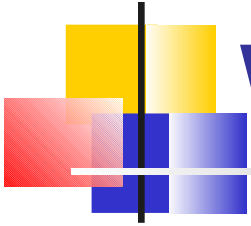




History of Christianity

Why do I believe the Bible is true



What is at stake ?

Is there a God ?

No

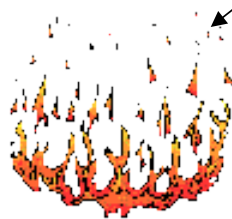
Yes

Have fun NOW !

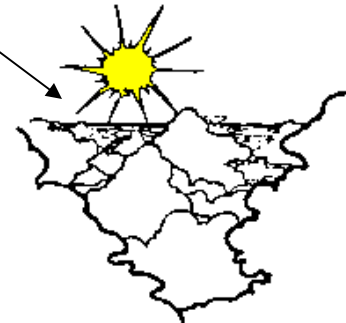
Which God is the real one ?



Wrong God



Right God





Purpose of this presentation

- Give you an idea on how Christianity developed during the **first 3 centuries**
- Provide historically verified evidence of the **faith of the founders of Christianity**
- Give you evidence that the **Bible is true**



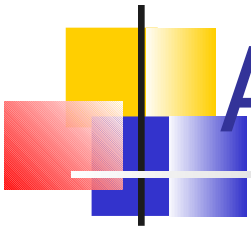
Is the Bible really true ?

- Evidence 1:
 - Historical Accuracy
- Evidence 2:
 - Personal testimonies of their founders
(discussed as part of the History of Christianity)

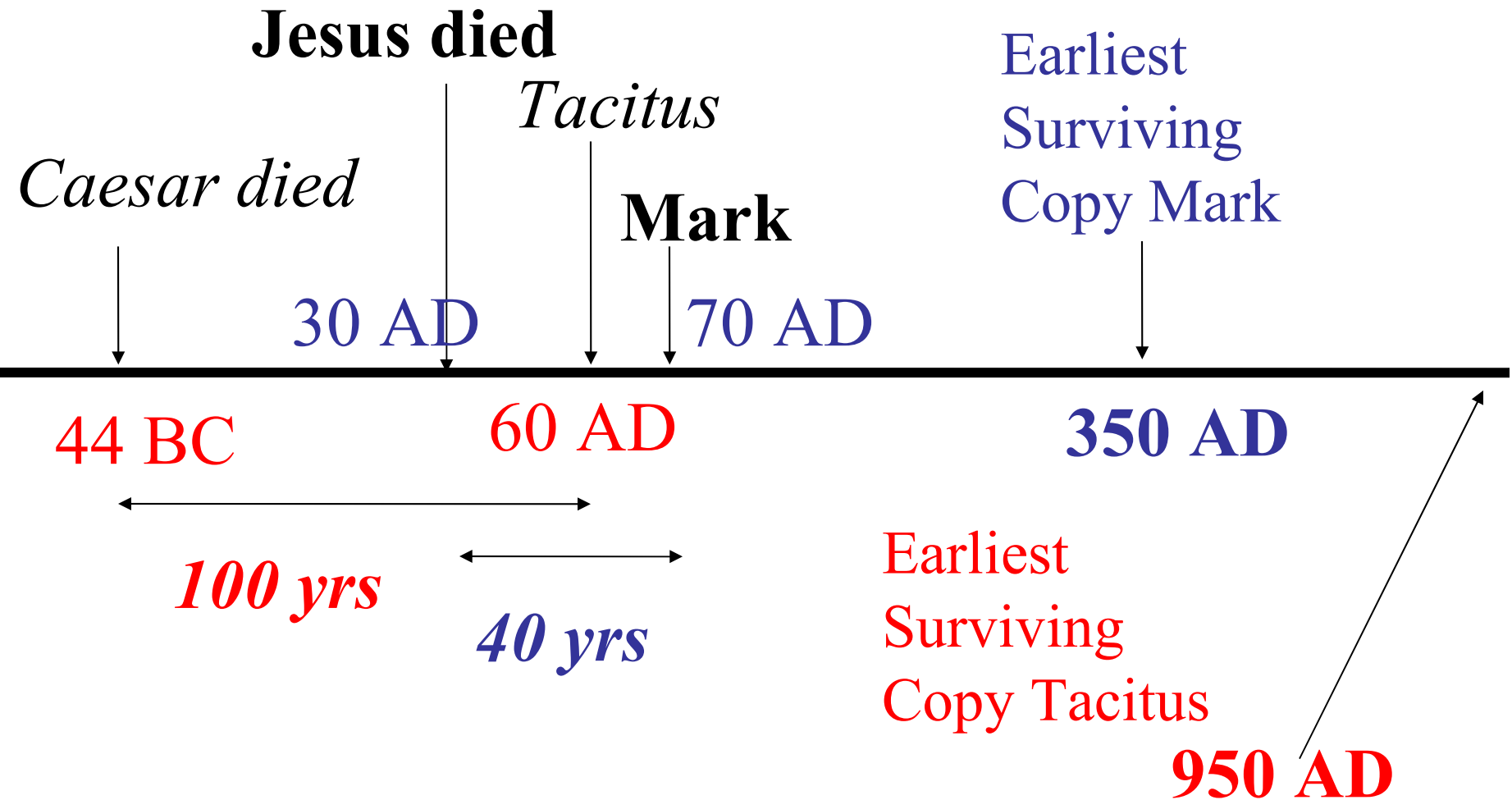


Historical Accuracy of the Bible

- Memory fades
- Written records do not fade
- Obvious fact:
 - The earlier the historical record is written, the more accurate it is !
- **So:** How does the New Testament compare with historical writings (about famous people) around the same time ?



Accuracy: Bible vs Julius Caesar





Accuracy of New Testament

- According to the scholars Norman Geisler and William Nix:
 - The New Testament has **survived in more manuscripts** than any other book from antiquity (there are over 5,000 copies of New Testament books in existence, while the second most numerous ancient document (Iliad) has about 600 copies)
 - New Testament has also **survived in a *purier* form than any other book** - *a form that is 99.5% pure*



History of Christianity

- Part 1:
 - When and How did Christianity begin ?
- Part 2:
 - Apostolic Era (first century)
- Part 3:
 - Era of the Church Fathers



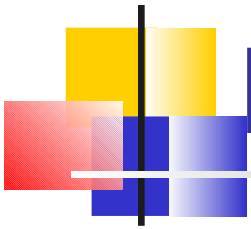
When did Christianity begin ?

- Jesus Christ did not start Christianity
- Christianity started by
 - Jesus' disciples (Peter, John, Matthew,..)
 - Jesus' brother James (in Jerusalem)
 - Paul (apostle to the gentiles)
- So anyone who would know whether Jesus really came back alive, it would be these people



Foundation of Christianity

- What is the ***one thing*** that the whole Christian faith is based on ?
 - ***Jesus' resurrection*** from the death
- Supporting material:
 - 1Co 15:14: "***And if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation is worthless, and your faith is also worthless.***"



Examining Jesus' resurrection

- Because this single fact is so important to the Christian Faith, we will spend some time looking at:
 - *Did Jesus really resurrect from His death ?*
- (1) Did Jesus really die ?
- (2) Did Jesus really come back to life ?



Did Jesus really die ?



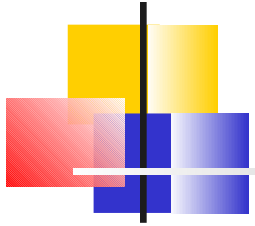
Undisputed: Jesus did die

- Jewish Historian **Josephus** (100 AD) wrote (***non-Christian*** !):
 - Now there was about this time **Jesus...**, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. And when **Pilate**, at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us, **had condemned him to the cross....**



Undisputed: Jesus did die

- Roman Historian **Tacitus** (60 AD) wrote in his Annals:
 - Consequently, to get rid of the report, Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace. **Christus**, from whom the name (Christians) had its origin, **suffered the extreme penalty** during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, **Pontius Pilatus**...



Did Jesus come back to life ?



Did Jesus came back to life ?

- No way to prove to you that an event happen, unless you see it yourself
 - Travel back in time to meet Jesus ?
- People can tell the truth
- People can also tell fairy tales (lies)
- What **sane** people will not do is:
 - Give up their life for a belief that they know it is a lie



Evidence of Jesus' resurrection

- *Strong evidence that Jesus did:*
 - Change in behavior of Jesus disciples
 - Confession of Paul
 - Change in behavior of Jesus' brother James
- The strongest evidence:
 - The willingness of Jesus' disciples, Paul and James to die for their belief in Jesus' resurrection



A bit of human psyche...

- A sane man may die for a belief that he believes to be true (if that belief is not true, then this man has been fooled to give up his life)
- No sane man will die for a belief that he knows to be false
- Jesus' disciples knew the truth about Jesus' resurrection; and are willing to *give up their life* for this belief



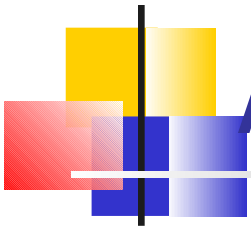
Evidence for Resurrection

- Put your money where your mouth is:
 - Peter was crucified in Rome in 66 AD
 - Paul was decapitated in Rome around the same time (66 AD)
 - James (brother of Jesus) was stoned to death in 62 AD in Jerusalem – James was the leader of the Church in Jerusalem
- No sane man will die for a belief that he knows it is untrue !!! These 3 did !!!



History of Christianity

- Part 1:
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Apostolic Era: Empowerment

33

Jesus' resurrection

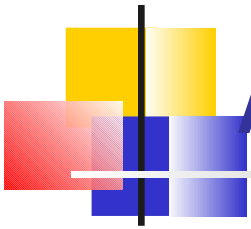
A few weeks later:

Peter and other disciples of Jesus announced Jesus' resurrection in Jerusalem

Peter and other disciples denied Jesus... (scared)

The disciples are not afraid for their lives...

Reason ???



Apostolic Era: Change of heart

33

37

38

66

Jesus' resurrection

Paul persecuted and killed Christians (according to his own words)

Paul was killed by Nero (because Paul was a Christian...)

According to Paul: he was converted to Christianity after seeing and speaking with the resurrected Jesus (Acts 9)



Apostolic Era: Change of heart

33

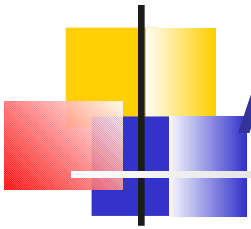
Jesus' resurrection

Jesus' brothers did not believe that He was the Son of God (in fact, they believed that He was crazy - John 7:3-5)

62

James (brother of Jesus) was stoned to death for his faith in Jesus

Jesus appeared to James after He has resurrected from the death (1 Co 15)... *Seeing a death person coming back to life will surely make someone into a believer...*



Apostolic Era: Early martyrs

33

37

42

47

49

Jesus' resurrection

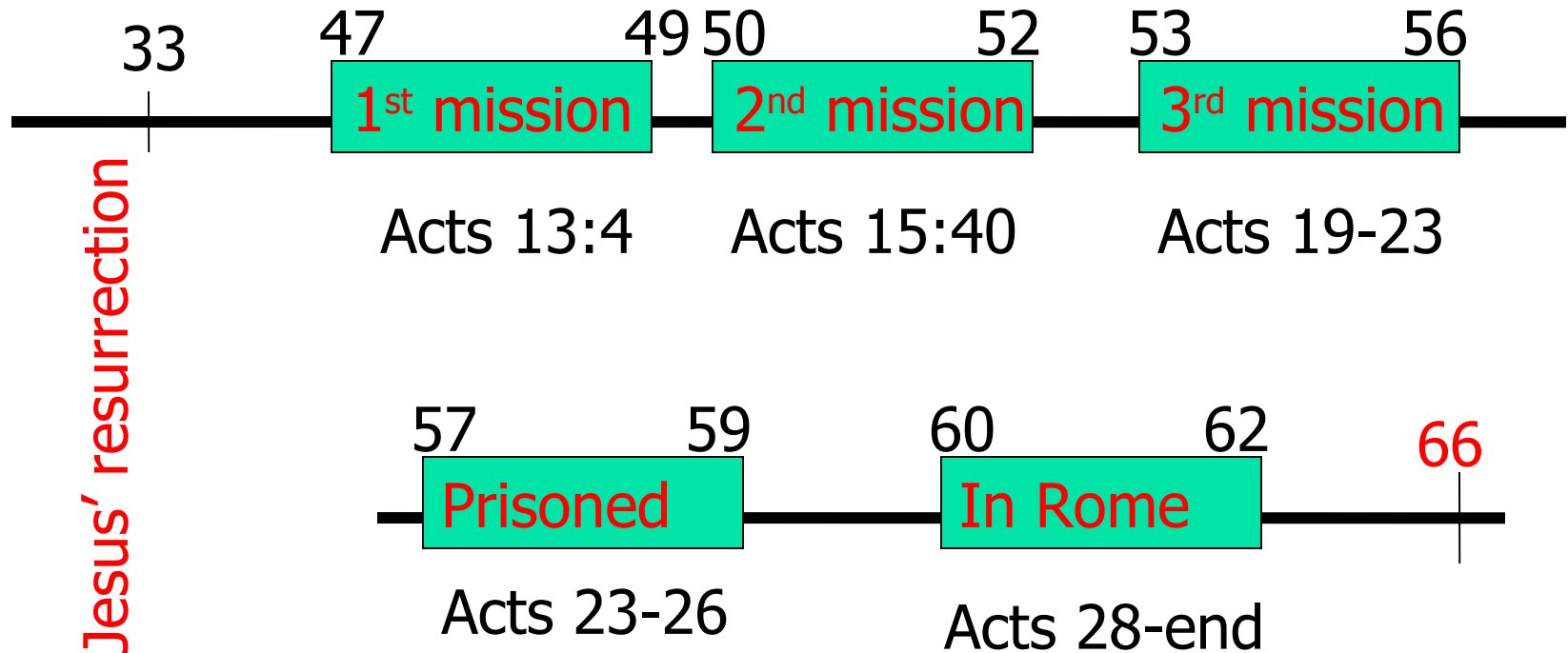
1st missionary mission of Paul (Acts 13-14)

Stephen (first martyr) dies at the hands of Saul (Paul) – Acts 9

James (brother of John) beheaded by Herod – Acts 12:2

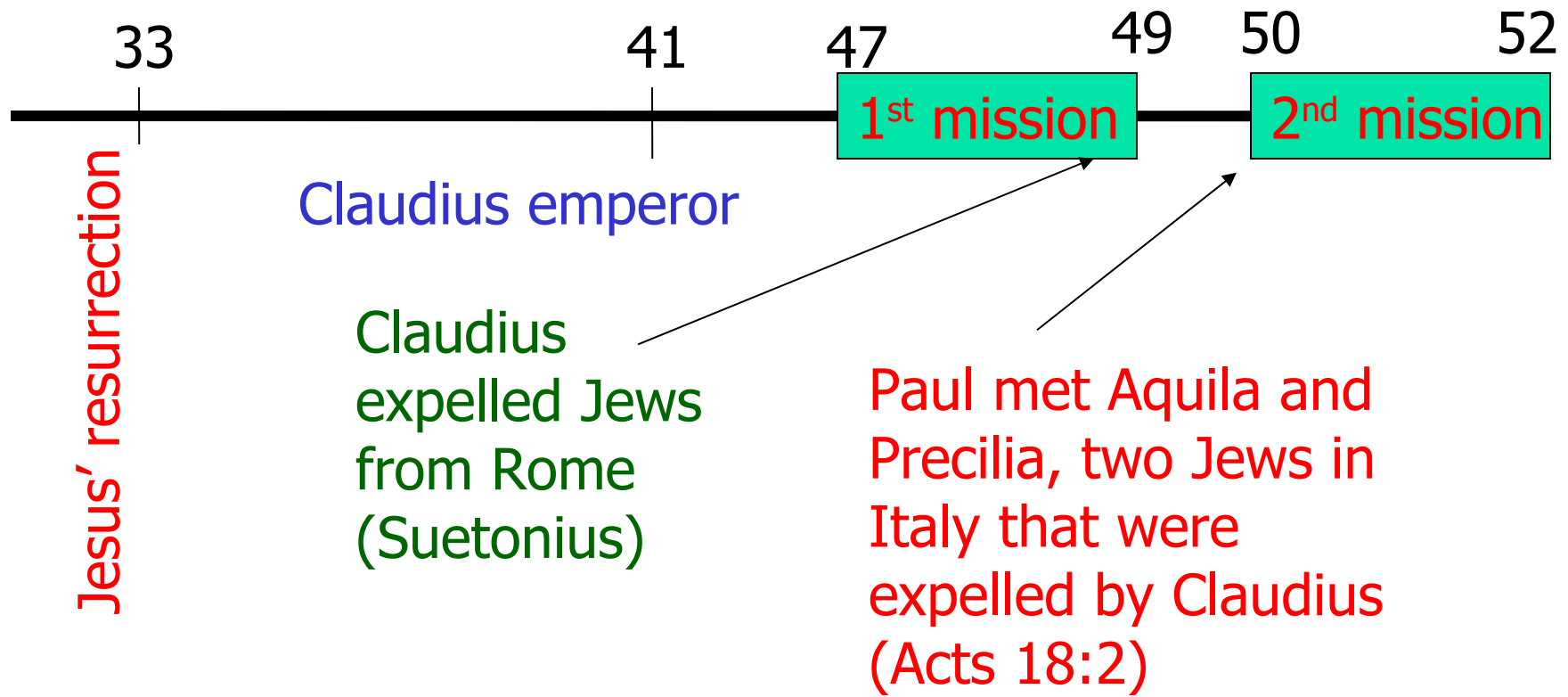


Apostolic Era: Paul's Missions





Apostolic Era: Verification





Apostolic Era: Persecutions

64

Rome burned By Nero

Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians (Tacitus)

"...a vast multitude, were convicted, not so much of the crime of incendiarism as of hatred of the human race. And in their deaths they were made the subjects of sport; for they were wrapped in the hides of wild beasts and torn to pieces by dogs, or nailed to crosses, or set on fire, and when day declined, were burned to serve for nocturnal lights."



History of Christianity

- Part 1:
 - When and How did Christianity begin ?
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 - Era of the Church Fathers



Post Apostolic: Persecutions

Pliny: 100 AD

"I have observed the following procedure: I interrogated these as to whether they were Christians; those who confessed I interrogated a second and a third time, threatening them with punishment; those who persisted I ordered executed...." – Pliny

"For the matter seemed to me to warrant consulting you, especially because of the number involved. For many persons of every age, every rank, and also of both sexes are and will be endangered..."



Post Apostolic: Persecutions

Decius: 249 - 251

"Under the emperor Decius many persecutions arose against the name of Christ, and there was such a slaughter of believers that they could not be numbered. Babillas, bishop of Antioch, with his three little sons, Urban, Prilidan and Epolon, and Xystus, bishop of Rome, Laurentius, an archdeacon, and Hyppolitus, were made perfect by martyrdom because they confessed the name of the Lord." – Gregory of Tours

Post Apostolic: Official Religion

312

Constantine emperor of the Western Roman Empire – fighting under the Christian Cross symbol (dream)

313

Edict of Milan: Christianity given same status as pagan religions

323

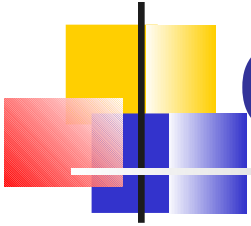
Constantine emperor of the WHOLE Roman Empire

324

Christianity only legal religion in Roman empire

325

Council of Nicaea



Council of Nicaea ala D. Brown

325

Jesus was not
considered
equal to God
before the Council

Council of Nicaea

Jesus was "made"
equal to God by a
close vote in the
Council

Dan Brown in a LIER



Evidence that D. Brown lies

- **Gospels** were written before 325 and they all state that Jesus is "**Son of God**"
- Pliny wrote:
 - Christians were accustomed to meet on a fixed day before dawn and sing responsively a hymn to **Christ as to a god**
- Worst of all:
 - The purpose of the Council of Nicaea was NOT to decide whether Jesus was God



Council of Nicaea

- 300+ Bishops met in Nicaea
- Main issue to decide was:
 - Arian Heresy
- Arius (256-336) taught that:
 - The Son was “begotten” – a created being
 - There was a time when the Son did not exist
- The Arian heresy was voted down by 298 against 2... (some close vote)



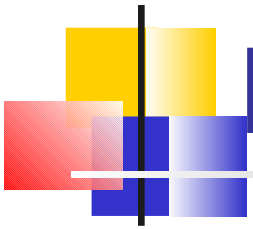
Final Thought

- How can we tell Bible is True ?
- What is the main difference between the Bible and other “holy books” ??
- John 14:29 “And now I have told you before it happens, so that when it happens you might believe.”
- Only God can know what will happen in the future
- Check out some **predictions** !!!



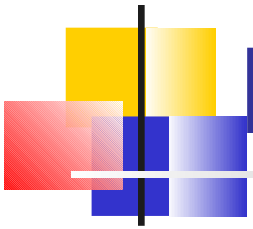
Prediction: Jews scattered

- Jer 9:16 *I will also scatter them among the nations, whom neither they nor their fathers have known.*
- After the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD by the Romans, Jews had no country of their own – they lived among other people for nearly 2000 yrs (until the UN formed the country of Israel in 1948)



Prediction: Israel will return

Jer 31:10 Hear the Word of Jehovah, O nations, and declare *it* in the coastlands afar off. And say, He **who** scattered Israel **will gather him** and **keep him**, as a shepherd *keeps* his flock.



Prediction: Israel will return

Hos 3:4 For the Israelites will live many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred stones, without ephod or idol.

Hos 3:5 **Afterward the Israelites will return** and seek the LORD their God and David their king. They will come trembling to the LORD and to his blessings **in the last days**



Prediction of fluke ?

- People from ancient history who had lost their country:
 - Assyrians (defeated by Babylonians)
 - Babylonians (by Persians)
 - Persians (by Greeks)
 - Romans (by different barbarians)
- How many of these survived more than a few generations?
 - NONE !!!
 - Why ?? They get absorbed into the people of the land !
The Jews are the only people not absorbed !!!



More predictions for you

- A temple for God will be built in Jerusalem – You will see this happen
- When Jews in Israel say “Peace and Safety”, they will be attacked. They will suffer utter defeat and persecution.
- You will see Jesus return (and when you do, and you are not yet a Christian, it is then too late for you...)