

#### **1.2.4 Biblical Time, Salvation History and the Kingdom of Heaven/God**

Biblical time is centered on the purposes of God in relation to humanity and is communicated through the concepts of “Salvation History” and the “Kingdom of heaven (God)” (Ervin 1984:2-3). The concept of “salvation” existed in the mind of the Triune God of the Bible (represented by the plural Hebrew name for God, *Elohim* in Genesis and alluded to by Old Testament Theophanies/Christophanies, mentions of the “Spirit of God,” and Ps 110; Prov 30:4; and Isa 63:7, 9-10) “before the foundation of the world” (Eph 1:4), or even the creation of Adam and Eve (who were made in the very “image of God,” without sin and considered to be “very good,” versus “good” for the rest of creation—Gen 1:26-31). However, salvation history is set into context and begins immediately after the Original Sin (the Fall) in Genesis 3:15. Here, the promise of the virgin birth of the Messiah, literally translated “her seed” in the Septuagint (Hamilton 1990:199), is found within the curse to the serpent: “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and *her seed*; *He* shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise *him* on the heel” [emphasis added] (Keil and Delitzsch 1949:102; Esses 1974:19-20; Ryrie 1978:12; Gangel and Bramer 2002:44). Thus, the orthodox doctrines of the Trinity and the need and promise of the Messiah (Christ in Greek) are outlined from the beginning of biblical time in Genesis.

Salvation history, in the person of Jesus Christ, is then foreshadowed throughout the entire Old Testament through themes in each book, for example: the seed of the woman in Genesis, the Passover lamb in Exodus, the high priest in Leviticus, etc. Salvation history is then interwoven throughout the entire New Testament and again represented by themes in each book, for example: messiah in Matthew, wonderworker in Mark, Son of Man in Luke, Son of God in John, the Holy Spirit working among men in Acts, etc. (Roberts 1975). Salvation history is also

addressed by God with specific “salvation acts” on behalf of the children of Israel in the Old Testament as follows: the Exodus out of Egypt and through the Red Sea; the protection, provision and leading for forty years in the wilderness; the conquering and resettling in the promised land of Canaan; the deliverance from surrounding nations during the time of the judges and kings; and the post-exilic return and rebuilding of the nation of Israel. Again, salvation history is specifically addressed in the messianic prophecies of the Old Testament prophets, then confirmed and sealed by the New Testament writers, while all the time looking toward the consummation of history and salvation at the *Parousia* or Second Coming/Advent of Jesus Christ.

In Hebrew, the phrase kingdom of heaven is rendered *malkut shamayim*, (Van Gemeren 1997, 2:956-63; 1997, 4:160-6) and in Greek, *basileia ton ouranon* (Zodhiates 1992:325-7). Again in Greek, kingdom of God is rendered, *basileia tou theou* (Lattke 1984:72). The kingdom of heaven is viewed as the spiritual realm or the supernatural realm where God is and rules sovereignly (McDonald 2007:chap. 3). The kingdom of heaven concept is also addressed as *olam habbah*, the age to come, by both Jesus and Paul. This is the antithesis of *olam hazzeh*, this present age (Ladd 1974:364, 68). Both of these concepts were derived from the Old Testament prophets’ understanding of history (as outlined by Section A.4 of the Introduction above). *Olam* can also be translated world or universe. The ancient rabbis spoke of two *olamot* or worlds: this world and the next, the world to come. *Olam habbah* speaks of either the afterlife or life in messianic times (Green 1999:23-4). Jesus spent much of His time on earth teaching about the kingdom of heaven and that the kingdom came through Him (Young 1998:146, 199-202, 207-8, 220-1). The kingdom of heaven (viewed through an eschatological lens) is the kingdom come through Jesus’ First Coming, but not fully yet, until His Second Coming (*Parousia*) – (This is

further amplified by the eschatological Christologies mentioned in section 1.2.2 above; the collection of essays written in *The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus*, edited by Bruce Chilton (1984); the sections on The Kingdom of God in Ladd's *A Theology of the New Testament* (1974); and Geisler's *Systematic Theology, 4 Church/Last Things* (2005)).

In the Old Testament, time is viewed as prophetic and looks forward to the kingdom of heaven being restored by the coming of the Messiah (kingdom coming). In the New Testament, time is viewed as apocalyptic (kingdom initiated by Jesus, but not fully realized until His *Parousia* at the *eschaton*—the end of all things). Apocalyptic time is previewed by Jesus' apocalyptic discourse on the Mount of Olives (Matt 24; Mark 13; Luke 21). However, apocalyptic time did not actually begin until after the completion of the atonement by the resurrection of Jesus (prophetic fulfillment of the Old Testament Messiah and beginning of the kingdom by Jesus). Apocalyptic time also looks forward to the *Parousia* of Jesus and the complete fulfillment of the kingdom of heaven on earth by the millennial reign of the Lord Jesus Christ as outlined by Revelation 11:15; 19:11 – 20:4 (Ervin 1984:1-3). Therefore, it follows that when exegeting eschatological portions of Scripture, one must determine whether the context is prophetic eschatology or apocalyptic eschatology. The Gospels are set in prophetic eschatological time; whereas, the rest of the New Testament is set in apocalyptic eschatological time (Ervin 2002:5).

In this thesis, the concept of *chronos* time will be used to mean historical-chronological-prophetic time that began with the creation of the sun, moon, and stars on the fourth day in Genesis 1:14-19 and will end with the creation of a new heaven and new earth in Revelation 21-22. Therefore, the year AD 2009 (or CE) corresponds to the year 5769 per the Jewish calendar; to the year 6013 per the best combined estimate from the Julian, Gregorian and Bishop Ussher's

calendars (Butt 2006:19; *World Book* 2001, 1:31; 3:29; *Hebrew Date Converter* 2007); and to the year 6009-6010 per Michael Rood's newly discovered *Astronomically and Agriculturally Corrected Biblical Hebrew Calendar* (2007). Biblical time (both prophetic and apocalyptic eschatological), in conjunction with the concepts of salvation history and the kingdom of God (or the age to come), will be viewed as *kairos* time and brought into focus with how they intersect with and in *chronos* time.