

Eternity to Eternity

A Literal Approach to Biblical History and Prophecy

by John R. Ecob D.D.

for The Herald of Hope Inc.

5th Edition, March 2017



*“It is high time for Christians to interpret unfulfilled prophecy
by the light of prophecies already fulfilled.*

*The curses on the Jews were brought to pass literally:
so also will be the blessings.*

The scattering was literal: so also will be the gathering.

The pulling down of Zion was literal: so also will be the building up.

The rejection of Israel was literal: so also will be the restoration.

J.C. Ryle - Prophecy, Page 65.

(Written in 1867 BEFORE the Zionist movement began in 1881)

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by

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Note: This book has been produced to assist believers in their study of the Word of God and as a tool for evangelism.
Every effort has been made to maintain the highest standards of accuracy in producing the charts, however should any reader find some inaccuracy the author would appreciate being advised. **Email:** editor@heraldofhope.org.au
All quotations of Scripture are from the King James Version of the Bible

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Introduction

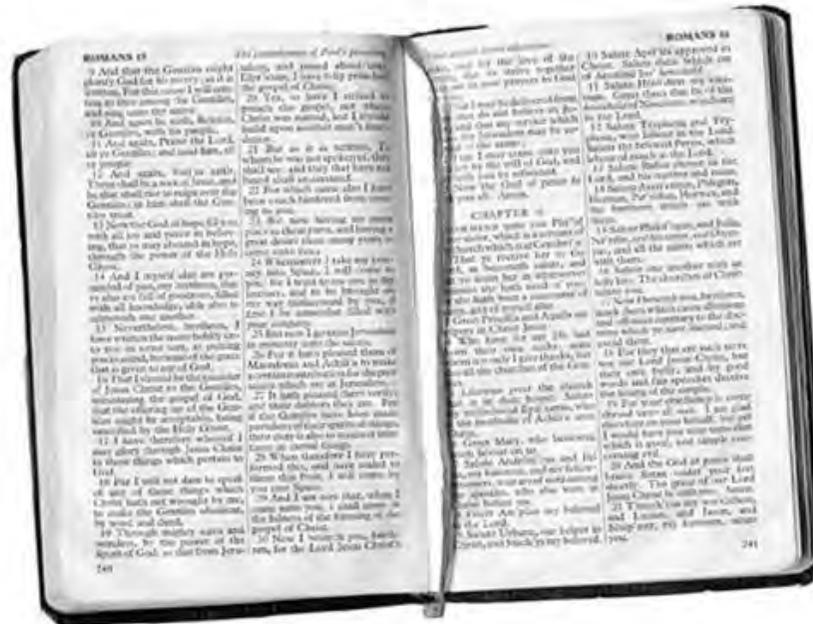
The Bible is the oldest book in the world and stands apart from all other books. Over centuries of time the Bible has withstood the onslaughts of Higher Critics, and Liberal Theologians from within Christendom, and from Atheistic Philosophers and Evolutionists from within the world's scientific fraternity.

Each time the Bible has been accused of being in error, providentially, evidence has come to light supporting and substantiating the literal rendering of the sacred record.

The archeologist's spade and true science have consistently given testimony to the accuracy of this oldest literary work known to man.

It is an amazing fact that a book of such antiquity continues to be printed in vast numbers and in every language. Most other books last but for a generation before fading into literary oblivion; many are read once before being consigned to the archival bookshelf to gather dust, yet the Bible is read daily by multitudes who ponder over its every word.

Millions attend meetings weekly to hear the Bible expounded or participate in regular Bible study groups where its verses are memorized, its precepts are revered, and its commands are obeyed.



False religions have borrowed from the Bible or sought to copy its style for the purpose of gaining a semblance of credibility, while nations have fashioned their laws on the righteous standards enunciated in Scripture.

It was once said, that Evangelist W.P.Nicholson was the most loved and most hated preacher in all Ireland, and it can also be said that the Bible has been the most loved and most hated book in all the world.

Noble men have willingly burned at the stake, been torn by wild beasts, or been cut down by the sword, rather than deny the Truth revealed in the Bible.

The secret of the Bible's unique character lies in its Divine authorship, for though the human agents who penned the sacred text, varied from men of scholarship to those who were judged "unlearned and ignorant men" (Acts 4:13), there is no contradiction within its 66 books; its morality is impeccable, its history reliable, and its prophecy never fails of literal fulfilment.

The Bible is not just the words of men: it is the words of the Living God and the Holy Spirit is its author. *Eternity to Eternity* seeks to trace the hand of God in human history, from eternity past to eternity future, as recorded in the Bible.

Adam to the Exodus

A lecturer in a Theological College told his students that the early chapters of Genesis were not to be taken literally; that the Garden of Eden was only a symbolic eastern story intended to provide us with an explanation of how sin entered the world. A young student responded: "Sir", he said, "If the garden of Eden is not literal; if the tree and the fruit on the tree of knowledge of good and evil is not literal; if the serpent is not literal or the mark in Cain's forehead is not literal; then Adam and Eve were not literal and neither are you and I!"

The Vice Principal threw his head back and laughed but had no answer.

There is no more accurate history than Biblical history because the Bible is Divinely inspired and its author is God Himself. Other histories from the ancient world are the records of men who, early in time, turned away from the true and living God to worship the heavenly bodies.

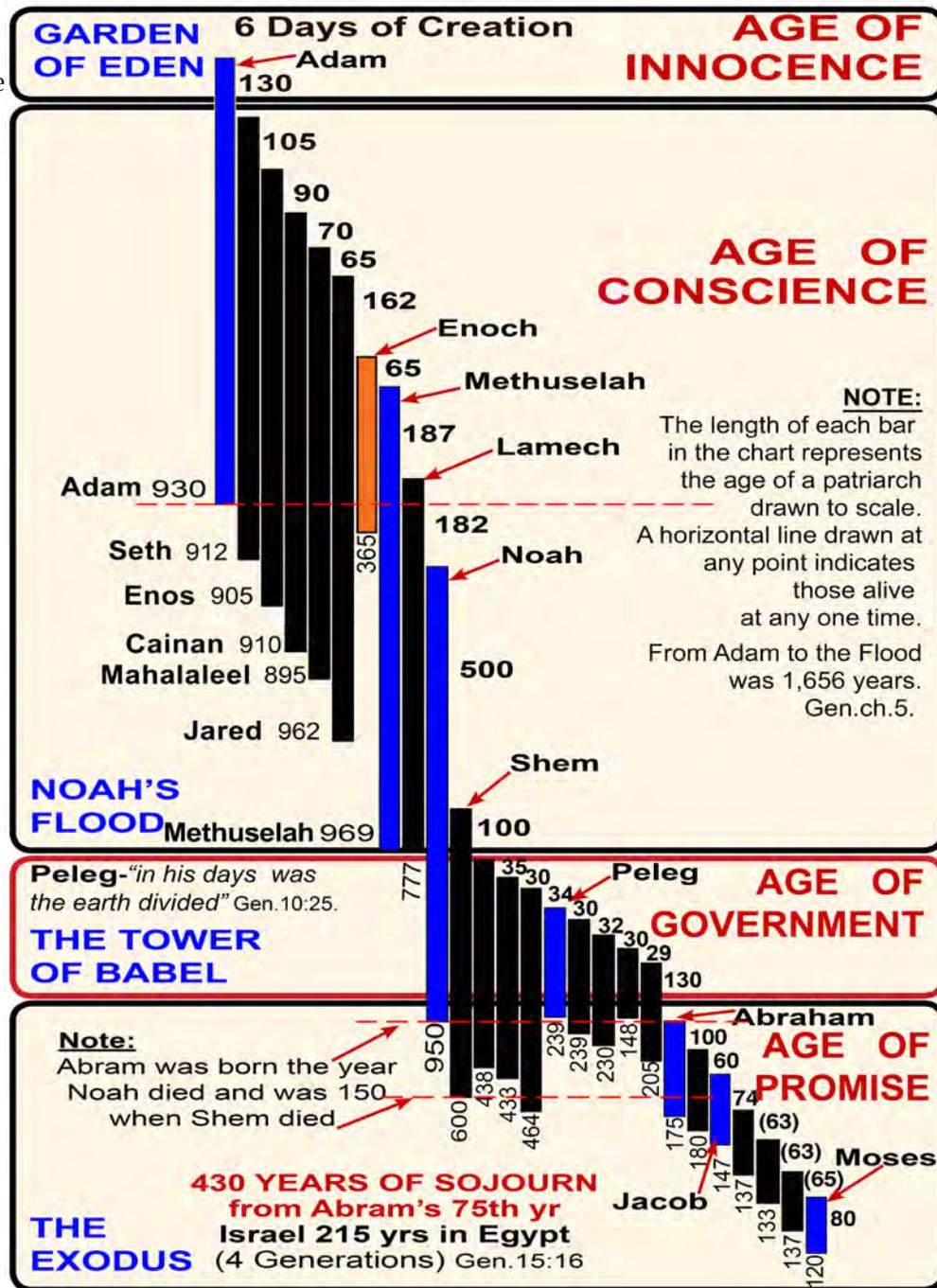
Before the Global Flood in Noah's day, Satan infiltrated the human race to corrupt the human blood-stream. The materialized sons of God (fallen angels) had intercourse with the daughters of men and bred a race of giants. It happened before the Flood and after the Flood. Secular historical records such as the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, the King of Erech, written a few centuries after the Flood, bear ample testimony to this fact. The *Epic* claimed Gilgamesh was two-thirds a

god, one third a man and twice the size of a man. Many documents recovered from the great library of 22,000 documents found in the ancient city of Nineveh, and from Babylon, confirm all the major elements of the Biblical record. Even the 10 generations with great longevity before the Flood are confirmed.

After the Flood, men like Nimrod from the line of Ham, defied the living God and polytheism flourished. The tower of Babel was constructed to provide a place to worship the heavens; the sun, moon and stars. The Jewish Talmud states that Terah, Abram's father, worshipped idols and after Abram turned from worshipping the heavens, he fled to Shem for protection.

Asshur, from the line of Shem, went out of the land of Shinar and built another civilization more than 400 km to the north at Nineveh; probably in protest.

In order to preserve the Truth from the abounding deception, God called Abram out of Ur and gave him the land of Canaan. Without Abram's seed there would be no Saviour to redeem mankind. Israel, as God's chosen people, is therefore central to God's plan for the human race and He assures us that only if "the heavens can be measured" or the sun, moon and stars cease to exist, will "the seed of Israel...cease from being a nation before Me for ever" (Jer.31:35-36).



Longevity before the Flood

John Ecob

The ages of men before the Flood has puzzled some and it has been suggested that their years may have been shorter than our years. Methuselah lived 969 years whereas today the average lifespan in Australia is just over 80 years; one-twelfth of the age of Antediluvians.

If Antediluvians years were shorter and they really only lived the same life span as us then the year would have to be one month long and summer and winter would occur each month.

The earth would need to travel the 584 million miles (940 million km) around the sun 12 times faster.

The earth is travelling around the sun at 67,000 mph and would need to increase to $12 \times 67,000 = 804,000$ mph. After the Flood it would need to slow at a variable rate until longevity reduced to about 80 years. It is much easier to believe the Bible that men lived longer before the Flood.

The great ages of Antediluvians is supported by the fact that after the Flood **longevity reduced on a sliding scale**; first to approximately 450 years and then 239 years reducing down to 120 years at the time of the Exodus suggesting that changes took place at the time of the Flood that shortened human and animal life. These changes may have been environmental, hereditary or both.

There is evidence that before the Flood the earth enjoyed greater protection from Gamma-ray bursts that kill living cells and damage the protective ozone layer. A canopy of water (cloud) existed before the Flood (Gen.1:7) and it would seem that when the Flood came the canopy was removed as the *"windows of heaven were opened"*.

Protection was thus reduced after the Flood accounting for a reduction in lifespan.

Other Ancient Records

The Bible is not the only document that indicates men lived very long lives before the Flood; ancient Chaldean records agree with the Bible that there were **10 generations** from Adam to the Flood and even give the names of each of the kings.

The length of the reign of each Antediluvian King is not however, given in years but in a **unit called Sari** which archeologist thought had a value of 3,600 years and when multiplied by the number of Saris gave a total of 432,000 years from Adam to the Flood!

Later the length of a Sari was found to be only $18\frac{1}{2}$ years. When this value was applied to the ages of each of the ten Kings given in the Chaldean record the total period from Adam to the Flood was only 2,220 years; still higher than the Biblical figure of 1,656 years, but supporting the fact that the Antediluvians lived very long lives.

It is significant that:

- i) both records support the creation of the first man.
- ii) both records agree that the earth was destroyed by a universal Flood.
- iii) both records agree that there were 10 generations from the first man to the Flood.
- iv) both records agree that the Antediluvians lived to a great age.

As one would expect, the entire human race after a universal Flood would be **fully aware of of**

BIBLICAL ANTEDILUVIAN PATRIARCHS	Year of the Birth of the eldest son of each Patriarch according to the			CHALDEAN ANTIDILUVIAN KINGS	SARI		
	Hebrew Pentateuch	Samaritan	Septuagint		Reckoned at 18½ years	Their Reigns in Sari	Reckoned at 3,600 years
Adam	130	130	230	Alorus	185	10	36,000
Seth	105	105	205	Alaparus	55.5	3	10,000
Enos	90	90	190	Almelon	240.5	13	46,800
Cainan	70	70	170	Ammenon	222	12	43,200
Mahalaleel	65	65	165	Amegalarus	333	18	64,800
Jared	162	62	162	Daonus	185	10	36,000
Enoch	65	60	165	Edoranchus	333	18	64,800
Methusalah	187	67	167	Amempsinus	185	10	36,000
Lamech	182	53	188	Otiartes	148	8	28,800
Noah's age at Flood	600	600	600	Xisuthrus	333	18	64,800
Total	1,656	1,302	2,242		2,220	120	432,000

the Flood. Parents would relate the facts to their children for many generations. Shem lived for 500 years after the Flood to give an eye-witness account. Abraham was 150 years old when Shem died and Jacob was 40 years of age when Shem died.

Two other ancient records describe the period of history from the creation of Adam to the Flood; these were **translations** of the Hebrew text and both agree there were 10 generations from Adam to the Flood but they have different ages for some of the Antediluvian patriarchs. Nevertheless they agree on the major items.

The corrupt Samaritan Pentateuch has only 1,302 years from Adam to the Flood and the 278BC Greek translation from the Hebrew text known as the Septuagint, allows 2,242 years from Adam to the Flood. We must remember that both these records are only translations that have suffered corruption and **the original Hebrew is the accurate Divinely inspired record.**

The Book of Job

The Lord gave and He took away;
I know it's true, but hard to say.
Why would God add, and then subtract?
It seems all wrong but still a fact.

Job lost his sons and daughters too;
Their house collapsed as strong winds blew.
His sheep and shepherds burned with fire;
Not one they lit, but from up higher.

The Sabeans took his ox that plowed;
Before his crops were sown or flowered.
The servants brave had all been slain;
Their bodies in the furrows lain.

Then from the north the Chaldeans came
To steal the camels was their aim;
So Job was left with all but naught
Except his friends with whom he wrought.

His wife, deprived of all she had,
Was not content to just be sad.
She turned on Job whose health had fled,
And left him on an ashes bed.

What more could God from Job remove
To test his faith, his true love prove?
But even when his wife accused,
To curse his God he still refused.

God took away from this great man
The things He gave, it was His plan;
To prove to one who could not bear
To see Job blessed for faith so rare.

For even in the midst of strife
Rejected by his friends and wife
This man looked forward to the day
When Christ would come in bright array.

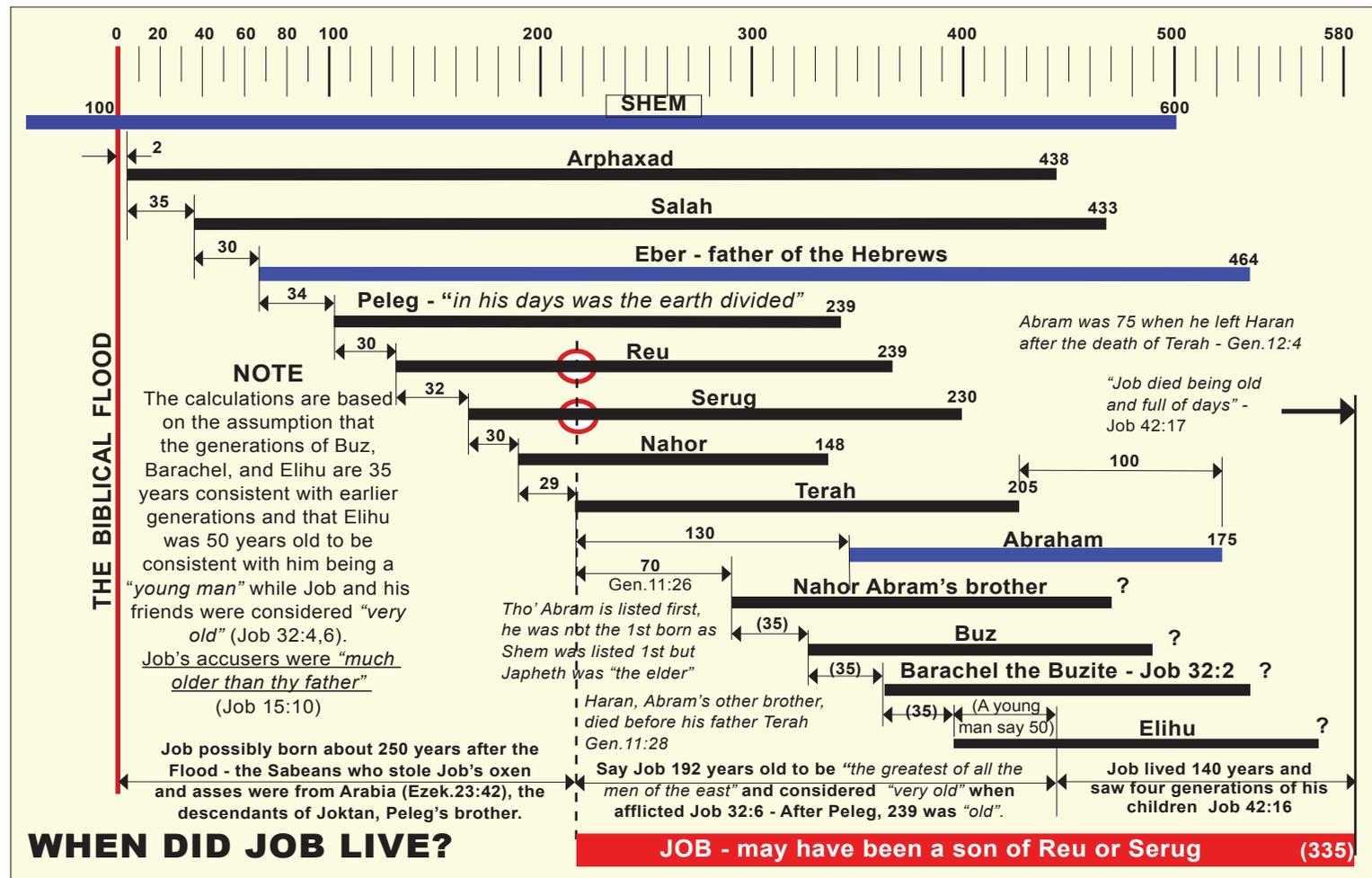
The test God sent will then seem small
When from the grave he's heard God's call.
His flesh restored will then be clean
And in the latter days be seen.

We know that Job survived the test
And in this world again was blessed;
He prayed for those who spoke in spite
And lived in peace with great delight.

I know that my Redeemer lives;
He took away, but now He gives
Far more than I could ever lose;
To change God's plan, I dare not choose.

The Book of Job indicates a conflict between God and Satan who has access to heaven and will continue to do so until the Great Tribulation when Michael will cast him down to earth (Rev.12:9-12). Satan accuses believers before God continually and seeks to render their service ineffective.

Job never attributed his affliction to Satan but saw the accusations of his "friends", the mockery of children who spat in his face, the physical assaults by young men (ch.30:1-12), were all permitted by God. He was confused by his accusers but resolved that "Though He slay me yet will I trust Him" and eventually came forth, purified "as gold." The lesson for us is that trials are permitted by God for our good and His glory (Rom.8:28).



Separation of the Godly Line

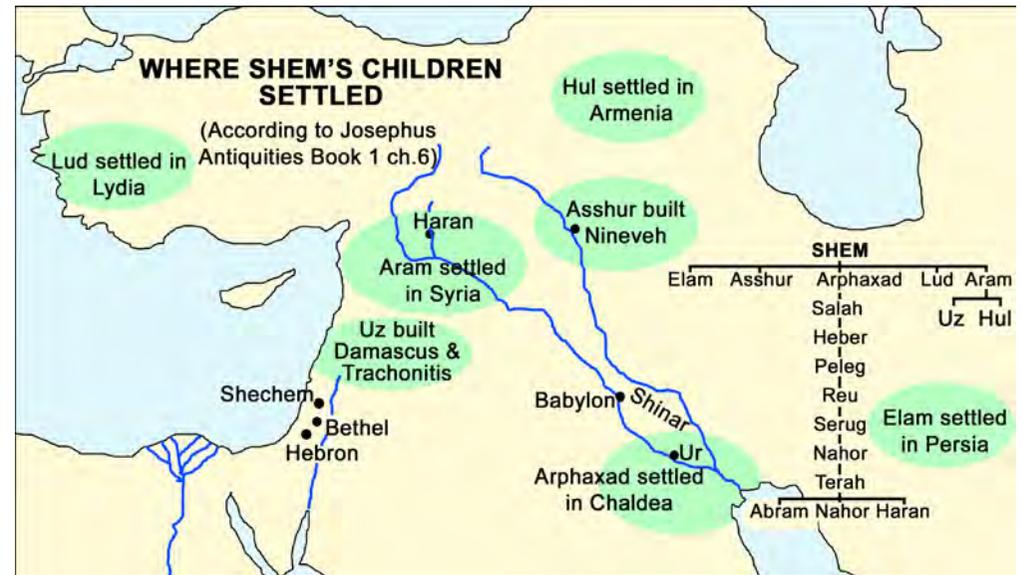
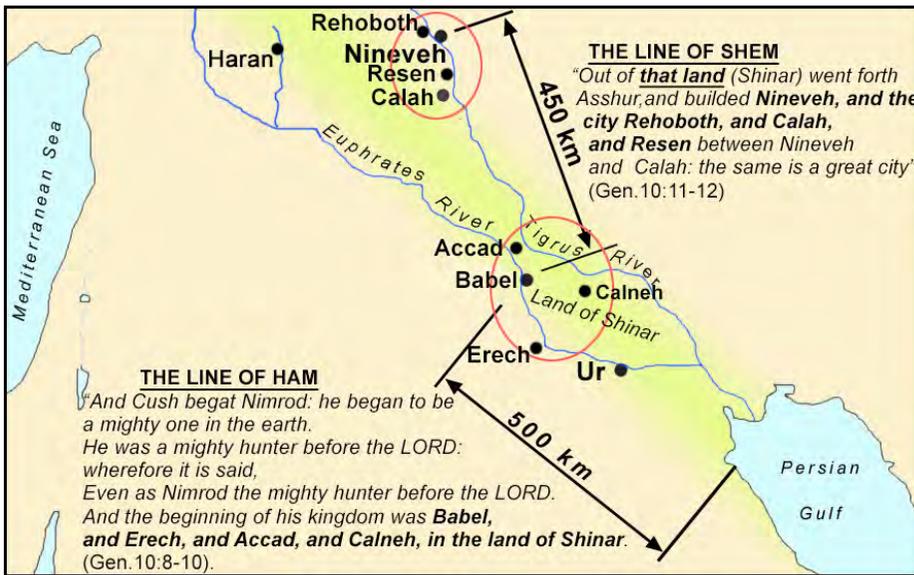
The Tower of Babel built by Nimrod was a **religious building** dedicated to the observation and worship of the heavens: the sun, moon and stars. According to *Barnes' Commentary*, the name Nimrod is of foreign origin and means "we shall rebel". It was probably taken after the confusion of languages.

Nimrod was a mighty hunter "before the Lord". This expression implies that he lived in unashamed, bold, and open rebellion before the Lord. Just as homosexuals "come out" of seclusion to openly, unashamedly, practice their unclean behaviour, so Nimrod did not conceal his rebellion but openly declared he was opposed to the Lord.

Nimrod said, "let us make a name lest we be scattered..." (Gen.11:4). When God saw what Nimrod was doing, He said, "the people is one" and "now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do" (Gen.11:6).

Today 54 per cent of the world's population live in urban areas, a proportion that is expected to increase to 66 per cent by 2050. In 1800 only 3% lived in cities! God scattered them by confusing their language!

While Nimrod was trying to concentrate the entire human race in the Plain of Shinar, Asshur, a son of **Shem**, broke away and went 450 km north to establish a group of cities that surrounded Nineveh. This was a protest against Nimrod



and his rebellious group. The knowledge of God at Nineveh in its early days may account for the city **repenting in the days of Jonah**.

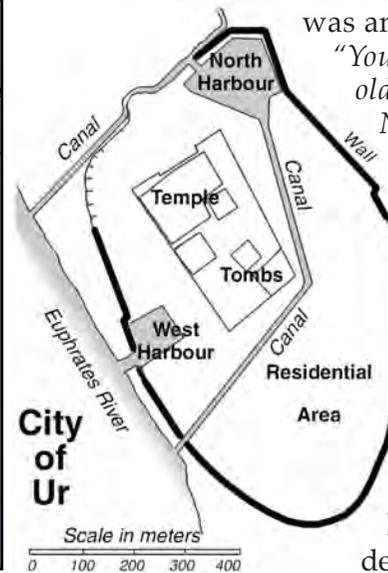
Terah and Abram at Ur

Terah, the father of Abram did not go with Asshur to Nineveh but continued at Ur which was a Chaldean capital city. Excavations at Ur have revealed a city with a large pagan temple and we know that Terah was an idolator. Joshua told Israel:

"Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood (Euphrates) in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods" (Josh.24:2).

Abram must have stood against the idolatry of his father and the Talmud says he fled to Shem for protection. God said to Abram, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation" (Gen.12:1-3).

When Abram finally obeyed God's command he took Terah with him to Haran and remained there until Terah died before proceeding to Canaan. Terah could not bear to stay in Ur after the death of Haran. Abraham was younger than his brothers but exercised the role of the 'firstborn' after the death of Haran; caring for Haran's son, Lot.



An Everlasting Abrahamic Covenant

The promise of the land of Canaan as an everlasting possession to Abram and his seed must be **taken literally**; any attempt to spiritualize the Abrahamic Covenant does gross injustice to the text of Scripture.

i) In Gen.12:2, before Abram was 75 years old, God promised to lead him to a **new land** and to make of him a *“great nation”*.

ii) When 75 years old Abram arrived at Shechem and God again assured him, *“Unto thy seed will I give this land”* (Gen.12:7).

iii) When Abram returned from Egypt to the altar at Bethel God promised that **all the land** he could see north, south, east, and west would be given to him *“and to thy seed FOR EVER”* (Gen.13:15); Abram’s seed would multiply so much they would not be able to be numbered.

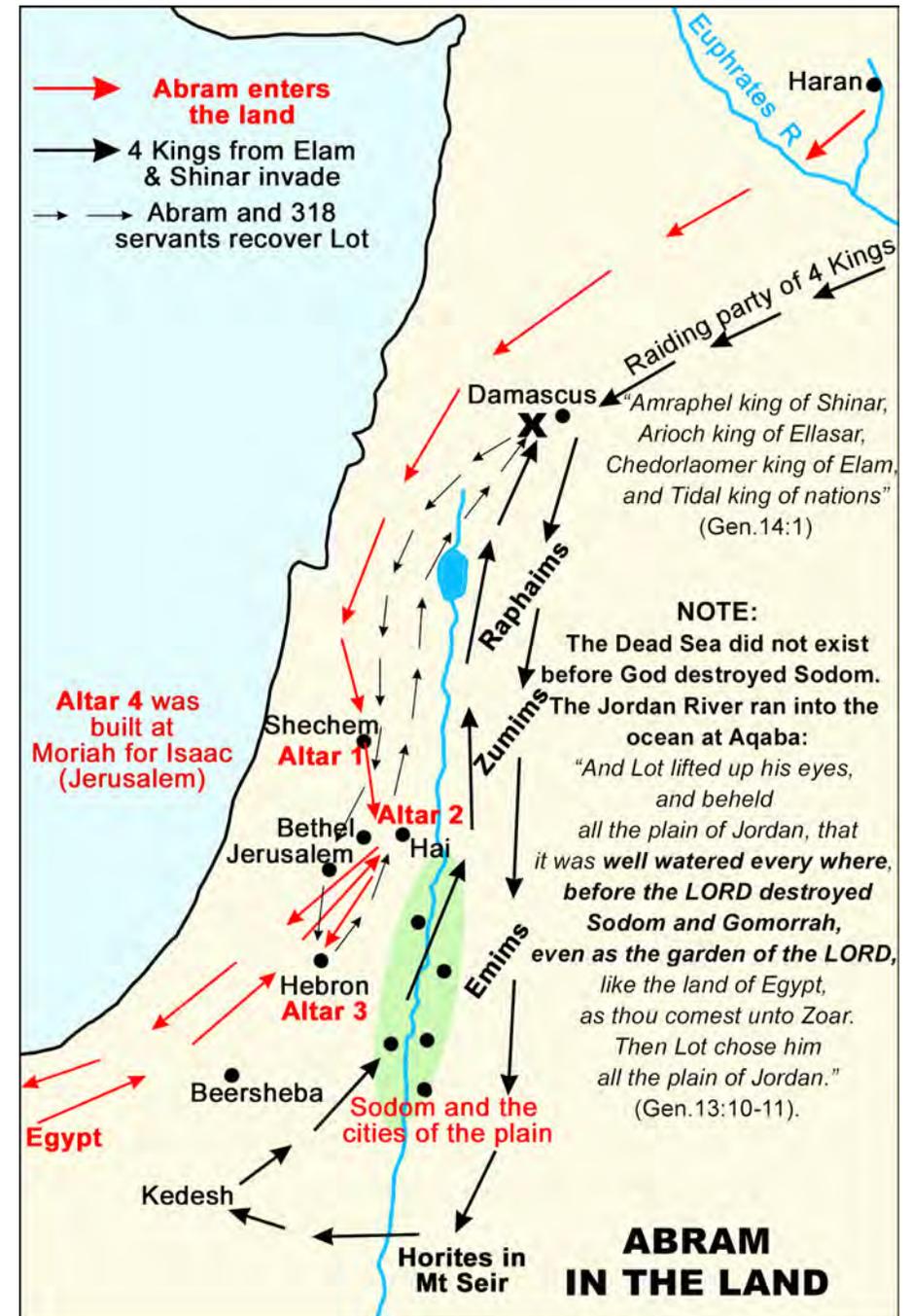
iv) About 10 years later, when Abram was about 85 years old, God reassured him that he would father **an heir to God’s promises** and made a covenant by sacrifice indicating the boundaries of the land would be from **Euphrates to the River of Egypt** saying, *“Unto thy seed will I give this land.”* (Gen.15:18).

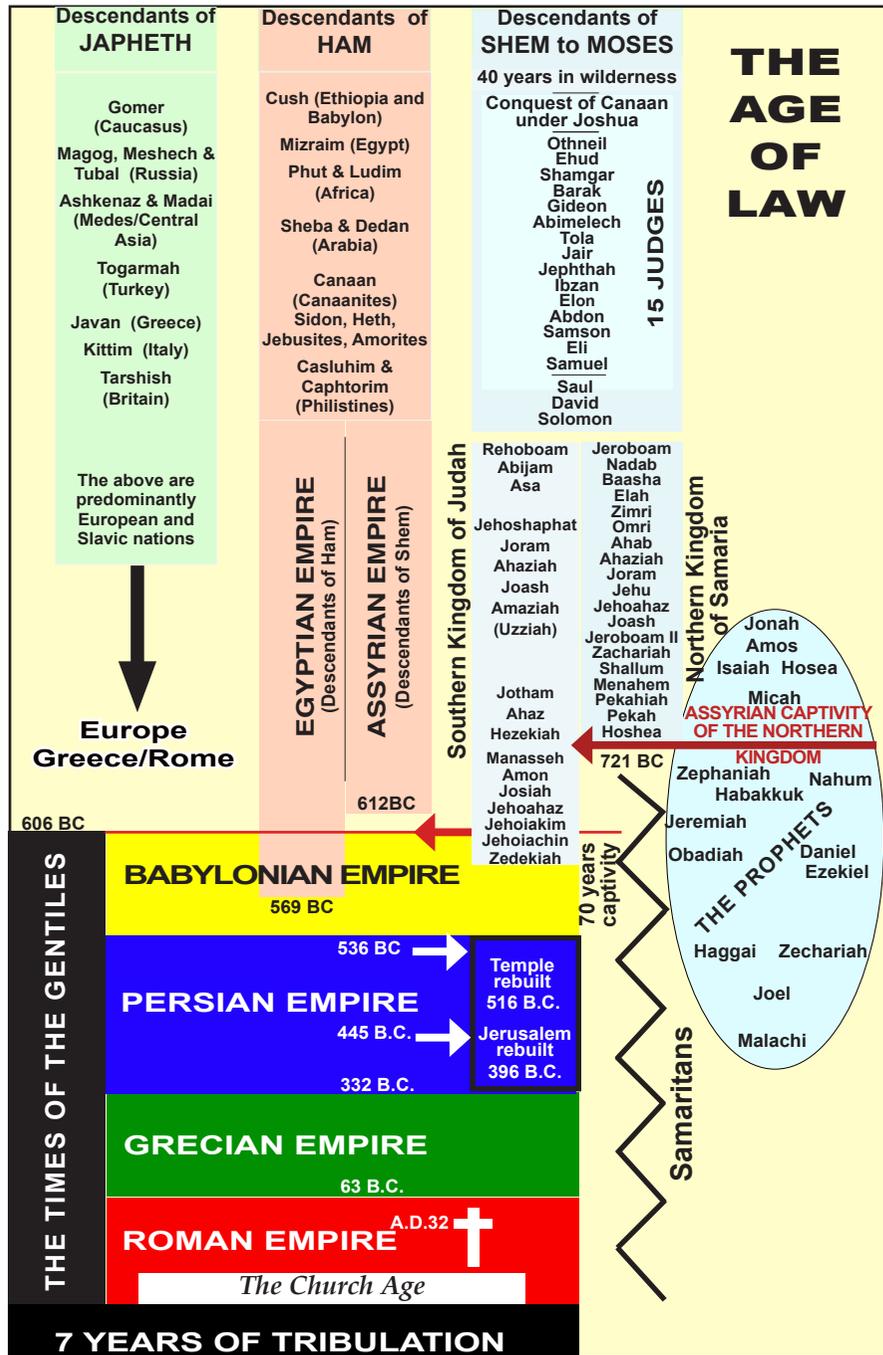
v) When Abram was 99 years old God changed his name to Abraham, meaning *“father of many nations”* and gave his seed *“all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession”* (Gen.17:8). The circumcision of every male child in Israel was given as a token of the covenant between God and Abraham’s seed *“for an everlasting covenant”* (Gen.17:13).

vi) The Palestinian Covenant states if Israel are disobedient they will be scattered but if they repent they will be restored to the land. All Israel shall be saved (Rom.11:26-29).

vii) When Abraham was about 115 years old he took Isaac to one of the mountains of Moriah (Mt Zion) where he was told to offer the lad as a sacrifice on an altar. Abraham obeyed but God intervened and a ram, caught in a thicket, was substituted for Isaac. The test of obedience to God brought **an oath from God** that He would multiply Abraham’s seed, that they would be victorious over their enemies, and that *“in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed”* (Gen.22:17-18).

In view of these **promises, oaths, and covenants** any denial of Israel’s right to the land and to be the channel of blessing to all nations can be nothing less that blatant unbelief. Nowhere in Scripture have these promises been renounced. The promises were confirmed to Isaac (Gen.26:3-4) and Jacob (Gen.35:9-12) and are *“everlasting”* and *“for ever”*. We await the day when Israel will **turn to the Lord and under the terms of the Palestinian Covenant (Deut.28-30)**, possess the gates of her enemies to the blessing of all nations in Christ’s millennial kingdom.





The Age of LAW

When Israel came out of Egypt a whole new administration began as God gave the nation laws that impacted on every area of life; there were sacrifices and offerings made by Divinely appointed priests, dietary and hygiene laws, moral and social laws; there were laws that pertained to warfare, land title, and to finances. The escape from Egypt changed the Israelites from slaves to an organized and responsible nation but there was more to it than national liberation.

The laws given to Moses on Mount Sinai were given by God and were intended to point each Israelite to God's plan of salvation which would unfold after centuries of time. The sacrifices for sin taught every individual that God is holy and that the wages of sin is death. The sacrifices clearly demonstrated that forgiveness could only be obtained by the death of another and the intercession of the priesthood taught that sinners need a mediator and advocate with a holy God. All of God's laws were just and good and obedience brought blessing to all who obeyed.



The law also pointed to One who would come from heaven to fulfil the "types" or shadows seen in the Temple rituals. Paul wrote: "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith" (Gal.3:24). The age of Law passed when Christ appeared and ascended to the Father. Jesus said:



"The law and the prophets were until John...it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail" (Luke 16:16-17).

The law is prophecy in picture form and every jot and tittle will come to pass.

John was the last of the Old Testament prophets and he declared that Jesus was "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

John also indicated that Old Testament saints were only "friends of the Bridegroom" (John 3:29) (Christ) but New Testament saints are "the Bride" of Christ. All the law is fulfilled in Christ who now has a new relationship with all who believe in Him.

Christ is our sacrifice, our Great High Priest, and our Advocate with the Father and He has placed His Holy Spirit within all who believe in Him so that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us.

The Seven Dispensations of Time

There are seven clearly defined periods in history when God administered the human race differently. These periods are called Dispensations or Ages. God's way of salvation however, has never changed. Salvation has only ever been by grace, through faith as indicated in chapter 11 of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Before Christ came to earth, animal sacrifices reminded men that atonement was only possible through the shedding of the blood of a substitute, but animal sacrifices were only shadows of Christ's perfect sacrifice. In the fulness of time Jesus Christ the Son of God, came from heaven to be born of a virgin, die as the Lamb of God for the sins of the world, and to rise from the dead. Salvation in every dispensation was by faith alone but administration changed. The seven dispensations are as follows:

1) **The Age of Innocence** when Adam and Eve lived sinlessly in the garden of Eden.

2) **The Age of Conscience** after Adam sinned and received the knowledge of good and evil.

3) **The Age of Government** after the Flood when God entrusted nations with authority to administer His Law.

4) **The Age of Promise**, or of the Patriarchs, from Abraham to the Exodus.

5) **The Age of Law** from the Exodus when Israel became a nation, to the formation of the Church at Pentecost.

6) **The Age of the Mystery Church** from Pentecost to the Rapture of the Church before the seven-year Tribulation.

7) **The Age of Christ's Kingdom** on earth from the return of Christ immediately after the Tribulation, for 1,000 years, until the eternal state and the New Heavens and new Earth.

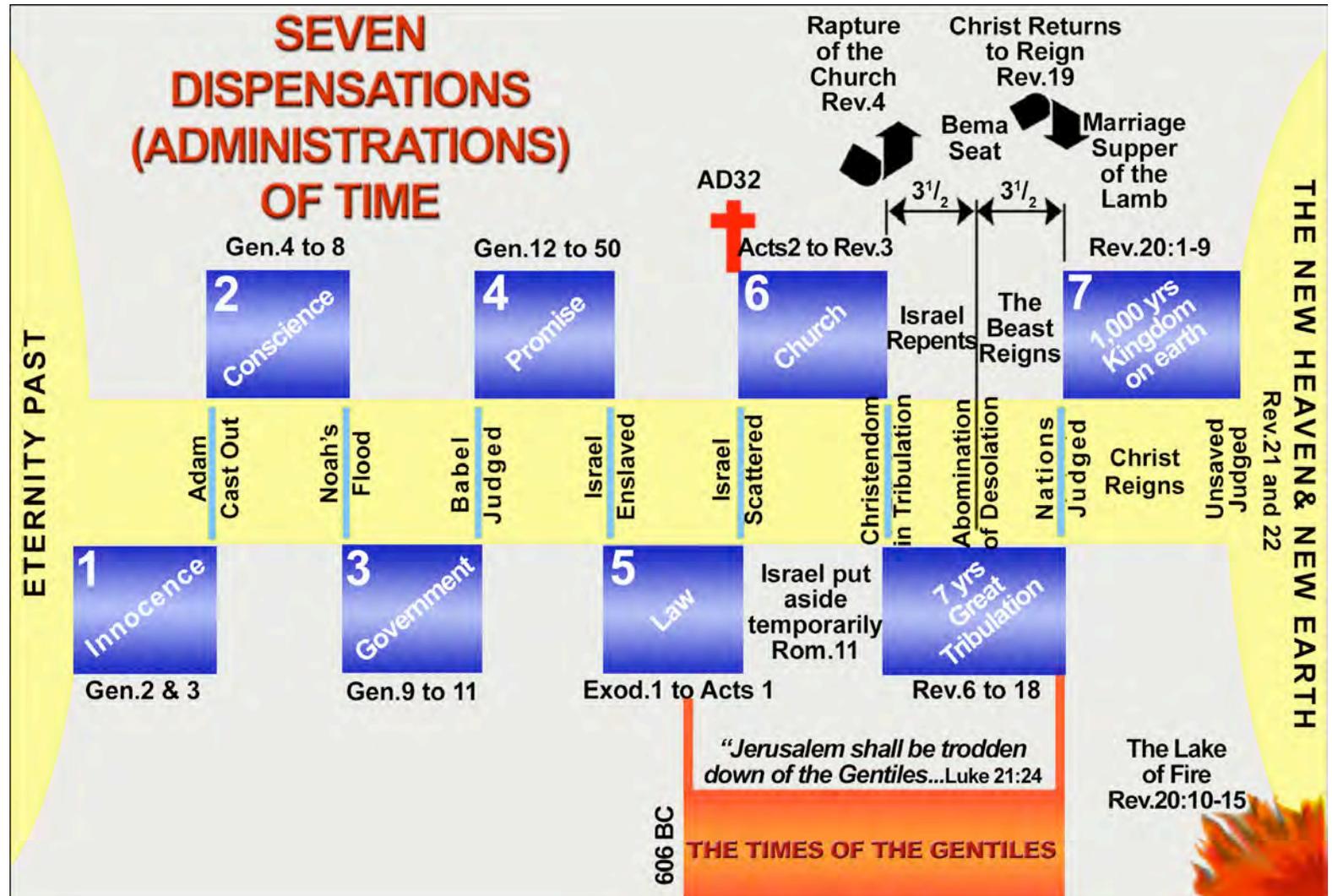
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Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth

Paul wrote: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH. But shun profane and vain babblings" (2Tim.2:15-16).

There are divisions within Scripture which we need to recognise. There are divisions of time as seen in seven different dispensations and there are three classes of people with whom God deals: the Jew, the Gentile, and the Church.

From the beginning of time God dealt with the nations of the Gentiles but after He called Abram out of Ur of the Chaldees, the Hebrew nation became the repository of Truth in the world.

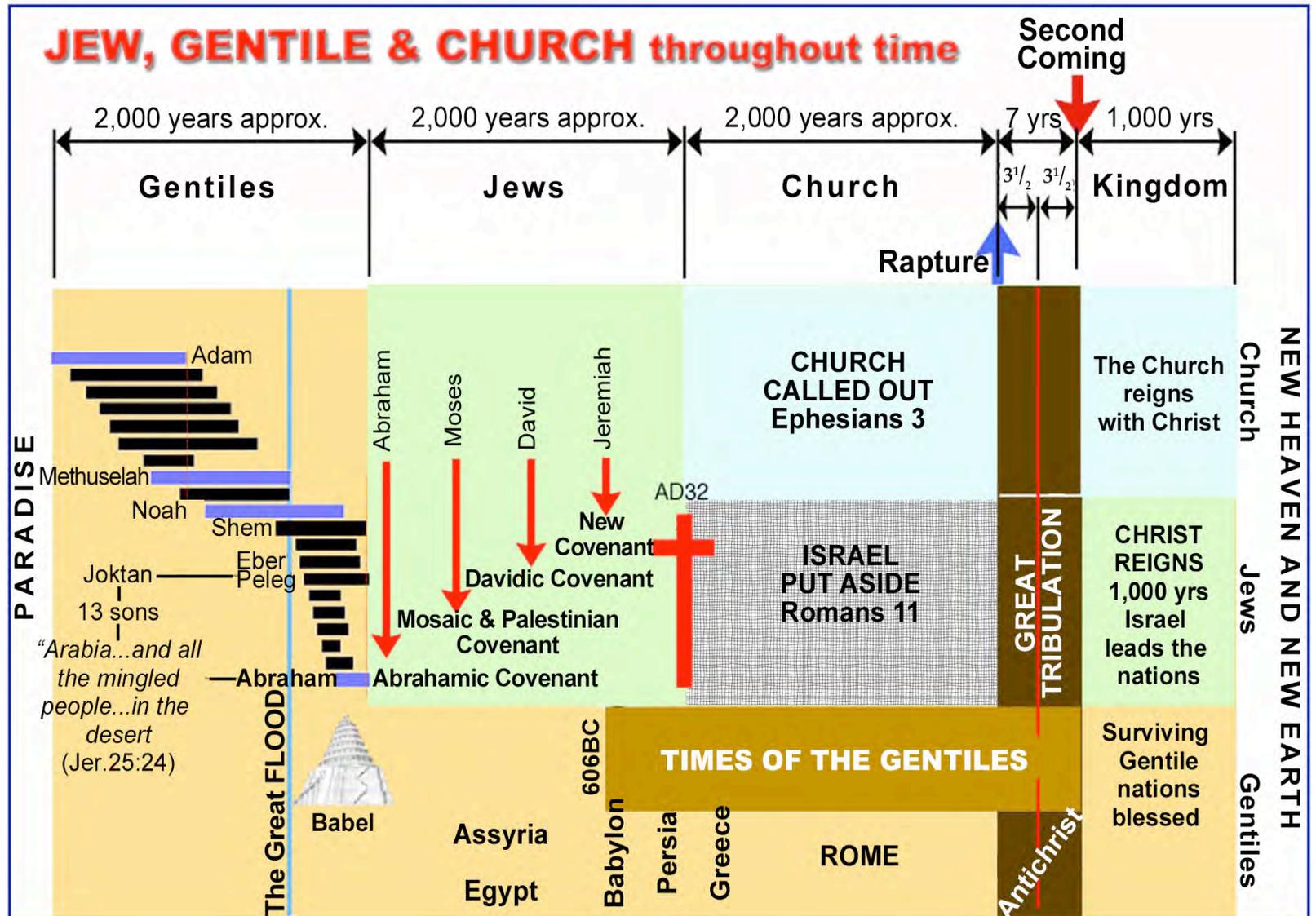
When Israel rejected her King the nation was temporarily blinded while God calls out from the Gentiles a bride for Christ; the Church.

At the end of this age, Christ, the heavenly Bridegroom, will call for His bride and the Church will be Raptured. The marriage of the Lamb will take place in heaven while God deals with Israel for seven years on earth.

During the seven years of Tribulation Israel will repent and Christ will reign from the throne of David at Jerusalem for 1,000 years.

At the end of the 1,000 years the earth will be renovated by fire and there will be a new heaven and earth.

The Church will dwell in the New Jerusalem which will descend from heaven, Israel will dwell around the eternal City, and the saved Gentiles occupy the new earth. The names of the 12 Apostles are in the foundations of the city and the names of the 12 tribes of Israel are on its 12 gates.



The Genealogy of the Arabs and Jews

Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Japheth was the eldest and Ham the youngest. Ham had a son Canaan who was wicked and was cursed by God. The descendants of Canaan inhabited the land of Canaan which God gave to Abraham for an everlasting possession.

The descendants of Shem, the second son of Noah, were the Godly line, at least in their early days. Asshur, one of Shem's sons moved away from the Plain of Shinar when Nimrod built his idolatrous Tower of Babel. Eber was the father of the Hebrews whom God chose to preserve Truth in the earth.

Eber had two sons, Joktan and Peleg. Joktan had 13 sons who became Arabian Princes occupying the Arabian Peninsula while Peleg fathered the line from which Abram came. Abraham was the father of the Jewish race and some of his sons mingled with the Arabian peoples.

The days of Peleg were important because "in his days was the earth divided" (by God). No doubt this relates to the time when God sent the confusion of tongues to prevent completion of the tower of Babel. This was the time that Asshur departed and built Nineveh 450 km to the north of Babylon on the River Tigris.

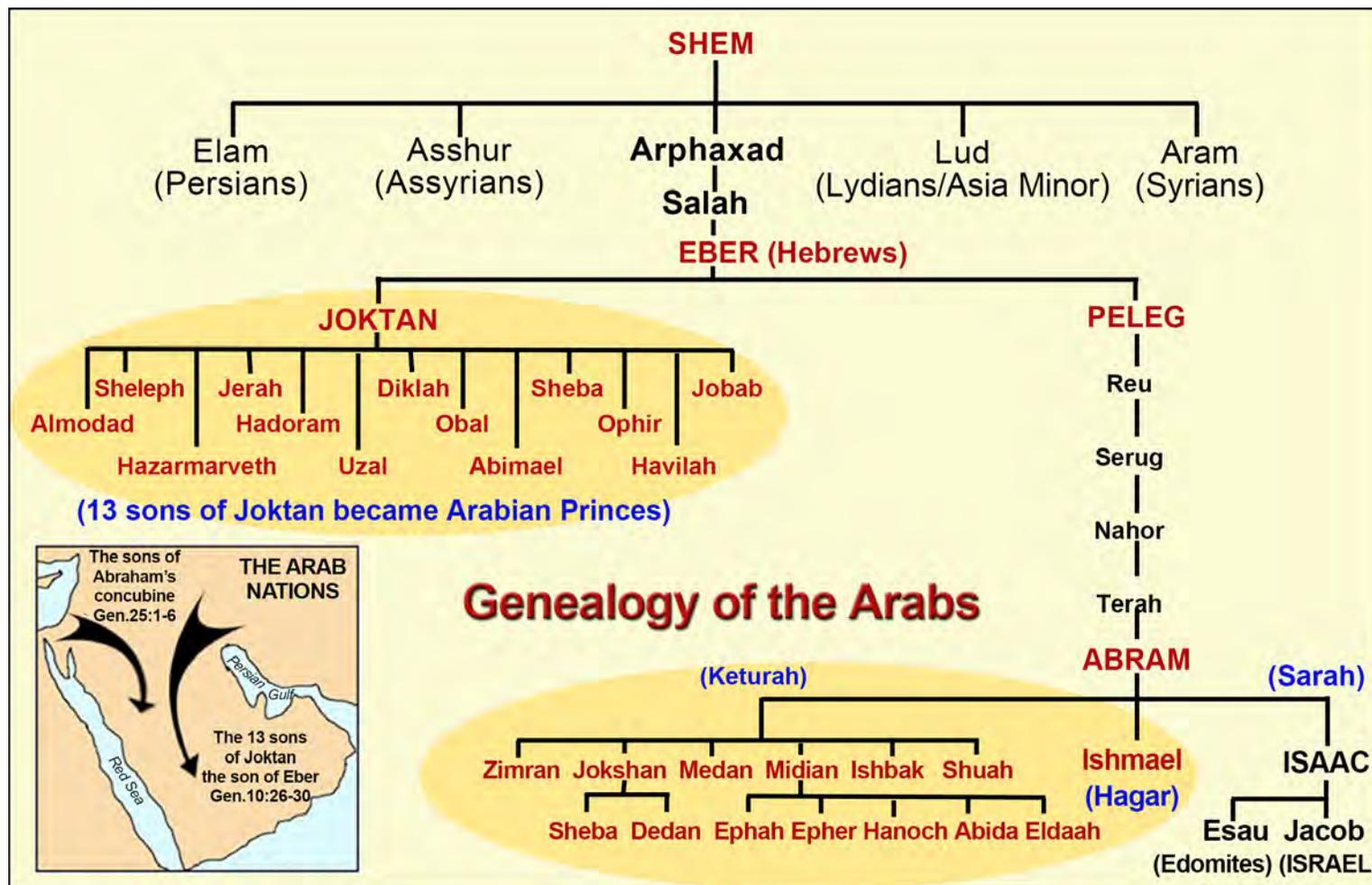
Shem is described as "the father of all the children of Eber" (Gen.10:21) and Abraham is called "the Hebrew" (Gen.14:13). Joseph and the children of Israel in Egypt were referred to as "Hebrews".

From Adam to Nimrod the whole earth spoke only one language which, in all probability, was Hebrew. God has said that in the Last Days "all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. For THEN will I turn to the

people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent" (Zeph.3:8-9). The Hebrew language was revived by Eliezer Ben Yehuda who died in 1922.

Abraham's children to Keturah were sent to the "east country" (Gen.25:6) and intermingled with the sons of Joktan; this was because God said, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called" (Gen.21:12).

Jacob was given the land promised to Abraham and Esau displaced the Horites in Mt. Seir which became the land of Edom south-east of the Dead Sea.



The Families of the Nations

The entire human race sprang from three families: the children of Japheth, Shem, and Ham. After the Flood the ark came to rest on Mount Ararat in eastern Turkey at the head of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers and as the waters receded they followed the Euphrates down to the Plain of Shinar and settled there. God intended that men should decentralize and fill the earth but Nimrod wanted to centralize so that he could control and lead the people into greater idolatry with his idolatrous Tower of Babel. When God confused the languages, work ceased on the Tower and men scattered according to their various languages. From Adam to Nimrod the whole earth spoke only one language which, in all probability, was Hebrew. We can be sure that the Godly people did not join with Nimrod in the construction of the Tower of Babel, therefore their language would not be confused. The purpose in confusing the languages was to cause work to cease on the Tower. Also we note that Asshur, the son of Shem, led his company out of Shinar as Nimrod was constructing Babel (Gen.10:8-12).

Historical records and Biblical history, indicate that the descendants of Japheth spread north and the descendants of Ham moved south into Canaan and Africa while the descendants of Shem remained in the Middle East and perhaps moved east into Asia.

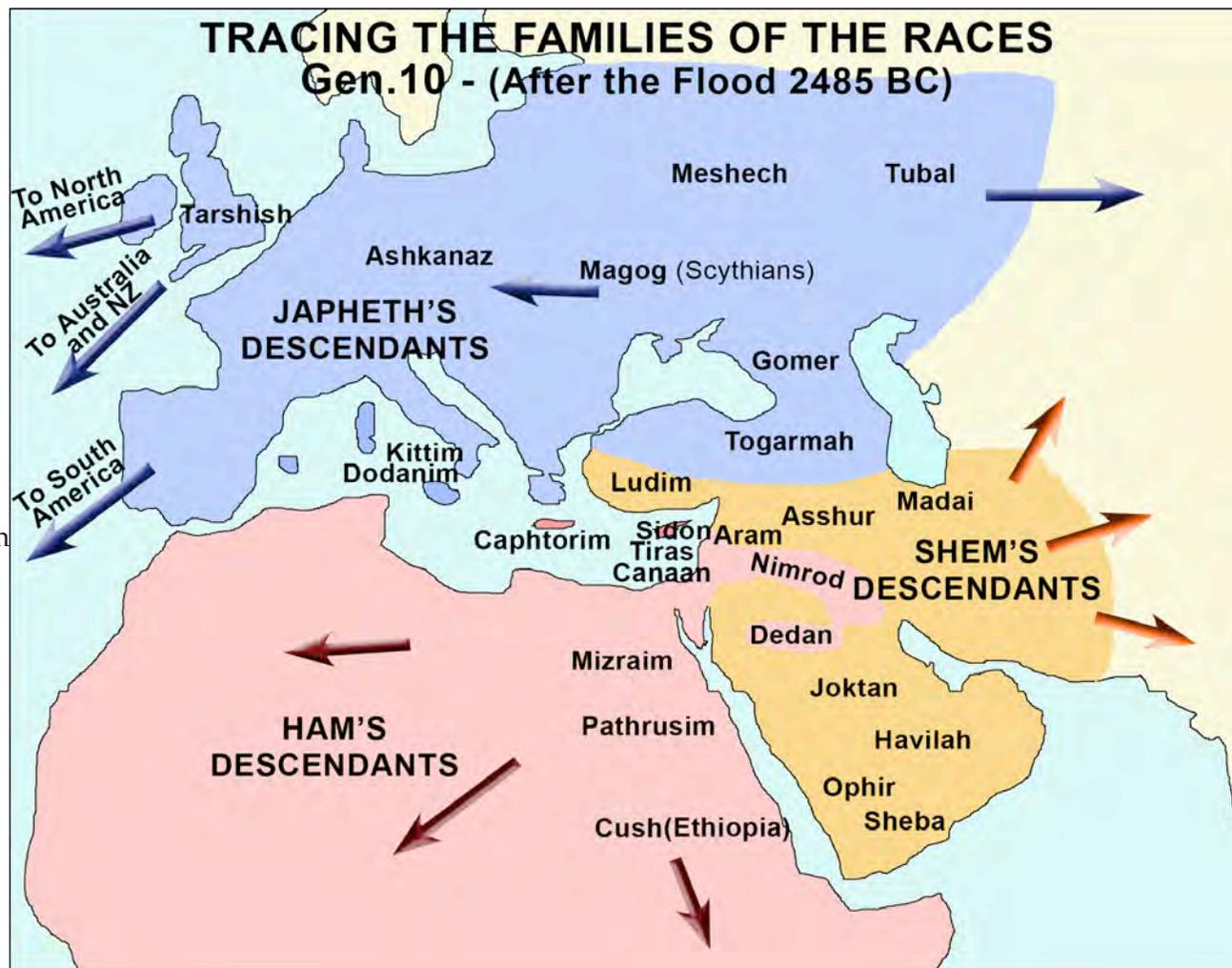
The "Isles of the Gentiles" were divided among the children of Javan (Greece) (Gen.10:4-5). The ancient name of Greece was *Iavan* spelt with an I instead of J.

The Greeks were great colonists and seafaring people. Greek colonies dotted the shoreline of the Mediterranean in 500 BC and Tarshish was one of Javan's sons. Britain was known as the "tin Isle" because Cornwall was the only major source of tin in Europe for the past 2,500 years and the "ships of Tarshish" brought tin to the markets at Tyre (Ezek.27:12).

Josephus tells us that the descendants of **Magog were known by the Greeks as Scythians** who lived along the northern shores of the Black Sea, Togarmah and Gomer

settled in eastern Turkey. Over the centuries these people moved within the region when driven from their lands or because of migration.

The sons of Ham were Cush (Ethiopia) and Mizraim (Egypt though modern Egyptians are Arabs since the Islamic conquests). Egypt is called the "tabernacles of Ham" (Ps.78:51). God said the descendants of Canaan would be servants to Japheth and Shem (Gen.9:25-27) and history has shown this prophecy to be true.



Location of the Families, Tribes, and Nations after the Flood

Josephus was a Jewish Historian who lived AD37 to AD100 and who became interpreter to Titus the Roman General who put down the Jewish revolt (AD66 to AD70). He is famous for his books *Antiquities of the Jews* which tells the story of the Bible from Adam down through history, and the *Wars of the Jews* which describes the conflicts in the Grecian era and the Roman era; he was an eye-witness to the destruction of Jerusalem. Both books are available today.

The first five books of the Bible are known as the **written Torah** and the **Talmud** consisting of the Mishna and the Gemara is known as the **oral Law**.

The Jerusalem Talmud was the oral law put to writing about AD200 because so many Rabbis had perished and it was feared that the oral law would also perish.

The more extensive Babylonian Talmud was published between AD300 and AD350. Josephus recorded many things that were only orally taught in his day and he often sheds light on Biblical history though he is not always accurate.

Josephus had access to many Egyptian, Babylonian, Assyrian and Roman records that have now perished and he provides valuable information on where the families settled after the Flood.

By identifying the ancient family names and the places in which they settled, we can gain a clearer picture of the last-days prophecies because Scripture often uses the family names which were changed during the Grecian era. For instance, the *Magogites* were known to the Greeks as Scythians who dwelt on the northern shores of the Black Sea.

The "House of Togarmah" settled in eastern Turkey and the descendants of "Gomer" settled in the region of Galatia in central Turkey as we know it. In the course of time families and tribes migrated or were driven from their home lands. The Gomerites spread around the eastern side of the Black Sea which we know as the Caucasus region.

Javan and his descendants settled in Greece and established many colonies around the coastline of the Mediterranean and Black Sea. The Greeks also occupied the cities at the western end of Turkey as we know

it, though it was formerly known as Asia. The Greeks were a sea-faring people, traders, and many were mercenary soldiers serving the kings of Persia and Egypt. Pharaoh-hophra (588 - 569BC) had 30,000 Greek soldiers in his army. Many of the Babylonian gods were adopted by the Greeks and Egyptians who changed their names.

The Phoenicians dwelt along the eastern coast of the Mediterranean at Tyre and Sidon and were famous as ship builders; they traded from as far away as Britain which was settled by the descendants of Tarshish (Ezekiel ch.27).

Some nations have ceased to exist. The Philistines, Moabites, Ammonites and Edomites have been destroyed or scattered and absorbed into other nations. Some peoples lost their national identity as Islam spread in the 7th century.



Locating Britain and America in the Last Days

Frequently people ask where Britain and America feature in the last days. This question can be answered by identifying Tarshish in ancient times.

Britain was known as “the tin isles” or “Cassiterides” in ancient times because of the extensive tin mines at Cornwall on the south-west tip of Britain. Other minerals were mined in nearby Wales.

There are many myths associated with the city of Troy and one is that at one stage more than 30 boatloads of Trojans escaped their attackers and sailed around the Mediterranean coast line eventually ending up in Britain.

Scripture says a great deal about the “ships of Tarshish” and “merchants of Tarshish” in ancient times and indicates that the ships of Tarshish will suffer in the Tribulation before Christ returns (Isa.2:16). The Bible links “the merchants of Tarshish and the young lions thereof” (Ezek.38:13) with “Sheba and Dedan” (Arabia) in the last days.

There is no doubt that Javan settled in Greece and that the Greeks spread around the Mediterranean. Herodotus who was known as the “father of ancient history” and wrote about 450BC, places Tarshish **beyond the Pillars of Hercules** on either side of the Straits of Gibraltar.

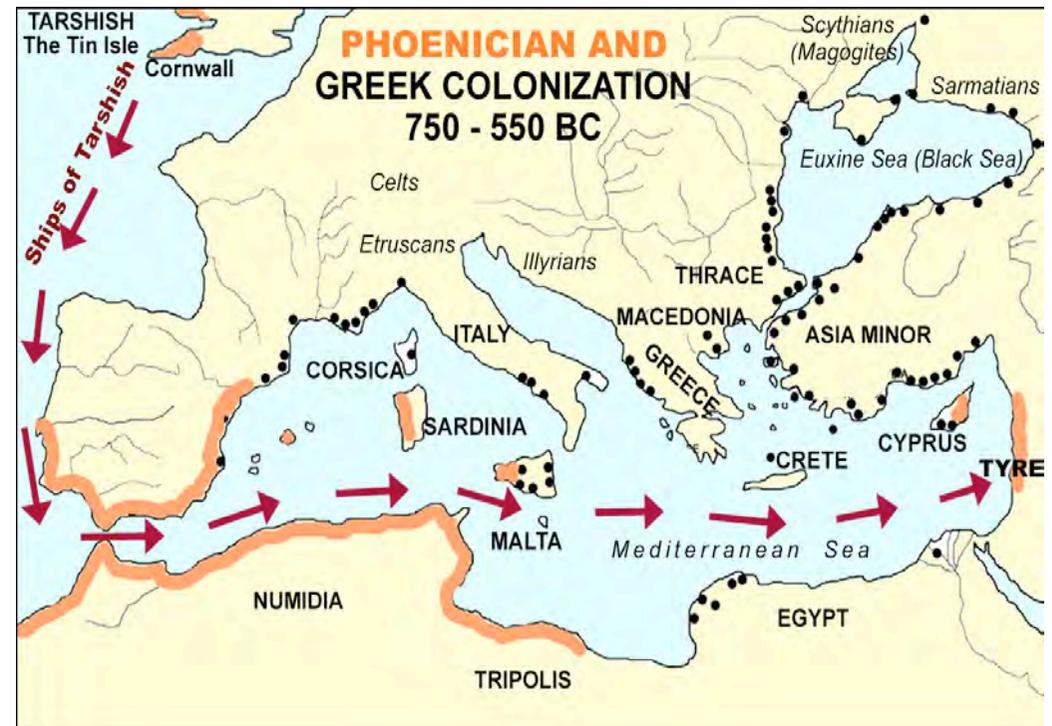
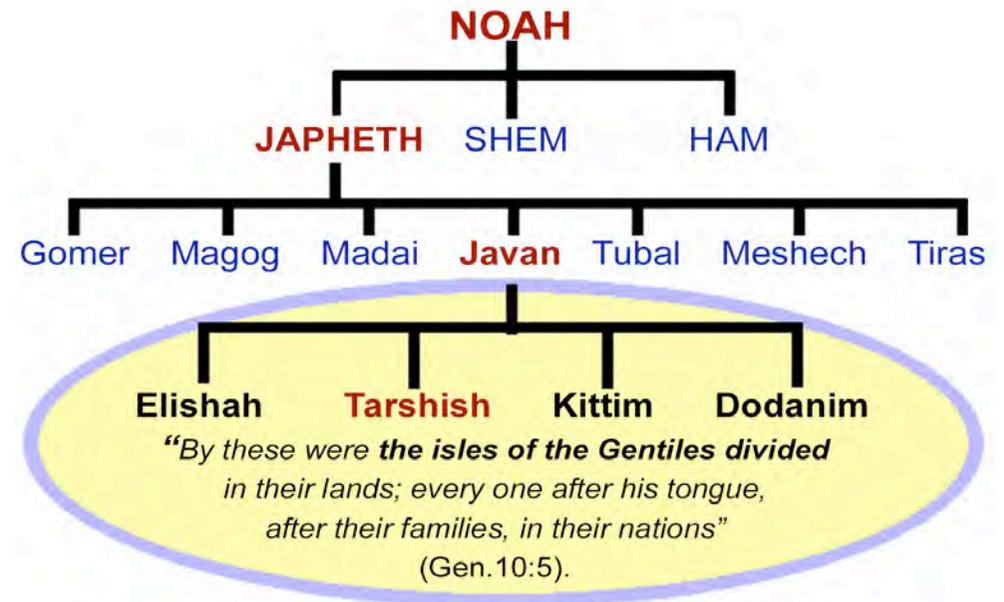
Ezekiel states that the ships of Tarshish brought all manner of metals to the markets of Tyre:

“Tarshish was thy merchant by reason of the multitude of all kind of riches; with silver, iron, tin, and lead, they traded in thy fairs” (Ezek.27:12).

Many Bible maps show Spain as the location of Tarshish but Spain is not an “isle of the Gentiles” and never had extensive tin deposits. Spain had copper and the “tin trail” from Britain enabled them to mix tin from Britain with copper to make bronze.

The mythical city of Tartessus has never been found and the mining town in Spain called, Tharsis, did not exist before the 19th century when a British mining company began to operate the mines there. Tharsis is not a Spanish word and it is more likely that the British mining company so named the town after Britain.

A full treatment of this subject may be found on the Herald of Hope Web Site: www.heraldofhope.org.au/resources/articles



God's Covenant People - Israel

God is a covenant-keeping God and binds Himself by immutable promises to keep His Word. The six covenants recorded in Scripture are as follows:

1) **The Noahaic covenant** is the first of these covenants in Scripture. It was made with the human race immediately after the Flood. God made an "everlasting covenant" with all mankind that He would never again destroy the world with a global flood. The rainbow was given as a token to remind us of His promise.

2) **The Abrahamic covenant** was made when God called Abram out of Ur of the Chaldees and it extended to his seed for ever. Under the Abrahamic Covenant, the land of Canaan from the Euphrates to the River of Egypt, was given as an everlasting possession to Abraham and his seed.

The Abrahamic Covenant was an unconditional Covenant, i.e. it was not dependent on conditions fulfilled by Abraham or his seed. On this basis the land belongs to God who has given the rights of possession to Israel. God told Abram: "All the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed FOR EVER" (Gen.13:15). A special relationship is established under this covenant: God will bless those who bless Abraham and his seed, and curse those who curse Abraham and his seed.

3) **The Sinaitic covenant** was made with the nation of Israel shortly after they passed through the Red Sea to escape from Egypt. This was a conditional covenant and God promised blessing IF they obeyed the voice of the Lord (Exod.24:1-8). The priesthood, the sacrifices, feasts, and many regulations were prescribed. The **Priestly Covenant** with Phinehas is an extension of this covenant (Num.25:12-13).

4) **The Palestinian covenant** was established just before Israel entered the promised land (Deut.28 to 30). It is a conditional covenant and sets forth the conditions under which Israel can enjoy the land given to them under the Abrahamic covenant. It states three things:

i) If Israel obeys the Lord they would be **blessed in the land**; their enemies would flee before them; the land would be fruitful and they would multiply (Deut.28:1-13).

ii) If Israel turned away from the Lord, God would bring all the curses of the Law upon them and they would be **scattered out of the land**. The two dispersions by the Babylonians and the Romans are prophetically enshrined in the covenant (Deut.28:36 and 52).

iii) If after Israel has been scattered among the nations, the people turned back to the Lord, then God would gather them "from all the nations whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee" (Deut.30:3). Israel would be **returned to the land** and curses would then come upon her enemies.

5) **The Davidic covenant** was made with David when he was anointed King of Israel with the promise that there would never lack for a man to sit upon the throne. Though the throne ceased with Zedekiah (Ezek.21:25-27), David's genealogy was preserved until Christ came (Matthew ch.1 and Luke ch.3) and will be restored for Him to reign at the second advent (Acts 15:13-18).

6) **The New covenant** based on Christ's sacrifice, will be made with Israel when Israel turns to the Lord in the Last Days. The Church partakes "of the root and fatness of the olive tree" (Israel) (Rom.11:17). We enjoy the spiritual blessings of the covenant but Israel will also enjoy material blessings.



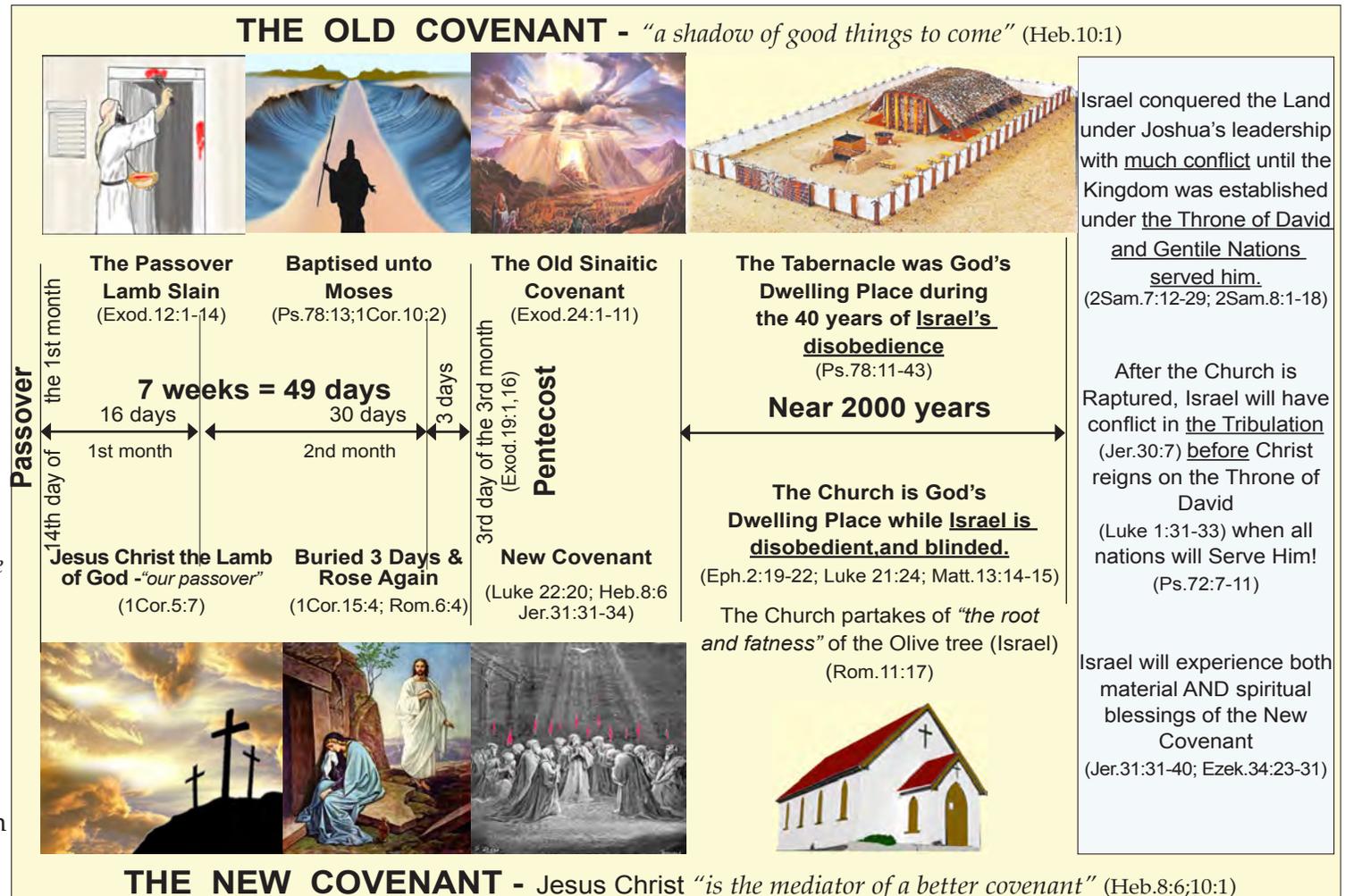
The Old Covenant a Shadow of the New Covenant

History repeats itself for God is working providentially in history. Events that occurred in the Old Testament are a shadow of future events. This is clearly seen in the typology of the Old Testament where for example, the life of Joseph was a 'type' or shadow of future events. Joseph was hated of his brethren; loved by his father; sent by his father to his own people Israel; betrayed and sold by his brethren to Gentiles; raised up from the dungeon to sit on the throne; gathered in a great harvest for seven years from the Gentiles during which time he took a Gentile Bride. In the second year of a world-wide dearth, He was restored to fellowship with his brethren and preserved his brethren through the dearth.

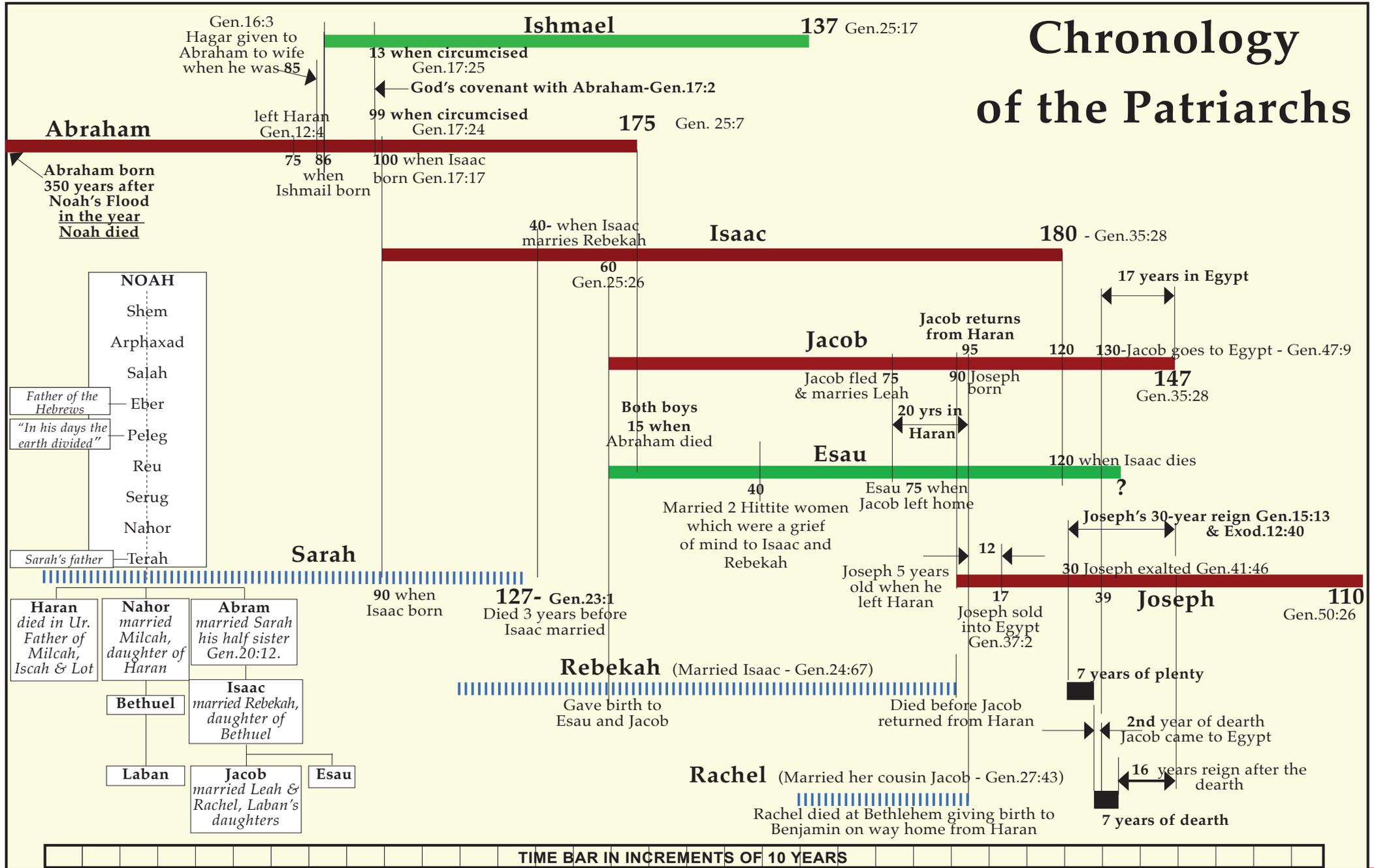
The entire life of Joseph foreshadowed the Lord Jesus and His relationship with His own people Israel: Jesus was sent by the Father, rejected by His brethren; sold for 30 pieces of silver; buried and raised to sit on the throne where He is now gathering a harvest which is His Gentile Bride, the Church, seen prophetically in the seven churches of Asia. In the seven years of global Tribulation, Christ will be restored to His brethren and reign over them in the millennial kingdom. In the book of Hebrews chapter 10 and verse 1 we read: *"For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect."*

Similarly, Israel's history has been and will be repeated. They slew the passover lamb; baptised (buried) unto Moses in the Red Sea (1Cor.10:2); came into a covenant relationship with God who came down with fire on Sinai after 49 days; spent the next 40 years wandering in disobedience until

a period of great conflict led by Joshua after which they served the Lord and King David while Gentiles bowed before the throne of David. This is a shadow of Israel that slew Christ the passover Lamb; He was buried and rose again and sent the Holy Spirit like tongues of fire at Pentecost. Disobedient Israel (Ps.78) has wandered for 2,000 years. After the Rapture of the Church, Israel will be restored to Messiah and preserved in Great Tribulation (Zech.12:6; Rev.12). Christ will return and the Gentiles will bow before the throne of David (Luke 1:32-33).



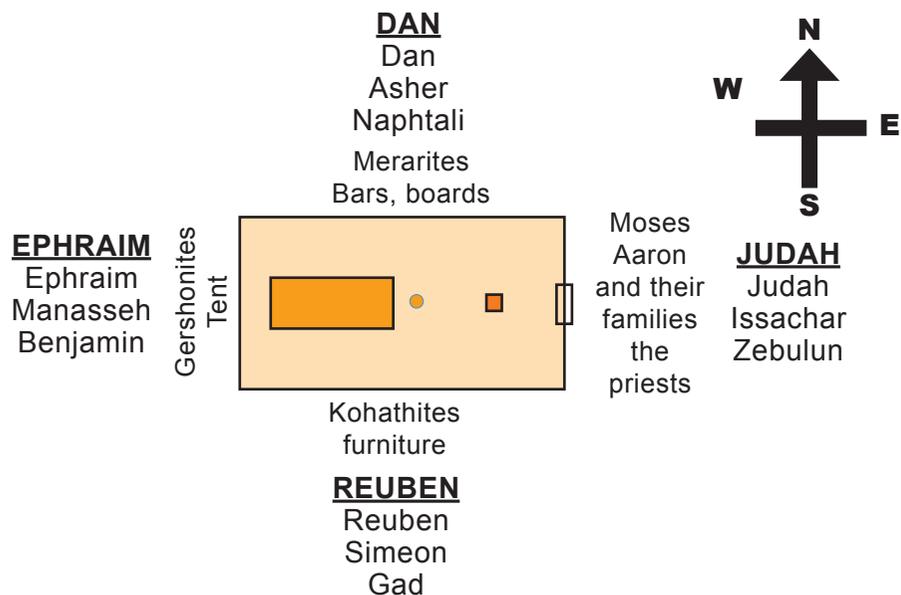
Chronology of the Patriarchs



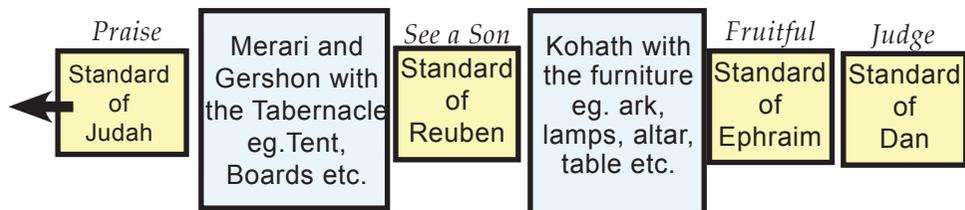
Israel - The Priests of the LORD

Under the Abrahamic Covenant, Abraham's seed were to be the means whereby God would bless all the nations. In the Age of Law Israel became a priestly nation with an everlasting Aaronic priesthood. There are no Gentile prophets or priests (Rom.3:1-2). Converted Gentiles became "strangers" in Israel (2Chron.2:17). The high priesthood passed to the sons of Phinehas. It was occupied by the descendants of Ithamar in the days of Eli but restored by David when he appointed Zadok as high priest.

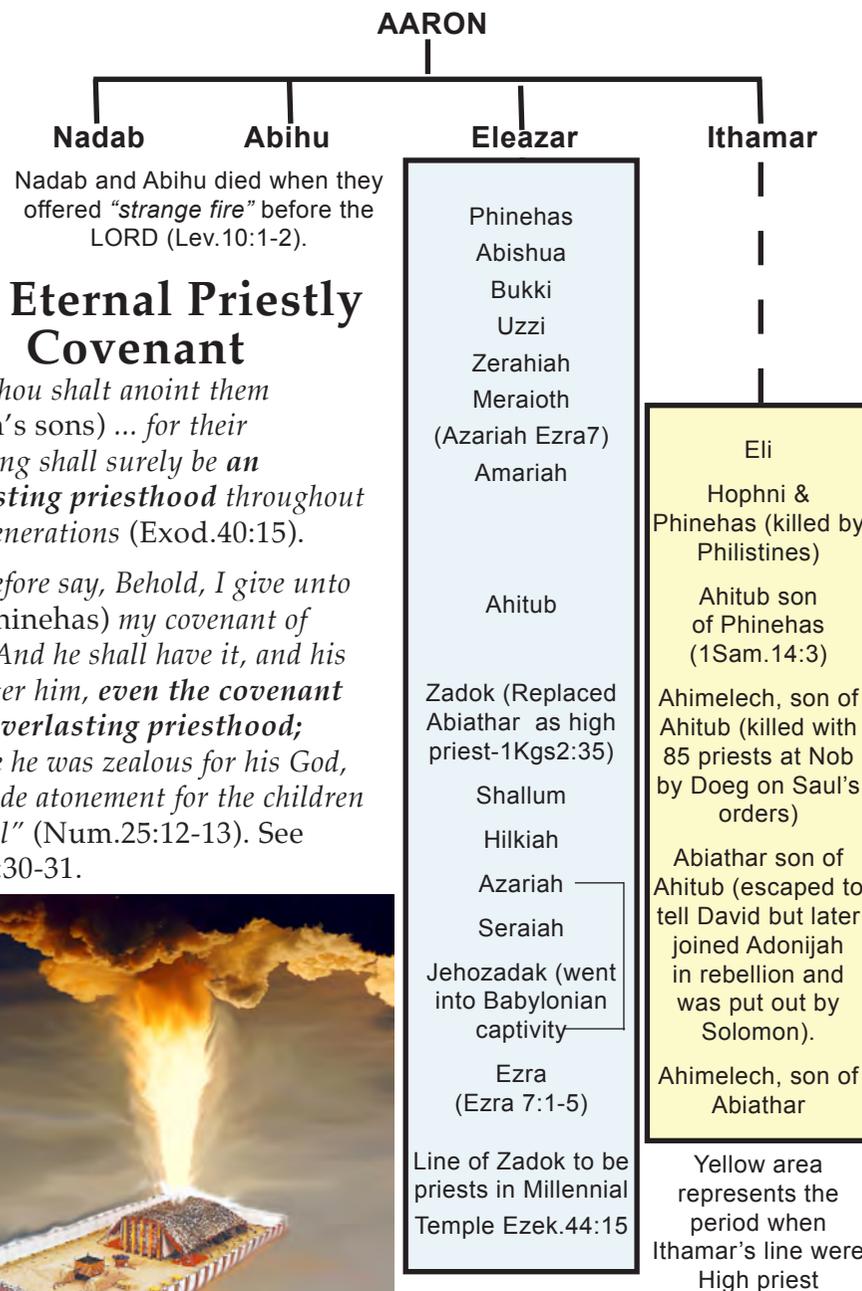
In the Millennium the descendants of Zadok will be the priests in the Temple; the whole nation will be "named the Priests of the LORD" and "men shall call you the Ministers of our God" (Isa.61:6). See also Isa.66:19; Isa.2:1-4.



The Order of the Camp



The Order When Israel Journeyed



The Eternal Priestly Covenant

"And thou shalt anoint them (Aaron's sons) ... for their anointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations (Exod.40:15).

"Wherefore say, Behold, I give unto him (Phinehas) my covenant of peace: And he shall have it, and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and made atonement for the children of Israel" (Num.25:12-13). See Ps 106:30-31.



Conquest of the Land of Canaan

The Conquest of Canaan was not easy. Having crossed the Jordan River Israel claimed a great victory at Jericho but then there was failure at Ai after Achan took of the accursed things from among the spoils of Jericho. Israel had to learn that sin hinders the blessing of God. Then the crafty Gibeonites made a league with Israel and when the five kings of the Amorites attacked the Gibeonites, Israel was compelled to defend them. This led to a successful **southern campaign** in which they defeated the giants, the sons of Anak. The sun stood still about the space of a whole day as God fought for Israel.

When Jabin King of Hazor, to the north of Galilee, organized a vast army to fight Israel, Joshua surprised them at the waters of Merom and pursued them to Mount Hermon; this led to a successful **northern campaign**. In all, there were 31 kings slain by Joshua in the conquest of the land however, when he died, there was still much land to be possessed and five lords of the Philistines along the southern coast were a constant problem.

The Phoenicians along the north coast of Lebanon also remained. Nevertheless, Joshua was commanded to allocate land to all the tribes. and

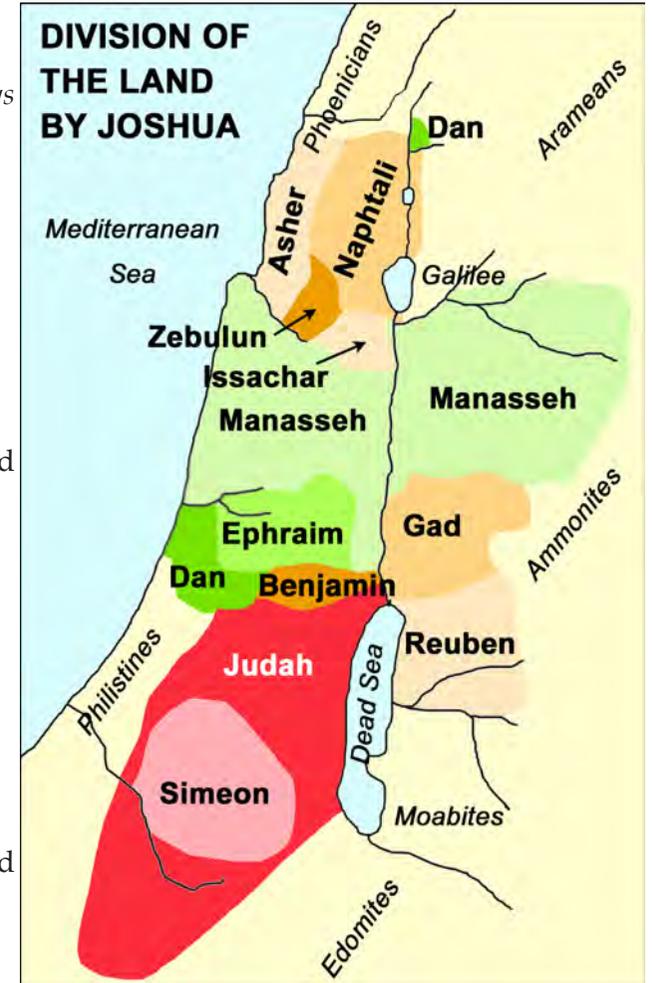
they were to occupy their portions in due course. We read:

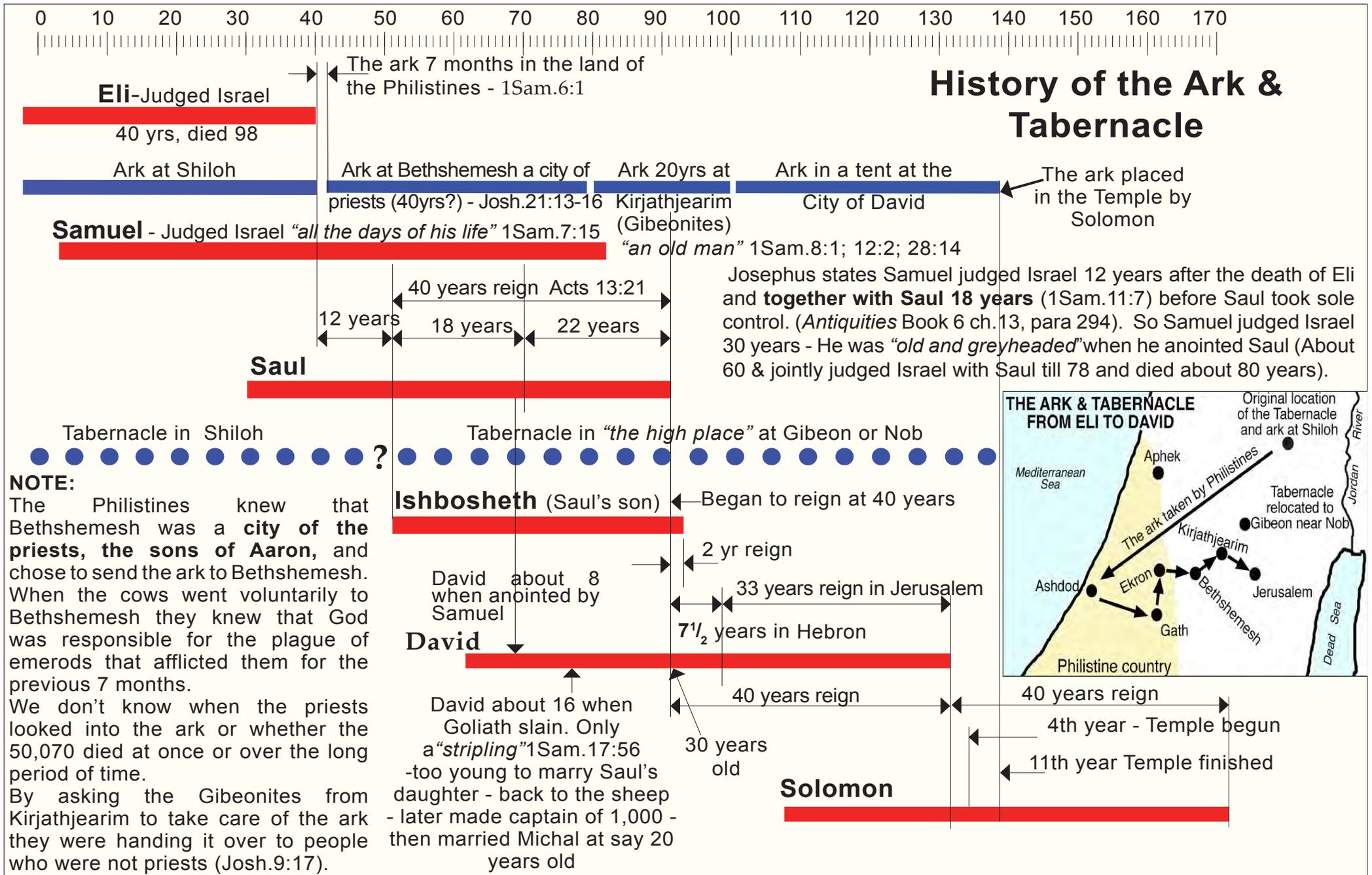
“Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua” (Josh.24:31), but after these men died the nation entered a long period when the Judges ruled. After each Judge died the nation lapsed into idolatry and God allowed the heathen to oppress them until Israel cried out to the Lord and another Judge was raised up to deliver them.

It was not until the days of Samuel that David was anointed King and all the land was finally subdued.

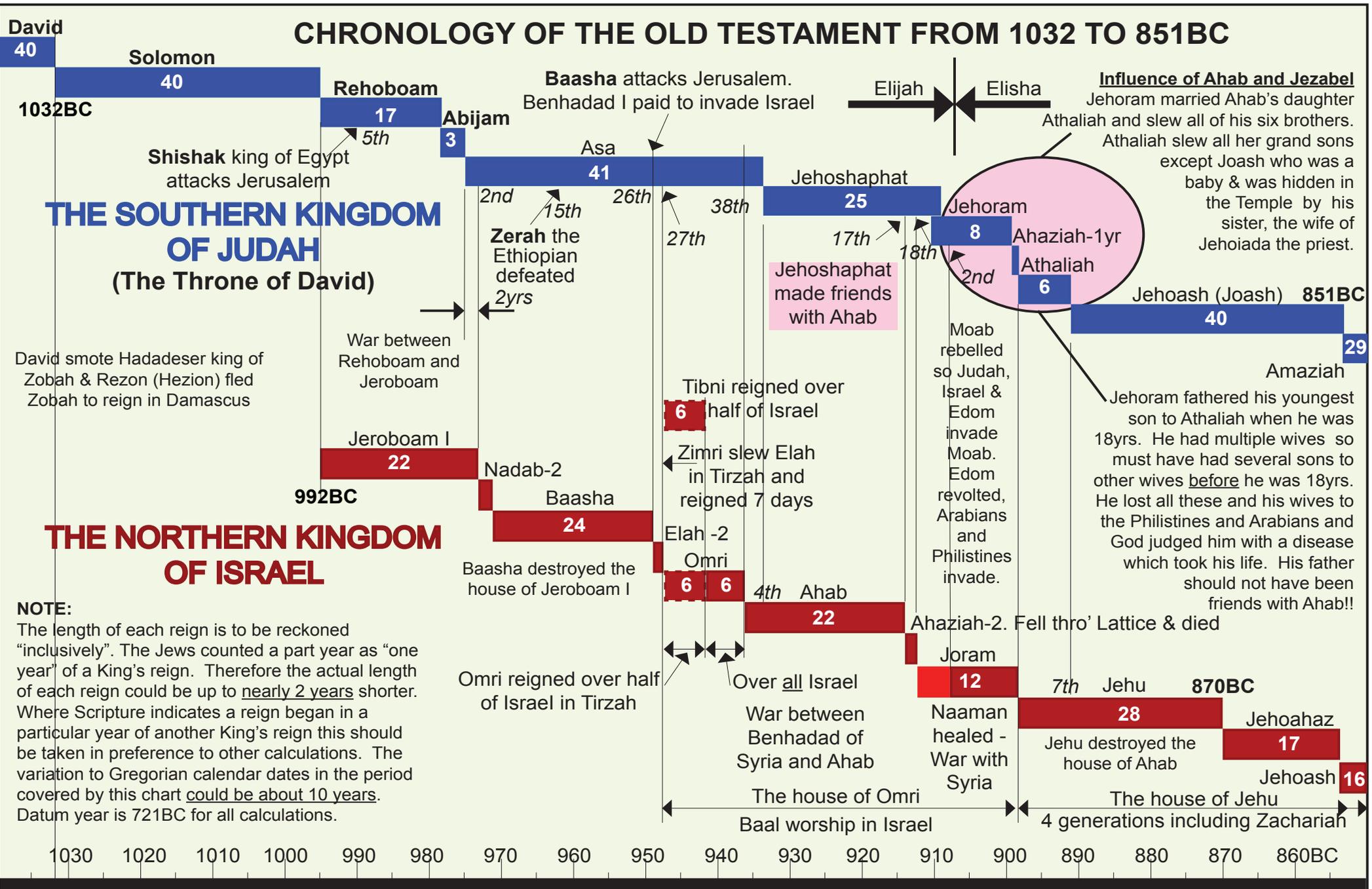


Entry into the land had been delayed 40 years when 12 spies returned from 40 days in Canaan and though they gave a glowing report of the land, 10 of the 12 refused to believe God, and so Israel wandered for 40 years in the wilderness through unbelief.



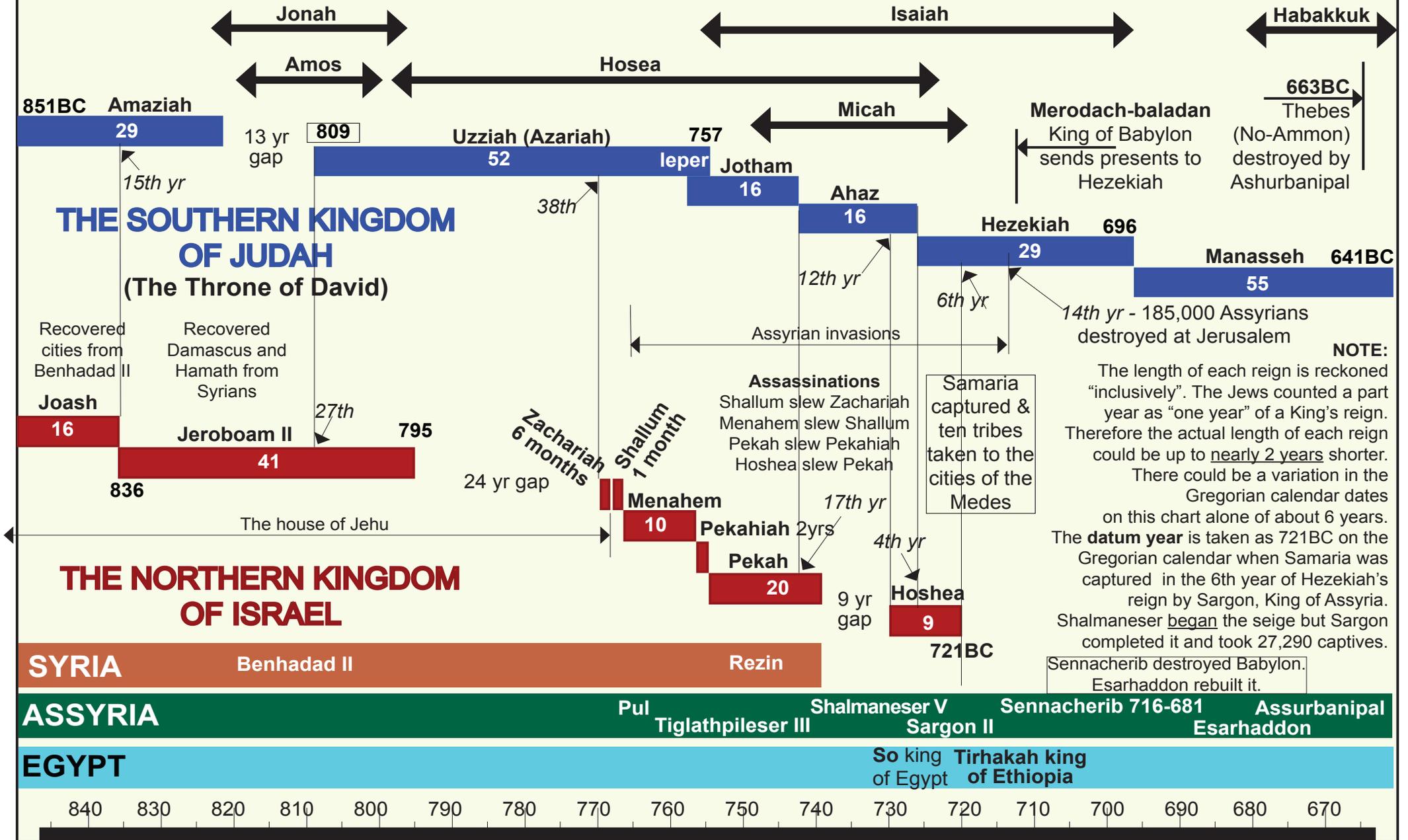


CHRONOLOGY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT FROM 1032 TO 851BC

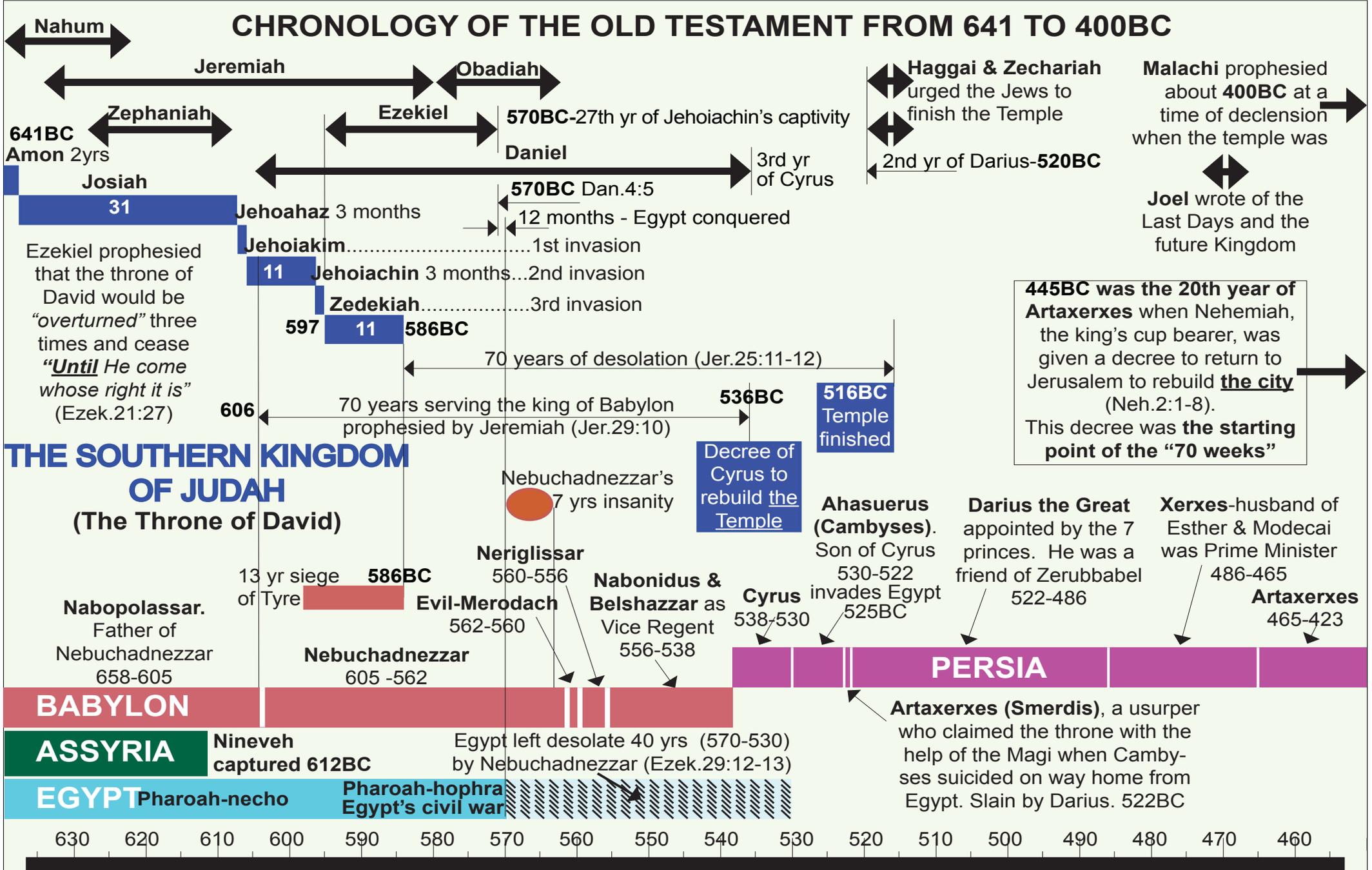


NOTE:
 The length of each reign is to be reckoned "inclusively". The Jews counted a part year as "one year" of a King's reign. Therefore the actual length of each reign could be up to nearly 2 years shorter. Where Scripture indicates a reign began in a particular year of another King's reign this should be taken in preference to other calculations. The variation to Gregorian calendar dates in the period covered by this chart could be about 10 years. Datum year is 721BC for all calculations.

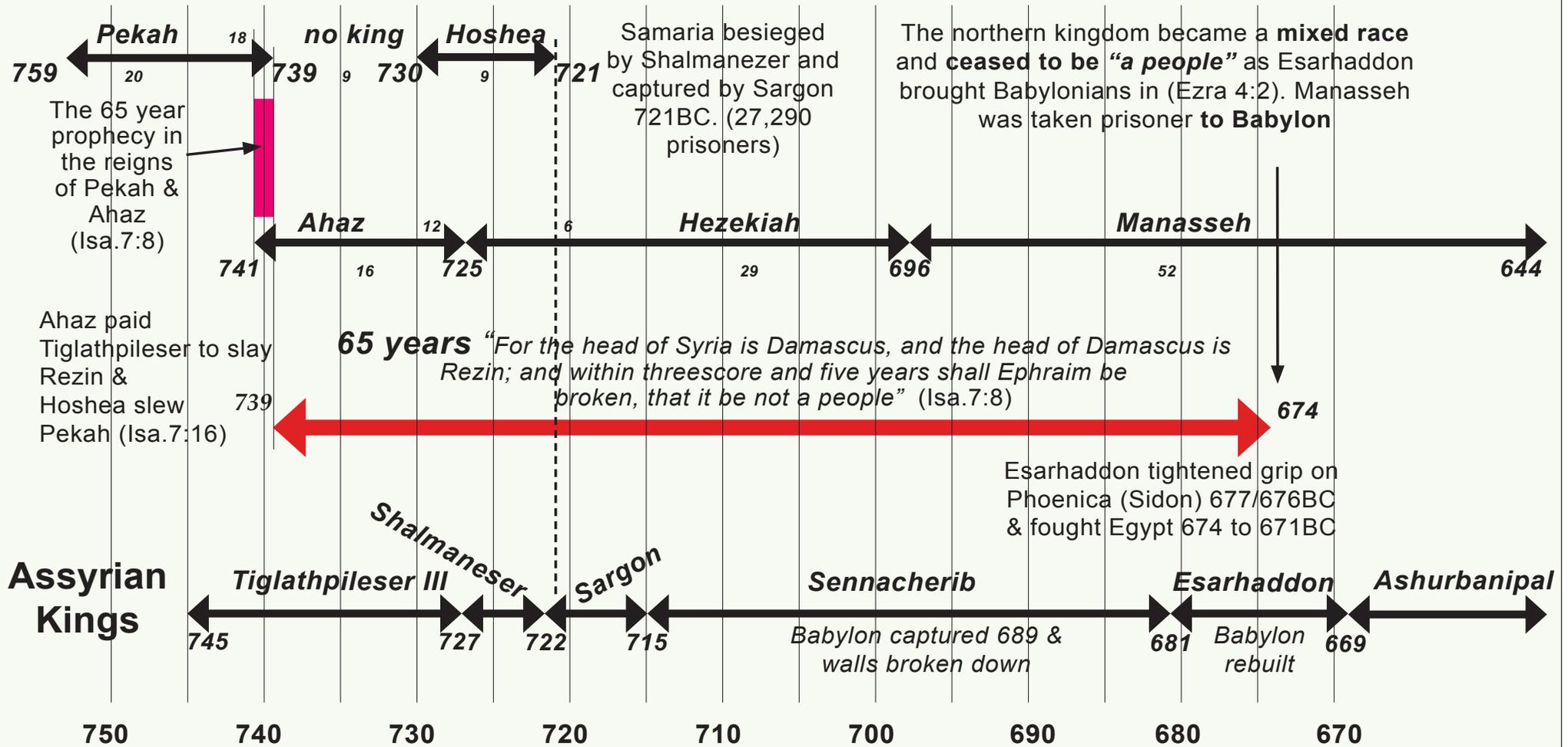
CHRONOLOGY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT FROM 851 TO 641BC



CHRONOLOGY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT FROM 641 TO 400BC



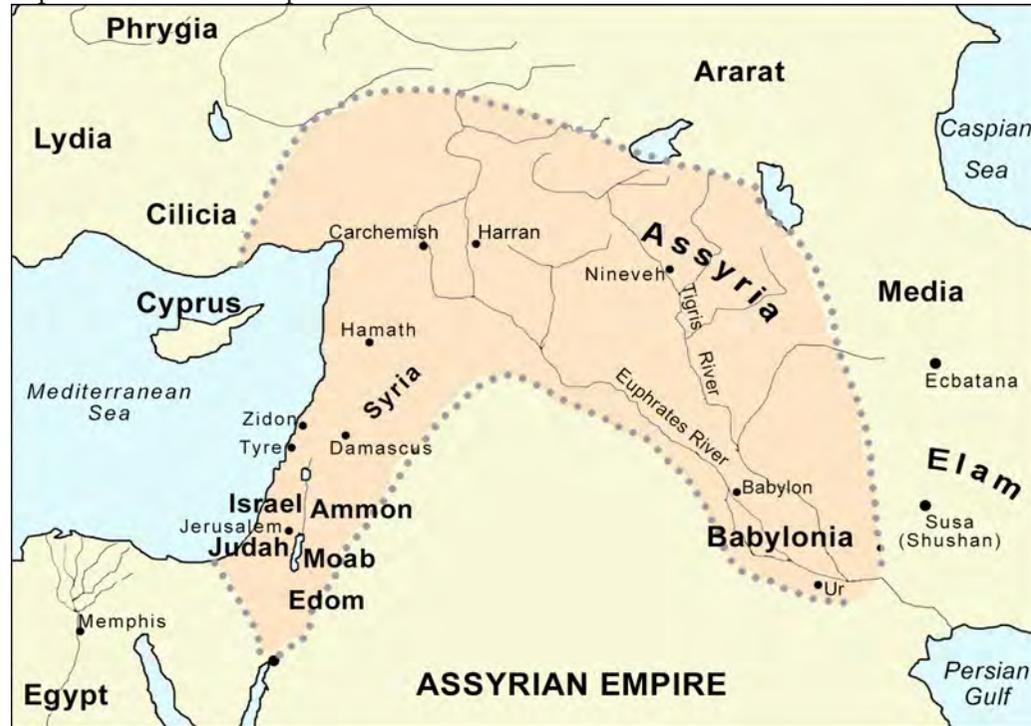
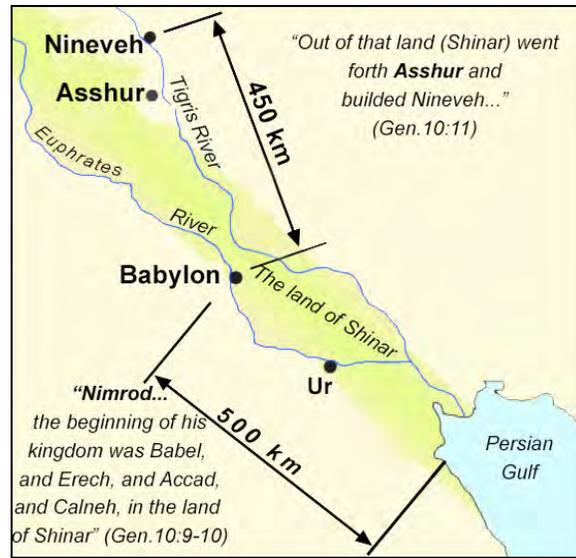
THE 65 YEAR PROPHECY OF ISAIAH 7:8



The Judgment of Nineveh - 612BC

When Nimrod, who was from the line of Ham, built the Tower of Babel, Asshur from the line of Shem, left the plain of Shinar (Gen.10:11) and built Nineveh with its surrounding cities which suggests that he did not want to be associated with the idolatry of Nimrod and that the people of Nineveh originally worshipped the living God.

About 830BC Jonah warned the Assyrians at Nineveh that God would destroy the city but they repented and were spared.



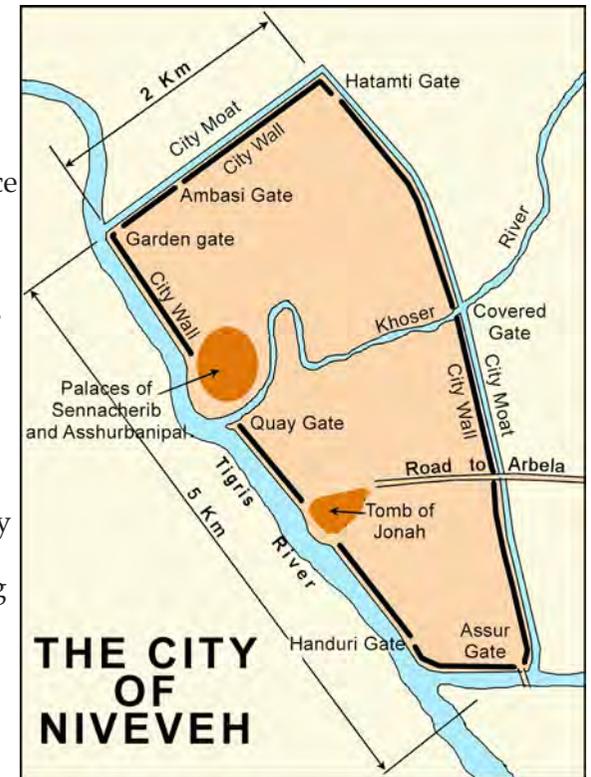
Between 650BC and 612BC Nahum prophesied the complete destruction of Nineveh and God raised up the Medes and the Babylonians to execute His judgment. The cruelty and violence of the Assyrians, witchcraft, and the blasphemy of Sennacherib (Nahum 1:11-13) when he came to Jerusalem, are given as the reasons for judgment.

The fall of Nineveh in 612BC is described in the *3rd Babylonian Chronicle of Nabopolassar*, the father of Nebuchadnezzar. The city was besieged and after heavy rains, Nineveh was flooded; twenty furlongs of the wall along the Tigris River collapsed.

The King at this time was Sinsariskun, the brother of Ashurbanipal. When the wall collapsed the king remembered an ancient prophecy that "Nineveh could not be taken until the river became an enemy to the city." The King gathered his concubines and eunuchs into the palace, built a large funeral pile, and burned it down on them. Nahum wrote, "the palace shall be dissolved" (Nahum 2:6). When the palace was burned the great library of Ashurbanipal was buried. It contained 22,000 valuable records many of which recorded the Biblical Flood and the Antediluvian period of history. So complete was the destruction that 300 years later, Alexander the Great passed over it without realising Nineveh was under his feet. God said that Nineveh would become "a gazingstock" (Nahum 3:6); It is to archeologists today.

No mention is made of the Queen but Nahum states that "Huzzab shall be led away captive...her maids shall lead her...Nineveh is of old like a pool of water: yet they shall flee away. Stand, stand, shall they cry; but none shall look back" (Nahum 2:6-8).

The kings of Assyria bred lions for the sport of lion hunting and Nahum wrote: "The sword shall devour the young lions" (Nahum 2:13).



The Judgment of Tyre - 586BC & 332BC

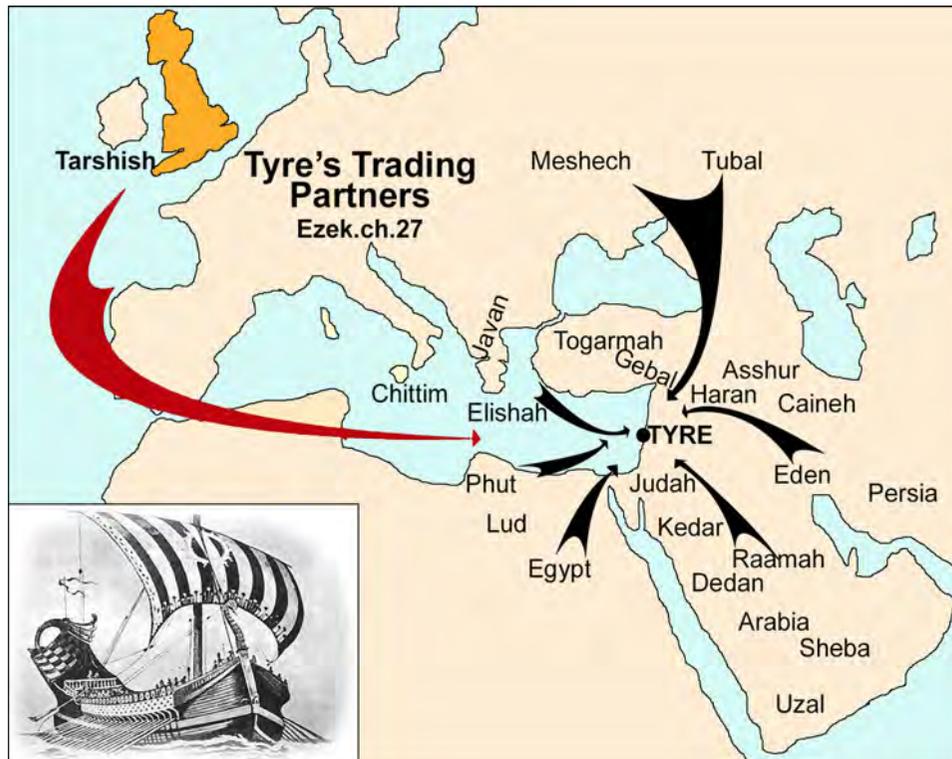
"Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Tyrus, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they delivered up the whole captivity to Edom, and remembered not the brotherly covenant: But I will send a fire on the wall of Tyrus, which shall devour the palaces thereof" (Amos 1:9-10).

Isaiah (about 700 BC) described Tyre as *"the crowning city, whose merchants are princes, whose traffickers are the honorable of the earth"* (Isa.23:8) but he also prophesied she would be destroyed and unable to trade for 70 years. *"Tyre shall be forgotten seventy years...at the end of seventy years shall Tyre sing as a harlot"* (Isa.23:15). This prophecy was fulfilled by Nebuchadnezzar who, according to Josephus, began a siege in the 7th year of his reign and destroyed the coastal city 13 years later in 586BC; the same year that the Temple was burned in Jerusalem.

During the siege of Tyre, the Tyrians moved with all their treasures to an island one kilometre off-shore however, they ceased to be a great trading port for 70 years while Babylon ruled. The city revived in the Persian era as Isaiah foretold. Ezekiel later wrote:

"Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon caused his army to serve a great service against Tyrus...yet had he no wages, nor his army, for Tyrus, for the service that he had served against it...Behold, I will give the land of Egypt unto Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon; and he shall...take her spoil...and it shall be the wages for his army" (Ezek.29:18-19)

Tyre began operations again 70 years later (516BC) in the Persian era just in time to supply the materials for the Temple service in Zerubbabel's day as foretold by Isaiah: *"Her merchandise shall be for them that dwell before the LORD, to eat sufficiently, and for durable clothing"* (Isa.23:15-18).

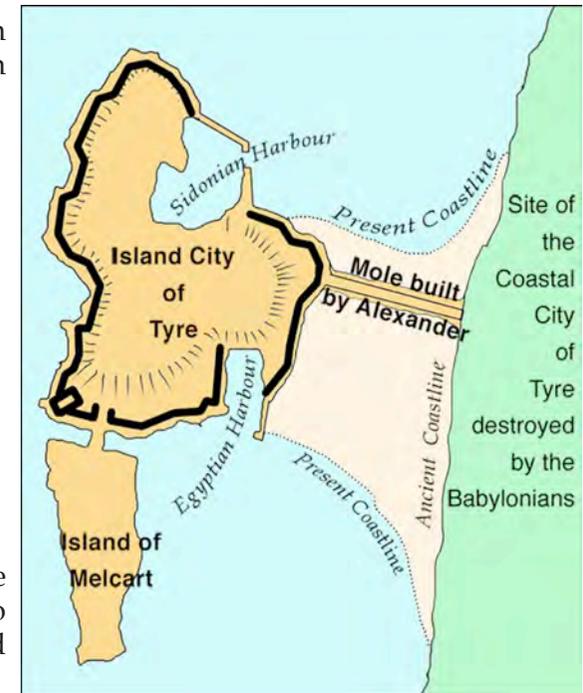


Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Egypt in 570BC and left it desolate for 40 years in fulfilment of Ezek.29:12.

The island city of Tyre was destroyed by Alexander the Great in 332BC in fulfilment of Ezek.26:3-5.

"Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up. And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea".

Alexander scraped the ruins of the coastal city left by Nebuchadnezzar into the sea to build a Mole to the island and destroy the island city.



The Judgment and Blessing of Egypt - 606BC, 570BC & in the Last Days

Three judgments of Egypt are prophesied in the Bible by four prophets; Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and Isaiah. They are:

- 1) Nebuchadnezzar's destruction of Pharaoh-necho's army at Carchemish by the River Euphrates which occurred in the 4th year of the reign of Jehoiakim (606BC) (Jeremiah 46:1-12).
- 2) Nebuchadnezzar's destruction of the land of Egypt in 570BC was foretold by Jeremiah (Jer.46:13-26) and by Ezekiel (Ezek.chapters 29-32).
- 3) The destruction of Egypt in the last days by Antichrist as foretold by Isaiah (Isa.19) and by Daniel (Dan.11:40-43).

Josiah was killed as he "meddled" with Pharaoh-necho whose army was travelling north to help the Assyrians who had made Haran and then

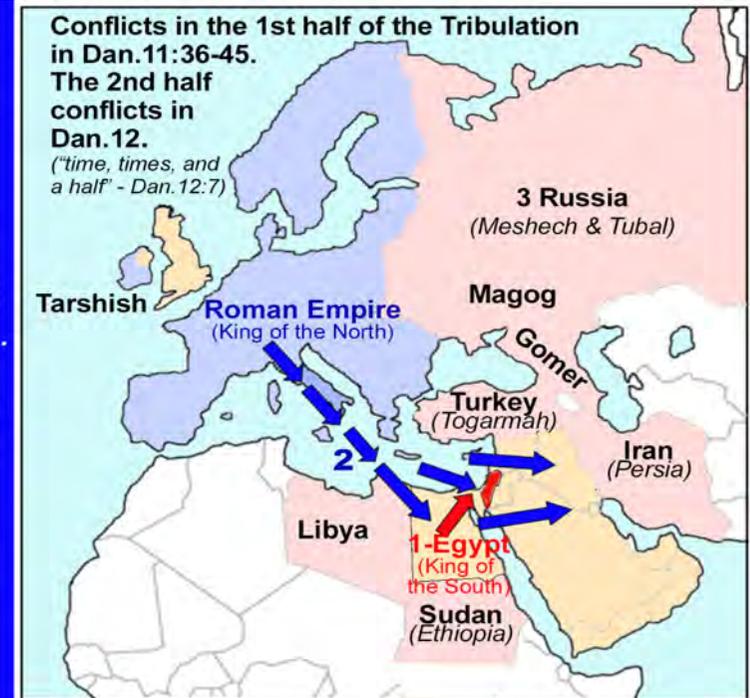


Carchemish their capital after the fall of Nineveh. Jeremiah foretold God's judgment on Pharaoh-necho who was defeated at Carchemish.

Nebuchadnezzar pursued the Egyptians to the border of Egypt and carried Daniel away from Jerusalem on the way home (606BC). In 570BC after Daniel interpreted the dream of the tree cut down (Dan.4), Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the land of Egypt which had been weakened by civil war between Pharaoh-hophra and his General, Amasis (Jer.44:30). God "broke the arm" of Pharaoh (through civil war) to give the spoils of Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar as wages for his army, for the service they rendered in besieging Tyre for 13 years (599-586BC) (Ezek.29:18; 30:21).

Egypt will be destroyed by Antichrist early in the Tribulation (Dan.11:42) but many will turn to the Lord through Jewish witness (the 144,000 Rev.7). At that time the Egyptians "shall fight every one against his brother" (Isa.19:2) just as they are today. After the Russian/Islamic army is destroyed in Israel (Ezek.38/39) many Muslims will turn to Christ and a highway will be built from Egypt and from Assyria to Jerusalem (Isa.19:23-25).

"At the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: And the king of the north (Antichrist) shall come against him like a whirlwind... He shall enter the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown... Egypt shall not escape"
 Dan.11:40-42
 (See Isa.19)



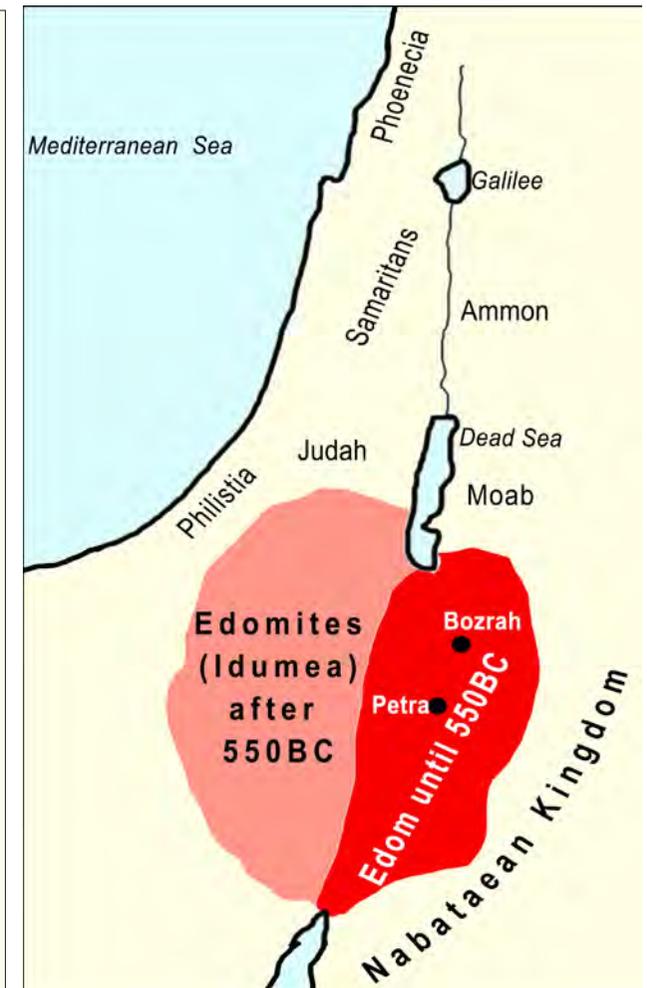
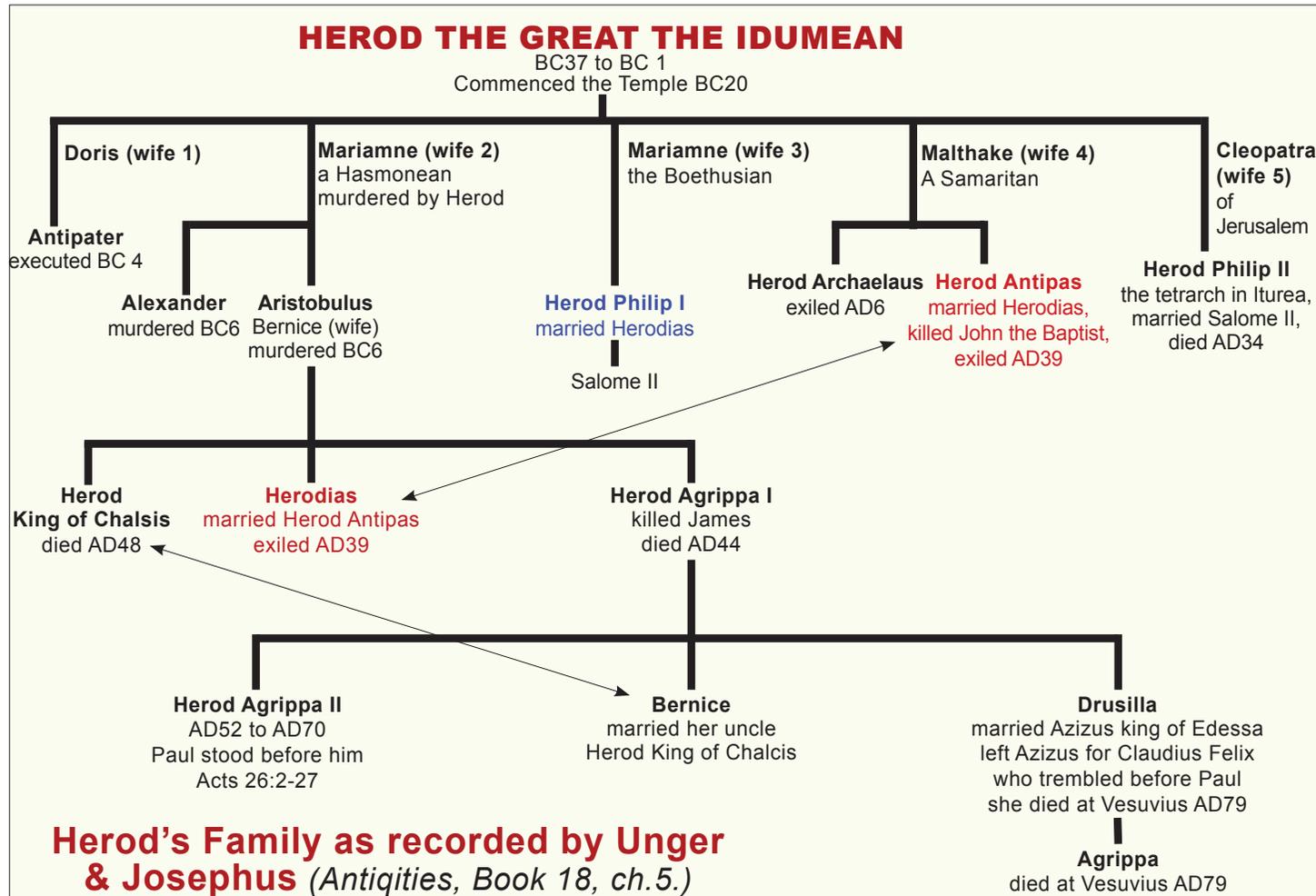
Judgment of Edom - 550BC

The Edomites were the descendants of Esau and they had a perpetual hatred for Israel. God gave them the land of Mt. Seir and they displaced the Horites who lived there. When Israel came out of Egypt the Edomites would not allow them to pass through their land.

When Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586BC the Edomites joined the Babylonians in ransacking the city. The Jewish captives in Babylon said: "Remember, O LORD, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, *Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof*" (Ps.137:7). The non-canonical First

Book of Esdras states that "the Edomites burned (the Temple) when Judea was made desolate by the Chaldees" (1Esdras 4:45).

Obadiah's prophecy against Edom was fulfilled when the Nabataeans, an Arab people, drove the Edomites into Judea about 550BC and it became known as Idumea. When the Jews returned in the Persian era, the Edomites were made to hand back the cities to the Jews, then in the days of the Maccabeans, Edomites were forced to convert to Judaism. Herod was an Idumean.



The Book of Daniel

Daniel prophesied in Babylon, and while other prophets were largely concerned with Israel, Daniel's prophecies related largely to the Gentile nations in the "times of the Gentiles". Jesus said that "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, **UNTIL the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled**" (Luke 21:24). Jerusalem began to be trodden down by the Gentiles when the Babylonians occupied the city in 606BC. From Daniel's prophecy we learn that the terminus point of the "times of the Gentiles" will be the return of Jesus Christ to reign. The last Gentile King to tread down Jerusalem and God's people Israel, will be a Roman prince called "the beast", "the man of sin", "the Wicked One", "the king of the north" and "Antichrist".

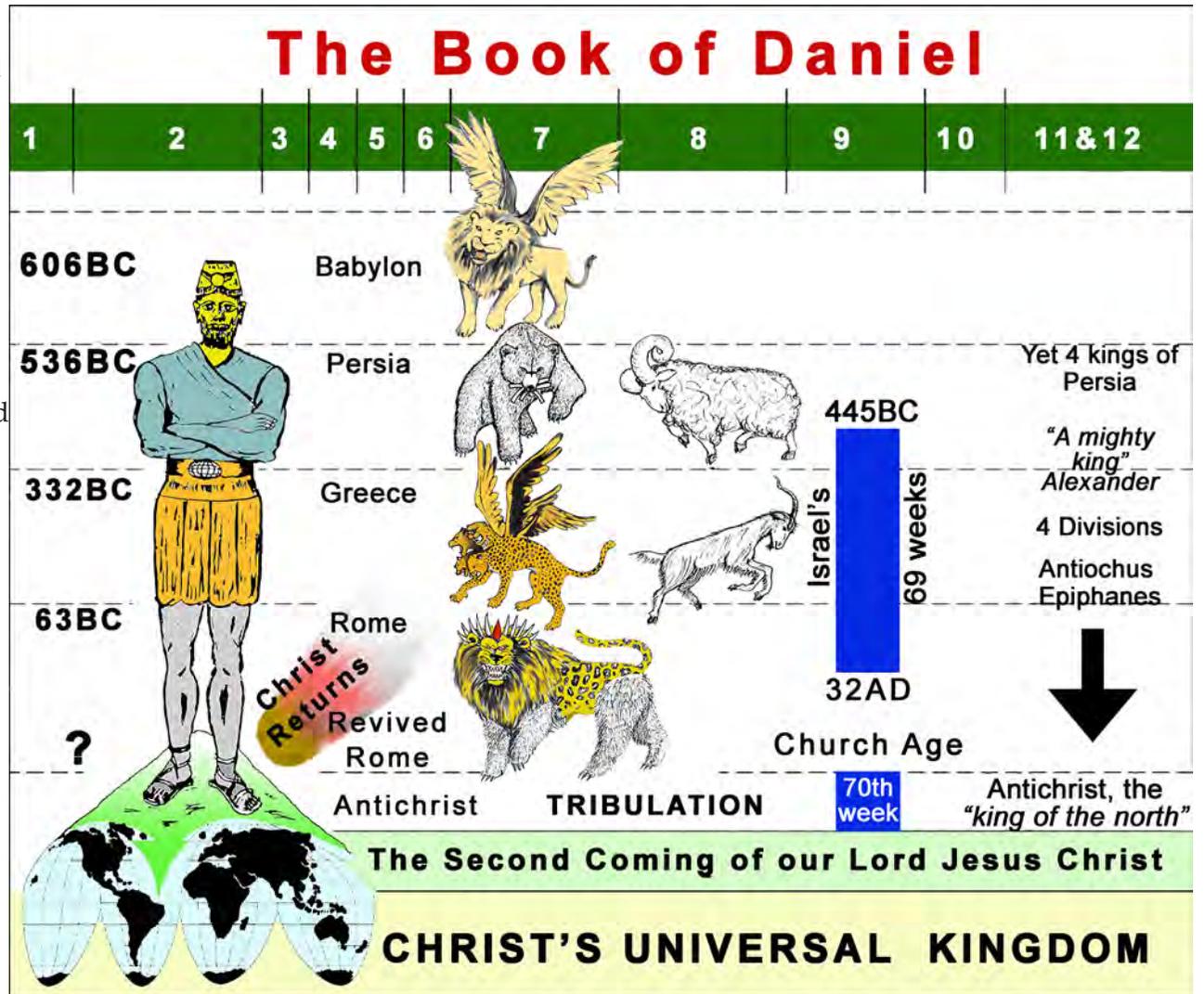
There are six chapters describing events in Daniel's time and six chapters of prophecy relating to some aspect of the Gentile occupation of Jerusalem before Christ reigns.

Chapters 2 and 7 provide a complete outline of Gentile history from the first world Empire, Babylon, to the last stage; the fourth Gentile world power, Rome. In chapter 2 Nebuchadnezzar sees Gentile political power as a glorious image but in chapter 7 Daniel sees the same empires as wild beasts.

Chapter 8 describes the Grecian Empire from Alexander the Great to Antiochus Epiphanes. After Alexander died the kingdom divided into four parts and Antiochus became the Seleucid king north of Israel (175-164BC). Antiochus fought against Egypt and defiled the Temple at Jerusalem. The Temple was cleansed by the Maccabees in 165BC. Antiochus stands as a "type" of the future Antichrist.

Chapter 9 provides the key to all Bible prophecy and especially the Book of Revelation. God's entire program for Israel is outlined in the 70 "weeks" (sevens) prophecy which determines 490 prophetic years on the Jews and Jerusalem until the nation is cleansed and blessed in Christ's Kingdom. The presentation of Christ as Israel's king on Palm Sunday is foretold at the end of 69 "weeks" or 483 prophetic years. A long gap is indicated between the 69th and 70th "weeks". The 70th "week" is the Tribulation.

Chapters 11 and 12 are one prophecy beginning with the Persian era to Xerxes who, in 480BC, offended the Greeks and gave cause for Alexander (334-323BC) to overthrow the Persian Empire. History during the four divisions of the Grecian empire after Alexander are described in amazing detail down to Antiochus Epiphanes in **chapter 11:4 to 35** when the prophecy leaps forward to Antichrist and his activities in the Last Days.



The Times of the Gentiles - Luke 21:24

Nebuchadnezzar had a dream but he could not remember what it was so he called the wise men, who claimed to be able to interpret dreams, and demanded that they recall the dream and interpret it. The wise men and magicians could not tell what the dream was but God revealed the dream and its interpretation to Daniel (Daniel chapter 2).

Nebuchadnezzar had seen an image with a head of gold, shoulders of silver, belly and thighs of brass and legs of iron. The feet and ten toes were part iron and part clay.

As Daniel watched he saw a stone come down from heaven which smote the image on the feet and the stone became a great mountain which filled the whole earth.

Head of Gold
Babylonian Empire
606BC to 536BC

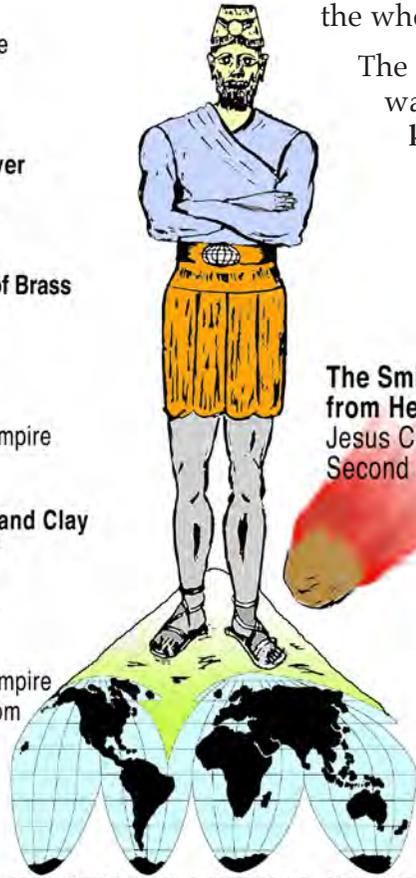
Shoulders of Silver
Persian Empire
536BC to 332BC

Belly and Thighs of Brass
Grecian Empire
332BC to 63BC

Legs of Iron
Imperial Roman Empire
63BC to 476BC

Feet of Part Iron and Clay
Weakened form of
Roman Empire
AD476 to present

Ten Toes
Revived Roman Empire
Antichrist's Kingdom
in the Tribulation



CHRIST'S MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

The interpretation given to Daniel was that there would be **four kingdoms** on earth before Christ would come from heaven to establish His Kingdom that would last for ever.

The Smiting Stone from Heaven
Jesus Christ at His Second Coming

The head of gold was Nebuchadnezzar's Babylonian Kingdom which would be replaced by the Medeo-Persian Kingdom which would be replaced by the Grecian Kingdom and finally the fourth Kingdom would be Rome which have 10 divisions in its final stage symbolized by the 10 toes.

These four kingdoms would tread down Jerusalem until Christ returned (Luke 21:24).

Nearly 50 years later, in the first year of the reign of Belshazzar over Babylon, Daniel dreamed of four wild beasts (Daniel chapter 7). The first was like a **lion with eagles** wings and this represented Babylon since the symbol of a lion was common in Babylon where 120 lions feature in glazed brick along the Processional Way inside the Ishtar Gate.

The second beast was like a **bear with three ribs** in its mouth. The ribs said to the bear "*arise devour much flesh*". The bear was the Persian Kingdom and the three ribs were Babylon, Media and Persia that made up the kingdom.

The third beast was like a **leopard with four wings and four heads** which represented the Grecian Kingdom that divided into four parts after the death of Alexander.

The fourth beast represented Rome and the 10 horns represented 10 kings that **shall arise in the last days** over a revived Roman Empire (EU).

The little horn that arises from among the 10 horns is the final king, Antichrist, who will be destroyed by Christ at His second coming.

DANIEL CHAPTER 7

("the Times of the Gentiles"- Luke 21:24)



Babylonian Empire
606BC to 536BC



Persian Empire
536 to 332BC



Grecian Empire
332 to 63BC



Roman Empire
63BC till
Christ returns

The Judgment of Babylon - 538BC

The city of Babylon was one of the wonders of the ancient world and reached the zenith of its glory in the days of Nebuchadnezzar. Nimrod was its founder and when he began to build the Tower of Babel God confused the languages and scattered the people. Babylon was the centre from which idolatry spread throughout the world. Babylonian gods were known by various names among different people but they were the same gods. When God's people, Israel, turned to the gods of Babylon, God allowed Nebuchadnezzar to take them captive to Babylon for 70 years where they were mocked by the Babylonians as indicated in Psalm 137:3 where we read: "There they that carried us away captive required of us a song;



and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion". The Psalm ends with the following:

"O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy shall he be, that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us. Happy shall he be, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones" (Ps.137:8-9).

Isaiah foretold the total desolation of Babylon:

"And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. **IT SHALL NEVER BE INHABITED, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation:** neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there" (Isa.13:19-21).

Some teach that Babylon must be rebuilt and destroyed again in the Last Days but the Bible is very clear that Babylon will **never be rebuilt**. Jeremiah wrote in his prophecy of the destruction of Babylon and indicated that it would be **the Medes** who would destroy Babylon. He wrote: "Make bright the arrows; gather the shields: **the LORD hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes:** for his device is against Babylon, to destroy it; because it is the vengeance of the LORD, the vengeance of his temple...And **I will make drunk her princes, and her wise men, her captains, and her rulers, and her mighty men: and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the King, whose name is**

the LORD of hosts. Thus saith the LORD of hosts; The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken, and her high gates shall be burned with fire; and the people shall labour in vain, and the folk in the fire, and they shall be weary" (Jer. 51:10-11, 56-58).

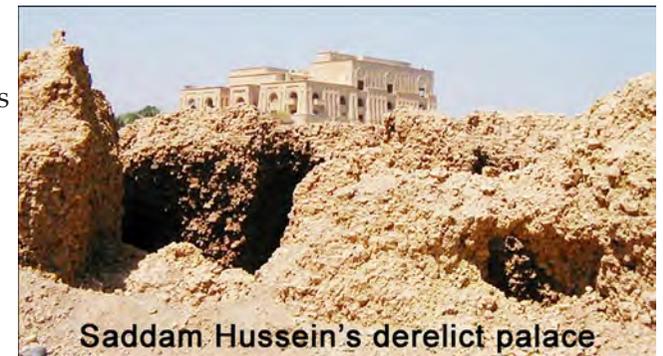
The city was suddenly captured when Darius the Mede entered via the river gates which had been left open while the rulers engaged in a drunken feast exactly as prophesied. Furthermore, when Seraiah, one of the princes in Israel, accompanied King Zedekiah on a visit to Babylon in the 4th year of his reign, Jeremiah gave him a scroll with his prophecy of Babylon's destruction and asked him to read it on arrival at Babylon. After reading the scroll, Seraiah was to bind a stone to it and cast it into the Euphrates River and say: "**Thus shall Babylon sink, AND SHALL NOT RISE FROM THE EVIL THAT I WILL BRING UPON HER**" (Jer.51:64).



Alexander the Great purposed to rebuild Babylon in 332BC and he died before he could begin; Saddam Hussein planned to rebuild Babylon and he was hanged; the palace which he had commenced was never completed and is derelict. The site is to be redeveloped as an archeological treasure.

The prophecy of the sudden destruction by fire of "Mystery Babylon" (Rev. chs.17 & 18) at the end of the Tribulation refers to Papal Rome for she sits on "seven hills", is guilty of "the blood of the martyrs of Jesus" and is associated with Antichrist who is a **Roman prince**. When she burns it will be visible from the sea whereas Babylon is hundreds of kilometers from the ocean. Rome now stretches to the coastline.

Neither is it Mecca as some teach, for it lies in a valley 80 km from the sea.



Saddam Hussein's derelict palace

After the Babylonian Captivity

Jeremiah prophesied that the Jews would be held captive in Babylon for 70 years (Jer.25:11-12; 29:10) after which they would return to the land. *“Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the LORD, and Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land... And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations”* (Jer.25:9-12).

About 700BC Isaiah prophesied that Cyrus, as the first king of the Persian Empire, would release the captive Jews and allow them to return to the land and rebuild **the Temple** (Isa.44:28; 45:1-5). Cyrus’ decree was given in 536BC which was 70 years after the first Babylonian invasion in 606BC.

Zerubbabel led the Jews back to Jerusalem from Babylon to rebuild the Temple in 536BC but work on the Temple was hindered by the people of the land and construction was not completed until 516BC in the reign of Darius the Great; 70 years after its destruction in 586BC. While the Temple was rebuilt, the city of Jerusalem remained in ruins until Nehemiah returned in the month Nisan, in the 20th year of Artaxerxes, as described in Nehemiah chapter 2.

This second decree by Artaxerxes is very important because it is the **start date for the seventy “weeks” prophecy** recorded in Daniel chapter 9 verses 24 to 27 and describes God’s plan for Israel from 445BC to when the nation will be blessed in the millennial Kingdom. Artaxerxes began his reign in 465BC and the 20th year was therefore 445BC which fixes the start date for the “seventy weeks” prophecy.

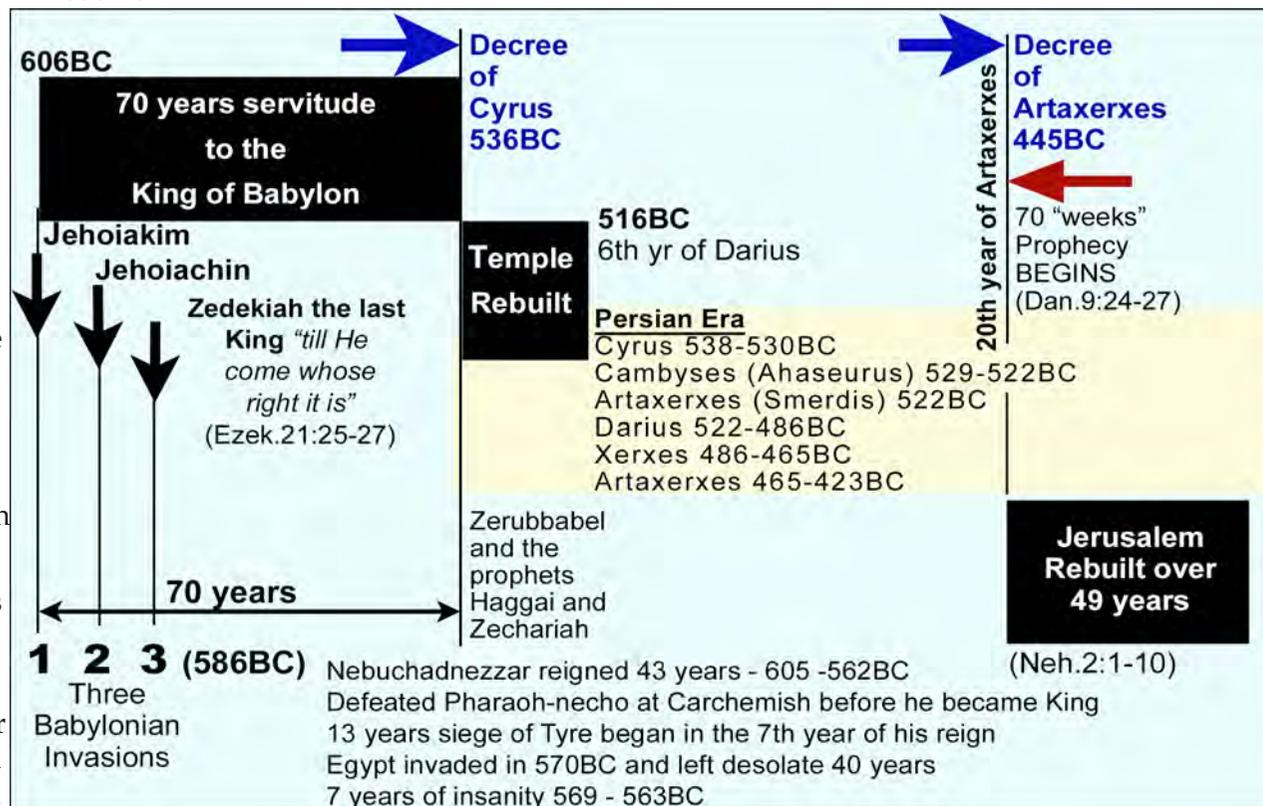
When Daniel realized the 70 years foretold by Jeremiah was soon to be completed, he sought the Lord to know God’s future plans for His people and the **“holy city”, Jerusalem.**

The decree of Cyrus allowed the Jews to build a “house” for the God of Israel but the decree of Artaxerxes allowed them to rebuild the “city” of Jerusalem. When Nehemiah arrived

at Jerusalem the Samaritans frustrated the builders so within 50 days they erected the wall sufficiently to give protection. They then proceeded to build inside the wall.

The start-date for the 70 “weeks” prophecy has been confused with the decree of Cyrus (536BC) and the return of Ezra in the 7th year of Artaxerxes (458BC). However, the prophecy clearly states that the seventy “weeks” (sevens) starts *“from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem”* (Dan.9:25).

Neither Zerubbabel nor Ezra **rebuilt Jerusalem** but Nehemiah did and the second decree therefore begins Daniel’s prophecy. From the 20th year of Artaxerxes to Palm Sunday is $69 \times 7 = 483$ prophetic years. There is a long gap after the 69th “week” until a Roman prince makes a covenant with Israel in the last days for the final seven years.



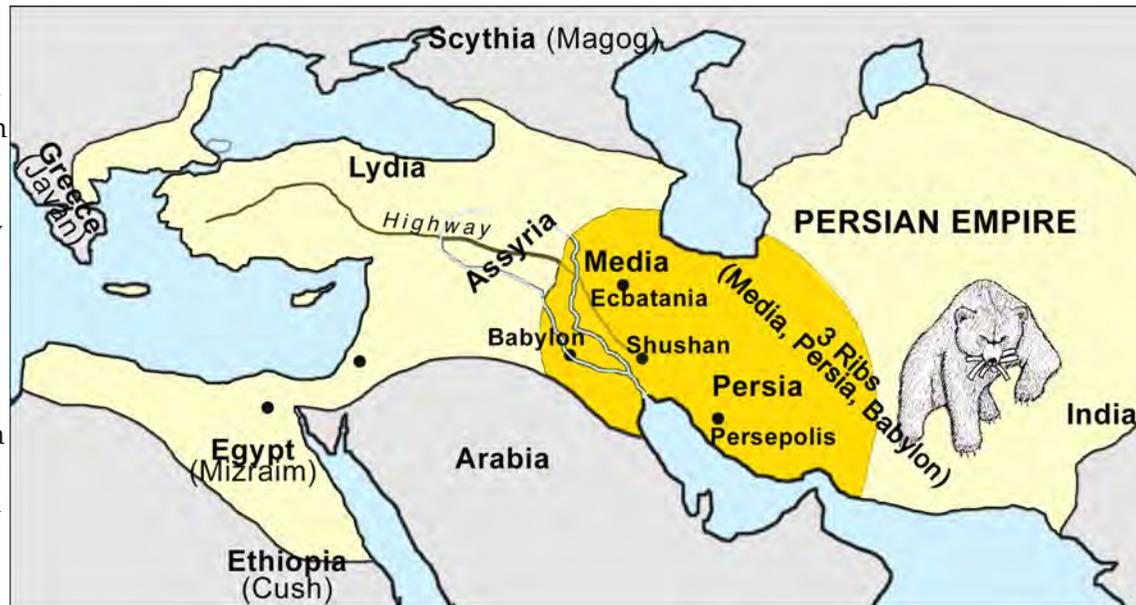
The Persian Empire - Its Rise, Fall, and Future

Isaiah prophesied (700BC) the destruction of Babylon by the Medes and Persians in 538BC and even named the King of Persia, **Cyrus**, as God's instrument to bring this about (Isa.44:28; 45:1-4). Babylon had been used of God to chasten Israel for 70 years but the idolatrous Babylonians had mocked the God of Israel (Ps.137:1-4) and gone beyond what God had allowed (Zech.1:15) and so God raised up Cyrus to execute judgment on Babylon.

Herodotus (450BC) the Greek historian, recorded in the first of his nine books, the history of the kings of the Medes beginning with the first king, Deioces, who revolted against Assyria about 705BC and whose grandson, Cyaxares, joined with Nabopolassar, Nebuchanezzar's father, to conquer Nineveh in 612BC. Cyaxares' son, Astyages, married Alyattes the daughter of the king of Lydia but they had no sons. Their daughter Mandane married a Persian prince, Cambyses, and Cyrus was born to them. Astyages had a dream which he interpreted to mean that Mandane's child would take Asia away from him and so he ordered Cyrus be killed soon after he was born.

Harpagus, Astyages' General, could not kill Cyrus and gave him to the king's herdsman, Mitrdates, whose wife had had a still-born baby which was buried in the place of Cyrus. At age 10, Cyrus was identified by Astyages who recognized the family likeness and Harpagus confessed that he had not killed Cyrus. Astyages then secretly killed the General's 13-year old son, cooked part of his body, and gave it to Harpagus to eat at a banquet. When he had eaten it, Astyages asked if he enjoyed it. The boy's head was then produced in a basket.

Cyrus was sent to his parents in Persia but, when he was grown, Harpagus sent a message to him that if he would raise an army and revolt, the Median army would surrender to him. Cyrus invaded Media, Astyages was killed, and Cyrus became king of the Medo-Persian Kingdom in fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy, being both Persian and Median.



Cyrus was favourable to the Jews and in fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy let the captive Jews return to the land (Isa.45:13) to rebuild the Temple in 536BC.

During the Babylonian era Elam (Persia) had come under Babylonian control as Jeremiah foretold that it would (Jer.49:35):

"Behold, I will break the bow of Elam...and I will cause Elam to be dismayed before their enemies (Babylon)" (Jer.49:35-37).

However, with the overthrow of Babylon by the Medes and Persians in 538BC God said He would set His throne in Elam (Jer.49:38) (Persia).

"And I will set my throne in Elam, and will destroy from thence the king and the princes (of Babylon), saith the LORD" (Jer.49:38).

The Persian Empire favoured the Jews. **Daniel** was Prime Minister under Cyrus, **Zerubbabel** was a body guard to Darius according to Jewish tradition, and Darius confirmed the decree of Cyrus (520BC) allowing the Jews to complete the Temple reconstruction. **Esther** was Queen to Xerxes

and **Mordecai** was Prime minister. Xerxes allowed the Jews to destroy all who would do them harm and Artaxerxes in 445BC made **Nehemiah** Governor in Judea and gave a decree that Jerusalem be rebuilt. **In the last days**, Iran (Persia) will be blessed: *"But it shall come to pass in the latter days, that I will bring again the captivity of Elam, saith the LORD"* (Jer.49:37). Other scriptures speak of Islamic nations turning to the Lord in the Tribulation. For example, Egypt and Assyria (Iraq) (Isaiah 19:18-25).

The Medo-Persian Empire is described as a bear in Daniel 7 that *"raised up itself on one side,*

and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh" (Dan.7:5). Persia dominated over Media and the three ribs represented Persia, Babylonia, and Media which were the core nations of the Persian Empire.

Background to Ezra and Nehemiah

After the 70 years of Babylonian captivity Zerubbabel was authorised by Cyrus to return and rebuild the "house of God" at Jerusalem. When the decree was made known, 49,697 Jews joined him and they took horses, mules, camels and asses in great numbers. In addition, approximately US\$1.5 million worth of silver and US\$5.3 million worth of gold was donated (Ezra 2:64-69).

Construction of the Temple proceeded until the death of Cyrus in 530BC but when his evil son Cambyses (Ahasuerus) (Ezra 4:6) began to reign the Samaritans made accusations to the King and the work on the Temple was ordered to cease.

According to Josephus, Zerubbabel then returned to Susa in Persia, to his friend Darius, and was employed as a bodyguard. Darius had made a vow that if ever he became king he would order the Temple at Jerusalem to be rebuilt. Zerubbabel was elevated to the first of three bodyguards because he excelled in wisdom.

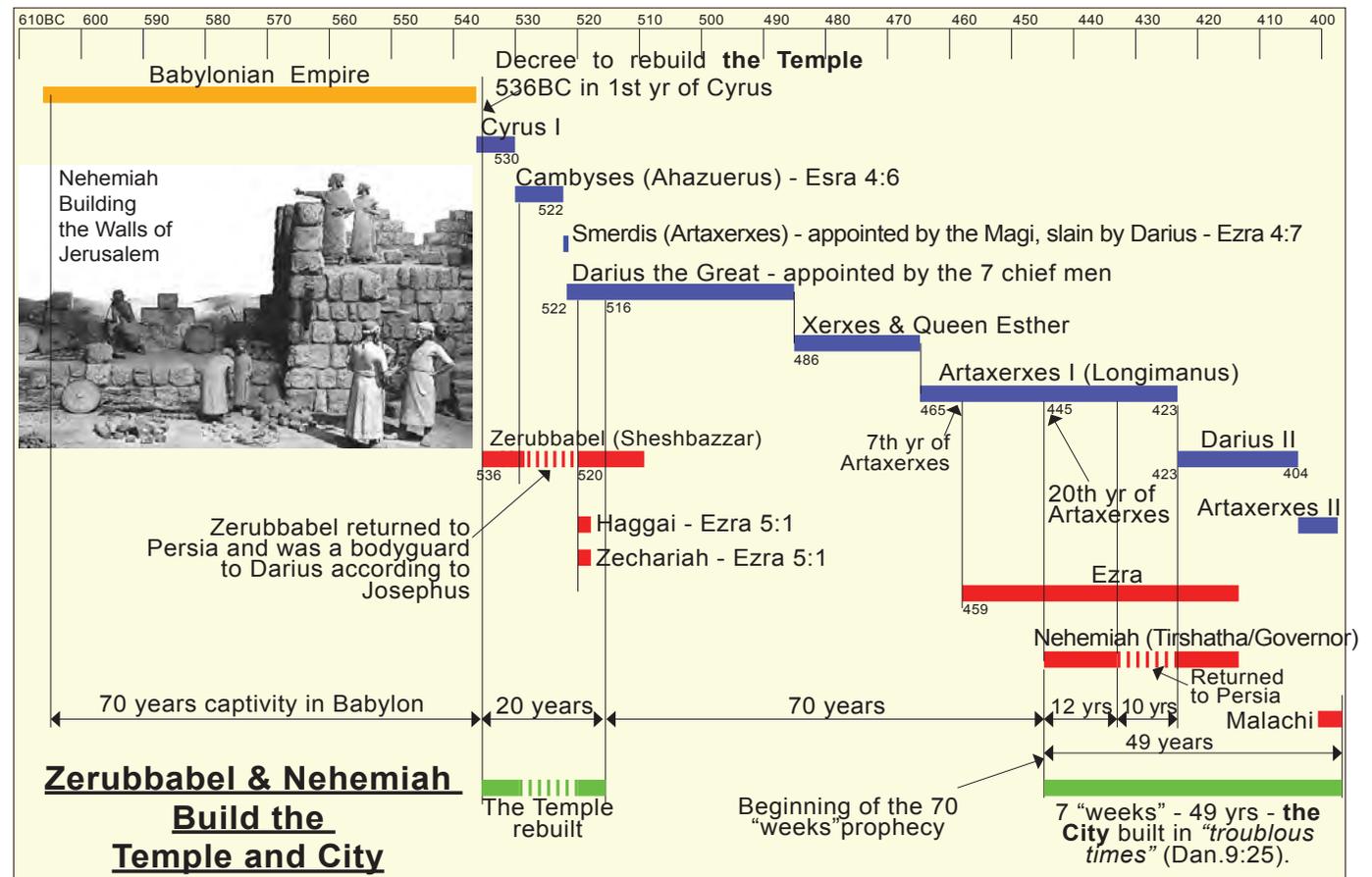
After Cambyses committed suicide at Damascus on his way home from a war with Egypt a usurper named Smerdis, called himself Artaxerxes (Ezra 4:7) and took the throne with the support of the Magi.

Darius slew Smerdis and the Magi and was crowned king by the heads of the seven families that ruled Persia (Esther 1:14). Zerubbabel would have had a vital role in the overthrow of Smerdis.

Meanwhile the prophets Haggai and Zechariah had urged the people to continue building the Temple and when this came to the notice of Darius he confirmed the decree of Cyrus in the 2nd year of his reign. Zerubbabel returned and the Temple was finished in the 6th year of the reign of Darius (516BC) (Ezra 6:15). Zechariah confirms it was Zerubbabel who finished the Temple and for this reason he must have returned to Jerusalem (Zech.4:9).

Seventy years later in 445BC, Nehemiah received a decree from King Artaxerxes I to rebuild the city of

Jerusalem (Neh.2:8) which was still uninhabited (Neh.7:4). This decree was the commencement date for the 70 "weeks" prophecy of Daniel (Dan.9:24-27) and dates its beginning from the month Abib in the 20th year of Artaxerxes. Nehemiah returned to Persia after 12 years, in the 32nd year of Artaxerxes (Neh.5:14; 13:6). He returned to Jerusalem (Neh.13:7) about 10 years later after Artaxerxes died to find that Jews had intermarried with the heathen, their children could not speak Hebrew, Tobiah the Ammonite had been given a room in the Temple and some Jews did not keep the sabbath. Nehemiah took firm action to correct the errors. Josephus says that Nehemiah died at an old age which would be only a few years before the prophet Malachi brought the Old Testament to a close.



The Grecian Era after Alexander - Dan.11:1-35

In Daniel chapter 11 the rise and fall of Greece as a world power is foretold by Daniel in remarkable detail, so much so, that critics has suggested that the Book of Daniel must have been written after the events described. The prophecy appears in chapters 8 and 11 where the overthrow of the Persian Kingdom is seen as the reaction of Alexander the Great to the invasion of Greece by Xerxes I the Persian king, in 480BC. At that time Xerxes crossed the Hellespont, capturing and burning Athens. After suffering defeat in the sea battle at Salamis he withdrew. Daniel wrote:

“Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia” (Dan.11:2).

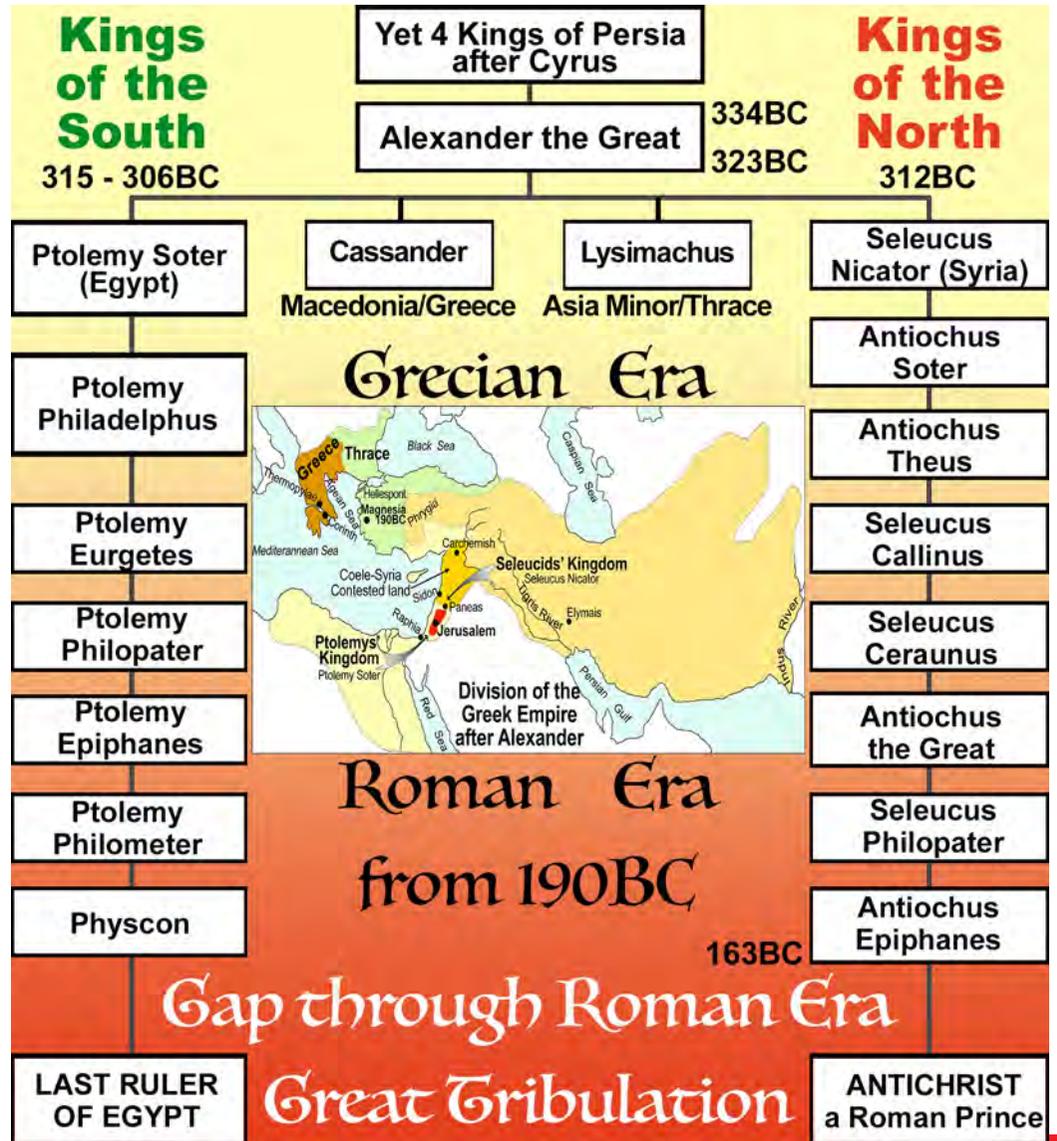
Daniel wrote in the reign of Cyrus the **first king of Persia** and the four kings who followed were Cambyses (Ahaseurus), Smerdis (Artaxerxes), Darius I and Xerxes who was married to Queen Esther. Xerxes was exceedingly rich and led the Persian armies in his unsuccessful campaign against Greece in 480BC. The prophecy looks forward to Alexander the Macedonian King, who in 334BC led his army into Asia Minor and three times defeated Darius II at Granicus, Isis, and Gaugamela before capturing the entire Persian Empire. He is described as a *“mighty king...that shall rule with great dominion”* (Dan.11:3).

When Alexander achieved dominion however, his kingdom was *“broken”* and in 323BC he died at Babylon leaving his kingdom to his four Generals and *“not to his posterity”* (Dan.11:4).

In Daniel Chapter 11 from verses 5 to 35 Daniel foretold the conflicts between the King of the North (of Israel), which was the **Seleucid Kingdom**, and the King of the South (of Israel), which was **Egypt**, down to 165BC when the Seleucid king, Antiochus Epiphanes desecrated the Temple, slaughtered the Jews, and caused Jewish sacrifices to cease.

Antiochus had invaded Egypt in 169BC but ambassadors from the Roman Senate arrived and ordered him out of Egypt. He had no option but to depart since his father **Antiochus the Great** had been defeated by the Roman Prince, Scipio, at the **battle of Magnesia (190BC)** and was compelled to withdraw from Asia Minor to east of the Halys River and pay tribute to Rome. In 167BC Antiochus Epiphanes returned and desecrated the Temple.

In this regard Antiochus stands as a ‘type’ of the future Roman prince, Antichrist, who is described in Daniel ch.11:36 to 45 as the King of the North. Just as Antiochus placed an idol to Jupiter (Zeus) in the Temple at Jerusalem, so Antichrist, at the mid-point of the 7-year Tribulation, will set up his image in the rebuilt Temple and will cause the Jewish *“sacrifice and oblation to cease”* (Dan.9:27). See 2Thess.2:4.



The Grecian Era after Alexander Cont...

Amazing detail is foretold of the conflicts between the Seleucid kings and the Ptolemies. Dan.11:5 states that the first king of the North (Seleucus Nicator) would have a **larger dominion, from Asia to India** and *"in the end of years"* or *"after years"* the King of the South (Philadelphus) would be joined to the King of the North (Theus) and give his daughter (Berenice) to *"make an agreement"* (11:6). Theus was to put away his former wife Laodice and her sons were to renounce any claim to the throne. When Philadelphus died, Theus took Laodice back and she drove Berenice out (*"she shall not retain the power of the arm"*) with her infant son. Laodice had Berenice, her son, and her guard (*"he that strengthened her"*) killed before poisoning Theus (*"neither shall he stand, nor his arm"*) and Seleucus Callinus reigned.

Philadelphus had favoured the Jews in Egypt and paid 72 Jewish elders to translate the Scriptures into Greek. He freed all Jewish slaves including 120,000 in his army. He gave lavish gifts to Eleazar the High Priest and to the Temple.

Berenice's brother (*"a branch out of her roots"*), Ptolemy Eurgetes overran the Northern kingdom to as far as the **Tigris River** and brought back captives, vast spoils and gods (11:7-8). He returned to Egypt and *"continued more years"* than Seleucus Callinus (about 4 years).

The sons of Callinus (Ceraunus and Antiochus the Great) were stirred up but Ceraunus died when he fell from his horse possibly in battle in **Phrygia**. Then *"one"* son, 18-year-old Antiochus the Great, assembled a great army and came against Ptolemy Philopater who met him at at **Raphia** south of Gaza with 70,000 infantry, 5,000 cavalry. Antiochus lost 10,300 men and 4,000 were taken prisoner.

Ptolemy Philopater returned to Egypt and his *"heart was lifted up"*. His life style angered his people and they rebelled.

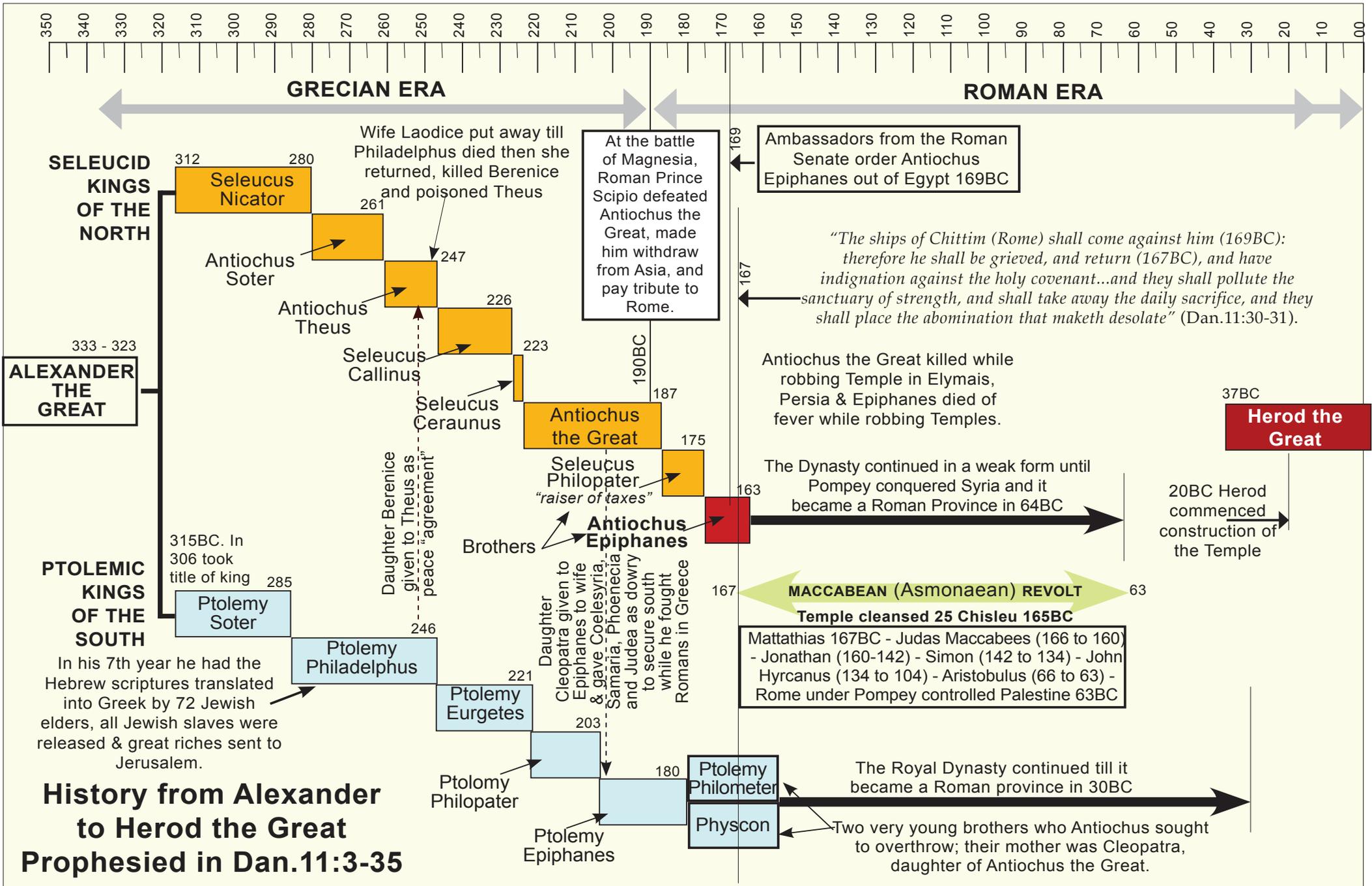
Antiochus the Great spent years securing his northern kingdom in Persia and India where he gathered a great army and after *"certain years"* (14 years) in 198BC, came against the very young Ptolemy Epiphanes. Ptolemy Philopater had died.

Ptolemy Epiphanes sent his General Scopus against Antiochus the Great but he was defeated and fled with

10,000 of his men to **Sidon** and was besieged. Ptolemy sent three of his best Generals with elite troops to rescue Scopus but they failed and returned to Egypt. Scopus surrendered when his food ran out.

At this time Rome was threatening from the west and so Antiochus the Great gave his daughter Cleopatra to young Ptolemy Epiphanes to wife hoping she would support him *"but she shall not stand on his side, neither be for him"* (11:17). Antiochus the Great also gave a dowry of all the lands he had just conquered, between Syria and Egypt, back to Ptolemy while he went to *"the isles"* in the **Aegean Sea** to meet the challenge from the Romans. After conquering all Asia he crossed the **Hellespont** and by 192BC he was established in Greece north of Corinth. In 191BC Antiochus was defeated at **Thermopylae** (Greece) and he retreated to Ephesus in Asia. In 190BC the Roman Prince Scipio defeated Antiochus at **Magnesia** and ordered him to pay 1,000 talents of silver each year to Rome. He was killed 3 years later while robbing a temple at **Elymais in Persia** and his son Seleucus Philopater reigned. He was a *"raiser of taxes"* and died a few days after a failed attempt to rob the Temple at **Jerusalem** by poisoning *"neither in anger, nor in battle"* (11:20). **Seleucus Philopater's brother Antiochus Epiphanes** then took the throne and fought against the Maccabees.





The Maccabean Wars from Antiochus Epiphanes to Herod - 167BC to 40BC

In the days of the Seleucid King Antiochus Epiphanes, there began a Jewish movement for independence led by the Asmonaeen (Maccabean) family, the head of which was a priest named Mattathias who had five sons. Mattathias had retired from priestly service in the Temple to the small town of Modin near Jerusalem.

Antiochus Epiphanes plundered the Temple at Jerusalem and erected an idol on the altar of burnt sacrifice. He sacrificed swine on the altar, sprinkled swine's broth in the Temple, and demanded that all people in his kingdom worship his god. Copies of the law were burned and circumcision was forbidden. **Mattathias** refused to sacrifice to the pagan deity and when he saw a Jew go forward to sacrifice, slew him, and broke down the altar. This act triggered the War of Independence led by the Asmonaeans which raged until the Roman era in the time of Herod the Great; a period from 167BC to 40BC when Herod began to reign.

When Mattathias died his third son **Judas Maccabeus** took the military leadership. The Jewish revolt was primarily a reaction to interference by pagans in Temple worship and the right to live according to the Law. Antiochus made three invasions of Egypt and on one occasion when he was returning to Syria he slew 40,000 Jews and took 40,000 captive.

Antiochus sent Lysias to put down the Jewish revolt while he went to plunder Temples in Persia in 163 BC. After hearing that Lysias, had been defeated by Judas Maccabees in Judaea, he fell ill and died, full of remorse saying,

"Now I remember the evils that I did at Jerusalem...and, behold, I perish through great grief in a strange land" (I Maccabees 6:12-13).

In 163 BC Lysias besieged Jerusalem in Judas' absence and many Jews sued for peace. An army led by Nicanor was sent to destroy Judas and his army but Nicanor was defeated in two decisive battles in 161BC at Capharaslama and at Adasa but Bacchides caught Judas with only a small company of his men and he died in battle at Eleasa in 161 BC.

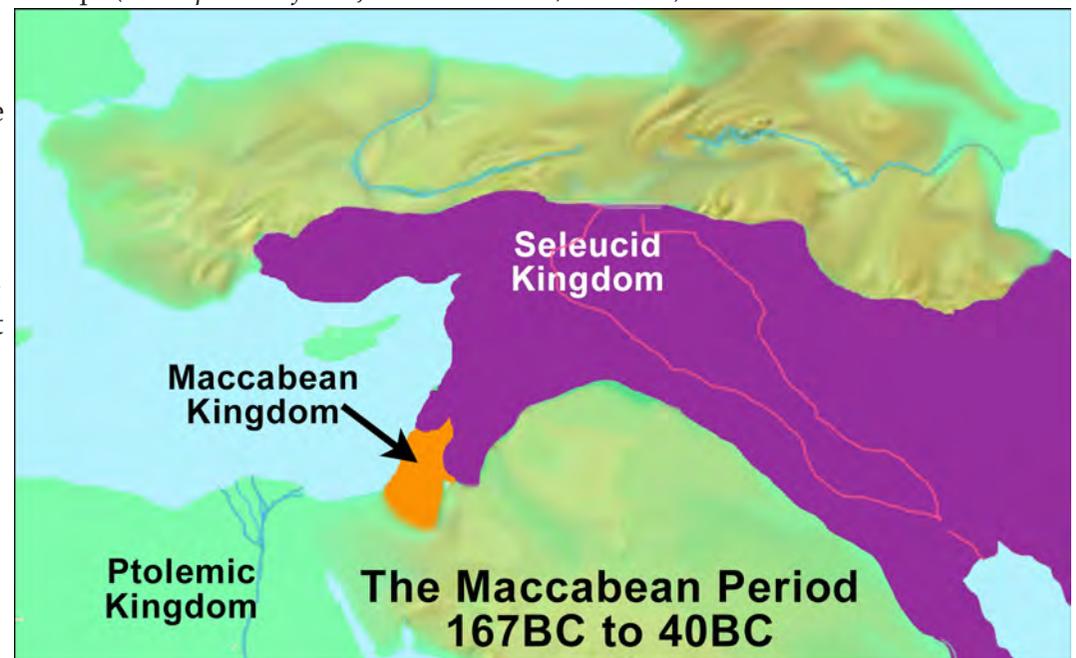
Jonathan, the youngest son of Mattathias took over the leadership and continued the fight gaining a measure of independence until in 144 BC he was captured by Tryphon and later slain.

Simon, the last surviving son of Mattathias negotiated the independence of the Jews in 143 BC to obtain the favour of Rome which was becoming the dominant world power as the Grecian world crumbled. Simon and his two sons were murdered in 135 BC.

John Hyrcanus was the next to lead the nation but soon after this, Judea was again invaded by a Seleucid King and Jerusalem besieged. The Jews surrendered and agreed to pay redemption money but later shook off the Seleucid yoke. Hyrcanus opened the tomb of David and was able to hire mercenary troops for his army. He and his sons destroyed the Samaritan Temple which had been built on Mount Gerizim in the days of Alexander the Great. It was later rebuilt by Herod the Great. The Jews were thus able to maintain their independence until the **Roman General Pompey occupied Jerusalem in 63 BC.**

Herod, an Idumaeen (Edomite), was made governor of Galilee by Mark Antony in 47 BC. and the Roman Senate was persuaded to make him King of Judaea in 40 BC. The last Asmonaeen leader, Antigonus, held Herod at bay for three years but Herod finally asserted his authority as king and captured Jerusalem in 37 BC. Antigonus was beheaded by the Romans. Josephus states:

"the government of the Asmonaeans ceased 126 years after it was set up" (*Antiquities of the Jews* Book XIV, Ch.XVI).



The Roman Empire - The Final Stage of the Times of the Gentiles

The fourth and last kingdom in the "times of the Gentiles" is the Roman Empire and Antichrist is the final Roman prince. Historically, Rome has never ceased to exist down through the last 2,000 years; it has simply changed its form.

The Roman Empire is both political and religious. Just as Nebuchadnezzar used his golden image to control all peoples, so Rome has used Emperor worship on pain of death to control its peoples. When Constantine proclaimed the Roman Empire to be "Christian" it was for political reasons because it was estimated there were 7 million Christians around the Mediterranean Sea. However Christendom corrupted and became "mystery Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth" (Rev.17:5). The idolatry of Babylon entered the Roman Church and when Rome was overrun by the German tribes the Pope crowned Charlemagne, King of the Franks (Germans), Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire (AD800).

The Papacy ruled through its secular arm: the kings of the earth who were subject to the Pope.

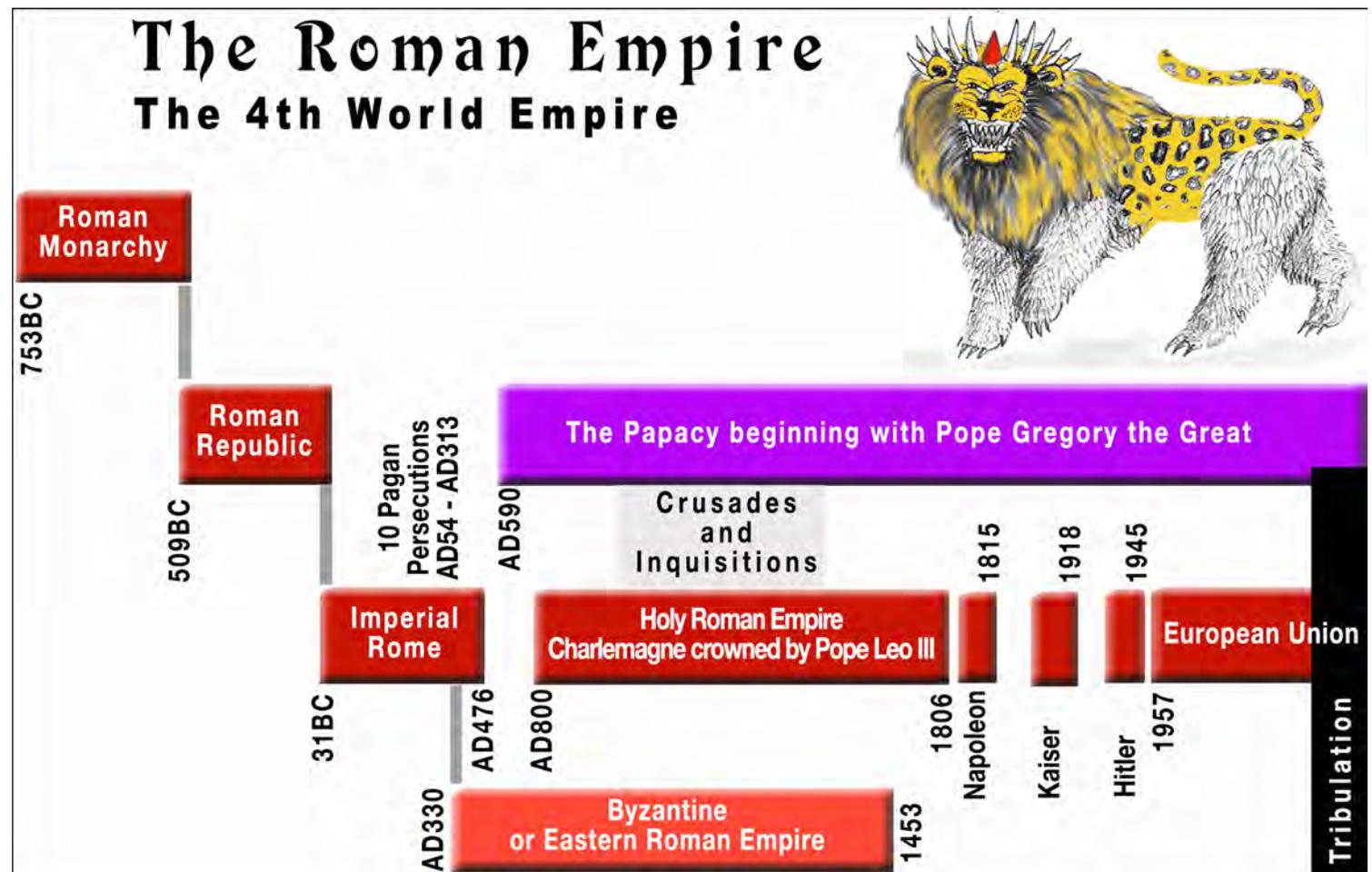
Scripture indicates that the Roman Empire would go through a stage of disintegration and is likened to **part iron and part clay**; "partly strong and partly broken" as seen in the image of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan.2:42).

The last stage of the Roman Empire before Christ comes from heaven will have **ten divisions** symbolized by the ten toes of the image in chapter 2 and by the ten horns on the fourth beast in chapter 7.

The "ten horns out of this kingdom are ten

kings that shall arise: and another shall arise after them...and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time" (three and a half years) (Dan.7:24-25).

The "little horn" (Dan.7:8) that arises from among the ten horns is the person of the Antichrist who will have total global control for the last 42 months of the 7-year Tribulation (Rev.13:5). But Christ will come "immediately after the Tribulation" (Matt.24:29) and He will reign from Jerusalem for 1,000 years.



The Seventy "Weeks" Prophecy Daniel 9:24-27. The Key to Last-Days Prophecy

"70 weeks (sevens) are determined upon **THY PEOPLE (ISRAEL)** and upon **THY HOLY CITY (Jerusalem)**, to finish the transgression, and make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy" (Dan.9:24).

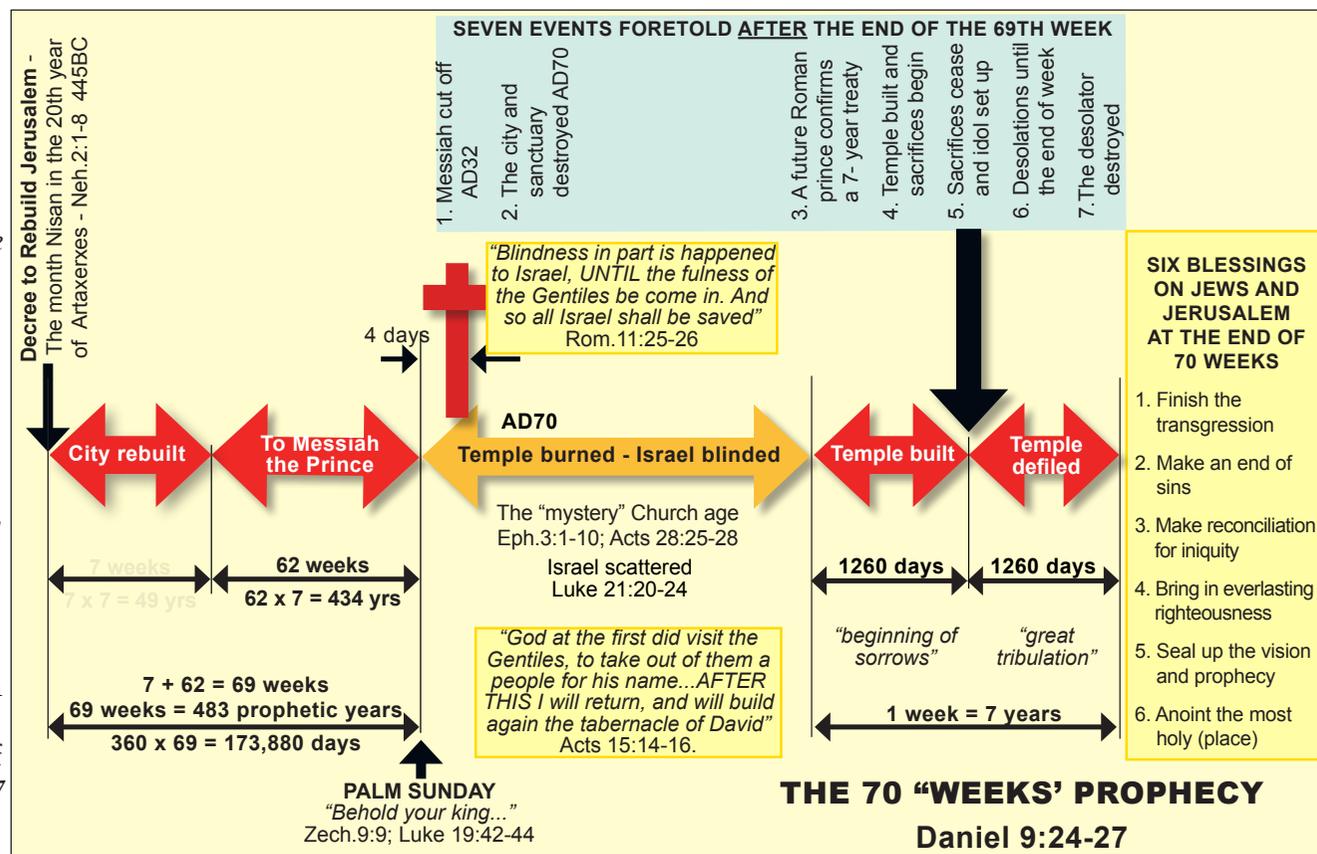
This amazing prophecy defines God's plan for His people Israel and for Jerusalem. We know exactly when the prophecy would begin: "from the going forth of the commandment to **restore and build Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince** shall be seven 'weeks', and threescore and two 'weeks'" (Dan.9:25).

As shown in the chart on page 26 the decree of Cyrus in 536B.C. allowed the Jews to return from Babylon to rebuild the Temple but the decree of Artaxerxes in the month Nisan (Passover month), in the 20th year of Artaxerxes (445BC) was the decree that allowed the Jews to **rebuild the CITY** of Jerusalem. From that date to Messiah the Prince would be 7 + 62 (sevens) = 69 (sevens) = 483 years. All Bible prophecy assumes a 360-day year as shown in Gen.7:11 and 8:3-4,13-14 where five months is said to be 150 days. Elsewhere $3\frac{1}{2}$ years = 42 months = 1260 days (Rev.11:2,3; 12:6,14; 13:5).

Jewish feasts followed the **lunar calendar** which differs from the Gregorian **solar calendar**, and Sir Robert Anderson QC has shown in his book, *The Coming Prince*, that from passover in 445BC to passover AD32 was 173,880 days and that the day Jesus presented Himself to Israel as her King was Palm Sunday just before Passover. Jesus said to the Jews: "If thou hadst known, even thou, **at least in THIS THY DAY** the things that belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes" (Luke 19:41).

The prophecy states that **AFTER** this event Messiah would be "cut off": Christ was crucified on the Thursday following Palm Sunday.

The "city and the sanctuary" must then be destroyed, which we know occurred in AD70. So there was a gap between the 69th and 70th "week".



Finally, a Roman prince must confirm a "covenant with many for one 'week'" (Dan.9:27) and **this has never happened**. It is therefore **future**. Half-way through the final seven years this Roman prince will cause the sacrifice and oblation in the Temple to cease "for the overspreading of abominations" (idolatry) (Dan.9:27). This cannot be Christ's sacrifice putting an end to Old Testament sacrifices: the purpose is "for the overspreading of abominations".

The obvious implication is that the Temple which was destroyed by the Romans in AD70 must be **rebuilt** under this covenant in order for the Jews to recommence sacrifices. The future Roman "prince" is undoubtedly Antichrist who Paul said would sit in the "temple of God showing himself that he is God" (2Thess.2:4). He is the "little horn" (Dan.7:20), the final ruler of the revived Roman Empire. Jesus mentions this as **future** in Matthew 24:15.

When Christ returns, Antichrist will be destroyed and **the Jews and Jerusalem will experience the six promised blessings in the Kingdom**.

Introduction to Ezekiel

It is of the greatest importance when studying the books of the Bible to have a clear understanding of the historical context. Prophecies need to be understood in the light of events occurring at the time. Too often prophecies that have already been fulfilled in history have been applied to the future. A good understanding of the historical background of the time will avoid such mistakes.

Ezekiel was a young priest who was taken captive to Babylon when Nebuchadnezzar came the second time to Jerusalem when evil King Jehoiakim was killed and his son Jehoiachin was taken captive to Babylon.

After Jehoiachin was taken away, his uncle Zedekiah was made King and he paid tribute to Babylon. In his 4th year, Zedekiah visited Babylon (Jer.51:59) but after his return to Jerusalem he listened to the false prophets who claimed to speak the word of the Lord saying that within two years Babylon would be destroyed and all the captives in Babylon would return.

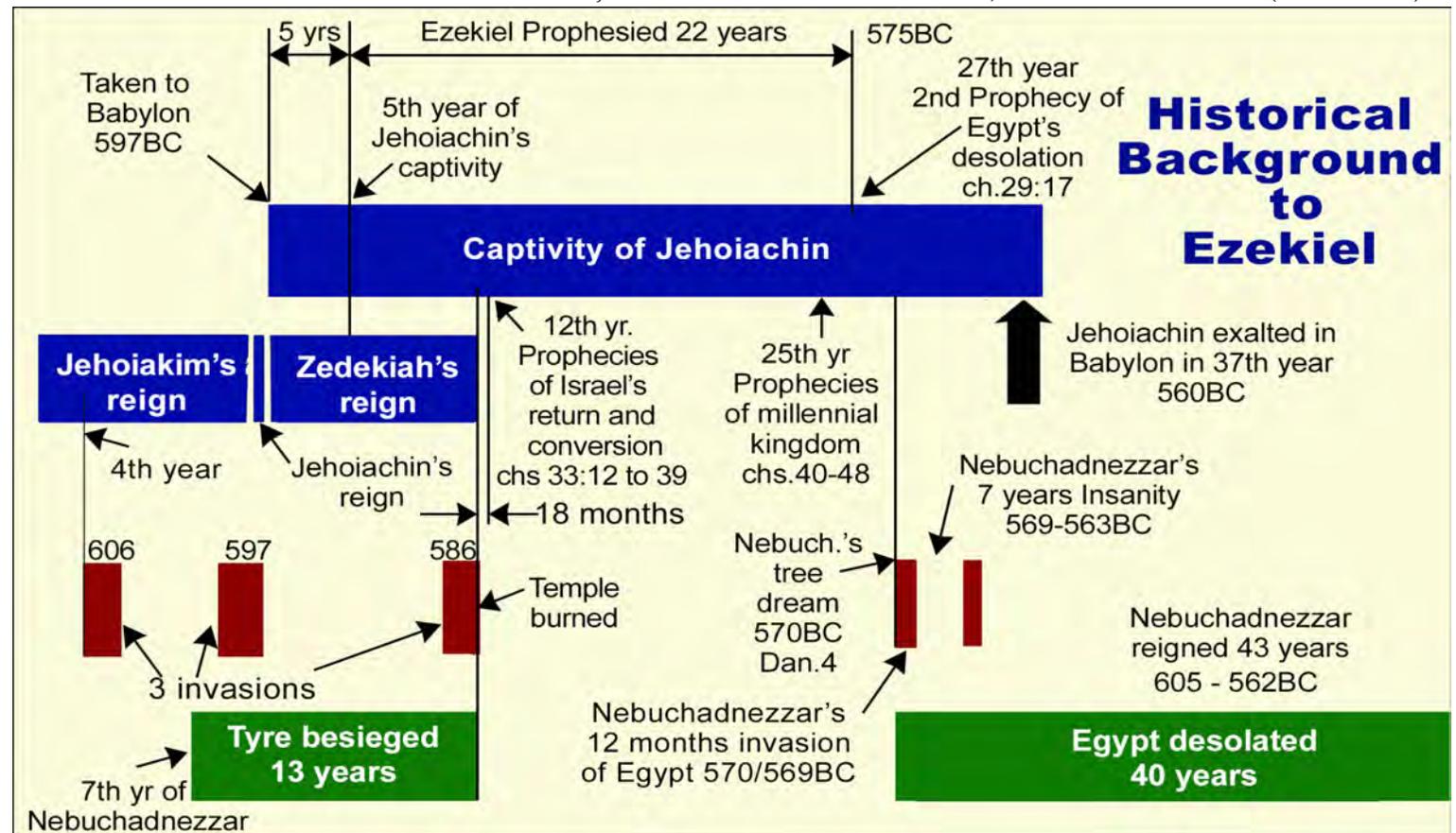
Jeremiah prophesied in the land while Ezekiel prophesied in Babylon telling the people not to resist the King of Babylon for God had determined that the Babylonian Empire would continue for 70 years (Jer.25:11-12; 29:10) and there would yet be a third invasion of Judea by Nebuchadnezzar who would destroy the city and the Temple; many would be slain or taken captive; King Zedekiah would be blinded and taken to Babylon where he would die in prison.

Ezekiel was warned by God before he began to prophesy, that the Jews would not listen to him or heed his message (See Ezek.chs.2 and 3).

Each time the Word of the Lord came to Ezekiel it was dated from the captivity of Jehoiachin; he began in the 5th year of the second captivity (593BC) and concluded with a brief prophecy concerning Egypt in the 25th year (575BC).

Most prophecies concerning **Israel in the last days** were given in chapters 34 to 39, in the 12th year of the captivity of Jehoiachin which was just one year after Jerusalem was destroyed (Ezek.33:21). In the 25th year of the captivity, Ezekiel prophesied of the **future kingdom** of Christ giving much detail of the Temple that will be built and how worship will be conducted. David will be prince and the Lord will be present (Ezek.34:23).

When Christ reigns, all of the Tribes of Israel will be reinstated in their portion of the land and the glory of God will be seen. Jerusalem will be renamed *Jehovah-Shammah* which means, "The LORD is there" (Ezek.48:35).



The Prophecy of Ezekiel Summarized

Daniel prophesied concerning “the times of the Gentiles” but Ezekiel prophesied concerning Israel (Ezek.3:4-11). The entire Book may be summarized as the removal of the presence of the Glory of the Lord from Israel (Ezek.chs. 1 to 11) to the return of the presence of the Glory of the Lord (Ezek.44:1-7).

The Glory of God departed in 586BC from the Temple and left by the Mount of Olives on the east of Jerusalem. It will return from the east to dwell in the millennial Temple, built to the specifications given in Ezekiel chapters 40 to 42.

Chapters 31 to 39 provide much detail about Israel’s return to the land in **unbelief** and of her return to the Lord when she is invaded from the north by Russia (Magog), Turkey (The house of Togarmah), Iran (Persia), Libya and Sudan (Ethiopia) (Ezek.38 & 39).

The return in unbelief is seen in chapter 36 where God says:
“I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. THEN will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you”...Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord GOD, be it known unto you: be ashamed” (Ezek.36:25-26, 32).

The vision of the valley of dry bones (ch.37:1-14) indicates three stages in

Israel’s restoration. When Ezekiel prophesied to the bones which were the “*whole house of Israel*”, they **came together** as in 1897 at the First Zionist Congress. When he prophesied to the skeletons they took on sinews and flesh but had no spiritual life, just as the nation was formed in 1948 without having acknowledged Jesus Christ as Messiah and king. Finally, Ezekiel prophesied to the carcasses, and the Spirit of God came into them and they rose up a great **living** army. This will occur in the “*time of Jacob’s trouble*” when Israel is born again (Jer.30:7).

The timing of this amazing conversion when “*all Israel shall be saved*” (Rom.11:26) will be in the **first half of the Tribulation when Russia leads her Islamic allies into the land**. Israel will seek the Lord “*from that day and forward*” (Ezek.39:22) and the invaders will be destroyed by Divine intervention; by hail, pestilence, disunity and an earthquake as described in Revelation chapter 6:12. Only one sixth of the army will escape to Siberia (Joel 2:20) and the land of Magog (Russia) will be burned (Ezek.39:6).

Israel will be regathered as a redeemed people and will serve Messiah in the land as Christ reigns for 1,000 years from David’s throne at Jerusalem.

“Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD” (Ezek.39:29).

EZEKIEL SUMMARIZED

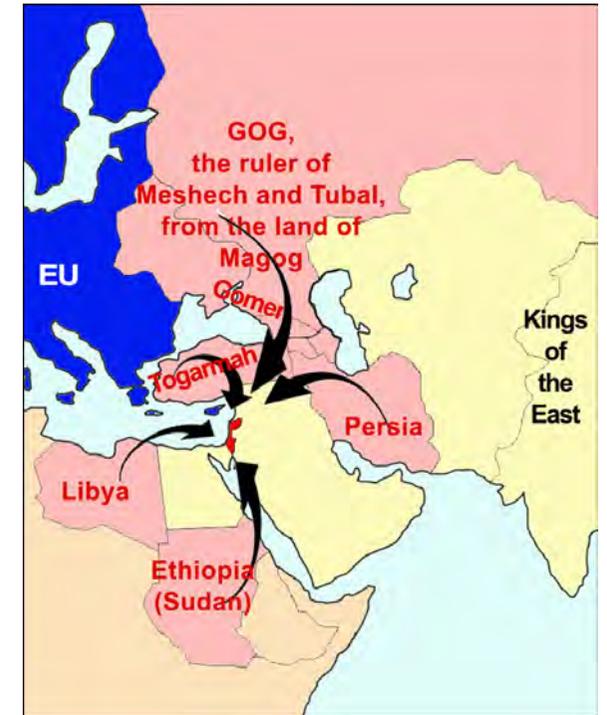
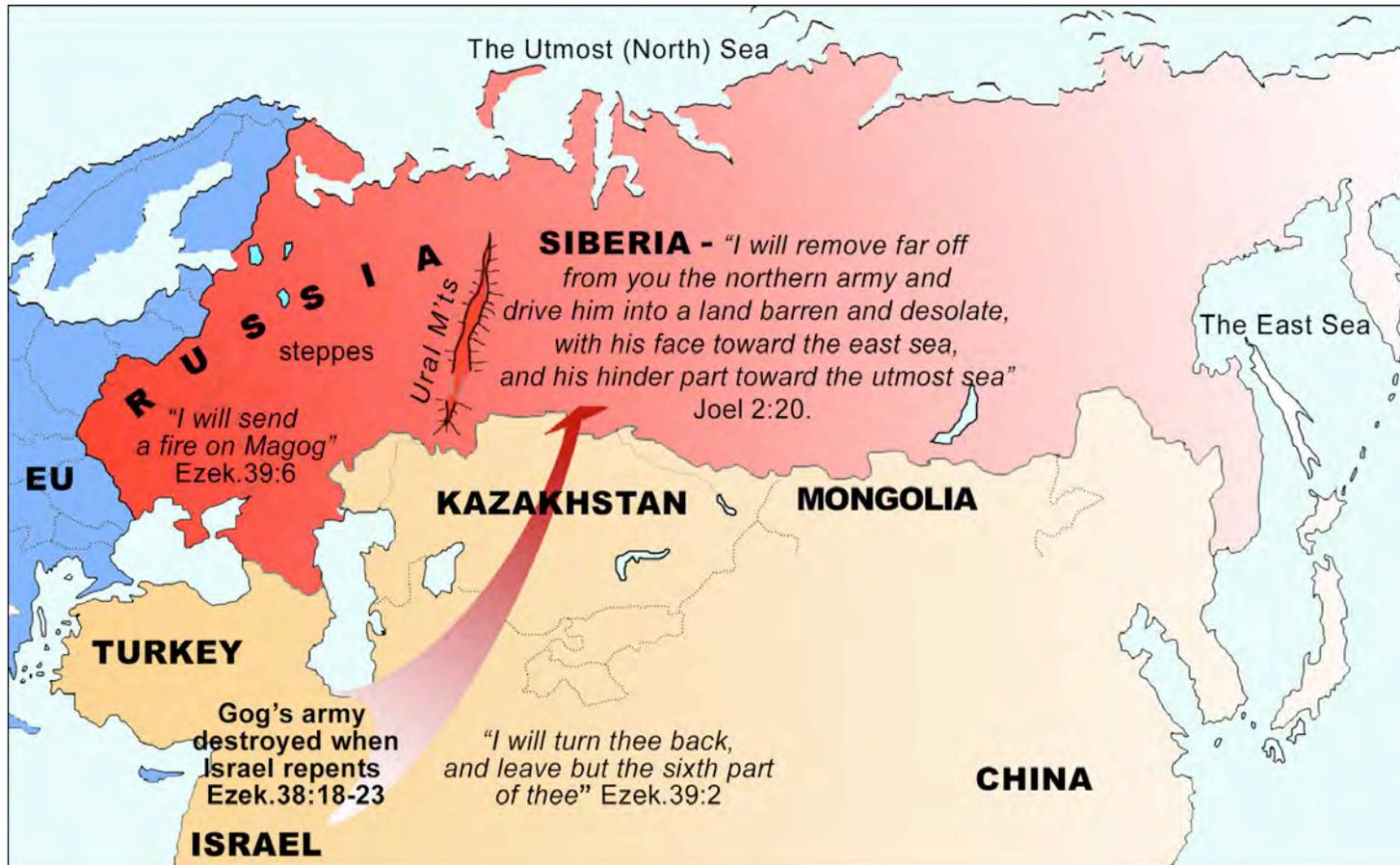
FULFILLED PROPHECY	<p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Chapters 1 to 11</p> <p>Ezekiel called to prophesy to Israel after seeing visions of the Glory of God & the Throne of God. The glory leaves the Temple and the Mt of Olives</p>
	<p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Chapters 12 to 24</p> <p>Idolatrous Jerusalem to be besieged, burned, & Zedekiah removed to Babylon. The throne of David to be overturned three times & cease till Messiah reigns.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Chapter 25</p> <p>Because Ammon, Moab, Mt Seir (Edom), and the Philistines rejoiced over Jerusalem’s downfall they would be judged by Nebuchadnezzar</p>
	<p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Chapters 26 to 28</p> <p>Tyre’s coastal city and Sidon to be destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, and the Island city later by Alexander because she rejoiced over Jerusalem’s downfall. Tyre’s king possessed by Satan.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Chapters 29 to 32</p> <p>Egypt to be judged by Nebuchadnezzar and desolate 40 years (570-530BC) because they failed to support Jerusalem. Tho’ Pharaoh claim to be God he will go to hell with kings of other heathen nations.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Chapters 30</p> <p>Ezekiel to be a Watchman to warn Israel about FUTURE events</p>
FUTURE PROPHECY	<p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Chapters 31 to 36</p> <p>Unbelieving Israel to return to the land in the LAST DAYS midst challenges from Arab neighbours.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Chapter 37</p> <p>Three steps to Israel’s restoration in LAST DAYS. Zionism (1881), Nationhood (1948), Conversion in the Tribulation (future). No longer 2 kingdoms when converted.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Chapters 38 and 39</p> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">The day of Israel’s conversion when Islamic armies led by Russia, invade in first half of the Tribulation</p>
	<p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Chapters 40 to 48</p> <p>The Millennial Temple and priestly service specified. The Dead Sea healed and the land divided among the 12 Tribes when the Glory of God returns in the LAST DAYS.</p>

The War that Brings Israel to Repentance - Ezek.38 & 39

Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39 describe the invasion of Israel in the **first half** of the 7-year Tribulation when Israel turns to the Lord. It must be in the first half because, during the second half, all Israel are keeping the "commandments of God, and have the *testimony of Jesus Christ*" (Rev.12:17). Also, this invasion must be **after the Rapture** because, if it were before the Rapture that "all Israel shall be saved" (Rom.11:26), then the Jews would become a part of the Church and all be Raptured. There would not be any Jews left to play their part in the 70th "week" which belongs to Israel.

This invasion must not be confused with ANOTHER invasion by Gog at the end of the Millennial kingdom (Rev.20:8). In the first invasion **one sixth escape** (Ezek.39:2) but at the end of the 1,000 years, **none escape**.

This invasion also must not be confused with Armageddon at **the end of the Tribulation** for only Turkey, Iran, Libya and Sudan join with Russia whereas Armageddon involves ALL NATIONS (Joel 3:2).



When will the Russian Islamic armies enter Israel? When Israel is **dwelling safely** in the "latter days" (Ezek.38:8). The covenant that many make with Antichrist will, at the beginning of the 7 years, guarantee Israel's security (Dan.9:27).

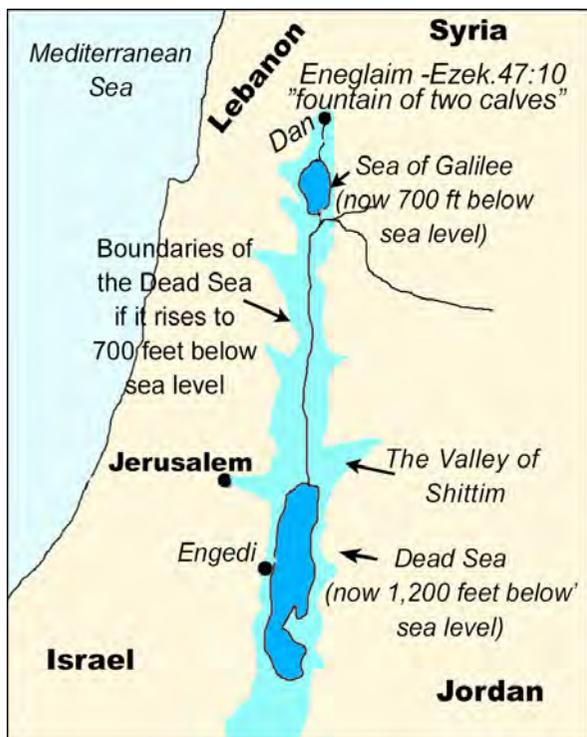
Where will the armies come from? Josephus states that the Magogites were "by the Greeks called Scythians" and we know they dwelt along the north coast of the Black Sea. Gog comes from his "place out of the **north parts**" (Ezek.38:15) and Togarmah is "of the north quarters" (Ezek.38:6).

The invasion is challenged by "the merchants of Tarshish and the young lions thereof" (Britain and US) and "Sheba and Dedan" - Saudi Arabia (Ezek.38:13).

The 1,000 Year Millennial Kingdom

When Christ returns He will come as King of kings to reign over the earth (Rev.19:16). The nations that survive the Tribulation will be separated as the sheep are divided from the goats. The sheep, (the saved), will enter the kingdom and the goats, (Antichrist and all who received his mark), go away into "everlasting fire" (Matt.25:31-46).

All Israel will be gathered to the land (Ezek.39:28; Matt.24:31) which will be divided among the 12 tribes and David will be a prince among them (Ezek.48:1-35). The presence of Christ will be there and the glory of God will lighten Jerusalem (Isa.60:1-3, 19-20).



A millennial Temple will be built to specifications given in Ezekiel chapters 40 to 42. Sacrifices will be offered **in memorial** of Christ's sacrifice at Calvary. Satan will be bound for 1,000 years and there will be universal peace; men will beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks (Isa.2:4).

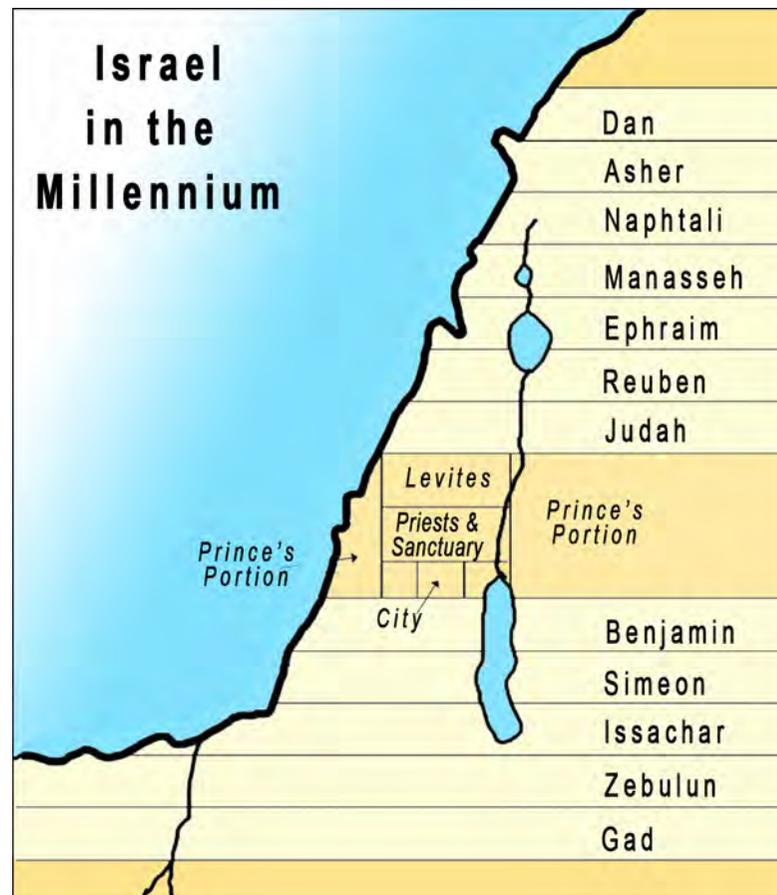
The land of Israel will receive "showers of blessing" (Ezek.34:26); "the tree of the field shall yield her fruit...and they shall be safe in their land" (Ezek.34:27). Isaiah wrote:

*"And it shall come to pass **in the last days**, that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and **all nations shall flow unto it**. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for **out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem**" (Isa.2:2-3).*

A stream of fresh water will gush out from under the Temple and flow into the Dead Sea so that the water level will be raised and fish will be caught in the Dead Sea (Ezek.47; Joel 3:18; Zech.14:8).

The animal kingdom will be at peace and the curse imposed in Eden will be lifted:

*"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for **the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea**" (Isa.11:6-9).*



Worship in the Millennial Kingdom

Ezek.chs.40-48

The 1,000 years reign of Christ on earth will not be the first time there has been a Kingdom of God on earth.

When Israel became a nation and inherited the land of Canaan they possessed God's Law, God's Land, and God Himself was their King; His presence went with them in the Tabernacle and later in the Temple.

To be a kingdom a nation must have a King, its laws and its land. Samuel reminded Israel that "the LORD your God was your king" (1Sam.12:12).

When the nation of Israel turned to idolatry in 586BC the glory of God departed from the Temple (Ezek.9:3 to 11:23) and God said the throne would be overturned "and it shall be no more, until He come whose right it is; and I will give it Him" (Ezek.21:27).

Without their King Israel ceased to be the Kingdom of God on earth.

Before the Lord Jesus ascended from the Mount of Olives, the disciples asked, "Wilt thou at this time restore AGAIN the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6).

When Christ returns at the end of the Tribulation He will come as

"King of kings" and will sit on the throne of David in the millennial kingdom. The 12 Apostles will sit on 12 thrones judging the 12 tribes of Israel and the kingdom of God will be established on earth again.

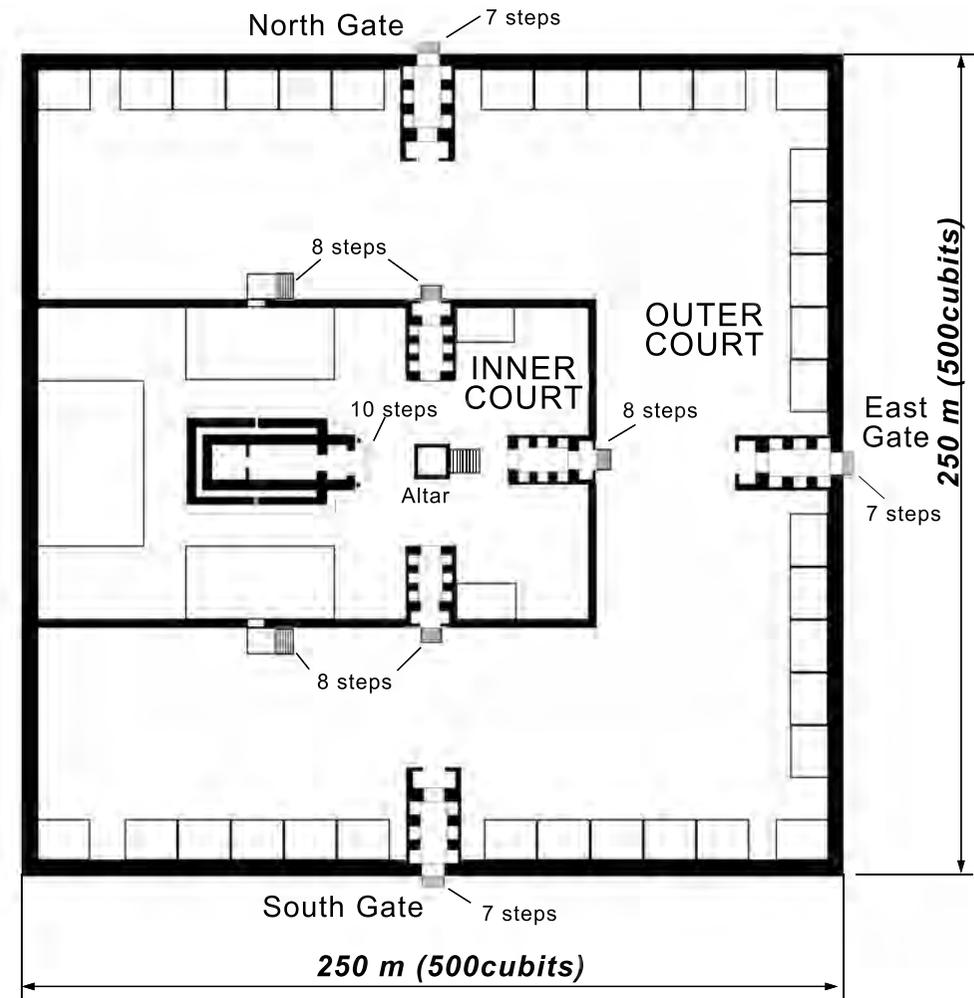
Worship in the kingdom will again be carried on as it was in the Old Testament. A new Temple will be constructed at Jerusalem and the glory of God will return to His House as described by Ezekiel:

"Behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory... And the glory of the LORD came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east... And he said unto me, Son of man, the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever, and my holy name, shall the house of Israel no more defile" (Ezek.43:2-7).

Sacrifices will be offered in memorial of Christ's sacrifice. The Old Testament sacrifices looked forward to Christ's sacrifice and could "never take away sins". The millennial sacrifices likewise will have no power to take away sins but will be a memorial of the true sacrifice: our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God.

Zechariah indicated that Israel and the Gentile nations will keep Jewish feasts annually (Zech.14:16-19) and "every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and seethe (boil) therein" (Zech.14:21).

There cannot be a kingdom of God on earth without a converted Israel. In this Church age Israel is blinded, and scattered among the nations; the natural branches of the olive tree are broken off but when the Church is complete she will be Raptured and "all Israel shall be saved" (Rom.11:26).



EZEKIEL'S MILLENNIAL TEMPLE - Ezek.chs 40 - 42

The Prophetic Significance of the Seven Feasts of the Lord

The Seven annual feasts of the Lord are a prophetic outline of God's plan for Israel and the first part of that plan has already been fulfilled.

Every male Israelite was required to attend the Temple three times each year at the seven-day Feasts of Passover, Pentecost (Weeks), and Tabernacles. The Feasts of Passover and Pentecost have been fulfilled: Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us and He is the Firstfruits from the dead who led the Old Testament saints from paradise to heaven as the firstfruits of those who slept (died). At Pentecost the Church became God's witness and Israel was blinded.

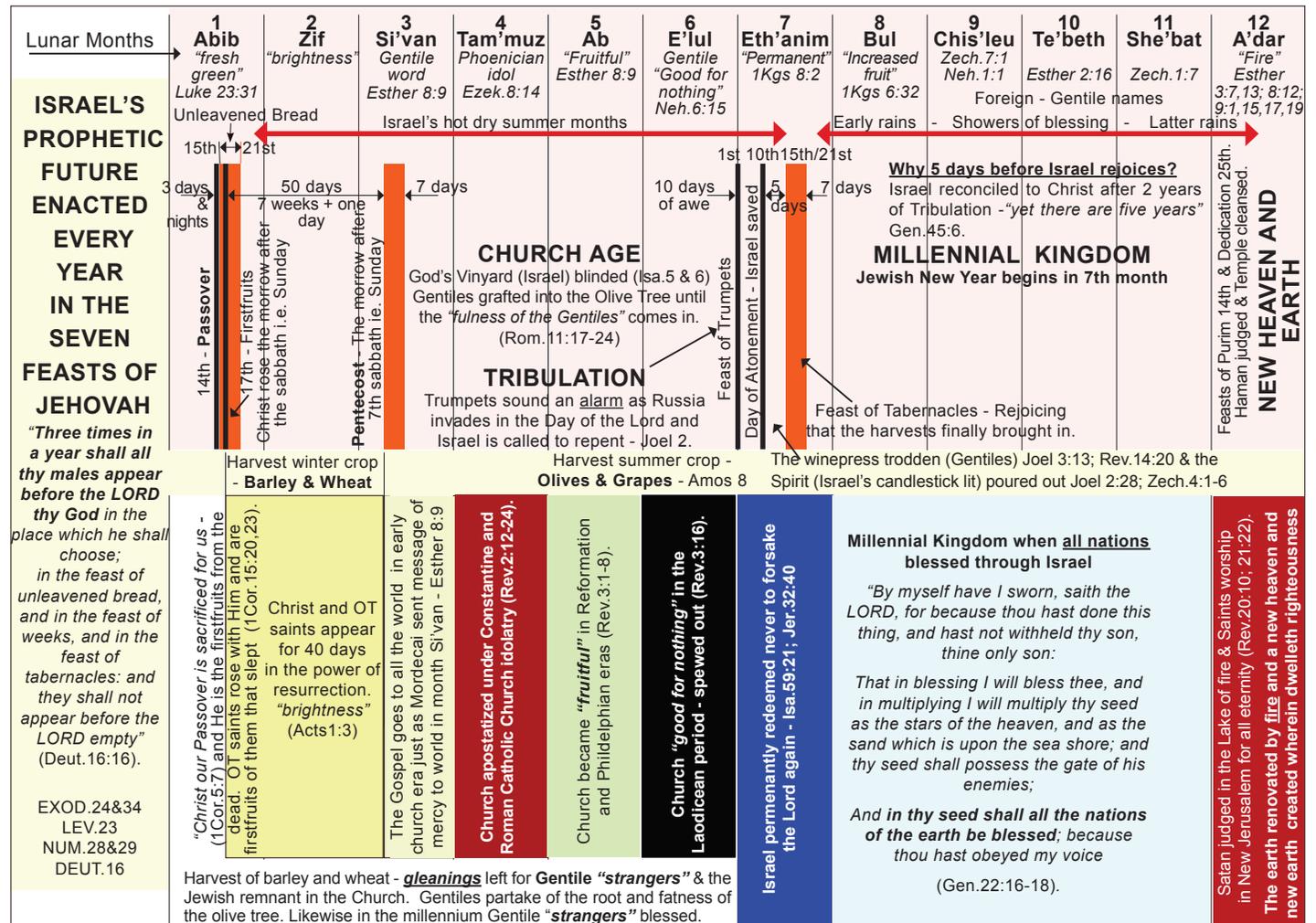
The sixth month was the end of the secular year and a new year began in the seventh month after the summer harvest of grapes and olives was gathered in. The grape harvest speaks of the winepress of the wrath of God and the crushed olives give oil which speaks of the Holy Spirit poured out on Israel and the saved nations in the Kingdom.

The Trumpets in the seventh month sound an alarm and call Israel to repentance as the Russian/Islamic armies invade. The Day of Atonement speaks of the conversion of Israel at the 2nd year of the Tribulation followed by the five years of tribulation before the Feast of Tabernacles which speaks of the joy and blessing of the Millennial kingdom.

The names of the months have special meanings consistent with events that will occur in Israel and in Christendom and there are two harvests reaped.

After each harvest, gleanings are gathered by the "strangers" who were saved Gentiles and so Gentiles are blessed after Pentecost and in the Kingdom.

Israel, like the grain crop, was ground to powder and scattered among the nations after AD70 while the Gentiles will be cast into the winepress of the wrath of God at the Lord's coming. Israel as the olive branch, is broken off but like crushed olives in the Tribulation, will experience the outpouring of the Spirit which will also be shed abroad on saved Gentiles in the Kingdom. The month Adar means "fire" and the earth will be burned with fire at the end of the Millennial Kingdom after which there is a New Heaven and Earth.



The Twelve Minor Prophets

The Minor prophets are often neglected because many of their prophecies are unintelligible when taken out of their historic context. The order that the Minor Prophets appear in the Bible unfortunately is not in the order they were written.

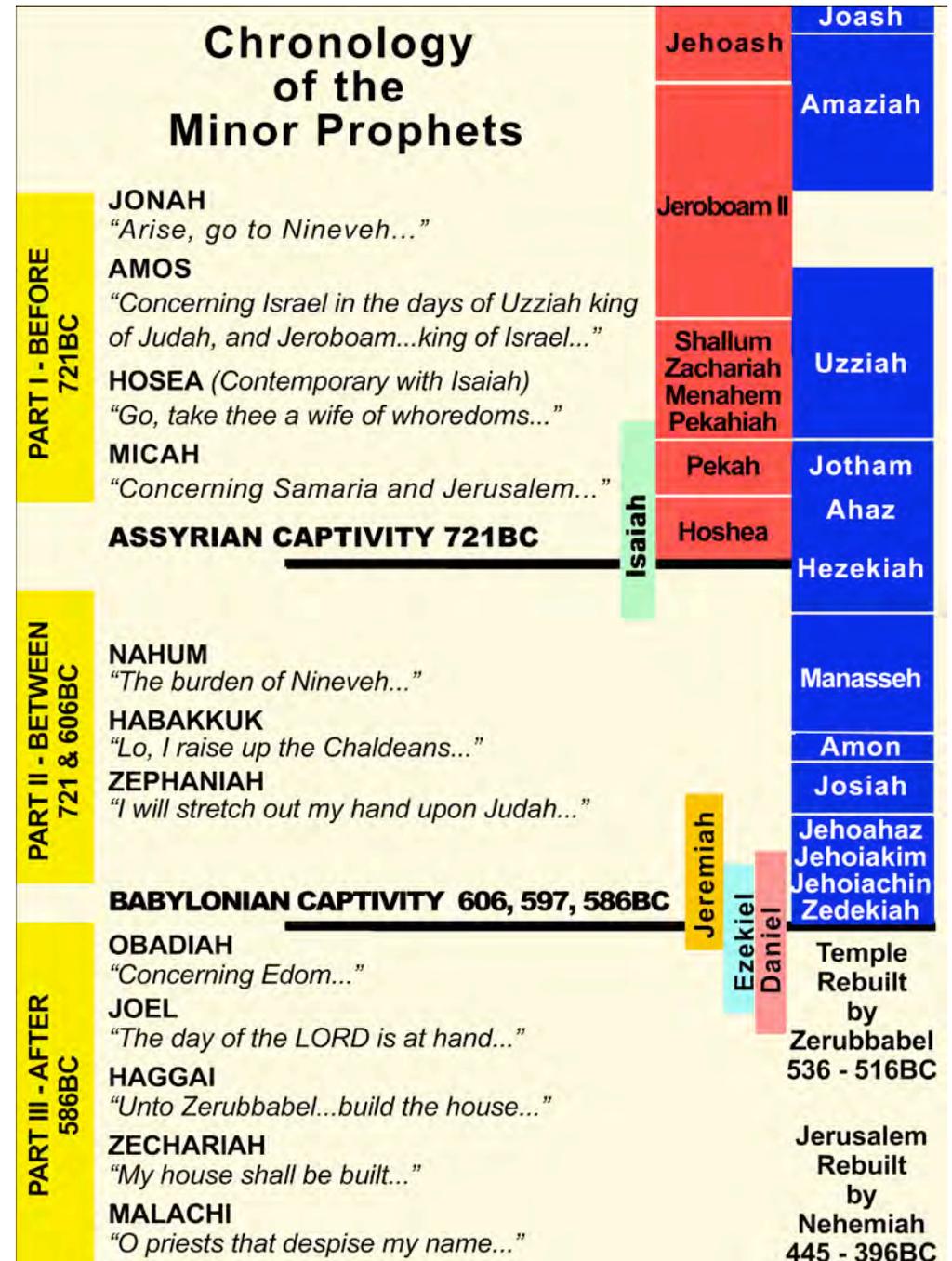
The Minor Prophets primarily dealt with the situation existing in their day but again and again they look through the gloom of declension and apostasy to a future day when God's kingdom will be established on earth and the wayward nation of Israel will be blessed under a new covenant.

It is noteworthy that Gentile nations that hate Israel become the objects of Divine judgment. Zechariah wrote that God was displeased with the Babylonians who had been God's instrument of chastening because, after they took the nation captive, "they helped forward the affliction" (Zech.1:15). Israel is the "apple of God's eye" and God says, "He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of His eye" (Zech.2:8).

Psalms 137 gives us a glimpse of how the Babylonians ridiculed the Jewish captives and mocked them when they sang the songs of Zion. "They that carried us away captive required of us a song: and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion" (Ps.137:3). Also God remembered what the Edomites did as Jerusalem was being ransacked; they joined with the Babylonians crying, "Rase it, rase it!" (Ps.137:7). As a consequence, Obadiah prophesied their total destruction.

Wonderful prophecies in the Minor Prophets, both fulfilled and future, confirm the Divine inspiration of the Bible. The judgments that fell on Samaria and Jerusalem by the Assyrians and the Babylonians, the destruction of Nineveh by the Medes and Babylonians and the expulsion of the Edomites from Mount Seir all have been fulfilled exactly as scripture predicted. After the 70 years of captivity in Babylon the Temple and city were rebuilt under the decree of Cyrus in a time of affliction.

There are prophecies of Christ's first coming (Mic.5:2), of John the Baptist (Mal.3:1) and of God's Shepherd who would be sold for 30 pieces of silver (Zech.11:12) and whose hands would be pierced (Zech.13:6). Joel foretold the Great Tribulation; the Russian/ Islamic invasion (Joel 2), Armageddon, the return of Christ and the kingdom blessing (Joel 3). Zechariah looks forward to the day when Christ will come and be King over all the earth (Zech.14). There is a spiritual feast in the Minor Prophets.



Joel's Prophecy of the Day of the Lord

Joel's prophecy uses a terrible locust plague to illustrate what will happen in the Day of the Lord; the great Tribulation. He describes TWO invasions of the land of Israel; the **first is in chapter 2 and the second is in chapter 3**. The first invasion is a "northern army" (Joel 2:20) but the second involves "all nations" (Joel 3:2). We know that the Russian/Islamic invasion comes from the north in the first half of the Tribulation (Ezek.38:15) and that Antichrist gathers "the kings of the earth and of the whole world" (Rev.16:14) in the second half of the Tribulation. Therefore Joel chapter 2 deals with the first half of the seven-year Tribulation and Joel chapter 3 deals with the second half of the Tribulation.

The outcome of the war in chapter 2 is that the remnant of the invading army escapes to a distant land that is waste between the "east Sea" (Pacific Ocean) and the utmost North Sea (The Arctic). This cannot be anywhere else other than Siberia.

At the same time Ezekiel tells us that the land of Russia (Magog) will be burned (Ezek.39:6). Professor Lance Endersbee AO, former Dean of Engineering at Monash University, has written in his book, *Voyage of Discovery*, of 100 mud volcanoes in the Black Sea that are emitting methane gas into the sea and is saturating the deep layers of water. The Black Sea is very deep but if the toxic water in the lower levels were to be disturbed and come to the surface, the methane gas would be released into the atmosphere. The Bible says that when the "northern army" will be judged, a global earthquake will occur and "the fishes of the sea" shall shake! (Ezek.38:19-20). This is probably the same earthquake as is described in Rev. 6:12-17. Joel also speaks of this earthquake:

"The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining" (Joel 2:10).

Joel indicates that the result of the northern invasion will be that Israel will gather the people together and cry out to God. We read:

"Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil" (Joel 2:12-13).

The Holy Spirit will then be poured out upon Israel under the New Covenant that God will make with Israel (Jer. 31:31-37; Joel 2:21-29).

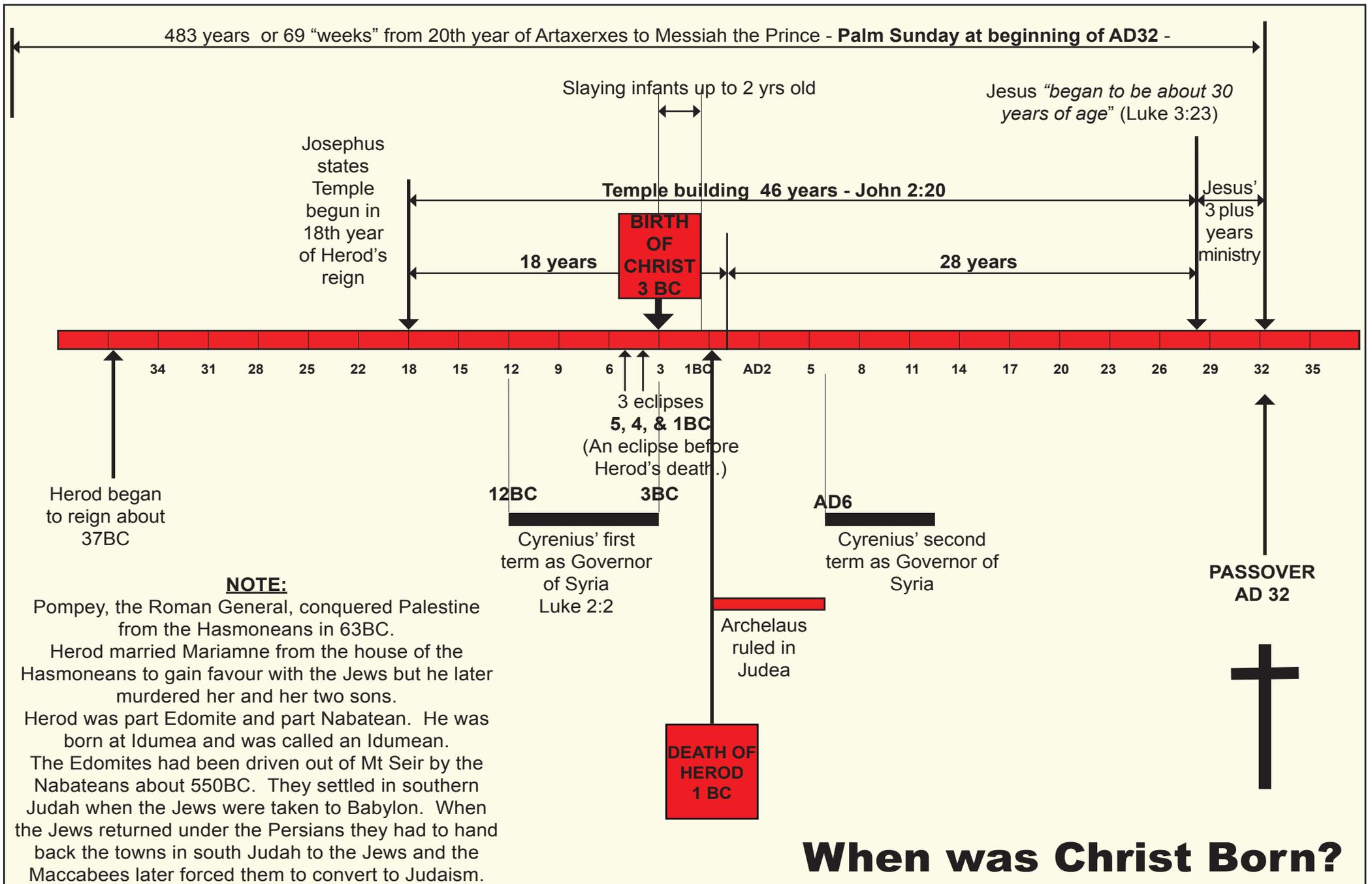


The outcome of the second war described in Joel chapter 3 is that the Lord will return to defend His repentant people:

"The LORD also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the LORD will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel" (Joel 3:16).

The Lord will then take up His place in Jerusalem and reign for 1,000 years:

"Judah shall dwell for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation. For I will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed: for the LORD dwelleth in Zion" (Joel 3:20-21).



When was Christ Born?

The Lord's Ministry in Rejection

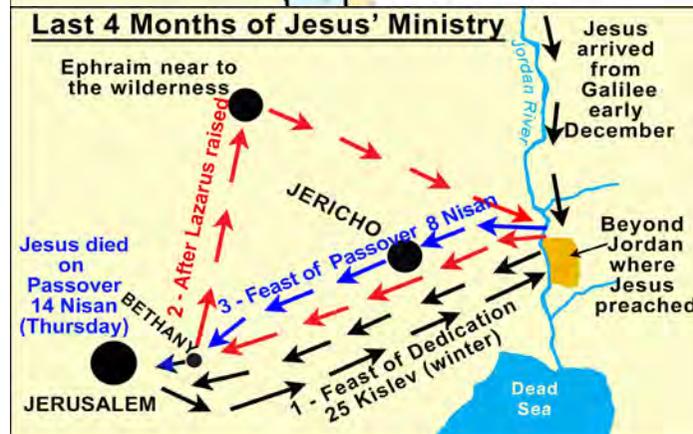
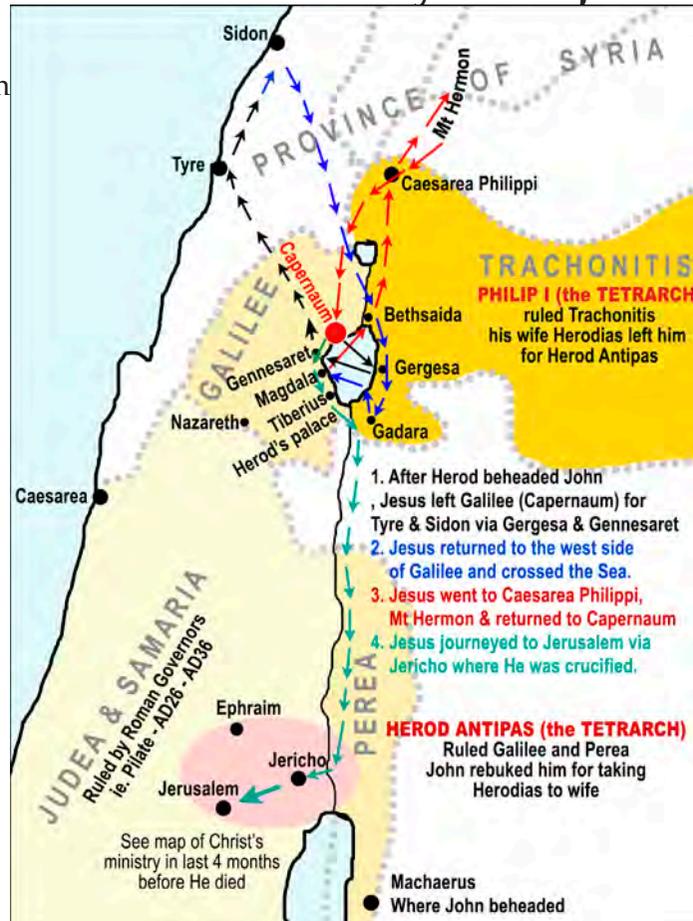
The ministry of Christ was centred in Galilee. He was brought up at Nazareth but at the beginning of His ministry He was baptised by John in Jordan and then returned home to Nazareth where He preached in the synagogue and the Jews would have cast him down a steep hill so He relocated to Capernaum.

The only recorded visits to Jerusalem were to attend feasts of the Jews and finally to die for the sins of the world. The greatest detail of the Lord's ministry in Jerusalem is given by John in his Gospel.

Matthew records the Lord's ministry entirely in Galilee except for His final visit to Jerusalem. In Matthew chapters 11 and 12, Matthew indicates that the nation had rejected Christ and were warned of the danger of committing the unpardonable sin; blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. In chapter 13 Jesus stated that the nation had been **blinded as prophesied in Isaiah 6:9-10** and He began to speak in parables to those who had believing hearts.

When Jesus heard in Galilee that John had been beheaded He withdrew into desert places and into Gentile territory; to the region of Tyre and Sidon (Matt.15:21). He returned to a desert place on the east of Galilee; to Gergesa, Gadara and thence across Galilee to Magdala (Matt.15:39), across the sea to Bethsaida, and north to Caesarea Philippi (Matt.16:13).

From Caesarea Philippi Jesus took Peter, James and John up into Mount Hermon, probably late November or early December before winter set in, and He was transfigured to give them a vision of His **second advent and future kingdom** before He went to the cross (Matt.17:1-13). He then returned to Capernaum where He paid His Roman tax (Matt.17:24-27) and proceeded south along the east side of the Jordan River to where John the Baptist had been baptizing (Matt.19:1).



While ministering "beyond Jordan", multitudes came to Him and when the feast of Dedication came on 25th Kislev (usually in December) it was winter and the Lord went up to Jerusalem (John 10:22).

The Jewish months in order were Kislev, Tevet, Shevat, Adar, and Nisan so the Lord was in Judea near Jordan from sometime early in Kislev for approximately 4 months before He died at Jerusalem on the 14th of Nisan. There were **3 visits** to Jerusalem.

1. The Jews at the **feast of Dedication** would have stoned Him so He returned to "beyond Jordan" (John 10:31).

2. While ministering "beyond Jordan" a message was received from friends of **Lazarus** in Bethany that he was gravely ill. Apparently Lazarus died soon after his friends left Bethany to take the **one-day journey**, and Jesus tarried for **two days** before taking the **one day journey** up to Bethany. When He arrived, Lazarus had been dead **four days**.

The raising of Lazarus stirred the Jews to hatred because many believed on Christ and so Jesus took His disciples north to the city of **Ephraim** (John 11:54) on the edge of the wilderness before returning to where He had been ministering "beyond Jordan".

3. When the **Passover** was near, in the month Nisan, Jesus went up to Jerusalem through Jericho and arrived at Bethany **six days before the Passover** which was Friday evening, and Martha made a supper for Him and Mary anointed the Lord. Jesus rested on the sabbath and on Palm **Sunday** rode into Jerusalem in fulfilment of Zech.9:9. **Monday**, Jesus cursed the fig tree and by **Tuesday** it had withered. Tuesday evening Jesus was in Simon the leper's house and again was anointed. On the Wednesday Jesus rested and Judas made his deal with the priests to betray Him. On **Wednesday** evening the last supper was held and on **Thursday** Jesus died as the Passover lambs were being sacrificed.

The Passover Week

ROMAN AND JEWISH DAYS

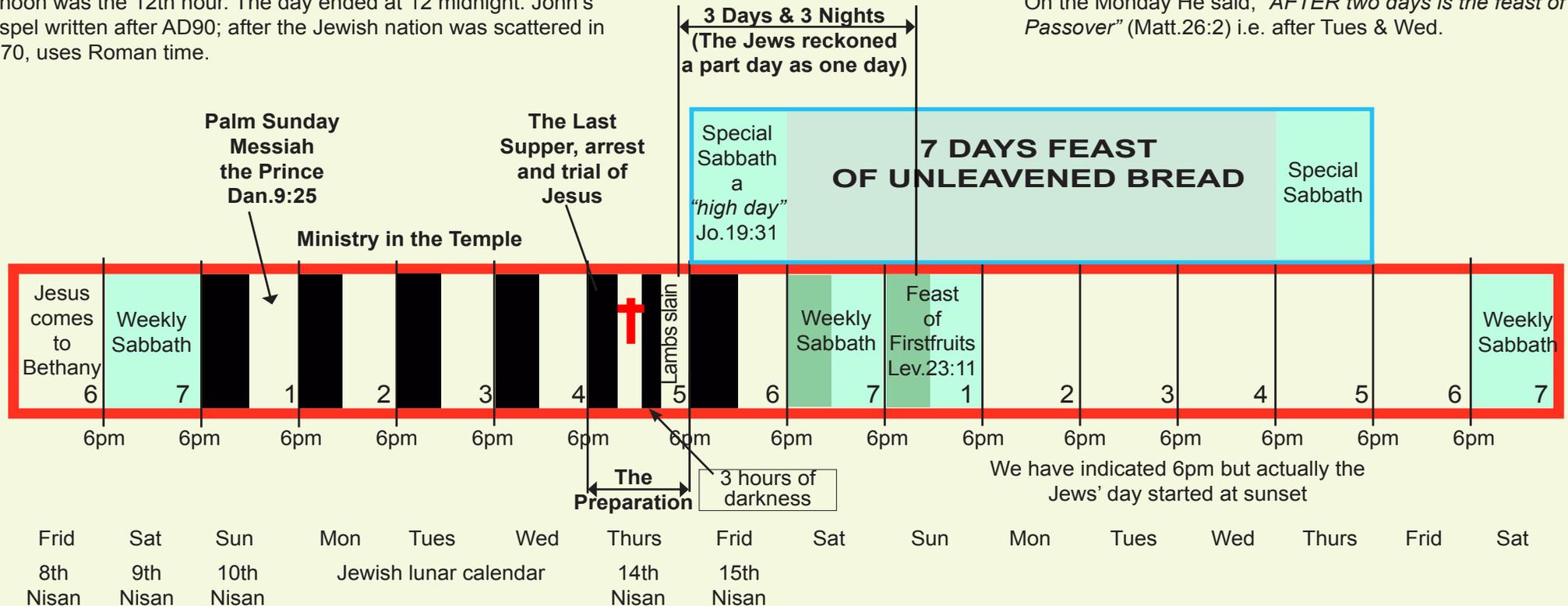
The Jewish day commenced at 6pm and counted two lots of 12 hours so noon was the 6th hour.
 The Roman day began at midnight and counted two lots of 12 hours so noon was the 12th hour. The day ended at 12 midnight. John's Gospel written after AD90; after the Jewish nation was scattered in AD70, uses Roman time.

Christ Buried before Sunset

Christ Risen before Daybreak

CHRIST DIED ON THURSDAY

Christ died on Thursday 14th of Nisan Lev.23:5. He arrived in Bethany on the Friday, **6 days BEFORE** the Passover (counting inclusively) Jo.12:1. On the Monday He said, "AFTER two days is the feast of Passover" (Matt.26:2) i.e. after Tues & Wed.



Note:

The **Prophetic Calendar** has 360 days/year. Jews followed the **Lunar/Solar Calendar** (29/30 day months alternating). About every 3rd year Jews added a second 12th month to agree with the Solar calendar. The **Gregorian, Solar Calendar**, has 365.24 days in the year (4th year a leap year).

THE PASSOVER LAMB

The Sadducees held the High Priesthood and observed Passover on 15 Nisan which began at 6pm on Thursday. Since they controlled the Temple, lambs were slain after 3pm on 14 Nisan. The Pharisees kept Passover on 14 Nisan (Wednesday night that year) without a lamb. Thus Jesus kept the Passover on Wednesday night and died as the Passover lambs were slain on Thursday afternoon. "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us" (1Cor.5:7).

69 "Weeks" = 483 y'rs
 173,880 days exact

Palm Sunday
 Luke 19:42

From the 20th year of Artaxerxes - 445 B.C. (Neh.2:1,7-8)

Three Days and Three Nights

“For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” (Matt.12:40).

This prophecy by our Lord was the only sign that Jesus would give to unbelieving Israel that He was the Christ of God and came from heaven.

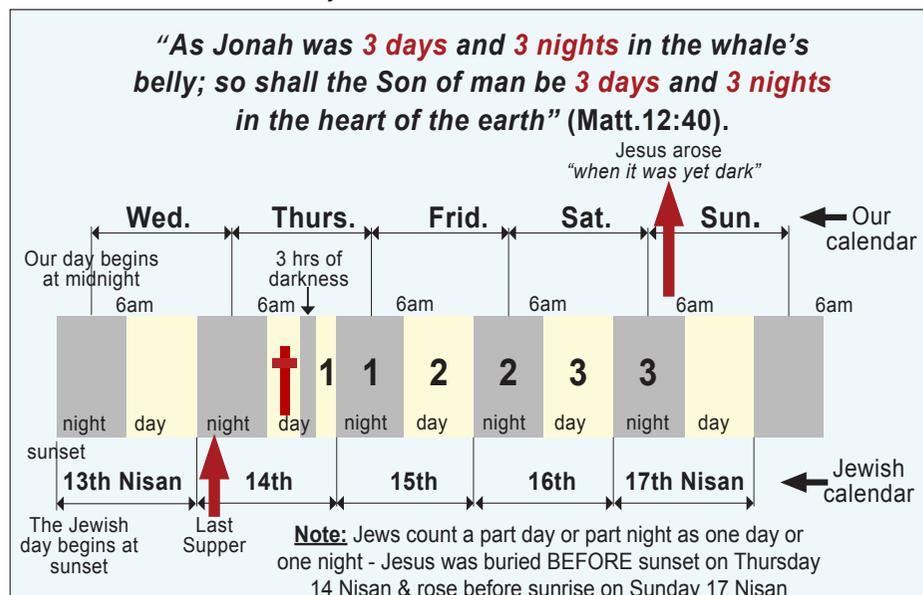
If Jesus was crucified on a Friday and rose on the first day of the week before sunrise then it is impossible to say He was in the grave for **three days and three nights**.

The Jews reckoned “inclusively” which means a part day was counted as “one day”. A part night was counted as “one night”.

Since Jesus was buried BEFORE sundown on the 14th Nisan (Thursday) that was one **day**. Friday was a second day and Saturday a third day.

Thursday night was one **night**; Friday night was a second night; and Saturday night was a third night making three days and three nights that Jesus was in the grave.

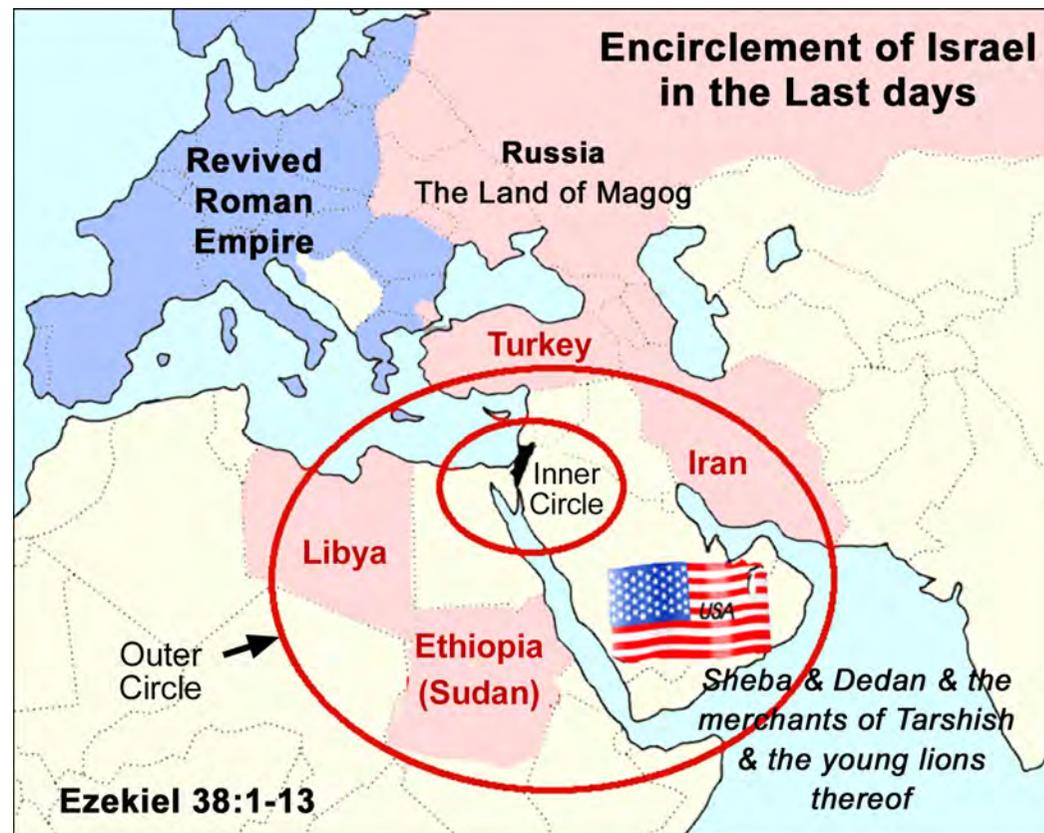
The miracle of Jonah’s preservation in the whale’s belly was to teach us that Jesus would rise from the dead. If men can’t believe that Jonah survived neither can they believe that Jesus rose from the dead!



Israel the Centre of Attention in the Last Days

From its earliest times Israel has been hated of the nations. The Psalmist wrote: *“Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the LORD shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion” (Psalm 2:1-6).*

The heathen rage because Israel is God’s covenant people through whom He preserved His Word and through whom He sent His beloved Son. In the first half of the Tribulation Israel will be attacked by a Russian/Islamic force (Ezek.38&39) and in the second half by “all nations” led by Antichrist. The first invasion brings Israel to repentance and the second invasion brings Gentiles into judgment.



The Resurrection of Christ - *“declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead”* (Rom.1:4).

Before daybreak on the Sunday morning after Christ was crucified, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, Salome the wife of Zebedee, and Joanna whose husband was Herod’s steward (Luke 24:1,10; 8:10; Matt 28:1; Mark 15:40; John 20:1) came to Jesus’ tomb to embalm the body but they found the grave was empty.

When Mary Magdalene saw the stone rolled away she assumed that someone had stolen the body and immediately left the women and ran about half a mile into the city to wake the disciples and tell them the news. Meanwhile the other women entered the tomb and saw an angel sitting beside where the Lord had lain. The angel told them to tell Peter and the other disciples that Jesus would see them in Galilee (Matt.28:7).

Meanwhile, Mary Magdalene had found Peter and John and told them the tomb was empty. All three immediately ran to the tomb and saw the grave clothes lying undisturbed. Peter and John returned to the city but Mary stood weeping at the door of the tomb when Jesus suddenly appeared (John 20:13). Mary mistook Jesus for the gardener until He spoke her name and told her to tell the disciples she had seen the Lord. Meanwhile, the other women were making their way into the city when Jesus appeared to them (Matt.28:9-10).



Later that day, Cleopas and another disciple were walking to the village of Emmaus when Jesus appeared to them. When they finally recognised Him as he broke bread at the evening meal, He disappeared and they ran back to Jerusalem to tell the other disciples (Luke 24:13-35).

Meanwhile Peter had left the upper room and while away, Jesus had met him. Peter had returned to the upper room and was excitedly telling the disciples he had seen the Lord when the two arrived from Emmaus to tell their story (Luke 24:34; 1Cor.15:5). Just then Jesus appeared in the room and said, *“Peace be unto you”* (Luke 24:36).

Thomas was absent when Jesus appeared and when he was told, would not believe the witness of Mary, the women, Peter, the disciples or Cleopas and the other disciple, unless he saw the wounds in the Lord’s hands and side.

The disciples remained in Jerusalem that week which was the feast of unleavened bread and the next Sunday Jesus again appeared to the disciples in the upper room when Thomas was present. Thomas exclaimed, *“My Lord and my God”* (John 20:26-28).

The disciples then took the 4-day journey to Galilee where Jesus said He would meet them but it would seem he did not immediately appear until one night, seven of the disciples decided to go fishing and caught nothing. Jesus appeared on the shore with breakfast cooked and after breakfast, He took a stroll with Peter and asked Peter three times if he loved Him. Peter was ashamed because he had denied the Lord but was recommissioned to feed the Lord’s sheep.



Later, Jesus appeared to the disciples in a mountain in Galilee where He had appointed them (Matt.28:16) for we read:

“Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted” (Matt.28:16-17).

Five hundred saw the Lord on another occasion and James saw Him on yet another, but there were many more appearances which were not recorded (Acts 1:3; John 21:25; 1Cor.15:6-7).

Finally, the disciples returned to Jerusalem ten days before the Feast of Pentecost. Jesus again appeared and led them out of the city to the Mount of Olives as far as Bethany where Lazarus lived. He told them to remain in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit came upon them and then to witness in *“Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth”* (Acts1:8). As He spoke these words He ascended up to heaven and a cloud received Him out of their sight. Then, as Jesus ascended two angels appeared telling the disciples,

“This same Jesus which is taken from you into heaven shall so come in like manner even as ye have seen Him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11).



Beyond the Grave in the Old and New Testament Eras

Time has been divided into two major parts: Before Christ died and after Christ died. Everything that God did for man before Christ died was done in anticipation of Christ's first advent and everything God has done since Christ has died looks back to the crosswork of Christ.

All the sacrifices of the Old Testament from Adam to Christ were only shadows of what was to come in the "fulness of time" (Gal.4:4).
 "For it is **not possible** that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" (Heb.10:4).

Nobody could go to heaven before Christ rose because He was the "firstfruits of them that slept" (1Cor.15:20).

Enoch "walked with God and he was not for God took him"- to Paradise.

Elijah was caught up to heaven in a whirlwind. This heaven was the heaven of the firmament but his soul went to Paradise. God buried his body as He did for Moses. They searched but could not find it.

Before Christ rose the souls of the saved went to the paradise section of *sheol* (Heb.) which Jesus described as "Abraham's bosom" (Luke 16:22) and the souls of the unsaved went to the *torment* section of *sheol* (Luke 16:23). There was a great impassible gulf between.

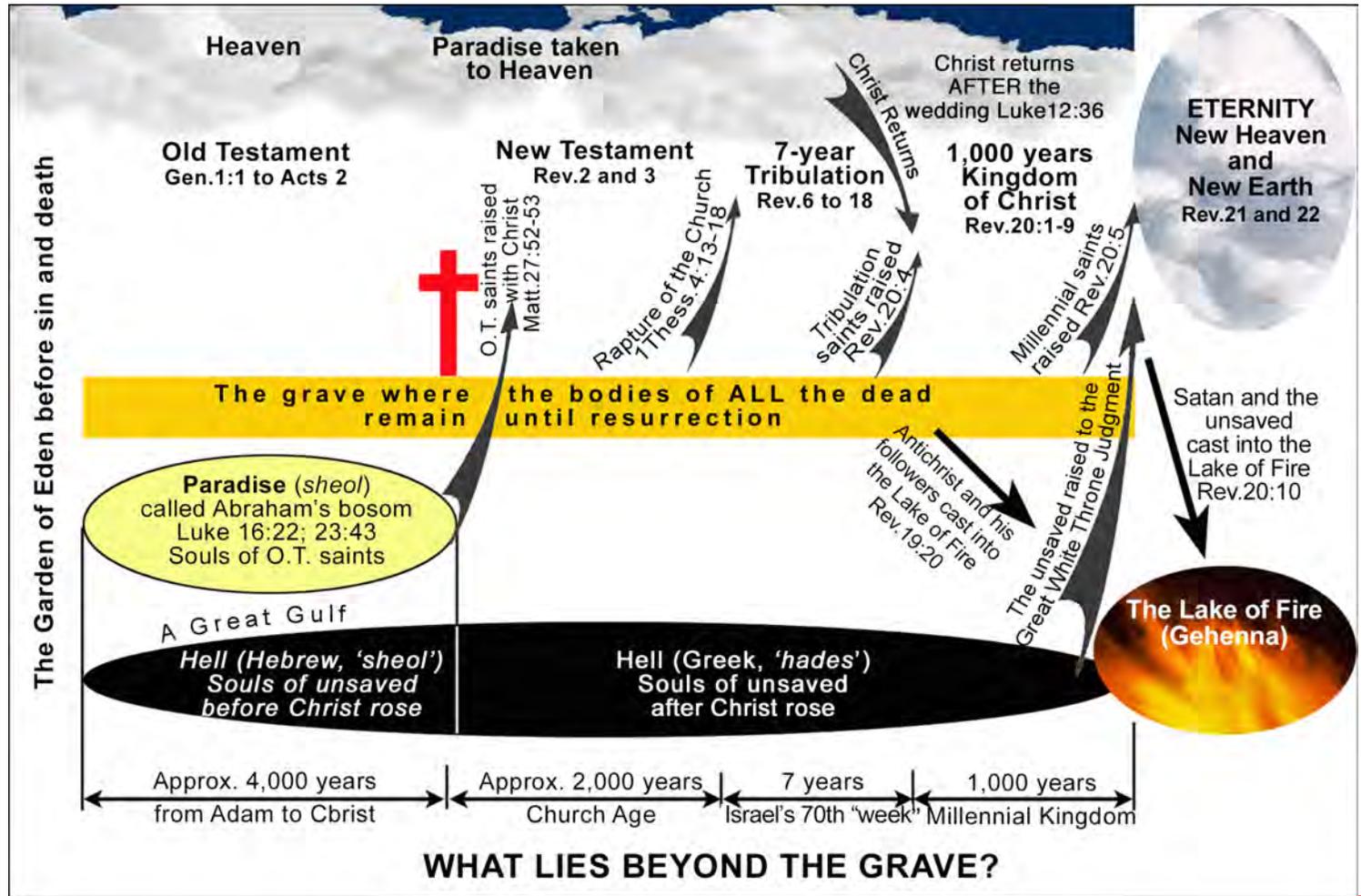
When Jesus died He went to paradise in *sheol* with the repentant thief on the cross (Luke 23:43).

David foretold that Christ would only be in *sheol* for **three days** (Ps.16:10) and Peter quoted this prophecy to the Jews on the day of Pentecost.

"My flesh (Christ's flesh) shall rest in hope: Because **thou wilt not leave my soul in hades** (Heb. *sheol*) neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption" (Acts 2:26-27).

All the Old Testament saints rose after Christ and ascended with Him (Matt.27:52-53); He took them into heaven (Eph.4:8-10). "When he ascended up on high, he **led captivity captive**...He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things."

Now, the souls of the saved go to heaven at death and the souls of the unsaved go to the torment of hades, God's Remand Centre, to await the judgment at the Great White Throne after which they are punished in the lake of fire for ever for the degree they have sinned, "according to their works" (Rev.20:11-15).



The Olivet Discourse

Just before Jesus went to the cross He was with His disciples in the Temple viewing the great stones in the structure built by Herod and his sons. Jesus shocked the disciples by saying that all these stones would be cast down and the Jews would be led away captive "into all nations and Jerusalem would be trodden down UNTIL the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:23-24). The disciples asked, "When shall these things be and what shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the age?" The Jews were led into captivity in AD70 but the sign of "the end of the age" will be 7 years of great tribulation that is divided into two parts:

- a) "the beginning of sorrows" (travail), after which the abomination of desolation would stand in the holy place (Temple),
- b) the second half of the seven years when there would be "great tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be" (Matt.24:21).

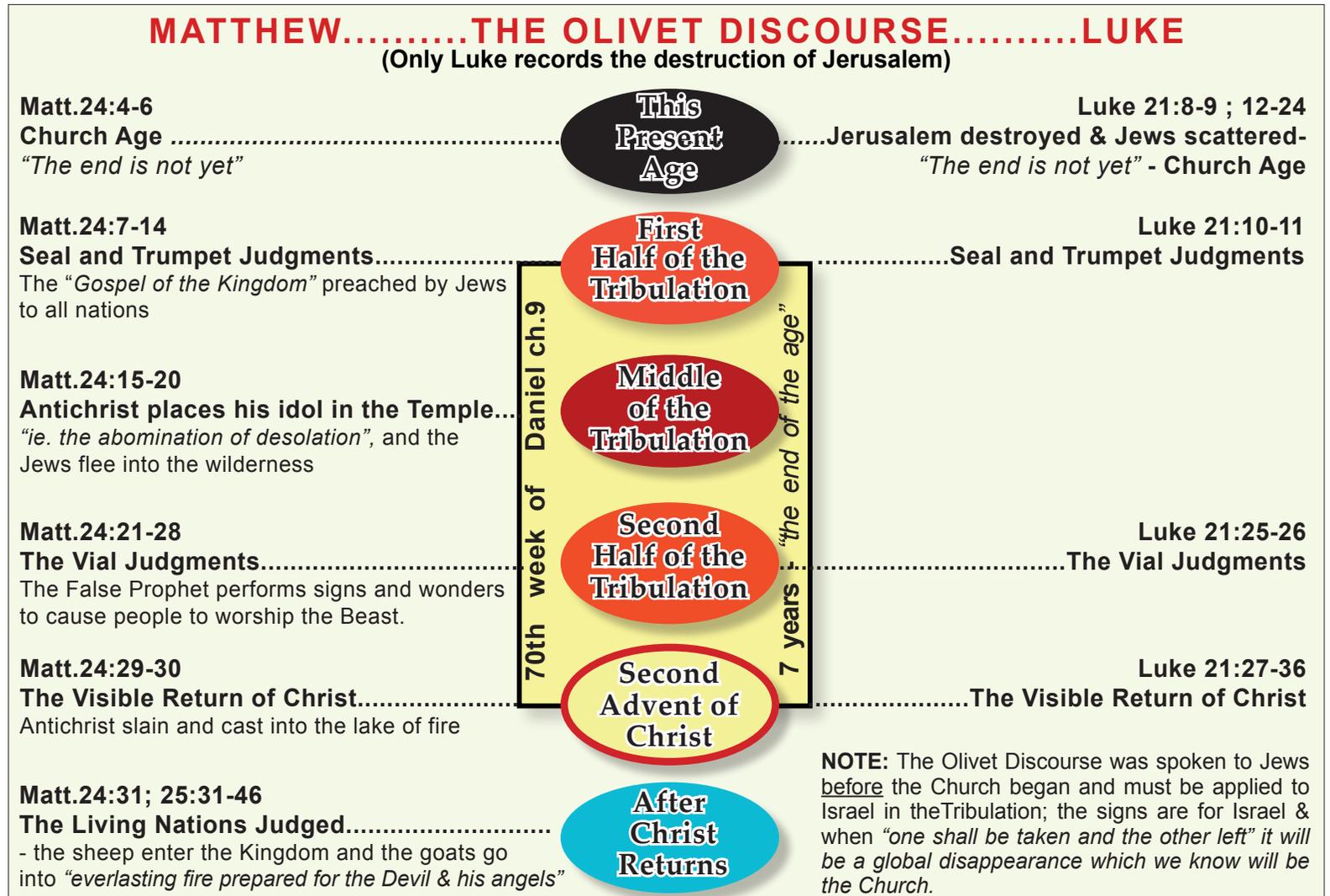
"Immediately after the Tribulation of those days" Christ will come in glory and power to judge Antichrist and the nations that follow him.

Three signs are given by the Lord as to when His coming will occur.

- i) The restoration of Israel as seen in the parable of the fig tree.
- ii) Conditions like the "days of Noah" would prevail. Ignorance of God's word, abounding wickedness and material interests.
- iii) There would be a sudden global disappearance of people.

We should remember that the Gospels record events in the age of Law **before** the Church began and these signs are therefore **to Israel**.

Those "taken" are NOT taken to judgment. The Greek word for "taken" indicates they are "received to one's self". Those "left" are "put away" for the Greek word is also translated of "divorce". The Disciples did not know it was the Rapture of the Church, for the Church did not exist at that time but **WE** know it will be the Church that suddenly disappears; we have Paul's epistles and the Rapture will signal the end of the age.



When Will the Kingdom Appear?

“And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation” (Luke 17:20).

John the Baptist, Jesus, and the Disciples all preached, *“Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand”* (Matt.3:2; 4:17; 10:7) and so the Pharisees asked, *“When?”* At this stage the nation had rejected the King and Jesus told them, *“The kingdom of God cometh **not with observation**”*.

The word translated *“observation”* is a compound word *para* meaning, *“near”* and *teros*, meaning *“to watch”*. It means to *“see-near”* i.e. Jesus told them, the kingdom will **NOT be seen in the near future.**

Jesus told the Pharisees, *“The kingdom of God is within you”*. He did not say this to Disciples! The words *“within you”* should be translated *“among you”*. He, the King, was **among them** but they had rejected Him! It certainly was **NOT within** the Pharisees.

Jesus then turned to **the Disciples** and said, *“The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and **YE SHALL NOT SEE IT**. And they shall say to you, See here; or, see there: go not after them, nor follow them. For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day”* (Luke 17:22-24).

Amillennialists teach that the kingdom is here NOW but Jesus said the Disciples **would not see it**; it had been deferred! False Messiahs would seek to establish the Kingdom such as Bar Kockhba (AD132-135) but Jesus said, *“Go not after them”*.

The kingdom would be established when Jesus came **like lightning in the heavens**. It would be AFTER His return *“BUT FIRST he must suffer...”* In other

words, there would be a gap in time before the Kingdom would appear.

Several SIGNS were then given to indicate **WHEN** the kingdom was near; it would be like the days of Noah and the days of Lot. In those times there was violence and homosexuality and men were oblivious to the grave danger of Divine judgment. Then suddenly, Noah was taken into the safety of the ark and Lot was snatched out of Sodom, and the Flood and fire came.

The Bible is clear that great Tribulation will come **after** the Church is taken into heaven at the Rapture. There will be a global disappearance of individuals, and so Jesus said: *“I tell you, in that night there shall be two in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left”* (Luke 17:34-36).

The word *“taken”* is literally in the Greek original, *“to receive to one’s self”* and *“left”* is *“to put away”*. The one *“taken”* is not taken for judgment but for mercy and those that remain are *“left”* for judgment.

The Disciples asked, *“Where Lord?”* and Jesus said, *“Wheresoever the Body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together”*. The Greek word for *“body”* is not *ptoma* meaning a carcass, but *soma* meaning a **living body**. The word comes from *sozo* meaning, *“I save”*. Like eagles ascending, the Rapture of the Church will be salvation to believers and a sign of when the Kingdom is near to Israel and the world.

LUKE CH.17:20-37

The Pharisees asked,
When will the kingdom appear?

Jesus replied;
It won't be seen in the near future.
Behold the kingdom of God is among you!
(i.e. The King is here!)

To the Disciples Jesus said:
The days will come when you shall desire
to see one of the days of the Son of man,
and you shall not see it.
When they say, See here, or see there: go
not after them, nor follow them...
For as the lightning, that lightens out of
the one part of heaven, shines unto the
other part of heaven; so shall also the Son
of man be in His day.

But first must He suffer many things, and be
rejected of this generation.

SIGNS OF WHEN THE KINGDOM IS NEAR
And as it was in the days of Noah...
Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot...
even thus shall it be in the day
when the Son of man is revealed.
There shall be two in one bed...
two shall be grinding together...
two shall be in the field:
the one shall be taken and the other left
The Disciples asked, Where, Lord?

Jesus answered, Wheresoever the
(living) body is, there will the eagles be
gathered together.

*“The dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are
alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in
the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air” (1Thess.4:16-17)*

The Mystery Church

The doctrine of the Church is central to understanding the prophecies of the end times. The image of the Church created by Christendom is foreign to that taught in the New Testament. Christendom sees the Church as an ecclesiastical organization led by a hierarchy of priests and Bishops who administer the rituals and order of a religious system. Prayerbooks spell out what each communicant should read at each season of the religious calendar. Many traditions are added to the mode of worship and in many instances these carry equal weight with the Scriptures. Clerical garb is prescribed for each level of leadership.

Large property holdings produce financial dividends for the church and consume a lot of time just to maintain and develop. When funds are required appeals are made and fund-raising methods are adopted to meet the needs of specific projects. In many cases, Government grants are sought and received. The stipends of clergy are regulated according to the level of seniority with tax free benefits.

The Church of Jesus Christ as established by the Apostles on the day of Pentecost was quite different; it consisted of Spirit-filled men of God who lived by faith working with their own hands where necessary, and receiving no stipend; they wore no robes, adhered to no prayerbook, sought no political favours and chose to suffer for the Faith they proclaimed rather than compromise the message. All of the Apostles suffered persecution and most lay down their lives for the sake of the Gospel of Christ. Though only a small band, in a few years the Apostles turned the world upside down, led multitudes to personal faith in Christ and established local churches.

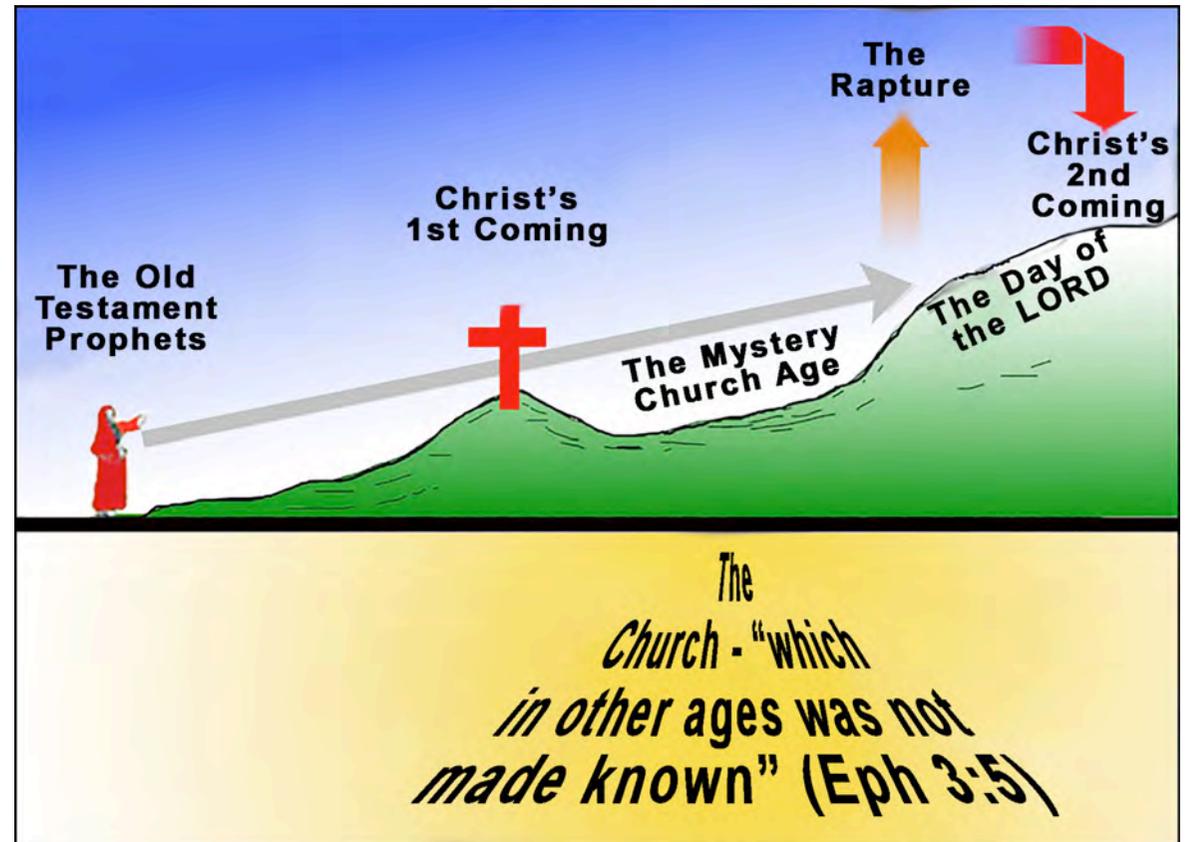
A common view in Christendom is that Israel was the Church in the Old Testament and the Church is "spiritual" Israel in the New Testament, but this is contrary to Scripture. The Bible teaches that the Church was "not made known in ages past" and did not exist in the Old Testament (Eph.3:1-10; Col.1:18-27; Rom.16:25-26).

When Jesus came He preached to the **nation of Israel** and the teaching of the Disciples throughout the Gospels was directed to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt.10:6).

The Old Testament prophets knew nothing of the Church and they saw the future events of Christ's first and second coming without

any understanding of the **long interval of the Church age** that lay like a great valley between. The fact that Israel would be blinded in part was foretold by Isaiah (ch.6) but it did not register even with the Godly Jews. Even in Acts chapter 1, only a matter of days before the Church was formed, the Disciples were still looking for an earthly kingdom over which Israel would reign. Jesus had told the Disciples they would NOT see it (Luke17:22).

The Church is quite different to the nation of Israel. The Church is a heavenly people blessed with all "spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph.1:3). Christ is the King of Israel but He is the **Bridegroom of the Church**. When the full number of believers are added to the Church, Christ will come into the air to catch away His Bride and the marriage of the Lamb will take place in heaven while Israel will turn to the Lord on earth.



Rapture Before the Great Tribulation

The Great Tribulation will be a period of seven years immediately before the second Advent of Christ (Matt.24:29-30); it is the "Day of the Lord" and the "time of Jacob's trouble" (Jer.30:7). The Tribulation is the 70th "week" of Israel's history before Israel is blessed in the Kingdom (Dan.9:27). It is therefore for Israel and NOT for the Church.

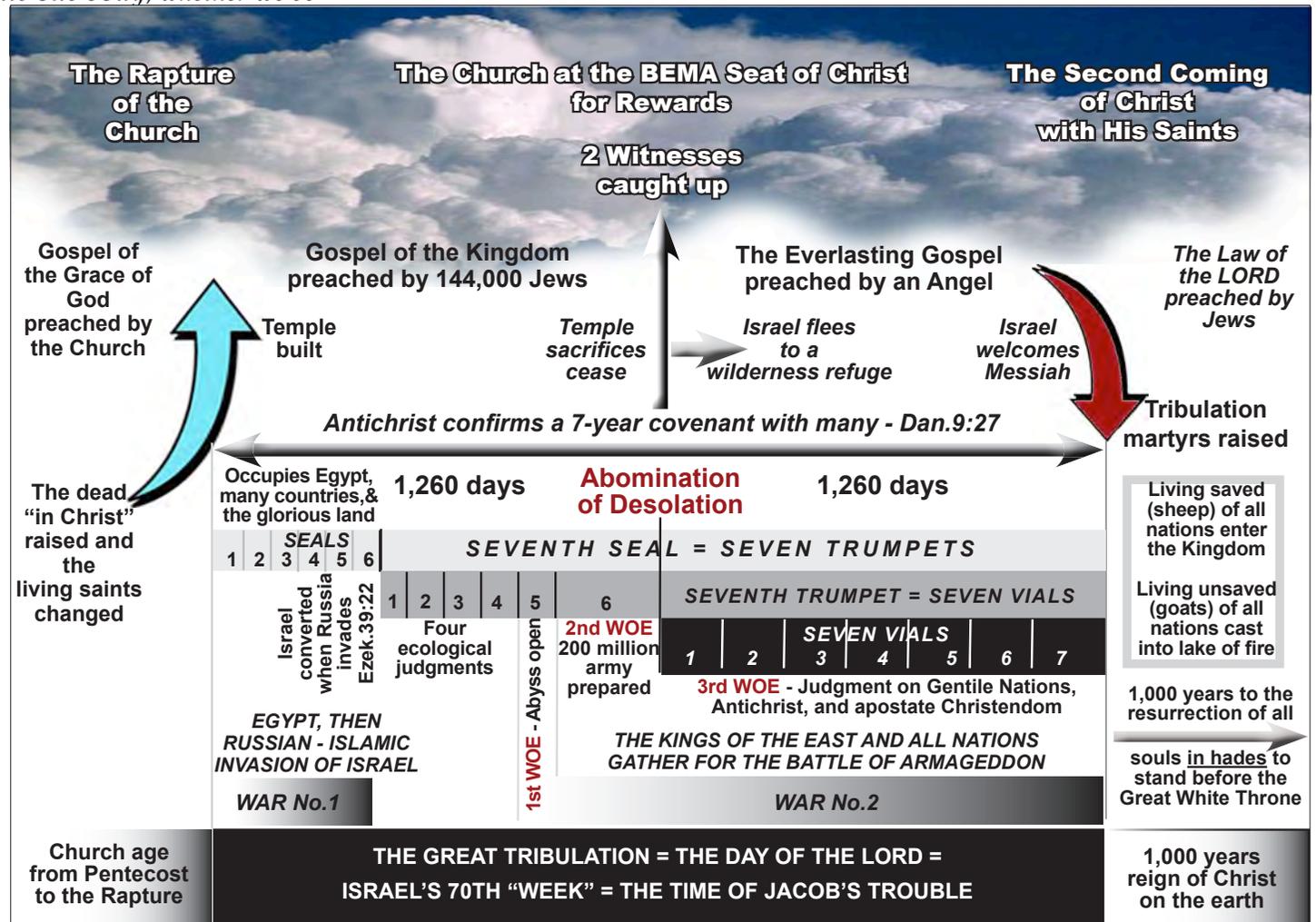
In 1 Thessalonians chapter 4, Paul described the Rapture of the Church - those "in Christ". Only the Church is "in Christ" i.e. in the body of Christ, for by "one Spirit are WE (Christians) all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles" (1Cor.12:13). At the Rapture "the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be CAUGHT UP together with them" (1Thess.4:16-17). See 1Cor.15:52.

When Paul described the Rapture of those "in Christ" he also discussed when it would occur. He warned that "the day of the Lord (the Tribulation) so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But YE, brethren, are NOT in darkness, that that day should overtake YOU as a thief" (1Thess.5:2-4).

Because...
 "God hath not appointed US to wrath, (of the Day of the Lord) but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him" (1Thess.5:9-10).

Jesus told the Philadelphian Church:
 "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from THE HOUR of temptation, which shall come upon all the wor..., to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Rev.3:10-11).

The Tribulation is Israel's time when 144,000 Jewish men (Rev.7:1-8) will preach the Gospel of the kingdom "in all the world for a witness and then shall the end come" (Matt.24:14). Jewish Temple worship will recommence at Jerusalem and when "one shall be taken and the other left" it will be a sign to Israel that the end of the age has come. Jesus told Jewish disciples that He would "return from the wedding" (Luke 12:36). The Bride is therefore at the wedding in heaven BEFORE the 2nd Advent - the marriage supper is on earth (Rev.19:7-9; Luke 12:37).



The First Resurrection or the Resurrection of Life

There is a common view throughout much of Christendom that there will be a General Resurrection at the end of the age when Christ returns and that all men, saved and unsaved, will be judged at that time. Such a view immediately rules out any possibility of an earthly kingdom for 1,000 years. It also rules out any future for Israel in the prophetic Scriptures and is known as Amillennialism, Replacement Theology, or Reformed Theology.

Jesus plainly stated that there is a **separate resurrection** for saved and unsaved souls. In John 5:28-29 we read:

*“Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the **resurrection of life**; and they that have done evil, unto the **resurrection of damnation**.”*

When Jesus rose from the dead the **Old Testament saints** from Adam to Christ, were also raised. Matthew wrote:

*“And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and **came out of the graves after his resurrection**, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many”* (Matt.27:51-53).

Before Christ rose, the **souls** of the saved went to the paradise section of “*sheol*”. The **souls** of all unsaved also went to “*sheol*”, but to the torment part of “*sheol*” (Luke 16:19-31).

Jesus told the repentant thief on the cross, “*Today shalt thou be with me in paradise*” (Luke 23:43).

Nobody could rise from the dead before Christ rose because He was the “*firstfruits of them that slept*” (1Cor.15:20,23). The Old Testament saints came out of their graves “*after His resurrection*” and Jesus took Paradise into heaven. Today, the souls of believers go to Christ in heaven at the moment of death (Phil.1:23).

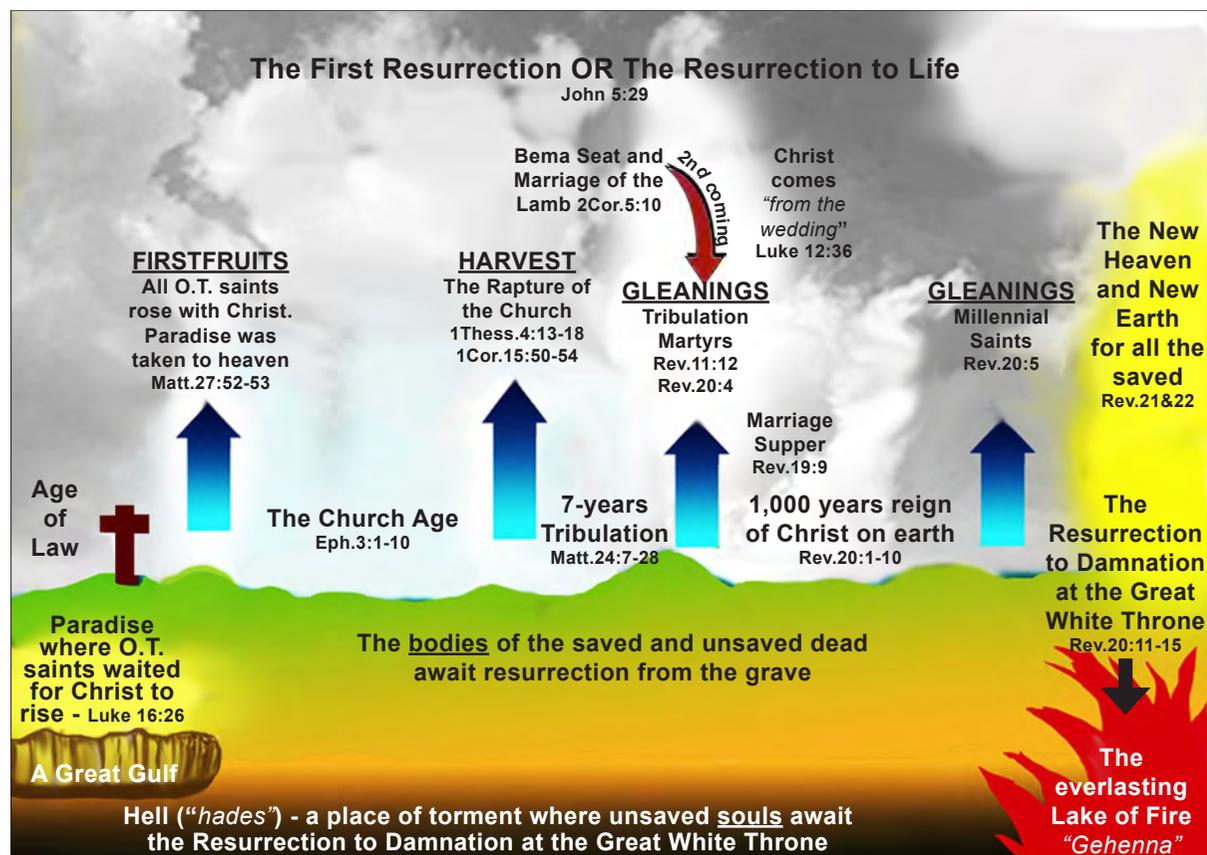
At the Rapture, the deceased **Church age saints** (those “*in Christ*”) will be raised first, and the living saints are “*changed*” and receive a resurrection body (1Thess.4:13-18; 1Cor.15:51-56).

When Christ returns at the end of the Tribulation, the **Tribulation saints** who were martyred will be raised to reign with Christ 1,000 years (Rev.20:4).

At the end of the 1,000 years of Christ’s kingdom on earth the “*rest of the dead*” (Rev.20:5), the **Millennial saints**, will be raised in resurrection power before the earth is renovated by fire and there is a new heaven and new earth.

The souls of the unsaved await the **resurrection to damnation** at the Great White Throne judgment at the end of time; they are cast into the lake of fire (Rev.20:14).

When Christ returns, Antichrist and all who follow him, will receive resurrection bodies before being cast into the lake of fire (Rev.19:20; Dan.12:2; Matt.25:41). Only unsaved resurrected persons go to the “lake of fire”.



Understanding the Book of the Revelation

*"Write the things which thou **HAST SEEN**, and the things which **ARE**, and the things which shall be **HEREAFTER**" (Rev.1:19).*

The Book of the Revelation concludes Divine revelation and brings together in chronological order, prophecies scattered throughout the Old and New Testaments. John was exiled on the Isle of Patmos in the Aegean Sea and wrote the Apocalypse (Revelation) about AD96 at the end of the reign of Domitian (according to Irenaeus who lived in the second century). John wrote his Epistles and Gospel about the same time.

There are three divisions in the Book of Revelation:

- 1) The things John **SAW** on Patmos (ch.1);
- 2) The things which **ARE** i.e. the things existing in this present Church age as described in the letters to the seven churches of Asia (chs. 2 and 3);
- 3) The things which shall be **HEREAFTER** this present Church age as described in chapters 4 through 22.

Having seen the vision of Christ, John was given messages to write to seven churches in Asia. These messages were appropriate to each of the Churches existing in John's day and also prophetic of **seven stages of Christendom** from Pentecost to the Rapture of the Church.

The last stage of Christendom before the Rapture is described by the letter to the church at Laodicea. In chapter 4 John saw a door opened in heaven and he heard a voice like the sound of a trumpet saying:
*"Come up hither and I will show you things which must be **HEREAFTER**" (Rev.4:1).*

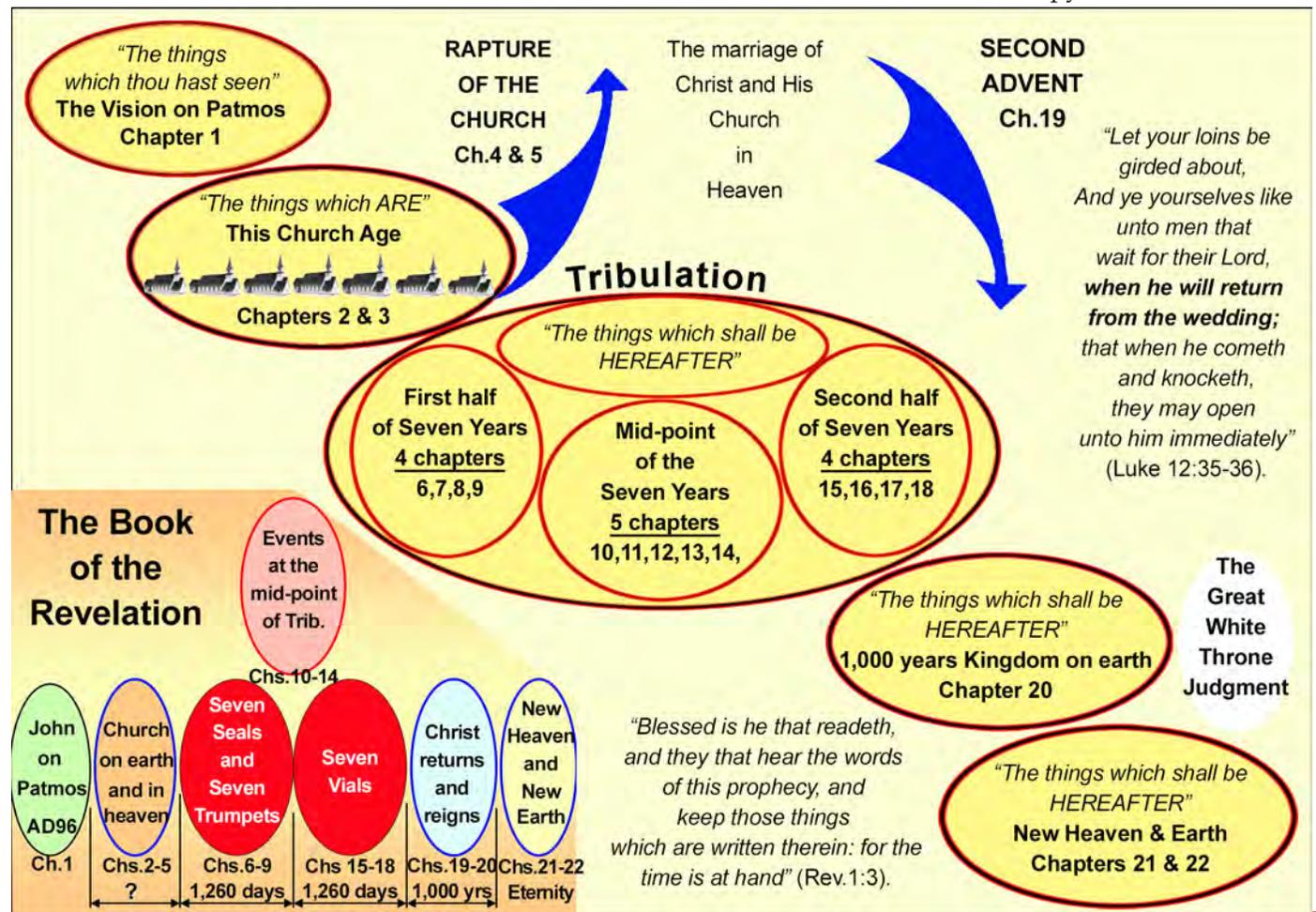
John foresaw his own future **Rapture** into heaven which he described in chs. 4 and 5.

The **Great Tribulation** is described in chapters 6 to 18: the **first half** of the 7 years is in chapters 6 to 9; the events occurring at the **mid-point** of the 7 years are recorded in chapters 10 to 14 and events of the **second half** of the 7-year Tribulation are recorded in chapters 15 to 18.

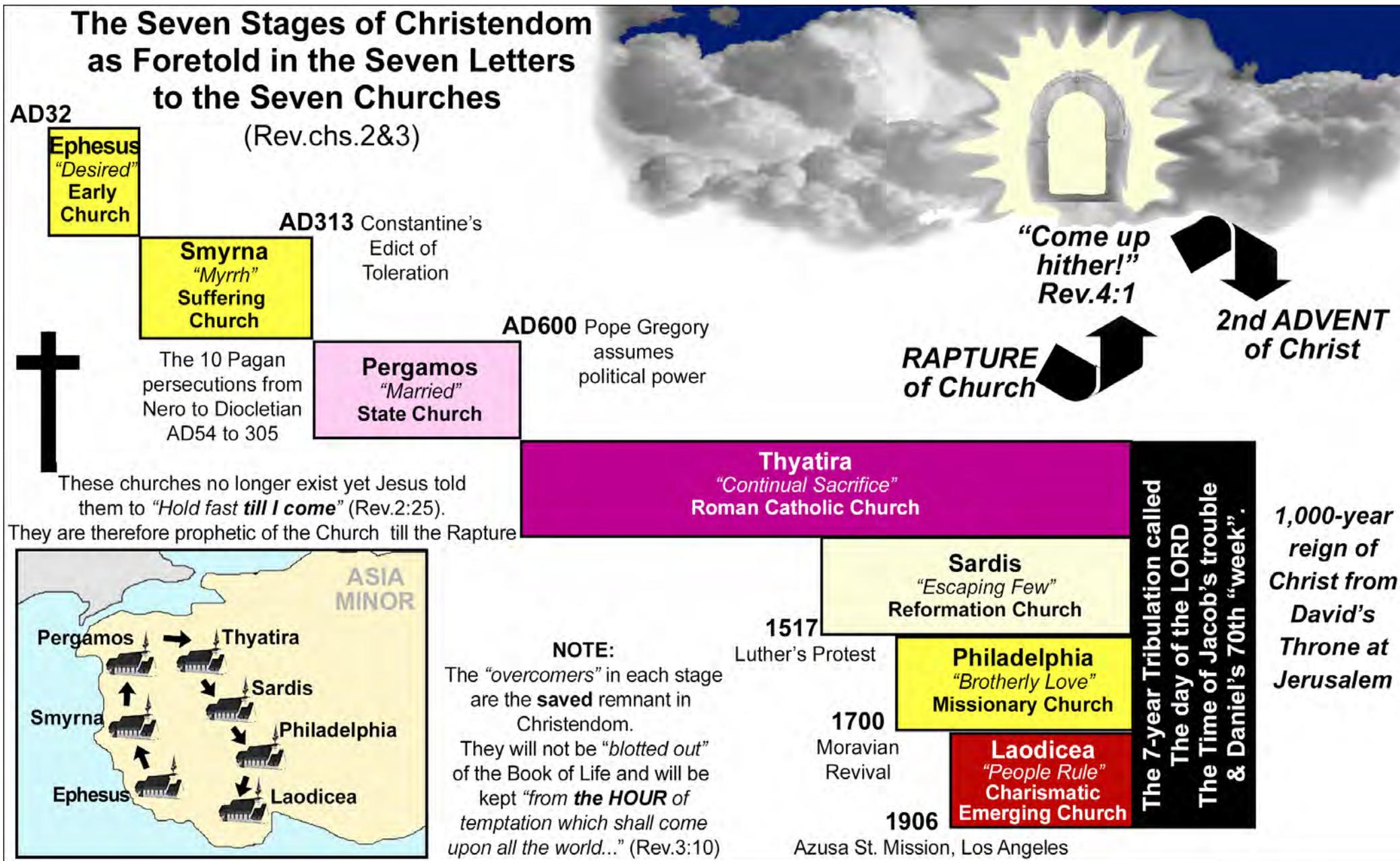
The **second coming of Christ** is followed by the marriage supper of the Lamb and is described in Revelation 19:7-9. Antichrist is judged at the coming of the Lord.

The **1,000-year millennial kingdom** of Christ is seen in chapter 20 concluding with the resurrection to damnation of the lost.

Revelation concludes with the eternal state in **the new heavens and new earth** in chs. 21 and 22. The Church will occupy the New Jerusalem, Israel will be located around the New Jerusalem, and the saved Gentiles will occupy the new Earth.

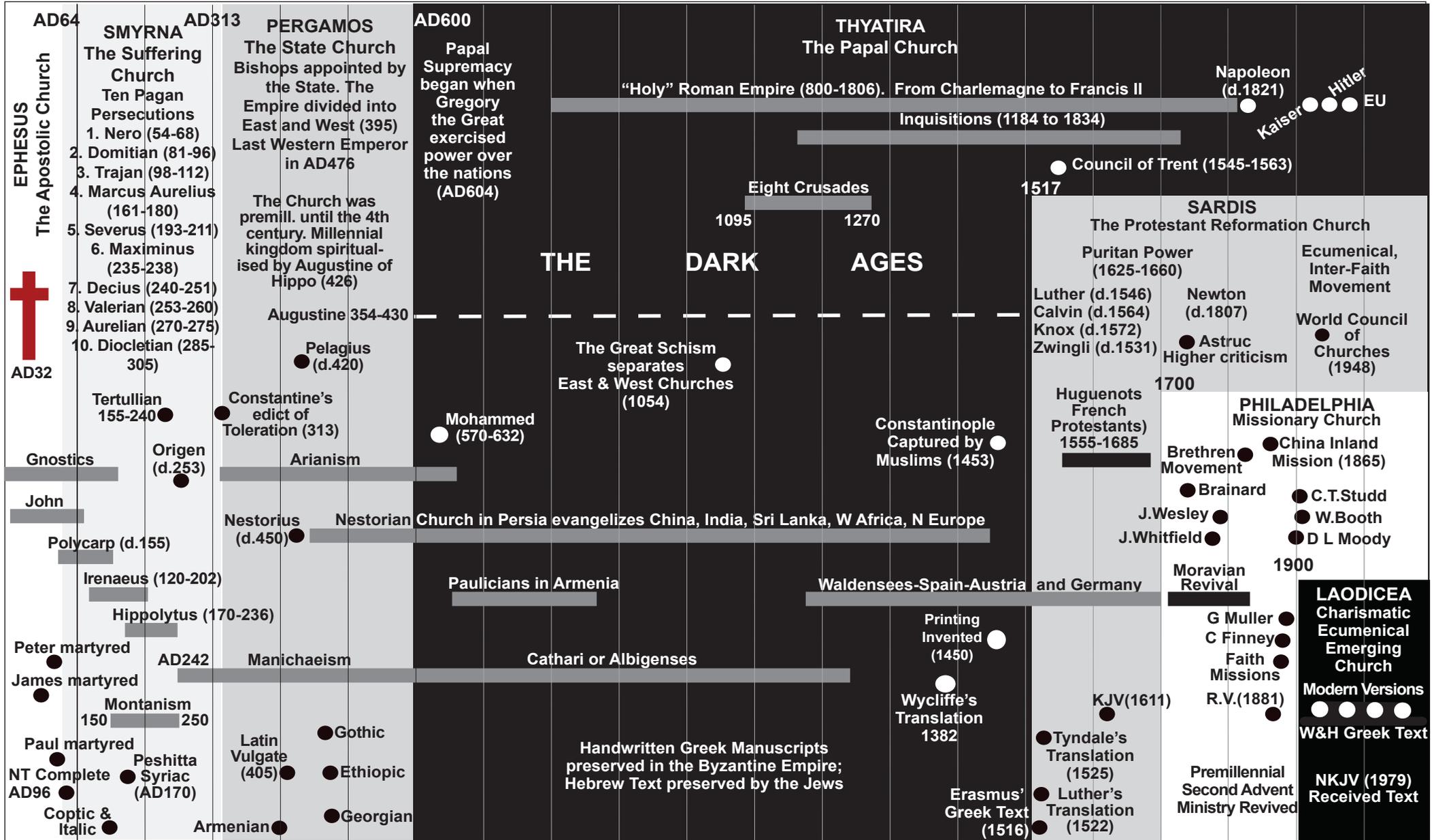


The Church in the Book of the Revelation



CHURCH HISTORY FORETOLD IN THE SEVEN CHURCHES

AD 100 200 300 400 500 600 700 800 900 1000 1100 1200 1300 1400 1500 1600 1700 1800 1900 2000



Sequence of Events in the Tribulation

The events occurring during the seven years of Great Tribulation may be divided into three areas.

- 1) The First half of the 7 years or 1,260 days
- 2) Events that occur at the Mid-point of the 7 years and,
- 3) The Second half of the 7 years or a second period of 1,260 days.

The more we become familiar with the text of the Revelation the more obvious it becomes that it provides us with a continuous record of major events that will occur from the Day of Pentecost all the way down to the end of time and on into eternity.

The entire scene will change after the first 1,260 days when Antichrist, who is the political head of the Revived Roman Empire in the first half of the 7 years, will become the Beast and be demonically possessed.

During the first half of the 7 years, attention is focussed on Israel who will be invaded by Russia and Islam but will, in her time of great trouble, cry out to the Lord and *"all Israel shall be saved"* (Rom.11:26-33).

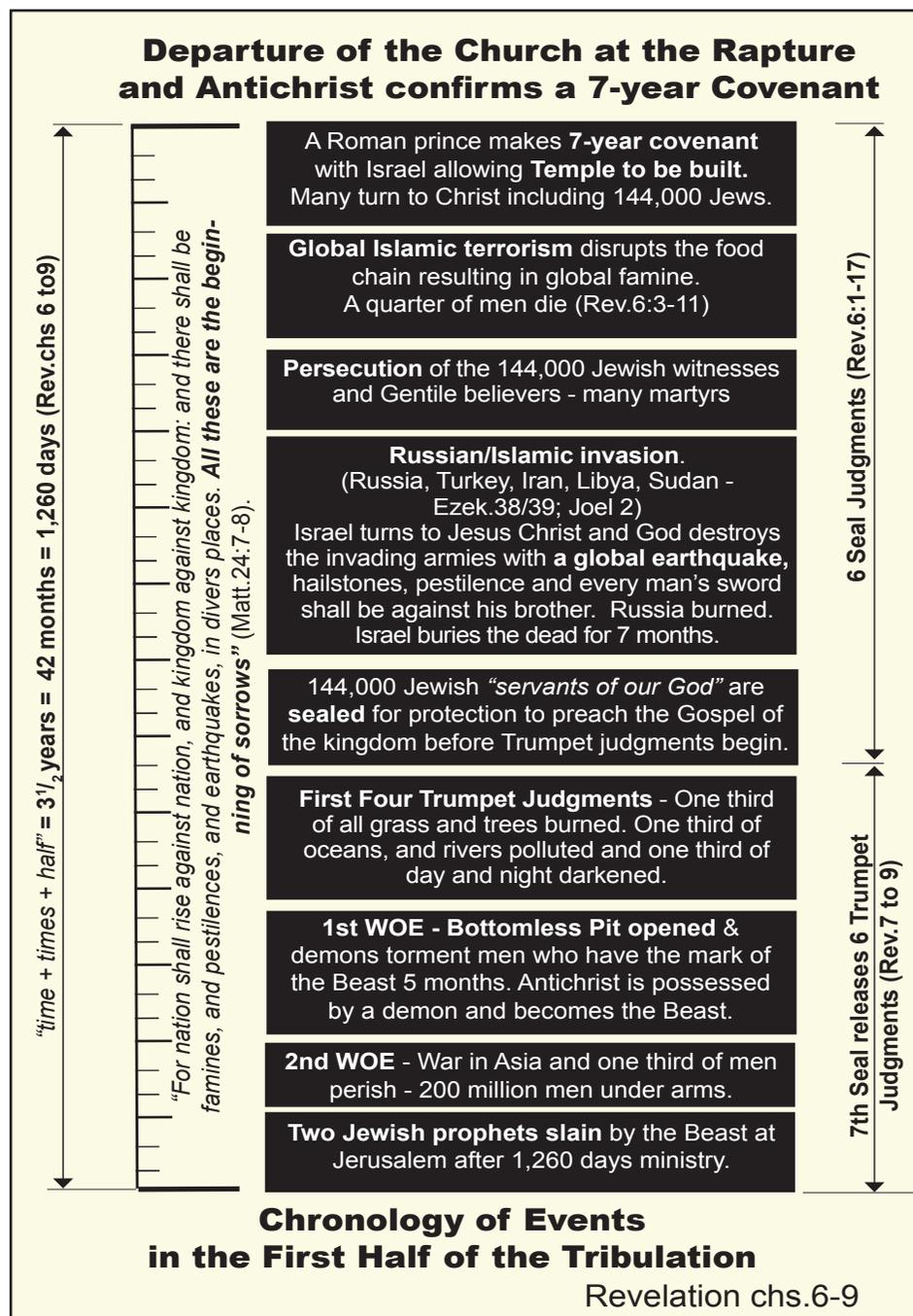
Gospel testimony will be entrusted to Israel in the first 1,260 days and 144,000 Jewish young men will, for a short time (Matt.10:23) proclaim the Gospel of the Kingdom *"in all the world for a witness unto all nations"* (Matt.24:14) before the last 1,260 days runs its course.

At the end of the first 1,260 days open testimony on earth will be silenced and the 144,000 Jews will appear before the throne in heaven.

In the second half of the 7 years the nations will be divided; those who are for Christ against those who are for the Beast and Satan. The Beast will have his mark of ownership implanted in the forehead or right hand of his followers. The vial judgments that God will pour out during this time will be directed against the beast, his kingdom, and those who receive his mark.

Two powerful leaders are identified in the seven-year period; Gog, who is the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal in the land of Magog (Russia) and the Beast (Antichrist) who is the leader of the Revived Roman Empire. Gog and the land of Magog are destroyed in the first half of the 7 years and the beast is destroyed at the end of the second half of the 7 years.

The entire period begins immediately after the Rapture of the Church and concludes when Christ comes in glory and power with all His saints.



Russia & Islam Destroyed, Israel Saved, Antichrist Demon possessed from the Abyss

Seven thunder judgments are sealed up and an angel declares there *"should be delay no longer"*.

Antichrist causes **Jewish sacrifices to cease** in the Temple and places his image there - *"the abomination of desolation"*.

There is **war in heaven** and Michael and his angels cast the Dragon (Satan) and his angels into the earth.

The two Jewish prophets slain by the Beast in Jerusalem are raised and **caught up to heaven** after $3\frac{1}{2}$ days.

Israel flees from Jerusalem helped by a nation with *"two wings of a great eagle"* - possibly the United States.

The 144,000 Jewish servants of God appear **before the throne** in heaven. Israel's testimony on earth silenced.

Angels flying through the heavens **proclaim the "Everlasting Gospel"** & warn of imminent wrath and Great Tribulation.

An **assassination attempt** is made on the Beast and his *"deadly"* wound by a sword to the head is healed.

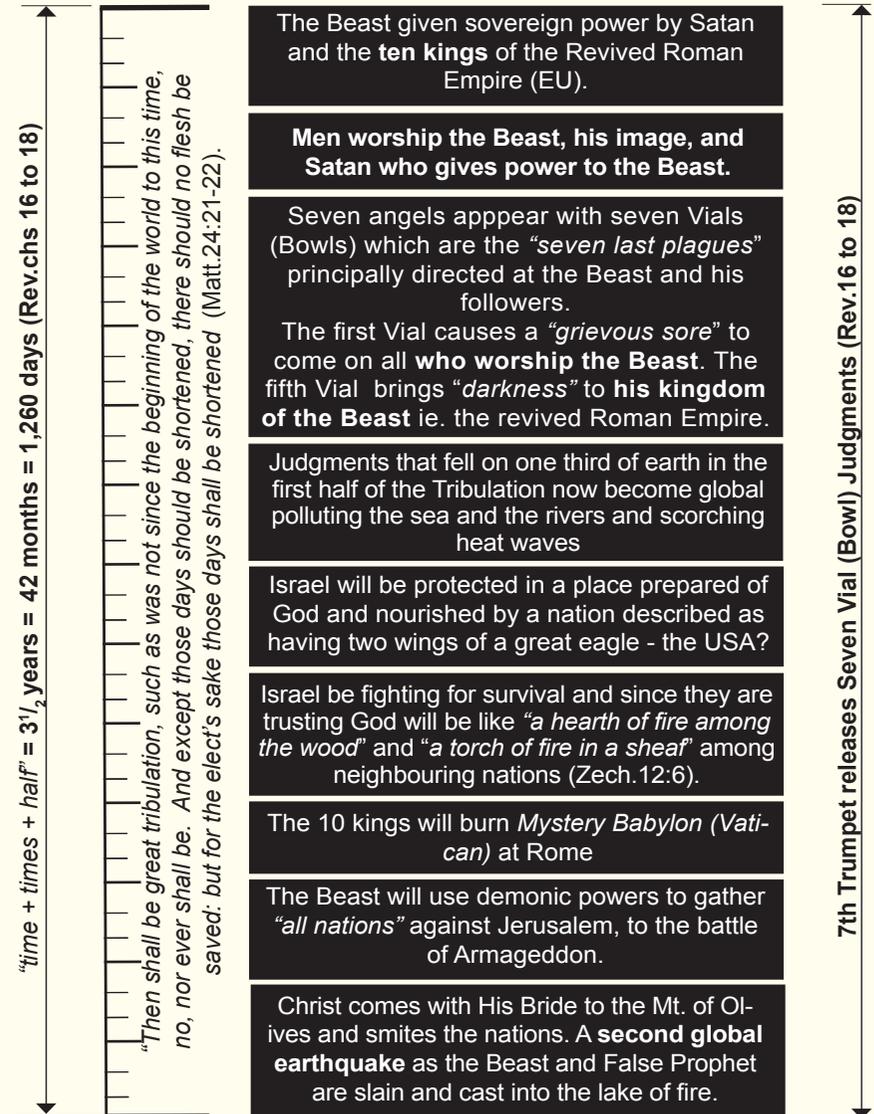
The Lord and angels prepare to **reap the harvest** of earth and to cast the nations into the winepress of the wrath of God.

An angel warns not to receive the **mark of the Beast**. Better to die *"in the Lord"* than be tormented for ever in the lake of fire.

Events Occurring at the Mid-point of the Tribulation

Revelation chs.10-14

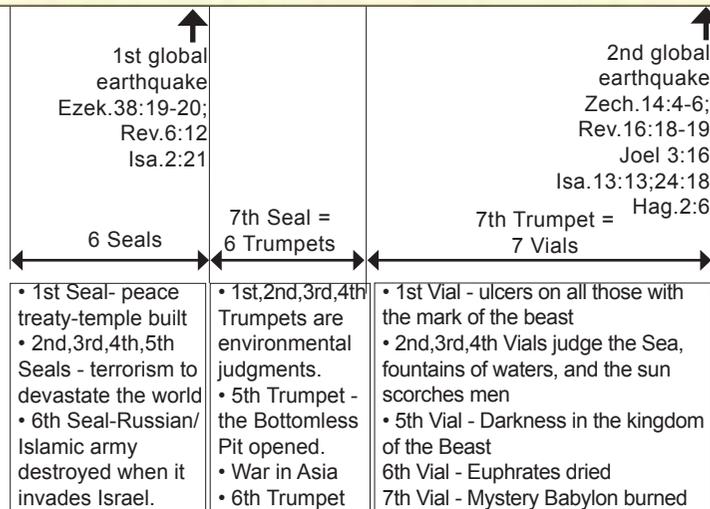
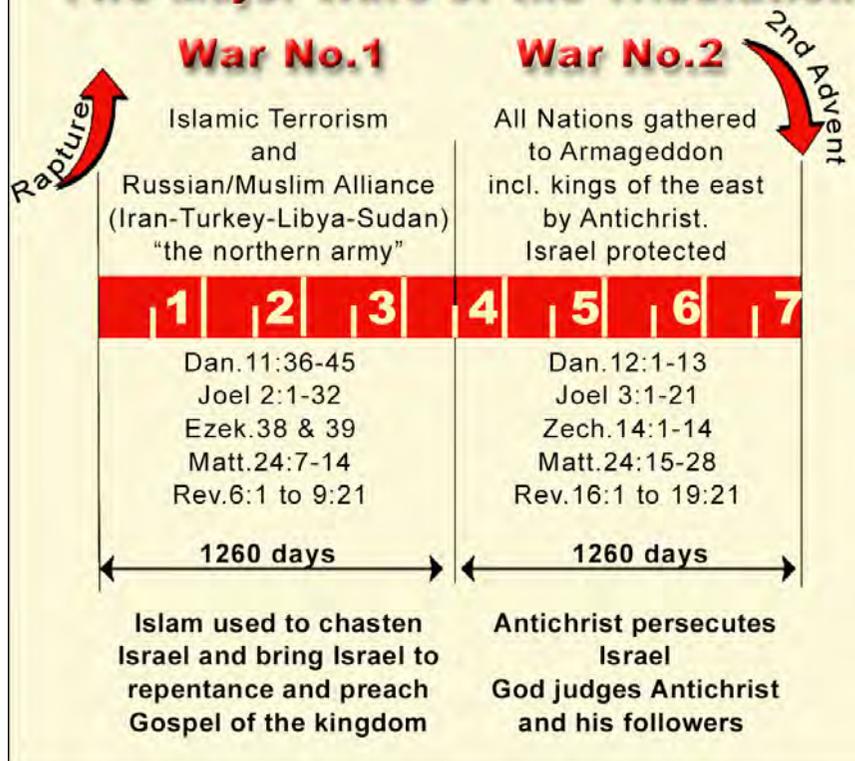
The 7th Trumpet Announces 7 "last plagues"



Chronology of Events in the Second Half of the Tribulation (Rev.chs.15 to 19)

Revelation chs.15-18

Two Major Wars of the Tribulation



Wars and Earthquakes in the Tribulation

The Tribulation occupies only seven years and the seven years divides into two periods of three and a half years. During the first half of the Tribulation Antichrist is a **political leader** over the revived Roman Empire and as such makes a covenant with Israel immediately after the Rapture. After the bottomless pit is opened at the end of the first half of the Tribulation and Satan is cast out of heaven to the earth, the Antichrist will become possessed by a demon from the bottomless pit. Thus it will be said of him that he "shall ascend out of the bottomless pit" (Rev.17:8).

During the **first half** of the Tribulation the rider on the red horse (2nd Seal) is given power to "take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another" (Rev.6:4). This is no doubt **terrorism** that will so disrupt the world that famine and death will dominate one fourth of the world (Rev.6:5-8) and persecution of all who turn to Christ will cause many to be martyred (Rev. 6:9-11). **The sixth Seal** judgment (Rev.6:12-17) describes a global earthquake; the first of two **global** earthquakes during the Tribulation.

The first global earthquake occurs when Israel is invaded in the first half of the Tribulation by a Russian/ Islamic army as described in Ezek. 38:18-20 and Rev.6:12-17. **This is not Armageddon.** A second and even greater earthquake occurs at the end of the second half of the Tribulation as the Lord returns in glory (Rev.16:18; Zech.14:1-5).

The first half of the Tribulation will see 144,000 Jews turn to Christ and preach the Gospel of the Kingdom and at the Russian invasion, the **one third of the nation** that survives will seek the Lord (Zech.13:9).

It will be the conversion of Israel nationally, that causes Antichrist to break his covenant and occupy the Temple causing the "sacrifice and oblation to cease" (Dan.9:27).

When Israel turns to the Lord, Russia and her Islamic allies will be destroyed; Russia (the land of Magog) will be burned (Ezek.39:6) and at the end of the first half, Antichrist as the Beast, and his false Prophet will deceive the world with miracles and seek to utterly destroy the godly nation of Israel and all who heed the Gospel they preached.

The Beast will gather "all nations" (Rev.16:12-14; Joel 3:2) to Jerusalem to totally destroy God's people but the "Lord will be the hope of His people, and the strength of the children of Israel" (Joel 3:16).

It is at this point in history that the second global earthquake will occur; islands will disappear, mountains will be flattened, the great city, Rome, will be split into three parts and hail the size of a talent (100 pounds) will cause the devil-worshipping people to blaspheme God. In Israel, the Mount of Olives will split to form a great valley and Christ will come rescue His people and destroy the Beast with all who follow him.

Apostate Christendom - "Mystery Babylon" to be Judged

The *Times of the Gentiles* is the period of time in which Gentiles have occupied Jerusalem. It began in 606BC when the Babylonians began to take Jews as captives to Babylon and continued through the time of the Persian Empire (538-332BC), and the Grecian Empire (332-63BC). It has since been occupied by Romans, Arabs, Turks, and the British. The old Roman Empire has continued in various forms: Imperial, Byzantine, the Holy Roman Empire, and since WWII, is being revived under the banner of the European Union (EU). According to Daniel 9:25 Antichrist will arise from the revived Roman Empire, the **last kingdom** in the *Times of the Gentiles* (Luke 21:24) since it was his people who destroyed Jerusalem in AD70. Antichrist will be destroyed when Christ returns.

Antichrist is described as a "little horn" among "ten horns" (kings) that will lead the revived Roman Empire in the last days (Daniel 7:8,23-26). He is also described as the "beast" having seven heads and ten horns (kings) in the Book of Revelation (Rev.13:1-2; 17:3).

In Revelation 17, the Beast is seen ridden by a harlot woman whose name is "Mystery Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the earth" (Rev.17:5). The woman clearly is located at Rome for she **sits on seven mountains** and in AD96, John said she was "that great city that reigneth over the kings of the earth" (Rev.17:18). Rome is known as the city of seven hills.

Other clues as to her identity are:

- 1) She sits on "many waters" (international v.15).
- 2) She has a golden cup full of blasphemy and abominations (idolatry).
- 3) She is clothed in purple and scarlet with great riches; "gold and precious stones and pearls."
- 4) She is drunk with the "blood of the martyrs of Jesus" (Rev.17:6).

Only the Papacy can match these clues: she is located at Rome, she has the golden cup of the mass in her hand full of idolatry, for she claims to worship Christ's body and blood in the wafer and cup; her cardinals are clothed in purple and scarlet, and the Vatican wealth is too vast to estimate. Through the centuries,



EU Parliament, Strasbourg

millions of Bible-believing Christians were slaughtered, burned, and tortured in Crusades and inquisitions. Through her secular arm, the Holy Roman Empire and Catholic kings, she warred against any who refused to bow to her. Now, behind the scenes, she is guiding the formation of the Revived

Roman Empire which was founded by the 1958 **Treaty of Rome**. The **Lisbon Treaty** (2009) was signed at a Catholic Monastery in Portugal. Germany's Christian Democratic Union (CDU) is a Catholic political party.



It is appropriate that her name is "Mystery Babylon." Satan was the spirit-being behind the king of ancient Babylon which is where idolatry began (Isa.13) and when Babylon's temples were destroyed he moved behind the king of Tyre (Ezek.28); when Tyre was destroyed Satan headquartered at Pergamos in Asia (Rev.2:13). Now the Pope wears the pagan high priestly title, *Pontifex Maximus*. In the last days, the Beast at the head of the Revived Roman Empire, will be possessed by Satan setting up his image in the rebuilt Temple at Jerusalem and throughout the world. The Pope is not the Antichrist but the Papacy will bring him to power. *Time* magazine Dec.9 1991 depicted the EU as a beast ridden by a harlot woman.

When the EU built its \$400-million Parliament House at Strasbourg the architect was required to design **an unfinished tower like the tower of Babel!** The image of a woman riding a beast occurs on coins in Europe and is on the cover of a Penguin book about the EU. The imagery arises from the myth of *Europa*, the daughter of the King of Tyre, who was courted by Zeus the father of the Greek gods. She refused, so he turned himself into a white bull and when she rode him, he leaped into the Mediterranean and swam with her on his back to Crete where he turned back into a man and married her. Antichrist will burn the Papacy when he comes to power (Rev.18). He will have no further use for her when he sits in the Temple at Jerusalem claiming to be God (2Thess.2:4).



TIME, December 9, 1991

The Eternal State - The New Heaven and New Earth

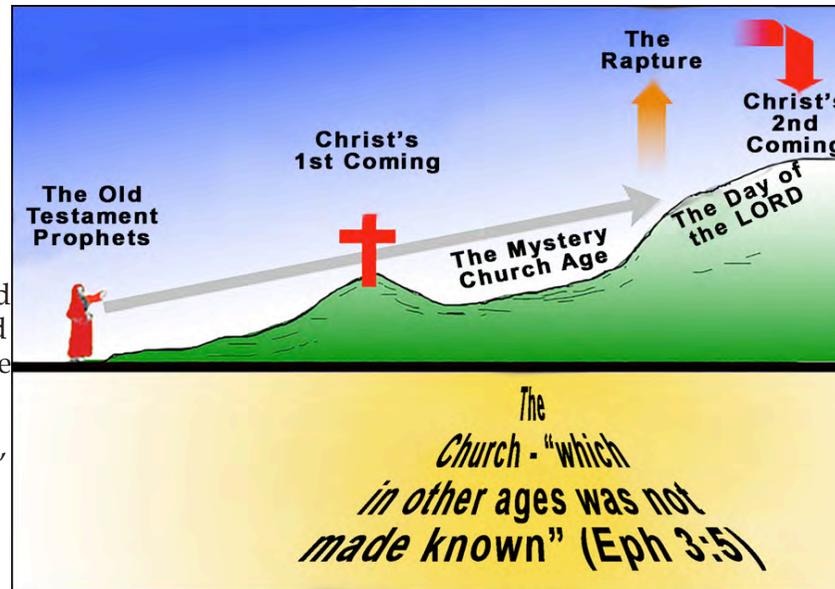
At the end of the 1,000-year reign of Christ on earth Satan will be loosed from the Bottomless Pit and go forth to test the nations who have lived under Christ's rule during the Kingdom age. Many who have not known regeneration by the Holy Spirit will be deceived and they will rebel against Christ. Gog and Magog (Russia) will lead an army against Jerusalem but God will destroy them with fire from heaven and Satan will be forever cast into the lake of fire (Rev.20:7-10).

After the 1,000-year reign of Christ on earth, the **unsaved** "dead small and great" from all Ages will be raised from the graves (the body) and hades (the soul) to stand before the "great white throne" where they will be judged according to their works. No **saved person** will ever stand before the "great white throne" because their sin has already been judged in the person of Jesus Christ when He died on the cross.

Two books are opened; the **Book of Life** and the **Book of Works** (Rev.20:11-15). The name of **every living person was written in the Book of Life** before the "foundation of the world" and only those who reject God's mercy have their names blotted out. To the Church at Sardis Christ said: "He that overcometh (the saved), the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the Book of Life" (Rev.3:5). The **Book of Works** will be opened to determine the degree of punishment the unsaved receive in the lake of fire.

Hades is the **Remand Centre** for the souls of the unsaved until they appear before the Judge to receive sentence. The Father has "given him (Christ) authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man" (John 5:27). "Death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was **not found written** in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (Rev.20:14).

The earth will then be renovated by fire. Peter wrote of "the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for **new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness**" (2Peter 3:12-13).



John also spoke of a "new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea" (Rev.21:1).

The new heavens (atmospheric heavens) and earth will be inhabited by the resurrected redeemed of all ages and the "throne of God and of the Lamb" (Christ) will be located on the new earth (Rev.22:3). John wrote:

"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God." (Rev.21:2-4).

The New Jerusalem is the "Father's house" of many mansions presently being prepared by the Lord Jesus (John 14:2). When John saw the city descend it appeared "as a bride adorned for her husband" (Rev.21:2). An angel said, "Come hither, I will shew thee **the bride, the Lamb's wife**. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God" (Rev.21:9-10).

The New Jerusalem will be the eternal abode of the Church, the bride of Christ; it is built upon the foundation of the apostles for their names are in the precious stones that make up its foundations (Rev.21:14; Eph.2:20).

The redeemed from Israel will surround the city whose wall is "great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the **twelve tribes of the children of Israel**" (Rev.21:12).

The redeemed from Gentile nations since the time of Adam will occupy the new earth. "The **nations** of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and **the kings of the earth** do bring their glory and honor into it" (Rev.21:24).

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away (Rev.21:4) "And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him" (Rev.22:3).

Prophecy at a Glance - Putting it Together

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that **no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation**. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2Peter1:19-21).

To understand Bible Prophecy it is necessary to consider all the Scriptures bearing on any particular subject. No prophecy of scripture is of **any private interpretation**; many erroneous views have been built on isolated texts.

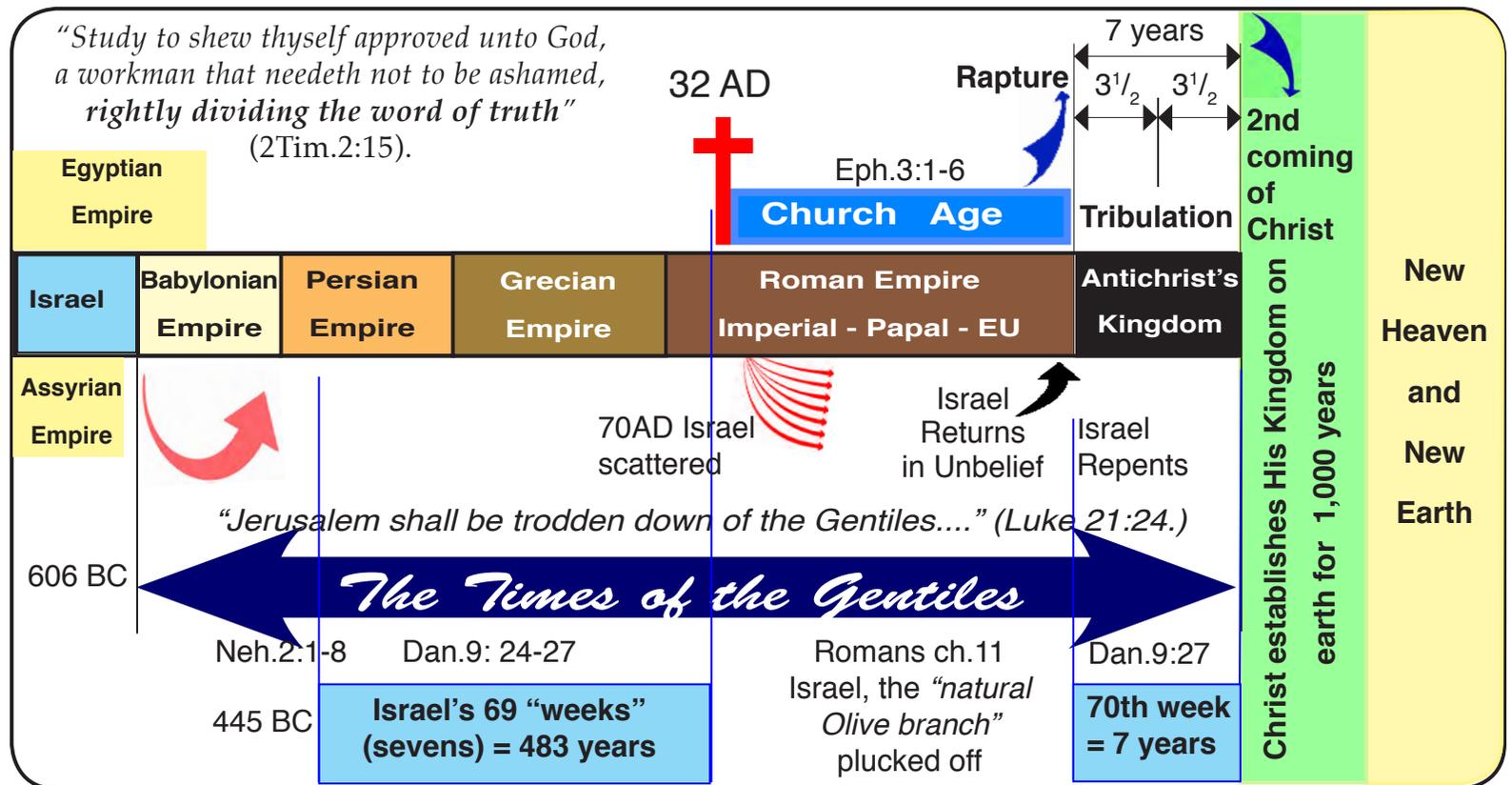
It is also important to have some knowledge of history to identify those amazing prophecies that have already been fulfilled and the historical sections of the Old Testament should be studied. Peter wrote that prophecy is found in **the many portions** of Scripture and we need to compare Scripture with Scripture. The Bible is its own interpreter.

The above chart shows how each aspect of Bible prophecy fits together. The prophecies concerning Israel, the Gentiles, and the Church all come together to give us a complete understanding of God's purpose and plan for this world.

Israel is God's chosen people through whom He has preserved His Word. Paul wrote: "What advantage then hath the Jew?... Much every way: chiefly, because that **unto them** were committed the oracles (utterances) of God" (Rom.3:1-2).

God chose Israel as the means whereby He brought His beloved Son into the world and Jerusalem was where He has eternally set His name (Deut.12:5). When God chose Abraham He promised that, in his seed, "all the families of the earth will be blessed." Those who bless Israel will be blessed and those who curse Israel will be cursed. Gentile nations rise and fall according to their attitude to God's chosen people.

Today Israel is under chastening from God for rejecting Christ and have been spiritually blinded in fulfilment of Isaiah ch. 6:9-12, but Paul wrote: "If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, **what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?**" (Rom.11:15).



How Near are We to the Rapture?

“And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching” (Heb.10:24-25).

Jesus said: *“But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father” (Mark 13:32).* The Father has put the times and seasons *“in His own power” (Acts 1:7)* and the reason why we cannot know the day or hour when the Rapture will take place is because it awaits the completion of the Church. When the last soul is added to the Bride of Christ, the Father will say to the Son, *“Go, and get your bride”*. Christ will bring the souls of the deceased Church-age believers and they will be reunited with their bodies; then *“we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”*

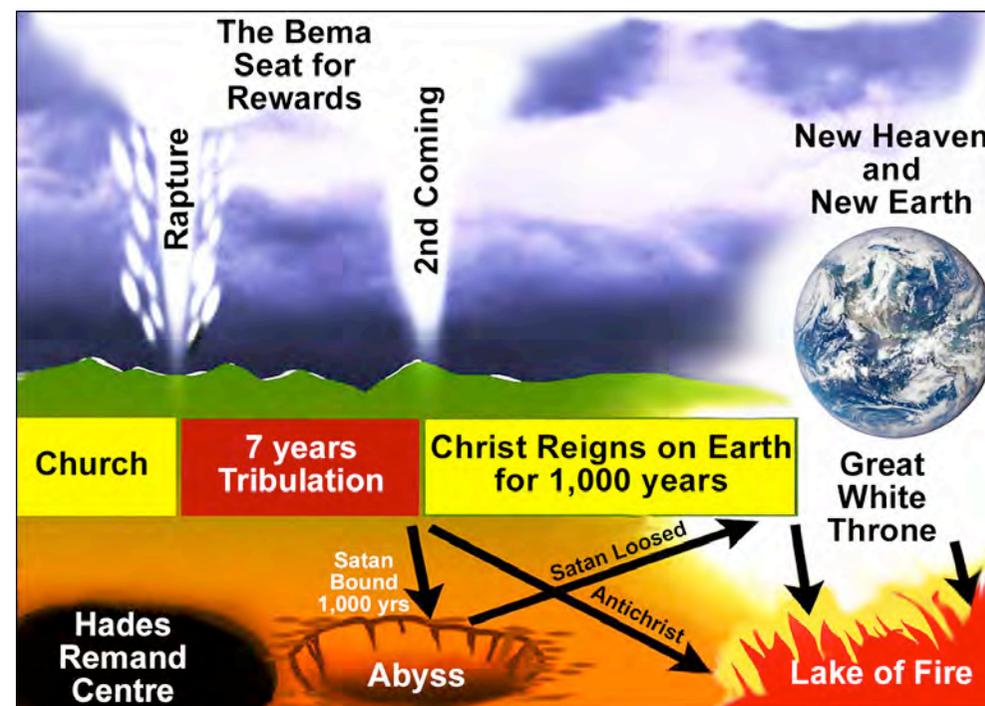
The last seven years before Christ returns in glory and power belong to Israel and Paul wrote:

*“I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, **UNTIL the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.** And **so all Israel shall be saved:** as it is written, *There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins” (Rom.11:25-27).**

The *“fulness of the Gentiles”* is the completion of the Bride of Christ from among the Gentiles during the years of Israel’s blindness. After the Church is removed Israel will seek the Lord in the first half of the seven years of tribulation. Once the Rapture occurs the prophetic clock will begin to tick and the Jews will be able to count down the days until Messiah appears in the heavens, takes His stand on the Mount of Olives, destroys the Antichrist and all his armies in the battle of Armageddon, and delivers His covenant-people; Israel.

For us today, we know not the day or the hour of the Rapture but **we can see the day approaching:**

- 1) We are living at the end of the Church age; in the Laodicean era of Charismatic, Ecumenical, and Emerging Christendom. Apostasy abounds.
- 2) The Roman Empire is being revived, ridden by the harlot woman; (the Papacy). The European Union (EU) is bringing Europe together to prepare a kingdom for Antichrist which will be finally divided into ten parts. It was established by **the Treaty of Rome 1957, the Maastricht Treaty 1993, and the Lisbon Treaty 2009.**



3) Russia is identifying with the Muslim nations and in the Tribulation will join with Iran, Turkey, Libya and Sudan to invade Israel (Ezek.38 & 39; Joel 2). The war in Syria has brought these armies to Israel’s border.

4) Daniel wrote that in the Last Days, *“many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased” (Dan.12:4).*

5) Christendom has become exceedingly apostate: The Ecumenical and Inter-Faith Movements are embracing pagan religions and demonic possession has been evident in the Charismatic Movement since 1900 fulfilling 1Tim.4:1-2:

“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy.”

6) Jesus said the days before His return would be like the days of Noah and Lot when there was a population explosion, **the earth was filled with violence, and aggressive homosexual behaviour** was common.

We can certainly see the day of the Lord’s return approaching. **Are you ready? Have you received Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour?**

How Can I be Ready?

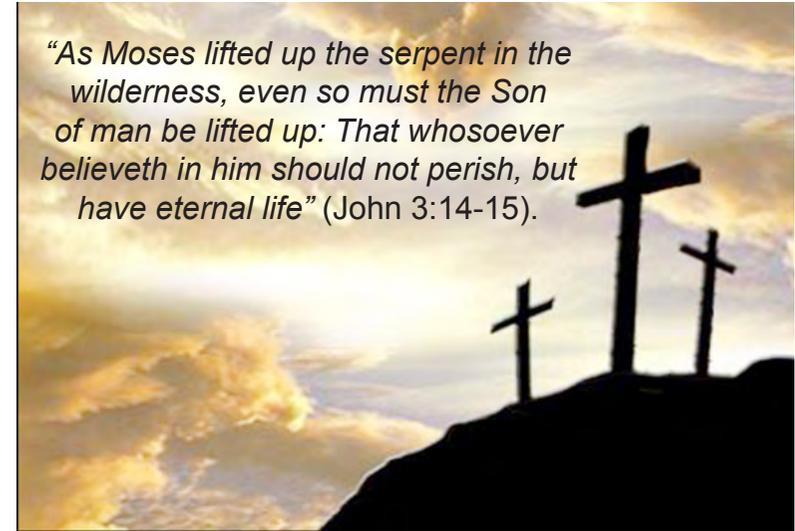
With so much evidence that we are approaching the end of the age it is important to be sure we are ready to meet God. The Rapture of the true believers in Christ could happen at any time and then the 7 years of fearful Tribulation will begin. Jesus said of that time: *“Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved”* (Matt.24:22). Jesus also said, *“Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines and pestilence (disease), and earthquakes in divers places”* (Matt.24:7). During this time Antichrist will control the world through a “one world government” and all will be required to worship him as God; all will be required to wear his mark on their forehead or right hand or they will not be able to buy or sell. As terrible as this will be it is nothing compared with the fearful lot of every person that dies without trusting in Christ for salvation. There is an eternal lake of fire prepared for the Devil and his angels and for all who reject the mercy and grace of God revealed in Jesus Christ. God does not desire the punishment of sinners; in fact He desires that all men should repent of their sin and accept the mercy freely offered in Christ. The Bible says:

“For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God” (1Pet.3:18). *“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance”* (2Pet.3:9).

If we are honest with ourselves we will admit that we are sinners and guilty of wrong doing before God. The Bible says that *“if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us”* (1John 1:8). It is because we are sinners that God in His love and mercy sent the Lord Jesus from heaven to live as a man and to go to the cross where He took the wrath of God for all human sin. It was not just the physical suffering that He endured at the hands of men but while He hung on that centre cross, the earth was darkened for three hours as the sinless Son of God became our substitute; our sacrifice, to make atonement for our sin. The Bible says, *“Without the shedding of blood there is no remission (of sins)”* but Jesus shed His precious blood for our sin.

“God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever, believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

All false religions would tell us that if we do good works God will have mercy upon us but the Bible says *“by grace (undeserved favour) are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast”* (Eph.2:8-9). Salvation from the guilt and power of sin is freely available to all who will seek the Lord with all their heart.



“As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:14-15).

The Bible says: *“Ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart”* (Jer.29:13). Christ has done all that is necessary to provide forgiveness, power to live a Godly life, and a home in heaven but He will not force His salvation on anyone. You must turn from sin to Christ and place your trust in Him as your personal Saviour.

Not only does God forgive us our sin when we trust Christ, but He puts His Holy Spirit within us to give us the power to live for Him day by day. Furthermore, He guarantees us a home in heaven that is *“incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time”* (1Pet.1:4-5).

But there is more. We have the promise of God’s Word that when the Great Tribulation comes every true believer in the Lord Jesus who is alive at the time, will be *“caught up (Raptured) to meet the Lord in the air”* (1Thess.4:17). *“For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ”* (1Thess.5:9). Jesus has promised: *“Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from **THE HOUR of temptation (Tribulation)** which shall come on all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth”* (Rev.3:10). **If you are not saved, Will you trust in Christ now?**

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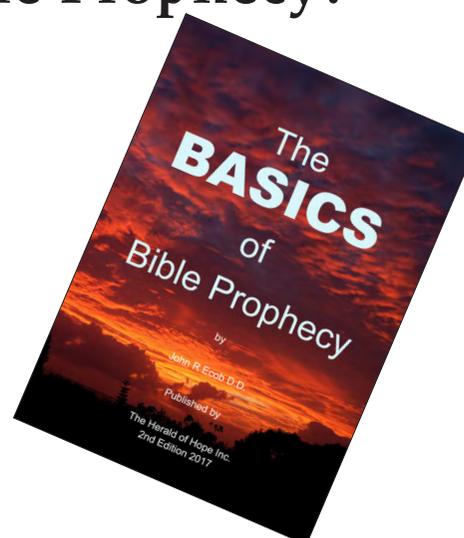
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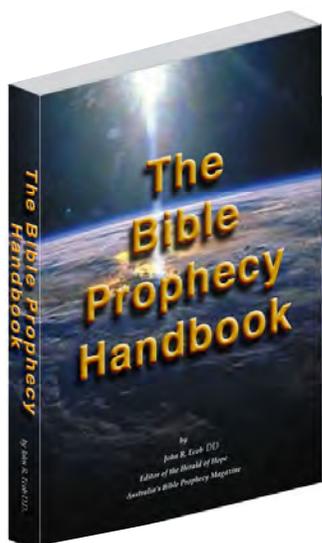
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