

THE 
KING
IS COMING

Survey of Judah Alone, Captivity, Return, and Years of Silence

LESSON 24: THE FULLNESS OF TIME . . . *PREVIEW*

MEMORY. Memorize Gal 4:4.

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READING. Read Eph 1-3. (Focus particularly on the eternal plan of God and what Christ accomplished in the fullness of time.) After doing your reading, in the space below write down something that you found to be interesting or important. It can be something that you have never noticed before or something that you want to remember and apply.

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DISCUSSION.

1. *Plan.* When did God formulate his plan (or purpose) for humanity? (Eph 1:4-5, 10-11; cf. 3:11; 1 Pet 1:20; Acts 4:24-30)
Why should the timing of the purpose of God be important to Christians?

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2. *Fulfillment.* When he began his earthly ministry, what did Jesus say about “the time” and “the kingdom of God,” and how were his hearers to respond to his message? (Mark 1:14-15) What did Jesus come to do in the fullness of the time(s)? (Gal 4:4-5; Eph 1:7-10; cf. 1 Tim 2:3-6; Titus 1:1-3)

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DISCUSSION.

3. *Providence.* Though God has not revealed the specific reasons for the timing of his plan, several “convenient” (or providential) events occur just before the arrival of Christ. Explain how each of these items contributed to the arrival and furthering of the gospel: **worldwide conquest of Rome | Roman patrols and highways | common language (Greek) ...**

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DISCUSSION.

3. *Providence.* Though God has not revealed the specific reasons for the timing of his plan, several “convenient” (or providential) events occur just before the arrival of Christ. Explain how each of these items contributed to the arrival and furthering of the gospel: **dismantling of old polytheism by Greco-Roman philosophy | empire-wide presence of Judaism ...**

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DISCUSSION.

3. *Providence.* Though God has not revealed the specific reasons for the timing of his plan, several “convenient” (or providential) events occur just before the arrival of Christ. Explain how each of these items contributed to the arrival and furthering of the gospel: **Jewish expectation of a coming Messiah.**

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DISCUSSION.

4. *Christ.* What did God carry out in Christ ? (Eph 3:11) Why was Jesus uniquely capable of carrying it out? (The answer[s] to this question is not directly available in Eph 3:11. This is a discussion question to explore ideas about who Jesus is and what he has done.)

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CONNECTION. In addition to the phrase “the fullness of time(s),” the NT uses several other like expressions: “the consummation of the ages” (Heb 9:26), “the ends of the ages” (1 Cor 10:11), “these last times” (lit. “the last of the times,” 1 Pet 1:20), (again) “these last days” (lit. “the last of these days,” Heb 1:2), and “the end of the age” (Matt 13:39, 40, 49; 24:3; 28:20). In what way is the Christian (or Messianic) age the end of the ages?

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APPLICATION. God is sovereign. He knew ahead of time when would be the right time to send Christ into this world. His unchangeable purpose was not accidental or reactionary. Jesus came at just the right time. . . .

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... Though Scripture unveils this eternal plan to us, we rarely, if ever, see how God is providentially working in our own personal lives, but he is. We know that he is because he has demonstrated his sovereignty, goodness, and trustworthiness. Be faithful to God. At just the right time, Jesus will come again and receive us to himself.