

Sabbath School Lesson #4 – The Nations: Part 1 – 19-25 April 2025

Christ will receive His kingdom, as soon as the ongoing investigative judgment is over, when it will have been determined who are worthy to be raised from the dead or to be translated at His second coming. Daniel wrote of this: “And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed” (Daniel 7:14). This is the same prophecy in words of the angel Gabriel to Mary, when he announced the birth of Jesus, saying: “And the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David; and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end” (Luke 1:32-33). The throne of David typified that of Christ, that dominion, the receiving of which is described in Daniel, is also the kingdom of Israel. It was declared that His everlasting dominion should be over the house of Jacob; yet Daniel, after telling of the destruction of earthly nations, says: “And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him” (Daniel 7:27). Therefore, it must be that all the saints of God will constitute the people of Israel, over whom Christ shall reign forever.

Sunday: Nimrod and Nineveh – Read Genesis 10:1-12; what do these verses tell us about Nimrod and Nineveh? The kingdom of Babylon (Daniel 1), which finally developed into the golden head of the great historic image, was founded by Nimrod, the great-grandson of Noah, over two thousand years before Christ (Genesis 10:8-10). It appears that Nimrod also founded the city of Nineveh, which afterward became the capital of Syria (verse 11). It is true Nimrod is no longer, but his ways linger on. “The thing that has been, it is that which shall be” (Ecclesiastes 1:9), so it is that the same hunger of dominion that has kept the world in greater or less turmoil since Nimrod’s first empire are still stirring up the hearts of men.

Monday: Abraham’s Call – Read Genesis 12:1-9; why did God call Abram (later called Abraham) out of his country of origin? Soon after the flood, as men began to multiply upon the earth, they again forsook the Lord and gave themselves fully over to the service of Satan. Within about four hundred years after the flood, the people of the earth were once more sunken in idolatry and superstition. At that time the Lord came to Abraham, one of the descendants of Shem, and said to him: “Get thee out of thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show thee; and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” (Genesis 12:1-3). The Lord saw in Abraham a willingness to serve Him, although all his people were idolaters (Joshua 24:2), and He separated him from them, so that he might not become contaminated by them, but might become the father of a people who should be fitted to inherit the earth. In Genesis 13:14-17, we find the promise renewed more in detail. At that time Abraham had no child, and in all human probability could never have one (read Genesis 17:1-5). After he had Isaac, the child of promise, once more we find the promise renewed, when Abraham had showed his faith in God by proceeding to offer up his only son, through whom the promise was to be fulfilled. The Lord again called to Abraham and said that in him shall all the nations of the earth be blessed (Genesis 22:16-18). In the expression “thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies,” we have the promise of conquest. In Galatians 3:15-17, we learn that the seed to whom the promise was made, is Christ, – the same that was promised at the time of the fall (Genesis 3:15). When the promise shall have been accomplished, then “the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace” (Psalm 37:11); for the meek are they who have come and have yielded to Christ to be His servants; and Paul says: “And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Galatians 3:29). From this, together with the statement that “they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed” (Galatians 3:7, 8), we may conclude, even at this stage of our study, that the promise to Abraham, and to his seed, was nothing less than the promise of

the earth to all who, through faith in Christ, should gain the victory over sin. This is further confirmed that, "the promise that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith" (Romans 4:13).

Tuesday: Given What You Asked For – After the Lord brought Israel from Egypt, and they settled into Canaan, how were they governed for many years? "After that he gave unto them judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet" (Acts 13:20). Who was the last of the judges? "And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. And he went from year to year in circuit to Bethel, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all those places. And his return was to Ramah; for there was his house; and there he judged Israel; and there he built an altar unto the Lord" (1 Samuel 7:15-17). In his days what did the Israelites demand? "Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah, and said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations" (1 Samuel 8:4-5). What did the Lord say they had done in this demand? "And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee; for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them" (1 Samuel 8:7). What did the Lord say that Samuel should do? "And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them." "Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and show them the manner of the king that shall reign over them." "And the Lord said to Samuel, Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king. And Samuel said unto the men of Israel, Go ye every man unto his city" (1 Samuel 8:7, 9, 22).

Wednesday: The Rulers of the Gentiles – Jesus said: "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant; even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:25-28). On this very occasion He said: "Whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? but I am among you as He that serveth" (Luke 22:27). Jesus was greatest of all, because He did the humblest service. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men" (Philippians 2:5-7). Notice that it was the form, not the character, of a servant, that Jesus took on Himself. Why did He not, in coming to earth, take the character of a servant? – Because He already had that. Although He is Lord of heaven and earth, He lives for the service of His creatures. He "went about doing good; and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him" (Acts 10:38), He still does in us.

Thursday: A Light to the Gentiles – Read Numbers 14:17-21; how was Israel to a light to the Gentiles? The Lord purposed that Pharaoh should declare God's name throughout the earth, but he refused (Exodus 9:16; Romans 9:17). Israel was to do that Pharaoh failed to do, declare God's name throughout all the earth. God's deliverance of Israel declared His name in Canaan, for the Canaanites were terrified at the approach of the Israelites for what God had done in delivering them from Egypt (Joshua 5:1). The purpose of God was that His name should be declared throughout all the earth. This affair was not to be done in a corner. The deliverance from Egypt was not something that concerned only a few people in one portion of the earth. It was to "be to all people" (Luke 2:10). In accordance with the promise to Abraham, God was delivering the children of Israel from bondage; but the deliverance was not for their sakes alone. Through their deliverance His name was to be made known to the uttermost parts of the earth. The time of the promise which God had sworn to Abraham was drawing near (Genesis 15:13-14); but since that promise included the whole earth, it was necessary that the Gospel should be proclaimed as extensively. The children of Israel were God's chosen agents to perform this work. Around them, as the nucleus, the kingdom of God was to centre. That they proved unfaithful to their trust, only delayed, but did not change God's plan. Although they failed to proclaim the name of the Lord, and denied it, God said, "As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord" (Numbers 14:21).