

Kingdom Report

Week of 3 August 2019

Part 1: Can These Bones Live?

There is a fascinating story behind the distance between Babylon and Jerusalem (539 miles). It is the answer to God's question to Ezekiel....can a people captured by Babylon be resurrected into a sheep nation? Can the bones of the captured nations of Southern Africa be resurrected into sheep nations?

There is an amazing "coincidence" between:

- The fall of Babylon
- The release of the Israelites out of Babylon to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple, the city and the nation.
- The book of Revelation written by the apostle John on the Isle of Patmos.

The coincidence is the number 539. And therein lies a roadmap for those of us asking the Lord can the bones of nations in Southern Africa live again to become the "sheep nations" that Jesus prophesied would come on the earth before His return?

The question "Can these bones live again?" is the question that God asked Ezekiel. The Lord was referring to the "state capture" of Israel and Judah by the Assyrians and the Babylonians.

First between 745-721 BC the Assyrians captured and destroyed the nation of northern Israel. But the southern kingdom of Judah centered on Jerusalem survived the Assyrian onslaught. But then Babylonia rose in power, defeated Assyria and in 607 BC Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon captured Jerusalem and took the best of the Jews captive to Babylon and left king Jehoiakin as a vassal. But after a number of years Jehoiakin rebelled thinking that since the Lord is with them they can defeat Babylon. They lost badly. In 587 BC Babylon had enough of the rebellious Jews and destroyed Jerusalem, the temple and took all the Jews into captivity.

Jeremiah the prophet had warned the Jews, they were far from God, they were serving false idols, listened to false prophets and were rebelling against the laws of the Lord. They had lost the vision the Lord had for Israel....a nation who were to be a light to the gentiles, a people who were to be a teaching and priesthood nation to heal the nations and lead them into the ways of the Lord...instead they wanted to be just like other nations.

And so the dream died, the vision of Israel's destiny given to the patriarchs to the prophets, to king David, to Moses....all those wonderful promises that in Abraham's seed all the nations of the earth would be blessed...gone, no hope, no nation, no Jerusalem, no temple, no priesthood, no sacrificed for sin. Dead. That was the utter despair of a defeated people who had lost their destiny and their purpose...

And in the midst of the despair God raised up a new breed of prophets....Daniel, Ezekiel...to give hope and new vision to the captive people of Israel. And this is what

God asked Ezekiel in the midst of his utter despair....Ezekiel look at the dead remnants of your people...like bones scattered in the desert...can they live again? Ezekiel did not think so...but this is what the Lord told Ezekiel (Ez. 37:11-12)
"Then he said unto me son of man these bones are the whole house of Israel behold they say Our bones are dried and our hope is lost we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy and say unto them Thus says the Lord God, behold o my people I will open your graves and cause you to come out of your graves and bring you into the land of Israel."

And then something happened on 12th October 539 BC.....Babylon fell to the army of king Cyrus the Mede....and Cyrus in fulfillment of the prophecy Isaiah had made in Is. 45 released the Jews and allowed them to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple, the city and the nation.

That is right...539 BC.

And the distance to be travelled on the return journey from Babylon to Jerusalem is 539 miles!

But here is the very important takeaway for our lesson today. These are not coincidence distance and times. They mean something, they are a sign. These dates and distances had no meaning to the Jews of that day. They only mean something to us. A "statute mile" was decreed by Queen Elizabeth's Parliament in the 16th century to be 5280 feet. The time of 539 BC is our Gregorian calendar. The Jews had a totally other year date and distance measurement....539 had no meaning for them.

So what is the Lord telling us about 539 time and distance?

Well here is another important coincidence. Statute miles are used when doing land distances. But when you travel over waters of the seas you use "nautical miles" which takes cognizance of the curvature of the earth, which is why ship speeds are in "knots" nautical miles per hour and not miles per hour.

So stand in Jerusalem and go 539 nautical miles over the Mediterranean sea and you land at the Island of Patmos. And it was here 539 nautical miles from Jerusalem that John the apostle in captivity had his great vision of the things which would take place in the future.

John's Revelation was a continuation of the prophecies of Daniel. Whereas Daniel gave the prophecies of the Beast nations that rule over Israel and capture Israel from Babylon till the coming of the Messiah....John continues the story of God's people, this time spiritual Israel from the time of the Messiah Jesus Christ to the coming of the manifestation of the Kingdom of God on earth...the New Jerusalem.

But once again John writes of the people of God captured by Babylon (Revelation 17&18) Once again God's call to His people....Come out of Babylon! Once again the prophecy....Babylon will fall. But here is where all prophecy writers miss the very important likeness between the exit of the Jews out of the fall of Babylon in 539 BC and their journey back to the Promised Land to rebuild a new Jerusalem and a new temple.

This is the message of John and Revelation 21&22....when we exit out of a crumbling world system, this present Babylon that has captured the people of God, this Babylon for whom we are spending our lives, our taxes our time building the glory of Babylon serving the interests of Mammon....we can only exit to a New Jerusalem. And that New Jerusalem is not in heaven...it needs to be built here on earth....to heal the nations...to fulfill Christ's prophetic vision of "sheep nations" of the prophetic vision of the prophets who declared that nations will come to our God and that the kings of the earth will bring their glory into His mountain...the New Jerusalem.

That is the message of 539 that ties the fall of Babylon in 539 BC and the 539 mile journey from Babylon to Jerusalem to the vision of John on Patmos 539 nautical miles away...a message only our generation can understand. Here is the message....

The entire journey that Israel took to come out of Babylon and rebuild Jerusalem and the temple and raise up the nation again from dead bones is the journey the church will have to take all over the world in the 21st century.

All the prophetic scriptures of Jeremiah, Daniel and Ezekiel are about this prophetic rebirth and calling of the people of God to fulfill the prophecy to Abraham that in your seed all the nations of the earth will be blessed. All the books that we call the "Minor prophets"...Zachariah, Hosea, Zephaniah, Micah, Nahum, Obadiah were all prophets encouraging the Jews of this great exodus out of Babylon in their very difficult task of rebuilding the vision of a restored Jerusalem and restored Temple and priesthood. The books of Ezra and Nehemiah were a history of this great task.

Preachers love to take snippets of favorite verses here and there from these many books of the Bible and forget the entire vision and theme of these books is coming out of Babylon and rebuilding, the nation, the vision, the calling, the temple, the city and the laws of God for a revived Israel.

This forms a valuable template for our generation upon whom the end of the ages have come. Israel is the blueprint, the template. It is all there...the spiritual revival, the revival of the laws of God, the coming of new prophets with visions of victory, the building of families, economic emancipation, rebuilding the ministry of the priests under Ezra, the rebuilding of the Godly state under Zerubable and Nehemiah, the attacks of the doubters and the scoffers....its all there for our generation.

Why? Because the end of the ages is not the end of history or the rapture or we all go to heaven and leave the world to the Antichrist.

The end of this present world age is the end of world Babylon....Babylon falling. It is the end of nation states that are crumbling because they think they can shake a fist of rebellion against the laws of God and economies that live in the fantasy world that endless debt creation can bring about endless economic growth.

It is here that there are going to be nations that will first come to hit the rocks of reality and crack and fall apart. Zimbabwe is already there. A report two days ago in the New York Times...a nation of 95% unemployment, water in Harare once a week,

electricity off 18 hours a day, inflation once again heading into the stratosphere. So we look at Zimbabwe and ask "Can these bones live again?".

The ugly reality for us here in South Africa is that the economists are already saying we are in a debt/death spiral of unpayable debt and currency collapse. And the IMF is not the solution. The enormous emigration out of the country of critical skills and financial capital fleeing the country is the answer for many to the question "Can these bones of South Africa live again?" their answer is no.

In this current series I am doing of which this is part 1 my question to the 47% of South Africans who are charismatic/Pentecostal evangelical Christians and the 80% of South Africans who call themselves Christians....Can these bones live again? Can we turn Southern Africa into a "sheep nation"? Can we be a beacon to Africa of a people and nation who are going to miraculously turn this nation around?

My answer to this is yes. My strategy to you will be outline in blogs in this series. We will look at the journey the Jews took out of Babylon. There is a template and roadmap there to the New Jerusalem that will heal our nation.

Oh by the way if you still think these time / distance numbers are a coincidence, here is another number to consider. The distance from Jerusalem to London...1948.4 nautical miles. And what did London do for Jerusalem and Israel in May 1948?

And if you think all the people here in Southern Africa and the place we are in Africa and the times we live have no prophetic meaning you are mistaken. Southern Africa has a prophetic destiny that will play a critical role in the coming world revival.