

## 541 AD – PLAGUE OF JUSTINIAN

**“Yet I will distress to Ariel,  
and there shall be heaviness and sorrow:  
and it shall be unto me as Ariel.” (Isaiah 28:15)**

### NOTES

‘Ariel’ means ‘lion / lioness of God’. The number 541 means ‘I Will See The Wicked Fall’.

### HISTORY

In 541 a plague hit Constantinople known as the ‘Plague of Justinian’. It is considered to be one of the worst pestilences in all of history. Estimates are that 40% of the population of Constantinople died in the initial stages of the pandemic and 25% of the population of the Eastern Mediterranean died. It was a different strain of bacterium than caused Black Death in the 14<sup>th</sup> century but it was the bubonic variety of plague – meaning it attacked the lymph nodes and cause painful swellings and fevers.

The loss of life was so high there was no room to bury the dead. Bodies were left stacked in the open. The plague reached into the countryside and reduced manpower so crop production declined. It was spread quickly by fleas hosting on rats and other mammals.

Justinian himself took sick to the plague but did not die. The mortality rate was around 60%.

The Plague of Justinian was intense for three years. Therefore in this context it would be appropriate to meditate on all three of the relevant verses: Isaiah **28 v 15** (1<sup>st</sup> year), Isaiah **28 v 16** (2<sup>nd</sup> year), and Isaiah **28 v 17** (3<sup>rd</sup> year). But some estimates say it lasted up to 100 years.

### PROPHECY OF ISAIAH

Isaiah prompts us to think how lions behave socially. In a pride of lions, the females are all related – mothers, daughters, and sisters. They won’t let any unrelated females into the pride. The males in the pride may not be closely related – but they are all closely bonded – usually by spending years foraging as youngsters together outside a pride. The group of male lions within the pride will fight any group of male lions who threaten their hegemony. If the

existing group of male lions loses they are all exiled and the new troupe of male lions are dominant.

The new male lions take no prisoners. All the cubs and young lions sired by the previous males are killed. This brings the female lions in the pride into estrus which makes them more yielding to being bred by the new male lions.

Courtship of the pride females with the new males takes months. Lions have a complex social group structure which makes them unique among cats. All other cats are lone hunters. Lions hunt as a group therefore the social dynamic is refined.

Justinian is in the role of Emperor. The Emperor is the top male lion within his tribe.

However, there is another lion, who is the LORD himself. If the nation is one of the Abrahamic peoples, then LORD is in the midst of them. Emperors come and go – the LORD is eternal God.

If the Emperor is bonded to the chief male lion – the LORD – then there is harmony in the nation. The Emperor is part of the male troupe in charge of the tribe. But if the Emperor and (special case because Justinian and Theodora were a co-regency) the Empress are not bonded with God – their forbidden marriage suggests they weren't - then there will be a fight for dominance in the pride – until the question is settled of who is the ruler in charge of the pride.

Through the mouth of Isaiah God says '**I will distress to Ariel**' (lion and/or lioness) '**there shall be heaviness and sorrow**'. In other words – I will behave as the dominant male lion here – this is my pride – my people. Because you challenge my authority – there will be carnage.

### **SPIRITUAL NUMBER ANALYSIS**

For a mind that has wisdom please read on and learn truth on another level.

Isaiah **29 v 2** is the **18,196<sup>th</sup>** verse in Scripture.

The number **18,196 = 4 x 4549 [617<sup>th</sup> prime]**

The spiritual meaning of **4** is 'Message: Word'

The spiritual meaning of **617** means 'No Place to Run from the Ruler'.

Justinian and Theodora discover they are not the ultimate ruler of God's people.