

Beauties of the Truth

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Thought to be Harmonious with God's Plan of the Ages
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Jehoiada
Two Secret Numbers
The Blood of Atonements (plural)

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Jehoiada

Ahaziah of Israel, the son of Jehoram (son of good king Jehoshaphat of Judah) and Athaliah (Ahab and Jezebel's daughter), reigned only one year. But this was sufficient for the Bible to tell us in 2 Kings 8:27 that he "walked in the way of the house of Ahab, and did evil in the sight of the Lord." This king was killed in battle by Jehu, the only "good" king of Israel, who fought against idolatry. So Athaliah, mother of Ahaziah, determined to seize power. To do this she had to kill all of Ahaziah's children in order to cut off any remaining descendants of David, even though they were her grandchildren. As she was a faithful worshipper of Baal, she did not want anyone in the line of David, who might again be obedient to God, to ascend the throne of Judah.

So were all her grandchildren killed? No, because we are told in 2 Chronicles 22:11, 12:

"But Jehoshabeath, the daughter of the king, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him from among the king's sons that were slain, and put him and his nurse in a bedchamber. So Jehoshabeath, the daughter of king Jehoram, the wife of Jehoiada the priest (for she was the sister of Ahaziah), hid him from Athaliah, so that she slew him not. And he was with them hid in the house of God six years."

Here we are introduced to two people who will play a key role in what follows. Jehoshabeath was the daughter of Jehoram. Was she also the daughter of Athaliah? The Bible is not precise on this, but we will assume that she was because she was the wife of the key person in this study: Jehoiada. Jehoiada was the high priest in the temple at Jerusalem. His name means Jehovah-knows. He held second place in importance in the kingdom after the sovereign. We are reminded, for example, that the one who was closest to David was the high priest Zadok.

Here, however, the most important religious person was Mattan, high priest of Baal. As for Jehoiada, the Bible tells us that he was a man deeply committed to Jehovah. It is not surprising that his righteous influence aroused similar sentiments in his wife Jehoshabeath, even though she was the daughter of idolatrous Athaliah. Let us note that Jehoiada and Jehoshabeath had a son, Zechariah, who will also play a part in this lesson.

JEHOIADA'S CONSPIRACY

Joash was thus raised in secret, in a room adjoining the temple. This is because the temple of Jehovah was probably poorly attended, even abandoned in preference to that of Baal. But when Joash reached the age of seven, Jehoiada decided to take action and put an end to the idolatrous Athaliah. The account in 2 Kings 11 and 2 Chronicles 23 gives us the details of the high priest's conspiracy.

We notice that Jehoiada began by telling his scheme to five captains who brought faithful Levites from throughout the land into the temple. He gave them arms which were stored in the temple. Then he crowned Joash as king, with protection from the armed Levites. The shouts raised by the people, who recognized a descendant of David, attracted Athaliah to the temple, where she dared not enter with her armed guards. This was precisely what Jehoiada had hoped she would do. Isolated and without protection, she was arrested, brought outside the temple, and finally executed, while the high priest completed winning the people to support their new, legitimate king. After the death of Athaliah, it was said that "Jehoiada made a covenant between himself, the people, and the king, that they should all be the LORD'S people." (2 Chronicles 23:16)

FIRST LESSON: THE CHARACTER OF JEHOIADA

Before going further into this lesson, we can already appreciate several character traits of Jehoiada. He was, according to the evidence, a courageous man who did not hesitate to risk his life for his faith in God, although surrounded by leaders of the kingdom who worshipped Baal. He took into his confidence and his conspiracy the captains of the kingdom without knowing whether one of them might reveal everything to Athaliah, which would have resulted in the death of both himself and of young Joash.

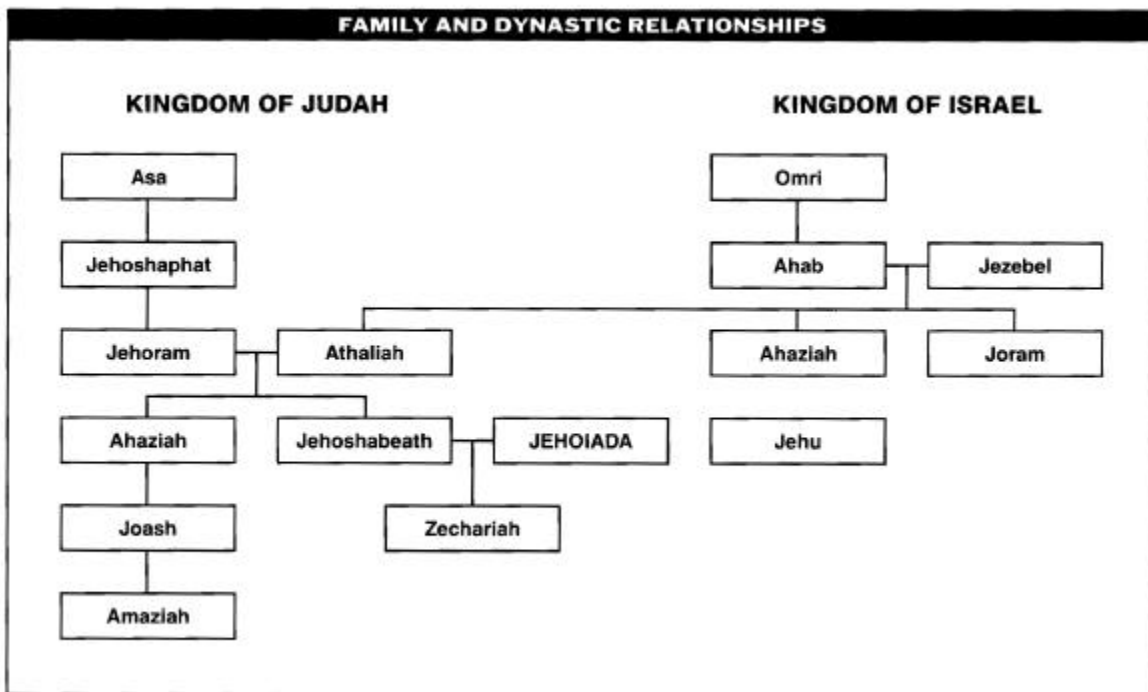
We should also emphasize that he waited until a favorable time to implement his plan, a time when the new king would be old enough to speak and to have enough reasoning to understand that henceforth he must represent royalty even though he was not yet reigning.

Such behavior represents many of the qualities God wants to find in us: loyalty for His cause, courage in the face of adversity and, at the same time, keen insight regarding everything that

pertains to His service. God asks that our consecration to Him be complete. He does not want us to compromise with the defilements of the world, the flesh, and the devil, although it is not always so easy to do this. May we be filled with similar zeal for our Heavenly Father.

JEHOIADA AND THE REIGN OF JOASH

The fact that Jehoiada established a covenant between himself, the people, and the king shows that he committed himself, as well as young king Joash, to serve God and God alone. This young king could not reign alone at this age and needed someone to act as regent until he was of age. Jehoiada was well suited to become counselor and mentor to the young king. Additionally, it was he and his wife, Jehoshabeath, who had raised Joash in the temple. Joash was like a son to him.



Perhaps some strain might have occurred when the young king became an adult and wished to “fly with his own wings,” no more to be under the guardianship of the high priest, whose job, after all, was not to be governor but to be occupied with the service of the Lord. How did Joash’s transition from youth to maturity proceed? We don’t know exactly, but the Bible assures us that Jehoiada did everything he could to influence the young king to serve God. We read in 2 Chronicles 24:2, 3 a statement which magnificently sums up the work of this high priest:

“Joash did that which was right in the sight of the Lord all the days of Jehoiada the priest. And Jehoiada took for him two wives; and he begat sons and daughters.”

Although this scripture is a simple statement, how eloquently it speaks of the actions of the high priest. May we all merit such approval from God when our life is appraised.

JEHOIADA REPAIRS THE TEMPLE

The long period of idolatry under Jehoram and Athaliah had led the people to profane the Lord's temple. The state of the temple, preserved under the good king of Judah, was in disrepair. There is even a strong possibility that stones from the temple were used to build the temple of Baal, because in 2 Chronicles 24:7 we read that Athaliah had "broken up" the house of God, and used all the sacred things for Baal. It became necessary to find funds for the needed repairs.

"And it came to pass after this that Joash was minded to repair the house of the LORD." (2 Chronicles 24:4)

The Bible is precise in saying it was King Joash who gave the order to repair the temple. This



The Death of Athaliah

demonstrates what great zeal he had for the Lord at this stage of his life (he was then undoubtedly an adult). The fact that he himself initiated this step shows how assertive he had become.

Let's look at how this repair work was done. The main problem was money. At the start, Joash

directed the Levites to collect money from different cities in Judah and "see that ye hasten the matter," he told them. But the Levites did not show the necessary zeal. The king, in fact, reproached Jehoiada in 2 Chronicles 24:6,

"Why hast thou not required of the Levites to bring in out of Judah and out of Jerusalem the

collection, according to the commandment of Moses the servant of the Lord, and of the congregation of Israel, for the tabernacle of witness?"

It seems that the people during all this period of idolatry had doubts about how the money they contributed was being used, which might have resulted in meager collections by the Levites. So Joash had another idea: he placed a box at the entrance of the temple forcing everyone to pay when he entered. It is one thing to give money when one is in a distant province, and another

thing to give when seeing, with one's own eyes, the temple of the Lord in disrepair. This time there were good results from the collection, and the donated money went to pay the workers who repaired the utensils, structure, and walls of the temple.

The theme of repairing the temple has often been used to illustrate the edification of our New Creature: sometimes speedy, full of zeal and enthusiasm; sometimes indifferent, troubled by the worries of the world impairing our growth.

The lack of zeal on the part of the Levites would have proven fatal to the renovation of the temple, so a reminder by means of an edict of the king was necessary to make the repairs possible. From time to time, through signs and experiences, God similarly admonishes us to serve him better; it is up to us to understand and to renew the edification of our New Creature.

JEHOIADAIS WORK ILLUSTRATES THE GOSPEL AGE

Jehoiada has been mentioned in Biblical commentaries as a type of our Lord. Let's see how his action, when placed in a wider yet limited context, pictures the Gospel Age.

The divine objective of the Gospel Age is to select an elect class who will reign with Christ. "God at the first did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name." (Acts 15:14) But the "taking out" of this people is done amidst difficulties, and many of these come from the scheming persecutions of the Apostate Church -Antichrist.

This Apostate Church was to rise after the apostles fell asleep. It would increase in power, renounce the true faith, take over the worship of God, wage war on the true saints, and finally collapse at the coming of the Lord. "And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." (2 Thess. 2:8) We find precisely in our lesson an illustration of these events.

The reign of Jehoshaphat, a pious king, can represent for us the beginning of the apostolic era when the pure gospel was being dispensed. When he died, the idolatry of Athaliah underhandedly gained the upper hand. Likewise, apostasy after the death of the apostles turned Christianity away from the true faith. Athaliah not only revered Baal, but she exterminated the entire royal family. Likewise we are told that the apostasy "made war with the saints and prevailed against them" (Daniel 7:21) The true, persecuted Church is symbolically exiled "into the wilderness" (Revelation 12:6), to the same condition as young king Joash who was raised secretly in the temple. Joash can here represent the true Church.

During the time Athaliah sacrificed to idols, symbolically the apostate church promoted itself to God's place in Christian worship. Jehoiada did not supplant Athaliah immediately; he waited until Joash had attained semi-maturity. In the same way Christ does not destroy Antichrist before the appointed time, but, as we previously read, "with the brightness of his coming" (2 Thess. 2:8) Then Jehoiada crowned Joash, the only remaining member of the royal family. In the same way Christ accepts the Church as an associate in his glorious reign. But will this king rule as a high priest? Will the Church be above Christ? Surely not, and in the picture we note that Joash was too

young to really reign. It was Jehoiada who was the true head of the kingdom, the regent, so to speak. And if the Bible assures us that Joash did that which was right in the sight of God during the lifetime of Jehoiada, it was Jehoiada who exercised real spiritual authority over Joash.

Finally, the fact that Jehoiada made a covenant “between himself, the king, and all the people” admirably illustrates for us the New Covenant that Christ and his Church will establish with humanity during the Millennial Age.

Here we stop making parallels between Jehoiada and Christ because in all Biblical types or illustrations, we can never include all the historical details in an extended application to the Gospel Age. But we can rejoice in that even in this apparently insignificant episode of history, God gave us a shadow of good things to come. We rejoice also that Christ with his church will reign with wisdom and strength for the good of humanity, just like Jehoiada.

FAITHFULNESS POORLY REWARDED

We previously mentioned that King Joash did that which was right in the sight of God during the life of the priest Jehoiada. But after his death -the death of the one who had raised him privately, taught him to obey God, and counseled him as a father -King Joash turned to idolatry. The Bible tells us in 2 Chronicles 24:17, 18:

'After the death of Jehoiada came the princes of Judah, and made obeisance to the king. Then the king hearkened unto them. And they left the house of the LORD God of their fathers, and served groves and idols.'

We can judge the beneficial and important influence Jehoiada had over King Joash, counseling him wisely to walk in the ways of God. When Jehoiada died, King Joash gave himself over to practicing evil, influenced this time by the chiefs in his kingdom. Why was there such an inexorable tendency to worship idols? We know that idols attract, that the unbridled morals which are tolerated, even encouraged, by the pagan religions were an ever present temptation for Judah. It was so easy for them to turn away from God!

But, in fact, can we really say this risk is gone today, when on every side unbridled temptations assail us to lead us far from serving God, to whom we have already consecrated our all?

JOASH STONES JEHOIADA'S SON IN THE TEMPLE!

But the worst was yet to come in the kingdom of Judah. We read in 2 Chronicles 24:19-22,

“Yet he sent prophets to them, to bring them again unto the LORD ... but they would not give ear. And the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, which stood above the people, and said unto them, Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the LORD, that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken the LORD, he hath also forsaken you. And they conspired against him, and stoned him with stones at the commandment of the king in the court of the house of the LORD. Thus Joash the king remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada his

father had done to him, but slew his son. And when he died, he said, The LORD look upon it, and require it.”

Zechariah, who may have been raised with Joash, is stoned by order of the king because he wanted to bring the people back to God; and he was even stoned in the temple! Zechariah was the one to whom our Lord, long afterward, paid homage by saying that his blood was shed “between the altar and the temple” (Luke 11:51), and he compared the generation of his time with that of Joash’s, which killed the prophets who wanted to turn them from idols! “Woe be unto you,” said he to the Pharisees whose hearts were not right in the sight of God, just as Joash’s “Pharisees” assassinated the son of his teacher. For us it stands as an additional warning not to allow ourselves to be entrapped by sin.

God did not permit the crime of Joash to remain unpunished. He caused him to meet with a severe defeat at the hands of a small force of Syrians who, after killing his advisors, tortured Joash before leaving. Finally he was assassinated by two of his servants. Because of the transgressions at the end of his life, he was not buried in the sepulchers of the kings. God “looked upon it, and required it.”

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

What can we say about Jehoiada, a man after God's own heart, considered an equal to the kings of Judah? He walked with integrity in obedience to the divine law without deviating, without compromising. He used his position to influence his king in God's ways; he taught and preached by his own conduct. As we have seen, he is a type of Christ. He thus sets an example for us to follow. Our French playwright Racine devoted a tragedy to him which he titled Athaliah. I'll only quote a few lines of the full poetic declaration that Jehoiada addresses to Joash prior to crowning him king, to motivate him to embrace justice, goodness, and piety toward God, remembering that he had been orphaned and raised humbly while hidden in the temple.

Promise on this book and before these witnesses,
You shall be hard on the wicked, but a refuge for the righteous.
Between the poor and you, you shall let God be the judge,
Remembering, my son, that hidden beneath this linen,
Like them you were once poor and like them, an orphan.

May we always, in following the example of this character from the Old Testament, walk in God's ways and not turn aside, and have faith and unshakable zeal for our Creator.

- *Regis Liberda, France*

Two Secret Numbers

“The secret things belong unto the Lord our God but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.” Deuteronomy 29:29

The tools by which we understand the word and plan of God are the Holy Spirit combined with a careful inspection of the dictionary/concordance meaning of words and the historical record. These are the basic building blocks of our faith. However, in Scripture there appears to be a level of information beyond only the surface reading of the record. This “hidden wisdom” is referred to by the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 2:6-10.

Once a “Thus saith the Lord” and thus say the Scriptures is in place, we are better prepared to properly interpret parables, understand allegories, apply symbols and types. These parts of Scripture are given to substantiate and confirm our faith while God hides them from the wise and proud of this world and confirms His foreknowledge and forecast of things to come for his people. Yet to use the symbolical method of reading Scripture without first grasping the clear face value, is to invite arbitrary speculation or reasoning toward preferred conclusions.

From here we venture into the world of numbers in Scripture. For many this arena is not so familiar and the events promised may be considered sufficient for faith, without accounting for days and years. Yet the numbers may be God's way of showing the precision of His plans. And their use hides the purpose from the casual reader.

We have many prophetic and historical periods: 490, 1260, 1335, 2300, 2520. Some of these are symbolically produced like “seven times” or “time, times and a half” or 42 months or 70 weeks. After determining the scale, we are required to attach them to the correct events. Here we must clearly understand God's purpose, methods and historical factors; else we also risk being arbitrary in our placing of numbers and dates.

SECRET ONE

A case in point is the Gentile Times. We have the vague but repetitive references in Leviticus 26:18, 21, 24, 28 to the seven times¹ of punishment upon Israel. Are these seven years or do the days of these “times” stand for years themselves? How many days are in a year and where should the times begin to count? We learn from Ezekiel 21:25-27 that the dominion removed from Israel would be overturned amongst others, the Gentiles. Ezekiel 21 indicates this began with the removal of Judah's last king from Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple (vss. 2, 25). This is connected with the Gentile King Nebuchadnezzar, who ended Zedekiah's throne and removed the population of the land. And the seven times in Daniel 4:16, 23, 25, 32 evidently relate to these seven times of Leviticus 26.

Finally we have Luke 21:24 from the New Testament that explains Jerusalem would be trodden down of the Gentiles for a fixed period to fulfill the prophecy. We might yet look for a

confirmation that this is a fixed period of 2,520 years² by multiplying 7 by 360 Jewish calendar days rather than 354 lunar days or 365 solar days.³ In other words, “Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify.” (I Peter 1:11) We hold that these seven times are based on the same 360 day formula that is required in Revelation 11 and 12, where 3½ times (years), 42 months and 1260 days all express the length of one span. Further, we hold that each day is fulfilled by a natural year, as in Revelation 11 and 12.



Daniel Interpreting the Writing on the Wall

Daniel interpreted the miraculous handwriting judgment on the palace wall just at the juncture of the first overturning of Gentile dominion from Babylon to Persia in Daniel 5:25-28. The proper rendering of the Chaldean words are “Numbered, Numbered, Weighed and Divided” “Daniel properly declared them as Judgment on this Babylonian “head of gold.”⁴

However, there is a unique property in these Chaldean words: *Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin*. The Hebrew equivalents are: Mina, Mina, Shekel, Peres. They are the same words used for weights. The smallest component weight was the gerah. The shekel consists of 20 gerahs (Exodus 30:13, Leviticus 27:25, Numbers 3:27). The mina is 50 shekels, therefore 1000 gerahs. Peres means a division (of Babylon and by implication

of the mina), therefore 500 gerahs. The total of 2 minas, 1 shekel, ½ mina = 2000 + 20 + 500 = 2,520 gerahs. This number, in years, was the fixed extent of Gentile dominion. Is this a contrived figure or something intentionally hidden below the surface? We think it was intentional, and that it confirms the limit of years given the gentile dominions, of which Babylon was the first. Else why code the judgment with a list of numerical weights?

You may remember that God allowed the Jewish temple built by Solomon to be destroyed by the fires of Nebuchadnezzar. This was prophesied in Hosea and Psalms and elsewhere.

“Set the trumpet to thy lips. He shall come as an eagle against the house of the Lord, because they have transgressed my covenant, and trespassed against my law.” (Hosea 8:1)

“Thine enemies roar in the midst of thy congregations; they set up their ensigns for signs. A man was famous according as he had lifted up axes upon the thick trees. But now they break down the carved work thereof at once with axes and hammers. They have cast fire into my sanctuary, they have defiled by casting down the dwelling place of thy name to the ground.” (Psalms 74:4-7)

TABLE OF EVENTS - 1914

June		28	Hapsburg heir Archduke Francis Ferdinand assassinated in Serbia
July		24	Austria delivers ultimatum to Serbia
		25	Serbia replies and protests two demands
		28	Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia
		30	Russia mobilizes, Austria-Hungary moves to Russian border
		31	Germany issues Russia ultimatum to move back
Saturday	August	1 (Av 9)	Germany orders general mobilization, declares war on Russia
Sunday		2 (Av 10)	Germany invades Luxembourg (for railways), first military event.
		3	Germany declares war on France and invades Belgium
		4	Great Britain declares war on Germany
		5	Austria-Hungary declares war on Russia
		6	Serbia against Germany
		7	Montenegro against Austria-Hungary
		10	France against Austria-Hungary
		12	Great Britain against Austria-Hungary
		20	Germany enters Brussels
		23	Japan against Germany
		25	Austria-Hungary against Japan
		28	Austria-Hungary against Belgium

All this happened on the 7th or 10th day of the Hebrew month Av according to Jeremiah 52:12 and 2 Kings 25:8. 2 Kings reads the 7th day. Some believe Nebuchadnezzar breached an outer wall on the 7th and set fire to the temple on the 10th. Others believe the Hebrew character for 7 was mistaken for the character for 10. The Jewish consensus is that the burning occurred on the 10th, and Josephus agrees. When Zedekiah was dethroned and the temple burned, the dominion was effectively transferred. All the symbols of the theocracy were removed from Jerusalem.

It is most interesting to inspect the end of the Gentile Times prophecy. Today the 9th of Av is reverently kept by Jews as the last day of temple independence. It raises the national zeal of Orthodoxy and occasionally leads to attempts to return the temple mount to Jewish hands from Muslim occupation.

Yet the 9th and 10th of Av reveal another turning point in history. The guns of August 1914 that began the First World War were loosed on the 10th of Av. Each day afterward saw the explosive burning of the European monarchies. Note the table above, listing the events for the year 1914 leading to the war and the first month of conflict.⁵ It would seem that God measured exactly His seven times to the day, from the day Nebuchadnezzar torched Solomon's temple till His judgments set the torch to the feet of the Gentile dominion. It was the First World War that eventuated in the Balfour Declaration and the British Mandate over Turkish-held Palestine and particularly Jerusalem. Jews were once more allowed the right of return and to purchase land and homes in the ancient capitol. This effectively began the process of returning dominion.

SECRET TWO

Some believe that every word and letter of Scripture was divinely directed. This led to a method of reading Scripture called “Gematria.” This is a method of adding the numeric value of each Hebrew or Greek letter in a text to determine a clue to some extended meaning of the text. Here we must be very careful not to use some value to insert a private interpretation or to fanaticize with the many mystical interpretations of the Cabalistic branch of Judaism. Any teaching must have a firm basis in the written word.

Yet there are some texts that invite our pursuit to a level deeper than the surface. And some uses of numbers do not relate to time at all. One of these is Revelation 13:18.

“Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.”

This follows the prophetic symbols of the seven-headed beast, a two-horned beast and an image of the beast. Finally this “image of the beast” receives power to mark both small and great in the hands or forehead and to control a certain commerce.

Following Bro. Russell's suggestion (and many earlier reformers), we understand the beast to represent Papacy, the Man of Sin, a most beastly church-state government. The other images are extensions of the ideology of the first beast, and even of the dragon, pagan Rome, who fostered the whole system.

The number 666 in some Greek texts is written out with the words for each number, as we would say, “six hundred sixty six.” In others, they are the three Greek letters $\chi\xi\zeta$ which are used for the positional value of numbers. $\alpha = 1$, $\beta = 2$, $\gamma = 3$, $\delta = 4$, $\epsilon = 5$, ... $\xi = 60$, $\chi = 600$. But when it came to 6, another letter was introduced! Not the next-the sixth letter (ζ , *zeta*) - but a different letter, a peculiar form of S, called “*stigma*” (ζ). Now the word $\sigma\tau\iota\gamma\mu\alpha$ (*stigma*) means a *mark*, but especially a mark made by a brand as burnt upon slaves, cattle, or soldiers, by their owners or masters; or on devotees who thus branded themselves as belonging to their gods. This meaning of the characteristic number six seems significantly related to the *mark* of the beast. Indeed the expression of this number $\chi\xi\zeta$ consists of the initial and final letters of the word $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\zeta$, (Christos), Christ, *viz.*, χ and ζ , with the symbol of the *serpent* between them, $\chi - \xi - \zeta$.

In this verse we are asked to “count” the number of the beast. The word “count” means to calculate, compute or sum. Many names may be found, the numerical value of whose letters amount to 666. Brother Russell suggested “Vicarius Filii Dei” which appeared on the papal crown. Others have suggested “Nero Caesar,” and there have been many others all applying to the Roman system.

It is remarkable that the Romans did not use all the letters of their alphabet for numbers, as did the Hebrews and Greeks. They used only six letters, D, C, L, X, V, and I. (M appears to have evolved from the original use of two adjacent Ds to represent their sum of 1000.) It is even more

remarkable, and perhaps significant, that the sum of these amounts to 666, and that each pair sum to the three component parts of the 666 prophetic number. Also the sum of the highest unit in each pair is 6.

1.	D	=	500	}	600
2.	C	=	100		
3.	L	=	50	}	60
4.	X	=	10		
5.	V	=	5	}	6
6.	1	=	1	}	
			666		

666 is the characteristic feature of the Roman numeral system, and perhaps is a reason this number was chosen to mark the whole Roman politico-religious system in this prophecy.

We think the meaning of the words “wisdom” and “understanding” in Revelation 13:18 do not refer to a cleverness to understand the formula of the number, but to the spiritual perception and wisdom in identifying the Man of Sin system and keeping separate in spirit from it. These are identified in Revelation 20:4 as those who “had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands' Let us be free from the spirit of antitypical Babylon.

CONCLUSION

We may each see different facets in God's word depending on our mind's eye. But we can be assured it is deeper and broader than can mortal ever go. Oh, the riches of His grace and the bounties of His word! Isaiah 45:3 is Isaiah's prophecy regarding Cyrus, who is a picture of Christ, the liberator from bondage.

“I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel.”

From the mouth of Isaiah we hear:

“Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.” (Isaiah 66:1, 2)

- *Jerry Leslie*

¹ There is actually no corresponding Hebrew word here for times. The single word is Strong's #7651 meaning the cardinal numeral seven. Isaac Leeser simply translates it as *sevenfold*, meaning seven repetitions. Gesenius says in

Leviticus 26 the word is used as an adverb, by implication *seven times*. This appears confirmed by Luke 21:24 where he uses the Greek word for *times*.

² Arithmetically, this is a very unique number. It is the least common multiple of the first ten numbers -the first number which is exactly divisible by all the first ten numerals. It would seem to be a special combination of the number ten, as are the ten horns in Revelation 12, 13 and 17

³ See "Bible Study Monthly," May/June 1994, Vol. 71, No. 3, "The Seven Times of Nebuchadnezzar," and July/August 1994, Vol. 71, No. 4, "The Lunar Month in Prophecy."

⁴ Some may begin this prophecy with the ascendancy of Nebuchadnezzar or his father in the emerging kingdom of Babylon. However, we are inclined to apply it to the time of Babylon's removal of Israel's dominion.

⁵ Encyclopaedia Britannica, 15th Edition, 1973, "World Wars."

The Blood of Atonements (plural)

*"And Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of it once in a year with the blood of the sin-offering of **atonements**: once in a year shall he make atonement upon it throughout your generations: it is most holy unto the LORD." (Exodus 30:10)*

In Hebrew the word rendered "atonements" in the King James Version is actually plural even though most translators, including those of the Standard and the Revised Standard versions, have rendered it "atonement" (singular). Rotherham, recognizing that the word is plural, so rendered it in his translation, but used another term, "propitiatory coverings."

The Hebrew word *Elohim*, rendered God in Genesis 1:1, is also plural, but it is there regarded as the "plural of majesty" because Jehovah is the God above all gods.

"Elohim is plural in form, but is singular in construction (used with a singular verb or adjective). When applied to the one true God, the plural is due to the Hebrew idiom of a plural of magnitude or majesty. (Genesis 1:1, etc.)" (*Pictorial Bible Dictionary*, Zondervan)

Since the blood of atonement referred to in Exodus 30:10 is that of the great Atonement Day sin-offerings (see Leviticus 16:16, 18, 19), might not the atonement above all atonements (including those of Leviticus 4) be also in the plural form of the Hebrew showing magnitude or majesty? In any event, it was the only blood which could reconcile the Court, the Tabernacle of the Congregation (Holy), and the Most Holy-the blood of both Atonement Day sinofferings, the blood of the bullock and the goat.

"Thus he shall make atonement for the sanctuary because of the uncleanness of the Israelites and their transgressions in all their sins. And he shall do the same for the tent of meeting that has its abode with them in the midst of their uncleanness ... He must then go outside to the altar which is before the LORD, and make atonement for it; taking some of the bullock's blood and some of the goat's blood, he must put it all around the horns of the altar, and sprinkle some of the blood on it with his finger seven times to cleanse and sanctify it from the uncleanness of the Israelites" (Leviticus 16:16, 18, 19 -Meek, *The Bible, An American Translation*)

No mention is made of how many bowls or basins were used to carry the blood of the sin-offerings from the Court into the Most Holy, there to be used in a sprinkling on and before the mercy seat. Perhaps it would not be unreasonable to suppose that there was but one which was used for both the blood of the bullock and the blood of the goat.

The account says that after Aaron had offered the incense at the golden altar, he took with him into the Most Holy the blood of the bullock and there sprinkled it on, and before, the mercy seat. Some of the blood, but not all, was used this way, since Leviticus 16:18-20, referring to a time later than the sprinkling of the mercy seat, states that some of the blood of the bullock was to be used in connection with the reconciliation of the altar. Again, the account definitely states that with the exception of the offering of incense, the blood of the goat was handled in the identical manner as that of the bullock.

“Then shall he kill the goat of the sin-offering [the Lord's Goat], that is for the people, and bring his blood within the vail and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat” (Leviticus 16:15)

Here, too, we must recognize that only some of the blood, not all of it, was used in sprinkling the mercy seat, for the reason mentioned in connection with the blood of the bullock.

If, then, our supposition that there was but one bowl used for all the blood be correct, it stands to reason that when the goat's blood was caught in the bowl, there was still some of the bullock's blood therein. Accordingly, there must have been a commingling of the two bloods so that when the High Priest offered the blood of the goat in the Most Holy, he was really offering (some of) the blood of the bullock a second time. This very beautifully sets forth the fact that there really is no merit of atonement in the blood of the goat, aside from that of the bullock; in fact, all the merit of atonement lies in the bullock's blood.

“When at the end of the Day of Atonement sacrificing the anti-typical High Priest shall make a further presentation of the blood of the goat upon the mercy seat, it will be 'his own blood' in two senses of the word:

“(1) It will be his own in the sense that all the merit was originally his and appropriated to us in order that we might have the opportunity to share with him in sacrifice. The sacrificial merit merely passed through us, 'the Lord's goat' class. ...

“(2) The blood (merit) which our Lord will apply as soon as the church shall have finished her share in his sacrifice will be 'his own blood: in the sense that he accepted or adopted us as his members, we losing our personality in the transaction in the same manner that a bride loses her name and her individuality at marriage. All that we have and are belong to the great Bridegroom, and we are delighted that he is pleased to count us in with himself in any sense of the word in connection with his sufferings of this present time, and the glories which will follow.” (R4493:2-4)
- *From the notes of Anton Frey*

“Let us go forth... unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.”