

THE NUMBER SEVEN

God's Plan For Totality, Completion, Perfection

IN THE BIBLE NUMBERS have symbolic significance. Seven is the most prominent number in Scripture. In the first book of the Bible, Genesis, the number seven receives its meaning. At the end of each of the first five days of Creation God pronounced what He had made “good.” At the end of the sixth day He pronounced all that He had made “very good.” Then God “rested” on the seventh day. This pattern forms the basis for the manner in which the new creation will be achieved: in stages that will finally culminate with perfection. In the last book of the Bible, Revelation, the number seven is frequently used, symbolic of God’s intent to bring every aspect of His plan for humanity to completion. Of special interest is the fact that human history is divided into seven millennial periods, indicating that salvation history will involve six thousand years, culminating with a seventh millennium of rest.

Genesis 1:4-31—...good...good...good...good...good...good...very good.

Genesis 2:1-3—¹ Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. ² And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. ³ Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

Revelation—7 Churches, 7 Stars, 7 Spirits, 7 Candlesticks, 7 Horns, 7 Eyes, 7 Seals, 7 Trumpets, 7 Angels, 7 Thunders, 7 Heads, 7 Crowns, 7 Plagues, 7 Mountains, 7 Kings.

Leviticus 25:1-6—¹ And the LORD spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, saying, ² “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When you come into the land which I give you, then the land shall keep a sabbath to the LORD. ³ Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather its fruit; ⁴ but in the seventh year there shall be a sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a sabbath to the LORD. You shall neither sow your field nor prune your vineyard. ⁵ What grows of its own accord of your harvest you shall not reap, nor gather the grapes of your untended vine, for it is a year of rest for the land. ⁶ And the sabbath produce of the land shall be food for you.

Revelation 20:1-6—¹ Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. ² He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; ³ and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished...⁶ Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

Dr. Richard Swenson—The world is spinning out of control and approaching the threshold of lethality—a point where life as we know it can no longer continue...irreversible trends, principles, and forces currently at work in the world system (that is, the global environment where everything is connected to everything else) are inevitably propelling us toward a cataclysmic outcome (*Hurling Toward Oblivion*).

NOTE: 3 signifies God. 4 signifies earth. 3+4=7. 7 is the number that signifies God’s perfect actions on earth.

- There are seven steps or stages to the Hebrew sanctuary, and therefore to our spiritual journey with God.
- There are seven colors in the rainbow—red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet.
- The number of stars in the constellation of Orion is seven.
- There are seven things the LORD hates (Proverbs 6:16-19).
- Jesus spoke seven last words or seven last sayings on the cross.
- In Mathew 18:21, Jesus says to forgive seventy times seven times.
- In Luke’s genealogy Jesus is 77th in a direct line.
- There are seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom in Acts 6:3.
- God told the Israelites they would displace seven nations when they entered the land of Israel (Deut. 7:1): the Hittite, the Girgashite, the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite.
- The walls of Jericho fell on the seventh day after marching around the city seven times (Joshua 6).
- There is said to be seven deadly sins: lust, gluttony, greed, sloth, wrath, envy, and pride.
- Seven is the sum of any two opposite sides on a standard six-sided die. When rolling two standard six-sided dice, seven has a 6 in 36 (or 1/6th) probability of being rolled (1-6, 6-1, 2-5, 5-2, 3-4, or 4-3), the greatest of any number.
- Finally, there are seven orifices on the face.

J.N. Andrews—The Great Week of Time; or the Period of Seven Thousand Years Devoted to the Probation and the Judgment of Mankind (A Series of Six Articles *Review and Herald*, July 17 - August 21, 1883).

J.N. Andrews—When God created our earth, he indicated the period of time which must elapse before the day of Judgment. He employed six days in the work of creation; on the seventh day he rested from all his work. He sanctified the seventh day to be an everlasting memorial of the work of creation. But it appears that God designed by the first seven days of time to indicate the period assigned to the probation and judgment of mankind (*Review and Herald*, July 17, 1883).

J.N. Andrews—St. Peter says that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 2 Peter 3:8. By this we think he meant, not simply that the day of Judgment will occupy the period of 1,000 years, though this fact seems to be revealed in Rev. 20, in what is said of the two resurrections, but we think St. Peter also signified by it that the period devoted to the history of man before the day of Judgment, was also indicated by the days that God employed in the work of creation. We think, therefore, that at the end of 6,000 years from the creation, the day of Judgment will commence, and that that day will last for the period of 1,000 years (*Review and Herald*, July 17, 1883).

J.N. Andrews—The week of years in which, after the land had been cultivated six years, it was to remain without cultivation the seventh (Lev. 25:1-7), is certainly a type of the great week of 7,000 years, in which after the earth has been cultivated by its inhabitants during 6,000 years, it will remain uncultivated and desolate during the seventh period of 1,000 years while the Judgment takes place... In this year liberty was proclaimed throughout all the land to all its inhabitants, and every man returned to his own inheritance. This signifies that AFTER the great Sabbath, during which the earth will remain uncultivated for 1,000 years, the great week of 7,000 years being finished, the curse will cease, AFTER having consumed the earth with all the wicked. THEN the earth will be created anew by the power of God, and all the just will return to their inheritance in the new earth, and never know sin nor sorrow any more (*Review and Herald*, August 21, 1883).

Ellen White—The great controversy between good and evil will increase in intensity to the very close of time... But as the church approaches her final deliverance, Satan is to work with greater power. He comes down “having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.” Rev 12:12... For six thousand years that mastermind that once was highest among the angels of God has been wholly bent to the work of deception and ruin. And all the depths of satanic skill and subtlety acquired, all the cruelty developed, during these struggles of the ages, will be brought to bear against God’s people in the final conflict (*The Great Controversy*, Author’s Introduction).

Arthur L. White—The vision at Lovett’s Grove, Ohio, on a Sunday afternoon in mid-March, 1858, was one of great importance. In this the theme of the great controversy between Christ and His angels on the one side and Satan and his angels on the other, was seen as one continuous and closely linked chain of events spanning six thousand years. This vision has put Seventh-day Adventist into a unique position with clear-cut views on the working of providence in the history of our world—a viewpoint quite different from that held by secular historians, who see events of history as the interplay between the actions of men, often seemingly the result of chance or natural developments. In other words, this vision and others of the great conflict of the ages yield a philosophy of history that answers many questions and in prophetic forecast gives the assurance of final victory of good over evil (Arthur L. White, *Ellen G. White: The Early Years Volume I – 1827-1862*, p, 366).

“God is Love”—1 John 4:16

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All Scripture References are from the New King James Version unless otherwise noted.