

Outlines in Bible Prophecy

The Prophetic Panorama

- *The panorama*
- *Prophetic events and periods*
- *Order of principal future events*

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Introduction

For illustrative purposes, the prophetic panorama in Figure 1 steps into God's prophetic program at the time of Solomon (Column 1 Figure 1). It is important to note that there were many prophecies made prior to this time which were literally fulfilled, such as the *bondage and deliverance* of the Hebrew people from Egypt. This was prophesied during the days of Abram and recorded in Genesis 15. Exodus 1-14 records the literal fulfilment of this prophesied bondage, and Exodus Chapter 15 celebrates the literal deliverance of the nation from it.

Figure 1 – The panorama

Figure 1 should be read from left to right while noting the three columns – each identifying the **dispensational** scheme of Scripture. It is also based on the **literal** interpretation of prophecy, the method of interpretation that is singularly endorsed by the Bible. It is, therefore, a panorama that is unashamedly literal in its construction and **premillennial** in its expectation regarding the Second Advent of Christ and His 1000-year reign on earth.

The prophetic events and periods

The prophetic events and periods shown in Figure 1 are named and defined in Scripture, such as the **Day of the Lord** and the **Times of the Gentiles**. Nothing is left to our imagination. This divine agenda centres on Christ, while bringing into view Israel, the nations outside its commonwealth and the Gentiles in so far as they relate to God's purposes, especially those relating to Israel.

The events and periods shown follow a divine order which parallel the prophecies associated with the Great Image in Chapter 2 of Daniel. Israel divided into two kingdoms after the reign of Solomon. There was the Northern Kingdom which began under Jeroboam. It comprised ten tribes. The Davidic Southern Kingdom began under Rehoboam and it comprised Judah and Benjamin. Due to its endemic idolatry, God brought judgment upon the Northern Kingdom allowing it to be carried away by the Assyrians. Its people were scattered among the Gentile nations. The Southern Kingdom also departed from God. Under divine judgment it was later taken into captivity by Babylon for 70 years as foretold in Scripture. This was the start of the Times of the Gentiles. In order to fulfill His purposes, God preserved the Jews during their Babylonian captivity. He later raised Cyrus, the king of Persia, who permitted them to return to Jerusalem thus ending their exile in Babylon. His successor, Artaxerxes went further and allowed Jerusalem's city and wall to be rebuilt. The temple and its observances were also restored. As time progressed, succeeding generations departed from God despite repeated warnings and exhortations from His prophets. As a result, Jerusalem fell under the dominion of the Grecian and Roman empires as prophesied by Daniel and testified by history.

During these centuries of subjection under the Gentiles, David's royal line was divinely preserved, paving the way for Christ, the *Lion of the tribe of Judah* (Gen 3:15; Rev 5:5). Christ came into the world, born of a woman made under the law during the days of the Roman Empire, the fourth empire of the Great Image. This was the **First Advent** of the Messiah. He was born in Bethlehem-Judea, as prophesied. But He was rejected by Israel and crucified. Consequently Israel was set aside by God in judgment and all prophetic fulfilment relating to Israel was suspended. God's *judgment* upon the nation however continues today under the Times of the Gentiles. He has brought in a *prophetic interval* during which His dealings with His firstborn nation are put in abeyance for a time and season. God now brings all men – Jew and Gentile, bond and free under the saving grace of Christ, His Son (Column 2, Figure 1). All in this present age who are saved in Christ constitute the Church which is His Body, the **One New Man** in Christ (Eph 2:15).

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The Church Age will end with the **Rapture** (the “catching up” of the Church). With this event the **Day of Christ** will begin which relates to events in *heaven* – the judgment seat (Rom 14:10; 2 Cor 5:10) and the marriage of the Lamb (Rev 19:7).

The Rapture of the Church will also bring an end to the prophetic interval. God will then resume His program for Israel on earth in order to fulfill His unconditional covenant promises to the nation according to His purposes in Christ (Column 3 Figure 1). The prophetic program will recommence ushering in a time of **Tribulation** – a seven year period in which God will purify His firstborn nation. The Tribulation is also known as Daniel’s *70th week*. This is the era of the “Beast” or **Antichrist**, who confirms a covenant with apostate Israel but then breaks it after 3½ years. This will bring in the last half of the seven years – **Jacob’s trouble**. It is the “Time of the END,” when the Gentiles powers spoil over Israel (Dan 11:40). It will be a day of unprecedented “trouble such as never was since there was nation” (Dan 12:1 cf Matt 24:21). It embraces a period of a time, times, and a half (3 ½ years, Dan 12:7).

These seven years will bear witness to the *revived Roman Empire* under the Antichrist and the *Great Harlot*, *Mystery Babylon* – the apostate ecclesiastical system. Again, God in divine providence and purpose preserves a Jewish remnant to Himself. The Tribulation will end with Christ’s **Second Advent** (the “stone cut out without hands” in the Great Image of Daniel 2) and the *final* battle of **Armageddon**. This marks the end of the Tribulation. “For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle” (Zech 14:2-3).

The judgment of Israel and the nations follow. The Gentile nations will be divided into the *sheep* and the *goats*. “When the Son of man shall come in his glory...And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world” (Matt 24:31-34).

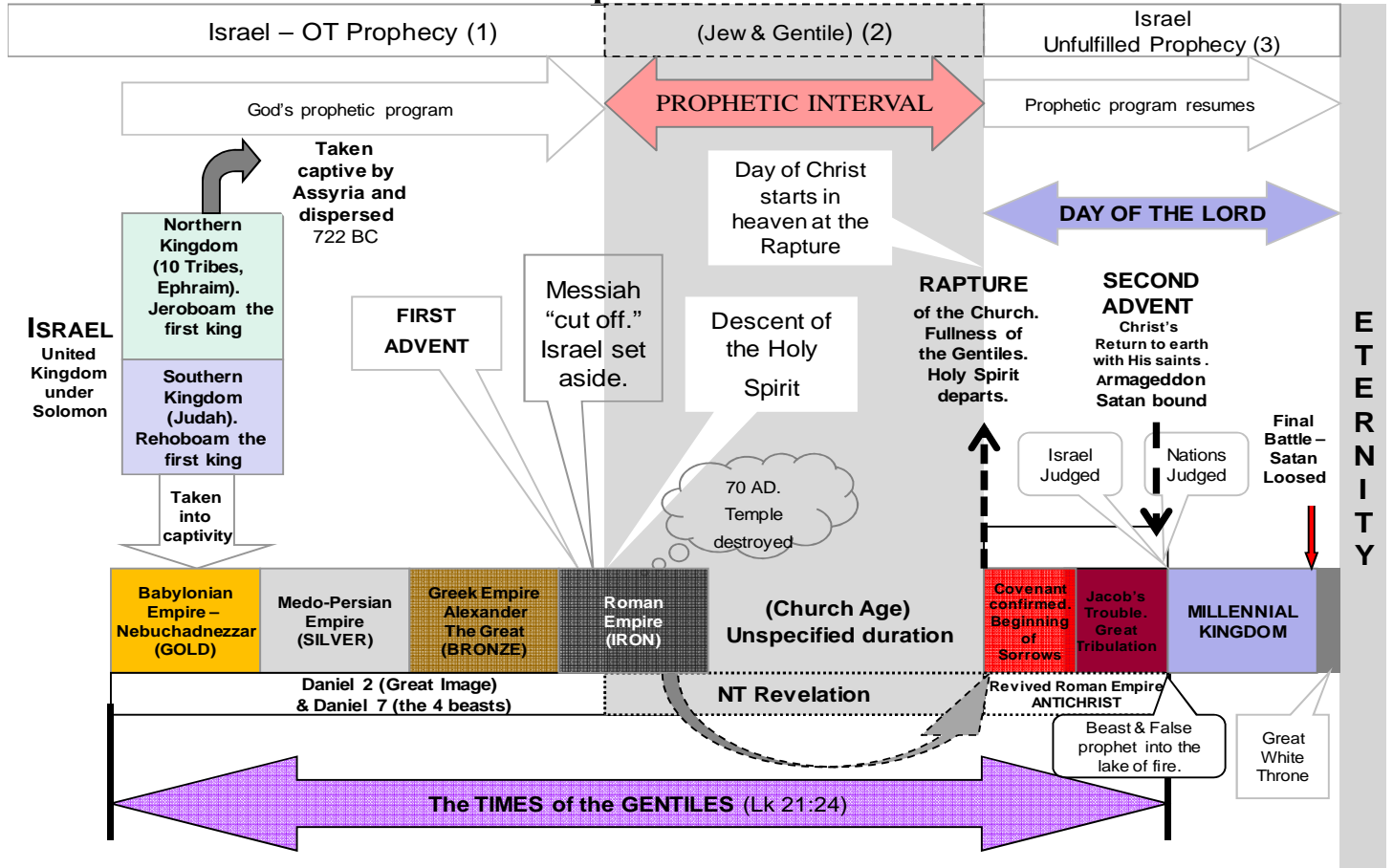
The faithful living Jewish remnant (all Israel) will enter their promised covenant blessing on earth in the **Millennial Kingdom**. “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth” (Jer 23:5). This Kingdom, in which the Gentiles are also blessed, will exist on earth for a literal 1000 years. It is a golden age of unparalleled peace and prosperity; its beginning celebrates the end of the Times of the Gentiles – the time of Gentile dominion over Jerusalem; the time during which Israel is without a sacrifice or king on the throne of David. Christ, the greater son of David, the once rejected Messiah will be the King of kings and Lord of lords. “For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet” (1 Cor 15:24-25).

The Millennial Kingdom is followed by the eternal state, just prior to which all the unrighteous dead will be resurrected and appear before the great **White Throne** of judgment. “And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them” (Rev 20:11).

“Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power” (1 Cor 15:24). The *delivering up* at the end follows the *putting down*. It is a putting down of all elements of government - “rule,” “authority” and “power” that is not of God. The Son will establish righteous rule and in the end quash all rebellion – even the final gasp of satanic rebellion at the close of the Millennial Age.

The Prophetic Panorama

FIGURE 1



Principal prophetic events to be fulfilled

(After the Church has been raptured)

1. The seven year Tribulation begins with a covenant confirmed between the Antichrist (the man on a white horse, Rev 6:1) and apostate Israel.
2. The breaking of this covenant by the Antichrist half way through the seven year Tribulation.
3. The time of Jacob's Trouble begins – severe persecution of the faithful remnant.
4. Second Advent of Christ.
5. Armageddon – the campaign to save Israel and defeat the Lord's enemies.
6. The judgment of Israel and the nations.
7. The Millennial kingdom – 1000 year reign of Christ on earth.
8. Satan is "loosed for a little season" and is defeated and cast into the Lake of Fire.
9. Great White Throne of judgment.
10. Eternal state.