

Babylon's Burden

By Tom Stephens

In the 14th chapter of Isaiah, we see that God links Israel's future restoration with Babylon's doom. Though centuries were to elapse between the two events, yet inasmuch as through the decree of Cyrus a remnant was permitted to return to Jerusalem, thus fulfilling a part of the divine prediction concerning the recovery of Judah, so their final restoration is linked with the complete overthrow of Gentile power.

“For the Lord will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. And the people shall take them, and bring them to their place: and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of the Lord of servants and handmaids; and they shall take them captives, whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors (Isaiah 14:1-2).

Note the expression, *“They shall take them captives, whose captives they were.”* This seems to give the true explanation of that very controversial passage in Ephesians 4:8, *“He led captivity captive.”* These words were quoted from Psalm 68:18—*“Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also that the Lord God might dwell among them.”* The same words are recorded in Judges 5:11, with Deborah and Barak's song of thanksgiving. The meaning is perfectly clear. Barak was to lead captive those who had held Israel captive.

So Jesus our Lord, by His triumphant resurrection, has overthrown the powers of hell and led captive Satan and his host who held humanity captive for so long. Satan was utterly defeated at that time. (Hebrews 2:14). So those who were once the victims of the Gentile world, ie., Babylon, were delivered from the power of the enemy. Likewise we who, for so long have been under the yoke and in bondage to the devil, are triumphantly free!

In Colossians 2:15 we are told that Christ, in rising from the dead, spoiled the principalities and powers, the hosts of evil. Therefore, Satan is now a defeated soul, and Jesus Himself leads captivity captive. Accept that as it is, for when we allow the evil one to deceive us by accepting a look alike Word of God that has been corrupted, it is like that part of Israel that decided not to return to Jerusalem when Cyrus destroyed Babylon, and freed a remnant to go back home.

The King of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, as used in Chapter 14, is a type of Lucifer, who also fell from heaven in order that the greater “other Kingdom”—“that God's Kingdom will ever provide peace and Joy in His precious Holy spirit”—to be forever honored in HIS KINGDOM FOREVER AND FOREVER!