

Isaac Newton and Daniel's Jubilee

(Revised and Expanded)

T.W. Tramm – (08/22/21)

ONE OF THE greatest minds to ever study the Scriptures, Isaac Newton, believed that a verse in Daniel 9 predicts the year of Jesus' return:

"From the going forth of the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks" (Dan. 9:25).

In his writings on the prophecies of Daniel, Newton proposes that the "seven weeks" denote a jubilee cycle, a future 49-year period, that will begin with a rebuilding of Jerusalem and end in an appearance of Messiah.

Historically, there have been several orders to rebuild Jerusalem, e.g., 457–58 BC, 444–45 BC, 1537–38 AD. However, the only order to rebuild Jerusalem in the modern era appears to have gone forth on August 19, 1970, when a press report appeared in the Jerusalem Post detailing how, the day before, a master plan to renovate the Old City—the area recaptured during the Six Day War—had been approved.

Counting Daniel's 49 years, plus a 50th for the Jubilee, from the plan to rebuild Jerusalem in 1970–71, we arrive at 2020–21.

Could the biblical year spanning 2020–21, beginning and ending at Nisan, be the Jubilee alluded to in Daniel?

The following are reasons it seems possible.

SECOND WITNESS

Bolstering the notion that the 1970–71 rebuilding of Jerusalem is relevant to Daniel's Weeks Prophecy is a second reckoning based on the same prophecy. Daniel mentions two sets of weeks, 7 weeks and 62 weeks, and specifies that Jerusalem's walls will be rebuilt (Dan. 9:25). Counting backward 62 weeks from 1970–71, we arrive at 1537–38 AD, the year Ottoman ruler Suleiman rebuilt Jerusalem's walls. What is remarkable is that by adding Daniel's 7 and 62 weeks and counting forward from 1537–38 AD, we arrive, again, at our speculative Jubilee: 2020–21.

Thus, our speculative jubilee is confirmed by two calculations of Daniel's weeks from different restorations of Jerusalem.

CORONAVIRUS SHUTDOWN

In Scripture, the Jubilee is a year-long Sabbath in which servants are released and allowed to return home (Lev. 25:8–13). With the jubilee themes of rest and returning to home in view, it is interesting that 2020–21 saw a global cessation of activity due to the Coronavirus pandemic. The restrictions that kept much of the world idle or confined to their homes began around Nisan 2020 and ended around Nisan 2021, corresponding to our speculative Jubilee. While it may be coincidental, it is uncanny that a type of worldwide compulsory “sabbath” coincided with the 50th year as counted from the rebuilding of Jerusalem in 1970–71.

HISTORICAL PATTERN

Counting backward 50-year periods from our speculative Jubilee 1970–71, we find a pattern of jubilee-themed events:

1920–21

Following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in 1917, the British Empire took military control of the Land of Israel and issued the Balfour Declaration, a pledge to facilitate the creation of a Jewish state. However, it was not until the 1920 “Mandate for Palestine” was issued, granting Britain official administrative rule over the Holy Land, that they became “legal owner” with the authority to create a Jewish state.

An excerpt from a 1920 Times article reflects the momentous nature of the British Mandate:

April 26, 1920 — Zionist rejoicings: British Mandate for Palestine Welcomed

“The news that Great Britain is to have the mandate for Palestine, and the decision to incorporate the Balfour Declaration in the Treaty of Peace with Turkey will be received with intense gratification by Jews in all countries. It means that at last, after 20 centuries, the Jews will begin work of the reestablishing of their ancient Homeland, under a stable and civilized Government. The wandering Jews will at last have a home The event will be celebrated in all Jewish centers with great joy, and the date—April 24, 1920—will perhaps become a Jewish national holiday.”

The 1920 Mandate for Palestine, granting Britain legal authority to establish a Jewish State, was thus a pivotal moment in Bible prophecy, echoing the jubilee theme of land returning to its original owner (Lev. 25:13).

1870–71

Counting backward 50 years from the British Mandate in 1920–21, we arrive at 1870–71, the year of the first modern Jewish settlement in the Land of Israel. The settlement, called Mikveh Israel, meaning

'Hope of Israel' was an agricultural school established for the purpose of teaching young Jews farming skills.

For many decades, Mikveh served as the research center for the country. Its teaching staff wrote the first study books about agriculture and served as field advisors. After finishing their studies, the thousands of graduates left Mikveh to start agricultural settlements all over the land, causing the desert to bud and blossom as foretold in Isaiah (27:6; 35:1–10).

Thus, the 1870 establishment of the first agricultural settlement in the Holy Land ushered in a new era in the region, facilitating the budding of the “fig tree” in May 1948, and echoing the jubilee themes of restoration and return of the land.

70–71 AD

Counting backward 38 jubilee periods from 1970–71 we arrive at 70–71 AD, the year Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed by the Romans. Significantly, some Jewish sources say the Temple was destroyed in the year after a sabbatical, or 7th, year. Since a sabbatical precedes a Jubilee, the Jewish reckoning agrees that Jerusalem could have been destroyed and the people dispersed in what was actually a jubilee year.

How does the removal of the Jews from the land in 70–71 AD correspond to the theme of Jubilee, which is supposed to be a year of returning to one’s land? In Scripture, the Lord instructs Israel that if they obey His laws they will dwell safely in the land (Lev. 25). However, if they ignore God’s laws, the blessings will turn into curses (Deut. 11:26–28; 28:15). Since in the days of the Second Temple Israel was ignoring the jubilee statute, it would make sense for judgment to fall in what was supposed to have been a Jubilee.

Thus, the dispersion of the Jews in 70–71 AD may represent a type of anti-fulfillment of the Jubilee due to Israel’s disregard of this key statute.

6,000-YEAR TIMELINE

To the Lord, “a day is as a thousand years” (2 Pet. 3:8). Based on the pattern set at Creation Week—six days of labor followed by one day of rest—Jesus is expected to return after 6,000 years to judge the world and reign during the thousand-year “Day of the Lord,” or Sabbath millennium.

Counting 50-year periods from Creation, the 6,000th year corresponds to the 120th Jubilee.

What is interesting is that the calculations of most chronologists have us presently already beyond the 6,000th year, or 120th Jubilee. For instance, James Ussher dated Creation to 4004 BC, making the earth 6,023 years old as of our speculative Jubilee 2020–21. Chronologist D. Petavius dated Creation to 3983 BC, making the earth 6,002 years old as of our speculative Jubilee.

Understanding that biblical chronology is not an exact science, it is intriguing to consider the possibility of Petavius being off by just a couple of years in his reckoning, making Nisan 2021—not 2019 as his calculation implies—the end of the 6,000th year.

TRIBULATION IMPLICATIONS

If 2020–21 was in fact a Jubilee, the current year, 2021–22, is the first year of a new 7-year sabbatical cycle. This is significant because, assuming God is fulfilling prophecy according to His 7-year cycles, it would make sense for the 7-year Tribulation to begin in the first year of a new sabbatical cycle.

RAPTURE IMPLICATIONS

A question raised by our jubilee scenario is, if 2020–21 was a Jubilee, why did the Lord not appear at this time? The answer may relate to a fundamental jubilee statute. According to Leviticus, no harvesting is allowed during the jubilee year (Lev. 25:11, 12). Since the Rapture is a “harvest,” and Jesus came to fulfill the Law (Matt. 5:17), it could be reasoned that the biblical year following the Jubilee, the year we are presently in, 2021–22, represents the first opportunity to lawfully rapture the Church.

The Rapture occurring in the year after the final Jubilee makes sense in view of a pattern established in Jeremiah:

“Thus says the LORD: After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you, and cause you to return to this place [Jerusalem]” (Jer. 29:10).

Notice God brings the Jews home “after” the 70 years are complete. Following the pattern of bringing His people home after the allotted number of years has fully expired, it would make sense for the Lord to allow the 6,000th year and final Jubilee to fully lapse before rapturing the Church in what would be the first year of a new sabbatical cycle.

Another hint that the Rapture may occur after the 6,000th year is the wedding at which Jesus has six water jars filled to the brim so He can turn it into wine (John 2:7). Six jugs filled to the “brim” may be a picture of the 6,000th year fully lapsing before the wedding of Messiah occurs in the first year of a new sabbatical cycle.

THE FINAL JUBILEE: RAPTURE OR SECOND COMING?

A popular view is that the 6,000th year, or final Jubilee, will coincide with the Second Coming. However, Scripture links the Jubilee to the Rapture:

In Isaiah, Jesus is seen executing judgment on the earth because “the year to redeem (Jubilee) had come” (Isa. 63:4). That the Jubilee “had come” indicates the order of events is Jubilee then Judgment, not Judgment then Jubilee.

In Revelation 5, Jesus receives a scroll representing the “Title Deed” to earth—a picture of the land going back to its owner per the jubilee statute (Rev. 5:6, 7 KJV). At this time, the saints are seen gathered around God’s throne, praising the Lord for having “redeemed” them, an allusion to the Jubilee, or year of redemption (v. 9 KJV). After this, the first seal of the scroll is opened, commencing judgment upon the earth (Rev. 6). Thus, the order of events is Jubilee then Judgment.

Another clue that the Rapture is a jubilee event is Pentecost. Pentecost, the 50th day, is a type of Jubilee, the 50th year. Since Pentecost celebrates the wheat harvest, signifying the rapture of the Church, the Jubilee is by association linked to the Rapture. It is significant that in Acts 2, when the Day of Pentecost had “fully come,” there were about 120 believers gathered in the upper room (Acts 1:15). The 120 Christians are likely an allusion to the 120th jubilee, corresponding to the 6,000th year.

FINANCIAL OMEN

If 2020–21 was in fact a Jubilee, the year before, 2019–20, was a sabbatical year.

In Scripture, the sabbatical is a year of economic reckoning in which debt is cancelled (Deut. 15:1). While the world’s leading economic power, the US, did not see a major financial reckoning in 2019, it is noteworthy that on August 15, corresponding to the biblical date Av 15, or Tu B’Av, an ominous sign occurred in the financial realm: the 10-year Treasury yield inverted, going lower than the 2-year yield for the first time since before the 2008 Great Recession, resulting in a headline-making 800.49 point market crash.

Seeing how the number “8” signifies a new beginning and the number “49” a Jubilee, it is striking that the 800.49 point crash occurred on Tu B’Av—a holiday associated with weddings and inheriting the Promised Land—exactly 49 years from when the plan to rebuild Jerusalem was approved on Tu B’Av (August 18) in 1970.

COW SIGNS

In 2014, two cows made news for being born with distinctive number “7s” on their heads. What made this bizarre occurrence especially intriguing, however, was the timing: The first cow made news on the biblical Feast of Trumpets (September 25). It was black in color and had a large formal appearing “7” on its head. The second cow, featured on a popular religious program, was born on the same Feast of Trumpets. This cow was red in color and had a small informal, or slapdash, appearing “7” on its head.

In prophecy circles, the cows were regarded as a modern-day version of the sign given to Pharaoh—a warning from God to a Gentile nation about 7 years of plenty followed by 7 years of famine (Gen. 41).

Counting 7 years from the Nisan following the cow signs, the 7 years of plenty could end as late as Nisan 2022. However, it is important to note that the last harvest season to occur within this presumed 7-year period of abundance is the one we are in now—summer 2021. That summer 2021 could be the final season of plenty before a famine sweeps the world is crucial because, according to Scripture, Jesus will return to “harvest” the earth at a time when there is plenty to eat and drink (Matt. 24:37–39; Luke 17:28–30).

That the current year, 2021–22, may be pivotal as regards a 7-year famine bolsters our jubilee scenario, which has this same year marking the first in a new sabbatical cycle.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

A persistent riddle in the realm of eschatology is the correct reckoning of the jubilee cycle.

Based on the rabbinical reckoning of the 7-year sabbatical cycle, 2015 was thought to be a jubilee year. However, questions around the accuracy of the Jewish reckoning, plus a lack of jubilee-themed events around 2015, cast doubt on this calculation.

Other jubilee reckonings have been attempted, based on various historical and biblical clues. Yet a lack of consensus leaves the puzzle unsolved.

Is it possible the Book of Daniel has held the answer to the jubilee-riddle all along, hidden in plain sight?

“From the going forth of the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks” (Dan. 9:25).

Isaac Newton understood Daniel’s “weeks” to be sabbatical cycles, and the “seven weeks” to be a final jubilee cycle that would begin with a rebuilding of Jerusalem.

There has only been one rebuilding of Jerusalem in the modern era, 1970–71. Counting one jubilee period from then, we arrive at 2020–21.

Validating the 2020–21 date is a calculation based on the rebuilding of Jerusalem’s wall by Suleiman: 1537–38 AD + 69 weeks = 2020–21.

Our speculative 2020–21 Jubilee explains or agrees with . . .

- The year-long pandemic shutdown of 2020–21.

- Jubilee-themed events occurring in 1920–21, 1870–71, and 70–71 AD.
- Chronologists’ reckonings of the 6,000th year.
- A convergence of signs and eschatological timelines indicating 2021–22 may be a pivotal year.

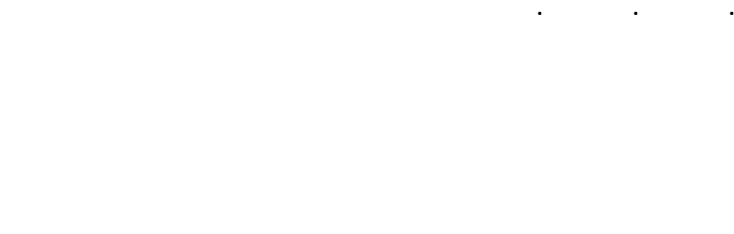
What’s more, our scenario . . .

- Allows the 6,000th year to fully conclude, allocating six full “days” to fallen man before Judgment Day begins.
- Results in 2021–22 being year-one of a sabbatical cycle, an apt time for the 7-year Tribulation or a 7-year famine to begin.
- Takes into account the jubilee statute of no harvesting (thus no Rapture) in a jubilee year.

Is it possible 2020–21 was a Jubilee, that the 6,000 years are complete, and the Day of the Lord is about to begin?

In view of our rationale, it is definitely possible.

However, only time will tell if it is fact.



NOTES:

1. Newton on Daniel’s Weeks Prophecy:

“Thus we have in this short prophecy [of Daniel], a prediction of all the main periods related to the coming of Messiah [including] the time of his second coming.”

“The weeks of years are Jewish weeks ending in sabbatical years.”

“The commandment to return and to build Jerusalem precedes Messiah the Prince 49 years.”

(See Isaac Newton, Observations Upon the prophecies of Daniel, and the Apocalypse of St. John, Echo Library, 2007, pp. 54, 55).

2. The popular interpretation of the 7 weeks is that they mark the completion of the rebuilding of Jerusalem in Nehemiah's day. It did not "add up" to Newton, however, that the Bible's only mention of a prophetic jubilee cycle would refer to something less than the highest degree of fulfillment for a Jubilee. Newton wrote of the 7 weeks: "The seven sevens are the compass of a Jubilee and begin and end with actions proper for a Jubilee and of the highest nature for which a Jubilee can be kept" (Newton, p. 54).

3. Ancient decrees and counts related to the rebuilding of Jerusalem coincide with Nisan. The first decree was issued in Nisan 457–58 BC by the Persian King Artaxerxes to Ezra (Ezra 7). Another decree was issued in Nisan 444–45 BC by the same Artaxerxes to Nehemiah (Neh. 2).

4. Modern rebuilding of Jerusalem: The planning and clearing of rubble in preparation for the rebuilding of Jerusalem began soon after the Israeli takeover in 1967. However, the plan to rebuild the Holy City, composed by a team of architects, engineers, and administrators, was not approved and publicly communicated until August 19, 1970. Five months later, in Tevet of the same biblical year (January 1971), the rebuilding of Jerusalem began when "a bulldozer commenced working within the perimeter of the United Nations premises at Government House": https://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/eed216406b50bf6485256ce10072f637/cad07c91cf05ebf985256437005be684?OpenDocument&fbclid=IwAR2gg_xmU9dFahVmpMLEUG1XxHwINRHZ-9BZhEFoO4Uxz_GMZdT-GSHz8o
<https://www.nytimes.com/1970/08/22/archives/jerusalem-is-hewing-to-rebuilding-plans.html?fbclid=IwAR2JbgqHHxkuJ7cK-BeNiy52ZUF-4goX-PGDU8xaB0HXJGy1UkaRibBhs1w>

5. Construction timeline for Jerusalem's walls in the days of Suleiman:

http://www.pages.drexel.edu/~cfh27/Jerusalem/Ottoman_Sabils_of_Jerusalem.pdf?fbclid=IwAR1xvA1AADQq7qlwKITSHXP_TFLXuBbNBKWBKxXhdAPyumx5IH5zEB4M-wQ

While construction continued until 1541 AD, Daniel's countdown to Messiah begins at the initial "going forth of the command" to rebuild (Dan. 9:25). The fountains (sabils) were ordered rebuilt in 1536–37. The walls and gates were ordered rebuilt in 1537–38.

6. It is interesting that the Coronavirus pandemic began around the time President Trump unveiled a peace plan, the so-called Deal of the Century, which included provisions to divide the Land of Israel by creating a separate Palestinian state. Could the proposal to divide the Land also have something to do with the plague of 2020–21? Background: On January 28, 2020, the Trump Administration unveiled a peace map showing Israel's redrawn borders per the Deal of the Century. Three days later, the World Health Organization declared a public health emergency as the Coronavirus was found present and quickly spreading in the US and other countries. Three days after that—less than a week after the US-sponsored peace plan was unveiled—the United States declared a public health emergency due to the Coronavirus.

7. A March 1921 memorandum on the Mandate for Palestine reads: "His Majesty's Government are responsible under the terms of the Mandate for establishing in Palestine [Land of Israel] a national home for the Jewish People."

8. The Mandate for Palestine was granted in April 1920, and Britain's civil administration of the Land of Israel began in July. The mandate gained international recognition at a private meeting of the Council of the League of Nations in July 1922.

9. 1920 Times Article on the Mandate for Palestine:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mandate_for_Palestine#/media/File:Zionist_Rejoicings_British_Mandate_For_Palestine_Welcomed,_The_Times,_Monday,_Apr_26,_1920.png

10. Remarkably, Isaac Newton predicted it would be a foreign nation friendly to the Jews that would facilitate their return to the land. In his writings on Daniel, Newton noted that the return to and rebuilding of Jerusalem, "May perhaps come forth not from the Jews themselves, but from some other kingdom friendly to them, and precede their return from captivity [dispersion] and give occasion to it" (Newton, p. 54). What Newton could not have foreseen is that it would be his own country, Britain, who would facilitate the Jews' return to the Promised Land. On May 14, 1948, after nearly three decades of British rule, the Mandate over Palestine expired and Israel became a sovereign nation.

11. It is fascinating that the 70 AD destruction of Jerusalem and later 1970 AD plan to rebuild Jerusalem both occurred in the month of Av, exactly 38 jubilee cycles apart. What's more, the destruction of Jerusalem occurred on Av 9, or Tisha B'Av, a date associated with tragedy in Judaism, whereas the plan to rebuild Jerusalem was approved on Av 15, or Tu B'Av, a Jewish holiday associated with inheriting the Promised Land and weddings.

12. While the phrase "Day of the Lord" is often used to describe the tribulation period, it actually applies to the whole thousand-year (Sabbath-millennial) "Day."

13. The 120th Jubilee is alluded to in Genesis where God says, "My Spirit will not contend with [mortal] humans forever ... their days will be a hundred and twenty" (6:3). The Lord was obviously not saying He would contend with mortals for 120 actual years from when He spoke these words as He is still contending with mortal-fallen man. Thus, Genesis 6:3 refers to the redemption of mortal man after 120 jubilees.

14. Creation date calculations:

J. Cappellus – 4005 BC

E. Greswell – 4004 BC

E. Faulstich – 4001 BC

D. Petavius – 3983 BC

Frank Klassen – 3975 BC

Becke – 3974 BC

Krentzeim – 3971 BC

15. Av 15 (Tu B'Av) calculation: The new moon of Av in 1970 would have been sighted the evening of August 3. Counting 15 days from the evening of August 3, we arrive at August 18, Av 15, or Tu B'Av, the day on which the Jerusalem Planning Committee approved the master plan to rebuild Jerusalem. The plan would not "go forth," or be made public, until the next day, August 19, via a press report in the Jerusalem Post:

https://www.calendar-12.com/moon_calendar/1970/august

16. Dow plunge of 800.49 points:

<https://www.cnbc.com/2019/08/14/stock-markets-wall-street-in-focus-amid-earnings-economic-data.html>

That the Tu B'Av "yield inversion" occurred two years ago, in 2019, is noteworthy because an inverted yield has preceded by roughly two years every U.S. recession over the past 50 years. Are we soon to see a recession or worse?

17. Cow signs of 2014:

<https://storage.googleapis.com/wzukusers/user-35306783/documents/aa641880872549af9388ff6f86f83a59/Cow%20Signs%20of%202014%20-%20Another%20Reason%202021%20Could%20Be%20a%20Pivotal%20Year%20In%20Bible%20Prophecy.pdf>

18. The currently acknowledged sabbatical cycle was computed by a third century rabbi (Hunna) who reckoned the cycle based on the notion that the Second Temple was destroyed in a sabbatical year. By counting uninterrupted 7-year periods from then, it is determined that the next sabbatical year begins in Tishrei 2021 and ends Tishrei 2022.

There are two problems with this reckoning:

- 1) Biblical years, including sabbaticals and Jubilees, begin and end in what Scripture calls the first month, Nisan, not in the seventh month, Tishrei, per rabbinical tradition (Ex. 12).
- 2) The uninterrupted count of seven-year periods ignores the intercalary insertion of a 50th year (Jubilee) every 49 years, thus rendering the overall sabbatical and jubilee reckoning inaccurate.

19. If fall 2021–22 is a sabbatical as the rabbinical reckoning suggests, the next sabbatical is fall 2028–29, and potential Jubilees are 2022–23 and 2029–30, respectively. This is important to note because the popular interpretation of the fig-tree parable has the 80-year generation ending no later than Israel's 81st birthday in May 2029, suggesting a conclusion of end-time events in fall 2028.

20. More on biblical calendar reckoning:

<https://storage.googleapis.com/wzukusers/user-35306783/documents/b1c82a902259495590a865b2bf038663/Calendar%20Confusion%20-%20Chapter%203%20-%20Summer%20Is%20Near%20-%20TW%20Tramm.pdf>

21. Convergence of biblical timelines pointing to 2021–28: <https://storage.googleapis.com/wzukusers/user-35306783/documents/2d99142469184f388e5db6fb93625b34/TIMELINE%20CONVERGENCE%202021-28%20-%20WHAT%20DOES%20IT%20MEAN%20rev%20b.pdf>