

UNDERSTANDING THE “ONE STORY” OF SCRIPTURE

Week 11 – JROC – The Times of the Gentiles

January 11, 2026

Malachi was the last prophetic book in the OT. The Gospels in the NT speak to the Messiah’s birth at His first coming. The Intertestamental time spans 430 BC to circa 6 BC when the angel Gabriel brought the news of the Messiah’s coming and John the Baptizer heralding the Messiah.

What type of world was Jesus born into? The Hebrew Jewish world? NO! Jesus entered a world which was Gentile-dominated. How did the Gentile-dominated world fit into God’s plan for Israel and for the world? SIGNIFICANTLY! (Isa. 43:10; Rom. 11:11) The Jews were told to share the one true God of Israel with Gentiles and the Gentiles were told to provoke the Jewish people to jealousy – to know their God!

God chose the children of Israel to receive the law (God is holy and man is sinful)...to serve as witnesses to the Gentiles (Isa. 43:10)...to be the channel through whom the Messiah would come (Gen. 12:3; Jn. 4:22)...to be an instrument of blessing for the world (Gen. 18:18).

Did God cut unconditional covenants with Israel? What are those covenants?

Abrahamic Covenant – land, seed (descendants/The Seed – Jesus), blessings – Gen. 12:1-3

Land Cov – Gen. 15 (boundaries: Gen. 15:18-21).

Davidic Cov. – the Messiah reigning from His earthly kingdom in Jerusalem (II Sam. 7:12-16)

New Cov. – Jer. 31:31fff; Eze. 36:24-27 - blessings – salvation (Gal. 3:14) – as a nation

What does “unconditional” mean? No strings attached! God has obligated Himself to deliver on His promises to Israel (Heb. 6:13). What message are the unconditional covenants PROCLAIMING to Israel? God is NOT finished with Israel!!! They will be the head and not the tail (Deut. 28:9-14). These unconditional covenants will be fulfilled during the Millennial Kingdom.

SO, WHY ARE WE EVEN DISCUSSING ISRAEL BEING TAKEN INTO CAPTIVITY?

Because God is holy...He is just...God must deal with sin!!

Jer. 29:4 - Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all who were carried away captive, whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem to Babylon. Build houses and dwell in them; plant gardens and eat their fruit. 5 Take wives and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons and give your daughters to husbands, so that they may bear sons and daughters—that you may be increased there, and not diminished. 6 And seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away captive, and pray to the Lord for it; for in its peace you will have peace. (Could it be God’s desire for Israel, instead of hoping for Babylon’s demise,

God was instructing them to not only seek the welfare of the city but also to pray for this Gentile city who had destroyed their city and the Temple?)

Jer. 25:5 - Repent now everyone of his evil way and his evil doings, and dwell in the land that the Lord has given to you and your fathers forever and ever. } The 70-year exile was part of God's plan to give Judah a future and a hope v. 11) 11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. 12 Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. 13 And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. 14 I will be found by you, says the Lord, and I will bring you back from your captivity; I will gather you from all the

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places where I have driven you, says the Lord, and I will bring you to the place from which I cause you to be carried away captive.

WHY did God cause the exile of the Kingdom of Judah to Babylon? They had not yet repented of their sin – their evil ways and evil doings (Jer. 25:5). Jer. 17:5-8 Judah's sin centered on her trust in false gods and foreign alliances rather than in the Lord.

Jer. 16:10-15 - And it shall be, when you show this people all these words, and they say to you, 'Why has the Lord pronounced all this great disaster against us? Or what is our iniquity? Or what is our sin that we have committed against the Lord our God?' 11 then you shall say to them, 'Because your fathers have forsaken Me,' says the Lord; 'they have walked after other gods and have served them and worshiped them, and have forsaken Me and not kept My law. 12 And you have done worse than your fathers, for behold, each one follows the dictates of his own evil heart, so that no one listens to Me. 13 Therefore I will cast you out of this land into a land that you do not know, neither you nor your fathers; and there you shall serve other gods day and night, where I will not show you favor.' **God Will Restore Israel**

14 "Therefore behold, the days are coming," says the Lord, "that it shall no more be said, 'The Lord lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of Egypt,' 15 but, 'The Lord lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north and from all the lands where He had driven them.' For I will bring them back into their land which I gave to their fathers.

When we first looked at the Magi weeks ago, I mentioned that the wise men had a connection with the Jewish Prophet, Daniel. What do we know about Daniel? He was a faithful Jewish young man – taken captive into Babylon. And Daniel remained faithful. God had given Daniel the ability to not only interpret dreams but also to, in the case of Nebuchadnezzar, tell people their dreams!

Daniel lived prior to the Intertestamental times (“between the testaments”) (The book of Daniel was written circa 530 BC) BUT Daniel lived in the TIMES OF THE GENTILES!

God is interceding...and it is SO SIGNIFICANT to understand how these “times” fit into the ONE STORY of Scripture in that they are setting the stage for the outworking of God’s plan – His Plan A - for the WORLD – the outworking of Isa. 49:6.

Luke 21:24 - And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. This is the only Scriptural reference to the times of the Gentiles – highlighting the “times of the Gentiles” as being in control! OBSERVATIONS?

The Times of the Gentiles refers to the time re: the prophetic period when Jewish Prophets were called by God to WARN the Jewish people if they continued to VEER from Him.

Who are the Gentiles? The Gentiles are known in Scripture as the nations/the peoples – the Goyim.

The Times of the Gentiles – Who is in control? GOD!!! BUT, it sounds as if the Gentiles are the domineering group! BUT GOD has made unconditional covenants with the Jewish people! The Jewish people are known as God’s covenant people whom God called to accomplish His purposes in the world. God made five covenants with the Jewish people:

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4 unconditional covenants: Abrahamic Covenant; Land Covenant; Davidic Covenant; New Covenant.

1 conditional covenant: the Mosaic Covenant.

The times of the Gentiles began in 586 BC with the Babylonian conquest of Jerusalem. We have the answer in Daniel 2 and in Daniel 7.... In 586 BC King Nebuchadnezzar’s armies broke through Jerusalem’s wall, destroyed the Temple and the city’s palaces, and took the tribes of the Kingdom of Judah captive.

Get this...Nebuchadnezzar took the Jewish people from the Kingdom of Judah captive when there was no Davidic King on King David’s throne in Jerusalem!

Matt. 1:11-16 - Josiah begot Jeconiah and his brothers about the time they were carried away to Babylon. 12 And after they were brought to Babylon, Jeconiah begot Shealtiel, and Shealtiel begot Zerubbabel. 13 Zerubbabel begot Abiud, Abiud begot Eliakim, and Eliakim begot Azor. 14 Azor begot Zadok, Zadok begot Achim, and Achim begot Eliud. 15 Eliud begot Eleazar, Eleazar begot Matthan, and Matthan begot Jacob. 16 And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ.

The "times of the Gentiles" began when the Davidic throne was vacated (586 BC) and continues to be vacated until a Davidic heir, One from David's line, will occupy the Davidic throne on earth. Who might that be? Jesus, the Son of David!

Professor and Author J. Dwight Pentecost wrote of "The Times of the Gentiles" . . . *the city (Jerusalem) was left without a temple and without a throne. Thus Nebuchadnezzar's invasions marked the beginning of a very significant prophetic time period which Jesus later referred to as 'the times of the Gentiles' (Luke 21:24). The times of the Gentiles is that extended period of discipline on God's covenant people during which time no Davidic descendant sat on David's throne ruling over David's kingdom. It extended from the destruction of Jerusalem and the emptying of the throne of David by Nebuchadnezzar until the ultimate repentance (Zech. 12:10 - And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.)*

The Bible indicates that this ultimate repentance of Israel will not take place until the second coming of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, to this earth.

And, we are told by the Jewish Prophet Hosea,

Hosea 3:4-5 - ... *the children of Israel shall abide many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar; without ephod or teraphim.* ⁵ Afterward (not given the timeframe) *the children of Israel shall return and seek the Lord their God and David their king. They shall fear the Lord and His goodness in the latter days* ("latter days" speak of the future – eschatologically – according to end times).

While the Jewish people lived under King's Nebuchadnezzar's rule in Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar had a dream. Nebuchadnezzar There were MANY who asked the king, "Tell us your dream and we will give you the interpretation! Nebuchadnezzar replied - ...*tell me the dream, and I shall know that you can give me its interpretation* (Dan. 2:9ff) No one could come forward with what Nebuchadnezzar dreamt.

Dan. 2:13 - So the decree went out, and Nebuchadnezzar's people began killing the wise men; and they also searched for Daniel and his companions (Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah), to kill them.

Dan. 2:16-19 - So Daniel went in and asked the king to give him time, that he might tell the king the interpretation. ¹⁷ Then Daniel went to his house, and made the decision known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, ¹⁸ that they might seek mercies from the God of heaven concerning this secret, so that Daniel and his companions might not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. ¹⁹ Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. So Daniel blessed the God of heaven....

Dan. 2:26-35 - Daniel went into the king and the king asked Daniel, 'Are you able to make known to me the dream which I have seen, and its interpretation?... ²⁸ But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the

latter days. ...³¹ You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendor was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome. ³² This image's head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, ³³ its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. ³⁴ You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. ³⁵ Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain (kingdom) and filled the whole earth.

The image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream describes the beginning and ending of the Times of the Gentiles for Israel and the Jewish people!

<u>Image</u>	<u>Empire</u>
Head of gold	Babylon – Dan. 2:36-38
Chest and arms of silver	Medo-Persian (Medo - ancient Persia; Persia) – Dan. 2:39
Belly and thighs of bronze	Greece – Dan. 2:39
Legs of iron	Rome – Dan. 2:40
Feet of iron and clay	Final nation – fragile (clay) - struck by the stone – Dan. 2:41-43
Kingdom of God	Dan. 2:44-45

Through this vision revealed to Nebuchadnezzar which displayed the course of history during these significant times of the Gentiles.

In Dan. 2:34 we read Daniel telling Nebuchadnezzar that he *watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. ³⁵ Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain (kingdom) and filled the whole earth.* The Kingdom of God which Jesus established at His physical Second Coming!

And so, it was revealed that the Messiah, the rock/stone in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, will destroy the nations that subordinated Israel to their authority during the times of the Gentiles. And the rock, the Messiah, will establish a kingdom that will fill the whole earth. Israel must be redeemed from Gentile bondage in order to become the theocracy through which God will ultimately demonstrate His right to rule.