

Tisha B'Av and God's Redemptive Plan

By T.W. Tramm

THE biblical calendar date Av 9 (Tisha B'Av), corresponding to August 11 in 2019, marks the anniversary of the destruction of the First Temple in 587 BC.

The Temple lay in ruins until the Jews returned and began to rebuild it after the 70-years of exile in Babylon (Jer. 29).

Uncannily, the Second Temple would also be destroyed on the date of Av 9, in 70 AD. The ensuing exile, which would last for nearly two millennia, was, like the former, followed by a Jewish return to the Land—the one that occurred in 1948.

Scripture specifies that the second return to the Land, when God “again” brings His people back from captivity, is to be followed by an unprecedented time of judgment called Jacob's Trouble:

“The days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will bring again my people Israel and Judah back from captivity and restore them to the land I gave their ancestors to possess, says the LORD. These are the words the LORD spoke concerning Israel and Judah ... Cries of fear are heard—terror, not peace. Ask and see: Can a man bear children? Then why do I see every strong man with his hands on his stomach like a woman in labor, every face turned deathly pale? How awful that day will be! No other will be like it. It will be a time of trouble for Jacob, but he will be saved out of it” (Jer. 30: 3-7).

In view of the remarkable and well-documented symmetry found throughout Scripture, it's interesting to note the mirror-imaging of prophetic events. In ancient times, Israel's judgment was followed by a return. In the last days, the return is followed by judgment:

Judgment Return | Return Judgment

What's more, the second return, like the first, is connected to a period of 70 years. Jesus says the generation who sees the budding of the “fig tree,” i.e. Israel's final homecoming, will see His return and ultimate redemption at the end of the age (Matt. 24:32-34). Scripture defines a typical generation as 70 years (Ps. 90:10).

Is it possible that the redemption of the fig-tree generation will, as in the days of Babylon, occur after a 70-year period?

Making all of this more interesting, Daniel's 70-weeks prophecy reveals how many weeks of years will pass before Messiah comes:

“From the going forth of the word to restore and to build Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince comes shall be seven weeks [49 years]...” (Dan. 9:25).

The Jews began to rebuild Jerusalem for the second time in 1969.

We are thus presently, in August 2019, in the harvest season after the 49th year since Jerusalem’s restoration began. This is significant because God typically acts after the end-year specified in prophetic timelines. For instance, the Jews were redeemed from Babylon “after” the 70th year (Jer. 29:10).

Messiah was crucified “after” the 62 weeks, or 434th year (Dan. 9:26).

And so summer 2019 not only marks the harvest season following Israel’s 70th year, related to the 70-year timelines in Jeremiah and Matthew, it also marks the harvest season following Jerusalem’s 49th year, related to Daniel’s countdown to Messiah!

That the 70/49 timelines converge on the same year is even more remarkable when we consider how the respective prophecies—Jeremiah’s 70 years and Daniel’s 70 weeks—are directly linked in Scripture. The 70-weeks prophecy was given to Daniel, a captive in Babylon, as the 70 years of exile were ending (Dan. 9). Daniel’s weeks-countdown to Messiah would commence when the exiled Jews returned to Jerusalem and began rebuilding (Dan. 9:25). Thus, Daniels’ 70-weeks timeline picks up precisely where Jeremiah’s 70-years timeline leaves off.

God always gives His people an “expected end”—a determinable point in time by which redemption will be realized (Jer. 29:11; Gen. 6:3; 15:13; Matt. 24:32-34).

While Scripture is clear that no one knows the day, the convergence of signs and timelines in 2019 is confirmation that it is near.

NOTES:

1. Jeremiah describes two returns to Jerusalem, one in the days of Babylon and one before the time of Jacob’s Trouble:

<https://www.biblestudytools.com/.../gills-.../jeremiah-30-3.html>

2. Daniel 9:25 full verse: “From the going forth of the word to restore and to build Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince comes shall be seven weeks; and for threescore and two weeks, it shall be built again, with broad place and moat, but in troublous times.”

The two sets of weeks are believed to be indicative of the two comings of Messiah—a first coming and a return. The sixty-two weeks, counted from the first return to Jerusalem, point to Messiah’s first coming when He was put

to death for our sins (v.26). The seven weeks, counted from the second return to Jerusalem, point to His second coming as Ruler (v. 25).

That the 70-weeks prophecy cryptically reveals the timing of both of Messiah's comings explains why Gabriel prefaces the prophecy: "Listen carefully so that you can understand the meaning of the vision" (Dan. 9:23 NLT).

3. Daniel's 70-weeks prophecy is similar to Jeremiah's 70-years prophecy in that both are based on a period of "70," both center on a return to Jerusalem, and both provide an "expected end," or year of redemption.