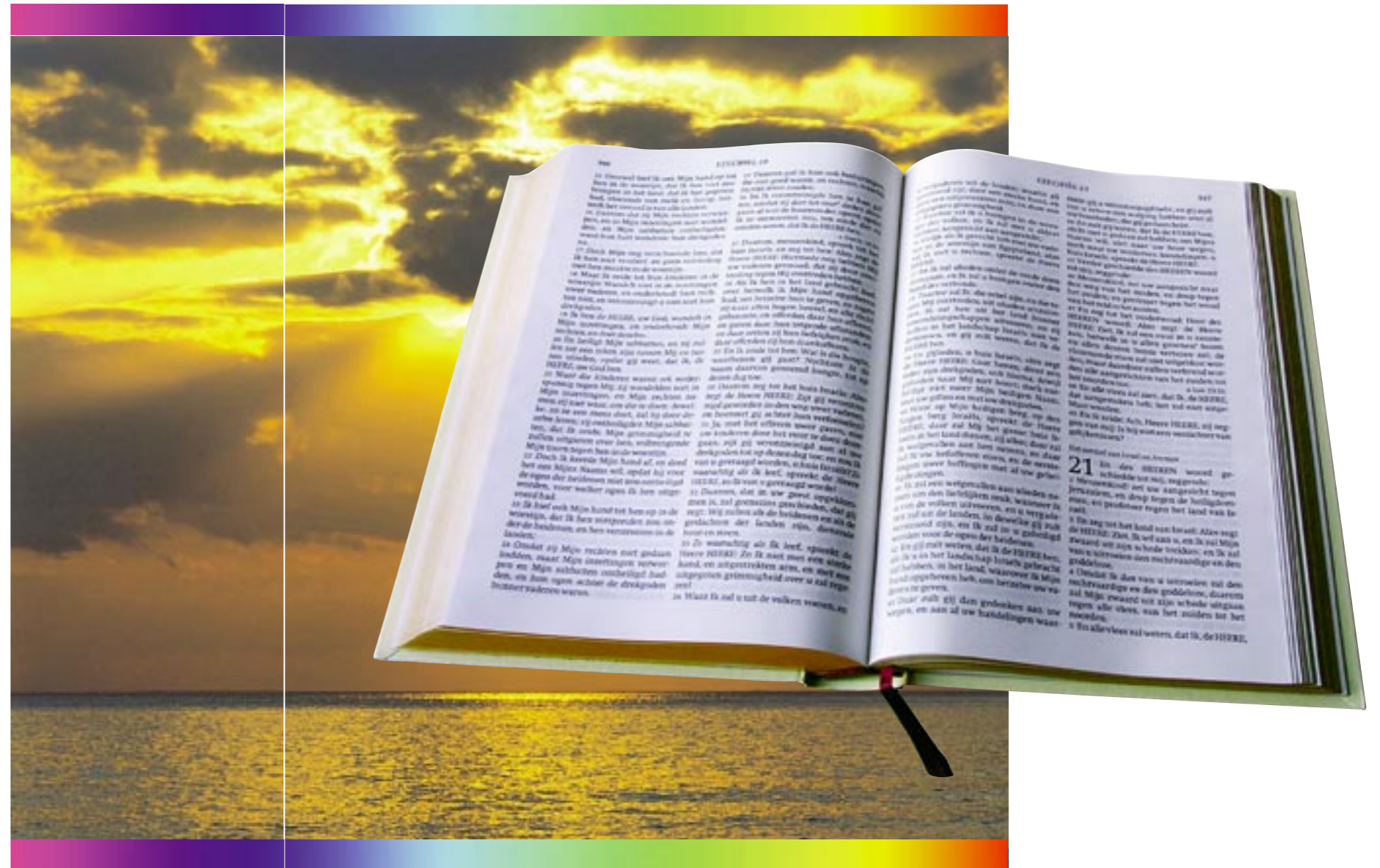


The main idea is ...

From “the world at that time” (2 Peter 3:6) and “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1) until “a new heaven and a new earth” (Revelation 21:1) God has laid down his salvation plan in His word. The Bible displays us the panorama of events that are behind us as well as before us. A good insight in the dispensations and the position, history and future of the people of Israel as well as of the Church, is essential to sound Bible Study.

This booklet is an adequate aid to illustrate the central themes of God’s salvation plan quickly and clearly. It can serve as a basis for comparing Scripture with Scripture and for “rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15).

Bible Panorama



Nr. 18-E Bible study

2001

28 pages A4 - 4,50 €

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)

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 becomes obvious that the expression “formless and void” (tohu wa bohu) is a description of a land that was previously judged by God because of their sins Is. 34:11; Jer. 4:23-26.

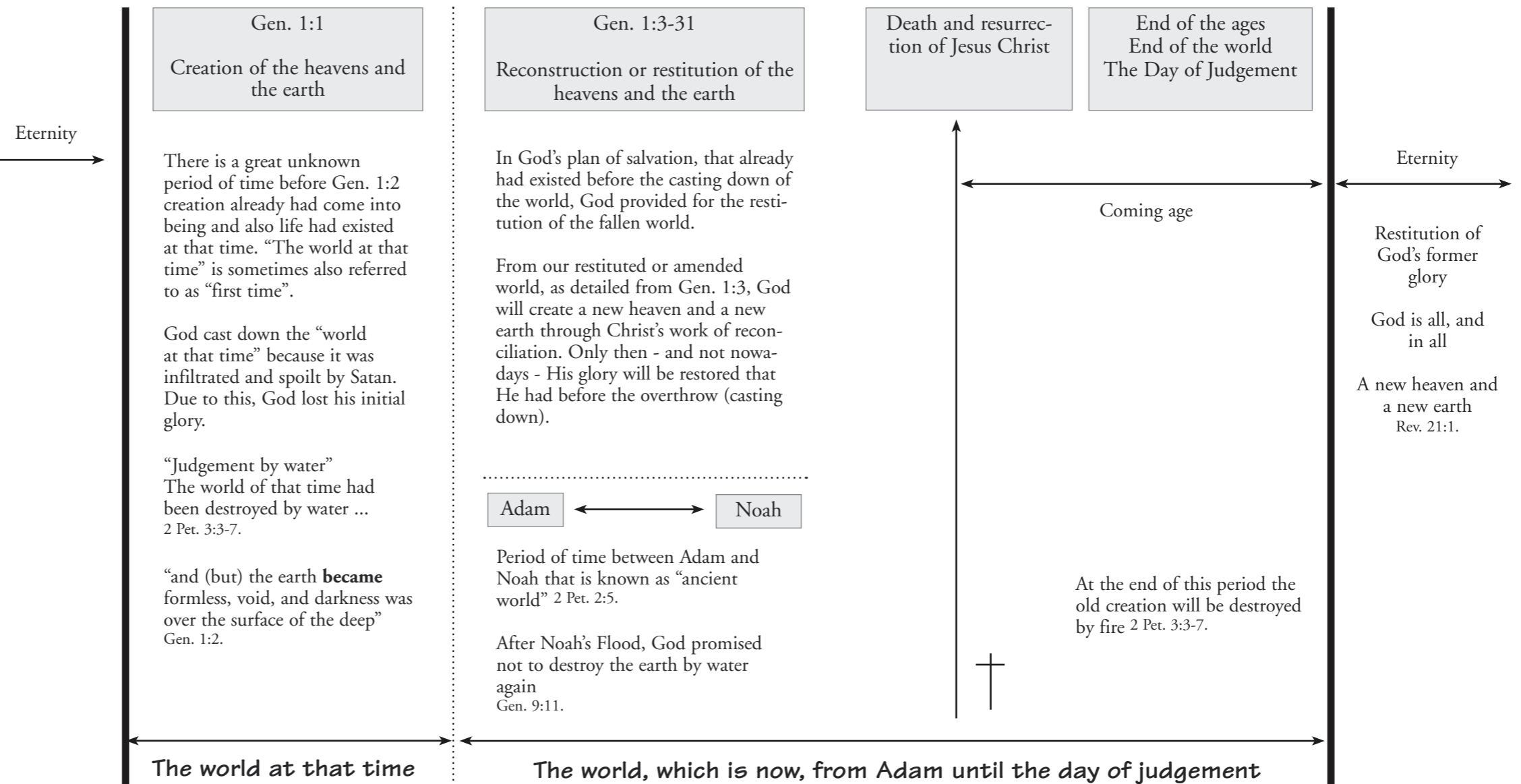
Gen. 1:2 - And the earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep...

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

It is not correct to think of Noah’s Flood in this context. The big flood from Gen. 1:1 differs clearly from Noah’s Flood. In Noah’s day, the heavens and the earth did not perish. The heavens still remained in existence and merely all the high mountains were covered by water. Living things like water animals survived the Flood. But all living people died except those who were in Noah’s ark.

The story about Noah and the judgement upon the world in his day is a picture (type) of a much severer judgement that had come over the world before Gen. 1:2.

In the Bible there is not much said about the time gap between the creation in Gen. 1:1 and the restitution in Gen. 1:3. Unexplained phenomena like fossils, the Sphinx, the Great Pyramid of Cheops, the legend of Atlantis etc., that cannot be placed in our restituted creation, could possibly date from this “world”.



The “casting down” of the world

The translators of the Bible confused the terms “foundation” and “casting down”. They translated the Greek word “kata-bole” (Strong’s No. <2602>), which means “to cast down”, with “to found”.

The translators considered the terms “foundation” and “casting down” to be identical. That would be no problem if these terms referred to one and the same event. But this is definitely not the case. The foundation (forming of a base, first beginning) is different from the casting down (overthrow; God’s judgement upon Satan’s rebellion).

The judgement upon the creation of Gen. 1:1 was caused by Satan’s fall. He was an anointed cherub but placed himself above his Creator Ezek. 28:12-19. In this judgement, Satan and a part of his angels were cast out into hell (tartaros) 2 Pet. 2:4.

At present, Satan is still in heaven with a part of his angels and exercises 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. In order to restore the connection, the coming of the Son was necessary.

Already before the casting down of the world God had preordained 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 as well as 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 formed of dust from the ground (earth, that had previously fallen into sin). Due to his fall he was driven out from the Garden of Eden (so that he could not eat from the tree of life) and he would have to die Gen. 3:13-24.

Adam’s descendants inherit this sinful nature via the man! Sin is working in man as long as he lives, but he who has died is freed from sin Rom. 6:7-23.

2 The plan of the ages

Translation of "aión"
(Strong's No. <165>)

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 term "aión" always depends on the context in which it is used. In the following, some examples are given:

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.

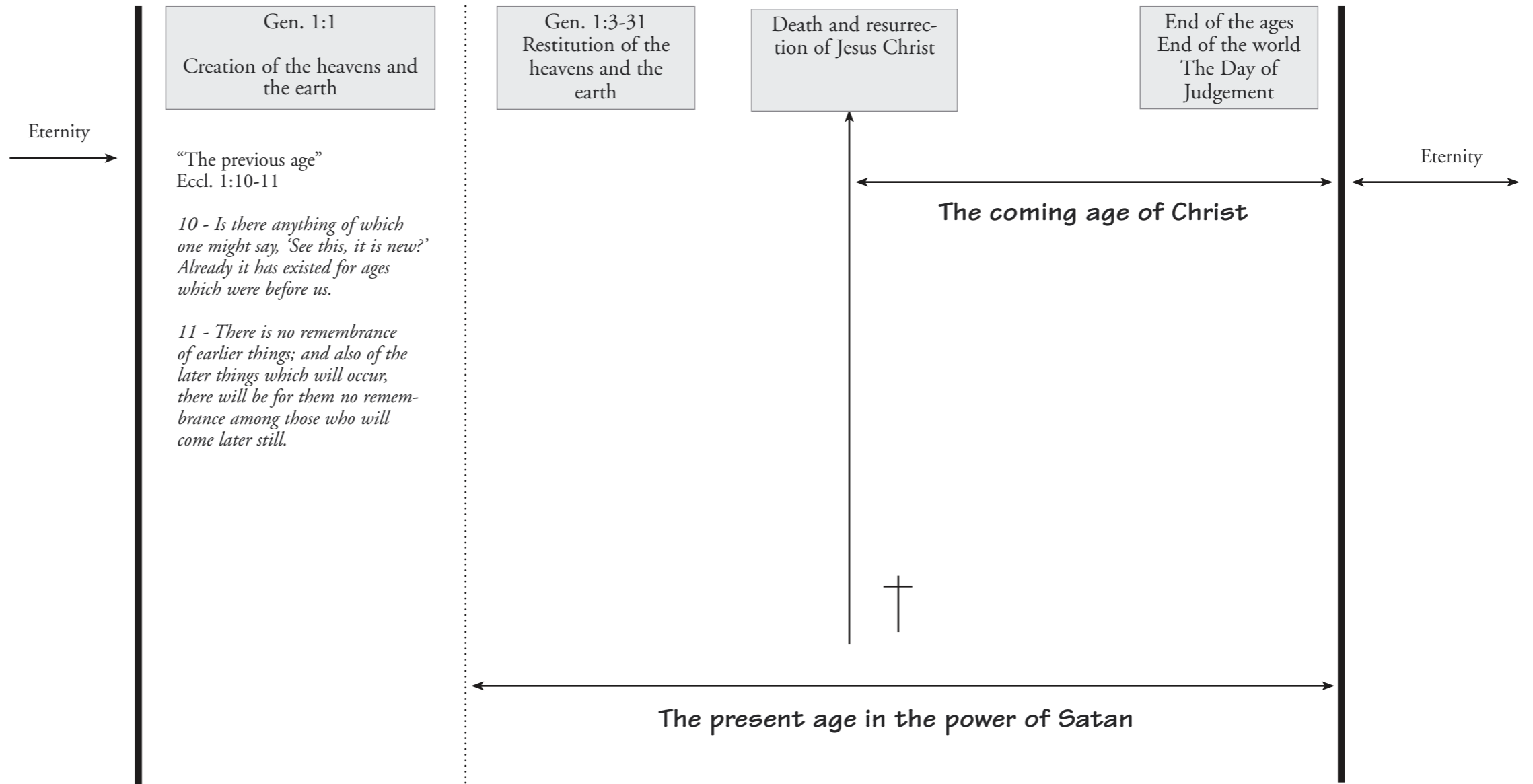
Translated as "ages":
Rom. 16:25, Eph. 2:7, 3:5-9, Col. 1:26, Tit. 2:9, Heb. 9:26, Rev. 15:3.

Translated as "eternity":
2 Tim. 1:9.

In some cases, the Bible translators translated the word "aión" as "world". The translation as "world" is confusing because there also exists the Greek word "kosmos" that is also translated as "world". But the word "kosmos" (Strong's No. <2889>) has the following meaning:
World (kosmos) = 2 heavens and 1 earth.

Translated as "world" = "aión" (Strong's No. <165>):
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>..."



The present age in the power of Satan

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

At present, Satan is still in heaven with a part of his angels and exercises 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 the 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

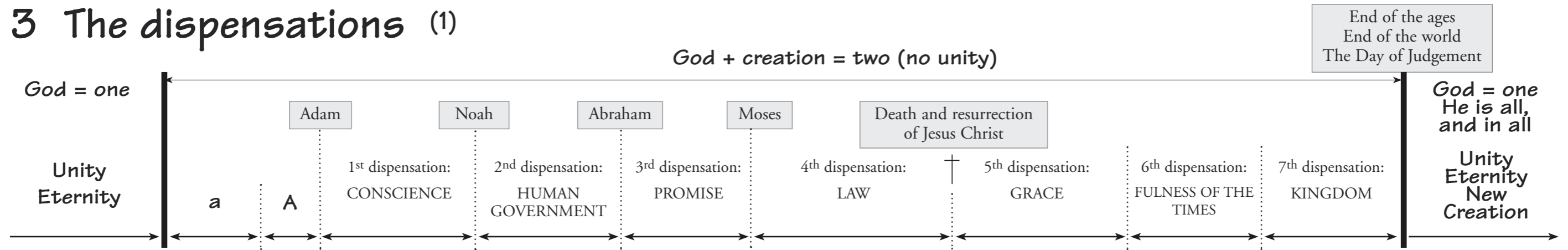
Through the death and the resurrection of Christ, He delivered us (believers) out of this present evil age Gal. 1:4, Eph. 2:2-10, 2 Tim. 4:10.

The following verses speak about 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" because then the heavens and the earth will be put in subjection to Him.

Those who believe in Him are delivered from this present evil age and are placed into "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 obtain a structure as follows:

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

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

a. Period from the creation until the fall of the world

The cosmos (2 heavens and 1 earth) was created Gen. 1:1.
Satan revolted against God (see "The casting down of the world").

1st day: Separation of the light from the darkness

There was darkness (the lie was stronger than the truth) Gen. 1:2.
That is why God made light and separated the light from the darkness.

2nd day: 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 between the waters is symbolic of the separation between the peoples.

3rd day: Dry land appears out of the water

The appearance of dry land out of the sea is a picture of Abraham's call out of the nations. The earth bearing fruit is a type of Abraham's descendants (the seas = nations had to give way).

4th day: The lights: Sun, moon and stars

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

5th day: The creation of fish and birds

The creation of the animals in the air and in the water symbolises the call of the Church out of the nations.

6th day: 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.

7th day: Rest from the work that He had done

On the seventh day God rested and the work was finished off. Creation has returned to God.

The creation of man

The structure in Gen. 1 is in agreement with God's plan regarding the history and future of mankind:

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

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

A - Period from the reconstruction (restitution) until Adam's fall

In the Garden of Eden, Adam walked with God and man was in communion with God.

1. - From the fall until 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 until the covenant with Abraham (HUMAN GOVERNMENT)

After Noah's flood, mankind was separated into people (70 people that all had their own land Gen. 10:5+20+31). As God did not want mankind to unite again, He gave each people its own language Gen. 11:6-8. Due to this confusion of language, mankind was scattered over the face of the whole earth.

3. - From the covenant with Abraham until the exodus from Egypt (PROMISE)

When Abraham went out of his country, God established a covenant with Abraham. 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 until 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 any other God is analogous to Israel's adultery against her husband Ex. 34:14-16, Hos. 1:2. Israel consented to marry her husband Ex. 19:8, 24:3-7, Deut. 5:27.

5. - From the resurrection of Christ until the rapture of the Church (GRACE)

Through the death and resurrection of Christ, the law was superseded by grace. The OLD COVENANT was replaced by the NEW COVENANT because of its weakness Heb. 7:18. This had already been announced long before Jer. 31:32. God's Kingdom was established in Heaven but it is hidden from the world. In this dispensation, God concerned Himself about taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name Acts 15:14-16.

6. - From the rapture of the Church until the binding of Satan (FULNESS OF THE TIMES)

After the rapture of the Church, God will pass a judgement over the nations on earth. God will start judging the people of Israel. In this period God will begin to establish His Kingdom on earth.

7. - From the binding of Satan until the "Day of Judgement" (KINGDOM)

When the nations are judged and the Kingdom is established on earth, Satan will be bound for 1000 years. So this period of time is characterised by Christ's and not Satan's rule over the last creation.

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

If we look up those fruits in the Bible, it becomes obvious that each fruit represents a dispensation.

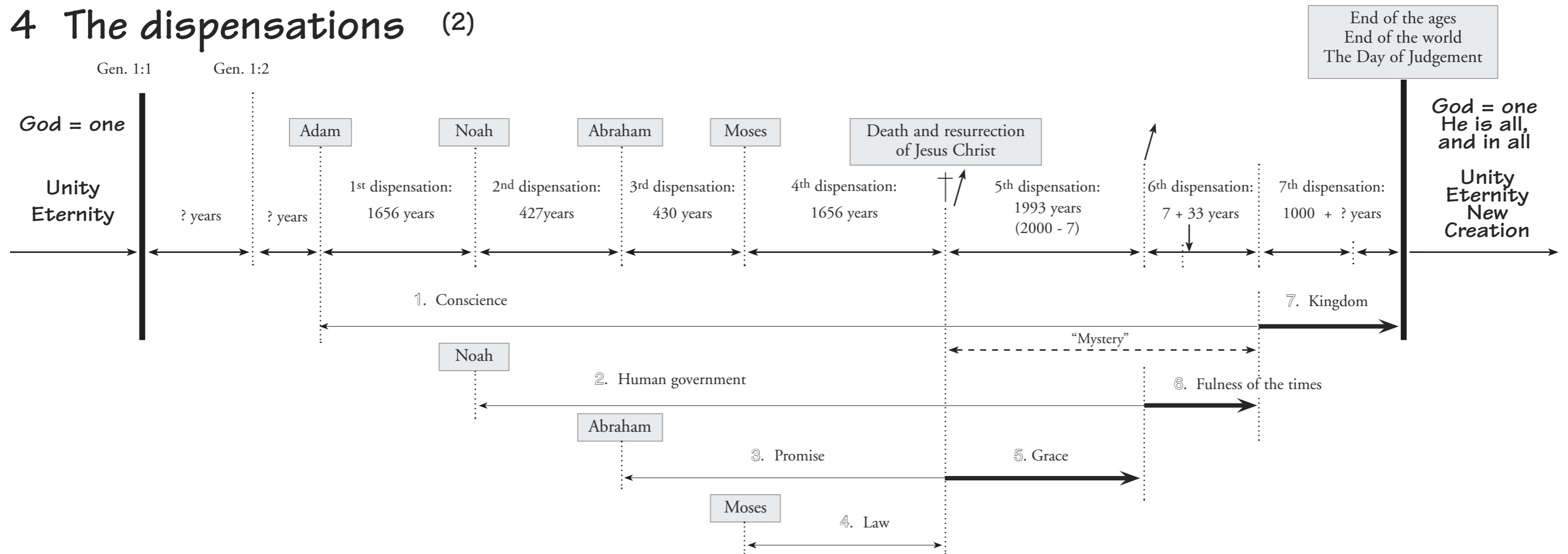
The same is true for the seven patriarchs: they are also a type of the dispensations Jude :14.

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

This principle is also applicable to the numbers 1 to 7. Due to the fact that in the Hebrew language literal numbers are at the same time letters of the alphabet, we obtain the following list:

- 1 - a
- 2 - b
- 3 - g
- 4 - d
- 5 - x
- 6 - w
- 7 - z

4 The dispensations (2)



The structure of the seven dispensations

When we study the Scripture thoroughly, it turns out that the **1st dispensation** shows many parallels **to the 7th dispensation**. Both dispensations deal with individuals and both will end in a judgement before the great white throne on the "Day of Judgement" Rev. 20:11-15. The difference between these two dispensations lies in the fact that in the 1st dispensation man lived separated from God while in the 7th one he will live in harmony with God. The **2nd and the 6th dispensation** also show a similar structure and are focussed 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 will pass judgement on all living nations. People who live on earth at that time will be subjected to Christ Matt. 25:31-34, Eph. 1:10. Also the **3rd and the 5th dispensation** merge into each other. Christ is the true descendant of Abraham. The **4th dispensation** stands apart and is a demonstration of God that nobody 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 out of the nations |
| 4. Law | | A people out of the nations |
| 5. Grace | | Christ / his descendants out of the nations |
| 6. Fulness 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 Satan's fall) He had already preordained that His Son, Jesus Christ, would reconcile the world to Him Eph. 2:15-16, Col. 1:20. The result of God's plan expresses itself in the present world (from Adam until the Day of Judgement). This plan can be divided into seven periods of time. Every period can also be called "dispensation". The term "dispensation" is the translation of the Greek word "oikonomia" (Strong's No. <3622>), and is defined as a stewardship, administration, management or economy.

In Luke 12 and Luke 16 the Lord Jesus speaks about stewardship. From this can be deduced 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 and has to administer his master's possessions.
- A dispensation or a stewardship can be removed if the master has a good reason for it.
- If a dispensation ends the master can establish a new dispensation as substitute for the old one.

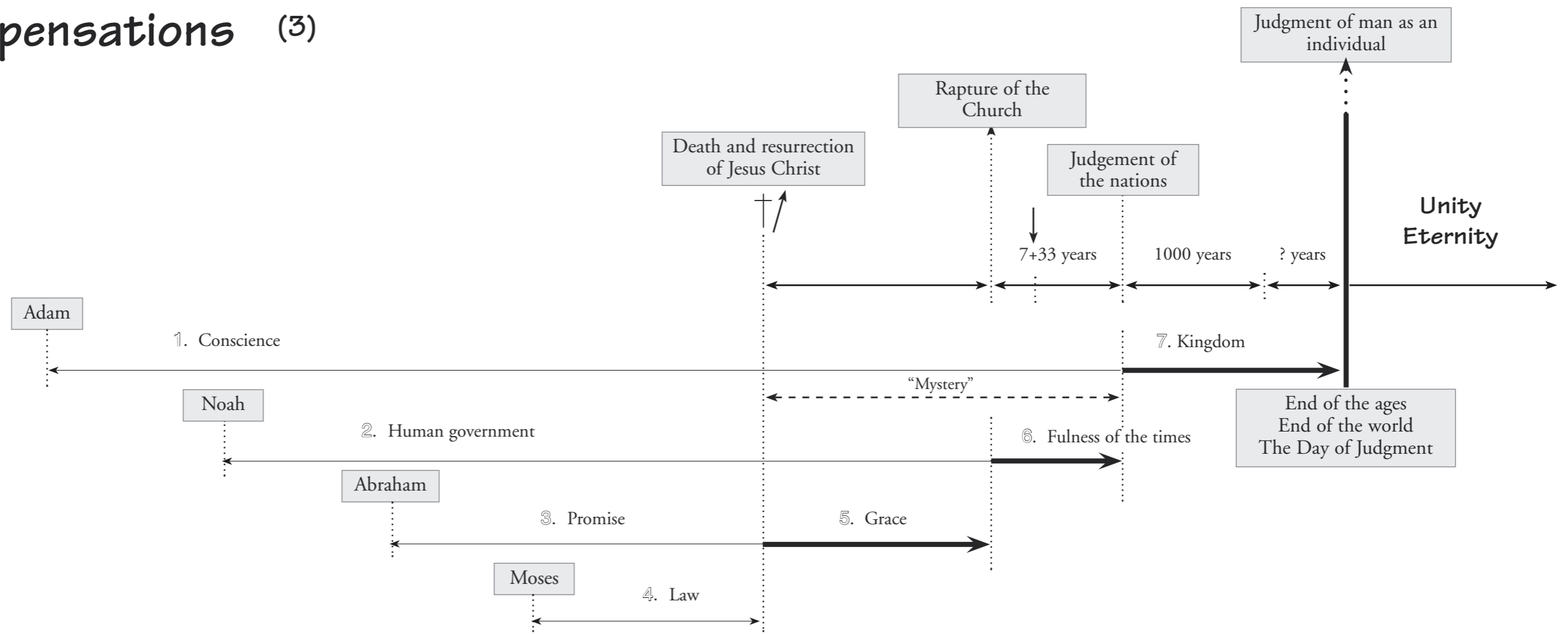
The apostle Paul speaks about this principle in the following Bible verses 1 Cor. 4:1-2 Gal. 4:2-9, Col. 1:25-27, Tit. 1:7.

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

- **Administration (dispensation) of the fulness 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 finished and revealed Rev. 10:7, see also Rev. 11:15).

God is the master of the house (creation) and as a steward, man is accountable to God of God's possessions. A dispensation does not necessarily have to be valid for all people. For example, the "dispensation of the law" was only given to the people of Israel after they had been rescued from Egypt.

5 The dispensations (3)



1. The dispensation of the conscience

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

God's aim for Adam was to let him cultivate the garden and rule over all creation Gen. 1:26. Because of Adam's sinful nature, this was impossible for him. There is only one person who can govern this creation. It is the Son of God who became the Son of Adam (= Son of man) through His incarnation. So it is all about the last Adam (= Christ) and not about the first one.

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 rule over this creation.

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

In comparison, the Kingdom of Christ is not restricted as regards time: it is everlasting 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 subjected to a human government. Mankind is separated into 70 nations, which all have their own land and their own government Gen. 10:5+20+31. This came into force after they had built the city of Babel.

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

Man as an individual

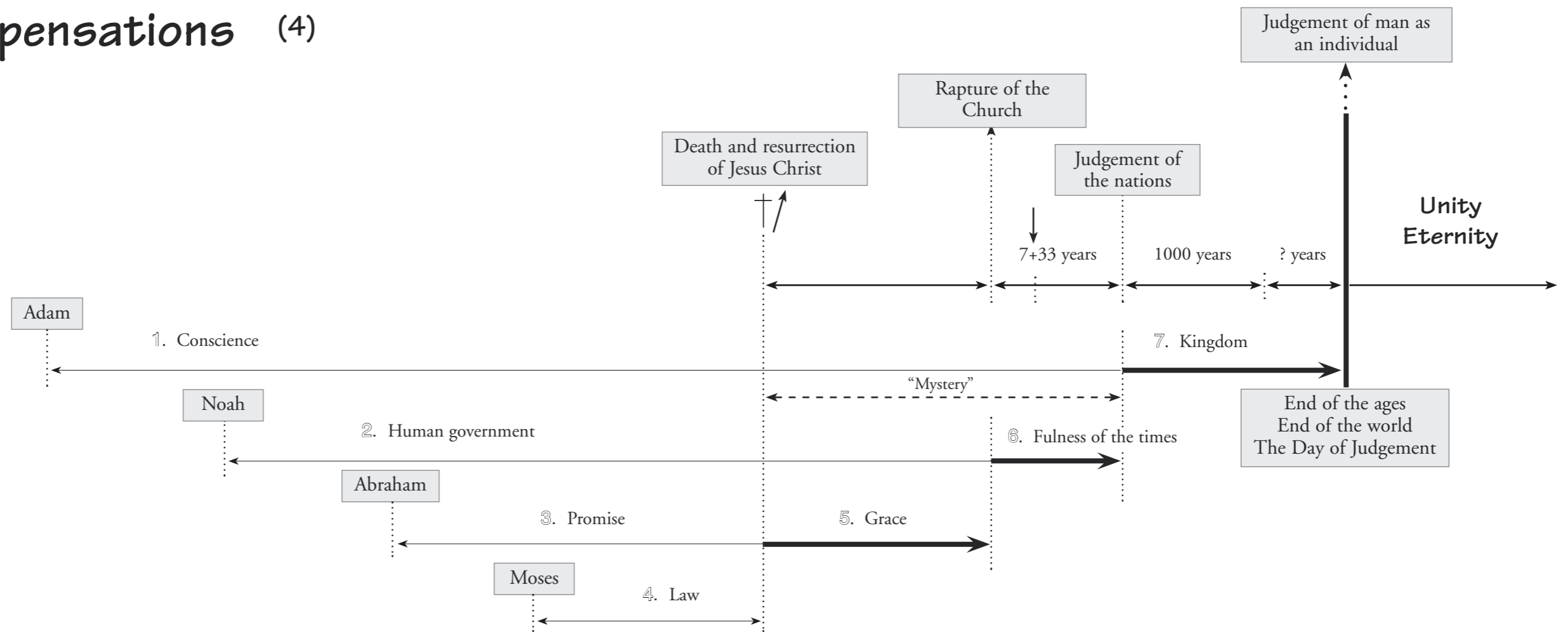
Nations

6. The dispensation of the fulness of the times

The sixth dispensation begins after the rapture of the Church. In this dispensation Christ will subject all the nations to Himself and will commence with the people of Israel by means of tribulation and judgement (70th week of Daniel). After Israel's repentance, God will deal with the other nations of the world for 33 years. This time-period will end at Armageddon and Babylon will be definitely 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 one man who had to isolate himself from his people. Abraham had to go out of 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 other condition to it except 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 will likewise be counted to the seed (offspring) of Abraham Gal. 3:27-29.

Individual believers out of 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 from the third dispensation shared in the promises to Abraham. In analogy to this, also the heirs (believers) from this dispensation share in the promises to Abraham's seed which is Christ. For this reason we find in the fifth dispensation the same principles as in the third one: Isolated from the other nations, there is a remnant of people with no lasting 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 out of the nations

4. The dispensation of the law

The fourth dispensation begins with Israel's exodus from Egypt. On this occasion, a people was born out of the descendants of Abraham which was placed under the law in contrast to the other nations.

In this way, all factors like 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 ends 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. According to their own will Ex. 24:7 they were placed under God's law:

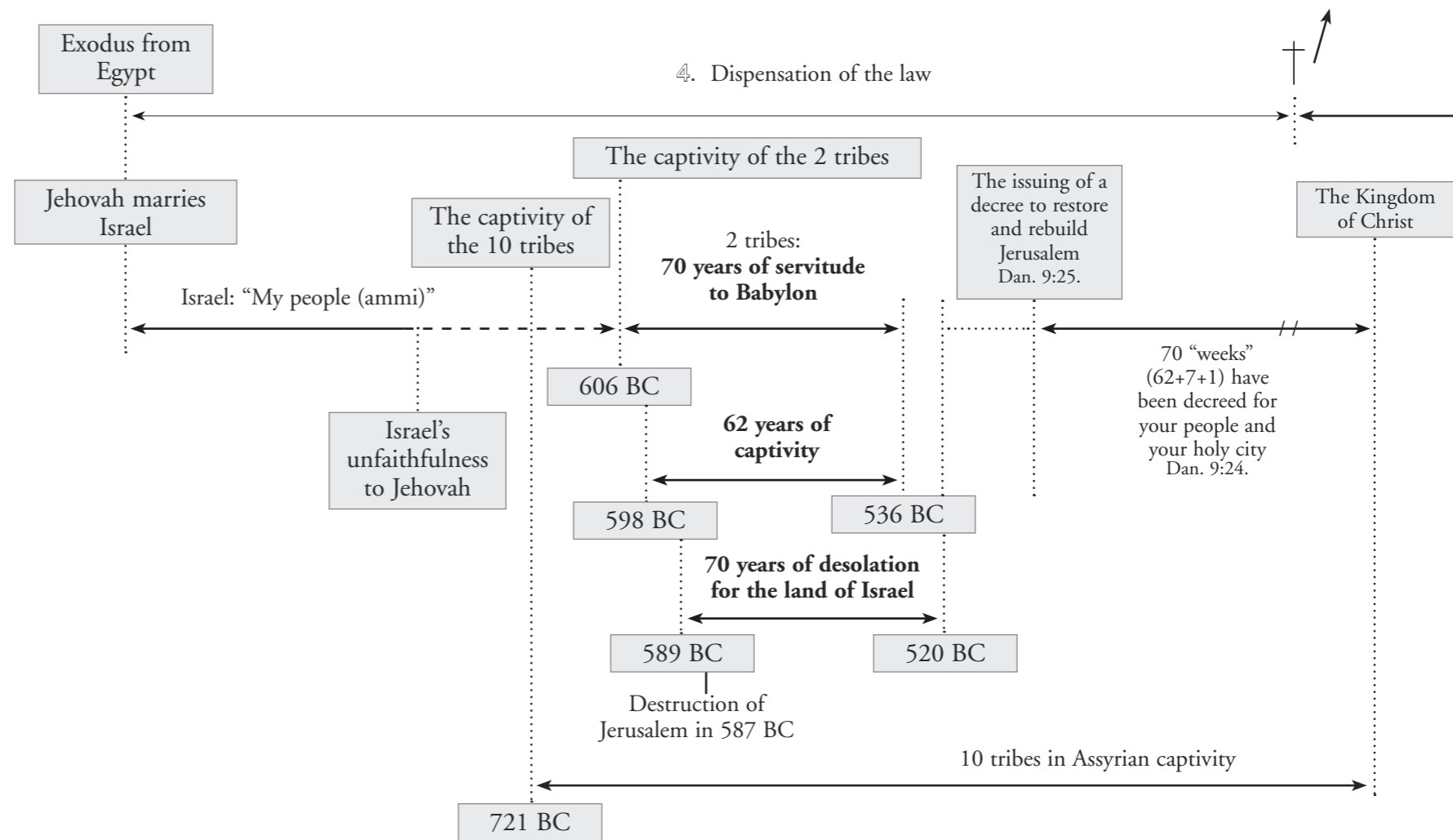
- Under the condition that Israel is obedient to the law, they will be the chosen people among the nations. They will be a kingdom of priests regarding the world (they will rule over the nations) Ex. 19:3-6.
- God will raise up a king from David who will receive a kingdom forever 2 Sam. 7:12-14, Ezek.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

In the Bible, Jehovah's covenant with Israel is described as a **marriage** between the Husband and his wife.

- **Engagement:** After the engagement, 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 law was the condition of this marriage Jer. 31:32, Ezek. 16:6-8.
- **Marital house:** The land of Palestine (Canaan) was their marital house. 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. That is why God has given the first commandment Ex. 20:2-5.
- **Whoring and adultery:** Jehovah himself would drive out Israel's enemies ahead of them and conquer them. That is the reason why Israel was not allowed to make a covenant with the neighbouring peoples. A covenant with another people is a covenant with the other people's God (husband). Consequently, this is whoring or adultery Ex. 34:10-14.
- **The unfaithfulness of the wife:** The Lord describes the unfaithfulness of Israel in Ezekiel 16:8-35.
- **Dissolution of the bond of matrimony:** Due to the unfaithfulness of Israel, their marriage with Jehovah ended.
- **Divorce laid down by law:** In the covenant of law, divorce was legally laid down Deut. 24:1. If the wife is unfaithful to her Husband and if she does not find favour in His eyes He could send her out of His house with a certificate of divorce (God cannot be unfaithful).
- **The release 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. In this way the 10 tribes were sent away into exile to Assyria in 721 BC.
- **Forgiveness for the 2 tribes (Judah):** In the first instance, the 2 tribes returned to the Lord, but later they became unfaithful again Jer. 3:8-10. They were also sent away into exile.

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

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



The exile of Israel

Because Israel was unfaithful to God, God removed from them the promised kingship over the nations Deut. 4:27, 28:62-64. The 10 tribes were carried away into exile to Assyria 2 Kin. 17:5-18 from which they have not returned until today. Jehovah had released the 10 tribes and had 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 letter of divorce. As a consequence, He had not dissolved the marriage with Judah yet. God put them into servitude at the beginning of the kingdoms, Babylon being the first kingdom. In the Bible, a period of 70 years was assigned to this servitude. Actually, these 70 years were 70 Sabbatic years that the people of Israel had not celebrated in a period of 490 years. According to the law, each seventh year was declared a Sabbatic year in which the land was not to be cultivated Ex. 23:10, Lev. 25:3, 26:33-43.

- **70 years of servitude 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 started in 606 BC when the king of Babylon had besieged Jerusalem. Jerusalem was put under the control of Babylon.

Many important people, for example Daniel, were carried away to Babylon.

- **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 that time the 2 tribes were carried away to Babylon.
- **70 years of desolation over Israel and Jerusalem.** Also to Jerusalem and the land a period of 70 years of desolation had been announced Dan. 9:2, Zech. 1:12. This period of time started in 589 BC 2 Chr. 36:19-21. Two years later, in 587 BC, Jerusalem was destroyed.

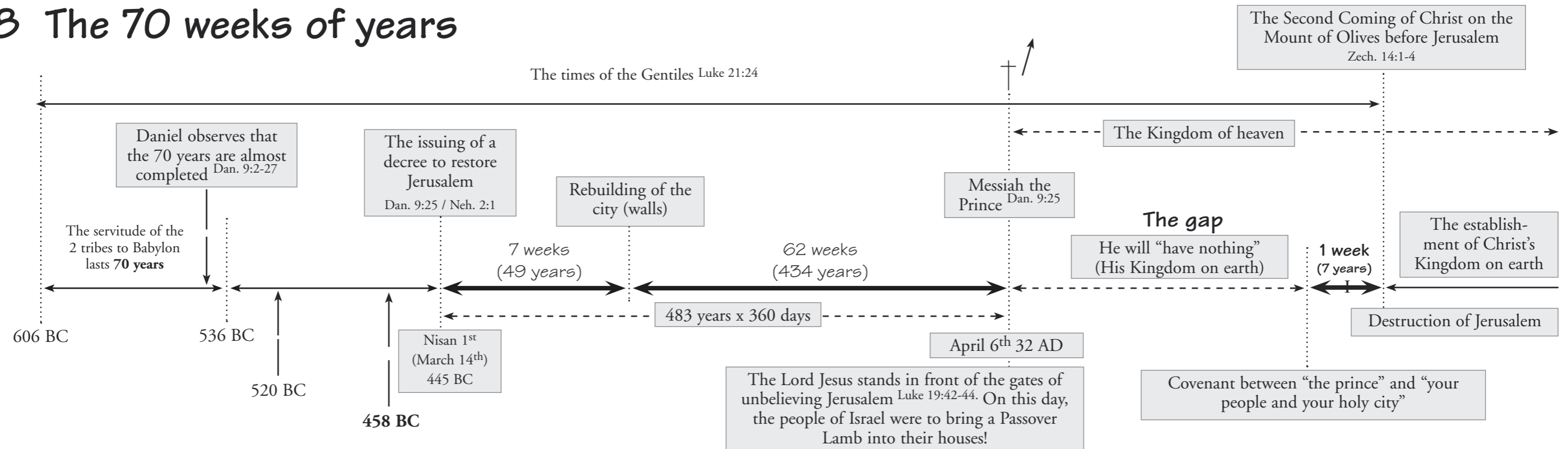
The seventy weeks

When Daniel noticed that the 70 years were almost completed Dan. 9:2 he did penance for the sins of his people. He knew from the Bible that all of God's prophecies would definitely be fulfilled in the nearest future.

In fact, there would be a rebuilding of Jerusalem and the people would return from Babylon even though this return will not be the final one. In order 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.

Not until after these 70 "weeks" there will be a global 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 speech concerning the end of the age *Matt. 24*, the Lord Jesus refers to the prophet Daniel.

Daniel (he had been deported to Babylon) believed and studied the Scriptures. He discovered that 70 years would elapse after the devastation of Jerusalem *Dan. 9:2*. God sent his angel Gabriel and Daniel got insight into God's plan concerning the restoration of his people.

The seventy weeks (in Hebrew literally: "seventy sevens") indicate a time period of 70 x 7 years (these weeks of years can also be traced back to Jacob *Gen. 29:27-28* and to the law *Lev. 25:8*). From similar passages of Scripture concerning the last (70th) week, we can draw the conclusion 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" ($1+2+1/2 = 3\frac{1}{2}$) *Dan. 12:7*

After these 70 x 7 = 490 years, Israel and Jerusalem will be completely restored. The 70 weeks started when the two tribes were given the permission to rebuild Jerusalem. When the time of captivity was officially over, there were three distinct decrees permitting the people of Israel to rebuild or beautify the temple.

- 536 BC: Permission to rebuild the temple *Ezra 1:1-3*
- 520 BC: Again permission to rebuild the temple *Ezra 4:3, Hag. 2:18*
- 458 BC: Return in order to beautify the temple *Ezra 7*

The 7 and 62 weeks

The 70 weeks can be divided into three periods. The 7 and the 62 weeks are combined in 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 started in the 20th year of King Artaxerxes (445 BC) when Nehemiah got 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 becomes obvious that the 483 prophetic years (containing 360 days each) ended when the Lord Jesus wept over Jerusalem because the Jewish nation had not recognized Him. At the same time the disciples prepared Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem on the foal of a donkey *Zech. 9:9, Matt. 21:1-5*.

The triumphal procession stagnated at the Mount of Olives before **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 ended peacefully. But the city (the people) had neither recognized nor believed the time of her visitation. Now devastation would come over 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 consequence, 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 substantiate the delay of the establishment of His Kingdom on earth and the destruction of the city as well as the sanctuary *Dan. 9:26*. Once again, Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 AD and the people (Judah) was carried away into exile to Egypt.

The time 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. In this period, He will take from among the Gentiles a people for His name (fifth dispensation).

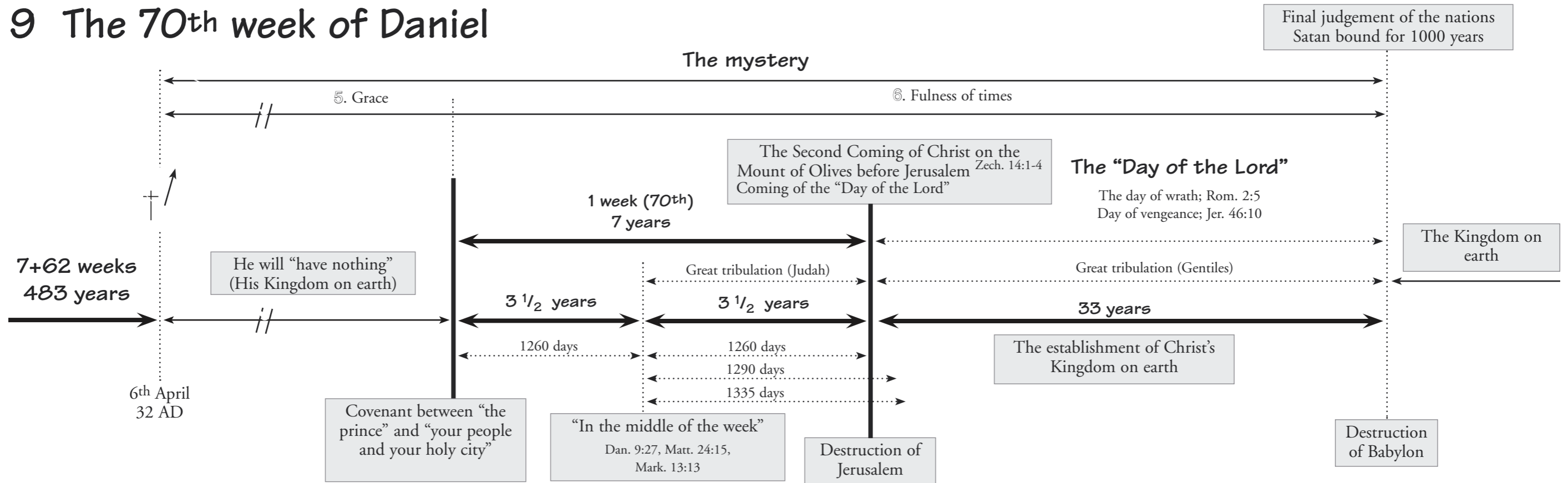
The 70th week

The last week of the 70 weeks is characterised by a covenant that is made between the Jewish State and the prince of a people. The Jewish State exists since 1948 and the people, that is referred to in this verse, are evidently the Palestinians (Philistines). The 70th week will start when these two parties, who presently dispute Jerusalem, will make a covenant concerning this city.

In the book of Daniel there is mentioned "a prince who is to come" in order to make a covenant with "your people and your holy city" (Judah and Jerusalem). This prince will make a firm covenant for one 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 regarding their land and Jerusalem Dan. 9:26-27, it will herald the beginning of the last (70th) week.

The covenant made will involve the fighting parties in the Jewish State. In the covenant, the position of Jerusalem plays a decisive role. This city will serve as a political and religious capital for the Jews as well as for the Palestinians; representatives of two different religions will make arrangements for their holy places. The Jews will restore their holy place (the Temple complex area). At the same spot, the Palestinians already have their holy place (where Mohammed allegedly ascended to heaven). Probably in the covenant there will be laid down that both parties can worship in the temple of Jerusalem. The Jews will reinstate their sacrifice and grain offering (we can conclude 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 sack-cloth.”** According to the description in Rev. 11:6 these two witnesses will be Elijah and Moses. Elijah had the power to prevent rain for 3 1/2 years (1 Kin. 17:1, James 5:17) and Moses was associated with the plagues in Egypt. Additionally, there happened something remarkable with both of them. We know about Elijah that he went up to heaven 2 Kin. 2:11 and about Moses it was said that there was an argument about his body Jud. :9. Obviously the Lord preserved their bodies and will use them again once the Church has been caught up to heaven.

The two witnesses will proclaim the coming of the Kingdom on earth. Those who come to believe in Christ by their preaching are advised to go out the camp (Jerusalem) and to flee into the desert (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, will abolish sacrifice and grain offering Dan. 8:11, 9:27, 12:11.

Jewish religion will be prohibited and the sanctuary will be desecrated just like in the day of Antiochus Epiphanes. Because the major part of the Jewish people is atheistic, 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 flee to the mountains (Paran / city of Petra) hastily. 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 on display 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 into fear when God lets the two witnesses rise from the dead after 3 1/2 days and when they go visibly up to heaven before the eyes of the enemies. Immediately after this, there will be a great earthquake that results in the fall of a tenth of the city and in the death of 7,000 people Rev. 11:8-13.

Devastation until the end

Due to the sacrilegious idol that causes desolation in the holy place, the second half of the 70th week is characterised 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: then the armies of Gog and Magog (Russia) will invade the country from the Mediterranean Sea and destroy the land and the city Ezek. 38-39, 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 consequence, the Messiah will return and He will stand on the Mount of Olives. This mountain will be split in two, forming a valley into the desert. By this valley, the “rest of the people” who calls on the name of the Lord, will be able to flee Zech. 14:1-5.

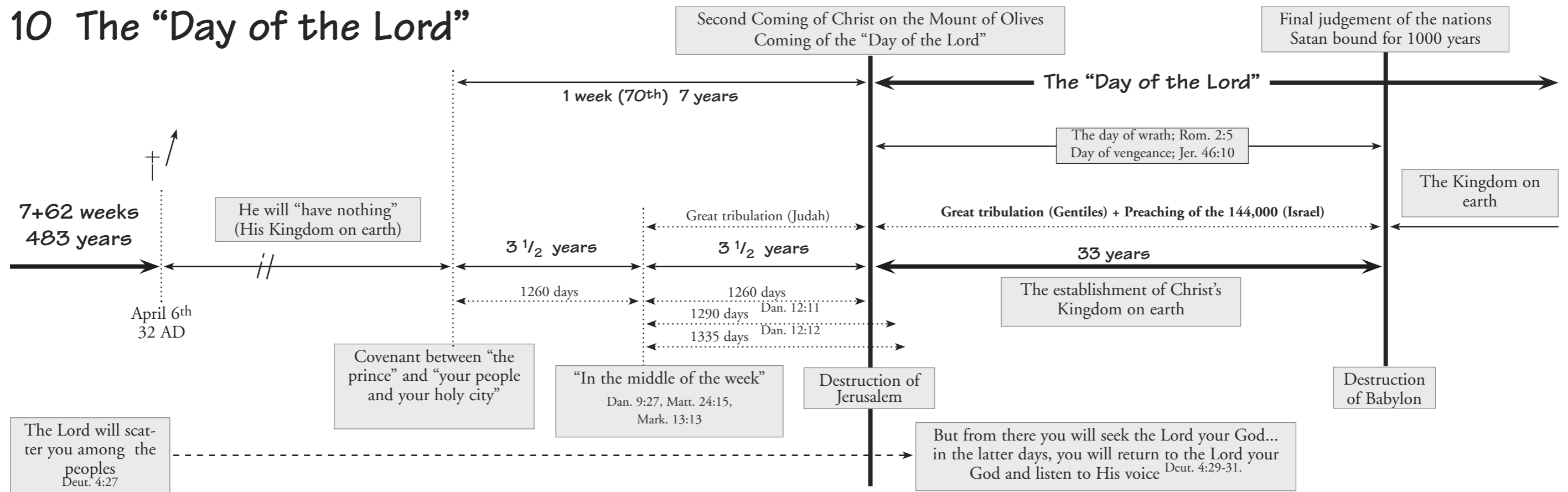
The Lord will destroy the armies of Gog and Magog by sending fire upon them and their allies Ezek. 39:1-6. The remnant from Jerusalem will flee to Petra where they will be gathered with that part of the believing remnant that previously has fled there in the first half of the 70th week Rev. 12:6.

The “Day of the Lord”

In relation to the events at the end of the 70th week, the **drawing near of the “Day of the Lord”** is always mentioned. The destruction of Jerusalem is linked to the coming of the “Day of the Lord”. This day will bring distress over 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"

In relation to the events at the end of the 70th week, the drawing near of the "Day of the Lord" is always mentioned. The destruction of Jerusalem is linked to the coming of the "Day of the Lord".

The expression "Day of the Lord" means "the day on which the Lord will be exalted and rule the world." This "day" will never end. The "Day of the Lord" as such is great and glorious to the believers Acts 2:20, but awesome to those who refuse to be subservient to His Kingdom.. To 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 a regular day starts with dawn, so the "Day of the Lord" will also begin with dawn. In this context, "dawn" does not indicate the rising of the sun but the term stands for the darkest part of the night (the after-night in which man is weakest and in which often (most of the) people die or are born.

This darkest part of the daybreak is connected 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

Due to 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, "Day of His anger" Job 20:28 or "Day of vengeance" Jer. 46:10.

When the peoples are judged, "dawn" will be over and the sun will rise = light comes 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

If there is a possibility of escape for the believing remnant of Judah and Jerusalem, they will flee to the city of Petra in the desert 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 of meeting the Lord. This encounter will take place a month later (after 1290 days Dan. 12:11) on the Mount Hor before Petra. There they will make out the imprint of the nails in His hands Zech. 13:6. On this occasion, they will meet the Lord as Jesus of Nazareth. So they will recognise 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 commence.

Then the Lord will gather and unite the 2 and the 10 tribes in 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.

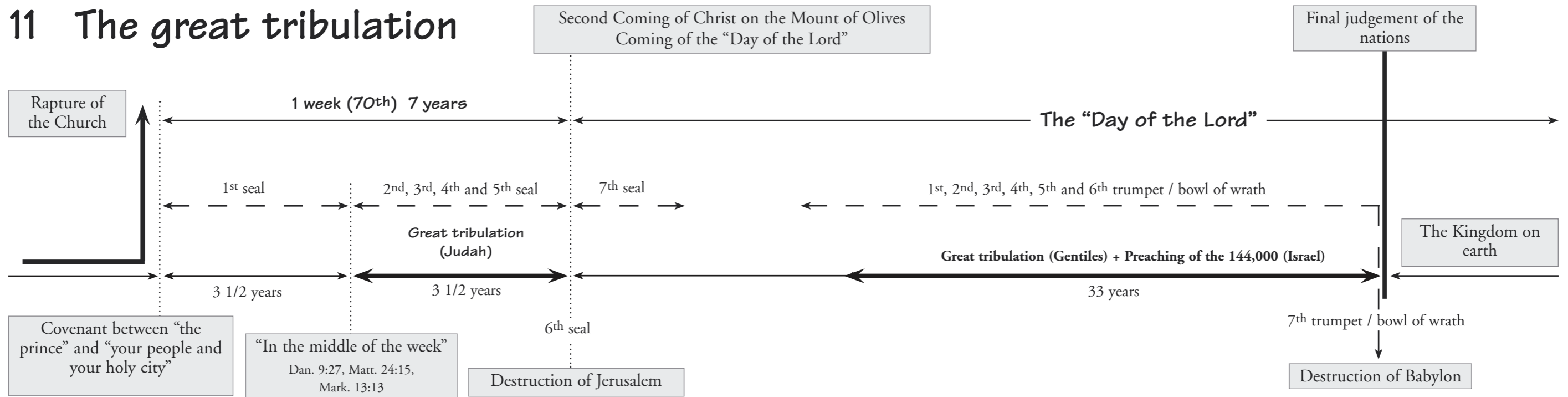
At the end of the 70th week, Israel and probably Egypt will be overrun by the armies of Gog and Magog (Russia and allies). In turn, they will be judged by the Lord (as well as the countries from which they come Ezek. 39). The 33 years will probably begin with a time of peace (just as the 70th week started 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. To the four angels standing at the four corners of the earth will be given the power to harm the earth and the sea. They will be restrained temporarily 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 there will be sealed 144,000 believing Israelites (12,000 from each tribe). They will preach the gospel during the following period of tribulation. "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. About the result of the preaching (at the end of the 33 years) we come to know: **"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 upon 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” that will start in the middle of the week when the “abomination of desolation” stands in the holy place. First the great tribulation will come over Judah and Jerusalem and, after that, upon all peoples, nations and languages. Concerning the tribulation upon 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. Because Judah and Jerusalem will be destroyed at the end of the 70th week and the believing remnant will call on the name of the Lord, their tribulation ends at that moment. In this way, the “great tribulation” is divided up. There is a time of tribulation upon the people of Israel (the second half of the 70th week) and a time of tribulation upon 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: White horse, and the rider who sat on it has a bow and a crown Rev. 6:2. He will be given power (bow) and will need no arrows that speak of war. He will seize his power by intrigue (politics) Dan. 11:21. The rider on the white horse will bring peace.

Second half of the 70th week:

2nd seal: Red horse, the rider was given a sword and the outcome was war Rev. 6:3-4.

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

4th seal: Ashen horse, and the rider has the name “Death”. To them (the three riders) authority is given over a fourth of the earth to kill with sword (2nd rider), and with famine (3rd rider) and with pestilence (4th rider) Rev. 6:8.

5th seal: The souls of those who will be slain because of their testimony ask for 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 the testimony they maintain 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 will have to wait with their judgements upon the earth and the sea (great tribulation upon the nations) because the 144,000 must be sealed first.

Tribulation upon the nations: 7 trumpets

After the 70th week, 144,000 bond-servants will be sealed. This event can only take place if the 2 and the 10 tribes have found their real identity (and are gathered back to Israel). Probably, this will last for several years. The silence in heaven is symbolic of it Rev. 8:1. After this, the judgement by means of 7 trumpets will begin. Those judgements will not come upon Judah and Jerusalem; they will exclusively come upon the nations in the 33 years.

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

2nd trumpet: Judgement upon 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 are in the sea and have life, will die; and a third of the ships will be destroyed Rev. 8:8-9.

3rd trumpet: Judgement upon the rivers. The water will be made bitter (poisonous) due to which many men 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 go 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: Release of the four angels who are bound at the river Euphrates. They will kill a third of mankind by fire, smoke and brimstone Rev. 9:14-21.

7th trumpet: Loud voices will arise in heaven, saying: **“The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; ...”** Rev. 11:15. The heaven will be opened and there will be flashes of lightning and roaring of thunder, an earthquake along with a great hailstorm Rev. 11:18-19.

Tribulation upon the nations: 7 bowls

John also sees the judgement upon the earth in a vision of “7 bowls of wrath (bowls)” Rev. 16. These bowls of wrath show the same structure as the 7 trumpets. The judgement that first is seen in shape of 7 trumpets corresponds to the judgement of the 7 bowls of wrath. Both sequences of judgements end with the finale that the kingdom of the world will be 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 into the earth. It will become a malignant sore upon the men who have the mark of the beast and who worship his image Rev. 16:2.

2nd bowl: Poured out into the sea that will become blood. Every living thing in the sea will die Rev. 16:3.

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

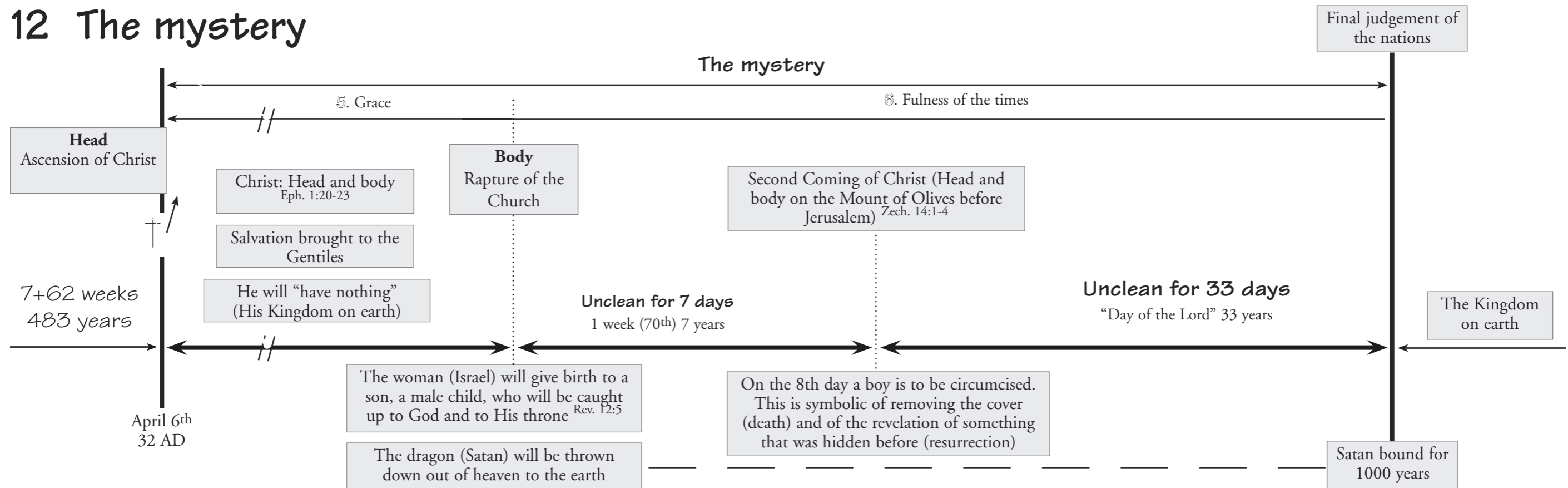
4th bowl: Poured out upon the sun. Men will be scorched with fire. They will blaspheme the name of God and yet refuse to repent Rev. 16:8-9.

5th bowl: Poured upon the throne of the beast. His kingdom will be darkened and men will ground their teeth in anguish. But they will blaspheme God and yet refuse to repent Rev. 16:10-11.

6th bowl: Poured upon the river Euphrates. Its water will be dried up that the way will be prepared for the kings from the east. Out of the mouth of the dragon, beast and false prophet there will come forth three unclean spirits. They will gather the kings of the whole earth together for the “war of the great day of God the Almighty” Rev. 16:12-16.

7th bowl: Poured out upon 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 answered: **“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 becomes obvious 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 to believers (the disciples) it is well given 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 spoke to the crowds when he told them the parable of the sower Mark. 4:1-20 but the interpretation of it was only given to His disciples.

The Jews were entrusted with the word of God John 5:39-40, Rom. 3:2. But the Jews were ignorant with regard to that word and to 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 being king over them, Matt. 27, John 1:11 salvation was taken from them and came 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 believers from among the Gentiles 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 postponed. This delay is part of the mystery. The mystery (as a time period) has begun 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. After that, His Kingdom will be revealed on earth.

The 7 and 33 years

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

There will be a time span between these two events of which the exact duration remains unknown. But from typology, we may prove the following: Revelation 12 speaks about a woman who will give birth to a son, a male child. This woman will flee into the desert (first half of the 70th week - 3¹/₂ years), where she will be fed (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.

As the law is a shadow of what is to come, this ritual has apart from its literal meaning also a prophetic one. 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 seed of the woman 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 grasp 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 (that is after the 7 years) the flesh of the boy’s foreskin shall 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 that, 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 can find the structure of 7 and 33:

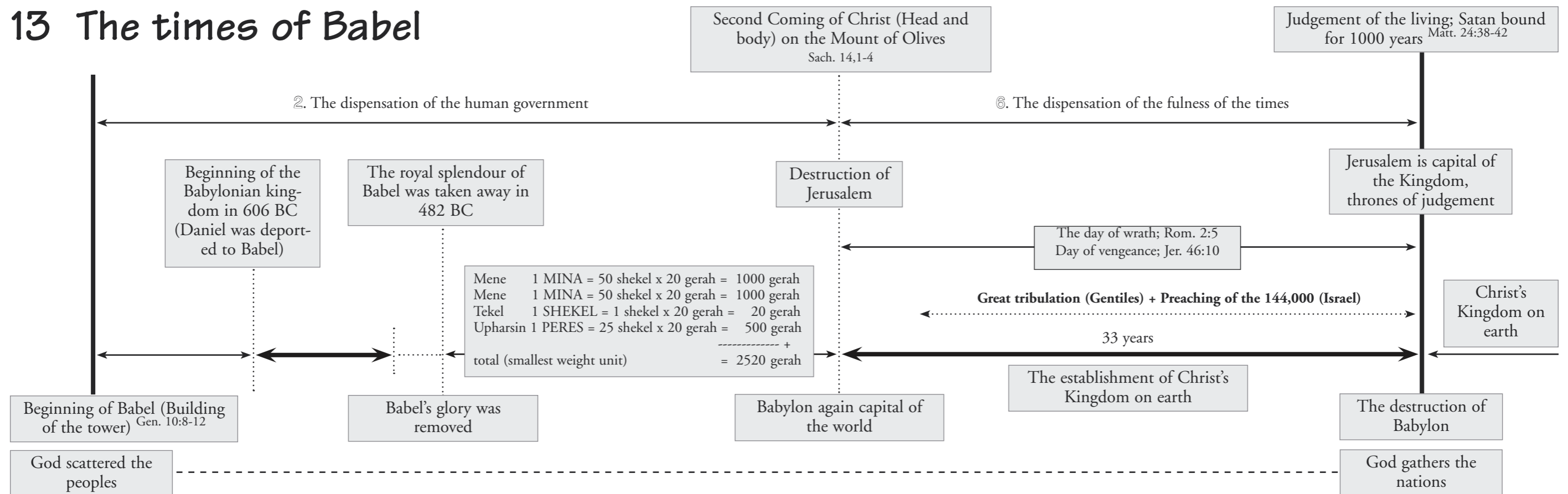
David: David reigned 40 years: 7 years over Judah (in Hebron) and 33 years over all Israel and Judah (in Jerusalem). Apart from the 7 years of reign there is also mentioned a period of 7¹/₂ years. This additional ¹/₂ year corresponds to the silence in heaven for ¹/₂ an hour immediately after the end 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. Afterwards he was in communion with the Lord for 33 days Ex. 24:16-18.

Thomas: Between Christ’s resurrection and ascension elapses a period of 40 days. Thomas did not believe for seven days, but came to believe on the eighth day. After his conversion there was a period of 33 days until Christ’s ascension. John 20:19-24, Acts 1:3.

Joseph: Joseph was 30 years old when he was set over all the land of Egypt. Then there was a 7-years-period of affluence, followed by seven years of famine. After the famine, Joseph lived another 66 years. (In Egypt the years are counted as double and hence 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 aim: **“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 intended to establish a world by their own endeavours. The city reflects the principle of economic and social business (materialism). The tower, whose top was to reach into heaven, mirrors the religious aspect (idealism; ideals like peace and harmony in which people firmly believe). These ideals that exist also today have their roots in the Babylon of old. They are also known as the “principle of Babylon”. Babylon means the unification of mankind that exalts itself above God.

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

Subsequently Babylon was forgotten until the reign of David and Solomon when Babylon again reached its peak (even though it is not written in the Bible). In 626 BC king Nabopolassar 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 a part of the people in bondage to Babylon (under which 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. On this occasion, Babel was not destroyed! The city still existed until 482 BC. At that time the walls and the gates were broken down and Babel declined. During the Greek empire, Alexander the Great made an attempt to rebuild Babel. But he did not succeed in it because he suddenly died.

The 7 times of Nebuchadnezzar

In Daniel 4 the king saw a dream in which he is compared to a tree. In this dream, the tree had been chopped down and the growth of the stump and roots were halted by a band of iron and bronze for seven years Dan. 4:7-13. Daniel interpreted this dream and applied it to the king Nebuchadnezzar himself. 7 times would pass over the king in which he was driven away from mankind and in which he behaved like the “beasts of the field”.

The 7 times over the king of Babel
This dream came true for the king when he placed himself above God saying: **“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.

The king was not able to take up his royal position for seven times (months or weeks) because he was mentally disturbed. At the end of these seven times his reason returned to him and he praised the Lord Dan. 4:34.

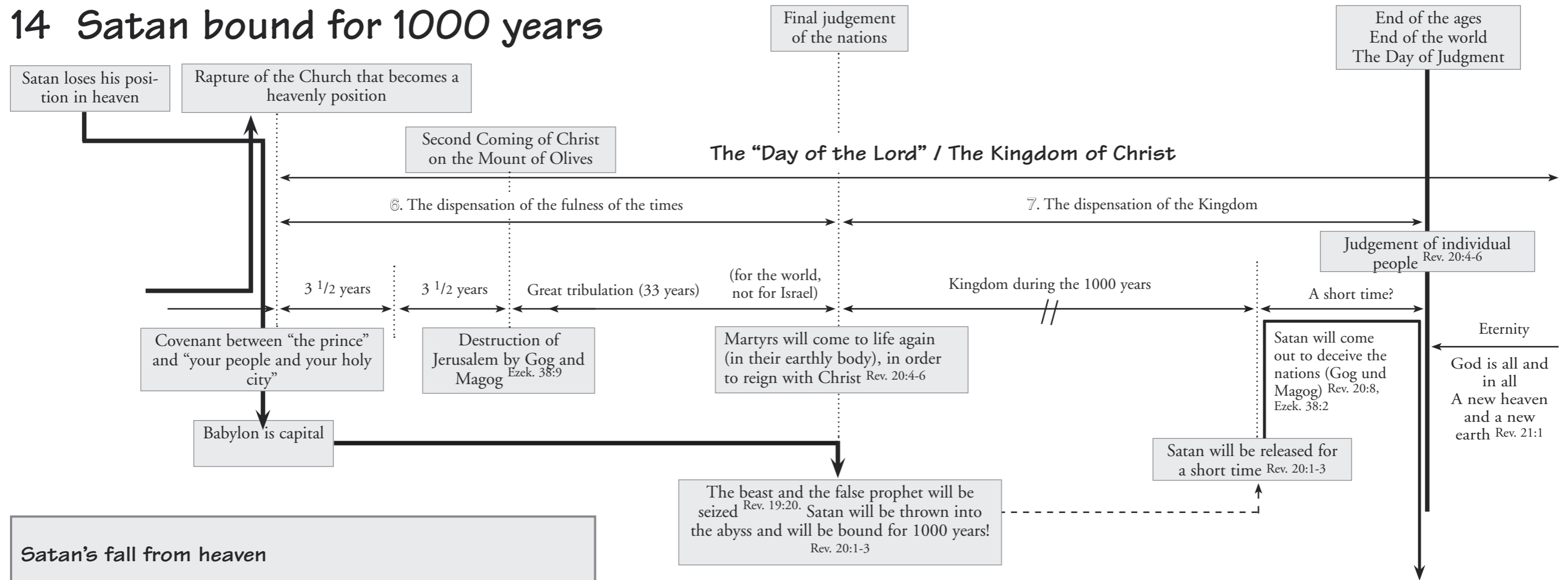
The 7 times of Babel

The chopped down tree is a picture of the 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 kept his position). Not until 482 BC Babylon lost its splendour when the king Ahasuerus broke down the walls and the gates. In the years which followed, Babel deteriorated to a ruin.

During the seven times the band of bronze and iron encircling the stump stunted its growth. This picture rather portrays his empire than king Nebuchadnezzar himself. In Daniel 2 we find the description of a statue which consisted 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 hindered by the Greek and Roman empire in becoming the capital of a world empire. But after the 7 times, Babel will regain its previous splendour just like the king.

According to calculations, the duration of the 7-times-period must be 2520 years (containing 360 days each). This was, for example, displayed by the writing on the wall Dan. 5. The words “Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin” can be put down to Hebrew weights and measures. In the near future (7 years after the rapture of the Church) Babel will regain its royal splendour and will be the capital of a great world empire. Many years ago they started with the restoration of Babel. The end of the 7 times coincides with the end of the 70th week. Then Babylon’s two greatest enemies will destroy each other (Israel and Gog & Magog). Babel will be the capital city of the world in which 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 erect his statue that must be worshipped by everyone Dan. 2, Rev. 19,20. At the end of the 33 years, Babylon will be definitely destroyed Rev. 14:8, 18:10-19 and its king will be cast into the lake of fire Rev. 19:20.

14 Satan bound for 1000 years



Satan's fall from heaven

The vision concerning the war in heaven between the archangel Michael and the dragon (with his angels) Rev. 12:7-9 is symbolic of the event at which 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 will be humiliated 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 Rev. 13:11-18 as the **beast coming up out of the earth**. Besides Satan claims Christ's rightful place (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 as the world teacher "Maitreya" (= political leader of the nations or the false prophet 1 John 4:1).

The beast rising up out of the earth will exercise power on the beast coming up out of the sea Rev. 13:1-8. He (the beast coming up out of the earth) makes sure that mankind will worship this political leader and that a statue will be erected for him. This political leader (= the prince who is to come Dan. 9:26-27, little horn Dan. 7:8, king of Babylon Rev. 17) will receive his power from the dragon (Satan) Rev. 13:2. To the beast coming up out of the earth there will be given power and he will breath life into the image to make it speak. If any person refuses to worship this image, he will be killed Rev. 13:15, Dan. 3. Those who have the mark of the beast, either his name or 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" that is spelled **"m(40) y(10) t(400) r(200) y(10) a(1) h(5)"** in the Hebrew language. If we add these number values, we obtain the number **666**.

Satan bound for 1000 years

At the end of the 33 years, Christ and his armies Rev.19:11-16 will wage 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 in Armageddon. About this battle it is said: **"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.

After this, it is described that Satan will be seized 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. In this period of time, Satan will not be able to exercise power. As a consequence, mankind cannot be influenced or deceived by him. However, during the 1000 years man is still marked with 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 set free for a short time. Then he will deceive the nations into waging war on Christ again. For this purpose, he will gather the nations of the earth (the four corners / winds) together for the 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 devastation of Jerusalem at the end of the 70th week Ezek. 39 and it again will have a prominent role in the final battle Ezek. 38.

After this battle, Satan will be thrown 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.