

3 Significant Numbers in Scripture; 7, 12, and 40

The Number 7

The number 7 perhaps speaks of perfection or completeness. God's complete provision in His dealings with men. Some examples:

7 days make a complete week

7 colors make a perfect spectrum

7 great land masses form a complete earth

7 notes make a perfect scale

7 great bodies of water form a complete ocean

There were the 7 days of creation as well as many other examples throughout the Scriptures:

Zech 3:9 For behold, the stone that I have laid before Joshua: upon the stone are seven eyes. Behold, I will engrave its inscription,' says the LORD of hosts, 'And I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.

Rev 1:4 John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,

To the Jew every 7th day was a Sabbath.

Every 7th year was a Sabbatical year.

After the 7th Sabbatical year was the year of Jubilee.

Every 7th month was holy and had 3 feasts.

There were 7 weeks between Passover and Pentecost.

The Passover feast lasted 7 days.

The feast of Tabernacles lasted 7 days.

At Passover 14 lambs (7 twice) were offered daily.

At Tabernacles 14 lambs (7 twice) and 70 bullocks were offered.

At Pentecost 7 lambs were offered.

The time of mourning the dead was fixed to 7 days.

and so on...

Seven continues to have symbolic prominence in the New Testament, with Jesus telling Peter that it is not enough that he forgive the brother who had sinned against him seven times, but "seventy times seven" (Matthew 18:21-22). Seven is also the number of Greek-speaking Christians appointed by the Twelve Apostles in Acts 6:3.

The New Testament concludes in a "great surge of sevens, with heptads, explicit and implicit, tumbling forth from many verses."

In the Book of Revelation there were:

The 7 letters to the 7 Churches.

The 7 Seal Judgements

The 7 Trumpet Judgements

The 7 Bowl Judgements

The 7 Golden Lampstands

The 7 Stars

The 7 Angels

The 7 Spirits of God

The Lamb with 7 Horns and 7 Eyes.

The 7 Lamps of Fire

The 7 Thunders

The Fiery Red Dragon with 7 heads and 7 Crowns.

The Leopard-Like Beast with 7 heads.

The [Scarlet](#)-Colored Beast with 7 heads.

The 7 Mountains

The 7 Kings

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The Number 12

The number 12 has been thought to represent the number of God's government. The ancient people recognized 12 lunar cycles corresponding loosely to 12 months in the year, and they divided the day and the night into 12-hour periods. They went on to organize the stars into the 12 signs of the Zodiac, and from their observations of the wanderings of the 7 planets through the 12 houses of heaven was born astrology.

The Bible tells that Jacob-Israel had 12 sons (Genesis 35:22-27) and that each of these became the founder of one of the Twelve Tribes of Israel, the people of God (Genesis 49:28). Jesus chose Twelve Apostles (Matthew 10:2-4) for the beginnings of the Church. There were 24 classes of priests and Levites (1 Chronicles 24:4) and 48 Levitical cities (Numbers 35:7).

And again in the Book of Revelation, the number 12 becomes very important when symbolizing the salvation of God's people. There are 24 elders around the throne of God and 144,000 of the saved (Revelation 4:4; 7:4). The perfection of the new Jerusalem is seen in its 12 gates, each "a single pearl," and 12 foundations, each adorned with jewels. Its circumference is 12,000 furlongs, and its walls are 144 cubits high (Revelation 21:10-21; Ezekiel 48:30-35).

The Number 40

The number 40 seems to be a round number in Scripture denoting a generation. Some of the judges judged for 40 years (Othniel, Deborah, Barak, and Gideon). Saul, David, and Solomon each reigned as king for 40 years.

The Scriptures speak of the number 40 often:

The flood rains lasted 40 days and 40 nights

Moses was in the Egypt 40 years, Midian 40 years, and on the mountain 40 days.

Israel wandered in the wilderness 40 years.

The spies were in Canaan for 40 days.

Elijah fasted 40 days.

40 days was given to Nineveh.

Jesus fasted 40 days

Jesus was with His disciples for 40 days after His resurrection (Acts 1:3).

From:

http://www.bible-history.com/tabernacle/TAB4Numbers_and_Scripture.htm