

# Convergence 2018: What Does It Mean?

By T.W. Tramm

A MONTH AWAY from Israel's landmark 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the drums of war are beating loudly: The US, UK, and France have launched a joint airstrike on targets in Damascus. Russia, allied with Turkey and Iran in Syria, claims to have intercepted most of the US missiles and is threatening "consequences."

The alliance between Russia, Turkey, and Iran portends a receding of US influence in the Middle East and sets the stage for the fulfillment of major end-times Bible prophecies such as Isaiah 17 and Ezekiel 38.

Wars and threats of war are not the only biblical signs flashing in spring 2018. In fact, virtually every sign given as a precursor to Jesus' return is present and accounted for:

- Storms and earthquakes are increasing in frequency and intensity (Matt. 24:6-8).
- A Mideast peace plan is soon to be unveiled by the Trump Administration (1 Thess. 5:3).
- Jews, worldwide, are facing the worst anti-Semitism since World War II (Matt. 24:9).
- True Christianity is on the wane and, in the vacuum, evil is flourishing (Matt. 24: 10-12).
- Signs in the sun, moon, and stars, which the Bible says will herald the day of the Lord, have been witnessed by the world (Luke 21:25; Joel 2:31).
- The passing of Billy Graham signals the end of an era in which the Gospel has been preached to every nation (Matt. 24:14).

Perhaps the most telling sign of all is that, despite increasing natural disasters, threats of war, and other troubling signs, life continues as normal for most people: they are "buying, selling, planting, building, and marrying" (Luke 17:26-29).

In addition to the above signs, we're witnessing a once-in-history convergence of prophetic timelines this year:

- 2018 marks the end of the calculated 6,000<sup>th</sup> year since biblical Creation.<sup>1</sup> This is key because a fundamental belief in eschatology is that the end of the 6,000<sup>th</sup> year will mark the beginning of the final 1,000-year "Day" of the Lord (Gen. 6:3; 2 Pet. 3:8).

- 2018 marks the end of the 70<sup>th</sup> year since Israel became a Nation.<sup>2</sup> This is crucial because Scripture defines a typical generation as 70 years in length, and Jesus says the generation who witnesses Israel's return to the Land will also see His return (Ps. 90:10; Matt. 24:32-34). In addition to the 70<sup>th</sup> year being significant as a generation marker, it's also important typologically: The Jews' liberation from Babylon, understood to be a type of the Church's "liberation" from the world at the Rapture, occurred in the 70<sup>th</sup> year (Jer. 25:11, 12).
- 2018 marks the end of the 50<sup>th</sup> (jubilee) anniversary of the Jews' return to Jerusalem in 1967.<sup>3</sup> This is key because, according to Isaac Newton's literal interpretation of Daniel 9:25, Messiah the Prince will appear one jubilee cycle after the latter-day restoration of Jerusalem.

To appreciate the unlikelihood of the above timelines converging in 2018, consider that each belongs to a different prophecy written centuries apart by a different author. The men who recorded them had no knowledge of the future year the Nation of Israel and its capital, Jerusalem, would be restored and thus no way of knowing or synchronizing an end date. Yet, defying all odds, each independently calculated timeline points to 2018!

Another thing to consider about the three-way convergence of timelines is that it ends this spring. Because biblical years begin and end at Nisan 1, the calculated 6,000<sup>th</sup> year from Creation and Jubilee end April 18-19. A month later marks the end of the 70<sup>th</sup> year since Israel became a nation.<sup>4</sup> From these dates forward, we enter into the 6,001<sup>st</sup>, 51<sup>st</sup>, and 71<sup>st</sup> years respectively.

It's interesting to note that, because Israel's rebirth occurred exactly when it did, May 1948, the end of the 6,000-year timespan occurs 30 days *before* the end of the 70-year generation timespan. That the end of the calculated 6,000 years precedes the end of the generation timespan harmonizes typologically with Jesus' statement that the end will come *before* the final generation has passed:<sup>5</sup>

*"Truly I tell you, this generation [70 years] will certainly not pass away until [after] all these things have happened"* (Matt. 24:32-34).

The convergence of timelines this year is not the only reason spring is considered a high watch time. Spring, both literally and typologically, is a time of transformation, new beginnings, and harvest. Spring is also the season in which the shepherd in Song of Solomon comes to gather and spirit away his beloved, a Gentile Shulamite maid:

*"The voice of my beloved! Behold, he comes leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills. My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag. Behold, he stands behind our wall; he is looking through the windows, gazing through the lattice. My beloved spoke, and said to me: 'Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land. The fig tree puts forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grapes give a good smell. Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away!"* (Song 2:8-13).

Could the seasonal cues in Song 2 denote a spring wedding for the “Good Shepherd” and His bride? They could. This is why it’s important to be watching not only in the summer or fall but during *every* season (Luke 21:36).

Could the endpoint of the timeline convergence this month portend an April Rapture? It could. In fact, in view of the typologies and our understanding of God’s 6,000-year plan, it’s difficult to imagine a more apt time for our redemption to occur than at the end of a jubilee year, in the spring, on a day few would expect, and just before Israel’s 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

What a thrilling possibility to consider!

Notice we say POSSIBILITY. Even though the above scenario is scriptural, there is still a certain amount of speculation involved: because Scripture is not explicit regarding the season or month of the Rapture, we can only hypothesize based on the types and patterns. Additionally, it goes without saying that when dealing with timelines and calendars there is a chance of misreckoning. Even in the case of a perfect reckoning, the overriding fact of the matter is that only God knows exactly when the Rapture will occur relative to the end of the age. This is why it’s a mistake to set dates or be dogmatic about timelines, regardless of how compelling a convergence of signs.

Besides ...

*“Of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone”* (Matt. 24:36).

Even so, let us be encouraged that all signs point to the Lord being “at the door” (Matt. 24:33). What an awesome and glorious day it will be when He steps through and says, *come up here!*

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#### NOTES:

1. Based on the genealogies in Scripture, biblical scholar D. Petavius calculates Creation to have occurred in 3,983 BC. Subtracting 3,983 years from 6,000 we arrive at 2018. See endnote #5 [here](#) for detailed calculation.

2. November 2017 marked a full 70 (Gregorian) years since the United Nations voted in favor of the establishment of the Modern State of Israel in 1947. May 2018 will mark a full 70 (Gregorian) years since Israel declared independence in 1948.

3. It is believed the previous Jubilee spanned Nisan of 1967 to Nisan 1968. (The prophetic return to Jerusalem during the Six day War occurred within this timeframe.) The new cycle of 49 years began at Nisan 1968 and ended at Nisan 2017. The 50<sup>th</sup> (jubilee) year began at Nisan 2017 and ends at Nisan 2018. NOTE: There is no apparent fall/Tishrei calculation that puts us presently, as of 2018, in a jubilee year. A 49-year cycle beginning in the fall of 1967 results in a jubilee year spanning the fall of 2016 to fall 2017. If one begins the 49-year count in the fall of 1968 (based on a presumed fall 1967 to fall 1968 Jubilee) the prophetic return to Jerusalem in 1967 occurs *outside* the Jubilee.

4. Israelis will observe the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the rebirth of the Nation of Israel on April 20 (Iyar 5), this according to the modern pre-calculated Jewish calendar, which has Nisan 1 corresponding to March 17. As explained in my article [“When is Nisan 1?”](#), however, there is good reason to believe that the true Nisan 1 in 2018 is the first new moon of April. An April Nisan 1 would put Israel’s 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary (Iyar 5) in May, close to the Gregorian anniversary date of May 14.

5. That Psalm 90:10 sets an upper limit of 80 years on a lifespan means one could also include the tribulation period in “all these things” described in Matthew 24.