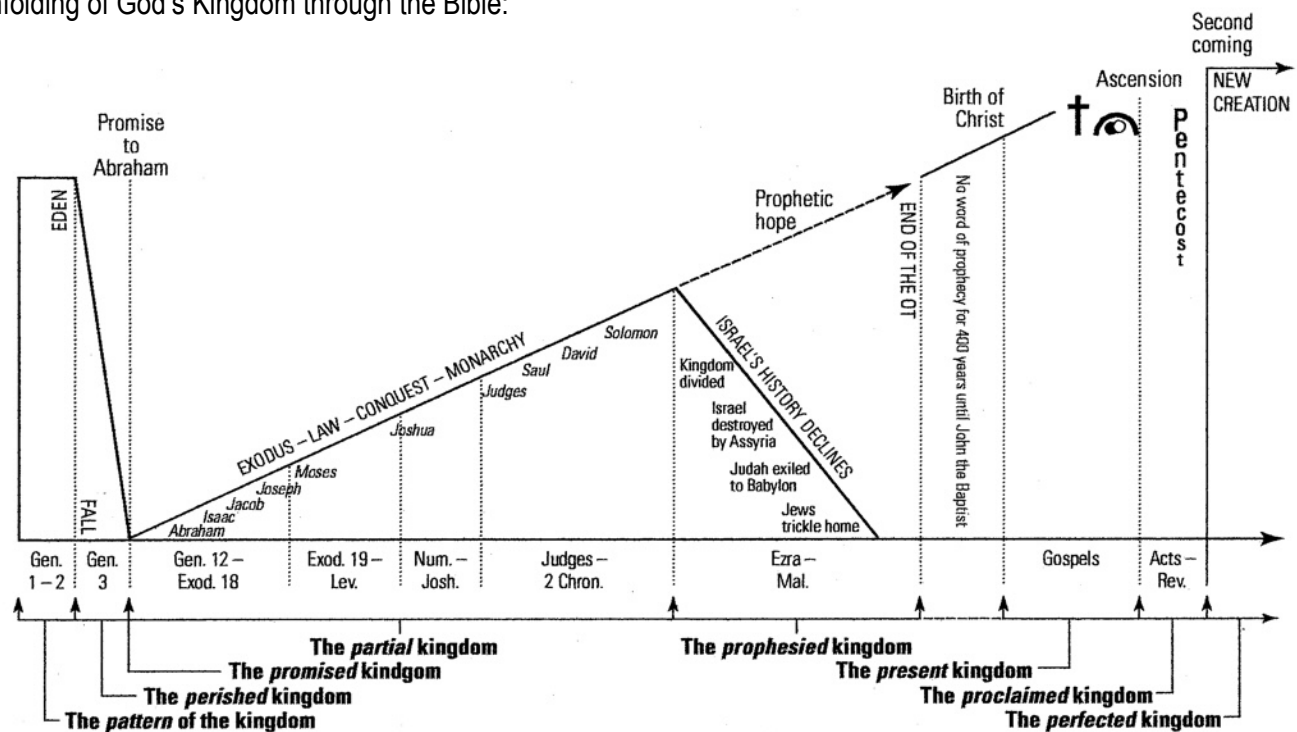


- Reading the Book of Revelation can be intimidating ... Still, it shouldn't be avoided ... John wrote this letter to be read and understood (1:3) ... John records what he sees, what is, and what will soon take place (1:19) – we can divide Revelation by these sections: what he sees (1), state of things presently (2-3, 4-5), state of things to come (6-22)
 - The book is a revelation of Jesus Christ – who He is, what He has accomplished, what He is accomplishing and the final accomplishment He is bringing about ... Revelation opens and ends with: **I am the Alpha and Omega** – first and last word ... The beginning of all things and the end of all things ... The One who stands at the center of history is the King who sits enthroned over history ... He's the rider of the white horse, who descends upon the earth in victory and engages an on-going battle that's already won
 - This isn't to minimize what we presently experience – the battle is real and not without casualties ... In this revelation is a message to the Church – a call to faithful endurance and obedience, lived from the reality of what is and what will be (Ph1:20-21) ... In the midst of suffering, trial, judgment, chaos, what's your faith rooted in? ... The slaughtered Lamb who purchased you with His blood to be added among God's people (Rv5:9; 13:8) ... Our faith is rooted in the One who is bringing about the culmination of all things according to His plan
- **Rv21**: new Heaven and a new Earth – new in quality not origin ... Meaning, God is not destroying the earth with fire, but is purifying the earth with fire ... **He12:27-29** – God is shaking out the impurities so only what is pure remains ... The reversal and renewal of things is underway ... **GOLDSWORTHY: WHAT WE ALREADY ARE IN CHRIST, WE SHALL BE IN OURSELVES AND, IN THE MEANWHILE, WE MOVE TOWARDS THE GOAL BY THE HOLY SPIRIT AT WORK WITHIN US.** ... And so, God will renew the earth by the Holy Spirit because of what Christ has accomplished (Is11, Rm8) ... Our regeneration is made complete with the final regeneration of creation ... Heavenly paradise is temporary, always been meant for a physical earth
 - Remember, the pattern of God's Kingdom is found in the garden; the perfected Kingdom is found in the garden ... Garden theme in scripture: Eden; promised land; tabernacle / temple; Jesus is the Tree of Life; Jesus is tempted in a garden, crucified and buried in a garden, and mistaken for a gardener after He rises; the garden within the city of God
 - The city is vast in size because the people are vast in number ... This number ultimately fulfills the promise to Abraham: people from every people group, more numerous than the stars, dwelling with God forever ... Dimensions are a cube symbolizing the Holy of Holies where God's presence dwelled ... God's presence can be experienced everywhere by every person dwelling in the city
 - **He will wipe away every tear from their eyes** – tears of happiness, gratitude, relief, exhaustion ... **Is25:8-9, Rv7:16-17** ... The battle is over ... The day-to-day trials are finished ... We have run our race, received our reward – to spend eternity with our God and to never be separated from His presence again
- Do you hear the call to faithful endurance and obedience, to live from the reality of what is and what will be

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