**Numbers in Bible Defined**

By BibleStudy.org

* **The Number One**

There can be no doubt as to the significance of this primary number. In all languages it is the symbol of **unity**. As a **cardinal** number it denotes **unity**; as an **ordinal** it denotes **primacy**. Unity being indivisible, and not made up of other numbers, is therefore independent of all others, and is the source of all others. So with the Deity. The great First Cause is independent of all. All stand in need of Him, and He needs no assistance from any. "One" excludes all difference, for there is no second with which it can either harmonize or conflict.

* **The Number Two**

We now come to the spiritual significance of the number Two. We have seen that *One* excludes all difference, and denotes that which is sovereign. But Two **affirms that there is a difference -- there is *another***; while One affirms that there is not another!

This *difference* may be for good or for evil. A thing may differ from evil, and be good; or it may differ from good, and be evil. Hence, the number Two takes a Two-fold coloring, according to the context.

**It is the first number by which we can *divide* another**, and therefore in all its uses we may trace this fundamental idea of ***division* or *difference***.

The *Two* may be, though different in character, yet one as to testimony and friendship. The Second that comes in may be for help and deliverance. But, alas! where man is concerned, this number testifies of his fall, for it **more often denotes that difference which implies *opposition, enmity*, and *oppression*.**\*

\* Like many other words; *e.g.*, the verb "*prevent*" meant originally for one to get before another. But because whenever one man got before another it was always to the hindrance and hurt of that other, the word gradually took on the meaning *to hinder*, and thus testifies of man's fall. So with the word *simple*: it meant originally sincere, open, honest. But in man's judgment, anyone who so acts is a *fool*. Hence, man soon came to use the word *simple* as denoting a very foolish person! So in the French with the word *chef*, which means "chief." But as man makes "a god of his belly" he who can best gratify its lusts has a unique claim to this word.

* **The Number Three**

In this number we have quite a new set of phenomena. We come to the first geometrical figure. Two straight lines cannot possibly enclose any space, or form a plane figure; neither can two plan surfaces form a solid. *Three* lines are necessary to form a plan figure; and three dimensions of length, breadth, and height, are necessary to form a solid. Hence *three* is the symbol of the *cube --* the simplest form of solid figure. As two is the symbol of the square, or plane contents (x2), so three is the symbol of the cube, or solid contents (x3).

*Three*, therefore, stands for that which is *solid, real, substantial, complete*, and *entire*.

Three propositions are necessary to complete the simplest form of argument  the *major premise*, the *minor*, and the *conclusion*.

Three kingdoms embrace our ideas of matter *-- mineral, vegetable*, and *animal*.

When we turn to the Scriptures, this **completion becomes *Divine***, and marks **Divine completeness or perfection.**

*Three* is the first of four perfect numbers.

* ***Three*** denotes ***divine* perfection**;
* ***Seven*** denotes ***spiritual* perfection**;
* ***Ten*** denotes ***ordinal* perfection**; and
* ***Twelve*** denotes ***governmental* perfection**.

Hence the number *three* points us to what is real, essential, perfect, substantial, complete, and Divine. There is nothing real in man or of man. Everything "**under the sun**" and apart from God is "**vanity**." "**Every man at his best estate is altogether vanity**" (Psalm 139:5,11, 62:9, 144:4; Ecclesiastes 1:2,4, 2:11,17,26, 3:19, 4:4, 11:8, 12:8; Romans 8:20).

* **The Number Four**

We have seen that ***three* signifies Divine perfection**, with special reference to the [Trinity](http://www.biblestudy.org/basicart/is-god-a-mysterious-trinity-no-one-can-understand.html): The Father, *one* in sovereignty; the Son, the *second* person, in incarnation and salvation, delivering from every enemy; the Holy Spirit, the *third* person, realizing in us and to us Divine things.

Now the number *four* is made up of three and one (3+1=4), and it denotes, therefore, and marks that which follows the revelation of God in the Trinity, namely, *His creative works*. He is known by the things that are seen. Hence the written revelation commences with the words, "**In the beginning God CREATED**." Creation is therefore the next thing *--* the *fourth* thing, and the number ***four* always has reference to all that is *created*.** It is emphatically the ***number of Creation***; of man in his relation to the world as created; while *six* is the number of man in his opposition to and independence of God. It is the number of things that have a beginning, of things that are made, of material things, and matter itself. It is the number of *material completeness*. Hence it is the *world number*, and especially the "city" number.

The ***fourth* day saw the *material creation* finished** (for on the *fifth* and *sixth* days it was only the *furnishing* and *peopling* of the earth with living creatures). The sun, moon, and stars completed the work, and they were to give light upon the earth which had been created, and to rule over the day and over the night (Genesis 1:14-19).

*Four* is the number of the great elements—earth, air, fire, and water.

*Four* are the regions of the earth—north, south, east, and west.

*Four* are the divisions of the day—morning, noon, evening, and midnight. Or in our Lord's words, when He speaks of His coming at evening, midnight, cock-crowing, or in the morning (Mark 13:35). We are never to put off His coming in our minds beyond tomorrow morning.

*Four* are the seasons of the year—spring, summer, autumn, and winter.

*Four* are the great variations of the lunar phases.

* **The Number Five**

*Five* is four *plus* one (4+1). We have had hitherto the [three persons](http://www.biblestudy.org/basicart/is-god-a-mysterious-trinity-no-one-can-understand.html) of the [Godhead](http://www.biblestudy.org/maturart/are-jesus-and-god-the-father-one-god.html), and their manifestation in creation. Now we have a further revelation of a People called out from mankind, redeemed and saved, to walk with God from earth to heaven. Hence, Redemption follows creation. Inasmuch as in consequence of the [fall of man](http://www.biblestudy.org/ychoice/did-god-want-adam-and-eve-to-sin.html) creation came under the curse and was "**made subject to vanity**," therefore man and creation must be redeemed. Thus we have:

1. Father
2. Son
3. Spirit
4. Creation
5. Redemption

These are the five great mysteries, and ***five* is therefore the number of** [**GRACE**](http://www.biblestudy.org/theplainertruth/what-is-grace-and-why-does-god-give-it-to-man.html).

If *four* is the number of the world, then it represents man's weakness, and helplessness, and vanity, as we have seen.

But four *plus* one (4+1=5) is significant of Divine strength added to and made perfect in that weakness; of omnipotence combined with the impotence of earth; of Divine *favor* uninfluenced and invincible.

* **The Number Six**

Six is either 4 *plus* 2, *i.e.*, man's world [(4)](http://www.biblestudy.org/bibleref/meaning-of-numbers-in-bible/4.html) with man's enmity to God [(2)](http://www.biblestudy.org/bibleref/meaning-of-numbers-in-bible/2.html) brought in: or it is 5 *plus* 1, the [grace of God](http://www.biblestudy.org/theplainertruth/what-is-grace-and-why-does-god-give-it-to-man.html) made of none effect by man's addition to it, or perversion, or corruption of it: or it is 7 *minus* 1, *i.e.*, man's coming short of spiritual perfection. In any case, therefore, it has to do with *man*; it is the number of imperfection; the human number; the number of MAN as destitute of God, without God, without Christ.

* **The Number Seven**

We come now to the great number of ***spiritual perfection***. A number which, therefore, occupies so large a place in the works, and especially in the Word of God as being inspired by the Holy Spirit.

In the *first* part of this book we have enlarged somewhat on the importance of this number in Nature and in [Grace](http://www.biblestudy.org/theplainertruth/what-is-grace-and-why-does-god-give-it-to-man.html), so that we need not here repeat many of the interesting facts already given.

As a number the actual word and number "Seven" is used as *no other number* is. *Seven* and its compounds occur in multiples of seven in the Old Testament.

*Seven* occurs 287 times, or 7 x 41.

"*Seventh*," the fractional part, occurs 98 times, or 7 x 14.

"*Seven-fold*," occurs 7 times.

The above three numbers together are of course a multiple of *seven*, but a very remarkable one, 287 + 98 + 7 = 392, and 392 is 72 + 73, or 8 times the square of *seven* (72x8).

Then again *seven*, in combination with other numbers, is remarkable, such as Fifty *and seven*, a Hundred *and seven*, etc. There are 112 of these combinations, or 7 x 16.

"*Seventy*" occurs 56 times, or 7 x 8.

"*Seventy*," in combination with other numbers, occurs 35 times, or 7 x 5.

It is, however, when we come to consider its *significance* that the true glories of its ***spiritual perfection*** are revealed.

We have just seen that *six* is the number which is stamped upon all things *human*, as being emphatically the number of *man*. The two numbers, [6 and 7](http://www.biblestudy.org/bibleref/meaning-of-numbers-in-bible/6and7.html) are further discussed in its own chapter.

**Seven, by Itself**

But now turning to the number *Seven*, we must first consider the meaning of the word.

In the Hebrew, seven is *shevah*. It is from the root *savah*, *to be full* or *satisfied, have enough of.* Hence the meaning of the word "seven" is dominated by this root, for on the *seventh* day God rested from the work of Creation. It was **full and complete**, and **good and perfect**. **Nothing could be added to it or taken from it without marring it.** Hence the word *Shavath*, *to cease, desist, rest*, and *Shabbath, Sabbath*, or day of *rest*. This root runs through various languages; *e.g.*, Sanscrit, *saptan*; Zend., *hapta*; Greek *hepta*; Latin, *septem*. All these preserve the "t," which in the Semitic and Teutonic languages is dropped out; *e.g.* Gothic, *sibun*; German, *sieben*; English, *seven*.

It is *seven*, therefore, that stamps with **perfection and completeness** that in connection with which it is used. Of *time*, it tells of the Sabbath, and marks off the week of seven days, which, artificial as it may seem to be, is universal and immemorial in its observance amongst all nations and in all times. It tells of that eternal Sabbath-keeping which remains for the people of God in all its everlasting perfection.

In the creative works of God, *seven* completes the colors of the spectrum and [rainbow](http://www.biblestudy.org/question/what-does-a-rainbow-symbolize-in-bible.html), and satisfies in music the notes of the scale. In each of these the *eighth* is only a repetition of the *first*.

Another meaning of the root *shavagh* is ***to swear*, or *make an oath***. It is clear from its first occurrence in Genesis 21:31, "**They sware both of them**," that this oath was based upon the "**seven ewe lambs**" (Genesis 21:28-30), which point to the idea of *satisfaction* or *fulness* in an *oath*. It was the *security, satisfaction*, and *fulness* of the obligation, or completeness of the bond, which caused the same word to be used for both the number *seven* and an *oath*; and hence it is written, "**an oath for confirmation is an end of all strife**." Beer-*sheba, the well of the oath*, is the standing witness of the spiritual perfection of the number *seven*.

(See [Bible Study Org. - Numbers in Bible Defined, #7](http://www.biblestudy.org/bibleref/meaning-of-numbers-in-bible/7.html) for more examples.)

* **The Number Eight**

In Hebrew the number eight is *sh'moneh*, from the root *shah'meyn*, "to make fat," "cover with fat," "to super-abound." As a participle it means "one who abounds in strength," etc. As a noun it is "superabundant fertility," "oil," etc. So that as a numeral it is the superabundant number. As *seven* was so called because the seventh day was the day of completion and rest, so ***eight*, as the eighth day, was over and above this perfect completion**, and was indeed the ***first* of a new series**, as well as being the *eighth*. We consider the connection between [8 and 7](http://www.biblestudy.org/bibleref/meaning-of-numbers-in-bible/8and7.html) in another section.

**Eight by Itself**

It is 7 *plus* 1. Hence it is the number specially associated with *Resurrection* and *Regeneration*, and the beginning of a new era or order.

* **The Number Nine**

The number *nine* is a most remarkable number in many respects. It is held in great reverence by all who study the occult sciences; and in mathematical science it possesses properties and powers which are found in no other number.\*

\*Among others may be mentioned (1) that the sum of the digits which form its multiples are themselves always a multiple of *nine*; *e.g.*, 2 x 9 = 18 (and 1+8=9); 3 x 9 = 27 (and 2+7=9); 4 x 9 = 36 (and 3+6=9); 5 x 9 = 45 (and 4+5=9), etc., etc.; and so with the larger numbers: 52843 x 9 = 475587 (and 4+7+5+5+8+7=36, and 3+6=9). (2) The sum of its multiples through the nine digits = 405, or 9 times 45.

It is the *last* of the digits, and thus marks the *end*; and is significant of the ***conclusion*** of a matter.

It is akin to the number *six*, six being the sum of its factors (3x3=9, and 3+3=6), and is thus significant of the *end of man*, and the summation of all man's works. ***Nine* is, therefore, the number of finality or judgment.**

**The Number of Finality or Judgment**

The number of finality or [judgment](http://www.biblestudy.org/bible-study-by-topic/proverbs/justice-judgment.html) is committed unto Jesus as "**the Son of man**" (John 5:27; Acts 17:31). It marks the **completeness, the end and issue of all things as to man—the judgment of man and all his works.**

* **The Number Ten**

It has been already pointed out that *ten* is one of the perfect numbers, and **signifies *the******perfection of Divine order***, commencing, as it does, an altogether new series of numbers. The first decade is the representative of the whole numeral system, and originates the system of calculation called "decimals," because the whole system of numeration consists of so many *tens*, of which the first is a type of the whole.

**Completeness of order, marking the entire round of anything, is, therefore, the ever-present signification of the number *ten*.** It implies that **nothing is wanting; that the number and order are perfect; that the whole cycle is complete.**

* **The Number Eleven**

If *ten* is the number which marks the perfection of Divine *order*, then ***eleven* is an *addition* to it, subversive of and undoing that order.** If ***twelve* is the number which marks the perfection of Divine *government***, then eleven falls short of it. So that whether we regard it as being 10 + 1, or 12 - 1, **it is the number which marks *disorder, disorganization, imperfection*, and *disintegration*.**

There is not much concerning it in the Word of God, but what there is, is significant, especially as a *factor*.

* **The Number Twelve**

Twelve is a perfect number, **signifying *perfection of government***, or of ***governmental perfection***. It is found as a multiple in all that has to do with *rule*. The sun which "rules" the day, and the moon and stars which "govern" the night, do so by their passage through the *twelve* signs of the Zodiac which completes the great circle of the heavens of 360 (12 x 30) degrees or divisions, and thus govern the year.

*Twelve* is the *product* of 3 (the perfectly Divine and heavenly number) and 4 (the earthly, the number of what is material and organic).

While *seven* is composed of 3 *added* to 4, *twelve* is 3 *multiplied* by 4, and hence denotes that which can scarcely be explained in words, but which the spiritual perception can at once appreciate, *viz*., *organization*, the products denoting production and multiplication and increase of all that is contained in the two numbers separately. The 4 is generally prominently seen in the *twelve*.

[**Bible Study Org. - Numbers in Bible Defined**](http://www.biblestudy.org/bibleref/meaning-of-numbers-in-bible/introduction.html)