The Jubilee Cycle

By Larry and June Acheson

Table of Contents

Introduction: Why Address the Jubilee Cycle? 1

1. Why the Jubilee Cycle Matters: Its Connection to Eschatological Chronology 3
2. Only Five Years of Reaping and Sowing Between the Jubilee and the Next Sabbatical Year? 14
3. Does the "Mur 24E" Document Prove Five Years of Sowing & Reaping Following a Jubilee Year? 27
4. Should we Compare the Jubilee Cycle to the Count to Pentecost? 33
5. The Book of Jubilees: Ancient Evidence for a 49-Year Jubilee Cycle? 38
6. The Prophecy of Daniel 9 52

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By Larry Acheson

Introduction: Why Address the Jubilee Cycle?

The observance of the Jubilee cycle is not something that June and I have incorporated into our lives, not only because it's something we don't personally observe, but more so because we live in a nation and society that has chosen to ignore this command from our Heavenly Father, and unless you live in a nation where this command is properly carried out and enforced, you cannot *properly* observe the commandment.[1] The consequences of living in a society that is ambivalent about observing the commandments of Yahweh are such that those who strive to live by those commandments are powerless to compel an unwilling nation to turn itself around and experience the blessings of observing this and other commandments given to Yahweh's people.

If we lived in a society that was dedicated to observing Yahweh's laws, we would anticipate a trumpet blast in a certain year on the Day of Atonement so as to proclaim liberty throughout all the land (Lev. 25:10), and we wouldn't be allowed to sow or reap during the year that followed. Since we do not live in a society or culture where our leaders recognize the importance of the Jubilee cycle, we do not anticipate the sound of the trumpet blast on the Day of Atonement anytime soon, at least not by the leaders of the United States of America. Nevertheless, if we're persuaded that a certain year is a Jubilee Year and our hearts are also bent on obedience to our Heavenly Father's laws, we will strive to observe the law pertaining to the Jubilee Year to the best of our ability, such as by not planting a garden that year—***or*** the year before that.

Glenn Moore, whose challenge concerning the Jubilee cycle prompted the research that eventually became this study. I took this photograph in October 2006.

And that's what this study is all about.

You see, back in 2008, I was challenged on the topic of whether or not the Jubilee cycle consists of 49 or 50 years. If it's a 49-year cycle, there will never be two consecutive years in which the land lays fallow. If it's a 50-year cycle, there will *always* be two consecutive years of land rest at the end of each cycle. The guy who challenged me is a man named Glenn Moore, a congenial believer who spent many Sabbaths with us here in our home. We had lots of animated conversations on a variety of Biblical topics, including a few friendly disagreements, but

[1] My study focuses on the length of the Jubilee cycle, not on the physical application of the Scriptural commandment. Many studies have been written outlining the nature and purpose of the Jubilee commandment, and while I do not recommend any specific articles, I *do* encourage you to pursue your own further study in this area. For those who would like to read an excellent introductory article pertaining to the meaning of the original Hebrew word for Jubilee *Yobel* (יוֹבֵל), I recommend one titled "What is the Original Biblical Meaning of Jubilee?".

this is a topic Glenn would not let go of. I frankly didn't care if he believed it's a 49-year cycle, even though Scripture says no such thing, because as I mentioned above, we're not even certain of when the next Jubilee Year is, or at least I'm not.

Glenn, on the other hand, had mapped out all the Jubilee cycles from Creation to the present day, and had it all figured out that September 16, 2015 would mark "the BEGINNING of the 6000th year." But that then-future date was only the tip of the iceberg: During the ensuing year, Glenn insisted the Messiah would return. He even had a "countdown counter" on his website, ticking off the seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months and years until the count would finally hit zero. It was all based on a 49-year Jubilee cycle. I told him I didn't care if he used 50-year Jubilee cycle to arrive at a certain year of the anticipated Messiah's return, I didn't think it was wise to start setting dates. I stand by that claim—especially now, based on what would eventually transpire. Once that ensuing year came and went, so did Glenn's website, and so did he. I haven't even heard from Glenn since either 2009 or 2010. I hope he's okay.

Even now, over 10 years later, I occasionally find myself confronted with online articles promoting a 49-year Jubilee cycle. When that happens, I generally just skim them for anything new, then move on because I've *never* run into anything new. What's really bizarre about this current revision is the fact that ten years ago, I'm not sure if *anyone* knew what the term "AI" meant. Ten years ago, I would never have guessed that I would find myself in a dispute with *Artificial Intelligence* about the length of the Jubilee cycle, but that's what happened this month (October 2026), and that "disagreement" is what motivated me to compose this revision. In fact, I would like to *thank* ChatGPT for the inspiring and spirited discussion we enjoyed on this topic. I'm not sure how ChatGPT could *emotionally* enjoy discussing this or any topic, but that's what he/she/it told me. And it was mutual.

My original study was over 330 pages long and essentially consisted of a back-and-forth slanging match between Glenn and me. It was tedious, time-consuming (and *time-wasting*), and did nothing to preserve the friendship Glenn and I once had. What's worse, I knew that with each argument I was confronted with, responding to it would add yet *additional* length to an already burgeoning study, and the longer it became, the less likely anyone would read it. To this day, I've never had anyone inform me that they have read it.

But this year, as ChatGPT and I bounced facts and fictions off of each other, it occurred to me that this *really* isn't a controversial topic that needs over 300 pages to resolve. Let's face it: If you've already made up your mind, 300 pages of debating and exchanges that got a little too personal won't persuade you either way. So here's a greatly-condensed version. I decided to keep the original study on my website just in case someone out there comes up with a contingency that pertains to something that Glenn and I have already battled, but this greatly-condensed version doesn't address. Nevertheless, I'm persuaded this abridged version settles any questions about what Scripture says and/or doesn't say, and it also focuses on the historical understandings *and* misunderstandings.

I try to always be open to new ideas and challenges to what I believe to be true, so long as time allows. If you find any mistakes that you can demonstrate from Scripture, please email me at seekutruth at aol dot com. I will do my best to address any questions or concerns. In the meantime, I hope you find this revised study as fascinating to *read* as I found it to *discuss* with ChatGPT.

October 17, 2026

Why the Jubilee Cycle Matters: Its Connection to Eschatological Chronology

As I mentioned in my introduction, I have reviewed both the "49-year Jubilee cycle" belief and the "50-year Jubilee cycle" view, and although I have reached a particular conclusion, I do not feel any animosity towards those who do not agree with my findings. The principal instructions for reckoning the Sabbatical years and Jubilee are found in Leviticus 25. First, let's take a look at how to determine the Sabbatical years:

> [1]And Yahweh spake unto Moses in mount Sinai, saying,
> [2]Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto Yahweh.
> [3]Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof;
> [4]But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for Yahweh: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard.
> [5]That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: for it is a year of rest unto the land.
> [6]And the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee.
> [7]And for thy cattle, and for the beast that are in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be meat.

According to the above instructions, upon entering the Promised Land, the Israelites were to sow their fields and reap their harvests for six years, and then allow the land to rest during the seventh year. Notice that no exceptions to this rule are specified; six years of sowing and reaping must precede each Sabbatical year. As we are about to see, this is a critical factor in determining whether the Jubilee cycle should consist of 49 or 50 years. In the verses that follow, the Israelites were given the instructions pertaining to the reckoning of the *Jubilee* year:

> [8]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.
> [9]Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee 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.
> [10]And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.
> [11]A jubilee 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.
> [12]For it is the jubilee; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field.

Leviticus 25:1-12 lays the template for what was expected of the Israelites insofar as working the land: six years of sowing and reaping, then the land rests during the seventh year. This same cycle repeats itself seven times for a total of 49 years (7x7). The following year, year #50, is the Jubilee year, which means the land keeps a double Sabbath for years 49 and 50. Just as the Sabbatical cycle repeats itself seven times, in the same way the Jubilee cycle also repeats itself. On this reading, once year 50 has concluded, a new Jubilee cycle begins, and with the subsequent year functioning as the first year of the next seven-year Sabbatical cycle, a new Jubilee cycle is initiated, modeled after the first cycle. This understanding of the text is also reflected in the following entry by Bible scholar D. F. Payne in his *Encyclopedia International* article titled "Jubilee":

> **JUBILEE** [*jōōˈbə-lē*] (Heb. *yovel*, "ram"), in the Old Testament, the name given to every 50th year, which was to be consecrated to Yahweh. The regulations for its observance are given in Leviticus 25:8-55.[2]

This highly respected reference straightforwardly assigns a 50-year cycle to *every* 50th year. Renowned 19th century commentator C. F. Keil, in his commentary on Leviticus 25:8-12, contrary to the interpretation of modern chronologists, affirms his understanding that the Jubilee cycle consists of *50 years*, not 49:

> This year of grace [*the Jubilee year*] was proclaimed and began with the day of atonement of every seventh sabbatical year, to show that it was only with the full forgiveness of sins that the blessed liberty of the children of God could possibly commence. This grand year of grace was to return after seven times seven years; i.e., as is expressly stated in Leviticus 25:10, every fiftieth year was to be sanctified as a year of jubilee. By this regulation of the time, the view held by *R. Jehuda*, and the chronologists and antiquarians who have followed him, that every seventh sabbatical year, i.e., the 49th year, was to be kept as the year of jubilee, is proved to be at variance with the text, and the fiftieth year is shown to be the year of rest, in which the sabbatical idea attained its fullest realization, and reached its earthly temporal close.[3]

The above reference to Rabbi Jehuda (c. 135–217 CE) demonstrates that, historically, there was indeed some dissension within Judaism regarding the length of the Jubilee cycle. As the following Talmudic reference from *Rosh Hashanah* demonstrates, <u>this rabbinic discussion preserves a dispute of the position attributed to Rabbi Judah, who treated the fiftieth year as belonging to both the Jubilee and the following Sabbatical cycle, while the Rabbis rejected that overlap</u>:

> And the Rabbis, who do not require an additional verse to derive that the Jubilee Year does not extend until Yom Kippur of the fifty-first year, derive this halakha from the verse: You count the fiftieth year as the Jubilee Year alone, but you do not count the fiftieth year as the Jubilee Year and also as the first year of the next Sabbatical cycle. <u>This *halakha* comes to exclude the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda</u>, who said that the fiftieth year is counted for here and for there, both as the Jubilee Year and also as the first year of the next Sabbatical cycle. Lest someone think that that is the case, therefore,

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[2] *Encyclopedia International*, Vol. 10, Grolier Incorporated, New York, NY, article "Jubilee," by D. F. Payne, University of Sheffield, England, 1972, p. 66. At Sheffield, Payne was a highly respected lecturer in Semitic Studies.

[3] Cf., Keil & Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. 1, "The Pentateuch," by C. F. Keil, Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MA, 2001 (originally published T. & T. Clark, Edinburg, 1866 – 91).

> the verse teaches us that this is not so; rather, the fiftieth year is the Jubilee Year, and the following year is the first year of the next Sabbatical cycle.[4]

This Talmudic reference validates the fact that the majority within the ranks of Rabbinic Judaism understood that the Jubilee cycle is reckoned as a 50-year cycle, with "Year 1" of the succeeding cycle *following* that 50th year. I'm not denying that there was dissent within the ranks of Judaism over the length of the Jubilee cycle, and it is true that *The Book of Jubilees*, dated to the 2nd century BCE, assumes a cycle of 49 years. However, the author of *Jubilees* is widely considered to have been an *Essene*, who also insisted on a solar calendar consisting of 364-day years instead of a luni-solar calendar, which is the calendar embraced by Rabbinic Judaism. Rabbinic Judaism is the class of Judaism that evolved from the Pharisee party after the Temple was destroyed in 70 CE. I will address *The Book of Jubilees* later in this study.

Dating the Messiah's Return: An Incentive to Study the Jubilee Cycle?

While it's true my primary focus is on determining the correct length of the Jubilee cycle as outlined in Leviticus 25, there's an underlying interpretation that also needs to be addressed. In 2008, a friend named Glenn Moore, whom I had known for nearly ten years, asked me to review a study he was writing—a study that included his reasons for believing the Jubilee cycle actually consists of 49 years. Although I respected his freedom to believe as he wished, especially since I don't think anyone can truly know when the next Jubilee year will occur, let alone observe it in accordance with its ordinances, I nevertheless expressed disagreement with his reasoning.

Glenn gently, yet forthrightly, pushed back, challenging me on every line of reasoning I presented. One thing led to another, and this study represents my conclusion, which not only includes Scriptural evidence, but historical understanding as well.

It would be great to know where we are right now in terms of the Jubilee cycle, but to accurately make such a determination, we first need to know the year of the starting point, or at least a verifiable year in antiquity that was observed as a Jubilee year. I'm persuaded no one can know with certainty when that starting point is.

It turns out Glenn, in conducting his own research, came up with what he felt is the beginning year of the first-ever Jubilee cycle as a means of eventually determining the start of the seventh millennium, which would also signal the year of the Messiah's return. As I prepared this study, I examined the teachings of at least three individuals whose Jubilee research led them to the same conclusion—that whatever year they came up with would coincide with the year of Yeshua's return. One individual came up with the year 2009. Another, like Glenn, was certain that He would return between 2015 and 2016. Obviously, each one's predictions proved to be wrong.

While I have concerns regarding the use of the Jubilee cycle as a means of "setting dates," and my original study dwelt extensively on those concerns, I don't want to lose sight of our objective—determining the true length of the Jubilee cycle. My point, though, is that the individuals who were so sure of their conclusions in 2008 ended up being wrong. One individual shut down his website as soon as his prediction officially failed and hasn't been heard from since. Another simply discontinued posting

[4] Cf., *Talmud Bavli*. Translated by Isidore Epstein, Soncino Press, 1938. Retrieved from Sefaria.org (the original work published ca. 500 CE).

updates after 2016. The other guy simply removed his Jubilee cycle study from his website. If there's a lesson to be learned from this, it's to be leery of over-zealous individuals who use their interpretation of the Jubilee cycles to determine the dating of eschatological events. The failure of these individuals' predictions does not, by itself, establish whether their interpretation of the Jubilee cycle was correct. It does, however, illustrate the danger of allowing an uncertain Jubilee chronology to become the foundation for specific eschatological predictions.

All calculations relevant to the timing of Scriptural events aside, the question I am led to ask myself is, "If I were living in the days in which Sabbatical years and Jubilee years were observed, would I reckon them the way Glenn and others of his persuasion teach that they should be determined?"

Before I answer the above question, let's first examine how different authors believe the Sabbatical years and Jubilee years should be determined. I have found that there are two principal interpretations of the commandment to observe the Jubilee cycle. The one interpretation, which is endorsed by June and me, enjoins that each Jubilee cycle contains 50 years. The other interpretation, supported by Glenn and many others, maintains that each Jubilee cycle consists of 49 years, with a designated "year 50" overlapping "year 1" of the next cycle. This "Year 50 = Year 1"[5] belief is somewhat confusing at first glance because one might think that if there is a "year 50," then it must be a 50-year cycle. However, if "year 50" coincides with "year one" of the following Jubilee cycle, this "overlap" produces a 49-year cycle instead of a 50-year cycle. Here is how Dean Thomas Coombs, in his internet article "The Geneva Peace Treaty: A Sign of What's to Come," explains this latter interpretation:

> Also of importance is that the entry into the promised land occurred in 1406 BC. This means that we are currently half-way through the important 70th jubilee cycle, which will end in the spring of AD 2025. (70 x 49, which is 7 x 70 x 7 years, or 490 x 7 years. <u>A jubilee is counted as 7 x 7 years in succession, with the 50th overlapping the first year of the next cycle of 49 years. Hence, the seven year Sabbaths and the 49-year jubilee cycles run uninterrupted in the same way as the regular weekly Sabbaths</u>. God is consistent!)[6]

The author of the above excerpt shares Glenn's view that the 50th year overlaps the first year of the next Jubilee cycle. In other words, although this teaching appears nowhere in Scripture, we're expected to understand that "year 50" is *also* "year one" of the following cycle. I'm sure there are other ideas and explanations pertaining to how count to Jubilee years, but the above is the one I am most familiar with. Interestingly, I find that although most of the explanations I have come across agree with the one cited above, virtually each individual's calculation seems to produce a different year in which the current Jubilee cycle ends. The above individual, as revealed in his commentary, maintains that the then-current cycle ended in the year 2025. Still another individual, Marilyn J. Agee, writing in the year 2005, speculated that the next Jubilee year would correspond to the year 2010:

> I made my own chart, and guess what? The year 2010 AD came out as the Jubilee Year.

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[5] For lack of a better designation, I will occasionally refer to this "two years overlapping as one year" approach as the "Year 50 = Year 1" method. It is certainly a method that is nowhere introduced or explained in Scripture, which is why proponents of this belief often find it necessary to go into considerable detail to explain it to others. Scripture nowhere explicitly states that the 50th, or Jubilee, year is simultaneously the first year of the succeeding seven-year Sabbatical cycle.

[6] From "The Geneva Peace Treaty: A Sign of What's to Come," by Dean Thomas Coombs.

> Sept. 9, 2010 is Tishri 1, 5771, the Feast of Trumpets that is Christ's Coronation Day in Heaven. It is also the day of the Marriage of the Lamb and the Judgment Seat of Christ. It is the Day of God's Wrath too. If this is correct, Jesus would return, as I thought, on the following Nisan 1, 5771 (April 5, 2011), during the Jubilee Year.[7]

I never cease to be amazed at how there seems to be no end to individuals offering their predictions of when the Messiah will return, even though Yeshua plainly stated, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only."[8] The above prediction is but one of many I have read over the years. Other prognosticators, a little more cognizant of Yeshua's words, but still perhaps a little too sure of themselves, say things like, "He said no man knows the *day and hour* … He didn't say we can't know the *month and year*!" Their different conclusions notwithstanding, both individuals from whom I have quoted thus far agree that "year 50" of the Jubilee cycle overlaps the first year of the *next* cycle. In other words, "year 50" and "year 1" coincide.

By now it is certainly obvious that the primary supporter of the "Year 50 = Year 1" position with whom I am acquainted is W. Glenn Moore. In 2008, Glenn participated in a forum discussion board in EliYah's Forums,[9] in which he laid his foundation that the 6000th year since Creation will begin in the year 2015. In a forum discussion that he initiated pertaining to the topic of "Jubilees, Sabbaticals, and Bible Chronology," Glenn submitted the following commentary:

> I don't know when the Messiah will come, or when the end will be, but the signs clearly show that the time is near. 200,000+ people have died in Asia because of the cyclone in Burma (130,000) and the earthquake in China (70,000). And it happened soon after the start of Passover!! Is it just a coincidence that this also comes in a Sabbatical year? [Yes, we are now in a Sabbatical year.] My message is not about an exact date for all of these events, but it IS "About Time."[10] Surely Yahweh does not want His children to be ignorant of the "season" of the coming of His Son, and His kingdom? The year 6000 is just around the corner, and while I cannot claim infallibility I do believe that we CAN know with 99% certainty when that year is. And yes, I have solid documentation to back that up.[11]

If you read the first portion of the above commentary apart from the second portion, you can see an apparent contradiction between the two portions. We first learn that Glenn doesn't know when the Messiah will come, a statement that I certainly agree with. He goes on to remark that the signs indicate that the time of His return is near. Again, I agree. After all, who can argue with Yeshua's own words in Revelation 22:20:

> 20 The one who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon."
> Amein! Come, Adon Yeshua!

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[7] Taken from the now-defunct Prophecy.com website blog, "Pro and Con 1209," 05-23-2005, by Marilyn J. Agee. Note: The author also wrote that she believed the rapture would occur on the day of Pentecost, 1998 (see "Pro and Con 2").
[8] *Cf.*, Matthew 24:36.
[9] EliYah's Forums may be accessed at the following URL: www.eliyah.com.
[10] This remark "About Time" was a subtle play on words calling to mind his (now defunct) website "Its about that time dot net."
[11] From a posting submitted by W. Glenn Moore on June 16, 2008 under the screen name gmoore44 in the forum thread titled "Jubilees, Sabbaticals, and Bible Chronology."

So, yes, I certainly agree with the upper portion of Glenn's posting; without question, the season of Yeshua's return is near. If we cannot see this for ourselves, then we should at least believe Yeshua's own words. However, I purposely highlighted Glenn's last two sentences because I believe we should pay close attention to how those words contrast with his introductory words. On the one hand, Glenn states he doesn't know when the Messiah will come. On the other hand, he is 99% certain of when the year 6000 will be, and he labored extensively to persuaded his reading audience that his method is the only feasible one. As we will see shortly, Glenn believed that knowing when the next millennium would begin simultaneously revealed a time frame wherein the Messiah "must" return. Thus, June and I found ourselves dealing with an individual who seemed to recognize the awkwardness involved with the setting of dates, while simultaneously trying to remove himself from the stigma associated with his predecessors who were proven wrong.[12] He was confident that *his* conclusion was the exception, which would seem to explain how he went from sharing his view of the correct timing of prophetic events to eventually showcasing it to the whole world.

At this point, some folks may reach the premature conclusion that I am making a sweeping generalization that all believers who support the "Year 50 = Year 1" method are date-setters. However, all I am presenting here is a general observation that, to date, this commonality has consistently been true. There are bound to be exceptions, so I don't mean to paint a broad picture of all "Year 50 = Year 1" adherents as being date-setters. Nevertheless, it all seems to fit the general narrative.

Since I don't know of anyone who is actually willing and able to fully observe the Year of Jubilee, the principal reason I encountered for attributing such prominence to Jubilee chronology is to establish a specific timeframe for the beginning of the seventh millennium. I mean, I certainly doubt that any modern-day landowners out there are going to find out who owned the land before they did and return it to their descendants during the Jubilee Year, which is what landowners would be required to do if they truly observed the Jubilee Year. There may be a few folks out there who will blow the trumpet on the Day of Atonement to announce the Year of Jubilee, and there will likely be some believers who will not sow or reap during that year, but I highly doubt that it will go much further than that, if at all, in this day and age. Let's face it: You're not likely going to find any articles written about the Jubilee cycle from the perspective that we need to remember to not sow and reap during that year. The thrust of Jubilee articles I have read is to establish timeframes for the seventh millennium and the return of Yeshua the Messiah.

On the surface, their expressed warning is timely and legitimate: We need to repent and turn to Yahweh. But if their predictions are wrong, and *especially* if their calculations are skewed, the opposite will be achieved.

Did Glenn believe the timing of the year 6000 played a role in determining the timing of the Messiah's return? Absolutely. In a subsequent posting, Glenn made it clear that the Jubilee cycle plays a significant role in his dating process, which includes the timing of the Messiah's second coming:

> The Bible is full of mathematical formulas, some complex and some simple. The formulas we will talk about here are relatively simple, and yet most people do not even

[12] These predecessors include Seventh-Day Adventists, who predicted the Messiah's Second Coming would be in 1844, Jehovah's Witnesses, who in 1876 began predicting He would return in 1914, and the Worldwide Church of God, who in 1956 began predicting He would return in 1975. These are famous examples; there are many others too numerous to list here.

> realize that they exist. Did you know of these formulas, or what I call the Jubilee Code?[13]
>
> If (and I say that with a straight face), IF my calendar is correct then September 16, 2015 will be the BEGINNING of the 6000th year. The Bible is full of mathematical formulas, some complex and some simple. The formulas we will talk about here are relatively simple, and yet most people do not even realize that they exist. [I recommend downloading the Excel file (The Jubilee Calendar) and going through each of the calendars, then checking at the end of the document for all of the reference pages. Everything is fully documented.] But just remember, the millennium actually begins 1 year later (about 354 days later) at the next feast of trumpets. Does that mean Messiah will come at that time--who is to say? It could be sooner, and there is no reason to doubt that he could come at anytime between now and then. Regarding the 7 year peace treaty, I don't know where Scripture actually supports such a view. I am more inclined to believe there will be a 3 1/2 year tribulation, followed by about 1 year of the 7 last plagues (during which we will have left the cities and returned to Jerusalem to await the Messiah). At least, that is my current understanding.[14]

Glenn made it clear that *if* his calendar was correct (and he had already stated that he was 99% certain of its accuracy), the 6000th year would begin in the year 2015. Moreover, Glenn had privately (*though not confidentially*) told me that the Messiah MUST return prior to the 6000th year, and in the above commentary, he concedes that His return could come "anytime between now and then," which effectively rules out any time *afterwards*. In other words, according to Glenn, Yeshua's return MUST come prior to the year 2016, and the driving force behind this determination is Glenn's proposed "Jubilee Code." Once again, I find that men's notions regarding the timing of the Jubilee cycle are often inappropriately used in an attempt to persuade us about the timing of Scriptural events, all the way from the date of Creation to the timing of the second coming of Yeshua the Messiah. On his website, Glenn repeated the claim he made in the internet forum, adding additional details:

> Based upon my extensive research on the Jubilee cycles, I can state with almost complete certainty that 3985 BCE is the year of Creation, and 2015 CE will be the beginning of the 6000th year of history (based upon this very-well documented timeline). Assuming that the last millennium begins one year later, the year 2016 CE (on Tishri 1, in the fall) will be the beginning of the last 1000 years. The countdown shown below is to the beginning of the 6000th year, based upon the Jubilee Calendar (the visible crescent, Jerusalem time and ending at sunset). This is about a seven-year countdown. About one year later, in the eighth year from now, the seventh millennium should begin.[15]

In the above commentary, we not only read the author's "almost complete certainty" claim regarding the year of Creation, but we also read the confirmation of his claim pertaining to the 6000th year.

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[13] From a posting submitted by W. Glenn Moore on June 16, 2008 at 8:06 AM in the forum thread titled "Jubilees, Sabbaticals, and Bible Chronology."
[14] Ibid, June 22, 2008 at 11:10 PM.
[15] Excerpted from Glenn Moore's article "It's About That Time," retrieved from his now-defunct website http://www.itsaboutthattime.net/.

Of course, I need to point out that, as with the previous authors I cited, Glenn is persuaded that a Jubilee cycle is 49 years in length, not 50 years.[16] In fact, as I stated previously, I have found that the majority of articles written concerning the Jubilee cycle are written from this same perspective. As I gathered information for this study, I conducted a **Google** search for articles pertaining to the Jubilee cycle, and the overwhelming majority of "hits" generated by the search were for websites supporting the "Year 50 = Year 1" doctrine.[17] In fact, the owner of the website that made the top of the list of hits agrees with Glenn on the year when 6,000 "years of sin" comes to an end: 2015:

> The 70 Jubilees began in 1416 BC when God's children entered Canaan. The 70 Jubilees will end 3,430 years later in 2015 AD when God's children will enter heavenly Canaan.[18]

In the same article, author Nora Roth elucidates her reasons for believing year 50 of the Jubilee cycle is also year one of the succeeding cycle. Here is one of them:

> The seventh year sabbath occurs every seventh year. It is not possible for some sabbatical cycles to be eight years long. There are no sabbatical cycles that have extra years added to them. Each sabbatical cycle is exactly seven years long. So the 50th year Jubilee comes after the 7th year of a sabbatical cycle and is the 1st year of the next seven-year sabbatical cycle.[19]

Nora Roth leaves no doubt that she is predicting the time of the Messiah's return, and a focal point of her message involves the Jubilee cycle, which from her perspective, consists of 49 years. Highlighting the fact that date setting is so tightly connected to the "year 50 = year 1," author Paul Sides refers to this approach as the "***Messiah Jubilee Theory***."[20]

From yet *another* internet article titled *The Jubilee Cycles*, the anonymous author exhibits the same understanding as Nora Roth in supplying the "year 50 = year 1" definition of the Jubilee cycle:

> The jubilee cycle is 50 years long and begins every 49 years, so that the 50th, or jubilee, year of one cycle is also the first year of the next cycle.[21]

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[16] For example, we read in chapter 6 of Glenn's book *The Jubilee Code*, p. 64, "If Daniel bases his prophecy on the Jubilee cycles (as I have just shown), and the period of time which his prophecy concerns is 70 times 7 (or 490 years), then he demonstrates by his testimony that the Jubilee cycles are intended to be 49 year cycles, not 50 year cycles."

[17] For example, John S. Bergsma, in his 2005 article "Once Again, the Jubilee, Every 49 or 50 Years?", wrote, "The Jubilee cycle should be 49 years in length, since the Jubilee Year counts as both the fiftieth year of the previous cycle and the first of the next." Maria Ana Travassos Valdez, on page 78 of her book *Historical Interpretations of the "Fifth Empire": The Dynamics of Periodization from Daniel to António Vieira, S.J.*, wrote, "After all, 70 is a multiple of seven, and the 70 weeks represent a jubilee, which is one of the most important divisions of historical time (it is normally understood as a period of 49 years) in the Jewish Christian context."

[18] From "Do 70 Jubilees predict the end of the world in 2015?", by Nora Roth, retrieved on 10/02/2008 from her "The Mark of the Beast Explained" website.

[19] From the PDF file titled "2016: The Time of the End," by Nora Roth, http://markbeast.com, March 2016, p. 18.

[20] Taken from *The Jubilee Cycles*, which, as of 2026, is no longer available on *The Sabbath Covenant* website, but nevertheless I'm including the original link here as evidence that I'm not making this up. The author's name is Paul Sides, (also known by his Hebrew persona Rav Sha'ul). He concluded his article with the following words: "The *Messiah Jubilee Theory* is thus projecting the 2nd Advent of Jesus Christ to be no later than the year 2009 AD." This concluding remark is likely the reason the article is no longer available.

[21] From a now defunct Seventh-Day Adventist website article (composed by an anonymous author) titled "The Jubilee Cycles." As with the previous author's article, I'm including the link as evidence that I'm not inventing these quotes. Also, see *The Chronology of the Old Testament: Solving the Bible's Most Intriguing Mysteries*, Dr. Floyd Nolen Jones, New Leaf Publishing

This same author referenced above also supplied a calendar depicting how he believes the Jubilee cycle should be reckoned. As you can see from his calendar, displayed on the following page, this individual is likewise persuaded that the Jubilee cycle is actually 49 years long, not 50, and that year 50 = year one:

Year 1 "Sunday"	Year 2 "Monday"	Year 3 "Tuesday"	Year 4 "Wednesday"	Year 5 "Thursday"	Year 6 "Friday"	Year 7 Sabbath
1	2	3	4	5	6	7 *Sabbath* (land rests)
8	9	10	11	12	13	14 *Sabbath* (land rests)
15	16	17	18	19	20	21 *Sabbath* (land rests)
22	23	24	25	26	27	28 *Sabbath* (land rests)
29	30	31	32	33	34	35 *Sabbath* (land rests)
36	37	38	39	40	41	42 *Sabbath* (land rests)
43	44	45	46	47	48	49 *Sabbath* (land rests)
50/1 Jubilee (land rests)	2	3	4	5	6	7 *Sabbath* (land rests)
8	9	10	11	12	13	14 *Sabbath* (land rests)
15	16	17	18	19	20	21 *Sabbath* (land rests)
22	23	24	25	26	27	28 *Sabbath* (land rests)
29	30	31	32	33	34	35 *Sabbath* (land rests)
36	37	38	39	40	41	42 *Sabbath* (land rests)
43	44	45	46	47	48	49 *Sabbath* (land rests)
50 Jubilee (land rests)						

Is the above author's definition of a Jubilee cycle Scriptural? Well, from his perspective, the answer is yes. Glenn Moore echoes the 49-year cycle understanding in his study "Jubilee Cycles–49 or 50 Years?" In it, he presents the understanding that the prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27 proves that the Jubilee cycles consist of 49 years:

Group, Green Forest, AR, November 2004, p. 288, where the author writes, "Whereas the Year of Jubilee is regarded as the 50th year (Lev. 25:10), there are only 49 years from one Jubilee to the next."

> The 70 week prophecy of Daniel 9 provides the first of several major keys to help us understand that the Jubilee cycles are 49 year cycles, not 50 year cycles.[22]

I will address the 70-week prophecy of Daniel 9 later in this study. For now, suffice it to say believers Glenn Moore, Dean Thomas Coombs, Nora Roth, Marilyn Agee and Paul Sides interpret the instructions found in Leviticus 25 as intending a 49-year Jubilee cycle. Someone like me, on the other hand, sees the Scriptural instructions differently. The question, therefore, is not whether the 49-year interpretation can be constructed from biblical passages. It clearly can. The question is whether Scripture itself requires us to understand the 50th year as simultaneously representing the first year of the succeeding cycle.

Both sides need to agree that there is no text in Scripture stating that the 50th year must likewise be counted as the first year of the next Jubilee cycle. It should be noted that a couple of years prior to authoring the above comments, Glenn wasn't quite as certain of his claim that the 50th year is *also* the first year of the succeeding cycle. What follows is an excerpt from a commentary that Glenn posted in an online forum in August 2006:

> Now I have to admit it is strange that Yahweh leaves us "hanging" regarding that 50th year--I sure wish He had made it clearer. Evidently, in that year (which started the new cycle) they did not sow or reap just as in the Sabbatical years. That meant they apparantly only sow or reap for 5 years instead of 6 after the year of Jubilee. But when you "weigh all the evidence" it is not difficult to see that all of these cycles are endlessly repeating cycles of time. A 49 year cycle is something which can be defended with Scripture (as I have done). And it can be defended with history (although I haven't gone into that much, as of yet).[23]

For someone who currently believes that the teaching "**The 50th year is also the first year of the next cycle**" is *more* than just an "interpretation of Scripture," Glenn is certainly more sure of himself *now* than he was a couple of years earlier. At least in 2006, Moore acknowledged that the relationship between the Jubilee year and the beginning of the subsequent cycle was not explicit in the biblical text. In order to get a firm grasp of what Scripture actually *does* say, let's take a closer look at the text in question. How and why do these believers glean the understanding that the 50th year is also the first year of the ensuing cycle? I will address this question in my next chapter.

You may wonder why I've cited so many sources supportive of a 49-year Jubilee cycle. Primarily, it's because I want to examine each author's reasoning in order to see if they offered anything that would resonate with me, but I *also* want to demonstrate a significant common denominator: They all promoted a specific timeframe for dating Yeshua's return. I say "promoted" (past tense) because once their predictions failed, the proposed timetables were subsequently abandoned.

The issue before us, therefore, is not whether a 49-year Jubilee system can be mathematically constructed. It can. Nor is the issue whether some ancient and modern interpreters have understood the Jubilee in that manner. They have. The central question is whether the Biblical instructions themselves

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[22] *Discovering the Jewish Messiah Through the Prophecy of Daniel 9*, by W. Glenn Moore, 2008, pp. 9-10. Note: As of 2026, this book is no longer available for viewing on the internet.

[23] From a posting submitted by Glenn Moore, under the screen name "gmoore44," to an online forum located at www.eliyah.com. This forum was a special forum set up by the forum owner for the purpose of discussing the Lunar Sabbath doctrine, and it was called the "True Sabbath" forum until it was closed by the owner in 2008. The "forum thread" was called "**70 Week Prophecy Confirms Weekly Cycle**," and Glenn posted the above commentary on 08-20-2006.

require the fiftieth year to function simultaneously as the Jubilee year *and* as the first year of the following seven-year Sabbatical cycle. If such an overlap is not explicitly stated, what evidence requires us to infer it?

Only Five Years of Reaping and Sowing Between the Jubilee and the Next Sabbatical Year?

We read in chapter one that those who teach the Jubilee cycle only consists of 49 years do so because they believe year 50 is *also* year 1 of the succeeding cycle. Although this understanding is nowhere presented in Scripture, this problematic component of the 49-year cycle is often greatly downplayed by the "Year 50 = Year 1" proponents. We need to review the Jubilee cycle instructions to confirm this truth. Leviticus chapter 25 is the only place in Scripture we can turn to in order to find those instructions. This same chapter offers the explanation for determining the Sabbatical years, often referred to as the *land Sabbaths*. These years are crucial to our study because in order to understand the determination of the *Jubilee year*, we must first understand the reckoning of the *Sabbatical years*. Although I cited the Leviticus 25:1-12 in my previous chapter, I would like to review those verses again so as to reinforce the instructions and the timing:

> [1]And Yahweh spake unto Moses in mount Sinai, saying,
> [2]Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto Yahweh.
> [3]<u>Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof</u>;
> [4]<u>But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for Yahweh: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard</u>.
> [5]That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: for it is a year of rest unto the land.
> [6]And the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee.
> [7]And for thy cattle, and for the beast that are in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be meat.

According to the above instructions, upon entering the Promised Land, the Israelites were to sow and reap for six years, then allow the land to rest during the seventh year.[24] Notice that no exceptions to this rule are specified; six years of sowing and reaping *must* precede each Sabbatical year. As we are about to see, this is a critical factor in making the determination as to whether the Jubilee cycle should consist of 49 or 50 years. In the verses that follow, we are given the instructions pertaining to the reckoning of the Jubilee year:

> [8]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.

[24] According to *The Apocryphon Of Joshua* (4Q379, aka 4QApocryphon of Joshua), fragment 12, the Israelites entered into the Promised Land during a Jubilee year; if this is accurate, the command to "sow and reap" referred to the following year.

> [9]Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee 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.
> [10]And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.
> [11]A jubilee 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.
> [12]For it is the jubilee; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field.

As I explained earlier, I am aware of two interpretations of the above passage, but from my perspective, the wording is very clear, removing the need for interpretation. Notwithstanding, here is how I understand the intent of the Author: A Sabbatical cycle is seven years long, six of which are spent sowing and reaping, and during the final year the land is to lay fallow. We are to count seven of these cycles (7 x 7), which comprise a total of 49 years. During the seventh month of the 49th year, the trumpet is sounded to announce the approaching 50th year—the year of Jubilee. Once that 50th year has ended, the Sabbatical/Jubilee cycle is reset. That is my understanding of how Yahweh intends the Jubilees to be determined. Notice that the instructions are the same for the 50th year as they are for the seventh year concerning sowing and reaping. The bottom line is, if the ancients did not start sowing their fields until the 51st year, then the 50th year could not have been the first year of the next seven year cycle of sowing and reaping. Thus, even though there is a cycle of "7x7" involved in the Jubilee cycle, it is actually a 50-year cycle, not a 49-year cycle, because the following year after the "7x7" cycle ends is the Jubilee Year.

The opposing view, as we have seen, maintains the Jubilee cycle is only 49 years in length, and that year one of the next Sabbatical cycle coincides with *year 50* of the preceding cycle.[25] Where do they glean this understanding? Certainly not from the text itself, because the text explicitly identifies the Jubilee as the fiftieth year and omits any hint that the years of sowing and reaping are reduced during the first Sabbatical cycle. Despite the clear wording of the Scriptural instructions, the "Year 50 = Year 1" proponents teach that the fiftieth year is *also* to be counted as the first year of the succeeding Sabbatical cycle. From the "Year 50 = Year 50" proponents' perspective, Yahweh instructed the children of Israel to follow a certain pattern every seven years; after following that pattern seven times (i.e., for 49 years), the following year is a special year: it's year #50. Once year #50 is over, we repeat the cycle, and that is what makes it a perpetual 50-year cycle, our opponents' view notwithstanding. The fact that Leviticus 25 makes no mention that *year one* of the succeeding Jubilee cycle must coincide with *year 50* of the previous cycle poses a problematic conundrum for which the proponents of this belief have offered no reasonable answers, at least none that I have ever read. Nevertheless, as we can observe from the calendar reproduced in chapter 1, the proponent of that calendar believes year 50 and year one *must* coincide.

I cannot emphasize enough the fact that the "Year 50 = Year 1" method effectively disrupts the "six years of sowing and reaping" mandated for each of the seven sabbatical cycles. One of the easiest ways to disprove the 49-year cycles is to recognize the "exceptions" that 49-Year proponents ignore: First, with a

[25] Cf., Moore, W. Glenn, *The Jubilee Code*, ch. 6, 2008, p. 68, where he writes, "If the Jubilee cycle is a 49 year cycle, and the 50th year is also year 1 of the next cycle, then all is well—the Sabbatical year counts will continue to be correct whether one observes the Jubilee year or not."

49-year cycle, you are *required* to participate in an exception, starting with the first Sabbatical count after the Jubilee Year. That exception is a required five years of sowing and reaping instead of the mandated six years (Lev. 25:3-4).

The other exception is that "Year 50 = Year 1" proponents impose a rule making two years = one year, (i.e., "Year 50 = Year 1"). This rule is concerning because, reasonably-speaking, years 49 and 50 should be understood as being two distinct calendar years. Heavyweights as Philo of Alexandria and Flavius Josephus did not mention any such anomaly, but they both understood a *consistent* six years of sowing and reaping prior to each Sabbatical Year. I will address Philo and Josephus's understanding of the Jubilee cycle later in this study.

Maintaining that "Year 50" stands independently as its own distinct year *before* the next 49-year Sabbatical count resets with a brand-new Year 1 is the *only* way to preserve both the mathematical integrity of the timeline *and* the literal requirements of the text. Merging them forces a 49-year label onto a 50-year reality.

The Law of Identity Versus the Law of Non-Contradiction

There's another reason treating "Year 50" and "Year 1" as identical years occurring within the same block of time is unreasonable. In formal logic, the *Law of Identity* states that a thing is identical to itself (A = A). Conversely, the *Law of Non-Contradiction* states that contradictory statements cannot both be true at the same time (A ≠ not -A). Therefore, "Year 50" of one cycle cannot equal "Year 1" of another cycle. Please understand that if Yahweh were to specify such a contradictory "cycle law," I would understand and gladly follow such an explicit specification. Without such clarification of Yahweh's desire in the Scriptural narrative, the 49-year cycle advocates' decision to equate "Year 50" with "Year 1" comes across as a drive to produce and compute a seamless, perpetual cycle of sevens.

Displayed below is an enlarged view of "week #1" of the first Sabbatical week following the Jubilee year, lifted from that anonymous Seventh-Day Adventist's calendar I displayed in chapter one. If Yahweh truly intends for there to be six years of sowing and reaping during each of the seven Sabbatical cycles, this man's calendar vividly illustrates the conflict he, along with his fellow "Year 50 = Year 1" constituents, face when reckoning the Jubilee year:

How many years of sowing are permitted within this Sabbatical cycle? How many are commanded (Lev. 25:3)?

As I mentioned previously, I have heard attempts at explaining the above conundrum, but none of them have been satisfactory. A common explanation is that the above scenario is an "exception," just as the Day of Atonement presents an "exception" to the "work six days, rest on the seventh" command. The Day of Atonement is commanded to be observed on the 10th day of the seventh Scriptural month. Since the 10th day of the month may fall on any day of the week, during that particular week there will be *two* days of rest, not one (unless the Day of Atonement happens to fall on the day of the weekly Sabbath, as it did in 2008, 2018 and 2025). Thus, although Yahweh commands His people to work six days, then rest on the seventh day, the week during which the Day of Atonement falls presents a necessary, specified excep-

tion to the "work six days, rest the seventh" command. This "necessary exception" explanation has been offered by "Year 50 = Year 1" proponents, including Chuck Baldwin, who contributed the following commentary to an online forum in August 2006:

> There are 2 possibilities regarding not sowing or reaping during the Jubilee year. The first is simply that it is an exception to the rule of sowing for 6 years. You are aware that the last day of U/B, the Day of Atonement, and "your" Pentecost (50% of the time) are exceptions to the 6-day work week. Therefore, since we already have "approved examples" of exceptions to the "rule of 6", there's no reason that the 1st year of the 1st "week" of the Jubilee cycle can't be an exception to the normal sowing & reaping.
> The other possibility is that the Jubilee/50th year actually starts in the middle of the 49th year. Note that the trumpet announcing the Jubilee is blown on the Day of Atonement and not during the spring festivals. Since this year is a Sabbath year, no sowing or reaping is done from this fall to the fall of the next (50th/1st) year. In the fall of the 50th/1st year, the normal seedtime planting could resume, since the "Jubilee year" (fall-to-fall) would be over.[26]

Chuck's explanations, though insightful, do not hold up under scrutiny. Since Yahweh specifically commands that the Day of Atonement be observed on the 10th day of the seventh month, this makes that particular week a *specified exception* to the "work six days, rest the seventh" rule. Is the "reap and sow five years in the first Sabbatical cycle" rule specified in Scripture? Absolutely not. We're expected to assume an *unspecified* exception. For the Jubilee cycle, Yahweh offers nothing that would so much as *hint* of a specified exception requiring that one sabbatical cycle must consist of *five* years of sowing and reaping. Such an "exception" is only an "exception" by *interpretation* of those who support the 49-year cycles. The response I've given here also applies to the day of Pentecost. Since the "morrow after the seventh Sabbath" is a commanded day of rest from servile work (Lev. 23:15-21), this day is another *specified exception*—unless, of course, it happens to fall on the day of the weekly Sabbath.

With regard to Chuck's proposed second possibility, that explanation also falls short. According to the text of Leviticus 25:8-9, the trumpet of the Jubilee is to be sounded on the tenth day of the *seventh month* of the 49th year. I regard this as an announcement of the upcoming Year of Jubilee, not a pronouncement that the 50th year has already begun in the middle of the 49th year. Notice that the trumpet was sounded in the *seventh month*, not the *first month of the 50th year*. A year is a year in the eyes of Yahweh, so a new Scriptural year doesn't begin until the following spring (Ex. 12:1-2). The year that begins in the spring is the 50th year and that 50th year doesn't conclude until the following spring. Thus, we see that the only explanations offered for "five years of sowing and reaping" during the first Sabbatical cycle after a Jubilee Year consist of *unspecified, unmentioned exceptions contrasted with Scripturally-specified exceptions*.

So to be clear, the Day of Atonement is explicitly reserved for the tenth day of the seventh month. If it falls during a normal workweek, that contingency, of necessity, creates an additional Sabbath/rest day for that particular week. This exception is *specified* and sanctioned by Scripture. A special five-year agricultural period isn't stated anywhere. The 49-year cycle interpretation requires us to *infer* that Year 50

[26] From a posting submitted by Chuck Baldwin, under the screen name "chuckbaldwin," to an online forum located at www.eliyah.com. This forum was a special forum set up by the forum owner for the purpose of discussing the Lunar Sabbath doctrine, and it was called the "True Sabbath" forum until it was closed by the owner in 2008. The "forum thread" was called "**70 Week Prophecy Confirms Weekly Cycle**," and Chuck posted the above commentary on 08-16-2006 at 05:47 PM. In a subsequent posting by Glenn Moore (on 08/20/2006), he expressed agreement with Chuck's explanation.

is simultaneously Year 1, and therefore creates an *interpretation* that the first Sabbatical cycle after Jubilee must only allow for five agricultural years. However, I reinforce that fact that this instruction is not to be found in Leviticus 25. Please notice the contrast between Yahweh's holy days, such as the Day of Atonement, and the "Year 50 = Year 1" interpretation: The day on which the Day of Atonement is to be observed is *specified*, a specified *exception*. Sowing and reaping for five years during one of the cycles is *not* specified by or within Scripture. The Jubilee is an explicitly commanded *exception* to the ordinary Sabbatical sequence, but Scripture never says this exception reduces the next agricultural cycle from six years of sowing and reaping to five.

Those who teach that Scripture also presents "five years of sowing and reaping" as an exception are simply reading something into the text that is not there—making up their own *unspecified* and—let's face it—*unscriptural* exception.

I recently stumbled across an additional explanation designed to prove that the Jubilee cycle only consists of 49 years. In a 2008 issue of the magazine *Bible and Spade*, Rodger C. Young presents a potential dilemma with two consecutive years of not working the land. He writes:

> There are also practical considerations that she that the Jubilee cycle was 49 years instead of 50. If the Jubilee was a separate year following the seventh Sabbatical year, then there would be two successive years of voluntary refraining from sowing and reaping, and there is no indication of such anywhere in Scripture. All these considerations establish that the Jubilee cycle was 49 years, and the Jubilee year was identical to the seventh Sabbatical year.[27]

Young correctly observes that Leviticus 25:20–22 specifically addresses the *Sabbatical* year and does not explicitly extend its promise to sustain the children of Israel for two consecutive years of land rest. However, the absence of an additional promise does not establish that two consecutive years of land rest were impossible. The passage demonstrates that Yahweh anticipated Israel's concern about food during a year in which they could not sow and promised sufficient provision. If the Jubilee year followed immediately after the Sabbatical year, the resulting two-year land rest would *likewise* have depended upon Yahweh's provision. Young's commentary implies a concern of starvation, as in how can the Israelites hold out for two consecutive years of the land laying fallow, then go yet another year waiting for that year's crop to mature? Keep in mind that Yahweh, in Leviticus 25:20-22, instructed Moses to tell the children of Israel to not worry about what they would eat during the seventh year of the *Sabbatical* cycle because He would bless them during the sixth year with a crop sufficient for three years. The three years would be inclusive of the sixth year, the seventh year and the following year during which they had to wait for their new crops to come to maturity. But, as Rodger Young points out, Yahweh said nothing about what He would do as the approaching "double Sabbatical" year loomed.

In response to such a concern as that presented by Mr. Young, I have two rebuttals. First, as I just mentioned, the absence of a second explicit promise does not demonstrate that the two-year land rest could not occur. Yahweh's demonstrated ability to provide abundantly for Israel during the *Sabbatical* year timeframe means we should not assume that two consecutive years of land rest were beyond His ability to sustain Israel. Please bear in mind that the very first Jubilee cycle—*of necessity*—had a 49th year <u>and</u> a 50th year. In that initial cycle, the Israelites had no choice but to set aside two consecutive years of land rest, then weather through a third year waiting for the newly-sown crop to mature. They clearly

[27] *Bible and Spade magazine*, "Evidence for Inerrancy from a Second Unexpected Source: The Jubilee and Sabbatical Cycles," by Rodger C. Young, *Bible and Spade 21.4* (2008), p. 113.

survived that formidable ordeal; otherwise, we certainly would have read of the calamitous consequences of letting the land lay fallow for two successive years. Thus, regardless of whether or not the *ensuing* Jubilee cycles consisted of 49 years, the children of Israel survived that first-ever Jubilee cycle. So why would we assume they couldn't have done the same in future years?

Second, are we expected to believe that the same Mighty One who plainly saw to it the Israelites had the means of making it through each of the first six Sabbatical years *wasn't* able to help them when the semicentennial double Sabbatical years came along? *Do we thus so limit Him?* Are we allowing a perceived agricultural difficulty to determine the interpretation of a biblical command, when the text itself repeatedly emphasizes Yahweh's ability to provide for Israel? Instead of expressing concerns with Young's "practical considerations," shouldn't we be thinking, "*Yahweh will provide*"?

If it is true, as I believe it is, that year 50 and year one of the next Jubilee cycle do *not* coincide, there will *always* be six years of sowing and reaping, as illustrated below:

43 1	44 2	45 3	46 4	47 5	48 6	**49** **7** **(land rests)**	**50** **Jubilee** **(land rests)**
1 1	2 2	3 3	4 4	5 5	6 6	**7** **7** **(land rests)**	
8 1	9 2	10 3	11 4	12 5	13 6	**14** **7** **(land rests)**	

In Glenn's rebuttal to our original study, he reinforced his view that there *must* be five years of sowing and reaping at the beginning of each new Jubilee cycle, emphasizing that this is an "exception to the rule." This time, however, he went a little further, remarking that the Jubilee year is not actually referenced in Scripture as being an interruption of the Sabbatical cycles.

> COMMENT: The Jubilee year and the five years of sowing and reaping are all exceptions to the rule, just as I have determined from my examination of Leviticus 25:22 that the eighth year is also an exception. And the Jubilee year is not actually stated to be an interruption of the Sabbatical cycles, so again, we have to look more closely at this issue to determine the final answer.[28]

Glenn does not distinguish between "exceptions" and "specified exceptions." A special Sabbath on the tenth day of the seventh month is a *specified exception* to the "work six days, rest the seventh" pattern. Five years of sowing and reaping are not only *unspecified exceptions*, but if they do not reflect the Almighty's intent, they must be classified as *forced exceptions*. Although Scripture never specifies that the first Sabbatical cycle within the Jubilee cycle will only have five years of sowing and reaping, this is the "Jubilee pattern" those of the 49-year Jubilee cycle expect us to accept as truth.

[28] "In response to *The Jubilee Cycle*," by W. Glenn Moore, PDF file dated 12/20/2008, p. 12.

Moreover, the Jubilee year must be regarded as an interruption of the Sabbatical cycles because that's simply the way it was for the very first Jubilee. There were 49 years followed by a 50th year—a double land Sabbath. If one chooses to then dub that 50th year as *also* constituting "year 1" of the next Jubilee cycle, he does it without the sanction of Yahweh's Word—it can only be by an *interpretation*, an interpretation that, if not sanctioned by the Almighty, is a *misinterpretation*.

If you begin a cycle, and then that cycle comes to an end, you subsequently start all over. Frankly, this is common knowledge. The nature of Yahweh's creation establishes the importance of cycles that repeat over and over without interruption, such as day and night, the lunar cycle, the year, etc. These are events that Yahweh put in motion for our understanding of how cycles work. Of course, the best illustration of how this works apart from astronomical events is with the weekly cycle. Once "Day 7" is over, "Day 1" of the next weekly cycle begins. With the Sabbatical cycle, it starts with "Year 1," then ends with "Year 7." Once "year seven" is over, the cycle begins again. However, the Sabbatical cycle is itself embedded within *another* cycle—the Jubilee cycle—making it a "cycle within a cycle." The Sabbatical cycle doesn't determine the Jubilee cycle; rather, they are encompassed within a larger *Jubilee* cycle. If a Jubilee cycle consists of 50 years, then once that 50th year has been completed, "Year 1" of the next Jubilee cycle begins. It's "Year 1" of both a seven-year cycle and a larger 50-year cycle.

If we thus understand the nature of cycles as put in motion by our Heavenly Father, we can agree that "Year 1" of the Jubilee cycle coincides with "Year 1" of the first Sabbatical cycle. With the method proposed by Glenn Moore, "Year 1" of the next Jubilee cycle begins before the previous Jubilee cycle has ended, which allows the year following the Sabbatical year (year 50) to coincide with "Year 1" of the next Sabbatical cycle, thus preventing interruptions to the Sabbatical cycle. Glenn justifies this understanding with the words "the Jubilee year is not actually stated to be an interruption of the Sabbatical cycles." But year 50 falls outside the seven-year sequence established by the preceding 49 years. The question, therefore, is whether or not Scripture authorizes us to restart the seven-year count within that same fiftieth year. Simply put, we need a statement from Scripture stating that year 50 must *also* be counted as year one. It's not there.

Does Scripture establish that Year 50 simultaneously belongs to the preceding Jubilee cycle as Year 50 and to the succeeding Sabbatical cycle as Year 1?

If it does, the five-year consequence follows naturally.

An argument I've heard in opposition to the belief that the Jubilee cycle must interrupt the Sabbatical cycles is that this pattern provides a stark contrast between 50-year cycles and the weekly cycle. I have heard such remarks as, "Your proposal cannot be correct because 'year 50' disrupts the 'cycle of sevens'!" Only when "year 50" and "year one" coincide is there a seamless transition from one Jubilee cycle to the next (i.e., no need to have "year 50" jutting out from the sabbatical cycle as it does with my previously-displayed calendar illustration). "Year 50 = Year 1" proponents assert that the seamless transition from one Jubilee cycle to the next one without disrupting the sequence of the Sabbatical cycle more closely mirrors the seamless pattern of the weekly Sabbath, which, as they claim, adds greater weight to their position. How do I answer this claim?

First of all, at the risk of repeating myself, in view of the fact that Scripture offers no indication that "year 50" and "year one" are to ever coincide with each other, this only leaves room for the understanding that they do *not* coincide, which in turn leaves room for the understanding that the Jubilee year must fall *outside* of the sabbatical cycle. Secondly, for those who insist that there *must* be a seamless transition

from one Jubilee cycle to the next (without disrupting the Sabbatical cycle in the process), I can only ask, "***Why?***" If Yahweh specifies it, but we don't understand *why* He specifies it, does that mean we modify the command to suit our earnest, but wishful thinking?

The Purpose Behind Observing the Jubilee Cycle

When questions of "why" Yahweh instructs us to do anything arise, we humans are left to speculate because we do not have the ability to read His mind. But we ought to be able to rationalize that Yahweh has a purpose that goes beyond our human comprehension. And we can be assured that Yahweh has a *righteous* and even beneficial purpose behind every command. But unless we are told *why* He wants us to act or believe a certain way, we are left to speculate. When it comes to the Jubilee cycle, for all we know, each cycle represents the entire generation of mankind on this earth, with the final Jubilee "year" being representative of eternity. Eternity certainly falls *outside* of what we understand as "time." If my premise is correct that the 50th year is representative of *eternity*, this means we can only observe that Jubilee year here on earth during what is known as "the time side of eternity." As such, once that year ends, we begin a new count to the next Jubilee—a new countdown representative of the dawn of man moving towards the goal of eternal life. With each completed "countdown," the cycle resets itself, so there is certainly no need for a seamless transition requiring "year 50" and "year one" to coincide with each other.

I might add that Glenn has actually expressed agreement with my view that the Jubilee year is representative of eternity. During one of our discussions on this topic, June asked Glenn, "Why did Yahweh specify the 50th year?"

To my surprise, Glenn answered, "Because He's using the 50th year to represent eternity."

I was so surprised to hear this response that I grabbed the first piece of paper I could find and immediately transcribed both the question and Glenn's answer, along with the date on which he said it.[29] The reason I wasn't expecting his response is because I don't believe it makes sense to regard the Jubilee Year as representing eternity if that symbol of "eternity" is actually a part of an ongoing, continuously-repeating process that will eventually bring us to *another* "eternity." In Glenn's case, he believes that the Jubilee Year is not only the representation of eternity, but to him it is also the beginning of another cycle that will bring him to "eternity" again … and again …. and again … a continuously-repeating process. Glenn is left with no choice but to regard the Jubilee Year as being a part of an ongoing, continuously-repeating process, symbolically combining our time-bound restriction with that of eternity. Glenn's 50th year also represents the 1st year of *another* cycle that will eventually bring him to the <u>next</u> "Year 50." This method *does* go along with Glenn's website slogan, "It's about that time." From my perspective, the Jubilee year is about *eternity*.

Many believers would agree that "eternity" falls *outside* the continuously-repeating cycle of time, so if we can agree on this understanding of the purpose behind the Jubilee cycle, then it makes more sense to believe that when the Jubilee Year arrives, the previous cycle (the Sabbatical cycle) is now in the past and a new "era" has begun—the era of eternity. The Jubilee Year is *outside* the boundaries of an otherwise continuously-repeating cycle, *not part of it*! This parallel fits the Scriptural model much more securely than the one proposed by Glenn, who wants to incorporate the Jubilee Year (timeless eternity) with the next cycle (time). For Glenn, there are no actual interruptions, and in fact, his "eternity" *coincides* with "time," since year 50 is *also* year one of the next cycle. Not only is such an understanding missing from

[29] The actual date was September 6, 2008.

Scripture, but it just doesn't fit the pattern. In Glenn's paradigm, time never ends. In the one I hold onto, time ends, and eternity follows for those who have been faithful to the end.

Glenn Moore addresses the above commentary as an "objection" in his website's "Answers to Objections" section. Rather than addressing his response here, I have chosen to incorporate it into Part II of this study, "Objections to Glenn's Answers to Objections."

Although I believe I have sufficiently addressed the "exception to the rule" argument presented by those who promote a 49-year Jubilee cycle, I realize I haven't offered the original explanation that Glenn Moore gave us, which is found in an excerpt from his book *The Jubilee Code*. This particular explanation, in my opinion, needs to be presented here because it incorporates *additional* concerns upon which we should focus some of our attention:

> In the case of the repeating pattern of "sow six years . . . rest one year" the five years following the Jubilee year would simply be the "exception to the rule." Actually, this was the same argument given by Rabbi R. Jehudah.[30] We know, for instance, that there is a rule that says "work six days" then "rest" on the seventh day—and it is in regard to the weekly cycle. However, this rule does not apply in situations which require the keeping of special feast days, which also contain "high-day" Sabbaths. These special Sabbaths interrupt the regular rule of "work six days. . . rest the seventh." Some may argue that these "exceptions" (like the feasts) are specifically identified in Scripture, but the year of Jubilee is (supposedly) not specifically identified as an "exception." However, I have to disagree: the year of Jubilee is specifically identified as an "exception" by its very mention in the text of Scripture, just as the other special Sabbaths are commanded to be kept on certain days of the Jewish calendar. And the fact that the cycles of 7 years is listed as repeating (whereas the 50th year is not listed as repeating) strongly implies that the main focus is on the cycles of seven (since a repeating cycle of 50 years is not mentioned in the text).[31]

I find the above "exception to the rule" explanation to be very confusing. First, Glenn explains that Rabbi R. Jehudah agreed with his argument that, following the year of Jubilee, there are only five years of sowing and reaping, not six. Of course, we all know that agreement with an ancient Jewish rabbi does not necessarily validate anyone's conclusion, especially when we learn that the majority of Jewish rabbis of his day *disagreed* with R. Jehudah. Elsewhere in his study, Glenn tells us where he read about Rabbi R. Jehudah's argument:

> One Rabbi, however, argued that the cycles were 49 years in length. In the Talmud, *Nedarim*, fol. 61a, and other related passages, R. Jehudah argues for a 49 year cycle without giving any specific reasons: "The year of Jubilee is included in the subsequent Sabbatical cycle" and in another statement "The fiftieth year counts in a twofold way."[32]

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[30] *A Treatise on the Sabbatical Cycle and the Jubilee*, p. 12, Benedict Zuckermann, Hermon Press, NY., 1866 (Reprinted in 1974). Note: I made reference to Rabbi R. Jehuda in chapter 1 with an emphasis that the *majority* rabbinical opinion separates the 50th year from the 1st year of the succeeding cycle, an historical fact that is frequently omitted within biased commentaries.
[31] Cf., Moore, W. Glenn, *The Jubilee Code*, 2008, p. 62.
[32] Ibid, p. 74.

As I alluded to above, R. Jehudah's view was *not* the view attributed to the Rabbis in the Talmudic discussion cited above.[33] Next, notice that Glenn, in the above commentary, conveys the impression that those of my persuasion may argue that the year of Jubilee is not identified as an "exception." Since I have already previously written that the year of Jubilee *is* identified and *specified* as an "exception," and since I have previously cited this as further evidence validating a 50-year cycle, I'm not sure I follow Glenn's line of reasoning, i.e., that I must somehow believe that it is *not* an exception.

The fact that the Jubilee year ***is*** an "exception" adds greater weight to the understanding that it cannot coincide with another year in the count! <u>If the "Year 50 = Year 1" understanding were to mirror the method we employ when reckoning the weekly Sabbath, "Day 7" would also be regarded as "Day 1" each week</u>. The application of such a system simply defies logic, both in normal reasoning and in approved Scriptural example. It begs the question, *"Why does Yahweh even refer to the Jubilee as 'the fiftieth year'? Why not just say the first year of the first Sabbatical cycle is <u>also</u> the Jubilee year?"*

As we have seen, in Glenn's attempt to explain how one would implement his version of the Jubilee cycle, he focuses on the "exception to the rule." According to Glenn, the five years of sowing and reaping following the Jubilee year (instead of the standard *six* years of sowing and reaping) would simply be the (*non*-specified) "exception to the rule." Of course, as noted above, we should find it strange and unsettling that Glenn's "exception to the rule" is nowhere addressed in Scripture. Certainly, if it is understood that there will always be a six-year interval between Sabbatical years, with the sole *exception* of how the land rest of the Jubilee year coincides with "year one" of the next cycle, shouldn't we expect to read something to that effect in Scripture? After all, if it were true that the fiftieth year coincides with the first year for each Jubilee cycle, shouldn't it be commonly known and taught that there is to be no sowing or reaping in the first year? If Yahweh's intent is for us to understand there will *always* be five years of sowing and reaping between the Jubilee Year and the following Sabbatical year, then shouldn't we expect to read such a stipulation or clarification? We really should expect to read *something* expounding on the "fact" that the first year of the Jubilee cycle is *also* a Jubilee year. However, it's just not there.

June, upon reviewing the above comments added an additional clarification to illustrate that Yahweh had to teach the Israelites how to observe *one* Sabbatical cycle before He could instruct them to observe *seven*:

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[33] In fact, some authors have expressed their disagreement with Rabbi R. Jehuda in no uncertain terms. Henry Browne, M.A., in his book *Ordo Sæclorum: A Treatise on the Chronology of the Holy Scriptures*, published by John W. Parker, London, 1844, p. 288, writes, "The numerical definition of the jubilee is plain: it is the 50th or 7 x 7 + 1st year, just as the day of Pentecost is the 7 x 7 + 1st day from the 2nd day of unleavened bread. The jubilean period, each and every period, contains just 50 years reckoned from a fixed epoch, the 10th day of the 7th month. It is surprising that any careful reader should have misunderstood these very plain expressions; yet such is the fact. It appears from the Talmud *Erichin*, fol. 12, 2. 13, 1. 32, 2. 33, 1. (cited by Ideler, 1. 503), that a certain rabbi Jehuda was the first to maintain, contrary to the established opinion and the plain sense of the words, that the jubilean period consists of 49 years, the jubilee-year being (as he said) itself the 49th, and identical with the 7th sabbatical year. His opinion, Ideler informs us, was subsequently adopted by the Gaonim, certain learned Rabbins, who lived after the completion of the Talmud, and expounded it in the academies over which they presided. Maimonides, however, rejects this view as a novelty: 'The 49th year,' says he, 'is the sh'mittah (or sabbatical year), the 50th is the jubilee, the 51st is the 1st of the new sh'mittah.'" Another author, Ray Summers, in his book *Chronos Kairos Christos II*, Mercer University Press, 1998, p. 283, wrote, "Zuckermann's work (in chronological dating) has stood the test of time, but advances in Qumran studies and archaeological research call for revisions of some of his conclusions. His table identifying sabbatical years runs from 535/534 B.C. to A.D. 2238/2239. He comes down on the side of the view (that of Rabbi Jehudah) that the jubilee period consisted of forty-nine and not fifty years. (We need to call attention to the fact that not all Jewish groups in Jesus' day, nor all of the later rabbis, followed Zuckermann's view of a forty-nine year cycle for both sabbatical and *jubilee* observances; some preferred a cycle of fifty years.)"

> Yahweh had to explain how to observe one cycle before He could tell the Israelites to observe *seven* cycles. Otherwise it would be like teaching someone how to crochet by simply saying, "Make fifty stitches for the first row and then start the second row." You must first explain how to make a *single* stitch before telling someone that they are to make *fifty* stitches.

June is right. They were taught how to observe the Sabbatical cycle and the succeeding Jubilee year as a pattern to remember and follow. They were taught how to make six green stitches followed by a red stitch seven times, and then you add a special 50th stitch that's different from all the others. And then you do it again. A tailor wouldn't make fifty stitches, then count that fiftieth stitch as also being "stitch one," with all succeeding stitches amounting to 49 over and over. That would be absurd. In the same way, it is unreasonable to conclude that Yahweh taught the Israelites how to observe one Sabbatical cycle consisting of seven years, only for Him to later expect them to "just know" that the first Sabbatical cycle of each Jubilee Cycle must consist of only *five* years of sowing and reaping. The "Year 50 = Year 1" method produces *two* convoluted cycles—a reduced "sowing and reaping" cycle and a 49-year cycle that's inclusive of the Jubilee year.

The Testimony of Philo

In the writings of the ancients, such as Philo, a Jew who lived from approximately 20 BCE until 50 CE, we might reasonably expect to find a reference to the "five years of sowing and reaping" between the Jubilee Year and the upcoming Sabbatical year. However, Philo instead refers to "*after six years*" as though it's the recurring understanding that there are no exceptions. Philo's reference to "after six years" is difficult to reconcile with a system in which the interval immediately following every Jubilee contains only *five* years of agricultural activity. Notice what Philo wrote on this subject:

> XXI. These considerations the prophetic author of our laws had before his eyes when he proclaimed a rest for the land and made the husbandman stay his work after six years. But he gave this enactment not only on the grounds which I have mentioned but also moved by that habitual kindliness which he aims at infusing into every part of his legislation, thereby impressing on the readers of the sacred scriptures the stamp of good and neighborly customs. For he forbids them to close up any field during the seventh year. All olive-yards and vineyards are to be left wide open and so with the other kinds of property, whether of sown crops or orchard-trees, thus giving an unrestricted use of such fruits as are of natural growth to the poor quite as much, if not more so, than to the owners.[34]

Certainly, if Philo understood that there are occasionally only *five years of incessant industry* between the Jubilee Year and the subsequent Sabbatical year, he had ample opportunity to incorporate such a significant "exception" into his explanation pertaining to the Sabbatical year. However, he offered no such commentary. In fact, when making a reference to the Jubilee Year, Philo *never* mentions a period of 49 years, as the "Year 50 = Year 1" proponents do. Instead, he refers to numbering "seven times seven" and *then* adding the fiftieth year. It's not possible to *add* a fiftieth year with the "Year 50 = Year 1" model. Here's what Philo wrote:

[34] From *The Works of Philo*, "Special Laws, II," by Philo of Alexandria, ch. XXI, sec. 104-105.

> XXII. While laying down this first foundation of moderation and humanity, he built on it by adding years to the number of seven times seven and consecrated the whole of the fiftieth year. This he made the subject of many special enactments, all of remarkable excellence, apparat from those which are common to other seventh years.[35]

Again, Philo writes that years are *added* to the number of "seven times seven." Those who go with the 49-year cycles add ***nothing*** to the "seven times seven," so this statement from Philo is significant, yet glossed over by "Year 50 = Year 1" advocates. Philo goes on to elaborate on what those *added* years are: *the fiftieth year*. If the fiftieth year were *also* regarded as the 49th year, then it most certainly would not have been an "added" year. Moreover, if the fiftieth year were *also* regarded as the first year of the succeeding count, then there wouldn't have been anything special about it. It would have been a year of sowing and reaping. If I were of the 49-year cycles persuasion, I most definitely would *not* have written what Philo wrote in his *Special Laws, II*, chapter XXII, section 110. It would have been nonsensical for him to have mentioned adding years to the "seven times seven," all the while expecting his readers to believe nothing is added to the "seven times seven." If Philo had been of the 49-year cycle persuasion, he would have written something like, "While laying down this first foundation of moderation and humanity, he consecrated the whole of the forty-ninth year." But that's *not* what Philo wrote because he understood repeating ***50-year cycles***. While I do not deny that, even during Philo's day, there appears to have been some disagreement within Judaism with regard to the duration of the Jubilee cycle, Philo's testimony is significant because his writings provide evidence for how at least one influential Jewish interpreter of the Second Temple period understood these laws.[36]

Despite Philo's rhetoric that clearly intimates his inclination towards the "Year 50 ≠ Year 1" model, scholars seem unwilling to regard his commentary as definitive. Among them is author Robert North, who in 1954 brushed off Philo's point about adding years to the "seven times seven." Here's what he wrote:

> The two chief books in which Philo interprets the Levitical laws are the *Special Laws* and the *Virtues*. In these he is purely theoretical, and of no help in determining the actually existing practice in such matters as the jubilee. Nor is he interested even in the canonical and casuistic questions that occupy the Rabbis.[37]

"*Of no help*"? Does not "adding years to the seven times seven" mean adding the 50th year at the end of each cycle instead of overlaying it onto "Year 1" of the succeeding cycle? ***Adding years*** to the "seven times seven" can only mean that additional years, i.e. "Years 50" are added to the seven times seven total. As we know, seven times seven = 49. If we add one year, that's the 50th year.

Another highly-regarded Jewish author from the 1st century is Flavius Josephus. Josephus, who was born in the year 37 CE, likely never met Philo, who passed away 13 years later; nevertheless, Philo's fame within Judaism continued down into Josephus' adulthood. Josephus certainly held Philo in high esteem, describing him as "a man held in the highest honor."[38]

I will present Josephus's understand of how to reckon the Jubilee cycle in chapter five.

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[35] Ibid, ch. XXII, sec. 110.
[36] For details demonstrating how Philo's beliefs aligned with the practices and beliefs of normative Judaism, please read chapter 12 of our study *Facing the Pentecost Controversy*.
[37] Cf., *Analecta Biblica*, "Sociology of the Biblical Jubilee," by Robert North, S. J., Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome, IT, 1954, p. 74.
[38] Cf., *Josephus*, "Jewish Antiquities," Book 18, Ch. 8, § 1 / Section 259 (Greek/Loeb layout), by Flavius Josephus, Translated by Louis H. Feldman, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, p. 155, 1980.

3. Does the "Mur 24E" Document Prove Five Years of Sowing & Reaping Following a Jubilee Year?

In his document titled "An Excerpt from Chapter 10 of *Discovering the Jewish Messiah Within the Prophecy of Daniel 9*," Glenn Moore devotes over four pages to presenting why he believes an ancient rental contract validates his belief that Jubilee cycles consist of 49 years and, more specifically, his contention that the first Sabbatical cycle of a Jubilee cycle can only include *five* years of sowing and reaping. In order to better assist you with following Glenn's reasoning, I've decided to incorporate all four pages of this section into my study, along with my response:

> We have knowledge of a document which establishes another Sabbatical year at the time of the Bar Kochba revolt. A rental contract dated to the era of the Bar Kochba revolt (labeled as "Mur 24E"), shows that in the second year of the revolt five years of harvest would be collected before the next Sabbatical year. This contract was found among several contracts in the caves of Wadi Murabba' near Bethlehem. This property was seized by the Jews during the revolt, which began sometime between the Fall of 132 and the Spring of 133 CE and lasted about two and a half years. They are dated on Shevat 20, year two of the Kochba revolt (which is about the month of January or February of the year 134 CE). Here is a translation of part of that document [brackets indicating missing and/or ambiguous text]:
>
> [On the twentieth of Shev]at of the year tw[o] of the Redemption of [I]srael by Shimeon ben K[os]ba, the prince of [Is]rael. In the camp which is located in Herodium, [Ye]hudah ben Raba' said to Hillel ben Grys:
> 'I of my free will have [re]nted from you today the
> land which is my re[n]tal in' Ir
> Nabash which I hold as a tenant from Shimeon, the Prince of Israel,
> This land I have rented from you today
> Until the end of the eve of Shemitah,[39] which are years
> Full [f]iscal years, five, of tenancy
> [that I wi]ll deliver to you in [Her]jodium: wheat,
> [of good and pure quality.] th[ree kor]s and a lethekh,
> [of which a tenth part of the tithe] of these
> [you will deliver to the silo of the treasury.] And [I am obli]gated
> [in regard of this matter thusly]
> [Yehudah ben Raba', in person]
> [Shim on ben Kosba', by dictation.][40]
>
> [Larry's thought: So—couldn't he have rented the land in year 2, then the next five years brings him to the Shemitah?]
>
> This document clearly indicates five complete "fiscal" years of tenancy to be concluded at the end of the eve of the "Shemitah" (or the Sabbatical year). While some might interpret this to be exactly five years of exactly 12 months each, the term "fiscal years" tells us that at some fixed point in time these years would end. The text plainly says that it will last "until the end of the eve of Shemitah" (meaning, the end of the year before the Sabbatical year). While it is true that the religious year is from Spring to Spring, (and Bar Kochba himself re-introduced this way of counting the years[41]), for Sabbatical years and "civil" (or "fiscal") years, such years would extend

[39] "Shemita" is a Hebrew word meaning "release" that is used in reference to the Sabbatical Year.
[40] Note: This is Glenn's footnote: Translated in "The Calendar of Sabbatical Cycles During the Second temple and the Early Rabbinic Period," by Ben Zion Wacholder, 1973, Hebrew Union College Annual 44, p. 177.
[41] Note: This is Glenn's footnote: *Israel Exploration Journal*, Kanael B., "Notes on the Dates Used During the Bar Kokhba Revolt," 1971, pp. 39-46.

from Fall-to-Fall (Tishri-to-Tishri), as noted in *The Mishnah*.[42] Please note that even today this tradition has continued, as a "fiscal year" often ends in late summer or in the fall. The fact that payment is to be made every year in the form of wheat shows that there must be five harvest seasons—or five "fiscal years." If you do as Wachover suggests (and extend this to five years and six months) then what you will end up doing is collecting six years of harvest, instead of five years. As a result, the way you calculate this so as to collect only five years of harvest can be seen in the following chart:

Chronology of Kochba Revolt and the Rental Contract						
Bar Kochba Revolt Begins Officially in Spring 133 CE	Second Year of Revolt: Rental Contract Given Feb. 134 CE		Bar Kochba Revolt Ends About this Year			
Year of Jubilee (See Chart p. 105)	First Harvest at End of Same Year	Second Harvest	Third Harvest	Fourth Harvest	Fifth and Final Harvest	**This Year Declared Sabbatical Year**
Fall Spring	Fall Spring	Fall Spring	Fall Spring	Fall Spring	Fall Spring	Fall Spring
132/133	133/134	134/135	135/136	136/137	137/138	**138/139**

The year that they are still in (the second year of the revolt) has spring and summer yet to be completed. Presuming that the land is already (or is soon to be) under cultivation, that means there must be a harvest in that same year. The conclusion of that second year is the conclusion of year one of the harvest. Four more harvests will take place in years 3, 4, 5, and finally with the contract being completed at the end of year 6 of the revolt. Therefore, according to this document, the Sabbatical year would be year 7 after the revolt. Please note that the previous chart not only reveals for us a Sabbatical year, but also a year of Jubilee—based upon the statement of Bar Kochba that his revolt began in the "first year" of the "redemption."

According to Jerome's compilation of the *Chronican of Eusebius*, the Bar Kochba revolt began in the 16th year of Emperor Hadrian.[43] While dating the 16th year of Hadrian has its share of problems (because of the various methods used in different places) the most likely way this event was dated is by the Roman method of counting the years which begins in August. Using this method, the 16th year of Hadrian would have begun in August of 132. For certain that revolt was in full bloom by the spring of 133 CE. We know this because of a document from that period which identified the first year of the revolt. It says: "On the first of Iyyar, Year 1 of the redemption of Israel by Simeon Bar Kosiba, prince of Israel."[44] Iyyar is the month which corresponds to April/May. The phrase "Year 1 of the redemption" means for certain the first year of the revolt. But it is also a significant clue which *clearly indicates* another special year—a Jubilee Year. Based upon our previously cited reference to the phenomena of *Chronomessianism*, the dating of events from "Year 1 of the redemption" clearly places that year in a year of Jubilee. While the revolt of Bar Kochba did not officially begin until the Spring of 133 CE, unofficially it probably had already begun at some time late in the year 132 CE. Therefore, it started within the year 132/33 of the Fall-to-Fall Jewish civil calendar. As added confirmation, the revolt is often dated

[42] Note: This is Glenn's footnote: "The first day of Tishre is the New Year for the reckoning of years, for Sabbatical years, and for Jubilees. . ." *The Mishnah, A New Translation*. Edited by Jacob Neusner. Yale University Press: New Haven and London, 1988. ROSH HASHSHANAH 1.1, p. 299.

[43] Note: This is Glenn's footnote: *Die Chronik des Hieronymous. In Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten Jahrhunderte*, Eusebius VII, by Rudolf Helm, Akademie-Verlag, Berlin, 1984.

[44] Note: This is Glenn's footnote: *Israel Exploration Journal*, Kanael B., "Notes on the Dates Used During the Bar Kokhba Revolt," 1971, p. 41.

from 132-135 CE by modern dictionary/encyclopedia sources (lasting two and a half years).[45] The revolt began sometime between the Fall of 132 and the Spring of 133 CE, a year of Jubilee.

Jubilee Calendar

Blue Numbers Below = Count From Start of Seleucid Era

Cycle 85

Week	1st Day Year	2nd Day Year	3rd Day Year	4th Day Year	5th Day Year	6th Day Year	Sabbatical Year
1	4117 CD Bar Kochba Begins Revolt in Year of Jubilee (132/133 CE) Fall 444 SE Year 1 132 CE	4118 Rental Lease Begins 2nd Year of Revolt Fall 445 Year 2 133	4119 446 Fall 3 134	4120 447 Bar Kochba Killed - Revolt Ends (135 CE) Fall 4 135	4121 448 Fall 5 136	4122 449 Rental Lease Ends before Sabbatical Fall 6 137	4123 450 Rental Lease Declares this Year a Sabbatical Fall 7 138
2	4124 451 Fall 8 139	4125 452 Fall 9 140	4126 453 Fall 10 141	4127 454 Fall 11 142	4128 455 Fall 12 143	4129 456 Fall 13 144	4130 457 Fall 14 145
3	4131 458 Fall 15 146	4132 459 Fall 16 147	4133 460 Fall 17 148	4134 461 Fall 18 149	4135 462 Fall 19 150	4136 463 Fall 20 151	4137 464 Fall 21 152
4	4138 465 Fall 22 153	4139 466 Fall 23 154	4140 467 Fall 24 155	4141 468 Fall 25 156	4142 469 Fall 26 157	4143 470 Fall 27 158	4144 471 Fall 28 159
5	4145 472 Fall 29 160	4146 473 Fall 30 161	4147 474 Fall 31 162	4148 475 Fall 32 163	4149 476 Fall 33 164	4150 477 Fall 34 165	4151 478 Fall 35 166
6	4152 479 Fall 36 167	4153 480 Fall 37 168	4154 481 Fall 38 169	4155 482 Fall 39 170	4156 483 Fall 40 171	4157 484 Fall 41 172	4158 485 Fall 42 173
7	4159 486 Fall 43 174	4160 487 Fall 44 175	4161 488 Fall 45 176	4162 489 Fall 46 177	4163 490 Fall 47 178	4164 491 Fall 48 179	4165 492 Fall 49 180
	4166 85th Jubilee 181						

Top Numbers = Creation Date (CD) Black Numbers = Common Era (CE)
Red Numbers = Before Common Era (BCE)

Does the Bar Kochba revolt reveal to us both a Sabbatical and Jubilee year? Well, indirectly, *yes it does*. Bar Kochba was a messianic figure, and messianic figures were expected to come at exactly the right time. Many Jews believed Him to be the promised Messiah—although they later changed their minds. The fact that he came and began his revolt in the year 132/33 CE (which is, I believe, a Jubilee year) strongly supports this contention. The fact that a land rental contract begins in the second year of this revolt and ends at the end of 5 years (on the "eve of the shemita") also directs us to a Sabbatical year in the year 138/139 CE. Finally, Bar Kochba is dating future events based on the first year of the revolt and calling it the "year of redemption" and he shows great concern so as to identify *when* the next Sabbatical year is. This is another indication that his designation of the first year is a special count of years from "year one", since

[45] Note: This is Glenn's footnote: See *Wikipedia* article on Simon Bar Kokhba.

> he calls it the "year of redemption." This brings to mind the redemption that Israel was supposed to receive every 50th year in the year of Jubilee. Based upon all of this, the year 132/133 would most certainly have to be a Jubilee year.[46]

The above commentary/proposal is untenable for several reasons. I will here address the more glaring concerns:

1. How can anyone know with certainty that the starting point of this contract is the year following a Jubilee year? The answer is, we cannot. Glenn *presumes* the year before the rental contract began was a Jubilee year, even though the contract itself says no such thing, and even though there is no surviving record from anyone who lived during that time period that a Jubilee year had just passed.[47] Here, again, are the pertinent words from the rental contract:

> This land I have rented from you today
> Until the end of the eve of Shemitah, which are years
> Full fiscal years, five, of tenancy;

Notice that the author of the above words tells us how long it was from the time the contract was written until the "eve of Shemitah." Thus, we know the ending point was the year before a Sabbatical Year; but where are we told that the year before the *starting point* was a Jubilee Year? We are told no such thing. Thus, it is entirely possible that the rental contract was written two years following a Jubilee year, or even two years following a Sabbatical Year. There is no reason from this document to assume that the land had to be rented until the next Jubilee. However, land could certainly be rented for a shorter period, even including a starting point that fell within any of the six years of a Sabbatical cycle. The question Glenn needs to answer is, "How do you know that this first year of the rental contract fell immediately after a Jubilee year?" Where in the above text does it say any such thing? There was no law mandating that a rental contract must begin during a year that follows either a Sabbatical year or a Jubilee year. If the contract contained a statement to the effect of "this year following the Jubilee," then Glenn might have a point—assuming the Jews were properly observing the Jubilee cycle at that time. This brings us to point #2, in which Glenn admits that there isn't even any evidence that the Jews were keeping Jubilee years:

2. Glenn wrote, "The phrase 'Year 1 of the redemption' means for certain the first year of the revolt. But it is also a significant clue which *clearly indicates* another special year—a Jubilee Year." Glenn's proposal presupposes that Jews were observing Jubilee years, even though Glenn is already on record as agreeing that there is no "direct historical confirmation of the keeping of Jubilee years." In his rebuttal titled "In response to *The Jubilee Cycle*," Glenn wrote the following:

> Yes, Larry, there is no direct historical confirmation of the keeping of Jubilee years. However, there is plenty of direct historical confirmation of the keeping of Sabbatical years. And since that historical record supports continuous cycles of seven years length over a period of about 500 years—that is definitely evidence of repeating cycles of seven!! This leads us to the conclusion that the Jubilees (if they were kept at all by anyone) would have

[46] From "An Excerpt from Chapter 10 of *Discovering the Jewish Messiah Within the Prophecy of Daniel 9*," May 2008, pp. 5-9. This excerpt was accessed at Glenn's now-defunct "It's About That Time" website.

[47] In *Ancient World Chronology*, by Qadesh La Yahweh Press, the anonymous author details the ancient history surrounding the Bar Kohka revolt, even to the point of mentioning Mur 24E, yet nothing is so much as inferred that it references a Jubilee cycle. This absence of any reference to a Jubilee cycle provides no independent confirmation that Judaism was observing Jubilee years at that time. I'm not aware of any other source referencing an understanding that Mur 24E proves or even hints at the timing of the Jubilee cycle.

> had to have been subordinate to the 7 year cycles (i.e., the first year of the next Jubilee cycle)—if they were kept, which we have no conclusive evidence to show that they were kept (in the Second Temple era, of course).[48]

Since Glenn understands there is no direct historical confirmation of anyone ever observing Jubilee years, how can he be so certain that "Year 1 of the redemption" clearly indicates a Jubilee Year? Answer: His conclusion goes beyond what his own admission about the historical evidence would seem to warrant. The 'redemption' language can naturally be understood in the context of the Jewish hope of deliverance from foreign oppression, not deliverance as per a Jubilee year liberation.

3. It is fairly obvious that Glenn identifies "redemption" with "Jubilee," but the question is whether or not his remarks to this effect can be substantiated. Unless he or anyone can produce evidence substantiating his claim, the answer to the question is, "No." Regardless of any similarities between the two terms, "redemption" and "Jubilee" are not the same thing. If Jewish thought explicitly identified the Jubilee Year with the "redemption" being proclaimed during the Bar Kokhba revolt, we might reasonably expect to find some historical or literary evidence making that connection. However, I'm aware of no such historical references, leaving us with only Glenn's interpretation of the events.

Glenn wrote, "Please note that the previous chart not only reveals for us a Sabbatical year, but also a year of Jubilee—based upon the statement of Bar Kochba that his revolt began in the 'first year' of the 'redemption.'" Again, with nothing but his own motivation to identify "redemption" with "Jubilee," Glenn's assessment above therefore remains an interpretive conclusion for which his cited evidence does not provide sufficient support.

4. Glenn is persuaded that the appearance of a "messianic figure," in the person of Bar Kochba, in and of itself, indirectly reveals a Jubilee Year. He wrote, "Does the Bar Kochba revolt reveal to us both a Sabbatical and Jubilee year? Well, indirectly, *yes it does*. Bar Kochba was a messianic figure, and messianic figures were expected to come at exactly the right time." Glenn's argument, therefore, raises an important question: if the appearance of a messianic figure is evidence that a particular year was a Jubilee year, how should we account for his own Jubilee chronology, which places Yeshua's lifetime *outside* a Jubilee year?" Even if Bar Kokhba was regarded by some of his contemporaries as a messianic figure, this does not establish an understanding that his revolt began during a Jubilee year. The existence of messianic expectations surrounding Bar Kokhba therefore cannot, by itself, establish the Jubilee status of 132/133 CE. If a messianic figure is supposed to appear during a Jubilee year, and this makes Bar Kochba an ideal candidate, then why didn't Yeshua the Messiah live to see a Jubilee year (at least not with Glenn's system)? That's right, if you examine Glenn's Jubilee calendar, you will notice that he attributes a Jubilee Year to the year 15 BCE (*before the birth of Yeshua*) and the next Jubilee Year came in the year 34 CE (*after Yeshua's resurrection*).

Suffice it to say, the document labeled Mur 24E provides no evidence establishing the length of the Jubilee cycle. Mur 24E documents a five-year tenancy terminating at the eve of a Sabbatical year. Nothing in the document itself identifies that five-year period as the interval between a Jubilee Year and the following Sabbatical year. That additional connection must be supplied by an external chronological *interpretation*.

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[48] From "In response to *The Jubilee Cycle*," by W. Glenn Moore, December 2008, page 17. At one time, Glenn posted this rebuttal on his website, but he removed it in the spring of 2009. For reference purposes, I have decided to post his original study on our web site. It may be read in its entirety here.

4. Should we Compare the Jubilee Cycle to the Count to Pentecost?

Should we compare the Jubilee cycle to the count to Pentecost? Glenn Moore insists there is indeed an association between these two counts. In fact, he terms it "a direct parallel." He offers the following explanation in his comparison of the Jubilee cycle with the count to Pentecost:

> An even better example of an exception to the rule is the count to Pentecost. The 50 day count to Pentecost is a direct parallel to the 50 year count to Jubilee—and yet, when the day of Pentecost comes it does not force us to alter the regular weekly cycle as some suggest we should do in regard to the Jubilee cycles. If such is true for Pentecost, it would also be true in regards to the year of Jubilee—the keeping of that special year does not alter the regular Sabbatical cycle.[49]

Later in his study, Glenn doubled down on his insistence that the count to Pentecost and the Jubilee cycle are parallels. He wrote the following:

> ***Pentecost and Jubilee Cycles are Parallels.***
>
> The count to Pentecost provides conclusive evidence that the weekly cycles (both of days and of years) are of a *continuous* nature. In Leviticus 23:15-16 it plainly commands the Israelites to count 7 Sabbaths until the "morrow after the seventh Sabbath," for a total count of 50 days. We know because of the wording ("Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land"). This is remarkably similar to the command to keep the weekly sabbath, and shows that the Sabbatical and Jubilee years are also based upon the Creation week. And yet, the count to Pentecost does not in any way disrupt the keeping of the weekly Sabbath. Some believe that "morrow after the seventh Sabbath" means after the festival Sabbath (which can be any day of the week, depending upon which year it takes place in) and others believe it means after the weekly Sabbath (i.e., on a Sunday). Regardless of which view is taken on this matter, the 50th day does not in any way disrupt or alter the weekly cycle. Therefore, since the 50 year count to the Jubilee year is an almost exact copy of the 50 day count to Pentecost, we have no choice but to conclude that the count to Jubilees is also a continuous cycle which does not alter the continuous count of the 7 year cycles. With that in mind, the 50th year (year of Jubilee) would be the first year of the next 49 year cycle, and also the first year of the seven year cycle. If the weekly cycle is continuous, then so are the Sabbatical and Jubilee cycles.[50]

In response to the above, I would like to first point out that nowhere in Scripture are we *ever* told that we should compare the count to Pentecost to the Jubilee cycle, nor is there an approved Scriptural example of anyone ever doing so. We need to consider that an analogy like Glenn's may *illuminate* Scripture, but an analogy cannot *legislate* for Scripture. Secondly, I agree that the 50-year count to the Jubilee year is an *almost* exact copy of the 50-day count to Pentecost. The key word here is "almost." The

[49] Cf., Moore, W. Glenn, *The Jubilee Code*, 2008, p. 62.
[50] Ibid, pp. 72-73.

count to Pentecost requires counting seven weeks, then adding a 50th day. The count to the Jubilee year requires counting seven weeks *of years*, then adding a 50th *year*. Neither count in any way alters the continuously-repeating weekly cycle.

The "almost" pattern ends there because, unlike the Jubilee *cycle*, which means a *repeating period of time*, the count to Pentecost doesn't repeat—at least not within any given year. So that's the primary difference between the two counting methods. That difference is precisely why Glenn errs in his claim that Jubilees is also a continuous cycle which does not alter the continuous count of the seven-year cycles. The count to Pentecost ends at "Day 50." The Jubilee cycle goes into "repeat mode." But what if Pentecost, like Jubilees went into "repeat mode"? Would "Day 50" *also* be "Day 1" of the succeeding count to Pentecost?

Before we address the answer to the above question, let's take a look at *another* striking difference between the Jubilee cycle and the count to Pentecost. The way many Torah-observant believers count to Pentecost includes the belief that the *seven sabbaths* (7 x 7) refer to seven weekly Sabbaths;[51] however, that is not the method June and I use when counting to Pentecost.[52] Rather, we're in agreement with the method such ancients as Philo and Josephus used, which was to begin the count on the morrow after the *festival Sabbath*, <u>not</u> the weekly Sabbath.[53] The *festival Sabbaths*, unlike the weekly Sabbath, can fall on any day of the week. Thus, the *seven sabbaths* are not necessarily weekly Sabbaths, and the 49th day does not necessarily fall on the day of the weekly Sabbath. This is the method prescribed within the *Septuagint* translation, which directs us to count seven <u>weeks</u> (Greek *hebdomadas*) instead of weekly Sabbaths, and that's the method my family has used for the past 40 years. I mention this because if we were to pursue a strict comparison of the Jubilee cycle with the count to Pentecost, the 49th day of the count, *unlike the 49th year*, is not necessarily a Sabbath.[54]

I now want to expound on the primary difference between the count to Pentecost and the Jubilee cycle, i.e., where the "almost" pattern of similarities ends. As we are about to see, this difference is a *glaring*, even *critical* difference. I mentioned earlier that the count to Pentecost, unlike the Jubilee cycle, doesn't repeat—at least not within any given year. That is precisely why the one is referred to as a "count" and the other is referred to as a "cycle." A *cycle* is a repeating period of time, as in when one cycle ends, another begins. When Pentecost ends, it's over for that particular year. *That's because there is no cycle.* It's <u>over</u>—*finito*—at least until the next Feast of Unleavened Bread observance comes along some 10 months later. "Day 50" of the Pentecost count does not—and *cannot*—simultaneously function as "Day 1" of the next Pentecost count because there is no such thing as a "Pentecost cycle." It's really that simple. The point here is that the completion of *one* count does not, by itself, establish the starting point of *another* count.

With the Jubilee cycle, the perceived Pentecost/Jubilee pattern *changes*, and it's a pretty significant change, yet no one seems to notice it; certainly not Glenn. Glenn's surface-level interpretation of the two methods of reckoning was sufficient to persuade many to the point that the "Day 50 = Day 1" method of determining how to reckon the Jubilee cycle is a very common, if not dominant interpretation. However, I

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[51] Cf., Leviticus 23:15 of the Masoretic Text.

[52] For information about how and why June and I reckon the count to Pentecost, the way I do, please read our study *Facing the Pentecost Controversy*.

[53] Cf., Leviticus 23:15 of the Septuagint translation.

[54] I checked our Scripturally-based calendars from past years and found that, going by the way June and I count to Pentecost, "Day 49" happened to fall on a weekly Sabbath in 2026. Before that, the previous year in which "Day 49" fell on a weekly Sabbath was 2012. It's not a common happenstance—at least not the way we count to Pentecost.

must emphasize that, unlike Pentecost with its concluding 50th day, once you reach the 50th year of the Jubilee cycle, *another* count to the Jubilee year begins. The cycle repeats itself—again—and again—and again. It's a repeating cycle, regardless of whether you're of the "Year 50 = Year 1" persuasion or if you're of the "Year 50 ≠ Year 1" understanding (like me). With a Jubilee cycle, once you reach that 50th year, the cycle resets itself. After that 50th year, another *cycle* begins. Please notice that no one ever refers to a "Pentecost cycle." That's because the Pentecost count itself is *not* a continuously repeating cycle; rather, it is a count that occurs once each year. This is a major difference that Glenn either overlooks or ignores in his book. Since virtually no one notices this major discrepancy between the count to Pentecost and the Jubilee cycle, I'm hopeful the following comparison chart will serve as a helpful visual aid:

The Count		Summary Description of Count
Count to Pentecost		Count 49 days; day 50 is Pentecost. The end. No more counting until next year's Feast of Unleavened Bread. "Day 50" can't also be "Day 1" because the count is over.
Count to Jubilee		Count 49 years; year #50 is the Jubilee year. **NOT THE END**. The count to the next Jubilee year begins with the very next year after this Jubilee year ends.

The distinction between these two counting systems is significant. With the one method, the count ends during the year, and a *new* count does not begin until the following year. With the other, a new count begins immediately after each and every Jubilee year *ad infinitum*. But what might things be like ***if*** there was such a thing as a "Pentecost cycle"? If I were to somehow come to believe the count to Pentecost is a repeating *cycle*, would it disrupt the weekly cycle? Here's an illustration to assist with your decision-making process:

FIRST DAY	SECOND DAY	THIRD DAY	FOURTH DAY	FIFTH DAY	PREPARATION	SABBATH
1 May 28 45	2 May 29 46	3 May 30 47	4 May 31 48	5 June 1 49	6 PENTECOST June 2 50	7 June 3 1
8 June 4 2	9 June 5 3	10 June 6 4	11 June 7 5	12 June 8 6	13 June 9 7	14 June 10 8

As the above potential calendar illustrates, if the count to Pentecost was a *cycle*, I would begin the next count on the day *following*, not inclusive of, "Day 50." That's because it doesn't make sense to have two calendar dates counting as the same 24-hour day; nor does it make sense to have two *years* counting as the same year. Please notice that the above counting method in no way disrupts the ordained weekly cycle.

On the other hand, if those of the "Year 50 = Year 1" persuasion were to believe there's such a thing as a "Pentecost cycle," Here's how *they* would do it:

FIRST DAY	SECOND DAY	THIRD DAY	FOURTH DAY	FIFTH DAY	PREPARATION	SABBATH
1 May 28 45	2 May 29 46	3 May 30 47	4 May 31 48	5 June 1 49	6 PENTECOST June 2 50/1	7 June 3 2
8 June 4 3	9 June 5 4	10 June 6 5	11 June 7 6	12 June 8 7	13 June 9 8	14 June 10 9

With the above-depicted Pentecost cycle, the 24-hour period of June 2nd would encompass *two* "Scriptural days," at least by their apparent interpretation of "Scriptural days."

So yes, there are *similarities* between the count to Pentecost and the Jubilee cycle, but there are enough *differences* that overlaying the one onto the other risks importing a counting principle into the Jubilee instructions that Scripture itself does not state. To then proclaim and teach this as a "parallel principle" to others imposes an interpretation that Scripture itself does not state. We must be careful.

Conclusion

In summary, introducing a "rule" that June and I should somehow adhere to a "Jubilee/Pentecost" counting parallel is not only unscriptural, but we've also seen that his "parallel" comparisons don't hold up when we dig deeper. Not only would Glenn's "day 49" not necessarily fall on a Sabbath day, but he has to believe June 2nd, in the scenario depicted above, is somehow "two days in one." So yes, the resemblance exists. But resemblance does not establish the rule Glenn claims it establishes. *What Scripture actually says about "Year 50" must decide the matter*. The "parallel" question begging to be answered is, "If the Pentecost count were intended to continue *seamlessly* into another Pentecost count, wouldn't "Day 50" *also* need to be designated "Day 1" of the next count?"

The real question needing resolved *isn't* whether the cycle is "interrupted"; the real question is, "What does Scripture tell us to do with the fiftieth year after the forty-nine years have been completed?" Leviticus 25 explicitly says that seven times seven years produce forty-nine years, and *then* says:

"... you shall hallow the fiftieth year."

It further calls that fiftieth year *Jubilee* and explicitly prohibits sowing and reaping in it. That's two consecutive years of no sowing or reaping. Therefore, if Glenn wants to use Pentecost as an analogy, he needs to establish and *prove* the following:

"If the weekly cycle is continuous, then so are the Sabbatical and Jubilee cycles."

If we must align the weekly cycle with Glenn's interpretation of the Sabbatical and Jubilee cycles, then we should expect to find a Torah mandate stipulating that the day following each and every 49 days is a *special* Sabbath—a *Shabbaton*. And to top it off, that special Sabbath of "Day 50" *also* marks "Day 1" of the next weekly cycle. Since that's the way Glenn's interpretation of the Sabbatical/Jubilee cycle works, then that must likewise be the pattern set by the weekly cycle. It seems to fit, and may even be viewed as logical, but we need to always remember that just because the pattern *seems* right, it doesn't mean the reasoning is *true*.

So yes, there is a genuine structural resemblance between the Pentecost count and the Jubilee count. But resemblance does not establish the identical rules Glenn claims it establishes. Scripture itself must determine whether the fiftieth year is *also* to be counted as the first year of the succeeding Sabbatical cycle. To be clear: The question is not whether the weekly cycle continues uninterrupted. It obviously does. The question is whether Scripture requires the seven-year Sabbatical count to continue through the fiftieth year—resulting in two consecutive years of land lying fallow.

Pentecost establishes that a count of seven units followed by a fiftieth unit can terminate in a fiftieth day without Scripture assigning that fiftieth day to a second numerical identity within the next count.

Glenn needed to establish from the Jubilee/Sabbatical instructions that "Year 50" receives such a dual designation. He did not do so.

As I put the finishing touches on this chapter, I want to acknowledge that Glenn Moore was within the realm of reason when he presented the close analogy between the count to Pentecost and the Jubilee cycle. Certainly, an analogy may suggest a possibility worth taking the time to investigate; historical evidence may offer an inference into how the ancients believed; but when the question is what Yahweh instructed Israel to do, the decisive question remains what the Scriptural instructions actually say. A balanced investigation involves not only examining the analogies, but also the contrasts. The Pentecost count is a count of days within a year, whereas the Jubilee arrangement governs years and agricultural obligations across multiple cycles. As we move on to my next chapter, these are items we need to keep at the forefront of our minds.

5. The Book of Jubilees:

Ancient Evidence for a 49-Year Jubilee Cycle?

An ancient text known as *The Book of Jubilees* is frequently cited as evidence that the ancients considered "Year 50" as coinciding with "Year 1" of the succeeding Jubilee cycle. *The Book of Jubilees* is a fascinating commentary on the book of Genesis, and is also known as "the Little Genesis." The 49-year cycle advocates often turn to *The Book of Jubilees*, a work commonly associated with a priestly sect known as the Essenes, as proof validating the 49-year Jubilee cycle.[55] *Jubilees* was not included in the rabbinic Jewish biblical canon, although it continued to be preserved and eventually survived canonically within the Ethiopian Christian tradition. Author David Wilber, in his article "The Book of Jubilees is Not Inspired Scripture," addresses several concerns that led ancient scholars to reject this work insofar as being "inspired canon." Here's one example:

> The notion that the book of Jubilees is inspired leads to additional theological and practical problems. First, Jubilees states that all the descendants of Lot are destined for complete annihilation (Jub. 16:9). The problem is that Lot's descendants include the Moabites and Ammonites (Gen. 19:37:38). Thus, Jubilees' proclamation of destruction for Moab and Ammon contradicts the Prophets' hope of salvation and restoration for a remnant of these peoples in the latter days (Jer. 48-49; Isa.15-16). Worse still, when one considers that Ruth was a Moabite, Jubilees' condemnation of Lot's descendants would extend to her, to her grandson King David, and to the Messiah himself (Matt. 1:5).[56]

The concern about annihilating Ruth and her descendants poses but one of many concerns about *The Book of Jubilees*. This ancient writing departs from the teachings of Torah in several instances, including how to begin the months of the year. According to Scripture, the month begins with the sighting of the first visible crescent moon after the conjunction (Ex. 12:1-2 1 Sam. 20:5).[57] As Wilber explains, *The Book*

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[55] Joshua Schachterle, Ph.D, in his online article titled "Book of Jubilees: Authorship, Dating, and Summary," writes, "The earliest scholarly theories said that the book was written by a Pharisee. This opinion was based on the content of the book, which focuses heavily on strict adherence to the Torah and keeping the sacred festivals. However, since Hebrew copies were found at Qumran among the Dead Sea Scrolls, scholarly opinion now leans towards the conclusion that the author was a member of the Essenes."

Professor Günter Strothotte, in his article "Jubilees, Book of," is less decisive, but he eliminates the author as having been a Sadducee due to the book's frequent references to angels (of which existence the Sadducees denied). And since the *Jubilees* calendar was "radically different from that calendar which was used by the Pharisees and Sadducees respectively," he concludes, "It is this evidence in particular, which makes it likely that the author was not a Pharisee, but a Qumran covenanter." While he stops short of specifically identifying the author as a member of the Essene sect, the process of elimination leaves little doubt that it was this party with which he identified. Cf., *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI, p. 717.

[56] Cf., *The American Journal of Biblical Theology*, "The Book of Jubilees is Not Inspired Scripture," by David Wilber, David, Vol. 24(43), October 2023, p. 10.

[57] This understanding is supported by 1st century Jewish philosopher Philo in "The Special Laws, II," ch. XXVI (140-141). *The Jewish Encyclopedia* adds, "The first appearance of the new moon determines the beginning of the month. At first a small and faint arc, like a sickle, can be seen by those endowed with good sight, from spots favorable for such an observation."

of Jubilees author completely ignores the moon for determining the months of the year, as the *Jubilees* calendar is a *solar* calendar:

> Third, the calendar articulated in Jubilees is a flawed system because it lacks a method of intercalation. To explain, a year is 365 days, but in Jubilees a year is only 364 days. So, over time, the festivals marked according to the Jubilees calendar occur earlier and earlier in the year until they don't align with harvest time at all. This poses a problem because the festival of Sukkot, for example, is supposed to be celebrated "after you have gathered in the harvest of your land" (Lev. 23:39). However, if one keeps the Jubilees calendar, then within thirty years, Sukkot will arrive so early in the year that no such harvest will be available. In contrast, the Torah's calendar does not have this problem because a year does not have a fixed number of days, so one can simply add a month to the end of the year whenever necessary to solve this problem. Jubilees lacks such a solution. Eventually, on the Jubilees calendar, Sukkot would be observed in spring, while Passover would be kept in the fall, completely erasing the symbolic connection between these festivals and their respective seasons.[58]

David Wilber succinctly describes the calendar dilemma presented by the author of *The Book of Jubilees*. Certainly, the dominant understanding of ancient Judaism was that timing of each month was dependent on the lunar cycle, and recognized a luni-solar calendar that aligned the timing of each new year with the vernal equinox.[59] But *The Book of Jubilees*, in contradistinction, decrees:

> 32 And command thou the children of Israel that they observe the years according to this reckoning—three hundred and sixty-four days, and (these) will constitute a complete year, and they will not disturb its time from its days and from its feasts; for everything will fall out in them according to
> 33 their testimony, and they will not leave out any day nor disturb any feasts.[60]

Instead of addressing a 364-day calendar's mathematical dilemma, I will simply state that ancient Israel recognized a calendar that began each new month with the sighting of the crescent moon. This is a fact that virtually every scholarly resource understands and recognizes as true. The most reliable Jewish sources testify that ancient Judaism began each month with the sighting of the first visible crescent moon following the conjunction. Here's the admission listed in the 1912 edition of *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia:*

> The study of astronomy was largely due to the need of fixing the dates of the festivals. The command (Deut xvi. 1), "Keep the month of Abib," made it necessary to be acquainted with the position of the sun; and the command, "Also observe the moon and sanctify it," made it necessary to study the phases of the moon.[61]

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[58] Cf., *The American Journal of Biblical Theology*, "The Book of Jubilees is Not Inspired Scripture," by David Wilber, David, Vol. 24(43), October 2023, p. 10-11.
[59] Cf., Philo, Supplement II, "Questions and Answers on Exodus," Book I, § 1, translated by Ralph Marcus, Ph.D., Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1953, pp. 2-3, where Philo writes, "(Scripture) thinks it proper to reckon the cycle of months from the vernal equinox." See also my study "Balancing the Calendar," as well as "Balancing the Calendar II."
[60] Cf., *The Book of Jubilees* 6:32-33.
[61] Cf., *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vol. 3, Isidore Singer, Projector and Managing Editor, "Calendar, History of," Funk and Wagnalls Company, New York, pp. 498-499, 1912.

This understanding is confirmed by *The Encyclopedia of the Jewish Religion*, where we read, "Until Hillell II instituted a permanent c. based on calculations (c. 360), the fixing of the NEW MOON was determined by observation and the evidence of witnesses."[62] Such modern sources as the "My Jewish Learning" website affirm this understanding.[63] No ancient writer conveyed this method of reckoning any plainer than first-century Jewish philosopher Philo of Alexandria. I have already cited Philo in support of perpetual six years of sowing and reaping versus an exception of five years after each Jubilee year. Philo also agreed that each Scriptural month begins with the sighting of the crescent moon:

> XXVI (140) Following the order stated above, we record the third type of feast which we will proceed to explain. This is the New Moon, or beginning of the lunar month, namely the period between one conjunction and the next, the length of which has been accurately calculated in the astronomical schools. The new moon holds its place among the feasts for many reasons. First, because it is the beginning of the month, and the beginning, both in number and in time, deserves honour. Secondly, because when it [i.e., *the new moon*] arrives, nothing in heaven is left without light, for while at the conjunction, when the moon is lost to sight under the sun, the side which faces earth is darkened, when the new month begins it resumes its natural brightness.
> (141) The third reason is, that the stronger or more powerful element at that time supplies the help which is needed to the smaller and weaker. For it is just then that the sun begins to illumine the moon with the light which we perceive and the moon reveals its own beauty to the eye.

Some question whether or not the above commentary proves that Philo went with visually sighting the first waxing crescent moon after sunset to begin new months. I ask these individuals, "If, when Philo states that the new month begins it (the moon) resumes its natural brightness" doesn't explicitly establish that the official beginning of every Jewish month is determined by the observation of the first visible crescent, then what exactly did he mean by that remark? Are they able to explain how the moon could possibly resume its natural brightness at its conjunction between the earth and the sun?" That would be an impossible scenario, as any serious astronomy student will tell you.[64]

Before we can move forward, we really need to agree that Philo was a reliable witness to the practices and beliefs of ancient Judaism. For those who are persuaded otherwise, I am compelled to point out that Philo was more than just a Jewish writer living in Alexandria, Egypt. *He was the most prominent Jew living in Alexandria, Egypt.* His fellow Jews chose him over all other Jews to represent their people in protesting pogroms[65] that were being perpetrated against Jews living in Alexandria. This was a very serious issue—a matter of life and death for the Jews of Alexandria. In order to plead their case before the Roman emperor, they had to select the man who could best represent them. As it turns out, once Philo and

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[62] C.f., *The Encyclopedia of the Jewish Religion*, edited by Dr. R. J. Zwi Werblowsky and Dr. Geoffrey Wigoder, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., New York, article "Calendar," 1966, p. 78.

[63] Cf., MyJewishLearning.com article "Months of the Jewish Year," where the author writes, "The Jewish month begins with the first sighting of the new moon, the Rosh Chodesh." © 2026 My Jewish Learning. All Rights Reserved.

[64] See also, the ancient text *The Book of Enoch* 78:11-12, where it says, "During all the period during which the moon is growing in her light, she is transferring it to herself when opposite to the sun during fourteen days [her light is accomplished in the heaven], and when she is illumined throughout, her light is accomplished in the heaven. And on the first day she is called the new moon, for on that day the light rises upon her." Verses 13-14 go on to describe the subsequent full phase and waning of the moon, supplying context for the passage's understanding of ancient believers' understanding of the role the lunar cycle played in establishing the luni-solar calendar.

[65] "Pogrom" is defined as "An organized and often officially instigated local massacre, especially one directed against the Jews.

his delegation returned from Rome, he wrote that he was in fear of his life during the entire visit.[66] The question arises, "Would the Jews of Alexandria have chosen Philo for such a dangerous mission had he not properly represented normative Jewish practice and belief?" Indeed, they would only have chosen a man whose beliefs aligned with their own, whether that be Sabbath observance, new moon observance, and yes, even Pentecost observance. This is indeed a significant fact, as echoed by *The Cambridge History of Judaism*:

> It is significant that his co-religionists chose him as ambassador to Caligula in 39-40. In such circumstances only a man who was important in the city would be appointed.[67]

For those who might *still* question the credibility and reliability of Philo, I am supplying the following excerpt from *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*:

> Philo was a prominent member of the Jewish community of Alexandria,[68] the largest Jewish settlement outside Palestine. The only certain date known from his life comes from his account of the great pogrom in Alexandria which started in A.D. 38 under the prefect Flaccus, during the reign of the Roman emperor Gaius Caligula. Philo was then chosen to head a delegation (*Gaium* 370) sent in A.D. 39/40 by the Jewish community to Gaius Caligula in Rome.[69]

Philo clearly had the respect of his fellow Jews in Alexandria, but did his practice and belief reflect that of all of normative Judaism? Again, let us turn to *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* for the answer:

> Was Philo then fundamentally Greek or Jewish? His loyalty to the Jewish institutions, the laws of Moses, the role of Israel as the priesthood of the world, and his harshness against renegades (even to the point of advocating lynching) shows that he was fundamentally a Jew.[70]

Philo represented the beliefs of normative Judaism; if he hadn't, it's highly unlikely he would have been chosen out of hundreds of thousands of Jews to represent them before the Roman emperor Gaius Caligula. This same Philo understood that years are reckoned with a luni-solar calendar, with each new year beginning with the first visible waxing crescent moon after its conjunction. And each year was always synchronized with the timing of the vernal equinox.

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[66] Cf., "On the Embassy to Gaius," ch. XLV (366), where Philo wrote, "So with the statement of our case thus mangled and disjointed, one may almost say cut short and crushed to pieces, we gave up, for there was no strength left in us, and since we all the time expected nothing else but death, in our deep distress our souls had passed from within us and went forth to supplicate the true Theon (Gk. *θεόν*) that He should restrain the wrath of the pretender to that name (i.e., Gaius Caligula declared himself to be deity)." Note: Philo referred to the Almighty as *Theon*, the Greek equivalent of *Elohim*. He never referred to the Almighty as "God." Of importance to this study is the fact that Philo is the one who was selected by his peers to help bring an end to the pogroms. Would he have been so considered if his religious views clashed with those of his fellow Jews?

[67] Cf., *The Cambridge History of Judaism*, Vol. 3, Edited by William Horbury, W.D. Davies and John Sturdy, Cambridge University Press, 1999, p. 879.

[68] According to this same reference, article "Alexandria," p. 153, we learn, "By the 1st century C.E. the Jewish population in Alexandria numbered in the hundreds of thousands." The majority of these Jews were descendants of prisoners of war who were forcibly settled there by Alexander when the city was founded.

[69] Cf., *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, Vol. 5, David Noel Freedman, Editor-in-Chief, article "Philo of Alexandria," by Peder Borgen, Doubleday, 1992, p. 333.

[70] Ibid, p. 341.

Some may object that just because Philo's peers chose him to represent them doesn't mean he represented every aspect of normative Jewish practice. On the surface, this would appear to be a fair argument. I would answer that in matters of trivial importance, minor disagreements could and should be overlooked. For example, ancient Jewish Rabbis clashed over whether or not it was improper to criticize the physical appearance of a new bride. The Beit Shammai faction argued for *absolute truth*, as in praise the bride *only* as she actually is, because the Torah says to "keep distant from a false matter." Beit Hillel, on the other hand, argued for compassion and joy, stating that one should always sing, "She is a beautiful and gracious bride."[71] They reasoned that in the eyes of her groom, she is beautiful, so making her happy takes precedence. Tractate Bava Kamma 60b in the Babylonian Talmud teaches that if a dog howls for no apparent reason, the angel of death has entered the city. I would hope that Philo would disagree with this teaching, as well as the Beit Shammai faction's belief that one should not compliment a brides beauty if, in their opinion, she's not actually beautiful. These and many other such disagreements are trivial—not worthy of separating from one faction and joining *or creating* another one.[72] Calendar disputes, on the other hand, were not considered trivial. Reckoning the Sabbatical years and Jubilee year may seem trivial here in the 21st century, but such would not have been true in the 1st century. If Philo had argued for a 49-year cycle while his peers were adamant that it's a 50-year cycle, the rift would not have been slight and Philo would most likely have addressed such a dispute in his voluminous writings.

Suffice it to say Philo disagreed with the author of *The Book of Jubilees*, not only with that author's "exception" to the "six years of sowing and reaping" rule prior to each Sabbatical year, but *also* with that author's reckoning of the Scriptural year. What's even more interesting is the fact that even today's religious entities who regard *The Book of Jubilees* as inspired do not hearken to its requirements. For example, the *Haymanot* is a branch of Judaism that regards *The Book of Jubilees* as inspired. However, instead of following the *Jubilees'* solar calendar, the Haymanot Jews go by a lunar calendar.[73] Another group that recognizes the inspiration of *The Book of Jubilees* is The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. But this religious entity celebrates holidays known to have pagan origins, such as Christmas and Easter.[74]

And now, let's take a look at how *The Book of Jubilees* author reckoned the Jubilee cycle. R. H. Charles, in the introduction to his translation of *The Book of Jubilees*, makes note of the fact that the author reckoned 49-year cycles instead of 50:

> *The Jubilees*.—The chronology is essentially heptadic. Each jubilee consists of seven year-weeks, and each year-week of seven years. It is probably on the ground of the sacred character of the number seven, and possibly also for the sake of symmetry, that our author makes his jubilee consist of forty-nine years instead of fifty, which was the usual reckoning among the Jews.[75]

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[71] Cf., *The Mishnah*, Ketubot 17a.

[72] For example, the Sadducees reckon the count to Pentecost from the morrow after the weekly "*Creation* Sabbath," but the Pharisees teach that the count is reckoned from the morrow after the "*Festival* Sabbath," i.e., the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

[73] Cf., "Haymanot," *Wikipedia*, Wikimedia Foundation, 06/24/2026, specifically the subheading "Calendars and holidays," where we read, "The [Haymanot Jews] calendar is a lunar calendar with 12 months, each containing 29 or 30 days."

[74] Cf., "Christmas in Ethiopia", anonymous author.

[75] Cf., *The Book of Jubilees or The Little Genesis*, translated from the Editor's Ethiopic Text, by R. H. Charles, D.D., Adam and Charles Black, Publishers, London, UK, p. lxvii, 1902.

Joram Mayshar, in a treatise titled "The Jubilee Calendar,"[76] supplied visual aid tables comparing the various counting methods. Here's the one he ascribes to *The Book of Jubilees* ("fallow" years are shaded in red):

Sabbatical year-count	4	5	6	7	1	2	3
Jubilee year-count	46	47	48	49=50	1	2	3

Please notice that the above scenario does not align with Glenn Moore's "Year 50 = Year 1" model. Mayshar's model presents a *pseudo* 50th year because there is actually *never* a 50th year with a 49-year cycle.[77] Applying a "Year 50" label to overlay "Year 49" only works if the Almighty supplies the instruction. This is not a scenario that should be *assumed* from Scripture—it needs to be *specified* within Scripture. I have not seen any such instruction in the Scriptural narrative, which would make the above model a teaching of man that simultaneously *eliminates* a 50th year. Expecting us to believe that "Year 49" *is* "Year 50" is like telling the emperor his new clothes are very fashionable.[78] It's a remarkable sleight of hand devoid of Scriptural instruction, yet many have nevertheless accepted it without question.

Here's the model Glenn promotes:

Sabbatical year-count	4	5	6	7	1	2	3
Jubilee year-count	46	47	48	49	50=1	2	3

Glenn Moore's model is noticeably different from Joram Mayshar's. Mayshar's overlays the 50th year onto "Year 49"; Glenn's model has "Year 50" overlapping "Year 1" of the following cycle. Both models overlay the 50th year onto another year of the cycle—without any apparent support from where it matters most: *Scripture*. Glenn's overlapping interpretation requires a single calendar year to serve simultaneously as the Jubilee year concluding one cycle *and* the first year of the succeeding Sabbatical cycle. On the following page, I'm supplying two consecutive Jubilee cycles from Glenn's Excel spreadsheet to illustrate this fact.[79] You can see that not only was the year 1945 "Year 50" of Cycle #121, but 1945 was *also* "Year 1" of Cycle #122:

[76] Cf., "The Jubilee Calendar," by Joram Mayshar, December 2020, p. 3. Note: Mayshar's proposed model has the Jubilee Year starting in the fall of the seventh sabbatical year and ending in the fall of the first year of the succeeding cycle. In his concluding statement, Mayshar states the following: "This interpretation implies that the jubilee cycle was intended to last forty-nine years, with the jubilee fallow coinciding with that of the seventh sabbatical year."

[77] Briefly, Joram Mayshar proposes a "hybrid calendar" that reckons the Jubilee Year in the same way as one does his or her birthday, which doesn't necessarily begin on the first day of each year; one's birthday might be on July 5th and that *year* of the individual's life doesn't change until July 5th of the following year. The Jubilee Year, according to Mayshar's line of reasoning, begins on the Day of Atonement of the seventh sabbatical year and ends on the Day of Atonement of the first year of the next cycle. It thus splits the year between the 49th and 1st year, *eliminating* an actual 50th year. Mayshar offers nothing in the way of Scriptural support for his model; I'm persuaded that Yahweh ordained the years to begin in the spring (Ex. 12:1-2) **period** (end of story); inserting a year within a year (or sandwiched between two years) is not a practice or teaching sanctioned or explained in Scripture, certainly not in Leviticus chapter 25.

[78] For those who are not familiar with the classic fairy tale of how two swindlers deceived the emperor and his subjects into thinking he was wearing the latest in-fashion apparel, you can access "The Emperor's New Clothes" here.

[79] Glenn's Excel spreadsheet titled "Jubilee Calendar" is dated April 27, 2008. It covers 144 Jubilee cycles beginning with Creation and ending with the year 3072.

Jubilee Calendar

Cycle 121

	1st Day Year	2nd Day Year	3rd Day Year	4th Day Year	5th Day Year	6th Day Year	Sabbatical Year
1	5881 CD Fall Year 1 1896 CE	5882 Fall Year 2 1897	5883 Fall 3 1898	5884 Fall 4 1899	5885 Fall 5 1900	5886 Fall 6 1901	5887 Fall 7 1902
2	5888 Fall 8 1903	5889 Fall 9 1904	5890 Fall 10 1905	5891 Fall 11 1906	5892 Fall 12 1907	5893 Fall 13 1908	5894 Fall 14 1909
3	5895 Fall 15 1910	5896 Fall 16 1911	5897 Fall 17 1912	5898 World War I Begins in June Fall 18 1913	5899 Fall 19 1914	5900 Fall 20 1915	5901 Fall 21 1916
4	5902 Fall 22 1917	5903 World War I Ends in Fall 1918 Fall 23 1918	5904 Fall 24 1919	5905 Fall 25 1920	5906 Fall 26 1921	5907 Fall 27 1922	5908 Fall 28 1923
5	5909 Fall 29 1924	5910 Fall 30 1925	5911 Fall 31 1926	5912 Fall 32 1927	5913 Fall 33 1928	5914 Fall 34 1929	5915 Fall 35 1930
6	5916 Fall 36 1931	5917 Fall 37 1932	5918 Fall 38 1933	5919 Fall 39 1934	5920 Fall 40 1935	5921 Fall 41 1936	5922 Fall 42 1937
7	5923 Germany Begins Military Aggression and Holocaust 1938	5924 Fall 44 1939	5925 World War II Now Involves USA Fall 45 1940	5926 Fall 46 1941	5927 Fall 47 1942	5928 Fall 48 1943	5929 VE & VJ Day--Atom Bomb Used on Japan Fall 1944
	5930 122nd Jubilee 1945						

Top Numbers = Creation Date (CD) Black Numbers = Common Era (CE)
Red Numbers = Before Common Era (BCE)

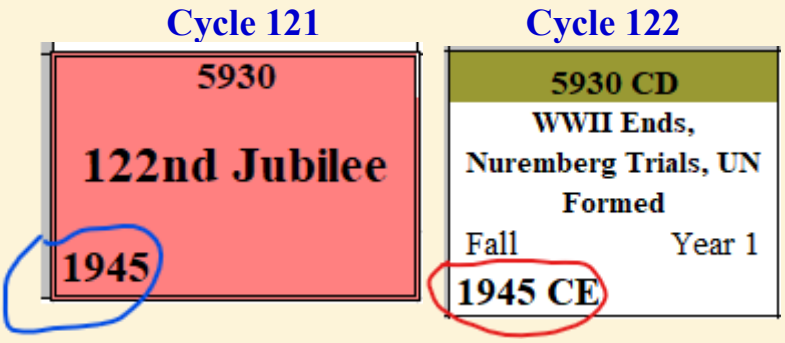
Jubilee Calendar

Cycle 122

	1st Day Year	2nd Day Year	3rd Day Year	4th Day Year	5th Day Year	6th Day Year	Sabbatical Year
1	5930 CD WWII Ends, Nuremberg Trials, UN Formed 1945 CE	5931 Fall Year 2 1946	5932 The State of Israel Formed Fall 3 1947	5933 Fall 4 1948	5934 Fall 5 1949	5935 Fall 6 1950	5936 Fall 7 1951
2	5937 Fall 8 1952	5938 Fall 9 1953	5939 Fall 10 1954	5940 Fall 11 1955	5941 Fall 12 1956	5942 Fall 13 1957	5943 Fall 14 1958
3	5944 Vietnam War Begins Fall 15 1959	5945 Fall 16 1960	5946 Fall 17 1961	5947 Fall 18 1962	5948 President Kennedy Assassinated Fall 19 1963	5949 Fall 20 1964	5950 Fall 21 1965
4	5951 Fall 22 1966	5952 Israel Takes Jerusalem in 6 Day War Fall 1967	5953 Fall 24 1968	5954 Fall 25 1969	5955 Fall 26 1970	5956 Fall 27 1971	5957 Fall 28 1972
5	5958 Fall 29 1973	5959 Vietnam War Ends in April Fall 30 1974	5960 Fall 31 1975	5961 Fall 32 1976	5962 Fall 33 1977	5963 Fall 34 1978	5964 Fall 35 1979
6	5965 Fall 36 1980	5966 Fall 37 1981	5967 Fall 38 1982	5968 Fall 39 1983	5969 Fall 40 1984	5970 Fall 41 1985	5971 Space Shuttle Challenger Destroyed Fall 1986
7	5972 Fall 43 1987	5973 Fall 44 1988	5974 Fall 45 1989	5975 Persian Gulf War Fall 46 1990	5976 Fall 47 1991	5977 Waco Davidian Compound Destroyed, 84 Dead 1992	5978 Jupiter Hit by 21 Fragments of Comet Shoemaker-Levy 1993
	5979 123rd Jubilee 1994						

Top Numbers = Creation Date (CD) Black Numbers = Common Era (CE)
Red Numbers = Before Common Era (BCE)

Whether or not Scripture authorizes the above dual designation for the fiftieth year as promoted within Glenn's model must be determined from the instructions contained within its volume; it should not and *must not* be established merely by constructing a chronological model that accommodates such an arrangement. In fact, as displayed by Glenn Moore's model, year 50 was, on the one hand, worthy of the special shading, making the year 1945 look pretty special. But then again, if you look at the *next* cycle, 1945 was there, too, but it mysteriously became just another "regular" year—*including a year of sowing and reaping*—completely undermining the instruction found in Leviticus 25:11.[80] Here's a closer look at Glenn Moore's "same year" of 1945 CE:



Was 1945 a Jubilee Year? Or was it a year of sowing and reaping?

We have thus seen that both Joram Mayshar and Glenn Moore uphold Jubilee cycles wherein "Year 50" overlaps another calendar year. *But where do the instructions in Leviticus explicitly authorize either overlap?* When delving into the original meaning of the Hebrew word for year, *shanah*, as well as its Greek equivalent, *etos*, we know from etymology that the core ancient concept of a "year" was linguistically built on the idea of a completed circle or repeating turn of nature, which modern science

[80] As a reminder, Lev. 25:11 mandates that there is to be neither sowing nor reaping during the Jubilee Year. According to Glenn's model, 1945 was both a Jubilee Year *and* a year of sowing and reaping. *How can such a conflicting model meet the approval of the Almighty?*

later mapped onto the physical revolution of the Earth around the Sun. To ascribe a new meaning to the word "year" so as to make the fiftieth year conform to and actually fit inside a 49-year cycle is to alter its inherent meaning and thus alter the instruction.

For the sake of comparison, I'm also displaying a table that reflects the model that I'm persuaded is presented in and *supported by* Scripture:

Sabbatical year-count	4	5	6	7	1	2	3
Jubilee year-count	46	47	48	49	50	1	2

"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." (Lev. 25:8)
"A jubilee 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." (Lev. 25:11)

If Yahweh instructs us to work the land six years, then let it rest the seventh, and *then*, after seven of those cycles, a 50th year is added (not overlaid), then that is what I would do, and that is how I would understand the instructions, unless He gives clarifications that were previously not revealed. Would He let His children starve during either the 50th year or the following year? *That's where trust comes in*. Do we trust Him to take care of us if we do as He says?[81]

Even in a standard Sabbatical year, the 6th-year harvest has to last through the 6th year, the 7th year (Sabbath), and the 8th year until the new autumn planting is harvested. If Yahweh explicitly promised that a single year's harvest could bring forth enough produce for three years under a normal cycle, He is certainly capable of miraculously expanding that blessing in Year 47 to carry the nation safely into the next Jubilee cycle.

Does Leviticus 25 prescribe seven Sabbatical cycles totaling forty-nine years, followed by a distinct fiftieth Jubilee year, <u>or</u> does it authorize an overlap between the Jubilee and another year in the cycle?

In the final analysis, the view that Year 50 overlays Year 1 is fundamentally a reconstructive attempt to smooth out the economic difficulty of keeping two consecutive land-rest years. However, from a strict chronological and textual standpoint, forcing a single solar year to simultaneously represent the culmination of an old era (release, return of property) and the ordinary agricultural beginning of a new 7-year Sabbatical week is drawing a huge assumption from Scripture. Now please don't get me wrong: I could go along with "Year 50" not only representing the final year of the cycle, but *also* "Year 1" of the succeeding cycle ***<u>if</u>*** the two cycles are specifically defined by Scripture to overlap that way. For such a *major* "cycle overlap" to have <u>no Scriptural instruction</u> poses a *major* interpretational risk—an assumptive risk that I would be ultra-cautious of taking. What I *don't* go along with is assuming such a method is Yahweh's intent.

Glenn Moore's Perspective

In my discussion/debate with Glenn Moore, we probably spent too much time arguing over whether or not *The Book of Jubilees* was popular and even respected within the Jewish domain. That argument resolved nothing. While it's true the ancient Jewish scholars whose views I respect the most made no

[81] Should we overlook how Yahweh, year after year for seven years, provided the Egyptians bountiful harvests to prepare them for seven years of famine (Genesis 41)? The harvests must have been greater than "double yield" for them to not only store grain for their own needs, but *also* grain for other nations. If Yahweh could supply such a bountiful provision, why would He not be capable of supplying double harvests in years 47 and 48 to help prepare the Israelites for those three consecutive years?

mention of this book *or* its method of reckoning the Jubilee Year, I won't argue that others didn't share my view. To be fair to Glenn, I'm incorporating what is probably his most persuasive case supportive of *The Book of Jubilees:*

> ***The Book of Jubilees***
>
> The Book of Jubilees supports continual Sabbatical and Jubilee cycles. Please notice now references from the Book of Jubilees point to the practice of continual Sabbatical and Jubilee cycles. There are three clear and unmistakable references which show an unbroken cycle of 7 year weeks, cycles which even extend beyond the 49 years (or 7 weeks) leading up to the year of Jubilee—as shown in several parts of the Book of Jubilee:
>
> > . . . And Isaac slept on his bed that day rejoicing; and he slept the eternal sleep, and died one hundred and eighty years old. He completed twenty-five weeks and five years; (Jubilees 36:18)
>
> 25 X 7 = 175 // 175 + 5 = 180. Scripture plainly states that Isaac lived 180 years (Genesis 35:28). There can be no question about it, this is over 3 jubilees long and the count of years confirms that an extra 50th year is not in the count (showing that the 50th year was included within all of the 49 year cycles). Again, this supports a continuous weekly cycle (of years).
>
> > . . . And Joseph took of the corn of the harvest the fifth part for the king and left four parts for them for food and for seed, and Joseph made it an ordinance for the land of Egypt until this day. And Israel lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years, and all the days which he lived were three jubilees, one hundred and forty-seven years, and he died in the fourth [2188 A.M.] 14 year of the fifth week of the forty-fifth jubilee. . . . (Jubilees 45:12-14)
>
> 3 X 49 = 147, exactly 3 Jubilee cycles. Scripture declares that Jacob lived exactly 147 years, just as stated in the book of Jubilees (Genesis 47:28). The numbers from Jubilees add up exactly, and show 21 continuous weekly cycles (of years).
>
> This is what I found in my search of Jubilees. There is probably more evidence that I have yet to find. Without any doubt, the book of Jubilees confirms that from about the time the book was written (about 150 BCE) it was a general understanding that the sabbatical/jubilee years were repeating cycles of 7 and of 49 years. The Jubilee year would have been the year following the 49th year, so that it would be both year 50 and the 1st year of the next cycle.
>
> There are those who will say that Jubilees is not part of the canon of Scripture. While I agree that it is probably not Scripture, that does not mean it is not important for us to consider. It was considered important and widely read by many Jews living at the time of the Messiah. And since the Book of Jubilees was widely read and used in Judea at that time, we have to at least consider it a valuable contributor to our understanding of Jewish history and culture.[82]

I agree that *The Book of Jubilees* supports the "Year 50 = Year 1" (or the "Year 49 = Year 50") understanding of the Jubilee cycle. That is not up for debate. However, the author of *Jubilees* also infused

[82] Excerpted from chapter 6 of *The Jubilee Code*, by Glenn Moore, pp. 68-69, 2008.

some heretical views, in addition to insisting on a solar calendar consisting of 364 days, a concern I have already addressed in this chapter. Thus, even if this book was popular, that doesn't make it true and accurate. If the author was in error with regard to the reckoning of a Scriptural year, can he also be wrong about the true length of the Jubilee cycle? So even if *The Book of Jubilees* was a "best seller," that doesn't mean it represents the true calendar. In the back of our minds, we really need to ask ourselves if it's possible the author of *Jubilees* may have intentionally shaped his chronological calculations to fit a pre-conceived theological framework. In view of the author's other dubious teachings, I'm persuaded this is a legitimate concern.[83]

So while *Jubilees* offers evidence that an ancient sect known as the Essenes understood an ancient 49-year chronological tradition, this evidence does not, by itself, establish that the tradition accurately reflects the original instructions of Leviticus 25. Their chronological framework really needs to be examined to determine whether it reflects independent historical information, theological *interpretation*, or a combination of the two.

If we're going to offer pseudepigraphical books as evidence supportive of our respective positions, I might suggest considering the reckoning found in *The Assumption of Moses*. The author of this document utilizes a unique chronological framework wherein each jubilee lasts exactly 50 years. This distinguishes it from the *Book of Jubilees*. For example, in the opening of the text, Moses delivers his farewell address to Joshua in the 2,500th year from the creation of the world (Chapter 1:2):

> The Testament of Moses *even* the things which he commanded in the one hundred and twentieth year of his life, that is the two thousand five hundredth year from the creation of the world:[84]

This opening line signifies that Moses's death occurs exactly at the conclusion of 50 jubilees (50 × 50 = 2,500 years).

Also, in Chapter 10:12, Moses prophesies the timeline extending from his death until the final eschatological visitation of Yahweh (the end of days). He predicts this period will last for 250 "times." Scholars widely interpret a "time" in this context as a week of years (7 years), meaning 250 multiplied by 7 yields 1,750 years. If their understanding is correct, when broken down into the author's structural system, 1,750 years divided by 50 equals exactly 35 additional 50-year Jubilee cycles.

I'm not about to endorse *The Assumption of Moses* as evidence supportive of the 50-year cycles, even though I'm more inclined to agree with its cyclical reckoning—a possible indication of a Jubilee-related chronological tradition. In the final analysis, I much prefer going with specific Torah instruction; but if 49-year advocates insist that we should go with *The Book of Jubilees'* counting method because of its perceived popularity, then one might make the same claim about *The Assumption of Moses*. After all, it was cited by such respected "Church Fathers" as Clement of Alexandria and Origen, both of whom noted that in the apostle Jude's narrative about the archangel Michael and the devil disputing over Moses's body (Jude 1:9), Jude's source material was *The Assumption of Moses.* So, to be clear, my decision-making

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[83] There are several dubious verses; I would advise individual researching *The Book of Jubilees* to learn more. One example I will list here is the fact that in the Bible (Genesis 22), the Almighty tests Abraham by commanding him to sacrifice Isaac. In Jubilees 17:15-17, it's **Mâstêma** who instigates the test. **Mâstêma** is the name the Essenes at Qumran typically used in place of Satan; see also the *Damascus Document*.

[84] Cf., Pseudepigrapha.com, "The Assumption of Moses," ch. 1:2. Translation adapted from R. H. Charles, The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament (Oxford: University Press, 1913) 2: 407-424, Wesley Center for Applied Theology, Northwest Nazarene University, Nampa, Idaho 83686, Copyright 2000.

process is not based on which ancient pseudepigraphal writing I like best. Rather, if the specific Scriptural instruction is to hallow both years 49 *and* 50 as two separate years in a 50-year cycle, can I find sufficient historical evidence validating that this is how the ancients likewise understood the instructions. ***Is there evidence*** of how first-century Judaism collectively reckoned the Jubilee cycle? Yes, there is, but are we willing to accept it?

Let's start with the commentary from Flavius Josephus.

Did Josephus Understand 49-Year Cycles or 50-Year Cycles?

I presented Philo's understanding of how the Jubilee cycle is reckoned in chapter 2. Neither Philo nor Josephus ever expressed any acknowledgement of *The Book of Jubilees*, so I have no way of knowing what their respective assessments might have been. What I *do* know is that neither Philo nor Josephus recognized the Jubilee cycle as representing 49-year cycles. Here is what Josephus had to say about the Jubilee cycle:

> (3) Such, then, are the laws, already in operation during his lifetime, which Moses has transmitted to us; but there were others for after times which, albeit sojourning in the wilderness, he devised beforehand, to the end that they should 48ractice them after the conquest of Canaan. Thus every seventh year he grants the land repose from ploughing and planting, even as he had prescribed to the people rest from their labors every seventh day; as for the spontaneous products of the soil, the enjoyment of these was to be open to all desirous of them, whether countryman or alien, none of them being kept back.[85]

If the above was all Josephus had to say about the Jubilee cycle, I *might* understand why some individuals would choose to believe he went with the 49-year Jubilee cycle. The phrase "every seventh year," without any further elucidation, hints at a 49-year cycle. "Every seventh year," if uninterrupted, produces a 49-year cycle. However, as we're about to see, the phrase "every seventh year" refers to "every seventh year <u>within the Jubilee cycle</u>." Josephus continues:

> This practice [i.e., not sowing or reaping during each seventh year] was also to be observed at the end of the seventh week of years. This is the period amounting to fifty years in all, of which the fiftieth year is called by the Hebrews *Jôbêl* (*Jubilee*); at that season debtors are absolved from their debts and slaves are set at liberty, that is to say those who are members of the race and having transgressed some requirement of the law have by it been punished by reduction to a servile condition, without being condemned to death. Now too he restores estates to their original owners after the following fashion. When the *Jôbêl* comes around—the name denotes "liberty"—the vendor and the purchaser of the site meet together and reckon up the products of the site and outgoings expended upon it.[86]

Please notice how Josephus's framing of the Jubilee cycle differs from those who go by the 49-year cycle. First, he mentions that "this practice" was *also* observed at the end of the seventh week of years. "This practice" was that of not sowing or reaping, and it was to *also* be practiced at the end of the seventh

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[85] Cf., *Josephus*, "Jewish Antiquities," Book 3.12.3 (280-283), by Flavius Josephus, Translated by H. St. J. Thackeray, M.A., Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1961, pp. 453-454.
[86] Ibid, p. 454.

week of years. Those of the "Year 50 = Year 1" persuasion might have written, "This practice was also to be observed at the *during* the seventh week of years." The practice of letting the land lay fallow at the **end** of the 49 years strongly hints that there's another year succeeding that 49th year, and that is precisely the object to which Josephus segues. He writes, "This is the period amounting to fifty years in all, of which the fiftieth year is called by the Hebrews *Jôbêl*." Josephus *didn't* say, "Forty-nine years in all"; no, he stated, "**FIFTY YEARS IN ALL**." That is a powerful statement; Josephus explicitly describes the period as amounting to *fifty years in all* and identifies the fiftieth year as the Jubilee. This is significant evidence that he understood the Jubilee as a distinct fiftieth year. His statement does not, by itself, explicitly settle every question concerning how the succeeding Sabbatical cycle was reckoned, but it provides important historical support for the fifty-year interpretation.

Adding further weight to Josephus's testimony is the fact that he claimed that prior to the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE, Titus Caesar allowed him to procure the "sacred books."[87] William Whiston, who translated Josephus's works into English makes the case that these "sacred books" were the sacred texts from the Temple itself.[88] Moreover, Josephus likewise claimed that he based his *Antiquities of the Jews* on his translations from those same "sacred books."[89] I'm not about to claim that Josephus was always accurate or that his writings didn't ever include any contradictions; for the purpose of this particular topic, I will merely establish that his fervent understanding was that the Jubilee cycle consists of "fifty years in all," not forty-nine, and that his understanding aligned with Philo's. No ancient authors attempted to refute his claim.

Did Normative Judaism Understand 49-Year Cycles or 50-Year Cycles?

Now that we know how Philo and Josephus understood the reckoning of the Jubilee cycle, it goes without saying that the 49-year cycle advocates will either do their best to either discredit both men or simply express disagreement with their mutual conclusion.

However, now that we know how Philo and Josephus understood how the Jubilee cycle was reckoned, it should be an easy matter to determine how normative Judaism understood the reckoning. First, we need to establish the fact that Josephus identified as a *Pharisee*.[90] Second, we also need to understand that after the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE, the party known as *Pharisees* evolved into *Rabbinic Judaism.*[91] I briefly touched on this aspect in chapter one, but once we put all the facts together, the answer is easily discerned. Josephus understood that the Jubilee cycle is a repeating fifty-year cycle. Josephus was a Pharisee. The Pharisees evolved into what is known as Rabbinic Judaism. The majority understanding within Rabbinic Judaism was that the Jubilee cycle is a repeating fifty-year cycle.

As mentioned earlier, the Essenes are commonly understood as being the progenitors of *The Book of Jubilees*, a book that promotes 49-year Jubilee cycles. This sect, though certainly well known in the first century, is never mentioned in the New Testament. While both Philo and Josephus *do* describe their attributes in a positive manner, the Essenes were nevertheless separate from the other two groups (the

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[87] Cf., Josephus, "The Life," Section 75, by Flavius Josephus, Translated by H. St. J. Thackeray, M.A., G. P. Putnam's Sons, Publisher, New York, NY, 1926, p. 153.
[88] Cf., William Whiston, Dissertation II.
[89] Cf., Josephus, "Against Apion," Book I, Section 10, by Flavius Josephus, Translated by H. St. J. Thackeray, M.A., G. P. Putnam's Sons, Publisher, New York, NY, 1926, p. 185.
[90] Cf., Josephus, "The Life," Section 12, by Flavius Josephus, Translated by H. St. J. Thackeray, M.A., G. P. Putnam's Sons, Publisher, New York, NY, 1926, p. 7.
[91] Cf., for example, "Who Were the Sadducees and Pharisees?" by Ty Perry, The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, 01/31/2020.

Pharisees and Sadducees). Although the New Testament provides no direct testimony indicating whether or not Yeshua or the apostles endorsed the Essenes' interpretation of the Jubilee cycle, the fact is the key sects referenced in the New Testament are the Pharisees and Sadducees. Of these two parties, it was the Pharisee party that both Josephus and the Apostle Paul embraced.[92] *Neither embraced the Essene party*. On the surface, this fact may seem a minor detail; however, it is significant.

It is significant that the Apostle Paul aligned himself with the sect of the Pharisees. If the Essenes had exhibited a more accurate understanding of Scripture, it is very likely Paul would have been an Essene prior to his conversion. As it was, he confessed that he had been a member of "the strictest sect" of his religion, and that sect was the Pharisees, not the Essenes.

It is also significant that in Yeshua the Messiah's many encounters with the Pharisees and Sadducees, it wasn't the Pharisees who He plainly informed didn't know the Scriptures; it was the *Sadducees* to whom He stated, "Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of Elohim."[93] While both sects had their faults, and many Pharisees were called out for their hypocrisy, nevertheless, Yeshua said the following in reference to the scribes and Pharisees:

> 2 Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat:
> 3 <u>All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, *that* observe and do</u>; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.
> 4 For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay *them* on men's shoulders; but they *themselves* will not move them with one of their fingers.[94]

On the surface, Yeshua's criticism of the scribes and Pharisees might appear to be an indictment and utter rejection of the entire sect. However, if we dig deeper, we find that He acknowledged their authority. "Sitting in the seat of Moses" was anciently understood as referencing those who had the authority to render decisions and judgments. Yeshua did not repudiate or otherwise remove that authority from the scribes and Pharisees. His criticism was not of their judgments; His criticism was of their hypocrisy.

For the purpose of this study, Yeshua did not say, "The Pharisees' calendar is flawed and useless." The calendar as understood by the Pharisees and later, Rabbinical Judaism, included Sabbatical cycles within a 50-year Jubilee cycle. Their understanding of the actual wording specified in Leviticus 25, as well as Philo's description of adding the fiftieth year to "seven times seven," *plus* Josephus's testimony, demonstrates that they did *not* regard "Year 50" as being overlaid onto "Year 1," nor did it overlap "Year 49."

This is precisely why the calendar as presented in *The Book of Jubilees* is not Scriptural or even the historically-accepted calendar. **A strict, literal reading of Leviticus 25 outlines a true 50-year cycle**. According to the *literal* text:

1. **Year 49** is the 7th Land Sabbath of the 7th week (Leviticus 25:8).
2. **Year 50** is explicitly set apart as the Jubilee, separate from the 49 years (Leviticus 25:10-11).

Under a literal 50-year system, the 49th year (the 7th Sabbath) and the 50th year (the Jubilee) run back-to-back. This creates a period where the people would rely on the supernatural provision of the harvest from Year 48 to sustain them until the harvest of Year 52 was ready. While the 49-year calendar model

[92] Cf., Philippians 3:5 and Acts 26:5.
[93] Cf., Matthew 22:23-29.
[94] Cf., Matthew 23:2-4.

alters the timing to keep the math aligned with continuous 7-year cycles, following the exact wording of Leviticus 25 results in a full 50-year cycle with consecutive rest years.

Ultimately, the central question that needs to be answered centers on how we are to understand the instructions given in Leviticus 25. The passage identifies seven Sabbaths of years, amounting to forty-nine years, and *then* designates the fiftieth year as holy and proclaims liberty throughout the land. The question is whether the text itself authorizes the Jubilee year to be counted simultaneously as part of the preceding Sabbatical cycle or as the first year of the following cycle—***or*** as a separate sabbatical year outside the 49-year cycle.

Unless an overlap model as described either by Glenn Moore or Joram Mayshar can be clearly demonstrated from the instructions themselves, the latter option—*the Jubilee Year always being outside the 49-year cycle*—remains an interpretation that is supported by two witnesses: a strict reading of Scripture *and* historical evidence. The weight of these two witnesses supports that "Year 49" is a Sabbath and "Year 50" is the Jubilee; the two terms should not be classified as comprising the same chronological year. The land therefore rests for **two back-to-back years**.

6. *The Prophecy of Daniel 9*

A major key to Glenn Moore's understanding that the Jubilee cycle consists of 49 years is the prophecy of Daniel chapter nine. In fact, on his website, Glenn referred to this prophecy as "The Most Crucial Key to Determine Jubilee Years." In his study "Jubilee Cycles—49 or 50 Years?", Glenn presented the understanding that the prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27 proves that "the Jubilee cycles are intended to be 49 year cycles, not 50 year cycles." Before I proceed with his premise, let's take a look at Daniel 9:24-27:

> [24] Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.
> [25] Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.
> [26] And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.
> [27] And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the over-spreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

It is understood that "seventy weeks" means "seventy weeks of years," so 70 x 7 = 490 years. We should take note of the fact that it *doesn't* say, "seventy sabbatical years," nor does it mention anything about a major component of Glenn's assertion—that the seventy weeks is connected in any way to the seventy years of the Babylonian Captivity. Here's an excerpt from Glenn's study *The Jubilee Code*:

> ***The Prophecy of Daniel 9***
>
> The 70 week prophecy of Daniel 9 provides the first of several major keys to help us understand that the Jubilee cycles are 49 year cycles, not 50 year cycles. We know this because 70 weeks (as mentioned in the prophecy of Daniel 9) is equivalent to 70 X 7 or 490 years. 490 years is equal to ten 49-year cycles, not 50-year cycles. While this is certainly significant, it may not be enough evidence for some to accept. There is more.
>
> In my book *Discovering the Jewish Messiah* I state it this way:
>
>> The reason Daniel receives the vision of the 70 weeks prophecy is because of what happened to cause the 70 years of captivity. The reason Israel[95] was taken into captivity for 70 years is because the children of Israel had violated Yahweh's Torah, rebelled against His commands, committed evil

[95] I'm certain Glenn intended to write "Judah" instead of "Israel."

> throughout the land that He had given them, and violated the Sabbatical and Jubilee years. In order for the land to receive its just rest, they were expelled from it for 70 years to fulfill the number of sabbatical years in which it had failed to receive the rest that it was due. What, therefore, is the conclusion of the matter? . . . The entire prayer of Daniel 9:1-19 is based upon, and in fact is a response to the 70 years' captivity. It is the "vision" that Jeremiah had received concerning the desolation and captivity of Israel for 70 years (Jeremiah 25:1; 11-12) that Daniel is concerned about. Moreover, it is the "matter" of how Yahweh allowed the land to keep the Sabbatical years that it had been denied because of Israel's sins (2 Chronicles 36:19-21). Therefore, what follows in the account of Daniel must in some way be connected to the Jubilee Calendar as it relates to the 70 years' captivity. This is exactly what Daniel had been studying and contemplating and praying earnestly about (Daniel 9:2).[96]

> If Daniel basis (sic) his prophecy on the Jubilee cycles (as I have just shown), and the period of time which his prophecy concerns is 70 times 7 (or 490 years), then he demonstrates by his testimony that the Jubilee cycles are intended to be 49 year cycles, not 50 year cycles.[97]

Glenn's reasoning as expressed above, on the surface, seems to make sense. The Babylonian exile is indeed connected in Scripture with the land's missed Sabbatical rests, as established in 2 Chronicles 36:19-21:

> 19 And they [the Babylonian army] burnt the house of Elohim, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof.
> 20 And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia:
> 21 To fulfil the word of Yahweh by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years.

So yes, the Babylonian Captivity is certainly connected to the Jews' having disregarded the command to not sow nor reap during the seventh year of each sabbatical cycle. But their snubbing the sabbatical years wasn't the *only* reason for the Captivity. As Glenn himself mentioned, "The reason Israel was taken into captivity for 70 years is because the children of Israel had violated Yahweh's Torah, rebelled against His commands, committed evil throughout the land that He had given them, and violated the Sabbatical and Jubilee years." It was their collective rejection of Yahweh's Torah, *including* their ignoring the sabbatical cycle, that led to their exile in Babylon.

I am waiting for Glenn's concise explanation of how Daniel's mentioning "seventy weeks" means "ten jubilee cycles." Glenn establishes his first premise, then presents a *second* premise without demonstrating how and why the seventy weeks must be organized as ten Jubilee cycles. The fact that both

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[96] Cf., Moore, W. Glenn, *Discovering the Jewish Messiah Through the Prophecy of Daniel 9*, 2008, pp. 9-10. Note: This study is no longer available.
[97] Cf., Moore, W. Glenn, *The Jubilee Code*, 2008, pp. 63-64.

passages involve sevens and periods of time makes a relationship worth investigating, but it does not establish the precise chronological arrangement he proposes.

With all due respect to Glenn's investigative prowess, I find his reasoning unpersuasive because I do not believe he has presented sufficient textual evidence to support his conclusion. First, we should note that the word *Jubilee* appears neither in Daniel chapter 9 nor anywhere else in the book of Daniel. Second, for those who maintain that the concept of a Jubilee cycle is nevertheless embedded in Daniel 9, I believe two fundamental questions must be answered. First, how is this concept established by the text, and (second) where is the evidence for it? Why should we infer a Jubilee-cycle framework when Daniel does not explicitly identify one? In my view, such a conclusion requires evidence beyond the numerical correspondence between the 490 years and ten periods of 49 years.

The Daniel 9:24-27 prophecy is commonly referred to as "the seventy weeks' prophecy." It is *not* known as "the Jubilee prophecy." Not only does the word "Jubilee" not appear in this passage, but neither is there a mention of 50 years. For that matter, *neither is there a mention of 49 years*. The seventy-weeks prophecy can be *interpreted* as comprising ten periods of forty-nine years, but that numerical equivalence alone does not establish that Daniel intended to identify ten *Jubilee cycles*. To reach that conclusion, one must first demonstrate from the text or its context that the seventy weeks are meant to be reckoned in Jubilee periods. Without such evidence, Glenn's proposed connection remains an *interpretation* rather than a demonstrated conclusion. It is noteworthy that the prophecy does *not* mention "Ten Jubilees."

The Source of the Confusion

In Glenn's commentary above, he mentioned the reason why the Jews were taken into captivity for 70 years is because they had violated Yahweh's Torah, including observance of the Sabbatical and Jubilee years. He summarizes, "In order for the land to receive its just rest, they were expelled from it for 70 years to fulfill the number of sabbatical years in which it had failed to receive the rest that it was due." Where did Glenn come up with the belief that the 70 years would fulfill the number of sabbatical years that the land had previously failed to receive?

The belief that Judaism was held captive in Babylon for 70 years because they had neglected a total of 70 sabbatical years is based on an interpretation of the reading found in 2 Chronicles 36:19-21. In his commentary above, Glenn references this passage, but he doesn't quote from it. Let's examine those verses:

> 19 And they [the Babylonian army] burnt the house of Elohim, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof.
> 20 And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia:
> 21 To fulfil the word of Yahweh by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years.

It really needs to be noted that "fulfilling threescore and ten years" does *not* equate to "fulfilling the number of sabbatical years in which the land had failed to receive the rest that it was due," yet that is precisely what Glenn Moore teaches.

The above Scripture text is based on the reading from the *King James Version* of the Bible.[98] Sometimes comparing different Bible translations helps to get a better grasp of the intended meaning of the text. Here's how verse 21 reads in the *Berean Literal Bible*:

> 21 to fulfill the word of YHWH by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths. All the days of her desolation she kept Sabbath, to the fullness of seventy years.

Please notice that there's a difference between "fulfilling seventy years" and "fulfilling the number of sabbatical years in which the land had failed to receive the rest that it was due." It's easy to *infer* that this is what the author of verse 21 intended, but that is *not* what the text says.

Understanding that the 490 years should *not* be interpreted so as to mean Judah had literally ignored 70 sabbatical years is not limited to my own personal view. Bible commentator C. J. Ball, in the commentary he supplied within Charles John Ellicott's *An Old Testament Commentary for English Readers*, wrote the following:

> We have no right whatever to press the words of the sacred writer, in the sense of assuming that he means to say that when Jerusalem was taken by the Chaldeans exactly seventy sabbatical years had been neglected—that is, that the law in this respect had not been observed for 490 years (70×7), or ever since the institution of monarchy in Israel (490 + 588 = 1,078).[99]

Please notice that the above author, in a book published well over 100 years ago, felt compelled to warn his reading audience that we violate the rules of proper exegesis **if** we should decide to interpret 2 Chronicles 36:21 so as to mean exactly seventy sabbatical years had been neglected and would thus be made up for during the Jews' exile. The mere fact that C. J. Ball was so compelled to issue his warning demonstrates that even in his day it was not uncommon to teach that *exactly* seventy sabbatical years had been ignored prior to the Jews' being exiled to Babylon. Is such a teaching justified? Well, according to author C. J. Ball, doing so "presses the words of the sacred writer." I cannot recommend reading into the Word anything that imposes a desired belief onto others; ultimately, that is what Glenn Moore does with the seventy-week prophecy.

Bible commentator C. F. Keil, in *Commentary on the Old Testament in Ten Volumes*, corroborates C. J. Ball's understanding in even greater detail:

> This connecting of Jeremiah's prophecy with the declaration in Lev. xxvi. 34 does not justify us in supposing that the celebration of the sabbath-year had been neglected seventy times, or that for a period of 490 years the sabbath-year had not been observed. Bertheau, holding this view, fixes upon 1000 B.C., *i.e.*, the time of Solomon, or, as we cannot expect any very great chronological exactitude, the beginning of the kingly government in Israel, as the period after which the rest-years ceased to be regarded. He is further of opinion that chap. xxxv. 18 harmonizes with this view; according to which passage the passover was not celebrated in accordance with the prescription

[98] The only exceptions are my having restored "Elohim" in verse 19 and "Yahweh" in verse 21.
[99] Cf., *An Old Testament Commentary for English Readers*, Vol. III, Edited by Charles John Ellicott, D.D., Commentary on the Second Book of the Chronicles, by C. J. Ball, M.A., Cassell & Company, Limited, New York, NY, 1883, p. 453.

> of the law until the end of the period of the judges. According to this chronological calculation, the beginning of this neglect of the observance of the sabbath-year would fall in the beginning of the judgeship of Samuel. But this is itself unlikely; and still more unlikely is it, that in the time of the judges the sabbath-year had been regularly observed until Samuel; and that during the reigns of the kings David, Solomon, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah, this celebration remained wholly in abeyance. But even apart from that, the words, that the land, to make full the seventy years prophesied by Jeremiah, kept the whole time of the desolation holy, or enjoyed a sabbath rest such as Moses had proclaimed in Lev. xxvi. 34, do not necessarily involve that the land had been deprived of its sabbath rest seventy times in succession, or during a period of 490 years, by the sin of the people. The connection between the prophecy of Jeremiah and the provision of the law is to be understood theologically, and does not purport to be calculated chronologically. The thought is this: By the infliction of the punishment threatened against the transgressors of the law by the carrying of the people away captive into Babylon, the land will obtain the rest which the sinful people had deprived it of by their neglect of the sabbath observance commanded them. By causing it to remain uncultivated for seventy years, God gave to the land a time of rest and refreshment, which its inhabitants, so long as they possessed it, had not given it. But that does not mean that the time for which this rest was granted corresponded to the number of the sabbath-years which had not been observed. From these theological reflections we cannot calculate how often in the course of the centuries, from the time of Joshua onwards till the exile, the sabbath-year had not been observed; and still less the time after which the observation of the sabbath-year was continuously neglected. The passage xxxv. 8 has no bearing on this question, because it neither states that the passover had been held according to the precepts of the law till towards the end of the time of the judges, nor that it was no longer celebrated in accordance with the precept from that time until Josiah; it only contains the thought that such a passover as that in Josiah's reign had not been held since the time of the judges: see on the passage.[100]

Indeed, when one considers all the neglected sabbatical years dating all the way back to the time of the judges, it makes the case that *seventy* ignored sabbatical years may well be an understatement. If the Israelites repeatedly neglected the Sabbatical-year commandment over many generations, the total number of neglected Sabbatical years could have easily exceeded seventy. The biblical text does not provide a complete chronological record from which that total can be calculated, so we are only able to speculate how many sabbatical years were snubbed. I concur, then, with Keil's statement, "The connection between the prophecy of Jeremiah (Jeremiah 25:1; 11-12) and the provision of the law is to be understood *theologically*, and does not purport to be calculated *chronologically*."

Clear historical evidence for the regular observance of the Jubilee legislation after the Babylonian exile is difficult to establish. The absence of such evidence, however, does not establish whether or not

[100] C.f., *Commentary on the Old Testament in Ten Volumes*, Vol. III, by C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, "The Second Book of the Chronicles," by C. F. Keil, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, MI, 1988, pp. 514-515.

the Jubilee Year was observed in earlier periods.[101] The fact that "seventy weeks" of years is equivalent to 490 years, which amounts to ten 49-year cycles, does not mean that a Jubilee cycle must consist of 49 years. No such definition is ever supplied within the bounds of Scripture. Thus, Glenn's remark that it is significant that 490 years is equal to ten 49-year cycles, not 50-year cycles, amounts to nothing more than an attempt to infuse his interpretation into the text. I could just as easily make a similar remark about the Millennium by stating, "It is significant that the Millennium consists of 1,000 years, or 20 Jubilee cycles. One thousand is equal to twenty 50-year cycles, not 49-year cycles." Such a statement, in and of itself, would not validate the position that the Jubilee cycle consists of a fifty-year period.

We all need to be careful not to read too much into any texts—including the prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27. Again, I want to emphasize that the word "Jubilee" does not appear in this prophecy, yet it is argued that Daniel's prophecy "proves" a 49-year Jubilee cycle. I urge great caution when it comes to interpreting Scripture and infusing our interpretations into any text.

[101] Cf., for example, *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, where we read, "Two other passages in the Priestly Code [Torah] refer to the Jubilee Year (Lev. 27:16-25; Num. 36:4), as does possibly Ezekiel (46:26 ff.), but it is not mentioned in any historical texts, not even in post-Exilic ones. Evidently, it was not observed in Second Temple times, as is attested by the conditions in the time of Nehemiah (cf. 5:1-13, where there is no mention of the institution), the obscure description of it in Josephus (Ant. 3:280 ff), and the explicit comment of one of the *tannaim* (Sifra 8:2)." –*Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 2nd. Edition, Vol. 17, "Sabbatical Year and Jubilee," by Aaron Rothkoff, Keter Publishing House Ltd., 2007, p. 624.