

**A Messianic Jewish Approach to
Eschatology:
A Presentation at the 2023 Messiah
Conference of the MJAA**

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July 7, 2023

Introduction

- **Eschatology is a category within the field of Systematic Theology**
- **“Systematic Theology may be defined as the collecting, scientifically arranging, comparing, exhibiting, and defending of all facts from any and every source concerning God and His works.”**

Classic Systematic Theology Categories

- **Prolegomena: Introductory material involving the study and nature of systematic theology.**
- **Theology Proper: The study of the being, attributes, and works of God**
- **Bibliology: The study of the Bible**
- **Christology: The study of Christ**
- **Pneumatology: The study of the Holy Spirit**
- **Soteriology: The study of salvation**

Classic Systematic Theology Categories

- **Anthropology: The study of humanity**
- **Angelology: The study of angels**
- **Demonology: The study of demons**
- **Hamartiology: The study of sin**
- **Ecclesiology: The study of the church**
- **Eschatology: The study of the last things**

Categories of Eschatology

- 1. Political Eschatology**
- 2. Cosmic Eschatology**
- 3. Personal Eschatology**
- 4. Realized Eschatology**

Methodology

The three basic approaches to eschatology

1. Premillennialism
2. Postmillennialism
3. Amillennialism

Premillennialism.

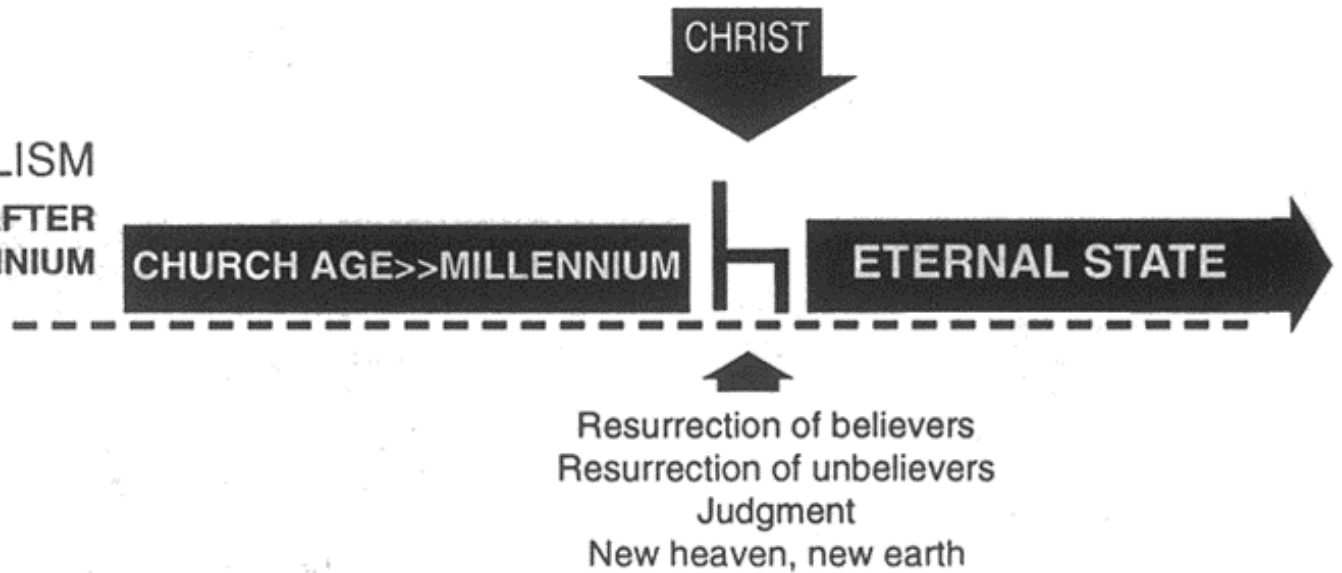
Premillennialism is the view that holds that the second coming of Christ will occur prior to the Millennium, which will see the establishment of Christ's kingdom on this earth for a literal one thousand years. It also understands that there will be several occasions when resurrections and judgments will take place. Eternity will begin after the thousand years are concluded. Within premillennialism there are those who hold differing views as to the time of the Rapture.

Postmillennialism.

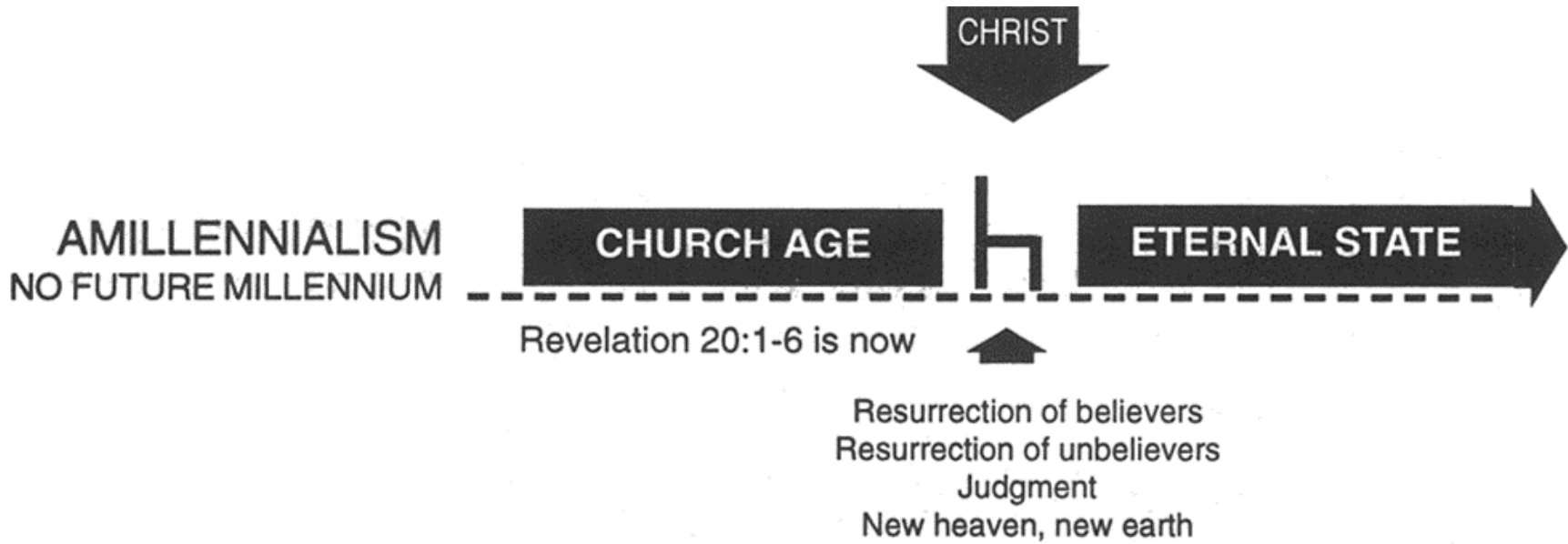
Not to be confused with Post-Tribulationists, who are Premillennialists, “According to this view, Christ will return after the millennium.

- **Belief in postmillennialism tends to increase in times when the church is experiencing great revival, when there is an absence of war and international conflict, and when it appears that great progress is being made in overcoming the evil and suffering in the world**

POSTMILLENNIALISM
CHRIST COMES AFTER
THE MILLENNIUM



- **“Amillennialism is the view of last things that holds there will be no Millennium before the end of the world. Until the end there will be a parallel development of both good and evil, God’s kingdom and Satan’s. After the second coming of Christ at the end of the world there will be a general resurrection and general judgment of all people.”**

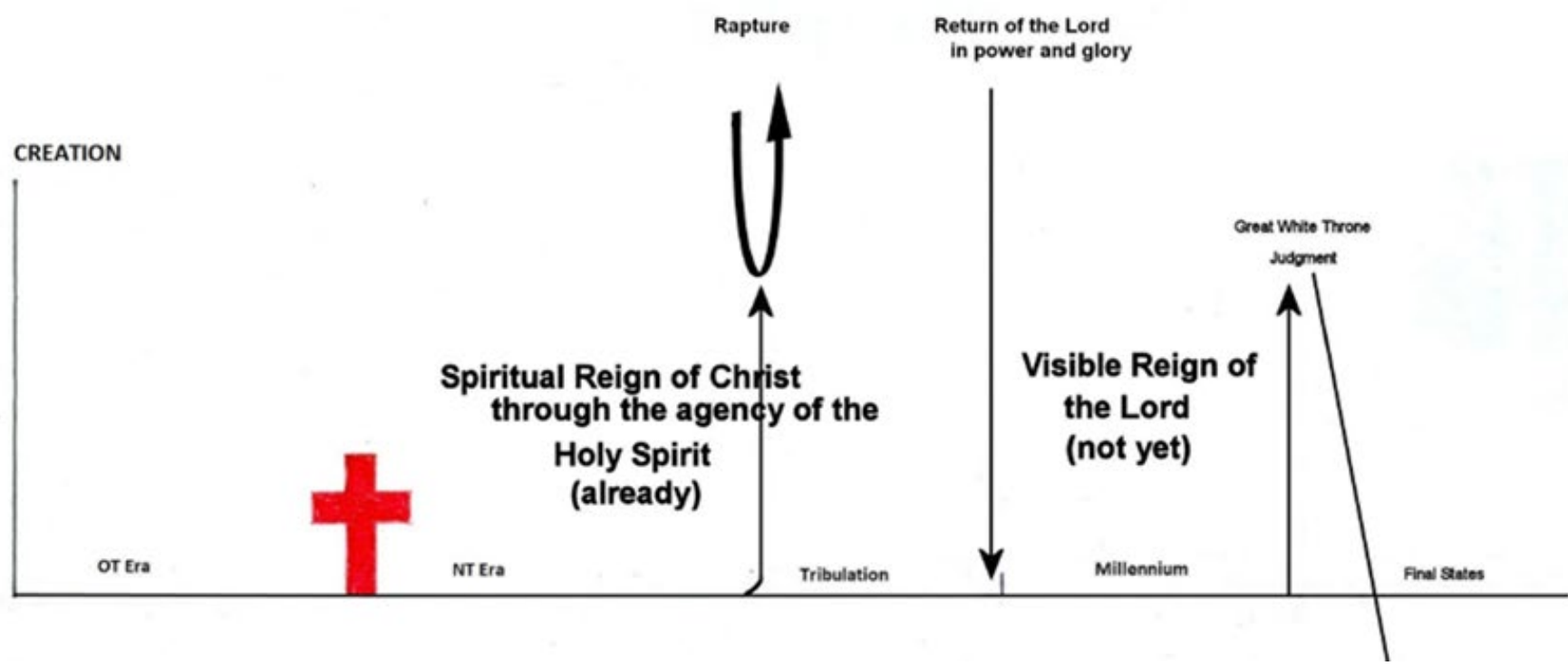


PREMILLENNIAL
Pre-Trib

Christian System

GOD IS KING OVER HIS KINGDOM

[-- Jesus Christ rules over the kingdom --]



Organization and Research Strategy

- “To what extent is it possible to develop a coherent eschatological framework from a Jewish perspective?”

- **TQRS:**

“I am studying the doctrine of eschatology, because I want to find out the extent to which it is possible to develop a theological framework for that doctrine from a Jewish perspective, to help my readers understand the role of the Jewish people in God’s redemptive plan, so that they can accurately evaluate the modern Messianic Jewish movement and spiritual condition of the world around them.”

Operating Questions

- 1. What work have scholars previously done on the topic? (a.k.a., “Precedent Research)**
- 2. How has the Body of Messiah throughout history understood the eschatological role of the Jewish people?**
- 3. What is Biblical teaching on the eschatological role of the Jewish people?**
- 4. To what extent does the Biblical teaching on eschatology inform a coherent Jewish perspective on the doctrine of eschatology?**

- **5. To what extent does the modern Messianic Jewish movement's approach to eschatology align with the biblical teaching on eschatology?**
- **6. What are the implications for the contemporary Body of Messiah?**

Summary of Bibliography

- **1. One category of precedent research focuses on a survey of Messianic Jewish eschatology, especially the words of Harvey. Messianic Dispensationalism, and Messianic Amillennialism, Studied Agnosticism (Maoz), Present & Future Tension (Nichol), and a reordering of Messianic Jewish Canonical Narrative locating eschatology as part of this narrative. (Kinzer)**

- **2. Another category of precedent research focuses on the resurrection, even one Orthodox Jewish source that accepts the historical fact of the event (Lapide), as well as Messianic Jewish sources such as (Rudolph).**
- **3. The third category of precedent research focuses on views of eschatology from among differing and opposing viewpoints between Rabbinic Judaism (Morgenstern), Messianic Judaism (Harvey, Fruchtenbaum, etc.), and Gentile Christianity (Reason, White, Troost-Cramer & Bock).**

- **B. Hole(s) in research: While much of the precedent research surveys and covers what exists in the three areas of eschatology, (Messianic, Rabbinic, & Gentile Christian); there does not seem to be any new models being introduced from the Messianic perspective. They all seem to take a side among the various Gentile Christian views, but simply put more emphasis on Israel.**

- **C. How research addresses: The Messianic sources all address the need by placing more emphasis on Israel and the Jewish experience than the Gentile Christian models; however, more work is needed to drill down further and place certain historical events as central in the eschatological narrative, (i.e., the chart).**

Establishing One's Own Methods

- **1. Bibliographic review and summary of precedent research. (PR = Secondary Sources).**
- **2. Historical theology analysis of the writings of selected figures in church history. (Primary Sources).**
- **3. Biblical theology analysis of key Scripture passages. (Primary Sources).**

- **4. Systematic theology synthesis of the biblical data. (Primary Sources).**
- **5. Correlation theology assessment of the modern Messianic Jewish movement. (Secondary and Tertiary Sources).**
- **6. Practical theology reflection on eschatology, the Jewish people, and the contemporary**
- **Body of Messiah. (Conclusions)**

Organization of the Project

- **Introduction**
- **Chapter 1 Survey of Secondary Sources on Messianic Jewish Eschatology from the first to the Third century, approximately AD 45—320.**
- **Chapter 2 Historical Analysis of Rabbinic Jewish Eschatology.**
- **Chapter 3 Historical Analysis of Messianic Jewish Eschatology.**

- **Chapter 4 A Comparative Analysis.**
- **Chapter 5 A Theological Synthesis
Comparing Historical and Biblical
Eschatology.**
- **Chapter 6 Is There a Messianic Jewish
Model of Eschatology? Conclusion:
further Research.**

Summary of Precedent Research

- This is where the fun begins.
- Daniélou, Jean Cardinal The Theology of Jewish Christianity. London: Darton, 1964.
- “Heterodox Jewish Christianity.”

- **Ebionites**
- **Origen (Contra Celsum II, 1). “It consisted of Jews who rallied to Christ but saw in him only the greatest of the prophets and not the Son of God. This is the position of Moslems today, and it is possible that they came into contact with Ebionites in Transjordan.”**

- **Nazarenes**
- **Epiphanius says they, “Separated [themselves] from the rest of the Church because they regarded the Jewish observances of Sabbath and circumcision as still of obligation.”**
- **Daniélou also says, “Jerome came across these Nazarenes in Beroea, a city in Syria in the fourth century.”**

- **Elkesaites**
- **According to Danielou, Elkesaism, one of the most interesting heterodox Jewish groups, is fairly closely related to Ebionism. The sect is known from notices in Origen, Hippolytus and Epiphanius. The first two were acquainted with it at first-hand in Alexandria and Rome, where it was spreading at the beginning of the third century. According to information given by Hippolytus, however, the revelation made to Elkesai took place in the third year of the reign of Trajan (Elench IX, 16), and this date is fully confirmed by the archaic character of the doctrine. Epiphanius gives the further detail that Elkesai 'came from Judaism and thought as a Jew' (XIX 1:5). Finally, the Christian elements are certainly primitive.**

- **Messianic Jewish Zealots**
- **סיקריים siqariyim**
- **Sicarii – meaning “dagger.”**
- **“Jewish Terrorists” some “Messianic.”**

- **Cerinthus' Gnosticism**
- **Danielou says, It [Cerinthus] was quite definitely this heterodox Jewish Christianity in Asia which St. John was concerned to combat. It appears from Eusebius that Cerinthus was in fact a partisan of a very markedly materialistic millenarianism: 'This was the doctrine which he taught, that the kingdom of Christ would be on earth ; and he dreamed that it would consist in those things which formed the object of his own desires (for he was a lover of the body and altogether carnal) in the full satisfaction of the belly and lower lusts' (IIE III, 28:4).**

- **Other Jewish Gnosticism**
- **According to Yamauchi, “Impressed by the great number of ‘Jewish’ elements such as the use of the Old Testament and midrashic interpretations in the Nag Hammadi texts a number of scholars are now maintaining the thesis of a pre-Christian ‘Jewish’ Gnosticism, that is, a Gnosticism which somehow developed from within Judaism itself. B. Pearson, the scholar who has been most effective in ferreting out traces of Jewish traditions in the Nag Hammadi texts, is convinced that Friedländer was correct in postulating ‘that Gnosticism is a pre-Christian phenomenon which developed on Jewish soil.’”**

- **Messianic Jewish Orthodox**
- **Certain features are typical of Jewish Christianity. Thus, James is given a prominent role; it is he 'for whose sake the heaven and the earth were brought forth' (12). There are allusions to apocrypha! accounts of the childhood of Christ. (4) Logion 22 on 'the height which becomes the depth' is paralleled in the Odes of the pseudo-Clementine Homilies, the Acts of Peter and the Gospel of the Egyptians and will call for further attention at a later stage.**

- **Desposynoi**
- **According to Richard Bauckman, There is good evidence that a considerable number of members of the family of Jesus, from the earliest period of the church down to the early second century, were prominent leaders in the Jewish Christian movement in Palestine and perhaps also were missionaries outside Palestine (see Jewish Christianity).**
- **STORY OF JUDE'S GRANDSONS**

What Was Their Eschatology?

- **More than the Rapture, more than the Tribulation, more than even the Parousia; the number one area where Messianic Jews influenced Christian Eschatology the most was by far, Millenarianism, (a literal earthly 1,000 year reign of the Messiah, in Israel from Jerusalem).**

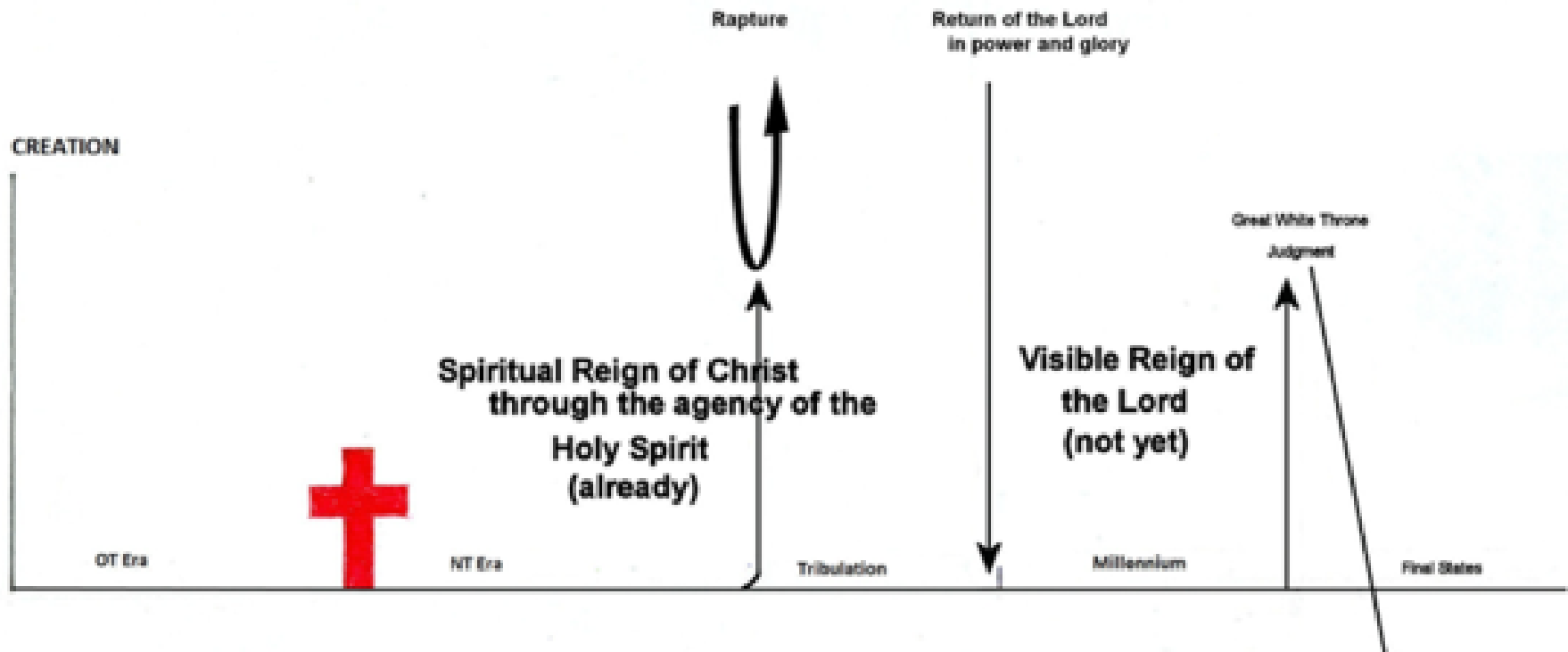
- **Not only did the Messianic Jews utilize the NT cannon as Daniélou rightly states, but they also had access to and used other non-canonical apocalyptic sources such as I Enoch and 11 (4) Esdras 6:20—28, and 11 Baruch describes the Messianic reign in the imagery of Paradise (XXIX, 4—8). The Revelation of John made use of the same material to describe the times of the Parousia.**

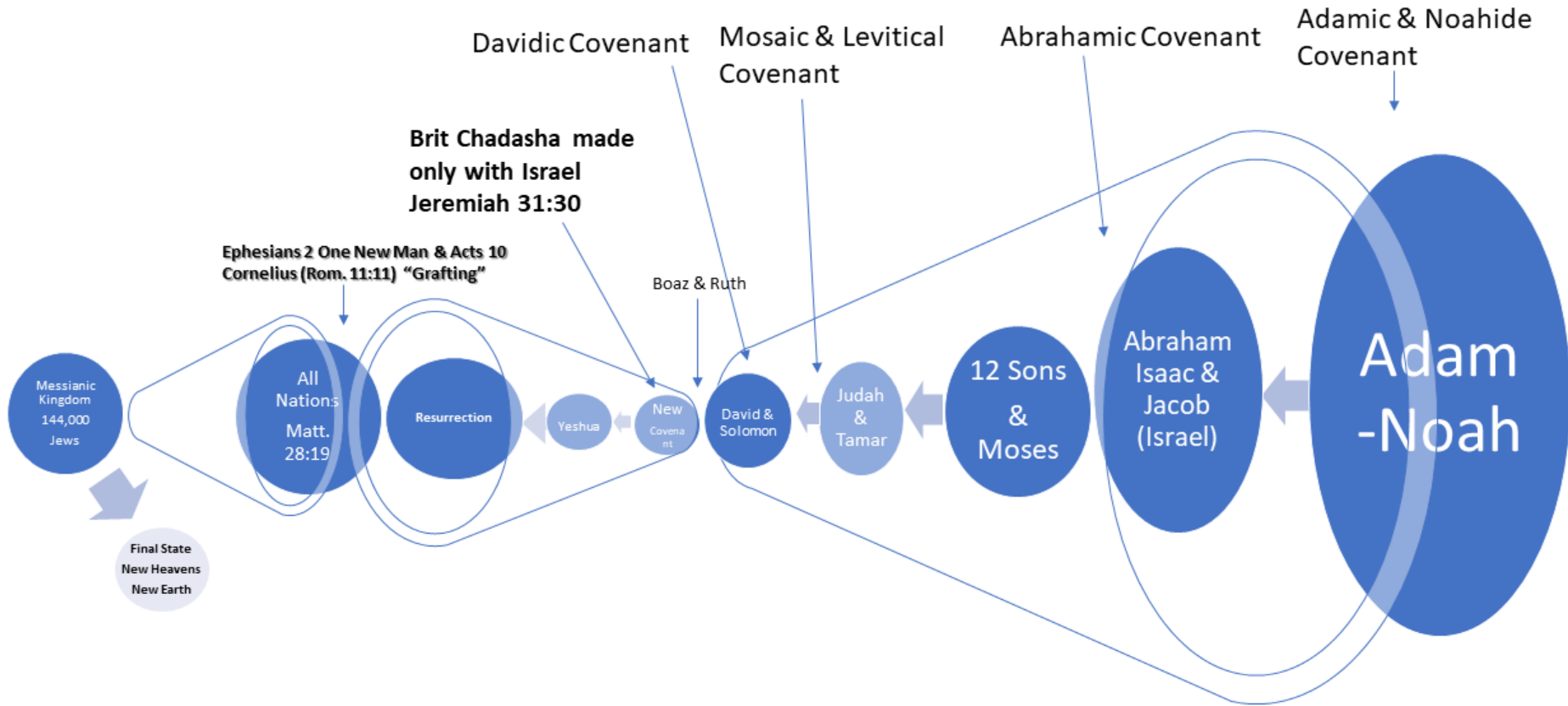
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**MESSIANIC SYSTEM
PROGRESSIVE REVELATION**

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