

HISTORY REPEATS: The Signs Are Evident, Jesus Is Coming, and the World Is Oblivious

By T.W. Tramm

It's the most pondered question since Jesus' ascension:

When is He coming back?

Those who propose timelines cite various Scriptures in support of their theories. However, there is only *one* passage in the Bible with a proven track record of predicting the time, even the *year*, of the Lord's coming: Daniel's famous ["seventy-weeks prophecy."](#)

The seventy-weeks prophecy is God's response to Daniel's fervent prayer for the pardon and restoration of his then-exiled people, Israel. It includes milestone events concerning the Holy City of Jerusalem and a future Deliverer who would put an end to sin and bring in everlasting righteousness.

Scholars believe that the magi, or "wise men," studied Daniel's prophecy, counting the years from a landmark return to Jerusalem, to determine the time of Jesus' birth. This is how they knew *when* to look for the "star" (actually a planetary conjunction of Venus and Jupiter) as the confirming sign.

Today, history appears to be repeating itself: a number of wise *watchmen* are studying the same prophecy of Daniel, counting the years from a landmark return to Jerusalem, to determine the time of Jesus' *return*.

"From the issuing of a decree to [return to¹] and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven sevens [or forty-nine years]..." (Dan. 9:25)

In this case, it's believed that the countdown, consisting of seven sabbatical cycles, or forty-nine years, began with the June 1967 recapture of Jerusalem by Israeli forces.² At this time, a decree was issued declaring, for the first time in millennia, Jewish sovereignty over the Holy City.³

Assuming that the '67 return is the one Daniel refers to, the prophecy is now "unsealed" and one can count the forty-nine years to Messiah: Counting from the decree date in prophetic years (17,640 days), we arrive at the fall of 2015 and, remarkably, the first day, or "New Year's Day," of the biblical year 5776.^{4,5} Counting in Gregorian years (17,885 days) from the decree date, the count ends eight months later in June of 2016.⁶

And so, no matter how one counts Daniel's seven sevens (prophetic or Gregorian years) the countdown ends where we are *now*, in the biblical year spanning the fall of 2015 to the fall of 2016.

Some reject the notion that we can count the years to Messiah based on the belief that the seven sevens are already fulfilled and, therefore, have no end-times application.⁷ Those taking this stance, however, have the challenge of explaining a conspicuous cluster of celestial signs around the beginning of the current biblical year 5776: a one-of-a-kind series of solar and lunar eclipses (blood moons) on God's feast days and—astoundingly—the reappearance of the Bethlehem star, the same planetary conjunction witnessed by the magi at Jesus' first coming.⁸

Is it coincidence that the same ultra-rare (star) conjunction that heralded the Lord's first coming has reoccurred "seven sevens" after the Jews' prophetic return to Jerusalem?

It seems unlikely.

The more reasonable explanation is that the reappearance of the Bethlehem star is *confirmation* from the Creator that the seven sevens of Daniel are indeed, as proposed by Isaac Newton,⁹ a countdown to Messiah's return.

The Lord does not change (Mal. 3:6). He has promised that we're not in darkness concerning the times and seasons of His coming and that He will do *nothing* without first revealing it to His prophets in Scripture (1 Thess. 5:1-5; Amos 3:7). We should therefore not be surprised that He would employ the same prophecy (Daniel's seventy weeks) and the same sign (the Bethlehem star) to inform *today's* wise watchmen of His arrival time.

"What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun" (Ecc. 1:9).

The tragic side of this replaying of history is that, as was the case two millennia ago, only a relative handful of believers are observing the signs, doing the math, and understanding the times. The majority of Christian leaders, echoing the blindness of the Jewish authorities in Jesus' day, do not recognize the time of their visitation.

What's more, just as the Jewish authorities at that time had no excuse for their blindness, neither do today's Christian principals and pastors: The signs are *everywhere*. In addition to those discussed above (The Jewish return in '67, the eclipse signs, and Bethlehem star), *every other sign* given in Scripture as a warning of Jesus' imminent return is occurring:

- Wars and rumors of wars (Matt. 24:6).
- Famines, pestilences, earthquakes, and extreme weather in diverse places (Matt. 24:7).
- Increasing persecution of Christians and Jews (Matt. 10:22).
- Economic woes. (Out-of-control money printing worldwide has set the stage for hyperinflation.) (Rev. 6:6).

- A mocking of the notion of Jesus' impending return (2 Pet. 3:4).
- An increase in wickedness and proportional *decrease* in awareness regarding the times (2 Tim. 3:1-9; Matt. 24:37-39).
- The nations surrounding Israel, driven by a demonically inspired, or "anti-Christ," religion (Islam), desire to see the Jewish state wiped off the map (Psalm 83:5; Ezekiel 38).

And many more...

But that's not all. A recent [New-York-Times best-seller](#) as well as [other books](#) have shed light on the fact that we're in a jubilee year.

The once-every-fiftieth-year Jubilee, ordained by God as the time captives are to be released from bondage and land returned to its original owner, is known as the "year of redemption."¹⁰ Significantly, "redemption" is the term Paul uses to describe the change our mortal bodies will undergo in "the twinkling of an eye" at the Rapture.¹¹

When we add the jubilee factor to the other signs and prophecies (earthly, celestial, and Daniel), the result is a "mega-sign" pointing to the fact that Jesus is about to return.

The question that remains is: when *exactly*.

According to Scripture, we cannot know the day or hour (Matt 24:36). We *can*, however, thanks to Daniel's countdown, establish a definite "window": Because Daniel specifies that Messiah comes *forty-nine* years after the Jewish return, the Lord must presumably come *before* the *fifty-year* milestone is reached. Counting prophetic years from the Jewish return in '67, the fifty-year milestone is reached in October 2016. Counting Gregorian years, the fifty-year milestone is reached in June of 2017.¹²

What this means, in view of Jesus' assurance that the "Scripture cannot be broken," is that it's scripturally unfeasible (assuming our take on Daniel 9:25 is correct) for Him to return any later than *ten months from now*. That is the *outside* (Gregorian) limit, or *terminus ad quem*. When we calculate in strictly prophetic (360-day) years or factor in the Jubilee as the year of redemption, it seems more likely He would come *before the current biblical year ends in October, 2016*.

Some will call this "date setting."

It is not.¹³

We are simply following the Lord's command to "watch" and also imitating the *wise* men by counting Daniel's sevens to determine an estimated time of arrival, or *window* of return, for the Messiah.

For those convinced that we cannot know the year of Jesus' coming, ask yourself: Why has God provided the *year*-countdowns and Jerusalem-related starting points in Scripture if He did not intend that we "do the math" and draw specific, to-the-*year*, conclusions? Common sense tells us if the Lord didn't want us zeroing in on a *year*, He would not have provided the *year*-counts and dateable milestone events to make it possible.¹⁴

Having said that, let me qualify by stating we are in no way suggesting that Jesus must *absolutely* return within the window specified. We acknowledge, as imperfect human beings, the possibility of error in our understanding of the Scriptures. Though, should this turn out to be the case, I doubt that the Lord would be irate with us for proposing the window we have, as it's based on a plain reading of a Scripture known for revealing Jesus' timing and only *one* assumption¹⁵—that the "return" to Jerusalem mentioned therein is a *dual* reference, referring to both the ancient homecoming and also the latter-days restoration that occurred in 1967. If this one assumption is correct, there is no debating the starting point of the countdown (the issuing of a decree), the length of it (forty-nine years), or what happens at the end (Messiah the Prince).

What *does* apparently perturb the Lord is when His people ignore the signs and fail to do the biblical math. It's precisely this behavior—ignoring the signs, events, and timelines given in Daniel—that caused Jesus to rebuke the Jewish authorities:

"You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of the earth and sky. Why don't you know how to interpret the present time?" (Luke 12:56)

Two millennia later, the signs are telling us Jesus is about to appear a *second* time.

As it was the first time: A prophetic countdown has been initiated. The countdown's end coincides with the appearance of an extraordinarily rare "star." And the world—even the *believing* world—is largely oblivious.

History repeats.

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NOTES:

1. Most Bible translations use the word "restore." The Hebrew word translated "restore" actually means to "return, or come back" (Strong's H7725).

2. This seems a given, as the Jewish return in '67 is the *only one* to have occurred since the ancient homecoming from Babylon.

3. <http://www.jimmycarterlibrary.gov/documents/campdavid/letters.phtml> (Scroll down to the sixth letter in the series.)

4. The Hebrew calendar in use today is believed to be about 225 years off. The true number of years from creation, as suggested by respected Bible chronologists such as D. Petavius, James Ussher, Floyd Nolan Jones, and Frank Klassen, is closer to 6,000.

5. The decree was issued on June 28th, 1967. Adding forty-nine prophetic (360-day) years (17,640 days) to this date, we arrive at October 13th-14th, 2015, the day that those who reckon the Jewish calendar according to the ancient method (first visible crescent of the new moon after the fall equinox marks the New Year) would identify as the Feast of Trumpets. <http://www.hope-of-israel.org/YHVHcal.htm>

Remarkably, if one counts the forty-nine prophetic years from the actual return date (June 7th, 1967) we arrive at September 23rd, 2015, the date that the modern (pre-calculated) Jewish calendar identifies as the Day of Atonement (jubilee declaration day). These two precise, to-the-day alignments defy coincidence.

6. June 15th.

7. Most interpreters *add* the seven sevens to the “sixty-two sevens” in the same verse to arrive at the year(s) of events related to Jesus’ *first* coming. This interpretation proposes that the seven sevens are separated from the sixty two sevens for the purpose of highlighting the time it would take to rebuild Jerusalem following the return from Babylonian captivity. It should be noted, however, that commentators acknowledge this is merely an *assumption*, as there is no way to know how long it actually took to rebuild Jerusalem. Notice what the *Pulpit Commentary* states about the seven sevens: “The city walls and internal buildings of Jerusalem *may* have taken fifty years to erect—we *simply cannot tell*” (emphases added). Additionally, a legitimate question for those who accept the above (standard) interpretation as the sole and correct interpretation of the seven sevens, is this: Does it make sense, given the vast prophetic significance ascribed to the Jubilee as the “year of redemption” in Scripture, that the Lord would assign the *one and only* jubilee cycle referenced therein to what is, essentially, a construction schedule?

8. The Bethlehem star is said to be a once-every-thousand-year planetary conjunction. Experts note that there was actually a *series* of conjunctions around Jesus’ birth. It’s believed the final one marked the time the magi from the east arrived with gifts. Significantly, the final occurrence of the *current* series of conjunctions, or “star appearances,” will happen on August 27, 2016 within the biblical year 5776.

http://www.pressofatlanticcity.com/life/could-this-be-last-chance-to-see-the-star-of/article_b670edb6-e4c5-5a18-ad13-988fd117a07f.html

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-3143237/Watch-Venus-Jupiter-superstar-tomorrow-Cosmic-illusion-make-planets-merge-one-bright-light-night-sky.html>

<http://www.yahchanan.com/Yahchanan/Star.php>

9. Read Newton's commentary on Daniel's seventy-weeks prophecy in its entirety (see pages 227-234): <http://publicdomainreview.org/collections/sir-isaac-newtons-daniel-and-the-apocalypse-1733/>

10. In Leviticus 25 the word "redeem" is used over a dozen times in connection with the jubilee year.

11. According to the Apostle to the Gentiles, the term "redemption" refers not just to the spiritual deliverance that happens when we become believers but, more precisely, to the *physical* deliverance—the miraculous change, or glorification, our bodies will experience at the end of the age (see Rom. 8:23; Eph. 1:13, 14).

12. This seemingly eliminates the fall feasts of 2017 as a potential time for the Rapture, as they occur months *outside* the limit, or *terminus ad quem*, of Daniel's forty-nine-year countdown to Messiah.

13. Date setting is identifying a specific day and claiming, in essence, that "the Bible says" Jesus is returning at this time. This is unbiblical because knowing the "day" is prohibited in Scripture (Matt. 24:36). Conversely, there is no biblical prohibition against knowing the year or season of the Lord's return.

14. Consider also: The Lord knew that the Jews were returning to Jerusalem in 1967. He also knew that many watchmen would associate this return with the one mentioned in Daniel 9:25. If the two are unrelated and God didn't want those studying the prophecies jumping to false conclusions, one would think He would have avoided placing the star of Bethlehem and eclipse signs right at the beginning of the forty-ninth year from the '67 return. Another thing the Lord could have arranged for, to avoid any confusion or false hope, is to have the Jews return to Jerusalem and issue a related decree a few days *earlier* or *later* than they did so that it would not be *exactly* forty-nine prophetic years (17,640 days) from these events to the start of the forty-ninth biblical year, 5776. Yet, the all-knowing and all-powerful God allowed these "coincidences." It thus seems He is *using* them to confirm the scriptural significance of the '67 return as it relates to Daniel 9:25.

15. The same cannot be said for any other rapture timing theory I'm aware of.