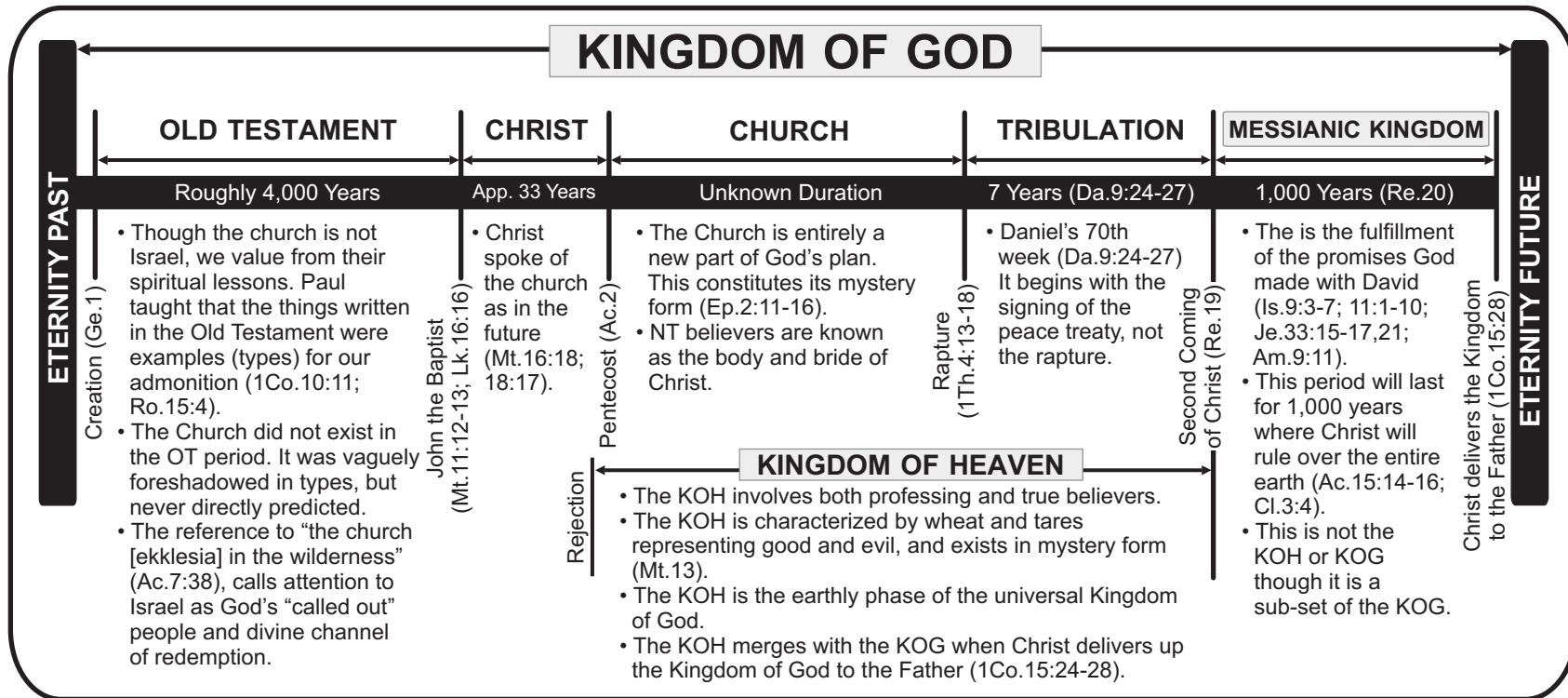


RELATIONSHIP: CHURCH AND "THE KINGDOMS"



3 "Kingdoms" used in Scripture: (1) **Kingdom of God**; (2) **Kingdom of Heaven**; (3) **Messianic Kingdom**

OLD TESTAMENT PERIOD — Believers during this period are known as "the friends of the Bridegroom" (Jn.3:29). They are not a part of the Church which begins later in time (Mt.16:18; 18:17).

KINGDOM OF GOD — The rule of God over all creation and creatures extending from eternity past to eternity future. It is both physical and spiritual. In its spiritual aspect it is entered only by the new birth (Jn.3).

KINGDOM OF HEAVEN — The period from the rejection of Christ till His Second Coming. It is the earthly phase of the Kingdom of God, and exists in mystery form (Mt.13). It is the present external form of the earthly Messianic Kingdom to come. This is true on the earth now while the King (Christ) is in Heaven waiting to return and initiate the Messianic Kingdom (Lk.19:12).

CHURCH — The Church is God's corporate witness in the world to the salvation message of grace, and the organic body for believers. The Church was unknown to the OT prophets (Ep.3:1-10; Ro.16:25-26; Cl.1:24-27). This is what constitutes it as a mystery where both Jews and Gentiles (Ep.2:11-16) would be members of "the body of Christ" (1Co.12:27; Ep.4:12). The church is a "sub-set" within the Kingdom of God.

MESSIANIC KINGDOM — The period of 1,000 years (Re.20) where Christ will rule on earth after His Second Coming. This fulfills the many OT promises of a reign by Israel's Messiah. This period is distinct from the Kingdom of God and Kingdom of Heaven. This Messianic kingdom is a sub-set of the Kingdom of God.

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