will reach its culmination in a world-wide reign of anarchy; and then men will learn to be still, and to know that Jehovah is God and that he will be exalted in the earth.

(Psa. 46:10) The condition of things spoken of in symbolic language as raging waves of the sea, melting earth, falling mountains and burning heavens will then pass away, and the “new heavens and new earth” with their peaceful blessings will begin to be recognized by trouble-tossed humanity. But the Lord’s Anointed and his rightful and righteous authority will first be recognized by a company of God’s children while passing through the great tribulation—the class represented by m and t on the Chart of the Ages (see also pages 235 to 239, Vol. I); afterward, just at its close, by fleshly Israel; and ultimately by mankind in general.

Seventhly, It will prove that before that date God’s Kingdom, organized in power, will be in the earth and then smite and crush the Gentile image (Dan. 2:34)—and fully consume the power of these kings. Its own power and dominion will be established as fast as by its varied influences and agencies it crushes and scatters the “powers that be”—civil and ecclesiastical—iron and clay.

UNITED NATIONS (Gentiles)



1. Times of the Gentiles – Luk 21:24

Gentile nations are in complete control of Israel

2. Fullness of the Gentiles – Ro 11:25

Completion of both Jews and Gentiles in the Little Flock

3. Court of the Gentiles – Rev 11:3

Justified condition of the great company class

4. Teacher of Gentiles – 2 Tim 1:11

Paul and others who preached the truth to nations

5. Mystery of the Gentiles – Col 1:27

Indwelling members of the Christ under one head

6. Greatest name among Gentiles – Mal 1:11

The Lord God and his son Jesus well known

7. Light to lighten the Gentiles – Luk 2:32

The offer of salvation to the nations

Figure 4.4 – ‘Gentile’ is a biblical symbol.

What is the biggest reason to believe the Gentile Times are over?

Our Lord's words, "until the times® of the Gentiles be fulfilled," imply that the times of the Gentiles must have a definitely appointed limit; because an unlimited, indefinite period could not be said to be fulfilled. So, then, Gentile rule had a beginning, will last for a fixed time, and will end at the time appointed.

The beginning of these Gentile Times is clearly located by the Scriptures. Hence, if they furnish us the length also of the fixed period, or lease of Gentile dominion, we can know positively just when it will terminate. The Bible does furnish this fixed period, which must be fulfilled; but it was furnished in such a way that it could not be understood when written, nor until the lapse of time and the events of history had shed their light upon it; and even then, only by those who were watching and who were not overcharged by the cares of the world.

The Bible evidence is clear and strong that the "Times of the Gentiles" is a period of 2520 years, from the year B.C. 606 to and including A.D. 1914. This lease of universal dominion to Gentile governments, as we have already seen, began with Nebuchadnezzar—not when his reign began, but when the typical kingdom of the Lord passed away, and the dominion of the whole world was left in the hands of the Gentiles. The date for the beginning of the Gentile Times is, therefore, definitely marked as at the time of the removal of the crown of God's typical kingdom, from Zedekiah, their last king.

According to the words of the prophet (Ezek. 21:25-27), the crown was taken from Zedekiah; and Jerusalem was besieged by Nebuchadnezzar's army and laid in ruins, and so remained for seventy years—until the restoration in the first year of Cyrus. (2 Chron. 36:21-23) Though Jerusalem was then rebuilt, and the captives returned, Israel has never had another king from that to the present day. Though restored to their land and to personal liberty by Cyrus, they, as a nation, were subject successively to the Persians, Grecians and Romans. Under the yoke of the latter they were living when our Lord's

®The Greek word here rendered "times" is *kairos*, which signifies a fixed time. It is the same word translated "times" in the following passages: Mark 1:15; 1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 12:14; Acts 3:19; 17:26. The word "seasons" in Acts 1:7 is from the same Greek word.

first advent occurred, Pilate and Herod being deputies of Caesar.

With these facts before us, we readily find the date for the beginning of the Gentile Times of dominion; for the first year of the reign of Cyrus is a very clearly fixed date—both secular and religious histories with marked unanimity agreeing with Ptolemy's Canon, which places it B.C. 536. And if B.C. 536 was the year in which the seventy years of Jerusalem's desolation ended and the restoration of the Jews began, it follows that their kingdom was overthrown just seventy years before B.C. 536, i.e., 536 plus 70, or B.C. 606. This gives us the date of the beginning of the Times of the Gentiles—B.C. 606.

Recognizing God's lease of power to these worldly or Gentile governments, we know, not only that they will fail, and be overthrown, and be succeeded by the Kingdom of Christ when their "times" expire, but also that God will not take the dominion from them, to give it to his Anointed, until that lease expires—"until the Times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." Consequently,

Why Monarchical Kings failed as a form of Government



1. **Unable to fit in.** Sovereign an invisible god. Divine allowance was more permissible than divine representation.
2. **Unable to decide** as king/priest. Melchizadek only exception. Law prevented combination.
3. **Unable to control** rational inquiries and disagreements of the governed.
4. **Unable to put** self-interest behind that of the governed.
5. **Unable to handle** complex authority, legislation, adjudication, administration, and military affairs.
6. **Unable to fix** heredity to maintain principles and commitments.

Figure 4.5 – Why monarchical kings failed as form of government

we are guarded right here against the false idea into which Papacy has led the world—that the Kingdom of God was set up at Pentecost, and more fully established when, as it is claimed, the Roman empire was converted to Christianity (to Papacy), and it attained both temporal and spiritual empire in the world. We see from this prophecy of the Times of the Gentiles that this claim made by the church of Rome, and more or less endorsed by Protestants, is false. We see that those nations which both Papacy and Protestantism designate Christian Nations, and whose dominions they call Christendom (i.e., Christ's Kingdom), are not such. They are “kingdoms of this world,” and until their “times” are fulfilled Christ's Kingdom cannot take the control, though it will be organizing and preparing to do so in the few years which close the Gentile Times, while these kingdoms will be trembling, disintegrating and falling into anarchy.

In what way has the kingdom of Christ started?

During the Gospel age, the Kingdom of Christ has existed only in its incipient stage, in its humiliation, without power or privilege of reigning—without the crown, possessing only the scepter of promise: unrecognized by the world, and subject to the “powers that be”—the Gentile kingdoms. And the heirs of the heavenly kingdom must so continue, until the time appointed for them to reign together with Christ. During the time of trouble, closing this age, they will be exalted to power, but their “reign” of righteousness over the world could not precede A.D. 1915—when the Times of the Gentiles have expired. Therefore it is the duty of the Church to await patiently the appointed time for its triumph and glorious reign: to keep separate from the kingdoms of this world as strangers, pilgrims and foreigners; and, as heirs of the Kingdom to come, to let their hopes and ambitions center in it. Christians should recognize the true character of these kingdoms, and, while they keep separate from them, should render to them due respect and obedience, because God has permitted them to rule. As Paul teaches, “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers; for there is no power but of God.” Rom. 13:1

Nor can fleshly Israel come into their long promised inheritance until that time, though

preparatory steps will previously be taken; for God will not fully establish either the earthly or the spiritual phase of his Kingdom until this lease to the Gentiles expires.

The crown (dominion) was removed from God's people (both the spiritual and the fleshly seed) until the Times of the Gentiles shall end—at the glorious presence of Messiah, who will be not only “King of the Jews,” but “King over all the earth, in that day.” Some may think that this removal of the crown from Israel was a violation of the promise, “The Scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come.” (Gen. 49:10) Note, however, a distinction between the crown and the scepter; for, though the crown passed away in the days of Zedekiah, the scepter, as we shall see, did not depart until six hundred and thirty-nine years afterward—when our Lord Jesus, of the tribe of Judah and seed of David according to the flesh, being approved of God, became the rightful and only heir of the long-promised scepter of earth.

God's promise to Abraham, renewed to Isaac and to Jacob, was that from their posterity should come the great deliverer who should not only bless and exalt their family in the world, but who should “bless ALL the families of the earth.” It looked for a time as though Moses, the great Lawgiver and deliverer, was the one promised; but he prophetically declared to the people, “A Prophet like unto me shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren,” thus indicating that he was but a type of him that was to come; and Moses died. Next, the promise, “The scepter shall not depart from Judah,” narrowed down the expectation to that tribe. And all the other tribes in a measure clung to Judah in proportion as they had faith in God's promises, expecting a blessing in conjunction with Judah, in due time.

When King David arose from the promised tribe, his victories led to great expectations of an extended kingdom, whose influence would spread and embrace the world, and subject all nations to the Law. And when Solomon's world-renowned wisdom and greatness were at their height, it surely looked as though the crown of universal dominion was almost within their grasp. The Lord's promise to David, that of the fruit of his loins he would raise up one to sit

pointed out in the decree against Zedekiah: Take off the crown—I will overturn it, till he come whose right it is, and I will give it unto him.

While the covenant made with Abraham promised the ruling and blessing of the world through his seed, the covenant of the Law made with Israel, Abraham’s children, limited and restricted that Abrahamic Covenant, so that only such as would fully and perfectly obey the Law could claim, or had any right to hope for, a share in the ruling and blessing promised in the Abrahamic Covenant. Seeing this fact led to the formation of the sect of the Pharisees, who claimed to fulfil every particular of the Law blamelessly, and “trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others,” calling others “publicans and sinners” and themselves the “children of Abraham,” heirs of the promised dominion which was to bless the world.

The clear, forcible teaching of our Lord Jesus was in part directed against the errors of the Pharisees, who supposed that their careful performance of some of the outward ceremonies of the Law was a full compliance with its letter and spirit. Our Lord taught what all Christians now know, that the Law, when seen in its fulness, is so majestically perfect, and man so fallen and imperfect, and so beset with temptations from without as well as by weakness from within, that none of them could possibly keep that Law perfectly nor claim the Abrahamic blessing. Our Lord’s censures of Pharisaism must not therefore be understood as objections to their endeavor to keep the Law blamelessly; nor did he blame them for failing to keep the Law fully, which no imperfect man can do. But he did blame them for hypocrisy, in deceiving themselves and others with a claimed perfection and holiness, which they as well as others could see was merely a cleansing of the outside, while their hearts were still impure and unconsecrated. He censured them for having a mere form of godliness, and a lip service, while their hearts were far from God. So, then, as our Lord and Paul declare, none of them really did or really could keep the Law perfectly (John 7:19; Rom. 3:20), though they might have come much nearer to a perfect observance of its requirements than they did.

Our Lord not only declared in words the full import of the Law to be, “Thou shalt love the

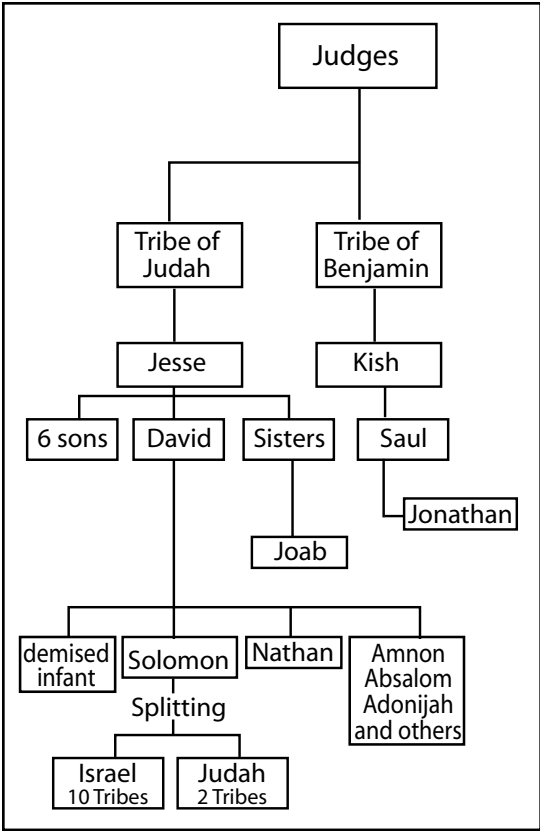


Figure 4.7 – Relationships at time of King David.

Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbor as thyself,” but he illustrated this in his full surrender of himself to the will and plan of God, in his avoidance of any plan and ambition of his own, and of all self-seeking—a most hearty doing of the will of God with all his heart, mind, soul and strength, and loving his neighbor as himself—all this even unto death.

Thus by fulfilling its conditions—by obeying the Law perfectly, as none of the imperfect human family could do—our Lord Jesus became heir of all the blessings promised in that Law Covenant made with Israel at Mount Sinai; and thus also he was proved to be THE SEED OF ABRAHAM to whom the entire Abrahamic promise now applied. Our Lord thus secured to himself the scepter (the promised right or authority of earth’s dominion) which for centuries had been promised should be merited by and given to some one in the tribe of Judah and family of David. The great prize, for which Israel had been hoping and striving and longing for centuries,

was won at last by the Lion (the strong one) of the tribe of Judah. Shiloh, the great Peacemaker, had come: he who not only made peace between God and man by the blood of his cross, when he redeemed mankind from the condemnation of death justly upon all, but he who also, when he takes his great power and reigns King of kings and Lord of lords, will overthrow all wrong and evil and sin, and establish peace upon a sure basis of holiness. He is the Prince of Peace.

In what way has the Law Covenant ended?

When the scepter (the right) under the covenant passed to our Lord Jesus, that Law Covenant ended; for how could God continue to offer to others, on any conditions, the prize which had already been won by Shiloh? Hence, as the Apostle declares, “Christ made an end of the Law [covenant], nailing it to his cross.” Col. 2:14

Thus the “Prince of Peace” secured for his subjects both forgiveness of sins and restitution, and established an everlasting kingdom on the basis of righteousness, such as could in no other way have been brought about. Thus was fulfilled the prediction, “The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet [loins], until Shiloh come.” Then it did depart from Judah, being given to “the Lion [the strong one, the highly exalted spiritual creature, the Lord of glory] from the tribe of Judah,” who now holds this scepter (or title to authority) as King of kings and Lord of lords.

Even after the seventy years captivity in Babylon, when some returned and built again the Temple and the walls of the city, it was such as had respect to the promise of God, and who “waited for the consolation of Israel.” These gathered about the tribe of Judah, remembering God’s promise that the Lawgiver, the Deliverer, the great Shiloh or peacemaker, should come in that tribe. But alas! when the peaceful one who made peace and reconciliation for iniquity by the blood of his cross came, they despised and rejected him, expecting not a great High Priest, but a great general.

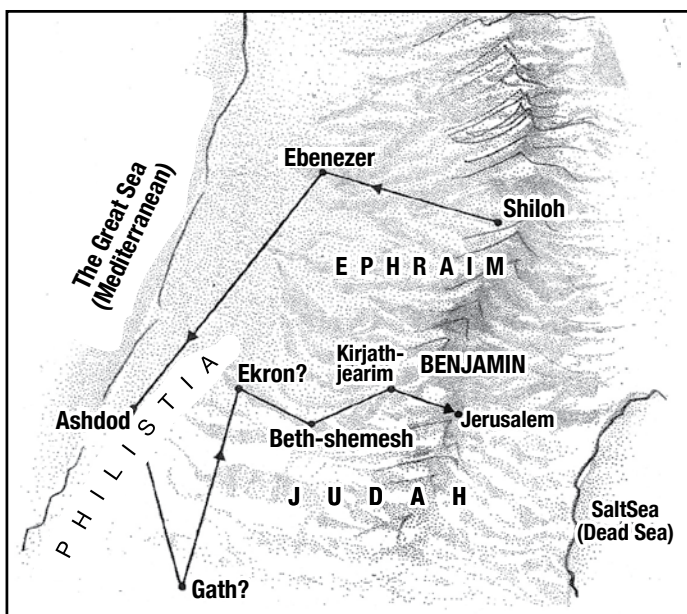


Figure 4.8 – Journey of the Ark from Shiloh to Jerusalem.

Shiloh having received the scepter and “all power” at his resurrection, because of his obedience unto death, will indeed bless Israel first—but not fleshly Israel, for they are not all true Israelites who are called such according to the flesh. (Rom. 9:6) Shiloh, the heir, is seeking and finding children of Abraham according to the spirit—such as share the Abrahamic disposition of faith and obedience, both from his natural posterity and from among the Gentiles—to be a people for his name. (Acts 15:14) And “after this” [after the gathering of his elect Church is accomplished—in the harvest or end of the Gospel age, at the close of the Gentile Times] he will turn again his favor and will build again the ruins of Israel, and finally of all the families of the earth, upon a better basis than has ever entered into the heart of man to conceive. He who now holds the scepter—“whose right it is” to rule—will at the expiration of the Gentile Times receive the crown also; “and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.” (Gen. 49:10) The scepter, or title to “all power in heaven and in earth,” was given unto him at his resurrection, but he awaits the Father’s appointed time—the limit of the Gentile Times—before he will take his great power and begin his glorious reign. See Rev. 11:17, 18.

Now bear in mind the date already found for the beginning of these Gentile Times—viz., B.C. 606—while we proceed to examine the

Why God punished Israel

7 x 360 = 2520 years
606 BC + 2520 = 1914

7 x 365 = 2555 years
606 BC + 2555 = 1948

STATEHOOD



1. Kept not God's covenant
2. Forgot His works and wonders
3. Demanded food to their desires
4. Spoke against God
5. Believed not in God
6. Trusted not in His salvation
7. Flatter God with their mouths
8. Lied unto God with their tongues
9. Tested and provoked God
10. Kept not God's testimonies
11. Provoked God with anger
12. Dealt unfaithfully
13. Moved God to jealousy with images

Figure 4.9 – Why God punished Israel for 2500 years. Reasons excerpted from Psalm 78.

evidence proving their length to be 2520 years, ending A.D. 1914.

We must not expect to find this information stated in so many words. Had it been so stated, it would have been known before it was due. It is given in such a way as to conceal it until “the time of the end.” Dan. 12:4, 10

What role did Jerusalem have for the ending of the Gentile Times?

Our Lord's words, “Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the Times of the Gentiles be fulfilled,” not only suggest a limit and definite period of Gentile domination, but they also suggest the thought that though spiritual as well as fleshly Israel has been subject to these Gentile powers, yet these “times” are somehow connected with and measured upon the earthly city, Jerusalem, and the fleshly house of Israel. And the thought occurs—Can it be that God foretold concerning Israel's history something which will give us the exact measure of these “times” to which our Lord refers? It is even so.

Turning to Leviticus we find recorded blessings and cursings of an earthly and temporal character. If Israel would obey God faithfully,

they would be blessed above other nations; if not, certain evils would befall them. The conclusion is stated thus: “And I will walk among you and be your God, and ye shall be my people;...but if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments,...I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies; they that hate you shall reign over you.” “And ye shall sow your seed in vain; for your enemies shall eat it.” “And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, THEN I WILL PUNISH YOU SEVEN TIMES more [further] for your sins.” Lev. 26:17, 18, 24, 28

This threat of “seven times” of punishment is mentioned three times. The various punishments mentioned before the “seven times” refer to the several captivities to the Assyrians, Moabites, Midianites, Philistines, etc., etc., during all of which God's care continued over them. His dealings were to them “line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little”; yet he kept hold of them, and when they repented and cried unto him, he heard them and answered, and delivered them from their enemies. (Judges 3:9, 15) But these chastisements having failed, he applied the threatened seven times: the crown was permanently removed, and Israel, as well as the whole world, was subject to the beastly powers for seven times. Thus it befell them according to God's warning—“If ye will not yet for all this [previous chastisements] hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times.”

The connection in which the “seven times” (more, further, or additional) are threatened indicates that they include a final and conclusive punishment upon that people after the other chastisements had repeatedly failed to reform them permanently. The punishment of these “seven times” will have the designed effect of thoroughly humbling them before the Lord, and thus preparing them to receive his blessings. These seven times therefore refer to the length of time during which the Gentiles should rule over them. And to this period of “seven times” our Lord undoubtedly referred when speaking of “the Times of the Gentiles.”

The time when the lesser captivities and chastisements gave place to this final great national chastisement of “seven times” was, as already shown, when their last king Zedekiah was removed—since which there has been one long

period of chastisement—the predicted “seven times” or 2520 years.

In the Bible a “time” is used in the sense of a year, whether the year be literal or symbolic; but at the time of the utterance of any prophecy, it could not be known whether the time referred to was literal or symbolic. The prophets searched diligently, but in vain, to learn what time, or manner of time (literal or symbolic), the Spirit did signify. (1 Pet. 1:11) A symbolic year as used in prophecy is reckoned on the basis of a lunar year—twelve months of thirty days each, or three hundred and sixty days—each day representing a year. Consequently, a “time” or year, if symbolic, signifies three hundred and sixty (360) symbolic days, and “seven times” represent twenty-five hundred and twenty ($7 \times 360 = 2520$) symbolic days, or 2520 literal years.

What does it mean Israel was punished ‘7 times’?

The question here presenting itself is, Were these “seven times” literal or symbolic? Did they refer to seven years, or twenty-five hundred and twenty years? We answer, they were symbolic times, 2520 years. They cannot be understood as seven literal years; for Israel had many captivities of longer duration—for instance, they served the king of Mesopotamia eight years (Judges 3:8), the king of Moab eighteen years (Judges 3:14), King Jabin twenty years (Judges 4:2, 3), the Philistines one period of forty years and another of eighteen years (Judges 10:7, 8; 13:1), besides their seventy years in Babylon. All these periods being far longer than “seven times” or years literal, yet the “seven times” being mentioned as the last, greatest and final punishment, proves that symbolic, not literal time is meant, though the Hebrew word translated “seven times” in Leviticus 26:18, 21, 24, 28, is the same word so translated in Daniel 4:16, 23, 25, 32, except that in Daniel the word *iddan* is added, whereas in Leviticus it is left to be understood. And, peculiarly, too, it is repeated four times in each case. In Nebuchadnezzar’s case they were literal years, but, as we shall yet see, both Nebuchadnezzar and his “seven times” were typical.

The “seven times” of Nebuchadnezzar’s degradation (Dan. 4:16, 23-26) proved to be seven literal years, when actually so fulfilled; and so the humiliation of Israel and the world under the

“powers that be” has proved to be seven symbolic times—twenty-five hundred and twenty literal years. This period now lacks but twenty-six years of being fulfilled, and agencies are at work on every hand pointing to a termination of Gentile dominion, and the bringing in of everlasting righteousness and all the blessings of the New Covenant to Israel and to all the groaning creation.

The End of Israel’s Seven Times

This long period (“seven times,” or 2520 years) of Israel’s punishment is the period of Gentile dominion—the “Times of the Gentiles.” Since, as we have already shown, the “Gentile Times” began B.C. 606, and were to continue twenty-five hundred and twenty years, they will end A.D. 1914 ($2520-606=1914$). Then the blessings recorded in the latter part of the same chapter (Lev. 26:44,45) will be fulfilled. God will remember and fulfil to Israel the covenant made with their fathers. Rom. 11:25-27

This may be shown more clearly to some thus: Israel’s “seven times” of chastisement = 2520 years. They began when the lease of power was given to the Gentiles, which, as we have shown, was 606 B.C. Consequently, in A.D. 1, 606 years of their period had passed, and the remainder would indicate the A.D. date, viz., 1914.

In proof that a day for a year is Bible usage in symbolic prophecy, we cite the following instances thus fulfilled: (a) The spies were caused to wander forty days searching Canaan, typical of Israel’s forty years wandering in the wilderness. (Num. 14:33, 34) (b) When God would announce to Israel by Ezekiel a period of adversity, he had the prophet symbolize it, declaring, “I have appointed thee each day for a year.” (Ezek. 4:1-8) (c) In that notable and already fulfilled prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27, examined in the preceding chapter, in which the time to the anointing of our Lord is shown, and also the seven years of favor to Israel thereafter, in the midst of which Messiah was “cut off,” symbolic time is used: Each day of the seventy symbolic weeks represented a year, and was so fulfilled. (d) Again, in Dan. 7:25 and 12:7, the period of Papacy’s triumph is given as three and a half times, and this we know (and will show in this volume) was fulfilled in twelve hundred and sixty years ($360 \times 3 \frac{1}{2} = 1260$). The same period is mentioned in the book of Revelation: In chapter

12:14 it is called three and a half times (360 x 3 1/2 = 1260); in chapter 13:5 it is termed forty-two months (30 x 42 = 1260); and in chapter 12:6 it is called twelve hundred and sixty days. The fulfilment of these prophecies will be particularly examined hereafter. Suffice it now to note that the use by the Spirit of the word “time,” elsewhere, agrees with the present use of that term—that in symbolic prophecy a “time” is a symbolic year of three hundred and sixty years; and the fact that three and a half times, applied as a measure to the triumph of the apostate church, has been fulfilled in twelve hundred and sixty years, establishes the principle upon which the seven times of Gentile dominion are reckoned (360 x 7 = 2520) and proves their end to be A.D. 1914; for if three and a half times are 1260 days (years), seven times will be a period just twice as long, namely, 2520 years.

Had Israel’s “seven times” been fulfilled in literal time (seven years), the blessing guaranteed to them by God’s unconditional covenant with their fathers would have followed. (See Lev. 26:45; Rom. 11:28.) But this was not the case. They have never yet enjoyed those promised blessings; and that covenant will not be fulfilled, says Paul (Rom. 11:25, 26), until the elect Gospel Church, the body of Christ, has been perfected

as their deliverer, through whom the covenant will be put into operation. “This shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days [i.e., the seven times of punishment], saith the Lord: I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” (Jer. 31:33, 34; Heb. 10:16, 17) “In those days [the days of favor following the seven times of punishment] they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape and the children’s teeth are set on edge. But every one [who dies] shall die for his own iniquity; every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge.” Jer. 31:29, 30

The restoration at the end of the seventy years in Babylon was not a release from Gentile rule; for they were a tributary people ever after that. That restoration served merely to keep together a people to whom Messiah should be presented. It was while Gentile rule was already holding Israel in subjection, and in view of that fact, that our Lord declared that they would continue to be

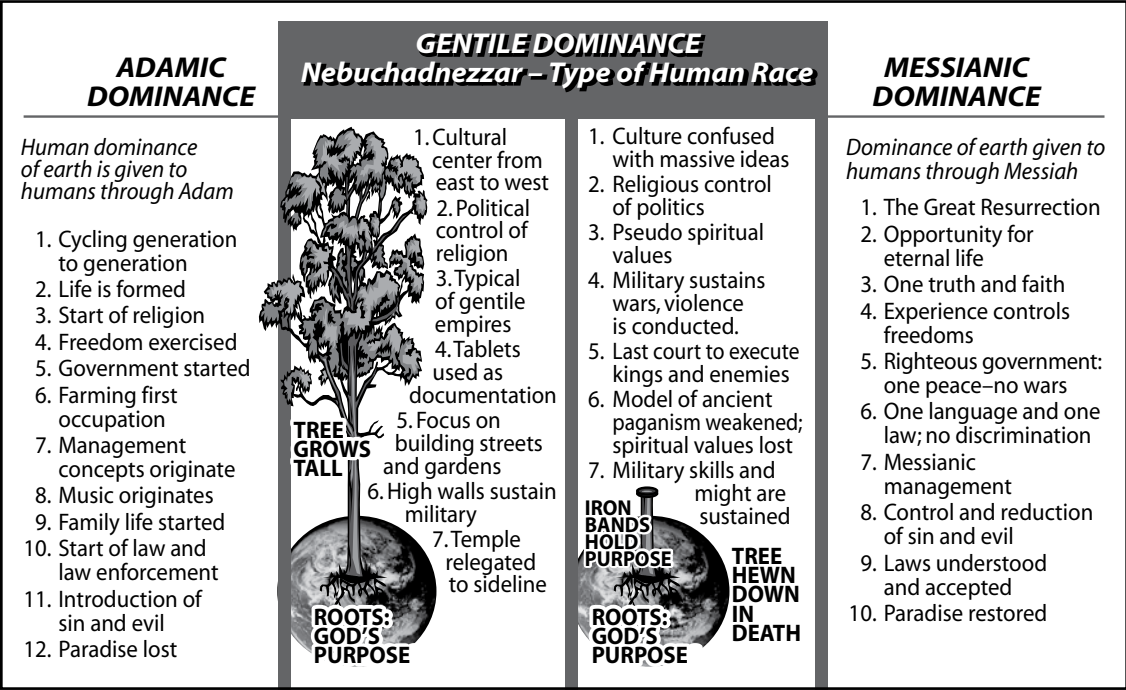


Figure 4.10 – Nebuchadnezzar’s dream: a tall tree is a type of the human race.

trodden down until the Times of the Gentiles expired, or were fulfilled. The world is witness to the fact that Israel's punishment under the dominion of the Gentiles has been continuous since B.C. 606, that it still continues, and that there is no reason to expect their national reorganization sooner than A.D. 1914, the limit of their "seven times"—2520 years. But as this long period of their national chastisement draws near its close, we can see marked indications that the barren fig tree is about to put forth, showing that the winter time of evil is closing, and the Millennial summer approaching, which will fully restore them to their promised inheritance and national independence. The fact that there are now great preparations and expectations relative to the return of Israel to their own land is of itself strong circumstantial evidence corroborative of this Scripture teaching. As to the significance of such an event, see Vol. I, pages 286-298.

Another Line of Testimony

Another view of the Gentile Times is presented by Daniel—Chapter 4. Here man's original dominion over the whole earth, its removal, and the certainty of its restitution, to begin at the end of the Gentile Times, is forcibly illustrated in a dream given to Nebuchadnezzar, its interpretation by Daniel, and its fulfilment upon Nebuchadnezzar.

In his dream, Nebuchadnezzar "saw, and behold a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof was great. The tree grew and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth; the leaves thereof were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all: and the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, and all flesh was fed of it. And, behold, a watcher and a holy one came down from heaven. He cried aloud and said thus, Hew down the tree and cut off his branches; shake off his leaves and scatter his fruit; let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches. Nevertheless, leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth. Let his heart be changed from man's and let a beast's heart be given unto him; and let seven

times pass over him. This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones, to the intent that the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men."

What meaning was there to Nebuchadnezzar's tree?

This remarkable tree, in its glory and beauty, represented the first dominion of earth given to the human race in its representative and head, Adam, to whom God said, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." (Gen. 1:28) The original glory of man and the power vested in him were indeed sublime, and were over the whole earth, to bless, and feed, and protect and shelter every living thing. But when sin entered, the command came to hew down the tree, and the glory and beauty and power of mankind were taken away; and the lower creation no more found shelter, protection and blessing under his influence. Death hewed down the great tree, scattered his fruit and foliage, and left the lower creation without its lord and benefactor.

So far as man was concerned, all power to recover the lost dominion was hopelessly gone. But it was not so from God's standpoint. The dominion originally sprang out of his plan, and was his gracious gift; and though he had commanded it to be hewn down, yet the root—God's purpose and plan of a restitution—continued, though bound with strong fetters so that it should not sprout until the divinely appointed time.

As in the dream the figure changes from the stump of a tree to a man degraded and brought to the companionship and likeness of beasts, with reason dethroned and all his glory departed, so we see man, the fallen, degraded lord of earth: his glory and dominion have departed. Ever since the sentence passed, the race has been having its portion with the beasts, and the human heart has become beastly and degraded. How striking the picture, when we consider the present and past half-civilized and savage condition of the great mass of the human race, and that even the small minority who aspire to overcome the downward tendency succeed only to a limited degree, and with great struggling and constant

effort. The race must remain in its degradation, under the dominion of evil, until the lesson has been learned, that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. And while men are in this degraded condition God permits some of the basest characters among them to rule over them, that their present bitter experience may prove in the future to be of lasting benefit.

True to Daniel's interpretation, we are told that "All this came upon the king, Nebuchadnezzar," and that in this insane, degraded, beastly condition he wandered among the beasts until seven times (seven literal years in his case) passed over him. Daniel's interpretation of the dream relates only to its fulfilment upon Nebuchadnezzar; but the fact that the dream, the interpretation and the fulfilment are all so carefully related here is evidence of an object in its narration. And its remarkable fitness as an illustration of the divine purpose in subjecting the whole race to the dominion of evil for its punishment and correction, that in due time God might restore and establish it in righteousness and everlasting life, warrants us in accepting it as an intended type.

Who does Nebuchadnezzar represent?

The dream in its fulfilment upon Nebuchadnezzar is specially noteworthy when we remember that he was made the representative ruling head of human dominion (Dan. 2:38), and, as lord of earth, was addressed by the prophet in almost the same words which God at the first addressed to Adam—"The God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowl of heaven hath he given into thy hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all." (Dan. 2:37, 38. Compare Gen. 1:28.) Afterward, because of sin, Nebuchadnezzar received the "seven times" of punishment, after which his reason began to return, and his restitution to dominion was accomplished. He was re-established in his kingdom, and majesty was added unto him after he had learned the needed lesson to which he referred in the following language:

"At the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honored him that liveth forever, whose dominion is an

everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation. And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say unto him, What doest thou? At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honor and brightness returned unto me...and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me. Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase."

The degradation of Nebuchadnezzar was typical of human degradation under beastly governments during seven symbolic times or years—a year for a day, 2520 years—from his day onward. And be it observed that this corresponds exactly with the seven times foretold upon Israel, which, as we have just seen, end A.D. 1914. For it was under this Nebuchadnezzar that Israel was carried away captive to Babylon, when the crown of God's kingdom was removed, and the seven times began.

It is in perfect harmony with this that God, in representing these governments of the Gentiles, portrayed them to Daniel as so many wild beasts, while the kingdom of God at their close is represented as given to one like unto a son of man.

Evidences that Gentile governments failed

Unless it was thus to foreshadow the degradation and the duration of Gentile Times, we know of no reason for the recording of this scrap of the history of a heathen king. That his seven years of degradation fitly illustrated human debasement, is a fact; that God has promised a restitution of earth's dominion after humanity has learned certain great lessons, is also a fact; and that the seven symbolic Gentile Times (2520 years) end at the exact point when mankind will have learned its own degradation and present inability to rule the world to advantage, and will be ready for God's kingdom and dominion, is a third fact. And the fitness of the illustration forces the conviction that Nebuchadnezzar's seven years, while literally fulfilled on him personally, had a yet greater and broader significance as a figure of

the seven symbolic times of Gentile dominion, which he represented.

The exact date of Nebuchadnezzar's degradation is not stated, and is of no consequence, because the period of his degradation typified the entire period of Gentile dominion, which began when the crown of the typical kingdom of God was removed from Zedekiah. It was beastly from its very start, and its times are numbered: its boundaries are set by Jehovah, and cannot be passed.

How refreshing the prospect brought to view at the close of these seven times! Neither Israel nor the world of mankind represented by that people will longer be trodden down, oppressed and misruled by beastly Gentile powers. The Kingdom of God and his Christ will then be established in the earth, and Israel and all the world will be blessed under his rightful and righteous authority. Then the root of promise and hope planted first in Eden (Gen. 3:15), and borne across the flood and transplanted with Israel the typical people (Gen. 12:1-3), will sprout and bloom again.

It began to sprout at our Lord's first advent, but the appointed season had not arrived for it to bloom and bring forth its blessed fruitage in the restitution of all things. But at the end of the Gentile Times the sure signs of spring will not

be lacking, and rich will be the summer fruitage and glorious the autumnal harvest to be reaped and enjoyed in the eternal ages of glory to follow. Then the original lord of earth, with reason restored, will be fully reinstated, with added excellence and glory, as in the type, and will praise and extol and honor the King of heaven.

Already we begin to see reason returning to mankind: men are awakening to some sense of their degradation, and are on the lookout to improve their condition. They are thinking, planning and scheming for a better condition than that to which they have been submitting under the beastly powers. But before they come to recognize God and his dominion over all, they will experience one more terrible fit of madness, from which struggle they will awake weak, helpless, exhausted, but with reason so far restored as to recognize and bow to the authority of him who comes to re-establish the long lost, first dominion, on the permanent basis of experience and knowledge of both good and evil.

True, it is expecting great things to claim, as we do, that within the coming twenty-six years all present governments will be overthrown and dissolved; but we are living in a special and peculiar time, the "Day of Jehovah," in which matters culminate quickly; and it is written,

"A short work will the Lord make upon the earth." (See Vol. I, chap. xv.) For the past eleven years these things have been preached and published substantially as set forth above; and in that brief time the development of influences and agencies for the undermining and overthrow of the strongest empires of earth has been wonderful. In that time Communism, Socialism and Nihilism sprang into vigorous existence, and already are causing great uneasiness among the rulers and high ones of earth, whose hearts are failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for the present powers are being mightily shaken, and ultimately shall pass away with a great tumult.

In view of this strong Bible evidence concerning the Times of the

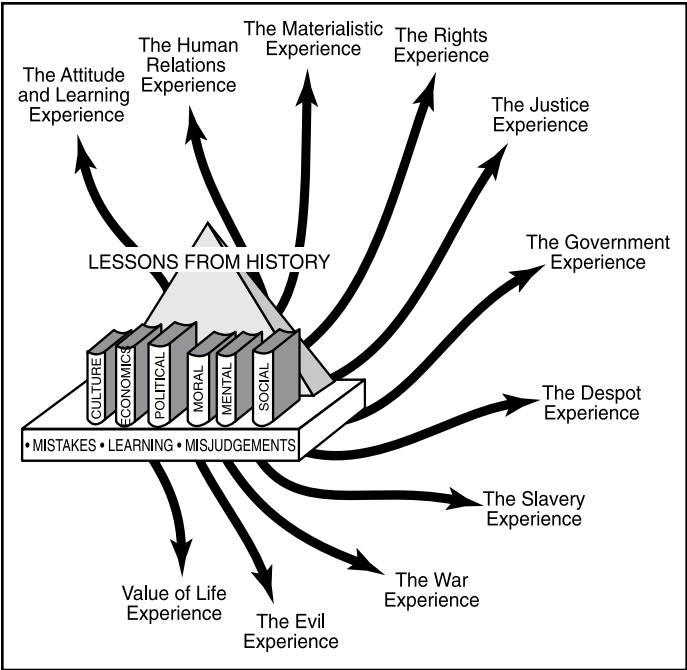


Figure 4.11 – Human experiences to guide through eternity is part of God's purpose.

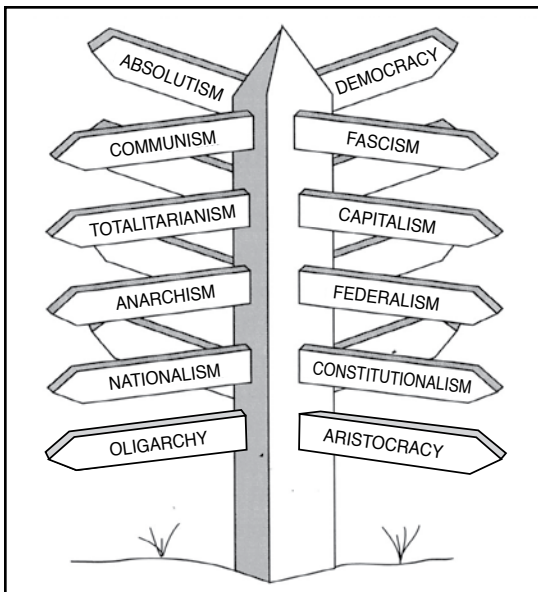


Figure 4.12 – Gentile governments are struggling to find the right government.

Gentiles, we consider it an established truth that the final end of the kingdoms of this world, and the full establishment of the Kingdom of God, will be accomplished near the end of A.D. 1915. Then the prayer of the Church, ever since her Lord took his departure—“Thy Kingdom come”—will be answered; and under that wise and just administration, the whole earth will be filled with the glory of the Lord—with knowledge, and righteousness, and peace (Psa. 72:19; Isa. 6:3; Hab. 2:14); and the will of God shall be done “on earth, as it is done in heaven.”

Daniel’s statement, that God’s Kingdom will be set up, not after these kingdoms of earth are dissolved, but in their days, while they still exist and have power, and that it is God’s Kingdom which shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms (Dan. 2:44), is worthy of our special consideration.

So it was with each of these beastly governments: it existed before it acquired universal dominion. Babylon existed long before it conquered Jerusalem and obtained the dominion (Dan. 2:37, 38); Medo-Persia existed before it conquered Babylon; and so with all kingdoms: they must first have existed and have received superior power before they could conquer others. So, too, with God’s Kingdom: it has existed in an embryo form for eighteen centuries; but it, with the world at large, was made subject to “the

powers that be,” “ordained of God.” Until their “seven times” shall end, the Kingdom of God cannot come into universal dominion. However, like the others, it must obtain power adequate to the overthrow of these kingdoms before it shall break them in pieces.

What does the day of trouble mean for government?

So, in this “Day of Jehovah,” the “Day of Trouble,” our Lord takes his great power (hitherto dormant) and reigns, and this it is that will cause the trouble, though the world will not so recognize it for some time. That the saints shall share in this work of breaking to pieces present kingdoms, there can be no doubt. It is written, “This honor have all his saints—to execute the judgments written, to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron”—of strength. (Psa. 149:8, 9) “He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they [the empires] be broken to shivers.” Rev. 2:26, 27; Psa. 2:8, 9

But our examination, in the preceding volume, of the great difference in character between the Kingdom of God and the beastly kingdoms of earth, prepares us to see also a difference in modes of warfare. The methods of conquest and breaking will be widely different from any which have ever before overthrown nations. He who now takes his great power to reign is shown in symbol (Rev. 19:15) as the one whose sword went forth out of his mouth, “that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron.” That sword is the TRUTH (Eph. 6:17); and the living saints, as well as many of the world, are now being used as the Lord’s soldiers in overthrowing errors and evils. But let no one hastily infer a peaceable conversion of the nations to be here symbolized; for many scriptures, such as Rev. 11:17, 18; Dan. 12:1; 2 Thes. 2:8; Psalms 149 and 47, teach the very opposite.

Be not surprised, then, when in subsequent chapters we present proofs that the setting up of the Kingdom of God is already begun, that it is pointed out in prophecy as due to begin the exercise of power in A.D. 1878, and that the “battle of the great day of God Almighty” (Rev. 16:14), which will end in A.D. 1915, with the complete overthrow of earth’s present rulership, is already

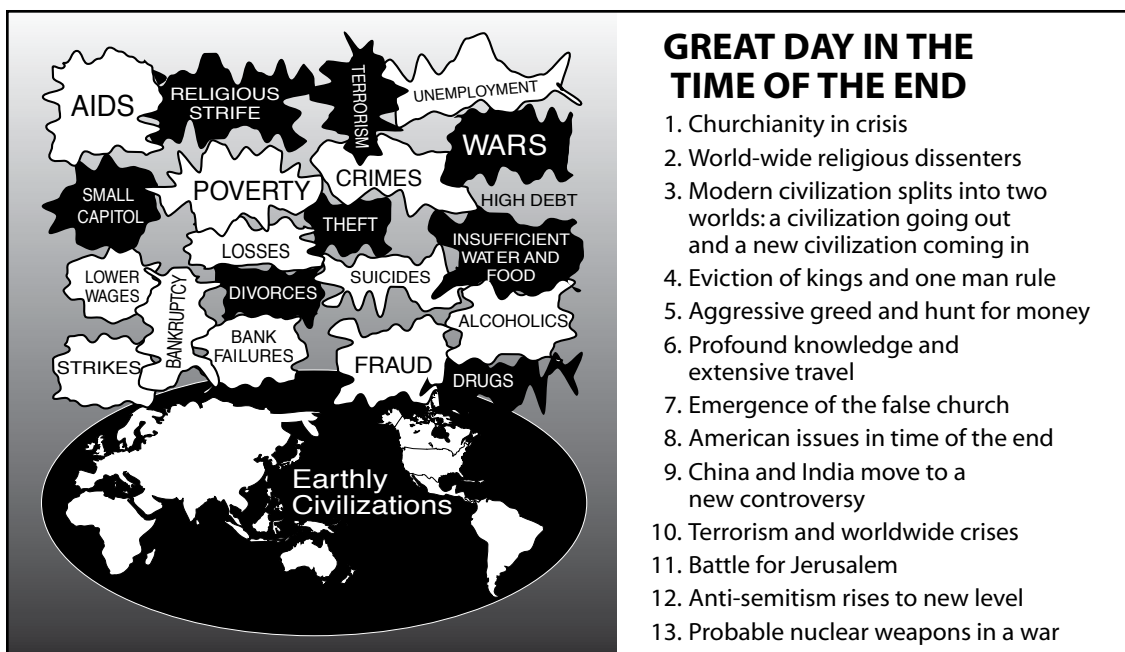


Figure 4.13 – These are accelerating causes that are shaking present day civilization. The shaking will produce trouble like never before. Tribulation does not mean the end of the world. It means the end of an old civilization.

commenced. The gathering of the armies is plainly visible from the standpoint of God's Word.

If our vision be unobstructed by prejudice, when we get the telescope of God's Word rightly adjusted we may see with clearness the character of many of the events due to take place in the "Day of the Lord"—that we are in the very midst of those events, and that "the Great Day of His Wrath is come."

The sword of truth, already sharpened, is to smite every evil system and custom—civil, social and ecclesiastical. Nay, more, we can see that the smiting is commenced: freedom of thought, and human rights, civil and religious, long lost sight of under kings and emperors, popes, synods, councils, traditions and creeds, are being appreciated and asserted as never before. The internal conflict is already fomenting: it will ere long break forth as a consuming fire, and human systems, and errors, which for centuries have fettered truth and oppressed the groaning creation, must melt before it. Yes, truth—and widespread and increasing knowledge of it—is the sword which is perplexing and wounding the heads over many countries. (Psa. 110:6) Yet in this trouble what a blessing is disguised: It will prepare mankind for a fuller appreciation of righteousness and truth, under the reign of the King of Righteousness.

As men shall eventually come to realize that justice is laid to the line and righteousness to the plummet (Isa. 28:17), they will also learn that the strict rules of justice alone can secure the blessings which all desire. And, thoroughly disheartened with their own ways and the miserable fruitage of selfishness, they will welcome and gladly submit to the righteous authority which takes the control; and thus, as it is written, "The desire of all nations shall come"—the Kingdom of God, under the absolute and unlimited control of Jehovah's Anointed.

"We are living, we are dwelling,
In a grand and awful time.
In an age on ages telling,
To be living is sublime.

Hark! the rumbling in the nations,
Iron crumbling with the clay:
Hark! what soundeth? 'Tis creation
Groaning for a better day.

"Scoffers scorning, Heaven beholding,
Thou hast but an hour to fight.
See prophetic truth unfolding!
Watch! and keep thy garments white.

Oh, let all the soul within you
For the truth's sake go abroad!
Strike! let every nerve and sinew
Tell on ages—tell for God!"