

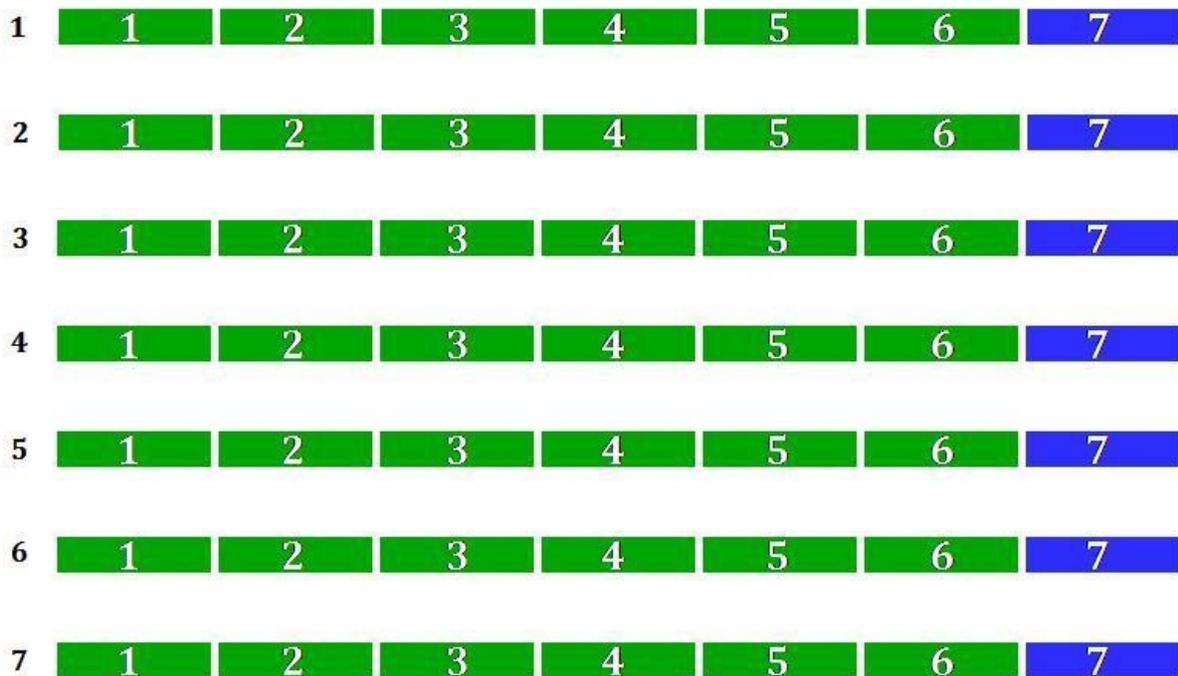
The 120 Jubilee Year Calendar

According to Scripture

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In Leviticus 25, we learn of God’s Jubilee calendar of 50-year cycles which God commanded Israel to observe. The 50th year is called the “year of release” or “year of liberty” because all land reverted back to its original owner and all debts were cancelled. This Jubilee Year followed every seven Sabbatical cycles (weeks of years), 7x7 years totaling 49 years. The Jubilee was the intercalated 50th year. It did not coincide with the 7th Sabbatical year, but followed it, rounding out the 7 weeks of years to an even 50 years.¹

Sabbatical & Jubilee Cycle Calendar



Jubilee 50th
Year

Many modern scholars claim that the Jubilee cycle is 49 years, not 50. They base this idea on alleged practical problems with having two years in a row of not farming the

¹ King Hezekiah celebrated a Sabbatical year followed by a Jubilee year, (Isaiah 37:30).

land (the 49th and 50th), and some of Josephus' reckoning of Sabbatical years without an intercalated 50th Jubilee year. These scholars propose that the Jubilee year is the 49th year, the regular Sabbatical year.

The Sedar Olam Rabbah, the ancient 2nd century Jewish chronology, the oldest work on the subject, states plainly that the Jubilee cycles were a full 50 years.² Modern scholars point to Josephus' accounts of certain Sabbatical years being observed shortly before his time as proof that the Jubilee year was not intercalated by the Jews. But the fact is, by that time the Jews had stopped celebrating the Jubilee year altogether. The Jewish Encyclopedia states:

"The fiftieth year, i.e., that following the last year of seven Sabbatical cycles, is the jubilee; ...

*"There is a difference of opinion in the Talmud as to whether the jubilee year was included in or excluded from the forty-nine years of the seven cycles. **The majority of rabbis hold that the jubilee year was an intercalation, and followed the seventh Sabbatical year, making two fallow years in succession. After both had passed, the next cycle began.** They adduce this theory from the plain words of the Law to "hallow the fiftieth year," and also from the assurance of God's promise of a yield in the sixth year sufficient for maintenance during the following three years, "until the ninth year, until her fruits come in" (Lev. xxv. 22), which, they say, refers to the jubilee year. Judah ha-Nasi, however, contends that the jubilee year was identical with the seventh Sabbatical year (R. H. 9a; Giṭ. 36a; comp. Rashi ad loc.). The opinion of the Geonim and of later authorities generally prevails, that **the jubilee, when in force during the period of the First Temple, was intercalated, but that in the time of the Second Temple, when the jubilee was observed only "nominally," it coincided with the seventh Sabbatical year. In post-exilic times the jubilee was entirely ignored, though the strict observance of the shemittah was steadily insisted upon.** This, however, is only according to a rabbinical enactment (Tos. to Giṭ. 36a, s.v. "Bizeman"), as **by the Mosaic law, according to R. Judah, shemittah is dependent on the jubilee and ceases to exist when there is no jubilee** (Giṭ. l.c. and Rashi ad loc.)."³*

Whether the Jews followed the Law or not, the original Sabbatical – Jubilee calendar that God commanded them to keep required that the Jubilee year be intercalated after seven Sabbatical cycles. That the Jews failed to keep it as commanded, as Josephus'

² Sedar Olam Rabbah, ch. 11, translated by Ken Johnson, PhD., p. 61

³ Jewish Encyclopedia, Article on Sabbatical and Jubilee Years,
<http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/8943-jubilee>

record plainly shows, is irrelevant to the question of how the calendar actually operated as given by God. If this calendar was indeed a sacred calendar, by which God Himself was guiding history and fulfilling prophecy, then it is the calendar that ought to be used as the basis for any chronology of the Bible.

Prior to the Babylonian exile, we have a clear example of a Jubilee year being observed following a Sabbatical year.

During the 15th year of the reign of Hezekiah, the kingdom of Judah was being threatened by the king of Assyria. King Hezekiah was so troubled by this, he prayed to the Lord for deliverance. God sent Isaiah to him with a message – a sign – to prove to him that the Assyrians would not defeat Judah.

Isa 37:30 NKJV

30 "This shall be a sign to you: You shall eat this year such as grows of itself, And the second year what springs from the same; Also in the third year sow and reap, Plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them."

This is a direct reference to the Sabbatical and Jubilee promise in Leviticus 25. The Jews had not kept the Sabbatical and Jubilee years for some time. Yet, God's original promise was that He would cause abundant crops to grow to feed them for the Sabbatical and Jubilee years when they did not plant or reap. The sign God gave Hezekiah was the spontaneous abundance of crops, enough for two more years. And God clearly said that they would eat of these crops without farming the land for two consecutive years, and begin to plant again the third year. Therefore, it is abundantly clear that the Jubilee year follows the seventh Sabbatical year, and is not identical with it. This passage also establishes the 15th and 16th years of Hezekiah as a Sabbath and a Jubilee year. Therefore, we conclude that according to God's reckoning (since this was His promise and His sign), the Jubilee cycle is 50 full years, not 49. That Josephus records the Jews observing consecutive sabbatical weeks without intercalating a 50th year after the close of the Old Testament Scriptures in no way means that it is correct, since the Jews by this time had abandoned the Jubilee celebration altogether.

Early Christian writers also acknowledged that the Jubilee cycle was 50 years, not 49 years. Hippolytus expressed this clearly in his commentary on the Psalms.

"Let us inquire, further, why there are one hundred and fifty psalms. That the number fifty is sacred, is manifest from the days of the celebrated festival of Pentecost, which indicates release from labors, and (the possession of) joy. For which reason neither fasting nor bending the knee is decreed for those days. For this is a symbol of the great assembly

*that is reserved for future times. Of which times there was a shadow in the land of Israel in the year called among the Hebrews "Jobel" (Jubilee) which is the fiftieth year in number, and brings with it liberty for the slave, and release from debt, and the like. ... Thus, then, it was also meet that the hymns to God on account of the destruction of enemies, and in thanksgiving for the goodness of God, should contain not simply one set of fifty, but three such, for the name of Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit. **The number fifty, moreover, contains seven sevens, or a Sabbath of Sabbaths; and also over and above these full Sabbaths, a new beginning, in the eight, of a really new rest that remains above the Sabbaths.**"⁴*

There is evidence in Scripture that this calendar was in use before Moses and the Law. We learn of Jacob's serving Laban for 7 years for each of his wives, a total of 14 years. He then served 6 more years, and departed on the 7th year (a total of 20 years of service),⁵ departing at the beginning of the 21st year. In the Law, slaves were to serve for 6 years, and be given their freedom in the 7th year.⁶ Jacob agreed to serve Laban one "week" of years for Leah, and another week of years for Rachael. He then agreed to serve a third week of years for his flocks and goods. Yet, the fact that he left at the end of the 6th year instead of the end of the 7th year strongly suggests that their agreement was in accord with what Moses commanded later concerning the Sabbatical and Jubilee calendar – slaves were to be set free at the beginning of the 7th year. Therefore, we may infer that Moses merely reemphasized something that was already known, no doubt having been handed down through Noah, and perhaps practiced from the very first year of creation.

Ancient extra-biblical sources also indicate the Sabbatical – Jubilee calendar being in use before Moses. After the Babylonian exile, perhaps shortly after the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, a Hebrew apocalyptic scroll was produced bearing the name "Jubilees," sometimes called "The Little Genesis." It purports to give a fuller account of some of the history in Genesis and Exodus. The book of Jubilees claims to be angelic revelation to Moses during his 40 days on Mt. Sinai. It reckons time from creation to the Messianic Kingdom in Sabbatical weeks of years and Jubilees.

"And He said to the Angel of the Presence: 'Write for Moses from the beginning of creation till My sanctuary has been built among them for all eternity. And the Lord will appear to the eyes of all, and all will know that I am the God of Israel and the Father of all the children of Jacob, and King on Mount Zion for all eternity. And Zion and Jerusalem

⁴ Hippolytus, Commentary on Psalms, I, 3-4

⁵ Genesis 31:41

⁶ Exodus 21:2

will be holy.’ And the Angel of the Presence who went before the camp of Israel took the tables of the divisions of the years – from the time of the creation – of the law and of the testimony of the weeks, of the Jubilees, according to the individual years, according to all the number of the Jubilees [according to the individual years], from the day of the creation until the heavens and the earth shall be renewed and all their creation according to the powers of the heaven, and according to all the creation of the earth, until the sanctuary of the Lord shall be made in Jerusalem on Mount Zion, and all the luminaries be renewed for healing and for peace and for blessing for all the elect of Israel, and that thus it may be from that day and unto all the days of the earth.”⁷

The idea presented in this paper, that the Sabbatical – Jubilee Calendar was intended as the basis for all of Bible chronology, from creation to the coming of Christ’s Kingdom, is not new. It is a very ancient Jewish tradition. The Jubilee calendar was intended to count down to the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom on the earth, when the heavens and earth will be made new. According to the author of the Jewish Book of Jubilees, all of history recorded in the Jewish Bible is to be reckoned on this divine calendar, from creation to the Messianic Kingdom.

The book of Jubilees gives the creation account and includes the genealogies found in Genesis. But, rather than the dates being given based on the age of each father when his son was born, (as in Genesis), they are given on a calendar of Jubilee cycles and Sabbatical years (according to the Jubilee calendar in Leviticus 25).

“And in the fifth week of the fifth Jubilee Seth took Azura his sister to be his wife, and in the fourth year of the sixth week she bore him Enos. He began to call on the name of the Lord on the earth. And in the seventh Jubilee in the third week Enos took Nôâm his sister to be his wife, and she bare him a son in the third year of the fifth week, and he called his name Kenan. And at the close of the eighth Jubilee Kenan took Mûalêlêth his sister to be his wife, and she bare him a son in the ninth Jubilee, in the first week in the third year of this week, and he called his name Mahalalel. And in the second week of the tenth jubilee Mahalalel took unto him to wife Dînâh, the daughter of Barâkî’êl the daughter of his father’s brother, and she bare him a son in the third week in the sixth year, and he called his name Jared.”⁸

While none of the early Christian writers who taught the Millennial week (6000 years + Millennial Sabbath) mentioned this Jubilee calendar specifically, some of them quoted

⁷ Book of Jubilees, Charles’ Translation, pp. 32-33

⁸ Ibid. p. 52

from the book of Jubilees. *“It was well known to Early Christians, as evidenced by the writings of Epiphanius, Justin Martyr, Origen, Diodorus of Tarsus, Isidore of Alexandria, Isidore of Seville, Eutychius of Alexandria, John Malalas, George Syncellus, and George Kedrenos.”*⁹ Obviously they were familiar with the main thrust of this book – the idea of a divine Jubilee calendar spanning from creation to the Messianic Kingdom. They already saw this time period as a week of millennia, with 6,000 years from Adam to the Messianic Kingdom.

Perhaps the reason they did not mention the Jubilee creation calendar specifically was because the book of Jubilees generally follows the Hebrew text for the genealogies in Genesis, while the early Christians used the Septuagint’s much longer genealogies.¹⁰ Thus, the book of Jubilees would not agree with their Greek Old Testament. Also, the Book of Jubilees uses a 49 year Jubilee cycle, which would not divide equally into 6000 years. However, when these two things are corrected (using the Hebrew text dates, and a 50 year cycle), there is perfect harmony between the Millennial Week and the main premise of the book of Jubilees, with the 6000 years being divided into 120 Jubilee cycles.

120 Jubilees in Genesis 6

Moses recorded a very curious statement by God in Genesis 6:3. *“And the LORD said, ‘My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.’*” The period of 120 years in this passage has usually been interpreted one of two ways.

Many suppose that God was limiting the lifespans of humans to 120 years each. Yet, after the flood many people lived to well beyond this age. Human lifespans did decline over time, but not until many years after the flood. And they did not settle to around 120, but to around 70-80.¹¹

No doubt God made this statement to Noah 120 years before the flood. Thus, it has application to the destruction of the flood. Yet, Peter had an interesting comment about this passage, which strongly suggests that he viewed the 120 years in Genesis 6 as a two-fold prophecy, giving both the year of the flood and the year of Christ’s return.

⁹ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jubilees>

¹⁰ The Septuagint gives greater ages for the patriarchs when their sons were born than the Hebrew text. The Septuagint systematically adds 100 years per generation. For example, the Hebrew says that Adam was 130 years old when Seth was born, but the LXX says 230 years. The Hebrew says that Seth was 105 when Enos was born. The LXX says he was 205. This one hundred years per generation error compounds, making the Genesis genealogies in the LXX too long by over 1500 years. Because of this, the early Christians thought that they were much closer to the end of the 6000 years than they actually were.

¹¹ Psalm 90:10

Peter characterized the period of time between Christ's first and second comings in terms of millennial days when he wrote: "But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise"¹² He also made a fascinating statement about Genesis 6:3, applying it to both the flood and the Day of the Lord.

Peter spoke of the old world being preserved "τω του θεου λογω" (by the statement of God). This "statement" delayed God's judgment of the flood. The only "statement" of God that Peter could be referring to is Genesis 6:3, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet **his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.**"

2 Peter 3:5b-7 (My literal translation)

5 "... The heavens used to be of ancient times, also the land having stood out of water and in water **by the statement of God**, through which [statement] the world was destroyed by a deluge of water. Yet, the present heavens and the land, **having been reserved by the same statement**, are being kept for fire unto the Day of Judgment and destruction of ungodly men."

The "statement of God" that Peter referred to did two things: It held back the judgment of God by a flood for a specified period of time (120 years). Yet, it also brought that judgment at the end of 120 years.

Some might argue that the "statement of God" refers to the creation week when God spoke these things into existence. But, the next clause proves that incorrect: "by which the world was destroyed." The pronoun "which" refers back to the "statement of God." So, it was by the same "statement of God" that the judgment was delayed for a time, and also the judgment came. That is, the same "saying" that permitted a temporary situation to exist during which God delayed the flood, was also the same "saying" that brought the flood. Why? Because God put an exact time limit on the delay. "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."

Peter then made a very remarkable statement. **The very same "statement of God" that delayed the flood for 120 years was also delaying the coming of the Day of the Lord.** How can this be? The only way it could be is if the "statement of God," about a 120-year delay in judgment, has a double meaning. One meaning was for the first destruction by the flood (120 regular years), and a second meaning for the coming Day of the Lord (120 Jubilee years). This is the only way "the same statement" can apply to the delay of both judgments. Thus, Peter has confirmed the basic premise of the Book of Jubilees.

¹² 2 Peter 3:8-9

Ussher and others have long ago identified the fall of man as occurring on the Tuesday following creation week. Man was created on the 6th day of creation and fell into sin on the 10th day of creation. This was inferred by Ussher from the festival of Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement), which marks the anniversary of the fall of man on the 10th day of the first month¹³ (on the Jewish civil calendar).¹⁴ Ussher's claim is strongly supported by the symbolism of this festival.

The two goats symbolized the fall of man and his expulsion from Eden.¹⁵ The first goat was sacrificed for man's sins and its blood sprinkled on the Ark of the Covenant by the high priest once a year on the Day of Atonement, symbolizing man's need for the atonement of Jesus Christ.¹⁶ The second goat was the scape goat. The high priest laid his hands on the head of this goat, symbolically transferring the sins of the people to the scape goat.¹⁷ It was then abandoned in the wilderness, illustrating Adam's expulsion from Eden carrying his guilt. Since the Day of Atonement occurs on the 10th day following the first day of the first month, which is Rosh Hashanah marking the first day of creation, we date the fall of Adam to Yom Kippur, Tuesday, Tishri 10, year 1.

It is no coincidence that the Jubilee trumpet is only sounded on Yom Kippur, marking the beginning of the year of Jubilee (50th year). Yom Kippur is the 10th day of the first month (on the civil calendar).¹⁸ Therefore the Jubilee year is offset from the regular civil years by 10 days, beginning 10 days later than regular years. If we count exactly 120 Jubilee years from the fall of man on Tishri 10th of year 1, the return of Christ must also be on Yom Kippur six thousand years later in order to fulfill the 120 Jubilee years to the very day.¹⁹ The second coming of Christ will occur on a Jubilee year, when "liberty" is proclaimed, as Isaiah proves.

¹³ Lev. 23:26

¹⁴ The civil calendar is the original calendar used by Moses to date the genealogies. It begins on the new moon in September. This was the only calendar in use until God commanded Moses to add a second calendar for tracking the festivals. This festival calendar began on the first day of the month in which God led the Israelites out of Egypt, in the spring. From the time of the exodus onward, the Jews have kept both calendars 6 months apart. The civil (original) calendar (fall to fall) was used to calculate the sabbatical weeks of years for planting and harvesting, and for the year of Jubilee. The festival calendar was used for everything else. Consequently, the Day of Atonement is on the 10th day of the 1st month on the civil calendar, and on the 10th day of the 7th month on the festival calendar.

¹⁵ Lev. 16:7-10

¹⁶ Heb. 10:1-4

¹⁷ Lev. 16:21

¹⁸ Lev. 25:8-12 The civil calendar is offset from the festival calendar by 6 months, making Yom Kippur the 10th day of the 7th month when reckoned on the festival calendar.

¹⁹ Inclusive reckoning

Isaiah 61:1-7 LXX

*1 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me; he has sent me to preach glad tidings to the poor, to heal the broken in heart, to **proclaim liberty** to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind; 2 to declare **the acceptable year of the Lord**, and **the day** of recompence; to comfort all that mourn; 3 that there should be given to them that mourn in Sion glory instead of ashes, the oil of joy to the mourners, the garment of glory for the spirit of heaviness: and they shall be called generations of righteousness, the planting of the Lord for glory.*

4 And they shall build the old waste places, they shall raise up those that were before made desolate, and shall renew the desert cities, even those that had been desolate for many generations. 5 And strangers shall come and feed thy flocks, and aliens shall be thy ploughmen and vine-dressers. 6 But ye shall be called priests of the Lord, the ministers of God: ye shall eat the strength of nations, and shall be admired because of their wealth. 7 Thus shall they inherit the land a second time, and everlasting joy shall be upon their head."

Compare this passage with the following instructions for the Jubilee year:

Lev. 25:8-11 NKJV

*8 "And you shall count seven sabbaths of years for yourself, seven times seven years; and the time of the seven sabbaths of years shall be to you forty-nine years. 9 Then you shall cause the trumpet of the Jubilee to sound on the **tenth day** of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement you shall make the trumpet to sound throughout all your land. 10 And you shall consecrate **the fiftieth year**, and **proclaim liberty** throughout all the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a Jubilee for you; and each of you shall return to his possession, and each of you shall return to his family.*

Jesus read from the passage in Isaiah in the synagogue of Nazareth, referring the statements about preaching glad tidings to the poor, and proclaiming the year of liberty (Jubilee) to Himself. Did Jesus preach about the year of Jubilee? Yes, if this refers to His second coming to establish His Kingdom on the earth. Jesus proclaimed "*the Gospel of the Kingdom*,"²⁰ and had a great deal to say about His second coming and the Kingdom.

It is evident therefore that Jesus will return on the 120th Jubilee, on Yom Kippur, when He will personally sound the "*trumpet of the Jubilee*."²¹ This of course corresponds to the "*trumpet of God*"²² which "*the Lord Himself*" who will blow.²³ He will blow the Jubilee

²⁰ Matt. 4:23

²¹ Lev. 25:9

²² 1 Thess. 4:16

²³ Zech. 9:14

trumpet *"immediately after the tribulation."*²⁴ This Jubilee trumpet is the *"last trumpet"* which Paul associated with the coming of Christ and the resurrection.²⁵ It is the *"last trumpet"* because it is the 120th Jubilee trumpet!

Our proposed Jubilee calendar, of 120 Jubilee years from creation to the second coming, can be tested and verified. If we can establish from biblical data an accurate chronology from the creation until the Jews began using the Jubilee calendar under Joshua, and if the Jubilee years on our creation calendar synchronize with Joshua's Jubilee calendar, this is sufficient proof for our Jubilee calendar theory. There is only a 1 in 50 chance that our creation calendar would synchronize perfectly with Joshua's actual Jubilee calendar by chance.

Not only does our creation Jubilee calendar synchronize perfectly with Joshua's Jubilee calendar, but the year of the exodus from Egypt, which was above all else the *"year of release,"*²⁶ falls exactly on the 50th Jubilee year from creation, the year 2,500. If every 50th regular year is a *"Jubilee,"* the 50th Jubilee year (50x50) would be a Jubilee of Jubilees! It cannot be mere coincidence that the *"year of release"* from Egypt, the *"year of liberty"*²⁷ from slavery, falls in precisely the middle of the 2500th year, the Jubilee of Jubilees!

But, there is more. The decree of Cyrus, setting the Jews at liberty after the 70 years captivity, falls on the 70th Jubilee! Jeremiah prophesied that the captivity would end after 70 years.²⁸ And sure enough, it lasted exactly 70 regular years. However, the year of their release from captivity was also the 70th Jubilee year from creation! Coincidence? Hardly!

Here's more. The birth of Abraham was on the 40th Jubilee. The birth of Isaac was also on the 42nd Jubilee year. God gave David the Davidic Covenant, the promise of the Messiah from his loins, on the 59th Jubilee year! The 70 weeks prophecy in Daniel 9 begins on the 70th Jubilee year. And the *"70th week"* of Daniel (the 7 year tribulation) necessarily ends on the day before the 120th Jubilee, at sundown on Tishri 9th, exactly 6,000 years from Adam's expulsion from Eden!²⁹ We will demonstrate the above in the articles to follow, which will develop a complete chronology from the Bible, from creation to the second coming of Jesus the Messiah.

²⁴ Matt. 24:29-31

²⁵ 1 Cor. 15:52

²⁶ Lev. 25:10 LXX *"And ye shall sanctify the year, the fiftieth year, and ye shall proclaim a release upon the land to all that inhabit it; it shall be given a year of release, a jubilee for you; and each one shall depart to his possession, and ye shall go each to his family."*

²⁷ Ezekiel 46:17 calls the Jubilee *"the year of liberty."*

²⁸ 2 Chron. 36:21; Jer. 29:10, Daniel 9:1-2

²⁹ Inclusive reckoning

To explore this issue further, and for a complete Biblical chronology based on these concepts, which pins down the year of Christ's return, please see the book, "The TIME of the END," available through Amazon.com.

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/1481074598>

