

# Numerology: The Symbolism of Numbers

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## INTRODUCTION:

- A. Apocalyptic literature was usually written in time of danger, and the personal safety of both writer and reader was endangered if the persecutors understood the true meaning. Symbolism both concealed and revealed: concealing the message from the enemy, yet revealing it to the one addressed.
- B. **Symbology** and **Numerology** are two basic concepts a student of the revelation must learn when studying the book of Revelation. There is no other book as full of figurative and symbolic language and the use of symbolic numbers as the Revelation.
- C. Special numbers meant very important things to the ancient mind. Numbers conveyed powerful images in the minds of the people of John's day.
- D. Let us take a brief look at the figurative or symbolic use of numbers in the Bible and especially in Revelation. Some concepts associated with numbers.

## 1 . . . . . ONE

- Man saw a single object and came to associate with the number "1" the idea of unity or independent existence.
- It stood for that which was unique and alone.
- NOTE: This number does not appear symbolically in the book of Revelation.
- One is the number of God. **Deuteronomy 6:4** - "The Lord our God is ONE GOD."

## 2 . . . . . TWO

- When man went out to hunt the wild animal or fight against a foe, he found courage in
- companionship.
- Two were far stronger and much more effective than one.
- Thus, the number "2" came to stand for strength, for confirmation, for redoubled courage and energy.
- In the book of Revelation the truth is confirmed by two witnesses who are slain and rise again.
- • Redoubled courage and/or energy.

## 3 . . . . . THREE

- Because man found love in the home (father, mother, child) the number "3" came to be the number for perfection.

- The number “3” came to carry the thought of the divine . . . ”Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit.”
- Three become one.

#### **4 . . . . . FOUR**

- Man lives in a world of four:
  - Four walls: Cities had walls had four sides. A room had four sides.
  - Four directions: North, east, south, and west.
  - Four winds
- Four became the cosmic number for man’s world.
- Therefore, when he thought of the world, he thought of four.
- In Revelation we find:
  - Four living creatures
  - Four horseman (of the apocalypse, for sure)
  - Four winds
  - Four horns
  - Four angels

#### **7 . . . . . SEVEN**

- Seven is the most prevalent number used in the Revelation
- • It means “complete . . . mature”
- The number “4” is added to the divine number “3” expressing perfection or completeness.
- Man’s perfect world (FOUR) added to God’s divine number (THREE) equals completeness.
- Seven came to be the most sacred number among the Hebrews.
- In Revelation we find:
  - Seven churches of Asia
  - Seven angels
  - Seven stars
  - Seven gold candlesticks
  - Seven seals on the Book (Scroll)
  - Seven trumpets
  - Seven thunders
  - Seven bowls of wrath
  - Seven spirits

#### **3j . . . . . THREE-AND-ONE-HALF**

- Seven cut in half becomes three and one half or times, time and half a time.
- This “broken seven” expresses incompleteness, or that which is imperfect.
- It stands for indefinite and dissatisfied.

**8 . . . . . EIGHT**

- The number of new beginnings.
- Children were circumcised on the eighth day after being born. Genesis 17:12; 21:4
- After the earth was cleansed by the great flood, eight souls came forth from the ark to the beginning of a new world.
- Other literature attributes the number 888 is the number of Jesus.

**10 . . . . . TEN**

- Complete as seen from man's perspective.
- Man looks at himself and sees five fingers on each hand and five toes on each foot for a total of ten fingers and ten toes. A complete or perfect man (physically speaking) was one who had all his members intact.
- In the Bible we have Ten times four equals 40
  - 40 days and 40 nights.
  - 40 years of wilderness wanderings.
  - 40 years reigning each for Saul, David, and Solomon.
  - 40 days Jesus fasted in the wilderness.
- In the Book of revelation we have a number of things with multiples of ten.
  - 1,000 years
  - 12,000 people
  - 144,000 people

**12 . . . . . TWELVE**

- Four (man's complete world) times three (divine) equals 12 — God's number for organized religion on earth.
- Think back, the 12 sons of Jacob later became the 12 tribes of Israel. God's family and
- kingdom in the Old Testament.
- Twelve is the number representing organized religion.
- The number twelve (including thousands - discussed later) appears some 26 times in the Book of Revelation.
 

- 12 thousand (13 times)	- 12 foundations
- 12 stars	- 12,000 furlongs
- 12 angels	- 12 apostles
- 12 gates (3 times)	- 12 pearls (2 times)
- 12 tribes	- 12 fruits

**24 . . . . . TWENTY-FOUR**

- Signifies organized religion (12 doubled)
- Perhaps combining both Old and New Testament or simply strengthening or

underlining this fact.

### **1000 . . . . . ONE THOUSAND**

- Simply man's complete number cubed (10x10x10). 1,000 is used often in a symbolic way.
  - **Psalm 50:10** – “For every beast of the forest is Mine, And the cattle on a thousand hills.”
  - **Deuteronomy 7:9** – “Therefore know that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments.”
  - In 2 Peter 3:8, Peter teaches us that a day with the Lord is as 1,000 years and a thousand years as a day.
- The number 1,000 represents completeness or all that there is. It is an indefinite number, used much like the “x” is in an algebraic equation. It is flexible and varies.

### **12,000 . . . . . TWELVE THOUSAND**

- 12 x 1,000 equals 12,000 or 12 (organized religion on earth) times, 1,000 (complete) means God's people on the earth . . . all of them
- 12 thousand appears 13 times in the Revelation.

### **144,000 . . . . . ONE HUNDRED FORTY FOUR THOUSAND**

- Symbolic . . . figurative . . . not literal.
- Terminology for 12, 12,000 or organized religion times completion.
- Revelation 7 - 144,000 represents all of the Christians on earth at one time.
- Revelation 14 - 144,000 represents pure, faithful Christians purchased out of the earth. Now in Heaven.

### **6 . . . . . 666 . . . . . SIX . . . . . SIX HUNDRED SIXTY SIX**

- This number has been saved until last in our list.
- Just as 7 is the sacred perfect number, 6 fell short and presented failure.
- It has a sinister symbolism.
- Six was so close to seven. It aims at it and almost reaches it, but it falls short.
  - It has victory in sight but falls short.
  - It looks good, but it is defeated.
  - It has within it the stroke of doom.
  - It looks good, but it fails to measure up.
- Number of the beast, 666, is also the number of man. To many people this is a superstitiously bad number. People through the centuries have tried to

mathematically calculate whose name this might be and tie it to some individual or organization in history.

- Again, let's stay with a more rational approach. We are dealing with symbols. The number six (6) represents falling short of completion and victory. It looks good, but isn't. It appears to be close and almost reaches seven, but it falls short.
- What a description of Satan. In John's day it appeared that Satan was winning. He had the power. The world was massacring Christians. It appeared that Christians were losing and even defeated.
- But from God's perspective, Satan was going down to defeat and the Christians were really victorious - Victory in Jesus!
- Satan, we are told, has a number that cannot win. Oh yes, it looks like he is winning and will triumph.
  - But no, his number is six, one away from God's complete and perfect number of seven
  - So, Satan tries again to defeat the Lord and now it's 66 (not 77, 11 away).
  - The old Devil tries one more time, now his number is up to 666 (not 777, 111 away).
- Does the Devil want to try again? He cannot win. Looks like he will? Yes, but no, his number is defeat, defeat, defeat! Praise the Lord! Satan can never win with the number 666, but he keeps on trying.