

Keep Watch! The Rapture Could Be Nearer Than You Think

By T.W. Tramm

AS WE COUNT down the final days of 2017, the signs of Jesus' return are everywhere: earthquakes, volcanism, floods, fires, famines, plagues, storms, wars and threats of war, new and ominous geopolitical alliances, warning signs in the economy, and a spike in mysterious phenomena, including reports of loud booms and bright flashes around the globe.

Those who follow the news know I'm not exaggerating. Check out this small sampling of recent headlines:

[Europe's HIV epidemic growing at alarming rate, WHO warns](#)

[UN warns of drug-resistant germ risk brewing in nature](#)

[World faces worst humanitarian crisis since 1945, says UN official](#)

[Indonesia volcano: Mount Agung eruption closes Bali's main airport](#)

[Thomas Fire is the largest blaze in California history](#)

[Mysterious loud booms are being heard around the world and no one knows why](#)

[Blazing fireballs seen over southern England by dozens of people](#)

[North Korea says "breakthrough" puts U.S. mainland within range of nuclear weapons](#)

[Japan Is Building Missile Bases to Confront Rising Threat from China](#)

[World War 3 warning: Iran v Saudi Arabia conflict has entered 'UNPREDICTABLE' phase](#)

[The stock market is 'dancing on the rim of a volcano,' warns investment bank](#)

[Debt bear stalks Goldilocks economy](#)

[2017 – A year of Disaster](#)

Some would say these types of things have always been happening. What is different about today, however, is the fact that all these things are happening *at once* and with unequalled frequency and intensity. Moreover, as part of this remarkable convergence of events, specific prophecies related to conditions in the Middle East are being fulfilled:

For instance:

- [Peace negotiations are ramping up](#) (1 Thess. 5:3).
- [Syria is at the center of a regional proxy war](#) (Isa.7:11).
- [Turkey is aiming to emerge as a regional power](#) (Ezek. 38).
- [Tensions are mounting between Iran and Saudi Arabia](#) (Isa. 21).¹
- [An unlikely alliance has formed between Russia, Turkey, and Iran](#) (Ezek. 38).
- [Turkey's president is calling for unity among Muslim nations](#) (Rev. 17:12-14).
- [The controversy over Jerusalem is reaching a boiling point](#) (Zech. 12:2, 3).

In addition to the above, the US policy of a diminished presence in the Middle East has left a power vacuum, making an already unstable region even more volatile and unpredictable.

Needless to say, never before has the prophetic stage been so perfectly set with so many *specific* Bible prophecies on the verge of fulfillment. And this is just in the geopolitical realm. The stage is also set in the financial arena: unequalled debt coinciding with massive bubbles in stocks, real estate, and bonds foreshadow an economic collapse like none the world has seen. A worldwide financial collapse followed by hyperinflation and the implementation of the "beast" monetary system is also a precondition to Jesus' return (Rev. 6:6; 13:17).

Now consider all the *other* unusual phenomena occurring today and how they fulfill Bible prophecy: Unparalleled seismic activity, fires, hurricanes, extreme temperatures, flooding, sinkholes, landslides, mass shootings, sex scandals, etc. We've also witnessed every type of sign in the heavens: the reappearance of the Bethlehem star, prophetically significant constellation alignments, solar and lunar eclipses, and an increase in meteor/asteroid activity.

The overall picture painted is a world on the brink with warning signs flashing everywhere. Everything is in place for the Tribulation to begin and tensions in every realm are being ratcheted to a max, like an overstretched rubber band about to snap.

And that's not all.

A convergence of crucial biblical timelines is further indication that the end of the age is upon us: This year marks the 100th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration and also the 70th anniversary of Israel's rebirth as a nation. The numbers 100 and 70 correspond to the length of a generation in the Bible, which is significant in view of Jesus' declaration that the generation who witnesses the rebirth of Israel will also see His return (Matt. 24:32-34).

Another timeline-related factor is that multiple signs point to the current biblical year being a Jubilee, or "year of redemption." The redemption of persons during the jubilee year typifies the Rapture. This is why the word *redeem* in its various forms shows up in key Scriptures related to the catching away, or wedding of Messiah:

- In the Book of Ruth a Gentile bride is *redeemed* via marriage to a Jewish kinsman (a picture of the Church being wed to Messiah).
- Paul speaks of the *redemption* of our bodies "when the children of God are revealed" at Jesus' coming (Rom. 8:18-23; Eph. 1:13, 14; 4:30).
- The Lord says that when we see certain signs we are to look up because our *redemption* draws near (Luke 21:28).
- In Revelation the just-raptured saints seen in heaven are said to be *redeemed* (Rev. 5:9).

In addition to persons being redeemed during the Jubilee, *land, or property*, is redeemed as well (Lev. 25). The redemption, or return, of land during the jubilee year typifies the earth going back to its original Owner, God, at the beginning of the Tribulation:

- In Revelation 4 John is caught up to heaven at the sound of a trumpet. Next, a sealed scroll, understood to represent the "title deed to earth," is handed to Jesus (a picture of the Land going back to its Owner at the time of the Rapture).
- In Isaiah the Lord is seen executing judgment on the earth because the year to *redeem* had come.

Why do we believe the biblical year spanning 2017-18² is a Jubilee?

There are four main reasons.

- 1) The genealogies in Genesis tell us the earth is in its 6,000th year.³ Based on a 50-year cycle, the 6000th year corresponds to the 120th and, presumably, final Jubilee.
- 2) Two pivotal events connected to the return of the Land of Israel to its original owners, namely the Balfour Declaration and the Jews' modern-day return to Jerusalem, occurred 50 years apart in 1917

and 1967. Assuming the biblical years spanning 1917-18 and 1967-68 were jubilee years, the next Jubilee is 2017-18.

3) Rabbi Judah Ben Samuel's [Prophecy of Ten Jubilees](#) points to a 2017-18 Jubilee.

4) A line from [Daniel's Seventy Weeks Prophecy](#), the same prophecy that predicts the year of Jesus' first coming, points to a 2017-18 Jubilee: "*From the issuing of the decree to return to and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince will be seven weeks [49 years, or one jubilee cycle]...*" (Dan. 9:25).⁴

Notice Daniel's prophecy links the coming of Messiah to a jubilee cycle that begins with a return to Jerusalem. This is important because in all of history there have been only *two* Jewish returns to Jerusalem, the ancient return in 457-458 BC and the modern return in 1967. Understanding that God's Word always bears fruit and that every detail of Scripture will be fulfilled, it's significant that no jubilee-themed event occurred 50 years after the ancient, 457 BC, return.⁵ Is it possible, therefore, that Daniel's jubilee cycle pertains to the modern, 1967, return to Jerusalem and that Messiah is about to appear?

No one can say, for certain.

What we *can* say for certain is that never in history has a particular year been the point of so much prophetic convergence. Moreover, because so many components of this convergence are *unrepeatable*—especially those related to dates and timelines—no *future* year will be the point of so much prophetic convergence. This fact speaks for itself in view of God's track record of revealing the year of Jesus' coming (Dan. 9:24-27) and the Scriptures suggesting we will know when the time is upon us (1 Thess. 5; Luke 21:28).

CONCLUSION

In view of the many signs pointing to this year and also God's rule that the truth of a matter is established by the testimony of "two or three witnesses" (2 Cor. 13:1), we believe the biblical year spanning the spring of 2017 to 2018 is a Jubilee.

Owing to three factors—namely the jubilee theme of *redemption*, the fact that this year's feasts and "high watch" dates have come and gone, and the Scriptures that say Jesus is coming "at an hour we think *not*"⁶—we believe the Rapture could happen on *any day* during what remains of the jubilee year. This is not to say the Rapture couldn't happen some day *next year*, during what would be the 51st anniversary of the Jews' return to Jerusalem, only that it seems logical and scriptural that the Church's redemption would occur in the 50th year, during the *year of redemption*.

As always, time will tell. The point is that while some are already focused on next year's feasts, there is every reason to be looking up *now*. Assuming we're correct about the Jubilee, the Rapture could happen sooner than many think. So keep watch!

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NOTES:

1. The “desert by the sea” being judged and attacked in Isaiah 21 refers to modern-day Arabia. The names Elam and Media (v. 2) refer to Persia/Iran.

2. Biblically, the years begin and end in the spring on Nisan 1. Thus, our proposed Jubilee began in March 2017 and will end in March 2018. See more here:

http://www.theseasonofreturn.com/WHEN_DOES_THE_BIBLICAL_YEAR_BEGIN_-_rev_a.pdf

http://www.theseasonofreturn.com/CALCULATING_DANIELS_JUBILEE.pdf

3. D. Petavius calculated that Creation occurred in 3983 BC, making the earth, as of 2017, 6,000 years old.

4. Most translations say, “From the time the word goes out to *restore* and rebuild Jerusalem.” Note that the Hebrew word translated “restore” means to “return, or come back” (Strong’s H7725).

5. The popular interpretation is that Daniel’s *seven sevens* relate to the time it took to rebuild the ruins of ancient Jerusalem. However, this is speculation. The Pulpit Commentary states: “The city walls and internal buildings of Jerusalem *may* have taken fifty years to erect—we *simply cannot tell*.” Even if it did take *seven sevens* (the span of a jubilee cycle) to rebuild the ruins, the rebuilding of ruins—even the ruins of *Jerusalem*—does not fulfill the jubilee theme of redemption for God’s people. Because the *seven sevens* of Daniel represent the only jubilee cycle mentioned in Scripture and are contained in the only passage dealing explicitly with the year(s) of Messiah’s coming, one would expect, as Isaac Newton did, that this particular cycle would “begin and end with actions proper for a jubilee and of the *highest nature* for which a jubilee can be kept” (Isaac Newton, *Observations upon the Prophecies of Daniel, and the Apocalypse of St. John*, Echo Library, 2007, p. 54).

6. “The Son of Man is coming at an hour you do *not* expect” (Matt. 24:44). “Concerning *that* day and hour *no one knows*, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son...” (Matt. 24:36). One can speculate about hidden layers of meaning in these verses, but the plain and, therefore, *main* message is that no one knows the day. The notion that one cannot know the day but only the general timeframe of the Rapture jibes with the fact that God has given us a *year* of redemption and told us to keep watch “at *all* times” and “at *every* season” (Lev. 25:10; Luke 21:36).