

Interpretations of numbers used in the Bible.

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The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 1

The number 1 is only divisible by itself. It is independent of any other numerals yet composes them all. It symbolizes in the Bible the unity and primacy, and the oneness of the Godhead. What is known as the Shema (or Shema Yisrael), a quote of verse four in Deuteronomy 6:4 that is often used in Jewish prayer services, attests to this fact.

The number 1 also represents the unity between God the Father and His Son Jesus (John 10:30). Jesus, by his singular sacrifice, has made possible the forgiveness of all our sins. He is the one Mediator and Shepherd (1 Timothy 2:5; John 10:16) in the life of a Christian.

The Old and New Testaments have an incredible unity between them. More than 1/3rd of the New Testament is composed of Old Testament quotes. Many writings from the prophets and Psalms could not be understood without the Gospels and the rest of the New Testament.

The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 2

The number 2 conveys the meaning of a union, division or the verification of facts by witnesses. A man and woman, though two in number, are made one in marriage (Genesis 2:23 - 24). There is also the union between Christ and the church (see 1 Corinthians 12).

The testimony of God is divided into Old and New Testaments. His agreements with mankind are divided into Old and New Covenants. And, though 2 in number, God the Father and God the Son (Jesus Christ) compose a single Godhead.

The first man, Adam, sinned and brought death and destruction into the world. Jesus, however, as the second (or last) Adam brings the hope of the resurrection and eternal life (1 Corinthians 15:21 - 22, 45 - 49).

The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 3

The number 3 is used 467 times in the Bible. It pictures completeness, though to a lesser degree than 7. The meaning of this number derives from the fact that it is the first of four spiritually perfect numerals (the others being 7, 10 and 12). The 3 righteous patriarchs before the flood were Abel, Enoch and Noah. After the deluge there was the righteous "fathers" Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (later renamed Israel).

There are 27 books in the New Testament, which is 3 x 3 x 3, or completeness to the third power.

Jesus prayed three times in the Garden of Gethsemane before His arrest. He was placed on the cross at the 3rd hour of the day (9 a.m.) and died at the 9th hour (3 p.m.). There

were 3 hours of darkness that covered the land while Jesus was suffering on the cross from the 6th hour to the 9th hour. Three is the number of resurrection. Christ was dead for three full days and three full nights, a total of 72 hours, before being resurrected on Saturday, April 8, just before sunset.

The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 4

The number 4 derives its meaning from creation. On the fourth day of what is called 'creation week' God completed the material universe. On this day he brought into existence our sun, the moon, and all the stars (Genesis 1:14 - 19). Their purpose was not only to give off light, but also to divide the day from the night on earth, thus becoming a basic demarcation of time. They were also made to be a type of signal that would mark off the days, years and seasons.

Interestingly, the Hebrew word for 'seasons' in Genesis 1:14 is *moed* (Strong's Concordance #H4150), which literally translated is "appointed times" (divine appointments) in reference to God's festivals. This is the earliest known allusion to what would later be called the Holy (or Feast) days (periods) of worship, which are seven in number.

The 4th of the Ten Commandments is to remember and keep God's holy Sabbath day (Exodus 20:9 - 11). The Sabbath day is tied directly to the creation week. God himself made the period between Friday sunset and Saturday sunset extra special when he rested on it after bringing everything into existence the previous six days (Genesis 2:1 - 3, Exodus 20:11).

The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 5

The number 5 symbolizes God's grace, goodness and favor toward humans and is mentioned 318 times in Scripture. Five is the number of grace, and multiplied by itself, which is 25, is 'grace upon grace' (John 1:16). The Ten Commandments contains two sets of 5 commandments. The first five commandments are related to our treatment and relationship with God, and the last five concern our relationship with others humans.

Appearances of the number five

There are 5 primary types of offerings God commanded Israel to bring to him. They are the Burnt Offering (Leviticus 1; 8:18 - 21; 16:24), Sin (Leviticus 4; 16:3 - 22), Trespass (Leviticus 5:14 - 19; 6:1 - 7; 7:1 - 6), Grain (Leviticus 2) and Peace Offering (Leviticus 3; 7:11- 34).

The Book of Psalms is divided into 5 major sections. Section 1 (Psalm 1 to 41) refers to the Passover, Israel's beginning, and the start of the God's plan of salvation that centers around Christ. Section 2 (42 to 72) sings about a unified Israel in the land and pictures the creation of the New Testament Church.

The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 6

In the Bible, the number 6 symbolizes man and human weakness, the evils of Satan and the manifestation of sin. Man was created on the sixth day. Men are appointed 6 days to labor.

A Hebrew slave was to serve six years and be released in the 7th year. Six years were appointed for the land to be sown and harvested. The number 6 is also associated with Satan in his temptation of Jesus.

The bringing together of three 6's is the number and mark of the end time Beast of Revelation. As such, it represents the very best system of governance that mankind can produce without God and under the constant influence of his chief adversary.

The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 7

Used 735 times (54 times in **the book of Revelation** alone), the number 7 is the foundation of God's word. If we include with this count how many times 'sevenfold' (6) and 'seventh' (119) is used, our total jumps to 860 references.

Seven is the number of completeness and **perfection** (both physical and spiritual). It derives much of its meaning from being tied directly to God's creation of all things. According to some Jewish traditions, **the creation of Adam** occurred on September 26, 3760 B.C. (or the first day of Tishri, which is the seventh month on the Hebrew calendar). The word 'created' is used 7 times describing God's creative work (Genesis 1:1, 21, 27 three times; 2:3; 2:4). There are 7 days in a week and **God's Sabbath** is on the 7th day. The Bible, as a whole, was originally divided into 7 major divisions. They are 1) the Law; 2) the Prophets; 3) the Writings, or **Psalms**; 4) the Gospels and Acts; 5) the General Epistles; 6) the Epistles of Paul; and 7) the book of Revelation. The total number of originally inspired books was forty-nine, or 7 x 7, demonstrating the absolute perfection of the Word of God.

The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 8

The number 8 in the Bible represents a new beginning, meaning a new order or creation, and man's true 'born again' event when he is **resurrected from the dead** into eternal life.

Like the Old Testament Passover lamb, Jesus was selected as the Lamb to take away **man's sins** on the Hebrew day of Nisan 10 (April 1, 30 A.D. - John 12: 28 - 29). He was crucified on Nisan 14 (Wednesday, April 5 in 30 A.D.). His resurrection occurred, exactly as he stated, **three days and three nights** after he was buried, which was at the end of the weekly Sabbath day that fell on Nisan 17 (seventeen symbolizes victory).

Nisan 17 was also the eighth day, counting inclusively, from the time Christ was selected as man's sacrificial Lamb. All this bears record of **Jesus' perfect sacrifice** and His complete victory over death.

The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 9

Used 49 times in Scripture, the number 9 symbolizes divine completeness or conveys the meaning of finality. Christ died at the 9th hour of the day, or 3 p.m., to make the way of salvation open to everyone. The Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) is the only one of God's annual Feast days of worship that requires believers to fast for one day. This special day, considered by many Jews to be the holiest of the year, begins at sunset on day 9 of the seventh Hebrew month (Leviticus 23:32).

The number 9 also represents the fruits of God's Holy Spirit, which are Faithfulness, Gentleness, Goodness, Joy, Kindness, Long suffering, Love, Peace and Self-control (Galatians 5:22 - 23).

Appearances of the number nine

Hoshea, who was Israel's last king before the kingdom fell to the Assyrians in 723 B.C., reigned for just 9 years (732 to 723 B.C.).

The total destruction of Jerusalem's temple began, on the Hebrew Calendar, on Ab 9. It was also on this day that the second (also known as Herod's) temple was burned to the ground by the Romans in 70 A.D.

The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 10

In the Bible, the number 10 is used 242 times. The designation "10th" is used 79 times. Ten is also viewed as a complete and perfect number, as is 3, 7 and 12. It is made up of 4, the number of the physical creation, and 6, the number of man. As such, 10 signifies testimony, law, responsibility and the completeness of order.

In Genesis 1 we find the phrase "God said" 10 times, which is a testimony of His creative power. God gave the 10 Commandments to man. Ten therefore represents man's responsibility to keep the commandments. A tithe is a 10th of our earnings and is a testimony of our faith in the Lord.

The Passover lamb was selected on day 10 of the 1st month (Exodus 12:3), as was Jesus, the Lamb that takes away the sins of the world (John 12:28 - 29; 1Corinthians 5:7). Day 10 of the 7th month is also the Holy Day known as the Day of Atonement. This unique day of fasting pictures the removal of Satan, the author of sin, before the Millennial reign of Jesus begins (Revelation 20:1 - 2).

The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 11

The number eleven is important in that it can symbolize disorder, chaos and judgment. In the Bible, number 11 is used twenty-four times and "11th" can be found 19 times.

Coming after 10 (which represents law and responsibility), the number eleven (11) represents the opposite, which is the irresponsibility of breaking the Law, which brings disorder and judgment.

In Genesis 11, men rebelled against God and built the tower of Babel. He judged them by confusing their language, resulting in chaos. Jehoiakim, one of the last kings over Judah, ruled for 11 years (609 to 598 B.C.). His successor, King Jehoiachin, rules for only three months before the Babylonians take control of Jerusalem. After overcoming the city,

King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon sets up Zedekiah as a puppet ruler of Judea. Zedekiah, however, soon rebels against his masters. His reign is ended in 586 B.C., after only eleven (11) years, when Nebuchadnezzar once again conquers Jerusalem but this time he destroys the city and temple.

The apostle John saw 11 things in connection with the final judgment (Revelation 20:12 - 14).

The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 12

Twelve can be found in 187 places in God's word. Revelation alone has 22 occurrences of the number. The meaning of 12, which is considered a perfect number, is that it symbolizes God's power and authority, as well as serving as a perfect governmental foundation. It can also symbolize completeness or the nation of Israel as a whole.

For example, Jacob (Israel) had twelve sons, each of which represented a tribe begun by a prince, for 12 princes total. Ishmael, who was born to

Abraham through Hagar, also had twelve princes.

God specified that twelve unleavened cakes of bread be placed every week in the temple with frankincense next to each of the two piles that were to be made. The priests were commanded to change the bread every Sabbath day (Leviticus 24).

The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 13

The number 13 is symbolic of rebellion and lawlessness. Nimrod, the mighty hunter who was 'before the Lord' (meaning he tried to take the place of God - Genesis 10:9), was the 13th in Ham's line (Ham was one of Noah's three sons who survived the flood). Thirteen represents all the governments created by men, and inspired by Satan, in outright rebellion against the Eternal.

The phrase 'valley of Hinnom' (or variation thereof) occurs in 13 places in Scripture. The valley was the scene of the evil-inspired rites of the pagan god Moloch (or Molech). The practices related to this false deity received some credibility when they were knowingly allowed by King Solomon (1Kings 11:7) in order to please his non-Israelite wives.

One way Molech was appeased and worshipped was through the sacrifice of children who, placed on the red hot arms of the idol, were burned alive. The valley's tie to fire made for an apt backdrop of the ultimate punishment unrepentant and rebellious sinners will receive in the lake of fire (Revelation 19:20, 20:9 - 10, 14 - 15).

The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 14

Being a multiple of 7, 14 partakes of its importance and, being double that number, implies a double measure of spiritual perfection. The number two with which it is combined (2x7) may, however, bring its own significance into its meaning, as it does in Matthew 1, where the genealogy of Jesus Christ is divided up and given in sets of 14 (2x7) generations, two being associated with incarnation.

The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 15

The number 15 in the Bible pictures rest, which comes after deliverance, represented by fourteen. The 15th day of the first Hebrew month (Nisan) is the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, a day of rest for the children of Israel (and for Christians). The 15th day of the 7th Hebrew month begins the Feast of Tabernacles, also a day of rest.

God told Abraham in a vision, just as the sun was setting to begin Nisan 15 on the Hebrew calendar, that his descendants would end up as slaves in a foreign country (Egypt). They would, however, eventually be set free (Genesis 15:12 - 16).

Many years later in Egypt, God miraculously delivered Israel's firstborn from the death angel just as Passover began after sunset (Nisan 14). Then, 24 hours later (just as the sun was setting to begin Nisan 15), the children of Israel began to leave Egypt (Exodus 12:40 - 41). This night is referred to as the 'night to be much observed' (Exodus 12:40 - 42, Deuteronomy 16:1). God's prophecy of freedom, given to Abraham on Nisan 15, was fulfilled years later on the exact same day.

The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 16

The number sixteen is symbolic of love and loving. Christians are to become perfected in God's love not just by physically obeying the Commandments (which should be done anyway) but also by following the full spiritual intent of our Creator's laws and judgments (Matthew 22:37 - 40). This duality of true love is represented by $8 + 8 = 16$.

In the Old Testament, 16 of the various names and titles for God specially signify His constant, never-ending love for the children of Israel.

Appearances of the number sixteen

Some of the longest words in the King James Bible are sixteen letters long. They include covenant breakers (Romans 1:31), evil favouredness (Deuteronomy 17:1), loving kindnesses (Psalm 25:6) and unprofitableness (Hebrews 7:18).

The words sickness and branch, as well as the phrase 'the Father,' appear sixteen times in Scripture.

The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 17

In the Bible the number 17 symbolizes "overcoming the enemy" and "complete victory." God overcame the sins of rebellious humans when he began to flood the earth through rain on the 17th of the second Hebrew month. Noah's ark and its eight passengers rested on the mountains of Ararat on the 17th of the seventh month (right in the middle of God's annual Holy period known as the Feast of Tabernacles).

Jesus Christ gained a complete victory over death and the grave when God resurrected him near sunset on Nisan 17 (Saturday, April 8, 30 A.D.).

In the book of 1Corinthians the thirteenth chapter, the seventeenth mention of the word 'love' comes when the apostle Paul states that it is the greatest gift of all (1Corinthians 13:13). God's unending love (John 3:16) is truly victorious over all things. Those who stay faithful to God to the end of their lives will gain the victory over the grave when they are miraculously brought back to life (see 1Corinthians 15).

The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 18

The significance of the number eighteen in the Bible comes from its symbolic meaning for bondage. After taking possession of the Promised Land, the children of Israel were in bondage to several nations and peoples before Saul was made king. Two of their enemies, Eglon the Moabite king and the Philistines (with the help of the people of Ammon) oppressed them for 18 years (Judges 3:12, 14, 10:7 - 8).

God freed the Israelites from Eglon through Ehud (who would become one of Israel's judges). He used Jephthah in the East and Samson in the South and West to free his people from the Ammonites and Philistines.

Bondage, however, can also be spiritual in nature.

Jesus healed many demonically possessed or influenced people during his ministry. On one particular Sabbath, while teaching in a Synagogue, Jesus healed a woman that had a 'spirit of infirmity' which had bent her over for 18 years!

The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 19

The number 19, which is the combining of 10 and 9, usually denotes God's perfect order in regard to his judgment in the Bible.

The names Job and Eve, if we substitute letters for numbers, add up to 19. What does the number 19 mean in relation to Israel?

The united kingdom split into two pieces after the death of Solomon. The piece referred to as Israel, or the Northern Ten Tribes, had Jeroboam as their first king (930 to 909 B.C.). Judah's first king was Rehoboam (930 to 913 B.C.).

Including Jeroboam, Israel was ruled by nineteen (19) kings before God allowed them to be conquered by the Assyrians. They were conquered and taken out of the land as captives due to their many sins against the Eternal.

The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 20

Twenty (20), which is one more than nineteen, is twice ten and can, at times, mean a complete or perfect waiting period.

For 20 years Jacob waited to get possession of his wives and property, and to be freed from the control of Laban his father-in-law (Genesis 31:38 - 41). For 20 years the children of Israel waited to be freed of Jabin, king of Canaan, who oppressed them. God response was to raise up Deborah and Barak, who freed the people from bondage (Judges 4 - 5).

In the days of Samuel the prophet the Philistines battled and overcame Israel, taking the Ark of the Covenant back to their land.

The Ark brought such calamities on the Philistines that after seven months they gave it back to the Israelites. It ended up in the city of Kirjath-jearim, which is several miles west of Jerusalem.

Israel had to wait at least twenty years (1Samuel 5 - 7) before the Ark would be moved again.

The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 30

Part of the meaning of the number 30 comes from it symbolizing dedication to a particular task or calling. Aaronic priests were initially dedicated to serving at thirty years of age (Numbers 4:3). God likely choose this age because it was when a person reached both physical and mental maturity and could therefore handle major responsibilities.

John the Baptist, who was of priestly descent (his mother was a descendant of the daughters of Aaron and his father was a priest), began his ministry at age 30. In the fall of 26 A.D., at the age of thirty, Christ began to publicly preach the gospel (Luke 3:23). His ministry lasted for three and one-half years.

The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 40

Mentioning 146 times in Scripture, the number 40 generally symbolizes a period of testing, trial or probation. During Moses' life he lived forty years in Egypt and forty years in the desert before God selected him to lead his people out of slavery.

Moses was also on Mount Sinai for 40 days and nights, on two separate occasions (Exodus 24:18, 34:1 - 28), receiving God's laws. He also sent spies, for forty days, to investigate the land God promised the Israelites as an inheritance (Numbers 13:25, 14:34).

The prophet Jonah powerfully warned ancient Nineveh, for forty days, that its destruction would come because of its many sins. The prophet Ezekiel laid on His right side for 40 days to symbolize Judah's sins (Ezekiel 4:6).

The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 50

The number 50 derives its meaning from its relationship to the coming of God's Holy Spirit. Fifty can be found at least 154 times in the Bible.

After Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene on Sunday morning, April 9 in 30 A.D., he ascended to the Father in heaven (John 20:17). His ascension, as a type of first fruit from the dead (Revelation 1:5), occurred on the day God told the Israelites they were to wave a sheaf composed of the first fruits of their harvest (Leviticus 23:9 - 11). It is on this day that the count of 50 days to the Feast of Pentecost begins.

In the New Testament, the word Pentecost comes from the Greek word for fiftieth (Strong's Concordance #G4005). Also known as the Feast of Weeks or First fruits, it was on this special Holy Day that God first poured his Holy Spirit upon about 120 believers who had gathered to keep the day (Acts 1:15, 2). They became the first fruits of God's spiritual harvest of humans.

The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 60

Part of the meaning of the number 60 is derived from the fact that it is considered the threshold of when a person enters the last major phase of their life.

The Apostle Paul warned Timothy that the church should not financially support widows less than sixty years old. This was because those who were younger were considered able to remarry or strong enough to support themselves (1 Timothy 5:3 - 11).

Under the Old Covenant, a sixty year old male could redeem himself from a vow of serving the Lord by paying 15 shekels to the temple. A 60 year old woman could redeem herself from such a vow for only ten shekels (Leviticus 27:1 - 2, 7). This compares to younger adult males who had to pay fifty shekels while younger women paid thirty (verses 3 - 4). Isaac, after his wife is healed of being barren, has his first two sons (Esau and Jacob) when he is 60 years old (Genesis 25:26).

The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 70

Seventy has a sacred meaning in the Bible that is made up of the factors of two perfect numbers, seven (representing perfection) and ten (representing completeness and God's law). As such, it symbolizes perfect spiritual order carried out with all power. It can also represent a period of judgment.

Seventy (70) elders were appointed by Moses (Numbers 11:16). After reading the covenant God gave him to read to the people, Moses took 70 elders, along with Aaron and his sons, up Mount Sinai to have a special meal with God himself (Exodus 24:9 - 11)!

Ancient Israel spent a total number of 70 years in captivity in Babylon (Jeremiah 29:10). Seventy is also specially connected with Jerusalem. The city kept 70 years of Sabbaths while Judah was in Babylonian captivity (Jeremiah 25:11). Seventy sevens (490 years) were determined upon Jerusalem for it to complete its transgressions, to make an end for sins and for everlasting righteousness to enter into it (Daniel 9:24).

The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 80

Part of the meaning of the number 80 comes from the fact that it can represent the start or duration of freedom from oppressors.

Moses was 80, and his older brother Aaron was 83, when they challenged Pharaoh to free the children of Israel from their bondage (Exodus 7:7).

Moses, whom God blessed by not having his strength or eyesight diminish as he aged, lived to the age of 120 (Deuteronomy 34:7).

Ehud was a rare left-handed warrior in ancient Israel. He freed the people from eighteen years of Moabite oppression by killing their king and rallying the Israelites around his cause. After his victory, he was Israel's Judge for eighty years, the longest person to serve in the position (Judges 3:12 - 4:1).

The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 100

The meaning of the number 100 can vary depending on the Biblical context in which it is found.

Abraham was 100 years old (Genesis 21:5), and his wife Sarah was 90 (17:17), when Isaac was born. Even though Abraham had already produced a son, Ishmael (through Hagar), God considered Isaac the rightful heir to the promises made to his father.

The patriarch Shem, one of Noah's three sons who survived the flood, gave birth to his firstborn son when he was one hundred years old.

The birth took place two years after the flood subsided when he was able to leave the ark (Genesis 11:10).

The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 666

As anyone who is a new Bible student quickly learns, the meaning of six hundred sixty six (666) is derived from the number and mark of the Beast Power discussed in the book of Revelation.

The number 666 symbolizes the perfection of man's overall system that is separated from God and under the constant influence of Satan the devil. Six in the Bible represents, by itself, incompleteness or imperfection, as it is one less than seven (which symbolizes completeness). Man's system on earth is made up of three parts, each represented by a six in the numeric 666.

The first six of the number 666 means the perfectly false religions of man under Satan's lead. The devil is the god of this world, and allowed to deceive mankind, until the return of Jesus Christ (2Corinthians 4:3 - 4).

The second six is for the deceived false governments of this world. The third six of 666 is symbolic of mankind's self-centered economic system.

The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 144,000

What is the meaning of 144,000 in the Bible? Who are these mysterious people numbered in the book of Revelation?

Do they constitute the entirety of God's church throughout the years? Could they be living today?

Could the 144,000 be a set of people that the leadership of a Christian group or denomination have designated as being "special?" What does the Bible say about this fascinating prophetic subject?

These people are specifically referenced only twice in the Bible. In the end time, after God commands a temporary ceasing of earth's calamities (Revelation 6, 7:1 - 3), he sends a powerful angel on a special mission.

The angel is not to allow the sea or even earth's trees to be damage until a unique group of folks are set apart.