

# CAN WE DATE THE SECOND ADVENT FROM IT?

## THE JUBILEE

Can we date the Second Advent of Christ from the jubilee cycles?

**Read this and you will find out.**

Some people set post-1844 time prophecies on earlier time prophecies, such as the 1260 days or the 2300 days.

But there are those who set time, based on the jubilee cycle.

Obviously, a careful reading of the Spirit of Prophecy reveals that we should not set time after 1844 on ANY basis. (See our two in-depth studies for much more information on this: *It Is No Time for TIME EXCITEMENT [PG-21]*, a very thorough Spirit of Prophecy compilation; and our *We Are Not to SET TIME [WM-563]*.)

But, all aside from other time-setting methods, can we not determine future dates from the jubilee? **Here are facts you have been looking for, regarding time-setting predictions based on the jubilee cycles:**

Here is the basic Bible passage on the jubilee:

“And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years.

“Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubile to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day

of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land.

“And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.

“A jubile shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of thy vine undressed.

“For it is the jubile; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field.

“In the year of this jubile ye shall return every man unto his possession.”—*Leviticus 25:8-13*.

(It should be noted that, in many KJV Bibles, the spelling is ‘jubile,’ while the Spirit of Prophecy and current spelling is ‘jubilee.’)

Several principles are presented in the above Bible passage:

**1 - The jubilee represents the time when we are freed from all our problems.** Antitype: In a sense, we are delivered when we accept Christ as our Saviour, but the full release does not come until His Second Advent for His people. (More on this, below).

“By every jubilee trumpet His [Christ’s] name was sounded.”—*Desire*

allowed to enjoy with its inhabitants a sabbath of repose. Its natural produce was the common property of all. No one was permitted to hoard any of it for himself. There was total unselfishness for a time.

The fulfillment of the *law of entail* had arrived: Every inheritance throughout the land was restored to its original owner.

Jubilee was a type of our eternal inheritance! Oh, how we long for it! Soon it will come!

*of Ages, 212.*

**2 - The typical jubilee occurred on the fiftieth year** (*Education, 43; 1 Bible Commentary, 1112*). It occurred in the fiftieth year, after seven sabbatical cycles (seven groups of seven years). Antitype: **Would the antitype, the Second Advent, also occur on a fiftieth year in the jubilee cycles?** More on this below.

**3 - The jubilee brought the return of property to its original owners.** Antitype: Through sin, Adam and his descendants lost the first dominion. Through Christ, it will be restored, and the meek shall inherit the earth.

“Every fiftieth year, the year of jubilee, every inheritance in the land was to be restored to its original owner.”—*1 Bible Commentary, 1112*.

“In the fiftieth, or year of jubilee, all landed property reverted to the original owner.”—*Education, 43*.

**4 - There would be no need of planting or harvesting in the time of the jubilee.** Antitype: Because human probation is forever ended, there will be no more need of missionary seed-sowing or harvesting.

The jubilee, described in *Leviticus 25*, was typical. **Now let us look more closely at the antitype—the antitypical jubilee:**

**1 - Specifically, the antitypical jubilee will, under no circumstances, begin until the Voice of God delivers His people, just prior to the Second Advent.**

“But there was one clear place of settled glory, whence came the voice of God like many waters, which shook the heavens and the earth . . . Then commenced the jubilee, when the land should rest . . . Soon appeared the great white cloud.”—*Early Writings, 34-35 (p. 286 and Life Sketches, 103 are identical)*.

The Voice of God delivers His people from the power of the wicked,

On the tenth day of the seventh month of the fiftieth year, a great trumpet was blown. By this means, the public authorities proclaimed that the year-long jubilee had begun!

Universal redemption of land and people had arrived! All prisoners and captives obtained their liberties, slaves were declared free, and debts were absolved.

The land, on the sabbatic year, was neither sowed nor reaped, but

and the Second Advent quickly follows. Note that the jubilee only begins at this point; it does not end then.

**2 - The antitypical jubilee will not occur, prior to that time, immediately before the Second Advent of Christ.**

It comes after the close of probation, and just before Jesus is seen in the clouds, returning for His own.

Therefore, contrary to what some say, **the antitypical jubilee does not represent conversion, 1844, the beginning of the investigative judgment, when it passes to the cases of the living, or the general close of probation.** The jubilee is not fulfilled until the time of the Second Advent.

**3 - The antitypical jubilee is NOT the completion of a fifty-year cycle—because it is an antitype! It does not come at the end of one of those literal cycles!** How can we know this? because the jubilee is an antitype.

The jubilee is a type/antitype relationship; it is not a time prophecy.

**4 - Antitypical fulfillments do not match the time lengths found in the types!**

Example: the Sanctuary service: The typical daily service was 364 days long—just under a year, while the antitypical was “18 centuries” (*Great Controversy*, 421) in length. The typical yearly service was one day long, but the antitypical began in 1844, and is still in progress.

Types and antitypes are related by events and sequential relationships, not by time periods.

Do not confuse antitypes with time-span prophecies: The 2300-year prophecy was a time prophecy, but the antitypical sanctuary fulfillments are not. They have no inherent time spans predicted within them.

It is of interest that, although the types (the daily and yearly sanctuary service, and the jubilee cycle) have inherent time spans (one day out of 365, and one year out of fifty),—those numbers do not carry over into the antitypes. It is only the principles which carry over.

What are the jubilee principles? Read them in the box on the bottom of page one of this tract.

**5 - Not only are antitypes not time prophecies, they are not even proportional to the mathematical ratio of the types which they follow.** The ratio of the yearly to the daily typical sanctu-

ary service was 1 to 364. If the antitypical yearly had been 1/365th the length of the antitypical daily, it would only have lasted about five years! It is obvious there are no time-pattern correlations between the antitypes and types. (At the present time [1994], the ratio of yearly to daily is already quite skewed in favor of the length of the yearly [about 30 to 365]).

In the jubilee type, the jubilee was one year, concluding a cycle of 50. It had a mathematical proportion of 1 to 50. But the antitypical jubilee will come when God designs that it should.—And, when it does come, it will last a very long time! The coming jubilee will be at least a thousand years in length. (In one sense, it could be no shorter than that, since the redeemed do not receive their land back—the new earth—until it is concluded. But, in another sense, the freedom of the jubilee will continue on forever.) Mathematically, a thousand-year jubilee ought to require 50,000 non-jubilee years before it.

For the above reasons, **the various 50-year cycle theories (which teach that the Second Advent will come at the end of a certain number of 50 year periods) ARE NOT correct!**

The above facts should be sufficient to bury the jubilee cycle theories, but **here are additional facts which you should keep in mind:**

**1 - No one on earth knows when the typical jubilee cycles began.** We just are not told, and there is no historical data to clarify the point. God has purposely hidden the fact, so we will not worship jubilee dates.

The first jubilee cycle began at some point after the Israelites entered the promised land. The entrance occurred 40 years after the Exodus—but when did that happen?

**2 - We do not know the date when the Red Sea was crossed, and the Exodus out of Egypt began.**

Biblical scholars place the general time when the Exodus occurred at (1) the *seventeenth century B.C.*, during the Hyksos period; (2) the *sixteenth century B.C.*, when the Hyksos were expelled; (3) the *fifteenth century B.C.*, under the eighteenth Egyptian dynasty (during the reign of Thutmose III); and

(4) the *thirteenth century B.C.*, under the nineteenth Egyptian dynasty (during the reign of Ramses II).

Adventist scholars, for several decades, have placed it as occurring in the fifteenth century B.C., during the reign of Thutmose III. After reviewing the data, the present writer has for a number of years agreed with that position. But that does not make it a known fact.

**3 - Yet, even if we were correct on the century—that would not tell us the year of the Exodus.**

Keep in mind that, **if we cannot know when the Israelites left Egypt, we cannot know when they entered the promised land 40 years later, and began the jubilee cycles.**

**4 - We cannot even have certainty as to the regnal years of Thutmose III—or any other pharaoh or ruler in the second millennium B.C.** Why not? because of a very special reason:

**5 - We cannot accurately pinpoint any date in ancient Near-Eastern history before one date, about nine centuries after Thutmose III.** That date is the 37th regnal year of Nebuchadnezzar (which began at sunset on April 22, 568 B.C., and ended at sunset on April 11, 567 B.C.).

We know that dated year because of a clay tablet unearthed in Mesopotamia, which links that regnal year to very definite astronomical events (in this case, a rather complete collection of planetary locations throughout that particular year). That data cannot be duplicated for any other year in history, so we can be totally certain of that one date.

**6 - We cannot with certainty link that dated year to earlier events.**

Efforts are made to link that dated year (568/567 B.C.) to earlier Hebrew history (including Edwin Thiele and Sigfried Horn's outstanding work), but, of course, we cannot have certainty about their conclusions. They may have partial accuracy, but how much we cannot know.

(However, it would not matter if they were accurate, since we have earlier noted that antitypical jubilees do not occur at the end of 50-year cycles.)

Believe not those who tell you we can know, with certainty the date of the Exodus. We do not have such certainty. Indeed, we do not even have clarity as to the pharaoh, during whose

rule it occurred!

There are those who date the jubilee cycle as starting with the Exodus out of Egypt, and there are those who date it as beginning at the entrance into Canaan.

**But that controversy between an Exodus date and an Entrance date only adds to the confusion of when the cycles began.**

In this study, we will assume the following:

**(1) The jubilee cycles did not begin at the Exodus,** because a careful reading of *Leviticus 25:8-16* reveals that two aspects had to be fulfilled: first, the freeing of the people, and second, the receiving of the landed inheritance. Then, the 50-year cycle would begin and, at its end, the people were again freed, and the land again given to them. **So, at the beginning of the cycle, the people must already have both: their freedom and their land.**

**(2) The jubilees were 50-year cycles, not 49-year cycles.**

“Every fiftieth year, the year of jubilee, every inheritance in the land was to be restored to its original owner.”—*1 Bible Commentary, 1112.*

“In the fiftieth, or year of jubilee, all landed property reverted to the original owner.”—*Education, 43.*

The people (or the children of the people) who owned the land, at the beginning of the 50-year cycle, were the ones who received it back at the end of the cycle—so, at the beginning of the cycle, they had to own the land. As we shall see below, the Israelites did not receive their land until several years after the entrance into Canaan.

At the Exodus from Egypt, the people received their freedom, but not until after the entrance into Canaan did they receive their land. Therefore, the position is here taken that an Exodus date for the beginning of the jubilee cycle would be untenable.

The jubilee was known as “the year of release and return.” It took both to make it a jubilee.

Next, what was the date of the entrance into Canaan, and certain events thereafter:

**7 - First, the Israelites had to cross the Jordan River** into the promised land. After that, they had to begin settling it. We do not know when

either event occurred. But we do know that they were two distinct, separate events.

**We do not know when the Israelites crossed into Canaan.** How could we know, since we do not know when they left Egypt, 40 years earlier.

**8 - We do not know the year that the Israelites actually received their inheritance. For it was not until then, that the 50-year cycle could begin.**

**The problem here is that the Israelites did not receive their inheritance the same year they crossed the Jordan River.**

Even if we did know the year-date when the Israelites miraculously crossed the Jordan and entered Palestine,—we still would not know when the first typical 50-year cycle began—because we do not know how many years elapsed between the crossing of the Jordan and the division of the land to the Israelites.

The first 50-year cycle would not begin in the middle of the lengthy war against the Canaanites, for the Israelites did not possess the land until it was completed.

We can assume that the first jubilee cycle began when the Israelites had rest from war and could begin peacefully settling the promised land. We are told that, from the time they passed over Jordan, until they were able to settle in the land, “several years” elapsed (*Patriarchs and Prophets, 510-511, quoted below*).

**9 - Unfortunately, we do not know the date when the land was divided up between the tribes, so they could receive their land.** All we know is that it occurred several years after the Jordan was crossed. Until the land was divided (*Joshua 13 to 22*), the people could not receive their landed inheritance. This is important, since it was the task of the jubilee to restore land which they owned, which had been sold or lost during the 50-year interval (*Leviticus 25:10, 13*).

“One by one the cities were taken, and Hazor, the stronghold of the confederacy, was burned. **The war was continued for several years, but its close** found Joshua master of Canaan. And the land had rest from war.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets, 510-511 [Emphasis ours]*.

So, several years after the entrance into Canaan, Joshua had the respon-

sibility of assigning the land to the people.

“The whole land, both the parts already conquered and that which was yet unsubdued, was to be apportioned among the tribes.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets, 511.*

**10 - We do not know when the declaration was proclaimed that the first cycle had begun.**

Before the war against the Canaanites was completed, it had been halted (*Joshua 13:1-13; Patriarchs and Prophets, 511, 543-545*), and we do not know at what point Joshua (or the priests) declared that the first year of the actual 50-year jubilee cycle began. There had to be an announced initial year, but we do not know when it was.

The observance of the jubilee would be obligatory after the Israelites had taken possession of the promised land and had cultivated the soil for 49 years. After completing this study, the present writer came upon this item:

The ancient Talmudic tradition is that it took the Israelites seven years to conquer Canaan, and the first sabbatic year was the 21st year, and the first jubilee was the 64th year after they entered Canaan. That is the Talmudic tradition; take it for what it is worth. We know that many Talmudic traditions are incorrect.

**11 - We do not know the initial or terminal year-date of any later jubilee cycle.**

Several dates for jubilees, later in Jewish history, have been suggested, but there is no clear-cut evidence for any of them.

One writer declares that each time a trumpet was blown to call a meeting, it was the beginning of a jubilee. It is true that the trumpet was blown to announce the beginning of the jubilee (*Leviticus 25:9*), but (1) trumpets were blown yearly to announce the feast of trumpets and the day of atonement, and (2) the jubilee was not a meeting! The crisis in Joel (*Joel 2:1*), for example, is not a jubilee.

Someone has said that the blowing of trumpets at a meeting called by Hezekiah indicated a jubilee (*2 Chronicles 29:27-28*), but read the entire chapter. Hezekiah was rededicating the temple, and seeking the forgiveness of God for the sins of the

people.

It has been speculated, by someone that the return of the Jews to Jerusalem, at the end of the 70-year prophecy of Jeremiah, would be the end of one of the jubilee cycles. That is only surmise.

Still others say that the crucifixion of Christ surely must be the end of a jubilee cycle. That also is conjecture. We cannot base truth on supposition; we must have clear statements from God's Word. The artful transformation of assumption into "truth" is how Sunday sacredness entered Christianity.

**We have no idea when the jubilee cycles began, how many were kept, or the date when any ended. It is a total mystery; a mystery purposely hidden from us.** Our kind Father knew it was not safe for us to have that information.

**12 - There is also a question whether the jubilee cycles were 50 years in length, or only 49 years.**

Some take the position that, after the 49th year, the next year (the jubilee year) began the next 49-year cycle.

However, we find no direct evidence of that in the Bible or the Spirit of Prophecy, so throughout this study, we have assumed a 50-year cycle, not a 49-year cycle.

**Keep in mind that the 50th year was to be "hallowed;"** it was not a commonplace year like those preceding it.

"And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year."—*Leviticus 25:10*.

It was not a normal year, for there was to be no tillage of the soil during it (*Leviticus 25:11*). **It is an error to suggest that the jubilee was just a common working year, part of the 49.**

After preparing this study, the following quotation was found:

"The jubilee year could not itself be the first of the next 49 years because "in *Leviticus 25:10*, not only is the fiftieth year expressly named as the year of Jubilee, but the forty-nine years which make seven Sabbatic years are expressly distinguished from it." (R.W. Winer, *Jubeljahr*).

It is significant that such a controversy should exist. **If the experts cannot even agree on the length of the jubilee, how will they ever manage to date future events by it?**

**It is of interest that the trumpet is blown to mark the jubilee. Here are several intriguing passages to consider.** They link the antitypical jubilee with the Second Advent of Christ:

**"Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubile to sound** on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement **shall ye make the trumpet sound** throughout all your land.

"And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family."—*Leviticus 25:9-10*.

"For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, **and with the trump of God:** and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

"Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."—*1 Thessalonians 4:16-17*.

In trumpet tones, Christ will send His angels to gather His own from the earth:

"They shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He shall send His angels **with a great sound of a trumpet**, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."—*Matthew 24:30-31*.

"But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, **at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound**, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."—*1 Corinthians 15:23, 52*.

In one Bible verse, the jubilee is called "*the year of liberty*."

"But if he give a gift of his inheritance to one of his servants, then it shall be his to the year of liberty; after it shall return to the prince: but his inheritance shall be his sons' for them."—*Ezekiel 46:17*.

The word "*jubilee*" comes from the Hebrew word, *yobel*, which means "ram's horn," or "trumpet." The word originally meant "a loud trumpet blast." The trumpet blast occurred on

the day of atonement in the 50th year.

Here is an interesting passage to conclude this study. It is figurative of the great final gathering of the faithful from the four winds, at the Second Coming of Christ for His people:

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem."—*Isaiah 27:13*.

For more information on the jubilee, read *Leviticus 25:8-55; 27:17-24*; and *Numbers 36:4*.

The Second Advent follows the investigative judgment and the close of probation. The Talmudic tradition is that the ram's horn was blown on the day of atonement of the 50th year—*after the day of atonement service* (described in *Leviticus 16*) was completed.

How very fitting that would be! The Second Advent coming after the completion of the investigative judgment and the cleansing of the Sanctuary!

The "*restitution of all things*," mentioned in *Acts 3:21* is generally recognized as referring to the Second Advent of Christ. What is not as well known, is that it also refers to the antitypical fulfillment of the jubilee.

Prior to that time, the Holy Spirit is "the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession."—*Ephesians 1:13-14 (Romans 8:19-23)*.

*Isaiah 37:30 (2 Kings 19:29)* almost identical) also refers to a jubilee-type experience (of two sabbatical years together: the 49th and 50th years). However, the context indicates it is only a jubilee-like experience, not an actual jubilee. For *Isaiah* is given this experience as a sign. If it was a normal event, it would not be a sign.

It is of interest that it is due to the jubilee cycles, that the family inheritance records were able to be preserved in the temple. From these records the genealogy of Christ's ancestors was taken.

*How thankful we can be that we know the truth about the jubilee!*