
BIBLE TALK

This week the question is: **Was Bible prophecy fulfilled in 1948 when Israel became a nation?**

On May 14, 1948, just ahead of the official end to the British Mandate in Palestine at midnight, David Ben-Gurion declared the establishment of a Jewish state, to be called Israel.

(Newsweek, "Declaring the State of Israel on May 14, 1948," <http://www.newsweek.com/declaring-state-israel-may-14-1948-332152> (accessed 11/7/17)).

Many Bible students view this day as a fulfillment of Bible prophecies. Isa 66:7-8 is one such prophecy which supposedly predicts this event. Here is what the prophet Isaiah wrote:

Isaiah 66:7-8

⁷ "Before she was in labor, she gave birth;
Before her pain came,
She delivered a male child.
⁸ Who has heard such a thing?
Who has seen such things?
Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day?
Or shall a nation be born at once?
For as soon as Zion was in labor,
She gave birth to her children.

Prophecy experts argue this prophecy predicts the Nation of Israel would be reborn on a single day and they argue this was fulfilled on May 14, 1948 when, with the single stroke of a pen, the documents were signed and Israel was declared an official sovereign nation.

Our question this week on Bible Talk is simply this: **Does this prophecy in Isa 66:7-8 actually predict the events of May 14, 1948?**

The answer is simply, "No." Allow me to explain why I give this answer.

If you will take the time to read Isaiah 66 in its entirety you will discover there are many indicators that this prophecy was fulfilled many, many years ago during the Old Testament times.

Isaiah was a prophet to the nation of Judah according to Isa 1:1. Because of unfaithfulness and sin God allowed Judah to be conquered and led into Babylonian captivity in 605 BC. You may read about this in 2 Chron 36. According to the prophet Jeremiah, Judah would remain in Babylonian captivity for 70 years (Jer 25:9-11). When the prophet Isaiah gave his prophecy in Isa 66:7-8, he was predicting the ending of the Babylonian captivity and the return of the Jews to their land which occurred in 539 BC.

Ezra 1:1-4

¹ Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also put it in writing, saying,

² Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth the LORD God of heaven has given me. And He has commanded me to build Him a house at Jerusalem which is in Judah.

³ Who is among you of all His people? May his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel (He is God), which is in Jerusalem.

⁴ And whoever is left in any place where he dwells, let the men of his place help him with silver and gold, with goods and livestock, besides the freewill offerings for the house of God which is in Jerusalem.

This is when the prophecy of Isa 66:7-8 was fulfilled. It is pure speculation to say that 1948 was the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy.

Notice the following in the Isa 66 passage:

- In verses 1 and 6 the temple is mentioned, but there is no temple in the modern nation of Israel that was established in 1948.
- In verses 3 and 20 animal sacrifices are mentioned as well as holy vessels and none of these exist in the modern nation of Israel.
- In verse 21 mentions priests and Levites and not one Jew in the modern state of Israel can prove he is of the tribe of Levi or from the family of priests – since all those records were destroyed in AD 70 by the Roman armies.
- The weaponry of Isa 66:19 is the bow and arrow – weapons which were in use in 539 BC when Judah was sent back to their homeland by Cyrus king of Persia. But these weapons were long outdated by 1948.

Isa 66:7-8 was a prophecy of encouragement to the Jewish people who would find themselves in Babylonian captivity. The Lord was promising that He would watch over them in that captivity and bring them out and reestablish them – which He did. This is the purpose of the books of Ezra and Nehemiah – to show that God kept His word and brought His people back to the promised land. Their temple was rebuilt and sacrifices were reinstated awaiting the arrival of the Messiah – the Lord Jesus Christ.

- Once the Lord came, He and His people would replace the temple (Jn 2:19; 1 Pet 2:5, 9).
- The sacrifice of the Lord ended the animal sacrifices forever (Heb 10:1-9).

The temple and its sacrifices were all symbolic foreshadows looking forward to the Lord and His church. When the Lord came and established His church, the physical nation of Israel lost all significance (Gal 3:28-29).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Well ... thanks for considering our message this week. We invite you to visit our website www.WillOfTheLord.com. There you may download the notes and the audio file of the message you just listened to.

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