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## **Christ the Redeemer: The Jubilee of the Jubilees**

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### **ABSTRACT**

According to the Bible, the year of Jubilee is the seventh year of the seven-year agricultural cycle mandated by the Torah for the land of Israel. It is a time in which the themes of personal liberty, restitution of property, and rest for the land, are dominant. In Luke 4, and quoting Prophet Isaiah, Jesus claimed that he has been sent to proclaim release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, and to set free those who are oppressed. This research article adopts a historical and mathematical approach to show the relationship between the meaning and concept of the Jubilee and the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. It shows that Jesus Christ is, indeed, the Jubilee of the Jubilees, or the ultimate Jubilee, who was sent to set free, once for all, those who have been enslaved. Calculations indicate that exactly 50 Jubilees have passed since God's flood of judgement to God's final redemption of mankind by the atoning cross of Jesus Christ. Moreover, the article shows that those 50 Jubilees can be further divided into five equal Eras, of exactly ten jubilees each, i.e. 490 years or 70 weeks, a fact that is alluded to in Daniel 9:24.

**Keywords:** Jubilee; Jesus Christ; Flood of Judgement; Bible History.

### **INTRODUCTION**

According to Leviticus 25: 8-55, the main purpose of the Jubilee was to gain freedom from slavery and debts. This concept was applied in three ways: a Sabbath for the land, a Sabbath for the redemption of property, and a Sabbath for the redemption of slaves.

So, in the Jubilee Year, those enslaved because of debts are freed, lands lost because of debt are returned, and community torn by inequality is restored.

In Church history, Pope Boniface VIII announced in the year 1300 a Jubilee for the forgiveness of sins for those who met the necessary conditions (Barone, 2000). Many Biblical interpreters have called the Church to proclaim a Jubilee as well (Ringe, 1985; Janzen, 1994; Ucko, 1997; Busby, 2007). The idea of Jubilee 2000 was articulated by Martin Dent, a retired lecturer in politics at the University of Keele, England, with his friend William Peters. They linked the Jubilee to a debt relief program and founded the Jubilee 2000 campaign in the early 1990s (Peters, 2010). The theological rationale for debt forgiveness in Jubilee 2000 states that “Jubilee points to a year of grace whereby relations between human beings are restored and a new beginning established.” So, Jubilee 2000 aimed at wiping out \$90bn of debt owed by the poorest nations. Also, Yoder argues that the Jubilee was central in Jesus’ gospel (Yoder, 1994, p. 68-70). Economic freedom, however, could not be separated from another important type of freedom, the freedom to live at peace with God and his people. This research paper argues that Jesus’ redemption was the ultimate and perfect fulfilment of the Jubilee of Jubilees proclaimed by God in Isaiah 61. This is why Jesus read this in Luke 4 *“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has appointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed, and proclaim the favourable year of the Lord.”*

One has to read into this Jubilee far more than economic and political freedom. It is the deliverance to those who are captives to Satan and sin. No deliverance is expected from sin except by Jesus, who saves his people from their sins, redeems them from Satan, and leads the captives out of captivity. The liberty that Jesus attains for those captives is the real and eternal liberty, as he stated “If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed” (John 8:36). It is the freedom after which there can be no more slavery. Precise calculations indicate that exactly fifty Jubilees have passed since God’s judgement by the flood on mankind to the redemption attained by Jesus Christ on the cross. Moreover, this research shows that those fifty Jubilees can be further divided into five equal periods, each of them equals exactly ten Jubilees i.e. 490 years or seventy weeks.

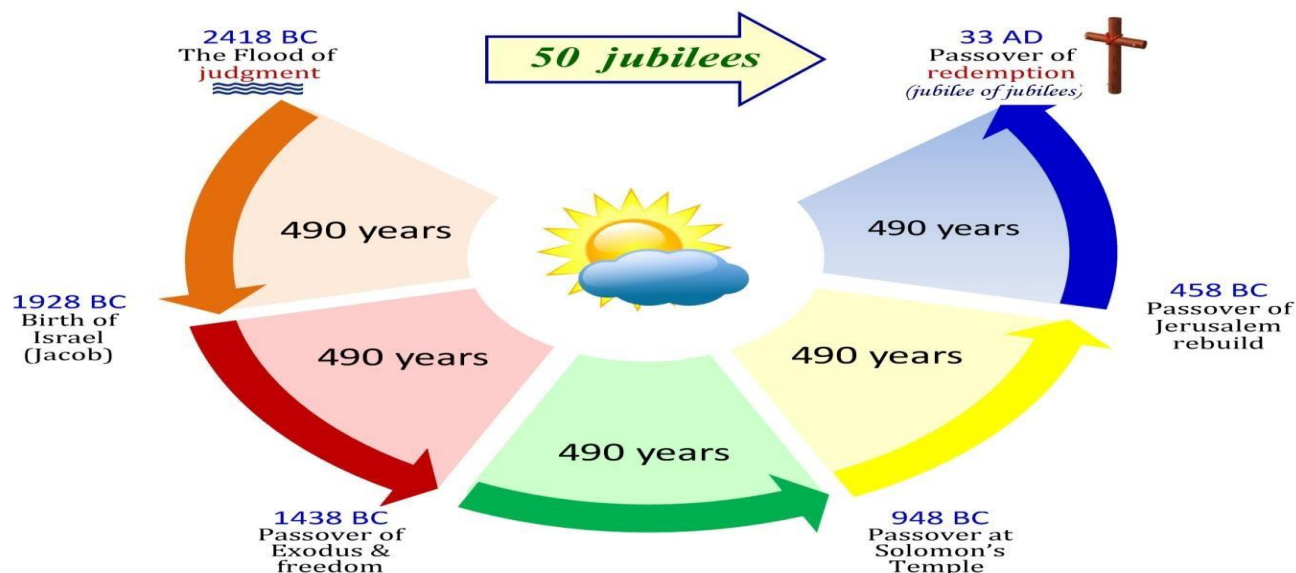
The precision of the dates and calculations shown in this article points to a God who is mighty in his plans for the redemption of mankind. It also testifies for the authenticity and historical and theological correctness of the Bible, as well as to the deity of the one who was sent to proclaim out loud that in him God has fulfilled his ultimate purpose in the ages, which he has accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord (Ephesians 3: 11).

Bible verses quoted in this article are taken from Authorized Version, **AV**.

### **FIVE EQUAL HISTORICAL ERAS, EACH IS EQUIVALENT TO TEN JUBILEES**

We read in Leviticus 25: 8 -10: “....And you shall count seven weeks of years, seven times seven years, so that the time of the seven weeks of years shall be to you forty-nine years. Then you shall send abroad the loud trumpet on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement, you shall send abroad the trumpet throughout all your land. And you shall sanctify the fiftieth year, and proclaim a release upon the land to all its inhabitants; it shall be a jubilee for you when each of you shall return to his property”.

It is noticed that the Jubilee year, i.e. the fiftieth year is, at the same time, the first year of the next season. Thus, the jubilee cycles are comprised of 49 years only, no more. In fact, precise calculations indicate that the great redemption Jesus achieved on the cross coincides exactly with the time of the fiftieth jubilee, as will be clearly shown later. Therefore, Jesus can be rightfully called “The Jubilee of the Jubilees”, hence the title of this research paper. Moreover, these fifty jubilees can be further divided into five equal Eras, each of 490 years long, i.e. ten jubilees. These Eras are illustrated in Figure 1, together with the starting and ending dates of each. This article investigates each of these five Eras in terms of their historical and theological significance.



**Figure 1: An Illustration of the Starting and End Dates of the Five Eras**

### **THE FIRST ERA OF 490 YEARS, STARTING AT THE FLOOD OF JUDGEMENT AND ENDING AT THE BIRTH OF JACOB**

The first era to be considered in this research article extends from the time of God’s flood of judgement on mankind during Noah’s time to the birth of Jacob, whose name was later changed to Israel (Genesis 32:28). According to Genesis 11:10-26, there are nine generations recorded from the flood to the birth of Abram. Those nine generations are, respectively, Arphaxad, Shelah, Eber, Peleg, Reu, Serug, Nahor, Terah, and Abram. As for the dating of God’s flood of judgement during Noah’s time, it should be stated that literature doesn’t provide an exact date for the event unless back calculations are performed. The first date figure, however, was given by the Irish bishop James Ussher who considered that the creation of mankind dates back to BC 4004, and made some back calculations to arrive at the figure BC 2348 for the flood (Ford, 2007). In his calculations, however, Ussher ignored Cainan, Shelah’s father, mentioned in Luke 3:36. He also assumed that Terah birthed Abram when he was 130 years of age, and that the Israelites slavery in Egypt lasted for only 215 years. Those two issues are thoroughly investigated in this research article.

Science of archaeology, however, has confirmed that the biblical dimensions of the Ark, recorded in Genesis 6:14-16, match those of the ark found on the top of Mount Ararat

in Turkey. Using Carbon 14 to date samples of the wood used to build the ark, it has been established that these woods date back to about BC 2780 (Weston, 2019; Abell, 2019; Kurczy, 2010; Pettit, 2019). With a reasonable estimate for the age of the wood used to build the ark, and taking into account that the flood came one hundred years after Noah started building the ark (Genesis 5:32, 6:6), an estimate of BC 2418 seems reasonable for the event. On the other hand, a biological study of the Y-Chromosome points clearly to the fact that all existing human beings have descended from the post-flood Noah, who, according to the study, existed between BC 2400 and BC 2500, a dating that is in agreement with the figure used in this research article (Tomkins, 2019).

### **SETTLING THE DISPUTE REGARDING THE HISTORICITY OF “CAINAN”**

Luke, the evangelist and historian, however, inserted the name Cainan between *Arphaxad* and *Shelah*, in his record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ found in the gospel that carries his name (Luke 3:36). In the introduction to his Gospel, led by the Holy Spirit, Luke confirms the authenticity of his record: “Inasmuch as many attempted setting a narrative about the matters that are fully assured among us, just as from the beginning delivered to us by eye-witnesses and ministers of the word, it seemed good also to me, having followed up accurately all things from the first, to write to you...” (Luke 1:1-3).

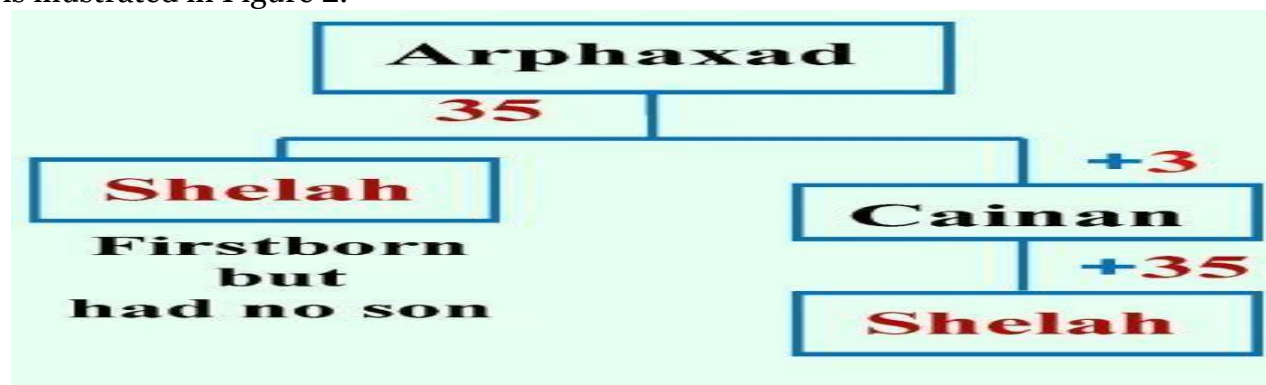
The name Cainan is also found in the Septuagint and in several other historical sources. Moreover, Cannan's historicity is confirmed by many of church fathers (Smith, 2018), as well as the Book of Jubilees, one of the Qumran manuscripts that date back to 160 BC. The Book of Jubilees states that *Cainan* was the first to learn occultism, a fact that may explain the absence of any mention to his name in the Hebrew text (Jacobus, 2009 and Charles, 2018). The Latin Alexandrine Chronicle states that “those who live east of the Samaritans were derived from Cainan”. This is also confirmed by George Smith, who stated that: “It is remarkable that, notwithstanding the omission of the name Cainan from the Hebrew text, and the consequent general rejection of him by historians, there are more traditions preserved of him than of his son Shelah. It is reported that Cainan was the first after the flood to invent astronomy and that his sons made a god of him, and worshiped his image after his death. The founding of the city of Harran in Mesopotamia is also attributed to him; which it is pretended is so called from a son he had of that name” (Smith, 1847).

On the other hand, the lack of mention of the name *Cainan* in the Hebrew text could historically be justified on the ground of Jewish traditions. As it was customary in those traditions to omit some names from the lists of genealogies. In the Gospel that carries his name, evangelist Matthew dropped names of three kings in Jesus' genealogy (Matthew 1). Jacob followed a similar tradition when he adopted Joseph's two sons to himself: “Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine, as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine. But the offspring born to you after them shall be yours” (Genesis 48:5). Some age discrepancies are also noticed in Genesis 11 between the Hebrew and the Septuagint texts. Up to Genesis 11:11, both Hebrew and Septuagint texts are in harmony in regard to both genealogy and ages. For example, both texts record that Shem was a hundred years old when he birthed Arphaxad, an event that took place two years after the flood. Also, both texts agree that Shem lived five hundred years after Arphaxad's birth. It was the disappearance of the name Cainan in the Hebrew text in Genesis 11:12, however, that

perplexed the translators, and that was their motive to review other sources in an attempt to reconcile dates. In ancient times, however, numbers were written in symbolic form that could be interpreted in more than one way. Undoubtedly, the Hebrew text alone is the original and inspired text to rely upon. However, “Shelah” was the name of both Arphaxad’s son as well as his grandson. According to Genesis 11:13 in the Hebrew text, Arphaxad lived for 403 years after he birthed Shelah. While, according to the Septuagint, he lived for 400 years only after he birthed Cainan. If we accept both texts, we must say that Arphaxad had birthed his eldest son Shelah, and then, three years later he birthed his second son that he named Cainan. Thus, both Shelah and Cainan were sons of Arphaxad.

According to the Book of Jubilees, Cainan married Melka, daughter of Madai son of Japheth. Melka birthed a child for Cainan that he also named “Shelah”, maybe in an attempt to replace his uncle who died without a child. No doubt, Arphaxad regarded Shelah, his grandson, as a replacement for Shelah his eldest son, who died without a child and, in doing so, was walking in the steps of Jacob when he adopted Joseph’s two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh.

In fact, the Book of Jubilees records that Cainan gave his son the name “Shelah” for he said, “Truly, I am sent” (Jubilees 8:5). We find resemblance in this with Enoch who named his son “Metushelah” to declare prophetically that his death would be accompanied by a flood (Jude 14). The name “Met-u-shelah” is composed of three parts: the first is “Met” which means “death”. The second is “U” which means “then”. The third is “Shelah” which means “who is sent for extension”. So, the name Metushelah means “death is followed by someone sent for extension”, indicating that death resulted from the flood would not be the end of life on earth, but it will be followed by someone sent for life extension. It is quite possible that Arphaxad, being the first to be born after the flood (Genesis 10:11), understood Enoch's prophecy and, accordingly, named his eldest son “Shelah”, to declare that he is sent for extension of life since that is the meaning of his name. Shelah, however, died without a child. So, Arphaxad placed his hope in his second son “Cainan” who was born 3 years after Shelah. And when Cainan got a son, he also named him “Shelah” to declare that he would fulfil Enoch’s prophecy by giving offspring instead of his uncle who had died without offspring. Specifically, the word ‘Shelah’ is usually used in the bible to mean “buds extension” and it refers to the extension and growth of plants (Jeremiah 17:8, Song of Songs 4:13, and Isaiah 31:5). This whole scenario is illustrated in Figure 2.



**Fig. 2: A Diagram to Illustrate the Genealogy of the Two “Shelah”**

Enoch's prophecy was, in fact, proven to be astonishingly precise. This is so because Metushelah was 187 years old when he birthed Lamech (Genesis 5:25), and Lamech was 182 years old when he birthed Noah (Genesis 5:28), and Noah was 600 years old when the flood came on earth (Genesis 7:6). Thus, the flood came down on earth when Metushelah was 969 years old, that is  $187 + 182 + 600$ , i.e. exactly in the year of his death (Genesis 5:27) as Enoch had previously foretold.

The first Era could, therefore, be divided into three periods as follows:

- A.** From the flood to the birth of Eber.
- B.** From the birth of Eber to the birth of Abram.
- C.** From the birth of Abram to the birth of Jacob.

#### **A. From the flood to the birth of Eber**

It has now been established that two men were carrying the name 'Shelah', the first was Arphaxad's firstborn son (Genesis 11: 12) who died childlessly, and the second was Arphaxad's grandson (Genesis 11: 14) who gave birth in place of his uncle. Arphaxad was born two years after the flood (Genesis 11:10). When Arphaxad was thirty-five, he birthed his firstborn Shelah (Genesis 11:12). Three years later, Arphaxad birthed a second son, Cainan (Septuagint). When Cainan reached thirty-five, the same age as his father when he birthed his first child, Cainan birthed a son whom he named Shelah (Luke 3:36). When Shelah reached thirty, he birthed Eber (Genesis 11:14).

So, the time from the flood to the birth of Eber =  $2 + 35 + 3 + 35 + 30 = \mathbf{105 \text{ years}}$ .

#### **B. From the birth of Eber to the birth of Abram**

According to Genesis 11:16-26, Eber lived for thirty-four years before he birthed Peleg. Peleg lived thirty years then he birthed Reu, Reu lived thirty-two years then he birthed Serug, Serug lived thirty years then he birthed Nahor, Nahor lived twenty-nine years then he birthed Terah, Terah lived seventy years then he birthed Abram, whom God later changed to Abraham (Genesis 17:5).

The argument that Terah was 130 years old, rather than 70, when he begat Abraham (Genesis 11:26), is based on a misunderstanding of Acts 7:4 which states that Abram departed from Haran after the death of his father, who died at the age of 205 (Genesis 11:32), while Abram was 75 years old (Genesis 12:4). God, however, appeared to Abram twice. The first appearance was in Ur, where God called him to depart with his family (Acts 7:2). Abram urged his father to act in obedience to God, so they all left Ur to Canaan (Genesis 11:31). Terah however chose to disobey God's commandments by staying in Haran (Joshua 24:2). So, God appeared to Abram for the second time and said to him: "Go forth from your country, and from your relatives, and from your father's house, to the land which I will show you" (Genesis 12:1). And, indeed, Abram left his father's house and continued his journey to Canaan. So, Acts 7:24, only signifies that God led Abram to Canaan even when his father refused to walk in obedience to God and decided to stay back in Haran.

So, According to Genesis 11:17-26, the period from the birth of Eber to the birth of Abram is:  $34 + 30 + 32 + 30 + 29 + 70 = \mathbf{225 \text{ years}}$ .

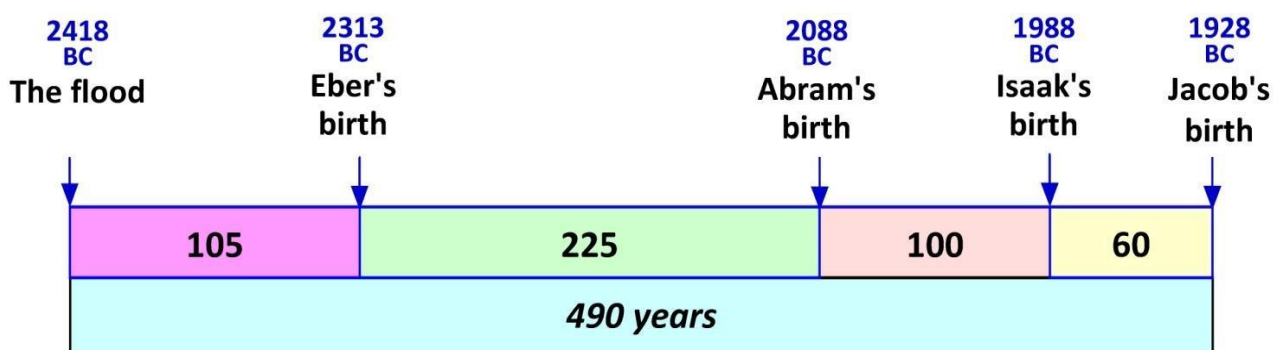
**C. From the birth of Abram to the birth of Jacob**

According to Genesis 21:5, Abram birthed Isaac when he was 100 years of age. While Isaac birthed Jacob when he was 60 years of age (Genesis 25:26).

So, from the birth of Abram to the birth of Jacob =  $100 + 60 = 160 \text{ years}$ .

Therefore, the total period from God's flood of Judgement to the birth of Jacob is  $105 + 225 + 160 = \mathbf{490 \text{ years}}$ .

The First Era is shown diagrammatically in Figure 3



**Figure 3: The Periods included in the First Era, and their total sum of 490 Years**

**THE SECOND ERA OF 490 YEARS, STARTING AT THE BIRTH OF JACOB AND ENDING AT THE EXODUS PASSOVER**

The second Era to be considered in this research starts from the birth of Jacob and ends at the Exodus Passover that was celebrated just before the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt. This Era is divided into three periods as follows:-

- A. From the birth of Jacob to his departure from his home to Padan Aram.
- B. From Jacob's sojourn in Padan Aram to the bondage of Joseph in Egypt.
- C. From the bondage of Joseph in Egypt to the Exodus Passover.

**A. From the birth of Jacob to his departure from his home to Padan Aram**

According to Genesis 28:9, Ishmael was less than 137 years of age when Esau visited him asking to marry his daughter. This is so because Ishmael died at that age (Genesis 25:17). At that time too, Isaac was less than 123 years of age, for he was born 14 years after Ishmael (Genesis 16:16 and 21:5), while Jacob was less than 63 years of age, for he was born 60 years after Isaac (Genesis 25:26). Now, Jacob left to Padan Aram before Esau's visit to Ishmael (Genesis 28:5-9). So, Jacob left his home to Padan Aram when he was about **60 years**.



### **Settling the Dispute regarding the age of Jacob when he left his home**

There are, however, those who argue that Jacob must have been 77, rather than 60, years old when he left his home. Their argument goes like this: Since Jacob came to Egypt at the age of 130 when Joseph was supposedly 39 years old based on Genesis 47:9, therefore Jacob must have birthed Joseph at age of 91, that is 130-39. And since Jacob left home 14 years earlier (Genesis 30: 24, 25), so he must have left his home at the age of 77, which is 91-14, rather than 60.

Joseph, however, wasn't 30 years of age when he stood before Pharaoh, as some advocate based on Genesis 41:46. According to Genesis 41:46, "Joseph went out over the land of Egypt and Joseph was a son of thirty years in his presence before Pharaoh King of Egypt, and went from the front of Pharaoh and passed throughout all the land of Egypt". The 30 years actually don't indicate Joseph's age, but rather the time he spent in Egypt, i.e. he stood before Pharaoh after spending 30 years in Egypt (Egypt is recorded 20 times in this chapter). We can see a parallel to this in 1 Samuel 13:1 "Saul was son of a year in his reigning". In fact, Joseph's age when he stood before Pharaoh was 47, which is 17+30, rather than 30 years. Joseph was, therefore, 56, that is 47+9 when Jacob came to Egypt. This leads to the conclusion that Jacob had birthed Joseph at age of 74, which is 130 - 56, and he left his home to Padan Aram when he was 60, which is 74-14, as has been calculated before.

The age of Joseph being 56 when Jacob came to Egypt could also be confirmed in a different way. Judah, the fourth son of Jacob, was at least 35 years of age when he birthed Perez, for he birthed him from Tamar, his daughter in law, a long time after the death of his two sons, Er and Onan, and after Shelah, his third son, has grown up (Genesis 38:12-14). At least 18 years later, Perez birthed Hezron and Hamul who came with him to Egypt (Genesis 46:12). So, when Judah came to Egypt with Jacob, his age was at least 53 years, which is 35+18. Jacob birthed eleven of his children, except Benjamin, during seven years of marriage (Genesis 29:25-30, 30:25, 32, 31:41). Since Judah was Leah's fourth child (Genesis 29:31-35), he must have been born, at least, towards the end of the fourth year of these seven years. Joseph was born towards the end of this period, and not after. Therefore, Judah was only three years older than Joseph. So, when Jacob came to Egypt, Joseph was older than 50, that is 53 - 3. In fact, Joseph was 56 years of age, as has been shown before, and not 39.

On the other hand, if Jacob left Haran when he was 77 years of age, and he served Laban for 20 years after that (Genesis 31:41), and stayed many years in Sukkoth and Shechem, this leads to the conclusion that he birthed Benjamin many years older than 97. In the absence of miraculous intervention, as the scripture is silent about, such an event would be very unlikely to happen as stated by Abraham (Genesis 17:17). So, indeed he was 60, rather than 77 years old when he left his home to Padan Aram.

### **B. From Jacob's sojourn in Padan Aram to Joseph's bondage in Egypt**

According to Genesis 30:25 & 31:41, Jacob birthed Joseph before completing 14 years in Laban's house. And since Joseph came to Egypt as a slave when he was 17 years old according to Genesis 37:2, one can conclude that the period from Jacob's sojourn in Padan Aram until Joseph's bondage in Egypt was almost **30 years**, that is 13+17.



### C. From Joseph's bondage in Egypt to the Exodus

According to Genesis 15:13, the Lord promised Abram saying: “Know surely that your descendants will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs. And they will be slaves there, and will be oppressed for 400 years”. So, the period from the bondage of Joseph in Egypt until the Exodus out of Egypt was 400 years

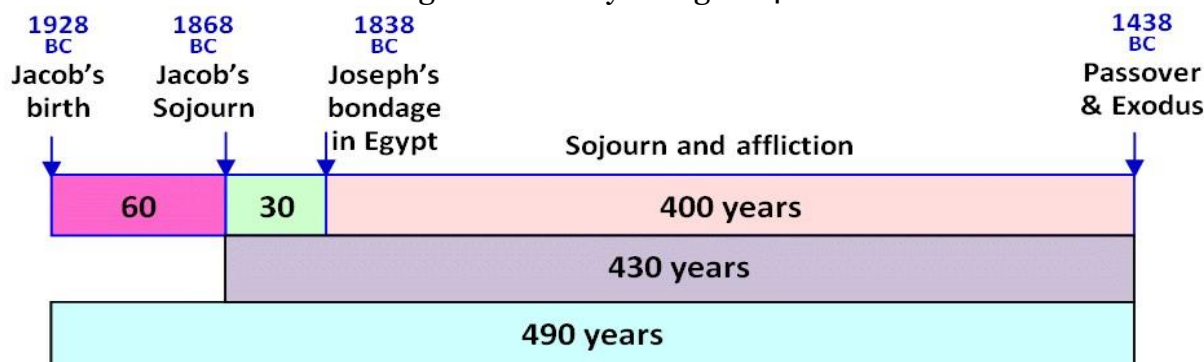
#### Settling the Dispute Regarding the 400 Years of the Israelites Slavery in Egypt

The claim that the countdown of the 400 years of bondage should start with the birth of Isaac is based upon the fact that the land of slavery is not specified as Egypt in Genesis 15:13. In addition, as soon as Abram had a child, his seeds were subjected to living in lands that were not theirs, including the land of Canaan which was not theirs at that time. Based on that claim, the Israelites must have spent only 215 years as slaves in Egypt, a period that covers four generations as stated in Genesis 15:16. There are, however, strong reasons to argue against that claim.

1. According to Genesis 15:13, it was the descendants of Abram, rather than Abram himself that were to be oppressed for four hundred years. The period of slavery, therefore, must start from Joseph's arrival as a slave into Egypt.
2. According to Exodus 12:37, there were 600 thousands of men who left Egypt at Exodus. Assuming each male has a wife and one child, to be conservative, the total number of the Israelites that left Egypt on Exodus must be around 2 million people. Starting with only seventy people entering Egypt, as stated in Genesis 46:27, the assumption that the period of slavery in Egypt was four hundred years makes stronger evidence than a period of two hundred and fifteen years with only four generations.
3. Even though Chronicles 7:20-23 state that there were ten generations from Ephraim to Joshua, a contemporary of the Exodus, only four of those ten are listed by name (Numbers 26:35).
4. The Hebrew word for “generation” in Genesis 15:16 is *dor*. The same word is also used in Job 8:8 and is rendered “century” or “age” in some translations. Therefore, Genesis 15:16 speaks of the “fourth century”, that is four hundred years, rather than the fourth generation. Even though, a generation could still be counted as hundred years considering the average lifetime at that time.
5. According to Galatians 3:17, the Law was given 430 years after the promise of blessings was given to Abram. The final announcement of God's promise, made to Jacob, is recorded in Genesis 28:4-15, during the dream of a ladder set up on earth with its top reaching out to heaven. It was then that God promised Jacob that all the tribes of the earth shall be blessed in his seed, i.e. the Messiah. According to Psalms 105: 8-10, God made a covenant with Abraham, swore it to Isaac, and confirmed it to Jacob as an everlasting covenant. In fact, the promise was confirmed to Jacob when he left his fathers' tent, 430 years before the law. It is that tent in which Jacob lived with Abraham and Isaac, the heirs with him of the same promise (Hebrews 11:9).

Thus, the total period from the birth of Jacob to the Exodus Passover =  
 $60 + 30 + 400 = 490 \text{ years.}$

The Second Era is shown diagrammatically in Figure 4



**Figure 4: The Periods included in the Second Era and their Total Sum of 490 Years**

### **THE THIRD ERA OF 490 YEARS, STARTING AT THE EXODUS PASSOVER AND ENDING AT THE FIRST TEMPLE PASSOVER**

The third Era to be considered in this research has its beginning at the Exodus Passover and ends at the first Passover celebration in Solomon's Temple.

This Era can be divided into four periods:-

- A.** From the Exodus to the laying down of the Temple foundations
- B.** From the laying down of the Temple foundations to its completion.
- C.** From the completion of the building of the Temple to the time when the Ark of the Covenant was brought into the Temple.
- D.** From bringing the ark of covenant into the temple to the Temple's first Passover celebration.

#### **A. From the Exodus to laying down the foundations of the temple, 480 years**

This exact number of years, 480, is clearly recorded in 1Ki 6:1 "In the four hundred and eightieth year after the people of Israel came out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, which is the second month, he began to build the house of the LORD".

So, it was 480 years after the Exodus Passover that Solomon started laying the foundations of the temple.

#### **B. From laying down foundations of the Temple to its completion, 7½ years**

This period of seven and a half years is deduced from 1Kings 6:1, 38. Laying the foundations of the temple began in the second month of the fourth year of Solomon's reign. The Temple was completed in the eighth month of his eleventh year on the throne. So, in total, the temple has taken 7½ years to complete.

### **C. From the completion of the Temple to the bringing of the Ark of the Covenant, 2 years**

According to 1 Kings 6:38, the temple was completed in the eighth month of the eleventh year of Solomon's reign. The Ark of the Covenant was brought into the Temple at the feast of Tabernacles in the seventh month of the thirteenth year of Solomon, after completing the house of the king and the house of Pharaoh's daughter (1 Kings 7: 1,8 and 8: 2). This is so since Pharaoh's daughter was not to live in the city where the Ark of the Covenant was (1 Kings 3:1, 2 Chronicles 8:11). So, the period from the Temple completion to the bringing of the Ark of the Covenant equals 2 years.

### **D. From the bringing of the Ark of the Covenant to the first Passover in the Temple, ½ a year**

According to 2 Chronicles 5:3, the Ark of the Covenant was brought into the temple during the Feast of Tabernacles in the seventh month. The first Temple Passover was celebrated 6 months later, in the first month of the following year. Therefore, half a year must have passed between the two events. Thus, the First Passover in Temple was celebrated 10 years after laying down its foundations, which is  $7\frac{1}{2}$  years + 2 years +  $\frac{1}{2}$  a year.

### **Settling the Dispute Regarding the Time between Exodus and Laying Down of the Temple Foundations.**

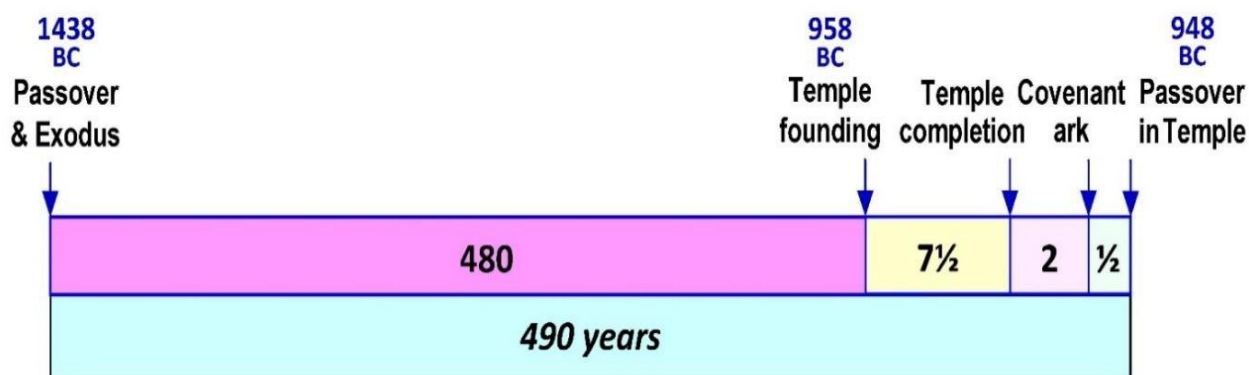
The argument raised that, according to Acts 13:20, the time of the judges of Israel was, alone, 450 years, makes it almost impossible to deduce that there were only 480 years between the Exodus and the laying down of the Temple foundations as recorded in 1 Kings 6:1. Considering RSV, ASV, and ERV translations of Acts 13:18-20, however, we read the following: "About 40 years He bore them in the wilderness. And when He had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, He gave them their land as an inheritance for about 450 years. And after these things, He gave them judges until Samuel the prophet". The question that needs to be asked at this point is the source that Paul relied upon in deducing the figure of 450 years in the absence of any Scriptural support. And what is the significance of this figure for Luke to insert it in his account? Considering the context, the only significance of the figure 450 years here is that when the figure 450 is added to the figure 40 years in the wilderness, it produces a total of 490 years i.e.  $70 \times 7$ . It is noticed that the phrase "40 years" was used six times by Stephen and Paul in Acts 7 and 13, respectively. And this was most likely because the Jews had some belief that perfection of times of their history is evidence of God's hand intervention in it (Mills, 1998).

The Jews believed that God's plan for them has reached its ultimate fulfilment by God's dwelling in Zion's mountain, 490 years after their Exodus from Egypt, the land of their slavery (Acts 7: 44-50). This is because Solomon's Kingdom at that time was completely established without war, as a fulfilment of God's promise to Abraham to give him the whole land from the river of Egypt to the river of Euphrates (Genesis 15: 18). The figure 450 years, recorded by Luke in Acts 13:20, signifies that God has fulfilled his promise to the nation of Israel by giving them the totality of their promised land in a period of 490 years  $7 \times 70$ , a period comprised of 40 years they sojourned in the wilderness in addition to the 450 years in which God had destroyed seven peoples before

them. The land of inheritance was, indeed, totally gained by the time of Solomon's kingdom.

One contemplates the same meaning in 1 Kings 6:1 which tells us that Solomon began to build the Temple after 480 years from the time of Exodus of Israel from Egypt. From the narration and historical points of view, one wouldn't expect the author to relate two historical events that are 480 years apart. The intention, the authors believe, is to draw attention to the fact that God almighty would reside with his people on the mountain of Zion 10 years later from the laying of the Temple's foundations, which is 490 years after their Exodus out of their land of slavery, Egypt. Therefore, the total period from the Exodus to the Temple's first Passover =  $480 + 10 = 490$  years.

The third Era is shown diagrammatically in Figure 5



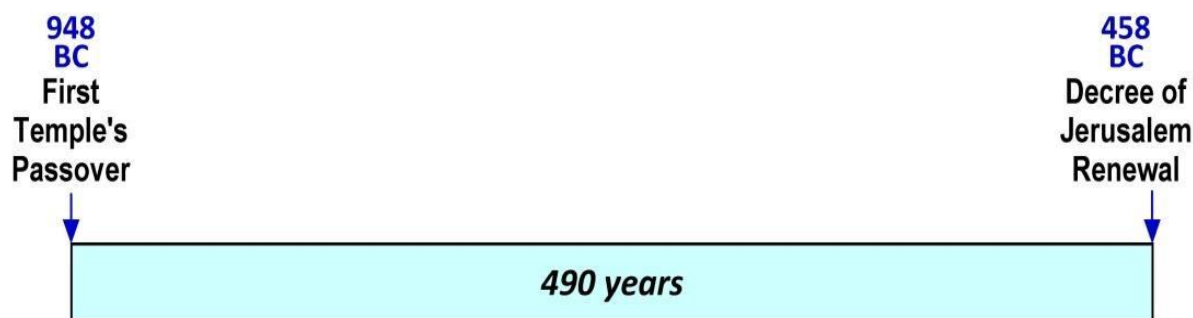
**Figure 5: The Periods included in the Third Era and their total sum of 490 Years**

#### **THE FOURTH ERA OF 490 YEARS, STARTING AT THE TEMPLE'S FIRST PASSOVER IN 948 BC AND ENDING AT ISSUING THE DECREE TO REBUILD JERUSALEM IN 458 BC**

The Fourth Era extends from the first Passover celebration in the Temple to the issuing of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem, issued by King Artaxerxes, after the return of the Jews from their captivity. According to Ezra 7:13-26, Ezra the priest returned to Jerusalem carrying the decree issued by the Persian King Artaxerxes to rebuild Jerusalem. Ezra appointed judges and magistrates over Jerusalem, according to the law of the God of Israel, to carry out this enormous task.

Since Solomon was throned in 961 BC (Al-Maskeen, 1997), and the Temple foundations were laid down in the fourth year of his reign (1 Kings 6:37), the foundations were, therefore, laid down in 958 BC. And since the Temple's first Passover took place 10 years after laying down the foundations, as discussed previously, therefore the Temple's first Passover was celebrated in 948 BC, and that would be the starting time of this fourth Era. As for the endpoint for that fourth Era, it is known that King Artaxerxes was throned 465 BC (Dunn & Rogerson, 2003). The decree to rebuild Jerusalem was issued in the King's first month of his seventh year of reign (Ezra 7: 6-26). This decree, therefore, coincided with the Passover celebrated in 458 BC.

Thus, the period from the first Temple Passover to the issuing of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem is  $948 - 458 = 490$  years.



**Figure 6: The Period of the Fourth Era, 490 years**

### **THE FIFTH ERA, STARTING AT THE ISSUING OF THE DECREE TO REBUILD JERUSALEM IN 458 BC, AND ENDING AT THE REDEMPTION CROSS OF JESUS CHRIST IN 33 AD**

The fifth and last Era to be considered in this research extends from the time of the issuing of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem and ends at the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Both the beginning of this fifth Era and the end of it coincide with a Passover celebration. In fact, this period is referred to in Daniel 9:24 *"Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place"*. As concluded in the discussion of the fourth Era above, the decree to rebuild Jerusalem was issued on the Passover of 458 BC. So, the starting point of this fifth Era is 458 BC. As for the endpoint, that is the date of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, one can state with confidence the date of April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 33 AD. This date has been confirmed by most historians, geologists, and astronomers (Collin and Waddington, 1985).

### **CONFIRMING THE DATE OF CRUCIFIXION**

The Geological Society of America, GSA, has confirmed April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 33 AD as the date the crucifixion of Jesus Christ took place (Austin, 2012). This date is supported by numerous pieces of evidence.

1. From the results of the analysis of the soil layers of the Dead Sea in the region of Zalim Gorge, the lowest point on earth (Pletcher, 2019), geologists have confirmed the historicity of an earthquake that occurred in the year 33 AD and was centred near the city of Jerusalem (Viegas, 2012). The Gospel of Matthew confirms this event (Matthew 27:51).
2. In addition, historians reported that Tiberius Caesar took over the Roman Empire in AD 14 (Levick, 1999). Historian Luke, on the other hand, reported that John the Baptist started his ministry in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius' reign (Luke 3:1). Therefore the baptism of the Lord Jesus Christ must have been around 29 or 30 AD. In John's

Gospel, Jesus attended three or four annual Passover feasts (John 2:13; 6:4; 11:55-57). Thus, the date of the Cross must have been in **33 AD**.

### **SETTLING THE DISPUTE REGARDING THE SEVENTY WEEKS OF DANIEL 9:2 AND 24**

The argument that the duration from the issuing of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem to the crucifixion of Jesus should be 69 or 69½ weeks, rather than 70 weeks is futile indeed. This argument is based on a misreading and interpretation of Daniel 9:2 and 9:24. A thorough investigation of Daniel 9:24 reveals the inaccuracy of that argument. The accurate reading of the passage is as follows:

*“Seventy sevens are appointed upon your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint holy of holies. Know therefore and understand, it is from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem unto Messiah...”*

Daniel 9:24 states that there are 70 x 7 of years from the issuing of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem to the cross of redemption by the Messiah. Hebrews 9:26 also states that Jesus “*has appeared, once and for all, at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself*”. The claim of a period of 69 weeks results from mistakenly adding 7 to 62, to make it one extended period, in Daniel 9:25. In fact, the Hebrew text adds a punctuation mark (^), called “Atnach”, under the word “seven” in order to separate the 7 from the 62, making them two separate periods rather than one. The reference to 62 by itself in (Daniel 9:26) confirms that they must not be added together. The Septuagint text confirms the separation of these two periods as well. The Hebrew word “שבעים” used in Daniel 9:25 & 26 can also be translated as “satiations” not “weeks”. It most likely refers to the fact that the temple would be destroyed 7 decades after being visited by the Messiah, which is in AD 70. Then, 62 decades later, that is AD 690, the dome of the rock would be established in its place.

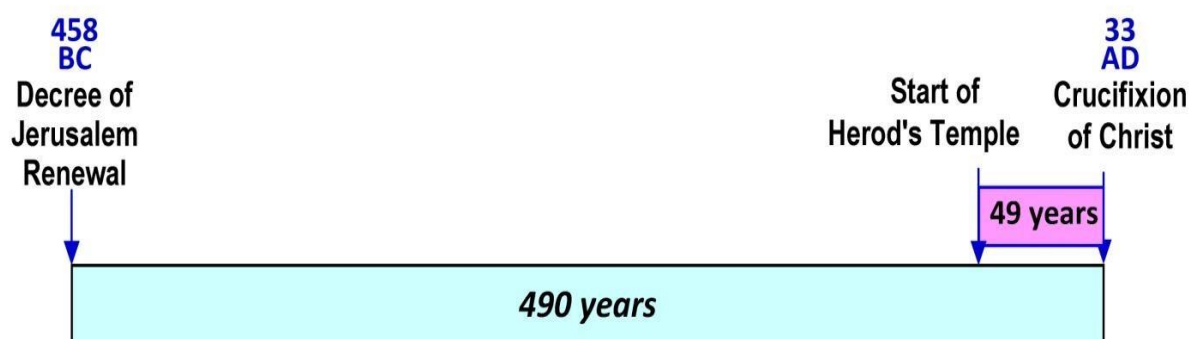
Thus, the total period from the issuing of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ is = 458 BC +33 AD – (year 0) = 490 years. (**Note** that 1 BC was followed directly by 1 AD since there is no year zero).

### **THE FIFTIETH JUBILEE CYCLE THAT ENDED AT THE REDEEMING CROSS**

At the time of the first Passover in Jesus’ ministry, he went up to the Temple courts with a whip made out of cords by which he drove out sheep and cattle, ordering the pigeons’ sellers “Get these out of here! Stop turning my Father’s house into a market” (John 2:13-16). At that time, it had been 46 years since Herod began building this Temple which was not yet completed according to John 2:20. And since Jesus was crucified 3 years later, and also at the time of Passover, it could be rightfully concluded that Jesus’ crucifixion took place 49 years after the beginning of Herod’s Temple construction. The starting point of the fiftieth Jubilee cycle, the last of fifty Jubilees of 49 years each, therefore, coincided with the start of Herod’s Temple construction, while its end coincided with the tearing down of the Temple’s curtain. A tearing down that announced the end of the ministry of the earthly Temple to usher, in its replacement, the heavenly spiritual Temple, the Church of Jesus Christ, which is his secret body resurrected from the dead

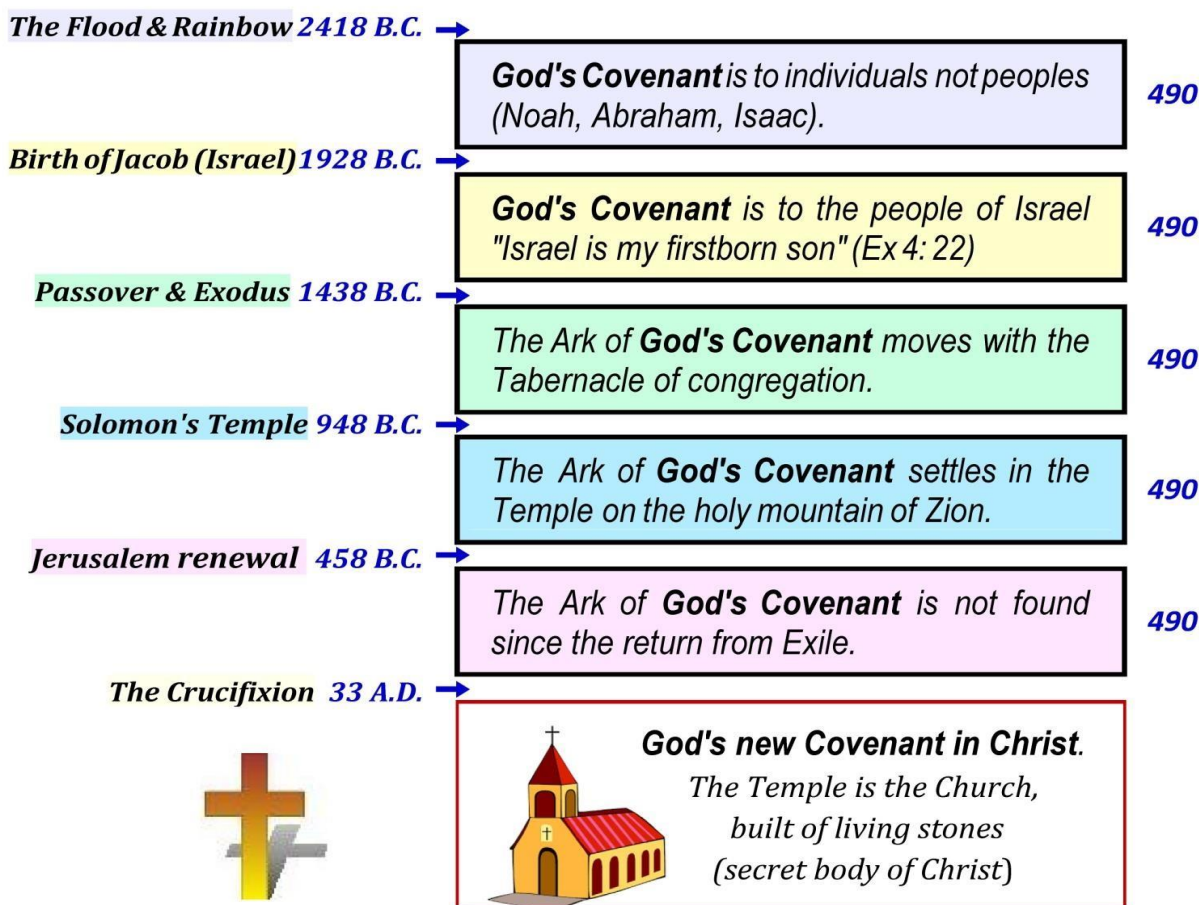
(John 2:21). Thus, by constructing Herod's Temple, God was leading the Old Testament to its final scene, and preparing the way for himself to come suddenly into His Temple, thus fulfilling the prophecy of Malachi 3:1.

This fifth Era is shown diagrammatically in Figure 7, together with the fiftieth Jubilee



**Figure 7: The Periods of the Fifth Era totalling 490 Years**

The Five Eras, 490 years each, are shown diagrammatically in Figure 8



**Figure 8: The Five Eras, 490 Years Each, and Characteristics of Each of Them**



## CONCLUSION

Utilizing precise historical data, this research article has shown that there are exactly fifty Jubilees between God's judgment on mankind during the time of Noah in 2418 BC, and God's redemption of mankind by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross in 33 AD. In addition, it has been shown that those fifty Jubilees could be grouped into five long Eras, each is equivalent to ten jubilees i.e. 490 years. The beginning and the end of each of these five Eras mark major events in the history of the nation of Israel. The end of the fifth Era marks the final redemption event by God in the history of mankind, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It wasn't then accidental that the Jubilee was celebrated on the Day of Atonement as shown in Leviticus 25:9.

Therefore, the redemption of Jesus has been shown in this article to be the fulfilment of that last Jubilee, the Jubilee of the Jubilees, just as the Lord Jesus Christ made clear in Luke 4.

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