

# Soon: The Gospel and the Last Days

## *Part 2: All Nations (The Gospel Must Reach)*

(preached 7/4/21)

### Sermon #1: The King is Coming

- We delved into the life of Julius Caesar and showed some parallels between him and Christ (not claiming Caesar was righteous).
- Spreading the Gospel has Roman connotations.
- When Caesar defeated Pompey and took the throne in Rome, he dispatched messengers to all the provinces within the empire to spread the “good news.”
- The messengers would be fiercely loyal to Caesar, viewing him as a savior who not only defeated evil, but would institute a government that would benefit everyone.
- As they rode out, their message might have been something like: “Caesar is victorious! Caesar has taken the throne is King of kings and Lord of lords, and Pompey is under his feet! He’s promised sweeping changes to the empire that are good for all! Soon he will ride out at the head of his army to all the nations to crush any remaining enemies and stabilize the empire.
- “If you pledge your loyalty to him now, he will forgive any debts and absolve you of any crimes against Rome. He will free you from prison, restore your lands and possessions, and make you a citizen of good standing in his kingdom.
- “If you reject Caesar, however, all your debts and crimes will remain on you and you will be facing him and his army as an enemy when he arrives. His coming is close at hand and he brings his reward with him for all who are his! Cry out ‘hail Caesar!’ now and be saved!”
- GOOD NEWS. Those who have great debts and crimes are more likely to see the rule and coming of Caesar as good news indeed, and they fall on their knees to pledge themselves to him.
- Some may voluntarily become messengers themselves, telling everyone they know the good news. Others learn all they can about Caesar: his past deeds, character, and the things he’s promised to do in the future. They actively seek to teach others the same and make disciples.
- BAD NEWS. Those who see this as bad news might believe their debts and crimes are small. Others might have prospered under Pompey and prefer his ways, while others are caught up in day to day life, feeling Caesar’s rule and coming won’t impact them. Still others doubt the news entirely, thinking the messengers are lying or deluded.
- When Caesar finally rides forth, all resistance is crushed and he then judges all the provinces within to decide whether they were loyal or not.
- Jesus was victorious over Satan, beating him at the Cross! Jesus beat death, defeating Him at the Resurrection! Jesus has taken the throne in Heaven at the right hand of God our Father, ruling supreme as KOK and LOL with all enemies under His feet! Jesus has promised sweeping new changes that will drain the swamp and transform the world into a Paradise! Jesus has offered to forgive all debts and crimes prior to His Second Coming—

anyone who pledges themselves to Him will become a citizen in good standing in His Kingdom! Jesus will return at the head of a mighty army and He will crush all resistance! He will judge the nations then enact all the prophetic promises He made!

- WE ARE HIS MESSENGERS!

TODAY I will reread a verse from Matthew 24 where Jesus tells us the “when” we all crave to know:

#### **Matthew 24:14 (ESV)**

<sup>14</sup> And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

WHEN RIDE OUT? When would Caesar have finally rode forth at the head of his army, after taking the capital city of Rome?

- When would he finally have presented himself, in the flesh, to the rest of the provinces within the empire?

### **After his messengers had gone to all the provinces and spread the good news.**

The starting point of the good news was the capital city of Rome, and Caesar’s commission to his messengers would be to travel everywhere to make disciples. He wanted all the provinces to have the chance to accept him before he arrived with his army.

#### **Matthew 28:18-20 (ESV)**

<sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

<sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

<sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

**Verse 18** speaks to Him being crowned as King by Father God—He’s taken rulership from Satan.

**Verse 19** is the commission: before He rides forth to drain the swamp and bring the full glory of His Kingdom, His messengers need to go ahead of Him and tell everyone the good news and making them disciples by teaching them all about Jesus.

BEGAN IN ISRAEL. 70 NATIONS. The Good News started in Israel, the capital nation of the world. As I’ve taught in a previous sermon: after the flood God divided the world into 70 nations and reserved the physical nation of Israel for Himself. He gave rulership of the other nations over to Angelic Princes, referred to as “principalities” in the NT.

### Deuteronomy 32:7-9 (ESV)

<sup>7</sup> Remember the days of old; consider the years of many generations; ask your father, and he will show you, your elders, and they will tell you.

<sup>8</sup> When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God.

<sup>9</sup> But the LORD's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage.

ANGELS REBELLED. ONLY GOD CAN BE WORSHIPPED. These powerful angels rebelled against God and here's why: no one but the Lord can endure being worshipped—no man, woman, child, or even a holy angel directly created by God in Heaven! When people adore and worship us, it puffs us up with pride and we crave more and more, even to the point of abandoning the Lord.

CORRUPTING. It seems to have a corrupting influence so prevalent that an angel—created without flesh and without sin—will fall. Remember in Revelation when John tries to worship the angel showing him around? The angel YELLS at him and says “don't do that! I'm only a fellow servant! Worship God alone!!!” That angel understood what worship did to Lucifer and all who rebelled with him, and wanted no part of it.

**The only Being Who ever walked this earth to not be corrupted by worship was Jesus! He is a good God and truly worthy of honor, glory, riches, and power! Holy Holy Holy is He!**

NATIONS WORSHIPPED ANGELS. The other nations of the world worshipped these angels—the “gods”—which is why we have so many different religions and gods in the world today. Every major religion except Christianity, Judaism, and Islam are polytheistic and even “Allah” was part of a pantheon of 360 gods before Mohammed began to worship him as supreme.

GENTILES. These 70 nations worshipping these other “gods” were then known by God in the Scriptures as “Gentiles,” “the nations,” and “the heathen.” In the days of Jesus, Gentiles were also equated with and often called SINNERS. The Jews of that day understood that everyone sinned and fell short of God's glory, yet they also knew they were in covenant with God whereas Gentiles weren't. They understood Gentiles were in covenant with their gods, the fallen angels. Therefore, in the derogatory sense, they often applied the term “sinner” to a Gentile.

1<sup>st</sup> COMMANDMENT. Please notice that the first commandment—the one God saw fit to place on top—is “thou shalt have no other gods before me.” These other gods were not and are not figments of overactive imaginations of primitive people—they were real angelic princes (and their underlings) who were put in command over them. These “gods” still exist today and pull the puppet strings of the world's nations. Paul referred to them as “principalities, powers, rulers of darkness of this world, and spiritual wickedness in the heavenly places.” (Ephesians

6:12). Please note these are not human beings, because Paul starts this verse out with “we wrestle NOT with flesh and blood.”

**ABRAHAM, ISAAC & JACOB.** God calls Abraham and Sarah to the land of Israel then God’s people were through Isaac and Jacob, renamed Israel. Over and over in the OT, God would say things like “I am Your God and You are My people. You’re separate from the other nations and you won’t worship their gods nor follow their ways. You will follow My ways alone.”

**WHOLE WORLD SOMEDAY.** Yet even though God set aside the land and people of Israel as His own, even back then He prophesied that someday He would take over the entire planet:

**Psalm 22:27-28 (AMP)**

<sup>27</sup> All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall bow down *and* worship before You,

<sup>28</sup> For the kingship *and* the kingdom are the Lord's, and He is the ruler over the nations.

**Psalm 103:19 (ESV)**

<sup>19</sup> The LORD has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all.

**Isaiah 9:7 (ESV)**

<sup>7</sup> Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

**MESSIAH = GENERAL.** They saw Messiah as a military general, like Caesar, who would lead a mighty army to spread God’s Kingdom to all the earth:

**Isaiah 60:12 (ESV)**

<sup>12</sup> For the nation and kingdom that will not serve you shall perish; those nations shall be utterly laid waste.

**DANIEL.** In Daniel 2 King Neb sees a vision of the most powerful Gentile empires all being crushed by the coming of Messiah and His Kingdom:

**Daniel 2:44-45 (ESV)**

<sup>44</sup> And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever,

<sup>45</sup> just as you saw that a stone was cut from a mountain by no human hand, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. A great God has made known to the king what shall be after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation sure.”

GOOD NEWS STARTS WITH JEWS. Fast forward to the advent of Christ—all His disciples including the 12 and anyone else who believed in Him, knew the Good News started with the Jews:

**Matthew 10:5-8 (ESV)**

- <sup>5</sup> These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, “Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans,  
<sup>6</sup> but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.  
<sup>7</sup> And proclaim as you go, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’  
<sup>8</sup> Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying; give without pay.

FOR NOW. Did you see where Jesus said to—for now—avoid sharing the Gospel to the Gentiles?

**Matthew 15:21-24 (ESV)**

- <sup>21</sup> And Jesus went away from there and withdrew to the district of Tyre and Sidon.  
<sup>22</sup> And behold, a Canaanite woman from that region came out and was crying, “Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely oppressed by a demon.”  
<sup>23</sup> But he did not answer her a word. And his disciples came and begged him, saying, “Send her away, for she is crying out after us.”  
<sup>24</sup> He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

JEW FIRST, THEN THE GENTILE. At this point in His ministry, Jesus’ mission is to bring the good news of His coming victory and Kingdom to the people and nation God chose as His own. The victory over death, Satan, and sin will start there therefore the good news of this victory will go forth from there.

WHY REJECT? Why did many Jews reject Jesus later on? They were disappointed because they had things backwards. They believed ONLY Israel would be Saved and then the army would ride forth with Jesus leading the charge. In fact:

**The Messengers need to go before the army.**

*The Messengers need to go to ALL the nations in the world first.*

**It’s only when the message has spread everywhere that the army begins to march.**

COVENANT WITH THEM ONLY. The Jewish understanding in the days of Jesus is that God had only made covenant with them and it would remain that way forever. Yes, His Kingdom would spread to all the world but the best Gentiles could hope for was to submit...despite the fact that even in the days of the Exodus there were Gentile converts to Judaism and God commanded they be treated exactly the same as someone born Jewish.

JEWS FIRST, THEN GENTILES. Although Jesus made the statement He did to the Canaanite woman, His actions were clear that His good news for the Gentiles too...but only after it was shared in Israel first. Matthew quotes from Isaiah stating Jesus would also be a light to the Gentiles (*Matthew 4:15*). As Jesus began to gain followers in the thousands, some of them were Gentiles and again: Matthew quotes from Isaiah who states the Gospel will be shared to the heathen and they will put their hope in Christ (*Matthew 12:18-21*).

APOSTLES ADJUST. It took time for the Apostles to adjust to this but they did, leaving Israel and going into Gentile nations.

## **Understand something: a covenant of God's creation is always first brought by God Himself.**

HE APPROACHES. In other words, it's God Himself Who approaches \_\_\_\_\_ and states covenant. Who approached Adam? Abraham? Isaac? Jacob? Moses and the Hebrew people? Each time it was the Lord Himself Who reached out to these men and reveal and form the covenant.

## **THEREFORE THE LAST AND BEST COVENANT ALSO NEEDED TO BE BROUGHT BY GOD HIMSELF IN THE FORM OF JESUS CHRIST, WHO OFFERED IT TO BOTH JEW AND GENTILE.**

OFFERS PLACE AT TABLE. He didn't just do that to be nice—the Gospel is news and its also God offering everyone a place at the table before He shows up with His conquering army. The Gentiles won't merely have to bend their knees and confess Him as Lord—Satan and his rebellious angels and their demonic offspring already do that in the presence of Christ!

REPENT FROM ANGEL COVENANT. In His amazing mercy and love, Jesus is offering even the pagan nations in covenant with fallen angels the chance to repent, and believe in Him. They'll become adopted sons and daughters of God the Father, partakers in His divine nature, and be part of the Kingdom and resurrection!

IT'S NEWS. The Gospel is both an offer and news because Jesus is coming riding on a white horse, many crowns on His head, sharp two-edged sword coming out of His mouth, and His robe dipped in the blood of His enemies! A massive army of human saints and angels will be behind Him and every eye will see Him as the sky rolls back like a scroll and the trumpet sounds!

***He's on His way and everyone on this planet needs to know ASAP!***

ORDER. So now we see the order in which things need to take place:

- Good news of victory, forgiveness & coming Kingdom brought by God.
- Good news given to Jews first and introduced as a NEW covenant...to escort them from the old one to the new one made with the same God.
- Good news brought to Gentiles second, giving them a chance to repent of angel worship & pagan living and graft them directly into the NC.

SMALL WORLD. URGENCY. Consider this: the known world back then was smaller than now, consisting of the Roman Empire. Therefore as the decades passed on the Gospel spread quickly, I understand the sense of urgency they had and clearly convey in the NT epistles that Jesus might ride forth at any moment.

### **Romans 13:11-12 (ESV)**

<sup>11</sup> Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed.

<sup>12</sup> The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.

PETER'S LAST WORDS. Look at the words of Peter's last epistle where he urges his disciples to be ready for the imminent return of Christ:

### **2 Peter 3:1-18 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder,

<sup>2</sup> that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles,

<sup>3</sup> knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires.

<sup>4</sup> They will say, "Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation."

<sup>5</sup> For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God,

<sup>6</sup> and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished.

<sup>7</sup> But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

<sup>8</sup> But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

<sup>9</sup> The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

## EXPOSIT

<sup>10</sup> But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

<sup>11</sup> Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness,

<sup>12</sup> waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn!

<sup>13</sup> But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

<sup>14</sup> Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace.

<sup>15</sup> And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him,

<sup>16</sup> as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.

<sup>17</sup> You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability.

<sup>18</sup> But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

HASTENING. Did you notice that Peter said we both waiting for and HASTENING the Second Coming?

- How do we take part in making it come more quickly?
- Sharing the Good news that the King and His Kingdom are coming!!!