

The Prophetic Year 2022: Looking Back, Looking Forward, and Looking Up

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WHAT a year it has been.

It started with covid surges, and inflation rising at the fastest rate in 40 years.

Then, Russia invaded Ukraine, igniting the largest conflict in Europe since World War II, and things escalated:

Shipments from Ukraine were halted, and sanctions were imposed on Russia, stoking global prices for grains, cooking oils, and fertilizer.

Fuel prices surged around the world.

Markets plunged, the housing bubble began to deflate, and economies began to contract.

The inflation and energy crisis of 2022 has been compared to the crisis of 1973. However, due to factors in play today that did not exist then, such as massive debt and money-printing, experts are predicting a far worse outcome:

Headlines:

“Roubini Warns ‘the mother of all economic crises looms’”

“Top economist says we’re not just headed for another recession, but a ‘profound economic and financial shift’”

“Hedge-fund Giant Elliot warns looming hyperinflation could lead to ‘global societal collapse’”

The unraveling of the economy in 2022 is not a surprise within the watchman community. A new seven-year Sabbatical “week” has just begun, which Scripture and signs suggest will be a time of unequaled Tribulation.

What *is* surprising, seeing that the pivotal week has already begun, is that no Tribulation events have yet occurred: no appearance of the Antichrist, no Middle-East peace deal, etc.

Why?

One possible explanation is that we have misinterpreted these events, or how they correlate to the Tribulation week.

Another explanation is that the Sabbatical calendar, the one that we base our calculations on, is one year off the mark as some propose.

SABBATICAL CONTROVERSY

Concerning the Sabbatical calendar, there are two widely recognized chronologies, which differ by a single year.

The first chronology was published around 1856 by Benedict Zuckermann, an orthodox Jewish scientist. Zuckermann's chronology represents what is considered the standard position, and is the Sabbatical calendar used in Israel today. According to this reckoning, the last Sabbatical year ended at Tishrei 2022, placing us currently in the first year of a new cycle.

The second chronology, which proposes Sabbatical dates one year later than Zuckermann's, was published by Ben Zion Wacholder, a Christian Jewish scholar, in 1973. While Wacholder was not the first to advocate such dates, his name is commonly associated with this position.

As with most debates, there are credible arguments on both sides. However, it is worth noting that Wacholder had access to documents not available to Zuckermann and, because his reckoning corresponds better to events such as the siege of Beth-zur (165 BC) and, according to some, the Temple destruction in 70 AD, many modern scholars have adopted the cycle that places the Sabbatical year one year later.

As an aside, while researching Wacholder, I stumbled upon an uncanny coincidence: The esteemed professor and theologian, known for his 1973 paper on the relationship between the Sabbatical cycle and biblical events, published his work in a Sabbatical year, at the age of 49, exactly 49 years ago today. Thus, Wacholder's birthdate, and the publication of his Sabbatical paper 49 years later, conform to, or align with, the cycle itself, and are marked with the number of Jubilee (Lev. 25:8–10).

Not only does Wacholder's Sabbatical chronology line up uncannily with his birthdate and paper on the subject, it lines up with landmark signs and events, particularly when the years are reckoned from Nisan, as shown below.

Wacholder Sabbatical years (spring reckoning):

- 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.

Notice that 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). The seventh month of the seventh Sabbatical year is also when the Jubilee is declared by a trumpet blast (Lev. 25:8, 9).

Finally, let’s consider the most recent Sabbatical year in Wacholder’s chronology: 2022–23. This year, reckoned from Nisan, has similarly turned out to be a year of signs and harbingers.

To date, we have seen:

- A war, inflation, and energy crisis, echoing the crisis of 1973 (a Sabbatical year).
- The worst year for the stock market since 2008 (a Sabbatical year).
- Record heat, drought, and a global fertilizer shortage, setting the stage for famine.
- An ultra-rare planetary procession and “wedding sign.”
- The last two blood moon eclipses until 2025.
- NASA’s successful test of asteroid deflecting technology (DART) on the Feast of Trumpets.
- 7.7 percent inflation during the seventh month.
- Earth’s population hit the eight-billion mark in the eighth month, the time of Noah’s Flood.
- The collapse of Cryptocurrency giant FTX on the anniversary of Noah’s Flood.
- The 77th assembly of the UN, the intergovernmental organization founded on the anniversary of Noah’s Flood in 1945.

And more.

With the above in view, the presumed first year of the Sabbatical week, 2022, has been a momentous year of Tribulation signs and stage setting. Yet, no actual Tribulation events have occurred, begging the question: could Wacholder be correct in his conclusion that the cycle is one year early?

Here are a few reasons it seems plausible:

Reason #1: In previous studies, I have speculated that spring 2022 began a Jubilee year. However, if the Sabbatical cycle is one year early as Wacholder proposes, spring 2022 marked instead the beginning of the seventh Sabbatical year, the 49th year in which the impending Jubilee is declared (Lev. 25:8, 9). This reckoning would explain why no climactic events occurred in 2022: it was not a Jubilee but, rather, the Sabbatical year ahead of a Jubilee, which is the year of culmination.

Reason #2: As the saying goes, “there are two sides to every story, but the truth usually lies somewhere in the middle.” According to Zuckermann, the pivotal first year of the Sabbatical cycle (potential Jubilee) began at Tishrei 2022. According to Wacholder, it begins at Tishrei 2023. Reckoning Wacholder’s chronology from Nisan, however, the pivotal first year lands directly in the middle of the two Jewish reckonings, beginning at Nisan 2023.

Click [here](#) for a chart.

Is it possible that the actual first year of the Sabbatical cycle lies in-between the Jewish reckonings? Is this why we have two fall–Jewish reckonings to begin with, because “the truth is in the middle”?

Reason #3: Wacholder’s one-year-later Sabbatical chronology corresponds to the scriptures that speak to an apparent delay on the Lord’s part: In the Parable of the Virgins, the bridegroom shows up later than expected (Matt. 25). In other passages, Jesus instructs the end-times Church to keep watching, to not lose confidence, and to not assume He is delaying for a long time, because He may show up at the final “watch” (Matt. 24:44, 48–50; Heb. 10:35–37; Mark 13:35, 37; Luke 12:38). The uneventful passing of Tishrei–September 2022, a date believed to mark the start of a new Sabbatical cycle and Jubilee, certainly left many with a sense of delay.

Having put forth rationale as to why Wacholder could be correct, there is no way to know definitively. While the Holy Spirit has been guiding the watching Church to understand how the Sabbatical cycle correlates to the Tribulation period, there is a margin of error inherent to a calendar that has two start points (spring vs. fall), and which is reckoned according to, in some instances, imprecise and thus debatable ancient records.

Despite the margin of error, what does seem clear, given all the scholarly analysis of Sabbatical dates, is that one of the two chronologies is correct. If Zuckermann is correct, we are presently in the first year of a new cycle, a potential Jubilee. If Wacholder is correct, we are very soon to be.

What is interesting is that, whether one observes the standard fall reckoning of Zuckermann, or Wacholder’s version reckoned from Nisan, the pertinent harvest season is the same: spring–summer 2023.

Because the harvest season is the same, one could argue that it makes little difference whether we count the years from spring or fall. This may be true from a wide-angle perspective. However, the

downside of the fall reckoning is that it obscures the vital fact that God considers spring—the time of harvest, birth, and transformation—the start of the year (Ex. 12:1, 2).

That spring begins the year is especially important in the year following a Sabbatical, a potential Jubilee. There is a reason the Jubilee is declared in the fall, six months ahead of its arrival in spring: to allow time to prepare for the redemption of servants and property that occurs at the 50th year.

Are you prepared for the year of redemption?

To be redeemed, one must know the Redeemer, Jesus. To know Jesus, simply call on His name: Ask Him to be your Lord and Savior. Believe that He is the Son of God who died for your sins and was raised from the dead, and you will be spared the judgment reserved for a God-rejecting world (Rom. 10:13; 1 Thess. 4, 5).

Do it today.

Time is running out.

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NOTES:

1. Economic warning headlines 2022:

<https://www.yahoo.com/video/top-economist-mohamed-el-erian-193236736.html>

<https://www.zerohedge.com/markets/roubini-warns-mother-all-economic-crises-looms>

<https://www.marketwatch.com/story/hedge-fund-giant-elliott-warns-looming-hyperinflation-could-lead-to-global-societal-collapse-11667470081>

2. About Ben Zion Wacholder:

https://prabook.com/web/ben_zion.wacholder/796882

<https://aajr.org/obituaries/ben-zion-wacholder-1924-2011/>

<https://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/archaeology-today/archaeologists-biblical-scholars-works/ben-zion-wacholder-1924-2011/>

3. Another Wacholder coincidence: Considering that Sabbatical “weeks” are reckoned from both Tishrei and Nisan (Jewish vs. biblical), it is uncanny that Ben Zion Wacholder was born one week before Tishrei 1, and died one week before Nisan 1 (September 21, 1924 and March 29, 2011, respectively).

4. Sabbatical years according to Wacholder:

1917–18
1924–25
1931–32
1938–39
1945–46
1952–53
1959–60
1966–67
1973–74
1980–81
1987–88
1994–95
2001–02
2008–09
2015–16
2022–23
2029–30

5. Complete table of Sabbatical years (Zuckermann and Wacholder):

<http://www.pickle-publishing.com/papers/sabbatical-years-table.htm>

6. Wacholder's published works on the Sabbatical cycle:

The Calendar of Sabbatical Cycles During the Second Temple and the Early Rabbinic Period (1973)

<http://www.betemunah.org/The%20Calendar%20of%20Sabbatical%20Cycles%20During%20the%20Second%20Temple%20and%20the%20Early%20Rabbinic%20Period.pdf>

The Timing of Messianic Movements and the Calendar of Sabbatical Cycles (1975)

<https://nakedbiblepodcast.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Wacholder-Chronomessianism-The-Timing-of-Messianic-Movements-and-Calendar-of-Sabbatical-Cycles.pdf>

The Calendar of Sabbath Years During the Second Temple Era: A Response (1983)

<https://ixtheo.de/Record/1780875118/Description#tabnav>

7. Example of Sabbatical argument: why some believe the Seder Olam supports Wacholder's chronology:

Chapter 30 of the Seder Olam gives the year that both Temples were destroyed as be-motsae shevi'it (במוצאי שבועית). Heinrich Guggenheimer's recent translation renders this phrase as "at the end of a Sabbatical year", thus unambiguously supporting the Wacholder calendar that starts a Sabbatical year in the fall of 69 CE. The problem, however, is that many translations of the Seder Olam render the phrase as "in the year after a Sabbatical year." This was the interpretation adopted by Zuckermann when citing the Seder Olam as supportive of his calendar of

Sabbatical years. The same Hebrew phrase is used in the Babylonian Talmud when citing this passage from the Seder Olam, and some modern translations of the Talmud into English translate the phrase in the sense given by Guggenheimer (at the end of the year), while others translate it “the year after”. The Seder Olam uses the same phrase regarding a Sabbatical year for the destruction of both Temples, so that its testimony in this regard is important for dating the shemitot in both pre-exilic and post-exilic times. Therefore, it would seem necessary to closely examine the phrase in the original Hebrew when making chronological decisions. Unfortunately, this was not done, either by Zuckermann or Wacholder when citing the Seder Olam's testimony as decisive for their particular calendars of Sabbatical years. Most interpreters have simply relied on an existing translation, which may have been unduly influenced by an attempt to be consistent with the chronology the Jews have adopted, which is Zuckermann's. At least one study has addressed this problem, arguing from both a linguistic standpoint and from a study of related texts in the Seder Olam that the phrase be-motsae shevi'it should be translated as something close to “in the latter part of a Sabbatical year”, consistent with Guggenheimer's translation and Wacholder's calendar. This recent study argues that a comparative study of the word motsae (literally, “goings-out”) does not support any sense of “after” (“after a Sabbatical year”).

The above excerpted from here: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shmita#The_Sabbatical_year_574/573_BCE
For the full text, read under the heading: “Sabbatical years in the Second Temple period.”

8. Significantly, according to the Wacholder spring reckoning, the first year of the Sabbatical cycle, or potential Jubilee, ends at Nisan 1, 2024, the day on which the second “Great American Eclipse” completes the “X” across the US. <https://www.greatamericaneclipse.com/april-8-2024>

9. Planetary parade and Wedding Sign in 2022:

<https://storage.googleapis.com/wzukusers/user-35306783/documents/63d710e3f83a40f69180e191c38735cf/June%20Planetary%20Parade%20-%20More%20Than%20an%20Astronomical%20Alignment.pdf>

10. Blood moons in 2022:

<https://storage.googleapis.com/wzukusers/user-35306783/documents/b9ecd3ea43fc4741ac57c5f6ea07e8ac/Blood%20Moon%20-%20The%20Last%20Warning%20rev%20b.pdf>
<https://storage.googleapis.com/wzukusers/user-35306783/documents/e7fee351f28746e4b12c49aa9309427c/Election%20Day%20Blood%20Moon%20and%20Americas%20Prophetic%20Destiny%20rev%20c.pdf>

11. Month to month inflation rate <https://www.rateinflation.com/inflation-rate/usa-inflation-rate/>

12. Citing an eight-billion-dollar shortfall, FTX filed for bankruptcy on November 11, corresponding to Cheshvan 17, the anniversary of Noah's Flood.

13. 2022 Jubilee calculation: <https://storage.googleapis.com/wzukusers/user-35306783/documents/a0ea26efd60c45ec83fce69a4d6e75cc/Jubilee%20Q%20and%20A%20-%20Is%20the%20Year%20of%20Redemption%20Upon%20Us%20-%20rev%20a.pdf>

14. A simple proof that God counts Sabbatical years from spring is found in Leviticus. Speaking to the prohibition on agricultural activity during the Sabbatical year, the Lord 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). Notice that the crop is sown in the "eighth year" and that its harvest comes in during the "ninth year." That the crops are sown in the eighth year and harvested in the ninth indicates a spring beginning to the year. If the year began at Tishrei, the crops sown just after, in Cheshvan–Kislev, would be harvested four months later in spring of the same year.

More on why biblical years are counted from spring:

[https://storage.googleapis.com/wzukusers/user-](https://storage.googleapis.com/wzukusers/user-35306783/documents/6f0d476832da43a18e0bd26d197703b8/WHY_GOD_COUNTS_YEARS_FROM_THE_SPRING_-_AND_WHY_IT_MATTERS.pdf)

[35306783/documents/6f0d476832da43a18e0bd26d197703b8/WHY GOD COUNTS YEARS FROM THE SPRING -
_AND WHY IT MATTERS.pdf](https://storage.googleapis.com/wzukusers/user-35306783/documents/6f0d476832da43a18e0bd26d197703b8/WHY_GOD_COUNTS_YEARS_FROM_THE_SPRING_-_AND_WHY_IT_MATTERS.pdf)