

Christ's Imminent Return: A Study of End-Times Prophecies and the Timeline of Events



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Prophetic Timeline Analysis: A Study of End-Times Prophecies and the Timeline of Events

Introduction

Overview and Approach

This is an analysis of the end-times prophecies in the Bible. While this centers primarily on the book of Revelation, supporting scripture from Ezekiel, Matthew, Daniel, and other books in the Bible are used to validate the assertions that are made. Fulfilled prophetic events are also used where applicable to help orient the timeline for future and yet unfulfilled events. When interpreting scripture, especially prophetic scripture, prayerful consideration must be taken to assure that the assertions made are sound, such that not only is scripture interpreted correctly, but that the logic used to correlate scripture with scripture is equally valid. To this end, a literal approach to interpreting scripture is employed unless obvious symbolism is being used to ensure that there is an objective standard of interpretation (2 Peter 1:20-21).

The approach used was to develop the prophetic timeline based primarily on the interpretation of scripture. Commentaries and other outside sources were used when interpretation of scripture was unclear or to provide support for the conclusions drawn. The purpose of this approach was to reduce to the extent possible the bias of “conventional wisdom” so that a fresh look at scripture is presented. Once the initial prophetic timeline was developed, additional source material was consulted to either bolster or refute the proposed timeline. In the areas where there was disagreement, the scriptural references were used to reconcile the timeline such that the final timeline, as presented, represents a unified scriptural interpretation. The seven-year tribulation period is broken up into two three-and-a-half year periods. For clarity, the entire seven-year period will be referenced as the tribulation period. The first three-and-a-half-year period will be referenced as the Lesser Tribulation and the second three-and-a-half-year period will be referenced as the Great Tribulation. It is hoped that this analysis is faithful to scripture’s teachings.

Analysis

Pre-Tribulation

During the Olivet Discourse, Jesus said that the time leading up to the tribulation period will be like the time of Noah (Matthew 24:37-39) in that the earth will be so full of corruption and violence that He will put an end to it (Genesis 6:5-6,11-13). He further describes the “birth pains” that will be signs that the end of the age is near. These include wars and rumors of wars, famines, and earthquakes (Matthew 24:4-8). As with childbirth, these labor pains will get closer together and more severe as humanity gets closer to the start of the tribulation period. The analysis will show that there are four major events remaining that lead up to the start of the tribulation period. These include the rapture of the church, an Arab-Israeli war, the Gog and Magog war, and the rise of a global government along with the harlot religion.

The Rapture

Several scholars, such as Rhodes (2012), note that scripture portrays Christ’s interaction with the church using the imagery of Jewish weddings with Christ as the bridegroom and the church as His bride. There are three phases to a Jewish wedding. First the groom pays for and prepares a place for the bride. As with ancient Jewish grooms, Jesus paid the purchase price through His death on the cross to establish the marriage covenant (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). Additionally, the church is declared sanctified and set apart for Christ just as a Jewish bride is sanctified waiting for her groom (cf. Ephesians 5:25-27; 1 Corinthians 6:11; Hebrews 10:10, 13:12). Jesus stated that he was going to heaven to prepare a place for His bride to live in His father’s house (John 14:2-3; Hebrews 11:16). Individuals living in the church age come to salvation and become part of the bride of Christ while Christ (the bridegroom) is in heaven preparing a place for the bride to live in His father’s house.

Next, the groom comes to claim his bride and it is unknown exactly when the groom will arrive, as noted in the parable of the ten virgins (Matthew 25:1-13). Just as a Jewish bride is unaware of the exact time her groom would come for her, so the church is unaware of the exact time that Jesus will come, though it is an imminent event (Matthew 24:36-51). This is the rapture, where Jesus is seen coming for His bride in the air prior to the tribulation period (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). This phase concludes with a private wedding ceremony. According to Jewish tradition, this ceremony is attended by a select few and typically only includes close family. Most likely, this ceremony also includes the judgment at the Bema Seat of Christ where believers are awarded crowns for how they lived for Christ.

Believers that have been raptured will be instantly transformed, given resurrection bodies (cf. Job 19:25-27; Romans 8:22-23; 1 Corinthians 15:51-55; Philippians 3:21; 1 John 3:2-3), and are then judged at the Bema Seat of Christ where “each of us will give an account of himself to God (Romans 14:12, HCSB)” so that “each may be repaid for what he has done in the body, whether good or worthless (2 Corinthians 5:10, HCSB).” This is not a judgment of sins, which have been paid for by faith in Jesus’ finished work on the cross (cf. Romans 3:28, 5:1, 5:8, 6:4-5), or a trial to determine acceptance into heaven, but rather God rewarding believers for the good they accomplished in their lives resulting from their salvation (1 Corinthians 3:11-15). Believers will be judged based on:

- (1) How well they obeyed the Great Commission to spread the gospel.
- (2) How vigilant they were in waiting for His return.
- (3) How faithful to scripture they were in teaching about God.
- (4) How victorious they were over sin in their lives.
- (5) How faithful they were in the face of persecution and hardships.

They will then be rewarded with corresponding crowns as described by GotQuestions (“What are the five heavenly crowns that believers can receive in Heaven?”, 2020):

- (1) The crown of rejoicing is for those that bring others to Christ by evangelizing (1 Thessalonians 2:19). It does not matter if they accept Christ directly because of these efforts. Planting a seed that another person waters is what counts. Additionally, because Christians have more in this life about which to rejoice, that joy should be shared with others by both word and example.
- (2) The crown of righteousness is for those who actively look forward to and long for Christ’s return (2 Timothy 4:7-8) by focusing on Christ in both thought and action. It is the righteousness of Christ that gives Christians the right to it, which means that it is obtained and possessed in a righteous way, and not by force and deceit as earthly crowns sometimes are. It is not for those who depend upon their own sense of righteousness or of their own works because such an attitude breeds only arrogance and pride, not a longing or fervent desire to be with the Lord.
- (3) The crown of glory is for those that faithfully teach and preach God’s word both by word and by example (1 Peter 5:2-4). Even though Peter is addressing the elders, it must be remembered that this crown will be awarded to all those who teach in any setting, including teaching family members or witnessing to friends.
- (4) The crown of incorruptibility is for those that stay true and faithful to God and do not compromise on God’s moral absolutes to gain acceptance in the world (1 Corinthians 9:24-27). Christians are urged to focus on eternal treasures that cannot be destroyed rather than earthly treasures that can be (Matthew 6:19-21).
- (5) The crown of life is for all believers that suffer in the name of Christ but is especially dear to those who endure sufferings and who bravely confront persecution for Jesus,

even to the point of death (James 1:12; Revelation 2:10). Through enduring discouragements, persecutions, sufferings, or even death, Christians know assuredly that their reward is with Christ in eternity (Philippians 3:20).

Finally, there is a wedding feast. This is seen as the Marriage Supper of the lamb (Revelation 19:6-9), which takes place in heaven during the seven years of the Tribulation Period before Jesus comes back with his bride to defeat the Antichrist and then to reign for a thousand years (Revelation 19:11-20:6). By Jewish tradition, the wedding feast lasts one week and is attended by a much larger group of family and friends to ensure that the new couple gets a good start to their new life together. This would correspond to Daniel's 70th week, or the week of tribulation (Daniel 9:27).

There are several theories on when the rapture will occur. One of these theories does not necessarily address the timing of the rapture, but rather who will be involved. This is known as the partial rapture view, which is based on the parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25:1-13 where five were prepared and five were unprepared. This interpretation indicates that only faithful and watchful Christians will be raptured, while the unfaithful Christians will be left behind to suffer the tribulation period. However, this theory misinterprets the parable by assuming that the bridesmaids left behind were symbolic of believers when they represented unbelievers. GotQuestions (“Will there be a partial rapture?”, 2020) notes that this theory fails because it goes against scripture, which teaches that when people believe, they are saved and that the rapture will apply to them universally (1 Corinthians 15:50-57; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18), regardless of their maturity or obedience.

The first theory on the timing of the rapture is the pre-wrath rapture theory, which says that the rapture occurs before the “great day of . . . wrath (Revelation 6:17)” and agrees that the church does not face the wrath of God. Since the word wrath does not appear in Revelation until after the

sixth seal, this theory contends that God's wrath must not be poured out until the seventh seal, so the rapture must take place between the sixth and seventh seals. According to GotQuestions ("What are the strengths and weaknesses of the pre-wrath view of the rapture?", 2020), this theory views the first six seals as the wrath of Satan, while the trumpet and the bowl judgments (Revelation 7–16) are viewed as the wrath of God, from which the church is exempted (1 Thessalonians 5:9). Where this theory fails is that all of the judgments (i.e. seal, trumpet, bowl) are divine judgments from God that are instruments of God's wrath that increase in intensity and scripture shows that it is Jesus who opens the seals (Revelation 5:5; 6:1) because no other man is found worthy to open them (Revelation 5:3-4).

The second theory is known as the mid-tribulation rapture. The primary reference for this theory is 1 Corinthians 15:51-55 because it references the last trumpet, which is the seventh trumpet judgment, as the timing for the rapture. While the seventh trumpet judgment occurs at the midpoint of the tribulation period (Revelation 11:15-19), it is a harbinger of judgment for the wicked, not a call of grace to God's elect ("What are the strengths and weaknesses of the midtribulational view of the rapture (midtribulationism)?", 2020). Therefore, it has nothing to do with the rapture, making this theory invalid. Similar to the pre-wrath theory, this theory also assumes that God's wrath does not begin until the start of the Great Tribulation, which occurs at the midpoint of the tribulation period. Again, this theory fails because the entire tribulation period is characterized by wrath (cf. Zephaniah 1:15,18; Revelation 6:17, 14:7,10, 19:2).

The third theory is the post-tribulation rapture. The primary support for this theory is Jesus stating that He would not return until after the Great Tribulation (Matthew 24:21-30). Supporting scripture for this timing discusses the saints who became believers during the tribulation period, were martyred, and then resurrected at the end of the tribulation period (Revelation 13:7, 20:4-6,9). However, scripture is clear that those who believe in Christ are not under condemnation and

will never experience the wrath of God (Romans 8:1), but if believers go through the tribulation period, they will experience the wrath of God in contradiction of Romans 8:1 simply because many judgments, such as the earthquakes, falling stars, and famines, will affect the saved and unsaved equally (“What are the strengths and weaknesses of the posttribulational view of the rapture (posttribulationism)?”, 2020). Matthew 24:37-40 also supposedly supports a post-tribulation rapture by referencing how “one will be taken and the other left” at Christ’s second coming, but the previous verse (Matthew 24:36) makes it clear that the time of the rapture is unknown. This theory fails because the timing of the end of the tribulation period is certainly known due to the fact that the tribulation period begins with the signing of the peace agreement between the Antichrist and the Jews and ends seven years later (Daniel 9:27). Finally, references for the rapture show Christ coming **for** His saints (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18), where at Christ’s second coming, He will come **with** His saints to the earth to reign for a thousand years (Revelation 19:11-14). These are separate events that are conflated with this theory.

Finally, there is the pre-tribulation theory. Scripture assures that the church is not appointed to wrath (cf. 1 Thessalonians 5:9-10; Romans 5:9; Revelation 3:10) and that God protects His people before judgment falls (2 Peter 2:5-9; Zephaniah 2:3; Psalm 27:5), which is why a pre-tribulation rapture is best supported by scripture if the Bible is interpreted literally and consistently. Those that oppose this theory cite that there are believers during the tribulation period. However, there are several reasons why they will come to Christ after the rapture, such as witnessing the rapture itself, as a result of the ministry of the 144,000 Jewish evangelists (Revelation 7), as a result of the ministry of the two witnesses (Revelation 11), or after reading Christian literature and Bibles left by those raptured. GotQuestions (“What are the strengths and weaknesses of the pretribulational view of the rapture (pretribulationism)?”, 2020) also notes that scripture does not mention the church in Revelation chapters 4-21, and in fact, never uses the word

'church' in a passage relating to the tribulation period, meaning that it is absent from scripture during the entire tribulation period.

The rapture is an event that is imminent, has no signs associated with it, and nothing must be prophetically fulfilled before the rapture can occur (cf. 1 Corinthians 1:7; Philippians 3:20, 4:5; 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10; Titus 2:11-14). Jesus confirms this by stating in the Olivet Discourse that the day or hour of the rapture event is only known by the Father and that not even the Son nor the angels in heaven know when this will occur (Matthew 24:36-51). A pre-tribulation rapture is the only theory that supports the teaching that the rapture is imminent and that the timing is not known. Additionally, Salus (2018) notes that the account of Noah, referenced by Jesus in the Olivet Discourse, not only supports a pre-tribulation rapture, but that it also supports a time gap between the rapture and the start of the tribulation period. Prior to the flood, Noah's grandfather Enoch was raptured (Genesis 5:21-24). Years later, Noah went through the flood (Genesis 7).

The chronology of the book of Revelation also shows the rapture occurring prior to the tribulation period. The book of Revelation begins with seven letters that Jesus wrote to seven actual churches that existed in John's time. In addition to being instructive to these specific churches, the letters in chapters 2 and 3 are representative of how churches throughout the church age can be and the issues that they can have. All churches throughout history can be examined against these representative churches and find instruction. Some scholars, such as LaHaye (1999), believe that these letters have prophetic meaning as well and that they are representative of not just individual churches, but entire church ages, as shown in Figure 1.

Revelation chapters 4 and 5 then represent the church in heaven, with Revelation 4:1 representing the rapture event, which occurs prior to the opening of the seals that start the tribulation period in chapter 6. In Jesus' letter to the church in Philadelphia (Revelation 3:7-13), which represents the evangelical Christian church or the "church Christ loved (LaHaye, 1999)",

Jesus said: “I will also keep you from the hour of testing that is going to come over the whole world to test those who live on the earth (Revelation 3:10, HCSB).” This, along with the chronology of the book of Revelation, confirms that the church is not destined to take part of the tribulation period.

THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF REVELATION						
	EPHESUS The Apostolic Church Rev. 2:1-7	SMYRNA The Persecuted Church Rev. 2:8-11	PERGAMUM The Indulged Church Rev. 2:12-17	THYATIRA The Pagan Church Rev. 2:18-29	SARDIS The Dead Church Rev. 3:1-6	PHILADELPHIA The Church Christ Loved Rev. 3:7-13
A.D. 30-100	A.D. 100-312	A.D. 312-606	A.D. 606-Tribulation	A.D. 1520-Tribulation Protestant Reformation		A.D. 1750-Rapture
COMMENDATION I know your . . .	Good works, labor, patience. Hated Nicolaitians.	Works, tribulation, poverty.	Works. Held fast my name. Has not denied my faith.	Good works, love, service, faith, patience.	Works. A name that you live.	Works. Missions. Little strength. Kept my word. Not denied my name.
CONDEMNATION	You have left your first love.	Not one word!	You have false teachers of Balaam and the Nicolaitians.	You allow Jezebel to teach idolatry and compromise.	You are dead. Works not complete.	Not one word! You are lukewarm, wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked.
COUNSEL I counsel you . . .	Remember from where you are fallen and repent.	Fear not. Be faithful.	Repent.	Hold fast what you have until I come.	Watch. Strengthen the things that remain. Remember, hold fast and repent.	Buy gold tried by fire and white raiment. Anoint your eyes. Be zealous and repent.
CHALLENGE To him that overcomes . . .	Will give to eat of the tree of life	Will not be hurt by the second death.	Will give hidden manna and a white stone.	Will give millennial leadership and the Morning Star.	Will be clothed in white raiment. I will not blot his name out of the book of life.	Will make him a pillar and write upon him the name of God and My new name. Will grant to sit with me on my throne.

Figure 1: Arab-Israeli War Adversaries

Some scholars argue that Psalm 83:3 indicates that the rapture will occur prior to the Arab-Israeli war described in that psalm, stating: “They have taken crafty counsel against Your people, And consulted together against Your sheltered ones (Psalm 83:3, NKJV).” It does not seem to be likely that the ‘sheltered ones’ (NKJV), ‘hidden ones’ (KJV), or ‘those you protect’ (NRSV) is a reference to the raptured church because the war described in this Psalm is to destroy the Jewish state (Psalm 83:4) and to capture the promised land of Israel (Psalm 83:12), and is therefore not directed against Christians. Salas (2013) believes it is more likely a reference to the faithful remnant of Jews that are protected through the tribulation period. However, since there is nothing that precludes the rapture from happening prior to the Arab-Israeli war, one could argue that it

would be a good catalyst to embolden Israel's immediate neighbors into starting such a conflict. While this is not a necessary condition to enable a large-scale Middle East conflict, such an event would provide ideal conditions for this conflict to ensue because a rapture event would likely reduce or eliminate United States influence in the Middle East region due to the significant number of Christians in the population.

Wars and Rumors of Wars

The next pre-tribulation event to occur is an Arab-Israeli war. Salus (2013) believes that this war is described in Psalm 83 and is the prelude to the Gog and Magog war because it includes all of Israel's immediate neighboring countries and enemies such that "the house of Israel will no longer be hurt by prickly briars or painful thorns from all their neighbors who treat them with contempt (Ezekiel 28:24, HCSB)." This psalm was written by Asaph, who is called a seer or prophet (2 Chronicles 29:30) that prophesied under the order of King David (1 Chronicles 25:2).

In this prophetic vision, Israel is ringed by an unholy alliance dedicated to her destruction. While this alliance has not formed yet, the stage is set. Salus (2013) notes that during the dispersion period, the cities of Israel were forsaken and reduced to ruins and that the surrounding nations swallowed the country from every side, giving themselves the land promised to Abraham and incurring God's wrath as prophesied by Ezekiel 36:1-5. Salus (2013) also notes that this is the heart of the Middle East conflict today because the return of the Jews meant the eviction of the Arab trespassers, which then became homeless refugees because the surrounding nations did not facilitate their return.

The Arab nations assumed that they would destroy the new Jewish state, but they lost, and this created the Palestinian refugees, or the "tents of Edom." This serves to unite the Arabs in common cause against Israel and, according to Psalm 83, they will not concede the land apart from Israeli conquest over them. In response to the repeated Arab assaults that the Jews have seen since

the creation of the new nation of Israel, they have established a strong military in self-defense as prophesied in the Valley of the Dry Bones prophecy (Ezekiel 37:10). Israel now is the most militarily dominant country in the Middle East, with the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) being the tenth ranked military in the world, and all that remains for them to be the “exceedingly great army” of Ezekiel is the conquest of the Arab confederacy (Psalm 83:6-8).

Kinder (1975) notes that this the war described in Psalm 83 may be bigger than a single threat and a particular alliance because it represents the perennial aggression of the world against God and His people and that not only does it want victory of the enemy, but it wants them convinced, made to acknowledge, and to seek the Lord. Salus (2013) also notes that this psalm begins the process of restoring the Jews to the status of “My people Israel” as prophesied by Hosea. God gave notice through Hosea that a time would come when they would become “not My people” (Hosea 1:8-9) and Jesus confirmed that the rejection of Him would begin this prophecy (Matthew 23:35-36). History also proves that this part of the prophecy was fulfilled in the generation that rejected Christ. The Temple was destroyed in 70 AD as Jesus prophesied (Matthew 24:2) and the nation of Israel ceased to exist after the Bar-Kokhba War in 136 AD.

This presented a dilemma of how to keep true to the Abrahamic covenant that the world would be blessed through Abraham’s descendants and still allow them to be “not My people,” but Paul resolved this dilemma by recognizing that only part of Israel would be hardened (Romans 11:25-26). As Salus (2013) notes, A remnant would go from “My people Israel” to “My people the Church.” Eventually, Israel will once again be “My people Israel” (Hosea 1:10) when the “full number of the Gentiles has come in (Romans 11:25, HCSB),” leading to Israel’s national salvation. The hardness or blindness will end, and the Jews will become “My people Israel” again in advance of the second coming of Christ (Ezekiel 36:8-12). This process of restoration began with the Balfour Declaration (“Balfour Declaration”, 2020) in 1917 to restore the nation of Israel. They

will again be “My people Israel” by the conclusion of the Arab-Israeli war (Ezekiel 25:14). This also supports a pre-tribulation rapture of the Church that occurs around the time of the Arab-Israeli war because this restoration coincides with the fullness of the Gentiles. The Church came into being when Israel lost the title of “My people Israel,” so it is fitting that the Church is removed when Israel regains that title and is spiritually restored (Ezekiel 36:25-30) through this war.

The Arab-Israeli war, then, is a proxy war being waged by Satan since the beginning of time. The destruction of Israel is Satan’s latest method for preventing the return of Christ and the surrounding nations are his pawns. Because this is yet another battle in the longstanding war that started at the beginning of time and was announced in Genesis just after Adam and Eve’s initial sin (Genesis 3:15), this bitter enmity against Israel goes deeper than the current politics and rivalries and is, as Kinder (1975) states, “one attempt among many others by the kingdom of darkness to wipe out the bearers of salvation.”

According to Salus (2013), this hatred originated almost 4,000 years ago when God made an unconditional covenant with Abraham and again with Jacob (Genesis 15:18-21; 22:17-18; 35:11-12). Hagar, Ishmael, Esau, Moab, and Ammon all coveted the contents of this covenant due to the inherent blessings contained within it. Salus (2013) notes that the conflict between Sarah and Hagar is the root of this hatred. Hagar had contempt for Sarah because she had to forfeit her son Ishmael to Sarah as the surrogate mother, but she coveted the blessings of the covenant with Abraham for herself (Genesis 16:1-6). Salus (2013) also states that this hatred then spread to Hagar’s son, Ishmael, who was never accepted as heir by Abraham and was then forced to leave when Isaac was born (Genesis 21:8-10). According to Salus (2013), this hatred was then spread throughout the elite circles of Egyptian leadership, who knew Abraham well for trying to pass Sarah off as his sister (Genesis 16:10-12; 17:20-21). The hatred started by Hagar and Ishmael then spread to Esau. Esau felt cheated out of his inheritance as well after he gave up his birthright

(Genesis 25:27-34) and then was denied Isaac's blessing when Jacob impersonated him (Genesis 25:22-23; 27:5-8,41). Esau then married a daughter of Ishmael to spite Isaac and further cement the ancient hatred (Genesis 28:6-9).

Salus (2013) states that Moab and Ammon are not noted for having a negative personal encounter with Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob. However, according to Salus (2013), this hatred manifested through their descendants centuries after the deaths of Moab and Ammon as the hatred from the other nations permeated their cultures and grew out of disputes over the possession of certain parts of the Promised Land. Plagues against Egypt, which led to the Exodus, further exacerbated and cemented this ancient hatred, according to Salus (2013). This hatred of Abraham's heirs continues today through their descendants. Over the years, their descendants perpetuated this hatred and propelled this disposition across the region. Salus (2013) notes that other historical enemies of Israel then found it favorable to embrace this attitude, which ultimately became cleverly enveloped into a religion known as Islam.

In Psalm 83, Asaph wants God to be active and to intervene on Israel's behalf as God's people and emphasizes that these are God's enemies, not Israel's. Kinder (1975) states that "this prayer takes its stand not on the people's plight, but on their relationship [with God]." Psalm 83 outlines God's Middle East peace plan that started with the rebirth of Israel, which itself is a miracle, because no nation has ever been restored after having been destroyed for so long. Israel's rebirth after a little over 1,800 years could only happen through God's divine will (Jeremiah 16:14-15; 31:35-37). Salus (2013) notes that for the miracle that is Israel's restoration to occur, God had to do several things:

- (1) Destroy the Ottoman empire that ruled the Middle East (1517-1917).
- (2) Create the desire in the Jewish people to return to the Promised Land, starting in 1917.

- (3) Defeat the Nazi regime, which attempted Jewish genocide to prevent their return to their ancient homeland, by uniting and empowering the Allied forces in WWII.
- (4) Reestablish the Arab and Persian states so that many Arabs and Persians could vacate out of Israel.
- (5) Move the United Nations to legislate and approve the partition plan of 1947 to reestablish the Jewish state so that they could have a home again.
- (6) Create and empower the IDF so that Israel could survive the repeated Arab attempts to destroy them.
- (7) Preserve and prosper Israel so that it can be secure until the end times.

It is through the Arab-Israeli war that Israel serves the purpose to make God's holy name known to all the world (Ezekiel 36:22-24). The ancient curse for cursing Israel (Genesis 12:3) is still in effect and Salus (2013) states that God will execute judgment on these hostile nations in compliance with the curse-for-curse-in-kind clause in Genesis. Salus (2013) also states that this is the historically proven foreign policy of God toward the Gentile nations, that it will be the shedding of Arab blood for the shedding of Jewish blood, and that it will place the Arab nations under Jewish sovereignty as they had done to the land of Israel. According to Jeremiah 12:14-17, God will completely uproot and destroy all of Israel's wicked neighbors for rejecting God and His chosen people's right to the Promised Land. What is interesting is that a fertile future would have awaited these neighbors had they blessed the return of the Jews to their land. They would have been allowed to peacefully coexist if they would, as God said, "swear by my name."

According to Psalm 83, and as shown in Figure 2, the alliance includes "the tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites, Moab and the Hagrites, Gebal, Ammon, and Amalek, Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre. Even Assyria has joined them; they lend support to the sons of Lot (Psalm 83: 5-8, HCSB)." Salus (2013) notes that the modern names for these adversaries, also shown in

Figure 2, are Jordan, Lebanon, the Negev into the Sinai, Gaza, Syria into western Iraq, the Palestinians, as well as Hamas, and Hezbollah. Figure 2 also provides the mapping between the ancient names and their modern equivalents.

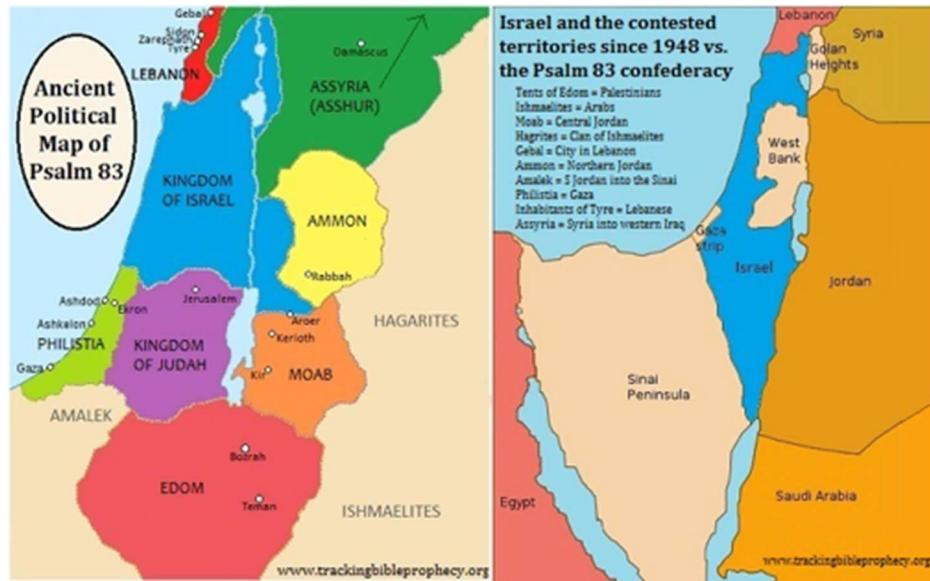


Figure 2: Arab-Israeli War Adversaries

The hostility of these nations is rooted in the ancient hatred. Kinder (1975) notes that some of these nations were close relatives of Israel, so their hostility was even more intense. Edom came from the people of Esau, Jacob's brother. Amalek was Esau's grandson and they were centered mostly in the south. The Ishmaelites stemmed from Isaac's half-brother Ishmael. Moab and Ammon were the children of Lot, Abraham's nephew. Even though the remaining nations were not related to Israel, the hatred spread to them through contact with the nations that were related. During Saul's reign, the tribe of Reuben waged war against the Hagrites and defeated them (1 Chronicles 5:10). Some of these nations, such as Philistia and Assyria, were long-standing enemies. Kinder (1975) states that Assyria was a great power that worked behind the scenes and used Moab and Ammon as their pawns and eventually incorporated this entire group of peoples, both friend and foe, into their empire. While they thought that they were the puppet masters, they were really just pawns of Satan rather than a player. Psalm 2:4 says that the Lord laughs and scoffs

at them and Psalm 82:6-7 notes that even though they think they are gods, they will die like mere mortals and fall like every other ruler.

Israel's ancient enemies will confederate in modern times to attempt to destroy her and confiscate the Promised Land (Psalm 83:4). This prophecy must remain to be fulfilled in modern times because the closest biblical match for this list of enemies comes from 2 Chronicles 20. Here, Jehoshaphat of Juda was threatened by an alliance of enemies that included Edom, Moab, and Ammon. The list of enemies in this psalm is much longer. These Arab nations that form this confederacy are Israel's most observable foes today and they have repeatedly denied Israel's right to exist. Parts of this confederacy have repeatedly attacked Israel in modern history in all the major wars and regional conflicts to date. However, never have all of them conspired together for a single conflict until this war. With it, they intend to finally achieve their goal to have Israel's name remembered no more (Psalm 83:4). Ezekiel 35 states that Moab and Ammon (i.e., Jordan) are to be given over to the people of the East (i.e., Northern Syria). It is possible that this growing influence could be how the confederacy forms.

Some scholars say that the Arab-Israeli war as described in Psalm 83 was fulfilled by Israel's War of Independence in 1948, but the Palestinian refugees in Gaza (i.e. the tents of Edom), Hamas, and Hezbollah did not exist at that time. Instead, the Palestinian refugees came about because of this war. Also, combatants not listed in Psalm 83 participated in the 1948 war, including volunteers from Yemen, Morocco, Sudan, and Pakistan. Some scholars also say that Psalm 83 was fulfilled with the Six-Day war in 1967 ("Six-Day War", 2019), but that war did not include full list of combatants described in the psalm. Also, Egypt was not desolated for 40 years post either of these wars (Ezekiel 29:12-14), Southern Jordan has not been permanently desolated (Isaiah 34:9-10), and the oppression of Israel by the Psalm 83 combatants has not ceased, meaning that this prophecy has not yet been fulfilled (Psalm 83:9-18; Judges 8:28).

The purpose of this prophetic war is to cast judgment upon the animosity established in ancient times toward the promises God made to Abraham. Psalm 83 asks God to defeat these enemies in the same manner that the enemies in two campaigns in the book of Judges were. These campaigns also provide examples of Israel being under divine empowerment and protection. Judges chapters 4 and 5 describe how the Canaanites oppressed the Israelites for 20 years and suffered a bitter defeat by the Israelites, led by Barak, resulting in no Israeli casualties. Judges chapters 6 to 8 describe how the Midianites had oppressed the Israelites for 7 years. Gideon took 300 warriors and even though he was outmanned and outgunned 400 to 1, he destroyed 120,000 Midianites, yet incurred no Israeli casualties. Both enemies were defeated from top to bottom with their kings, nobles, and princes being killed alongside their soldiers. The result was that they ceased to ever oppress the Israelites or the Promised Land again. By petitioning the Lord to defeat the Psalm 83 Arab confederacy in the historical methods described in Judges 4-8, Asaph is encouraging the divine empowerment of the IDF to victory (Psalm 83:9-12) rather than through divine victory like when Pharaoh's army was swallowed up by the converging waters of the Red Sea. Such a divine victory will occur again with the Gog and Magog war (Ez. 38:18-39:6; Is. 63:1-6). Also, by referencing these campaigns from the book of Judges, Psalm 83 advocates for the total annihilation of these enemies from top to bottom, and with no Israeli casualties.

Kinder (1975) states that by advocating victory like the campaigns referenced in Judges 4-8, this war emphasizes the weakness of God's chosen victors and that without God's support, they could not be successful. This also emphasizes the futility of Satan's pawns. Even with Satan's support, they have no hope of standing against God. Kinder (1975) also notes that Psalm 83:12 restates the enemies' intentions to take the Promised Land from Israel, which brings out the truth that these are the pasturelands of God and not simply Israel's holdings. Therefore, any attempts to retake them are doomed to fail.

This will not a small regional conflict. This will be a major war with global implications. This war will be devastating and will totally reshape the Middle East politically, economically, and militarily. The outcome will be that Israel will become a regional, if not global, superpower nation. As a result, this will fulfill God's promise to glorify His name through Israel.

The Arab-Israeli War

Based on Psalm 83's plea for God to intervene and provide a victory as described in Judges 4-8, as well as God's intent to use this war to glorify His name, the Arab-Israeli War will likely be swift, decisive, and one-sided, with destruction of Israel's enemies executed at the hands of the IDF through divine empowerment (Ezekiel 25:14). Zephaniah also prophesies about this war and his prophecy provides a good summary view for how this war progresses. This prophecy shows how Gaza, Hamas, and the Palestinian refugees are destroyed, and Israel's lands are repossessed. Israel first uproots and destroys all the terrorist organizations within its current borders, making Syria, Jordan, and the Gaza Strip desolate wastelands (Zeph. 2:3-5). After Gaza is deserted, Hamas is destroyed, and no Palestinian inhabitants reside along the Southwestern seacoast of Israel, this coastal territory will become the possession of the Jewish people (Zeph. 2:6-7). Jordan, the Golan Heights, and the West Bank will then be repossessed (Zeph. 2:8-9). Finally, Syria and Iraq will be destroyed and desolate. Nineveh, which is modern-day Mosul in Northern Iraq, will be utterly desolate and dry as the desert. (Zeph. 2:13-14).

While Psalm 83 advocates for minimal Israeli casualties, if any, it appears that may not be the case at least in the initial attack against Israel that starts this war. In addition to God's judgments against Israel's adversaries, Isaiah indicates that Israel will also be punished for their disobedience:

On that day the splendor of Jacob will fade, and his healthy body will become emaciated.

It will be as if a reaper had gathered standing grain—his arm harvesting the heads of

grain—and as if one had gleaned heads of grain in the Valley of Rephaim. Only gleanings will be left in Israel, as if an olive tree had been beaten—two or three berries at the very top of the tree, four or five on its fruitful branches. This is the declaration of the Lord, the God of Israel...On that day their strong cities will be like the abandoned woods and mountaintops that were abandoned because of the Israelites; there will be desolation (Isaiah 17:4-6,9, HCSB).

Based on this description, there will be severe loss of life, but little structural damage, in at least one regional battle that starts this war. These verses may indicate that Syria will initiate the war with a devastating attack on Israel through the use of chemical or biological weapons, which Syria is known to possess.

This is the confederacy's one and only shot at winning the war. They would need a decisive preemptive strike that would destroy Israel in a single blow. However, since this war is ultimately against God, not Israel, this will fail. This, then, will invoke God's wrath, which terrifies them, knowing what God has planned for them (Isaiah 19:16-17). It may be that from this point on there are no Israeli casualties as Asaph had prayed for in Psalm 83. Israel then responds with the utter destruction of Damascus. Isaiah states that Damascus will be a heap of ruins (Isaiah 17:1-3) and Jeremiah describes the devastation with God declaring that all her soldiers will be silenced and that He will set fire to the walls of Damascus, all in a single day (Jeremiah 49:23-27). It is likely that Israel would respond with nuclear weapons if they experienced a chemical or biological attack, matching Jeremiah's description of Damascus' destruction. These descriptions of the utter devastation for both Damascus and within Israel would fit this scenario for how this war starts.

Israel will then destroy the Palestinians, which represent a remnant of Esau's descendants from Edom (Isaiah 34:1-6; Jeremiah 49:16-17). Esau and the entire region from Edom (i.e., Southern Jordan) to Dedan (i.e., Northwestern Saudi Arabia) will be reduced to rubble, leaving no

survivor (Ezekiel 25:12-13). Edom will become an object of horror (Jeremiah 49:16-17). Salus (2013) notes that the word for horror that Jeremiah used was Tiphletseth (טִיפְלָתָה), which is the most descriptive word available in the Hebrew language and the only time in the Bible that this word is used. According to Obadiah, the Palestinian's mistreatment of the Jewish people results in their own ethnical demise (Obadiah 1:9-15). According to Isaiah, the Israelis will then destroy the descendants of Esau, which includes Jordan and neighboring nations (Isaiah 11:11-14). They will take Northern Jordan and the capital city, Amman, will surrender to them. They will also conquer Gaza and plunder the people of the East, which is modern-day Northern Syria.

The war then extends into Northwest Saudi Arabia and as far south as the Red Sea to include Egypt (Obadiah 1:20). Jeremiah says that the earth shakes at the sound of the fall of Israel's enemies and that their cry will resound to the Red Sea (Jeremiah 49:21), showing the magnitude of this alliance's defeat and the impact it has on the international community. As a result, the region will be reshaped and desolated due to this war. At the war's conclusion, Israel's borders will resemble the tribal territories that existed when Solomon was king, and Figure 3 shows how they may be redrawn.



Figure 3: Israel's Borders after the Arab-Israeli War

Israel will have defeated the enemies bordering her land and, for the first time as a single unified country since the time of Joshua, they will have expanded the country's borders back to what God had promised Abraham (cf. Genesis 15:18-21; Joshua 1:4; Obadiah 1:19-21; Ezekiel 47:13-48:35). With the destruction of their neighbors, Israel will gain sovereignty over much of the Middle East.

Another result of this war is that Egypt will be desolate for 40 years (Ezekiel 29:12-14). Also, Edom, which is Southern Jordan, will be permanently desolated (Isaiah 34:9-10). Because of their military power, the destruction of their neighbors, and the new national borders, Israel will be much more secure. Finally, with her enemies defeated, it appears that Israel will feel safe, live peacefully, and allow themselves to drop their guard and disarm (Ezekiel 28:24-26), which is a requirement for the Gog and Magog war (Ezekiel 38:8,11,14). They will be a regional, if not global, superpower due to their victory. Therefore, as Salus (2013) concludes, the 7-year peace treaty between the Antichrist and Israel that starts the tribulation period may have nothing to do with bringing peace to the Middle East because that has been achieved at this point, and instead, it may be an attempt to neutralize the stature of the Jewish people and their God.

Kinder (1975) states that Psalm 83 prays for a route of Israel's enemies, not a mere retreat. The imagery of a whirlwind that blows everything away before it and a fire that completely consumes mountains (Psalm 83:13-15) would be an accurate description of the one-sided and total victory that is prophesied. In the long run, this is what happens to even the most powerful of men before God. They will be swept away completely and with ease. In addition, the confederacy that stood against Israel will be totally humiliated (Psalm 83:16-17) and God's name will be vindicated with them acknowledging "that you alone are the Most High over all the earth (Psalm 83:18, HCSB)." This acknowledgement of God is the bare minimum of a much richer knowledge of God, but it is the first step toward the final victory that will occur at the end of the Tribulation.

Scripture indicates that Rahab, Babylon, Philistia, Tyre, and Cush will come to acknowledge God (Psalm 87:4). Jeremiah states that Moab and Ammon (i.e., Jordan) will also acknowledge God and have their fortunes restored (Jeremiah 48:46-47; 49:5-6). The question is whether this acknowledgement of the Lord is saving knowledge or just a return of their earthly fortunes. Most importantly, there will be a spiritual awakening for the Jews in the wake of this war (Isaiah 17:8; Ezekiel 36:25-30, 37:9-10), such that the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are formally recognized by God as “My people Israel” once again (Hosea 1:10). This will cause Israel to rebuild the temple, which will likely take several years to complete, and allow the sacrificial system to resume. It is unclear whether the temple construction will begin before or after the Arab-Israeli war or even if the start of construction is delayed until after Gog and Magog war, but it must be completed, and the sacrificial system must begin, with the start of the tribulation period. Scripture states that the temple will only exist for 42 months (Revelation 11:1-2) and then it will be destroyed at the midpoint of the tribulation period (Daniel 9:27), meaning that the temple exists throughout the Lesser Tribulation. One important caveat is that this spiritual awakening does not include an understanding that Jesus is their Messiah. That revelation will not occur until the end of the Great Tribulation.

The Gog and Magog War

The results of the Arab-Israeli war will set the stage for the Gog and Magog war (Ezekiel 38-39). The participants in this war include Magog, Meshech, Tubal, Persia, Cush, Put, Gomer, and Beth-Togarmah (Ezekiel 38:1-6). According to Salus (2013), the modern equivalents to these are Russia, the former Soviet states (Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia), Iran, Sudan, Ethiopia and Libya, eastern Europe, Armenia, western Asia, and Turkey. This confederacy is shown in Figure 4. Evidence that supports a separate Arab-Israeli war prior to the Gog and Magog war is the absence of Israel's immediate neighbors as participants in this war (Salus, 2013). The

most logical conclusion is that Israel has defeated these adversaries in a prior war and has expanded her borders to encompass that land as noted in Ezekiel 47:13-48:35.



Figure 4: Gog and Magog War Adversaries

Ezekiel 38:13 indicates that Yemen (Sheba) and Saudi Arabia (Dedan) do not participate in this war. Additionally, Ezekiel 38:13 includes “the merchants of Tarshish and all her rulers (HCSB)” in this coalition. Salus (2016) believes that Tarshish is Great Britain and that her rulers (HCSB) or villages (NIV) are her colonies, or specifically, the United States, Canada, and Australia. This verse asks: “Have you come to seize spoil? Have you assembled your hordes to carry off plunder, to make off with silver and gold, to take cattle and possessions, to seize great spoil (HCSB)?” Based on the wording of this verse and the fact that that this coalition includes countries that support Israel, their absence in the Gog and Magog war indicate that these nations limit their support for Israel to political or economic sanctions rather than providing military support.

One of the chief reasons the Gog and Magog coalition comes against Israel is to “seize spoil and carry off plunder, to turn your hand against ruins now inhabited and against a people

gathered from the nations, who have been acquiring cattle and possessions and who live at the center of the world (Ezekiel 38:12, HCSB)." While it is man's hatred toward God's chosen people that drives the Arab-Israeli war and it is the divinely empowered IDF that defeats Israel's enemies as divine judgment against those enemies, it is God that persuades Gog into starting the Gog and Magog war (Ezekiel 38:4, 39:2). God then defeats them divinely (Ezekiel 39:3-5) without the IDF "so that the nations may know Me, when I show Myself holy through you [Gog] in their sight (Ezekiel 38:16, HCSB)." According to Taylor (1969), there is no inconsistency with man's reasons for starting this war and the fact that, unlike with the Arab-Israeli war, God is bringing this war about because "a divine purpose overrules, while it makes use of, the base human motive."

Taylor (1969) notes that:

The same paradox marks Isaiah's teaching on the Assyrian invasion (Isaiah 10:5-19) and Habakkuk's attitude to the Chaldean menace (Habakkuk 1:5-11). It does not mean that Gog is a luckless pawn in the hand of an all-powerful but immoral God. Gog freely acts according to the evil dictates of his lust for conquest and easy spoil, but behind everything in the universe (and especially as it relates to God's people) there is the controlling hand of God, who orders all things with a view to the ultimate vindication of His honour among the nations.

As Taylor (1969) concludes, this is a picture of God "leading His enemies forth in order to disarm and destroy them, and the ultimate indignity for them will be that their bodies will be left unburied for the wild beasts to devour."

Also, one reason that God must intervene to divinely save Israel from this attack is that Israel has left its guard down in the wake of the Arab-Israeli war. They are living in perceived security because all of their neighbors have been defeated and they now have much more defensible borders. Taylor (1969) notes that Israel is now helpless and that God "will become

incensed at the unprovoked invasion by the hordes from the north and He will bring all kinds of natural disasters upon them.” Taylor (1969) further states that a host of non-human agents that are frequently associated with God’s judgments will be used against this coalition and will include earthquakes, pestilence and bloodshed, torrential rains, hailstones, and fire and brimstone. In addition, the sword will also be used against Gog such that “every man’s sword will be against his brother (Ezekiel 38:21, HCSB),” meaning that “the demoralized heathen [will] slay each other in their panic and add to the general destruction (Taylor, 1969).”

Another major difference between these two wars is that in the Arab-Israeli war, both Israel and her enemies will be punished and there will be widespread devastation (cf. Isaiah 17:1-3,9; Obadiah 1:15-18; Ezekiel 25:13-14, 29:12-14, 36:7; Jeremiah 49:21), but with the Gog and Magog war, only Israel’s enemies are punished and the devastation described is limited to just the attacking forces. While it may take months for the IDF to fully defeat the Arab confederacy in the Arab-Israeli war after that confederacy’s initial attack on Israel, the Gog and Magog coalition will be defeated immediately and totally by God as they begin their preemptive strike against Israel.

The Gog and Magog war is yet another example that proves that God’s command to curse those that curse Israel (Genesis 12:3) is still in effect. This has already been seen with the Arab-Israeli war, but there are other examples from scripture as well. First, Joseph’s brothers attempted to harm him by selling him into slavery, but it turned out to be a blessing (Genesis 50:20). Next, Egypt attempted to kill the Hebrews by trapping them at the Red Sea, but the sea parted, letting the Hebrews escape and then closing on the advancing Egyptian army (Exodus 14). Finally, during the time of Queen Esther, Haman plotted to kill the Jews living in Persia and hang Esther’s adopted father Mordechai, but the Jews fought back, survived, and instead of Mordechai getting hung in the gallows, Haman did (Esther 7:9-10). God knows how to convert bad things into good (Romans

8:28), giving Israel the ability to plunder and pillage these enemies in retaliation for invading them (Ezekiel 39:9-10).

Many scholars place the Gog and Magog war in the first half of the tribulation period. However, it is through this war that God will make His holy name known among His people Israel and will no longer allow it to be profaned (Ezekiel 39:7), so that people have the opportunity to believe in God before being deceived by the Antichrist (Salus 2018). Also, Ezekiel 39:9 states that it will take Israel seven years to burn the weapons from the war. If the Gog and Magog war were to occur during the tribulation period, there would not be seven years left for this cleanup to take place, especially if this war were to occur at a point significantly after the start of the Lesser Tribulation. Additionally, the sheer magnitude of this war would be the perfect catalyst to bring forward the Antichrist, who would then establish the seven-year peace agreement that begins the tribulation period as described in Daniel 9:27.

Finally, scripture indicates that the Antichrist does not break the peace treaty that he establishes at the beginning of the Lesser Tribulation until the start of the Great Tribulation three-and-a-half years later (Daniel 9:27), so it would be highly unlikely that he could allow the Gog and Magog war to occur during the Lesser Tribulation and keep the peace treaty intact. This is especially true if the Gog and Magog war were to occur at the beginning of the Lesser Tribulation, and just after signing the peace treaty, as would be required to allow for the maximum amount of time for cleanup to occur. It is more likely that the Gog and Magog war precedes the tribulation period and that the war, famine, and death described in the seal judgments (Revelation 6:3-8) are representative of other conflicts throughout the world. Additionally, Salus (2013) believes that the Gog and Magog war must start three-and-a-half years before the start of the tribulation period and asserts that this timing is required to complete the seven-year period for Israel to burn the

weapons from the war before they need to flee at the start of the Great Tribulation (Matthew 24:15-22).

Rise of a Global Government

Several prophecies in scripture assert that a global government will be established in the last days. There are currently no preconditions that would preclude this government from developing, so while it could happen anywhere along this pre-tribulation timeline, the assumption is that it will occur in the wake of the Gog and Magog war. According to scripture, this government will rise before the Antichrist (Daniel 7:24) and be a multinational alliance of ten nations (Daniel 2:33,41-43, 7:7,24; Revelation 13:1, 17:3). Historically, multinational alliances have arisen after large conflicts. For example, the League of Nations was formed after World War I and the United Nations and NATO were formed after World War II. It would stand to reason, then, that this new alliance would be a result of the Gog and Magog war. Scripture also indicates that this alliance will have authority only for a short time before the Antichrist takes over (Revelation 17:12).

There is evidence in scripture that indicates that this alliance reforms the old Roman Empire. Figure 5 shows that Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Daniel 2:31-45) and Daniel's vision of the four beasts (Daniel 7:1-48) both represent the same kingdoms of the world but differ dramatically in their imagery based on how man views these kingdoms versus how God views them.

Comparisons between Daniel 2 (the statue) and Daniel 7 (the beasts)		
DANIEL 2 (the statue)	DANIEL 7 (the beasts)	Power symbolized
Head of gold	Lion with eagle's wings	Babylon
Chest and arms of silver	Bear with three ribs	Medo-Persia
Belly and thighs of bronze	Leopard with four heads	Greece
Legs of iron	Beast with iron teeth	Rome
Feet of iron and of clay	10 horns of the beast	The 10 nations
	Little horn	Identity to come...
Stone breaking the statue and becoming a mountain	Destruction of nations, reign of God's people	Kingdom of God established forever

Figure 5: Comparison Between Daniel 2 and Daniel 7

Nebuchadnezzar saw an impressive statue that consisted of a head of gold, chest and arms of silver, a belly and thighs of bronze, legs of iron, and feet of iron mixed with clay. These represent Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, and a yet-to-exist alliance of ten nations that consists of both weak and strong nations where “the peoples will mix with one another but will not hold together, just as iron does not mix with fired clay (Daniel 2:43, HCSB).”

God, on the other hand, depicted horrible beasts that included a lion with eagle’s wings, a bear, a leopard with four wings of a bird, and one that was indescribable other than it had teeth of iron and ten horns. The first three beasts correspond to the head of gold, the chest and arms of silver, and the belly and thighs of bronze from Nebuchadnezzar’s statue. However, this last beast represents both the legs of iron and the feet mixed with iron and clay of Nebuchadnezzar’s statue, indicating that the Roman Empire will rise again as a ten-member alliance in the last days.

Additionally, Daniel states that three of the ten horns of the last beast in his vision (Daniel 7:7-8) are plucked out. Tsarfati (2018) also supports a reconstituted Roman empire by noting that:

Western Europe is the only area that has had ten tribes with three that no longer exist: the Visigoths (Spain), Anglo-Saxons (England), Franks (France), Alemanni (Germany), Burgundians (Switzerland), Lombards (Italy), Suevi (Portugal), Heruli (rooted up), Ostrogoths (rooted up) and Vandals (rooted up).

Further corresponding scripture comes from the descriptions of the beast in the book of Revelation:

I saw a beast coming up out of the sea. He had 10 horns and seven heads...The beast I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like a bear's, and his mouth was like a lion's mouth...One of his heads appeared to be fatally wounded, but his fatal wound was healed (Revelation 13:1-3, HCSB).

This description of the last kingdom of man shows that it will have aspects of all the previous kingdoms because it incorporates the leopard (Greece), bear (Medo-Persia), and lion (Babylon).

Revelation 17:9-10 further identifies the seven heads as seven kings, which have been identified as the kingdoms that ruled over Israel. Rhodes (2012) states that these kingdoms are Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, and the revived Roman Empire. Since the heads represent kingdoms, the fact that “one of his heads appeared to be fatally wounded, but his fatal wound was healed (Revelation 13:3, HCSB)” provides additional evidence supporting the conclusion that the fourth beast in Daniel’s vision represents a revived Roman Empire.

Given that this ten-member alliance will form from the old Roman Empire, it is possible that this alliance will be formed from the current European Union (EU) or be its successor. The EU currently consists of 27 member states, of which some are strong, and some are weak. However, in its current form, it does not appear to be the final ruling empire as described in the Bible. The EU could take a page from the United Nations (UN) and form a ruling council similar to the UN Security Council in which there are five permanent members to form the ten-nation ruling alliance. Salus (2020) notes that the Club of Rome published a report in 1974 entitled “Mankind at the Turning Point” that provided a listing of ten recommended governmental zones. These include:

- (1) Canada and the United States
- (2) the European Union
- (3) Japan, North and South Korea
- (4) Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa
- (5) Russia
- (6) Mexico, Central and South America
- (7) North Africa and the Middle East
- (8) Central Africa
- (9) India, Pakistan, and Southeast Asia

(10) China and Central Asia.

At this point in the timeline, this alliance does not have global control, but it is within this context that the Antichrist emerges (Daniel 7:24). Scripture is clear that the Antichrist comes from this alliance, stating: “The people of the coming prince will destroy the city and the sanctuary (Daniel 9:26, HCSB).” The Roman Empire destroyed the temple in 70 AD, which means that the Antichrist must come from the reconstituted Roman Empire. Additionally, it is likely that the Antichrist is a Jew or from Jewish descent and that he will come from the tribe of Dan because that tribe is not included in the 144,000 witnesses (Revelation 7:4-8). This aspect of his heritage would also be beneficial for building the trust necessary to broker the peace treaty that allows the temple to be rebuilt. Another characteristic of the Antichrist may be that he is either a homosexual or is just celibate because scripture describes him as not being desired by women (Daniel 11:36-37). One can only speculate as to how the Antichrist gains power within this alliance. It could be purely political, or he could gain power by possessing new technological advances, such as artificial intelligence (AI), quantum computing, biomedical, nanotechnology, or other advances that either have significant military implications or drive humanity significantly closer to the singularity with technology (Toumey, 2016). With the rise of the Antichrist, the tribulation period begins.

Rise of the Harlot False Religion

Revelation 17 shows that intertwined with the rise of the global government is the rise of the harlot false religion. This is Satan's counterfeit religious system, also known as the Whore of Babylon (Hosea 3:1-5; Zechariah 5:5-11) because of the spiritual fornication this religious system causes (Jeremiah 3:6-9; Isaiah 1:21), that started with Nimrod and the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1-9). It is the adulterous religious system (Proverbs 5; Jeremiah 3:1-5) of the world which is opposite to the Bride of Christ that seeks a faithful relationship with God (Proverbs 31; 2

Corinthians 11:2). According to LaHaye (1999), three of the prophetic churches to which Jesus wrote letters in Revelation chapters 2 and 3 will continue through the tribulation period (see Figure 1). These include Thyatira, Sardis, and Laodicea. The whore is seen riding on a scarlet beast, meaning that it is riding on the popularity of the Antichrist. This harlot religion most likely rises from the remnants of Christianity that was left behind as an amalgamation of these remaining churches. John said that he was astonished when he saw this prostitute (Revelation 17:3-6).

It is possible that John was astonished because he saw how pagan idols were adopted into Christianity. This is prophetically represented in the letters to Pergamum (Revelation 2:12-17) and Thyatira (Revelation 2:18-29). The church in Pergamum is where “Satan has his throne...[and] where Satan lives (Revelation 2:13, HCSB).” The church in Thyatira tolerated “the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess and teaches and deceives My slaves to commit sexual immorality and to eat meat sacrificed to idols (Revelation 2:20, HCSB).” This indicates that the harlot church of the tribulation period will be deceived by supernatural visions of a prophetess that will become prevalent, which most likely causes the worship of a new incarnation of Asherah that plagued the ancient Jews during the time of the kings (cf. Deuteronomy 16:21-22; Judges 3:7; 1 Kings 14:15,22-23, 16:30-33; 2 Kings 17:7-17, 21:1-7; Jeremiah 17:1-3). Some scholars believe this references the visions of Mary, such as the visions in Fatima, Portugal in 1917 (“Are apparitions of Mary, such as Lady Fatima, true messages from God?”, 2020). However, this figure will need more wide-ranging appeal to coalesce the remaining religions, including those represented by the three remaining churches through syncretism. Whatever the form, these visions will preach a gospel that is at odds with the true gospel of Christ (cf. 2 Peter 3:3; Galatians 1:6-9; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4) and deceive people into believing in false doctrines that draw people away from a personal relationship with God.

Location of Mystery Babylon

There are several theories on where Mystery Babylon is located, however only two are compelling. The first is that Mystery Babylon will be located in the historical city of Babylon, which is located in Shinar (Genesis 11:2) between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in modern-day Iraq. Woods (2021) lays out a compelling argument in favor of this theory with the primary evidence being that the historical Babylon is the city where mankind first began to worship himself in an organized manner and is the location of the origin of the mother-child cult, thus making it the ultimate source or mother of spiritual harlotry. Figure 6 shows that this religion then spread to other cultures throughout the world. Woods (2021) notes that at the time that this Babylonian religion emerged, there was only one language in the world, which is why it spread so universally throughout the world after God confused their language and scattered them over the face of the earth (Genesis 11:1-9). The genesis of this mother-child cult centered around Nimrod's (Genesis 10:8-11) wife Semiramis and her son Tammuz, who reportedly was killed by a wild animal and miraculously was restored to life.

Cultures with Mother-Child Cults	Mother	Child
Babylon - The origin of the Mother-Child Cult	Semiramis	Tammuz
Assyria	Ishtar	Tammuz
Phoenicia	Astarte	Baal
Egypt	Isis	Osirus/Horus
Greece	Aphrodite	Eros
Rome	Venus	Cupid
Asia	Cybele	Desius
India	Isis	Aswara
Roman Catholicism	Mary	Jesus
Israel	Queen of Heaven (Je. 7:18, 44:17)	Tammuz (Ez. 8:14-15)

Figure 6: Comparison of Mother-Child Cults (Woods, 2021)

Woods (2021) continues the argument for Mystery Babylon being the historical city of Babylon by stating that the destruction of the ancient city by the Medo-Persian empire (Daniel 5:31) in 540 BC does not match the cataclysmic language found in Isaiah or Jeremiah. Specifically, Woods (2021) notes:

- (1) Isaiah 13:6,9 uses “Day of the Lord,” which is typically used for end times.
- (2) Isaiah 13:10-13 predicts several cosmological disturbances that did not take place. These disturbances have more in common with Matthew 24:27-30.
- (3) Isaiah 13:11-12 indicates Babylon’s judgment will inflict punishment on the whole world (Matthew 24:21-22; Revelation 6:8, 9:15,18).
- (4) Isaiah 13:19 equates Babylon’s destruction with the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19:24-28).
- (5) Isaiah 13:20-22 predicts that Babylon will never be inhabited again.
- (6) Isaiah 14:1-4 predicts Israel’s spiritual restoration, which happens in the end times (Romans 11:26-27).
- (7) Isaiah 14:5-8 predicts that the world will enter a period of universal peace, which would not occur until the Millennial Reign of Christ.
- (8) Jeremiah 50:3 predicts an enemy from the north would destroy Babylon, but the Persians came from the east.
- (9) Jeremiah 51:8 predicts Babylon would be destroyed suddenly, but history shows that Babylon has decayed gradually.
- (10) Jeremiah 50:3,13,26,39-40, 51:29,43,62 predicts that Babylon would be completely and permanently destroyed, but Daniel served in Babylon after the fall for many years (Daniel 5:30, 6:1-3).

- (11) Jeremiah 51:26 predicts Babylon's destruction would be so catastrophic that even her building materials would never be used again.
- (12) Jeremiah 50:8, 51:6,45 predicts that believers would flee Babylon upon her destruction, but the Jews did not flee after the fall (Daniel 5:28,30-31, 6:1-3).
- (13) Jeremiah 50:2,4-5,20, 51:50 predicts that the reuniting and national repentance of Israel would follow Babylon's fall, which did not occur.

In addition, Woods (2021) notes several similarities between description of Babylon in Jeremiah and Revelation as shown in Figure 7. Woods (2021) further cites Zechariah 5:5-11 and the similarities of these verses to those in Revelation, shown in Figure 8, as further evidence for Mystery Babylon being located in the historical city.

Description of Babylon	Jeremiah	Revelation
Associated with a golden cup	51:7a	17:3-4; 18:6
Dwelling on many waters	51:13	17:1
Intoxicating the nations	51:7b	17:2
Stone sinking into the Euphrates	51:63-64	18:21
Sudden destruction	51:8	18:8
Destroyed by fire	51:30	17:16
Final, uninhabitable	50:39	18:21
Deserved	50:29	18:6
God's people flee	51:6,45	18:4
Heaven rejoices	51:48	18:20

Figure 7: The Description of Babylon vs. Mystery Babylon (Woods, 2021)

Zechariah	Revelation
Woman sitting in a basket (Ze. 5:7)	Woman sitting on the beast (Rv. 17:3,9,15)
Emphasis in commerce (Ze. 5:6)	Emphasis in commerce (Rv. 18:11-13)
Woman = Wickedness (Ze. 5:7-8)	Woman = Mother of Prostitutes (Rv. 17:5)
Focus on false worship (Ze. 5:11)	Focus on false worship (Rv. 17:5-6)
Woman taken to Babylon (Ze. 5:11)	Woman called Babylon (Rv. 17:5)

Figure 8: Description of the Woman in Zechariah and Revelation (Woods, 2021)

Woods (2021) also states that the lid being pushed down on the woman in Zechariah's vision signifies that God is in control and will release her on His timetable (2 Thessalonians 2:6-7).

Woods (2021) also states that this vision teaches that wickedness, commerce, and religion will once again return to the land of Babylon.

Woods (2021) completes the argument by stating that "Satan's capacity to lead humanity away from the truth is enhanced if only one government exists and this single government happens to fall into the hands of anti-God forces. No opposition to an anti-God agenda is even possible under this scenario." This appears to be a frightening and accurate portrayal of the harlot religion and one world government that will emerge during the Tribulation Period. Therefore, according to Woods (2021), "ever since the Tower of Babel incident, God has decreed that humanity be ordered according to national boundaries, rather than global government (Deuteronomy 32:8; Isaiah 2:4, 66:18; Acts 17:26; Revelation 12:5, 20:3, 21:24,26)." As the world enters the Tribulation Period and God's hedge of protection is removed, these national boundaries will be stripped away to enable this demonic symbiosis to occur, thus leading Woods (2021) to conclude that only this city and system could constitute the mother or source of all harlotry with its headquarters located in Shinar (i.e., historical Babylon).

The second theory asserts that Mystery Babylon represents pagan Rome. This is because Babylon is held guilty of killing all the martyrs who have been slain on earth (Revelation 18:24) and because the saints, apostles, and prophets rejoice when God executes judgment on her (Revelation 18:20). Mecca or the actual city of Babylon would not fit because no apostle was martyred in these cities. However, Peter, Paul, and possibly Andrew were martyred near Rome. Pergamum was the seat of the government for the Roman empire as it began its decline and began to embrace Christianity as the state religion, so Satan's throne would have moved to Rome with the government as the empire amalgamated into Papal Rome as described in the letter to Thyatira

(Salus, 2020). This indicates that the center of Babylonian commerce is centered in Rome. Also, Revelation 17:9 states that the beast upon which this harlot rides has seven heads, and these are representative of seven hills or mountains. Rome is known as the city of seven hills, indicating that this references Rome. Additionally, Revelation 17:18 states that “the woman you saw is the great city that has an empire over the kings of the earth.” Because of the use of present tense (*is* the great city), Babylon must be a great city in John’s time that has a vast empire. Rome is the only city of that time period that fits this description. Finally, Babylon was a common reference to Rome in John’s day.

Last, John sees “that the woman was drunk on the blood of the saints and on the blood of the witnesses to Jesus (Revelation 17:6, HCSB).” This indicates that the harlot religion will have persecuted the church-age saints as well as those that come to Christ in the post-rapture time period, persecuting anyone that holds views that are heretical to their dogma. While many religions have persecuted Christians in the church age, Salus (2018) notes that Papal Rome famously persecuted Christians during the Spanish Inquisition. The persecution of the witnesses to Jesus after the church age will be rampant because the harlot church will be emboldened due to the rapture, arguing that the wicked were removed by God, leaving the true church whose mission it is to shepherd the soles of those remaining (cf. Proverbs 10:30; Psalm 37:10-11). Therefore, the leaders of the harlot church will not likely feel the need, nor consider it wise, to be religiously tolerant. This will necessarily include secular or commercial persecution as well. Satan will bolster this view and further deceive the population through the visions of the prophetess.

It would seem fitting that things would come full circle with Mystery Babylon being the historical city of Babylon since it was the birthplace or mother of all harlotry. However, both theories are compelling. Woods (2021) believes that both religious and commercial aspects of Mystery Babylon are centered in the historical city of Babylon based on the similarities in the

language between chapters 17 and 18, as shown in Figure 9, and that these chapters extend the seventh bowl judgment. Additionally, Woods (2021) notes that Revelation 14:8 and 19:2-3 announces the singular destruction of Babylon, while drawing on the imagery from both Revelation chapters 17 and 18, including the prostitute (Revelation 19:2; 17:1), the fall (Revelation 14:8; 17:6; 18:2), the name (Revelation 14:8; 17:5; 18:2), immorality (Revelation 14:8; 17:2; 18:3), and destruction by fire (Revelation 19:3; 18:9,18).

Description of Babylon	Religious	Commercial
Both called Babylon	Rv. 17:5	Rv. 18:2
Both identified as a city	Rv. 17:18	Rv. 18:10
The woman is wearing the same clothing	Rv. 17:4	Rv. 18:16
The woman is holding a cup	Rv. 17:4	Rv. 18:6
The woman is fornicating with kings and drunk with the wine of immorality	Rv. 17:2	Rv. 18:3
The woman is persecuting believers	Rv. 17:6	Rv. 18:20,24
The city is destroyed by fire	Rv. 17:16	Rv. 18:8,18
The city is destroyed by God	Rv. 17:17	Rv. 18:5,8

Figure 9: Description of Religious and Commercial Babylon (Woods, 2021)

However, it may still be possible that they are separated. The timeline for the fall of the harlot religion appears to occur at the midpoint of the Tribulation Period when the Antichrist removes all other religious systems and forces everyone to worship him (Revelation 13:11-18), not at the end as Woods (2021) suggests, while the commercial destruction of Babylon appears to occur at the end of the Great Tribulation as part of the seventh bowl judgment as Woods (2021) stated. Therefore, when incorporating the timeline with the imagery of the utter destruction of the city, it is apparent that such destruction could not happen twice, meaning that the religious center and commercial center would have to be located in two separate cities. So, while the similarities in the descriptions of both commercial and religious Babylon are striking, it is possible that the city of Babylon in Iraq could be the headquarters for the Babylonian religion and Rome could be the headquarters for Babylonian commerce and government. This aligns with the most compelling

aspects for each theory because there is a more compelling religious case for the city of Babylon and a more compelling commercial and governmental case for Rome.

The Lesser Tribulation (1st 3½ Years)

After describing the “birth pains” in the Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24:4-8), Jesus continues His discourse with a description of events during the first half of the seven-year tribulation period. Here Jesus notes that people will be persecuted and killed for their faith (Matthew 24:10). Also, many people will turn away from faith, be deceived by false prophets, will betray and hate each other, and because of this, love will grow cold (Matthew 24:10-14). The Lesser Tribulation can be broken down into two phases, consisting of the seal judgments and the trumpet judgments. This section of the Olivet Discourse appears to describe the effects seen in the seal judgments.

The tribulation period begins with Jesus breaking the seals on a scroll that He receives from “the One seated on the throne (Revelation 5:7, HCSB).” This is the same scroll that is described by Ezekiel that “was written on the front and back; words of lamentation, mourning, and woe were written on it (Ezekiel 2:10, HCSB).” This scroll not only contains God’s final plan of judgment and redemption, but also contains the title deed of creation that establishes God’s rightful ownership. God’s redemptive plan must be done in a way that prevents Satan from having any kind of legal authority to keep his control over the world (1 John 5:19; 2 Corinthians 4:4). Satan never did have rightful ownership, but instead he stole it when he deceived Adam and Eve into believing him over their Creator, thus bringing sin and his evil control into the world.

To be worthy to take the scroll from God’s right hand, one must have the authority, honor, status, and power to fulfill what is written within, and the only one worthy is God’s one and only son, Jesus Christ. He is the only one who can redeem or emancipate the world from the usurper, Satan, along with the rulers, authorities, the powers of this dark world, and the spiritual forces of

evil in the heavenly realms who have collaborated with him to usurp God's will from the time of Adam and Eve's fall. The only way for Satan to be defeated is for Jesus to come as a warrior, a king, and a sacrificial lamb, who by His willing sacrifice, defeated sin and death so that he could reclaim His legal right to rule the world in perfect righteousness.

The four living creatures that surround God's throne (Revelation 4:6-8) and who are worshipping God before His throne play a significant role in the events that unfold during the tribulation period. They represent the heavenly forces that God will use to unleash His wrath against all godlessness, which is necessary before a new heaven and earth can be created. Each one represents different aspects of God's character. They are covered with eyes front and back, signifying God's all seeing, all knowing, and omnipresent existence. Scholars note that each of these living creatures represent a different aspect of God's character. The one that looks like a lion represents God's majesty and omnipotence. The one that looks like an ox represents God's service and continuous labor toward fulfilling His will. The one that has a face like a man represents God's intelligence and reason. The one who looks like an eagle represents His sovereignty and supremacy. These four living creatures introduce the first four seal judgments.

The Seal Judgments

The Lesser Tribulation begins with the breaking of the first seal (Revelation 6:1-2). The living creature that introduces this judgment is likely the one that looks like a lion. Because the Antichrist considers himself a king and wants to usurp God's majesty and declare himself omnipotent, it is fitting that the living creature that represents these aspects of God's character would introduce this judgment. According to scripture, this judgment brings forth the Antichrist, who is represented as the rider on a white horse and with a bow, but no arrows. Therefore, the Antichrist will have victory through diplomacy as the emerging leader of the newly formed ten-nation Roman alliance (Daniel 7:24). Daniel 9:27 states that the Antichrist will establish a

covenant with Israel for seven years, which marks the beginning of the Lesser Tribulation. The Antichrist will rise from the sea (Revelation 13:1) of humanity prior to the Lesser Tribulation, but he will not be identified until he establishes a covenant with the Jews to allow them to resume sacrifices in the newly built temple.

The process of establishing this covenant may take a significant portion of the three-and-a-half-year period between the end of the Gog and Magog war and the start of the Lesser Tribulation. Isaiah 28:15 states that Israel signs onto this covenant to avoid an “overwhelming scourge.” With the rise of wars and religious persecution described in the next three seal judgments, it appears that the Antichrist promises to allow Israel to build their temple unhindered by establishing this agreement with him, the harlot religion (Revelation 17:3-6), and his newly formed Roman alliance. One way this might occur is if the temple can be built on the temple mount alongside the Dome of the Rock. This would fit scripture’s admonition to exclude the outer courts from measurement because it had been given to the Gentiles (Revelation 11:2).

The temple will be completed when the Lesser Tribulation begins, and with that, the sacrificial system will now be able to resume for the first time since the last temple was destroyed in 70 AD by the Romans. The nations, or Gentiles, will have secular control over Jerusalem, but the Jews will control the temple and be able to worship there for 42 months (Revelation 11:1-2). Also during this time, God empowers two witnesses, as required by Mosaic Law to confirm testimony (cf. Deuteronomy 17:6; John 8:17; Hebrews 10:28), to prophesy for 1,260 days. God gives them the ability to prevent it from raining during their time of prophecy, turn water into blood, strike the earth with plagues, and kill anyone that attempts to harm them by consuming with fire that comes from their mouths (Revelation 11:3-6). Both events are coincident with the three-and-a-half-year Lesser Tribulation.

Many scholars believe that these two witnesses are Moses (Exodus 7-11) and Elijah (1 Kings 17) because the powers given to these witnesses closely mirror those given to both men (James 5:17) and because they were both with Jesus on the mount of transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-8; Luke 9:28-36; John 1:14). Additionally, God promises to raise up a prophet like Moses (Deuteronomy 18:15,18) and says: “I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome Day of the Lord comes (Malachi 4:5, HCSB).” Other scholars believe that it is Enoch that witnesses with Elijah, not Moses, because they are the only two known individuals that have been taken to heaven directly without experiencing death (Genesis 5:24; 2 Kings 2:11; Hebrews 11:5). Scripture states that “it is appointed for people to die once—and after this, judgment (Hebrews 9:27, HCSB)” and that a second death is only reserved for those unbelievers destined for the lake of fire (Revelation 21:8). GotQuestions (“Who are the two witnesses in the book of Revelation?”, 2020) also states that a third possibility is that these two witnesses are not famous historical figures, but ordinary believers because of the lack of specificity in Revelation 11, but this is unlikely.

The next three seal judgments round out the four horsemen of the apocalypse and include a rider on a red horse (Revelation 6:3-4), a rider on a black horse (Revelation 6:5-6), and a rider on a pale horse (Revelation 6:7-8). These judgments represent war, famine, and death, respectively. As with the first seal judgment, these three judgments are also introduced by one of the four living creatures from God’s throne room. It is likely that the second seal judgment is introduced by the living creature that looks like an ox because the judgment for man’s defiance against God’s will and the failure to serve others is the elimination of peace. The third seal judgment is likely introduced by the living creature that has the face of a man because the judgment for man’s attempts to interject his own will, intelligence, and reasoning, rather than relying on God’s, is to reap the unintended consequences of his actions. The living creature that looks like

an eagle likely introduces the fourth seal judgment because the judgment for man's rejection of God and claiming sovereignty and supremacy over the world is not only physical death, but spiritual death as well.

Given the nature of these judgments, they most likely occur in quick succession of each other. Since the Antichrist has made a peace agreement with Israel, which started the Lesser Tribulation, these judgments are most likely centered on the Gentiles rather than specifically on the Jews, but many Jews will most likely also be affected. These judgments also likely occur very early in the Lesser Tribulation because the remaining seal judgments as well as the trumpet judgments must also occur within the first half of the seven-year tribulation period.

During this period, people will slaughter one another (Revelation 6:4), food will become scarce (Revelation 6:6), and those that are not outright killed by war or starvation, are subjected to plagues and attacks by wild animals (Revelation 6:8). Through these judgments, "Death and Hades" will have authority to kill a quarter of the earth's population (Revelation 6:8). Death and Hades appear to be references to the world government and harlot religion as physical death and spiritual death respectively. It will be with the opening of the fourth seal judgment that the Antichrist will, through diplomacy, become the leader of the ten-member Roman alliance that forms the world government and turning it and the harlot world religion into the instruments of death described in Revelation 6:8. The global religious war represented by the second seal will most likely be the process by which this is accomplished.

It could be that much of this conflict includes increased religious persecution. There will be many that did not truly have faith in Christ prior to the rapture but have since become believers. These new Christians will be persecuted and martyred by followers of the harlot religion, which not only has tacit approval by the world government, but the government may also provide the legal legitimacy by sentencing capital punishment through the court system. The opening of the

fifth seal judgment (Revelation 6:9-11) shows a scene in the spiritual realm where the people who were “slaughtered because of God’s word and the testimony they had (Revelation 6:9, HCSB)” cry out for justice. Unfortunately, more are yet to be martyred during the tribulation period as people come to know Christ and turn to Him for salvation (Matthew 24:9), so they must wait a little longer for justice to be meted out (Romans 12:19).

When the sixth seal is opened, the physical realm is rocked with a massive earthquake that is so devastating that “every mountain and island was moved from its place (Revelation 6:14, HCSB).” Additionally, there are unusual astronomical events that occur, such as what appears to be lunar and solar eclipses and a major meteor shower. Scripture indicates that people realize that God is judging them because they “said to the mountains and to the rocks, ‘Fall on us and hide us from the face of the One seated on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb, because the great day of Their wrath has come! And who is able to stand?’ (Revelation 6:16-17).”

Before the seventh seal can be opened, the remnant of Israel needs to be sealed from harm from both divine judgments and from the wrath of the Antichrist (Revelation 7:1-8). This group consists of twelve thousand men from each of the twelve tribes of Israel (Judah, Reuben, Gad, Asher, Naphtali, Manasseh, Simeon, Levi, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, and Benjamin) and total 144,000 people. Through God’s grace, they will all be unmarried and celibate (i.e., virgins) to spare them from losing wives and children (Jeremiah 16:1-4). These will be the first fruits (Revelation 14:4) of Israel that will repent and accept Jesus as their Messiah (cf. Zechariah 12:10; Romans 11:26-27). A great multitude that cannot be counted will be saved during the tribulation period through the ministry of these 144,000 witnesses (Revelation 7:9-17).

The opening of the seventh seal introduces the trumpet judgments (Revelation 8:1-5). There is no timing associated with this, however based on the length of time needed to complete the fifth and sixth trumpet judgments, it seems reasonable that this could occur somewhere around

16 months into the Lesser Tribulation. The magnitude of this judgment is seen by silence in heaven for about a half an hour (Zephaniah 1:7; Revelation 8:1). When the censer full of the prayers of God's people is hurled to the earth, "there were rumblings of thunder, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake (Revelation 8:5, HCSB)." This begins the trumpet judgments.

The Trumpet Judgments

The second phase of the Lesser Tribulation opens with a series of environmental disasters as described in Joel 2:30-32. The sounding of the first trumpet judgment causes a third of the earth, a third of the trees, and all the green grass to be burned up by a storm of hail and fire, mixed with blood (Revelation 8:7). This could be a reference to an eruption of a super volcano, such as the one at Yellowstone National Park. This could also be a swarm of meteorites, possibly created by a failed attempt to deflect or destroy an asteroid, that strikes the earth. The sounding of the second trumpet judgment heralds what appears to be an asteroid strike in the ocean when "something like a great mountain ablaze with fire was hurled into the sea (Revelation 8:8, HCSB)," which caused a third of the sea to become blood, a third of the creatures in the sea to die, and a third of the ships to be destroyed (Revelation 8:9). The sounding of the third trumpet judgment announces the Wormwood meteorite, which could be a "rubble pile" type asteroid that breaks up upon entry, resulting in multiple air-burst impacts that causes a third of the rivers and springs to become bitter and poisonous (Revelation 8:10-11). It is possible that if the first two trumpet judgments are both asteroid strikes, they could be a result of Wormwood dislodging them from the asteroid belt as it heads toward earth. The sounding of the fourth trumpet heralds a calamity that causes a third of the sun, the moon, and the stars to become darkened (Revelation 8:12). This could be the result of atmospheric changes caused by the first three trumpets.

The final three trumpet judgments, also known as the three woes (Revelation 8:13), take place during roughly the second half of the Lesser Tribulation, based on the time required for them

to be completed. With the sounding of the fifth trumpet judgment, John sees “a star that had fallen from heaven to earth (Revelation 9:1, HCSB).” This is a demon that is permitted to open the abyss, which releases smoke that darkens the sun and air as well as a host of locusts that stings anyone that does not have God’s seal on their foreheads. Had this been an angel, John would have recognized him as such. People are tormented for five months and while the stings are so painful that people seek death, death will not come (Revelation 9:1-12). This torment is designed to draw people to salvation. Preventing death as a quick escape prevents people from making a rash decision in the moment that has eternal consequences.

At the sound of the sixth trumpet judgment, an army of 200 million demonic mounted troops kill one third of the human race through plagues of fire, smoke, and sulfur (Revelation 9:13-19; Joel 2:1-11). Despite this devastating judgment, those remaining still refuse to repent (Revelation 9:20-21). According to scripture, “the four angels who were prepared for the hour, day, month, and year were released to kill a third of the human race (Revelation 9:15, HCSB).” LaHaye & Parker (2014) state that the hour, day, month, and year represent a 13-month period in which this judgment takes place. Between this judgment and the first four seal judgments, fully one half of the human population will be killed. With a current world population estimated to be 7.8 billion people, this represents the deaths of 3.9 billion people.

Some scholars contend that because the trumpet judgments happen during the first half of the tribulation period, they will all appear to be explainable as natural occurrences. Therefore, they believe that John saw a global war that included things that he could not describe. The opening of the abyss with the fifth trumpet judgment may be seen as an incoming nuclear missile because “smoke came up out of the shaft like smoke from a great furnace so that the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke from the shaft (Revelation 9:2, HCSB).” Also, the locusts

described in the fifth trumpet judgment could be helicopters or drones that are flown by demon-possessed pilots because of their description:

The appearance of the locusts was like horses equipped for battle. Something like gold crowns was on their heads; their faces were like men's faces; 8 they had hair like women's hair; their teeth were like lions' teeth; they had chests like iron breastplates; the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots with many horses rushing into battle; and they had tails with stingers like scorpions, so that with their tails they had the power to harm people for five months (Revelation 9:7-10, HCSB).

The AH-64 Apache attack helicopter could visually and audibly fit John's description. The horses described in the sixth trumpet judgment could be tanks, such as the M1A2 Abrams main battle tank, operated by demon-possessed soldiers because the "horsemen had breastplates that were fiery red, hyacinth blue, and sulfur yellow. The heads of the horses were like lions' heads, and from their mouths came fire, smoke, and sulfur. (Revelation 9:17, HCSB)." Firing the main gun on a tank would fit this description. These can be seen in Figure 6. With modern warfare, air assaults precede ground assaults, which is why the locusts proceed the cavalry in the fifth and sixth trumpet judgments.



Figure 10: Possible Manifestations of the Fifth and Sixth Trumpet Judgements

During this second woe, a mighty angel reads a small scroll that describes the judgments of the Great Tribulation, and the seven thunders speak (Revelation 10), but the details of this are

hidden (Deuteronomy 29:29). The seven thunders could be a reference to God's judgments coming in the Great Tribulation and the seven angels that will bring forth the bowl judgments during that time. As John noted, God's word is sweet, but judgment is bitter to those that do not listen and believe in Him (Revelation 10:9-11; Ezekiel 2:3-3:3; Psalm 119:103; Amos 5:18-20).

The second woe ends with the martyrdom, resurrection, and rapture of the two witnesses. The Antichrist will kill the two witnesses and their bodies will lie in the public square for everyone to see (Revelation 11:7-8). They are killed because they prophesied the seal and trumpet judgments and are made to be the scapegoats and seen as the cause of those judgments. For the next three-and-a-half days, all the people of the world will see them lying dead in the street and they will celebrate by giving each other gifts like it were Christmas (Revelation 11:9-10). Next, they will be resurrected, and unlike the rapture, everyone will see them taken up to heaven (Revelation 11:11-12). At the conclusion of the second woe there will be a violent earthquake that destroys a tenth of Jerusalem and kills 7,000 people (Revelation 11:13-14).

Immediately after the completion of the second woe, the seventh trumpet judgment is sounded (Revelation 11:15-19). With this, a great war in heaven is heralded and "God's sanctuary in heaven was opened, and the ark of His covenant appeared in His sanctuary. There were flashes of lightning, rumblings of thunder, an earthquake, and severe hail (Revelation 11:19, HCSB)." As with the battle of Jericho (Joshua 6:15-16), the sounding of the seventh trumpet heralds the collapse of Satan's reign over the kingdoms of the earth, which are then given to Christ (Psalm 2:1-6). This war is an inflection point that begins the transition from the Lesser Tribulation to the Great Tribulation, and several significant events happen at this time, both in heaven and on earth. During this war, Michael and his angels fight against Satan and his demons. Satan loses this war and is thrown out of heaven (Revelation 12:7-9). This is the third woe because while heaven rejoices over this, it means that Satan turns his wrath on humanity (Revelation 12:10-12). Revelation

12:13-17 makes it clear that Satan is thrown out of heaven at the midpoint of the Lesser Tribulation because he persecutes the Jews for the remaining three-and-a-half years of the Great Tribulation.

Some scholars, including LaHaye & Parker (2014), believe that one of the physical outcomes of this spiritual war is that the Antichrist is killed and resurrected as described in Revelation 13:3. The imagery of this prophecy as described in Revelation 13:1-2 is consistent with other prophecies in Revelation 17 as well as in Daniel 2 and Daniel 7, which indicates that the entity being resurrected is the Roman Empire, not an individual. Another possibility is that during the political struggle in which the Antichrist destroys three of the leaders of the ten-nation alliance, he appears defeated, and this resurrection implies a political resurrection with the Antichrist assuming total control. However, Revelation 11:7 states that “the beast that comes up out of the abyss (HCSB)” will kill the two witnesses and Revelation 17:8 describes the Antichrist as “the beast, which you saw, once was, now is not, and yet will come up out of the Abyss and go to its destruction (HCSB).” A governmental or political resurrection does not address the concept of the beast returning from the abyss. Therefore, while the Antichrist’s resurrection occurs after he kills the two witnesses, this description about the two witnesses’ killer indicates that this prophecy represents the physical death and resurrection of the Antichrist. It may also have dual fulfillment with the resurrection of the Roman Empire along with Satan attempting to mimic the resurrection of Christ as a way to deceive people into worshiping the Antichrist. This resurrection could be an illusion and not a true resurrection (2 Thessalonians 2:11) or God could allow Satan to perform a true resurrection (Job 1:8-12). In either case, the Antichrist would be resurrected after being in the abyss for three days as part of a larger deception that would allow the False Prophet to claim that the Antichrist is the one that fulfilled scripture as the true Messiah.

The Great Tribulation (2nd 3½ Years)

After describing the signs of the first half of the tribulation period in the Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24:9-14), Jesus continues His description of the abomination that causes desolation (Matthew 24:15-21). These are events that occur during the second half of the seven-year tribulation period, which is known as the Great Tribulation. Satan being thrown out of heaven (Revelation 12:7-12) marks the beginning of this period.

The Abomination that Causes Desolation

At this point Satan has resurrected the Antichrist and indwells him (Revelation 13:1-10). The Antichrist then breaks the seven-year covenant with Israel (Isaiah 28:18) and begins the three-and-a-half-year persecution of the Jews (Revelation 12:13-18). It is also at this point that the Antichrist replaces the ten-nation Roman alliance and expands his authority by creating a new global kingdom (cf. Daniel 7:23, Revelation 17:11) in which he is the sole ruler (Revelation 13:7) for the next three-and-a-half years (cf. Daniel 7:25, Revelation 13:5). This new kingdom will have global control politically (Revelation 13:7), religiously (Revelation 13:8), and economically (Revelation 13:16-17). Dr. Jeremiah (2019) states that the Antichrist will “assassinate the leaders of three countries and all other nations will immediately relinquish their power to him” as prophesied in Daniel 7:8,24.

This begins the Antichrist’s campaign to destroy Jerusalem, which will remain a thorn in the Antichrist’s side throughout the Great Tribulation (Zechariah 12:1-3). One of the Antichrist’s first acts after assuming global power is to destroy the temple, which brings sacrifices to an end (Revelation 11:1-2) and is noted by Jesus in the Olivet Discourse as the abomination that causes desolation (Matthew 24:15). Jesus also states that the Jews will need to flee Jerusalem and hide from Satan’s wrath (Matthew 24:16-21; Zechariah 14:1-2). Those that heed this warning to flee and will be saved are the remnant that have not taken the mark of the beast and have turned to

Christ (Zechariah 14:16). Additionally, when Gentiles that have come to believe in Jesus as their savior help to save the Jews, Satan turns his wrath on them as well (Revelation 12:16-17). Zechariah states that throughout this period the Antichrist will kill two thirds of the remaining Jews (Zechariah 13:7-9), but it is not certain if this can be generalized to the population at large. If so, that would mean that only one sixth of the population would remain by the end of the Great Tribulation.

Many scholars, including Rhodes (2012), believe that the fleeing Jews will possibly hide in Petra, 80 miles to the south of Jerusalem, as shown in Figure 11. These scholars cite the superior defensive capabilities offered by the terrain and Old Testament prophetic scripture that seems to indicate that Jesus will defend the remnant of Israel in the mountain wilderness of Bozrah, which is where Petra is located, upon His return just prior to the Battle of Armageddon (Isaiah 34:1-7, 63:1-6; Habakkuk 3:3; Micah 2:12-13).



Figure 11: Location of Petra

However, Petra has been judged as was Sodom and Gomorrah such that “no one will live there; no people will dwell in it (Jeremiah 49:18, HCSB).” Petra is abandoned today, and its ruins have remained uninhabited for centuries in fulfillment of Jeremiah’s prophecy (“What is the significance of the city of Petra in the Bible?”, 2020), so the Jewish remnant may hide out in the wilderness surrounding Petra rather than in the city itself.

It appears that it is at this point that the fate of people that have not turned to Jesus as their savior is sealed. Paul states:

The coming of the lawless one is based on Satan’s working, with all kinds of false miracles, signs, and wonders, and with every unrighteous deception among those who are perishing. They perish because they did not accept the love of the truth in order to be saved. For this reason God sends them a strong delusion so that they will believe what is false, so that all will be condemned—those who did not believe the truth but enjoyed unrighteousness (2 Thessalonians 2:9-12, HCSB).

This prophecy is manifest at this time with the False Prophet, who is the third leg of the unholy trinity (Matthew 24:24; John 16:13). This unholy trinity includes Satan, the Antichrist, and the False Prophet as satanic replacements for God the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit respectively. The False Prophet is raised up to perform signs and wonders in an attempt to give credibility to the Antichrist (Deuteronomy 13:1-3; 2 Thessalonians 2:9-10), who has exalted himself above all gods (Daniel 11:36-37), and to force people to worship him (Revelation 13:11-18).

The result, though, will be that anyone following any other religion will be killed and the Whore of Babylon, which is Satan’s harlot religious system, will be destroyed (Revelation 17:16; Hosea 3:1-5; Proverbs 5,31). This destruction will be total and not only include the people and the system, but any physical symbols of it as well, meaning that the seat of its power, Babylon, will be utterly destroyed (Isaiah 13:19-22; Jeremiah 50:3,8,13,26,39-40; 51:6-8,26-29,43-45,62).

Scripture states that the False Prophet has “two horns like a lamb (Revelation 13:11, HCSB),” which indicates that, just like the 10 kings of the Roman alliance provided power and authority to the Antichrist (Revelation 17:13), two religious leaders will provide authority to the False Prophet to help spread this new false religion. The leader of the harlot will be one of these horns and the other would most likely be a leader of Islam because even though Islam will likely be in decline after the defeats in the Arab-Israeli war and the Gog and Magog war, it will still have a large following. What they do not realize is that they are aiding in their own demise as the False Prophet wipes out all traces of all former religions.

At this time, three angels are dispatched from heaven to spread the gospel (Revelation 14:6-7), declare the destruction of the harlot religion (Revelation 14:8, 17:16), and warn of the repercussions for taking the mark of the beast throughout the world (Revelation 14:9-11). With the rise of the False Prophet, and the destruction of the harlot religion, the False Prophet will compel “the earth and those who live on it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed (Revelation 13:12, HCSB)” and tell “those who live on the earth to make an image of the beast who had the sword wound and yet lived (Revelation 13:14, HCSB).” These phrases also indicate that the resurrection of the Antichrist will occur and be used effectively to deceive the people into worshiping him. Dr. Jeremiah (2019) also notes that it is at this time that the False Prophet sets up an economic system that “requires everyone—small and great, rich and poor, free and slave—to be given a mark on his right hand or on his forehead, so that no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark (Revelation 13:16-17, HCSB).”

Another possible aspect of the great deception described in 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 could be a result of Satan and his demons being cast down to earth after their defeat in the war in heaven (Revelation 12:7-12). It is possible that these demons could manifest themselves as extraterrestrials. They would promote the lie that they created life on earth and that the account in

Genesis 1-2 that God created the universe is false. Their appearance would hasten the destruction of the harlot religion and they would promote the False Prophet's plans to compel mankind to worship the Antichrist. This, in turn, would also aid the Antichrist in his plans to overthrow the last vestiges of the Roman alliance, leaving the Antichrist in total control of the government.

At this point, the 144,000 witnesses that had been sealed and protected by God (Revelation 7) are now “redeemed from the human race as the firstfruits for God and the Lamb (Revelation 14:4, HCSB).” Scripture is silent as to whether these witnesses are raptured or martyred by the Antichrist for their testimony. It would stand to reason that they would then stand before the Bema Seat of Christ at this point. Again, scripture is silent on this point, but this fact is supported in that they are seen in heaven with Christ and are referenced as the ‘firstfruits’ (Revelation 14:1-4).

Interestingly, LaHaye & Parker (2014) believe that this group of 144,000 believers is different from those referenced in Revelation 7 because this scene is in heaven, not earth, and they have both the Father and Son written on their foreheads, rather than just the Father as stated in Revelation 7. However, Revelation 14:3 states that they had already been redeemed. Also, having come to Christ during the Lesser Tribulation, they would also be sealed with the names of both the Father and the Son at this point. Therefore, the interpretation by LaHaye & Parker (2014) does not seem necessary, nor correct. It also does not seem reasonable to introduce a new group of witnesses through an obscure reverence to what was written on their foreheads, which could be easily misinterpreted. Additionally, having this be the same group of 144,000 witnesses makes more logical sense in the grand scheme of the prophetic timeline because the work of spreading the gospel that had been performed by these 144,000 witnesses is now so dangerous that it is impossible for humans to do it. This task must now be performed by one of three angels (Revelation 14:6-13) that bring even greater authority to the message, and therefore more condemnation on those that reject it.

The Bowl Judgments

As with the seal judgments, the sounding of the seventh trumpet judgment brings forth the bowl judgments. Also like the seal judgments, one of the living creatures that surround God's throne introduces the bowl judgments by giving the seven angels the bowls filled with God's wrath (Revelation 15:7). Given the extreme nature of these judgments and the impacts to life on earth, it is likely that the bowl judgments do not occur until the second half of the Great Tribulation, with the majority of them occurring at very end of the Great Tribulation. Their purpose is no longer to cause repentance, but to punish and pronounce judgment. Additional justification for this view is that the 144,000 witnesses must first be redeemed (Revelation 14:1-5) and the three angels need time to spread the good news of the gospel, the destruction of the harlot religion, and warn of the repercussions for taking the mark of the beast throughout the world. With these proclamations, God provides comfort to those that reject the Antichrist and keep God's commands and remain faithful to Jesus even though they know that martyrdom will be the result of that decision (Revelation 14:12-13, 20:4). During this time the bowl judgments are also prepared (Revelation 15).

With these assumptions, the first bowl judgment most likely occurs early in the second half of the Great Tribulation while the three angels are still spreading their messages as a final warning to repent. When the first bowl judgment is poured out, "severely painful sores broke out on the people who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped his image (Revelation 16:2, HCSB)," which covers the entire body and are incurable (Deuteronomy 28:35). It is possible that these sores are a reference to a viral pandemic because other sources, such as chemical or nuclear, would be seen as being caused by man, not God. Since this judgment only affects those that accepted the mark of the beast, it would appear that this virus or infection is linked to either how the mark is applied, its composition, or to the universal healthcare services afforded the bearer.

At some point after the first bowl judgment is poured out and before the second bowl judgment is poured out, the harvest of the earth (Revelation 14:14-20; Micah 4:11-13; Matthew 13:41-43, 24:31) begins. This harvest concludes in the final days of the Great Tribulation after the three angels complete their work of spreading the gospel and warning of the consequences for taking the mark of the beast. It is during this time when the remaining bowl judgments are poured out.

The remaining bowl judgments are so devastating that they can only occur during the last days of the Great Tribulation. When the second bowl judgment is poured out into the sea, it will turn to blood like a dead man's, and all life in the sea will die (Revelation 16:3). When the third bowl judgment is poured out into the rivers and springs of water, they will become blood (Revelation 16:4-7). One possible way that these judgments manifest is through volcanic activities, such as the eruption of an underwater super volcano, and be the continuation or fulfillment of the second and third trumpet judgments.

From this point forward, people realize that these judgments come from God and cannot be explained away as natural occurrences, but instead of repenting, they blaspheme God (Revelation 16:9,11,21). When the fourth bowl judgment is poured out onto the sun, people will be burned by the intense heat (Revelation 16:8-9). It is likely that at this point the earth's protective ozone layer has been destroyed. This type of judgment would then be seen if the sun enters an active phase with large solar flares. Sustaining life will now be extremely difficult with all of the water on earth poisoned and intense solar radiation burning everything.

When the fifth bowl judgment is poured out onto Babylon, the Antichrist's kingdom will be plunged into darkness, causing agony (Revelation 16:10-11; Matthew 8:11-12). Babylon is not only symbolic of the worldwide sinful religious system but is also symbolic of the worldwide sinful economic system, as well as a physical city that is the capital for Satan (Isaiah 14:4-12), has

the throne of the Antichrist, and as Satan's seat of power, where many of the citizens are possessed by demons (Revelation 18:2). This judgment destroys commercial Babylon (Revelation 18:1-3; Jeremiah 51:1-2) because the spiritual destruction of Babylon occurred with the destruction of the harlot religion at the midpoint of the tribulation period. Since the Antichrist's kingdom is global by this time, this judgment is also global. The merchants lament because they cannot make money off the Babylonian financial system any longer (Revelation 18:9-20).

The darkness described may reference the destruction of all the electronics that are needed to run all aspects of life, especially those needed to control the economy and communications, throwing the earth into technological darkness and back to the proverbial stone age. The destruction of Babylon is in such totality (Revelation 18:21-24) that it may be caused by a coronal mass ejection (CME) from the fourth bowl judgment's increased solar activity that would have effects similar to a massive electromagnetic pulse (EMP) that destroys all technology. This may cause massive explosions as control systems at power generation facilities, including nuclear facilities, go offline. Additionally, the cumulative effects of these judgments may have a large contingent of people so disenchanted with the Antichrist's government that, much like the destruction of religious Babylon, a coalition from the north destroys Babylon (cf. Jeremiah 50:9,41-43,51:31-32) such that it will be desolate like Sodom and Gomorrah (Isaiah 13:19). It may be that the third angel that warns people not to take the mark of the beast (Revelation 14:9-12) also warns people to flee commercial Babylon before it is destroyed (Revelation 18:4-8; Jeremiah 51:6-7; Isaiah 48:20). So, in addition to the continuing pain from the boils of the first bowl judgment, people are now tormented by having the global economy, and therefore all aspects of modern life, shut down because the means to execute transactions has been removed.

When the sixth bowl judgment is poured out on the Euphrates River, it is dried up to prepare for the final battle of Armageddon and allow the kings of the east, coming from countries in Asia

such as Korea and China, to cross unhindered (Revelation 16:12; Isaiah 11:15). Along with this, three unclean spirits, which are represented like frogs because they capture their prey with their tongues just as frogs do, come out of the mouths of Satan, the Antichrist, and the False Prophet (Revelation 16:13) to rally the Antichrist's forces across the earth and assemble them for war. They are “spirits of demons performing signs, who travel to the kings of the whole world to assemble them for the battle of the great day of God, the Almighty...at the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon (Revelation 16:14,16, HCSB).” They are the satanic mirror of the three angels that God sends to proclaim the gospel, the destruction of the harlot, and warn of the consequences for taking the mark of the beast (Revelation 14:6-13).

As the Antichrist gathers his armies to destroy Israel to attempt to prevent Jesus' return (cf. Daniel 11:40-45; Joel 3:2,9-14), God laughs at them (Psalm 2:1-6) and pours out the seventh bowl judgment into the air, which causes flashes of lightning and rumblings of thunder. There will also be a severe earthquake like no other since man has been on the earth, such that islands and mountains will disappear, and every city will be leveled (Revelation 16:18-20). This earthquake appears to affect plate tectonics across the entire earth, possibly causing the earth's axis to shift by altering the earth's gravitational center. This, along with the increased temperatures caused by the fourth bowl judgment, could cause all of the earth's polar ice caps to melt, raising the sea levels. It appears that the epicenter of the earthquake is centered on what remains of Rome from its destruction during the fifth bowl judgment because “the great city split into three parts...Babylon the Great was remembered in God's presence; He gave her the cup filled with the wine of His fierce anger (Revelation 16:19, HCSB).” Additionally, changes to earth's environment cause such extreme weather conditions that massive thunderstorms, possibly associated with hurricanes and tornados, produce one hundred-pound hailstones that will fall from the sky (Revelation 16:21; Job 38:22-23).

These are extinction level events, and it is almost impossible to imagine the utter devastation wrought by these judgments. With the bowl judgments complete, God states: “It is done (Revelation 16:17)!” This is a mirror to Jesus’ statement on the cross where He said: “It is finished (John 19:30)!” On the cross, Jesus was saying that sin and death have been defeated. Here, God is saying that judgment is complete and that all will now be restored as it once was. With this statement by God, there is a celebration in heaven in which a vast multitude of martyred saints (Revelation 6:9,11;15:2), the twenty-four elders, and Jesus praise God the Father and proclaim the righteousness of His judgments against Satan’s corruption of earth and humanity (Revelation 19:1-5).

The Marriage Supper of the Lamb

As these events are occurring on earth, the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:6-10) takes place in heaven. As noted earlier, Jesus frequently referred to Himself as a bridegroom (cf. Matthew 9:15, 22:2-14, 25:1-13; Mark 2:19-20; Luke 5:34-35, 14:15-24; John 3:29), with the church portrayed as His virgin bride (2 Corinthians 11:2). The bride has made herself ready through the Bema Seat of Christ and is now righteous before God and clothed in white linens (Revelation 19:7-8). This is the third and final phase of the wedding between Christ and His church. The marriage takes place in heaven sometime between the rapture and Jesus’ return at the end of the tribulation period. As illustrated by the wedding in Cana (John 2:1-2), the marriage supper may go on for days. The wedding guests will include the Old Testament saints who have yet to be resurrected, but whose souls are in heaven (Revelation 19:9; Matthew 8:11; John 3:28-29) and the saints that died during the tribulation period (Revelation 6:9-11, 7:9-17).

The first phase was completed when Jesus paid the dowry to God the Father through His crucifixion on the cross and each individual became betrothed by accepting Jesus as their savior. The second phase will be completed when Jesus returns for His bride with the rapture. While

waiting for this to occur, communion offers an opportunity to prepare one's heart and be ready for the glorious day when those that believed in Christ are able to sit down and sup with Him with joy, laughter, reverence, celebration, and thanksgiving for their salvation (Mark 14:25-26).

The Salvation of Israel

While the Marriage Supper of the Lamb is taking place in heaven, the war on earth continues and God concludes His judgment of Israel (Ezekiel 20:34-38). Given the state of the earth and humanity after the bowl judgments, it is hard to believe that there is any fight left in those that rebel against God, yet the Antichrist and all the people of the earth are still intent upon waging war with Jesus and His army. The Antichrist continues by pursuing the first phase of his campaign, which is to destroy Israel in an attempt to prevent Jesus from returning.

The Antichrist regroups his forces after the destruction of Babylon and the devastation caused by the bowl judgments and begins his final assault from the east across the dried-up Euphrates River. He will first move against the Jewish remnant that had fled at the midpoint of the tribulation period (Matthew 24:15-22) to the mountain wilderness of Bozrah around Petra and then on to Jerusalem to destroy it once and for all. With the Antichrist and his forces advancing on the remnant of the Jews, God lifts the spiritual blindness from them (cf. Joel 2:28-29; Romans 11:25-27). The Jewish leaders will then call for the nation to repent (Hosea 6:1-3), and with that, the Jews will realize their error in attempting to earn righteousness through the law instead of building a faith relationship with Christ (Galatians 2:15-16, 3:2,5,10) and that failure through the law is inevitable (James 2:10; Romans 9:31-32). They will realize that Jesus was their Messiah (Isaiah 53:1-9) and they will mourn (Zechariah 12:10-14) because they rejected Him when he did not fit their preconceived ideas of what He should be (Matthew 12:9-14,22-24). Israel will confess her national sin (cf. Leviticus 26:40-42; Jeremiah 3:11-25) and they will cry out for Christ to save them (cf. Hosea 5:15; Matthew 23:37-39), who will then deliver them (Romans 10:13-14; Joel

3:18-21). While the nation of Israel will be saved as a whole, it will be only one-third the size it once was at the start of the tribulation period (Zechariah 13:7-9). The rest will have perished and be condemned for not turning to Christ.

As the Antichrist advances on the remnant of Israel, Jesus returns to earth in glory as he had ascended by arriving on the Mount of Olives (Acts 1:9-11; Zechariah 14:3-4) for all to see (cf. Revelation 1:7; Matthew 24:30) and be accompanied by great signs in the heavens (Matthew 24:29). Jesus then comes to Israel's defense (Isaiah 34:1-7, 63:1-6; Habakkuk 3:3; Micah 2:12-13) and the Antichrist's armies are thrown into chaos (Zechariah 12:1-9). This chaos causes orders to be confused such that the Antichrist's army is unable to locate the Jewish remnant. With Jesus' return, there will be an earthquake and the Mount of Olives "will be split in two from east to west, forming a great valley...[that] will extend to Azel (Zechariah 14:4-5, HCSB)." This valley will be used by the Jewish remnant to flee from the wilderness and escape the Antichrist's army that is now confused and blind to them. Since Petra is about 215 miles south of Megiddo, which is where the final battle will take place, it is possible that they decide to make their last stand at Masada, which is only about 35 miles west of Megiddo.

According to GotQuestions ("What is the history of Masada?", 2020), Masada was built in 31 BC by Herod the Great as a 'place of refuge' in case there was a revolt against him and, following the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD during the Roman conquest of Israel, it was also the last holdout of a group of Jewish Zealots who hid there, finally falling itself in 73 AD. GotQuestions ("What is the history of Masada?", 2020) describes how the design allows this fortress to be easily defended:

Masada is built on a high elevation. The fortress contains a number of barracks, armories, and defensive structures. It also has huge storehouses and cisterns, which contained months' worth of food and water. The primary defense of Masada was a single-file "snake

path” up the 1,300-foot mountain. The path was extremely easy to defend from vantage points above.

Another factor that favors Masada as the location that the Jewish remnant’s last stand is that Masada still plays an important role in Israeli culture in that new IDF soldiers climb the ‘snake path’ up the mountain to the fortress at night upon the completion of basic training where they are sworn in, declaring “Masada shall not fall again (‘What is the history of Masada?’, 2020).” With Masada’s proximity to Megiddo, as shown in Figure 12, the stage is set for the Battle of Armageddon.



Figure 12: Location of Masada

The Battle of Armageddon

GotQuestions (“What is the battle of Armageddon?”, 2020) states that the word ‘Armageddon’ comes from a Hebrew word Har-Magedone, which means ‘Mount Megiddo,’ but the exact location of the valley of Armageddon is unclear because there is no mountain called Megiddo. Since ‘Har’ can also mean hill, GotQuestions (“What is the battle of Armageddon?”, 2020) believes that the most likely location for this battle is the hill country surrounding the plain of Megiddo, which Figure 13 shows is 60 miles north of Jerusalem and 18 miles southeast of Haifa. Scripture also states that the final battle occurs in the Valley of Decision (Joel 3:12-17), which appears to be the Jezreel valley where Megiddo is located.

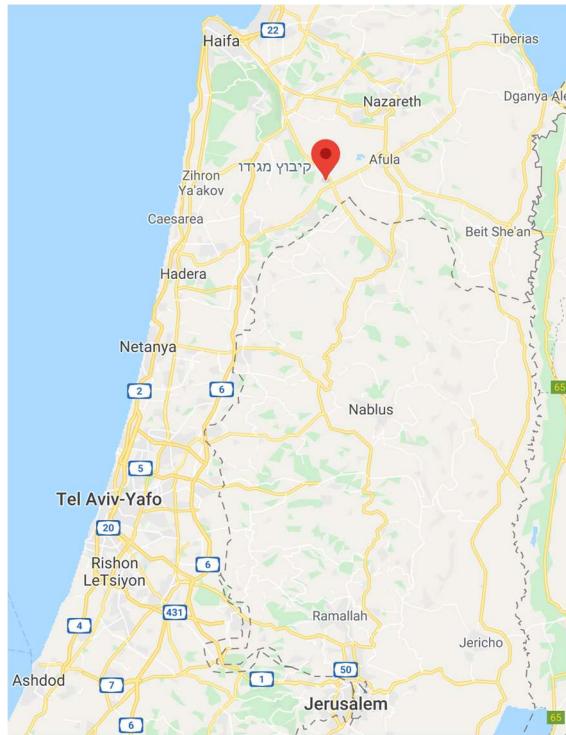


Figure 13: Location of Megiddo

GotQuestions (“What is the battle of Armageddon?”, 2020) notes that Megiddo is the location of more than 200 battles, including Barak’s victory over Canaanites (Judges 4:15), Gideon’s victory over the Midianites (Judges 7), where Saul and his sons were killed (1 Samuel 31:8), and where King Josiah was killed (2 Kings 23:29-30; 2 Chronicles 35:22). This site’s military significance comes from its strategic location at the crossing of two military and trade routes, controlling a commonly used pass between Egypt and Mesopotamia (“Megiddo”, 2020). In modern times, Megiddo was also the site of an important battle as part of the final Allied offensive in the Sinai and Palestine Campaign against the Ottoman Empire, which led to the final defeat of the Turks in the Middle East in World War I (“Megiddo”, 2020). Rhodes (2012) notes that “Napoleon is reported to have once commented that this site perhaps the greatest battlefield he had ever witnessed.”

After saving Israel in the wilderness of Bozrah, Jesus will lead His army, comprised of His bride (Revelation 19:7,14), the tribulation saints (Revelation 6:9-11, 7:9), and the angels of heaven

(Jude 1:14; Matthew 25:31), all riding on white horses for the final battle to defeat the Antichrist (Revelation 17:14, 19:11-16). This battle is won single handedly by Jesus through his word alone (Isaiah 11:4). He breathes on them, and the Antichrist's army dissolves. Zechariah paints a vivid picture of this battle:

This is the plague with which the Lord will strike all the nations that fought against Jerusalem: Their flesh will rot while they are still standing on their feet, their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongues will rot in their mouths. On that day people will be stricken by the Lord with great panic. They will seize each other by the hand and attack one another (Zechariah 14:12-13).

These final battles are so terrible and the armies arrayed against Jesus are so large that blood runs for 1,600 stadia, or 184 miles, at a depth of 4 feet (Revelation 14:20).

Given the topography of Israel, it seems that this indicates that the blood from the Antichrist's defeated armies all drain into the Dead Sea through the valleys from Petra and Megiddo, creating 4-foot-deep rivers of blood along a 184-mile path. In contrast to the marriage supper of the lamb, Christ's enemies are called to the supper of the damned and an angel calls all the birds to feast on the dead (Revelation 19:17-18). This battle is an extreme act of mercy because if Jesus does not end the tribulation period and defeat the Antichrist once and for all, nobody would spiritually survive (Matthew 24:22). In the end, the Antichrist and the False Prophet are captured and, as anathema, they do not go before the Great White Throne judgment but are thrown directly into the lake of fire (Revelation 19:19-21). The conclusion of the Battle of Armageddon marks the transition from the Great Tribulation to the millennial reign of Christ.

The Millennial Kingdom

As with the rapture, there are several theories regarding the Millennial Kingdom. The first theory is known as amillennialism. GotQuestions ("What is amillennialism?", 2020) states that

amillennialism is the belief that the Millennial Reign does not represent a literal 1,000-year reign of Christ on earth, that Christ is now sitting on the throne of David, that this present church age is the kingdom over which Christ reigns, and that the time of trouble at the end of the 1,000-year reign is the tribulation period. The Millennial Kingdom is described as a time of peace in which Satan has been bound and cannot deceive the nations (Revelation 20:1-3). Any casual observation of the church age shows this to be false and that Satan continues to deceive the nations.

Additionally, this theory is closely aligned with the false doctrine of replacement theology. According to Gotquestions (“What is replacement theology / supersessionism?”, 2020), adherents to this philosophy believe that the Church has replaced Israel in God’s plan, that the Jews are no longer God’s chosen people, and that God does not have specific future plans for the nation of Israel. However, this is refuted in several places within scripture. The prophet Jeremiah recorded the promise that God’s covenant with Israel will always stand and of Israel’s restoration (Jeremiah 31:35, 33:24-26). Paul also reaffirmed this in his letter to the Romans (Romans 11). Also, a literal reading of the book of Revelation shows that God will restore Israel as the primary focus of His plan during the tribulation period.

The second theory is known as postmillennialism. According to GotQuestions (“What is postmillennialism?”, 2020), postmillennialism is the belief that Jesus’ second coming occurs after a period of Christian prosperity and dominance. As with amillennialism, this does not need to be a literal 1,000-year period. Also, this theory shares amillennialism’s errors in interpreting scripture allegorically, causing this theory to be at odds with the view of the world as presented in the previous chapters in the book of Revelation.

The last theory is known as premillennialism. GotQuestions (“What is premillennialism?”, 2020) states that premillennialism is the belief that Christ’s second coming will occur prior to His Millennial Kingdom, that the Millennial Kingdom is a literal 1000-year reign of Christ on earth,

and that the Millennial Kingdom fulfills the promise that Christ will reign on David's throne. This theory correctly interprets scripture literally and recognizes the distinction between Israel and the Church. Additionally, GotQuestions ("What is premillennialism?", 2020) notes that "God made unconditional covenants with both Abraham and David. Neither of these covenants has been fully or permanently fulfilled. A literal, physical rule of Christ is the only way the covenants can be fulfilled as God promised they would."

Gotquestions ("What is dispensational premillennialism?", 2020) also notes that premillennialism can be divided into historical and dispensational views with the main differences being the emphasis that each gives to the nation of Israel during the Millennial Kingdom, the former's attempt to symbolize prophetic history, and the latter's insistence on maintaining a distinction between the nation of Israel and the Church. The dispensational premillennialism approach appears to be the soundest and is consistent with the methodology used throughout this paper. Therefore, the details of the Millennial Kingdom will be explored using this approach.

The Transitional Period

Several events occur between the conclusion of the tribulation period and the beginning of the Millennial Reign of Christ. Daniel states: "From the time the daily sacrifice is abolished and the abomination of desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days. The one who waits for and reaches 1,335 days is blessed (Daniel 12:11-12, HCSB)." Here, Daniel is referencing the length of time between the start of the Great Tribulation and the start of the Millennial Reign. Since the Great Tribulation is 1,260 days, it appears that this period is 75 days. One of the first events to take place during this period is to eliminate the influence of Satan, who is bound by an angel with a great chain and thrown into the abyss for one thousand years so that he will not be able to deceive anyone during the Millennial Reign of Christ (Revelation 20:1-3; 2 Peter 2:4).

The next event to take place is the judgment of the nations. At this point, anyone left alive “will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, just as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats (Matthew 25:32, HCSB).” Those that accepted the mark of the beast and rejected Jesus are sent away to eternal punishment (Matthew 25:41-46). The Gentiles that did not accept the mark of the beast and remained faithful to Jesus, as well as the Jewish remnant that turned to Christ at the end remain living, are given their inheritance and are allowed to enter the Millennial Kingdom in their mortal bodies (Matthew 25:34-40) where they will continue to age, die, and have children (Isaiah 65:20) to repopulate the world.

These judgments most likely take place in the first 30 days of the transitional period. The remaining 45 days are used for rebuilding the Temple and setting up the government for the Millennial Kingdom. This begins with the resurrection of the Old Testament saints (Isaiah 26:19), who are then judged at the Bema Seat of Christ (cf. Daniel 12:2; John 5:28-29), are given their inheritance, and allowed to enter the Millennial Kingdom in their glorified bodies (Daniel 12:11-13). Those that had died in Christ during the tribulation period are also resurrected, stand before the Bema Seat of Christ to be judged, and enter the Millennial Kingdom in their glorified bodies (cf. Revelation 20:4).

Next, the temple is rebuilt for the Millennial Kingdom. Daniel states there will be 1,290 days from “the time the daily sacrifice is abolished and the abomination of desolation is set up (Daniel 12:11, HCSB).” Therefore, it appears that the image of the Antichrist is removed from the temple and construction of the millennial temple (Ezekiel 40-48) begins after the first 30 days. This temple will be built by Christ (Zechariah 6:12-13), redeemed Jews (Ezekiel 43:10-11), and representatives from the Gentile nations (cf. Haggai 2:7; Zechariah 6:15) and will be the dwelling place for God (Ezekiel 37:26-28). Everyone, both Gentile and Jew, will worship at this temple

(cf. Isaiah 60:6, 66:23; Zephaniah 3:10; Zechariah 2:11) and Jesus will be the focus of this worship (cf. Jeremiah 33:15-22; Zechariah 14:16-21).

Even though Mosaic law has been abolished (cf. Romans 6:14-15, 7:1-6; 1 Corinthians 9:20-21; 2 Corinthians 3:13-16; Galatians 4:1-7, 5:18; Hebrews 7-10), sacrifices will continue (cf. Isaiah 56:7, 60:7; Jeremiah 33:17-18; Zechariah 14:19-21; Malachi 3:3-4). Rhodes (2012) notes that there are two possible reasons for this. First, sacrifices could be used as a Jewish memorial to the price Christ paid, similar to the Lord's Supper for the church (1 Corinthians 11:25-28), because scripture states that "in the sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year (Hebrews 10:3, HCSB)." One issue raised with this interpretation is that scripture also states that sacrifices are "to make atonement (Ezekiel 45:15,17,20, HCSB)" for sin. The second possibility is that sacrifices are used to remove ceremonial uncleanness and prevent defilement from polluting the purity of the temple (Ezekiel 43:18-27, 45:13-46:24). It is possible that both reasons could be true with the acknowledgement that atonement is no longer required.

Finally, the establishment of the governmental structure for the Millennial Kingdom takes place. This government will not be like any government devised by man and will not be inefficient, unjust, or corrupt. Everyone that died in Christ, including the Old Testament, New Testament, and tribulation period saints, will be priests and reign with Jesus over the mortal survivors for the next one thousand years (cf. 1 Corinthians 6:2-3; Revelation 3:21, 5:9-10, 20:4-6, 22:5; 2 Timothy 2:12; 1 Peter 2:9). Within the government, they will be assigned duties and authority over cities, states, and nations and as priests, they will be assigned duties in support of the religious system.

These government roles would include being judges in local courts or administrators of various government agencies. Those that died in Christ will judge those that enter the Millennial Kingdom as mortals. Jesus will be the ultimate judge and sole jurist on the highest court. In Matthew 19:28-29, Jesus spoke of the Apostles sitting on 12 thrones, so it is likely that they would

constitute a high court and form an appellate court system. There will likely be many lower courts to handle the more minor issues, both civil and criminal. Exodus 18:13-26 described how Moses' father-in-law instructed him to set up a system of lower courts to lighten his burden. This provides a good model for how the court system in the Millennial Kingdom will be setup. Those that died in Christ, then, will be the magistrates for these courts. The judicial system, both civil and criminal, should not be overburdened with a high case load in the beginning because only believers enter the Millennial Kingdom. Both crime and civil disputes should be low. However, they still have their sin nature, so over time as people are born and non-believers emerge, it will get progressively more difficult and the number of both civil and criminal cases will increase.

In addition to reigning with Jesus, those that died in Christ will also be priests serving Him as the Levites did. As priests, they will have responsibilities to teach the word of God, knowing that at the end of the Millennial Reign people will again be deceived by Satan when he is released and rebel. Additionally, they will perform duties at the Millennial Temple. These duties will include ministering both to Christ and to the people, and will also support the sacrificial system as part of the religious system that will be established during the Millennial Reign. With both the government and religious system complete, the Millennial Kingdom will be established (cf. Isaiah 2:2-4; Micah 4:1-7).

The Millennial Reign

With the start of the Millennial Reign, the groups that enter are the mortal and living saved (cf. Isaiah 1:19-20, 26:2, 60:21, 65:13-16; Malachi 3:16-18), which includes both the Jewish remnant (cf. Zechariah 13:9; Ezekiel 20:34-48) and those remaining from the Gentile nations (Matthew 25:34,46), as well as the resurrected saints that rule with Christ (Daniel 7:18,22; Revelation 20:4) in their glorified bodies. Those that reign with Christ (cf. Daniel 7:27; Romans 8:17; 2 Timothy 2:12) include all the saints from the Old Testament, the New Testament, and the

tribulation period (cf. Luke 19:17-19; Jeremiah 30:7-9; Revelation 5:9-10, 20:4). The wicked have been judged and are barred from entering the kingdom (cf. Isaiah 1:19-28; 65:11-12, 66:15-16; Jeremiah 25:27-33, 30:23-24; Ezekiel 11:21, 20:33-44; Micah 5:9-15; Malachi 3:2-6,18, 4:3). Israel is restored and possesses the land promised to them (cf. Jeremiah 16:14-18, 31:31-34; Deuteronomy 29-30; Isaiah 43:5-7). Like the church in the previous age, every Jew will personally know the Lord (cf. Isaiah 29:22-24, 30:18-22, 44:1-5, 45:17; Jeremiah 24:7, 50:19-20; Ezekiel 11:19-20, 36:25-27; Hosea 1:10-2:1, 14:4-8; Joel 2:28-32; Micah 7:8-20; Zephaniah 3:9-13; Romans 11:25-27), as do the Gentiles, through the Holy Spirit.

Christ reigns from the throne of David (cf. Isaiah 9:6-7, 16:5; 2 Samuel 7:12-13,16, 22:51; Micah 4:1-5; Zephaniah 3:14-20; Zechariah 14, 9:10; Psalm 72:8; Jeremiah 23:5; Daniel 7:13-14; Luke 1:32-33; Revelation 20:4) and His kingdom is characterized by righteousness (Isaiah 51:5, 60:21, 61:11), peace (Isaiah 2:4, 14:4-10, 32:17-18), holiness (Isaiah 4:3-4, 35:8-11; Joel 3:17), truth (Psalm 25:10, 89:14, 119:160), justice (Isaiah 9:7, 46:13), obedience (Psalm 22:27-28; Isaiah 45:23; Jeremiah 31:33), and faithfulness (Psalm 85:10-11; Zechariah 8:3). Under Christ's rule, and for the first time ever, the world has a government that is perfect and effective (Isaiah 9:6-7), global (Psalm 2:6-9; Daniel 7:14) and centered in Jerusalem (Isaiah 2:2-4; Jeremiah 3:17; Ezekiel 48:30-35; Joel 3:16-17; Micah 4:1,6-8; Zechariah 8:2-3). Rhodes (2012) notes that with His reign, Christ brings several physical blessings, including living in a blessed and enhanced environment (Isaiah 35:1-2), having plentiful rain and food (Isaiah 30:23-24), animals living in harmony (Isaiah 11:6-7), no physical illness (Isaiah 29:18), as well as prosperity, joy, and happiness (Jeremiah 31:12-14). Along with that, Rhodes (2012) states that Christ will bestow several spiritual blessings as well. The Holy Spirit will be present and indwell all believers (Isaiah 44:3; Ezekiel 36:27, 37:14; Joel 2:28-29). Therefore, according to Rhodes (2012), everyone will have a knowledge of

God (Isaiah 11:9, Habakkuk 2:14), will worship Christ (Malachi 1:11; Zephaniah 3:9; Zechariah 8:23), and God's presence will be made manifest (Ezekiel 37:27-28; Zechariah 2:10-13).

During this period, lifespans will increase to be like the time before the flood (cf. Genesis 5:1-32) and it will be considered a tragedy if someone dies before reaching one hundred years old (cf. Isaiah 65:20). People will rebuild their society, enjoy the fruits of their labor, and live in harmony with nature (Isaiah 65:21-25). Everyone will once again speak one language, which may possibly be Hebrew, to serve God with a single purpose (Zephaniah 3:9). It is unclear what will happen to those that do not accept Christ during this period. Isaiah states that "the one who misses a hundred years will be cursed (Isaiah 65:20, HCSB)," which may indicate that they have until the age of 100 to accept Jesus. Sin will also be dealt with swiftly and justly.

At the conclusion of the thousand-year reign of Christ, Satan is released to deceive the nations (Revelation 20:7-8). The release of Satan after his 1,000-year imprisonment in the abyss has always been assumed to occur at the end of the Millennial Reign, which lasts 1,000 calendar years. However, this provides no time for Satan to deceive the nations and cause the rebellion against Christ. One possible solution to this is to assume that there is a period of time after the conclusion of the Millennial Reign and the start of eternity where Satan deceives the nations, but there is no scriptural evidence for this. Another possibility is that Satan's release from the abyss occurs after 1,000 360-day biblical years, or about 986 calendar years. This seems to better align with scripture. This would also give Satan around 14 years until the end of the 1,000-calendar-year Millennial Reign to tempt man one final time, raise an army, and mount an insurrection. Then at the end of the Millennial Reign, there is a final war that will consist of a confederation of nations, who are quickly defeated. John calls this a Gog and Magog war as a metaphor to help illustrate the nature of this war (Rhodes, 2012). Because of the increased lifespans, those that will rebel will

be like the sand of the sea, but fire will come down from heaven to consume them (Revelation 20:8-9).

An interesting thought exercise shows that if only 1% of the population entering the Battle of Armageddon remains alive at the end of the tribulation period and only 1% of those remain after the subsequent sheep and goats judgment, then only 400,000 would enter the Millennial Kingdom. This analysis appears to match Isaiah's prophecy that God "will make man scarcer than gold, and mankind more rare than the gold of Ophir (Isaiah 13:12, HCSB)." Currently, the population doubles every 70 years, and if one assumes that this remains the same even with the increased lifespans, then by the end of the millennium the population would be restored to the pre-tribulation value of approximately 7.9 billion people. If only 1% have not accepted Christ at the end of the Millennium and rebel, then Satan's army will include about 79 million people.

The population still alive at the conclusion of the Millennial Reign will be sifted like wheat and weeds or fish in a net (cf. Matthew 13:24-30,47-50), destroying the wicked. Being anathema, Satan is already judged and will then be thrown directly into the lake of fire with the Antichrist and False Prophet to be tormented for eternity (Revelation 20:10; Matthew 25:41; 2 Peter 2:4). The final act taken during the Millennial Reign of Christ is for Jesus to hold the Great White Throne judgment for everyone throughout the ages that were not already judged at the Bema Seat of Christ because they were either part of the church and judged after the rapture (Revelation 20:11-15; John 5:22-23; Philippians 2:10-11; Romans 2:16) or had died in Christ during the Tribulation Period and also judged prior to entering the Millennial Kingdom. Here, all that died throughout the ages up to and including the Millennial Kingdom are resurrected (Revelation 20:5). These people, along with all those that survived the Millennial Reign are given immortal bodies and judged. Those that are not found in the Book of Life are judged according to their works (Matthew 12:36-37; Revelation 20:12-13) and those that are listed in the Book of Life are judged

on how they lived for Christ just as they would have, had they stood before the Bema Seat of Christ. Those found in the Book of Life would include the Old Testament saints and believers from the Millennial Reign of Christ, both living and dead. Scripture states that those that are not found in the Book of Life are thrown into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:14-15) for eternity (Matthew 25:46; 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9) where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 13:41-42). Those that are found in the Book of Life are ushered into eternity along with the church. These judgments are just because none are without excuse (Romans 1:20-22, 2:12-15).

Eternity

Eternity is the end state for and restoration of all things. Here, Jesus delivers the kingdom back to God the Father and the universe is restored to its pristine state as it was intended to be prior to the fall of man. Those that enter this state are the ones that are faithful to Christ and incorruptible. This is the restoration of Eden.

The Kingdom Delivered and the Universe Restored

With all of God's enemies defeated, including death, eternity is then ushered in and the kingdom is delivered to God the Father:

Then comes the end, when He hands over the kingdom to God the Father, when He abolishes all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign until He puts all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy to be abolished is death. For God has put everything under His feet. But when it says "everything" is put under Him, it is obvious that He who puts everything under Him is the exception. And when everything is subject to Christ, then the Son Himself will also be subject to the One who subjected everything to Him, so that God may be all in all (1 Corinthians 15:24-28, HCSB).

According to GotQuestions (“What does the Bible teach about the Trinity?”, 2020), it is important to note that even though Jesus is completely equal to the Father as part of the Triune God (cf. John 1:1,14, 8:58, 10:30; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 2:9; 1 John 5:20), Jesus is still under the authority of the Father (cf. Luke 22:42; John 5:36, 14:28, 20:21; 1 John 4:14; 1 Corinthians 11:3). There are specific roles for the Father (cf. 1 Corinthians 8:6; John 3:16-17, 4:42, 5:17, 14:10; Revelation 1:1, 4:11), for the Son (cf. 1 Corinthians 8:6; John 1:1,3, 16:12-15; Matthew 1:21, 11:27; Colossians 1:15-18; 2 Corinthians 5:19; Revelation 1:1) and for the Holy Spirit (cf. Genesis 1:2; Job 26:13; Psalm 104:30; Isaiah 61:1; John 3:6, 16:12-15; Acts 10:38; Ephesians 3:5; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Peter 1:21; Titus 3:5) as part of the Trinity. One of Jesus' roles is to be the mediator between man and God (1 Timothy 2:5) and with this role now complete, Jesus voluntarily surrenders the kingdom to God the Father (1 Corinthians 15:24-25).

The current universe is cursed (Genesis 3:17-18) and subject to decay (Romans 8:20-22). Therefore, the earth, the first heaven that is the atmosphere (Job 35:5), and the second heaven that is the stellar universe (Genesis 1:17; Deuteronomy 17:3) must be destroyed and remade by Jesus (cf. Psalm 102:25-26; Isaiah 51:6; Matthew 24:35; John 1:3; 2 Peter 3:7-13; Colossians 1:16-17) and purified of all evil, sin, suffering, and death (Matthew 19:28; Acts 3:21; Isaiah 65:17-25, 66:22; Ezekiel 28:25-26, 34:25-30). This new universe will be beyond comprehension (1 Corinthians 2:9) where those that enter this kingdom will share in Christ's inheritance and “shall inherit all things (Revelation 21:7, NKJV),” which will surpass anything and everything imaginable (Isaiah 53:12; Romans 8:17-18). With the creation of the new heaven and earth, the sea will no longer exist (Revelation 21:1). As the new universe is ushered in, there will be a great feast and celebration (Isaiah 25:6-8).

New Jerusalem

A new Jerusalem, described as a gigantic and brilliant jewel that shines with God's glory, will then come down from heaven (Revelation 21:2,10-21). This is the eternal house that Jesus said he was preparing (John 14:2-3; Hebrews 11:16). Scripture has pointed to this glorious city with the use of precious stones in the construction of the ephod, which included 12 gemstones (Exodus 28:17-20), the use of costly stones in the construction of Solomon's temple (1 Kings 7:9-10) as well as the construction of the reservoir (1 Kings 7:25), and the organization of the camps while Israel was in the wilderness (Numbers 2). Scholars note that the number 12 is representative of governmental perfections, which is why there are repeated instances of the number 12 in reference to the city as seen with the 12 gates, 12 foundations, 12 angels, 12,000 stadia, and 144 cubits.

Rhodes (2012) states that the 12 angels that guard the gates (Revelation 21:12) are doing so in their role as ministering spirits to those that have received their inheritance (Hebrews 1:14), that the names of the 12 tribes of Israel that are written on the gates (Revelation 21:12) are there to remind the inhabitants that "salvation is from the Jews (John 4:22, HCSB)," and that the names of the apostles that are written on the foundations (Revelation 21:14) are there to remind the inhabitants that the church was built upon these Godly men (Ephesians 2:20). The city will measure 12,000 stadia, or approximately 1,380 miles, in length, width, and height (Revelation 21:16). Scripture also states that the walls were measured to be 144 cubits, or approximately 214 feet (Revelation 21:17). Given that the height of the city is already known to be 12,000 stadia, scholars believe that this measurement represents the thickness of the walls and is recorded to signify the great strength of the city. Some scholars prefer to envision the city shaped as a pyramid and others prefer to consider it shaped as a cube because the Holy of Holies in Solomon's Temple was cube-shaped (1 Kings 6:20).

Put in perspective, Figure 14 shows that the city would cover an area of approximately 1.9 million square miles, running from Bangor, ME to Sioux Falls, SD and from Houston, TX to Winnipeg, Canada. Additionally, most satellites, including the International Space Station, orbit the Earth at a distance between 200 and 400 miles, but this city will extend another 1,000 to 1,200 miles above that. Rhodes (2012) notes that this would give the city the capacity to house 20 billion residents, each having a private 75-acre cube, with plenty of room for parks, streets, and other things found in a typical city.

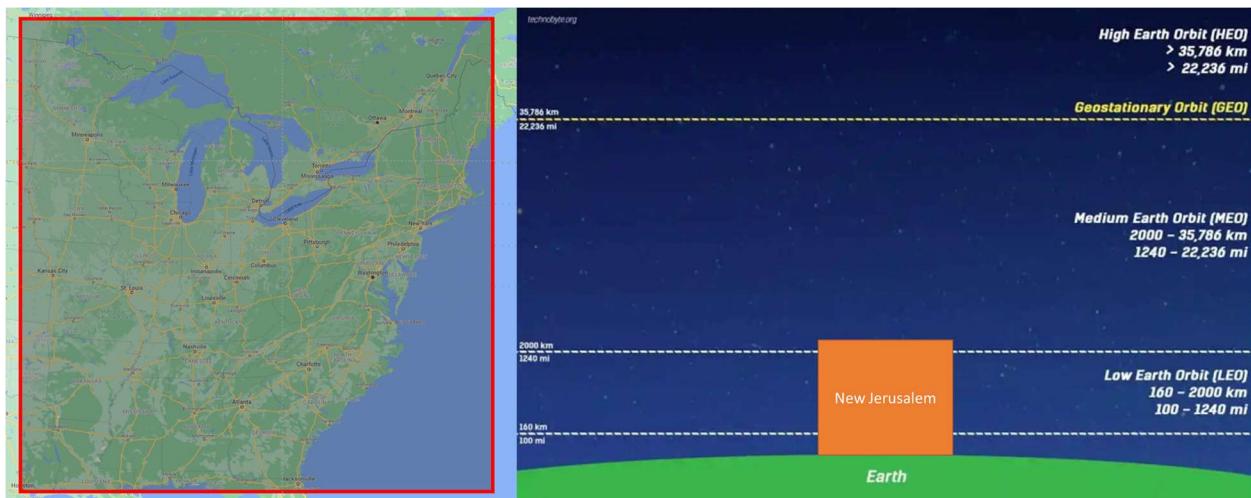


Figure 14: The Size of New Jerusalem

The Inhabitants of Eternity

There is little detail in scripture regarding those that enter eternity. Therefore, there are many different theories regarding this subject. Scripture does detail that there will not be a sanctuary in the city because God will be its sanctuary (Revelation 21:22). Nor will the city need light because God's glory will illuminate it (Revelation 21:23-25, 22:5; Isaiah 60:19-20; Ezekiel 44:4-5; 1 John 1:5; James 1:17). Also, nothing profane will ever enter it (Revelation 21:26-27; Romans 4:11,13,20-24; Hebrews 10:14). Within the city, there will be a river of life that flows from the throne of God (Revelation 22:1-2; Ezekiel 47:1-12). The tree of life will also be on both sides of this river, bearing twelve kinds of fruit each month and whose leaves provide healing to

the nations (Revelation 22:2-3). It could be that there are multiple trees that are collectively known as the tree of life or that there is one tree that has multiple trunks, similar to a banyan tree. God will dwell in the city where the people will serve Him (Revelation 22:3), know Him and see His face (Revelation 22:4; 1 John 3:2), and they will reign forever and ever (Revelation 22:5).

Many scholars spiritualize this description. Jesus referred to the river of life when He spoke with the woman at the well (John 4:10) and Rhodes (2012) believes that this river is symbolic of the perpetual outpouring of spiritual blessing and the abundance of spiritual life that will characterize those who are living in the city. Additionally, Rhodes (2012) takes the scriptural references to the tree of life symbolically, noting that because eternity is the perfect and eternal state, the idea of healing cannot mean that there is any form of sickness or hurts that need to be renewed. Instead, Rhodes (2012) believes that it means that the tree of life promotes the enjoyment of life.

Most scholars, therefore, believe that those entering eternity, which includes those that were faithful to Christ during the Millennial Reign and either remained alive throughout the Millennial Reign or had died and are now resurrected, are given their glorified bodies at the start of eternity and face judgment at the Bema Seat of Christ. One major issue with this theory is that it does not follow the primary tenant for biblical interpretation, which states that scripture should be interpreted literally unless obvious symbolism is used. The symbolic interpretation is required to fit the theory that everyone living in the eternal state are immortal and require no food or healing and that there are no nations. This theory also leaves open the question of who resides outside the city of New Jerusalem and what the purpose of the eternal state is.

Other scholars take a more literal approach to these verses. They note that the tree of life produces a different fruit every month (Revelation 22:2), which means that seasons and years are still counted. Also, if one assumes that those that remained faithful to Christ and remained alive

at the conclusion of the Millennial Reign to enter eternity remain mortal, then the “healing of the nations (Revelation 22:2, HCSB)” would make sense in its literal interpretation. The fruit from the tree of life would provide the population’s food supply and the leaves would provide medical benefits to preserve their lives for eternity. This is a plausible assumption because Jesus ate fish when he returned to see His Disciples after His resurrection (Luke 24:41-43). Also, scripture describes a feast in heaven at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:9).

In continuing this paradigm, these mortals would be the new Adams and Eves that repopulate the world, and possibly the universe, as God had intended in the beginning (Genesis 1:28; Hebrews 2:5). However, this assumes that these mortals no longer have a sin nature. Satan was released at the end of the Millennial Reign as the final test for corruptible mortals, but if these mortals are now incorruptible, such tests would no longer be needed because “there will no longer be any curse (Revelation 22:3, HCSB).” This supports the assumption that man will no longer have a sin nature. Scripture states that those that have been resurrected, been given immortal, glorified bodies, and who reigned with Christ in the Millennial Kingdom as priests, live within the walls of New Jerusalem (1 Corinthians 15:52-53; 1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 5:10). However, the role of being priests may only be limited to the Millennial Kingdom (Revelation 20:6) because as sinless mortals, they will be able to see and interact with God directly as Adam and Eve did before the fall (Genesis 2:15-25; 1 John 3:2; Revelation 22:4). In this scenario, the mortals that now repopulate the universe reside outside the city, but have access to it, because the gates remain open for the nations to bring glory and honor (Revelation 21:25-27).

Unfortunately, scripture is silent on the state of those that survive the Millennial Reign and enter eternity. Therefore, assumptions and conjecture must be made for any theory regarding this, making all theories highly speculative. Each theory presented has both advantages and flaws

because of the way scripture is interpreted and the assumptions that need to be made. Without solid scriptural guidance, this topic will remain a mystery until God chooses to reveal the answer.

Final Admonition

In conclusion, John stated that he was given the prophecies in the book of Revelation by Jesus while imprisoned on the island of Patmos (Revelation 1:9-20), that those who study them will be blessed and given rewards, that they are true because Jesus sent His angel to attest to these events, that Jesus is coming soon, and that the time is near for these events to occur. There are blessings for those that read and hear this prophecy (Revelation 1:3), die for Christ (Revelation 14:13), watch for His return (Revelation 16:15), are called to the marriage supper of the lamb (Revelation 19:9), are part of the first resurrection (Revelation 20:6), and keep the sayings of this prophecy (Revelation 22:7). These blessings will result in rewards (Revelation 22:12-15), which may include greater responsibilities in the Millennial Kingdom, a more glorious resurrected body, and greater access throughout the new heaven and earth.

The angel that showed John these things stressed that these things are “faithful and true (Revelation 22:6, HCSB)” and that these events are imminent (Revelation 22:6-7, 12, 20). This angel is one of the seven angels that had held the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues (Revelation 21:9). He is most likely the archangel Gabriel, who is God’s messenger, and is the same angel that had interpreted Daniel’s visions of the end times (Daniel 8:16, 9:21, 10:10-14). The book of Revelation is about choices (Joshua 24:15), with the purpose to ensure that the world is informed of and understands the events that are to come so that none can claim ignorance.

This prophecy is the same one that was given to Daniel, which is evidenced by several parallel events described in each vision, as shown in Figures 15 and 16. Daniel was told to seal up the prophecy until the end times (Daniel 12:4, 9) because the time was not yet right for the details of the vision to be revealed and the vision would not be understood. John was told not to

seal up the prophecies described in the book of Revelation because of the imminence of the events and because the vision could now be properly interpreted. People would now be without excuse. The unrighteous would be allowed to be unrighteous and the righteous to be righteous in full knowledge of these events so that when Jesus returns, He will repay each according to their work (Revelation 22:10-12; Daniel 12:10).

The Throne Room of God	Daniel	John
Daniel and John are brought into their respective visions	Da. 7:9	Rv. 4:1
God is seen sitting on His throne in heaven	Da. 7:9	Rv. 4:2-3
Heavenly servants surround God's throne	Da. 7:10	Rv. 4:4
There is fire before God's throne	Da. 7:9-10	Rv. 4:5
There is an image of a sea	Da. 7:2-3	Rv. 4:6
Books are opened before the throne	Da. 7:10	Rv. 5:1-14
A divine figure approaches God's throne to receive authority to reign forever over a kingdom that includes those from all peoples, nations, and languages	Da. 7:13-14	Rv. 5:5-7, 9, 12-13
Daniel and John both had emotional experiences seeing the vision	Da. 7:15	Rv. 5:4
Daniel and John both receive heavenly counsel about the vision from one of God's servants	Da. 7:16	Rv. 5:5
The saints are given authority to reign over a kingdom	Da. 7:18, 22, 27	Rv. 5:10
Both visions mention God's eternal reign	Da. 7:27	Rv. 5:13-14

Figure 15: Parallels in Daniel's and John's Vision of God's Throne Room

The Description of the Beast	Daniel	John
The beast comes from the sea, having ten horns, and has the appearance of a leopard, bear, and lion	Da. 7:2-8, 20, 24 Da. 11:36	Rv. 13:1-2
The beast speaks boasts and blasphemies	Da. 7:8, 11, 20, 25	Rv. 13:1, 5-6
The beast was given great power and authority to wage war against every tribe, people, language, and nation and conquer the saints for 42 months	Da. 7:21, 23, 25 Da. 8:24 Da. 11:7	Rv. 13:2, 5, 7
Many will be captured, plundered, and killed	Da. 11:33	Rv. 13:10
People must worship the beast as a god or be killed*	Da. 3:6, 15	Rv. 13:15
* Not part of Daniel's visions, but occurred during Daniel's time		

Figure 16: Parallels in Daniel's and John's Vision of the Beast

As a final admonition, John notes that all are welcome to take the water of life freely (Revelation 22:17). However, should anyone add to these prophecies, as Eve added to the word of God (Genesis 3:3), God will subject them to the plagues described in the book of Revelation. Additionally, should anyone take away from these prophecies, as Satan took away from the word of God (Genesis 3:4), God will take away their share of the tree of life and the holy city (Revelation 22:18-19).

Conclusions

Signs of the Last Generation

While it is impossible to determine the exact timing of the rapture, it may be possible to determine the timing of Christ's glorious return (Matthew 24:36-51; Acts 1:7-8) and therefore determine an upper boundary for it. In his first letter to the Thessalonians, Paul confirmed that the day and hour of the rapture cannot be known by stating:

For you yourselves know very well that the Day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. When they say, ‘Peace and security,’ then sudden destruction comes on them, like labor pains come on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. (1 Thessalonians 5:2-3, HCSB).

However, Paul also confirmed that believers would know the season in which Christ's return would occur by also stating: “But you, brothers, are not in the dark, for this day to overtake you like a thief (1 Thessalonians 5:4, HCSB).” Therefore, one must first determine what the signs of Christ's return are.

The Rebirth of Israel

The first set of signs pointing toward Christ's imminent return center around Israel. The first of these states that the nation of Israel will be brought back into existence on a single day (Isaiah 66:7-8) and as a single unified nation with Judah (Isaiah 26:19-21; Ezekiel 37:22). Ezekiel describes this process with the Valley of Dry Bones prophecy. As Ezekiel prophesied, “there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bone to bone (Ezekiel 37:7, HCSB).” Then, “tendons appeared on them, flesh grew, and skin covered them, but there was no breath in them (Ezekiel 37:8, HCSB).” Next, he prophesied “Breath, come from the four winds and breathe into these slain so that they may live (Ezekiel 37:9, HCSB)!” Finally, Ezekiel prophesied about the reunification of Israel as one nation within the land that was promised to them (Ezekiel 37:15-28).

One can look at history and see that some of these events have been fulfilled. In 1917 the Balfour Declaration announced British support for the establishment of a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine (Ezekiel 37:4-8). Then, on May 14, 1948, with the Jewish Agency Chairman David Ben-Gurion declaring Israel to be a nation and the United States recognizing Israel on that same day, “the State of Israel officially came into being upon termination of the British mandate in Palestine (‘State of Israel proclaimed’, 2010)” as prophesied (Ezekiel 37:15-22; Isaiah 66:7-8). During the Six-Day war in 1967 (“Six-Day War”, 2019), the mountains of Israel were returned to them when Israel then won the Golan Heights (Ezekiel 36:1-15). Jerusalem was recognized as Israel’s capital by the U.S. in 2017 (Landler, 2017). What remains is for breath to enter them so that they come to life and stand on their feet (Ezekiel 37:9-10). This will occur with the spiritual awakening in the aftermath of the Arab-Israeli war (Isaiah 17:8).

Prior to the restoration of Israel, the land was a desolate, barren wasteland that was primarily marsh and desert. The land was dead because it was not in the hands of its rightful owners, but God’s blessing restored the land when the Jews began to come back (Tsarfati, 2018). This is in fulfilment of God’s promise in Ezekiel 36:33-38. Tsarfati (2018) also notes that:

Israel is only the size of New Jersey, but it contains five different climate zones. These qualities did not come into existence when Israel declared independence in 1948; they had always been there. But before Israel’s statehood, there was no manifestation of it, no careful utilization of this wonderful gift.

This leads to the next sign, which is that Israel will have a thriving agriculture (cf. Isaiah 27:6, 35:1) and that the Dead Sea will come to life (cf. Ezekiel 47:9-10). According to Breaking Israel News (Bin Staff, 2020), “scientists have been shocked to discover that the sinkholes appearing around the sea are quickly filling up with fish and other forms of life previously unseen in the inhospitable region.” Israel’s tourist industry also touts the country’s success in shrinking the

Negev Desert over the last century, which currently covers 60% of the country, through the use of modern agriculture technology. This has turned the desert into green fields that produce a variety of crops, including cherry tomatoes that are 2-3 times sweeter than those produced elsewhere due to the unique growing conditions. The Negev is also home to fish farms and olive groves. Israel is now also one of the world's leading citrus producers.

A third sign is that Jerusalem will be the center of world conflict (cf. Zechariah 12:2-3) and there can be no doubt that this is true. Every U.S. president since Jimmy Carter has attempted to broker peace treaties between Israel and her neighbors. While each has had varying success, none have been fully accepted, let alone lasting. One reason for this is that all these plans require Israel to give up land for peace. Biblically, these are all doomed because the Bible states that once God gives Israel back the land promised to her, it will always remain in her possession (cf. Ezekiel 36:12).

A fourth sign is that the IDF will be a great army (cf. Ezekiel 37:10; Zechariah 12:6,8). Unfortunately, peace with Israel's neighbors has not been realized. Therefore, Israel has had to rely on their military to ensure their survival. Despite Israel being such a small country and surrounded by vastly larger enemies, Israel has fought many wars against superior forces and has won all of them. This includes the 1948 War of Independence, the 1967 Six-Day War, the 1973 Yom Kippur War, the 1986 and 2006 Lebanon Wars, and the 2008 Gaza War, along with many other smaller skirmishes.

Recent events also indicate that the time horizon is short for the remaining prophetic events to occur. While the rapture would most certainly reduce or eliminate U.S. influence in the Middle East, several events prior to the rapture are currently reducing U.S. influence in the region as well. For example, in the wake of the U.S. drone strike that killed Iran's General Soleimani, Iraq demanded that U.S. forces withdraw (Morgan, 2020), which could have had, and may still have, a

destabilizing effect. U.S. influence in the region is also being eliminated prior to the rapture by God raising up a U.S. president that is not supportive of Israel after the previous president that did righteously support Israel was rejected (cf. Daniel 2:21). The disastrous effects of this are already being seen with the collapse of the Afghan government and the rise of the Taliban after the U.S. withdrawal (Shepp, 2021). Additionally, Iran openly mocks the U.S. at the U.N. (Wolfgang, 2021), Turkey is embracing closer ties with Russia (AP, 2021), and the withdrawal of U.S. military support in Saudi Arabia is further eroding the recent Middle East peace pact (Timmerman, 2021). God has also raised up a new Israeli Prime Minister that formed the government with a coalition including Arab parties. If this new government also proves to be weak, it will further embolden Israel's neighbors against them. Also, there appears to be increased interest by Russia to exert control over oil fields in the region (Wolfgang, 2020). As noted in Ezekiel 38:11-12, seizing spoil and plunder is a major factor in Russian involvement in the Gog and Magog war.

Lastly, prophetic events are starting to be seen. For example, Israel and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) just recently signed the Abraham accords, a peace agreement normalizing relations between the two countries (JNS, 2020). This is the third country to sign such a deal after Egypt and Jordan, with the last agreement being signed by Jordan in 1994. President Trump hinted that additional Arab states may soon sign similar agreements, but the current administration abandoned the process. While a new peace treaty sounds positive for peace in the region, it may end up causing further instability with Turkey and Iran because of their backing of the Palestinians and their belief that these peace agreements harm the Palestinian push for an independent state (Sidman, 2020). This increased instability would then lead to the prophesied Arab-Israeli war. Additionally, with a weak U.S. president, other world adversaries such as China, and North Korea will be further emboldened (Cheung & Lendon, 2021; Keene, 2021) and bring further instability.

The State of the World

In addition to the signs concerning Israel during the last generation, there are several signs regarding the heavens, people, technology, environment, and government leading up to Christ's return. Astrologically, one sign has already been seen in the stars to warn that judgment is coming. Scripture describes "a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head. She was pregnant and cried out in pain as she was about to give birth. (Revelation 12:1-2, HCSB)." This event occurred for the first time in 7000 years on September 23, 2017 and is depicted in Figure 17. Many misinterpreted this sign and believed that it would coincide with the rapture of the church. It was, instead, a warning sign pointing toward the impending judgments as a message to repent.



Figure 17: Signs in the Heavens

The earthly signs begin with the people. Paul's second letter to Timothy provides a scathing description of the attitude of people during this time:

But know this: Difficult times will come in the last days. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, without love for what is good, traitors, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding to the form of godliness but denying its power. Avoid these people! For among them are

those who worm their way into households and capture idle women burdened down with sins, led along by a variety of passions, always learning and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth (2 Timothy 3:1-7, HCSB).

It is clear from this description that this generation is self-centered and wants nothing to do with God (2 Timothy 3:1-4). Even though they may profess faith, they are at best hypocrites (2 Timothy 3:5) and at worst professing a false faith (2 Timothy 4:3-4) or occult practices (1 Timothy 4:1-2). Also, though they may be well educated, they have no understanding of truth (2 Timothy 3:6-7). With this, many false messiahs will come to deceive the world (Matthew 24:23-24) and deny the second coming of Christ (2 Peter 3:3-4). It would be impossible to deny that all this is currently seen in the world today, especially considering the general disregard for unborn human life (Shaw, 2019) and the recent rioting, looting, and gaslighting of history by Marxist and anarchist groups like Black Lives Matter (Park, 2020) and Antifa (Arama, 2020). From a U.S. perspective, this moral decline will have far reaching effects. The impacts caused by the chaos created will affect both believers and nonbelievers alike. Also, it will bring judgment on the entire country, removing the U.S. as a superpower. This may be one reason why the U.S. is unable or unwilling to support Israel in the Gog and Magog war (Ezekiel 38:13).

The next sign that this is the last generation is that the technology necessary to fulfill certain prophecies in Revelation currently exist. For example, this is the first generation to have nuclear weapons which allow mankind to destroy the world (cf. Revelation 8:7). Advances in gene editing through technologies like CRISPR are raising the specters of creating accidental pathogens or intentional bioweapons that pose a grave threat to mankind (Allen, 2022). Additionally, advances in brain-mapping technologies are giving scientists the ‘godlike’ power to manipulate biology and alter neural function using digital devices (Allen, 2022). People will be further deceived by this

false gospel that man is in control of his destiny and cause the one true God to put an end to things as He did when man created the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1-9).

Additionally, computers are powerful enough now to track all financial transactions and the use of digital currency allows for instantaneous transactions and borderless transfer-of-ownership, but such currency can only be owned and spent using electronic wallets or designated networks, giving the Antichrist complete control of the economy (Salus, 2019). Additionally, Radio-Frequency Identification (RFID) can be used to create the mark of the beast that controls the ability to buy and sell in a global cashless economy (Revelation 13:16-17). Also, the global Internet as well as cable and satellite news will allow everyone to see the two witnesses martyred, resurrected, and raptured live (cf. Revelation 11:7-14). Dr. Jeremiah (2019) notes that this rapture will be visible for all to see, similar to when Christ ascended to heaven from the Mount of Olives (Acts 1:9-11), but unlike the rapture of the church which is in the blink of an eye (1 Corinthians 15:52).

Through these technological advances, the gospel is being spread throughout the world in every language through online and electronic versions of the Bible as well as through global broadcasts of Christian programs via the Internet (cf. Revelation 14:6). This will be an ever-increasing method for spreading the gospel as the world gets closer to the tribulation period. Paul has shown that significant events, such as the resurrection of Christ, will lead people to seek information about prophecy (cf. Acts 2:14-42, 8:26-40, 13:27-31, 17:2-3, 10-12, 18:5, 26:22-27). The rapture of the church will present another significant opportunity to spread the gospel and the best way to find that information will be through the Internet. However, while many will read the gospel and come to know Christ as their savior, many more will still be deceived and turn away from Christ. Because of this generation's reliance on technology, they will put their faith in science rather than Christ. Demons potentially posing as extraterrestrials will further promote this belief.

There are many reports in today's news that is already promoting the idea that extraterrestrials exist, including the declassification of UFO sightings by the U.S. military (Palwyk, 2020).

Another sign that this is the final generation is that there will be major environmental changes, such as famines and earthquakes. The signs of these birth pains as described by Jesus in the Olivet discourse (Matthew 24:7-8) are clearly visible. According to data from the U.S. National Centers for Environmental Information, as shown in Figure 18, earthquakes are on the rise (NOAA, 2020).

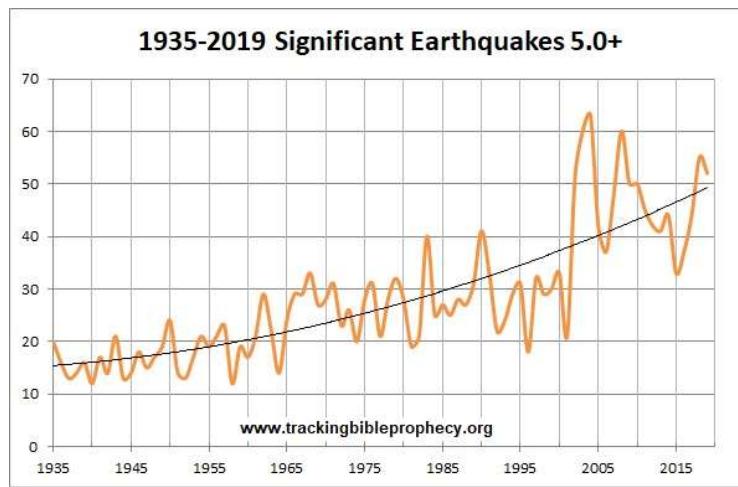


Figure 18: Earthquake Trends

The recent COVID-19 virus scare provides another prime example of these birth pains. The fear of this virus is causing people to panic and hoard supplies (Ryan, 2020), as well as causing markets to tumble (Nguyen, 2020). Additionally, the mandates to take experimental gene therapies to combat COVID-19, even though there are cheap and effective alternate solutions, are a foreshadowing of the mark of the beast that are conditioning the population to submit to the government or face economic and social repercussions. Robinson (2021) provides further evidence of this by noting that the patent for the Moderna vaccine lists Luciferase as an ingredient, which is an enzyme that can produce bioluminescence and is used to tag cells or proteins so that they can be tracked. Robinson (2021) also states that the Defense Advanced Research Projects

Agency (DARPA) is “fighting with Moderna over the ownership the COVID vaccine because DARPA has ‘funded and implantable biochip’ that could be used ‘to deploy’ it” and be detectable by an app on a smartphone. Finally, Robinson (2021) states that the pharmaceutical companies and government are developing future vaccine shots that have ‘dissolvable needles’ and quantum dot tattoos along with other technologies that enable embedding vaccine records beneath the skin with invisible ink such that people can be tagged and tracked. Notably, MIT is currently developing subcutaneous vaccine passports using these quantum dot and microneedle technologies through funding by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research (“Introducing subcutaneous vaccine passports”, 2021).

There also appears to be direct evidence that the battle of Armageddon is close at hand. As the battle begins, Revelation 19:17-18 states that an angel calls all the birds to feast on the dead. According to CNN (Robertson, 2014), 540 species of birds, including 25 species of raptors, are migrating to Galilee, west of the Golan Heights, in what the author describes as miraculous numbers since Israel started restoring the wetlands in the 1990s. Many sources estimate that 500 million birds migrate to the area, with many staying the entire winter, due to the plentiful food, the favorable winds and thermals needed for migration, and Israel’s strategic location between Europe and Africa.

One final sign that this is the last generation is the establishment of a one-world government (cf. Daniel 2:31-45, 7:1-48; Revelation 13:1-3, 17:9-10). With the moral decline causing countries such as the United States to lose influence in the world, the Antichrist is able to fill this power void by establishing a worldwide government. Many people wonder how the Antichrist will establish his one-world government and persuade Israel to sign a peace deal. While the underlying geopolitical conditions that give rise to the Antichrist are unknowable, one must only look at the 2020 COVID-19 virus scare to see how the Antichrist will rise to power. Without faith in God,

fear will grip the world due to some global disaster and people will mistakenly flock to anyone that provides a message of hope that can calm the panic and stop the chaos. The Antichrist will masterfully exploit that fear to his advantage and there will be no question about taking the mark of the beast if it means having safety, stability, and necessities such as food, clothing, and shelter. Instead of providing salvation, faith in the Antichrist will only ensure that the war and pestilence that people fear are inflicted upon them. However, if one would only have faith in God, He has promised to protect believers:

He Himself will deliver you from the hunter's net, from the destructive plague. He will cover you with His feathers; you will take refuge under His wings. His faithfulness will be a protective shield. You will not fear the terror of the night, the arrow that flies by day, the plague that stalks in darkness, or the pestilence that ravages at noon. Though a thousand fall at your side and ten thousand at your right hand, the pestilence will not reach you. You will only see it with your eyes and witness the punishment of the wicked. Because you have made the Lord—my refuge, the Most High—your dwelling place, no harm will come to you; no plague will come near your tent. For He will give His angels orders concerning you, to protect you in all your ways. They will support you with their hands so that you will not strike your foot against a stone. You will tread on the lion and the cobra; you will trample the young lion and the serpent (Psalm 91:3-13, HCSB).

Not only has God promised to protect believers from the upcoming trials, which include the birth pains prior to the rapture of the church as well as the judgments during the tribulation period for those that come to know Him after the rapture, but He can also be trusted to fulfill those promises (cf. Genesis 28:15; Numbers 23:19; Joshua 21:45, 23:14; Psalms 119:140, 145:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:24; Hebrews 10:23; 2 Corinthians 1:20) unlike the Antichrist.

Proposed Future Timeline

In the Olivet Discourse, Jesus stated: “This generation will certainly not pass away until all these things take place (Matthew 24:34, HCSB).” In this context ‘all these things’ references everything that He has discussed up to that point, which includes the birth pangs prior to the tribulation period, the tribulation period itself, and His return. Also, ‘this generation’ references the generation that witnesses all these events. The first question that must be answered, then, is what is the length of a generation? According to Genesis 6:3, God set a generation to be 120 years. The next question that must be answered is when does or did this generation begin? Jesus made this statement in the context of the parable from the fig tree, stating: “As soon as its branch becomes tender and sprouts leaves, you know that summer is near. In the same way, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near—at the door (Matthew 24:32-33, HCSB)!” The reference to a fig tree is a representation of Israel.

It may be possible to narrow down the timeframe more explicitly for the remaining end-time events. Figure 20 in Appendix A details the timing of these events. To confirm the validity of this timing, an analysis of the overall biblical timeline was performed where each date identified in the Bible was plotted and, where applicable, corroborated with other biblical events and historical records. The timing of the remaining end-time events is consistent with the overall biblical timeline and unfulfilled prophecy. Figures 22 through 40 in Appendix B detail the events listed in the Bible and document the overall redemptive history since the day of creation.

If one takes the Balfour Declaration as the point where the branches of the fig tree become tender and sprouts leaves (Matthew 24:32) and one uses 120 years as the length of the final generation (Genesis 6:3), this generation will start in 1917 and culminate in 2037 with Christ’s return. Therefore, the Lesser Tribulation would start seven years prior, in 2030. Additionally, if the Gog and Magog war occurs three-and-a-half years before the start of the tribulation period,

then this war would need to occur in 2027. The maximum upper boundary for the rapture is the spiritual awakening in the wake of the Arab-Israeli war. This puts the upper boundary for the rapture prior to the Gog and Magog war at around 2027. If the rapture does occur prior to the Arab-Israeli war, the time horizon could be significantly shorter because of the time needed for Israel to feel safe and disarm (Ezekiel 28:24-26, 38:8,11,14) before the Gog and Magog war and for Israel to rebuild the temple prior to the start of the tribulation period.

Application of Biblical Numerology

Some scholars attempt to apply biblical numerology to prophetic timeline events. While it is unclear whether the application of biblical numerology is appropriate in this context, additional support for this timeline is based on this theory. Those that ascribe to this theory point to events such as the 70-year exile of Israel to Babylon (cf. Daniel 9:1-2; Jeremiah 25:11, 29:10; 2 Chronicles 36:20-21). In this example, the seventy years of punishment is based on the seventy sabbath years that Israel ignored due to their disobedience as supported by Leviticus 25:1-7 and 26:33-35 (Treybig, 2020). Cahn (2019) applies this construct in this context by noting that the length of time between the Balfour Declaration in 1917 and the Six-Day War in 1967 is one 50-year jubilee (Leviticus 25:8-12) and that the time between the Six-Day War and the recognition of Jerusalem in 2017 as Israel's capital is one additional jubilee. Using this construct, a reasonable assumption for the timing of the upcoming Arab-Israeli war could be one jubilee following the 1973 Yom Kippur War ("Yom Kippur War", 2019). This would place the Arab-Israeli war in 2023, which would also be one sabbath (Leviticus 25:1-7) prior to the start of the tribulation period. However, this does not appear to be a biblically sound approach.

A more biblically sound use of Jeremiah's prophecy for a 70-year exile of Israel (Jeremiah 25:8-12) might be to apply Ezekiel's prophecy for Israel's punishment along with Jeremiah's prophecy. Ezekiel was commanded by God to lie bound, first for 390 days on his left side and

then 40 days on his right, for a period of 430 days with each day representing a year of exile from Israel (Ezekiel 4:4-8). These two prophecies can be correlated through the principles outlined in Leviticus 26:14-43, which states that if Israel did not follow God's laws, then they would be defeated by their enemies who would rule over them (Leviticus 26:17) and that if Israel still remained disobedient to God, then God would punish them seven times over (Leviticus 26:18,21,23,28). The application of these prophecies is shown in Figure 19.

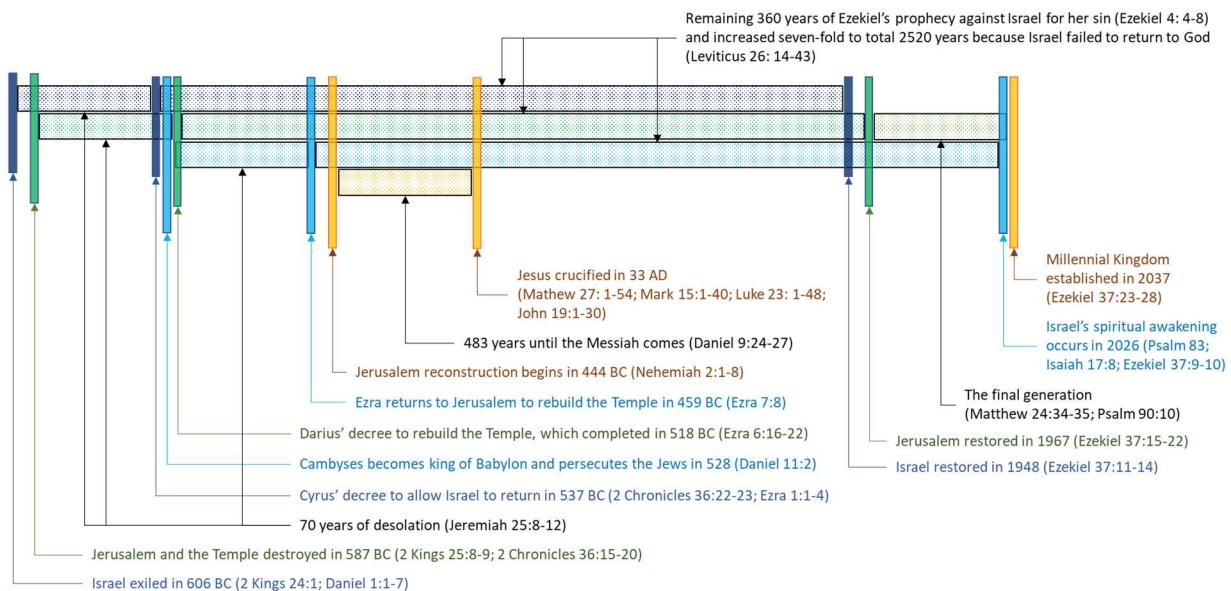


Figure 19: Events Prophesied by Biblical Numerology

Using this formula, Israel was exiled for 70 years, starting in 606 BC (2 Kings 24:1; Daniel 1:1-7), and ending in 537 BC with Cyrus' decree to allow the Jews to return to their homeland (2 Chronicles 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-4). This matches Jeremiah's prophecy because biblical years are based on a 360-day year rather than a 365.24-day solar year. At this point the Jews have returned to the land but are not under self-rule. This leaves 360 years remaining on Ezekiel's prophecy, which is now multiplied by seven to give a remaining 2,520 biblical years, or 2,484 solar years, of exile. By adding the remaining time of exile, it is shown that Ezekiel prophesied that Israel would

be reborn and be under self-rule in 1948. This also corresponds to Israel's prophesied rebirth in Ezekiel's Valley of the Dry Bones prophecy. (Ezekiel 37:11-14).

Interestingly, the same calculations regarding Ezekiel's prophecy can be used for the restoration of Jerusalem. Both Jerusalem and temple were destroyed in 587 BC (2 Kings 25:8-9; 2 Chronicles 36:15-20). Darius then decreed that the temple be rebuilt 70 years later in 518 BC (Ezra 6:16-22), which means that by using the same formula as with the restoration of Israel, a restoration event was prophesied to occur in 1967. In this case, history shows that Israel reclaimed Jerusalem and the Golan Heights during the Six-Day War in 1967, which corresponds to Ezekiel's prophecy about the reunification of Israel in the Valley of the Dry Bones prophecy (Ezekiel 37:15-22), and that the restoration of the Temple is still yet to come.

The future restoration of the Temple most likely follows the same pattern. If one starts the first 70 years of punishment for the restoration of the temple with the persecution of the Jewish exiles at the start of Cambyses' rule over Babylon in 528 BC, one sees that this concludes in 459 BC when Ezra returns to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple (Ezra 7:8). Again, following the same formula used for the restoration of Israel, a restoration event is scheduled to take place in 2026. This event is most likely the Arab-Israeli war (Psalm 83), which either causes or is caused by Israel's desire to return to God and rebuild the Temple. This spiritual awakening is also identified in Ezekiel's Valley of the Dry Bones prophecy (Ezekiel 37:23-28).

Also tied to this series is the prediction of Christ's crucifixion. The rebuilding of Jerusalem in 444 BC (Nehemiah 2:1-8) is the start of Daniel's seventy sevens prophecy (Daniel 9:24-27), where the Messiah was to be put to death at the conclusion of 69 sevens ("What are the seventy sevens in Daniel 9:24-27?", 2020). Adding sixty-nine sevens, or 483 360-day biblical years, from the time Jerusalem was rebuilt, results in the prediction that Christ would be crucified or cut off in 33 AD. Based on the start of John the Baptist's ministry, Emperor Tiberius' reign, and Pontius

Pilate's rule, many scholars have concluded through historical methods that Jesus was crucified in 30 AD ("In what year did Jesus die?", 2020), which would be exactly 2000 years to the start of the proposed tribulation period. However, there is debate regarding the exact date that the decree was given to start Daniel's 483-year prophecy as well as the length of Jesus' ministry, which leads other scholars believe that Jesus was crucified in 33 AD ("In what year did Jesus die?", 2020). Given that scriptural support for both the application of numerology and the timing of Jesus' crucifixion to this context is unclear, it is best to consider these facts to be interesting coincidences rather than evidence either for or against a particular timeline of end-times events.

Application of the Jewish Feasts

Some scholars believe that the remaining major milestones for Jesus' return will be fulfilled on the fall Jewish feasts. This is because Jesus fulfilled the spring Jewish feasts with His first coming. Jesus fulfilled the Feast of Passover (Leviticus 23:4-8; Exodus 12) with His crucifixion as the perfect Passover lamb, which He commemorated at the Passover meal by passing the elements and telling the disciples to eat of His body and drink of His blood (Matthew 26:17–27). The Feast of Unleavened Bread (Deuteronomy 16:3; Numbers 9:11) was fulfilled through His sinless life. Jesus then fulfilled the Feast of Firstfruits (Leviticus 23:9–14; Deuteronomy 26:1–11) with His resurrection because He was the "firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep (1 Corinthians 15:20, HCSB)." The primary focus for the Feast of Weeks (Leviticus 23:15-22), or Pentecost, is gratitude to God for the harvest and reminds believers of Jesus' promise to send "another helper" (John 14:16) who would indwell believers and empower them for ministry. This was fulfilled when the Apostles received Holy Spirit 50 days after Jesus' resurrection, guaranteeing that the promise of salvation and future resurrection will come to pass (Ephesians 1:13–14).

Therefore, in continuing this pattern, some scholars believe that Jesus will return for the Battle of Armageddon at the end of the tribulation period on the Feast of Trumpets (Leviticus

23:23-25; Numbers 29:1), or Rosh Hashanah, which commemorated the end of the agricultural and festival year. The trumpet blast signaled to Israel that they were entering a sacred season. In this context, this sacred season will begin with the Lord sounding a trumpet to begin the Battle of Armageddon (Zechariah 9:14). Next, according to this pattern, the tribulation period will end, and judgment will begin on Day of Atonement (Leviticus 23:26-32), or Yom Kippur. The Day of Atonement was the day the high priest went into the Holy of Holies each year to make an offering for the sins of Israel through the offering of two goats (Leviticus 16:1-34), which represents the sufficiency and completeness of the sacrifice of Christ. Finally, this pattern holds that the Millennial Reign will begin with the Feast of Tabernacles (Leviticus 23:33-42), or Booths. This feast signifies the time when Christ rules and reigns on earth where those allowed entrance into the Millennial Kingdom will “tabernacle” or dwell with Christ.

The dates for the timeline presented in Appendix A can be more precisely determined by incorporating the Jewish Feasts into this construct. The return of Christ can be used as the starting point for this exercise and all dates are based on the proposed timeline in Appendix A. By applying the fall Jewish feasts to the proposed timeline, Christ will return for the Battle of Armageddon with the Feast of Trumpets on September 10, 2037. The end of the tribulation period then ends on the Day of Atonement, which occurs on September 19, 2037. The Millennial Reign would then start with the Feast of Tabernacles on September 24, 2037.

Interestingly, the 75-day period where the Millennial Temple is built and the government is established concludes on December 3, 2037, which starts Chanukah, also known as the Festival of Lights. This festival is the Jewish holiday that commemorates the rededication of the Holy Temple (the Second Temple) in Jerusalem at the time of the Maccabean Revolt of the 2nd century BC. This seems to be an appropriate festival for this event. The Millennial Kingdom will last 1,000 calendar years, so using 365.25 days per year, eternity would be ushered in on October 2,

3037, which happens to fall on the Feast of Trumpets for that year. Finally, if the assumption that Satan is released after 1,000 biblical years is correct, then Satan's imprisonment would end 360,000 days after the end of the Great Tribulation. This would be May 14, 3023, which is the 1st day of Iyyar, and roughly 14 years prior to the end of the Millennial Reign.

Moving backward from the end of the tribulation period, the beginning of the Great Tribulation, which occurs at the midpoint of the tribulation period 1,260 days prior, happens during Passover on April 8, 2034. This means that the Antichrist will sign the peace treaty with Israel to start the tribulation period 1,260 days prior on the first day of Cheshvan on October 26, 2030. The Gog and Magog war must occur seven years prior to the start of the Great Tribulation, which means it must conclude by April 8, 2027, which is the first day of Nisan.

Probably the most controversial of these dates is that of the rapture. Bristow (2020) asserts that the rapture must also occur on the Feast of Trumpets per this construct because this feast is associated with the trumpet blast that signals the rapture (1 Thessalonians 4:16) and the coming Day of the Lord (Zephaniah 1:14-18; Matthew 24:30-31). According to Bristow (2020), Jesus' statement "concerning that day and hour no one knows—neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son—except the Father only (Matthew 24:36, HCSB)" is misinterpreted and that Jesus was not saying that the date of the rapture is not knowable, but instead was using a familiar Jewish figure of speech or idiom to refer to the Feast of Trumpets, noting that the "unusual fact about the Feast of Trumpets is that in the days of Jesus, no one knew the day or hour it began." The Jewish festivals for the coming month were sanctified for observance at the beginning of the new month by observing the new moon and the President of the Sanhedrin would publicly sanctify the start of the new month only after he was convinced that the new moon had arrived by the observation of two witnesses (Bristow, 2020). Because the Feast of Trumpets starts on the first day of the month of Tishri, no one could begin observing the festival until they heard from the President of the

Sanhedrin that it was sanctified (Bristow, 2020). According to this theory, the rapture must occur prior to the Gog and Magog war in April 2027, so the last possible date for the rapture would be at the Feast of Trumpets on September 12, 2026.

Interestingly, another theory predicts this date as well. According to Bristow (2020), God has a 7,000-year timeline for humanity, in which humanity has dominion for 6,000 years and Jesus reigns for 1,000 years. Bristow (2020) starts the timeline using Bishop Ussher's date for creation of 4004 BC. Bristow (2020) then postulates that Adam and Eve were given time to mature before the fall. Using Paul's comparison between Adam and Jesus (1 Corinthians 15:22,45) and noting that Jesus was "about thirty years of age" when He was tempted (Luke 3:23), Bristow (2020) concludes that Adam and Eve were tempted thirty years after creation. This would put the fall at 3974 BC. Bristow (2020) then called the next 2,000 years the Age of Chaos and the following 2,000 years the Age of the Law. These periods end 1974 BC and 26 AD respectively, with the Age of the Law ending when Jesus was baptized and started his three-and-a-half year ministry (Bristow, 2020). Bristow (2020) then states that the last 2000-year period of man, the Age of Grace, will end in 2026 with the rapture at the Feast of Trumpets.

There appears to be scriptural and historical support to apply the Jewish feasts to the events surrounding the return of Christ, the end of the tribulation period, and the start of the Millennial Reign. Although, as with any method for homing in on specific prophetic dates, one must use extreme caution because God's ways are not man's ways (Isaiah 55:8-9) and applying such constructs could be incorrect. Additionally, it seems clear that applying such constructs to the rapture is not scripturally sound. There are many references in scripture to always watch and be ready for Christ's return. The parables of the ten virgins (Matthew 25:1-13) and thief in the night (Luke 12:39-40) are just two examples. Pinning the rapture to the Feast of Trumpets means that one only must be watchful just prior to that feast, which is contrary to scripture. Also, having to

read into Jesus' statement that nobody knows the day or hour of the rapture as a symbolic reference to the Feast of Trumpets is contrary to biblical analysis, which states that the plain meaning of the text should be used unless there is an overriding reason not to do so.

Finally, the correlation of the rapture with the end of the 6,000-year Age of Man requires several assumptions to be valid for this theory to hold true and there is little scriptural support for this theory. Ussher's date of creation relies on the conformity with an expected 6,000 years of history (Faulkner, 2016), along with an offset in the timeline based on a proposed 30-year period before the fall for this assumption to remain valid. Without that additional 30-year offset, the 6,000-year timespan would have already expired. Additionally, Ussher stated that creation began on Rosh Hashana on October 23, 4004 BC. Faulkner (2026) notes that this would require the moon to be in a particular phase on that date, but "it would not be possible to ascertain the date from the moon's phase on the calendar that Ussher proposed that the ancient Hebrews used." Finally, Ussher's date of creation does not match the biblical timeline detailed in Appendix B. Therefore, it would not be prudent to rely on this theory to support the proposed end-times timeline.

Application of Historical Events

There is another potentially correlating event involving the Six-Day War. Scripture states: "Our lives last seventy years or, if we are strong, eighty years. Even the best of them are struggle and sorrow; indeed, they pass quickly and we fly away (Psalm 90, HCSB)." If the seventy-year lifespan described in this psalm can be taken to represent the lifespan of Israel in the last days and if the life of Israel began with the reacquisition of Jerusalem and Samaria (i.e., the West Bank) in 1967, then the death of the nation would occur seventy years later in 2037. This matches the time period described for the end of the final generation. Also, if it is valid to apply the seventy-year lifespan to Israel, it would help to explain why seventy years is allocated for punishment before

the seven-fold increase is imposed (cf. Jeremiah 25:8-12; Ezekiel 4:4-8; Leviticus 26:14-43) as one lifespan is allocated by God for repentance.

One concern with the proposed timeline is that if the Arab-Israeli war occurs somewhere between 2023 and 2026, the forty years of Egypt's desolation would extend well into the millennium. It is tempting to view the beginning of the millennium as a hard breakpoint for judgments such as this, but Salus (2019) does not see this as an issue and scripture does not preclude it. Additionally, adjusting the prophetic timeline to allow Egypt's judgment to conclude at the beginning of the millennium causes more problematic issues with the timeline than it solves.

Primarily, the Arab-Israeli war would need to occur 30 to 33 years prior to the beginning of the tribulation period. While the rapture of the church could still occur prior to the Arab-Israeli war, that would also be 30 to 33 years prior to the start of the tribulation period, which seems unlikely. This can be resolved by assuming that the spiritual awakening occurs closer to the beginning of the tribulation period. Here, the rapture could occur after the Arab-Israeli war and within close proximity to the tribulation period, just prior to the Gog and Magog War, and be the catalyst that brings about the spiritual awakening. One additional supporting factor for this scenario is the fact that there is much more time available for Israel to feel safe and disarm (Ezekiel 28:24-26, 38:8,11,14) because there are decades separating the Arab-Israeli war and the Gog and Magog war.

However, one significant argument against this scenario is that the timeline must start with the establishment of Israel as a nation in 1948, which would put Christ's return in 2068, the start of the tribulation period in 2061, the Gog and Magog War in 2057, and the Arab-Israeli war around 2028. If one agrees with the prophetic timeline for Christ's return in 2037 based on Jeremiah's and Ezekiel's prophecies outlined earlier, then this timeline cannot be correct. Additionally, by using the 1917 Balfour Declaration as the starting point, the Arab-Israeli war would have had to

have occurred in 1997, which provides further evidence that this interpretation is incorrect. Ezekiel's prophecy on the gathering of the bones (Ezekiel 37) also seems to fit better with the 1917 Balfour Declaration as a starting point as opposed to the establishment of Israel as a nation in 1948. Therefore, allowing Egypt's judgment to continue into the millennium seems more likely to be the correct interpretation.

An Alternative Interpretation of Scripture

Salus (2018) offers another unique interpretation of the tribulation period. This theory proposes that the start of the tribulation period does not need to start with the opening of the first seal because the start of the tribulation period only requires the establishment of the peace agreement between the Antichrist and Israel (Daniel 9:27). This does not necessarily occur when the Antichrist is identified with the opening of the first seal. According to this theory the first five seal judgments occur pre-tribulation. The first seal judgment must still occur after the rapture. Based on the chronology of the book of Revelation, the rapture is described when the church is brought to the throne room of God (Revelation 4:1-11) and it is after this that the scroll is handed to Jesus for Him to begin opening the seals (Revelation 5:1-14). The second, third, and fourth seal judgments still represent war, famine, and death respectively. The fifth seal judgment now represents those that are martyred after the rapture and before the beginning of the tribulation period by those of the harlot religion, rather than those that are martyred during the tribulation period.

According to Salus (2018), it is with the opening of the sixth seal that the tribulation period begins because this begins the day of wrath:

And they said to the mountains and to the rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of the One seated on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb, because the great day of Their wrath has come! And who is able to stand (Revelation 6:16-17, HCSB)?”

Based on this chronology and as shown in Figure 21 in Appendix A, the Arab-Israeli war, the rapture, and then the Gog and Magog war occur as before, followed by the formation of the ten-nation alliance that reconstitutes the Roman empire. Shortly after, the Antichrist rises to power with the opening of the first seal and in accordance with Daniel 7:24. There will be religious wars and famine where many are martyred for their beliefs, which will persuade Israel to sign a peace treaty with the Antichrist's world government, starting the tribulation period.

Additional support for this theory comes from Zephaniah: "Be silent in the presence of the Lord God, for the Day of the Lord is near (Zephaniah 1:7, HCSB)." This corresponds to the thirty minutes of silence when the seventh seal is opened (Revelation 8:1) and would seem to indicate that the tribulation period begins with the sealing of the 144,000 witnesses (Revelation 7:1-8), followed by the opening of the seventh seal, which then begins the trumpet judgments. This interpretation is not inconsistent with Salus' (2018) theory and may just be a refinement on it. It could be that with the opening of the sixth seal, humanity realizes that the tribulation period is about to start, and it is with the opening of the seventh seal, which ushers in the trumpet judgments (Revelation 8:2-6), that the tribulation period actually begins.

There are advantages to this chronology. It provides an explanation for why Israel makes this peace treaty, and it gives time for the Antichrist to come onto the scene and establish a world government. Also, it explains why the martyrs described in the fifth seal judgment cry out wondering when judgment avenging their blood would occur (Revelation 6:9-10) because it would still be unknown when the tribulation period would start. Additionally, if the tribulation period does not start until the opening of the sixth seal, this timeline could also explain why the fifth seal judgment martyrs are called out separately from the multitude of martyrs described as having come out of the great tribulation (Revelation 7:9,14). However, the phrase 'day of the Lord' identifies events that occur during a period of time at the end of history (Isaiah 7:18-25) when God's will

and purpose for mankind will be fulfilled (“What is the day of the Lord?”, 2020), which would include the seal judgments. This theory also does not appear to be a view supported by other biblical scholars, so it should be adopted with caution.

Final Remarks

It is with earnest hope that this analysis faithfully reflects the truth of scripture and does not add to nor take away from the word of God. One must always use extreme caution when attempting to align prophecy with history, and especially when one attempts to assign specific dates to future events. Some dates, such as the rapture, are unknowable (Matthew 24:36; Acts 1:7). For other events, it may be possible to make reasonable conclusions on the timing based on scripture (Acts 1:8). While this timeline seems to fit scripture, one must always be aware that the interpretation can be incorrect and that God will do things at His appointed time (Habakkuk 2:3), which may or may not be revealed (cf.; Genesis 7:4; Acts 1:7; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-4). Salus (2019) states that interpreting biblical prophecy is like looking through a water glass in that no matter how clear the glass is, the view is always distorted. Because of this, one must test all things (1 Thessalonians 5:20-21) rather than blindly accepting any scriptural interpretation, be willing to make adjustments as new scriptural facts are revealed, and not be dogmatic about prophetic interpretation.

Maintain Steadfast Endurance

During these last days, it is clear that the trials will continue to get worse before they get better as the world sinks deeper into depravity due to the sin nature of this last generation (Romans 1:18-32; 1 Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Timothy 3:1-9). This is true not only for those that must endure the tribulation period, but for those that will be saved from that through the rapture because the birth pangs that lead up to the tribulation period will continue to get more extreme and more frequent

(Matthew 24:4-8). It is imperative, then, that one faces these trials through faith and steadfast endurance (Philippians 4:12-13).

Enduring these trials does not mean merely surviving, but also being a light in the darkness, leading by example, and helping others to salvation by exposing them to the light of Christ (Luke 11:33-36; Ephesians 5:6-14) because people are longing for the answers that only Christ can provide. This can only occur if one first puts on the full armor of God to resist Satan's schemes and tactics:

For our battle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world powers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavens. This is why you must take up the full armor of God, so that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having prepared everything, to take your stand. Stand, therefore, with truth like a belt around your waist, righteousness like armor on your chest, and your feet sandaled with readiness for the gospel of peace. In every situation take the shield of faith, and with it you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is God's word. Pray at all times in the Spirit with every prayer and request, and stay alert in this with all perseverance and intercession for all the saints (Ephesians 6:12-18, HCSB).

In practical terms, this means paying all taxes and obeying all governmental authorities and laws that do not contradict God's laws, even if those rules are unjust (Romans 13:1-7; Hebrews 13:17). It also means showing respect and honoring leaders even if they are foolish and ungodly (1 Peter 2:15-17).

Additionally, one must maintain Christian ethics while faced with affliction by loving one another (Romans 12:9-18), knowing that these acts and sacrifices are building up treasures in heaven (Matthew 6:19-21), and remembering that vengeance and judgment are the Lord's purview

(Romans 12:19-21). While it is easy to become cold in the face of persecution and injustice, it is imperative that the temptation to respond in kind is resisted and to respond with love instead. This means having a servant mindset, working with integrity, and treating everyone fairly and with respect (Ephesians 6:5-9). This also means continuing to do God's will (Ephesians 5:15-21), not bowing to man's desires, even in the face of persecution (Philippians 2:5-11; Hebrews 12:7-11), and doing all this without complaint (James 1:2-4; Philippians 2:14-15). God brings discipline and trials into Christians' lives to root out that which He does not want in their lives, to make them more holy, and to transform them so that they are better able to serve the purposes for which He set them apart.

Through steadfast perseverance, one is then able to triumph over affliction and be blessed (James 5:11; Hebrews 10:32-36; 2 Corinthians 6:4) because "we know that affliction produces endurance, endurance produces proven character, and proven character produces hope (Romans 5:3-4, HCSB)." Focusing on this hope for eternity and faith in God is what provides the strength necessary to endure (Romans 8:18-27; Hebrews 12:1-2; 2 Thessalonians 3:5) and to find peace with God. The benefits of these trials may not be apparent while they occur, but they will help prepare Christians for their future assignments in the Millennial Kingdom and throughout eternity. Additionally, these trials will pale in comparison to the rewards that will be received in heaven for being faithful. God will also ensure that these burdens are not unbearable and can be handled through faith in Him.

So, for this very reason, "make every effort to supplement your faith with goodness, goodness with knowledge, knowledge with self-control, self-control with endurance, endurance with godliness, godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love (2 Peter 1:5-7)" so that the corruption of the world can be avoided. As these qualities increase, one not only is prevented from being useless or unfruitful for Christ in the present (2 Peter 1:8), but one also has

the assurance that they will ultimately triumph (Deuteronomy 20:4; Psalm 20:6-7, 44:6-7; 1 Corinthians 15:57) and reign with Christ for eternity (2 Timothy 2:11-13).

Jesus' Imminent Return

Over the last two thousand years believers have been told that the return of Christ is imminent. Unfortunately, this has caused people to lose the sense of urgency and more importantly, their preparedness for Christ's return. Peter wrote about this in his second letter:

Above all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, “Where is this ‘coming’ he promised? Ever since our ancestors died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation” (2 Peter 3:3-4).

Jesus also prophesied this in the parable of the ten virgins: “Since the groom was delayed, they all became drowsy and fell asleep (Matthew 25:5, HCSB).” The most important takeaway from this analysis is much broader than any of the specifics of the timeline itself. Regardless of whether the assumptions made in determining the prophetic timeline are correct, and especially for those concerning dates, if providing this timeline renews that sense of urgency and preparedness (Matthew 25:6-7), then the goal of this analysis has been achieved.

Jesus commanded this generation to watch for His return (cf. Mark 13:35-37) and used several parables to illustrate this point, including the ten virgins (Matthew 25:1-13), the thief in the night (Luke 12:39-40), and the master and his servants (Luke 12:35-38,42-46; Matthew 24:42-51). Peter also addressed this in his second letter (2 Peter 3:5-9). He reminded people that God works on His own time:

With the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a day is like a thousand years is like one day. The Lord does not delay His promise, as some understand delay, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish but all to come to repentance (2 Peter 3:8-9, HCSB).

This level of alertness allows one to be prepared and have the strength to endure the upcoming hardships (Luke 21:34-36), with the knowledge that the struggle is worth the rewards to be found in eternity (Romans 8:17-18) and that the Holy Spirit will also intercede to protect and provide additional strength during times of hardship (Romans 8:26-27). All the signs pointing to Christ's imminent return are present and this is the first generation for which this is true. So, look up now that these signs are seen (Luke 21:28) because the kingdom is near (Luke 21:29-33).

What is most important is that there are no preconditions that preclude the start of the Arab-Israeli war, and with it the rapture of the church. Therefore, it is critical that people realize that the bridegroom is here, and rapture is close at hand because being unprepared and missing this condemns one to living through the horrors of the tribulation period. Additionally, without repentance and acceptance of Jesus as one's savior though His completed work on the cross where He paid the price for all of man's sins – past, present, and future (cf. Ephesians 2:8-9; John 14:6; Acts 4:12, 16:31; Galatians 2:16; Hebrews 10:10; 1 John 2:2), the final result will be judgment and being cast into the lake of fire for eternity (cf. Romans 6:23; John 3:36; Revelation 20:11-15). Salvation cannot come from one's works (cf. Isaiah 64:6; Romans 3:28, 4:5, 5:1,8; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:4-5). Only time will tell if this interpretation of scripture and the prophetic timeline is correct. However, one fact remains true; while the date of the rapture is unknown and unknowable, the return of Jesus truly is imminent. Therefore, be prepared by having faith in Christ because He will return as a thief in the night (1 Thessalonians 5:1-11). Maranatha!

Appendix A

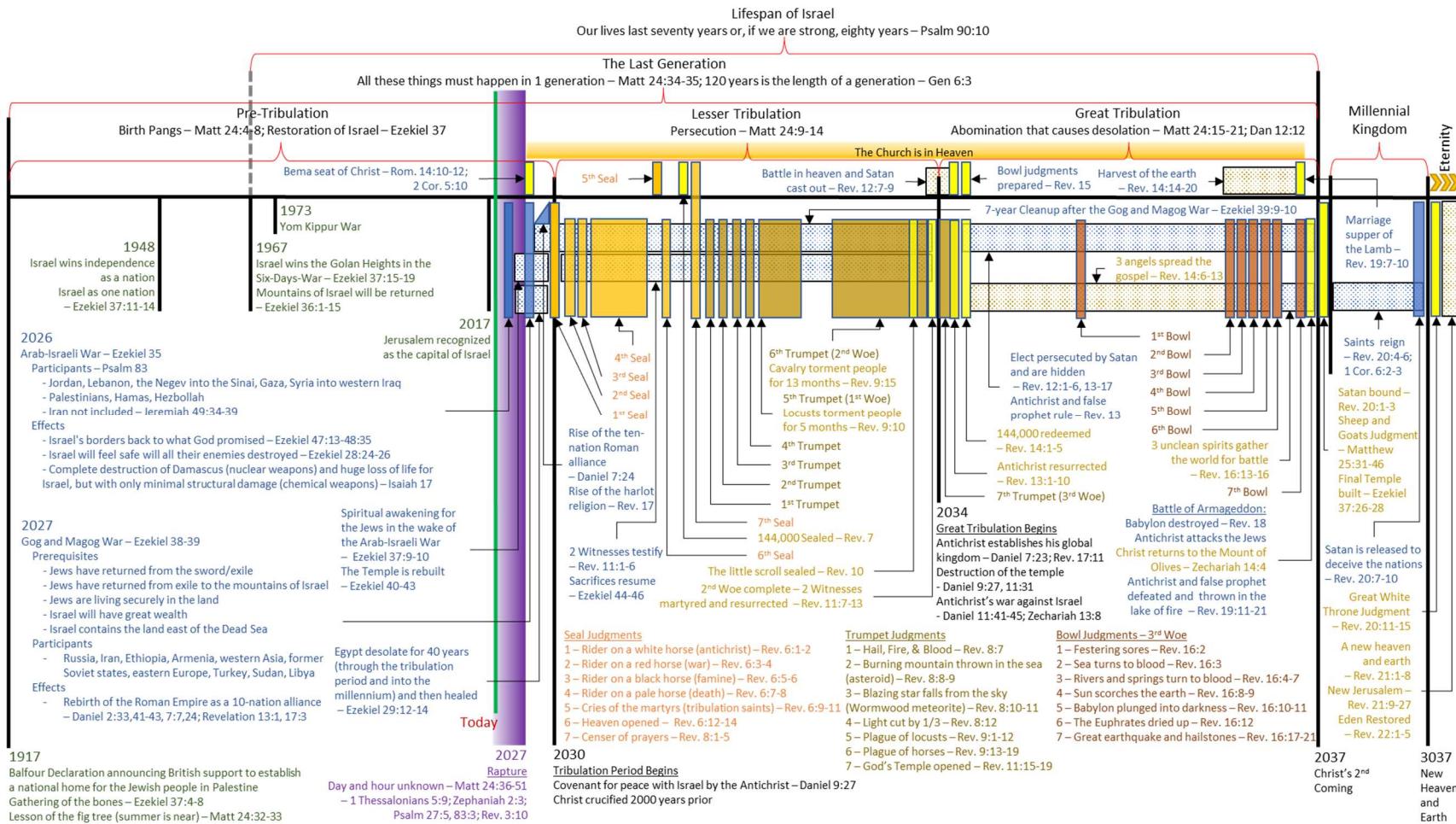


Figure 20: Timeline of End-Times Events

CHRIST'S IMMINENT RETURN

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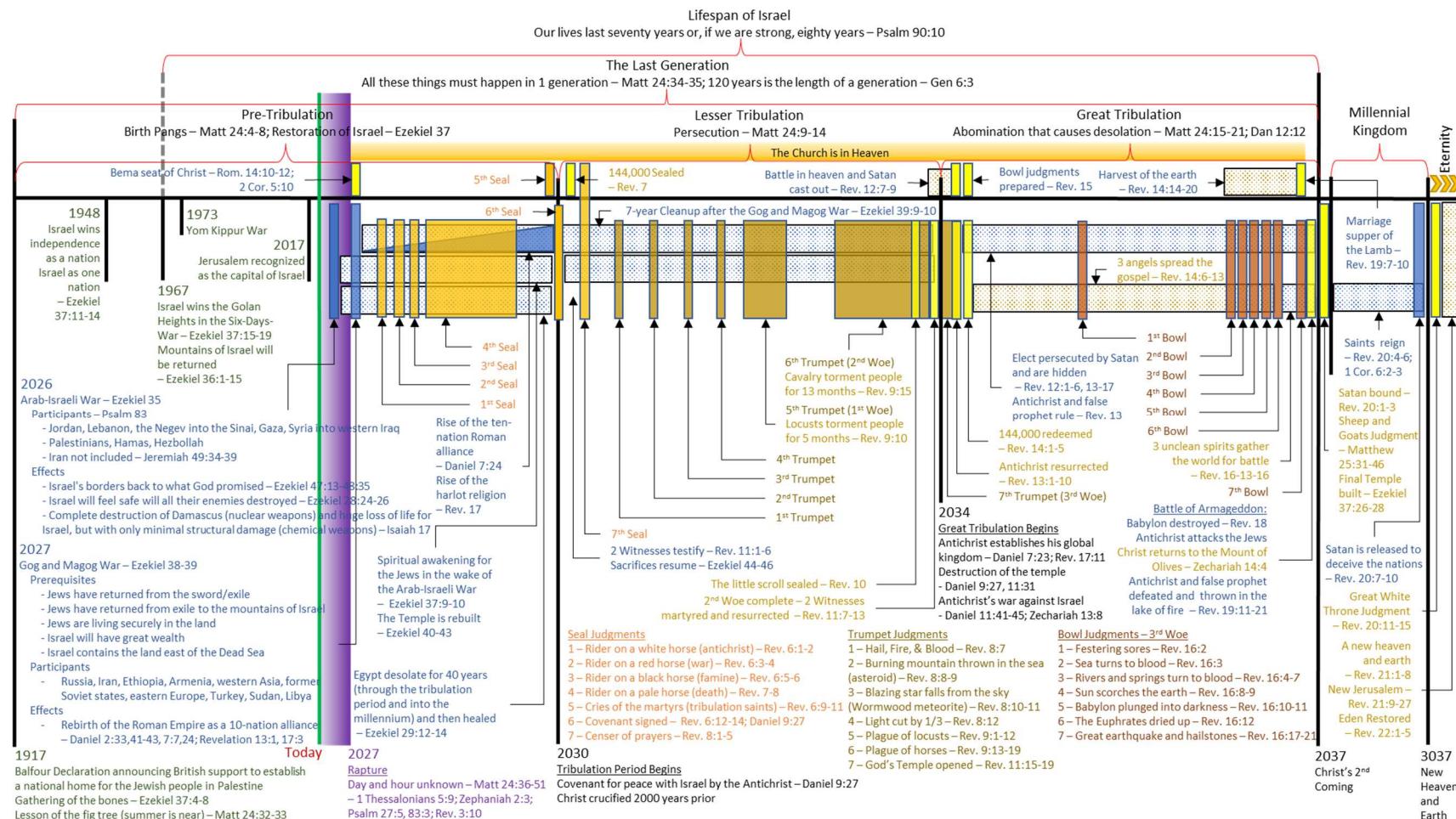


Figure 21: Alternative Timeline of End-Times Events

Appendix B

The dates in the tables that are listed in red cannot be validated by scripture and are estimated. Additional notes are provided for these entries to give additional context and clarity. The entries in brown are sourced from non-canonical scripture and the source references are listed. The entries in blue represent historical references. All other items listed in the tables in black are validated by scripture and the biblical source references are listed. The items highlighted in green or purple are biblically sourced and validated prophetic events that are critical to the timeline analysis. The conversion of the dates from the years after creation (A.M.) to Gregorian calendar dates (B.C./A.D.) is based on known historical dates of biblical events.

The Pre-Diluvian Era Person or Event	Date Born/Started		Date Died/Ended		Age or Duration	Scripture References
	A.M.	B.C./A.D.	A.M.	B.C./A.D.		
Adam – Created by God on the 6th day	1	-4165	931	-3235	930	Gn. 1:26, 5:4-5
The timing of The Fall after creation is unknown, but God could have given Adam and Eve time to mature before being tempted. Jesus was tempted when he was about 30 years old.	31	-4135				Gn. 3:1-7; Lk. 3:23
Enoch's 1st Week: Justice and righteousness still endured	31	-4135	731	-3435	700	Enoch 93:3
Seth – Born when Adam was 130 years old	131	-4035	1043	-3123	912	Gn. 5:3,7-8
Enosh – Born when Seth was 105 years old	236	-3930	1141	-3025	905	Gn. 5:6,10-11
Kenan – Born when Enosh was 90 years old	326	-3840	1236	-2930	910	Gn. 5:9,13-14
Mehalalel – Born when Kenan was 70 years old	396	-3770	1291	-2875	895	Gn. 5:12,16-17
Jared – Born when Mehalalel was 65 years old	461	-3705	1423	-2743	962	Gn. 5:15,19-20
Enoch – Born when Jared was 162 years old	623	-3543	988	-3178	365	Gn. 5:18,22-24
Methuselah – Born when Enoch was 65 years old	688	-3478	1657	-2509	969	Gn. 5:21,26-27
Enoch's 2nd Week: The fallen angels corrupt the earth and great wickedness rises	731	-3435	1431	-2735	700	Enoch 93:4
200 angels fall from heaven and take human wives creating the Nephilim	731	-3435				Gn. 6:1-4; Enoch 106:13-14
Lamech – Born when Methuselah was 187 years old	875	-3291	1652	-2514	777	Gn. 5:25,30-31
Noah – Born when Lamech was 182 years old	1057	-3109	2007	-2159	950	Gn. 5:28-29; 9:28
Enoch prophesies that the giants will be destroyed	1088	-3078				Enoch 10:10
Enoch's 3rd Week: The flood destroys the earth and God makes His covenant with Abraham to establish the nation of Israel forever	1431	-2735	2131	-2035	700	Enoch 93:5
Shem – Born when Noah was 500 years old	1557	-2609	2159	-2007	602	Gn. 5:32; 11:10-11
The fallen angels are bound until judgement	1588	-2578	7188	3023	5600	Enoch 10:12
The flood began when Noah was 600 years old on the 17th day of the 2nd month and ended with the ark resting on Mt. Ararat on the 17th day of the 7th month, mountains being visible on the 1st day of the 10th month, the water drying up by the 1st day of the 1st month of the following year, and completely dry by the 27th day of the 2nd month so that Noah could leave the ark	1657	-2509	1658	-2508	1	Gn. 7:6,11 Gn. 7:12,17 Gn. 7:24 Gn. 8:3-4 Gn. 8:5 Gn. 8:13 Gn. 8:14-15

Figure 22: The Pre-Diluvian Era

NOTE 1: The date for the fall of Adam and Eve after creation (Genesis 3:1-7) is unknown. One theory is that God gave them time to mature before tempting them. According to this theory, God waited 30 years to tempt Adam and Eve just as He waited about 30 years to allow Jesus to be tempted (Luke 3:23).

NOTE 2: Enoch describes the fall of the angels from heaven (Genesis 6:1-4; Enough 106:13-14), but the date for this event is unknown. Enoch also segments the 7,000 years of creation into ten 700-year weeks. Enoch's second week includes the time when the fallen angels corrupt the earth (Enoch 93:4). Given that the Book of Enoch is non-canonical, one can only speculate at the veracity of the account and no formal conclusions can be made regarding the timing of any events. Therefore, while the date of the angels' fall is placed at the start of Enoch's second week, it is highly speculative and provided only for contextual reference.

NOTE 3: Enoch prophesied that the Nephilim would be destroyed within 500 years (Enoch 10:10). Since they were destroyed in the flood (Genesis 7:6-24), this prophecy most likely occurred at the date given, but there is no scriptural validation for this.

NOTE 4: Enoch states that the fallen angels are bound for 70 generations (Enoch 10:12). The date for when these angels are bound is unknown and there are no scriptural references to validate any assumptions on the timing of this event. Additionally, there are several possibilities for the length of a generation. Based on the end date for the Millennial Reign when these angels would be released and the assumption that a generation is 80 years (Psalm 90:10), the date for when the fallen angels were bound as listed seems reasonable, given that it is prior to the flood and after Enoch's prophecy that the Nephilim will be destroyed.

The Post-Diluvian Era Person or Event	Date Born/Started		Date Died/Ended		Age or Duration	Scripture References
	A.M.	B.C./A.D.	A.M.	B.C./A.D.		
Arpachshad – Born 2 years after the flood	1659	-2507	2097	-2069	438	Gn. 11:10,13
Shelah – Born when Arpachshad was 35 years old	1694	-2472	2127	-2039	433	Gn. 11:12,15
Eber – Born when Shelah was 30 years old	1724	-2442	2188	-1978	464	Gn. 11:14,17
Peleg – Born when Eber was 34 years old	1758	-2408	1997	-2169	239	Gn. 11:16,19
Reu – Born when Peleg was 30 years old	1788	-2378	2027	-2139	239	Gn. 11:18,21
Serug – Born when Reu was 32 years old	1820	-2346	2050	-2116	230	Gn. 11:20,23
Nahor – Born when Serug was 30 years old	1850	-2316	1998	-2168	148	Gn. 11:22,25
Terah – Born when Nahor was 29 years old	1879	-2287	2084	-2082	205	Gn. 11:24,32
Abram – Born when Terah was 70 years old	1949	-2217	2124	-2042	175	Gn. 11:26; 25:7
Sarah – Born 10 years after Abram	1959	-2207	2086	-2080	127	Gn. 17:17; 23:1

Figure 23: The Post-Diluvian Era

The Time of the Patriarchs Person or Event	Date Born/Started		Date Died/Ended		Age or Duration	Scripture References
	A.M.	B.C./A.D.	A.M.	B.C./A.D.		
Abram left Haran when he was 75 years old	2024	-2142				Gn. 12:4
Ismael – Born to Hagar when Abram was 86 years old	2035	-2131	2172	-1994	137	Gn. 16:16; 25:17
Abram was renamed Abraham when he was 99 years old	2048	-2118				Gn. 17:1-5
Isaac – Born to Sarah when Abraham was 100 years old	2049	-2117	2229	-1937	180	Gn. 21:5; 35:28
Isaac married Rebekah when he was 40 years old	2089	-2077				Gn. 25:20
Esau – Born when Isaac was 60 years old	2109	-2057				Gn. 25:24-26
Jacob – Born when Isaac was 60 years old	2109	-2057	2256	-1910	147	Gn. 25:24-26; 47:28
Enoch's 4th Week: God gives Moses the Law on Mt. Sinai and the Arc of the Covenant built	2131	-2035	2831	-1335	700	Enoch 93:6
Esau married Judith and Basemath when he was 40 years old	2149	-2017				Gn. 26:34
Joseph – Born when Jacob was 91 years old	2200	-1966	2310	-1856	110	Gn. 41:46; 47:9,11; 50:22
Joseph entered Pharaoh's service when he was 30 years old	2230	-1936				Gn. 41:46
Jacob and his family settled in Egypt when he was 130 years old	2239	-1927				Gn. 47:9,11
Israel's bondage in Egypt began 30 years after the Israelites settled in Egypt	2269	-1897	2669	-1497	400	Gn. 15:13; Ex. 12:40

Figure 24: The Time of the Patriarchs

The Time of the Exodus Person or Event	Date Born/Started		Date Died/Ended		Age or Duration	Scripture References
	A.M.	B.C./A.D.	A.M.	B.C./A.D.		
Moses – Born 80 years before the exodus	2589	-1577	2709	-1457	120	Ex. 7:7; Dt. 34:7
Aaron – Born 83 years before the exodus	2586	-1580	2709	-1457	123	Ex. 7:7; Nm. 33:38-39
Moses rescued an oppressed Israelite by killing an Egyptian, then flees to Midian, where he fathered two sons when he was approaching 40 years old	2628	-1538				Ac. 7:23-24,29
Caleb – Born 40 years before scouting the promised land and Israel refuses to take possession	2631	-1535				Js 14:7
Joshua – Died at the age of 110 the same year Eleazar died	2639	-1527	2749	-1417	110	Js 24:29,33; Jg 2:8
Eleazar – Died at the age of 98 when the Arc of God was captured by the Philistines	2651	-1515	2749	-1417	98	Js 24:33; 1Sa 4:15,17-18
Moses sees the burning bush, talks to God on Mt. Sinai, and is sent back to Egypt to lead the Israelites out of bondage	2668	-1498				Ac. 7:30
The Israelites are freed from bondage in Egypt	2669	-1497				Ex. 12:40
Israel reaches the border of Canaan after wandering the wilderness for 40 years	2709	-1457				Ex. 16:35
A census is taken at Mt. Sinai in the 2nd year after leaving Egypt	2670	-1496				Nm. 1:1
The Israelites travel from the Wilderness of Sinai to the Wilderness of Paran in the 2nd year after leaving Egypt	2670	-1496				Nm. 10:11
The Israelites scout the promised land and refuse to take possession of it. God judges them for their rebellion and then they are routed when they attempt to take possession of the land	2671	-1495				Nm. 14; Js 14:7
Israel wanders the desert for 38 years	2671	-1495	2709	-1457	38	Dt. 2:14; Ac. 7:36
Moses explains the law to the Israelites on the 1st day of the 11th month in the 40th year after leaving Egypt	2709	-1457				Dt. 1:3
Eleazar serves as high priest after Aaron dies	2709	-1457	2749	-1417	40	1Sm 4:18
The Israelites conquer Canaan after Passover in the 1st year after reaching Canaan	2710	-1456	2716	-1450	6	Js 5:10-6:21; 14:10
Israel's inheritance in Canaan is divided and Caleb gets his inheritance when Caleb was 85 years old	2716	-1450				Js 14:10

Figure 25: The Time of the Exodus

The Time of the Judges Person or Event	Date Born/Started		Date Died/Ended		Age or Duration	Scripture References
	A.M.	B.C./A.D.	A.M.	B.C./A.D.		
Samuel – Born during the time Eleazar was high priest and died after anointing David as king, but before Saul's death	2740	-1426	3090	-1076	350	1Sa. 1:20; 25:1
Israel's 1st apostacy – The Lord sold them to King Cushan-rishathaim of Aram-naharaim	2741	-1425	2749	-1417	8	Jg. 3:8
The Ark of the Covenant is captured by the Philistines the year that Eleazar died	2749	-1417				1Sa. 4:11,17-18
Othniel is raised as Israel's 1st judge	2749	-1417	2789	-1377	40	Jg. 3:9-11
The Philistines keep the Ark of the Covenant in Kiriat-jearim for 7 months	2750	-1416	2770	-1396	20	1Sa. 6:1; 7:2
Samuel judged for Israel	2770	-1396	3064	-1102	294	1Sa. 7:2,6,13,15
Israel's 2nd apostacy – The Lord gave King Eglon of Moab power over Israel	2771	-1395	2789	-1377	18	Jg. 3:14
Ehud is raised as Israel's 2nd judge	2789	-1377	2869	-1297	80	Jg. 3:30
Enoch's 5th Week: Solomon's Temple built	2831	-1335	3531	-635	700	Enoch 93:7
Shamgar is raised as Israel's 3rd judge after Ehud	2869	-1297	2869	-1297	0	Jg. 3:31
Israel's 3rd apostacy – The Lord sold them to King Jabin of Canaan	2869	-1297	2889	-1277	20	Jg. 4:1,3
Deborah and Barak are raised as Israel's 4th judge	2889	-1277	2929	-1237	40	Jg. 5:31
Israel's 4th apostacy – The Lord handed them over to Midian	2922	-1244	2929	-1237	7	Jg. 6:1
Gidean is raised as Israel's 5th judge	2929	-1237	2969	-1197	40	Jg. 8:28
Israel's 5th apostacy – Abimelech is made king	2969	-1197	2972	-1194	3	Jg. 8:33-9:6,22,52-57
Tola is raised as Israel's 6th judge	2972	-1194	2995	-1171	23	Jg. 10:1-2
Jair is raised as Israel's 7th judge	2995	-1171	3017	-1149	22	Jg. 10:3
Israel's 6th apostacy – The Lord sold them to the Philistines and the Ammonites	2998	-1168	3016	-1150	18	Jg. 10:6-8; 11:26
Jephthah is raised as Israel's 8th judge – 300 years after the Israelites entered the promised land	3016	-1150	3022	-1144	6	Jg. 11:4-11,26; 12:7
Ibzan is raised as Israel's 9th judge	3022	-1144	3029	-1137	7	Jg. 12:8-9
Israel's 7th apostacy – The Lord handed them over to the Philistines	3024	-1142	3064	-1102	40	Jg. 13:1
Elon is raised as Israel's 10th judge	3029	-1137	3039	-1127	10	Jg. 12:11
Saul – Born 30 years prior to becoming King of Israel	3034	-1132	3106	-1060	72	1Sa. 13:1
Abdon is raised as Israel's 11th judge	3039	-1127	3047	-1119	8	Jg. 12:13-14
Samson is raised as Israel's 12th judge until the time of the Kings	3044	-1122	3064	-1102	20	Jg. 15:20; 16:31

Figure 26: The Time of the Judges

The Time of the Kings Person or Event	Date Born/Started		Date Died/Ended		Age or Duration	Scripture References
	A.M.	B.C/A.D	A.M.	B.C/A.D		
Saul reigns as Israel's 1st king 85 years prior to Solomon starting construction of the 1st Temple	3064	-1102	3106	-1060	42	1Sa. 10:1,17-24; 13:1; 1Ki. 6:1
Ish-bosheth – Born 40 years prior to becoming King of Israel after Saul	3066	-1100	3108	-1058	42	2Sa. 2:10; 4:7
David – Born 30 years prior to becoming King	3076	-1090	3146	-1020	70	2Sa. 5:4-5
Ish-bosheth reigns as King of Israel, except Judah	3106	-1060	3108	-1058	2	2Sa. 2:10; 4:7
David reigns as King of Judah in Hebron	3106	-1060	3113	-1053	7	2Sa. 2:11; 5:5; 1Ch. 29:27; 1Ki. 2:11
David reigns as King over all Israel and Judah in Jerusalem	3113	-1053	3146	-1020	33	2Sa. 5:5; 1Ch. 29:27; 1Ki. 2:11
Rehoboam – Born to Solomon 41 years prior to becoming King	3145	-1021	3203	-963	58	1Ki. 14:21; 2Ch. 12:13
Solomon reigns as King of Israel	3146	-1020	3186	-980	40	1Ki. 6:1; 11:42; 2Ch. 9:30
Solomon constructs the 1st Temple 480 years after leaving Egypt	3149	-1017	3156	-1010	7	1Ki. 6:1,37-38; 2Ch. 3:2
Solomon constructs his palace complex	3156	-1010	3169	-997	13	1Ki. 7:1; 9:10; 2Ch. 8:1
The Ark of the Covenant is placed in the Temple	3169	-997				1Ki. 8:1-2; 2Ch. 5:2-3

Figure 27: The Time of the Kings

The Time of the Northern Kingdom - Israel Person or Event	Date Born/Started		Date Died/Ended		Age or Duration	Scripture References
	A.M.	B.C./A.D.	A.M.	B.C./A.D.		
Jeroboam reigns as King of Israel after the death of King Solomon	3186	-980	3208	-958	22	1Ki. 12:20; 14:20
Nadab's reign as King of Israel began in the 2nd year of Judah's King Asa	3208	-958	3209	-957	1	1Ki. 14:20; 15:25
Baasha's reign as King of Israel began in the 3rd year of Judah's King Asa	3209	-957	3232	-934	23	1Ki. 15:28,33
Elah's reign as King of Israel began in the 26th year of Judah's King Asa	3232	-934	3233	-933	1	1Ki. 16:8
Zim's reign as King of Israel began in the 27th year of Judah's King Asa	3233	-933	3233	-933	0	1Ki. 16:10,15
The Northern Kingdom is divided between Tibni and Omri	3233	-933	3237	-929	4	1Ki. 16:21-22
Omri's reign as King of Israel began in the 31st year of Judah's King Asa	3237	-929	3248	-918	11	1Ki. 16:23
Israel's King Baasha went to war against Judah in the 36th year of Judah's King Asa	3231	-935				1Ki. 15:16-17,32; 2Ch. 16:1
Samaria becomes the capital of the Northern Kingdom in the 6th year of King Omri	3243	-923				1Ki. 16:23-24
Ahab's reign as King of Israel began in the 38th year of Judah's King Asa	3244	-922	3265	-901	21	1Ki. 16:29
Ahaziah's reign as King of Israel began in the 17th year of Judah's King Jehoshaphat	3265	-901	3266	-900	1	1Ki. 22:51
Joram's reign as King of Israel began in the 17th year of Judah's King Jehoshaphat	3266	-900	3279	-887	13	2Ki. 1:17; 3:1
Jehu's reign as King of Israel began after Joram's reign	3279	-887	3308	-858	29	1Ki. 19:16; 2Ki. 9:1-10; 10:36
Jehoahaz's reign as King of Israel began in the 23rd year of Judah's King Joash	3308	-858	3324	-842	16	2Ki. 13:1
Jehoash's reign as King of Israel began in the 37th year of Judah's King Joash	3324	-842	3340	-826	16	2Ki. 13:10
Jeroboam's reign as King of Israel began in the 15th year of Judah's King Amaziah	3340	-826	3381	-785	41	2Ki. 14:23
Zechariah's reign as King of Israel began in the 38th year of Judah's King Azariah	3403	-763	3404	-762	1	2Ki. 15:8
Shallum's reign as King of Israel began in the 39th year of Judah's King Azariah	3404	-762	3404	-762	0	2Ki. 15:13
Menahem's reign as King of Israel began in the 39th year of Judah's King Azariah	3404	-762	3415	-751	11	2Ki. 15:17
Pekahiah's reign as King of Israel began in the 50th year of Judah's King Azariah	3415	-751	3417	-749	2	2Ki. 15:23
Pekah's reign as King of Israel began in the 52nd year of Judah's King Azariah	3417	-749	3437	-729	20	2Ki. 15:27
Hoshea's reign as King of Israel began in the 20th year of Judah's King Jotham	3437	-729	3446	-720	9	2Ki. 15:30; 17:1
Shalmaneser, King of Assyria, marched against Samaria and besieged it in the 4th year of Judah's King Hezekiah	3443	-723	3446	-720	3	2Ki. 18:9
The Northern Kingdom falls to Assyria and Samaria is captured in the 6th year of Judah's King Hezekiah	3446	-720				2Ki. 17:6, 18:10

Figure 28: The Time of the Northern Kingdom – Israel

NOTE 1: “In the thirty-sixth year of Asa, Israel’s King Baasha went to war against Judah (2 Chronicles 16:1).” However, King Baasha’s reign started in the 3rd year of King Asa and reigned for 24 years (1 Kings 15:33), which means that King Baasha’s reign end in the 27th year of King Asa. Therefore, King Baasha could not go to war against Judah in the 36th year of King Asa. This could be a transcription error in scripture.

NOTE 2: King Ahab’s father Omri reigned as king of the Northern Kingdom for 12 years, starting in the 31st year of King Asa (1 Kings 16:23). However, Ahab became king in the 38th year of King Asa (1 Kings 16:29), after only seven years. It is possible that both Omri and Ahab co-reigned the Northern Kingdom until King Ahab’s death.

NOTE 3: King Zechariah’s reign begins in the 38th year of King Azariah (2 Kings 15:8). This leaves a 22-year gap between the end of King Jeroboam’s reign and the start of King Zechariah’s reign.

NOTE 4: Scripture states that King Hoshea’s reign began in the 20th year of King Jotham (2 Kings 15:30) and in the 12th year of King Ahaz (2 Kings 17:1). Both cannot be true, and the timing is correct with his reign beginning in the 20th year of King Jotham. The reference to King Ahaz is most likely a transcription error.

The Time of the Southern Kingdom - Judah Person or Event	Date Born/Started		Date Died/Ended		Age or Duration	Scripture References
	A.M.	B.C./A.D.	A.M.	B.C./A.D.		
Rehoboam's reign as King of Judah after the death of King Solomon	3186	-980	3203	-963	17	1Ki. 11:43; 14:21; 2Ch 9:31; 12:13
King Shishak of Egypt went to war against Jerusalem and seized the treasures of the Lord's temple and the treasures of the royal palace	3191	-975				1Ki. 14:25-26; 2Ch. 12:2
Abijam's reign as King of Judah began in the 18th year of Israel's King Jeroboam	3203	-963	3206	-960	3	1Ki. 14:31; 15:1-2; 2Ch. 13:1-2
Asa's reign as King of Judah began in the 20th year of Israel's King Jeroboam	3206	-960	3247	-919	41	1Ki. 15:9-10; 2Ch. 14:1; 16:13
Jehoshaphat – Born 35 years prior to becoming King	3212	-954	3271	-895	59	1Ki. 22:42; 2Ch. 20:31
The tribes of Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon gathered and entered into a covenant to seek the Lord	3220	-946				2Ch. 15:9-12
Jehoram – Born 32 years prior to becoming King	3239	-927	3278	-888	39	2Ki. 8:17; 2Ch. 21:5
Jehoshaphat's reign as King of Judah began in the 4th year of Israel's King Ahab	3247	-919	3271	-895	24	1Ki. 22:41-42; 2Ch. 17:1; 20:31
Jehoshaphat sent his officials to teach in the cities of Judah in the 3rd year of his reign	3250	-916				2Ch. 17:7-9
Ahaziah – Born 22 years prior to becoming King	3256	-910	3279	-887	23	2Ki. 8:26; 2Ch. 22:2
Jehoram's reign as King of Judah began in the 5th year of Israel's King Joram	3271	-895	3278	-888	7	2Ki. 8:16-17; 2Ch. 21:5
Ahaziah's reign as King of Judah began in the 12th year of Israel's King Joram	3278	-888	3279	-887	1	2Ki. 8:25-26; 9:24-28; 2Ch. 22:2
Athaliah usurps the throne as Queen of the Southern Kingdom after the death of Ahaziah	3279	-887	3286	-880	7	2Ki. 11:1-3; 2Ch. 22:12
Joash – Born 7 years prior to becoming King	3279	-887	3326	-840	47	2Ch. 24:1
Joash's reign as King of Judah began in the 7th year of Israel's King Jehu	3286	-880	3326	-840	40	2Ki. 12:1; 2Ch. 24:1
Amaziah – Born 25 years prior to becoming King	3301	-865	3355	-811	54	2Ki. 14:2,17; 2Ch. 25:1,25
The repairs to the temple begin in the 23rd year of King Joash	3308	-858				2Ki. 12:6-8
Amaziah's reign as King of Judah began in the 2nd year of Israel's King Jehoash	3326	-840	3355	-811	29	2Ki. 14:1-2; 2Ch. 25:1
Azariah (Uzziah) – Born 16 years prior to becoming King	3350	-816	3418	-748	68	2Ki. 14:21; 15:2; 2Ch. 26:1,3
Azariah's (Uzziah's) reign as King of Judah began in the 27th year of Israel's King Jeroboam	3366	-800	3418	-748	52	2Ki. 15:1-2; 2Ch. 26:3
Isaiah's ministry occurred during the reigns of Kings Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah	3366	-800	3469	-697	103	Is. 1:1
Hosea's ministry occurred during the reigns of Kings Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah	3366	-800	3469	-697	103	Ho. 1:1
Jotham – Born 25 years prior to becoming King	3393	-773	3434	-732	41	2Ki. 15:32; 2Ch. 27:1
Ahaz – Born 20 years prior to becoming King	3414	-752	3450	-716	36	2Ki. 16:2; 2Ch. 28:1
Hezekiah – Born 25 years prior to becoming King	3415	-751	3469	-697	54	2Ki. 18:2; 2Ch. 29:1
Jotham's reign as King of Judah began in the 2nd year of Israel's King Pekah	3418	-748	3434	-732	16	2Ki. 15:32-33; 2Ch. 27:1
Isaiah's Call and Mission began in the year that King Uzziah died	3418	-748				Is. 6:1
Micah's ministry occurred during the reigns of Kings Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah	3418	-748	3469	-697	51	Mi. 1:1
Ahaz's reign as King of Judah began in the 17th year of Israel's King Pekah	3434	-732	3450	-716	16	2Ki. 16:1-2; 2Ch. 28:1
Hezekiah's reign as King of Judah began in the 3rd year of Israel's King Hoshea	3440	-726	3469	-697	29	2Ki. 18:1-2; 2Ch. 29:1
Hezekiah opened the doors of the Lord's temple and repaired them in the 1st year of his reign	3440	-726				2Ch. 29:3

Figure 29: The Time of the Southern Kingdom – Judah

NOTE 1: King Azariah's (Uzziah's) reign begins in the 27th year of King Jeroboam (2 Kings 15:1). This leaves an 11-year gap between the end of King Amaziah's reign and the start of King Azariah's (Uzziah's) reign.

NOTE 2: King Hezekiah's reign begins in the 3rd year of King Hoshea (2 Kings 18:1). However, this is 10 years before the end of King Ahaz's reign. It is possible that both Hezekiah and Ahaz co-reigned the Southern Kingdom until King Ahaz's death. This can also be resolved if King Azariah's reign begins eleven years earlier, closing the gap between the start of his reign and the end of King Amaziah's reign.

The Time of Judah after the Fall of the Northern Kingdom Person or Event	Date Born/Started		Date Died/Ended		Age or Duration	Scripture References
	A.M.	B.C./A.D.	A.M.	B.C./A.D.		
Isaiah delivered his oracle against Philistia in the year that King Ahaz died	3450	-716				Is. 14:28-32
Sennacherib invaded in the 14th year of King Hezekiah	3454	-712				2Ki. 18:13; Is. 36:1
Manasseh – Born 12 years prior to becoming King	3457	-709	3524	-642	67	2Ki. 21:1; 2Ch. 33:1
Manasseh's reign as King of Judah began in the year that King Hezekiah died	3469	-697	3524	-642	55	2Ki. 21:1; 2Ch. 33:1
Amon – Born 22 years prior to becoming King	3502	-664	3526	-640	24	2Ki. 21:19; 2Ch. 33:21
Josiah – Born 8 years prior to becoming King	3518	-648	3557	-609	39	2Ki. 22:1
Amon's reign as King of Judah began in the year that King Manasseh died	3524	-642	3526	-640	2	2Ki. 21:19; 2Ch. 33:21
Josiah's reign as King of Judah began in the year that King Amon died	3526	-640	3557	-609	31	2Ki. 22:1; 2Ch. 34:1
Enoch's 6th Week: The Jews will be blinded and the Messiah will ascend	3531	-635	4231	66	700	Enoch 93:8
Jehoiakim – Born 25 years prior to becoming King	3532	-634	3568	-598	36	2Ki. 23:36; 2Ch. 36:5
King Josiah began to seek the God of his ancestor David in the 8th year of his reign	3534	-632				2Ch. 34:3
Jehoahaz – Born 23 years prior to becoming King	3534	-632	3557	-609	23	2Ki. 23:31; 2Ch. 36:2
King Josiah began to cleanse Judah and Jerusalem of the high places, the Asherah poles, the carved images, and the cast images in the 12th year of his reign	3538	-628				2Ch. 34:3
Jeremiah's ministry occurred from the 13th year of the reign of King Josiah until the 5th month in the 11th year of King Zedekiah	3539	-627	3579	-587	40	Je. 1:2,25:3
King Josiah repairs the Temple, the book of the law is found, and Passover starts to be observed again in the 18th year of his reign	3544	-622				2Ki. 22:3, 23:21-23; 2Ch. 34:8, 36:19
Zedekiah – Born 21 years prior to becoming King	3547	-619	3579	-587	32	2Ki. 24:17-18; 2Ch. 36:11; Je. 52:1
Jehoiachin – Born 18 years prior to becoming King	3550	-616	3605	-561	55	2Ki. 24:8,12; 2Ch. 36:9
Jeremiah makes a speech in the Temple and is seized at the beginning of the reign of King Jehoiakim	3557	-609				Je. 26:1
Jehoahaz's reign as King of Judah began in the year that King Josiah died	3557	-609	3557	-609	0	2Ki. 23:31; 2Ch. 36:2
Jehoiakim's reign as King of Judah began in the year that King Jehoahaz died	3557	-609	3568	-598	11	2Ki. 23:36; 2Ch. 36:5

Figure 30: The Time of Judah after the Fall of the Northern Kingdom

The Conquest of Judah by Babylon - The 1st Wave of Exiles Person or Event	Date Born/Started		Date Died/Ended		Age or Duration	Scripture References
	A.M.	B.C./A.D.	A.M.	B.C./A.D.		
Nebuchadnezzar's reign over Babylon began 8 years prior to the start of King Zedekiah's reign over Judah	3559	-607	3605	-561	46	2Ki. 25:8,27; Je. 25:1; 32:1; 52:12
In the 3rd year of the reign of King Jehoiakim, Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to Jerusalem	3559	-607	3565	-601	6	2Ki. 24:1,10-12; Da. 1:1
Jeremiah predicts Judah's 70-year exile to Babylon in the 4th year of King Jehoiakim's reign	3560	-606				Je. 25:1; 29:10
Judah's exile to Babylon (1st 70 years of punishment) begins with Jeremiah's prophecy of God's punishment	3560	-606	3629	-537	69	2Ki. 25:21; 2Ch. 36:21-23; Je. 1:3; 25:1,11-12; 29:10
Jeremiah dictates a scroll to Baruch and the Lord sends a message to Baruch in the 4th year of King Jehoiakim's reign	3560	-606				Je. 36:1; 45:1
Nebuchadnezzar defeats Egypt's Pharaoh Neco and his army at Carchemish on the Euphrates River in the 4th year of King Jehoiakim's reign	3560	-606				Je. 46:2
Nebuchadnezzar has a dream of the statue made of gold, silver, bronze, iron, and clay in the 2nd year of his reign	3560	-606				Da. 2:1
Ezekiel's Ministry begins 13 years prior to the 5th year of King Jehoiachin's exile	3560	-606	3586	-580	26	Ez. 1:1-2
Baruch reads the scroll at the Temple in the 5th year of King Jehoiakim's reign	3561	-605				Je. 36:9
King Jehoiakim became Nebuchadnezzar's vassal before he rebelled and was taken captive in the 8th year of his reign	3565	-601	3568	-598	3	2Ki. 24:1,10-12
The 1st wave of the Jews (3,023 people, including Daniel and Ezekiel) are deported to Babylon in the 7th year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign	3565	-601				Je. 52:28
Daniel is deported to Babylon	3565	-601				Da. 1:3-4,6
Daniel is trained to serve in Nebuchadnezzar's court	3565	-601	3568	-598	3	Da. 1:5
Ezekiel's visionary journey to Jerusalem occurs in the 6th year of his ministry	3565	-601				Ez. 8:1

Figure 31: The Conquest of Judah by Babylon - The 1st Wave of Exiles

The Conquest of Judah by Babylon - The 2nd Wave of Exiles Person or Event	Date Born/Started		Date Died/Ended		Age or Duration	Scripture References
	A.M.	B.C./A.D.	A.M.	B.C./A.D.		
Ezekiel's prophecy on Israel's rebellion occurs in the 7th year of his ministry	3566	-600				Ez. 20:1
Darius the Mede (Cyrus) – Born 62 years prior to conquering Babylon	3567	-599	3638	-528	71	Da. 5:30-31
Jehoiachin's reign as King of Judah began in the year that King Jehoiakim died	3568	-598	3568	-598	0	2Ki. 24:8; 2Ch. 36:9
King Jehoiachin is imprisoned in Babylon	3568	-598	3605	-561	37	2Ki. 25:27; Je. 52:31
Zedekiah's reign as King of Judah began in the year that King Jehoiachin died	3568	-598	3579	-587	11	2Ki. 24:17-18; 2Ch. 36:11
Jeremiah predicts the yoke of Babylon at the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah	3568	-598				Je. 27:1
Daniel served in Nebuchadnezzar's court after completing his training	3568	-598	3605	-561	37	Da. 1:5
Ezekiel's parable of the boiling pot occurred in the 10th month in the 9th year of his ministry	3568	-598				Ez. 24:1
Ezekiel's prophecy of Egypt's ruin occurred in the 10th month in the 10th year of his ministry	3569	-597				Ez. 29:1
Ezekiel's prophecy on the downfall of Tyre occurred in the 11th year of his ministry	3570	-596				Ez. 26:1
Ezekiel's prophecy to break Pharaoh's power occurred in the 1st month in the 11th year of his ministry	3570	-596				Ez. 30:20
Ezekiel's prophecy on the downfall of Egypt and Assyria occurred in the 3rd month in the 11th year of his ministry	3570	-596				Ez. 31:1
Ezekiel's prophecy of Egypt in Sheol occurred in the 12th year of his ministry	3571	-595				Ez. 32:17
In the 4th year of King Zedekiah, the false prophet Hananiah says that he will break Jeremiah's Yoke, but dies because he preached rebellion against the Lord	3572	-594				Je. 28:1,17
Ezekiel's lament for Pharaoh occurred in the 12th month in the 12th year of his ministry	3572	-594				Ezekiel 32:1
Ezekiel's vision of God's glory occurred in the 5th year of King Jehoiachin's exile	3573	-593				Ez. 1:1-2
Jerusalem comes under siege by Nebuchadnezzar in the 9th year of King Zedekiah's reign	3577	-589	3579	-587	2	2Ki. 25:1-2; Je. 39:1-2; 52:4-5
The 2nd wave of Jews (832 people) are deported to Babylon in the 18th year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign	3577	-589				Je. 52:29
A fugitive from Jerusalem came to Ezekiel in the 12th year of his exile and reported, "The city has been taken!"	3577	-589				Ezekiel 32:21
Jeremiah buys a field in Anathoth from his cousin Hanamel in the 10th year of King Zedekiah's reign	3577	-589				Je. 32:1

Figure 32: The Conquest of Judah by Babylon - The 2nd Wave of Exiles

The Time of the Babylonian Exile Person or Event	Date Born/Started		Date Died/Ended		Age or Duration	Scripture References
	A.M.	B.C/A.D	A.M.	B.C/A.D		
Jerusalem and the Temple are destroyed, beginning the 1st 70-year period of punishment, in the 19th year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign	3579	-587	3648	-518	69	2Ki. 25:8-9; 2 Ch 36:15-20
Gedaliah is assassinated by Ishmael after the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple	3579	-587				Je. 41:1
The 3rd wave of Jews (745 people) are deported to Babylon in the 23rd year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign	3581	-585				Je. 52:30
Ezekiel's prophecy of the Millennial Temple occurs in the 1st month in the 25th year of his ministry	3584	-582				Ez. 40:1
Ezekiel's prophecy to give the land of Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar as compensation for destroying Tyre occurs in the 1st month in the 25th year of his ministry	3586	-580				Ez. 29:17
Daniel remained in Babylon until the 1st year of King Cyrus	3605	-561	3629	-537	24	Da. 1:5
Amel-Marduk's reign over Babylon begins after the death of King Nebuchadnezzar	3605	-561	3607	-559	2	
Nergal-shar-usur's reign over Babylon begins after the death of King Amel-Marduk	3607	-559	3611	-555	4	
Labashi-Marduk's reign over Babylon begins after the death of King Nergal-shar-usur	3611	-555	3611	-555	0	
Nabonidus' reign over Babylon begins after the death of King Labashi-Marduk	3611	-555	3629	-537	18	
Belshazzar's reign as co-regent over Babylon begins 3 years before the death of King Nabonidus and ends with the fall of Babylon to Cyrus	3626	-540	3629	-537	3	Da. 5:30-31, 7:1
Daniel's dream of the 4 beasts occurs in the 1st year of King Belshazzar's reign over Babylon	3626	-540				Da. 7:1
Daniel's dream of the ram and the goat occurs in the 3rd year of King Belshazzar's reign over Babylon	3628	-538				Da. 8:1
The fall of Babylon to the Medes occurs with the death of King Belshazzar	3629	-537				Da. 5:30-31; Is. 13:17

Figure 33: The Time of the Babylonian Exile

The Time of Judah's Rebellion to Return from Babylonian Exile Person or Event	Date Born/Started		Date Died/Ended		Age or Duration	Scripture References
	A.M.	B.C./A.D.	A.M.	B.C./A.D.		
Cyrus' (Darius the Mede) reign over Babylon began with the death of King Belshazzar	3629	-537	3638	-528	9	Da. 5:30-31
Daniel's prayer concerning the end of Judah's exile occurred during the 1st year of Cyrus' reign	3629	-537				Da. 9:1
Gabriel responded to Daniel's prayer with the vision of the seventy sevens occur during the 1st year of Cyrus' reign	3629	-537				Da. 9:20
Cyrus decrees that the Jews can return to Israel to rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple in the 1st year of his reign	3629	-537				2Ch. 36:22-23; Er. 1:1
The Seven-fold punishment until Israel is restored for not returning to rebuild Jerusalem begins with Cyrus' decree	3629	-537	6113	1948	2484	Ez. 4:4-8; Le. 26:14-43
Daniel's vision of a man occurred during the 3rd year of Cyrus' reign	3631	-535				Da. 10:1
The reconstruction of the Temple begins in the 2nd month in the 2nd year after they arrived in Jerusalem	3631	-535				Er. 1:8
Cambyses' reign over Babylon begins with the death of King Cyrus	3638	-528	3645	-521	7	
Cambyses persecutes the Jews that remain in Babylon with the start of his reign, beginning the 1st 70 biblical years of punishment for not returning to rebuild the Temple	3638	-528	3707	-459	69	Ez. 4:4-8; Le. 26:14-43
Darius I the Great's reign over Babylon begins with the death of King Cambyses	3645	-521	3680	-486	35	
Cyrus' decree that the Jews can have full control over the Temple Mount affirmed by Darius in the 2nd year of his reign	3648	-518				Is. 44:28; Er. 4:24
The Seven-fold punishment until Israel regains control of the Temple Mount for not returning to rebuild the Temple begins with Darius' reaffirmation of Cyrus' decree	3648	-518	6132	1967	2484	Ez. 4:4-8; Le. 26:14-43
Xerxes I the Great's (Ahasuerus) reign over Babylon begins with the death of King Darius	3680	-486	3701	-465	21	
The people already living in the land of Israel oppose rebuilding the city in the the beginning of the reign of King Ahasuerus	3680	-486				Er. 4:6
Queen Vashti angers King Ahasuerus by refusing to come before him and his guests during a feast and is stripped of her royal position in the 3rd year of his reign	3682	-484				Es. 1:3
Esther becomes queen in the 10th month in the 7th year of King Ahasuerus' reign	3687	-479				Es. 2:16
Haman plots to kill the Jews in the 1st month in the 12th year of King Ahasuerus' reign	3691	-475				Es. 3:7
Haman's plot to kill the Jews is thwarted when Mordecai writes a new edict to allow the Jews to defend themselves in the 3rd month in the 12th year of King Ahasuerus' reign	3691	-475				Es. 8:9,11-12
Haman is killed when his plot to kill the Jews backfires because the Jews are given the right to assemble and defend themselves	3692	-474				Es. 3:12-13; 9:1

Figure 34: The Time of Judah's Rebellion to Return from Babylonian Exile

The Time of Judah's Restoration Person or Event	Date Born/Started		Date Died/Ended		Age or Duration	Scripture References
	A.M.	B.C./A.D.	A.M.	B.C./A.D.		
Artaxerxes I's reign over Babylon began with the death of King Xerxes	3701	-465	3742	-424	41	
The rebuilding of Jerusalem is halted by King Artaxerxes at the beginning of his reign	3701	-465				Er. 4:7;21-23
Ezra comes up from Babylon to Jerusalem with the king's tribute to rebuild the Temple in the 5th month in the 7th year of King Artaxerxes' reign	3707	-459				Er. 7:8
The Seven-fold punishment until Israel's faith is restored begins with Ezra's return to Israel	3707	-459	6191	2026	2484	Ez. 4:4-8; Le. 26:14-43
All foreign wives and children are sent away by the 1st day of the 1st month after Ezra's return to Israel	3708	-458				Er. 10:17
Nehemiah receives news from Jerusalem during the 9th month in the 20th year of King Artaxerxes' reign	3721	-445				Ne. 1:1
Nehemiah is sent to Jerusalem to rebuild the city during the 1st month in the 20th year of King Artaxerxes' reign	3722	-444				Ne. 2:1
Nehemiah is appointed governor of Judah in the 20th year of King Artaxerxes' reign	3722	-444	3734	-432	12	Ne. 5:14
The wall around Jerusalem is completed on the 25th day of the 6th month after Nehemiah's return	3722	-444				Ne. 6:15
Ezra reads the law to the people of Jerusalem and the festival of Booths was observed in the 7th month after Nehemiah's return	3722	-444				Ne. 8:2
Jerusalem is rebuilt, beginning the first 7 weeks (49 biblical years) of Daniel's seventy sevens prophecy	3722	-444	3770	-396	48	Da. 9:25
Nehemiah returns to Babylon in the 32nd year of King Artaxerxes' reign	3734	-432				Ne. 13:6
Sogdianus' reign over Babylon began with the death of King Artaxerxes	3742	-424	3743	-423	1	
Darius II's reign over Babylon began with the death of King Sogdianus	3743	-423	3762	-404	19	
The rebuilding of the Temple resumed in the 6th month in the 2nd year of King Darius' reign	3744	-422				Er. 4:24; Hg. 1:1,14-15
God encouraged the people and promised restored glory to His house on the 21st day of the 7th month	3744	-422				Hg. 2:1
God promised to bless the people on the 24th day of the 9th month, in the 2nd year of King Darius' reign	3744	-422				Hg. 2:10
Zechariah pleaded for repentance in the 8th month, in the 2nd year of King Darius' reign	3744	-422				Ze. 1:1
Zechariah had visions of the Horsemen, the Four Horns and Craftsmen, the Surveyor, the High Priest and Branch, the Gold Lampstand, the Flying Scroll, the Woman in the Basket, and the Four Chariots on the 24th day of the 11th month, in the 2nd year of King Darius' reign	3745	-421				Ze. 1:7
Zechariah receives prophecies on disobedience and fasting and obedience and feasting on the 4th day of the 9th month in the 4th year of King Darius' reign	3746	-420				Ze. 7:1
The rebuilding of the Temple is completed on the 3rd day of the 12th month in the 6th year of the reign of King Darius.	3748	-418				Er. 6:15
The next 62 weeks (434 biblical years) of Daniel's seventy sevens prophecy occur, ending with Christ's crucifixion on the cross	3770	-396	4198	33	428	Da. 9:25

Figure 35: The Time of Judah's Restoration

The Time of Christ Person or Event	Date Born/Started		Date Died/Ended		Age or Duration	Scripture References
	A.M.	B.C./A.D.	A.M.	B.C./A.D.		
Herod the Great's reign over Israel	4129	-37	4162	-4	33	
Caesar Augustus' reign over the Roman Empire	4139	-27	4179	14	40	
Caesar Augustus decreed that a census should be taken	4161	-5				
Quirinius' rule as governor of Syria	4161	-5	4164	-2	3	
John the Baptist - Born 6 months before Jesus and is killed by Herod Antipas	4160	-6	4195	30	35	Lk. 1:26; Mt. 14:1-12; Mk. 6:14-29
Jesus - Born in Bethlehem during the time of King Herod. At that time, Caesar Augustus had issued a decree that a census should be taken and the 1st registration occurred while Quirinius was governing Syria	4161	-5	4198	33	37	Mt. 2:1; Lk. 2:1-2
Jesus escaped to Egypt after He was born and stayed there until King Herod's death	4161	-5	4162	-4	1	Mt. 2:13-15
Jesus and His family return to Nazareth after King Herod's death	4162	-4				Mt. 2:19-23
Philip's rule as tetrarch of Iturea and Traconitis began after Herod the Great's death	4162	-4	4199	34	37	
Herod Antipas' rule as tetrarch of Galilee began after Herod the Great's death	4162	-4	4204	39	42	
Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem at the Temple after the Passover festival when He was 12 years old	4173	8				Lk. 2:42-43
Tiberius Caesar's reign over the Roman Empire began with the death of Caesar Augustus' death	4179	14	4202	37	23	
Pontius Pilate's rule as governor of Judea	4191	26	4201	36	10	
John the Baptist starts his ministry in the 15th year of Tiberius Caesar's reign over the Roman Empire	4193	28				Lk 3:1-2
Jesus was baptized, tested, and started His ministry when he was about 30 years old	4194	29				Lk. 3:23, 4:1; Mk. 1:12; Mt. 4:1
John the Baptist is arrested by Herod Antipas after Jesus is tested	4194	29				Lk. 3:19-20; Mt. 4:12
Jesus is crucified during the Passover festival at the conclusion of the 69th week of Daniel's seventy sevens prophecy	4198	33				Da. 9:26; Mt. 27:50; Mk. 15:37; Lk 23:46; Jn. 19:30
Enoch's 7th Week: The Apostate Church rises and there are great advances in science	4231	66	4931	766	700	Enoch 93:9-11
The Jewish Revolt occurs and the Temple is destroyed by the Roman Empire at the conclusion of the war	4231	66	4235	70	4	Mi. 3:12; Da. 9:26; Lk. 19:41-45
Bar-Kokhba War occurs and Israel is desolated at the conclusion of the war	4297	132	4301	136	4	Je. 9:11
Enoch's 8th Week: The Protestant Reformation occurs	4931	766	5631	1466	700	Enoch 91:12-13
Enoch's 9th Week: The reestablishment of Israel and the Great Tribulation occur and the Millennial Reign begins	5631	1466	6331	2166	700	Enoch 91:14

Figure 36: The time of Christ

The Time of the Last Generation Prior to the Tribulation Person or Event	Date Born/Started		Date Died/Ended		Age or Duration	Scripture References
	A.M.	B.C/A.D	A.M.	B.C/A.D		
Balfour declaration is issued to reestablish Israel as prophesied by Ezekiel in the Valley of the Dry Bones prophecy	6082	1917				Ez 37
Israel is restored at the conclusion of the seven-fold punishment decree for not returning to Israel after the Babylonian exile	6113	1948				Ez 4:4-8; Le. 26:14-43
Israel regains control of the Temple Mount at the conclusion of the seven-fold punishment decree for not rebuilding the Temple	6132	1967				Ez 4:4-8; Le. 26:14-43
The final generation before Jesus' return begins when Israel regains control of the Temple Mount	6132	1967	6202	2037	70	Mt. 24:34; Ps. 90:10
The Psalm 83 war occurs, causing Israel to have a spiritual awakening and a desire to rebuild the Temple	6191	2026				Ps. 38; Is. 17:8; Ez. 37:9-10
The rise of the 10-nation Roman alliance and the Harlot religion begin prior to the start of the tribulation period. They will then be in power by the beginning of the Lesser Tribulation and the Antichrist will destroy them at the beginning of the Great Tribulation.	6191	2026	6199	2034	8	Da. 7:24; Rv. 17:1-18
Rapture of the Church occurs sometime prior to the beginning of the Gog and Magog War	6192	2027				1Th. 4:16-17
The saints are judged at the Bema Seat of Christ after the rapture and remain in heaven until they return with Christ at the end of the tribulation period.	6192	2027				Ro. 14:10-12; 2Co. 5:10
The Gog and Magog war occurs at the conclusion of the seven-fold punishment decree until Israel's faith is restored	6192	2027				Ez 4:4-8; 38; Le. 26:14-43
The cleanup after the Gog and Magog war takes 7 years to complete	6192	2027	6199	2034	7	Ez 39:9-10

Figure 37: The Time of the Last Generation Prior to the Tribulation

NOTE 1: There are no prophetic references to when either the 10-nation Roman alliance or the Harlot religion begin to rise. While the precursors of them already exist, they will most likely not begin to fully take shape until after the Arab-Israeli war (Psalm 83). They will then be in power by the beginning of the tribulation period and the Antichrist will destroy them at the beginning of the Great Tribulation.

The Time of the Lesser Tribulation Person or Event	Date Born/Started		Date Died/Ended		Age or Duration	Scripture References
	A.M.	B.C/A.D	A.M.	B.C/A.D		
The Tribulation Period, which is the 70th week of Daniel's seventy sevens prophecy, begins with a peace deal between the nations and Israel, brokered by the antichrist, and ends with Jesus' return at the completion of the final generation	6195	2030	6202	2037	7	Da. 9:27, 12:7
The Seal Judgments occur within the 1st 12 to 18 months of the Tribulation Period	6195	2030	6197	2032	2	1st Seal - Rv. 6:1-2 2nd Seal - Rv. 6:3-4 3rd Seal - Rv. 6:5-6 4th Seal - Rv. 6:7-8 5th Seal - Rv. 6:9-11 6th Seal - Rv. 6:12-14 7th Seal - Rv. 8:1-5
The 2 Witnesses testify. They begin their ministry at the start of the tribulation period and are martyred and resurrected just prior to the abomination that causes desolation	6195	2030	6199	2034	4	Rv. 11:1-13
The Temple is rebuilt and sacrifices resume at the start of the tribulation period	6195	2030	6199	2034	4	Ez. 44:46
The 144,000 witnesses are sealed by the end of the Seal Judgments	6197	2032				Rv. 7:1-17
The Trumpet Judgments follow the Seal Judgments and end with the abomination that causes desolation - Locusts torment people for 5 months (1st Woe) - Cavalry torment people for 13 months (2nd Woe)	6197	2032	6199	2034	2	1st Trumpet - Rv. 8:7 2nd Trumpet - Rv. 8:8-9 3rd Trumpet - Rv. 8:10-11 4th Trumpet - Rv. 8:12 5th Trumpet - Rv. 9:1-12 6th Trumpet - Rv. 9:13-19 7th Trumpet - Rv. 11:15-19
The little scroll is sealed between the 6th and 7th Trumpet Judgment, just prior to the start of the Great Tribulation	6199	2034				Rv. 10:1-11

Figure 38: The Time of the Lesser Tribulation

NOTE 1: Both the Seal Judgments and the Trumpet Judgments occur in the first half of the tribulation period. There is no specific timing in the prophecy to determine exactly how long either the Seal Judgments or the Trumpet Judgments last. However, prophecy states that the 5th Trumpet (1st Woe) lasts 5 months and the 6th Trumpet (2nd Woe) lasts 13 months, so it is reasonable to assume that the Seal Judgments occur within the first 12 to 18 months of the tribulation period. This leaves the remaining time until start of the Great Tribulation at the midpoint of the tribulation period for the completion of the Trumpet Judgments.

The Time of the Great Tribulation Person or Event	Date Born/Started		Date Died/Ended		Age or Duration	Scripture References
	A.M.	B.C./A.D.	A.M.	B.C./A.D.		
There is a battle in heaven and Satan is cast out to start the 2nd half of the tribulation, known as the Great Tribulation	6199	2034				Rv. 12:7-9
The antichrist is killed and then resurrected and indwelled by Satan, who was just cast down from heaven	6199	2034				Rv. 13:1-10
The antichrist performs the abomination that causes desolation at the midpoint of the Tribulation Period and begins the Great Tribulation.	6199	2034				Da. 12:12; Mt. 24:15-21
The antichrist breaks the peace agreement with Israel and destroys the Temple three-and-a-half years after making the agreement	6199	2034				Da. 9:27, 11:31
The antichrist establishes his global kingdom, destroying the Harlot religion and the 10-nation Roman alliance	6199	2034				Da. 7:23-27; Rv. 17:11-17
During the Great Tribulation, the antichrist and the false prophet rule, persecute the elect (who are hidden from Satan), and wage war against Israel	6199	2034	6202	2037	3	Da. 11:41-45; Ze. 13:8; Rv. 12:1-6, 13:17; 13:1-18
The 144,000 witnessess are redeemed at the beginning of the Great Tribulation	6199	2034				Rv. 14:1-5
The 3 angels spread the gospel, announce the destruction of Babylon, and warn of the consequences for taking the mark of the beast after the 144,000 witnesses are redeemed	6199	2034	6201	2036	2	Rv. 14:6-13
The Bowl Judgments are prepared at the beginning of the Great Tribulation	6199	2034				Rv. 15:1-8
The Bowl Judgments occur during the Great Tribulation	6199	2034	6202	2037	3	1st Bowl - Rv. 16:2 2nd Bowl - Rv. 16:3 3rd Bowl - Rv. 16:4-7 4th Bowl - Rv. 16:8-9 5th Bowl - Rv. 16:10-11 6th Bowl - Rv. 16:12 7th Bowl - 16:17-21
The harvest of the earth occurs after the 3 angels complete their mission to spread the gospel	6201	2036	6202	2037	1	Rv. 14:14-20
The 3 unclean spirits gather the world for battle as the Bowl Judgments conclude in preparation for the Battle of Armageddon	6202	2037				Rv. 16:13-16
Babylon is destroyed and the world mourns just prior to the Battle of Armageddon	6202	2037				Rv. 18:1-24
The Marriage Supper of the Lamb occurs in heaven with the raptured Church as His bride. The OT saints and tribulation saints are the invited guests.	6202	2037				Rv. 19:7-10
Jesus returns to the Mount of Olives at the conclusion of the Great Tribulation with His bride, the tribulation saints, and His angels as His army	6202	2037				Ze. 14:4; Jd. 1:14; Mt. 25:31; Rv. 6:9-11; 7:9; 19:7,14
Jesus defeats the nations at the Battle of Armageddon and throws the antichrist and false prophet into the lake of fire	6202	2037				Rv. 19:11-21

Figure 39: The Time of the Great Tribulation

NOTE 1: The timing of when the 3 angels spread their messages is not precisely known. They start after the 144,000 witnesses are redeemed at the beginning of the Great Tribulation and end before the harvest of the earth, which occurs just prior to the Battle of Armageddon at the end of the Great Tribulation.

NOTE 2: The Marriage Supper of the Lamb occurs in heaven during the tribulation period. Since the guests include the tribulation saints that were martyred during the tribulation, it is reasonable to assume that this event occurs just prior to Jesus' return for the Battle of Armageddon at the end of the Great Tribulation. This would allow all the tribulation saints to be present.

The Time of Christ's Millennial Reign into Eternity Person or Event	Date Born/Started		Date Died/Ended		Age or Duration	Scripture References
	A.M.	B.C/A.D	A.M.	B.C/A.D		
The transitional period includes the 1st 75 days after the end of the Tribulation and before Christ's Millennial Reign	6202	2037	6202	2037	0	Da. 12:11-12
Satan is bound for 1000 years after the Battle of Armageddon	6202	2037	7188	3023	986	Rv. 20:1-3; 2Pe. 2:4
The Sheep and Goats Judgment occurs during the transitional period	6202	2037				Mt. 25:31-46
The Millennial Temple is built during the transitional period	6202	2037				Ez. 37:26-28, 43:10-11; Ze. 6:12-13,15; Hg. 2:7
The government is established where the saints reign with Christ during the Millennial Kingdom	6202	2037				Is. 2:2-4; Mi. 4:1-7; 1Co. 6:2-3; 1Pe. 2:9; 2Ti. 2:12; Rv. 3:21, 5:9-10; 22:5
The Millennial Reign begins after the Christ's Kingdom is established during the transitional period	6202	2037	7202	3037	1000	Rv. 20:4-6
Sacrifices resume during the Millennial Reign	6202	2037				Is. 56:7, 60:7; Je. 33:17-18; Ze. 14:19-21; Ma. 3:3-4
Enoch's 10th Week - 1st 6 Days: The end of the Millennial Reign of Christ	6331	2166	6931	2766	600	Enoch 91:15-16
Enoch's 10th Week - 7th Day: The Great White Throne Judgement occurs	6931	2766	7031	2866	100	Enoch 91:15-16
Satan is released and instigates the final Gog and Magog War where he is defeated, resulting in his destruction and banishment in the lake of fire for all eternity.	7188	3023	7202	3037	14	Rv. 20:7-10
The Great White Throne judgement is the end of sin and occurs after Satan is thrown into the lake of fire. All the unsaved since the beginning of time are thrown into the lake of fire.	7202	3037				Rv. 20:11-15
A new heaven and earth are created and a new Jerusalem descends from heaven after the Great White Throne judgment	7202	3037				Rv. 21:1-27
Eden is restored and eternity begins in the new heaven and earth	7202	3037				Rv. 22:1-5; Enoch 91:17-19

Figure 40: The Time of Christ's Millennial Reign into Eternity

NOTE 1: The timing of Satan's release occurs at the end of the Millennial Reign, but it may be that Satan is released after 1,000 biblical years and tempts man for the remaining 14 years of the Millennial Reign to complete 1,000 calendar years.

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