

# Promise of the Messiah and the Millennial Kingdom

Prophecies about our future exist in both the Old and New Testaments. The book of Revelation in the New Testament paints a timeline that is Jewish in focus starting with the tribulation, continuing to the battle of Armageddon, the second coming of Christ resulting in victory over the armies of the world, and then the setting up of the millennial kingdom. Jesus, Himself, also describes the same basic timeline in Matthew 24-25 and gives us some additional details.

The same timeline is found in the books of Joel, Daniel, and Zechariah in the Old Testament. The book of Zechariah is like the Revelation of the Old Testament. Zechariah 11-14 describes the antichrist, the tribulation, the battle of Armageddon, the

second coming of Christ, and the millennial kingdom. Collectively, the major and minor prophets give us important information about the tribulation, the second coming of Christ, and the millennium! They give us wonderful glimpses of the

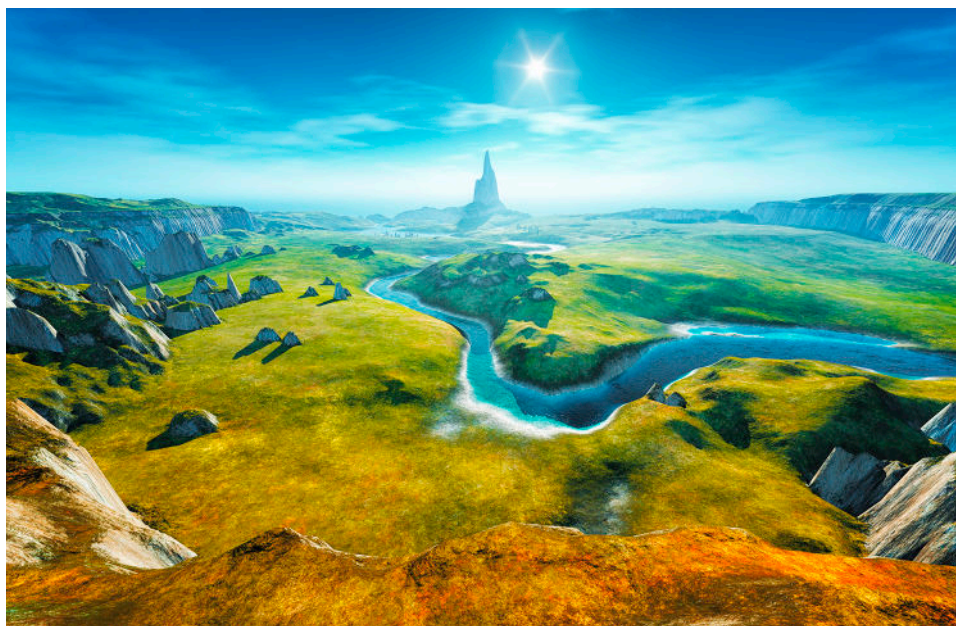
future kingdom because Yahweh repeatedly warned Israel about pending judgment due to their rebellion, and then he comforted the believing remnant with promises that the Messiah and the kingdom were coming. Israel has a glorious future.

Sadly, the major prophets are sometimes ignored, but those who do miss the many assurances that Yahweh has given to believers of the coming Messiah and His kingdom.

Just recently, we have been discovering some of those glorious promises in our studies of the book of Ezekiel. Since some of these prophecies have not yet occurred, today we have the joy of watching for the fulfillment of those prophecies about Israel.

**PROPHECY OF THE NEW COVENANT.** In our study in Ezekiel 11:19-20, we learned that Yahweh promised to give Israel a new heart someday. They would no longer have a heart of stone but a heart of flesh. Jeremiah 31:31-34 records this promise. It says,

Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah." Jeremiah 31:31 (NASB)



Then verses 33-34 continue the promise,

"But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,"

declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. "They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the LORD, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more." Jeremiah 31:33-34 (NASB)

Later in Ezekiel 36:25-27 the same promise was recorded. This promise was repeated during the Last Supper when Jesus used the cup symbolic of the new covenant in His blood (Luke 22:20). Hebrews 8:7-13 quotes Jeremiah 31:31-34 and calls it a new covenant. Then Hebrews chapters 9 and 10 say that Jesus instituted the new covenant when He died on the cross. The evidence of the new covenant occurred when the Holy Spirit spoke through the apostles on the day of Pentecost. It is being fulfilled now in every individual believer.

But the full impact of the new covenant on Israel has not yet been fulfilled. That will not happen until the second coming of Christ when He comes in victory at the battle of Armageddon (Zechariah 12:10-11; Romans 11:16-27). Then all of

Israel that is still alive at His coming will see Him in the air, will believe in Him, repent, and mourn.

In our study of Ezekiel 16:60-63, the promise of the new covenant was echoed. Yahweh said He will remember the new covenant. When He has forgiven Israel, then the chosen remnant will remember their evil ways, humble themselves, and be ashamed. Then He will establish His covenant; that is, the Messiah will establish His kingdom. Verse 63 says,

*“So that you may remember and be ashamed and never open your mouth anymore because of your humiliation, when I have forgiven you for all that you have done,” the Lord GOD declares. Ezekiel 16:63 (NASB)*

The fulfillment of the New Covenant is already occurring as promised. It had to occur so that Israel would enjoy their

Messiah and His millennial kingdom. They must repent and believe in Christ so that they can enter the millennial kingdom. For more information about this point, read the study, “The Judgment of the Nations — Sheep and Goat judgment.”

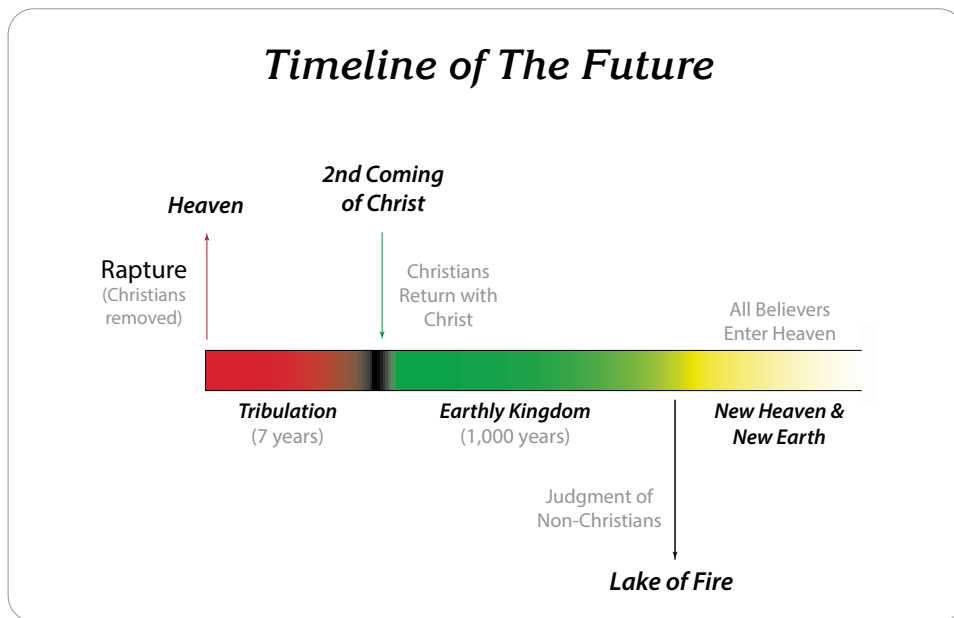
**PROBLEM WITH THE MESSIANIC LINE.** That was the background for our study now in Ezekiel 17:22-24. Our study is another prophecy that reveals more blessings of the new covenant for all the saints. The blessing to which I refer is that every believer down through the ages will enjoy the Messiah and

His millennial kingdom that was promised to King David. The original prophecy is recorded in 2 Samuel 7:16-17. Ezekiel 17:22 says,

*Thus says the Lord GOD, “I will also take a sprig from the lofty top of the cedar and set it out; I will pluck*

*from the topmost of its young twigs a tender one and I will plant it on a high and lofty mountain. Ezekiel 17:22 (NASB)*

In order to understand this verse, we must remember some details from our last study which was in Ezekiel 17:1-21. There we discovered that Ezekiel 17 is a parable about two great eagles and a vine. The two eagles were two superpowers that existed at the time the prophecy was written (about 593 – 588 B.C.) The two eagles were the Babylonian and Egyptian empires. The vine was King Zedekiah. The interpretation of the parable can be found in verses 11-21. In verse 12 of the interpretation, we are told that King Nebuchadnezzar of the Babylonian empire captured and removed the reigning king and his princes from Jerusalem to Babylon. Then in verse 13 we are told that another member of the royal family was made king. Verse 15 adds that this puppet king later rebelled against



King Nebuchadnezzar. That gives us enough information to identify the names of these kings.

We discovered that the second king was King Zedekiah. He was the puppet king who was supposed to maintain control of the city for King Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 24:18-25:7; 2 Chronicles 36:10-14). That helped us to identify the first king, who was taken to Babylon. He was King Jehoiachin (2 Kings 24:15-17; 2 Chronicles 36:9-11). This means that none of King Jehoiachin's sons sat on his throne. In fact, the prophet Jeremiah had prophesied that this would occur in Jeremiah 22:24-30. In that passage an alternate name is used for Jehoiachin. It is Coniah. In verse 30, the prophet Jeremiah announced that Yahweh had decreed that none of King Jehoiachin's sons would reign on his throne because he had been so wicked. Therefore, the prophet called him "childless."

Now before we return to our passage beginning with verse 22, we need to discuss three important facts that occurred when King Jehoiachin was removed as king. First, 2 Kings 24:8 tells us that he was only eighteen when he became king and then reigned only for three months. He was very young.

Another important fact that occurred when King Jehoiachin was taken to Babylon was that he was the last king to sit on King David's throne. Archaeological evidence has been discovered in the Weidmer clay tablets near the Ishtar Gate in Babylon that states the people of Judah considered him to be the last king. They probably thought that due to his youth, King Jehoiachin had not yet fathered a male child. That is, he did not have any heirs to the throne at the time of the Babylonian invasion and deportation.

That leads us to the third fact which is that the people correctly understood this to mean there was a break in the messianic line. If there is no descendant in the messianic line, then no man can qualify as the Messiah. Clearly King Jehoiachin had not been the Messiah. So, the parable in Ezekiel 17 introduced a major problem when it said that King Jehoiachin would be taken captive to Babylon. So, what about the future Messiah? Would there ever be one? Furthermore, Yahweh had caused this situation. What would Yahweh do to solve this problem that He created? That is the question this parable answers. This parable is very important, but the conclusion is even more important. How would Yahweh solve the problem

of no heir in the messianic line? King Jehoiachin was the last king in David's line to sit on David's throne, even to this very day!

**PROPHECY OF THE MESSIAH AND HIS KINGDOM.** Now we are ready to return to Ezekiel 17:22. This verse and the next two verses reveal Yahweh's promise that there is not a problem with the messianic line. Here is verse 22 once again,

*Thus says the Lord GOD, "I will also take a sprig from the lofty top of the cedar and set it out; I will pluck from the topmost of its young twigs a tender one and I will plant it on a high and lofty mountain. Ezekiel 17:22 (NASB)*

The first part of this verse reminds us of the first eagle in verses 3-4 which plucked off the topmost of young twigs from the top of a cedar tree. But Yahweh is not an eagle. Yet, He used parts of the parable to give us this important prophecy. Notice that in the NASB, the word "sprig" is in italics. That means it is not in the Hebrew text. That means the passage should just read as, "I will take from the high top of the cedar and set it out," "pluck from the topmost of its young twigs a tender one," and "plant it on a high and lofty mountain."

So, what does the cedar symbolize? Who is the young twig? What is the lofty and high mountain? Then what do these three symbols mean or represent? We have already discovered from the parable that the cedar referred to Jerusalem, but now we need to understand that it also refers to the royal line of kings who reigned in Jerusalem! It referred to the ancestral line of the messiah. That is the symbolic meaning of the cedar tree.

In addition, the Hebrew grammar suggests that the "young twig" that was plucked is a person more important than King Jehoiachin. Next, the high, lofty mountain is explained to us in verse 23 which says,

*On the high mountain of Israel I will plant it, that it may bring forth boughs and bear fruit and become a stately cedar. And birds of every kind will nest under it; they will nest in the shade of its branches. Ezekiel 17:23 (NASB)*

Now we are told the high mountain is in Israel. The city of Jerusalem sat on Mount Zion. Mount Zion is Yahweh's holy and high mountain. Also, in the Old Testament, the word mountain could symbolically refer to a kingdom. A good example is Jeremiah 51:24-25. The passage says,

**“But I will repay Babylon and all the inhabitants of Chaldea for all their evil that they have done in Zion before your eyes,” declares the LORD.**

**“Behold, I am against you, O destroying mountain, Who destroys the whole earth,” declares the LORD,  
“And I will stretch out My hand against you,  
And roll you down from the crags,  
And I will make you a burnt out mountain.  
Jeremiah 51:24-25 (NASB)**

Here the empire of Babylon is symbolized as a mountain twice. Another example is Daniel 2:35, 44. Daniel 2:35 is part of King Nebuchadnezzar's dream, and it says,

**Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. Daniel 2:35 (NASB)**

Then in verse 44 of Daniel 2, we discover the mountain is a kingdom. So, the “young twig” will be from David's line. He will reign in Jerusalem over an empire.

So, who does the “young twig” symbolize? He symbolizes the Messiah. The young twig or branch is another name or title for Messiah (Isaiah 4:2; Jeremiah 23:5; 33:15; Zechariah 3:8; 6:12). For example, Jeremiah 23:5 says,

**“Behold, the days are coming,” declares the LORD,  
“When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch;  
And He will reign as king and act wisely  
And do justice and righteousness in the land.  
Jeremiah 23:5 (NASB)**

The phrase “that it may bring forth boughs and bear fruit and become a stately cedar” means His kingdom will grow and prosper.

The last sentence of verse 23 is, “And birds of every kind will nest under it; they will nest in the shade of its branches.” That is, the Messiah's kingdom would rule over all the peoples of all of the nations. These nations would be blessed. This sentence reminds us of Jesus' parable of the Mustard Seed in Matthew 13:31-32 and Luke 13:18-19. This passage helps us understand His parable. The parable teaches that the kingdom of God will include everyone; but not everyone will be a believer.

Then verse 24 concludes the chapter.

**“All the trees of the field will know that I am the LORD; I bring down the high tree, exalt the low tree, dry up the green tree and make the dry tree flourish. I am the LORD; I have spoken, and I will perform it.” Ezekiel 17:24 (NASB)**

All of the trees of the field includes all of the leaders of the world. They will know that Yahweh is Lord! Yahweh will bring down all of the nations of the world and exalt Jesus Christ as the only king of the world. He will reign from Jerusalem over a worldwide kingdom.

Yahweh ends with, “I am the LORD; I have spoken, and I will perform it.”

This should have been an encouragement to every person in exile and every citizen of Jerusalem. Even though King Jehoiachin did not have any descendants; when he was taken to Babylon and the Messianic line appeared to have been interrupted by Yahweh Himself, they should not fear. Ezekiel 17:22-24 was and is a prophecy that promises the Messiah, who is Jesus Christ, will reign as king over an empire that will encompass the entire world. So, Yahweh said, “I am the LORD; I have spoken, and I will perform it.” We can trust that He knows what he is doing.

**SOLUTION ABOUT THE MESSIANIC LINE.** Before we end, we need to read Matthew 1:11-12. These two verses are from the genealogy of Jesus Christ. They are from Joseph's line to King David.

**Josiah became the father of Jeconiah and his brothers, at the time**



of the deportation to Babylon. After the deportation to Babylon: Jeconiah became the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel. Matthew 1:11-12 (NASB)

Here we are told that Josiah was the grandfather of Jeconiah (1 Chronicles 3:14-16). Matthew skipped Jehoiakim in his genealogy. This was a common occurrence. But the important fact in verses 11-12 for us is to notice the name Jeconiah. That is another name for King Jehoiachin, just as Coniah was another name for the king. The letters in “Coniah” are common to all three names. So, this verse refers to King Jehoiachin at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

Then verse 12 adds this very important point, “Jeconiah became the father of Shealtiel.” So, what does this verse reveal? It reveals that King Jehoiachin did have children after the Babylonian invasion. In fact, 1 Chronicles 3:17-18 reveals he

had seven boys. This means King Jehoiachin was childless only from the perspective that none of his immediate descendants sat on the throne before or after he was taken to Babylon. However, he did later have children. So, Yahweh removed the wicked king and refused to allow any of his descendants to reign on David’s throne. Then Yahweh made sure that the messianic line continued unbroken as Jehoiachin later had seven sons. Matthew 1 records the messianic line is traced to Jesus Christ. So, Ezekiel 17 is a prophecy and a promise. It explains how Yahweh rescued the messianic line from a wicked king. The result was that Jesus is the Messiah and some day He will yet rule over all of the nations of the world.

**CONCLUSION.** Yahweh said, “I am the LORD; I have spoken, and I will perform it.” That is a great encouragement.

## OUTLINE OF EZEKIEL

Author: Ezekiel, son of Buzi  
Date Written: 590 -- 570 B.C.

Glory of God		Destruction of Jerusalem Prophesied				Judgment of Gentile Nations			Restoration of Jerusalem				
1:1	3:27	4:1	7:27	8:1	11:25	12:1	19:14	20:1	24:27	25:1	32:33	33:1	48:35
*	Introduction	1st Cycle Prophecies	2nd Cycle Prophecies	*	3rd Cycle Prophecies	**	4th Cycle Prophecies	***	Prophecies Against Judah's Enemies	****	Promised Land, Millennial Kingdom & Glory of God		
First Vision		2nd Vision		"Word of the Lord" Occurs Predominately In This Section (54 of the 60 times in the book)						38:1 Third Vision			
Ezekiel Called	Certainty of Judgment		Necessity of Judgment		Justification of Judgment		God Cannot Ignore the Sin of Others		God Will Restore Israel, for He Keeps His Promises				
Before the Siege on Jerusalem (593 – 588 B.C.)							During the Siege (588-586 B.C.)			After the Siege (Future)			
<b>Dates of Prophecies While In Chebar, Babylonian Empire (July 593 – March/April 571 B.C.)<sup>†</sup></b>													
593 B.C.	593 B.C.	592 B.C.	592 B.C.	592 B.C.	592 B.C.	591 B.C.	589 B.C.	588 B.C.	588 B.C.	586 B.C.	585 B.C.	585 B.C.	573 B.C.

\*Visions of God with Cherubim.  
 \*\*Prophecy about the Messiah.  
 \*\*\*Prophecy about the fall of Satan.  
 \*\*\*\*Prophecies about Israel's restoration, Valley of Dry Bones, and Battle of Gog and Magog.  
 †Ezekiel 19:1-16 was given in 571 B.C.

