

THE LAST DAY OF PROPHECY

DISCOVER THE REST OF THE STORY

THE BIBLE'S NUMBER

We expect to use a little math when balancing our checkbooks. And astronomers could never calculate the distance between stars without a complex equation or two. Even botanists depend on mathematical patterns in their study of plants, trees, and flowers.

But did you know that math and numbers play a central role in Bible prophecy? We see very prominent numbers in Scripture, such as **3**, **10**, **12**, and **40**. But of all the numbers that appear in the Bible, the digit **SEVEN** shows up more than any other—appearing **583** times. It shows up **29** times in the Gospel accounts and **59** times in the book of **REVELATION**. (By comparison, the number **SIX** appears only **NINE** times in **REVELATION**!)

Perhaps we could even say that the number **SEVEN** is God's number, because it keeps turning up throughout His book. Let's now take a closer look at how this number could be revealing something about our past and our future . . .

THE MILLENNIAL WEEK

Many Bible scholars note that human history, as seen in Scripture, can be divided into **THREE** distinct segments—the time from Adam to Abraham, the period from Abraham to the birth and life of Christ, and the time from Christ's death to His second coming.

It's interesting to note that the first two periods span about **2,000** years each—and that we are nearing **2,000** years after the death and resurrection of Jesus. When we consider how the Lord sees time, we discover an intriguing pattern in the Bible that could be telling us we are near the second coming of Jesus.

Notice, for instance, what the apostle Peter wrote: "Beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (**2 PETER 3:8**). We actually first see this idea back in the Old Testament, in **PSALM 84:10**, for instance.

With this in mind, we see that human history could be viewed as one week in God's time—**A THOUSAND YEARS FOR EACH DAY OF THE WEEK**—or what we call a "**MILLENNIAL WEEK**."

ADAM TO ABRAHAM	2 DAYS	2,000 YEARS
ABRAHAM TO JESUS	2 DAYS	2,000 YEARS
JESUS TO SECOND COMING	2 DAYS	2,000 YEARS
	6 DAYS	6,000 YEARS

But what about the seventh day of the millennial week—or what the Bible calls the "**SABBATH**"? Well, it's interesting to note that Revelation tells us that after Jesus returns, we will live and reign with Him for a thousand years! (**REVELATION 20:4**).

AFTER SIX DAYS

Several stories in the Bible follow a distinct pattern of something happening for **SIX DAYS**, and then a special, climactic event taking place on the **SEVENTH DAY**. For instance, the Bible says the earth was created in six days, and then at the beginning of the seventh day, the Sabbath was made. God created—or worked—for six days; then on the seventh day, He ceased from that work and sanctified that day. (**SEE GENESIS 2:1**.)

In another instance, Jesus told the disciples they would see a miniature picture of the second coming (**MATTHEW 16:28**). Six days later, He took three of them up on a mountain and, as the seventh day began, Jesus was transfigured. Moses and Elijah appeared there as well, and the voice of God declared Jesus was His Son. This event was a small taste of the glory of the second coming!

This pattern is also found in the story of Moses meeting with God on Mount Sinai. "The glory of the LORD rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days. And on the seventh day He called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud" (**EXODUS 24:16**).

There are many more illustrations of six days and then a seventh day in the Bible. This pattern might affirm a prophetic history lesson: For about six thousand years, humankind has lived and toiled in this world of sin, but when Jesus returns, He will start a new day, a seventh day—when His people will see the glory of God and be taken to heaven to rest for **1,000 YEARS**, often called the **MILLENNIUM**.

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A DELAY

Many believe that Jesus should have come before now, but did you know the Bible actually foretells a delay? Indeed, the Savior Himself warned us of this delay. In the parable of the servants, the evil servant says, “My master is delaying his coming” (**LUKE 12:45**), and then he begins to mistreat his fellow servants. Of this delay, Christ says, “Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect” (v. 40). We can also find this idea in the parable of the 10 virgins, when we are told the bridegroom was “delayed” (**MATTHEW 25:5**).

While we do not know the exact hour or day of Jesus’ coming, we can know that it is near. The signs of our times tell us that Christ is coming soon. “As the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be” (**MATTHEW 24:37**).

A WEEKLY REMINDER

Did you know God has given us a weekly reminder to wait patiently for the soon return of Christ? Each seventh day tells us that God is our Creator and Redeemer. (Compare **REVELATION 14:6** with **EXODUS 20:8–11**). Through the power of grace found in Jesus Christ, we can be prepared for the millennial rest that is soon to come!

Until that day, let us be found among the remnant described by John, who wrote, “Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus” (**REVELATION 14:12**).

STUDY QUESTIONS

Q. Can we know exactly when Christ will return to this earth?

A. “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only” (**MATTHEW 24:36**). It’s impossible for anyone to set a date and time for when Jesus will come—but Jesus indicates there will be signs so we can know when His coming is near.

Q. Are there other Bible references to how God sees a thousand years?

A. “For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it is past, and like a watch in the night” (**PSALM 90:4**). Our infinite God is continually reminding Bible readers that a thousand years for Him is much like a day is to finite people.

Q. What other Old Testament story illustrates the seven-day/year pattern?

A. “Six years you shall sow your land and gather in its produce, but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave, the beasts of the field may eat. In like manner you shall do with your vineyard and your olive grove” (**EXODUS 23:10, 11**).

Q. How does the Bible describe the coming down of Moses from Mount Sinai?

A. “Now when the people saw that Moses *delayed* coming down from the mountain, the people gathered together to Aaron, and said to him, ‘Come, make us gods that shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him’” (**EXODUS 32:1**, emphasis added).