

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a white ceramic mug. The mug is in the foreground, slightly out of focus. In the background, an open book is visible, with text on the pages. The lighting is soft, and the overall tone is calm and contemplative.

HEBREW NUMEROLOGY AND THE BIBLE

By R. Baruch, PhD

Hebrew Numerology and the Bible

One: G-d

Two: Two divergent opinions, or differences

Three: Testing, revealing, proving, documenting, victory and if applied to G-d, holiness

Four: The world, four is the global number

Five: Incompletion or lacking

Six: Grace

Seven: Holiness, sanctification, purpose, and being set apart for a purpose (whether good or evil)

Eight: The Kingdom of G-d, redemption, and newness or renewal

Nine: Work, deed, outcome, result....

Ten: Completion, wholeness, in a general sense, entirety....

Twelve: People, the people of G-d

Thirteen: Unity between man and G-d, good things happen

Fourteen: A double blessing or G-d's providence

Seventeen: An emphasis on the meaning of the number seven, i.e. thoroughly sanctified, or completely or entirely set apart for a purpose

Eighteen: Life (according to Jewish tradition)

Thirty: Death

Forty: Transition or change

Fifty: Freedom and liberty

Numbers appear in the Scripture much more often than most people may think. It is important to realize that numbers can and frequently do convey information which can figure greatly in arriving at the proper interpretation of a given passage of Scripture. In the same way that every word and every aspect of a word can provide insight to the one who interprets the Bible, so too is it necessary for the Bible student to understand the meaning of numbers.

Numerology can be abused and used by those who are not followers of the True Living G-d; therefore, it is important to state that the meaning of numbers which

will be provided in this article will be supported by Biblical texts alone and not the same meanings which may be traditional among Judaism or Christianity. One should be cautioned not to apply the significance of numbers to the occurrence of such numbers outside the Scriptures. For example, a person's birthday will not have any connection to the Biblical significance for that number. Only when a number appears in the Biblical text should one seek to discover if the number has any relevance to the interpretation of that particular number.

ONE: Refers to HaShem (G-d), Who is One. This number can also refer to unity. The first place the number "one" occurs is in Genesis 1:5. There one reads, "*And there was an evening and there was a morning— one day*". Later on in this same book of Genesis, it is stated concerning the man and his wife, "*And they became one flesh*" (Genesis 2:24). It is very significant that in both of these examples there was a multiplicity for the subject. In the first example, the evening and the morning became one day and in the second example, it was Adam and Eve who became one flesh.

One of the most famous passages in the Torah concerning HaShem is Deuteronomy 6:4 which states, "*Hear O Israel the L-rd your G-d the L-rd is One.*" The question which a person must ask himself is what is the connection between the use of the Hebrew word אחד "one" which identifies a multiplicity being one and the fact that the L-rd G-d of Israel is One? The answer is that the Hebrew word אחד can relate to the concept for one as in "unification". There is another Hebrew word which could have been used if the author wanted to refer to an absolute oneness or a singleness. This is the Hebrew word יחיד. In fact, there is a well-known prayer in Judaism which states, "אחד ואין יחיד כיחודו". This phrase should be translated as, "(G-d is) One and there is no singularity as His singularity." The idea that is being expressed in this prayer is that the L-rd G-d of Israel is One; but not an absolute One; rather there is a uniqueness and a complexity to His Oneness.

The number one is frequently employed to express in the Scriptures one object, such as one man or one tabernacle. This usage would be the simple or common purpose that the number one or for that matter any number, would appear in a Biblical text. Often the appearance of a number does not contain any of the significance that Hebrew numerology might offer. Therefore, the reader must always consider when coming across a verse which contains a number, that the number only expresses an amount and no additional significance.

Because the number one is often associated with G-d, there is a unique phenomenon in the Scriptures concerning this number. Sometimes the number one is employed to express a unique relationship that the object has to HaShem. For example,

"And it will be one day, it will be known to HaShem..." Zechariah 14:7

In the text above, Zechariah could have stated simply, *"And it will be a day..."* The fact that the prophet said *"one day"* is to convey that this day is uniquely related to G-d. Similarly, it is stated by the prophet Ezekiel in chapter 37 *"one King"*, *"one nation"* and *"one Shepherd"* (see Ezekiel 37:22, 24). Each of these objects—King, nation and Shepherd—have a connection to HaShem. The King and Shepherd is Messiah Yeshua, the Son of G-d and the one nation is Israel, the people of G-d.

TWO: The classic example for the number "two" is found in Matthew chapter 26. There Yeshua says to His disciples,

"You know that after two days comes the Passover, and the Son of Man will be given over for crucifixion." Matthew 26:2

The phrase *"after two days"* is somewhat meaningless because *after two days* can mean three or more days. The period is unspecified. The reason for such ambiguous language is because the purpose of the number two in this passage is not solely numerical. This means that the text is not intending to provide the reader with some definite information concerning a time period. Rather, the purpose of the number two in this context is one of the numerological meanings of the number two. Often the number two relates to two divergent opinions. In the aforementioned verse, the author wants to inform the reader that there are two very different understandings for this coming Passover. Yeshua wants to emphasize that He is going up to Jerusalem in order to die as the true Passover sacrifice. Even though Yeshua states this emphatically, the disciples did not receive this. In fact, the disciples did not perceive at all what was going to take place during Passover in regard to Yeshua. In other words, Yeshua and the disciples have two divergent opinions concerning the Passover.

This same principle is also found in the Hebrew Bible (Old Covenant). In the book of Amos one reads,

"Can two walk together without them having agreed" Amos 3:3

The word which was translated into English with the phrase *"them having agreed"* is נועדו. The root of this word is יעד which relates to a specific destination. The word which precedes this word is בלתי and in this context the word implies a change to the condition. In other words, had there not been a change in the condition, then the two could not walk together, i.e. they could not have arrived at the common destination.

The concept of divergent or different is also seen in the book of Genesis. In speaking about the sun and moon one reads, *"And G-d made two great lights..."* (Genesis 1:16). Obviously the sun and moon are very different, as one is a source of light, while the latter just reflects light. Also in the book of Genesis, one

encounters the account of the flood. Here Noah is commanded to bring onto the ark two sorts of each type of animal. In this passage, the two relates to two **different** (or divergent) kinds of the same sort, i.e. male and female. Likewise two angels came to Sodom, demonstrating that the people of Sodom had a very different way of living from that of the Law of G-d. Once again, the reader should not assume that every occurrence of the number two in the Bible demands this interpretation. However, one will find in a great majority of Biblical passages, the reader will be assisted in arriving at the proper interpretation, when he considers this divergent quality for the number two.

THREE: The number "three" is one of the most significant numbers in the Scriptures. Its primary purpose is for the sake of revealing or documenting something as fact (**testing** in order to validate something). It is also connected to the outcome of the will of G-d. One of the most famous occurrences for the number three is found in the book of Jonah, where Jonah is in the belly of the fish "*three days and three nights.*" A major aspect of the book of Jonah is that the prophet was fleeing from the presence of HaShem. Instead of Jonah going to Nineveh as G-d had commanded, the prophet desired not to obey this commandment, even if it meant that his relationship with G-d would be destroyed. HaShem decided to **test** in order to see if Jonah really preferred to end his relationship with G-d rather than go to Nineveh. By placing Jonah in the belly of the fish for three days and three nights, it would be revealed whether or not it was true that Jonah wanted to end his relationship with G-d over this commandment to go to Nineveh. It is most significant that immediately after (in the next verse) the reader is informed that Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three days and three nights. What does Jonah do? The text states that Jonah prayed to the L-rd his G-d from within the fish. Hence, the three days and three nights ultimately revealed, proved, or documented that what Jonah said he wanted was not true. One could also say that Jonah was tested for those three days and three nights and the test results showed that he did not want to end his relationship with G-d and in the end Jonah went to Nineveh.

In a similar manner, Peter rejects Yeshua's statement that he will deny Him. Therefore Yeshua says to Peter that he will deny Him three times. These three denials prove, document, and reveal to the reader that Yeshua's statement was factual. It is not a coincidence that when Yeshua reinstated Peter after the resurrection, He asked him three times, "*do you love Me?*" In this context, Yeshua was **testing** the validity of Peter's statement.

Yeshua also revealed that He, in a similar manner to Jonah being in the belly of the fish three days and three nights, would be in the belly of the earth three days and three nights and then rise from the dead. In this passage, the number three not only documents the fact that He died, but also the resurrection. It is also very significant that Yeshua rose on the third day.

The number three also relates to victory, as in the completion of G-d's purposes and plans. In the book of Genesis, one reads about the offering of Isaac. This passage has great theological significance and is one of the first passages which is read in the morning synagogue service each day. This section begins with HaShem commanding Abraham to offer his son as a burnt offering on one of the mountains in the land of Moriah. The climax of this portion of Scripture comes about on the third day. It was on the third day that HaShem provided the ram so that Isaac would live. In this passage, Isaac represents the promise (of G-d) which would have died (ended) had not HaShem acted. There is not a conflict between the two concepts for the number three of victory (the fulfillment of G-d's will) and revelation or documentation. Often, it is the climax of what HaShem is wanting to do which is simply being revealed or proved with the use of the number three.

Please note that when the number three is applied to G-d, then it can relate to holiness; whereas the number seven relates to holiness when this number is in reference to man (see explanation for the number seven).

FOUR: The number "four" has a global significance or relates to the world. There are some common and similar expressions in the Scripture which are "*the four winds of the heavens*" or "*the four corners of the earth*" or "*the four ends of the heavens*." Each of these expressions relate to the earth or the world in a collective manner. In the book of Daniel chapter 2, one reads about a dream which Nebuchadnezzar dreamed. In this dream, he saw an image set up and this image had four distinct parts. Each of these parts represented an empire which ruled over the world.

In the book of Deuteronomy chapter 22, Israel is told to make a four corner garment and place a tzitzit upon each corner. The tzitzit represents the Biblical commandments of the Torah (see Numbers chapter 15). These commandments are understood as being a framework for life in this world, as when one dies, the tzitzit are removed from one's four corner garment for burial.

In the books of Ezekiel and Revelation, one encounters the four beasts which are in the heavens and never cease to praise HaShem. It is understood that the four beasts who continuously say, "*Holy, Holy, Holy is the L-rd G-d of Hosts, Who was and is and is to come*" (see Revelation 4:6-9) are related to the will of G-d for all the world (His creation). In a similar manner, one of the Seraphim called to another saying, "*Holy, Holy, Holy, is the L-rd of Hosts, all of the earth (shall be) with His Glory.*"

FIVE: In order for a person to understand the meaning of the number "five", one must first realize that the meaning of the number ten is completion or wholeness. Since five is half of ten, the idea is that the number five represents incompleteness or that which is lacking. A Scripture that expresses this idea is found in the book of John. At a place called Beit Chesed (Bethesda), there was a pool whose waters

healed the sick. The reader is told that around the pool there were five porches. It is stated that on these five porches laid individuals who were not whole. Some were paralyzed and the rest of them had a variety of health problems. It is not a chance happening that these people who were lacking their health were on five porches. Another well-known passage that contains the number five is found in I Samuel 17. In the account of David and Goliath, David picks up five stones (see I Samuel 17:40). Why is the reader told the specific number and not simply that David had gathered a few stones? The answer is to assist the reader in understanding that the stone which David hurled at Goliath was not the source of victory. Rather, this was only the means that G-d used to accomplish His victory. In other words, the stone and even David, who hurled this stone at Goliath, were insufficient to bring about this victory.

One of the first places where the idea of "lacking" or "incompleteness" is seen in regard to the number five is in the book of Genesis. In chapter 18, two angels are sent to Sodom to destroy the city. G-d tells Abraham that if 50 righteous people are found in the city, then the city will be free of this punishment (We will learn that the number 50 is related to freedom when this number is studied). This is revealed to Abraham and he responds saying, perhaps the city will lack 50 righteous people by five. It is significant that Abraham uses the number five when referring to the city lacking enough righteous people.

SIX: The number "six" relates to the Grace of G-d. It is not a coincidence that man was created on the sixth day of the week. The fact that man became a living being on the sixth day reveals that only by means of the grace of G-d will man experience true life, i.e. eternal life, through a relationship with G-d. In the book of Isaiah, there is a passage which is rich in theological truth. In chapter six, one reads about the death of King Uzziah. It is this statement about Uzziah's death that sets the context for this passage. Next, the reader is given a vision of heaven with the L-rd sitting on His throne. It is said about G-d that He is high and lifted up. The sages understand that the purpose of this phrase (high and lifted up) is to convey to the reader that there is a large separation between man and G-d. There is also mentioned in this vision of heaven that there were seraphim (a type of angel) present around the throne. It is revealed to the reader that each of the seraphim had six wings. The seraphim would call to one another saying,

"Holy, holy, holy, is the L-rd of Hosts, full is the entire earth of His glory."

Isaiah 6:3

As a result of this proclamation concerning the Holiness of G-d, the heavens shook and were filled with smoke. To this, the man Isaiah stated,

"Woe is me, for I am undone, for a man of unclean lips am I and in the midst of a people with unclean lips I dwell; for the King— the L-rd of Hosts, my eyes have seen." Isaiah 6:5

Isaiah is responding to the fact that he has just heard that the whole world is going to be full of the glory of G-d. It was this vision of a Holy G-d, Who was high and lifted up, that revealed to him his own sinfulness and the sinfulness of his people. His statement in verse five shows his hopelessness in and of himself. However, the next occurrence in this vision focuses upon the seraphim which had six wings. One of the seraphim flew to the altar and removed a burning ember and then touched the lips of Isaiah with it. Because of this act, the reader is informed that the iniquity of Isaiah is removed and his sin has been atoned. The point is that there is a direct connection to the six-winged seraph (seraphim in the plural) and the removal of iniquity and the atoning of sin. Theologically, one knows that the removal of iniquity and the atoning of sin are only the result of the grace of G-d.

Another reason that the number six is related to the grace of G-d is seen in the fact that there were six cities of refuge. A city of refuge was a type of safe haven for one who had killed an individual without direct intent of doing so. It was not seen as an accident; rather the Torah calls the killer a murderer. A family member of the one killed was commanded to slay the murderer; however the murderer could flee to one of the six cities of refuge and be safe within the walls of this city. In other words, although the murderer should die as the consequence of his action, he finds "grace" in the city of refuge. It is not a coincidence that there are six cities of refuge.

In the book of Ruth, the concept of redemption is a major theme. When Boaz agrees to act as the kinsman redeemer to Ruth, the reader is told that he gives her six measures of barley (Ruth 3:15). This again is not a chance happening. It is to reveal to the reader the relationship between grace (that which the number six expresses) and redemption. When speaking about the Exodus from Egypt, which also came about through redemption (the Passover sacrifice), one finds that 600,000 men from the Hebrews came out of Egypt, i.e. experienced redemption (see Exodus 12:37). Once again the number six appears (600,000) to emphasize the connection between grace and redemption.

In the New Testament there are several places where the number six appears and once again the context is grace. In John's Gospel, the writer begins to speak about Passover. It has already been stated that Passover is known as the Festival of Redemption. In order to remind the reader of the connection between redemption and grace, John writes,

"Therefore Yeshua, six days before the Passover, came to Bethany...." John 12:1

Another interesting occurrence of the number six is also found in John's Gospel. Here the context is also Passover. In this section, Yeshua speaks about the destruction of the Temple which took forty and six years to build. He states that He will raise it up in three days (**Here Yeshua is referring to His body**). How do these numbers assist the reader to arrive at a proper interpretation of the passage? Although we have yet to study the significance of the number forty, we will learn that forty relates to a **transition** or **change**. John chapter two alludes clearly to the destruction of the Temple. Why will the Temple be destroyed? The answer is multifaceted. First, the message which the Temple service was suppose to convey to the people was so distorted by the corruption that characterized the Temple in Yeshua's day. Second, the time was at hand for the grace of G-d to be revealed. It is important for the reader to remember that when Yeshua alluded to the Temple, He mentioned the forty and six years that it took for it to be built. Why was this fact necessary to be included in this passage? It is a hermeneutical aid to the reader. Forty and six speaks about a change or transition (the significance of the number forty) to grace (the meaning of the number six) and away from the sacrificial system of the Temple. The number three also appears in this discourse (see John 2:19). As we have already learned, the number three expresses a revealing or documentation. Hence, Yeshua was revealing (3) this change (40) from the sacrifices at the Temple, to the grace (6) of G-d, that His resurrection would document (3).

The final example which we will examine from the New Testament is located in Matthew's Gospel. In Matthew chapter 27, the context is once again Passover. In the passage in question, one reads,

"And from the sixth hour darkness was upon all the earth until the ninth hour."
Matthew 27:45

Matthew's Gospel was written in a manner in which those from a Jewish background could easily grasp the significance of what he was stating. Jewish sages of old pointed out that because the Exodus from Egypt took place in the night, there was a connection between darkness (the night) and redemption (the Exodus from Egypt). In order to convey to Israel that this One Who hung upon the Cross was in fact the Redeemer, HaShem caused a miracle to take place. As the verse states, there was darkness upon **all** the earth until the ninth hour. Although we have yet to study the significance of the number nine, let it suffice to say now that the number nine relates to "outcome" or "deed". Hence, the sixth hour is mentioned to relate to the grace of G-d and the ninth hour is recorded to reveal what was the outcome of the death of Yeshua, i.e. Redemption.

SEVEN: Christianity frequently teaches that the meaning of the number seven is completion. This is not correct. The number seven relates to "rest" and "holiness". The best example of this is the many places that the number seven is used in regard to the Shabbat (the Sabbath day). The primary idea of the Shabbat is rest

and holiness. Please note that there is also an etymological connection between the concept of holiness and sanctification. In several passages of Scripture, one reads that HaShem has sanctified the seventh day or He has made it holy. In addition to this, work is forbidden on the Shabbat. In fact, both Biblically and traditionally, the Shabbat is seen as a day of rest.

Finally, the number seven can relate to perfection. Obviously there is an association between holiness and perfection.

What is the Scriptural basis for those who teach that the number seven relates to completion? These scholars also refer to the Shabbat. In the book of Genesis, one reads,

"The heavens and the earth were finished (completed) and all their hosts. And G-d completed on the seventh day His work which He did and He ceased on the seventh day from all His work which He did." Genesis 2:1-2

There certainly seems to be a Biblical basis for associating the number seven with completion. However, in the next verse it is stated,

"And G-d blessed the seventh day and He sanctified it (literally made it Holy) for in it, He ceased (rested) from all His work which G-d created to do." Genesis 2:3

Now we have two concepts related to seven, completion and holiness. When one examines the number seven in additional passages, the concept of holiness (sanctification) and perfection appear much more frequently. Before looking at a few such passages, let us refer to an additional verse that relates the number to completion. In Revelation 10:7, one reads that in the days of the seventh angel, the mystery of G-d should be finished (completed). The word which is translated "finished" or "completed" is the Greek word **τελέω** which has great theological significance. There are two well known passages where this word appears. One is found in Romans chapter 10. Here the word in question is in the form of a noun. Although it is frequently translated as the "end", it is important for the reader to know that within this word there is the idea of "goal", "purpose", or "objective". The verse from Romans reads literally,

"For an end of Torah (is) Messiah for righteousness, for everyone who believes."
Romans 10:4

It is significant that there is no definite article (the) prior to the word "end". If the proper interpretation is that Yeshua brings an end to the Law, then the verse should state, "For **the** end of the Torah is Messiah...." Most English translations insert the definite article which the Greek text does not have. It is awkward to state, "an end". In actuality, Messiah did not bring an end to the Law; the Torah commandments continued to be practiced by the followers of Messiah (see Paul in

Acts 21:20-24). The proper translation for this verse when understanding the fuller meaning of the word **ΤΕΛΟΣ** is,

"For an objective of the Law is Messiah; for righteousness for everyone who believes."

The objective or purpose of the Law is not solely that people would turn to faith in Messiah. Naturally there are many purposes contained in the Torah. However, the Law reveals our unrighteousness and causes us to seek redemption by means of the Messiah. Although the Torah defines what is righteous (and unrighteous), it is only Yeshua Who can bring about righteousness in a person. Of course as the end of the verse states, Messiah only mediates righteousness for the one who believes.

The other passage that contains the word **ΤΕΛΕΩ** is John 19:30. In this verse ,Yeshua is on the tree and knowing all things have been accomplished, He said, *"It is finished"*. The emphasis of this statement is not that His work of redemption is complete, although this is true. Rather, this work was done in a perfect manner. Holiness is also related to purpose. It is very important for the Biblical student to understand that Holiness is always related to a purpose. As was briefly mentioned earlier, there is a strong relationship between the terms holiness and sanctification. In fact, both in Greek and in Hebrew the word sanctification is derived from the word holy. Hence, when Yeshua cried out, *"It is finished"*, He is referring to the work that G-d the Father had set Him apart (sanctified Him) to do.

When considering another verse which has the number seven, the matter becomes clearer. Yeshua fed a multitude of 4,000 people from the seven loaves and few fishes. This is of course different from the feeding of the five thousand. After the multitude had eaten and were satisfied, the reader is told that seven full baskets were taken up. What is the meaning of the number seven in this passage? First, the number 4,000 (the number four, a thousand times) relates to the world. In examining the passage, perhaps a case could be made for asserting that Yeshua had come for the whole (complete) world. However, when taking into account the context of this section, another interpretation seems to fit better. Yeshua, in the previous paragraph, had healed the lame, deaf, blind, and the maimed. The emphasis is not simply that He had made them whole, but these are said to have glorified the G-d of Israel. In other words, these who were incapable of worshiping G-d, were now able to do so. The point is that Yeshua did not come to simply minister to the entire (complete) world, but to make the world holy, that is to sanctify the world according to His purposes. Likewise, when in the book of Revelation the seven spirits are mentioned or the seven menorahs, the idea is not completion, but holiness and sanctification.

When the number ten is studied, it will be demonstrated that the concept of completion is much better applied to this number, rather than seven.

EIGHT: The number eight both in Judaism and Christianity expresses "newness". Many scholars call it the number of redemption or the Kingdom number. A common use for the number eight relates to circumcision, for a male child was circumcised on the eighth day. It was on the eighth day the male child was also given a name. It was through the covenant of circumcision and the giving of a Hebrew name that the child entered into a new relationship as a member of the Children of Israel. Circumcision also relates to the death of the flesh (carnal nature) which is one of the primary outcomes of redemption. Not living according to the flesh expresses a Kingdom lifestyle. Before examining a few examples from the Scripture, let it be stated that early churches were often built with eight walls to convey faith in the resurrection (the Kingdom hope). The Bible states that Yeshua rose from the dead on the first day of the week. However, when also considering the prior week, seven days and adding the first day of the week, the total is eight. Therefore, Christianity has used the number eight to convey the concept of resurrection and not only the resurrection of Yeshua, but all who will enter into the Kingdom. Resurrection and Kingdom are often linked together in both Judaism and Christianity.

In the book of Leviticus, Moses provides a list of G-d's festival days. The last one is known as the Eighth Day Assembly (see Leviticus 23:36). Although very little is stated in the Scripture concerning this festival, it is treated as a Shabbat and called a holy convocation. Whereas Christianity ignores this day altogether, Judaism places great significance upon it and understands its message as related to the Kingdom.

A classic example of the number eight is found in Acts chapter 9. There, a man paralyzed for eight years, was healed by Peter. There is no coincidence that in the next passage the message found is resurrection. In 1 Peter 3:20, eight individuals are mentioned. These are Noah and his wife and their three sons and their wives. It was with these eight people that HaShem began humanity anew. This is one of the places that one can see how the concept of newness is related to the number eight. The vast majority of times the number eight appears in the Scripture it is part of a composite number. For example, in John chapter five a man was paralyzed for 30 and 8 years (38). This occurrence provides a good illustration of how composite numbers should be handled.

Although the number 30 has as a general meaning of death, it is possible to understand it as multiplications of five and six, and three and ten. The idea then would be that when incompleteness (5) meets with the grace of G-d (6), there is a new beginning (8). One could make this interpretation somewhat more spiritual. As sinners we are incomplete (5) for entrance into the Kingdom of G-d, but when we experience the grace of G-d (6), we become a new creation (8) and are no longer incomplete for entrance into the Kingdom.

If one uses the other numbers (3 and 10) the following can be derived from the number 38. As we have learned, the number three expresses the concept of testing. Hence, the number thirty can relate to being thoroughly or completely (10) tested (3). Usually when a person finds himself being tested, he immediately prays for the testing to be stopped or to be removed from the trial. What is being expressed in this example is that one is going to be thoroughly or completely (10) tested (3) and when the purpose for this testing or trial is complete, then this person will have a new beginning (8).

NINE: The number nine is understood in Judaism to express the concepts of work, deed, outcome or result. A common illustration that is offered is a woman is pregnant for nine months and then the outcome / result of this pregnancy is manifested. Although the number appears several times in the Old Covenant, in general it is used to simply express an allotment of time; that is, something that happened in the ninth year. It is when one considers the appearance of the number nine in the New Covenant that the interpretation for the number becomes clear. In the book of Luke, Yeshua ministers to ten lepers. As these ten lepers obey Yeshua's command to go and show themselves to the priests, they were healed. Only one of those who were healed went back to thank Yeshua. The nine apparently continued on towards the priests. The point is that the one leper who returned to Yeshua really was the only one who was changed; the nine were only healed outwardly. Biblically, leprosy is not the disease that most of the world usually assumes, a natural skin ailment that is highly contagious. In the Bible, leprosy is also highly contagious, but its cause is pride and unkind speech. Hence, it was the one who returned to Yeshua that really had been healed not only outwardly, but inwardly too, as he did not think of only being pronounced clean by the priests, but first he wanted to thank Yeshua. Thanksgiving is an act of humility and not pride. The nine who were healed and did not return to Yeshua, only focused on the outcome of the miracle. In other words, they only looked to the deed or the work of Yeshua and not the spiritual aspects of their situation.

When studying the number six, we also spoke about the number nine. Please note that many English translations, even some of the more literal ones, still make interpretations for the reader which are not warranted. This is often the case when hours (time of day) are mentioned. The ninth hour is actually three in the afternoon. Therefore, instead of leaving the text in its original manner, many translations prefer to change the ninth hour to three in the afternoon without informing the reader of the literal rendering. In doing so, the translation robs the reader of being able to benefit from the significance that a proper understanding of numbers adds to the text.

In the example given in our study of the number six, it is stated that there was darkness over the earth from approximately the sixth hour until the ninth (see Matthew 27:45). It was interpreted that the use of the numbers six and nine

together expressed that Yeshua being on the Cross was the deed / work (9) that made the grace of G-d (6) possible. Likewise, in the next verse (Matthew 27:46), Yeshua cries out at about the ninth hour, "My G-d, My G-d, why have You forsaken Me." This statement speaks about the outcome / result of sin. Not Yeshua's sin (G-d forbid), as He was without sin! However, Scripture states that this One Who knew no sin; that G-d made Him sin for us, so we could become the righteousness of G-d in Him (2 Cor. 5:21). The point is that Scripture mentions the ninth hour to reveal the outcome of Yeshua becoming sin on our behalf, i.e. His death. Sin and death are inherently related in the Bible, so it is also at the ninth hour the outcome / consequence of sin, is manifested. It is clear that Yeshua dying at the ninth hour was not a random happening. It pointed to the work of the Messiah, dying for the sins of the world.

TEN: The number ten relates to completion, wholeness, or speaking about something in its entirety. In Luke's Gospel, Yeshua uses the number ten frequently in His parables or when recounting an event. Yeshua spoke of ten coins (chapter 15), ten lepers (chapter 17), ten servants (chapter 19), and ten units of money (chapter 19). In Matthew's Gospel, Yeshua refers to ten virgins; while in Mark's Gospel, ten cities. In all of these passages, Yeshua is utilizing the number ten in a collective manner. In other words, He is speaking about ten in a general manner or as a whole.

In the book of Revelation chapters 13 and 17, the number ten appears in reference to ten horns. These ten horns are related to the beast which had also seven heads. These ten horns are ten kings which rule with the beast. Why specifically ten kings? Other than Israel, all the nations of the world are going to serve the beast. Hence, the ten kings represent the world in its entirety or wholeness. In this example, it may be puzzling at first to see why the number seven is used in regard to the beast, as seven relates to holiness or perfection. The solution to this difficulty is found when one remembers that seven also relates to purpose or setting something apart. Hence, the beast is the empire which has as its purpose the exact opposite of the will of G-d, i.e., the beast has been set apart to stand in opposition to the purposes of G-d.

In Hebrew, the word which relates to a pagan temple prostitute is the word that could be translated as a "holy one". Certainly this one is not holy in our understanding of the word; however in Hebrew, the idea which is being expressed by the use of the Hebrew word for "holy" is that this woman has been set apart (sanctified) for a purpose. Obviously a very unholy purpose; yet in Hebrew the word "holy" does not always convey a good or godly purpose, just a purpose.

TWELVE: Naturally, when the number twelve is mentioned, two thoughts enter into one's mind. The first thought is the twelve tribes of Israel and the second is the twelve disciples. Both groups represent the people of G-d. Hence, when the

number twelve appears in the Scriptures, the reader ought to think of the people of G-d in some unique or specific manner.

THIRTEEN: The meaning of the number thirteen is found when the numbers one and twelve are combined. We have learned that twelve refers to the people of G-d and the number one relates to HaShem; therefore, the number thirteen speaks of a unity between G-d and His people. The classic example of this is found in the book of Joshua.

"All the cities of the children of Aaron, the Priests, (were) thirteen and their fields."

Joshua 21:19

The Priests' general calling was to serve in order to bring about unity between HaShem and His people.

The number thirteen is also seen when the people are commanded to make a special offering to HaShem. There is a clear reference to thirteen bulls which were to be offered (see Numbers 29:13-14). Obviously, when the people made a sacrificial offering which was to be a pleasing aroma to HaShem, it is for the purpose of unity. This unity is not simply for the sake of unity, but for a mighty outcome which is the result from such a unity between G-d and His people. What is this outcome? The answer is victory, or the fulfillment of the will of G-d. In the book of Genesis, one reads that Ishmael was circumcised at the age of 13 years. Circumcision expresses the death of the flesh. In other words, the death of the flesh is the outcome of faith, the basis for the Abrahamic covenant. The death of the flesh represents the fulfillment of the will of G-d and the purpose of HaShem entering into a covenantal relationship with man. Again, the fulfillment of G-d's will relates to victory.

This same idea is subtly seen in the account of the walls of Jericho. The Children of Israel were to march around the walls of Jericho one time for six days and on the seventh day (Shabbat) they were commanded to do so seven times. Rabbinical scholars point out that in all, the Children of Israel marched around the city of Jericho 13 times. When they fulfilled the commandment of HaShem, they were united with G-d through obedience to His word, then the walls supernaturally crumbled into dust. This miraculous event gave the Children of Israel victory. Hence, the number thirteen relates to unity between G-d and His people, which brings about victory. In this example, the number 13 was comprised of the numbers six and seven. This reveals another aspect for the number 13. We have seen that unity speaks about the unity between man and G-d. The numbers six and seven are related to this idea. The only way that there can be unity between man and a Holy G-d is when sinners are made holy (7) by the grace of G-d (6).

In the book of Esther the number 13 appears the most—six occurrences in all. Each of these occurrences is in regard to the 13th day of the 12th month. Originally, this date represented the plan of Haman to destroy the Jewish people. It is most significant that this date was chosen in the first month, the month of Nissan, which is the month of redemption, i.e. Passover, for the Jewish people and in the 12th year of the King. The reader needs to remember that the number 12 relates to the people of G-d. Therefore, the message the reader should derive from the verse (Esther 3:7) is that although Haman intended this date to be for the destruction of the Jewish people, HaShem intended it to be for the redemption of His people. In the end, the 13th day became known as the fast of Esther. One of the primary purposes of fasting is to rid oneself from those things that are a hindrance between the one fasting and G-d. Hence, fasting is for the purpose of unity between man and G-d.

FOURTEEN: The idea which is expressed by the number fourteen is a double blessing or an expression of G-d's providence to His people. The Rabbis point out that Jacob worked fourteen years and the outcome of these fourteen years of labor were his two wives, Leah and Rachel. A wife is a helpmate (Genesis 2:18) and the Scripture instructs that he who has found a wife has found a good thing (Proverbs 18:22). Hence, the outcome of these fourteen years of labor was the children of Israel (who were called to bless the world).

Passover is on the 14th day of the Jewish month of Nissan. Here again, according to the Rabbis (Talmud— Rosh HaShana 11a), not only did the first redemption take place on the 14th day of Nissan, so too will the final redemption **רבי יהושוע— בניסן** נגאלו בניסן עתידין ליגאל. The point is that this date, the 14th day of Nissan, will serve as a double blessing or a second expression of providence to His people. The first blessing was the Exodus from Egypt into the Land of Promise, i.e. Israel; and the second blessing will be the Exodus from sin into the Kingdom by means of our Passover Lamb, Yeshua the Messiah.

In a similar fashion, King Solomon dedicated the Temple during the Festival of Tabernacles. This festival is seven days; however, because Solomon wanted to express what a great blessing this was, he in fact celebrated for an additional seven days, i.e. 14 days in total.

In the New Testament, the number 14 appears in the very first chapter of Matthew's Gospel. The reader is told that in Messiah's genealogy, there are 14 generations between Abraham and David and 14 generations between David and the Exile, and 14 generations from the Exile to Messiah. It is understood that the Messiah is the second Redeemer (Moses being the first) and the establishment of the Kingdom, being the role of Messiah, is the second expression of G-d's promise to His people of which the Prophets frequently spoke. **Careful attention reveals that there was actually only 13 generations from the Exile to the birth of**

Messiah. The fact that the text states 14 is not an error. It is a subtle reference to not the first coming of Messiah, but to the second, when the Kingdom will be established. In Judaism, the final generation is often referred to as the next generation, so as to emphasize an expectancy for the Kingdom.

SEVENTEEN: The number seventeen relates to the significance of the numbers ten and seven. In other words, the number 17 expresses complete (10) sanctification. The example that is offered by Judaism is Joseph. In Genesis chapter 37, the reader is informed that he is going to encounter the genealogy of Jacob, but only one descendant is mentioned, Joseph. The first thing that is stated about Joseph is that he was 17 years old (Genesis 37:2). What the reader learns about Joseph is that he goes through a series of trials for several years, all of which prepare him for the purpose of becoming the leader of the world. In other words, Joseph was set apart for a period of sanctification so that he could be prepared for the purpose of G-d.

When examining the Scripture, one finds the number 17 clearly relating to the will of G-d, which relates to divine purpose. Once again, this setting apart for a purpose relates to the Biblical concept of holiness. The Scripture states that the rain began to fall on the 17th day of the month (Genesis 7:11), that the ark came to a rest on the 17th day of the month (Genesis 8:4), Jacob lived in the land of Egypt 17 years (Genesis 47:28), and that Jeremiah bought a field that was related to the will of G-d for 17 shekels (Jeremiah 32:9).

EIGHTEEN: Jewish tradition associates the number eighteen with the concept of life. The primary reason for this is when Hebrew letters are used to convey numbers (each Hebrew letter has a numerical value) the two letters which are used to express the number 18 spell life. In the New Covenant, the number 18 is only found in Luke chapter 13. There it appears three times (Luke 13:4, 11, and 16). Initially, Yeshua spoke about 18 people whom the Tower of Shiloach fell upon and killed. This occurrence of the number 18 would seem to relate to the opposite of life, i.e. death. However, it is important for the reader to understand the emphasis of the first section of this chapter is repentance. Next, Yeshua states, "Unless one repents, he shall perish." The message that Yeshua is teaching is repentance leads to life. The second and third time the number 18 is discussed concerns a woman who has been bound by her infirmity for 18 years. It was on the Shabbat that Yeshua healed her. In healing her, Yeshua remarked that it was proper that this woman be healed on the Shabbat, seeing that she too is a daughter of Abraham and was bound for 18 years.

There are significant terms which Yeshua used in this passage. Shabbat relates to the Kingdom. The woman is called a daughter of Abraham. This term expresses the inheritance of the promise that G-d had made to Abraham, i.e. blessing. And lastly the number 18 is again mentioned. The lesson which the reader should take from this section is that repentance is fundamental to the Kingdom, i.e. the ultimate

outcome of the Abrahamic Covenant. This all speaks to an abundant life which the number 18 conveys.

When examining the more than two dozen occurrences for the number 18 in the Old Covenant, there is no clear connection of this number to life.

THIRTY: The number thirty is understood in Judaism as relating to death. One of the mourning periods is known as a "Shaloshim". This is actually the Hebrew word for 30. The connection between the number 30 and death is seen by the fact that the Children of Israel mourned Aaron for 30 days (see Numbers 20:29). Likewise, when Moses died, the people also mourned him for exactly 30 days (see Deuteronomy 34:8). Another reference to the number 30 relating to death is found in the fact that Joshua took 30,000 men with him to fight Ai the second time (see Joshua 8:3). This time Israel was successful and Ai was put to death. It is significant that the reader is told that 12,000 people died, all the people of Ai (see Joshua 8:25). Here the number 12, as in 12,000, relates to the people, as we learned in our study of the number 12, and the fact that they all died is reflected in the 30,000 (30) soldiers that Joshua took.

In the New Covenant, the reader is told that Judas betrayed Yeshua, delivering Him over to the Jewish leadership to be put to death for 30 pieces of silver (see Matthew 26:15). In the book of Luke, it is revealed that Yeshua was about the age of 30 when He began His ministry. What was the primary aspect of Yeshua's ministry? In other words, what did Yeshua enter into this world to do? The answer is to offer up His life for redemption. Death is the key ingredient in redemption. As one reads, without the shedding of blood (death) there is no redemption.

FORTY: Often people will speak of the number forty as a generational number. There is no evidence for such an interpretation from the Scripture. The number 40 expresses a change or transition. The examples for such a view are seen throughout both the Old and New Covenants.

- It rained for 40 days in the days of Noah (see Genesis 7:12). These rains brought about a transition, HaShem would begin the world again with the family of Noah.
- Moses was on Mount Sinai for 40 days and 40 nights (see Exodus 34:28). Although this was the second time Moses went up to the mountain, it was this time that the Law was actually given to the Children of Israel and a transition was made to Israel being commanded to observe the Law.
- Yeshua was tested in the mountains of Judah for 40 days and 40 nights (see Matthew 4:2) and afterwards He began His ministry. Hence, a transition was made from when Yeshua did not minister, to the time when He began to fulfill His Father's will in a formal way.

- After the resurrection, Yeshua appeared for 40 days (Acts 1:3) and He ascended into the heavens. Yeshua's earthly ministry had finished and there was a transition to His disciples carrying on His work.
- In the account of Absalom, the reader is told that at the end of 40 years (see 2 Samuel 15:7), Absalom requested permission to go to Hebron from his father. Although he said that he wanted to pay his vows, this was said so he could depart and begin his rebellion against David, his father. Why is 40 years mentioned? To what does the 40 years refer? Some commentaries say the 40 years was from when Saul began the monarchy. Whether this is true or not is undetermined. However, what is for sure is that there was a transition in the leadership of Israel. The number 40 appears in verse 7 to assist the reader in identifying this change in leadership.

Numerous other examples could be provided, but these few sufficiently demonstrate the meaning and use of the number 40 in the Scriptures.

FIFTY: When a person hears the number fifty the first thing that should enter his mind is Jubilee, for every 50 years was the Jubilee year. In the book of Leviticus the following is read,

"And you shall sanctify the fiftieth year and you shall call (that year) a year of freedom in the Land for all the ones who dwell in it, it shall be a Jubilee for you...." Leviticus 25:10

The key word in this verse is the Hebrew word, חַיִּיט which means freedom. When one studies the nature of this word for freedom, he will understand the relationship between freedom and the will of G-d. In other words, the freedom that is provided by G-d is so that His will can be realized in one's life. In connection with this understanding is another occurrence of the number 50.

The Torah speaks of three special festivals which every Jewish male, 20 years and older, must go up to Jerusalem to observe. These festivals are Unleavened Bread, Weeks, and Tabernacles. The Feast of Weeks derives its name from the fact that HaShem commanded the Children of Israel to count seven **weeks** and the next day would be the Holy Day. However, during this time, not only were the Children of Israel commanded to count seven weeks, but also 50 days. Hence, an additional name for the Festival of Weeks is Pentecost, or the festival of fifty. Although Judaism traditionally associates this festival with the giving of the Ten Commandments, it is only in the New Covenant that this festival is clearly connected to the giving of the Holy Spirit. It is important for the reader to comprehend that only when one is indwelt by the Holy Spirit can he truly turn away from the bondage of sin and be set free to obey the will of G-d.

Another example from the Scripture is found in the Gospels. Here, Yeshua fed the 5,000 (100 X 50). He had the 5,000 people sit down in groups of 50. Because of this, there is obviously an emphasis on the number 50. One of the theological points which this passage teaches is that when one acts in faith, he is not bound by the things of this world. Rather, he is free, or liberated, to serve G-d.

Conclusion: Numbers can and often do assist the reader in arriving at a more accurate interpretation of Biblical texts. In the examples provided in this article, one learns how to utilize the numbers that appear in the Bible and the rules/methodology for interpreting such numbers. Again, one must remember two important facts: 1) the significance of each number should only be applied to the numbers that appear in the Scriptures and not the numbers that we encounter in everyday life; 2) the significance of each number may not be relevant for every appearance of that number in the Scriptures. Hence, one should be very cautious in applying the significance of numbers when interpreting the Bible.