

# DIGGING DEEPER *with Dr. Jim Eckman*

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## BIBLE PROPHECY, PART 3

### Session 1: Introduction and Review

#### **Daniel 2 presents a four-kingdom sequence for world history**

1. The first 3 kingdoms are clear—Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece.
2. The 4th kingdom is not as clear. It seems to be presented in two phases—legs [Rome] and feet and [10] toes [future].
3. The “stone cut out of the mountain without hands” destroys these great Gentile kingdoms and ushers in God’s kingdom, which “fills the whole earth”, and “shall stand forever” [2:35, 44]. We do not know who or what the “stone” is at this point.

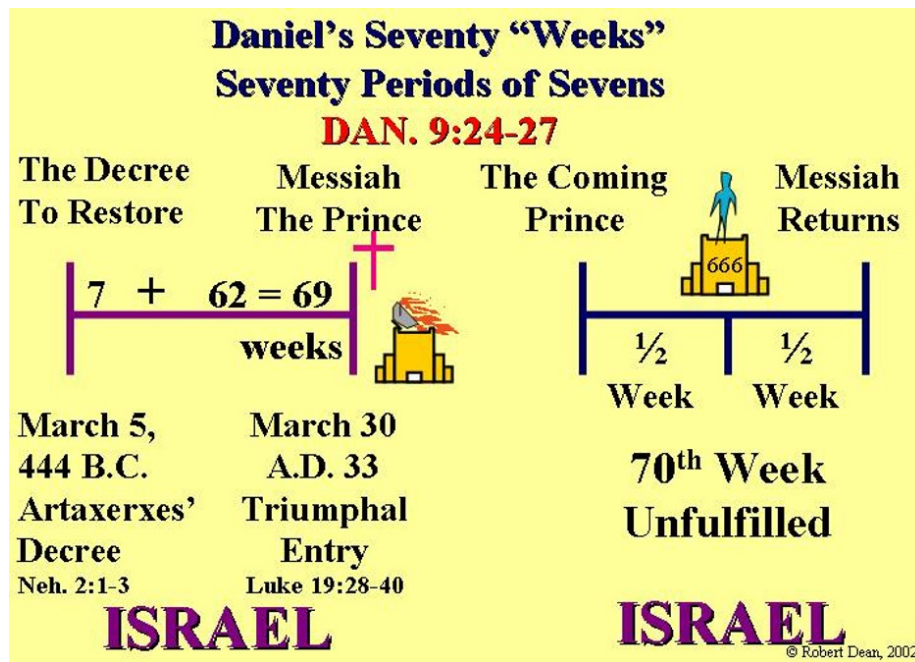
#### **Daniel 2 and 7—the 4 kingdom sequence followed by the kingdom of God**

1. These two visions/dreams present an outline of human kingdoms in a four-kingdom sequence:
  - Chapter 2—Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, with the 4th not clear. It ends with a rock striking and crushing the statue.
  - Chapter 7—same 4 kingdoms, with more clarity for the 4th. A ruler emerges through political maneuvering and a degree of military and political dominance.
2. In chapter 7 important details are added:
  - The character of the last ruler is arrogant, a warrior and persecutes the saints.
  - A time pattern is added: “time, times and half a time”
  - Most importantly, there is divine judgment and the transfer of power and authority to one like the **Son of Man (7:13)**

#### **Chapters 8 and 10-12—two kingdom sequence**

1. Chapter 8: At the end of this two-kingdom sequence, a pattern of trouble and judgment occur—identified as Medo-Persia (v. 20) and Greece (v. 21). The Greek king will die and be replaced by four other kings (v. 22). From these four a “little horn” will arise.

2. New details are added from chapter 8-12:
  - Temple desecration
  - Cessation of sacrifice
  - Additional time measurements—2,300 mornings and evenings (1,150 days); 1,335 days; “time, times and half a time”
3. In addition, in chapters 9, 11-12, the phrase “abomination of desolation” is added (11:31; 12:11; 9:27).



**DANIEL 9:24 SAYS THAT "SEVENTY WEEKS [LITERALLY "SEVENTY SEVENS"] ARE DECREED FOR YOUR PEOPLE AND YOUR HOLY CITY," IN ORDER TO FINISH (I.E., ACCOMPLISH):**

- To finish the transgression
  - To make an end to sin
  - To make atonement for iniquity
  - To bring in everlasting righteousness
- ➔ The First 4 Purposes Accomplished by Jesus in His First Advent
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- To seal up vision and prophecy
  - To anoint the most Holy [place].
- ➔ The Last Two Purposes Accomplished by Jesus in His Second Advent

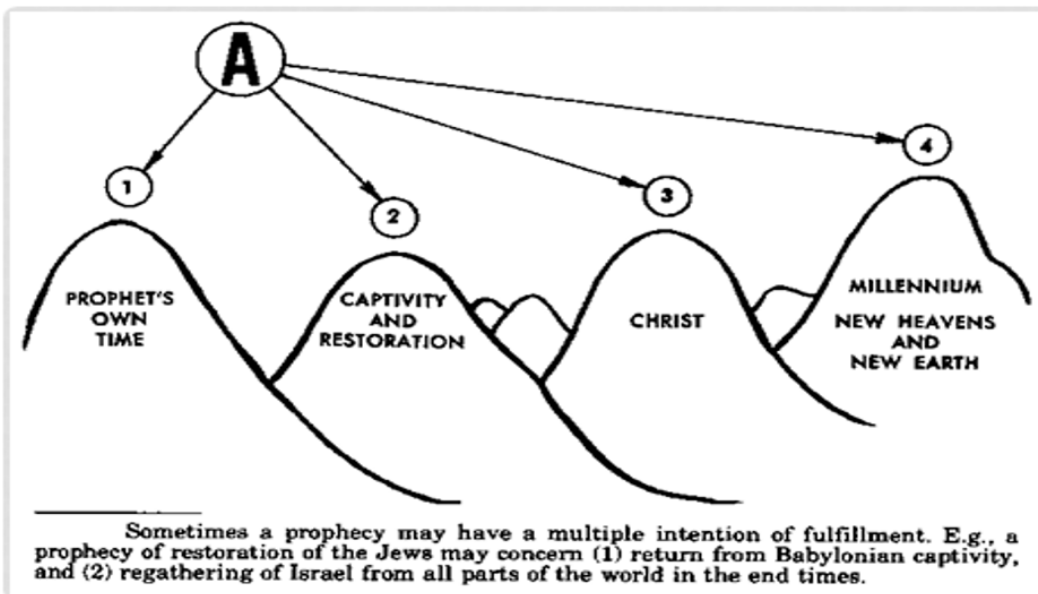
4. There is also activity of the archangel Michael, 12:1
5. There is the prediction of the resurrection of the dead as a feature of Israel's deliverance, 12:2-3.

There is, therefore, a progression in the complexity of Daniel's visions/dreams from a relatively simple statue in chapter 2 to a detailed narration of an antagonist ("abomination of desolation," the little horn, etc.) who blasphemes God, deifies himself, persecutes the saints and is destroyed by God Himself.

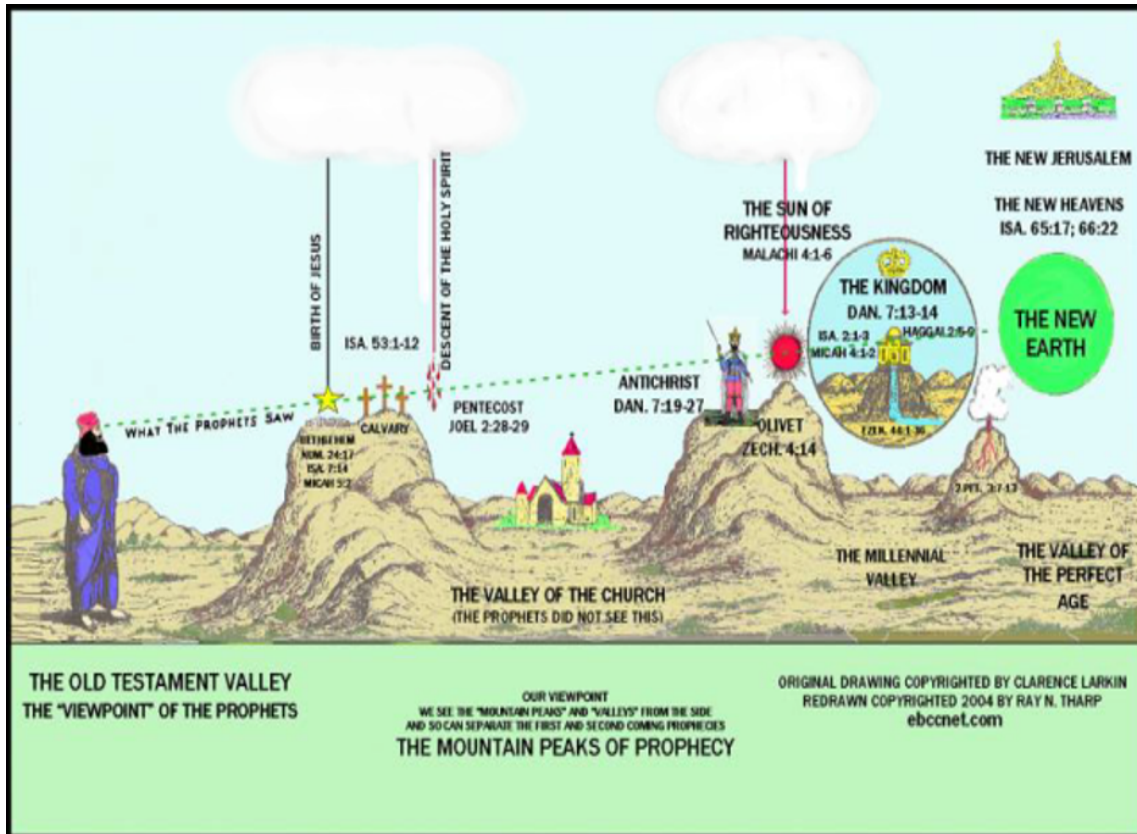
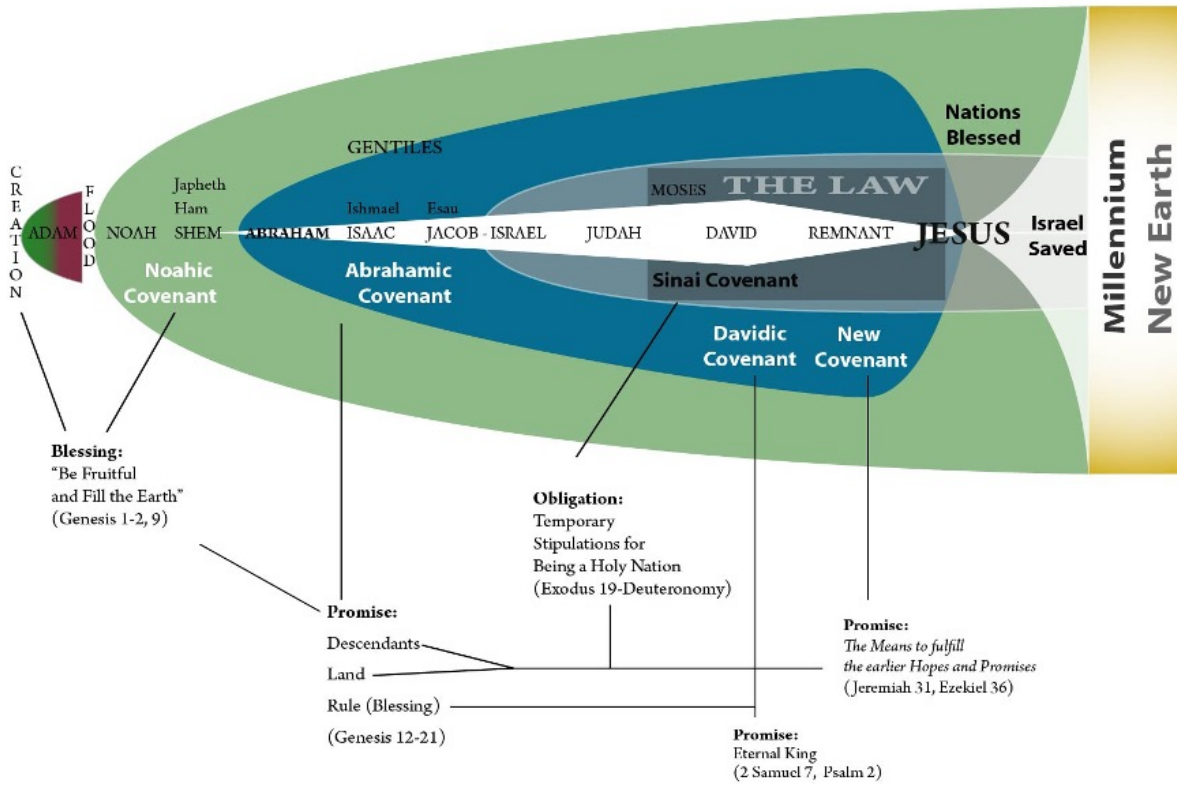
**Among other things, what is clear from all this is that judgment will precede the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth.**

### Characteristics of the Antichrist

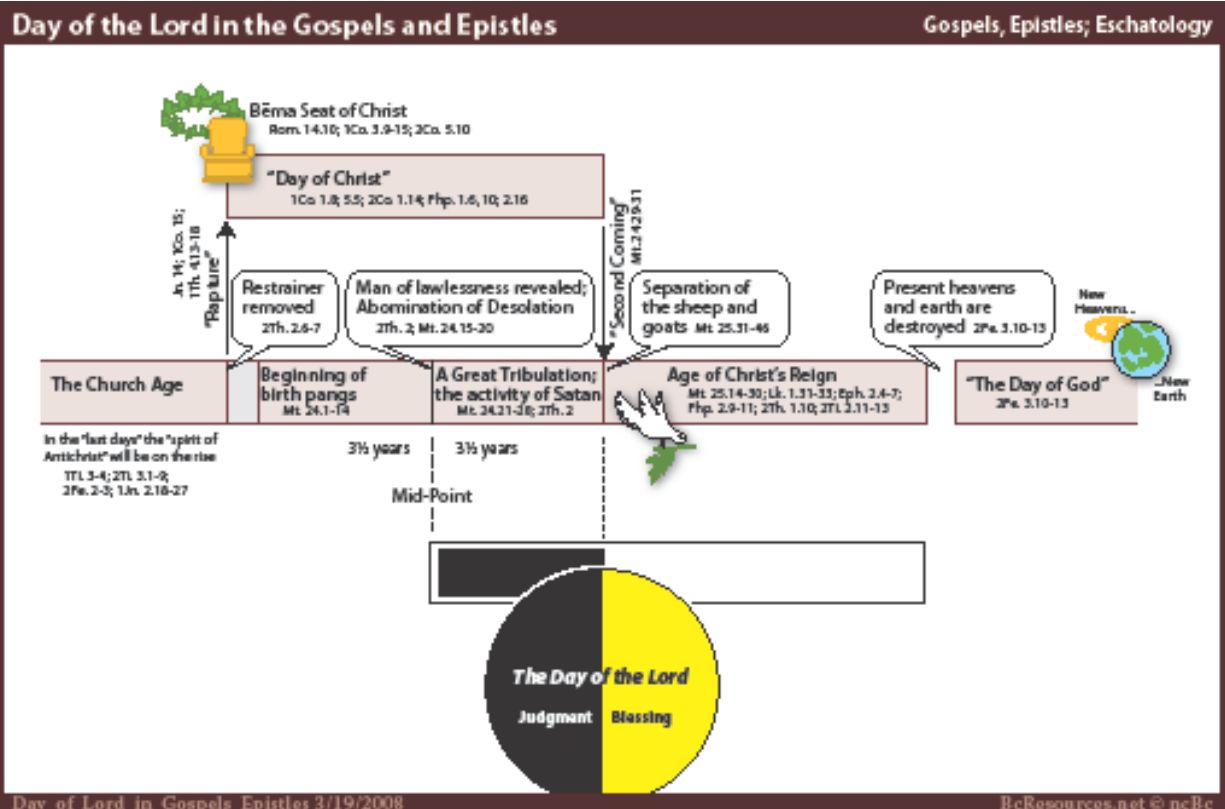
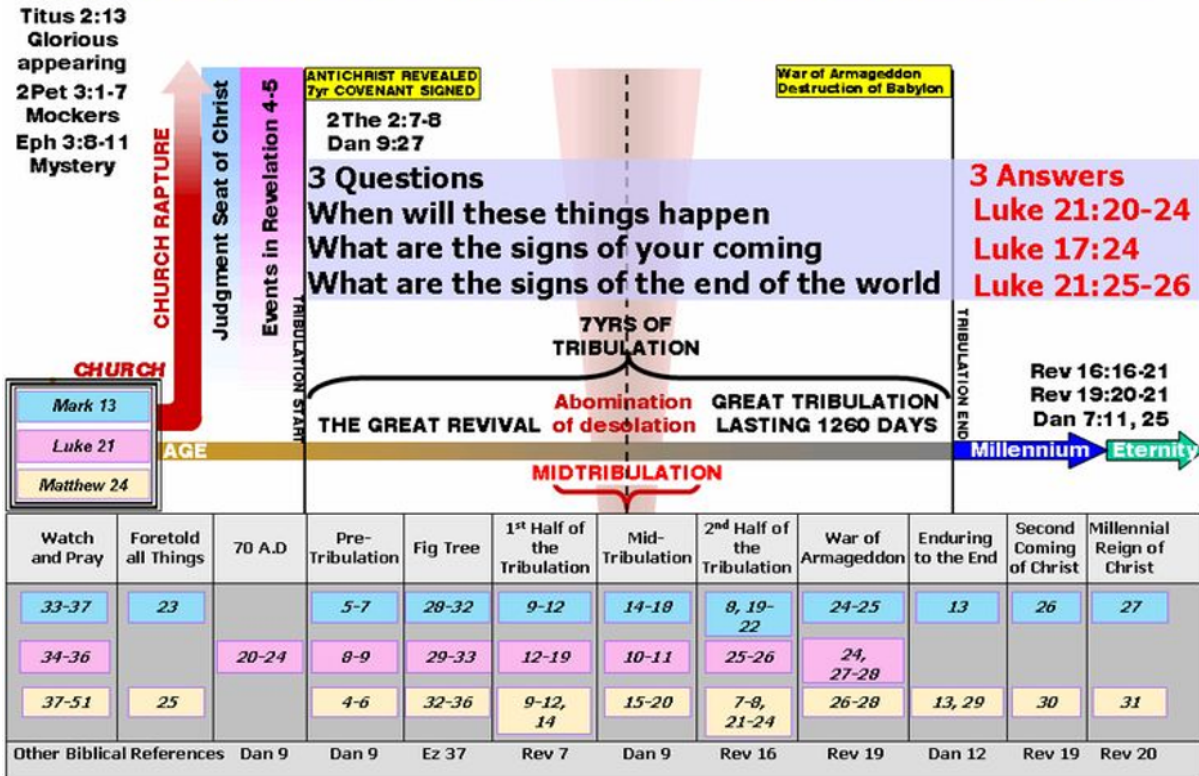
Description	Little Horn Daniel 7	Small Horn Daniel 8	Willful King Daniel 11	Man of Lawlessness 2 Thess. 2
Braggart / Egotist	✓	✓	✓	✓
Blasphemer of God	✓	✓	✓	✓
Contemptuous	✓	✓	✓	✓
Persecutor of Believers	✓	✓		
Insolent		✓		
Deceptive / Shrewd		✓		
Demonic		✓		✓
Destructive		✓		✓
Willful		✓	✓	
Sexually Perverted			✓	
Militarist			✓	
Materialist			✓	



# The Biblical Covenants

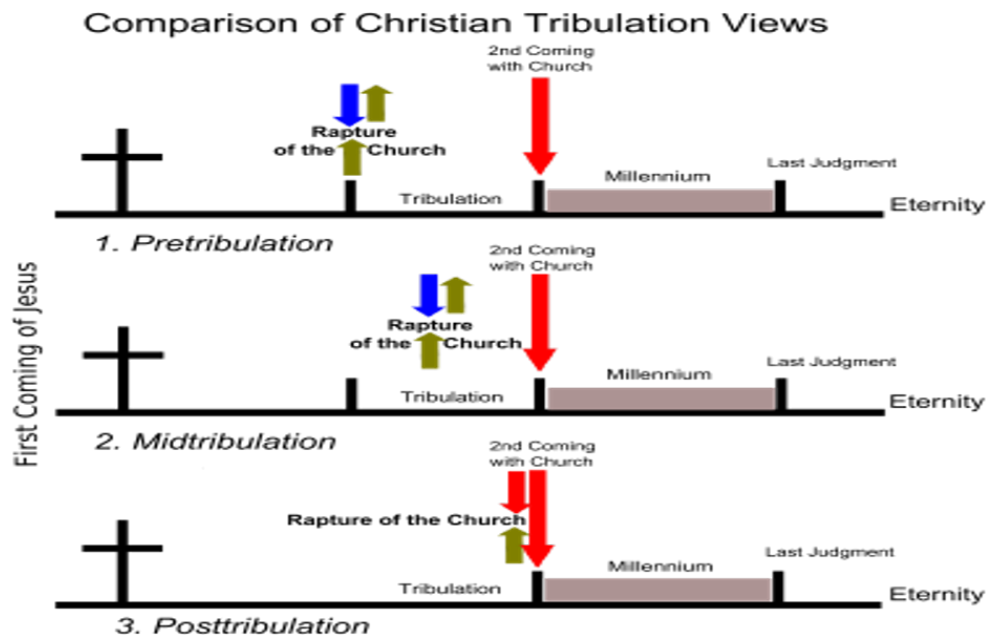


# A Comparative View of the Olivet Discourse



## WHEN WILL THE RAPTURE OCCUR?

Over the centuries, four positions have emerged: A **Posttribulation** rapture—the event occurs right before the Second Coming (i.e., the resurrected saints and those who are alive meet Jesus in the air and then immediately return to fight the battle of Armageddon, etc.) **Midtribulation** rapture—the event occurs in the middle of the Tribulation, when the antichrist breaks the covenant. A **Pre-wrath** rapture—the event (immediately after the sixth seal) occurs right before the wrath of God detailed in the trumpet and bowl judgments of Revelation. A **Pretribulation** rapture—the event occurs before the seven year Tribulation.



There are several threads of evidence that support a Pretribulation rapture:

1. Wherever the Tribulation is mentioned in Scripture, there is no mention of the church of Jesus Christ. For example, the church is mentioned in Revelation 1-3 and in 19-22 but is not mentioned in chapters 6-18. An argument from silence is never terribly strong but in the context of Revelation this cannot be easily dismissed. It is part of the thread of evidence supporting pretribulationism.
2. In 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 and in 1 Thessalonians 5:1-10, the Apostle Paul writes that Jesus “delivered us from the wrath to come” (1:10) and he also states in 5:10, that “God has not appointed us unto wrath.” The term “wrath” is used in Romans 1:18 for God’s general wrath against sin and in Revelation 6:17; 14:10, 19; 16:1; 15:1 and 16:1 as the “wrath” of the Great Tribulation. By virtue of our standing in Christ (Romans 6:1-11), we are already redeemed from Hell (and the Lake of Fire described in Revelation 20). He will return to

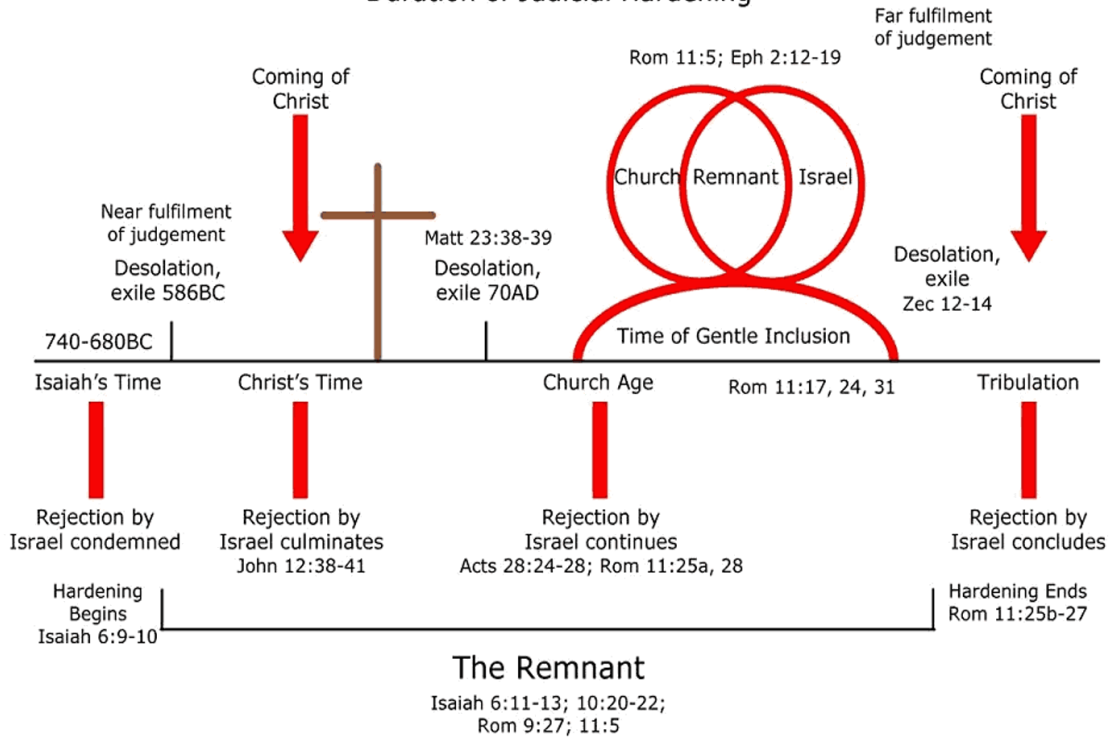
deliver us from the wrath of the Tribulation. The church will not go through the Tribulation. This is apparently also the promise Jesus made to the church at Philadelphia when He promised to deliver them from the tribulation that will encompass the whole world (Revelation 3:10).

3. An important word about Paul's teaching in 2 Thessalonians 2: In 2 Thessalonians 2, we learn that false teachers had taught the Thessalonian church that, because of their suffering and persecution, the Day of the Lord had begun. Paul argues absolutely not, because these three events must occur first:

- The rebellion or literally, the **Apostasy** (2:3). This is a revolt, a departure, and an abandoning of a position once held. Occurring within the professing church, this future apostasy is described in several passages—1 Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; 4:3-4; James 5:1-8; 2 Peter 2 and 3:3-6; and Jude. It is a decisive turning from the truth declared in God's Word. It could be the deliberate turning from the truth of God to embrace the Antichrist, who will set himself up to be worshipped.
- The revelation of the "man of sin or of lawlessness" (**anomias**, 2:4). The verb tense of the term Paul uses, "revealed," indicates a decisive act that will occur at a defining point in history. He is also described as a "man doomed to destruction" (literally a "son of perdition") in v. 3 (i.e., as one doomed to everlasting judgment). In v. 4, he is further described as the adversary of God, seeking to replace the worship of the true God with the worship of himself. He will set himself up on God's throne in the inner sanctuary of the Temple. Such descriptions correspond with Daniel 9:27ff; 11:36-37; Matthew 24:15; Zechariah 11:16-17; Revelation 13:1-10; 17:3; 17:8; 16; 19:19-20 and 20:10. This also corresponds with 1 John 2:18, where the term Antichrist is used, a pseudo-Christ hostile to Jesus. This "secret power of lawlessness" in v. 7 (literally the "mystery" of lawlessness) is in reality the climax of lawlessness in the world at the end of history.
- The one who is "holding him back" (literally "restraining" him, i.e., the man of lawlessness) in 2:6-7. Who or what is this restrainer? Some have argued for the Roman Empire, or law itself, or Satan himself, or human government or the Holy Spirit, indwelling the church. The term "restrainer" is **to katechon**, which is neuter in 2:6 but masculine in 2:7. In John 14:26 and 16:13-14 **to katechon** is neuter and used of the Holy Spirit. Once the restraining nature of the Spirit is removed at the Rapture, the world reverts to lawlessness, as it did in Genesis 6:3. The "restrainer" must be stronger than Satan, so there are not that many real options

## ISRAEL'S NATIONAL REJECTION

### Duration of Judicial Hardening



## A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION

### INTRODUCTORY MATTERS

The book's title is actually "The Revelation of Jesus Christ" (i.e., the revelation that Christ gave). The author is John, the Apostle, one of Jesus' inner circle and the "disciple whom Jesus loved." He was not martyred, apparently the only one of the 12 who was not. But John was exiled by Caesar Domitian to the island of Patmos, where the book was written. Indeed, the early church father, Irenaeus (c. AD 115-c. 202) states that "The Apocalypse. . . was sent not a very long time since, but almost in our own day, toward the end of Domitian's reign." [Domitian died in AD 96.] This makes the claim of preterism (see below) impossible and there is not strong enough evidence to outweigh the testimony of Irenaeus. The book was written by John on Patmos in AD 95.

Important **background to the book** (given A.D. 95, the date the book was written):

#### 1. Social Conditions:

The Roman Empire was at the heights of its power and its prosperity. The great Pax Romana was in full swing, but there was equally abject poverty and suffering throughout the empire.



## 2. Political Conditions:

Rome ruled by fear and was ruthless in its application of violence to those who stepped out of line. In many ways, Rome was a totalitarian regime. Under the Flavian emperors (Vespasian, Titus and Domitian, AD 69-96), Rome expanded its holdings to Britain and Germany.

## 3. Religious Conditions:

Jerusalem had been destroyed and the Temple burned. Jews were dispersed throughout the empire and anti-Semitism reigned supreme. (Indeed, there was a special tax Rome levied just on the Jews). The Roman Empire was filled with idolatry and emperor worship was thriving. Domitian especially cultivated himself as a god, who had a son ("the son of god") pictured as reigning supreme over the clouds of heaven, holding seven stars. For Christians, Christianity was by now recognized as a distinct sect, no longer tied to Judaism. Localized persecution of the church was beginning—and John's exile to Patmos is an example of this.

## Approaches to the book:

1. **The preterist approach:** This approach says that basically all the prophecies in the book were fulfilled in the 1st century. Most who hold to this view believe the book was written before the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70. Therefore, the date of the book would be during the AD 60s, the time of Nero's persecution.

2. **The idealist approach:** This approach sees Revelation as representing the ongoing conflict between good and evil, with no immediate historical connection to any social or political events. This view denies that anything in Revelation is predictive; rather, it merely affirms in a powerful, symbolic story the triumph of good over evil.

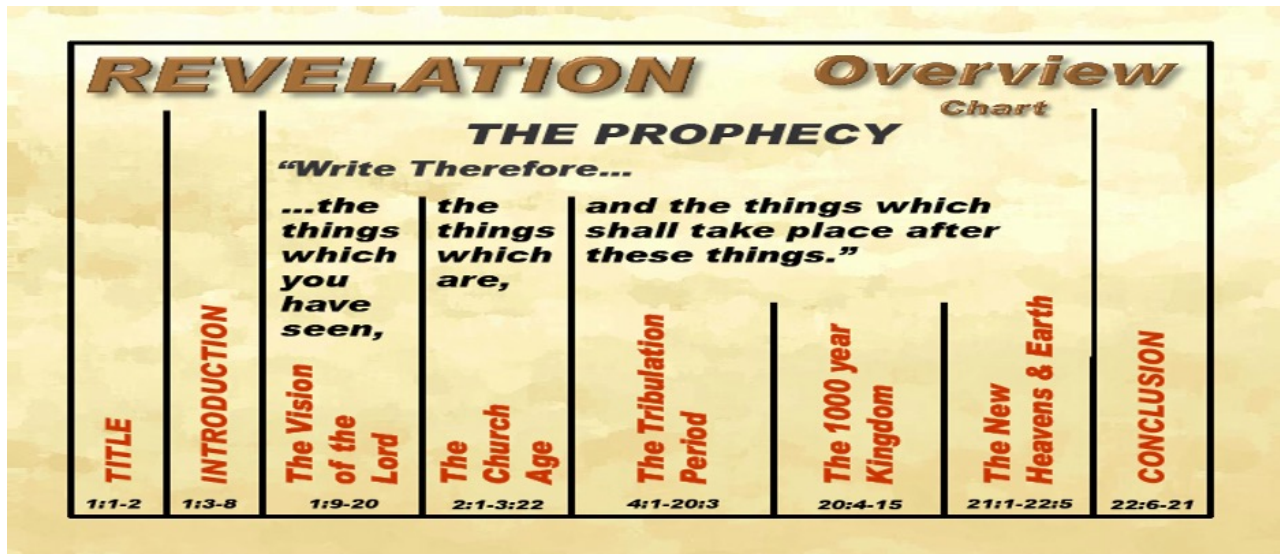
3. **The futurist approach:** This approach sees the prophecies of the book as totally future. The key verse for this approach is 1:19, where there are three different verb tenses (past, present and future), with the latter being most of the book ("things which shall take place.")

4. **The "already/not yet" approach:** This approach sees the kingdom of God as inaugurated but its fulfillment and consummation are yet future. There is therefore the tension of already/not yet. This is the basic approach I will take. (See "General Overview" below).

## The book's purpose:

1. To give encouragement to the suffering church of the 1st century
2. To detail the ultimate victory and triumph of God in Christ Jesus and the establishment of His kingdom.

## General overview of the book:



The key verse is **Revelation 1:19** - “Write, therefore what you have seen: both what is now and what will take place later”(NIV); “Write therefore the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall take place after these things”(NASB). “Write therefore the things that you have seen, those that are and those that are to take place after this”(ESV). Chapter 1 consists of the amazing vision of Jesus Christ(what John “has seen”); chapters 2-3 comprise the messages to the seven churches(“The things which are”/“what is now”)and chapter 4-22 describe “the things which shall take place.”

Let me put this another way. **Chapter 1** is the majestic vision of Jesus, the Christ. **Chapter 2-3** describe the seven churches, which exist on earth in this age. **Chapters 4-5**, with their vivid description of the death and resurrection of Jesus, portray the reality that the age to come has already dawned, but only in heaven. **Chapters 6-18** depict the transition from this age to the age to come on earth, with the Great Tribulation marking the turning point. **Chapters 19-22** present the full arrival of the age to come to earth, initiated by Christ’s return and the messianic reign of Jesus revealed to all. The age to come has dawned, but it is not complete; it awaits Jesus’ return for its consummation. Hence, **this already/not yet tension for the Christian.**