

1.3 OLD TESTAMENT ESCHATOLOGICAL WRITINGS

The foundation for the Church proclaiming an Eschatological Gospel of the kingdom of heaven/God was found in the Old Testament concepts of biblical time and salvation history (including a Triune God and promise of a Messiah—see Section 1.2.4) and was patterned after the “Creation Week,” including the seventh day of rest established by God and which later became known to the Israelites as the “Sabbath” (Dumbrell 1994:15-23). Factoring in the concept that a day with the Lord is literally one thousand years (Ps 90:4; 2 Pet 3:8), many of the Early Church Fathers believed that humanity’s lease on earth was for six thousand years. This was to be followed by God’s sabbath rest of one thousand years or the Millennium of Revelation 20 (*The Letter of Barnabas* 15:4-5; *The Writings of St. Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho*:81; *The Extant Writings of Julius Africanus* 3:18:4; *Instructions of Commodianus*:35; Hippolytus in Ladd 1956:30-1; Lactantius in *The Divine Institutes* 7:14, 25).

This Eschatological Gospel concept was confirmed throughout the Old Testament by the covenants God made with Adam, Noah, Shem (Semites), Abraham (Hebrews), and Moses (and the Israelites). It was also confirmed by Theophanies or Christophanies (appearances of God) as follows: to Abraham when he arrived in Canaan for the first time in Genesis 12:7, to establish covenant with him in Genesis 17, and in human form as one of the three men appearing to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre in Genesis 18; to Isaac to confirm his father Abraham’s covenant in Genesis 26; to Jacob in a dream at the top of a ladder to heaven at Bethel to confirm Abraham’s covenant, as he was going to Haran in Genesis 28:11-22 and again before re-entering Canaan with his family to continue covenant, and while he wrestled with “a man” who dislocated his thigh socket and changed his name to Israel in Genesis 32:24-31.

These appearances of God continued during Moses' time with the following: as "an angel" in the burning bush, when God gave Moses His name—*Yahweh*—in Exodus 3 - 4:17, on Mt. Sinai with Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel in Exodus 24:9-18, in the Tent of Meeting face-to-face in Exodus 33:8-11 and Deuteronomy 34:10, and again by himself atop Mt. Sinai, in a cleft of a rock as *Yahweh*'s glory passed by in Exodus 33:18 - 34:8; as the glory cloud of the Lord by day and fire by night above the Tabernacle during the Israelites' travels through the wilderness in Exodus 16:10; 40:38; Leviticus 9:23; Numbers 9:15-23; 14:10; 16:19, 42; 20:6; and Deuteronomy 31:15-23. This continued, after Moses, with the following: to Joshua as "captain of the host of the Lord" in Joshua 5:13-15; to Gideon as "an angel of the Lord" in Judges 6:11-24; to Solomon in two dreams in 1 Kings 3:5-14 and 9:2-9. This phenomena may also be seen as types of Jesus, as follows: seen in Melchizedek, king of righteousness, king/priest of peace in Genesis 14:18-20, Psalm 110:4, Hebrews 5:6; 6:20 - 7:21; the fourth man in Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace who looked like "the Son of God" in Daniel 3:25; and the "Son of Man" who "came with the clouds of heaven" in the vision of Daniel 7:13.

The seven annual feasts or festivals of Leviticus 23 and Numbers 28 - 29; Passover, Unleavened Bread, Firstfruits, Weeks or Pentecost, Trumpets, Day of Atonement, and Tabernacles or Booths (Deal 1981; Spangler and Tverberg 2009:104-110, 114-124); and the offices of prophet, priest and king throughout the Old Testament also confirm the Eschatological Gospel. Additionally, the Eschatological Gospel was foretold by the Old Testament prophets in the prophecies of the kingdom of heaven/God, the First and Second Advents of the Messiah, and the day of the Lord or judgment. Next, each of these areas of prophecies will be explored in greater detail