



The Seven Churches in Revelation

Revelation 1:4, 11 (NKJV)

⁴ John, to the **seven churches** which are in Asia... ¹¹ saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," and, "What you see, write in a book and send it to the **seven churches** which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."

2 Thessalonians 2:1-4 (NKJV)

¹ Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, ² not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. ³ Let no one deceive you by any means; for **that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first**, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, ⁴ who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

Matthew 25:31-33 (NKJV)

³¹ "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. ³² All the nations will be gathered before Him, and **He will separate them one from another**, as a shepherd divides *his* sheep from the goats. ³³ And **He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.**

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43 (NKJV)

²⁴ Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; ²⁵ but **while men slept**, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. ²⁶ But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. ²⁷ So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' ²⁸ He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?' ²⁹ But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. ³⁰ **Let both grow together until the harvest**, and **at the time of harvest** I will say to the reapers, "First **gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn...**" ' ' ³⁶ Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, "Explain to us **the parable of the tares** of the field." ³⁷ He answered and said to them: "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. ³⁸ The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked *one*. ³⁹ The enemy who sowed them is the devil, **the harvest is the end of the age**, and **the reapers are the angels.**

⁴⁰ Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, ⁴² and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³ Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

Revelation 13:11 (ESV)

¹¹ Then I saw another beast rising out of the earth. It had **two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon.**

Revelation 3:14-17 (NKJV)

¹⁴ "And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, 'These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: ¹⁵ **I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot.** ¹⁶ So then, **because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.** ¹⁷ Because **you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'--and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked...**

We cannot understand the book of the Revelation without applying the spiritual meaning of numbers. The most prominent number in Revelation is the number *seven*. From E.W. Bullinger's book, *Number in Scripture*.

In the Hebrew, *seven* is שֶׁבַע (*shevah*). It is from the root שָׂבַע (*savah*), *to be full or satisfied, have enough of*. Hence the meaning of the word "seven" is dominated by this root, for on the *seventh* day God rested from the work of Creation. It was full and complete, and good and perfect. Nothing could be added to it or taken from it without marring it. Hence the word שְׁבַת (*Shavath*), *to cease, desist, rest*, and שַׁבָּת *Shabbath, Sabbath, or day of rest*. This root runs through various languages; e.g., Sanscrit, *saptan*; Zend., *hapta*; Greek, *επτα (hepta)*; Latin, *septem*. All these preserve the "t," which in the Semitic and Teutonic languages is dropped out; e.g. Gothic, *sibun*; Germ., *sieben*; Eng., *seven*.

It is *seven*, therefore, that stamps with perfection and completeness that in connection with which it is used. Of *time*, it tells of the Sabbath, and marks off the week of seven days, which, artificial as it may seem to be, is universal and immemorial in its observance amongst all nations and in all times. It tells of that eternal Sabbath-keeping which remains for the people of God in all its everlasting perfection.

In the creative works of God, *seven* completes the colours of the spectrum and rainbow, and satisfies in music the notes of the scale. In each of these the *eighth* is only a repetition of the *first*.

Another meaning of the root שָׂבַע (*Shavagh*) is *to swear, or make an oath*. It is clear from its first occurrence in Genesis 21:31, "They swore both of them," that this oath was based upon the "seven ewe lambs" (vv 28, 29, 30), which point to the idea of *satisfaction* or *fulness* in an *oath*. It was the *security, satisfaction, and fullness* of the obligation, or completeness of the bond, which caused the same word to be used for both the number *seven* and an *oath*; and hence it is written, "an oath for confirmation is an end of all strife." Beer-*sheba, the well of the oath*, is the standing witness of the spiritual perfection of the number *seven*.

Seven is *fullness*, meaning *filled to the full*, like a glass of water which cannot hold any more liquid. In many cases in scripture, it incorporates the preceding six things before it (Prov. 6:16-19). This is the case in the book of the Revelation. The seventh church, Laodicea, denotes the *four* churches (Ephesus, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis) which Jesus rebuked coupled with the *two* He didn't (Smyrna and Philadelphia). It is the "wheat" and "tares" growing together until the "time of the harvest."

Not suprisingly, "Six is either 4 *plus* 2, i.e., man's world (4) with man's enmity to God (2) brought in: or it is 5 *plus* 1, the grace of God made of none effect by man's addition to it, or perversion, or corruption of it: or it is 7 *minus* 1, i.e., man's coming short of spiritual perfection. In any case, therefore, it has to do with *man*; it is the

number of imperfection; the human number; the number of MAN as destitute of God, without God, without Christ” (Bullinger). Apart from Christ, we can do nothing (John 15:5).

The rise of “Satan” in the church denotes her “falling away,” that which Paul addressed in II Thessalonians 2, verses one through four. The Lord, as well as all of His apostles, warned the body of Christ about the influx of false Christ’s and false prophets and that it would be especially bad at the end of the age (Matt. 24:24).

Revelation 13:11 (ESV)

¹¹ Then I saw another beast rising out of the earth. It had two horns like a lamb (*Smyrna/Philadelphia*) and it spoke like a dragon (*Ephesus/Pergamos/Thyatira/Sardis*).