

The main idea is ...

From "the world at that time" (2 Peter 3:6) and "in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1) to "a new heaven and a new earth" (Revelation 21:1) God has laid out His plan of salvation in His Word. The Bible shows us the panorama of events that lie behind or ahead of us. Without a good understanding of the dispensations and the position, history and future of the people of Israel, but also of the Church, a solid study of the Bible is not possible.

This booklet is an excellent tool for quickly and clearly grasping the main features of God's plan of salvation. It is a basis for comparing "Scripture with Scripture" and for "rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15).

Bible Panorama



All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;

that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

(2 Timothy 3:16-17)

No. 18-E Bible study

1 The Casting Down of the World

"The World at that Time"

2 Pet. 3:6

Gen. 1:1 - In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

According to Isaiah, the heavens and the earth were not created formless or void Is. 45:18. It is clear that the expression "formless and void" (tohu wa bohu, H8414 & H922) is a description of a land that had previously been judged by God because for its sins Is. 34:11; Jer. 4:23-26.

Gen. 1:2 - And the earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep [...].

This verse speaks of a judgement that God had passed on the creation of Genesis 1:1. As a result, the heavens and the earth were flooded with water and plunged into darkness. The apostle Peter also confirms this in 2 Peter 3:5-7.

It is not correct to think of Noah's Flood in this context. The great flood of Genesis 1:1 is very different from Noah's Flood. In Noah's day the heavens and the earth were not destroyed. The heavens still existed and only all the high mountains were covered with water. Living things such as water animals survived the Flood. But all living people died except those who were in Noah's ark.

The story of Noah and the judgement of the world in his day is a picture (type) of a much more severe judgement that had come over the world before Genesis 1:2.

The Bible does not say much about the time gap between the creation in Genesis 1:1 and the restitution in Genesis 1:3. Inexplicable phenomena such as fossils, the Sphinx, the Great Pyramid of Cheops, the legend of Atlantis etc., which cannot be placed in our restituted creation, could possibly date from this "world".

Eternity



Gen. 1:1

Creation of the heavens and the earth

There is a long unknown period of time before Genesis 1:2 when creation had already occurred and life existed. "The world at that time" is sometimes referred to as the "first time".

God cast down the "world at that time" because it had been infiltrated and corrupted by Satan. As a result, God lost His original glory.

"Judgement by water"
The world of that time had been destroyed by water [...] 2 Pet. 3:3-7.

"and (but) the earth **became** formless, void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep" Gen. 1:2.

The world at that time

Gen. 1:3-31

Reconstruction or restitution of the heavens and the earth

In God's plan of salvation, which existed before the casting down of the world, God provided for the restitution of the fallen world.

From our restituted or restored world, as described in Genesis 1:3, God will create a new heaven and a new earth through Christ's work of reconciliation. Only then - and not now - will His glory be restored, which He had before the overthrow (casting down).

Adam



Noah

The period between Adam and Noah, known as the "ancient world" 2 Pet. 2:5.

After Noah's Flood, God promised not to destroy the earth by water again Gen. 9:11.

The world that is now, from Adam to the day of judgement

Death and resurrection of Jesus Christ

End of the ages
End of the world
The Day of Judgement

Coming age

Eternity

The restoration of God's former glory.

God is all, and in all.

A new heaven and a new earth Rev. 21:1.



The Casting Down of the World

The translators of the Bible confused the terms "foundation" and "casting down". They translated the Greek word "katabolé" (G2602), which means "to cast down", with "to found".

The translators considered the terms "foundation" and "casting down" to be identical. This would not be a problem if these terms referred to the same event. But this is definitely not the case. The foundation (lowest part of a building, first beginning) is different from the casting down (overthrow; God's judgement of Satan's rebellion).

The judgement on the creation of Genesis 1:1 was caused by the fall of Satan. He was an anointed cherub but set himself above his Creator Ezek. 28:12-19. In this judgement, Satan and some of his angels were cast into hell (tartaros) 2 Pet. 2:4.

At present, Satan is still in heaven with some of his angels, exercising power over the present evil age Job 1:6-12, Matt. 4:7-10.

Christ's Work of Reconciliation

The casting down of the world resulted in a separation between God and His creation. The coming of the Son was necessary to restore the connection.

Even before the casting down of the world God had foreknown that His Son, Jesus Christ, would reconcile the world to Himself Eph. 2:15-16, Col. 1:20.

In the following verses the "casting down" of the world and Christ's work of reconciliation are mentioned Matt. 25:34, John 17:24, Eph. 1:4, Heb. 4:3, 1 Pet. 1:18-20, Rev. 13:8.

Adam's fall was inevitable because he was made of dust from the ground (the earth, which had previously fallen into sin). As a result of his fall, he was expelled from the Garden of Eden (so that he could not eat of the Tree of Life) and was destined to die Gen. 3:13-24.

Adam's descendants inherit this sinful nature through man! Sin works in man as long as he lives, but he who has died is free from sin Rom. 6:7-23.

2 The Plan of the Ages

The Translation of the Word "aión" (Strong G165)

The Greek word "aión" has been translated in different ways, as there are:

"Age": a period of time
"Eternity": everlasting

The correct translation of the word "aión" always depends on the context in which it is used. Here are some examples:

Translated as "age":

Matt. 12:32, 13:49, Mark 10:30, Luke 16:8, 18:30, 1 Cor. 1:20, 2:6-8, Gal. 1:4, Heb. 6:5.

Translated as "ages":

Rom. 16:25, Eph. 2:7, 3:5-9, Col. 1:26, Tit. 2:9, Heb. 9:26, Rev. 15:3.

Translated as "eternity":

2 Tim. 1:9.

In some cases the Bible translators have translated the word "aión" as "world". The translation as "world" is confusing because there is also the Greek word "kosmos" which is also translated as "world". But the word "kosmos" (G2889) has the following meaning: World (kosmos) = 2 heavens and 1 earth.

Translated as "world" = "aión" (G165):

Matt. 13:22, Mark 4:19, Rom. 12:2.

In Eph. 2:2 we find the combination of the Greek words "kosmos" and "aión":

"[...] the course <aión> of this world <kosmos> [...]"

Eternity

Gen. 1:1
Creation of the heavens and the earth

"The previous age"
Eccl. 1:10-11

10 - Is there anything of which one might say, 'See this, it is new?' Already it has existed for ages which were before us.

11 - There is no remembrance of earlier things; and also of the later things which will occur, there will be for them no remembrance among those who will come later still.

Gen. 1:3-31
Restitution of the heavens and the earth

Death and resurrection of Jesus Christ

End of the ages
End of the world
The Day of Judgement

Eternity

The coming age of Christ

The present age in the power of Satan

The Present Age in the Power of Satan

Judgement came upon the creation of Gen. 1:1 because of Satan's sin. He was an anointed cherub but had set himself above his Creator Ezek. 28:12-19. In this judgement Satan and some of his angels were cast out into hell (tartaros) 2 Pet. 2:4.

At present, Satan is still in heaven with some of his angels, exercising power over the present age Job 1:6-12, Matt. 4:7-10. He is the ruler of this world John 14:30, 16:11, Eph. 2:1-2, 6:12.

Through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, Satan's power is overcome Heb. 2:14.

If Satan had known that the death of Jesus resulted in the resurrection of Christ, he would never have driven Him to death 1 Cor. 2:8.

The God of this age has blinded the minds of those who refuse to believe 2 Cor. 4:4.

The Coming Age of Christ

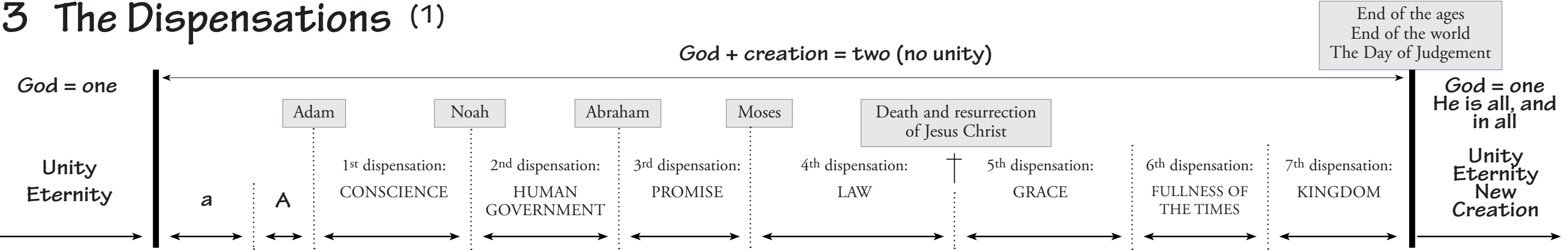
Through the death and resurrection of Christ, He has delivered us (believers) from this present evil age Gal. 1:4, Eph. 2:2-10, 2 Tim. 4:10.

The following verses speak of the present age and the age to come: Matt. 12:32, Mark 10:30, Luke 18:30, 20:34-35, Eph. 1:21, 1 Tim. 6:17, Heb. 6:4-5.

The age to come has begun with the resurrection of Jesus Christ and will be fulfilled on the "Day of Judgement" when the heavens and the earth will be subject to Him.

Those who believe in Him will be delivered from this present evil age and placed in "the age to come" or the Kingdom of Christ.

3 The Dispensations (1)



The Creation of the World

If we summarise the events in Genesis, we get the following structure:

- **The creation of the world**
- **The fall of the world**
- **The sequence of seven days of creation**

This structure has typological significance because it corresponds to the eight periods of time outlined in the Bible. In each period God gave rules to His appointed stewards. Such a period is called a "dispensation". The following sequence is taken from Genesis 1.

a. Period from creation to the fall of the world
The cosmos (2 heavens and 1 earth) was created Gen. 1:1.
Satan rebelled against God (see "The Casting Down of the World").

Day 1: Separation of light and darkness
There was darkness (the lie was stronger than the truth) Gen. 1:2.
So God made light and separated the light from the darkness.

Day 2: Separation of the water from the waters
Water is a type of the nations Ps. 2:1, 65:7, Is. 17:12, Ezek. 26:3.
The separation of the waters is a symbol of the separation of the nations.

Day 3: Dry land appears out of the water
The dry land coming up out of the sea is a picture of Abraham being called out of the nations. The earth bearing fruit is a type of Abraham's descendants (the seas = the nations had to give way).

Day 4: The lights: Sun, moon and stars
John compares the light with God himself: His Word, the law, is light Ps. 119:105, Prov. 6:23. In the Bible, Israel, God's people, (bearers of the Word Rom. 3:2) is often referred to as "sun, moon and stars" Gen. 37:9, Is. 60:1-3, Rev. 12.

Day 5: The creation of fish and birds
The creation of animals in the air and water symbolises the call of the Church from the nations.

Day 6: The creation of the beasts of the earth and man
The animals are a picture of mankind and the one man is a type of the Son of Man. The latter will rule over mankind.

Day 7: Rest from the work He had done
On the seventh day God rested and the work was finished. Creation returned to God.

The Creation of Man

The structure of Genesis 1 is consistent with God's plan for the history and future of mankind:

- **The creation of man (Adam)**
- **The fall of man**
- **The sequence of the seven dispensations**

A dispensation is a period of time during which an individual, a group of people or a nation is tested for obedience to its Creator. In each dispensation, God deals with man in a particular way and gives His stewards different rules. According to this principle, salvation history can be divided into the following periods.

A - The period from the reconstruction (restitution) to the fall of Adam
In the Garden of Eden, Adam walked with God and man was in fellowship with God.

1. - From the fall to the Flood (CONSCIENCE)
Adam's fall. Adam was expelled from Eden and God established a new dispensation Gen. 3:15-24.

2. - From the Flood to the Covenant with Abraham (HUMAN GOVERNMENT)
After the Flood of Noah, mankind was divided into nations (70 nations, each with their own land Gen. 10:5+20+31). Because God did not want mankind to reunite, He gave each nation its own language Gen. 11:6-8. Because of this confusion of languages, mankind was scattered all over the face of the earth.

3. - From the covenant with Abraham to the Exodus from Egypt (PROMISE)
When Abraham left his country, God made a covenant with him. God promised him eternal life. Abraham would be heir of the world (i.e. inherit the world = survive the world) Rom. 4:13 and God promised him a new creation Heb. 11:8-16.

4. - From the Exodus from Egypt to the Resurrection of Christ (LAW)
During the Exodus of the people of Israel from Egypt, God made a covenant (the Law) with His people. God married the people of Israel Jer. 2:2, 3:14, 31:31-32. Worshipping another god is analogous to Israel's adultery with her husband Ex. 34:14-16, Hos. 1:2. Israel agreed to marry her husband Ex. 19:8, 24:3-7, Deut. 5:27.

5. - From the resurrection of Christ to the Rapture of the Church (GRACE)
Through the death and resurrection of Christ, the Law was replaced by Grace. The OLD COVENANT was replaced by the NEW COVENANT because of its weakness Heb. 7:18. This was prophesied long before Jer. 31:32. God's Kingdom has been established in heaven, but it is hidden from the world. In this dispensation, God was concerned to take a people for His name from among the Gentiles Acts 15:14-16.

6. - From the rapture of the Church to the binding of Satan (FULLNESS OF THE TIMES)
After the rapture of the Church, God will judge the nations of the earth. God will begin to judge the people of Israel. At this time God will begin to establish His Kingdom on earth.

7. - From the binding of Satan to the Day of Judgement (KINGDOM)
When the nations are judged and the Kingdom is established on earth, Satan will be bound for 1000 years. This period is therefore marked by Christ's reign over the last creation, not that of Satan.

Sequences of Seven

Apart from the sequence of seven days of creation and seven dispensations, there are other sequences of seven. The fruits of the land that the Lord would give to Israel are a type of the dispensations Deut. 8:8.

- 1 - Wheat
- 2 - Barley
- 3 - Vines
- 4 - Fig trees
- 5 - Pomegranates
- 6 - Olive trees
- 7 - Honey

When we look up these fruits in the Bible, we see that each fruit represents a dispensation.

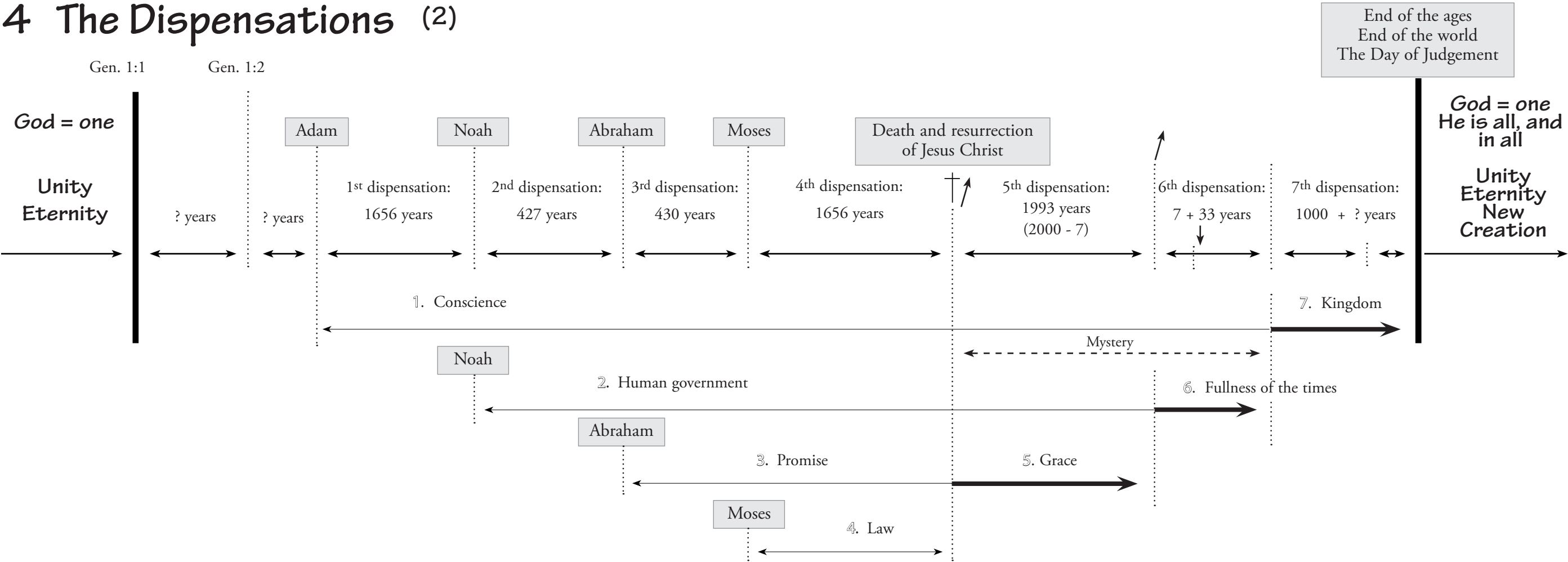
The same is true of the seven patriarchs: they are also a type of the dispensations Jude 1:14.

- 1 - Adam
- 2 - Seth
- 3 - Enosh
- 4 - Kenan
- 5 - Mahalalel
- 6 - Jared
- 7 - Enoch

This principle also applies to the numbers 1 to 7. Since the literal numbers in the Hebrew language are also the letters of the alphabet, we get the following list:

- 1 - א
- 2 - ב
- 3 - ג
- 4 - ד
- 5 - ה
- 6 - ו
- 7 - ז

4 The Dispensations (2)



The Structure of the Seven Dispensations

When we study the Scriptures carefully, we find that the **1st dispensation** has many parallels **with the 7th dispensation**. Both dispensations deal with individuals, and both will end in judgement before the great white throne on the Day of Judgement Rev. 20:11-15. The difference between these two dispensations is that in the 1st dispensation man lived apart from God, whereas in the 7th dispensation he will live in harmony with God. The **2nd and 6th dispensation** also have a similar structure and focus on the nations. The 2nd dispensation will end at the same time as the 6th dispensation. Then the Lord Jesus Christ will sit on His glorious throne in Jerusalem and judge all the living nations. People living on earth at that time will be subject to Christ Matt. 25:31-34, Eph. 1:10. The **3rd and 5th dispensation** also merge into one another. Christ is the true offspring of Abraham. The **4th dispensation** stands apart and is God's demonstration that no one can keep the law except our Lord Jesus Christ.

The dispensations can be represented by the following symmetrical structure (introversion):

1. Conscience	.....	Individuals / separated from God
2. Human government	.....	Nations / scattered
3. Promise	.....	Abraham / his descendants fro the nations
4. Law	.....	A people from the nations
5. Grace	.....	Christ / his descendants from the nations
6. Fullness of the times	.....	Nations / judged and gathered
7. Kingdom	.....	Individuals / in harmony with God

The Term "Dispensation"

Before God cast down the world (because of the fall of Satan) He had already determined that His Son, Jesus Christ, would reconcile the world to Himself Eph. 2:15-16, Col. 1:20. The result of God's plan is expressed in the present world (from Adam to the Day of Judgement). This plan can be divided into seven periods. Each period can also be called a "dispensation". The term "dispensation" is the translation of the Greek word "oikonomia" (G3622) and is defined as stewardship, administration, management or economy.

The Lord Jesus speaks of stewardship in Luke 12 and Luke 16. From this we can deduce the following:

- In a dispensation there are at least two parties: first there is a master and second there is a steward ("oikonomos"). The steward is employed by the master to manage his master's possessions.
- A dispensation or a stewardship can be removed if the master has a good reason for doing so.
- When a dispensation ends, the master can set up a new dispensation to replace the old one.

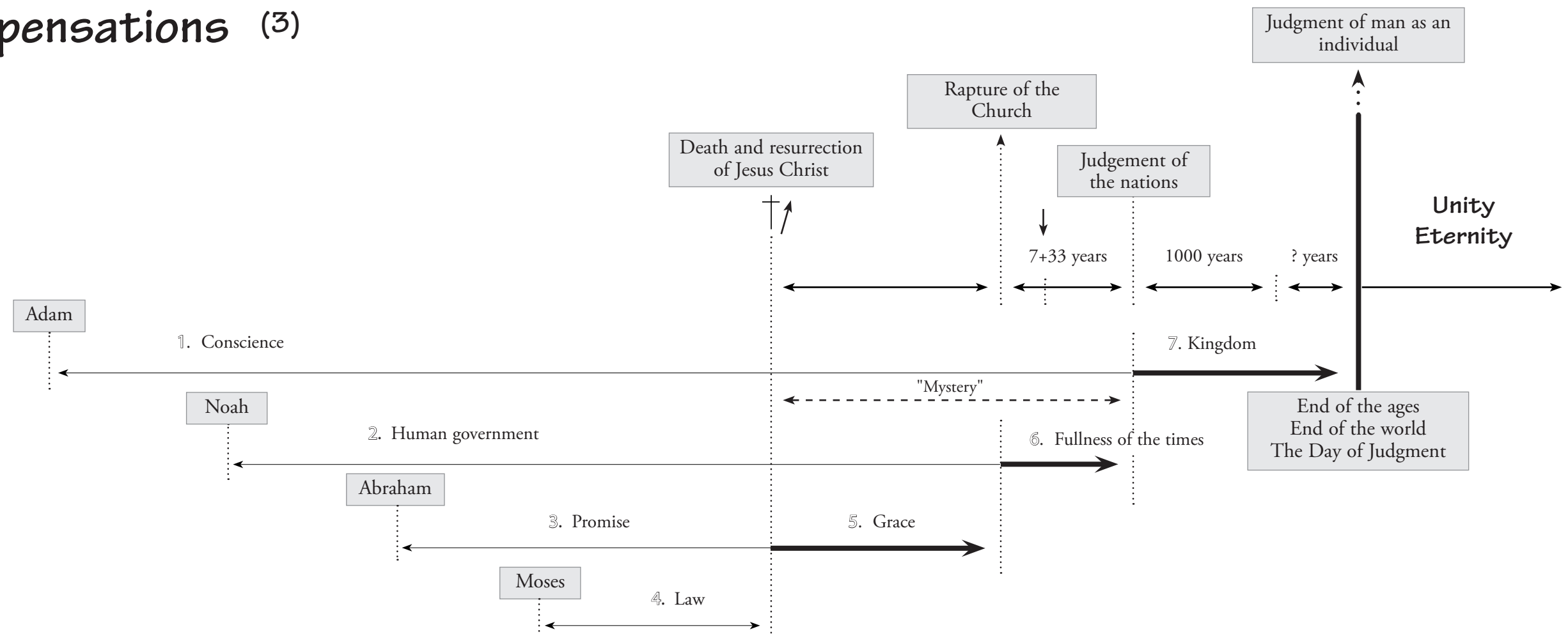
The apostle Paul speaks about this principle in the following Scriptures: 1 Cor. 4:1-2 Gal. 4:2-9, Col. 1:25-27, Tit. 1:7.

At least two dispensations are literally mentioned by Paul in the Bible:

- **Administration (dispensation) of the fullness of the times** Eph. 1:10.
 - **Stewardship (dispensation) of God's grace** Eph. 3:2 = **Administration (dispensation) of the mystery** Eph. 3:9.
- (The *dispensation of the mystery* is the 5th dispensation. The *mystery* will continue until the end of the 6th dispensation. In this 6th dispensation the mystery will be completed and revealed Rev. 10:7, see also Rev. 11:15.

God is the master of the house (creation) and man, as a steward, is accountable to God for God's possessions. A dispensation does not necessarily apply to all people. For example, the "dispensation of the law" was only given to the people of Israel after they were brought out of Egypt.

5 The Dispensations (3)



1. The Dispensation of Conscience

The first dispensation begins with the fall of Adam and focuses on man's conscience as an individual. This dispensation is characterised by the fact that it is not governed by nations: each individual is personally and directly responsible to God.

God's purpose for Adam was that he should cultivate the garden and have dominion over all creation Gen. 1:26. This was impossible for Adam because of his sinful nature. There is only one person who can rule this creation. It is the Son of God who by his incarnation became the Son of Adam (= Son of Man). So it is all about the last Adam (= Christ) and not the first.

Man as an individual

7. The Dispensation of the Kingdom

The seventh dispensation begins after Christ's subjection of the nations. Then the Messianic Kingdom will be established on earth.

The last ADAM = Christ will reign over this creation.

This dispensation is characterised by the binding of Satan for 1000 years Rev. 20:2-3.

In contrast, the Kingdom of Christ is not limited in time: it is eternal and will continue into the New Creation.

2. The Dispensation of Human Government

The second dispensation begins after Noah's flood. In this dispensation, mankind is under human government. Mankind is divided into 70 nations, each with its own land and government Gen. 10:5+20+31. This came into effect after they built the city of Babel.

Since then every individual has been responsible not only to God but also to a human government. But the governing authorities will also be accountable to God Rom. 13:1-7.

Man as an individual

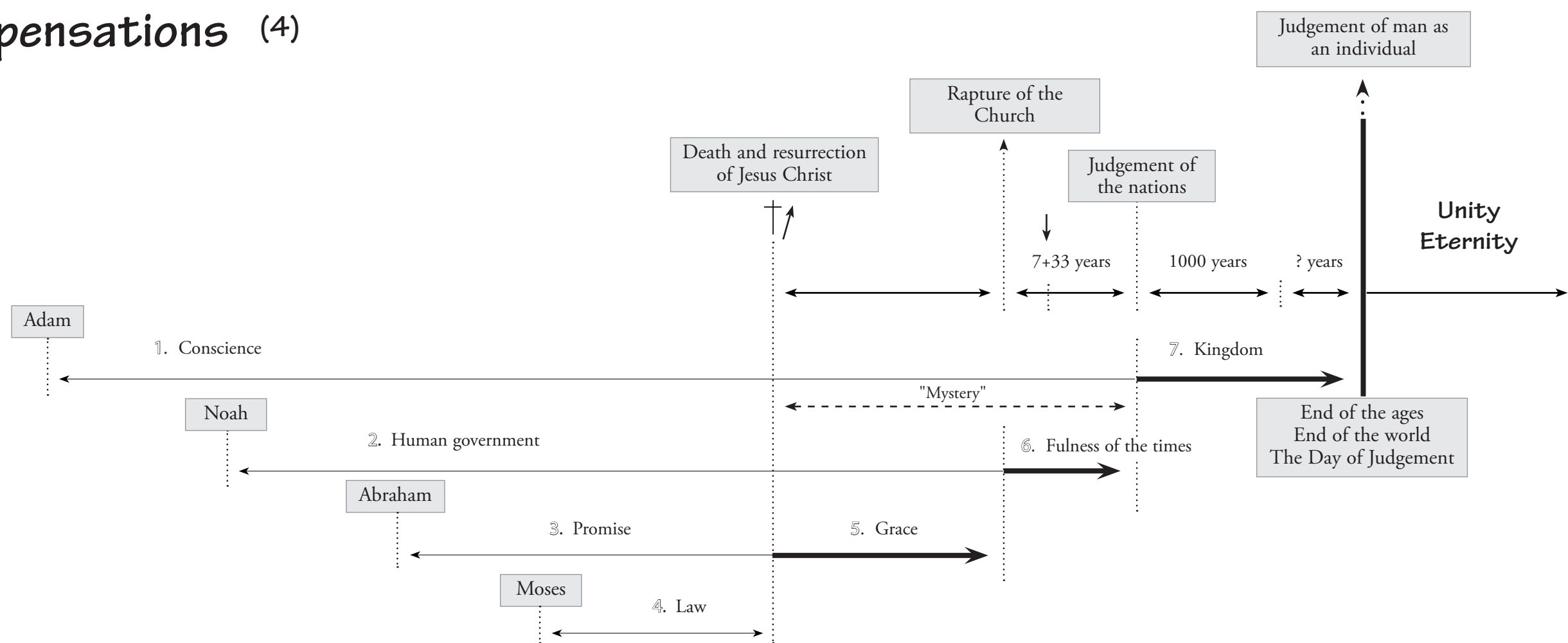
Nations

6. The Dispensation of the Fullness of the Times

The sixth dispensation begins after the rapture of the Church. In this dispensation Christ will subject all nations to Himself, beginning with the people of Israel through tribulation and judgement (70th week of Daniel). After the repentance of Israel, God will deal with the other nations of the world for 33 years. This period will end at Armageddon, and Babylon will be finally destroyed Is. 13:4-5, Jer. 50:9+41-42.

At the end of this dispensation the mystery will be finished Rev. 10:7, see also Rev. 11:15. It will be revealed to all the remaining believers on earth.

6 The Dispensations (4)



3. The Dispensation of Promise

The third dispensation begins with a man who had to isolate himself from his people. Abraham had to leave his country and his father's house.

God made a covenant with Abraham Gen. 15:18. This covenant is described by Paul as "the promise" because there was no condition other than Abraham's faith.

The promise was given to Abraham and his descendants (seed) Gen. 15:18, 22:17. The seed of Abraham is Christ Gal. 3:16.

Every person who believes in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is also counted as Abraham's seed (offspring) Gal. 3:27-29.

Individual believers from the nations

5. The Dispensation of Grace

The fifth dispensation begins with the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Paul indicates that this dispensation is the continuation of the dispensation of promise Gal. 3:16, Eph. 3:6.

The descendants of the third dispensation shared in the promises made to Abraham. By analogy, the heirs (believers) of this dispensation also share in the promises to Abraham's seed who is Christ. Therefore, we find the same principles in the fifth dispensation as in the third: Isolated from the other nations, there is a remnant of people without a permanent city on earth.

This dispensation replaces the dispensation of the Law Rom. 6 and 7. *"You are not under law, but under grace."*

A people from the nations

4. The Dispensation of the Law

The fourth dispensation begins with the exodus of Israel from Egypt. On this occasion, a people was born from the descendants of Abraham who, unlike the other nations, were placed under the Law. In this way all factors such as conscience, human government, the promise of earthly blessings and God's law were united in this one nation Ex. 19:5-6, Deut. 7:6.

This dispensation ended with the death of the Lord Jesus.

7 The Position of Israel

Marriage between Jehovah and Israel

In the fourth dispensation God will separate the people of Israel from the other nations. By their own volition, Ex. 24:7 they have been placed under God's law:

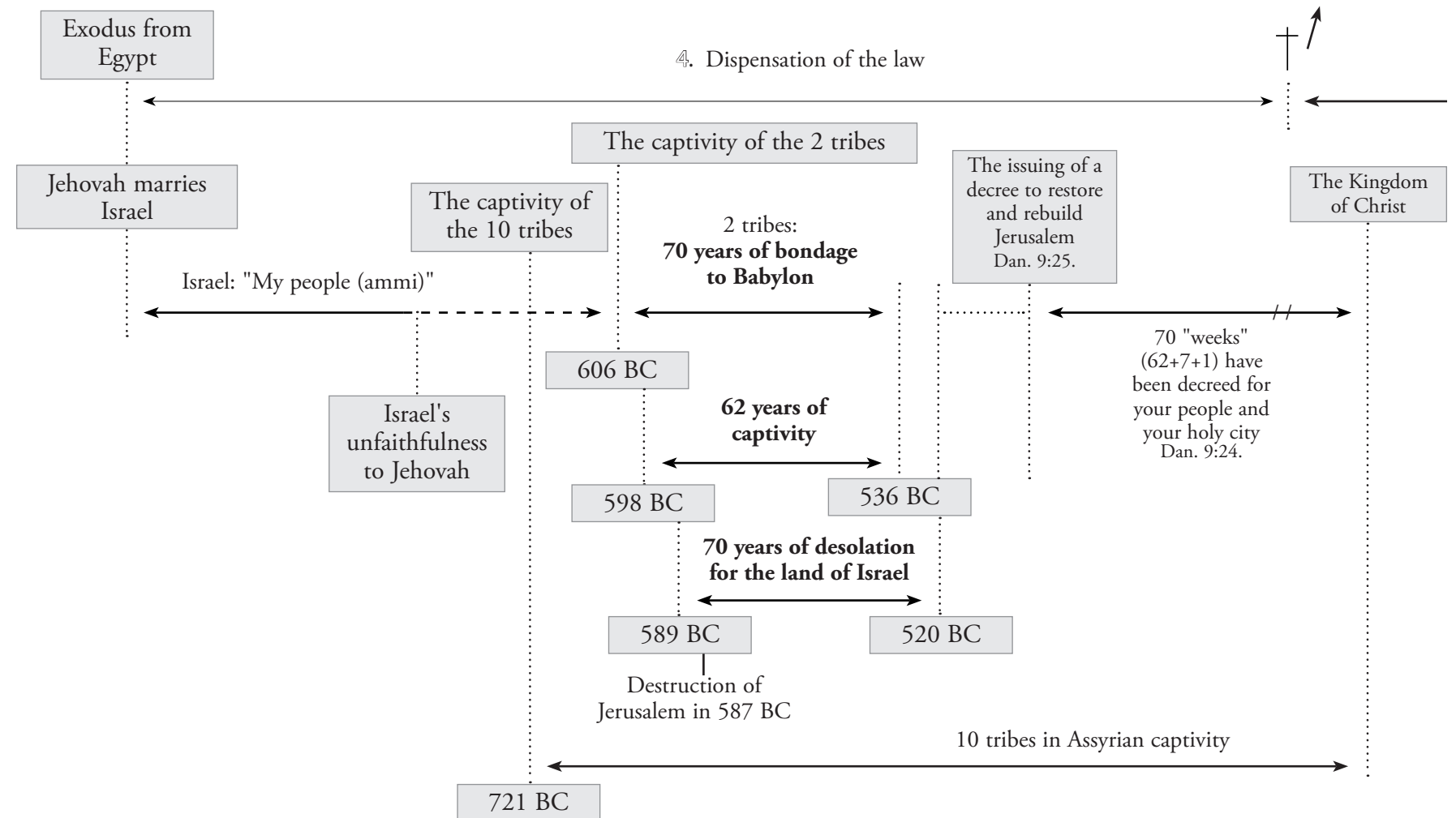
- Provided Israel is obedient to the law, they will be the chosen people among the nations. They will be a kingdom of priests to the world (they will rule over the nations) Ex. 19:3-6.
- God will raise up a king from David who will have an everlasting kingdom 2 Sam. 7:12-14, Ezek. 34.

The Bible describes Jehovah's covenant with Israel as a **marriage** between a man and his wife.

- **Betrothal:** After betrothal, Israel entered into marriage with the Lord (Jehovah) Jer. 2:2.
- **Promise of marriage:** "All that the Lord has spoken we will do" Ex. 19:8, 24:3-8, Deut. 5:27.
- **Marital conditions:** Obedience to the covenant of the law was the condition of this marriage Jer. 31:32, Ezek. 16:6-8.
- **Marriage house:** The land of Palestine (Canaan) was their marriage home. The land belonged to Jehovah and Israel was allowed to live in it Lev. 25:23, Is. 14:2, Jer. 11:15.
- **God's jealousy:** Mutual faithfulness is the foundation of a good marriage. This is why God gave the first commandment Ex. 20:2-5.
- **Fornication and adultery:** Jehovah Himself would drive out and defeat Israel's enemies before them. This is why Israel was not allowed to make a covenant with the neighbouring nations. A covenant with another nation is a covenant with that nation's God (husband). Consequently, this is fornication or adultery Ex. 34:10-14.
- **The unfaithfulness of the wife:** The Lord describes Israel's unfaithfulness in Ezekiel 16:8-35.
- **The dissolution of the marriage bond:** Because of Israel's unfaithfulness, their marriage with Jehovah ended.
- **Divorce by law:** In the covenant of law, divorce was legally established Deut. 24:1. If the wife was unfaithful to her husband and did not find favour in His eyes, He could send her out of His house with a certificate of divorce (God cannot be unfaithful).
- **The deliverance of the 10 tribes:** Jehovah had found "some indecency in her", released His wife and gave her a decree of divorce Jer. 3:8-10. Thus the 10 tribes were sent into exile to Assyria in 721 BC.
- **Forgiveness for the 2 tribes (Judah):** At first the 2 tribes returned to the Lord, but later they became unfaithful again Jer. 3:8-10. They were also sent away into exile.

Regarding the duration of a marriage we can summarise the following:

1. Marriage is meant forever.
2. In principle, marriage ends in case of infidelity.
3. Officially, marriage ends with a letter of divorce.
4. Marriage ends with the death of the husband and/or the wife.



The Exile of Israel

Because Israel was unfaithful to God, God took away their promised kingship over the nations Deut. 4:27, 28:62-64. The 10 tribes were taken into exile to Assyria 2 Kin. 17:5-18 from which they have not returned to this day. Jehovah had released the 10 tribes and given them a decree of divorce Jer. 3:8.

The 2 tribes (Judah) were deported to Babylon Ezra 5:12. God had not given them a divorce decree. Therefore, He had not yet dissolved the marriage with Judah. God put them in bondage at the beginning of the kingdoms, Babylon being the first kingdom. In the Bible, this bondage was given a period of 70 years. These 70 years were actually 70 Sabbatical years, which the people of Israel had not celebrated in a period of 490 years. According to the Law, every seventh year was declared a Sabbatical year in which the land was not to be cultivated Ex. 23:10, Lev. 25:3, 26:33-43.

- **70 years of bondage to Babylon.** It was announced that the 2 tribes would serve the king of Babylon for seventy years Jer. 25:11, 29:4-10. This servitude began in 606 BC when the king of Babylon had besieged Jerusalem. Jerusalem was brought under the control of Babylon. Many important people, such as Daniel, were taken into captivity.
- **62 years of captivity.** The actual captivity of the 2 tribes in Babylon lasted 62 years and began with the second conquest of Jerusalem in 598 BC. At this time the 2 tribes were taken to Babylon.
- **70 years of desolation over Israel and Jerusalem.** A period of 70 years of desolation had also been prophesied for Jerusalem and the land Dan. 9:2, Zech. 1:12. This period began in 589 BC 2 Chr. 36:19-21. Two years later, in 587 BC, Jerusalem was destroyed.

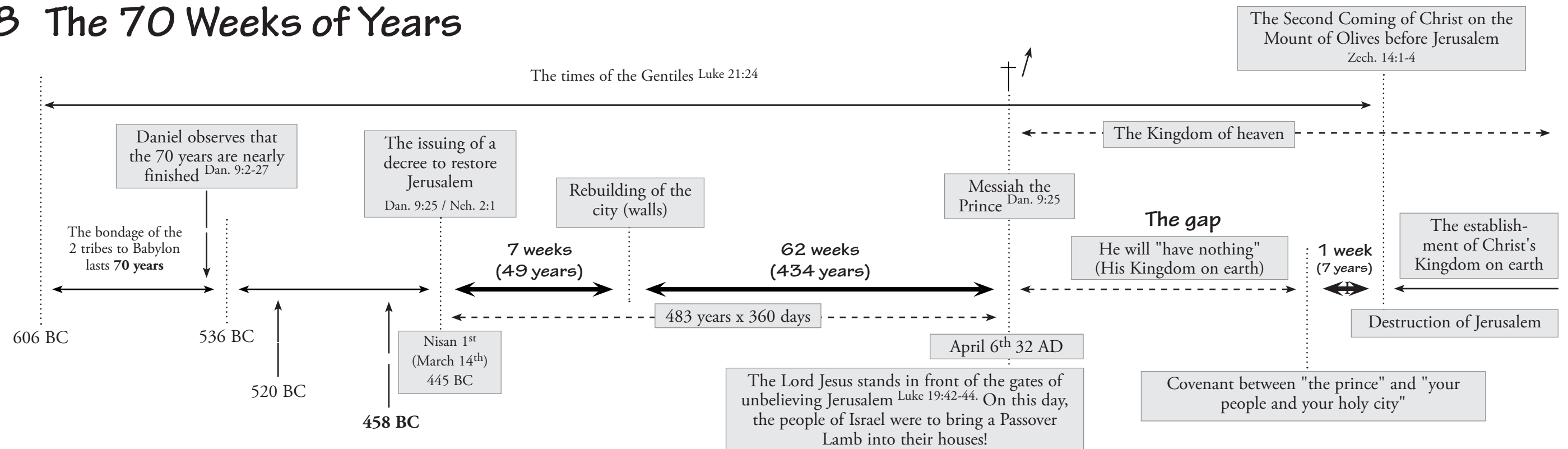
The Seventy Weeks

When Daniel saw that the 70 years were nearly finished Dan. 9:2, he repented for the sins of his people. He knew from the Bible that all of God's prophecies would surely be fulfilled in the near future.

In fact, there would be a rebuilding of Jerusalem and the people would return from Babylon, although this return would not be the final one. To give Daniel an insight into these events, God sent His angel Gabriel. He revealed the following to Daniel: "Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city [...]" Dan. 9:24. The seventy years of Babylonian captivity are a type of the 70 "weeks" for Judah and Jerusalem.

Only after these 70 "weeks" will there be a worldwide restoration of the land and the people of Israel, as God has promised by the mouth of His holy prophets.

8 The 70 Weeks of Years



The Seventy Weeks of Years

In His discourse on the end of the age ^{Matt. 24}, the Lord Jesus refers to the prophet Daniel.

Daniel (who had been deported to Babylon) believed and studied the Scriptures. He discovered that 70 years would pass after the destruction of Jerusalem ^{Dan. 9:2}. God sent His angel Gabriel and Daniel was given insight into God's plan for the restoration of his people.

The seventy weeks (in Hebrew literally: "seventy sevens") indicate a period of 70 x 7 years (these weeks of years can also be traced back to Jacob Gen. 29:27-28 and the Law Lev. 25:8). From similar scriptures concerning the last (70th) week, we can conclude that in this given context, one week consists of 7 years. This 70th week is divided into two parts, as we see in Dan. 9:27: "in the middle of the week".

- "Forty-two months" Rev. 11:2
- "Twelve hundred and sixty days" Rev. 11:3
- "Time, times and half a time" ($1+2+1/2 = 3 1/2$) Dan. 12:7

After these $70 \times 7 = 490$ years, Israel and Jerusalem will be fully restored. The 70 weeks began when the two tribes were given the permission to rebuild Jerusalem. When the time of the captivity was officially over, there were three separate decrees which allowed the people of Israel to rebuild or beautify the temple.

- 536 BC: Permission to rebuild the temple ^{Ezra 1:1-3}
- 520 BC: Renewed permission to rebuild the temple ^{Ezra 4:3, Hag. 2:18}
- 458 BC: Return to beautify the temple ^{Ezra 7}

The 7 and 62 Weeks

The 70 weeks can be divided into three periods. The 7 and 62 weeks are combined into one period ^{Dan. 9,25}. This period begins with **"the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem"** and ends with **"Messiah the Prince"**.

The period began in the 20th year of King Artaxerxes (445 BC) when Nehemiah received the permission to rebuild the city of **Jerusalem** Neh. 2:1. The period ended when the Anointed Prince or Messiah was "cut off" Dan. 9:26 before His crucifixion. It is clear that the 483 prophetic years (of 360 days each) ended when the Lord Jesus wept over Jerusalem because the Jewish nation had not recognised Him. At the same time, the disciples were preparing for Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem on the foal of a donkey Zech. 9:9, Matt. 21:1-5.

The triumphal procession stopped on the Mount of Olives outside **Jerusalem** where the Lord Jesus wept over the city Luke 19:35-46.

The Lord said: **"If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes."** If the people had accepted the Messiah, the things would have been peaceful. But the city (the people) had neither recognised nor believed the time of her visitation. Now desolation would come upon the city Luke 19:43-44.

After the 62 weeks "the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing". That is to say: He would not have His Kingdom on earth (yet). Five days after His "triumphal entry", the Lord Jesus was crucified. As a result, the establishment of His Kingdom on earth was delayed.

The 70th Week

After the 62 weeks "the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing". These verses explain the delay of the establishment of His Kingdom on earth and the destruction of the city and the sanctuary ^{Dan. 9:26}. Once again Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 AD and the people (Judah) were taken into exile in Egypt.

The gap in the 70 weeks

After His resurrection, Christ sat down at the right hand of God. Of course His Kingdom has come but it is now limited to heaven. During this period He will take from among the Gentiles a people for His name (fifth dispensation).

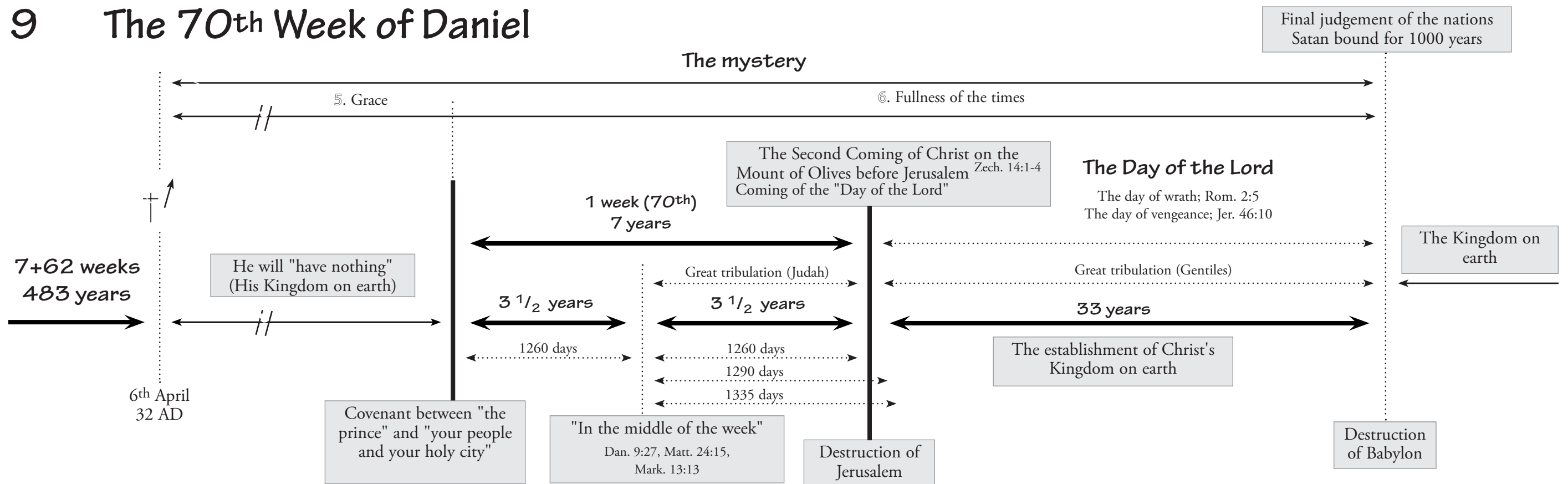
The 70th week

The last week of the 70 weeks is marked by a covenant between the Jewish State and the prince of a people. The Jewish State has existed since 1948 and the people, that is referred to in this verse, are obviously the Palestinians (Philistines). The 70th week will begin when these two parties, who are currently fighting over Jerusalem, will make a covenant over that city.

In the book of Daniel there is mention of "a prince who is to come" to make a covenant with "your people and your holy city" (Judah and Jerusalem). This prince will make a firm covenant for a week. But in the middle of the week this prince will "put a stop to sacrifice [...]" Dan. 9:26-27.

THE GAP

9 The 70th Week of Daniel



The First Half of the 70th Week

The covenant

Just as the end of the 69th week is clearly marked in the Bible, so the beginning of the 70th week is also clearly mentioned. When Israel makes a strong covenant with the Palestinian leader concerning their land and Jerusalem Dan. 9:26-27, it will herald the beginning of the last (70th) week.

The covenant made will involve the warring parties in the Jewish state. The position of Jerusalem plays a crucial role in the covenant. This city will serve as the political and religious capital for both Jews and Palestinians; representatives of two different religions will make arrangements for their holy places. The Jews will rebuild their holy place (the temple complex area). In the same place, the Palestinians already have their holy place (where Mohammed supposedly ascended to heaven). The covenant will probably stipulate that both parties can worship in the temple of Jerusalem. The Jews will reinstate their sacrifices and grain offerings (we can infer this from the fact that they will cease in the middle of the week) Dan. 11:36.

The two witnesses

In the first half of the 70th week the two witnesses will prophesy Rev.11:3-6. **"And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth."** According to the description in Revelation 11:6, these two witnesses will be Elijah and Moses. Elijah had the power to stop rain for 3 1/2 years (1 Kin. 17:1, James 5:17) and Moses was associated with the plagues in Egypt. In addition, something remarkable happened to both of them. We know of Elijah that he ascended to heaven 2 Kin. 2:11 and of Moses it is said that there was a dispute about his body Jud. 1:9. Obviously the Lord has preserved their bodies and will use them again when the Church is caught up to heaven.

The two witnesses will announce the coming of the kingdom on earth. Those who come to believe in Christ through their preaching are advised to go out the camp (Jerusalem) and flee to the wilderness (Petra). There will be time to flee until the middle of the 70th week Matt. 24:16-26.

The Middle and the Second Half of the 70th Week

The abomination of desolation

In the middle of the week the prince, who makes a firm covenant with Israel, shall take away the sacrifice and grain offering Dan. 8:11, 9:27, 12:11. The Jewish religion will be forbidden and the sanctuary will be desecrated, as in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes. Since the majority of the Jewish people are atheists, they will prefer peace to regular religious sacrifice. The Lord Jesus refers to the prophecies of Daniel and He adds that as soon as this event takes place they will have to hastily flee to the mountains (Paran / city of Petra). After that it will not be possible to flee out of the country for 3 1/2 years and there will be a great tribulation upon the Jewish state (such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world) Matt. 24:15-21, Mark 13:14, Luke 21:20, 1 Thess. 5:3.

The death of the two witnesses

In the middle of the 70th week (after 1260 days), two witnesses will be ready to give their testimony. In the middle of the week they will be killed by the beast that comes up out of the abyss Rev. 11:3-7. Their dead bodies will be displayed in the streets of Jerusalem for 3 1/2 days. The people will celebrate the death of the two witnesses and make merry. But their joy will turn to fear when, after 3 1/2 days, God raises the two witnesses from the dead and they ascend visibly into heaven before the eyes of the enemies. Immediately after this there will be a great earthquake which will cause the fall of a tenth of the city and the death of 7,000 people Rev. 11:8-13.

Desolation to the end

Because of the sacrilegious idol that causes desolation in the holy place, the second half of the 70th week is marked by destruction. Desolation will come upon Judah because they will make a covenant with another god Jer. 4:1-4, 13:27, 16:18, 32:34 and desolation will come upon the idol itself. At the end of the 70th week the climax will be reached: the armies of Gog and Magog (Russia) will invade the land from the Mediterranean Sea and destroy the land and the city Ezek. 39, Joel 2:1-20.

The End of the 70th Week

The Second Coming of Christ on the Mount of Olives

During the destruction of Jerusalem by the armies of Gog and Magog, Judah will call on the name of the Lord in her distress Joel 2:32, Acts 2:20.

As a result, the Messiah will return and He will stand on the Mount of Olives. This mountain will be split in two, forming a valley in the desert. Through this valley, the "rest of the people" who calls on the name of the Lord, will be able to flee Zech. 14:1-5.

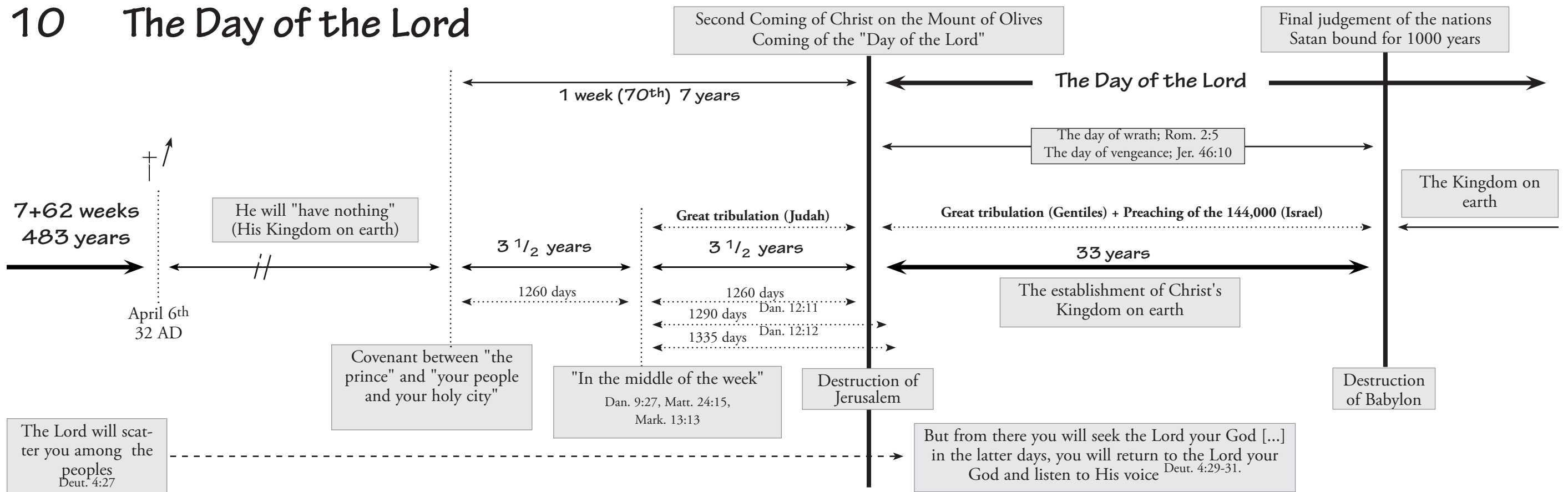
The Lord will destroy the armies of Gog and Magog by sending fire upon them and their allies Ezek. 39:1-6. The remnant of Jerusalem will flee to Petra where they will be gathered with the part of the faithful remnant that fled there earlier in the first half of the 70th week Rev. 12:6.

The Day of the Lord

The approach of the Day of the Lord is always mentioned in connection with the events at the end of the 70th week. The destruction of Jerusalem is associated with the coming of the "Day of the Lord". This day will bring distress to the Gentiles Ezek. 30:2-3, Joel 2:1-31, Obad.1:15, Zeph. 1:14-15.

"Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord" Mal. 4:5.

10 The Day of the Lord



The Day of the Lord

The approach of the Day of the Lord is always mentioned in connection with the events at the end of the 70th week. The destruction of Jerusalem is associated with the coming of the Day of the Lord.

The expression "The Day of the Lord" means "the day when the Lord will be exalted and will rule the world." This "day" will never end. The Day of the Lord as such is great and glorious for believers Acts 2:20, but terrible for those who refuse to submit to His Kingdom. For them it will be a "day" of darkness and despair Ezek. 30:2-3, Joel 2:1-31, Obad. 1:15, Zeph. 1:14-15.

Just as an ordinary day begins with dawn, so the Day of the Lord will begin with dawn. In this context, "dawn" does not mean the rising of the sun but the darkest part of the night (the after-night, when man is weakest and when most people die or are born).

This darkest part of the daybreak is associated with the distress when the Day of the Lord comes.

- Darkness, gloom, clouds and thick darkness Joel 2:2, Zeph. 1:15
- The sun and the moon grow dark Is. 13:6, Joel 3:15, Amos 5:18, Acts 2:20

Because of the distress when the Day of the Lord begins, this "day" is also called "The day of (their) wrath" Rom. 2:5, Rev. 6:17, "The Day of His anger" Job 20:28 or "The Day of vengeance" Jer. 46:10.

When the nations are judged, "the dawn" will be over and the sun will rise = light will come over all creation (Christ who rules over all creation).

In this sense, the "Day of the Lord" will never end.

The Gathering of the 2 and the 10 Tribes

When there is a possibility of escape for the believing remnant of Judah and Jerusalem, they will flee to the city of Petra in the wilderness Joel 2:32, 3:1-12. When this happens (at the end of the 70th week), the Lord will appear on the Mount of Olives Zech. 14:1-7. On the flight out of the city, they will not have the opportunity to meet the Lord. This encounter will take place one month later (after 1290 days Dan. 12:11) on the Mount Hor before Petra. There they will see the imprint of the nails in His hands Zech. 13:6. On this occasion, they will meet the Lord as Jesus of Nazareth. They will know that He is the Messiah. Then they will grieve bitterly over His death Zech. 12:10. After 1335 days Dan. 12:12 they will enter the Promised Land and the Messianic Kingdom will begin.

Then the Lord will gather and unite the 2 and the 10 tribes of Israel and Jerusalem will be rebuilt.

"For, behold, days are coming", declares the Lord, "when I will restore the captivity of My people Israel and Judah." The Lord says, "I will also bring them back to the land that I gave to their forefathers, and they shall possess it." Jer. 30:3.

God has promised numerous times that He would gather and unite the 12 tribes (Judah and Israel) in Israel Deut. 30:3, Ps. 53:6, Jer. 16:15, 31:31, Ezek. 28:25, 39:25, Joel 3:1, Amos 9:14, Zeph. 3:20 etc.

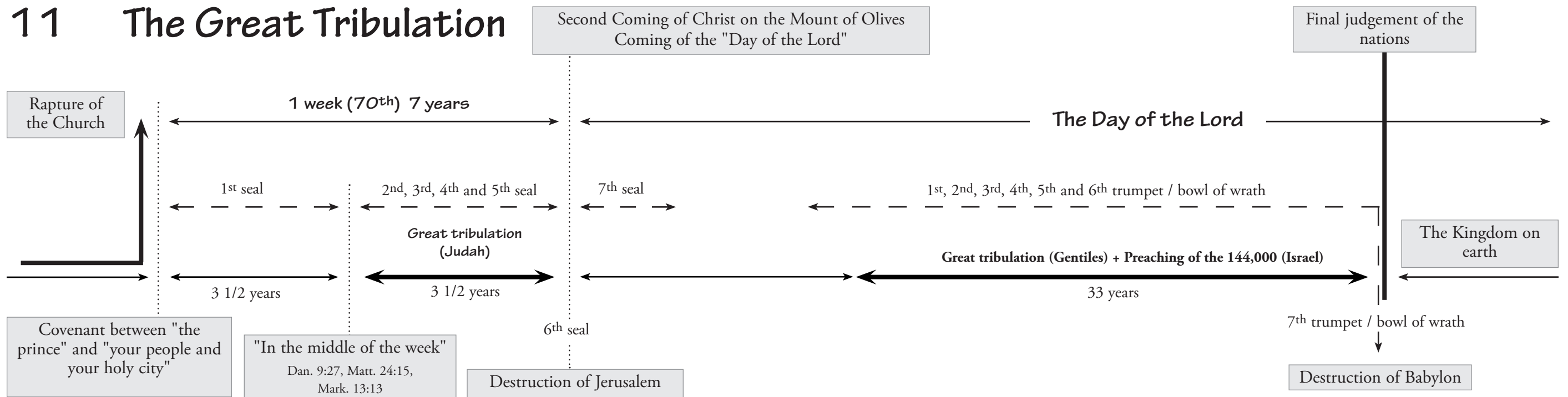
At the end of the 70th week, Israel and probably Egypt will be overrun by the armies of Gog and Magog (Russia and allies). They in turn will be judged by the Lord (as well as the countries they come from Ezek. 39). The 33 years will probably begin with a time of peace (just as the 70th week began with a time of peace).

The Preaching of the 144,000

It is said that immediately after the earthquake in Jerusalem (the 6th seal Rev. 6:12) the great day of His wrath will come. The four angels who stand on the four corners of the earth will be given the power to harm the earth and the sea. They will be temporarily restrained by another angel who has the "seal of the living God". This angel cried out with a loud voice: **"Saying, 'Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have sealed the bond-servants of our God on their foreheads.' And I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed [...]"** Rev. 7:1-8.

From the 12 tribes 144,000 faithful Israelites will be sealed (12,000 from each tribe). They will preach the gospel during the following tribulation period. "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations, and then the end shall come." Matt. 24:14. We are told of the result of the preaching (at the end of the 33 years): **"After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude, which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands [...]"** Rev. 7:9-10.

11 The Great Tribulation



Tribulation for Judah

The second half of the 70th week will overwhelm both Judah and Jerusalem. **"For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall"** Matt. 24:21. There will be a period of "great tribulation" beginning in the middle of the week when the "abomination of desolation" stands in the holy place. First the great tribulation will come upon Judah and Jerusalem, and then upon all peoples, nations and languages. Regarding the tribulation of Judah and Jerusalem, the Lord Jesus says the following: **"And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short"** Matt. 24:22. Since Judah and Jerusalem will be destroyed at the end of the 70th week and the faithful remnant will call on the name of the Lord, their tribulation ends at that moment. This is how the "great tribulation" is divided. There is a time of tribulation for the people of Israel (the second half of the 70th week) and a time of tribulation for the nations (33 years).

In Revelation 6 we find a vision (seven seals) describing the events in the 70th week.

First half of the 70th week:

1st seal: A white horse, and the rider who sits on it has a bow and a crown Rev. 6:2. He will be given power (bow) and will not need arrows (they speak of war). He will gain his power through intrigue (politics) Dan. 11:21. The rider on the white horse will bring peace.

Second half of the 70th week:

2nd seal: A red horse, the horseman was given a sword and the result was war Rev. 6:3-4.

3rd seal: A black horse, and the horseman has a pair of scales in his hands (famine) Rev. 6:5-7.

4th seal: An ashen horse, and the horseman has the name "Death". To them (the three horsemen) is given power over one fourth of the earth to kill with the sword (2nd horseman), and with famine (3rd horseman) and with pestilence (4th horseman) Rev. 6:8.

5th seal: The souls of those who are killed because of their testimony seek vengeance. But they will have to wait for a little while longer (33 years). There will be more believers (in the 33 years) who will be killed because of their testimony Rev. 6:9-11, 20:4.

End of the 70th week:

6th seal: The great earthquake upon Israel (the beginning of the Day of Wrath) Rev. 6:12-17.

Immediately after the 70th week:

7th seal: Silence in heaven for about half an hour Rev. 8:1. The four angels must wait with their judgements on the earth and the sea (great tribulation of the nations) because the 144,000 must be sealed first.

Tribulation for the Nations: 7 Trumpets

After the 70th week, 144,000 bond-servants will be sealed. This event can only take place when the 2 and the 10 tribes have found their true identity (and are gathered back to Israel). This will probably take several years. The silence in heaven is symbolic of this Rev. 8:1. Then the judgement by means of the 7 trumpets will begin. These plagues will not come on Judah and Jerusalem, but only on the nations during the 33 years.

1st trumpet: Judgement on the earth. Hail and fire, mixed with blood. A third of the trees and all the green grass will be burned Rev. 8:7.

2nd trumpet: Judgement on the sea. A "mountain burning with fire" will be thrown into the sea. A third of the sea will become blood and a third of the creatures, which have life in the sea will die; and a third of the ships will be destroyed Rev. 8:8-9.

3rd trumpet: Judgement on the rivers. The water will be made bitter (poisonous) so that many people will die Rev. 8:10-11.

4th trumpet: A third of the sun, moon and stars will be darkened Rev. 8:12.

5th trumpet: The bottomless pit will be opened and smoke and locusts will come up. They will torment men for five months (except those who will have the seal of God on their foreheads) Rev. 9:1-11.

6th trumpet: The release of the four angels bound on the river Euphrates. They will kill a third of mankind with fire, smoke and brimstone Rev. 9:14-21.

7th trumpet: There will be loud voices in heaven, saying: **"The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ [...]"** Rev. 11:15. Heaven will be split open and there will be flashes of lightning and peals of thunder and an earthquake and a great hailstorm Rev. 11:18-19.

Tribulation for the Nations: 7 Bowls

John also sees the judgement on the earth in a vision of 7 "bowls of the wrath of God" Rev. 16. These bowls of wrath show the same structure as the 7 trumpets. The judgement first seen in the form of the 7 trumpets corresponds to the judgement of the 7 bowls of wrath. Both judgements end with the finale of the kingdom of the world being given to Christ. At the end of both the 7th bowl and the 7th trumpet, Babylon will be desolate (at the end of the 33 years).

1st bowl: Poured out on the earth. It will become a malignant sore on the people who have the mark of the beast and who worship his image Rev. 16:2.

2nd bowl: Poured into the sea, which becomes blood. Every living thing in the sea will die Rev. 16:3.

3rd bowl: Poured into the rivers and the springs of waters. They will become blood Rev. 16:4.

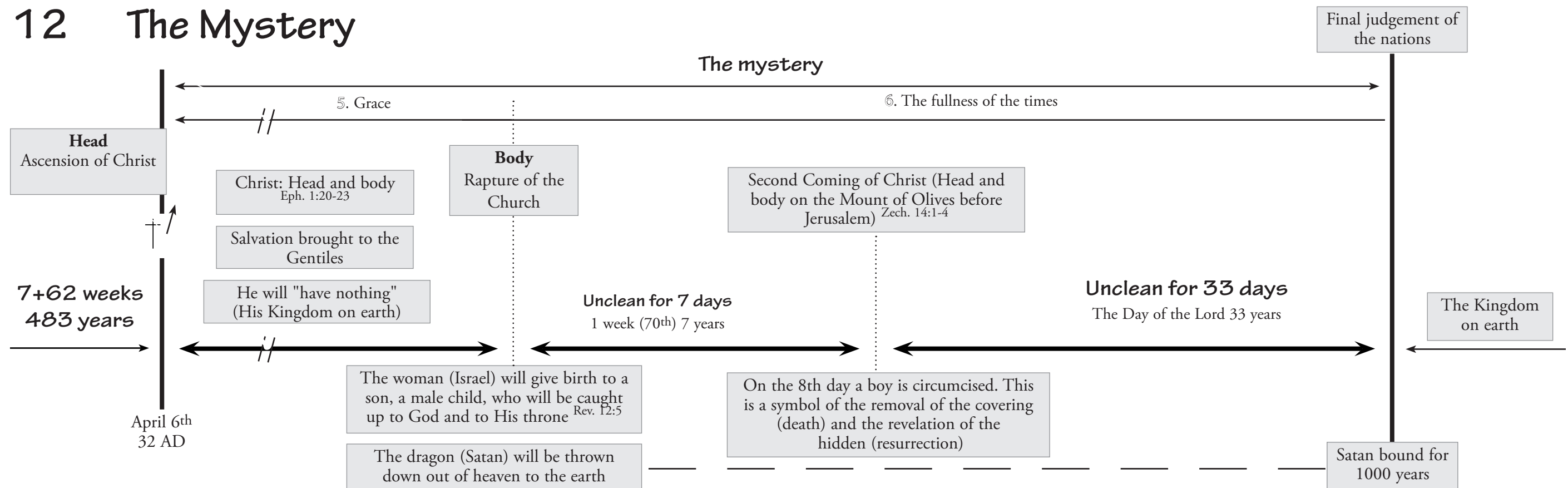
4th bowl: Poured out on the sun. Men will be burned with fire. They will blaspheme the name of God and yet refuse to repent Rev. 16:8-9.

5th bowl: Poured out on the throne of the beast. His kingdom will be darkened and people will gnash their teeth in torment. But they will blaspheme God and yet refuse to repent Rev. 16:10-11.

6th bowl: Poured out on the river Euphrates. Its water will be dried up to prepare the way for the kings from the east. Out of the mouth of the dragon, and of the beast and of the false prophet come three unclean spirits. They will gather together the kings of the whole earth for the "war of the great day of God the Almighty" Rev. 16:12-16.

7th bowl: Poured out into the air. **"And a loud voice came out of the temple from the throne, saying, 'It is done.'"** There will be flashes of lightning, sounds and peals of thunder and a great earthquake. Babylon will be split into three parts, the cities of the nations will fall, huge hailstones will come down from heaven Rev. 16:17-21.

12 The Mystery



The Mystery

When the disciples asked the Lord why he spoke to them in parables He replied: **"To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them (unbelieving Jews) it has not been granted."** Matt. 13:10-11.

It is clear that the Lord did not speak to the crowds in plain language (He spoke to them in parables) because they were not meant to know the mysteries or His secrets. But it is given to the believers (the disciples) to know these mysteries or secrets Ps. 25:14, 1 Cor. 2:7, Eph. 1:9, 3:3-9, Col. 1:26-27. The Lord was speaking to the crowds when he told them the parable of the sower Mark. 4:1-20 but the interpretation was given only to His disciples.

The Jews were entrusted with the Word of God John 5:39-40, Rom. 3:2. But the Jews were ignorant of this Word and of the coming of "Messiah the Prince". That is why the mysteries of the Kingdom are expressed in parables, so that an unbelieving people would not understand them. **"Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand"** Matt. 13:13.

Because the Jews rejected Him as King over them, Matt. 27, John 1:11 salvation was taken from them and given to the Gentiles Acts 13:46-48. **"Simeon has related how God first concerned Himself about taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name. And with this the words of the Prophets agree, just as it is written, 'After these things I will return, and I will rebuild the tabernacle of David which has fallen [...]'"** Acts 15:14-16. The apostle Paul reveals the mystery to the Gentile believers Rom. 11:25, 16:25, 1 Cor. 2:7, 15:51, Eph. 1:9, 3:3-9, 5:32, 6:19, Col. 1:26-27.

The revelation of the Kingdom of heaven on earth is delayed. This postponement is part of the mystery. The mystery (as a period of time) began with the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus and will end with the Second Coming of Christ at the end of the 33 years; then the mystery of God will be finished Rev. 10:7. Then His Kingdom will be revealed on earth.

The 7 and 33 Years

We can see from the prophetic Word that at the end of the 70th week the promised Kingdom will be established on earth from Jerusalem to the uttermost part of the earth. The prophecies speak of Christ's coming on the Mount of Olives to save the faithful remnant in Jerusalem. They also speak of the final destruction of Babylon at Armageddon, when Satan will be bound.

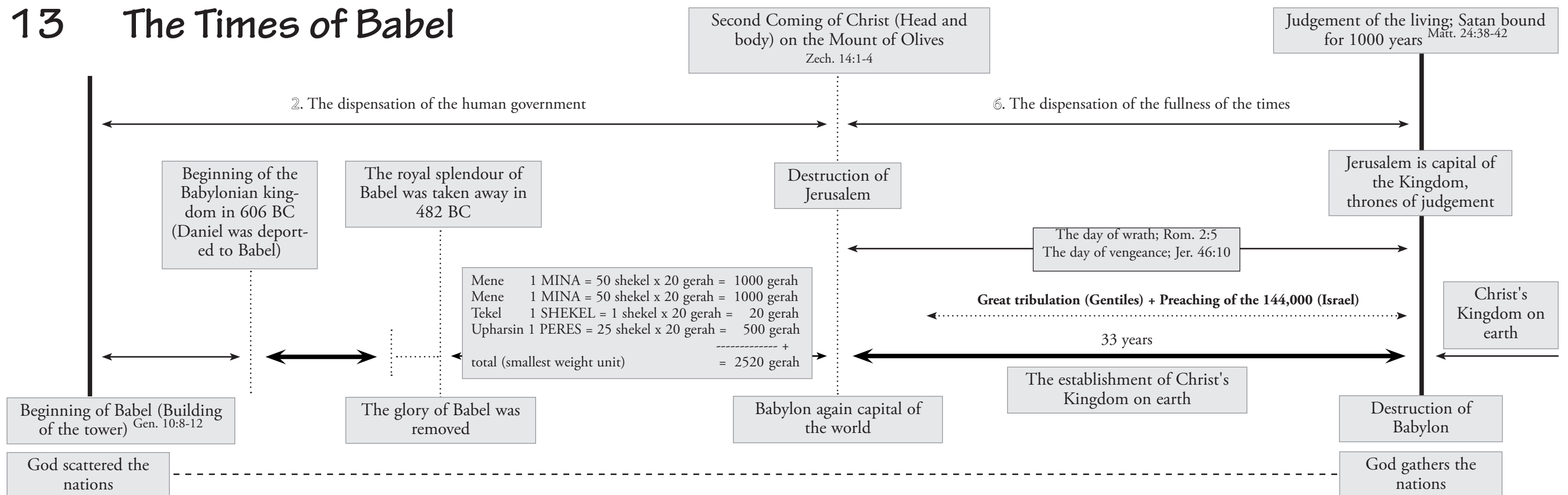
There will be a period of time between these two events, the exact length of which remains unknown. But from the typology we can prove the following: Revelation 12 speaks of a woman who will give birth to a son, a male child. This woman will flee into the wilderness (first half of the 70th week - 3¹/₂ years), where she will be nourished (second half of the 70th week - 1260 days - 3¹/₂ years). The Law speaks of such a woman: **"Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'When a woman produces seed and bears a male child, then she shall be unclean for seven days, as in the days of the impurity of her sickness she shall be unclean. And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised. Then she shall remain in the blood of her purification for thirty-three days; she shall not touch any consecrated thing, nor enter the sanctuary, until the days of her purification are completed.'"** Lev. 12:2-6.

Since the Law is a shadow of things to come, this ritual has a prophetic as well as a literal meaning. The practical use of this ceremony is difficult to ascertain because the times are doubled when a woman gives birth to a girl. The interpretation of this Bible passage is as follows: The woman conceives seed. The woman's seed refers to the Messiah (a woman cannot produce seed). The woman is Israel and the seed is Christ, the male child. Here we find the same expression "male child" as in Revelation 12, which is Christ and the Church (head and body). If we understand the deeper meaning of the ceremony, we will find that the 7 days reflect the 7 years of the 70th week; immediately after giving birth (rapture of the Church) the woman will be unclean. On the 8th day (i.e. after the 7 years) the flesh of the boy's foreskin will be circumcised. This event corresponds to the Second Coming of the Messiah (Christ and His Church) on the Mount of Olives immediately after the 70th week. After this, the woman will be unclean for 33 days and will not be allowed to enter the sanctuary (temple). (After the period of 33 years, the temple will be built in the 1000 years of peace).

Also in other passages of Scripture we find the structure of 7 and 33:

- David:** David reigned 40 years: 7 years over Judah (in Hebron) and 33 years over all Israel and Judah (in Jerusalem). Apart from the 7 years of reign there is also a period of 7¹/₂ years mentioned. This additional ¹/₂ year corresponds to the ¹/₂ hour silence in heaven. Immediately after the end of the 70th week 2 Sam. 5:4-5, 1 Kin. 2:10, 1 Chr. 3:4, 29:26, Rev. 8:1. David was not allowed to build the temple!
- Moses:** Moses was on the mountain for 40 days; until the 7th day he was covered by the cloud and then he had an encounter with the Lord. After that he was in communion with the Lord for 33 days Ex. 24:16-18.
- Thomas:** There is a period of 40 days between Christ's resurrection and ascension. Thomas did not believe for seven days, but became a believer on the eighth day. After his conversion there was a period of 33 days before Christ's ascension. John 20:19-24, Acts 1:3.
- Joseph:** Joseph was 30 years old when he was put over all the land of Egypt. There were seven years of plenty, followed by seven years of famine. After the famine, Joseph lived for 66 years. (In Egypt, the years are counted twice, so the ratio is 3¹/₂ : 3¹/₂ : 33) Gen. 50:22-26.

13 The Times of Babel



Babel in the Past

After the Flood, the descendants of Noah built a city with the following purpose: **"And they said, 'Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name; lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth'"** Gen. 11:1-9.

Men wanted to build a world through their own efforts. The city reflects the principle of economic and social enterprise (materialism). The tower, the top of which was to reach into heaven, reflects the religious aspect (idealism; ideals such as peace and harmony in which people firmly believe). These ideals, which still exist today, have their roots in ancient Babylon. They are also known as the "Babylonian Principle". Babylon means the union of mankind that exalts itself above God.

The Lord foiled their plan by confusing their language. As a result, the Babylonians stopped building the city. Because of the confusion of tongues, God scattered them abroad over the face of the whole earth Gen. 11:8.

Babylon then fell into oblivion until the reigns of David and Solomon, when Babylon was again at its height (although this is not recorded in the Bible). In 626 BC, King Nabopalassar ascended the throne and achieved the independence of Babel from the Assyrian kingdom. In 606 BC, Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem for the first time and took some of the people into captivity in Babylon (including Daniel and his friends). In the same year, Nebuchadnezzar came to power and established the great Babylonian empire of those days. It came to an end in 538 BC when Babel was conquered by the Medes and Persians. Babel was not destroyed on this occasion! The city continued to exist until 482 BC. At that time the walls and the gates were torn down and Babel fell into decline. During the Greek Empire, Alexander the Great tried to rebuild Babel. But he did not succeed because he died suddenly.

The 7 Times of Nebuchadnezzar

In Daniel 4 the king had a dream in which he was likened to a tree. In this dream, the tree was cut down and the growth of the stump and roots was stopped by a band of iron and bronze for seven years Dan. 4:7-13. Daniel interpreted this dream and applied it to King Nebuchadnezzar himself. 7 times would pass over the king, in which he would be cast out from the people, and in which he would behave like the "beasts of the field".

The 7 times of the king of Babel
This dream came true for the king when he placed himself above God and said: **"Is this not Babylon the great, which I myself have built [...]"** Dan. 4:30.

While the word was in the king's mouth, a voice came from heaven, saying: **"King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is declared: sovereignty has been removed from you,"** Dan. 4:31-32.

For seven times (months of weeks) the king was unable to exercise his royal authority because he was mentally disturbed. At the end of these seven times his mind returned to him and he praised the Lord Dan. 4:34.

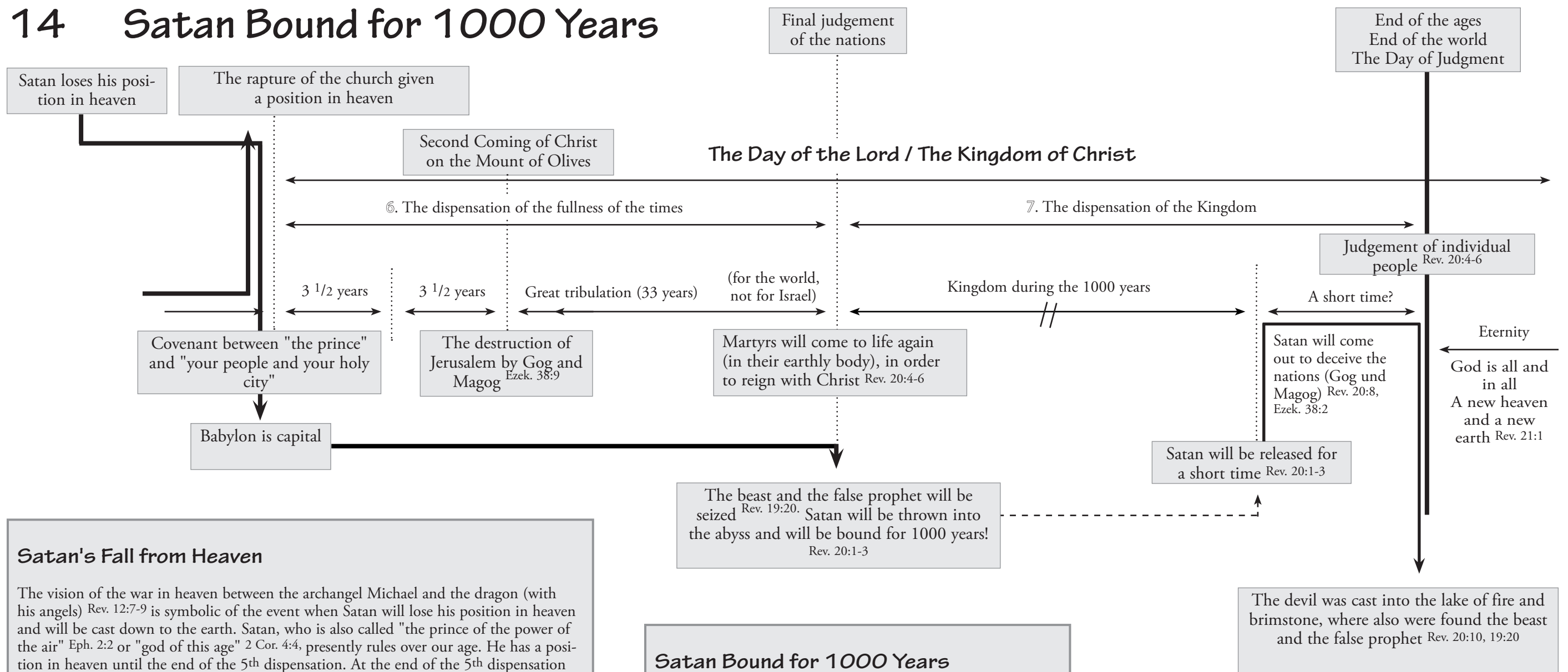
The 7 Times of Babel

The chopped down tree is a picture of King Nebuchadnezzar, the personification of Babylon (he was the head of gold Dan. 2:38). Nebuchadnezzar represents the whole Babylonian empire. In this way, the prophecy of the seven times can be applied to the king as well as to the Babylonian kingdom itself. At the end of the Babylonian Empire, Babel was not destroyed. In 538 BC the city was conquered by the Medes and Persians (Daniel retained his position). It was not until 482 BC that Babylon lost its glory, when King Ahasuerus tore down the walls and the gates. In the years that followed, Babel fell into ruin.

During the seven times, the band of bronze and iron that encircled the stump stunted its growth. This image represents his kingdom rather than King Nebuchadnezzar himself. In Daniel 2 we find the description of a statue made of gold (Babylonian kingdom), of silver (Medo-Persian kingdom), bronze (Greek kingdom), iron (Roman kingdom) and iron mixed with clay (federation of 10 states). So Babel was prevented by the Greek and Roman empires from becoming the capital of a world empire. But after the 7 times, Babel, like the king, will be restored to its former glory.

According to calculations, the duration of the 7 times must be 2520 years (each of 360 days). This was for example shown by the writing on the wall Dan. 5. The words "Mene, mene, tekem, upharsin" can be attributed to Hebrew weights and measures. In the near future (7 years after the rapture of the church) Babel will be restored to its royal splendour and will be the capital of a great world empire. The restoration of Babel began many years ago. The end of the 7 times coincides with the end of the 70th week. Then the two greatest enemies of Babylon will destroy each other (Israel vs. Gog & Magog). Babel will be the capital city of the world where the "king of Babylon" (= the prince who made a covenant with Israel) will have his throne. During the 33 years the king of Babylon (to whom the dragon = Satan has given his power Rev. 13:2) will set up his statue, which must be worshipped by everyone Dan. 2, Rev. 19:20. At the end of the 33 years, Babylon will be finally destroyed Rev. 14:8, 18:10-19 and its king thrown into the lake of fire Rev. 19:20.

14 Satan Bound for 1000 Years



Satan's Fall from Heaven

The vision of the war in heaven between the archangel Michael and the dragon (with his angels) Rev. 12:7-9 is symbolic of the event when Satan will lose his position in heaven and will be cast down to the earth. Satan, who is also called "the prince of the power of the air" Eph. 2:2 or "god of this age" 2 Cor. 4:4, presently rules over our age. He has a position in heaven until the end of the 5th dispensation. At the end of the 5th dispensation (during the rapture of the church, 2 Thess. 2:7-8) Satan will be thrown from heaven to the earth and be humbled by appearing in an earthly body. "[...] **less the apostasy comes first, and the man¹ of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction**" 2 Thess. 2:3.

¹ Greek: "anthropos" = appearance of a man. He will deceive the people by means of many signs and wonders Matt. 24:24, 2 Thess. 2:9, Rev. 13:13-15.

Satan is described in Revelation 13:11-18 as the **beast that comes up out of the earth**. Satan also claims the rightful place of Christ (Antichrist) "[...] **and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon**" Rev. 13:11. He will show himself to be the Christ, but he will speak like the dragon (Satan) and reveal himself to be the world teacher "Maitreya" (= political leader of the nations or the false prophet 1 John 4:1).

The beast coming up out of the earth will exercise power over the beast coming up out of the sea Rev. 13:1-8. He (the beast coming up out of the earth) makes sure that people will worship this political leader and that a statue is set up for him. This political leader (= the prince who is to come Dan. 9:26-27, the little horn Dan. 7:8, king of Babylon Rev. 17) will receive his power from the dragon (Satan) Rev. 13:2.

Power will be given to the beast that comes up out of the earth, and he will breathe life into the image to make it speak. If anyone refuses to worship the image, he will be killed Rev. 13:15, Dan. 3. Those who have the mark of the beast, (either his name or his number) will be allowed to buy and to sell Rev. 13:16-18. His number is 666. According to our present knowledge, his name could be "Maitreya" which is written in the Hebrew language as "מִיִּתְרֵיָא" (Mithreya). If we add these numerical values, we get the number 666.

Satan Bound for 1000 Years

At the end of the 33 years, Christ and his armies Rev.19:11-16 will make war against the king of Babylon and his armies Rev. 19:19. This final battle (6th trumpet Rev. 9:13-21, 6th bowl of wrath Rev. 16:12-16) will take place at Armageddon. About this battle we are told: "**And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast [...]**" Rev. 19:20a. "**And the rest were killed with the sword**" Rev. 19:21a.

It then goes on to describe that Satan being caught and bound for a period of 1000 years. "**And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him [...]**" Rev. 20:2-3a.

During these 1000 years, the Kingdom of Christ will be established on earth. During this period of time, Satan will not be able to exercise power. As a result, people cannot be influenced or deceived by him. However, during the 1000 years man will still have a sinful nature.

The Final Judgement of Satan

"[...] **so that he should not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.**" Rev. 20:3b.

When the 1000 years are completed, Satan will be released for a short time. Then he will deceive the nations to make war against Christ again. To this end he will gather the nations of the earth (the four corners/winds) together for battle. In this context the nation of Gog and Magog (Russia) will play a special role Rev. 20:8. This nation was already involved in the destruction of Jerusalem at the end of the 70th week Ezek. 39 and will again play a prominent role in the final battle Ezek. 38.

After this battle, Satan will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone. "**And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever**" Rev. 20:10.