

Why 2023 Is the Highest Rapture Watch Ever

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JUNE 26 will mark eight years since I began this calendar-focused ministry called “Season of Return.”

Each year, biblical timelines and math have added up in a way that confirms we are in the season of the Rapture. However, no year has seen a calendar-convergence like the current one. The following are 10 reasons I believe the most anticipated event in history—the catching up into the clouds of countless followers of Jesus Christ—could happen in 2023.

1. SABBATICAL CYCLE

According to scholars, 2023 marks the start of a Sabbatical week.

Validating this reckoning is a pattern of signs at a seven-year interval (see notes) and the fact that the corresponding Jewish and Gregorian years (5782/2023) are both divisible by seven. This coincidence does not occur with the standard rabbinic reckoning, which has 5782 corresponding to 2022.

That 2023 begins a new Sabbatical week is significant because the Bible’s “bridal week” custom implies that the ultimate Bride, the Church, will be spirited away to the home of the Bridegroom around the start of a week (Gen. 29:26–28; John 14:3; Isa. 26:19–21).

2. JUBILEE

Because 2023 is the first year of a Sabbatical week, it is also a potential Jubilee, or “year of redemption” (Lev. 25). This is significant because Scripture associates the year of redemption with the resurrection–rapture of the Church:

- Paul, the Apostle to the Gentile Church, speaks of the “redemption” of our bodies at the Lord’s appearing (Rom. 8:19–23).
- Jesus says when we see the signs of His coming, our “redemption” is drawing near (Luke 21:28).
- Christians are sealed by the Holy Spirit until the day of “redemption” (Eph. 4:30).

3. ISRAEL'S 75th BIRTHDAY

2023 marks Israel's 75th birthday. This is noteworthy because the father of Israel, Abraham, was 75 years old when he and his family entered the Promised Land in the year 2023 AM (Gen. 12:1–4). If the pattern repeats, Israel's 75th birthday in 2023 AD could see the "sons of Abraham" by faith, believing Jews and Gentiles, enter the heavenly Promised Land (Gal. 3:7).

4. 1335 TIMELINE

2023 marks 1,335 years since the Islamic Dome of the Rock was set up on the Temple Mount in 688 AD. This is significant because in Daniel's final vision of the end times, the setting up of an "abomination" in the Temple area commences a countdown of 1,335 (days or years) to an unspecified blessed event: "Blessed is the one who waits for and reaches the end of the 1,335 days" (Dan. 12:12). Since the "blessed hope" of believing Jews and Gentiles is Jesus' appearing (Titus 2:13; Luke 12:37), it is conceivable that the unspecified "blessed" event after 1,335 (days or years) is the Rapture.

5. COW SIGNS

2023 marks nine years since two cows with "7s" on their heads appeared around the Feast of Trumpets in 2014. In prophecy circles, the cows with '7s' were interpreted as a modern version of Pharaoh's dream of seven healthy cows swallowed up by seven sickly cows, a divine warning about seven years of plenty followed by seven years of famine (Gen. 41).

According to the extrabiblical Book of Jasher, the seven years of plenty began two years after Pharaoh's cow dream, and the seven years of famine began seven years after that (Jasher 50).

Fast forward to the present: It is noteworthy that a period of economic abundance began two years after the 2014 cow signs, with the election of Donald Trump. If the omened time of plenty began in 2016, the period of famine should begin seven years later, in 2023.

6. SEVEN WEEKS UNTIL MESSIAH

2023 marks the completion of seven Sabbatical weeks since Jerusalem was restored to the Jews in 1967. This is significant because, according to Daniel's Weeks Prophecy, Messiah will appear seven weeks, or one Jubilee period, after a restoration of Jerusalem:

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

If our reading of Daniel is correct, not only is the post-Sabbatical year 2023 a potential Jubilee, it *is* a Jubilee.

7. 69 WEEKS UNTIL MESSIAH

2023 marks the completion of 69 Sabbatical weeks since Jerusalem's wall was rebuilt by Islamic ruler Suleiman. This is significant because, according to another reading of Daniel's Weeks Prophecy, Messiah will appear "seven weeks and sixty-two weeks" (69 weeks) after Jerusalem's wall is rebuilt: "From the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall" (Dan. 9:25).

8. 10 WEEKS SINCE 1948

2023 marks the completion of 10 Sabbatical weeks since Israel became a nation in 1948. The number 10 denotes completeness, divine order, and judgment: There are 10 commandments; 10 generations of man lived on the earth before the flood waters came and swept them away; 10 days precede the Day of Atonement, or "judgment day."

Additionally, 10 weeks are equivalent to 70 years. The number 70 denotes completeness related to Israel: The Nation of Israel began with 70 Hebrews who migrated to Egypt; Moses appointed 70 elders to be the governing body of Israel; the Jews spent 70 years in Babylon; God's plan of redemption for Israel is comprised of 70 weeks.

9. THE START OF THE 11th WEEK

2023 marks the start of the 11th Sabbatical week since Israel became a nation in 1948. The number 11 denotes chaos, disorder, and judgment in Scripture, themes associated with the Tribulation period. The next Sabbatical week, beginning in 2030, will be the 12th since Israel became a nation. The number 12 signifies God's authority and a perfect governmental foundation in Scripture, themes associated with the Millennial Kingdom.

10. 354 WEEKS SINCE DANIEL'S PROPHECY BEGAN

2023 marks the completion of 354 Sabbatical weeks since Daniel's Weeks Prophecy began to be fulfilled upon the Jews' return to Jerusalem in 457 BC (Ezra 7:9; Dan. 9:25). Because there are 354 days in a perfect 12-month lunar year, the number 354 symbolizes the fullness of time related to God's celestial calendar. Moreover, since the Moon is symbolic of the Church, or Bride of Christ, it could be said that 354 denotes the fullness of time related to the Bride.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

With the above list in view, here are the key takeaways:

- God reckons time according to His Sabbatical calendar.
- Scholarly analysis, signs, and math suggest that 2023 begins a new Sabbatical week.
- An unrepeatable convergence of timelines suggests that the week beginning in 2023 is the final one: the Tribulation week for Israel, and the bridal week for the Church.

Will 2023 see the gathering of the Bride? Despite all our reckoning, there is no way to know. What can be said is that, based on the timelines, it is the highest Rapture watch ever.

NOTES:

1. Concerning the reckoning of Sabbatical years, it is important to note that there are two accepted chronologies, which differ by a single year. The first chronology, associated with Benedict Zuckermann, has the Sabbatical year 5782 ending in 2022. The second chronology, associated with Ben Zion Wacholder, has the Sabbatical year 5782 ending in 2023. <https://www.pickle-publishing.com/papers/sabbatical-years-table.htm>

Zuckermann's chronology, published circa 1856, corresponds to the rabbinic reckoning of Sabbatical years, and is the cycle observed in Israel today. Sidenote: it has been speculated that Benedict Zuckerman, an orthodox Jew, may have been motivated, consciously or subconsciously, to validate the existing rabbinic reckoning rather than challenge it.

Wacholder's chronology, published in 1973, is generally favored by scholars as he had access to ancient records not available to Zuckermann. Additionally, a number of coincidences make Wacholder's chronology compelling:

- Ben Zion Wacholder, known for his research on the Sabbatical cycle, published his chronology in a Sabbatical year, 1973, at the age of 49. Thus, Wacholder's birthdate and the publication of his paper on the Sabbatical cycle correspond to the cycle itself, and are stamped with the number of Jubilee.

- Given that Sabbatical weeks are counted from either Tishrei (Jewish) or Nisan (biblical), it is fascinating to note that Wacholder was born exactly one week before Tishrei 1, and died exactly one week before Nisan 1 (September 21, 1924 and March 29, 2011, respectively). Thus, the scholar known for his chronology of Sabbatical weeks was born and died exactly one week before the date(s) on which Sabbatical weeks begin.
- Wacholder's chronology, reckoned from Nisan, lines up with recent landmark signs and events. Note below how the signs culminate in the seventh month of the seventh year, the "appointed time" in the year of debt remission, or "Shemitah" (Deut. 31:10):

Sabbatical 1973–74: Yom Kippur War and inflation crisis begin in the seventh month.

Sabbatical 2001–02: Market crash related to the 9/11 terror attacks occurs in the seventh month.

Sabbatical 2008–09: Market crash of 777 points linked to the Global Financial Crisis occurs in the seventh month.

Sabbatical 2015–16: Major signs in the heavens (blood moons, solar eclipses, and Bethlehem Star reappearance) culminate in the seventh month.

2. Sabbatical years are counted from Nisan, the "first month" (Ex. 12:1, 2). This is clear in Leviticus where, speaking to the prohibition on farming during the Sabbatical year, God says, "You shall sow in the eighth year, and eat old produce until the ninth year; until its produce comes in, you shall eat of the old harvest" (Lev. 25:22). In this scenario, the crop is sown during the fall of the "eighth year" and its harvest comes in during the "ninth year," indicating a spring beginning to the year. If the year began in the fall, the crops sown at that time would be harvested four months later in spring of the same year. More on why biblical years begin at Nisan: [https://storage.googleapis.com/wzukusers/user35306783/documents/6f0d476832da43a18e0bd26d197703b8/W HY GOD COUNTS YEARS FROM THE SPRING - AND WHY IT MATTERS.pdf](https://storage.googleapis.com/wzukusers/user35306783/documents/6f0d476832da43a18e0bd26d197703b8/W%20HY%20GOD%20COUNTS%20YEARS%20FROM%20THE%20SPRING%20-%20AND%20WHY%20IT%20MATTERS.pdf)

3. According to the wedding custom in the Bible, the bride and groom are hidden away for a week to get acquainted before making their first public appearance as man and wife (Gen. 29:26–28). Since everything related to a wedding in Scripture points to the ultimate wedding of Christ and the Church, we understand the "bridal week" to foreshadow a seven-year period in which the Church–Bride is hidden away in heaven, while judgment is poured out on the earth (Isa. 26:19–21).

4. 1335 calculation: <https://storage.googleapis.com/wzukusers/user-35306783/documents/2b79181f3a184f348586bb555dd5034d/The%20Daniel%2012%20Prophecy%20and%202023%20rev%20a.pdf>

5. Cow signs: <https://storage.googleapis.com/wzukusers/user-35306783/documents/ddaa5e9422e8469b84f4ca9b814c4e00/Cow%20Signs%20and%20the%20Looming%20Biblical%20Famine.pdf>

6. The Book of Jasher is an ancient history book that fills in details not included in the Bible. Jasher is referenced three times in Scripture, confirming that it is a legitimate source of information (See Josh. 10:13; 2 Sam. 1:18; and 2 Tim. 3:8).

7. Daniel's Weeks Prophecy and 2023: <https://storage.googleapis.com/wzukusers/user-35306783/documents/955eaefdcfb34a3ea89c02951f1721f8/2023%20-%20THE%20YEAR%20OF%20REDEMPTION%20rev%20a.pdf>

8. 69 Weeks fulfillment: <https://storage.googleapis.com/wzukusers/user-35306783/documents/d9d5e868e4bb48139e5a8de0fc8f71ed/Daniels%2069%20Weeks%20and%20Messiahs%20TWO%20Appearances%20rev%20C.pdf>

9. Another coincidence related to the number 354 occurs in what is regarded as the standard index of the Bible, Strong's Hebrew–Greek Concordance: Strong's #354 in the Hebrew, *ayyal*, refers to a "stag, or male deer." Strong's #354 in the Greek, *analémpsis*, refers to a "taking up into heaven." That the Hebrew and Greek words associated with the number 354 refer to a stag and a taking up to heaven is striking because the Bible's rapture-allegory in Song of Songs depicts Jesus as a young stag who calls on His beloved to "rise up" and come away: "My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag My beloved spoke, and said to me: 'Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away'" (Song 2:9, 10).

10. Interesting coincidences related to the number 23:

- Psalm 23, the most quoted Psalm in the Bible, ends: "I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever" (Ps. 23:6).
- Leviticus chapter 23 describes the seven Feasts of the Lord. Leviticus 23:23 describes the Feast of Trumpets.
- Planet Earth's axis is tilted 23 degrees.
- Though not biblical, the "23 enigma" is a phenomenon popularized by various books, movies, and conspiracy theories, which holds that the number 23 appears with unusual frequency in various contexts and may be a symbol of some larger, hidden significance. A topic related to the 23 enigma is eikositriphobia, which is a fear of the number 23.