

Chapter 14

THE CHRONOMETRICAL PRINCIPLE

I. DEFINITION

That principle by which the interpretation of a verse or passage is determined upon a consideration of its chronometrical setting.

II. AMPLIFICATION

A. **Definition:** The word “chronometrical” is taken from two Greek words; CHRONOS meaning “time”, and METRON meaning “measure”. Note the following relevant words as defined by the dictionary:

chronometry: “The art of measuring time; the measuring of time by periods or divisions.”

chronometer: “An instrument that measures time; specifically, a compact timekeeper of the highest possible accuracy.”

chronographer: “One who writes concerning time or the events of time.”

The Scriptures clearly reveal that God is the great chronographer of the ages. God Himself is eternal; He is not limited to time or by time. Well did Moses say, “from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God . . . For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night” (Psalms 90:2, 4).

Man is subject to time, but God is the guardian of time and the designer of its ages. The writer to the Hebrews tells us that “through faith we understand that the worlds (Greek; ages-translations vary in their handling of the word AION) were framed by the word of God. . .” (Hebrews 11:3). Time is but a fragment of eternity in which God is working out His eternal purposes pertaining to creation and redemption.

The Scriptural basis upon which this principle is built is the usage of these words: age(s), time(s), and season(s).

Old Testament Hebrew:

MOWADAH = “an appointment; i.e., a fixed time or season; specifically a festival”

Translated:

feasts Leviticus 23:2, 4, 37, 44; Numbers 15:3; 29:39; Lamentations 2:6; Zechariah 8:19.

season(s) Genesis 1:14; Exodus 13:10; Leviticus 23:4; Numbers 9:2, 3, 7; 28:2.

time(s) Genesis 17:21; 18:14; Exodus 23:15; 34:18; Psalms 102:13; Daniel 8:19; 11:27, 29, 35; Habakkuk 2:3.

ETH

= “time”

Translated:

season(s) Exodus 18:22, 26; Leviticus 26:4; Deuteronomy 11:14; 28:12; Psalms 1:3; 145:15; Jeremiah 5:24.

time(s) Judges 10:14; I Chronicles 12:22; 29:30; Esther 1:13; 4:14; Job 24:1; Psalms 31:15; Ecclesiastes 3:1-17; Daniel 11:35, 40; 12:1, 4, 9, 11; Zechariah 10:1.

YOWM

= "a day literally or figuratively (a space of time)"

Translated:

(day(s) Genesis 1:5; 5:1-8; Job 24:1; Isaiah 2:2; 13:6, 9; Jeremiah 23:20; Hosea 9:7; Joel 2:29, 31; Malachi 4:5.

time(s) Genesis 4:3; Numbers 13:20; Deuteronomy 10:10; 20:19; Joshua 3:15; 11:18; I Samuel 14:18; II Kings 19:25; Psalms 27:5.

New Testament Greek
AION

= "an age; by extension, perpetuity of time; by implication, the world; an unbroken age, a segment of time, an era, a period of time viewed in relation to what takes place in it"

Translated:

age(s) Ephesians 2:7; Colossians 1:26

course Ephesians 2:2

eternal Ephesians 3:11; I Timothy 1:17

forever Philippians 4:20; I Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 1:8; Revelation 20:10

world(s) Matthew 13:39, 40, 49; 24:3; I Corinthians 10:11; Hebrews 1:2; 11:3

GENEA

= "a generation; by implication, an age, a period of time (of limited duration)"

Translated:

age(s) Ephesians 3:5, 21

generation(s) Luke 1:48, 50; Colossians 1:26

nation Philippians 2:15

time(s) Acts 14:16; 15:21.

KAIROS

= "an occasion; i.e., set or proper time; a measure of time; a fixed and definite time; a seasonable time; the right time; a period of time; a limited portion of time"

Translated:

season(s) Luke 4:13; 12:42; Acts 1:7; 14:17; I Thessalonians 5:1

time(s) Mark 1:15; Luke 19:44; 21:24; Acts 3:19; Romans 5:6; 13:11; II Corinthians 6:2; Ephesians 1:10; I Thessalonians 2:17; II Thessalonians 2:6; I Timothy 4:1; II Timothy 3:1; Hebrews 9:10; I Peter 1:5, 11; Revelation 1:3; 11:18; 22:10.

KRONOS

= "a space of time (in general); a period of time; by implying delay"

Translated:

season(s) Acts 19:22; 20:18; Revelation 6:11; 20:3

space	Acts 15:33; Revelation 2:21
time(s)	Acts 1:6, 7; 3:21; 7:17; 17:30; Galatians 4:4; I Thessalonians 5:1; I Peter 1:20; Jude 18; Revelation 10:6

Together these words support the concept that God has divided and arranged time into a series of successive ages, times and seasons.

B. **Classification:** These ages can be divided as follows:

- Past Ages** — The Eternal Ages Past
 - Age of Creation
 - Re-creation
 - Age of the Patriarchs — Promise: Adam-Abraham
 - Age of the Chosen Nation — Law: Isaac-Christ
- Present Age** — The Messianic Age — first coming to second coming
- Future Ages** — The Age to Come
 - The Eternal Ages Future

Each of these ages will now be considered separately but briefly:

1. **The Past Ages:** This is an all-inclusive term referring to all the ages of time prior to New Testament times. It can also be used in a more limited sense to indicate any one of the ages prior to the cross.

Hebrews 1:1 "God, who at sundry *times* and in divers manners spake in *time past* unto the fathers by the prophets."

Colossians 1:26 "Even the mystery which hath been hid *from ages* and *from generations*, but now is made manifest to his saints."

- a. **The Eternal Ages Past** — God Himself is eternal; unlimited as to time. He is the I AM, having no beginning nor ending.

Psalms 90:2 ". . . *from everlasting* to everlasting, thou art God."

Revelation 1:8 "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and *which was*, and which is to come, the Almighty." (see also Revelation 1:4; Isaiah 41:4).

These verses encompass time past, time present, and time future — eternity. The expressions "from everlasting" and "which was" both refer to God's existence in eternity past.

- b. **The Age of Creation** — Though Scripture is somewhat silent concerning the creation of the angelic hosts and the universe of worlds, it does imply an age prior to the creation of the earth as we know it, in which these were created.

Genesis 1:1 "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

Colossians 1:16, 17 "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether there be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: and he is before all things, and by Him all things consist." (see also Revelation 4:11).

- c. **The Age of Re-creation** — Many Bible scholars assume that between verses 1 and 2 of Genesis 1, the fall of Satan took place, bringing about the chaotic condition spoken of in verse 2. Isaiah 45:18 implies that

when God created the heavens and the earth He did not create the earth "without form and void," nor in a state of darkness. "For thus says the Lord who created the heavens. God Himself who formed the earth and made it, who established it and created it *not a worthless waste*; He formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord, and there is no one else" (Isaiah 45:18 Amplified). In connection with this it is suggested that there was an indefinite period of time between the chaotic condition described in verse 2 and the events of the rest of the chapter.

The remainder of Genesis 1 is actually a description of a period of re-creation. By "re-creation" we mean "to create or form anew; to re-make." Thus God brings light out of darkness, order out of chaos, fruitfulness out of barrenness, and life out of death, crowning this period with the creation of man, God's masterpiece. This age included the refashioning of the earth and the creation of man, a new creature, in the image of God.

- d. **The Age of the Patriarchs: Promise** — From Adam to Abraham there was a period of about 2,000 years. This "Age of the Fathers" was bounded by Adam, the father of the human race (Genesis 5:1) and Abraham, the father of all them that believe (Romans 4:16, 17). This time period is substantiated by the genealogies given in Genesis 5, 10 and 11 concerning the Godly patriarchs. As noted in the Covenantal Principle Adam, Noah, and Abraham each received special covenantal promises, thus distinguishing this period as the Age of Promise.
 - e. **The Age of the Chosen Nation: Law** — From Isaac to Jesus there was another period of about 2,000 years. This "Age of the Sons" was bounded by Isaac, the only begotten son of the Old Testament (Hebrews 11:17), and Jesus, the only begotten son of the New Testament (John 3:16). God's promise to Abraham was centered in Isaac in that God said, ". . . in Isaac shall thy seed be called" (Hebrews 11:18). It was to be through the only begotten son that the chosen nation would come into existence. This nation, in its infancy, was spoken of as God's son: "Israel is *my son*, even my firstborn" (Exodus 4:22, 23); "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called *my son* out of Egypt" (Hosea 11:1). To this many-membered son was given the Law Covenant with its Tabernacle, Priesthood, Sacrifices, Feasts and Statutes, which were as "tutors and governors" to bring this son to maturity. With the failure of this son to fulfill the purposes of God, the Father brought in His only begotten Son, "made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law" (Galatians 4:4, 5). This closed the Age of Law.
2. **The Present Age:** This term is used to refer to the New Testament Era. It is referred to in Scripture as:
 - This world (age) (Matthew 13:22, 40; Luke 16:8; 20:34; Galatians 1:4; Titus 2:12)
 - The time of reformation (Hebrews 9:10)
 - The times of restitution (Acts 3:21)
 - The last days (Acts 2:17; Hebrews 1:2).

This period is also known as the Messianic Age.

- a. **The Messianic Age: Spirit** — From the first coming of Christ to His second coming is a period of approximately 2,000 years. This is the

age in which the Lord Jesus is performing His Messianic work. This work, though one, involves two distinct phases: the first and second comings; the second being the ultimate completion of that which was begun in the first. This period is also referred to as the Age of the Holy Spirit, and is bounded by two great outpourings of the Spirit.

The New Testament clearly teaches that Christ came as the fulfilment of the promises, and the fulfiller and abolisher of the law. This He did when, by grace, He instituted the New Covenant in His blood, thus making provision for the outpouring of the Spirit and the formation of the Church as His body. Christ came at the end of the past ages and introduced the present Messianic Age.

I Corinthians 10:11 "Upon whom the ends of the world (Greek; ages) are come."

Hebrews 9:26 "Now once in the end of the world (Greek; ages) hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."

It is during this Messianic Age that the mystery of the one body of Christ, composed of Jew and Gentile, is being revealed.

Ephesians 3:4-6 "The mystery of Christ which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed . . . That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:"

The Scriptures reveal that this present age is to come to an end.

Matthew 13:39, 40, 49 "The harvest is the end of the world (Greek; age)."

Matthew 24:3 "What shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world (Greek; age)."

Matthew 28:20 "I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world (Greek; age)."

3. **The Future Ages:** This term is used to refer to the ages beyond the second coming of Christ: those that are future to the present Messianic Age. The Bible does not give a full description of these future ages, but it does establish their reality by referring to them.

- a. **The Age to Come** — This refers to the age immediately following the second coming of Christ. Many expositors speak of this as The Kingdom Age in its fullest earthly manifestation. However, there is a sharp division of opinion concerning this future age. The Scriptures do speak clearly of an age to come:

Mark 10:30 ". . . in the world (Greek; age) to come eternal life."

Luke 20:34-36 "The children of this world (Greek; age) marry . . . but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world (Greek; age), and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."

Ephesians 1:21 ". . . not only in this world (Greek; age) but also in that which is to come."

Hebrews 6:5 ". . . and the powers of the world (Greek; age) to come."

b. **The Eternal Ages Future** — The eternal ages are referred to in Scripture as:

- the ages to come (Ephesians 2:7)
- world without end (Ephesians 3:21)
- forever and ever (I Timothy 1:17; II Timothy 4:18; Revelation 5:13, 14; 14:11; 20:10).

The following Scriptures speak of the endless ages to come:

Ephesians 2:7 “. . . that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace.”

Ephesians 3:21 “Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.”

The dominant thought in the Scriptures concerning eternity future is the eternal bliss of the righteous and the eternal torment of the wicked.

C. **Conclusions:** God as the eternal administrator of time has ordained its successive ages and therefore was also able to be the great chronographer of the ages, writing concerning them and their related events.

Thus, the literary method of *chronography* used in writing Scripture gives rise to the *Chronometrical Principle* of interpreting Scripture.

III. QUALIFICATION

A. The first step in using this principle is to determine whether the verse or passage under consideration has some time element in it.

B. The second step in using this principle is to rightly discern the tenses of the verbs in the verse to determine whether they are pointing to the past, the present, or the future. This necessitates consulting Hebrew and Greek study aids in order to realize the full force of the tense in each situation.

C. The next step is to determine to what period or age of time the verse is referring. To facilitate this one may ask the following questions:

1. Does it refer to the Eternal Ages Past?
2. Does it refer to the Age of Creation?
3. Does it refer to the Age of Re-creation?
4. Does it refer to the Age of the Patriarchs?
5. Does it refer to the Age of the Chosen Nation?
6. Does it refer to the Messianic Age?
7. Does it refer to the Age to Come?
8. Does it refer to the Eternal Ages Future?

D. In interpretation great care must be taken so as not to confuse God's time element, as set forth in this principle. The interpreter must not take that which belonged under the Law Age and was abolished at the cross, and bring it over into the Messianic Age. For example, animal sacrifices, the Aaronic priesthood, ceremonial laws, circumcision, and the keeping of Sabbaths were abolished at Calvary and should not be placed in the Messianic Age (Acts 15:1-11; Colossians 2:14-17). Neither should temporal things belonging to the present Messianic Age be carried over into the Age to Come or the Eternal Ages. Such things as marriage, mortality, and death do not belong to the Future Ages (Luke 20:34-36). Much confusion in Biblical interpretation is caused by attributing to a particular age that which belongs to another.

E. The interpreter must recognize that the ages are successive, each age making way for another. Each age is greater than the previous as it moves onto a higher level in the eternal purpose of God. The Age of Law was greater than the Age of Promise; the Messianic Age is greater than both the Age of Promise and the Age of Law; the Age to Come and the Eternal Ages will supersede all previous ages.

F. It is also to be recognized that within certain of these ages there are shorter periods of time referred to in Scripture. Some of these are:

1. Times
2. Seasons (this is often used in connection with "times")
3. Days
4. Weeks
5. Months
6. Years
7. Day of the Lord
8. The Jubilee Years
9. The Sabbaths — Weekly, Festival, Annual
10. The Last Days: The Latter Days
11. The Time of the End.

Each of these should be considered on their own to discern their full significance.

G. This principle must be used in connection with the Election, Covenantal, and Ethnic Division Principles. Also consult Chapter 15, "The Dispensations Redefined."

IV. DEMONSTRATION

Ephesians 3:10, 11: "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:"

This passage involves the Church as the instrument of God's eternal purpose in Christ. The Church is the instrument for manifesting God's wisdom because it is the instrument of fulfilling His purpose. The words "eternal purpose" appear in the Greek text as "the purpose of the ages." These ages include the past ages, the present age, and the future ages. In each of the successive ages of God's varied dealings with man, there has been but one purpose which God has been working to fulfill. His mode of operation has changed, but His purpose has remained constant. This purpose, proceeding forth from God's person, was centered in Christ Jesus and concerned the Church, His body. Romans 8:28, 29 defines for us what this purpose has been: ". . . to them who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." The desire of the Father's heart has always been to have a family of sons conformed to the image of His only-begotten Son, who is the express image of the Father's person. This is the purpose of the ages. Each successive age has been a progressive step toward the ultimate fulfilment of this one Divine purpose.

Chapter 15

THE DISPENSATIONS REDEFINED

I. DEFINITION

A. **Dictionary Definition:** According to “Webster’s Dictionary” the definition of “dispensation” includes:

1. An administrative system; management.
2. In theology:
 - a. The ordering of events under divine authority; the dealing of God to His creatures.
 - b. Any religious system; a system of principles and rites enjoined.

B. **Scripture Definition:** The Scriptural background for this word is as follows:

New Testament Greek OIKONOMIA

= “administration (of a household or estate); specifically a religious economy”

Translated:

dispensation	I Corinthians 9:17 — “a dispensation of the gospel” Ephesians 1:10 — “in the dispensation of the fullness of times” Ephesians 3:2 — “the dispensation of the grace of God” Colossians 1:25 — “the dispensation of God”
stewardship	Luke 16:2 — “give an account of thy stewardship” Luke 16:3 — “taketh away from me the stewardship” Luke 16:4 — “when I am put out of the stewardship”

C. **Theological Definition:** There has been much misunderstanding concerning the use of the word “dispensation.” The confusion surrounding this word has centered around its application to ages of time. Certain dispensational schools have confined the various dispensations to limited periods of time. This confinement misses the emphasis of the meaning of the word. The term “dispensation” involves God’s administrative dealings with man, but it contains *no direct allusion to the ages of time*. To maintain balance in interpretation this distinction must be constantly kept in mind. Therefore, in this chapter we are using the word “dispensation” not to refer to an age of time, but rather to an arrangement or administration of religious affairs.

II. CLASSIFICATION

God’s plan of redemption is one, but through the ages His methods of dealing with man in regard to his sin has varied. These various dispensations, or arrangements, cannot be separated from the divine covenants. They, in fact, find their very basis in the covenants. Each of these redemptive covenants was a particular arrangement between God and man, having its own distinctive emphasis. Therefore, the word “dispensations”

as used here refers to the dealings of God with man under their respective covenants.

Each dispensation will now be placed in its appropriate covenantal setting:

The Dispensation of Innocence	The Edenic Covenant
The Dispensation of Conscience	The Adamic Covenant
The Dispensation of Human Government	The Noahic Covenant
The Dispensation of Promise	The Abrahamic Covenant
The Dispensation of Law	The Mosaic Covenant
The Dispensation of Grace	The New Covenant
The Dispensation of the Kingdom	The Everlasting Covenant

A. The Dispensation of Innocence — The Edenic Covenant: The Edenic Covenant included an arrangement between God and man characterized by man's innocence. The details of this arrangement are recorded in Genesis 1:26-2:25. Man was created in the image and likeness of God. He was in a state of innocency, knowing neither good nor evil. He was placed in the garden of Eden and, having received one commandment, was put under a period of probation. The one commandment given to Adam was that he was not to partake of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, lest he come under the death penalty. Man, having a free will and the power of choice, chose to partake of the forbidden fruit and brought himself, with the whole of mankind, under subjection to Satan, sin and death. Thus, sin temporarily broke this arrangement and excluded man from its benefits.

B. The Dispensation of Conscience — The Adamic Covenant: The Adamic Covenant included the arrangement between God and man that was characterized by man's awakened conscience. The details of this arrangement are recorded in Genesis 3-7 and Romans 1, 7. Though man did possess the faculty of conscience in his state of innocency, it was inoperative until the fall. Partaking of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil awakened man's conscience because it is, in itself, the discernor within man to distinguish between good and evil. Thus man came under the arrangement of conscience, and God's dealings with man was through his conscience (Romans 2:15). Though the conscience defines good and evil, it gives man no power to overcome evil, and therefore by itself is an inadequate arrangement between God and man. The judgment on Noah's generation confirmed this fact. The arrangement of conscience under the Adamic Covenant has continued to exist, just as the blessings and curses of the covenant are also still in effect.

C. The Dispensation of Human Government — The Noahic Covenant: The Noahic Covenant included the arrangement between God and man that was characterized by man being entrusted with governmental authority. The details of this arrangement are recorded in Genesis 8, 9. After the flood God placed in the hands of man the legal authority to execute murderers. This suggests the institution of human government, in that such an act is the highest function of government, and implies every lesser function. Though divinely instituted, human government has proved itself throughout history to be inadequate to produce divine order. The failure of human government was proven decisively in God's judgment at the tower of Babel (Genesis 10, 11).

D. The Dispensation of Promise — The Abrahamic Covenant: The Abrahamic Covenant included the arrangement between God and man characterized by man receiving promises from God. The details of this arrangement are recorded in Genesis 12-50. God gave promises to Abraham and confirmed them to Isaac and Jacob. Their relationship to God was centered around these promises. These promises, involving the seed and the land, included temporal, national and spiritual blessings. They received the fulfilment of some of the promises in their day, but they died in faith, not having received

certain other promises which were to be fulfilled under other arrangements (Hebrews 11:8-21, 33). This arrangement of promise was centered in the only begotten son of promise.

E. The Dispensation of Law — The Mosaic Covenant: The Mosaic Covenant included the arrangement between God and man characterized by man coming under the law of God. The details of this arrangement are recorded mainly in Exodus 19-40 and Leviticus. In fulfilment of the promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the children of Israel had become a great nation in Egypt, and had been delivered from it to possess the promised land. At Mount Sinai God brought the nation under the Mosaic economy. This arrangement included the moral, civil and ceremonial law. The ceremonial law included the Tabernacle, Priesthood, Sacrifices, Feasts and Sabbaths. However, the law arrangement also proved inadequate to accomplish the full purpose of God. This was proved to be true when those who were under the law rejected and crucified Him who was the fulfilment of the law. While Christ fulfilled and abolished the ceremonial law, the righteousness of the moral law finds its fulfilment in those who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit (Romans 8:1-4).

F. The Dispensation of Grace — The New Covenant: The New Covenant included the arrangement between God and man that was characterized by man receiving the grace of God. The details of this arrangement are recorded especially in the epistles of the New Testament. John 1:17 declares that "the Law was given by Moses but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," and Titus 2:11 states "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men." Jesus Christ is the grace of God personified who established the New Covenant in His own blood (Matthew 26:26-28). This is the new arrangement of grace by which all men may come into eternal fellowship with God by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. This arrangement is abundantly able to accomplish the eternal purpose of God in relation to man.

G. The Dispensation of the Kingdom — The Everlasting Covenant: The Everlasting Covenant included the arrangement between God and man characterized by man's place of dominion in the everlasting kingdom of God. There has never been a time when the kingdom of God has not been in existence. The psalmist proclaims in Psalms 145:13: "Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom." This is true because the King Himself is "eternal, immortal, invisible" (I Timothy 1:17). In relation to man on earth the kingdom of God has been expressed in different forms. Each of these forms provided a progressive expression of the eternal kingdom. This arrangement under the Everlasting Covenant is actually the beginning and the consummation of all the other arrangements under their covenants. This arrangement of the kingdom ushers in the eternal order (Revelation 20-22).

"Then cometh the end when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father . . . that God may be all in all." (I Corinthians 15:24-28).

III. CONCLUSION

In summary:

A. The dispensations find their proper foundation in the covenants in that they only refer to the different methods of God's dealings under these arrangements.

B. The dispensations, having no definite reference to time, do have a point of commencement. However, each arrangement was not abolished when another arrangement was ushered in (e.g., conscience was not abolished when human government was brought in; promise was not abolished when law was brought in).

Chapter 16

THE BREACH PRINCIPLE

I. DEFINITION

That principle by which the interpretation of a certain verse or passage of Scripture is aided by a consideration of certain breaches of promise and time.

II. AMPLIFICATION

Since this principle will be a “new” one to many interpreters a larger amount of space will be given to its development.

A. **Definition of a “Breach”:** According to Webster’s Dictionary, a “breach” is:

- A state of being broken; a rupture; a break; a gap.
- A hole or opening, as in a wall or fence, made by breaking or parting.
- An interruption of continuity; blank space.
- A break or interruption in friendly relations.

The following phrases are also defined:

- Breach of faith a failure to keep faith.
- Breach of privilege an act in violation of rules, order, privileges or dignity of a legislative body.
- Breach of promise failure to fulfill a promise.
- Breach of the peace a violation of the public peace.
- Breach of trust a violation by fraud or omission of any duty imposed on a person in a position of trust.

This word has the following background in Scripture:

Old Testament Hebrew

BEDEQ

= “a gap or leak (in a building or a ship); fissure or rent.”

Translated:

breach(es) II Kings 12:4-8, 12

calkers Ezekiel 27:9, 27

BAQA

= “to cleave; generally to rend, break, rupture or open; to break through or into.”

Translated:

make a breach Isaiah 7:6; 22:9; Ezekiel 26:10

break Genesis 7:11; II Chronicles 25:12;
Proverbs 3:20; Isaiah 58:8

cleave Genesis 22:3; Numbers 16:31;
Judges 15:19; Psalms 74:15; Amos 6:11;
Zechariah 14:4

divide Exodus 14:16, 21; Nehemiah 9:11;
Psalms 78:13

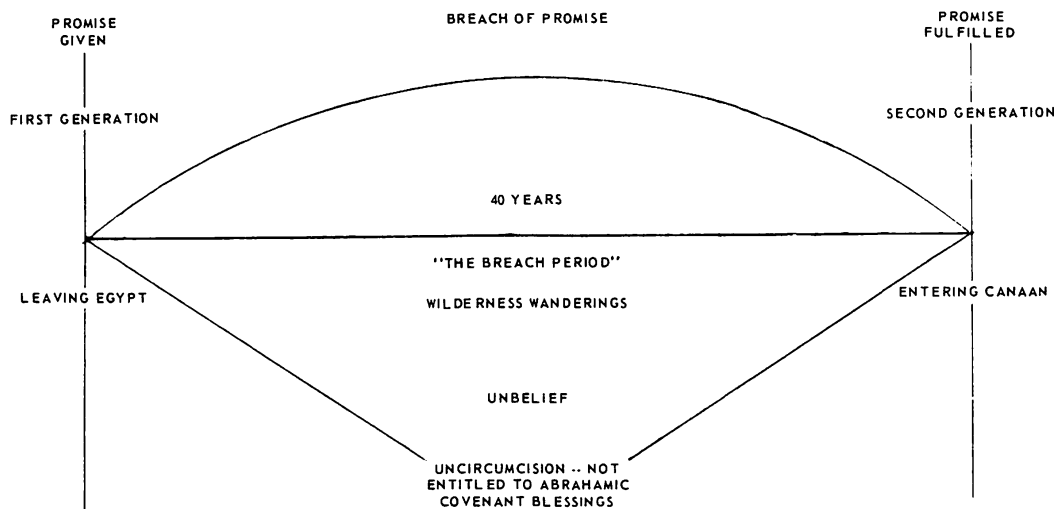
rend Joshua 9:4; I Kings 1:40; Job 26:8;
Ezekiel 13:11, 13

tear II Kings 2:24; Hosea 13:8

their leader (Exodus 3:15-17). After two years, Israel came to Kadesh-Barnea on the border of Canaan. From there Moses sent twelve spies to search out the land and bring back some of its fruit. Forty days later they returned and ten of the spies brought an evil report saying that, though the land was good, the obstacles were too great to be overcome. This caused the whole nation to rise in unbelief and rebellion, and reject the land of promise. In so doing they turned their backs upon the Abrahamic Covenant (Numbers 13, 14). The New Testament records plainly that they could not enter into the promise because of their unbelief (Hebrews 3, 4). God clearly expressed His reaction and determination to Moses:

“Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I swore to make you dwell therein . . . And you shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms . . . After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even *forty years*, and ye shall know my *breach of promise*.” Numbers 14:26-38.

The marginal rendering indicates that the “breach of promise” refers to an altering of His purpose. The Amplified Version states that it was a revoking of the promise. In actual history this breach of promise was a time lapse in the fulfilment of the promise to the nation. This gap in time lasted forty years, during which the first generation that had come out of Egypt died in unbelief in the wilderness. Both the first and second generations experienced the breach caused by being out of covenant relationship with God. Circumcision was the seal of the Abrahamic Covenant (Genesis 17). For this reason the second generation had to be circumcised before they could enter into the blessings of the covenant (Joshua 5:2-9). Thus, the entering of the land was postponed by unbelief for forty years. This is known as “the breach period.” This time spent in unbelief was lost time as far as Israel was concerned.



2. **Breach of Promise Concerning Dominion in the Land:** God had promised Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that their seed would also have dominion over the Canaanites (Genesis 15: 18-21; 22:16-18; 24:60). This promised victory over their enemies was confirmed to the nation by Moses (Deuteronomy 28:14; 30:1-20). This dominion was contingent upon their obedience. The book of Joshua records the fulfilment of this promise

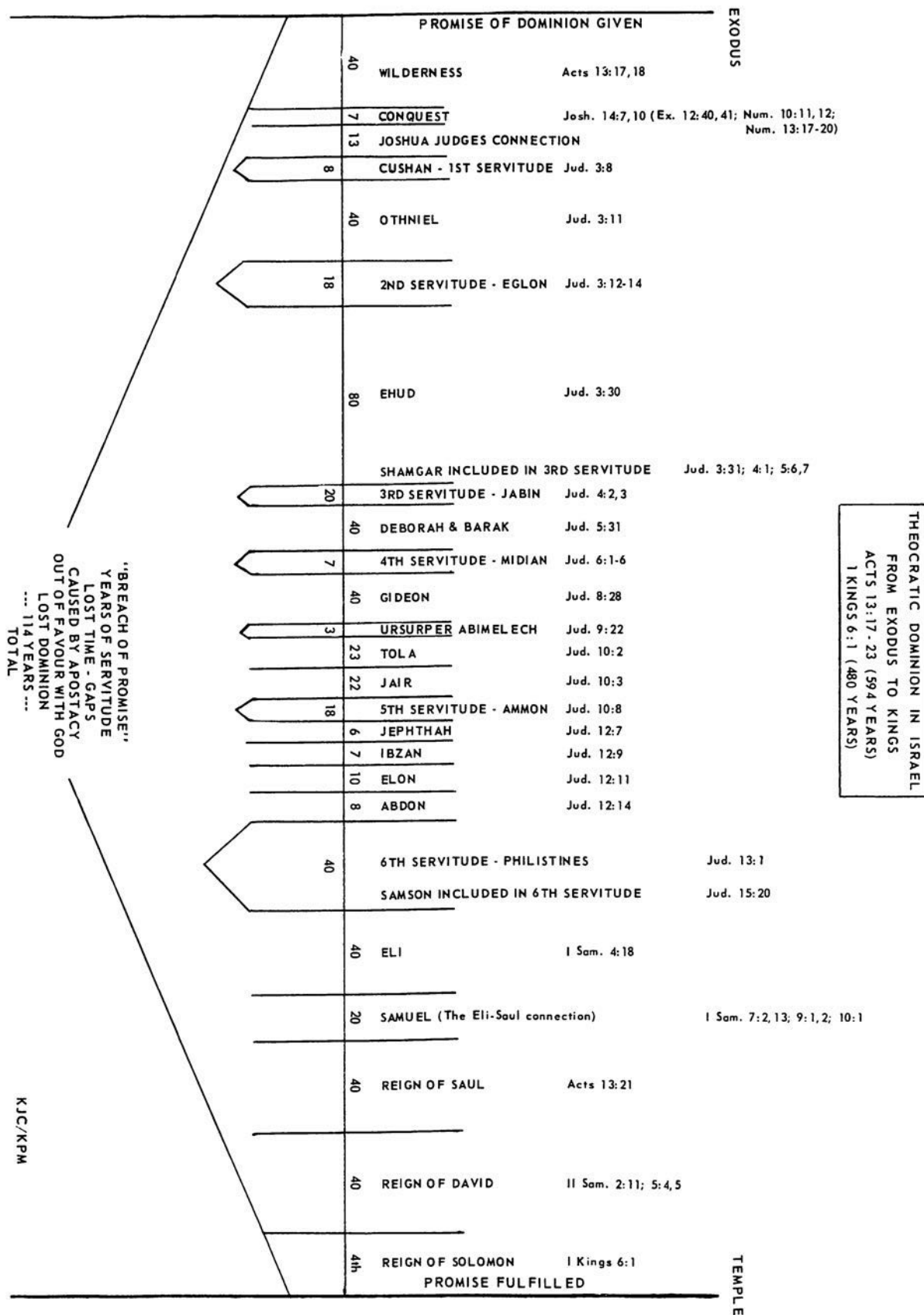
when Joshua led Israel in the conquest of Canaan (Joshua 1:1-9; 21:43-45). However, the book of Judges records that after the death of Joshua another generation arose that, through not following the Lord, lost the dominion. They began to compromise with their enemies and lapsed into idolatry and immorality. Seven times during the period of the judges, Israel went through the cycle explained in Judges 2:11-19.

- Departure from the Lord
- Servitude to their enemies
- Supplication to the Lord
- Saviour-Judge raised up
- Return to the Lord
- Death of the judge
- Departure from the Lord

The book of Judges covers approximately 450 years of Israel's history (see Acts 13:20). About 111 years of this time were spent in servitude to various Canaanite nations. During these periods of bondage God's promise of dominion was not being fulfilled due to apostasy. These years were lost time to Israel. As such, they provide a solution for an apparent discrepancy in Biblical chronology. In I Kings 6:1 we read that from the exodus to the building of the Temple 480 years elapsed. On the other hand Paul, in Acts 13:17-23, specifically mentions 530 years from within that same period, and implies at least 570 years. Paul fails to mention the years of the conquest in Joshua, the years between Joshua and Judges, and the early years of Solomon's reign, all of which fall within the boundaries of I Kings 6:1. These three time periods may be shown to be 7 years, 13 years and 4 years, respectively. Therefore, using Paul's years in conjunction with all the chronological references from Exodus to I Kings, the years covering this period come to a grand total of 594 years. The apparent discrepancy between this figure and the one given in I Kings 6:1 is 114 years ($594 - 480 = 114$ years). Why then were these 114 years left out of the I Kings 6:1 total? By totalling all the years which Israel spent in servitude to their enemies, including Abimelech's usurpation, we arrive at the figure of 114 years. Therefore, a possible solution to this discrepancy is that the I Kings 6:1 reference left out the time that was lost when Israel was in bondage due to their disobedience. During these periods God's promise of theocratic dominion was not being fulfilled because they were not meeting its conditions. These servitudes were breaches of promise and gaps of lost time in Israel's theocratic history. The following charts will help to illustrate this.

Chronology of the Period from the Exodus to the Building of the Temple

	Years
1. The wilderness wanderings — Acts 13:17, 18	40
2. The conquest of Canaan — Joshua 14:7, 10; Exodus 12:40, 41; Numbers 10:11, 12; 13:17-20	7
*3. The Joshua-Judges connection (see below)	13
4. First servitude — Cushan — Judges 3:8	8
5. Othniel — Judges 3:11	40
6. Second servitude — Eglon — Judges 3:12-14	18
7. Ehud — Judges 3:30	80



8. Shamgar included in third servitude — Judges 3:31; 4:1; 5:6, 7	—
9. Third servitude — Jabin — Judges 4:2, 3	20
10. Deborah and Barak — Judges 5:31	40
11. Fourth servitude — Midian — Judges 6:1-6	7
12. Gideon — Judges 8:28	40
13. Usurpation of Abimelech — Judges 9:22	3
14. Tola — Judges 10:2	23
15. Jair — Judges 10:3	22
16. Fifth servitude — Ammon — Judges 10:8	18
17. Jephthah — Judges 12:7	6
18. Ibzan — Judges 12:9	7
19. Elon — Judges 12:11	10
20. Abdon — Judges 12:14	8
21. Sixth servitude — Philistines — Judges 13:1	40
22. Samson included in sixth servitude — Judges 15:20	—
23. Eli — I Samuel 4:18	40
24. Samuel (the Eli-Saul connection) — I Samuel 7:2, 13; 9:1, 2; 10:1	20
25. Reign of Saul — Acts 13:21	40
26. Reign of David — II Samuel 2:11; 5:4, 5	40
27. Reign of Solomon — I Kings 6:1	4
	594

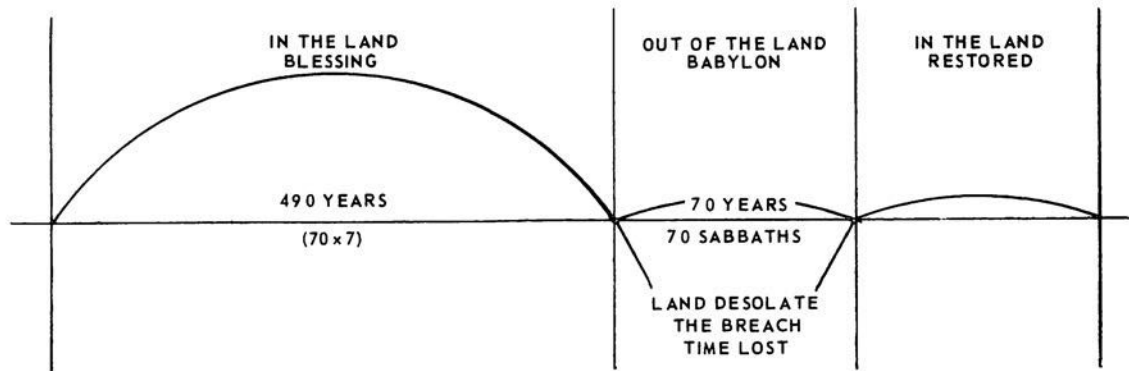
* **NOTE:** For a further discussion of the chronology of this period see Martin Anstey's *Chronology of the Old Testament*.

3. **Breach of Promise Concerning Remaining in the Land:** God had promised Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that their seed would not only inherit the land and have dominion over their enemies, but would also remain in the land, having it for an everlasting possession (Genesis 17:8; 48:4). This promise was given certain conditions under the Mosaic and Palestinian Covenants (Deuteronomy 27-30). One of these conditions for Israel's remaining in the land was that they were to allow the land to keep its Sabbaths. In other words, they were to let the land lay fallow, not sowing or reaping, one out of every seven years. Also, every fiftieth year ($7 \times 7 = 49 + 1 = 50$) was to be a jubilee year, which was an additional Sabbath for the land (Leviticus 25:1-22). Under these covenants God threatened to punish them for not keeping the Sabbaths.

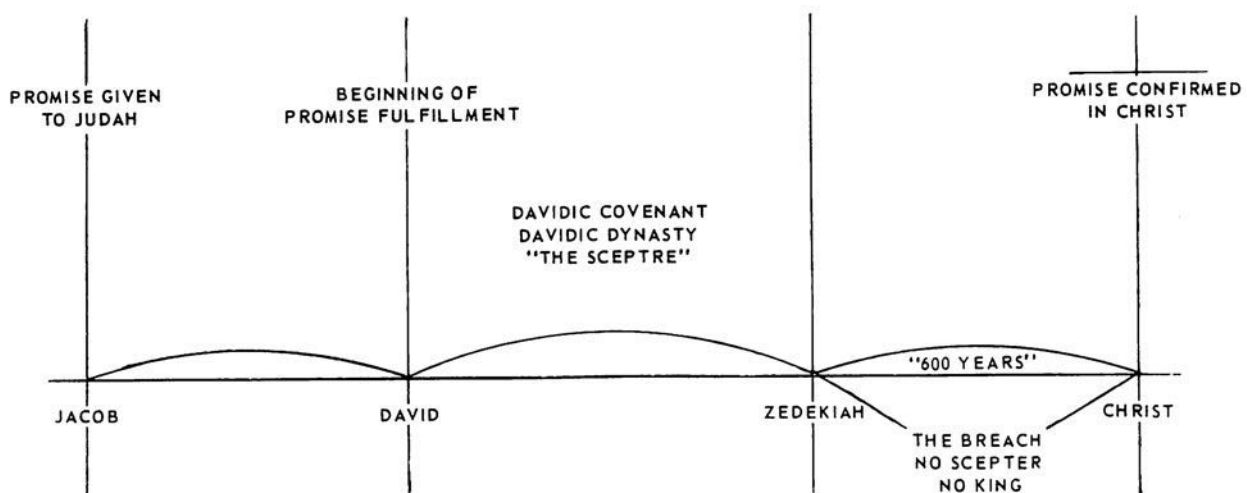
"And if ye shall despise my statutes . . . break my covenant . . . I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation, . . . And I will bring the land into desolation . . . And I will scatter you among the heathen . . . then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it . . . If they shall confess their iniquity . . . if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled . . . Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob . . . Isaac and . . . Abraham . . . and I will remember the land." Leviticus 26:14-46; 18:24-30; 20:22-26; Deuteronomy 28:58-68.

This actually came to pass in Israel's history when God sent Judah into captivity to Babylon for 70 years. The reason for the 70-year duration of this captivity is clearly stated in II Chronicles 36:21. For approximately

490 years (70×7) Israel had failed to meet the conditions for remaining in the land by not allowing the land to keep her Sabbaths. After removing His people for 70 years from the land so that it could have its overdue rest, God was able to allow them to return from captivity to dwell in the land once again (Jeremiah 25:12; 29:10; Daniel 9:2). This period was time lost in that it was a breach in the fulfilment of God's promise concerning Israel's remaining in the land.



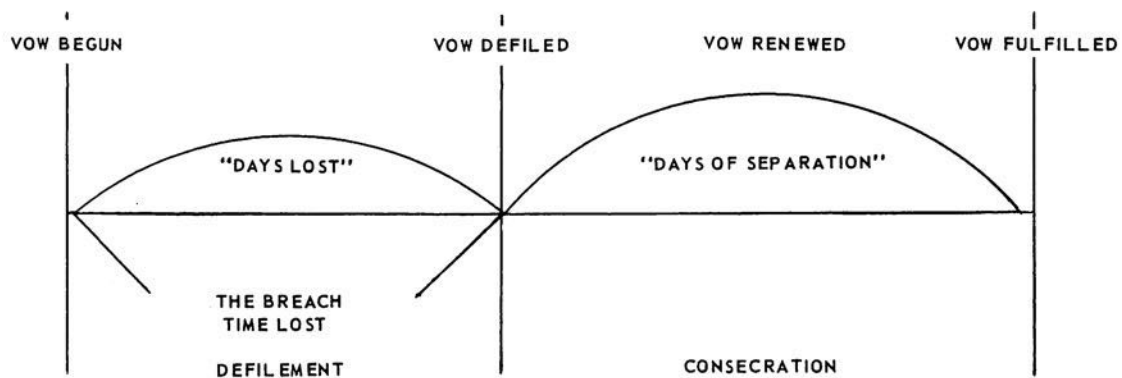
4. **Breach of Promise Concerning the Sceptre:** Jacob prophesied over his son Judah that "the sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until shiloh come; and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be" (Genesis 49:10). The first king of Israel who came from the tribe of Judah was David. God confirmed to David the promise of the sceptre and the throne in the terms of the Davidic Covenant (II Samuel 17; Psalms 89). This came in confirmation and fulfilment of Jacob's prophecy. There was an unbroken dynasty of Davidic kings reigning over Judah until Zedekiah, the last king to hold the sceptre. Zedekiah was dethroned approximately 600 years before Shiloh (Messiah) came. This sceptre and throne of David was promised to Jesus Christ (Numbers 24:17; Luke 1:30-33). The 600 years from Zedekiah to Christ was apparently a breach of promise concerning the sceptre.



5. **Breach of Promise Concerning the Nazarite Vow:** In Numbers 6:1-12 the laws concerning the vow of separation are recorded. This vow was a promise that a man or woman could make to God to show special consecration to Him. The vow was to be in effect for a period of time specified by the Nazarite. If he became defiled at any point during the days of his separation unto the Lord, all the previous days would be lost as far as the fulfilling of his vow was concerned.

"But the days that were before shall be lost, because his separation was defiled." Numbers 6:12

These lost days constituted a breach of his promise to the Lord. Samson, as a Nazarite defiling his vow, was an example of this (Judges 13-17).

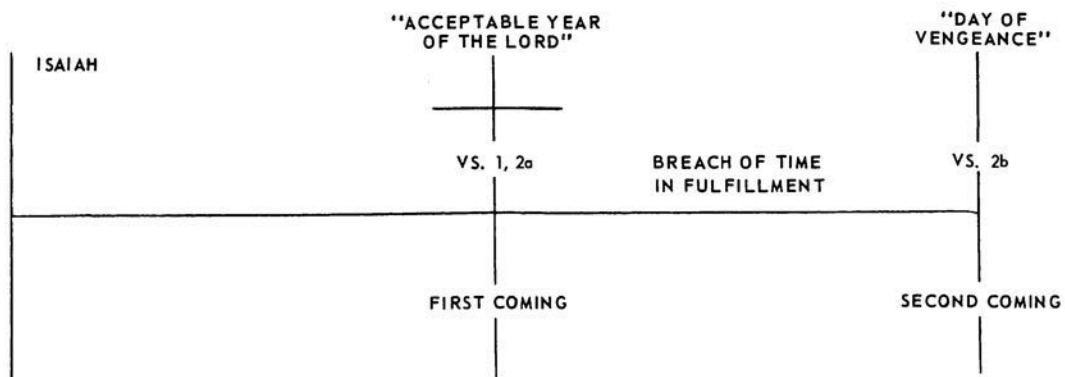


C. **The Breach of Time in Prophetic Fulfilment:** A consideration of certain prophecies concerning the future, both in the Old and New Testament implies a *breach of time* in their complete fulfilment. By "breach of time" we mean the span or period of time between the fulfilments of certain prophecies. This is not to say that "God's prophetic time-clock" stopped, for it never has. But because the prophets were often caught up in what is spoken of as "the prophetic perspective" they would group together in certain verses or passages events involving the past, present and future. Because God is the great I AM THAT I AM (Exodus 3:14-15), time past, present and future are as one eternal present before Him. Hence, when the prophets were in the Spirit, they saw things from God's eternal present. However, history which is the fulfilment of prophecy, shows that there was or is a "breach of time" or "time periods" for these prophetic details of events to unfold. Thus, *breach of time* is not to be confused with the *breach of promise*. It deals with a different type of breach altogether and must be kept in clear distinction.

The Old Testament prophets could not always understand their own utterances concerning the coming of Christ. They searched what was meant and what manner of *time* the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. It was revealed to them that their utterances were not just for themselves or their generation but unto another generation (I Peter 1:10-12).

Various passages in the prophetic books view mountain peaks of events as being all together with no valleys between. Their historical fulfilment has proven that there is a "time gap" or a *breach of time* involved in their fulfilment. This is especially true concerning the events pertaining to the first and second comings of Christ. This area of "time element" is what makes the interpretation of prophecy so very difficult.

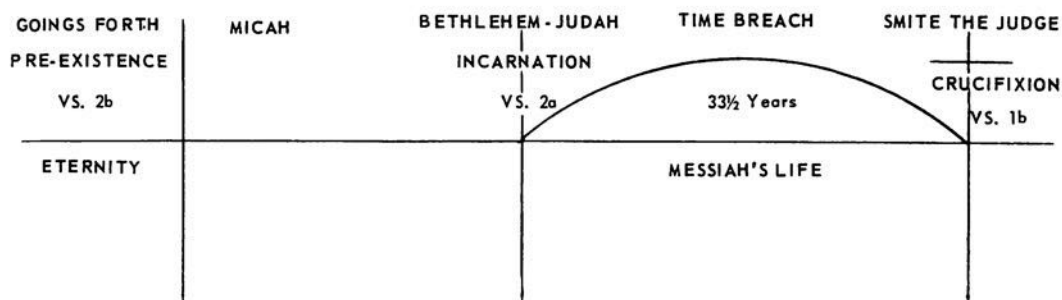
The First and Second Comings of Messiah: A comparison of Isaiah 61:1, 2 with Luke 4:16-21 implies the first and second comings of Christ. When Jesus entered the synagogue at Nazareth, He was given the book of Isaiah. He opened it to Chapter 61 and began to read. He read the clauses of verse 1 and read the first clause of verse 2, concerning "The acceptable year of the Lord." At this point He stopped reading and closed the book. It may be asked why He did not continue to read. The next clause speaks of "the day of vengeance of our God." These two clauses certainly imply the first and second comings of the Lord. The first coming was indeed "*the acceptable year of the Lord*," and His ministry in the Gospels, from His anointing in Jordan to His crucifixion, certainly fulfilled the clauses of verse 1 (II Corinthians 6:2 with Isaiah 49:8). There was no vengeance in His heart then, for He asked His Father to forgive those who crucified Him. It is the second coming that is "*the day of vengeance of our God*" (Isaiah 63:4 with II Thessalonians 1:7-9). Though the prophet Isaiah spoke of these two events together in the same passage, history proves that there is a *breach of time* between them, extending from the first to the second coming.



2. **The Pre-existence, Incarnation and Crucifixion of Messiah:** (Micah 5:1-2). These two verses of prophetic utterance from Micah include clauses that are Messianic. They run together as if they were to be fulfilled all at once. Yet the historical fulfilment of these verses shows that a *breach of time* is involved in their fulfilment. The primary Messianic elements of the prophecy are noted here:

- a. The Ruler in Israel had His goings forth from of old, from everlasting. This is a reference to Messiah's pre-existence, pointing out His eternity of being.
- b. The Ruler would come out of Bethlehem of Judah. The fulfilment of this phase shows it to be Messiah's incarnation. It speaks of His virgin birth (Matthew 2:1-6).
- c. The Ruler or Judge of Israel was to be smitten with a rod upon the cheek. Historically this was fulfilled in the events pertaining to Messiah's crucifixion (Matthew 27:30).

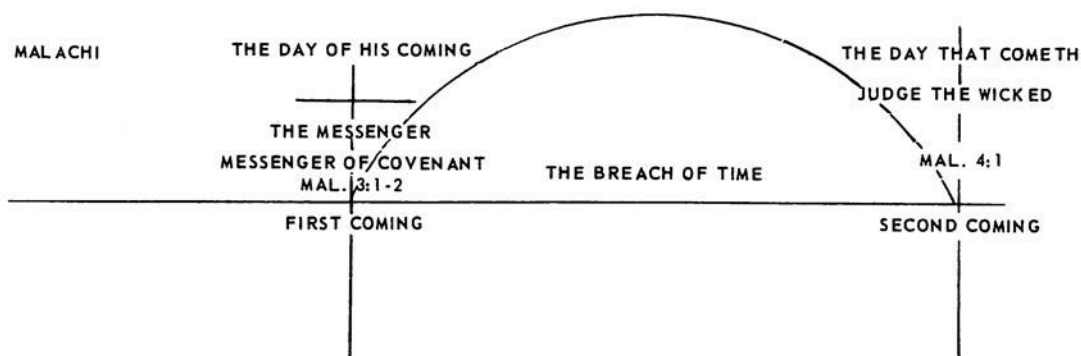
The historical fulfilment of these clauses indicates a breach of time in their realization.



3. **The Day of the Lord:** The prophets spoke of “the Day of the Lord” that was to come. A consideration of any of these prophetic utterances, in the light of historical fulfilment, clearly shows that “the Day of the Lord,” with its surrounding events, was used to refer to both the first and second comings of Christ. Nearly 2000 years have elapsed between these two comings, thus constituting a *breach of time*.

- a. Malachi 3:1-2 speaks of the Messiah’s first coming as the Messenger of the Covenant, preceded by the ministry of John the Baptist (see also Mark 1:2). It is spoken of as “The Day of His coming.”
- b. Malachi 4:1 speaks of Messiah’s second coming. This is also spoken of as “the day that cometh.” It is a time of complete judgment upon the wicked.

Thus, between Malachi 3:1-2 and Malachi 4:1, there is an intervening Messianic era — a *breach of time* between the first and second comings of the Lord.

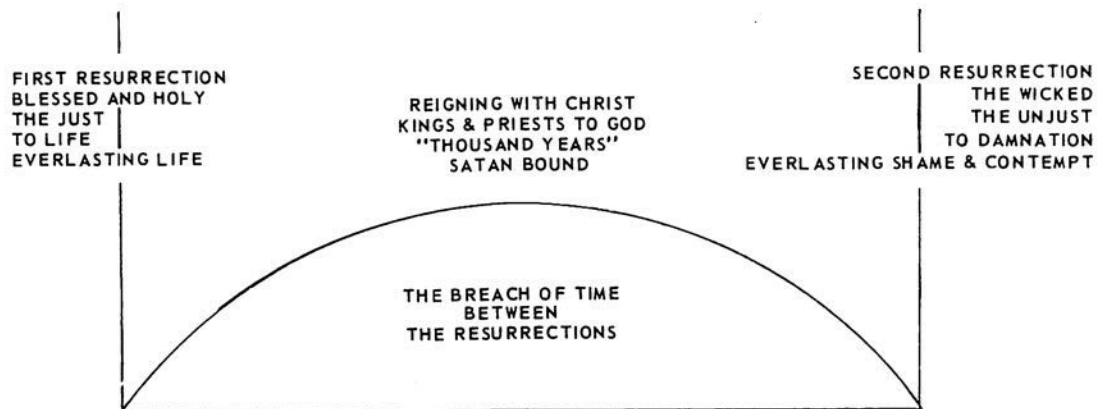


4. **The Two Resurrections:** There are several verses in Scripture which speak of the resurrection, both of the righteous and the wicked.
- a. Daniel 12:2 Some shall awake to everlasting life.
Some shall awake to everlasting shame and contempt.
 - b. John 5:29 The resurrection of life.
The resurrection of damnation.
 - c. Acts 24:15 A resurrection of the just. A resurrection of the unjust.
- By referring to Revelation 20:5, 6, we discover that there are two resurrections:

The first resurrection — for the blessed and holy.

The second resurrection — for the rest of the dead.

This passage also explains that there is a “thousand years” between the first and second resurrection. Thus, there is a *breach of time* between the resurrections of the righteous and of the wicked. Though all the verses above speak of the resurrection of the just and the unjust, there is implied in them a *breach of time*, as is clearly stated in Revelation.



NOTE: Those who interpret the first resurrection to be spiritual and the second to be bodily, state that the “thousand years” between is symbolic of the period of time between the two advents of Christ. Therefore there is a *breach of time* between the resurrections, regardless how these two resurrections are interpreted.

D. Summation of Breach Revelation: That which is revealed in Scripture concerning the many breaches of time and promise only further substantiates and illustrates the fact that God both transcends and controls time. The breaches of time are not to be viewed as having caused the time clock of God’s eternal purpose to stop running. Man’s failures, as illustrated in the breaches of promise, did not alter God’s scheduled purposes. Though it *was* time lost for man, it *was not* time lost for God. His purpose and promises are sure and so also is their fulfilment. In that God is eternal and has all of time laid out before Him, He was able to write concerning the various breaches of time and promise in history and prophecy. This He did skillfully, scattering the clues to many of these breaches throughout Scripture.

Thus, the *literary method of breach revelation* used in writing Scripture gives rise to the *breach principle* of interpreting Scripture.

III. QUALIFICATION

A. The first and most difficult step in using this principle is determining whether the verse or passage under consideration is in any way related to a breach.

B. If a breach is intimated, the interpreter must correctly discern the true nature of the breach, as well as its cause and boundaries.

C. There must be a clear distinction between breaches of promise and breaches of time in prophetic utterance. The breaches of promise are caused by unbelief, while the breaches of time are caused by the prophet’s viewing separated events as one.

D. Due to the limited relevance of this principle to Scripture, the interpreter must be cautious in seeking to apply it.

E. Obviously, this principle must be used in harmony with all others.

IV. DEMONSTRATION

Romans 11:25 "... that blindness in part has happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in."

It becomes apparent from even a superficial reading of this verse that there is a breach of sight involved. In other words, there is a period of time in which Israel is in a state of blindness. This breach of time is to last *until* the "fullness of the Gentiles be come in."

Jesus Christ came as the promised Messiah to the chosen nation of Israel, confirming the promises made to the fathers. However, according to the prophecy of Isaiah, the nation as a whole had ears and could not hear, eyes and could not see, and a heart that could not perceive (Isaiah 6:9, 10). Through the spiritual blindness of their unbelief they could not see Jesus as their promised Messiah (Matthew 13:14, 15; Acts 28:25-27).

There was "a remnant according to the election of grace . . . but the rest were blinded" (Romans 11:5, 7). This state of spiritual blindness was to continue over a period of time, during which the Gentiles were to come into blessing through the Messiah. The context of this verse is dealing with the symbolism of the olive tree. The natural branches, Israel, were broken off through unbelief. The wild branches, the Gentiles, are grafted in through faith (Romans 11:19, 20). The only way that national Israel can be grafted back into the olive tree is if they do not remain in unbelief (Romans 11:23). The verse under consideration points out that this state of blind unbelief is to continue over a breach of time, during which the full number of the Gentiles will come in. It implies that there will come a time when the blindness shall be lifted and "all Israel shall be saved" (Romans 11:26).

Although the coming of the Gentiles is a breach in God's dealing with Israel, it is not of secondary importance to God. The Church age is *not* a parenthesis in the ultimate purpose of God, but rather is a parenthesis in national Israel's faith in their Messiah. The Church, composed of Jew and Gentile, is the eternal purpose of God in Christ (Ephesians 3:10, 11).

