

God And The Nations

Lesson 1

God Rules And Judges All Nations

Introduction

- Political, judicial, social, economic and religious corruption abound
- Political leaders make decisions affecting many for good or evil
- Political leaders seek to exalt government above God and His Word
- Christians must neither fear nor trust in fleeting governments above God

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Introduction

- Political leaders do not have the last word – are not the highest power on earth
- The Old Testament reveals God ruled all nations to accomplish His Divine purpose – saving humanity through Christ
- The New Testament reveals Jesus today rules all nations to accomplish His Divine purpose – saving humanity through the gospel

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God Rules And Judges All Nations

1. God has always ruled all nations
2. By what standard does God judge all nations?
3. What means does God use to judge all nations?

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God Has Always Ruled All Nations

- God creates, establishes and controls all nations to execute His wrath on those who do evil and praise those who do good
- God also controls the nations to accomplish His Divine purpose of saving humanity through Christ
- God controls all nations using them for His purpose whether they know it or not

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God Has Always Ruled All Nations

Dan 4:16 "Let his mind be changed from *that of* a man And let a beast's mind be given to him, And let seven periods of time pass over him.

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God Has Always Ruled All Nations

Dan 4:17 "This sentence is by the decree of the *angelic* watchers And the decision is a command of the holy ones, In order that the living may know That the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind, And bestows it on whom He wishes And sets over it the lowliest of men."

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God Has Always Ruled All Nations

Dan 4:31 "While the word *was* in the king's mouth, a voice came from heaven, *saying*, 'King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is declared: sovereignty has been removed from you,

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God Has Always Ruled All Nations

Dan 4:32 and you will be driven away from mankind, and your dwelling place *will be* with the beasts of the field. You will be given grass to eat like cattle, and seven periods of time will pass over you until you recognize that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes.'

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God Has Always Ruled All Nations

Dan 4:33 "Immediately the word concerning Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled; and he was driven away from mankind and began eating grass like cattle, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair had grown like eagles' *feathers* and his nails like birds' *claws*.

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God Has Always Ruled All Nations

Dan 4:34 "But at the end of that period, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever; For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, And His kingdom *endures* from generation to generation.

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God's General Purpose For The Nations

Rom 13:1 Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.
Rom 13:2 Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.

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God's General Purpose For The Nations

Rom 13:3 For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same;

Rom 13:4 for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil. ¹³

God's Divine Purpose Revealed To Abram

Gen 12:1 Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you;

Gen 12:2 And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing;

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God's Divine Purpose Revealed To Abram

Gen 12:3 And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."

Gen 12:4 So Abram went forth as the LORD had spoken to him; and Lot went with him. Now Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.

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God's Divine Purpose Revealed To Abram

Gen 12:5 Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his nephew, and all their possessions which they had accumulated, and the persons which they had acquired in Haran, and they set out for the land of Canaan; thus they came to the land of Canaan.

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God's Divine Purpose Revealed To Abram

Gen 15:13 *God* said to Abram, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years.

Gen 15:14 "But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve, and afterward they will come out with many possessions.

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God's Divine Purpose Revealed To Abram

Gen 15:15 "As for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you will be buried at a good old age.

Gen 15:16 "Then in the fourth generation they will return here, for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete."

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Isaac, Child of Promise, Born To Abraham and Sarah

Gen 21:1 Then the LORD took note of Sarah as He had said, and the LORD did for Sarah as He had promised.

Gen 21:2 So Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the appointed time of which God had spoken to him.

Gen 21:3 Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him, whom Sarah bore to him, Isaac. 19

God Gives Canaan To Israel

Jos 21:43 So the LORD gave Israel all the land which He had sworn to give to their fathers, and they possessed it and lived in it.

Jos 21:44 And the LORD gave them rest on every side, according to all that He had sworn to their fathers, and no one of all their enemies stood before them; the LORD gave all their enemies into their hand. 20

God Gives Canaan To Israel

Jos 21:45 Not one of the good promises which the LORD had made to the house of Israel failed; all came to pass. 21

Nations Serve God's Purpose Even While Not Knowing It

Jer 25:8 "Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Because you have not obeyed My words, 22

Nations Serve God's Purpose Even While Not Knowing It

Jer 25:9 behold, I will send and take all the families of the north,' declares the LORD, 'and *I will send* to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land and against its inhabitants and against all these nations round about; and I will utterly destroy them and make them a horror and a hissing, and an everlasting desolation. 23

Nations Serve God's Purpose Even While Not Knowing It

Jer 25:10 'Moreover, I will take from them the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp.

Jer 25:11 'This whole land will be a desolation and a horror, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years. 24

Nations Serve God's Purpose Even While Not Knowing It

Jer 25:12 'Then it will be when seventy years are completed I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation,' declares the LORD, 'for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans; and I will make it an everlasting desolation.

Jer 25:13 'I will bring upon that land all My words which I have pronounced against it, all that is written in this book which Jeremiah has prophesied against all the nations. 25

Nations Serve God's Purpose Even While Not Knowing It

Jer 25:14 '(For many nations and great kings will make slaves of them, even them; and I will recompense them according to their deeds and according to the work of their hands.)'"

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Nations Serve God's Purpose Even While Not Knowing It

Isa 44:28 "It is I who says of Cyrus, 'He is My shepherd! And he will perform all My desire.' And he declares of Jerusalem, 'She will be built,' And of the temple, 'Your foundation will be laid.'"

Isa 45:1 Thus says the LORD to Cyrus His anointed, Whom I have taken by the right hand, To subdue nations before him And to loose the loins of kings; To open doors before him so that gates will not be shut: 27

Nations Serve God's Purpose Even While Not Knowing It

Isa 45:3 "I will give you the treasures of darkness And hidden wealth of secret places, So that you may know that it is I, The LORD, the God of Israel, who calls you by your name.

Isa 45:4 "For the sake of Jacob My servant, And Israel My chosen *one*, I have also called you by your name; I have given you a title of honor Though you have not known Me. 28

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Nations Serve God's Purpose Even While Not Knowing It

Isa 45:5 "I am the LORD, and there is no other; Besides Me there is no God. I will gird you, though you have not known Me;

Isa 45:6 That men may know from the rising to the setting of the sun That there is no one besides Me. I am the LORD, and there is no other,

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Nations Serve God's Purpose Even While Not Knowing It

Isa 45:7 The One forming light and creating darkness, Causing well-being and creating calamity; I am the LORD who does all these.

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By What Standard Does God Judge All Nations?

- God allows nations to stand based on how much righteousness is within them
- A minimum of righteousness required of a nation
- Judah led by Manasseh became more unrighteous than the seven nations God cast out of Canaan

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God Requires Righteousness of All Nations

Pro 14:34 Righteousness exalts a nation,
But sin is a disgrace to *any* people.

Psa 9:17 The wicked will return to Sheol,
Even all the nations who forget God.

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God Requires A Minimum of Righteousness

Gen 18:20 And the LORD said, "The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah is indeed great, and their sin is exceedingly grave.

Gen 18:23 Abraham came near and said, "Will You indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked?"

Gen 18:24 "Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city; will You indeed sweep *it* away and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous who are in it?³⁵

God Requires A Minimum of Righteousness

Gen 18:25 "Far be it from You to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous and the wicked are *treated* alike. Far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?"

Gen 18:32 Then he said, "Oh may the Lord not be angry, and I shall speak only this once; suppose ten are found there?" And He said, "I will not destroy *it* on account of the ten."

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Unrighteous Judah Led By Manasseh

2Ch 33:2 He did evil in the sight of the LORD according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD dispossessed before the sons of Israel.

2Ch 33:3 For he rebuilt the high places which Hezekiah his father had broken down; he also erected altars for the Baals and made Asherim, and worshiped all the host of heaven and served them.

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Unrighteous Judah Led By Manasseh

2Ch 33:4 He built altars in the house of the LORD of which the LORD had said, "My name shall be in Jerusalem forever."

2Ch 33:6 He made his sons pass through the fire in the valley of Ben-hinnom; and he practiced witchcraft, used divination, practiced sorcery and dealt with mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking Him *to anger*.

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Unrighteous Judah Led By Manasseh

2Ch 33:9 Thus Manasseh misled Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to do more evil than the nations whom the LORD destroyed before the sons of Israel.

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What Means Does God Use To Judge All Nations?

- Deut. 28 gives a variety of ways God would use to judge Israel
- As a last resort, He uses unrighteous nations to judge other unrighteous nations
- Note some examples of God's judgments
- Nations may cease to exist or be reduced in glory and power

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God Used Variety of Ways To Punish Israel

Deu 28:18 "Cursed *shall be* the offspring of your body and the produce of your ground, the increase of your herd and the young of your flock.

Deu 28:21 "The LORD will make the pestilence cling to you until He has consumed you from the land where you are entering to possess it.

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God Used Variety of Ways To Punish Israel

Deu 28:22 "The LORD will smite you with consumption and with fever and with inflammation and with fiery heat and with the sword and with blight and with mildew, and they will pursue you until you perish.

Deu 28:38 "You shall bring out much seed to the field but you will gather in little, for the locust will consume it.

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God Used Variety of Ways To Punish Israel

Deu 28:44 "He shall lend to you, but you will not lend to him; he shall be the head, and you will be the tail.

Deu 28:47 "Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and a glad heart, for the abundance of all things;

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God Used Variety of Ways To Punish Israel

Deu 28:48 therefore you shall serve your enemies whom the LORD will send against you, in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in the lack of all things; and He will put an iron yoke on your neck until He has destroyed you.

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God Uses Unrighteous Nations To Judge Other Nations

Hab 1:2 How long, O LORD, will I call for help, And You will not hear? I cry out to You, "Violence!" Yet You do not save.

Hab 1:5 "Look among the nations! Observe! Be astonished! Wonder! Because *I am* doing something in your days-- You would not believe if you were told.

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God Uses Unrighteous Nations To Judge Other Nations

Hab 1:6 "For behold, I am raising up the Chaldeans, That fierce and impetuous people Who march throughout the earth To seize dwelling places which are not theirs.

Hab 1:13 *Your* eyes are too pure to approve evil, And You can not look on wickedness *with favor*. Why do You look with favor On those who deal treacherously? Why are You silent when the wicked swallow up Those more righteous than they?

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God Uses Unrighteous Nations To Judge Other Nations

Hab 2:16 "You will be filled with disgrace rather than honor. Now you yourself drink and expose your *own* nakedness. The cup in the LORD'S right hand will come around to you, And utter disgrace *will come* upon your glory.

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1385 BC Israel Used To Judge Canaan

Deu 9:4 "Do not say in your heart when the LORD your God has driven them out before you, 'Because of my righteousness the LORD has brought me in to possess this land,' but *it is* because of the wickedness of these nations *that* the LORD is dispossessing them before you.

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1385 BC Israel Used To Judge Canaan

Deu 9:5 "It is not for your righteousness or for the uprightness of your heart that you are going to possess their land, but *it is* because of the wickedness of these nations *that* the LORD your God is driving them out before you, in order to confirm the oath which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

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1385 BC Israel Used To Judge Canaan

Deu 9:6 "Know, then, *it is* not because of your righteousness *that* the LORD your God is giving you this good land to possess, for you are a stubborn people.

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722 BC Assyria Used To Judge Israel (Northern Kingdom)

2Ki 17:5 Then the king of Assyria invaded the whole land and went up to Samaria and besieged it three years.

2Ki 17:6 In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria captured Samaria and carried Israel away into exile to Assyria, and settled them in Halah and Habor, *on* the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

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722 BC Assyria Used To Judge Israel (Northern Kingdom)

Isa 10:5 Woe to Assyria, the rod of My anger And the staff in whose hands is My indignation,

Isa 10:6 I send it against a godless nation And commission it against the people of My fury To capture booty and to seize plunder, And to trample them down like mud in the streets.

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722 BC Assyria Used To Judge Israel (Northern Kingdom)

Isa 10:7 Yet it does not so intend, Nor does it plan so in its heart, But rather it is its purpose to destroy And to cut off many nations.

Isa 10:25 "For in a very little while My indignation *against you* will be spent and My anger *will be directed* to their destruction."

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612 BC Babylon Used To Judge Assyria

Nah 3:1 Woe to the bloody city, completely full of lies *and* pillage; *Her* prey never departs.

Nah 3:7 "And it will come about that all who see you Will shrink from you and say, 'Nineveh is devastated! Who will grieve for her?' Where will I seek comforters for you?"

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586 BC Babylon Used To Judge Judah

Jer 25:8 "Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Because you have not obeyed My words,

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586 BC Babylon Used To Judge Judah

Jer 25:9 behold, I will send and take all the families of the north,' declares the LORD, 'and *I will send* to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land and against its inhabitants and against all these nations round about; and I will utterly destroy them and make them a horror and a hissing, and an everlasting desolation.

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586 BC Babylon Used To Judge Judah

2Ki 25:9 He burned the house of the LORD, the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem; even every great house he burned with fire.

2Ki 25:10 So all the army of the Chaldeans who *were with* the captain of the guard broke down the walls around Jerusalem.

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539 BC Medes and Persians Used To Judge Babylon

Jer 51:11 Sharpen the arrows, fill the quivers! The LORD has aroused the spirit of the kings of the Medes, Because His purpose is against Babylon to destroy it; For it is the vengeance of the LORD, vengeance for His temple.

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539 BC Medes and Persians Used To Judge Babylon

Dan 5:28 " 'PERES'--your kingdom has been divided and given over to the Medes and Persians."

Dan 5:30 That same night Belshazzar the Chaldean king was slain.

Dan 5:31 So Darius the Mede received the kingdom at about the age of sixty-two.

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What Means Does God Use To Judge All Nations?

- Above all, God judges all nations to fulfill His purpose of saving humanity through Christ
- Nations may fail but God will care for and save individuals who are willing to obey Christ

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Judah To Be Judged But Jesus To Be Born

Mic 3:12 Therefore, on account of you Zion will be plowed as a field, Jerusalem will become a heap of ruins, And the mountain of the temple *will become* high places of a forest.

Mic 5:2 "But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, *Too* little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity." 61

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