

# God's Heart For All Nations



## How God Sees the Nations (from Genesis to Revelation)

NOTES COMPILED BY CHRIS RAGG

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## **GOD'S HEART FOR ALL NATIONS**

### **I. INTRODUCTION: A HIGHER PERSPECTIVE - THE NATIONS CALLED TO WORSHIP**

TEXT: ACTS 17:26-27

- A. INTRODUCTION – GOD'S HEART AND PERSPECTIVE
- B. ALL PEOPLES ARE CALLED TO WORSHIP
- C. EVERY NATION, TRIBE AND TONGUE AROUND THE THRONE
- D. GOD'S HEART FOR THE NATIONS

*STUDY QUESTIONS*

*PRAYER:*

### **THE NATIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT**

#### **II. THE NATIONS COME INTO BEING**

- A. GOD MADE EVERY NATION AND DETERMINED THEIR PLACE
- B. MAN FELL AND WORSHIPPED THE CREATURE RATHER THAN CREATOR.
- C. GOD CAN BE KNOWN OF ALL MEN
- D. THE NATIONS BEGIN
- E. GOD SCATTERS THE NATIONS AND CONFUSES THEIR LANGUAGE (TOWER OF BABEL)
- F. GOD PLANS MAN'S REDEMPTION

*STUDY QUESTIONS*

*PRAYER*

#### **III. FROM ONE MAN A NATION**

- A. GOD CALLS ABRAHAM OUT OF UR IN BABYLON WITH A PROMISED BLESSING FOR ALL NATIONS.
- B. ISAAC AND JACOB – COVENANT REMINDER CONTAINED BLESSING FOR ALL NATIONS.
- C. JACOB'S BLESSING TO HIS SONS INCLUDED A BLESSING VIA THE MESSIAH "THE OBEDIENCE OF THE NATIONS IS HIS"

*STUDY QUESTIONS*

*PRAYER*

#### **IV. THE NATION OF ISRAEL**

- A. ISRAEL CALLED OUT OF EGYPT TO BE GOD'S OWN POSSESSION AMONG ALL PEOPLES AS A HOLY NATION
- B. ISRAEL CHOSEN BY GRACE
- C. ISRAEL CALLED TO DECLARE THE UNIQUENESS AND UNIVERSALITY OF GOD
- D. ISRAEL CALLED TO BE DISTINCTIVE IN BELIEF AND DEEDS.
- E. ISRAEL WARNED ABOUT THE NATIONS
- F. NATIONS UNDER SATANIC RULE
- G. ISRAEL FALLS UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THE FOREIGN GODS OF THE NATIONS

*STUDY QUESTIONS*

*PRAYER*

#### **V. GOD WELCOMES THE STRANGER INTO THE COVENANT**

- A. GOD'S PURPOSE WAS THAT "ALL THE EARTH BE FILLED WITH HIS GLORY"
- B. THE PEOPLE OF THE NATIONS (THE GENTILES) HAD A PLACE IN ISRAEL
  - 1. *Joseph's offspring*
  - 2. *Moses' offspring*
  - 3. *The Exodus included a mixed multitude*
  - 4. *Gentile aliens can share the Passover*
  - 5. *Gentiles can bring sacrifices to altar*
  - 6. *Gentiles take part in the Feasts*
  - 7. *Gentiles were to be treated justly*
- C. GENTILES WHO THROUGH FAITH IDENTIFY THEMSELVES WITH THE PEOPLE OF GOD
  - 1. *Caleb*
  - The genealogy of Christ the Messiah*
  - 2. *Tamar*
  - 3. *Rahab*
  - 4. *Ruth*
  - 5. *Bathsheba*
- D. THE TEMPLE WAS OPEN TO THE PEOPLES OF THE NATIONS

1. *King Solomon's temple is open to the foreigner.*
2. *Visit of the Queen of Sheba*
3. *Visit of people from all nations*
4. *Temple – house of prayer for all nations*

STUDY QUESTIONS

PRAYER

## VI. GOD'S PEOPLE AMONG THE NATIONS 1

- A. 'COME AND SEE' OR 'GO AND TELL?': OLD TESTAMENT MISSIONARY WITNESS
- B. JOSEPH IN EGYPT
  1. *A man in a foreign land by the providence of God*
  2. *A witness to the Gentiles*
  3. *A man of the Spirit*
  4. *A blessing to the nations*
- C. MOSES IN EGYPT
  1. *Identifies with God and His people*
  2. *Speaks the word of the Lord to the Ruler*
  3. *Demonstrates the works of the Lord to the Ruler and the 'gods'*
- D. ELIJAH AND ELISHA (GOD'S CONCERN FOR THE GENTILES)
  1. *Elijah and the widow of Zarephatah in Phoenicia*
  2. *The witness of a young servant girl (Elisha and Naaman the Syrian Army Commander)*
  3. *The interpretation of Jesus*
- E. JONAH – GOD'S HEART FOR NINEVEH
  1. *Reluctant missionary*
  2. *God's judgment on the nations*
  3. *The nature of God – God's mercy over man's selfishness*
- F. OTHER PROPHETS SPEAK TO NATIONS,  
STUDY QUESTIONS  
PRAYER

## VII. GOD'S PEOPLE AMONG THE NATIONS 2 – THE EXILE

- A. THE EXILE: ISRAEL DISPERSED AMONG THE NATIONS.
- B. DANIEL AND FRIENDS – FAITHFUL WITNESS
  1. *Faithful witness*
  2. *Nebuchadnezzar reveres the Lord*
  3. *Daniel speaks to Belshazzar*
  4. *Daniel with Darius, the King of the Persian Empire.*
  5. *Cyrus, the Lord's anointed*
  6. *Vision of the Son of Man*
- C. ESTHER – PLACED TO SAVE A NATION
- D. THE EXILE AND INTER-TESTAMENTAL PERIOD
  1. *The diaspora*
  2. *The establishment of synagogues*
  3. *Proselytes and God-fearers*
  4. *Translation of Septuagint (Greek translation of Old Testament)*
 STUDY QUESTIONS  
PRAYER

## VIII. THE LORD REIGNS – THE PSALMS AND THE PROPHETS

- A. THE PSALMS
  1. *The sovereignty of God - exalted in nations*
  2. *All nations to worship*
  3. *Role of Israel (saints) to speak of God to the nations*
- B. ISAIAH
  1. *Israel – The Servant*
  2. *The Servant Messiah is a light to the nations*
  3. *All the ends of the earth see salvation*
  4. *God's Servant will bring justice to the nations*
  5. *The nations shall come to the Root of Jesse*
  6. *Israel is a witness*
  7. *God calls all the ends of the earth to salvation*
- C. OTHER PROPHETS:
  1. *Jeremiah – all nations gathered to the Lord's throne*
  2. *Joel – God's Spirit poured out on all flesh*
  3. *Amos – Gentiles called by God's name*

4. *Micah – the nations will go up to the mountain of the Lord*
  5. *Habakkuk – all the earth filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord.*
  6. *Haggai – all nations shaken to come to the Desire of All Nations*
  7. *Zechariah – nations joined to the Lord*
  8. *Malachi – God’s name to be great among the nations*
- D. IN CONCLUSION  
STUDY QUESTIONS  
PRAYER

## THE NATIONS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

### IX. THE COMING OF MESSIAH TO ISRAEL

- A. THE MESSIAH COMES
- B. AT HIS BIRTH
  1. *Visit of Jew and Gentile*
  2. *Prophecy of Simeon*
- C. THE MINISTRY BEGINS
  1. *The role of John the Baptist*
  2. *The cleansing of the Temple*
- D. HIS MINISTRY IS TO ISRAEL
  1. *Jesus is sent only to lost sheep of Israel*
  2. *Jesus sent His disciples only to lost sheep of Israel*
  3. *Salvation to the Jew first*
  4. *Jesus speaks of sheep of another fold*
  5. *The title ‘Son of Man’*
  6. *The Jewish nation rejects His message*
  7. *In Nazareth Jesus spoke of God blessing Gentiles*
  8. *Jesus taught in the Kingdom of God Jews would be thrown out, and others inside*
  9. *The Kingdom will be taken and given to another nation*

STUDY QUESTIONS  
PRAYER

### X. THE MESSIAH’S MINISTRY WAS TO THE WORLD

- A. BRINGING BOTH JEW AND GENTILE TOGETHER
- B. A MINISTRY TO THE WORLD
  1. *God so loved the world*
  2. *Light to every man*
  3. *Saviour of the world*
  4. *Gives life to the world*
  5. *Light of the world*
  6. *Come to save the world*
  7. *That the world might believe*
- C. CHRIST MINISTERS TO NON-JEWS
  1. *In Jesus ministry: Devotion to non-Jews.*

STUDY QUESTIONS  
PRAYER

### XI. THE MESSIAH’S DEATH BRINGS SALVATION TO THE WORLD

- A. DRAWING ALL PEOPLES TO HIMSELF
- B. GREEKS WANTING TO SEE HIM REVEAL HIS HOUR HAS COME
- C. HIS DEATH BROUGHT JEWS AND GENTILES TOGETHER
- D. HIS DEATH WAS FOR BOTH JEW AND GENTILE
- E. HIS DEATH WAS A PROPITIATION FOR THE WHOLE WORLD
- F. PEOPLE WHO RECEIVE THE GOSPEL PASS IT ON
  1. *The gospel will be preached in all the world as a witness to all nations*
  2. *Sermon on the Mount - salt of the earth, light of the world*
  3. *Parable of wheat and tares – the field is the world*

STUDY QUESTIONS  
PRAYER

### XII. THE COMMISSIONS OF THE MESSIAH

- A. JESUS COMMISSIONS HIS CHURCH
  1. *The evangelistic commission of Mark 16*
  2. *The Church planting commission of Matthew 28*

3. *The teaching commission of Luke 24*
4. *The sending commission of John 20*
5. *The global commission of Acts 1*
6. *In conclusion*

STUDY QUESTIONS

PRAYER

### **XIII. THE BOOK OF ACTS: THE GOSPEL GOES FORTH TO THE NATIONS**

- A. WITNESSES UNTO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH
  - B. PENTECOST (FOR THE NATIONS)
    1. *God's wonders spoken in languages of the nations*
    2. *People of the Nations were the first-fruits*
    3. *All these people belonged to the House of Israel*
  - C. THE GOSPEL GOES FROM JUDEA TO SAMARIA
    1. *Dispute between people groups, Hellenists and Hebrews*
    2. *Church scattered to preach*
    3. *The Ministry of Philip*
  - D. AN ETHIOPIAN RECEIVES THE GOSPEL
  - E. PAUL'S CONVERSION BRINGS A CALL TO THE GENTILES
  - F. THE GENTILES RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT
    1. *The angel visits Cornelius a non-Jew*
    2. *Peter's vision*
    3. *Peter visits the home of Cornelius*
    4. *No partiality with God*
    5. *Confirmed by the Holy Spirit*
  - G. THE CHURCH'S JEWISH LEADERSHIP HAS DIFFICULTY ACCEPTING THE GENTILES INTO THE FAITH
- STUDY QUESTIONS
- PRAYER

### **XIV. THE BOOK OF ACTS: MISSIONARY TEAMS GO OUT I**

- A. THE ANTIOCH CHURCH SENDS OUT A MISSION TEAM
  - B. THE GOSPEL GOES TO THE GENTILE NATIONS  
PAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY (ACTS 13-14)
    1. *Destinations*
    2. *Starting in synagogues*
    3. *From the Jew first then to the Gentiles*
  - C. JERUSALEM COUNCIL DISCUSSES THE PLACE OF THE GENTILES IN THE FAITH
    1. *Report - the door of faith for the gentiles*
    2. *Some demand circumcision for Gentiles*
    3. *The Jerusalem council accepts Gentiles as they are*
    4. *The message accompanied by signs and wonders*
    5. *Encounter with idolatry*
- STUDY QUESTIONS
- PRAYER

### **XV. THE BOOK OF ACTS: MISSIONARY TEAMS GO OUT II**

- A. A CHANGE OF PLAN - THE GOSPEL GOES TO EUROPE  
PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY (ACTS 15:39-18:22)
    1. *Destinations*
    2. *Modalities and sodalities/Apostolic mission bands and the church*
    3. *The Macedonian call*
    4. *To Philippi*
    5. *To Thessalonica and Berea*
  - B. ATHENS AND EPHESUS - TWO DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO EVANGELISM
    1. *Athens - a people and city of opinions*
    2. *Corinth - a people a return to demonstration of the gospel*
- PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY (ACTS 18:23-21:16)
3. *Ephesus - a people and city of the occult*
- C. PAUL'S ARREST AND VISIT TO ROME
- STUDY QUESTIONS
- PRAYER

### **XVI. THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS: THE GENTILES AND THE JEWS.**

- A. SALVATION IS FOR ALL

1. *Salvation is to the Jew first and then the Greeks*
  2. *All mankind have had the chance to know God*
  3. *All – Jew and Gentile - are under sin and all who come by faith will be accepted*
- B. THE PLACE OF ISRAEL AND THE GENTILES
1. *The Gentiles accepted*
  2. *Israel blinded and in stupor*
  3. *A remnant remains*
  4. *The Jews – natural to the olive tree*
  5. *Gentiles grafted in while others broken off*
- C. THE CHURCH AND THE JEWS
1. *Provoking to jealousy*
  2. *Rejection of the Jews by the Church*
  3. *Anti-Semitism is of the devil*
  4. *Opposing the Jewish people*
  5. *Replacement Theology*
- D. LIFE FROM THE DEAD
1. *The fullness of the Gentiles*
  2. *Life from the dead- All Israel will be saved*
- STUDY QUESTIONS*  
*PRAYER*

**XVII. THE OTHER EPISTLES: THE TWO BECOME ONE**

- A. EPHESIANS AND COLOSSIANS - THE TWO RECONCILED BECOME ONE
- B. GALATIANS - ALL ONE IN CHRIST JESUS
- C. 1 PETER - THE HOLY NATION NOW CONSISTS OF JEW AND GENTILE
- D. REACHING BOTH JEW AND GENTILE
1. *Determination to Reach the Gentiles*
  2. *How can people hear the gospel?*
  3. *Different responses of the Jews and the Greeks (Corinthians)*
  4. *Different approaches to the Jews and Greeks*
- E. EPISTLES OF JOHN - THE WORLD
- STUDY QUESTIONS*  
*PRAYER*

**XVIII. THE BOOK OF REVELATION: THE DESTINY OF NATIONS**

- A. THE CHALLENGE OF INTERPRETATION
- B. JESUS IS RETURNING TO EARTH
- C. THE LAMB REDEEMS PEOPLE FROM EVERY TRIBE, TONGUE, PEOPLE AND NATION
- D. BEFORE THE THRONE AND THE LAMB ARE PEOPLE OF ALL NATIONS, TRIBES, PEOPLES AND TONGUES
- E. PROPHECY ABOUT THE NATIONS
- F. THE KINGDOMS OF THE WORLD BECOME THE KINGDOMS OF OUR LORD AND CHRIST
- G. THE RULER OF THE NATIONS IS OPPOSED BY THE DECEIVER OF THE NATIONS
- H. THE NATIONS WILL COME AND WORSHIP BEFORE GOD
- I. THE LORD HIMSELF WILL GO FORTH
- J. THE FINAL BATTLE
- K. THE MARRIAGE FEAST
- L. THE HONOUR OF THE NATIONS BROUGHT INTO THE NEW JERUSALEM
- STUDY QUESTIONS*  
*PRAYER*

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**GOD'S HEART FOR ALL NATIONS**  
**HOW GOD SEES THE NATIONS (FROM GENESIS TO REVELATION)**

## **I. Introduction: A Higher Perspective - The Nations Called To Worship**

THEME: God who cares for the individual also cares for peoples and nations.

**Text: Acts 17:26-27**

*<sup>26</sup>And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings,<sup>27</sup> so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us.*

### ***A. Introduction – God's heart and perspective***

Our view of life centres on where we come from or where we are at a particular time. Our prayers therefore focus on *our* family, *our* church, *our* locality (our parish) and sometimes even extend to *our* region or nation. *"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."* (Matthew 6:21). It is, however, a limited and partial perception on life. Fortunately God's perspective, however, is not so limited.

In Western societies emphasis is put on the individual rather than the whole. There is much talk of individual rights. It is part of the Western church too - Western missionaries and evangelists bring the gospel message to the individual rarely perceiving that some cultures make decisions communally. While it is true that God so cares for the individual that *"the very hairs of your head are all numbered,"* (Matthew 10:30) His heart and His perspective is much greater. He is also concerned for families, cultures, tribes and nations – those both near and far from us.

If we hear His voice (*He who has ears to hear, let him hear!*) we will learn that He requires of us the same perspective and heart. To the one who enquires *'is it now time for you to restore the Kingdom to (our) Israel'* - i.e. bless my family, my church, my place (Acts 1:6) – He replies that He is going to extend our vision beyond our four walls and immediate boundaries: *"you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."* (Acts 1:8).

He cries out ‘catch My Heart and catch My perspective. It is much bigger than yours.’

To be a true servant of the Lord we **must** have His heart and His perspective. This course will enlarge your outlook on the world and help you to obtain God’s heart and vision. It surveys the Bible from Genesis to Revelation to see how God views the nations. My prayer is that as you too search the scriptures with me that your eyes will be opened to the world as God sees it, and you will gain His heart for **all** nations; and from there fulfil his commandment to ‘go and make disciples of all nations...’

### ***B. All peoples are called to worship***

Every person and every nation was created to worship God - the whole earth. He is above all and worthy of worship. He reigns over all nations and all nations will praise Him.

### ***C. Every nation, tribe and tongue around the throne***

The Book of Revelation outlines a time when this will truly come to pass. Here outlined is the future when people of “*all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues*” will be before the throne in worship.

#### **Malachi 1:11**

*“For from the rising of the sun, even to its going down, My name shall be great among the Gentiles; In every place incense shall be offered to My name, And a pure offering; For My name shall be great among the nations,” Says the LORD of hosts.*

#### **Psalm 47:8**

*God reigns over the nations;  
God sits on His holy throne.*

#### **Psalm 96:3**

*Declare His glory among the nations,  
His wonders among all peoples.*

#### **Psalm 99:2**

*The LORD is great in Zion,  
And He is high above all the peoples.*

#### **Psalm 97:1**

*The LORD reigns;  
Let the earth rejoice;  
Let the multitude of isles be glad!*

#### **Psalm 67:3-4**

*<sup>3</sup>Let the peoples praise You, O God;  
Let all the peoples praise You.  
<sup>4</sup>Oh, let the nations be glad and sing for joy!  
For You shall judge the people righteously,  
And govern the nations on earth.*

#### **Psalm 46:10**

*Be still, and know that I am God;  
I will be exalted among the nations,  
I will be exalted in the earth!*

#### **Revelation 7:9-10**

*9 After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, 10 And they cried out in a loud voice: “Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.”*

#### ***D. God's heart for the nations***

The heart of God has always contained the desire that those He created, the peoples of the nations, would come before His throne in worship. That is why he sent His Son into the world.

It is also why Jesus sent his disciples into the world.

God is concerned for His world.

*"We must be global Christians with a global vision because our God is a global God."*  
John Stott

#### **John 3:16**

*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

#### **Matthew 28:18-20**

<sup>18</sup>*And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup>Go therefore and make disciples of all the 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 things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.*

**STUDY QUESTIONS:**

*Section One:*

a) Looking at your own life and ministry, how much of it is concerned with your own personal and local issues?

b) In the light of the teaching above what do you need to change about your life and ministry?

**PRAYER:**

That you might have a greater perspective of the world God loves and catch His heart.