

# God Rules the Nations / Fulfill Your Purpose / The Fullness of Time

## Overview of the Captivity and Restoration

➤ = next PowerPoint Slide

### ➤ Intro:

- **topical review** of last quarter's Sunday AM Bible class
- **themes:** God Rules the Nations / Fulfill Your Purpose / The Fullness of Time

### ➤ God Rules the Nations

- **Ps. 22:28** "For the **kingdom is the Lord's** and **He rules over the nations.**"

- **Bible class: Neo-Babylonian Empire** (606-535 B.C.), during which King Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem, and the Jews went into captivity.

- **God gave rise to one nation, to bring down another, Judah, to punish them for their sins.**

- **Bible class: God humbled Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 4)**, he lived in the fields like an animal for seven years, till he

- **Dan. 4:14-15** till he recognized that **God is ruler over the realm**, and bestowed it on whomever He wishes

- **God gives the rule over the kingdoms of the world to whom he pleases**

- **Matt. 24** Jesus' prophesy, **fall of Jerusalem** A.D. 70

- **Rev.** Jesus' prophesy, through John, **fall of Rome**

- **USA**, future, **fall?**

- **God is in control – in democracy, we have our part to do – not worry**

➤ - **Rom. 13:1, 2, 3-4, 5, 6-7; 1 Pet. 2:13-14** responsibility, attitude, civil authorities, every human institution (school, work, HOA, etc.)

➤ - **What is your attitude toward our government, taxes, every human institution that's over you?**

- **Jude 1:8** sinful men reject authority, and revile angelic majesties

- **Rom. 1:30; 2 Tim. 3:2** sinners are disobedient to parents

➤ - **Are you subject, or disobedient?**

- **Fulfill Your Purpose as God's Child – live by faith, do the work**
  - **illus.:** throughout history, today, God's children have been challenged to live by faith and do God's word
  - **illus.:** message of Haggai and Zechariah, Israelites had returned to Jerusalem, their job was to rebuild the temple, they began the work but they're enemies got a decree to stop it, after 16 years of Israel's neglect, God sent Haggai and Zechariah to prophesy, Israel restarted the work and completed the temple
  - **today: we need elders, deacons, preachers and teachers, members spurring** us on to do the work
    - **sometimes dormant**, like Israel
    - **sometimes listen to people of the world, discouraged**, rather than just doing the work
    - **sometimes try to over think**, instead of just working, and letting God give the growth
  
- - **illus.:** Daniel fulfilled God's purpose in his life – lived by faith, did the work – **determined, proactive**
  - **Dan. 1:8-16 Daniel not defile himself**
    - **vs. 8 "made up his mind"**
      - **make up mind in advance**, not sin, obey God, do good
    - **vs. 8 Daniel had to speak up**, couldn't remain silent, had to initiate conversation and voice his objection
      - **we're often afraid** to do this, trust in God, He's in control, speak up, right way
        - **Thomasville, school began going on field trips on Sunday**, talked with schools and got a commitment for them not to be gone on Sunday – speak up
        - **high school band, raffle**, spoke up and voiced objections, reasons, gained respect – speak up
    - **vs. 9 God granted Daniel favor and compassion**
      - **God often gives us favor** with others, so we are able to do things others can't, and we given permission to exempt from things others aren't, when make up our mind to obey, not compromise
        - **Dawn, school activities that violated her conscious** (against her religion) - e.g., dissect animals
    - **vs. 12 Daniel formulated a win-win plan**, whereby commander could get what he wanted, and Daniel could get what he wanted
      - **often, we need to come up with a win-win plan** whereby we can obey God, and fulfill the requirements put on us by authority
        - **get someone to work a shift** for us, so we can go to church
        - **parent drive on school field trip** to take child to church
        - almost always, where there's a will there's a way
  
- - **illus.:** Daniel and friends willing to die, rather than sin – lived by faith, did the work – **dedicated**
  - **Daniel thrown into lion's den** because refused to stop praying to God, his **friends thrown in furnace** because refused to participate in idolatry – **both resulted in glory to God**
    - **both occasions, sinful men conspired**, hatred, set them up, trouble, death
      - **today, Jesus, world hates his disciples**
      - **What would you have done?**
  - **Dan. 6:10 Daniel not do anything differently, didn't even try to hide**
    - **sometimes we change**, sin, to satisfy others – if we don't change, **sometimes we hide**
  - **Dan. 6:16 Daniel's faith was so strong, the king believed** in God and his deliverance of Daniel
    - 1 Pet. 3 wife's faith can be so strong her husband believes, without her even saying a word
    - **if our light shine's bright enough**, some people will see our faith, come to God – **Russ**
  
- - **Dan. 3:16-18 Daniel's friends, attitude, confidence, faith**
  - **What would you have done? Do you do the same thing today?**

- - **Esther saved Israel from annihilation – faith**
    - Mordecai didn't bow down to Haman, so **Haman conspired against the Jews**, and **convinced the king to issue a decree resulting in the annihilation of the Jewish race**
      - to save the Jews, Mordecai wanted Ezra to go to the king, and plead with him for the people
      - at first, Ezra didn't want to go, because the king hadn't called for her, and she would be killed, if he didn't hold out his golden scepter
    - **Esth. 4:13-14 Mordecai's words to Esther** – he knew Jews would be saved, prophesy
      - not escape, she'll die with all the other Jews if she doesn't act to save them
      - she may have been elevated to power, for the purpose of doing God's work, saving the Jews
        - God often elevates his children to give them an opportunity to do work they couldn't do otherwise
          - material wealth, authority and influence over others, civil authority
      - if she didn't do God's work, God will accomplish it another way, and perish her
        - God's word never returns void, He always accomplishes His will, with out without us
        - if we don't do our part as God's children, we'll be punished
        - Are you doing God's work in your life? What has God elevated you to accomplish?
    - **Esth. 4:15-16 Esther's plan and attitude**
      - pray, beseech God
        - Do you pray before doing the “hard” things, as God's child?
      - do what she had to do, even though she could die
        - Are you doing what you have to do – no matter the personal cost?
- - Are you fulfilling your purpose as God's Child? – determined and proactive, dedicated, faith
- **Summary / Inv. – fullness of time**
  - end of last quarter's Bible study, talked about the Greek and Roman Empires
    - shows God's plan in action, to bring about the proper time, for His Son to come into the world – fullness of time
    - Gal. 4:4-7 fullness of time, Jesus sent into world, redeem us, so we could be adopted as sons
    - Gal. 3:26-29 baptized into Christ, sons of God, heirs according to the promise
  - inv.: become a son of God today