

Israel's 70th Anniversary and Our Liberation From Babylon

By T.W. Tramm

APRIL 20 marks the 70th anniversary of the rebirth of the Nation of Israel.¹

Israel's 70th birthday is a major prophetic milestone as 70 years denote a generation in Scripture. Jesus says the generation who sees Israel reborn will also see His return (Ps. 90:10; Matt. 24:32-34).

Another reason Israel's 70th birthday is prophetically significant is the typology of the Jews' liberation from captivity in Babylon in the 70th year. A brief synopsis: At a time of spiritual apostasy and moral apathy in Israel, Jeremiah prophesied that desolation would come upon the Land by way of a conquering King, and that the Jews would be exiled to Babylon for 70 years:

"Because you have not listened to my words, I will summon all the peoples of the north and my servant Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon ... and I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants This whole country [Israel] will become a desolate wasteland, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years" (Jer. 25: 8, 9, 11).

After the 70 years were complete, the Lord would judge Babylon and bring the Jews back home to Jerusalem:

"When the seventy years are fulfilled, I will punish the king of Babylon and his nation..." (v. 12).

"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).

Bible commentators agree that the liberation from Babylon foreshadows the liberation of believers from the world, i.e. "spiritual Babylon," at the Lord's return. Babylon is a type of the world because, on the whole, they bear the same attributes: idolatry, pride, ungodliness, spiritual adultery, and corruption. The ancient City of Babylon was enveloped by Satan's influence, and so is the world.

With the Babylon typology in view, let's consider six parallels between the Jews' release from captivity in ancient Babylon and our release from *spiritual* Babylon at the Rapture.

REDEMPTION

Ancient Babylon: The liberation from ancient Babylon is referred to as a "redeeming" (Mic. 4:10; Isa. 48:20).

Spiritual Babylon: Our bodily transformation at the Rapture is referred to as a “redemption” (Rom. 8:23). Additionally, redemption is the term applied to the release of slaves and return of property in the “year of redemption,” or Jubilee, which also typifies the Rapture.

LIBERATED BY AN ANOINTED ONE

Ancient Babylon: The Jews’ liberation from ancient Babylon was secured by the Persian Emperor Cyrus (Ezra 1:1-2). Cyrus, referred to as the “anointed one of God” in Scripture (Isa. 45:1), is widely acknowledged to be a type of Messiah, or Christ.²

Spiritual Babylon: Our liberation from spiritual Babylon at the Rapture is secured by the principal Anointed One, Jesus Christ.

SOME STAY BEHIND

Ancient Babylon: When the release from Babylon was granted suddenly via Cyrus’ decree, only a fraction of the Jews, “those whose heart God had moved” (Ezra 1:5), immediately returned home to Jerusalem.³

Spiritual Babylon: At the Rapture, only those whose heart is indwelt by God’s Spirit will return home immediately to heavenly Jerusalem.

BABYLON IS JUDGED

Ancient Babylon: At the time of Israel’s liberation from ancient Babylon, the great city was judged (Jer. 25:12).⁴

Spiritual Babylon: At the time of the Rapture, the Lord will commence judgment on the world.

One of the most important and *timely* correlations between the Jews’ release from Babylon and our release from spiritual Babylon is that the year is revealed in Scripture.

THE YEAR IS KNOWN

Ancient Babylon: The length of the Jews’ captivity in ancient Babylon was revealed ahead of time in Scripture: the Israelites would be in Babylon 70 years (Jer. 25:11). It was by studying the prophecies and doing the math that Daniel understood the 70 years were up and that freedom was at hand (Dan. 9:1).

Spiritual Babylon: The length of our captivity in spiritual Babylon is inferred in multiple scriptures. The first instance is in Genesis where God says He will contend with mortal man no longer than 120 years (Gen. 6:3). Because God is *still* contending with mortal/fallen man, we assume He was referring to jubilees. Thus, the Lord will cease contending with mortal man at the 120th jubilee, corresponding to the 6,000th year of biblical history.

Another instance in which the year of our liberation is inferred is the fig-tree prophecy, which says the generation who sees Israel reborn will also see Jesus' return (Matt. 24:32-34). Because a typical generation is 70 years, the 70th year following the Jews' return to the Land is inferred.

A third instance in which the year of our liberation from spiritual Babylon is inferred is in Daniel's weeks prophecy, which states, "*From the issuing of the decree to return to and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince will be seven weeks [49 years, or one jubilee cycle]*" (Dan. 9:25). Assuming verse 25 applies to the latter (end-times) return to Jerusalem, we can expect Messiah the Prince to appear one jubilee cycle later.

Thus, in three different prophecies, Scripture infers the year of our liberation by providing a quantity of years and a starting point from which to begin the count. What is remarkable, and what has many prophecy watchers excited about this year, is that when we match the three countdowns to the starting points, all converge on the biblical year spanning 2017-18:

- 2017-18 marks the 120th Jubilee, i.e. the calculated 6,000th year since biblical Creation.⁵
- 2017-18 marks the 70th anniversary of the rebirth of the State of Israel.⁶
- 2017-18 marks the 50th anniversary of the Jews' prophetic return to Jerusalem.⁷

To appreciate the off-the-charts improbability of the above convergence, consider that it depends on the two most important prophetic events in nearly two millennia—the rebirth of Israel and the restoration of Jerusalem—occurring twenty years apart and also 70 and 50 years before the calculated 6,000th year since Creation. If either event had occurred just months earlier, or *any other time* during the last 2,000 years, we would not be having this conversation.

In addition to the improbability factor, a number of other signs, events, and alignments testify to 1948 and 1967 being crucial milepost dates:

- The dates 1948 and 1967 were highlighted proximately 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 miracles that tipped the scales of victory in Israel's favor.

- The dates 1948 and 1967 have been shown by scholars like Dr. Ken Johnson, Ellis H. Skolfield, and others to have been *literally*, i.e., mathematically, predicted in Scripture.

Assuming 1948 and 1967 are the correct starting points, it's simply a matter of counting the years to the end of the age. When we count the 70 and 50 years from 1948 and 1967 we arrive at 2017-18, the calculated 6,000th year since Creation.

Could 2018 be the year of our liberation from spiritual Babylon? It depends on whether we've interpreted the prophecies and done the math correctly. Nonetheless, it's thrilling to consider the prospect and also the parallel to ancient times: just as Daniel was able to count the years to determine the time of release was at hand, we are now seemingly able to count the years to determine the time of our release. The numbers have been in Scripture all along, though the math could only be done after the Jews returned to the Land.

Let's conclude by considering one last parallel between the ancient liberation from Babylon and our liberation at the Rapture.

THE WRITING IS ON THE WALL

The Babylonian King Belshazzar was aware of the prophecy that declared the Jews would be in captivity for 70 years and that Babylon would be judged upon their release (Jer. 25:11-12). According to the Talmud, Belshazzar was concerned about this prophecy and, therefore, kept count of the 70 years. Though, as fate would have it, he apparently miscalculated by one year. When the year of the expected release and judgment arrived and nothing happened, Belshazzar assumed that God had abandoned the Jews and that the prophecy concerning Babylon's judgment would not come to pass.⁸ To celebrate, the King put on a huge feast at which his consorts and concubines drank from the cups taken from the Lord's Temple as they praised their own false gods made of "gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone" (Dan. 5:1-4). That night, an apparitional hand appeared and wrote something on the wall. The inscription read as follows:

MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN

Belshazzar, shaken to the core, could not read the message. He called on his astrologers and diviners to decipher the meaning, but they could not read it either. Eventually, the prophet Daniel was summoned to the banquet hall to decipher the message. Daniel, full of wisdom and the knowledge of the Lord, had no trouble reading the writing on the wall. It said:

"God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end. You have been weighed on the scales and found wanting. Your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians" (Dan. 5:25-28).

That same night, the Persians and Medes attacked, killing the King and all his party.

The modern-day parallel to the above ancient type is patent: The writing on the wall says “*time is up*” for the final generation, yet most inhabitants of spiritual Babylon are oblivious. If the ancient pattern holds, as they tend to do in Bible prophecy, the ungodly inhabitants of Babylon are in for a terrible surprise. They will be “eating and drinking”—just like the King and his party—when judgment comes upon them like a flood (Matt. 24:37-39).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In this study we have shown how the liberation from ancient Babylon in the 70th year typifies the ultimate liberation of believers at the Rapture. The world is our Babylon. The number 70 denotes the length of our sojourn here.

As of April/May 2018, it will have been a full 70 years, the span of a biblical generation, since Israel’s rebirth as a Nation. According to the calculations of some scholars, it will also have been 3,500 years, or *exactly 70 jubilees*, since the newly birthed Nation of Israel entered the Promised Land.⁹ This convergence of “70s,” along with the 6,000-year count, the 50-year count, and a host of other numerical alignments, suggests we’re living in the final hours of captivity in spiritual Babylon.

As it was in ancient times, so it is today. Some have wrongly counted the years and are assuming that judgment has been cancelled or postponed. Those who have wisdom, however, can read the writing on the wall. It says:

“God has numbered the days of this generation and is bringing it to an end.”

Worshippers of Babylon, be warned.

Worshippers of the Lord, be encouraged.

Jesus is coming soon!

. . .

NOTES:

1. Israelis observe their Independence Day according to the Hebrew calendar date. The Nation of Israel was born on the Hebrew calendar day Iyar 5, corresponding to May 14 in 1948. In 2018 Iyar 5 corresponds to April 20.

2. Cyrus as a type of Messiah: http://www.heraldmag.org/2003/03so_6.htm

3. Why many Jews remained in Babylon: <https://www.gotquestions.org/all-Jews-return-Jerusalem.html>

4. The subsequent verses in Jeremiah 25 (15-38) speak of *all* the nations being judged. So shall it be during the Day of the Lord.

5. **6,000 YEARS SINCE CREATION**

The biblical genealogy as formulated and published by biblical scholar Dionysius Petavius in 1627:

Adam to Seth

130 years

Seth to Enosh

105 years

Enosh to Kenan

90 years

Kenan to Mahalalel

70 years

Mahalalel to Jared

65 years

Jared to Enoch

162 years

Enoch to Mathuselah

65 years

Mathuselah to Lemech

187 years

Lemech to Noah

182 years

Noah at the time of the flood

600 YEARS GENESIS 7:11

Total: 1656 years

2 years after the flood Shem had Arphaxed

Arphaxed to Shelah

35 years

Shelah to Eber

30 years

Eber to Peleg

34 years

Peleg to Reu

30 years

Reu to Serug

32 years

Serug to Nahor

30 years

Nahor to Terah

29 years

Terah to Abram (Abraham) 70 years

135 years later Terah died

Total: 427 years

GENESIS 12:4

Abram as 75 years old when Terah died and God told him to leave Haran. Genesis 17:1 Abram was 99 when God made the Covenant 75 to 99 = 24 years

24 Years

GALATIANS 3:16-17

EXODUS 12:40

From the time of the Covenant to the year of the Exodus was

430 years

I KINGS 6:1

From the Exodus to the fourth year of King Solomon was

480 years

The fourth year of King Solomon when he began the building of the temple

966 years

Adding the above numbers (1,656 + 427 + 24 + 430 + 480 + 966) we arrive at 3,983 BC for the creation of Adam. Subtracting 3,983 years from 6,000 we arrive at 2017-18.

6. FIG TREE GENERATION (70 YEARS SINCE ISRAEL REBORN)

November 2017 marked a full 70 (Gregorian) years since the United Nations voted in favor of the establishment of the Modern State of Israel in 1947. May 2018 will mark a full 70 (Gregorian) years since the modern State of Israel declared independence in 1948.

7. JUBILEE CALCULATION (50 YEARS FROM 1967)

The last jubilee year presumably spanned Nisan of 1967 to Nisan 1968. (The prophetic return to Jerusalem during the Six day War occurred within this timeframe). The new cycle of 49 years began at Nisan 1968 and ended at Nisan 2017. The 50th (jubilee) year began at Nisan 2017 and ends at Nisan 2018. NOTE: There is no fall/Tishrei

calculation (based on a 1967 terminus a quo) that puts us presently, as of 2018, in a jubilee year. A 49-year cycle beginning in the fall of 1967 results in the 50th (jubilee) year spanning the fall of 2016 to fall 2017.

8. Talmud – Megillah 11b <https://www.sefaria.org/Megillah.11b?lang=bi>

9. Calculations vary widely as to the year of the Exodus and subsequent entry into the Promised Land 40 years later. 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 it has been exactly 3,500 years, i.e. *70 jubilees*, since the Jews first entered the Promised Land.