

Israel's 70th Year—Why It's Significant

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NUMBERS have meaning in Scripture.

The number 70, as shown in the examples below, symbolizes fullness, restoration, and an endpoint:

- The post-flood world was repopulated by 70 descendants of Noah, resulting in 70 nations (Gen. 10).
- Terah, the father of Abraham, was 70 years old when Abraham was born (Gen. 11:26).
- The Nation of Israel began with 70 Hebrews who migrated to Egypt (Ex. 1:1-5).
- Moses appointed 70 elders to be the governing body of Israel (Num. 11:16).
- Following the liberation from bondage in Egypt, the children of Israel camped at an oasis of 70 palm trees (Ex. 15:27).
- The Jews were liberated from captivity in Babylon after 70 years (Jer. 29:10).
- God's plan of redemption for Israel and Jerusalem is comprised of 70 weeks (Dan. 9:24-27).
- Jesus sent out 70 disciples to harvest the field of believers (Luke 10:1 KJV).
- A typical human lifespan is 70 years (Ps. 90:10).
- Israel's greatest ruler, King David, died at the age of 70 (2 Sam. 5:4).

Seeing how the number 70 symbolizes restoration, it's interesting that restoration-themed events in Israel's history tend to occur at a 70-year interval:

- From the destruction of the First Temple in 586 BC to the completion of the Second Temple in 515-16 BC is 70 years.
- From the completion of the Second Temple in 515-16 BC to the completion of the wall around Jerusalem in 445 BC is 70 years.

- From the UN vote in favor of the establishment of the modern State of Israel in 1947 to the first recognition by a foreign power (US) that Jerusalem is its capital in 2017 is 70 years.

The most significant 70-year intervals correspond to the dates 1948 and 1967:

- From the first modern Jewish settlement in the Land of Israel (Petah Tikvah) in 1878 to the birth of the Nation in 1948 is 70 years.
- From the first major step in reestablishing the State of Israel (First Zionist Congress) in 1897 to the final step (restoration of Jerusalem) in 1967 is 70 years.

Notice that both watershed events related to Israel’s restoration to the Land—the rebirth of the Nation in 1948 and the restoration of its capital in 1967—are preceded by a seminal event 70 years earlier. The odds against this occurring by chance are astronomical, suggesting divine orchestration.

While the events of 1948 and 1967 were vital to God’s plan to redeem the Jews and the Holy City, they did not represent the endpoint.¹ When we extend the pattern forward 70 years from 1948, we arrive at the biblical year spanning 2018-19.²

$$1878-79 + 70 = 1948-49 + 70 = 2018-19$$

2018-19 is a logical endpoint for the 70-year pattern because Jesus says the generation who sees Israel reborn will see the end of the age (Matt 24:32-34). A generation is defined as 70 years in Scripture (Ps. 90:10).

Another reason 2018-19 is a logical endpoint for the 70-year pattern is that it represents the third date-milepost. The number three signifies completeness of testimony in Scripture:

“This will be my third visit to you. ‘Every matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses’” (2 Cor. 13:1).

CONVERGENCE

In addition to the 70 years from 1948, a timeline in Daniel’s weeks prophecy (9:24-27) points to 2018-19. In verse 25, the angel Gabriel reveals how many weeks (seven-year periods) will elapse from the time a decree is issued to rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince comes to rule:

“Know and understand this: From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, until the Messiah, the Prince, there will be seven weeks and sixty two weeks” (Dan. 9:25).

The modern-day rebuilding of Jerusalem began in 1969.³ When we add Daniel’s seven weeks, or 49 years, to this date we arrive at 2018-19.

1969 + 49 = 2018-19

What are the odds that Israel's prophetic 70th year would correspond to the 49th year since the rebuilding of Jerusalem began?

If the 70/49 convergence in 2018-19 isn't uncanny enough, here's another: The "seven weeks and sixty-two weeks" in Daniel's prophecy add up to 483 years. When we add 483 years to the time that an earlier decree to rebuild Jerusalem's walls was issued in 1535 AD by the Ottoman Emperor Suleiman, we, again, arrive at 2018-19.

1535 AD + 483 = 2018-19

Thus, we have three key eschatological timelines pointing to 2018-19. But there's more. Israel's 70th year also corresponds to the calculated 6,000th year from Creation, the time that the seventh thousand-year (millennial) day known as the "Day of the Lord" begins.⁴

6,000 AD - 3982-83 BC (Creation of Adam) = 2018-19

PEACE AND SAFETY

Another factor pointing to 2018-19 is the drafting of a Middle East peace plan dubbed the "Deal of the Century." This is crucial because the fundamental sign given by Paul to the Church to identify the season of the Rapture is people saying "peace and safety":

"Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command ... and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air Now, brothers and sisters, about times and dates [of this event] we do not need to write to you, for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, 'Peace and safety,' destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape" (1 Thess. 4:13, 16, 17; 5:1-3).

While there have been a number of peace plans proposed since the restoration of Jerusalem in 1967, the Deal of the Century is the only one to coincide with a convergence of key eschatological timelines, begging the question: if the talk of peace and safety in 2018-19 isn't that which Paul was alluding to, then what could he have been alluding to, and how will we recognize it when it occurs?

Assuming that Paul's peace-and-safety sign is manifesting before our eyes, consider the ominous scenario: Daniel's weeks prophecy assigns a period of 70 weeks (490 years) to redeem the Jews and Jerusalem. In 2018-19, exactly 70 years after the Jews' return to the Land, and 49 years after Jerusalem was restored as its capital, a peace plan has been drafted that purportedly aims to divide the Holy City.

Do you see the problem?

God's plan calls for the restoration of the Holy City, while the world's plan is to divide it. Dividing Jerusalem is prohibited because it belongs to the One who will reign there during the millennium (Jer. 3:17). The Lord has been patient for decades as Israel has tried to secure peace by giving away land. A plan that aims to divide the Land around the 6,000th year from creation, however—the time that Messiah the Prince is set to take possession—explains why destruction will come “suddenly” upon those saying peace and safety (1 Thess. 5:3).

PARALLELS TO PONDER

Exile—

Ancient Israel was exiled *physically* from the Land for 70 years. Is it possible that modern Israel's 70 years represent a time of *spiritual* exile in which the Jews are present in the Land yet separated from the heart of Messiah? The physical exile preceding the spiritual makes sense in light of Paul's teaching that the physical man, Adam, precedes the spiritual, Jesus (1 Cor. 15:45-49).

Judgment—

When Israel's 70 years of exile were complete, God judged Babylon (Jer. 29:12). Could the completion of modern-day Israel's 70th year mark the beginning of judgment for “spiritual Babylon,” i.e. the world?

Holocaust—

2018-19 marks 80 years since the beginning of the seven-year Holocaust period (1938-45).⁵ Could 2018-19 also mark the beginning of the ultimate time of Jacob's Trouble? History records that during the Holocaust an estimated two thirds of the Jewish population of Europe was systematically murdered. Similarly, Zechariah says that two thirds of Israel will perish during the Tribulation: “In all the land, declares the LORD, ‘two-thirds will be cut off and perish, but a third will be left in it. This third I will bring through the fire; I will refine them like silver and test them like gold’” (Zech. 13:8, 9).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In the Bible, the number 70 signifies fullness, restoration, and an endpoint.

It's significant that the numbers 71 through 80 do *not* typify restoration or an endpoint in any comparable way in Scripture.

Israel's 70th year, ending spring 2019,⁶ marks the convergence of four prophetic timespans and the drafting of the most anticipated Middle East peace plan in half a century. If this once-in-history

convergence is God's way of declaring the season of His return, the world may soon see the Rapture and the beginning of the Tribulation week. In this scenario, the Church's redemption occurs "seven sevens" after Jerusalem's rebuilding began, while Israel's redemption occurs after "seventy sevens," at the end of Daniel's 70th week. The dividing line that separates the Church Age from the time of Jacob's Trouble is Israel's 70th year.

Spelled out another way:

7 x 10 (70) = end of the Church Age/start of Tribulation⁷

7 x 7 (49) = Church's redemption (rapture)

7 x 70 (490) = Israel's redemption (resurrection)⁸

Notice that in each case multiples of God's perfect number "7" signify ultimate perfection and completion.

Having put forth a scenario, it goes without saying that we cannot set a time limit on Jesus' return. No man knows the day, and Scripture is clear that our prophetic range of vision is limited on this side of the last trump (1 Cor. 13:13; Matt. 24:36-44).

On the other hand, believers should understand that nowhere in the Bible is *speculation* about the year or season of the Rapture discouraged. In fact, believers are *encouraged* to study the clues, to recognize the season, and be watching when the Lord returns (Heb. 10:25; Luke 12:37; 21:28; Ezek. 33:6). This is why the numbers and timelines are included in Scripture: This is why Daniel provides the countdowns of "weeks" to Messiah (9:25). This is why Jesus links the time of His return to the rebirth of Israel and a definite (generation) timespan (Matt. 24:32-34; Ps. 90:10). This is why Scripture is brimming with typologies like the 70 years in Babylon, which commentators agree is a picture of humanity's time of separation or exile in the fallen world.

Around 2,560 years ago, when the 70 years of Babylonian captivity were nearly over, Daniel understood by Jeremiah's prophecy that the time of liberation was at hand:

"You will be in Babylon for seventy years. But then I will come and do for you all the good things I have promised, and I will bring you home" (Jer. 29:10).

Today, as the end of Israel's 70th year draws near, many are coming to understand by the prophecies that *our* time of liberation is at hand. Like Daniel, we're not privy to the day or hour, but we know that it's soon.

NOTES:

1). Additional evidence that 1948 and 1967 are central dates in God's plan of redemption:

- Abraham, the father of the Nation of Israel, was born 1,948 years from Creation.
- The years 1948 and 1967 have been shown by scholars like Dr. Ken Johnson and Ellis H. Skolfield to have been mathematically predicted in Scripture.
- The years 1948 and 1967 were highlighted by total lunar eclipses on biblical feast days, evoking the prophecies about the moon being turned to blood before the great and terrible day of the Lord (Joel 2:31).
- The wars fought in 1948 and 1967 (the War of Independence and the Six Day War) were accompanied by a host of miraculous events that tipped the scales of victory in Israel's favor.
- The 19th book and 48th chapter in the Bible (Psalm 48) describe the rebirth of Israel.
- The numbers 19 and 48 add up to 67, which is the year that Israel's capital, Jerusalem, was restored.
- Gold is heated to exactly 1,948 degrees (1948) Fahrenheit during the refining process. Scripture compares Israel's deliverance during Jacob's trouble to the refining and purification process of precious metal (Zech. 13:9).
- During Israel's 70th anniversary, a comet discovered in 1948 made its closest flyby since that time. On the day of optimal viewing, the comet passed within a few degrees of the star cluster Pleiades, which is said to be a heavenly representation of the Church.
- When we add 1,948 years to 70 AD (the year the Second Temple was destroyed), we arrive at the biblical year spanning 2018-19. When we reverse the numbers and add 70 years to 1948 we, again, arrive at 2018-19.
- $1948 + 70 \text{ years} = 2018-19$. 2018-19 marks 70 jubilees from the time of the Exodus (circa 1500 BC), when Israel was called out as a Nation. Thus, 2018-19 marks 70 jubilees since Israel's *original* birth and 70 years since the nation was born a *second time*. Some put the Exodus at 1522 BC, which means the Jews entered the land of Canaan circa 1482 BC. If this calculation is correct, as of 2018-19 it has been exactly 3,500 years, or 70 jubilees, since the Jews first entered the Promised Land.

2). Biblical years begin and end on Nisan 1 in the spring (Ex. 12: 1, 2).

3). In 1969, the Jewish Quarter Development Company was established under the auspices of the Construction and Housing Ministry to rebuild the desolate Old City of Jerusalem: <https://www.rova-yehudi.org.il/company-profile/>

May 9, 1969 headline about the rebuilding of Jerusalem from the St. Petersburg Times:

“Jerusalem Restoration On High Priority List”

“JERUSALEM -- One of the most dramatic restoration projects in the history of cities is forging ahead in the ancient walled city of Jerusalem. The reconstruction of the Jewish quarter of the Old city, lost to the Jews in the 1948 war after centuries of occupancy, is one of the high priority projects of the Israeli government.”

It’s interesting that from the day the above article was published in 1969 (May 9) to Israel’s Independence Day in 2019 (May 9) is exactly 50 years. (Israelis observe their Independence Day according to the Hebrew calendar date. Modern-day Israel was born on the Hebrew calendar day Iyyar 5, corresponding to May 9 in 2019.)

https://www.officeholidays.com/countries/israel/independence_day.php

4). Based on the genealogies in Genesis, D. Petavius determined that Adam was created in 3,983 BC.

5). The Holocaust (1938-45) is a type of Jacob’s Trouble, or Tribulation: The first major actions against the Jews (KrySTALLNacht, decrees banning business and property ownership, and ordinances banning attendance at public schools) began in Germany in 1938. In 1939 Germany invaded Poland (considered to be the start of World War II) and began opening forced labor camps and ghettos to segregate and confine Jews. Major killing operations began in 1941 and peaked between 1942 and 1945 when World War II ended. Interestingly, from the end of the Holocaust on May 9, 1945 (V-Day) to the anniversary of Israel’s rebirth in 2019 (Iyyar 5) is exactly 888 months.

<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/1938-key-dates>

<https://www.ushmm.org/learn/timeline-of-events/1942-1945>

6). The biblical year ends Nisan 1 (April 6-7) in 2019. Counting from Israel’s May 14, 1948 birthday, the 70th year ends May 14 (Gregorian) or May 9-10 (Hebrew) in 2019.

7). The numbers 7 and 10 symbolize perfection and completion in Scripture. The number 70, a combination of these two perfect numbers, represents an intensification of the themes, thus denoting *ultimate* perfection and completion.

8). 7 x 70 (490) denotes an ultimate end, and redemption, or forgiveness of sin:

- A total of 70 bulls are sacrificed during the seven-day Feast of Tabernacles (70 x 7), which will be fulfilled at the end of the seven-year tribulation, marking the end of the 70th week (7 X 70).
- In both Daniel and Matthew, “seventy sevens,” or 490, is the number linked to the ultimate forgiveness of sin (Dan. 9:24-27; Matt. 18:21, 22).