

GOD'S RULE OVER THE NATIONS

Text: Daniel 4:30-33

INTRO: The lesson that King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon needed to know is also a lesson that each of us would do well to learn & remember. For the next few minutes let us consider the rule of God over the nations of the earth.

I. THE BIBLE CLEARLY TEACHES THAT GOD RULES OVER ALL NATIONS.

READ DANIEL 2:20-22; 4:17, 25.

Inasmuch as there is none like You, O Lord, (You are great & Your name is great in might), Who would not fear You, O King of the nations?... (Jer. 10:6-7).

For the Lord Most High is awesome; He is a great King over all the earth... For God is the King of all the earth; Sing praises with understanding. God reigns over the nations; God sits on His holy throne. (Psalm 47:2, 7-8).

II. GOD'S DEALINGS WITH THE NATIONS HAS ALWAYS BEEN BASED PRIMARILY ON MORAL PRINCIPLES.

A. There are many things at God's disposal to bring judgment on an ungodly, immoral nation.

READ DEUT 28:15-20

Plague-(epidemic disease) 21-22, 27, 59-62
drought, 23-24
worms, locusts, etc., 38-39, 42
fruit trees drop their fruit, 40
wild animals, 26
numerous unnamed judgments, 29:20

B. But one of the most frequently named judgments of which God has warned is that of enemy nations.

READ DEUT. 28:32, 36, 49-51, 64-67.

C. Tho these verses apply to Israel, it would be a mistake to think that other nations could ignore God's moral standards & escape such consequences.

1. Jonah was sent to Assyria to cry out against sin:

Yet 40 days & Nineveh shall be overthrown (Jonah 3:4). But they repented & the city was spared.

2. The Gentile nation of Babylon was severely judged because of their sins against God. Jer 50:9-13.

3. Such examples could be cited many times over. The principle involved has been stated several ways in Scripture, & that principle applies in all cases.

Righteousness exalts a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people. (Prov. 14:34).

The wicked shall be turned into hell (Sheol) & all the nations that forget God. (Psa 9:17).

4. God's use of one nation to bring judgment on another is amply illustrated from the facts that

He used Assyria to judge Israel, Isa. 10:5-7; Babylon to judge Assyria, Jer. 50:17; Medo-Persia to judge Babylon, Dan. 5:28; Greece to judge Persia [Iran]. Dan 8:3-7. And this is but a drop in the bucket of what the Bible says about this subject.

III. THE EVIDENCE SUPPORTS THE CONCLUSION THAT GOD STILL RULES THE UNIVERSE, THRU HIS SON, & CONTINUES TO BLESS OR CURSE NATIONS ACCORDING TO THEIR MORALITY OR LACK OF IT.

- A. Such dealings were not limited to the time of Moses' law, for God had so dealt with them during the Patriarchal age before the Law.

But in the 4th generation they [Abraham's seed] shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete. (Gen. 15:16).

Judgment of Sodom & Gomorrah-Gen. 19

- B. During the time that the Jewish nation was governed by the Law of Moses, God continued to deal with the Gentiles according to the same moral principles as before. Remember that Moses' Law was never given to Gentiles, Deut. 5:2-3, 6.

But during the time of the Law, God sent prophets among the Gentiles to warn them to depart from immorality. Jonah to Assyria, much of Isaiah's writing is addressed to Egypt & Babylon. Daniel served & warned

the kings of Babylon & later those of Persia. Obadiah wrote to Edom...

C. God continued to deal with all nations after this manner into N.T. times. The destruction of Jerusalem occurred in 70 A.D., 40 years into the N.T. age.

D. Such judgments further continued past the days of miracles & to the fall of the Roman Empire, 476 A.D. Most scholars believe this is taught in Dan. 9:27, "And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate." (NASB).

Most conservative scholars also believe that this is a major part of the message of the book of Revelation, Rev. 17:3-6, 9, 18.

E. Since such judgments began hundreds of years before Moses' Law, continued with those nations who never received that law, & extended into the N.T. age well beyond the age of miracles till at least 476 A.D., there is no logical reason to doubt that the principles are still in force in Christ's universal rule today.

F. Psalm 22 is one of the most obviously Messianic psalms, fulfilled in the work of Jesus Christ.

READ PSA 22:1, 7-8, 16-18, 22, 26-28

Jesus Christ [is] the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, & the ruler over the kings of the earth... (Rev. 1:5).

READ REVELATION 19:11-16

CONCLUSION: Christ rules today. In a very special sense, He rules in the hearts & lives of those who believe in Him, repent of their sins, & obey Him in baptism. But in a broader sense, He rules the universe. Someday He will bring to judgment every man, woman & accountable child. Until then, our destiny, both as individuals & as a nation is determined by what we do with His revealed will.

La Porte, TX, April 12, 1981

La Porte, TX, May 2, 1982

Exton, PA, February 22, 1987

Shiloh, Mexia, TX, February 14, 1993

Susquehanna, Marietta, PA, November 10, 2002