



GATEWAY EQUIP

The Book of Revelation: Exile as an Interpretive Key

October 28th, 2017

Exile/Galut-גלות¹ Revelation/Hitgalut - תְּהִלָּתֵנוּ,
Redemption/Ge'ulah - גְּאוּלָּה

Exile & Return are the framework for Jewish history.²

- Exile is always a pivotal event in Scripture that thrusts the story/plan of G-D in a drastic way. Its not always the result of sin. Joseph, David, Elijah went into exile for a time either for correction or because they did the right thing.

Snapshot of Exile in Scripture:³

Gen.3: Exile from Eden - **ch.4:** Cain's exile – **ch.6-8:** Judgment/Deliverance Flood - **ch.11:** Dispersion at Babel- **ch.12:** Call of Abram*- **ch.15:13-16:** Exile 400 yrs/Oath, 22:15-19- **ch.28:** Jacob goes to Padan Aram 20 yrs*⁴- **ch.37:** Joseph exiled into Egypt*- **ch.44-** Joseph's Revealing- **ch.46:** Jacob's house goes to Egypt*-

- **10 Northern Tribes**- 2 Kings.17, **722 b.c.e. – Assyria**
- **Southern Kingdom of Judah**- 2 Kings.24 (All the prophets referred to the Exile), **587 b.c.e. Destruction of Temple and Jerusalem**- Babylon

¹ Galut/Exile helps us to understand G-D's plan for Israel, Messiah's coming & work, without galut we don't understand hitgalut/Revelation.

² Neusner, Jacob. "Exile and Return as the History of Judaism," in *Exile: Old Testament, Jewish, and Christian Conceptions*. Ed. Scott, James M. 221-238. Brill. Leiden, Netherlands. 1997. 221.

³ Sometimes there will be multiple exiles then a sudden judgment or an exile and a revelation that precedes or succeed a judgment. This is similar to the exile Israel is in, in the time of Revelation where the judgments and revelation coincide as Israel is subsequently gathered back into the Land.

⁴ I placed an * after individuals of whom their exile wasn't the result of sin but rather doing the right thing such as Elijah obeying the L-RD to go to Tzarefat to stay with the widow and her son and when facing off against prophets on Mt. Carmel Jezebel threatened him and he fled to Horeb for a time.

(Lam., Esther, Dan., Eze. all written in the Exile), Ezekiel-Prophet of the Exile

- **Daniel**- ch.9- the *Exile Jeremiah prophesied wasn't 70 yrs, but 490 yrs.* The Babylonian Exile didn't necessarily end with Persia. Nehemiah stated that the people were slaves in their own land (Neh.9:36-37). This subjugation existed as Israel was no longer a sovereign nation with a monarchy. Greeks subsequently subjugated Israel then the Romans, followed by the 2nd Diaspora to this day. Only in the last and final week of Daniel does the Exile come to its full end.
- **538/537** b.c.e- Israel back in Land (Post Exilic prophets/ Zechariah, Malachi, Haggai)- Persia
- **521-516** b.c.e - Period of Restoration 2nd Temple w/no glory, No Davidic Monarchy

Greece

Rome

- **1st-century c.e.** considered by Sages to be in exile due to lack of sovereignty⁵
 - **70 c.e.** – 2nd Diaspora, Destruction of 2nd Temple
- Last Book of Tanakh⁶- 2 Chron.36:22-23, return

NT/Apostolic Writings- Matt.1- Genealogy of Yeshua...Exile is central theme of the genealogy. Ch.2:15 citing Hos.11:1- *G-D fulfills Israel's exile in Yeshua, i.e. in Yeshua the exile is filled to its fullness but G-D also fulfills Israel being brought back into the Land through Messiah. Hosea refers to the Exodus as history not as predictive prophecy. He refers to the Exodus because G-D delivered Israel and in return, Israel went astray and subsequently into Exile.* ; Gen.15:13-16, 22:15-19

v.17-18 citing Jer. 31:15- Rama (present day Ramallah) was a deportation center during the Babylonian Exile

- **Ch.3:3** cites Isa.40:1-5,
- **Acts.2- Shavuot/Pentecost-** (Joel.3:1-5) *Jews from the nations of the Dispersion- ch.8:4 those scattered by persecution proclaim the Word**⁷

⁵ This is pervasive throughout the Dead Sea Scrolls since for the community at Qumran, as for so many Jews throughout history, exile and return are not a description of one's geographic position on the globe, but rather refer to a state of Jewish disunity, abandonment of Torah, and national powerlessness. Such a state was possible even within the land. Schiffman, Lawrence. *Exile & Return In The Dead Sea Scrolls.*

⁶ The Hebrew Bible known to Christianity as *Old Testament.* Books have a different order of Torah (Law/Instruction), Nevi'im (Prophets), Ketuvim (Writings) these form the acronym TNK- Tanakh

⁷ Jews in the Diaspora played a major role in spreading the Gospel.

Post 70 c.e. Israel is driven from place to place, exile to exile. Major catalysts are the Crusades, Spanish Expulsion of 1492, the Holocaust.⁸ A return to the Land that is redemptive stands on three pillars: **1. Law, 2. Land, 3. People/National Sovereignty.**

The Leprous Messiah in Exile

R. Joshua b. Levi met Elijah standing by the entrance of R. Shimon b. Yochai's tomb. He asked him: 'Have I a portion in the world to come?' He replied, 'if this Master desires it.' R. Joshua b. Levi said, 'I saw two, but heard the voice of a third.' He then asked him, 'When will the Messiah come?' — 'Go and ask him himself,' was his reply. 'Where is he sitting?' — 'At the entrance of the gates of Rome.' 'And by what sign may I recognize him?' — 'He is sitting among the poor lepers: all of them untie [them] all at once, and re-bandage them together, whereas he unties and re-bandages each separately, [before treating the next], thinking, should I be wanted, [it being time for my appearance as the Messiah] I must not be delayed [through having to bandage a number of sores]...' — Sanhedrin 98A, Babylonian Talmud (Messiah in Isa.53 is described with the same terms in Hebrew as the leper in Lev.13)

Exile as a Historical Context of the Revelation:

Rev.1:9 (TLV) — I, John, your brother and fellow partaker with you in the tribulation and kingdom and patient endurance that are in Yeshua, was on the island called "*Patmos*"¹⁰ because of the Word of God and the testimony of Yeshua.

The book goes from Exile – Return & Redemption. These aspects always appear in conjunction with one another as even believers from all nations are "redeemed."¹¹

Revelation fits thematically where each Gospel begins:

⁸ It's the Holocaust that either directly or indirectly results in re-establishment of Israel and return from Diaspora.

⁹ The untying of the bandages individually rather than all at once is representative of the Messianic unveiling being that of a process than a suddenness.

¹⁰ Πάτμος - Grk. "*My killing*"

¹¹ Rev.5:9. (TLV)

1. **Matthew**- Genealogy from Exile/Bethlehem - **Rev.1**- Glorious Son of Man
2. **Mark**- Wilderness- **Rev.2-3** to the communities in Asia Diaspora
3. **Luke**-Temple/Jerusalem- **Rev. as a whole** is preoccupied with the Temple/Jerusalem
4. **John**-Eternity - **Rev. begins** with the Eternal Son of G-D revealing Himself to John and **ends** with Him returning to rule Earth and deliver all into their eternal destinies.

Jewish Demographics in 7 Congregations of Revelation:

Ephesus - Acts.19, Jewish population 200,000	Sardis - Jewish population 100,000. <i>The Sardis synagogue may have been able to seat 1,000 people but this is only one estimate by an archaeologist.</i>
Smyrna - Jewish population 100,000. Influential and affiliated with Rome	Philadelphia - 30 miles from Sardis
Pergamos - Jewish population 100,000	Laodicea - large and wealthy Jewish population Approx. 7,500-14,000 adult males
Thyatira - smaller town, strong and active Jewish population, size unknown	

New Jerusalem- Not unique to Revelation as there are references to it in Ezekiel (40-48) and Dead Sea Scrolls.

Main difference between Revelation and the DSS-

Revelation-New Jerusalem comes down from heaven to earth already complete

DSS- G-D builds it on earth. The manuscripts from Qumran containing references to the New Jerusalem are dated between 50- 100 b.c.e meaning they were written some 100-140 years before the Book of Revelation was written.

Temple Imagery:

Revelation is highly concerned with and has a pervasive theme of ritual purity i.e. the kind of purity necessary to enter into the Temple precincts through washings, changes of clothes, sacrifices. Ex. Lev.16. Ritual impurity is not classified as sin in the Torah but can lead to death because G-D's presence could not tolerate ritual impurity. Lev.11-17.

The book of Revelation and its author seem to be positively preoccupied with the central ideas of ritual Temple purity. This is hardly surprising since ritual purity was central to Jewish world in the 1st century.¹²

Rev.3:4 (TLV)- But still, you have a few people in Sardis who have not stained their clothes. They will walk with Me in white, because they are worthy.

v.17 (TLV)- (*The Laodiceans are described as the Jewish exiles were during the Babylonian exile.*) For you say, 'I am rich, I have made myself wealthy, and I need nothing.' But you do not know that you are miserable and pitiable and poor and blind and naked. See also 2 Kings. 25:7; Jer.39:7; 52:11; Lamentations; Eze.16:39 ; Psalms.137.

The structure of Revelation is that of being within a literary inclusion of the Temple- worship:

Ch.1- Intro/ Vision of the Glorious Son of Man in Exile similar to Eze.1-2

Ch.2-3-Letters to 7 Communities

Ch.4-Heavenly Throne- Reminiscent of Temple worship. This forms an inclusion with **ch.21-22**- The Lamb & L-RD of Hosts are the Temple surrounds the whole letter.

Ritual Purity In Relation to Exile:

Ritual and Moral purity are the two kinds of purity/impurity found in Leviticus.

The Temple imagery and all of the surrounding symbolism of ritual purity throughout Revelation speaks towards the exile Israel was in as the ritually impure are not allowed within Temple precincts. Throughout the prophetic books the Temple was destroyed and the people defiled not just because of ritual impurity but because of moral impurity. Moral impurity signified a rejection of G-D's rule.

"If their Rock had not sold them, and the L-RD (had not) delivered them (into their hands)": I do not deliver you into their hands of Myself, but

¹² Lizorkin, Eli. *Jewish Purity In The City of Sardis (Rev.3:4-5)*.
<https://blog.israelbiblicalstudies.com/jewish-studies/the-jewish-purity-in-the-city-of-sardis/> Posted August 11, 2015. Accessed October 18, 2017

through others. (And it already happened that the flies delivered them in Yehudah [by revealing their whereabouts]). R. Yehudah of Tivim says: Not as one says to his neighbor: "I am selling you a slave to be delivered at a certain time." But I am not like that. I sell and deliver (at once), as the unclean into the hands of the clean. And whence is it derived that only the unclean are "delivered" ("masgirim")? From (Leviticus 13:4) "And the Cohein shall 'deliver' ('hisgir', lit., 'close off')¹³ the plague-spot."¹⁴

Ingathering of Exiles/ Kibbutz Galyot: The 10th Blessing of the Amidah

"Sound the great shofar for our freedom, raise the banner to gather our exiles and gather us together from the four corners of the earth. Blessed are you, L-RD, Who gathers in the dispersed of His people Israel."¹⁵

Deut.30:3-4 (TLV) - *Then the L-RD, your G-D will bring you back from captivity and have compassion on you, and He will return and gather you from all the peoples where the L-RD your G-D has scattered you. Even if your outcasts are at the ends of the heavens, from there the L-RD your G-D will gather you.*

Matt.24:31 (Delitzsch Hebrew Gospels) - *"He will send forth his angels with the sound of a great shofar; they will gather his chosen ones from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."¹⁶*

Isa.27:12-13 (NKJV) - *It will come about in that day, the L-RD will thresh from the channel of the River to the Wadi of Egypt, and you will be gathered one by one children of Israel. It will also come about in that day, a great shofar will be blown. Those perishing in the land of Assyria and the exiles in the land of Egypt will come and worship the L-RD on the Holy Mountain in Jerusalem."*

Eze.20:34 (NKJV)- *I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm, with fury poured out...v.41, With your sweet aroma I will*

¹³ From קָנַר (sagar)- to close, shut as in a door, gate, wound, Piel form- to deliver.

Gesenius' Lexicon ; see also Lam.2:7 ; Rom.11:32 ; Gal.3:22.

¹⁴ Sifrei Devarim. Pisqua 323:3. Deut.32:29-30; Lev.13:4.

¹⁵ Scherman, Nosson and Zlotowitz, Meir. *Siddur Ahavat Shalom*. Mesorah Publications. Brooklyn, NY. 107

¹⁶ Matt.24:31 (The Delitzsch Hebrew Gospels)

accept you, when I bring you out from the peoples and gather you from the countries where you have been scattered. I will be sanctified in you in the sight of the nations.

R. Yohanan said: The re-gathering of the Exiles is as great as the day when heaven and earth were created, for it is said, "And the children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together, and they shall appoint themselves one head, and shall go up out of the land; for great shall be the day of Jezreel;" and it is written, "And there was evening and there was morning, one day."¹⁷

Exilic Concepts, References, & Terminology in Revelation

Rev.6- Four Horsemen- Conqueror/Captivity, War, Famine, Death. These four methods of judgment appear in Lev.26; Deut.28; Jer.15:2-3; 24:10; 38:2-3; Eze.7:15; 14:21. The four horsemen judgments were used as ploy so that no one would remain safe and secure within their cities and would have to flee.¹⁸

v.12-15: Earthquake, stars falling, mountains and islands being moved out of their places. The kings of the earth, military, all flee into caves to hide in the mountains. Exile/Galut means to be unveiled or naked as in the land naked of its inhabitants i.e. outside of their borders. Everything in this book that G-D is judging is outside of His prescribe boundaries so He loosens all aspects of creation out of its boundaries as judgment of the same measure that the lawless have mete out against G-D.

The Kings and Nations of the Earth factor in big in Revelation but what does this have to do with Israel? What does this mean for Israel in Exile? The return to the L-RD always begins in exile and this return stimulates and initiates the return to the Land, see Ex.2:23-24, Deut.30:1-8. The Shekhinah/Glory is considered to be in exile w/Israel seen in Eze.1-2.

Ch.7- Four angels at the four corners of the earth. Always used in the Tanakh to refer to those scattered, the expanse and breadth throughout which Israel has been dispersed throughout the world, Eze.7:2

¹⁷ Pes.88a. *Babylonian Talmud.* ; Hos.2:2; Gen.1:4

¹⁸ Jer.38:2 (TLV)

Hiding of the Face in Tanakh¹⁹ becomes the Revealing of the Face through Yeshua and exile from His presence is turned into an instrument of revelation of Him. Ultimate exile is to be out of G-D's presence as the 2nd death is the lake of fire.

Ch.12- Woman (Israel) fleeing into the wilderness. v.16, the earth helps the woman but in all other passages the earth's destruction is a weapon against those who hate Israel...the nations.

Ch.14- sealed like in Eze.9. This is not a literal seal but a spiritual mark. 144,000 on Mt. Zion, v.14-16- 1st Harvest, v.17-20- 2nd harvest/gathering of the wicked nations hellbent on Israel's destruction (Joel.4)

Rev.18:4- Come out of her my people. Babylon is Babylon but historical Babylon becomes a symbol of who and what the world system is because Babylon destroyed the Temple and the 1st Exile so to the world system seeks to destroy the Sanctuary and see to it that it is not re-built.

¹⁹ Hester Panim...The Hiding of the Face, the severest judgment in the Torah; Deut. 31:17-18.