

Framework of Scripture

In examining the Bible, five distinct periods, administrations, or economies become apparent. They are shown in the chart below. Every believer in Christ should understand this framework since it goes to the heart of understanding the Scriptures and one's place in them. All of the Scriptures are *for* the believer in Christ but not all of them are *to* him. For example, believers in this age need not fear, as David did, that God would remove his Holy Spirit (Psalm 51.9-11). God the Holy Spirit permanently indwells all who have believed the gospel (1 Corinthians 12.13, 15.1-4; Ephesians 1.13-14).

Mankind	Israel	Church	Israel Redux	Kingdom	Eternity
Adam to Abraham	Abraham to Paul	Paul to Rapture	7 Years	1,000 Years	New Heaven and New Earth

The chart shows the five periods: Mankind, Israel, Church, Kingdom, and Eternity. God will revive Israel's program following His coming for and removing the Church, the body of Christ. This is the return of Christ, phase 1, a.k.a. the Rapture or Resurrection of the Body of Christ or the Day of Christ. Sometime after this, the prophesied Tribulation will begin (Matthew 24.21, 29). Noting Israel's central role in this event, Jeremiah called the Tribulation the "time of Jacob's trouble" (Jeremiah 30.7). Daniel referred to it as Israel's 70th week (Daniel 9.24-27). To the faithful exegete who uses a normal, historical hermeneutic, these five periods leap out.

Mankind

As the Genesis reveals, God initially communicated with and revealed Himself to the entire human race. This program lasted from the first to the twelfth chapter of Genesis. At that point, God began a new program. He selected a particular man,

Abram (Abraham), and made a sovereign covenant (see [Covenants of Israel](#)) with him (Genesis 12.1-3; 15.1-21, etc.). Through God's call of Abraham, He created a new race, the Jews. From this time forward, God would no longer reveal Himself to all mankind; He would reveal Himself through the Jews.

Israel

The period of Israel extended from Abraham to God's commissioning of the apostle Paul. When one reads the Old Testament, it is impossible to miss the fact that Israel anticipated one great event: the coming of the Messiah and the establishment of His kingdom. The prophets wrote hundreds of verses (cf. Isaiah 2.1-4; 11.1-11; Zechariah 14.9-11) that detailed this kingdom. Israel yearned for God's promise to be fulfilled. They would be safe from their enemies and preeminent among the nations (Deuteronomy 28.1, 13). When Jesus began His ministry, He proclaimed He was the Messiah and that the kingdom of God was near (Matthew 3.2; 4.17). Had Israel repented and accepted Him, the promised kingdom would have come. But Israel refused to repent and believe the message of John the Baptizer, Jesus, and the Twelve. Instead, they crucified Him. After Jesus was resurrected and ascended, Peter addressed the nation with a renewed message of repentance—the same message John the Baptizer and Jesus had proclaimed in His earthly ministry (Acts 2.28; 3.19-26). The nation had another opportunity to repent. Had they, God would have established the kingdom. Israel, however, continued to reject the message of Jesus as Messiah.

Church

Since Israel rejected her Messiah and the kingdom of God, did this mean God's plan was thwarted and that Gentiles had no hope? No, God had a "secret" ([μυστήριον](#)) as Paul called it (Romans 16.25; Colossians 1.26-27). God in grace raised a Pharisee, Saul of Tarsus, a violent enemy of those who had believed in Christ, through whom He would reveal His grace to

Gentiles. But what of Israel? Was God through with the nation? Had they forfeited their blessings? Had they nullified God's promises to them? The majority in Christendom teach they did and that the Church became the new "Israel." Tragically, beginning in the second century A.D., most of Christendom abandoned Biblical Christianity and taught that Israel forfeited its blessings through its unbelief and that God supplanted national Israel with the Church. The majority of seminaries and pulpits teach the Church has assumed the promises God made to Israel in an allegorical way. They teach Israel was "typological" of the Church.

The problem with this view is that it is unbiblical. The Scriptures explicitly declare God is *not* through with national Israel (Romans 9-11). Rather than the Church (the body of Christ) assuming Israel's promises, God made different, equally valid promises and provisions for both Israel and the Church. God has scores of promises to national Israel that remain unfulfilled. Hundreds of verses proclaim He will establish His earthly kingdom for the sons of Jacob and that they will be preeminent among the nations of the earth. When national Israel repents, which they will do in the future (Matthew 23.39 cf. Psalm 118.26; Zechariah 12.10), God will fulfill all these promises. The promise God made to Abraham 4,000 years ago was *sovereign* and remains in force. Daniel prophesied a total of 70 weeks of years from the time of the restoration and rebuilding of Jerusalem and to the time of making an end to sin for the nation of Israel (Daniel 9.24-27). At 69 weeks of years, he prophesied the nation would reject the Messiah. A final week of seven years remains. Jesus called this week the Tribulation (Matthew 24.21, 29). Elsewhere it is known as the "time of Jacob's trouble" (cf. Daniel 9; Jeremiah 30.7) and the day of the Lord (Zephaniah 1; Joel 2). At the end of this week, Israel will recognize her Messiah and repent. When this occurs, He will return (Matthew 23.37-39).

God created Israel to be the instrument of God's blessing to Gentiles. They failed to fulfill this destiny at the Lord's first advent. But by God's grace, blessing came to Gentiles not through Israel's obedience, but because of her disobedience. Through the *fall* of Israel Gentiles have become blessed. Paul revealed this matter in Romans 9-11 and declared God's matchless wisdom (Romans 11.33-36). God's plan can be delayed but never thwarted by the will of men. God knows the end from the beginning and is sovereign in all His activities. Those who teach that when Israel rejected her Messiah that God rejected Israel and formed the Church as the "new" Israel have rejected God's sovereignty. They believe man's will is greater than God's.

After God called the apostle Paul as "the apostle to the Gentiles" (Romans 11.13), The risen, glorified Christ revealed to Paul "secrets" (μυστήριον). These revelations constitute Church doctrine. All Church doctrine comes from the pen of the Apostle Paul for to Paul alone did the ascended Lord reveal the secret of the Church, the body of Christ. Peter and the rest of the Twelve knew nothing of the Church or of the other revelations Paul received. This is what we call Christianity.

Before Paul, no one knew that Jew and Gentile were equal "in Christ" (Ephesians 3.3-7). Jesus never mentioned it in His earthly ministry nor did the Twelve. Read your Bible. Apart from Paul, one will find no reference to it. In the Church, the body of Christ, every believer is "in Christ," "seated in the heavenly places," and indwelt with God the Holy Spirit. This present time is a time of unprecedented grace and blessing to individual believers—both Jew and Gentile. The Church is under the administration of grace as Israel was under the administration of Law (Romans 6.14). The Church was a secret, not mentioned in the Old Testament.

Israel Redux

God is not through with national Israel (Romans 11.25-26). The

age of Israel will be restarted after God removes the Church from the earth. Theologians refer to this event as the Rapture. The Rapture was another "secret" God revealed to Paul (1 Corinthians 15.51-52; 1 Thessalonians 4.13-18). The Rapture was unknown until God revealed it to Paul. Jesus never spoke of it nor did any of the Twelve.

Kingdom

The long-awaited kingdom, unfulfilled in Jesus' first advent will be fulfilled at His second advent. At the end of the Tribulation, the Lord Jesus Christ will return to earth to save repentant national Israel, as well as Gentiles who are still alive in those final hours of the Tribulation. The generation of Jews who are alive at Christ's return will succeed, unlike the Jews of Jesus' generation, who failed to repent under the preaching of John the Baptizer, Jesus, Peter, and Stephen. The Lord will establish His long-anticipated kingdom and fulfill all the covenants of Israel: Abrahamic, Sabbatic, Palestinian (Land), Davidic, and New. In this kingdom, peace and righteousness will cover the earth and Israel will be preeminent among all the nations of the earth (Deuteronomy 28.1, 13). Jesus the Messiah will rule the entire world (Zechariah 14.9) and Israel will occupy the land promised by God to Abraham from the Nile to the Euphrates Rivers (Genesis 15.18).

New Heaven, New Earth

In eternity, God will create a new universe: a new heaven and earth (Revelation 21.1-2; 2 Peter 3.13 cf. Isaiah 65.17; 66.22). The New Jerusalem, the true Jerusalem, will descend from heaven upon earth. Literally, heaven will come upon earth. Death will cease and sin and evil will not be possible. God and man will dwell together for eternity in unimaginable joy and adventure.

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