

The Times of the Gentiles

By David W. Breese

Knowing the teaching of the Holy Scripture makes life understandable; knowing the content of history can give us a growing appreciation of the Word of God. To aid our understanding, God divides history into different eras. One such era is “the times of the Gentiles” (Luke 21:24), a period of time in which the leadership of the nations is no longer in the hands of Israel but rather Gentile empires. This period began with the captivity of Judah by Babylon under King Nebuchadnezzar, 605 B.C. (2 Chr. 36:21; Jerm. 25:11). Since that time, the world has been “trodden down of the Gentiles” (Luke 21:24) and will continue to be UNTIL Christ returns for the Church.

This Gentile era has been and will be characterized by many developments: The emergence of Gentile world power and control (Lk. 21:24);

The disappearance of Israel as a world power (Matt. 21:18-20);

The emergence of the Church (Eph. 1:20-23);

The renewal of Israel (Matt. 24:39);
Pronouncement of the futility of temple worship (Matt. 24:2);

The Jews being called “lost sheep” by Christ Himself (Matt. 15:24) and;
Attempted domination by Gentile power over the entire world under the leadership of the Antichrist.

The Bible then indicates that the massive force of Gentile world power will be destroyed. The commercial world center, centered in the city of Babylon, will be in control for a limited time. Then the Scriptures announce the devastation of the world’s commerce and currency (Rev. 18:2-3, 9).

When we consider the conditions that characterize the times of the Gentiles, we come to the conclusion that man without God, whatever his abilities may be, cannot succeed. The result of merely human activity, however impressive, will be failure, loss and final devastation.

The world has long boasted that it has no need of God. It has insisted on its own ability to govern by making mere human wisdom its guide. During the

times of the Gentiles, the world will believe many religions, many philosophies, and set many goals. These may be temporarily impressive but, in the final analysis, they will amount to nothing. We do well, therefore, to conclude that the culture can be improved only by divine intervention. ONLY CHRIST, RETURNING IN POWER AND GREAT GLORY, CAN BRING TO PASS A BENEFICIAL SOCIETY. Such a society, as the scripture clearly teaches, can exist only by altering human nature itself. The world is sinful and during the times of the Gentiles, is controlled by a fallen human race, which, having steeped itself in sin, has lost its spiritual status. It has fallen “short of the Glory of God” (Rom. 3:23).

The connection between inerrancy, prophecy, and personal assurance is explained in Hebrews 6:18: “that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.” Our hope is based on the inerrant fulfillment of prophecy. Jesus Christ fulfilled Old Testament prophecy to the letter, and His return will fulfill both Old and New Testament predictions.

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