

# Calculating Daniel's Jubilee

By T.W. Tramm

*"Know and understand this: From the issuing of the decree to return to and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince will be seven weeks;"*  
(Daniel 9:25)

Could a single verse of Scripture tell us when Jesus is returning?

Isaac Newton believed so.

In his 1733 commentary entitled, [\*Observations Upon the Prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse of St. John\*](#), the renowned scientist and Bible Scholar proposed that the "seven weeks" of Daniel 9:25 refer to a jubilee cycle that would begin with the Jews' prophetic return to Jerusalem and end in Christ's second coming:

*"The seven weeks are the compass of a jubilee, and begin and end with actions ... of the highest nature for which a jubilee can be kept."*<sup>1</sup>

*"The commandment to return and to build Jerusalem precedes Messiah the Prince 49 years."*<sup>2</sup>

Two centuries after Newton penned these words, the Jews took possession of Jerusalem for the final time, in 1967. Forty-nine years, or *seven weeks*, later, we are witnessing an unparalleled convergence of signs like the ones Jesus said would herald His return.

It's looking as if Newton may have been correct.

Still, the question remains: How do we count Daniel's *weeks* to determine the final Jubilee?

## FOUR SCENARIOS

There are four possible ways to count the *weeks* of Daniel *because*:

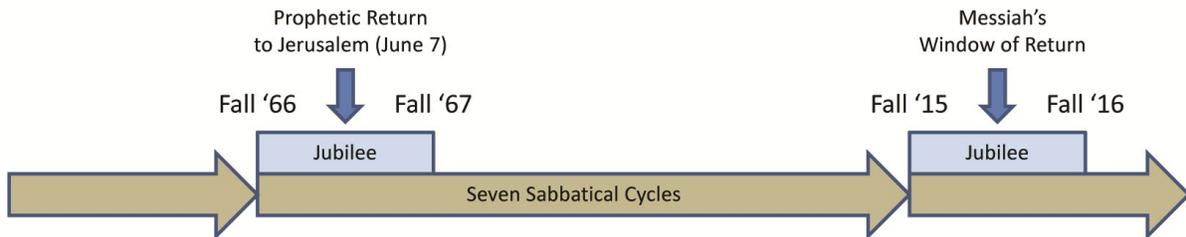
- 1) There is debate over the correct way to reckon the jubilee year relative to the sabbatical cycle: Some believe the Jubilee is also the first year of the next sabbatical cycle, while others believe the Jubilee is distinct, or set apart,<sup>3</sup> from the sabbatical cycles.

And...

- 2) There is debate over the correct starting point of the biblical year: Some believe the years should be counted from the fall (Tishrei 1), while others believe they should be counted from the spring (Nisan 1). For a review of the arguments on both sides of this debate, please read my article [When Does the Biblical Year Begin?](#)

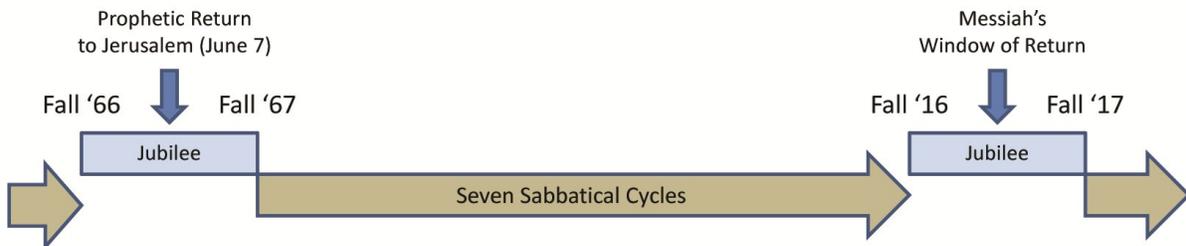
With the above points of contention in view, the four possible jubilee scenarios, two “fall” and two “spring,” are as follows:

### FALL SCENARIO #1: Jubilee is counted as first year of new sabbatical cycle.



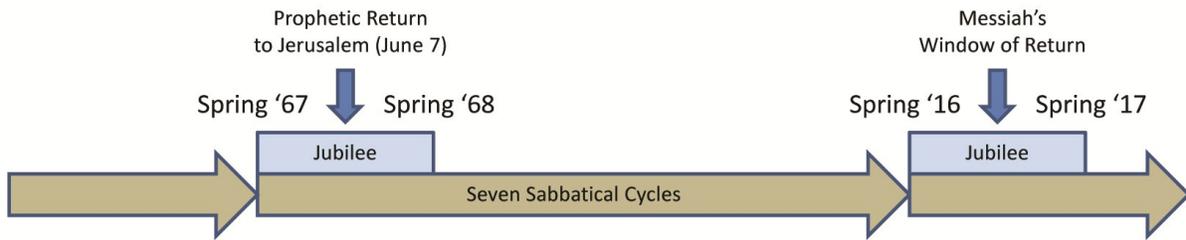
This jubilee scenario represents the earliest possible fulfillment of Daniel's weeks. Though, it is no longer viable, as 2015-16 has already passed.

### FALL SCENARIO #2: Jubilee is set apart from sabbatical cycles.



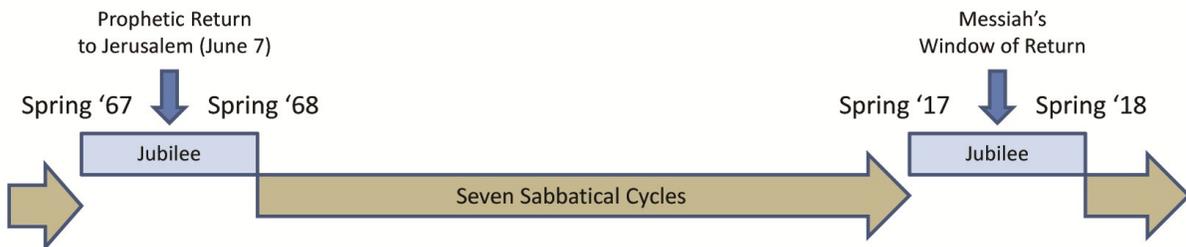
This jubilee scenario—the most espoused at present—encompasses most of 2017, including the spring feasts, and has the Jubilee concluding at the Feast of Trumpets, September 21-23.

### SPRING SCENARIO #1: Jubilee is counted as first year of new sabbatical cycle.



This jubilee scenario encompasses only the first few months, and none of the feasts, of 2017 as the Jubilee ends March 31 (Nisan 1), about a month from the time of this writing.

### SPRING SCENARIO #2: Jubilee is set apart from sabbatical cycles.



Our final jubilee scenario encompasses most of 2017, including all of the spring and fall feasts, and extends into mid-March (Nisan 1) of 2018. This date marks, according to our calculations, the outside limit, or *terminus ad quem*, of Daniel's weeks-countdown.

### CONSIDERATIONS

The first thing to note about the scenarios (excluding the no-longer viable fall instance) is that *all* of them point, to a greater or lesser degree, to 2017 on the Gregorian calendar. This meshes with the pattern of "7s" in Gregorian years connected to Israel's restoration to the Land:

1897: First Zionist Congress sets the goal of establishing a permanent legal home for the Jews.

1917: Balfour Declaration declares British support for the establishment of a Jewish state.

1947: UN Resolution 181 calls for the creation of a Jewish state.

1967: Jews return to Jerusalem during the Six Day War.

2017: Final Jubilee?

Notice the *fifty-year* increments: 1897 to 1947 = 50 years; 1917 to 1967 = 50 years; 1967 to 2017 = 50 years.

The 1917 date in the above sequence also jibes with the [Rabbi Judah ben Samuel prophecy](#), which ultimately points to 2017.

### THE MILLION-DOLLAR QUESTION

Having mapped out the four possible scenarios based on Newton's interpretation of the *weeks* and the 1967 *return*, the question is: which one is correct?

Since, owing to the aforementioned calendar controversies, it's impossible to know beyond a doubt, we may have to *wait* to find out. Meanwhile, we are by no means left in the dark, as the overlapping scenarios establish a definite "watch window" that stretches from the present until mid-March (Nisan 1) 2018—the primary time of emphasis being 2017.

Can we say with 100% certainty that Jesus is returning within this window?

We cannot.

What we *can* say with certainty is that based on a plain reading of Daniel and some simple math (the same formula employed by the magi two millennia ago<sup>4</sup>), it surely *appears* that way.

### WATCH TIMES

Because the Jubilee is the YEAR of redemption and "no man knows the day,"<sup>5</sup> the best approach is to keep watch at all times as the Lord instructs.<sup>6</sup> There are, however, certain dates and times that warrant the label *high watch*.

For instance:

- **March 29-30, 2017** (Nisan 1) marks the turn of the year, according to Exodus (12:1-3).
- **June 4, 2017** (Sivan 10) marks *Shavuot*, or Pentecost.<sup>7</sup> (Click [here](#) for a study of the scriptural support for a Pentecost Rapture.)

- **June 7, 2017** marks the fiftieth anniversary of the Jews' prophetic return to Jerusalem, and **June 28, 2017** marks the fiftieth anniversary of a [decree](#) recognizing said return.
- **September 21-23, 2017** (Tishrei 1) marks *Yom Teruah*, or Feast of Trumpets, commencing the fall-feast season.

Other times may be deemed high watch as well. As always, due to factors like time zones and calendar discrepancies, it's best to draw *wide circles*, or, better yet, *no limiting circles*, around dates.

Could 2017 be the year?

No one can say, *absolutely*.

Though, if Isaac Newton were around today, you can bet he'd be looking up.

. . .

#### NOTES:

1. Isaac Newton, *Observations Upon the Prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse of St. John*, (Middlesex: Echo Library, 2007) p.54.

2. Ibid.

3. Proponents of the view that the Jubilee is a separate year, not overlapping the first year of the new sabbatical cycle, point to Leviticus where God says the Jubilee is to be consecrated, meaning "set apart" from other years: "Set this year apart as holy, a time to proclaim freedom throughout the land..." (Lev. 25:10 NLT). The Rabanan teach that the Jubilee is not to be counted as the first year of the next cycle because it is the culmination, i.e. *part of*, the previous shemitah cycle: only after a cycle has been completed can the next cycle begin. It's also pointed out that 120 jubilee cycles (the time span allotted for the present age in Genesis 6:3) divides into 6,000 years equally, whereas this is not the case when the Jubilee overlaps the first year of the sabbatical cycle.

4. Scholars believe that the magi most likely counted the *weeks* of Daniel 9:25 to determine Messiah's arrival time: [http://www.icr.org/home/resources/resources\\_tracts\\_whentheysawthestar/](http://www.icr.org/home/resources/resources_tracts_whentheysawthestar/)

5. Leviticus 25; Isaiah 63:4; Matthew 24:36.

6. Mark 13:37; Luke 21:36.

7. Most calendar sources have Shavuot/Pentecost occurring between May 30<sup>th</sup> and June 4<sup>th</sup> in 2017:

<http://www.calendarpedia.com/when-is/pentecost-sunday.html>

[http://www.chabad.org/library/article\\_cdo/aid/671902/jewish/When-is-Shavuot-in-2017-2018-2019-and-2020.htm](http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/671902/jewish/When-is-Shavuot-in-2017-2018-2019-and-2020.htm)

<https://www.hebcal.com/converter/?gd=31&gm=5&gy=2017&g2h=1>

For those who prefer the *observational* method over the modern *pre-calculated* calendar: The first new moon sighted after the spring equinox in Jerusalem (March 16) should be [March 29/30](#), marking the first day of the biblical year, or Nisan 1. Two weeks from this date is Passover (April 12/13) and then Firstfruits (April 15/16). Counting the Omer (fifty days) from Firstfruits, we arrive at June 3/4 for Pentecost.