

3.3 1500 BC TO THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

During this period of time, according to Griffin, Kirban and David Livingstone, the Chaldean or Babylonian Mysteries false religious cult was expanded and transferred throughout the Middle East and Far East (and to Europe, Africa and South America). Its various pagan forms are identified as follows: Baal and Ishtar/Ashteroth worship in Canaan; Hinduism/Animism, Jainism, Buddhism, and Tantrism in India; sun and idol worship in Egypt; Secular Humanism, Taoism and Confucianism in China; Zoroastrianism in Persia; Kabbalah in Babylon; Mithraism in Asia Minor; and Druidism in the Celtic lands of Britain, Ireland and France (Kirban 1980:51, 55-9, 74-88; Griffin 1993:26; Livingston 2007:15-7, 25-6). This is further outlined chronologically below.

Hinduism dates from as early as 2000 BC (more likely 1500 BC), comes from the Persian word *hind* (a word describing the region around the Indus River in N. India), is used as a “catch-all” term for thousands of religious groups from India, and is broadly characterized by the “Caste System,” the Sanskrit language and two main categories of Hindu texts written; *Sruti* and *Smriti* (Brandon 1970:330; Levinson 1996:81). According to S. G. F. Brandon, the main periods of Hinduism in the Indus Valley were broken down as follows: 2000 – 800 BC (Vedic Period), when Vedic hymns were composed; 800 – 400 BC (Upanisadic Period), with a focus toward monistic and monotheistic (in the sense of one god who appeared in many spiritual forms or *avatars*) beliefs and the genesis of beliefs in karma and the cycle of rebirths or *samsara* (Ellwood 1998: 159); and 400 BC – AD 500 (Classical Period), when the classic, modern and normalized form of Hinduism took shape (1970: 330). Another term used for this loose definition of Hinduism is Animism, which Kirban defines as follows, “*the worship of stones, animals, trees, streams, mountains, and stars. Snakes were considered divine symbols of virile reproductive*

power. Some spirits were considered good; others evil. They believed that only great skill in magic could keep the body from being possessed or tortured” [emphasis added] (1980:80).

The Caste System (or *Varna*, meaning color) of the Hindus consists of the following five social categories: 1) *Brahmin*—the priests or spiritual and intellectual leaders; 2) *Kshatriya*—the rulers and warriors; 3) *Vaisya*—the farmers and merchants; 4) *Sudra*—the laborers and servants; and 5) *Chandala*—the untouchables or outcasts considered outside of the Caste System. The *Sruti* (meaning hearing) texts describe “eternal knowledge as revealed to Hindu seers (*rishis*),” and were passed down by the Brahmin priests and divided into the following four groups: 1) The *Vedas* (written between 1500 and 800 BC) which include hymns and chants to different gods, descriptions of sacrificial rituals, magical spells, incantations, and kingly duties; 2) The *Bramanas* (written after The *Vedas*) which further delineate ritual practices and their mystical meaning; 3) The *Aranyakas* (or “Forest Book”), written for ascetics secluded in the forest and contain “esoteric descriptions of the nature of humanity and the world”; and 4) The *Upanishads* (written around 600BC) which form the philosophical framework of Hinduism, provide the *Vedanta* (culmination of sacred knowledge), on how to achieve “oneness with the universe through self-consciousness.” The *Smriti* texts were written later, and include The Epics, The Code of *Manu* and the *Puranas*. They speak of traditional knowledge through mythological interactions of thousands of deities by providing lessons of life.

Early Vedic Hinduism taught of the celestial gods *Varuna* (creator of the universe), *Mitra* (god of the sun) and *Vishu* (able to change forms/*avatars*, including Lord Krishna). These gods ruled over gods of natural orders on the earth/atmospheric gods, such as *Indra* (thunder god, who waged war) and *Agni* (fire god). Vedic Hinduism also developed a sacrificial system of fire to the gods, spoken words, or *mantras*, meditation, yoga, bathing and washing, ritual observances,

festivals and pilgrimages, and the Brahman-Atman principle of individuals being part of the greater whole or “the self becoming merged into One” (Levinson 1996:83, 85-6, 88). *Even though Hinduism arose before the central core doctrines of Christian orthodoxy were established, it still falls into the realm of heresy based on its contradiction to the Old Testament orthodox concepts of the Trinity and the coming of a Messiah in answer to humanity’s need of one due to its sinful nature resulting from the Fall (addressed by Sections 1.2.4 and 1.3 above). Specifically, Hinduism believes in polytheism and sees no need for a Messiah, atonement, salvation or bodily resurrection (replaced by the cycle of rebirths and oneness with the universe through self-consciousness) [emphasis added].*

Kirban states that beginning as early as 1400 BC and continuing until AD 400, “The Persians, Indians, Romans, and Greeks worshipped the god Mithras. In the age of the Hittites, Mithras was invoked as a god before whom an oath may be sworn. Mithras was a god of friendship and was closely connected with sun worship. . . . There were seven grades of initiation into the Mithraic mysteries, each with a symbolic name . . . Each initiate was bound and beaten to test his courage. He then submitted to a baptism, and with eyes masked would kneel down to the leader, who wears a pointed cap” (1980:53).

According to Livingstone, the more formal development of Mithraism apparently had its origins in the heretical Chaldean Magi cult (who were the Babylonian priests, descended from the Medes) that started in Babylon after the introduction of Zoroastrianism by the Persians in 588 BC. This Magi cult took Zoroastrianism, corrupted it and incorporated Babylonian astrology, magic and Nimrod’s Babylonian Mysteries cult religion with it. Then, they connected with heretical Jews (who were in captivity in Babylon at that time and had not yet purged the pagan influences from their religion) and perverted such Jewish teachings as the messiah, promised

land, chosen race, the lost tribes of Israel, and the Nephilim/Anakim (descendents of the Nephilim remaining in Canaan and identified in Num 13:28, 33 and Deut 9:1-2). This then formed the basis for what is now known as the Kabbalah (Livingstone 2007:7-17). These Kabbalistic beliefs and doctrines were first recorded in written form by the Greek philosophers Pythagoras and Plato and included the following ideas: 1) world domination/totalitarian state to be governed by the “chosen or enlightened people”; 2) the “science that makes men most wise is astrology”; 3) the elimination of marriage and the family; 4) compulsory education by the state; 5) use of eugenics (selective breeding) and infanticide by the state; and 6) the use of deceptive propaganda methods to further their goals. These beliefs were then passed from Plato to Aristotle and from Aristotle to Alexander the Great, who believed himself to be a god with the distinct purpose of conquering, ruling and “Hellenizing” (or passing on the Greek version of this belief system to) the entire known world at the time (Livingstone 2007:19-22).

These Kabbalistic beliefs then formed the basis for the more formal and well-known Mysteries of Mithras or Mithraism (combining Mithras, as the dying god, with Bel and Baal to worship Lucifer as God, with the idea of an “ascent through the seven ‘palaces’ or planets”) that became the most popular cult of the Roman Empire. This Mysteries of Mithras cult was initially isolated to the central and eastern part of Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey), which included Armenia, Cappadocia and Pontus. From this region there were certain bloodlines identified as being connected to the Mithraic bloodline. These bloodlines supposedly went back through the house of Herod, Julius Caesar, the Syrian priest-kings of Baal, the house of Commagene of the Armenians, Alexander the Great, the Scythians and Medes, to the Nephilim/Anakim (or “Aryans”), who supposedly survived the flood on the lost continent of Atlantis and were directly connected to Lucifer’s bloodline.

From this auspicious beginning, Mithraism spread throughout the entire Roman Empire, primarily through the Roman soldiers. As this cult settled in certain regions, it became known by the following different names: Jewish Kabbalah or Merkabah Mysticism from the house of Herod and the Essenes in Palestine, Therapeutae in Alexandria of Egypt, and Gnosticism, the Hellenistic form of this mysticism (Livingstone 2007:8-14, 25-35). *Thus, Mithraism is also considered a heresy based on its denial of almost all the central core doctrinal beliefs of Christian orthodoxy, which were based on the Old Testament concepts of the Trinity, the Messiah and humanity's need for one. Specifically, Mithraism worships Lucifer/Satan as god, denies the deity of the Messiah or the need for atonement or salvation by grace through faith in the Messiah [emphasis added].*

Kirban continues the false religion historical timeline with the following information. Although sun worship began in Babylon, it was popularized in ancient Egypt around 1000 BC. The Babylonians called the sun god Utu, and the Egyptians named him Ra (or Re). Kirban specifies, "The center of worship was at Heliopolis. Pharaohs were known as the 'Son of the Sun.' Sun worship in Egypt gradually spread to the solar cult of Rome." The sun also played a major role in the practice of astrology and interpreting horoscopes. Kirban continues, "Not only did the Egyptians worship the sun, they also worshiped the moon, the bull, the crocodile, the hawk, the cow, the baboon, the goat, and many other animals" (1980:55-6). Sun worship also spread to India. *This became the Egyptian form of Mithraism, and as such is also considered to be heretical [emphasis added].*

In the sixth century BC, the Hindu religious culture in India gave birth to two other founders of cult sects that rejected traditional Hinduism. The first was *Mahavira*, or the Great Hero (599-527 BC), who at the age of thirty left his wife and child and began a period of twelve

years of self-denial to seek self-purification. After this period of extreme asceticism and *ahimsa* (non-injury to other living things), he apparently reached a state of *moksha* (being released from the bonds of rebirth). He then spent the remainder of his life preaching and teaching his beliefs to his followers. His disciples, known as *Jains* (from *jina*, meaning to conquer; the idea of conquering karma and reaching self-liberation) believed him to be the last of a long line of prophets, or “the 24th saviour.”

Jainism is therefore considered to be the “oldest ascetic religious tradition.” It teaches the following: liberation is reached through meditation and self-denial; there are no deities or idol worship, salvation lies in one’s own destiny; all living things have an immortal soul (*jiva*) and should seek to be liberated from matter (*ajiva*); the *jiva* is reincarnated after death but held back from liberation by *karma*; to be free from karma, one must perform the “Five Great Vows”—1) Renounce the killing of all living things, 2) Renounce all vices associated with lies of fear, laughter, anger, and greed, 3) Renounce all stealing, 4) Renounce all sexual pleasures, and 5) Renounce all forms of attachment that cause pleasure/pain, love/hate and encourage others to do so; and the universe is eternal, with no beginning or end (Levinson 1996:99-101). *Jainism is a heretical religion since it is completely atheistic and secularly humanistic. And as a result, it rejects the Old Testament concepts of the Trinity and the deity of the Messiah. Consequently, there remains no need for atonement or salvation by a loving God to restore relationship with His creation, humanity* [emphasis added].

The second sect leader to reject Hinduism in the sixth century BC was *Buddha* (the enlightened one), born as Siddhartha Gautama about 563 BC in modern-day Nepal. At age 29, he gave up his warrior class status to become a wandering ascetic and submitted himself to two Hindu gurus to meditate and reach higher states of being (the path of enlightenment). This did

not work, so he tried severe ascetic practices (reminiscent of Mahavira and the Jains). This did not work either and he almost died. So, he decided to sit under a tree cross-legged, off the road and out of the way, to seek enlightenment again by meditation. There, while lost in meditation, he experienced three temptations and spent the night learning from former life cycles and experiencing the cosmic truth (*dharma*). After this, he became *Buddha* and returned to five ascetics he had been with earlier to teach them about “setting in motion the Wheel of Truth.” They then became members of his *sangha* (monastic order). He spent the remaining forty-five years of his life teaching his followers and training sixty “perfected disciples” (*arhats*), who then spread Buddhism throughout all India.

Buddha's beliefs included the following: belief in many demons and spirits; no belief in a personal world-creator; no belief in an immortal soul, but rather a person being made up of five components (*skandhas*) of body, perceptions, feelings, dispositions, and consciousness; “a personal continuity from life to life through many rebirths (reincarnation)”; to obtain liberation from the rebirth cycle, one must extinguish *tanha* (selfish craving for physical/material pleasure) by understanding *dharma* or “The Four Noble Truths” and following “The Eight-fold Path” with the goal of achieving enlightenment . . . or “reaching *nirvana*” (extinguishment). Reaching *nirvana* breaks the cycle of rebirth, which means the person finally dies and breaks all connection to life (Levinson 1996:25-27, 29-30). *Although being different from Jainism in several fundamental ways, Buddhism remains a heretical cult because of its secular humanistic beliefs and the rejection of the Old Testament concepts of a Triune God, or the need for atonement or salvation by grace through faith provided by a loving God through a fully God/fully man Messiah [emphasis added].*

While all this was happening in India, many of the same secular humanistic beliefs were being espoused in China. According to Brandon, the roots of secular humanism (secularization) were to be found in China from between the sixth to fourth centuries BC, primarily attributed to the founders of two far-eastern humanistic philosophical/religious sects: Kung Fu-tze, better known as Confucius (551-479 BC) and Confucianism; and the legendary/possibly historic figure Lao Tzu (Tze, possibly born in 604 BC), coupled with later writer Chuang Tzu and Taoism (Brandon 1970:568). Kirban defines secular humanism as “. . . an atheistic philosophy which holds that man is capable of self-fulfillment without recourse to God.” This philosophy was transmitted by a “metaphysical book called *I-Ching*, or ‘*Book of Changes*’” as follows:

. . . there was a single cosmic cell containing “ether” (*Ch'i*) which was made to pulsate by a creative force known as *Tao*. Tension set up by this activity eventually spit the cell into opposite and complementary halves. . . . twin ethers which encompassed the universe . . . *Yin* and *Yang*. *Yin* is of the earth, dark, female. *Yang* is of heaven, bright, male. . . . the continuous operation of *Tao* (which they suppose to be a natural law), causes *Yin* and *Yang* to alternate and by this process five “elements” are produced: water, fire, wood, metal, and earth. The Chinese used *I Ching* (*The Book of Changes*) as a manual for telling the future (Kirban 1980:74-5).

Taoism focuses on right actions and good works. Their beliefs are found in the book *Tao Te Ching* and are based on the five principles of *Tao*, relativity, non-action, returning to the ways of the past, and government. Apparently in the second century AD, Chiang Ling from the Szechuan Province claimed to have a revelation from Lao Tzu to implement “his orthodox and sole doctrine of the authority of the covenant.” He then ascended to heaven, became a “Heavenly Master” and founded an organization to follow Lao Tzu’s teaching of Taoism. Specifically, this includes the following: the definition of *Tao* as “the course or way,” although “Taoism points to no particular way”; an “elaborate hierarchy of priest-magicians, both male and female . . . specialists in various branches of Chinese occultism,” who use astrology and acupuncture to function in the role of “medium oracle, sorcerer and physician”; accounts of spirit journeys of the

“Heavenly Masters”; breathing, meditation, incense, sexual activity, and diets (Kirban 1980:76-7; Levinson 1996:245-7). *Taoism is a mixture of an atheistic, secular humanistic philosophy and activist social agenda, with a spiritual component also being addressed. As such, Taoism also rejects the Old Testament concepts of the Trinity, deity of the Messiah and the need for any interaction with a deity for atonement, salvation or anything else* [emphasis added].

Up front, David Levinson poses the question as to whether Confucianism is a “religion or humanistic philosophy” (1996:43). Confucius was an agnostic, who was disenchanted with the government of his time, and at age 51 began traveling and teaching his social and political reform as a “return to the ways of the past.” This included the following: humaneness, peace and justice; studying history to understand heaven; the use of rituals and music from the earlier times to spread virtue; correct performance of social roles; and learning/education to correct human weaknesses. The Five Classic Texts normally attributed to Confucius are: *Shu Ching, Shih Ching, I Ching, Chun Chiu, and Li Chi*. The basic beliefs of Confucianism include the following: “the traditional Chinese view of the universe, the gods and human morality and conduct . . . heaven was approachable for knowledge of the future only by the Emperor . . . and then only to . . . obtain his mandate to rule on earth . . . did not uphold belief in the survival of the soul . . . Man had no special destiny and . . . did not believe in eternal life” (Levinson 1996:43-5). *Confucianism must also be labeled heretical, for its secular humanistic philosophy, polytheism and lack of belief in the immortal soul of humanity; and therefore discounting all of the Old Testament concepts that form the foundation for the central core beliefs of Christian orthodoxy* [emphasis added].

At approximately the same time as Confucianism and Buddhism were getting started in China and India respectively, Levinson addresses another cult religion that started in Iran. About

588 BC, at the age of 30, Zoroaster, a trained priest in Persia (now Iran), claimed to have seen an angel who led him to the Iranian god *Ahura Mazada* and the Five Immortals. After several such revelations, Zoroaster was told to “preach the true religion.” By the age of 42, he had only one convert, his cousin, until he apparently cured King Vistaspah’s horse of paralysis and converted the entire royal household. His religion then quickly spread through Persia all the way to China.

Zoroastrians believe in the following, taken from *The Avesta* (four writings: *Yasna*, *Vispavat*, *Khorde*, and *Videvat* containing prayers and hymns (*gathas*), invocations of celestial lords, daily prayers and ritual purifications): *Ahura Mazada* (Wise Lord) as supreme god and creator; humanity’s struggle with good and evil, symbolized by *Ahura Mazada*’s offspring *Spenta Mainyu* (good) versus *Ahura Mazada* (evil) in conflict; humanity should therefore pursue good with good thoughts, words and deeds with God’s gifts given to them of body, soul and mind; at the end of each person’s life they will be judged on choices made; after the third day of death, the soul leaves the body and is taken by the angel *Sorush* to judgment tribunal (*aka*) and crosses the *Chinvat* Bridge—the righteous go to heaven, the sinful go on till the bridge becomes “razor thin” and they fall off into hell; and four, three thousand year periods of time (12,000 years) for the lease of the earth (Levinson 1996:261-4). *Zoroastrianism also falls into the heretical category, due to its polytheistic views and rejection of the Old Testament concepts of a Triune God and a need for a Messiah for atonement or salvation of humanity* [emphasis added].

According to Brandon, Kirban, and Robert S. Ellwood, the *Druids* (Wise Ones), or “the men of the oak trees” trace their roots back to about 380 BC. Kirban states, “Druids are mentioned by name in some 30 references by Greek and Roman writers between the second century BC and the fourth century AD.” Both Brandon and Robert S. Ellwood recount Julius Caesar specifically speaking of the Druids as overseeing divine and religious matters,

administering both public and private sacrifices as worship to the gods, and meeting annually in Gaul.

The Druid calendar was divided into four parts by ritual feasts: *Beltain* (1 May); *Samuin* (1 November, when the supernatural forces were fighting against humanity); *Imbolc* (1 February); and *Lughnasa* (1 August). The Druids passed on their knowledge by memory versus writing. And like the Brahmins of India, they had different ranks of priests, poets and soothsayers (women could be only soothsayers), and worshipped many tribal gods (each tribe having a father god with more than three hundred god names and sensual goddesses also). They believed in the following: “. . . reincarnation . . . in a purgatorial type of hell where they would purged of their sins, afterward passing on to the happiness of unity with the gods . . . that all men would be saved, but that some must return to earth many times to learn the lessons of human life . . . they worshiped the sun, moon, and stars . . . and the serpent . . . Those desiring to become Druids had to pass through three degrees of the Druidic Mysteries.” Since Druids came out of the Celtic culture, they also “practiced human sacrifice . . . and ritual drownings” (Brandon 1970: 181-2; Kirban 1980:59, 61-3; Ellwood 1998:103-4). *Druidism is also considered to be heretical due to its polytheism (versus the Old Testament concept of the Trinity) and belief in reincarnation as a means of universal salvation (versus the Old Testament concept of the need for a Messiah and atonement/salvation appropriated by grace through faith)* [emphasis added].

Again, as Satan brought this flood of mysterious false religious cults around the world, “God raised up His standard” from the descendents of Shem, Abraham and Israel. While the Israelites were in Egypt, God raised up Moses (from the tribe of Levi and brought up in the house of Pharaoh) and his brother Aaron. God revealed Himself to Moses at the burning bush as *YAHWEH, I AM WHO I AM*, and sent Moses back to Egypt to deliver the Israelites and to keep

His covenantal promise to Abraham. Through Moses and ten divine plagues, *Yahweh* delivered the Israelites from slavery and bondage in Egypt; instituted the Feast of Passover (in honor of the death-angel passing over those with the blood of the lamb on the doorposts); delivered them through the Red Sea and destroyed the entire Egyptian army; and led them by His *shekinah* presence of a pillar of cloud by day and fire by night to Mt. Horeb (or Sinai), where He established the Mosaic Covenant (based on the Ten Commandments) with them and then called them “a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Exod 2-3; 7-14; and 19-20).

The second of three divisions of the Hebrew Scriptures is called the Prophets. This section is divided into the Former Prophets (consisting of the Books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel (1/2 Samuel), and Kings (1/2 Kings)) and the Latter Prophets (consisting of the Books of Amos, Hosea, Micah, Isaiah, Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Obadiah, Joel, Jonah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi) – (LaSor, Hubbard and Bush 1996:vi, 131). Using the power and authority of the Mosaic Covenant, which passed from Moses to Joshua (the same name as Jesus in Hebrew—*Yeshua*), the Israelites entered and conquered the Promised Land of Canaan in complete fulfillment of God’s covenantal promise to Abraham (the Book of Joshua). Again, despite the same objections from the JEDP textual critics, the historical Joshua most probably wrote the book named after him (except for Josh 15:13-17 and 24:29-33, probably penned by Aaron’s son Eleazar and his son Phineas). This all took place around 1400 BC (Ryrie 1978:326; LaSor, Hubbard and Bush 1996:144-7; *The Timechart of Biblical History* 2002:VI). From that point, there was a period of about four hundred years where judges led the Israelites and fought the remnants of the Canaanites left in the land (the Book of Judges, according to the Jews, written by Samuel about 1050-1000 BC—Ryrie 1978:364; LaSor, Hubbard and Bush 1996:161).

Then came the Israelite period of prophets, priests and kings, through whom *Yahweh* carried out His Covenant with the Israelites. This is chronicled by the Books of 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, and 2 Chronicles (1/2 Chronicles are contained in the third division of the Hebrew Scriptures—the Writings). Jewish tradition credits Samuel as the author of 1 and 2 Samuel. However, it is likely others (possibly the Prophets Nathan and Gad mentioned in 1 Chr 29:29) helped him, since his death is recorded in 1 Samuel 25 (Ryrie 1978:409; LaSor, Hubbard and Bush 1996:166). According to Jewish tradition, 1/2 Kings were most probably written by Jeremiah about ca. 550 BC. First and Second Chronicles were traditionally believed to be authored by Ezra between 450 and 425 BC (Ryrie 1978:504, 599).

Through Samuel the prophet and David the king (and *Yahweh's* Covenant with David), *Yahweh* reinstated the Mosaic Covenant with the Israelites through the office of the king of Israel and David's descendents (1 Sam 7-8; 16; 2 Sam 5; 7; 23:1-7; 1 Kgs 2:1-12; 1 Chr 11:1-9; 17; 28-29). This took place around 1000 BC (Ryrie 1978:409; *The Timechart of Biblical History* 2002:VII). *Yahweh* then appeared to Solomon twice to confirm His Covenant with him (1 Kgs 6-9). Solomon (David's son who succeeded him on the throne of Israel) built the glorious Temple (to house the Ark of the Covenant and other sacred items from the Tabernacle that Moses made in the shadow of Mt. Horeb, and which traveled with the Israelites throughout the wilderness for forty years and into the Promised Land with Joshua), which was blessed by the *shekinah*, covenant-confirming, presence of *Yahweh* (1 Kgs 8:10-13 and 2 Chr 5:13 – 6:2). Yet, after all of this and later in his life, Solomon turned away from *Yahweh* and His Covenant and followed the idolatrous false religions of his wives and concubines (from the Babylonian Mysteries). As a result, the kingdom of Israel was split into two kingdoms—Israel or Samaria to the north, and Judah to the south (1 Kgs 11).

Ultimately, both kingdoms turned away from following the Mosaic Covenant of *Yahweh* and were invaded, conquered and taken into exile back to where the idolatrous, satanic and mysterious false religious cults started; Israel to Assyria in 721-2 BC (2 Kgs 17:5-6; Ryrie 1978:580-1; *The Timechart of Biblical History* 2002:VIII) and Judah to Babylon in 586-8 BC (2 Kgs 24:8-16; 2 Chr 36:11-21; Ryrie 1978:1114; *The Timechart of Biblical History* 2002:IX). *Yahweh*; however, was again faithful and promised that Judah would return from Babylon and resettle the land, rebuild the temple, and reestablish His Covenant after a sabbath rest of seventy years (2 Chr 36:21; Jer 25:11). The Book of Jeremiah was written by its namesake between 627 and 585 BC as part of the “Latter Prophets” of the second division of Hebrew Scriptures (Ryrie 1978:1114; LaSor, Hubbard and Bush 1996:329).

The apocalyptic Book of Daniel, as part of the third division of the Hebrew Scriptures (the Writings), chronicles Judah’s exile in Babylon and the prophetic visions given to Daniel about the future of Israel as a nation (Dan 9 and the seventy weeks of years, 70 x 7, or 490 years, confirmed and expanded by Dan 12). *Yahweh* also gave Daniel visions regarding the successive Gentile world powers that were to rule over the future land of Israel in Daniel 2, from Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of a multi-metal/clay statue (representing Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, and a future ten-nation Arab confederacy rising out of the confines of the Old Roman Empire in the end-time, confirmed and expanded by Dan 7, 8, 10-11). See Section 1.3.2 above for more details on these prophecies. Although there is much controversy as to whether Daniel himself wrote the book named after him in the sixth century BC, or a “pseudo-Daniel” wrote it in the second century BC, traditionally the best consensus leans towards Daniel writing it himself around 537 BC (Ryrie 1978:1305; LaSor, Hubbard and Bush 1996:574).

The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah chronicle the Jews' (new name for the Israelites) return to the Promised Land to rebuild the Temple (538-516 BC) and the city of Jerusalem (458-ca. 420 BC). Though Ezra, Nehemiah and Chronicles were originally combined to form one book in the Writings (third division of Hebrew Scriptures), they were separated later to recognize the respective authors: Ezra, by Ezra from 456-444 BC; 1/2 Chronicles, by Ezra from 450-425 BC; and Nehemiah, by Nehemiah from 445-425 BC (Ryrie 1978:599, 693, 710; LaSor, Hubbard and Bush 1996:552, 557-60). The Jews' return to Canaan began with the decree of King Cyrus of Persia in 538 BC to Ezra to rebuild the Temple (2 Chr 36:22-3; Ezra 1—Ryrie 1978:692-3) and was completed by the decree of King Artaxerxes in 444-5 BC to Nehemiah to rebuild Jerusalem (Neh 2:1-9—Ryrie 1978:712).

After the Book of Malachi (translated, “my messenger,” the last book of the English Old Testament and contemporary with Chronicles, the last book of the Hebrew Scriptures) was written, between 450-400 BC (Ryrie 1978:1430, or 397 BC according to *The Timechart of Biblical History* 2002:IX), came the four hundred silent years (or Intertestamental Period) leading up to the birth of Jesus Christ the Messiah (*Yeshua HaMashiach*)—prophesied to occur during the fourth Gentile kingdom (the Roman Empire). Interestingly enough, the last prophecies of the Old Testament concerning the coming of the Eschatological Gospel in the person of the Messiah are contained in Malachi 3:1-2 and 4:5-6. These prophecies speak of both comings of the Messiah, as follows: *Yahweh* will send “. . . My messenger and he will clear the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple . . .” speaking of the First Advent of Jesus Christ, with John the Baptist coming before Him (c.f. Isa 40:3); and *Yahweh* will “. . . send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord”

speaking of one of the two witnesses of Revelation 11:3-12, preceding the *Parousia* of Jesus Christ at the consummation of the Eschatological Gospel.