

The Time to Favor Zion Has Come

After the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians, the children of Israel found themselves in exile in the land of their enemy. Several psalms were written during this period, questioning God about this terrible turn of events and reminding Him of His promises to King David that his throne would be an everlasting one. How could He have allowed the kingdom to be destroyed?

At times the grief was overwhelming. In Psalm 137, the exiles are said to be sitting along the river of Babylon and weeping as they remember Zion. They hung their harps on the tree, unable to even sing the songs of Zion in a foreign land.

During this time, the prophet Daniel read in Jeremiah's prophecies the Babylonian Empire would last 70 years. Daniel understood that God appoints times and seasons and He deposes kings and raises up others (Dan. 2:21). If Jeremiah was right, the end was near and, in fact, Daniel witnessed the fall of Babylon to Persia.

The Persian king, Cyrus, had a very different approach to the captive kingdoms he inherited and allowed them to rebuild their temples. The first wave of Jewish exiles made their way home to Jerusalem and began rebuilding the temple.

It must have been at this point that Psalm 102 was written. It rejoices that it was now time to show favor to Zion—the appointed time had arrived and the exiles were going home to rebuild Zion. What joy they felt.

However, their return after 70 years did not begin to compare to the joy of the second return that began in the 1880s after 2,000 years of exile. Up until today, Jews are returning from countries around the world to their ancient homeland, the

State of Israel, founded in 1948. They are still quoting the same psalm written by the Babylonian exiles: "You will arise and have mercy on Zion; for the time to favor her, Yes, the set time, has come" (Ps. 102:13, NKJV).

Join me for this week's Out of Zion podcast on "The Time to Favor Zion Has Come." Walk Thru the Bible with me each week by downloading our Bible reading plan and get started reading right away! Invite your friends and family to join us! I can't wait to Walk Thru the Bible with you! {eo}

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