

# Israel, the Church and the Nations in History and Prophecy

God works with humanity in three spheres:

1. **In Creation (material)** God, the Creator, has made of “one blood” all people to dwell on the earth (Acts 17:24-27). There is one “human race”.
2. **In Redemption (spiritual)** God, the Redeemer, divides people into two classes in relation to salvation – the saved and the lost (John 3:36, Rev 22:11)
3. **In Providence (moral)** God, the Governor of the ages, deals with man in three classes: “Jew [Israel], Gentile [nations] and church of God” (1 Cor 10:32)

God has *distinct plans* for 1. Israel, and 2. the nations, and 3. the church (composed of saved Jews/Gentiles) both in the dispensations and in the eternal state. (Note: N/A below indicates “not applicable”)

GOD'S DEALINGS with MEN	1 <sup>st</sup> Dispensation Innocence	2 <sup>nd</sup> Dispensation Conscience	3 <sup>rd</sup> Dispensation GOVERNMENT	4 <sup>th</sup> Dispensation PROMISE	5 <sup>th</sup> Dispensation LAW	6 <sup>th</sup> Dispensation CHURCH/GRACE	7 <sup>th</sup> Dispensation KINGDOM	The Eternal State (The Day of God)
→ → → → → → → → →								
<b>The Nations</b> Hebrew = ‘goyim’; Gk = ‘ethnos’ often transl. ‘Gentiles’	N/A	N/A	Noah’s sons become families and nations. The nations divide at Babel (Gen 10-11). God sets their times & boundaries (Deut 32:8, Acts 17:26)	God “gives the nations up” (Rom 1:24-28), allowing them to walk in their own ways (Acts 14:16), and overlooking the “times of ignorance” (Acts 17:30) until the coming of Christ.	The nations live “without law” (Greek: anomos). No codified written law is ever given to the Gentile nations. They live by their God-given conscience (Rom 2:12-15, 1 Cor 9:21).	The coming of Christ inaugurates a change. “God NOW commandeth all men everywhere to repent” (Acts 17:30). The apostles are told to “Go therefore and teach all nations” (Matt 28:19).	The nations are ruled by Christ and His Church. They are blessed through Abraham’s seed. Earthly Jerusalem becomes the world’s capital; Israel the world’s centre (Mic 4:2-8, Zech 14:16-19).	“The nations of them which are saved” shall walk in light of the heavenly New Jerusalem and bring “glory and honour” into it (Rev 21:23-26). New Jerusalem, the city with foundations, joined to earth (Heb 11:10, Rev 21:2).
<b>Date:</b>	<b>2,348BC</b>	<b>1,913BC</b>	<b>1,491BC</b>	← 606BC Times of the Gentiles →				
<b>The Nation of Israel</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	Abram: “I will make of thee a great nation” (Gen 12:2). Abram is unconditionally promised a tract of land at the centre of the world (Gen 13:15, 15:18-21).	Israel a nation born out of Egypt (Hos 11:1), is put “under law” (Gk: hypo nomos) at Sinai as a rule of life (1 Cor 9:20). Loses national headship through idolatry (Deut 28:13).	After rejecting Christ, Israel is temporarily set aside, its special privileges suspended (Rom 11:11-25). After the rapture, Israel will go through ‘Jacob’s trouble’ before being finally restored (Jer 30:7).	Jerusalem becomes the global centre of worship (Mic 4:1-2, Isa 62:1-9). Israel becomes a kingdom of Priests on earth in the “promised land” (Isa 61:6, Dan 12:13).	Israel lives on the New Earth eternally in the land promised to Abraham, existing as a distinct entity from both the rest of the nations and the church, the body of Christ (Jer 31:35).
<b>The Church</b> The body of Christ	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	The church begins at Pentecost and is completed at the rapture. She is “not under law, but under grace” (Rom 6:14-15) being “in law to Christ” (1 Cor 9:21) (Gk: ennomos). Christ is the Church’s rule of life.	The Church reigns with Christ in connection with His throne (Matt 19:28, Luke 19:17, 1 Cor 6:2, 2 Tim 2:12, Rev 2:26, 3:21, 5:10, 20:4) as He administers “the fullness of times” (Eph 1:10).	The Church eternally retains her distinct unique character. She is to be the eternal display of God’s grace (Eph 2:7). Glory to God will be <i>in the church</i> unto all generations of the age of the ages in Christ Jesus (Eph 3:20-21).

**At the beginning of history:** God begins to deal with nations first (Gen 10), then Israel (Gen 12, Exod 12), and finally the church begins on the Day of Pentecost in AD32 (Acts 2)

**At the end of history:** God will fulfil his purposes *in reverse order*. The church (saved people, whether Jew or Gentile) is called out in salvation during this present evil age (Acts 15:14) and is then taken to heaven at the rapture (1 Thess 4:16-17, 5:9, 2 Thess 2:6-8). God then takes up dealings with the nation of Israel again in the time of “Jacob’s trouble” in Daniel’s 70<sup>th</sup> week (Jer 30:7, Dan 7:24-27), regathering the nation back to the land at His 2<sup>nd</sup> coming (Isa 11:11-12, Amos 9:14, Acts 15:16). Finally the blessing flows to the nations of the world, bringing them peace, blessing and the knowledge of God in the Millennium and in eternity (Gen 22:18, Mic 4:2-8, Rom 11:15, Acts 15:17).