

# The Fullness of Time

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Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, Yeshua:

The Bible tells that, *"when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons"* (Galatians 4:4-5, NKJV).<sup>1</sup> This verse speaks to the First Advent of Christ. But it also speaks to the redemption of Israel. However, what about Christ's second Advent and Israel's final redemption?

In Daniel, we read:

*"And in the latter time of their Kingdom, When the transgressors have reached their fullness, A king shall arise, Having fierce features, Who understands sinister schemes. His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power; He shall destroy fearfully, And shall prosper and thrive; He shall destroy the mighty, and also the holy people. Through his cunning He shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule; And he shall exalt himself in his heart. He shall destroy many in their prosperity. He shall even rise against the Prince of princes; But he shall be broken without human means. And the vision of the evenings and mornings Which was told is true; Therefore seal up the vision, For it refers to many days in the future"* (Daniel 8:23-26).

The Lord has given us a glimpse of the future tribulation that will come to Israel and the nations at the end of the age through the prophet Daniel. It is written, *"For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled"* (Revelation 17:17).

Notice the Lord uses the word "fullness," meaning that God's purposes regarding the final redemption of Israel and the return of Christ will be satisfied in the fullness of time. Israel's final redemption initially correlates with the arrival of a false king and savior (the Anti-Christ). This man will exalt himself above the God of Abraham, even warring against Yeshua, the true King, and the Messiah of Israel.

Paul said this about Israel's final redemption: *"For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in"* (Romans 11:25).

Paul is telling us that Israel's partial blindness and rejection of their Messiah is temporary and that when the Lord brings His message of the gospel to the total number of nations, then Israel shall be saved out of their tribulation. Yeshua said: "*And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come*" (Matthew 24:14).

Now that we understand that the "fullness of time" also correlates with the Second Advent of Christ, the question is, how are we to recognize when will this happen?

The Lord spoke to Daniel, saying: "*Seventy weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy*" (Daniel 9:24).

Seventy is a unique prophetic number in scripture. For example, there were seventy descendants of Noah that came after the great flood.<sup>ii</sup> From Noah, the sages learn that humanity comprised seventy nations, each with its own language.<sup>iii</sup>

Seventy members of Jacob's family came down to Egypt, including Joseph and his sons, already in Egypt.<sup>iv</sup> Centuries later, Israel would spend seventy years in Babylonian captivity for breaking God's commandments regarding the Sabbath, which is the seventh day and seventh year of the Hebrew calendar.<sup>v</sup>

Seven is another unique number. The sages explain that the natural order of creation is represented by the number seven. For example, God created the world in seven days. Additionally, the rabbis associate seven with the timespan of the creation, which they believe to be seven thousand years. And they associate it with these other aspects of the created realm:

- Seven heavens,
- Seven lands (continents),
- Seven seas,
- Seven rivers in Israel,
- Seven deserts that Israel walked through (Sinai being the seventh one),
- The seventh palace being the Holy of Holies,
- Seven weeks of the counting of the Omar,
- And seven Jubilees during the time of the First Temple.

The number ten is associated with the Torah (God's calendar and Law) and the creation of the world.<sup>vi</sup> This association is made in scripture, where the first verse in the Bible and the first verse in the Ten Commandments have precisely seven Hebrew words. We reach the completed purpose for creation through the fulfillment of the Law, which Christ has done.<sup>vii</sup>

Therefore, any number multiplied by ten represents the completeness of that number because ten is a complete number. After ten, we start counting again with one. For example, eleven is ten

plus one. And seven times ten (seventy) represents the completion of the natural order and the fullness of time.<sup>viii</sup>

The number seventy also correlates with leadership. Moses selected seventy elders whom the Lord anointed with His Spirit.<sup>ix</sup> Later, the Sanhedrin (the rabbinical high court) would also have seventy judges, plus one, the head of the Sanhedrin, representing Moses.<sup>x</sup>

Yeshua appointed seventy leaders to go out and share the message of the Kingdom. It is written, *"After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go" (Luke 10:1)*. Therefore, seventy also reflects the church, which will rule and reign with Christ in His Kingdom.

There is a special relationship between the church and the twelve tribes of Israel. We see a prophetic picture of this in the Book of Exodus. It is written, *"Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees; so they camped there by the waters" (Exodus 15:27)*. Here, I believe, the twelve springs represent the twelve tribes of Israel, and the seventy palm trees represent the elders of Israel in Christ.<sup>xi</sup> Yeshua said, *"In the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matthew 19:28)*.

Seventy has also has spiritual significance. The sages tell us there are seventy Divine names in scripture,<sup>xii</sup> seventy faces of the Torah,<sup>xiii</sup> seventy Biblical holy days in a solar calendar year,<sup>xiv</sup> seventy names of the Jewish nation,<sup>xv</sup> and seventy names for Jerusalem.<sup>xvi</sup>

While the number seventy represents the completion of the natural order, eighty is transcendent and reaches beyond the natural world, taking us deep into the spiritual realm and the Kingdom of God.

Let us return to Daniel chapter nine and look again at the number seventy related to Israel's final redemption. Yeshua said:

*"Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near—at the doors! Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away" (Matthew 24:32-35)*.

The Bible tells us that the entire years of a person's life are seventy.<sup>xvii</sup> Israel was rebirthed as a nation just over seventy years ago, and we know that she is God's time clock. Yeshua spoke of a generation of Jewish people that would see the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy in the fullness of time. Is it possible that Yeshua was talking to this current generation?

Paul spoke about the return of the Lord at the last trumpet.<sup>xviii</sup> The last trumpet commanded in the Torah was blown on the Day of Atonement, but only in a Jubilee year. It is written, *"Then you*

*shall cause the trumpet of the Jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement you shall make the trumpet to sound throughout all your land" (Leviticus 25:9).*

The Day of Atonement correlates with Christ's second Advent, and it points to His final atonement for the nation of Israel and their land.<sup>xix</sup> The year of the Jubilee also speaks to Israel's final redemption when the Lord brings them back to the land He promised to Abraham.<sup>xx</sup> That land now includes the Gentiles, who are called the seed of Abraham.<sup>xxi</sup> But how are we to know the season of this last Jubilee? And could it be that God's pattern will align with His number—seventy—the completion of the natural order and the fullness of time?

The nation of Israel was instructed to begin counting their Sabbatical and Jubilee years from the time they entered the land of Canaan. Part of these commandments was to release all debt and free their Hebrew bondservants.<sup>xxii</sup> Thus, seven also represents freedom.

The sages tell us the counting of the Sabbaticals and Jubilees was delayed by fourteen years due to the dividing of the land and the conquests of Caleb. The Talmud states that the people of Israel counted seventeen Jubilees from this time until their exile at the destruction of the First Temple.<sup>xxiii</sup> This raises an interesting question. How many Jubilees have *not* been tallied since the destruction of the First Temple?

If we want to retrace these calculations, we will need to pinpoint the date of the Exodus. However, this date is highly controversial. Most Egyptologists believe that the Israelites were enslaved during Rameses, the third and last kingdom of Egypt. Some scholars have also argued against the Bible due to a lack of physical evidence proving the Exodus.

However, there are discoveries now pointing to the Middle Kingdom, about two hundred years earlier than the time of Rameses.<sup>xxiv</sup> For example, archaeological digs have discovered what appears to be the tomb of Joseph and the Hebrew city of Goshen. There is even a manuscript of Hebrew slave names that were found. However, to me, the most significant correlation was the date of the Middle Kingdom aligning Biblically with the number seventy. Let me explain.

The time of Egypt's Middle Kingdom is dated to around 1,450 BC. If we correlate the Exodus to that same period and subtract forty years to Israel's entering the land of Canaan, we arrive at about 1,410 BC. Adding this number to our recent year, 2020, gives us 3,430 years from the time of the Exodus. Dividing this number by 49 years, the time allotted for each Jubilee cycle, we have precisely seventy Jubilees. Now that is a fascinating coincidence. Or is it?

Given the uncertainty for both the precise date of the Exodus and the time for Israel's counting of their Jubilee cycles, and given the words of Yeshua, we cannot know the day of the Lord's return. But given the pattern of seventy that God has established in His Hebrew calendar, we can most certainly conclude that we are in the season near the end of the age. And, we can take comfort in knowing that God is completing His natural order of creation and that we are reaching the fullness of time regarding Israel's final redemption.

We close with the words of our Lord and Savior:

*"And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near" (Luke 21:25-28).*

We are not afraid of what is coming. No. We rejoice in knowing that the return of Christ is near, even very near. And until He returns, we are to continue sharing the good news of the Kingdom, making disciples of all nations. As Yeshua instructed us:

*"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen!" (Matthew 28:18-20).*

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<sup>i</sup> All Scripture quotations are taken from the New King James Bible (NKJV) unless otherwise noted, Thomas Nelson Inc., 1982.

<sup>ii</sup> Genesis 10:32.

<sup>iii</sup> Commentary of Rabbeinu Bechayei ad loc.

<sup>iv</sup> Exodus 1:5. Rashi *ad loc.*

<sup>v</sup> Jeremiah 29:10.

<sup>vi</sup> Shurpin, Yehuda. Why Only Ten Commandments at Sinai? Chabad.org.

<sup>vii</sup> See *Torat Menachem, Maamarei Melukat*, vol. 2, p. 67.

<sup>viii</sup> Shurpin, Yehuda. Why Is 70 Special? And ten instances in Jewish tradition where 70 is significant. Chabad.org.

<sup>ix</sup> Numbers 11:25.

<sup>x</sup> Exodus 24:1; Numbers 11:16.

<sup>xi</sup> John 12:12-13. Revelation 7:9.

<sup>xii</sup> Bamidbar Rabbah 14:12. See the commentary of the Baal Haturim on Numbers 11:16 for a list of the 70 names.

<sup>xiii</sup> Bamidbar Rabbah 13:15.

<sup>xiv</sup> Bamidbar Rabbah 14:12.

<sup>xv</sup> Bamidbar Rabbah 14:12. See Baal Haturim, *ibid.*, for a list of these seventy names.

<sup>xvi</sup> Bamidbar Rabbah *ibid.* It should be noted that the commentaries do not provide a complete list. Some have attempted to compile their own lists, with some containing more than seventy names.

<sup>xvii</sup> Psalm 90:10.

<sup>xviii</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:52.

<sup>xix</sup> Deuteronomy 32:43.

<sup>xx</sup> Leviticus 25:10.

<sup>xxi</sup> Galatians 3:29.

<sup>xxii</sup> Exodus 21:2.

<sup>xxiii</sup> Babylonian Talmud (*Arakhin* 12b); cf. Maimonides, *R. Moses b. Maimon Responsa* (vol. 2), ed. Jehoshua Blau, Rubin Mass Ltd. Publishers, Jerusalem 1989, *responsum* # 389.

<sup>xxiv</sup> Patterns of Evidence Exodus, A Filmmakers Journey. 2014.