

Isaiah 38

2 Kings 20

June 7, 2015

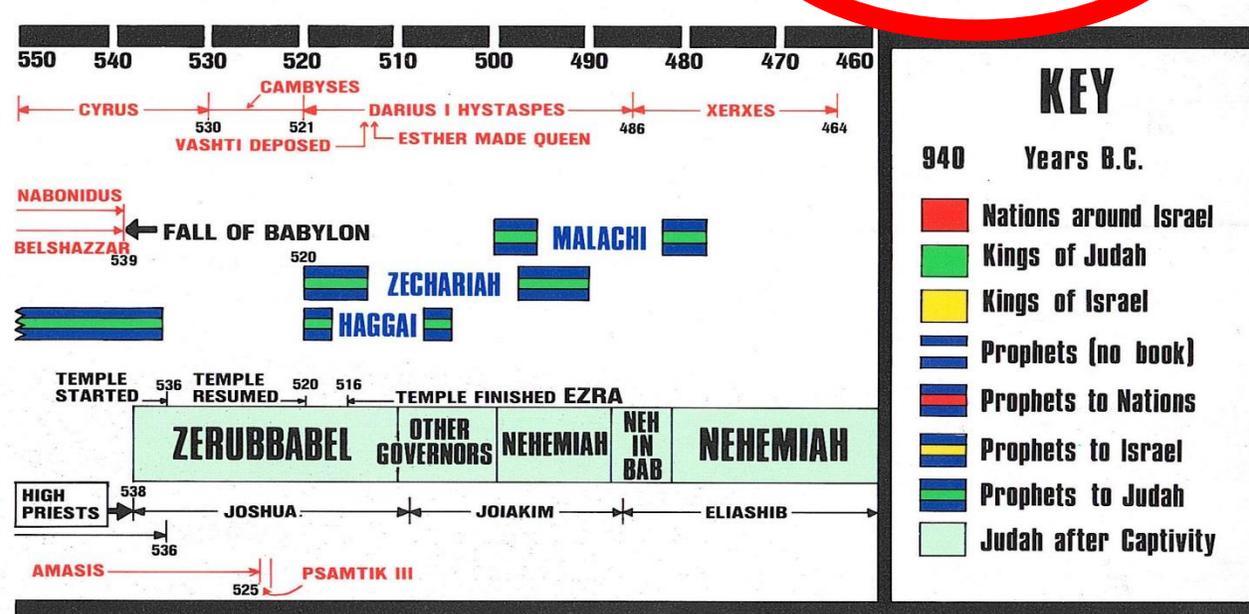
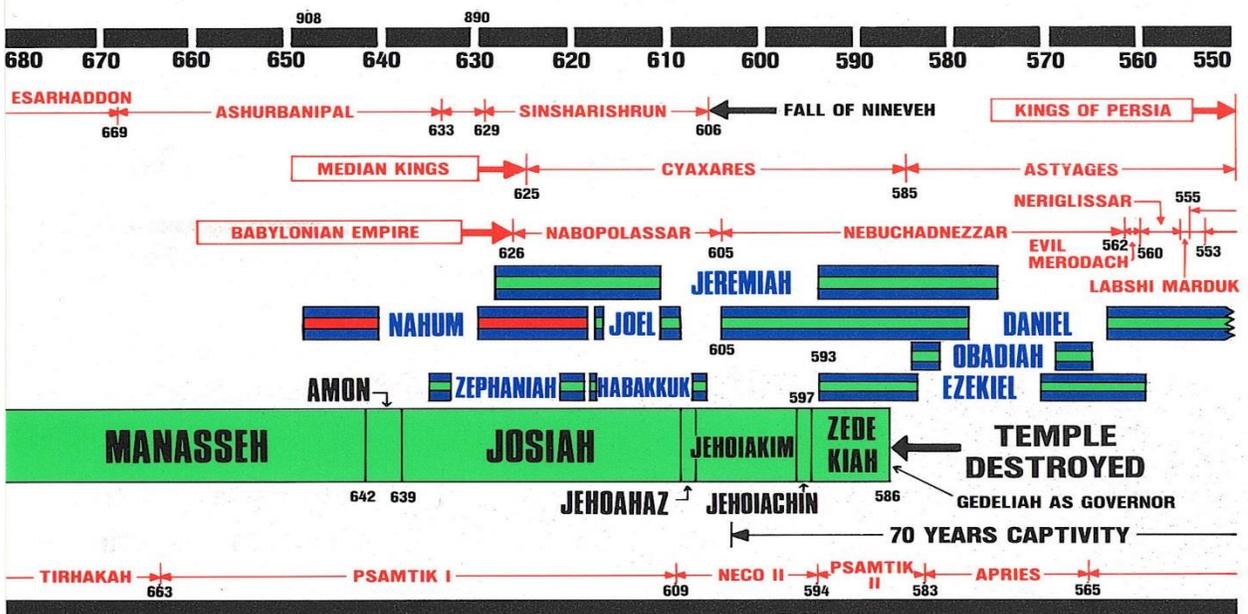
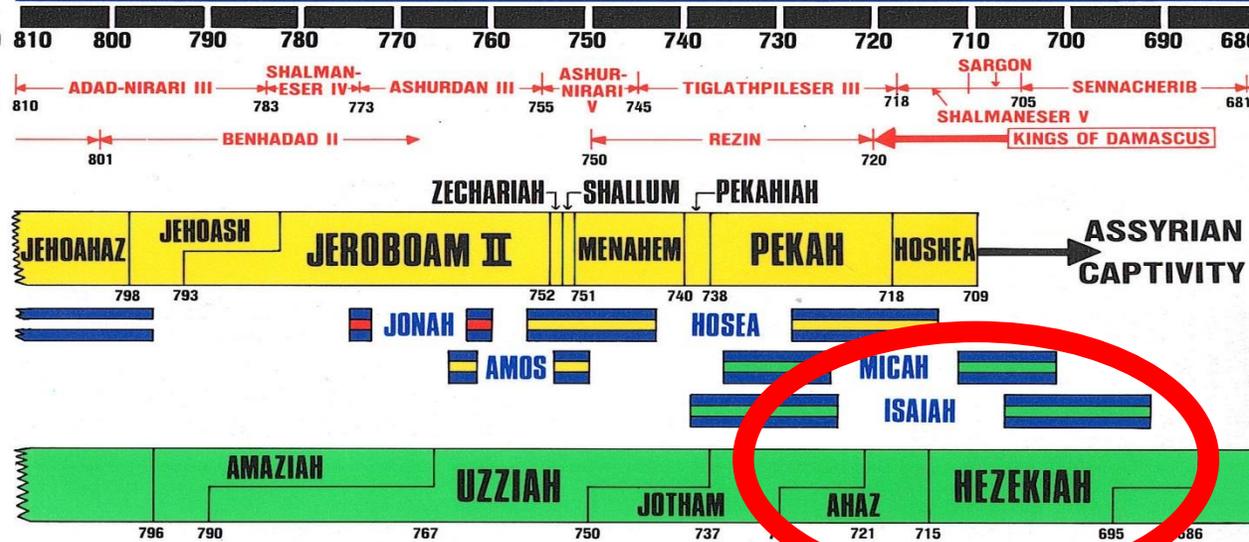
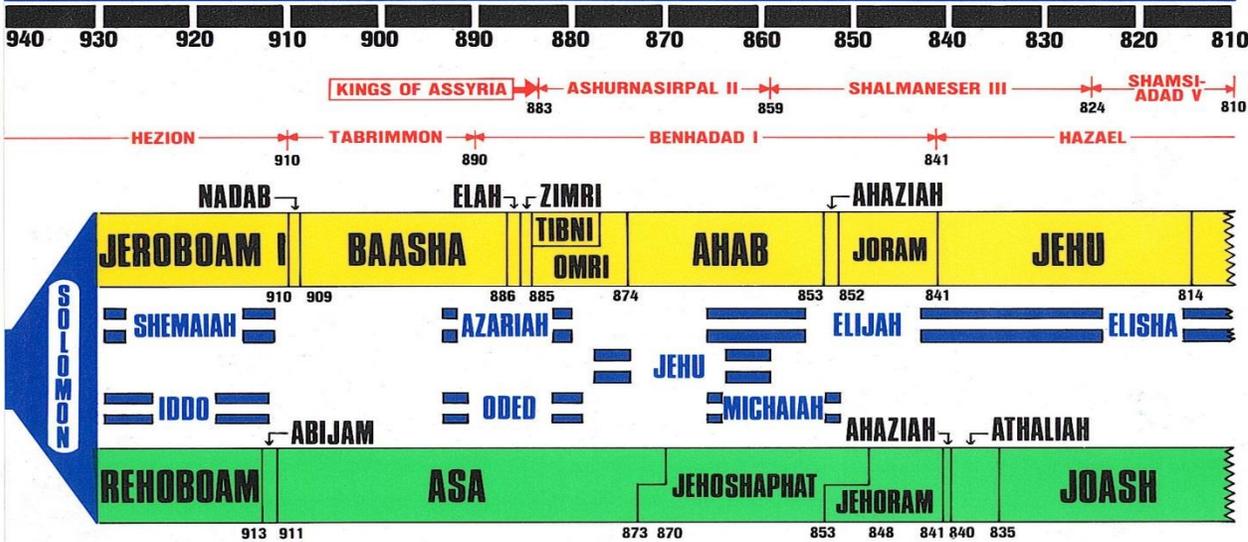
Two Questions

Who Is Hezekiah?

- Hezekiah wrote psalms (38:9-20).
- He also collected Solomon's sayings for inclusion in the book of Proverbs:
 - Proverbs 25:1 -- These are more proverbs of Solomon, copied by the men of Hezekiah king of Judah...
- What else is he known for?

THE KINGS AND PROPHETS

OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH

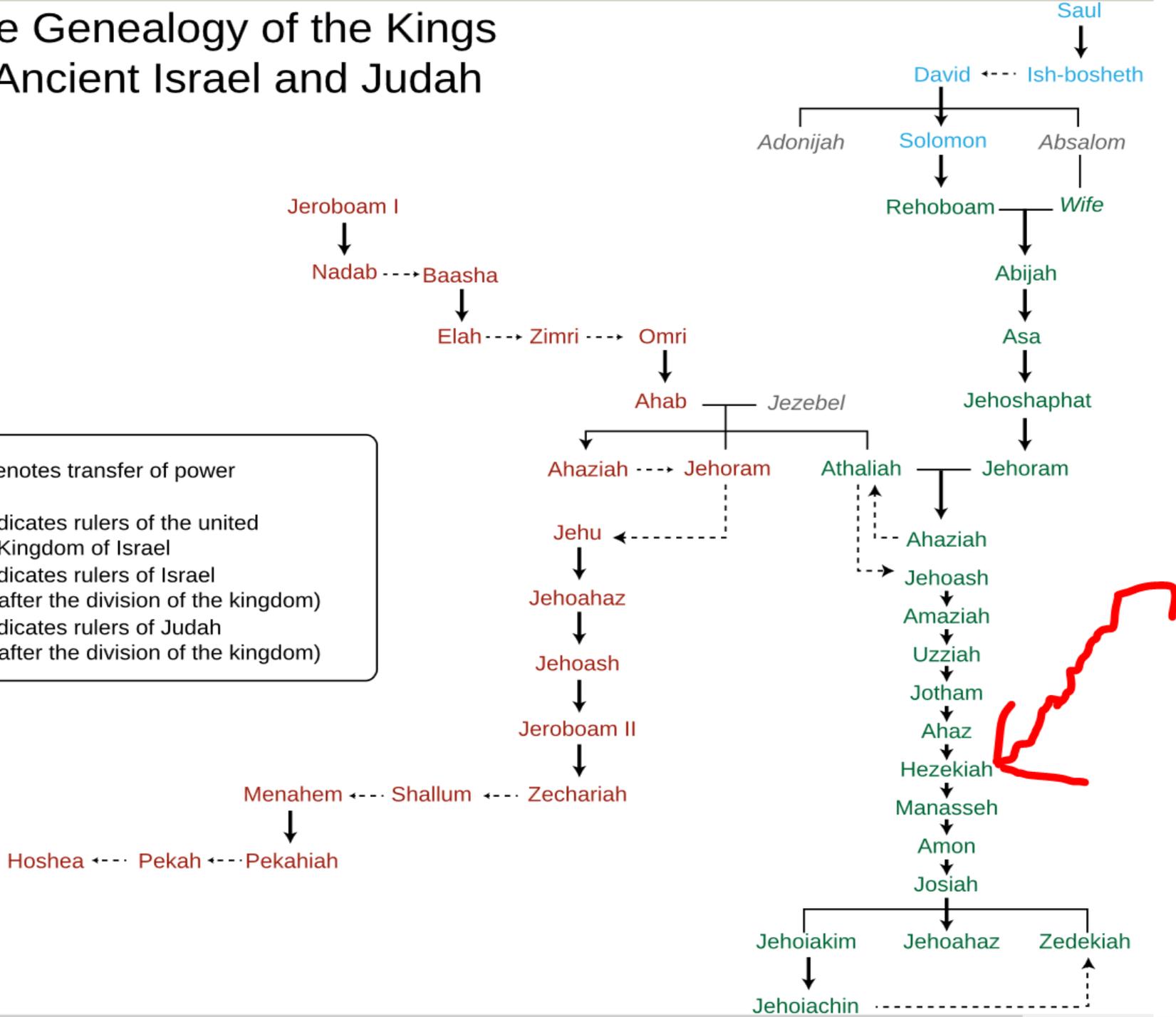
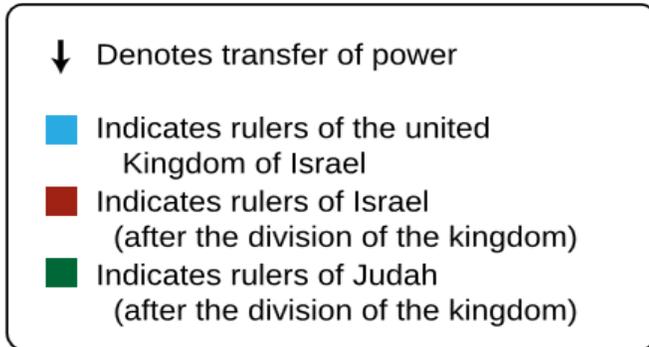


KEY

940 Years B.C.

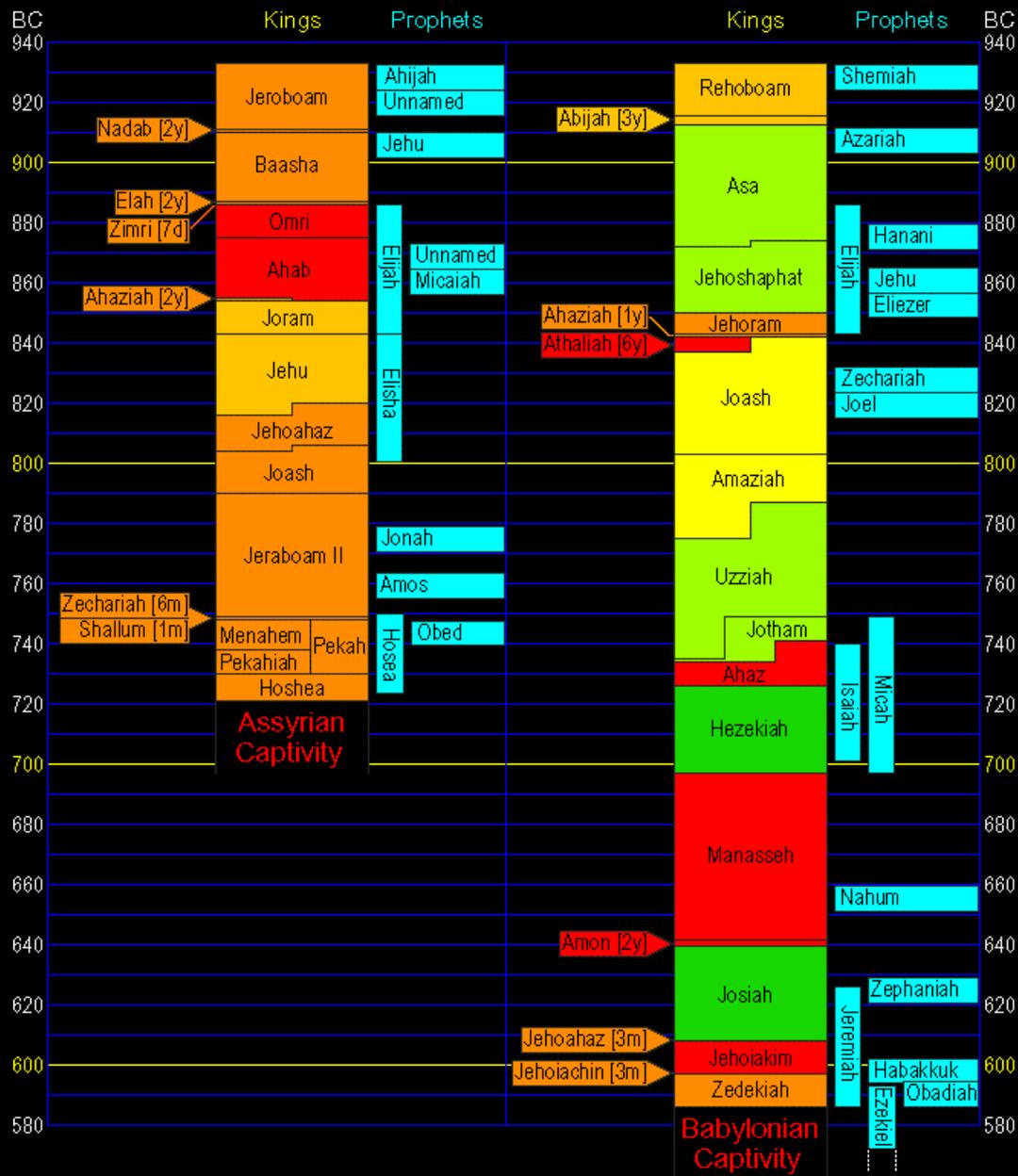
- Nations around Israel
- Kings of Judah
- Kings of Israel
- Prophets (no book)
- Prophets to Nations
- Prophets to Israel
- Prophets to Judah
- Judah after Captivity

The Genealogy of the Kings of Ancient Israel and Judah



Israel

Judah



ISAIAH 38 OUTLINE

1. Hezekiah is almost dead.
2. God says Hezekiah will die. No recovery from illness.
3. Hezekiah prayed.
4. God says He will add 15 years to Hezekiah's life (plus, deliverance from Assyria), and provides a sign for Hezekiah.
5. Hezekiah writes a psalm after he recovers.

Commentary Assessment #1

- The prophet tells him, That his disease is mortal, and, if he be not recovered by a miracle of mercy, will certainly be fatal: "Thou shalt die, and not live." (Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible.)
- **Question: Is this really what the prophet told him?**

Commentary Assessment #2

- **YOU ARE GOING TO DIE (38:1)** - This example of conditional prophecy points to Hezekiah's illness and recovery as a test of faith. (College Press NIV Commentary, Briley)
- **Question:** What in this verse tips us off that this is a "conditional" prophecy? What IS a "conditional prophecy," anyway?

As the riders loped on by him
he heard one call his name
if you wanna save your soul from hell
a-ridin' on our range
Then cowboy change your ways today
or with us you will ride
And try to catch the devil's herd
across these endless skies

Commentary Assessment #3

- God's word from Isaiah is unequivocal: Hezekiah is "going to die." This is not a word of judgment; it is simply a fact. (NIV Application Commentary, Oswalt)
- Do you AGREE... or DISAGREE?

What is the difference between an UNTRUTH and a LIE?

- UNTRUTH

- Job 42:7 After the LORD had said these things to Job, he said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "I am angry with you and your two friends, because you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has..."

- LIE

- Genesis 3:4-5 "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

Do you find an example of an UNTRUTH or a LIE in Isaiah 38?

Isaiah 38:18

For the grave cannot praise you, death cannot sing your praise; those who go down to the pit cannot hope for your faithfulness.

Is this an UNTRUTH... or a LIE... or TRUTH?

Isaiah 38:7-8

"This is the LORD's sign to you that the LORD will do what he has promised: 'I will make the shadow cast by the sun go back the ten steps it has gone down on the stairway of Ahaz.'" So **the sunlight went back the ten steps** it had gone down.

Is this an UNTRUTH... or a LIE... or TRUTH?

Isaiah 38:7-8 -- the sunlight went back the ten steps

- **STATEMENT:**

- "God reversed the rotation of the planet in order to have the sunlight go back ten steps."

- **QUESTION:**

- **Is the statement an UNTRUTH... or a LIE... or TRUTH?**

Isaiah 38:1

...The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz went to [Hezekiah] and said, "This is what the LORD says: Put your house in order, because **you are going to die; you will not recover.**"

Is this an UNTRUTH... or a LIE... or TRUTH?

Personal Growth

When was the last time you caught yourself rationalizing the words of scripture so that they would match what you knew was TRUE...

instead of letting the words of scripture change your understanding of TRUTH?

Jeremiah 3:6-7

During the reign of King Josiah, the Lord said to me, "Have you seen what faithless Israel has done? She has gone up on every high hill and under every spreading tree and has committed adultery there. **I thought** that after she had done all this she would return to me **but she did not**, and her unfaithful sister Judah saw it.

Jeremiah 19:3-5

...This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says:

...

They have built the high places of Baal to burn their sons in the fire as offerings to Baal--something I did not command or mention, **nor did it enter my mind.**

God can absolutely determine that a given course of action will play out. He can make any course of action play out that He desires. That is not the same as saying that He "knows the future infallibly."

To say that is to say that prayer is meaningless.

I can come to no other conclusion.

When confronted with tragedy, it is customary to hear Christians try to reassure themselves or others with clichés like, “There is a reason for everything;” “God is in control”; “God’s ways are not our ways, we simply have to trust him.” The assumption behind all such remarks is that every event, however tragic, somehow fits into a divine plan. There is a divine reason for everything.

This assumption has been prevalent in the Christian tradition since the time of Augustine. It has been worked out by theologians in a variety of ways. Some have held that God unilaterally controls the world. Hence **all events, including human decisions, unfold exactly as God wills**. In this view God ordains all that comes to pass. This view is usually associated with **classical Calvinism**. Others have granted that **humans (and perhaps angels) have free will** and thus make choices that God does not ordain. Yet they have held that, on the basis of his foreknowledge, God orchestrates how these decisions fit into his providential plan. He specifically allows each event to take place for a divine reason. This view is usually associated with classical **Arminianism**. The views are obviously significantly different, but they both agree that the ultimate reason things go astray as they do is because, at the very least, God willed not to prevent them.

Gregory A. Boyd, Ph.D., Princeton Theological Seminary
Senior Pastor, Woodland Hills Church. Author of *God of the Possible*,
Letters from a Skeptic, *Across the Spectrum*, and *God at War*.

Five Points of Calvinism

- **Total depravity** -- This doctrine is derived from Augustine's explanation of Original Sin.
- **Unconditional election** -- God has chosen from eternity those whom he will bring to himself not based on foreseen virtue, merit, or faith
- **Limited atonement** -- only the sins of the elect were atoned for by Jesus's death, i.e. Jesus did not die for the non-elect. The controversy centered on whether this limited efficacy was based on God's election (the view of the Synod and of later Reformed theologians) or on the choice of each person and God's foreknowledge of that choice (the view of Arminius)
- **Irresistible grace** -- the saving grace of God is applied only to those whom he has determined to save (that is, the elect) and overcomes their resistance to obeying the call of the gospel
- **Perseverance of the saints** -- those whom God has called into communion with himself will continue in faith until the end. "Once saved, always saved."



Jacobus Arminius (1600)

- In attempting to defend Calvinistic predestination against the teachings of Dirck Volckertszoon Coornhert, Arminius **began to doubt aspects of Calvinism** and modified some parts of his own view. He attempted to reform Calvinism, and lent his name to a movement—Arminianism—which resisted some of the Calvinist tenets (**unconditional election, the nature of the limitation of the atonement, and irresistible grace**). The early Dutch followers of his teaching became known as Remonstrants after they issued a document containing five points of disagreement with mainstream Calvinism, entitled Remonstrantiæ (1610).
- Arminius wrote that he sought to **teach only those things which could be proved from the Scriptures** and that tended toward edification among Christians (with the exception of Roman Catholics, with whom he said there could be no spiritual accord). His motto was reputed to be "Bona conscientia paradisus", meaning, "A good conscience is a paradise."
- Arminius taught of a "preventing" (or prevenient) grace that has been conferred upon all by the Holy Spirit and this grace is "sufficient for belief, in spite of our sinful corruption, and thus for salvation." Arminius stated that "the grace sufficient for salvation is conferred on the Elect, and on the Non-elect; that, **if they will**, they may believe or not believe, may be saved or not be saved." William Witt states that "Arminius has a very high theology of grace. He insists emphatically that grace is gratuitous because it is obtained through God's redemption in Christ, not through human effort." **Arminius referred to even faith as being received from God as a gift.**

Topic	Calvinism	<u>Lutheranism</u>	<u>Arminianism</u>
Human will	<u>Total depravity</u> : ^[86] For <u>Calvin</u> , humanity possesses "free will," ^[87] but it is in bondage to sin, ^[88] until it is "transformed." ^[89]	<u>Total depravity</u> : ^[86] For <u>Luther</u> , humanity possesses free-will/free choice in regard to "goods and possessions," but regarding "salvation or damnation" people are in bondage either to God or sins." ^{[90][91]}	For <u>Arminius</u> , humanity possesses freedom from necessity, but not "freedom from sin" unless enabled by " <u>prevenient grace</u> ." ^[92]
Election	<u>Unconditional election</u> .	<u>Unconditional election</u> . ^{[86][93]}	<u>Conditional election</u> in view of foreseen faith or unbelief. ^[94]
Justification and atonement	<u>Justification by faith</u> alone. Various views regarding the extent of the atonement. ^[95]	<u>Justification for all men</u> , completed at Christ's death and effective through <u>faith alone</u> . ^{[96][97][98][99][100]}	Justification made <u>possible for all</u> through Christ's death, but only completed upon <u>choosing faith</u> in Jesus. ^[101]
Conversion	<u>Monergistic</u> , ^[102] through the means of grace, <u>irresistible</u> .	<u>Monergistic</u> , ^{[103][104]} through the <u>means of grace</u> , <u>resistible</u> . ^[105]	<u>Synergistic</u> , resistible due to the common grace of free will. ^[106]
Perseverance and apostasy	<u>Perseverance of the saints</u> : the eternally elect in Christ will certainly persevere in faith. ^[107]	Falling away is possible, ^[108] but God gives gospel <u>assurance</u> . ^{[109][110]}	<u>Preservation is conditional</u> upon continued faith in Christ; with the possibility of a final <u>apostasy</u> . ^[111]

Book Recommendation

This is a book about the foreknowledge of God and the free will of man, and as such is bound to cause controversy. This controversy will not be simple, but multi-faceted. Some people will have intellectual problems with this book because it challenges their pre-conceived ideas about God. Some will find the book emotionally uncomfortable because it threatens their sense of security. Others will grapple with the aspects of biblical interpretation, while others may find the implications for their daily Christian life particularly challenging.

Most people in the Church today would not consider reconciliation between the foreknowledge of God and the free will of man to be a “problem.” This may be because many people simply accept all they are taught in church without any question as to its biblical veracity or philosophical consistency. Some Christians may think merely bringing up the topic is unacceptable, since they believe controversy is to be avoided at all costs. There are many, though, who are not satisfied with spoon-fed doctrine and are eager to think about, research, and challenge everything they hear in an effort to increase their biblical understanding of God.

Does God Know the Future?

by Michael Saia

... my journey began as I was reading my Bible as part of my daily devotions. As I read Genesis 18:21, the phrase, “and if not, I will know” caught my attention. God said, “and if not, I will know!” I knew immediately I was faced with a dilemma. This concept of God did not agree with what I had learned about him. Would I believe what I had been taught by men, no matter how well meaning, or would I believe the word of God alone? I made the commitment to put God’s Word before any teaching of man, and that decision launched me into a thirty-year study on the foreknowledge of God. This book is a result of that research.

It is not my intention to cause any brother or sister undue doctrinal discomfort. Rather, my desire is to stimulate thought, Bible study, and discussion about an important aspect of God’s nature. In this investigation into an age-old dialogue, we can only humbly acknowledge that we do not have complete understanding of God, and that we all need to learn more about him from his Word.

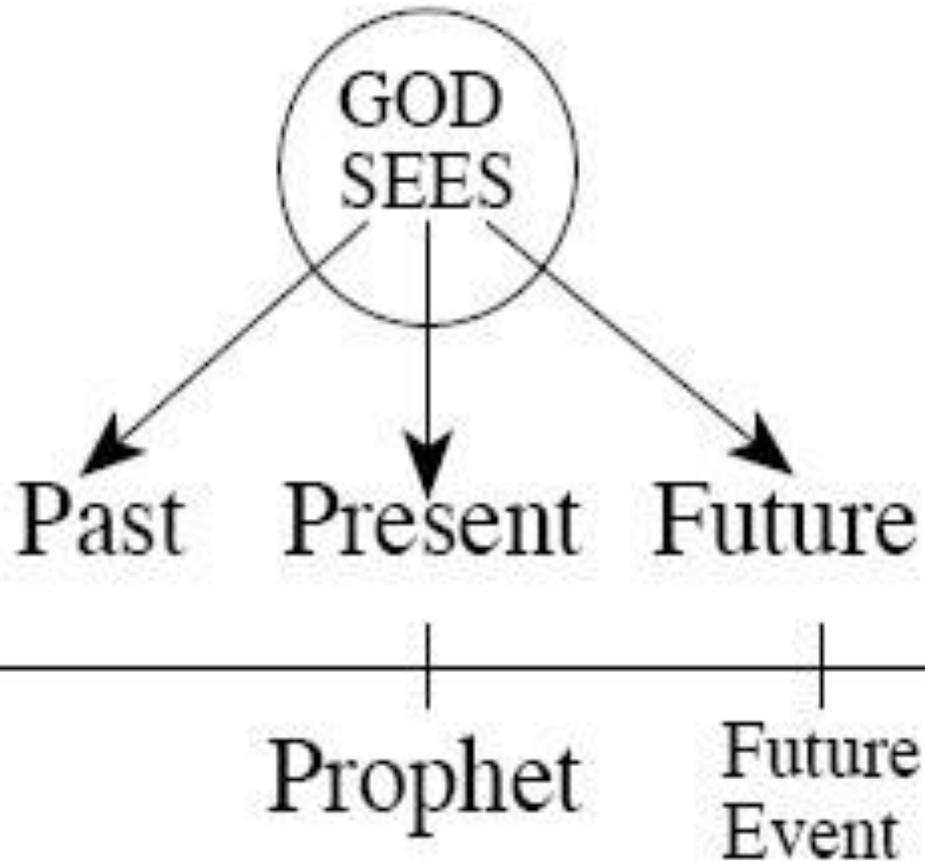
My hope is that this work will take the Church one more step in the direction of a radically-biblical concept of God. If this purpose is accomplished, I will be grateful.

Does God's will always come to pass?

- 2 Peter 3:9 -- It is not His will that "any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."
- Matthew 7:13-14 -- "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it."
- **What is the will of God?** That all be saved.
- **What will happen?** Only a few will be saved.
- **Does the will of God come to pass in this instance?** No.

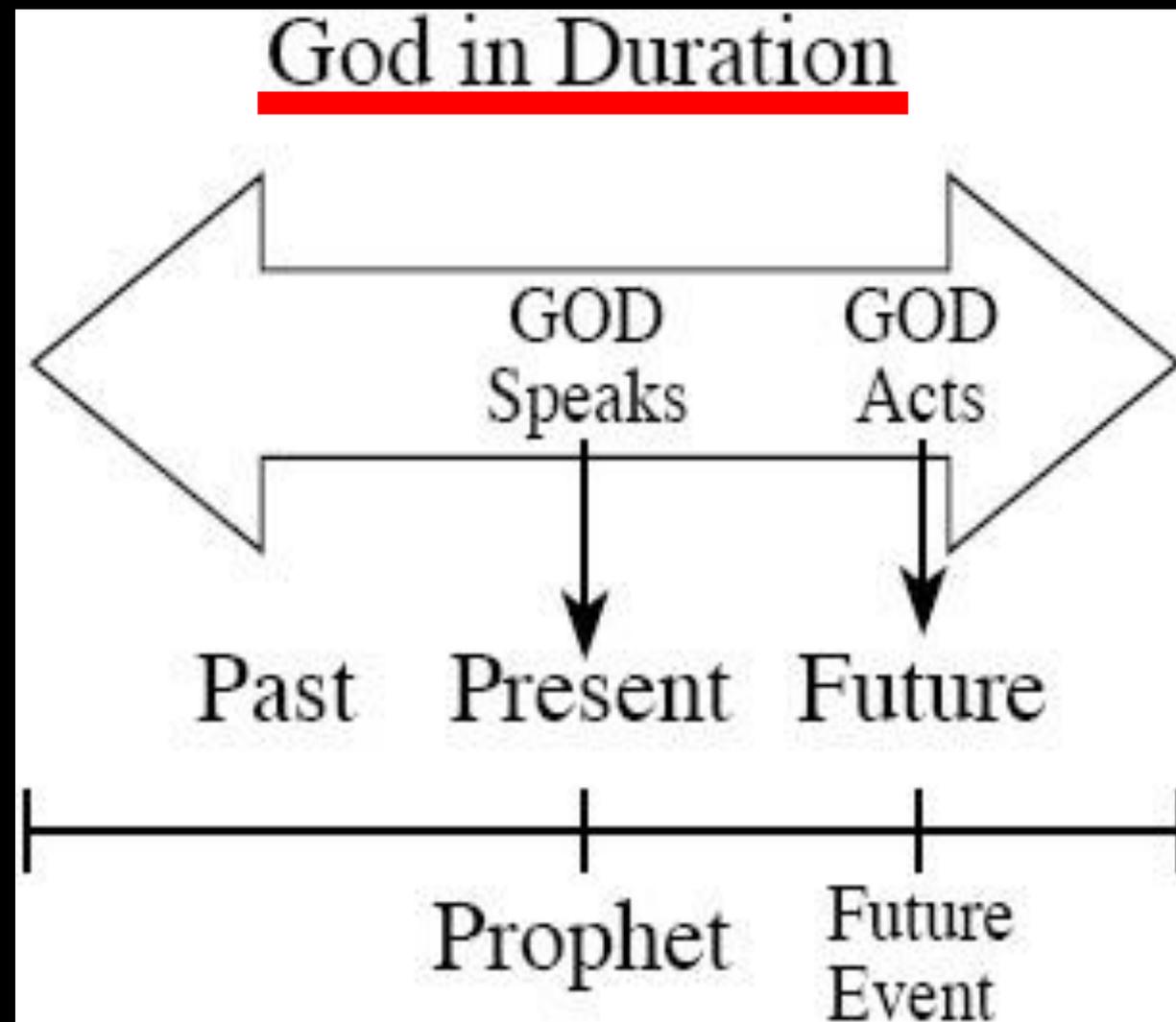


“Eternal Now”



In this illustration, God is outside of time seeing all events, past, present, and future. He then tells the prophet what will happen and the event happens as he has seen it.

In this illustration, God is in a duration, declaring to the prophet what He plans to do in the future. Then, when the time comes, God acts in history to bring about the prophesied events.



The "Eternal Now"

- PLATO - 350 BC

- Alfred North Whitehead once noted: "the safest general characterization of the European philosophical tradition is that it consists of a *series of footnotes to Plato*."

The "Eternal Now"

- PLATO - 350 B.C.
- St. Augustine - 400 A.D.
 - Plato's ideas were adopted and developed by the church father Saint Augustine, bishop of Hippo.
 - According to his contemporary, Jerome, Augustine "established anew the ancient Faith." In his early years, he was heavily influenced ... by the **Neo-Platonism** of Plotinus. After his baptism and conversion to Christianity in 387, Augustine developed his own approach to philosophy and theology, **accommodating a variety of methods and perspectives**. Believing that the grace of Christ was indispensable to human freedom, he **helped formulate the doctrine of original sin...**

The "Eternal Now"

- PLATO - 350 B.C.
- St. Augustine - 400 A.D.
- Anicius Boethius - 500 A.D. (Roman Philosopher)
 - He relied heavily on Plato and repeated and refined the logic of timelessness and foreknowledge, which he preferred to call providence.

The "Eternal Now"

- PLATO - 350 B.C.
- St. Augustine - 400 A.D.
- Anicius Boethius - 500 A.D. (Roman Philosopher)
- St. Anselm - 1100 A.D. (Archbishop of Canterbury)
 - Continued the propagation of the idea of **timelessness**

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It appears as if all the modern references to timelessness in God are in some way derived from or related to this history.

Scriptures which do not support foreknowledge:

Genesis 6:5-7 (1:31)	II Samuel 12:14, 22	Ezekiel 12:3
Genesis 18:20-21	II Samuel 24:16, 25 (I Chronicles 21:7-15)	Ezekiel 20:8-9, 13-14, 15-17, 21-22
Genesis 22:12	I Kings 21:21, 22, 27-29	Ezekiel 22:30
Exodus 4:8, 9	II Kings 20:5, 6 (Isaiah 38:1-5)	Ezekiel 24:14
Exodus 13:17, 18	II Chronicles 12:5-7	Hosea 8:5
Exodus 16:4	II Chronicles 32:31	Joel 2:12-14
Exodus 32:9-12, 147	Psalms 14:2; 53:2	Amos 7:1-3, 4-6
Exodus 33:5	Psalms 78:21-22; 58-61	Jonah 3:2, 10
Numbers 11:1	Psalms 106:23, 43-45	Jonah 4:2
Numbers 14:11, 27	Isaiah 5:3-7	Zechariah 8:14-15
Deuteronomy 8:2	Isaiah 63:8, 10	Matthew 19:28
Deuteronomy 13:1-3	Jeremiah 3:6, 7	Matthew 25:41
Judges 2:20-22 (3:4)	Jeremiah 7:31 (19:5, 32:35)	Mark 13:32 (Mt. 24:36; Acts 1:7)
Judges 10:13-16	Jeremiah 18:7-10	John 14:2
I Samuel 13:13-14	Jeremiah 26:2-3	Acts 15:7
I Samuel 15:11, 23, 26, 35	Jeremiah 26:13, 19	Revelation 3:5, 28
II Samuel 7:10-11 (I Chronicles 17:9, 10)	Ezekiel 2:5, 7	

Prayer and Absolute Foreknowledge

Does it do any good to pray? Our natural intuition tells us it must, but the idea of absolute foreknowledge dictates otherwise. Are there events which will not happen because we failed to petition God? Does prayer itself have any meaning if God knew from all eternity what we would say? If the answer to our prayers is already a known fact to God, can we change history by intercession? These and other questions become serious roadblocks to a person's prayer life if he espouses the doctrine of absolute foreknowledge.