Bible Numerics

An examination of the theory that there is
in the Bible a mysterious and marvelous
numerical pattern which establishes
the correctness of the text and proves
the divine authority of Holy Scripture

By
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This booklet was originally published in 1944,
two years after the death of Ivan Panin.

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In 1929 Allis, J. Gresham Machen, Robert Dick Wilson and others founded Westminster Theological Seminary. Allis was independently wealthy and it was his property in Philadelphia which initially served as the home of the new seminary.

He taught at Westminster for six years, and resigned in 1935 to devote himself to writing and study. Two of his more notable works are *Prophecy and the Church* (1945) and *God Spake By Moses* (1951). Allis was a conservative Christian theologian who believed in the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch.

Bible Numerics

FIGURES are both interesting and fascinating. The almost infinite variety of permutations and combinations which can be made with ten simple numerical signs (0 to 9) is amazing and seems incredible. The ignorant count laboriously on their fingers; the astronomer speaks learnedly in terms of "light years." Symmetrical designs can be found in nature or constructed by art which have beautiful and wonderful numerical values. Snow crystals are a remarkable example of this. It is no wonder that the Pythagoreans, centuries before our era, attached especial importance to the study of numbers and sought to determine their deeper meanings and harmonies, or that the Jewish Rabbis display in Talmud and Kabbala a similar interest in Numerics (Gematria).

Numbers, like names, acquire significance because of what they represent. 1776 is such a number. I mention it because of its sevens. It is the year of the Declaration of Independence, a memorable event to every patriotic American. So those who are interested in Numerics as well as in history may be disposed to seek a reason that the date was 1776 and not 1775 or 1777. The number 1776 has two 7s in it. Add the first and the last figures together (1+6) and the result is a third 7. 777 is 7x111. Subtract 777 from 1776 and the remainder is 999. 777 and 999 in connection with 1776 look mysterious and significant.[1] Other remarkable things can easily be discovered. 1776 is 4x444. So 444, 777, 999 are all concealed in it. Independence Day is the 4th of July. This accounts for the 4. 4 is also 1+3. 1 and 3 are the figures which compose 13. So each of the 4s in 4x444 may be regarded as a cryptic reminder of the 13 colony-states that ratified the Declaration. The reverse of 13 is 31. The Declaration was signed in July which has 31 days. If 444 is subtracted from 1776, the remainder is 1332 from which 333 can be formed just as 777 is formed from 1776. These three 3s in 333 and the 3 identical numbers in 999, 777, 444, 333, all

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1. The figure 999 is of course the natural result of taking away "1" from the thousand-column and adding to it the unit-column.

serve to remind us that the monarch of whose misrule the Declaration was an indictment was George the Third. And so on *ad infinitum.* All of which "facts" lead inevitably to the conclusion that 1776 is a very remarkable number. Q.E.D. So reasons the numericist!

To the Jews the Day of Atonement *(Yom Kippur)* has always been of great significance. This was to be expected in view of the meaning of the day as given in Leviticus 16. But modern Jews who are more interested in the Talmud and Kabbala than in the Law of Moses give a special reason for its importance. The word *Satan* means "adversary" in the Hebrew. "The Satan" is *"the* Adversary" in the pre-eminent sense. "The Adversary" has, according to the numerical values assigned to the letters of the Hebrew alphabet in rabbinical times, a value of 364. This is one less than the number of the days of the solar year. So the learned Rabbis argued from this that during 364 days of the year Satan may exercise his right to accuse mankind (Job 1 and 2). But on one day of the year, which they took to be the Day of Atonement, he may not accuse. They argued thus despite the fact that the Jewish religious year is a lunar year of approximately 354 days which must be brought into agreement with the solar year by the addition of an extra month at certain more or less definitely defined intervals. This "numeric" teaching regarding the Day of Atonement has been current among the Jews for more than 1500 years.

These two examples– the one brand-new, the other hoary with age– will serve to illustrate both the fascination of the study of numbers and the exceedingly important inferences which can be and often are drawn from them.

Ivan Panin (1855-1942)

Bible Numerics, as it is known and practiced today, is indissolubly connected with the name of Ivan Panin of Aldershot, Ontario, who made this subject a specialty for more than fifty years. His aim was to establish the correct text of the Bible; and his *Numeric Greek New Testament* was published in 1934. Mr. Panin died quite recently at an advanced age. A couple of years ago [1941] a book was pub-

lished bearing the rather startling title, *Astounding New Discoveries: Thousands of Amazing Facts Discovered Beneath the Very Surface of the Bible Text.* It is by Karl G. Sabiers, M.A., who describes himself as "Author-Lecturer-World Traveler." It has a Foreword by Albert Nobell of the "Nobell Research Foundation" and is printed by the Robertson Publishing Co. of Los Angeles. The author's claim for his book is that it gives "an actual scientific demonstration of the divine inspiration of the Bible"; and the reader is assured that this is "the indisputable proof you've been wanting!"[2]

It is to be noted that Mr. Sabiers makes no claim to originality. He describes himself as a pupil of Ivan Panin, for whose work he expresses unbounded admiration. He tells us that for two and a half years he made a "general study of Mr. Panin's work and has personally examined and studied many of the 40,000 pages of numeric data" prepared by him; this being possible because "Mr. Panin has extended every courtesy and has most graciously given the writer access to all of his valuable manuscripts and numeric data." Such advantages should uniquely qualify Sabiers to be the proponent and interpreter of the work of Panin; and the zeal and enthusiasm of the disciple show his deep appreciation of the indefatigable labors of the master. The calculations on the "40,000 pages of numeric data" referred to represent an amount of toil which it is hard to do justice to; and the fact that these exacting labors were undertaken in defense of the Bible and for the purpose of establishing its true text and the infallibility of that text should make every lover of the Word respect Mr. Panin for his abundant labors in the pursuit of a goal which every true Christian must regard as highly commendable. But this does not suffice to prove that Panin's system is sound and his conclusions reliable. If they are unsound, the exponents of Bible Numerics are, however innocently, offering the spiritually hungry stones for bread and giving a broken reed to those whose faith in the inspiration and infallibility of Scripture

2. Mr. Sabiers is connected with the Angelus Temple (Aimee Semple MacPherson) and a graduate of the school. Robertson, the printer of the book, is also connected with this group. Albert Nobell's interest in Numerics is due to the fact that he was converted from atheism through the instrumentality of Mr. Panin. It is reported that he has set aside $10,000 to be applied to the publication of Mr. Panin's manuscripts. This is apparently what is meant by the Nobell Research Foundation.

is weak and asks for a staff to lean upon. A theory for which so much is claimed must be subjected to the most careful scrutiny and testing.

The subject of Bible Numerics has two main divisions, because the data appealed to are of two kinds– the *open* and the *hidden* numeric phenomena.

I. The Open Numeric Phenomena

By *open* phenomena are meant those data in which the numerical evidence is plain and incontestable.

Verses and Sentences

Anyone who is able to read the Hebrew Bible can count the verses, words, and letters of any passage in the OT. If he begins with the first verse of Genesis, for example, he finds that it has 7 words (or phrases)[3] and 28 letters. Since 7 is sometimes a significant number in the Bible (e.g., the 7th day of the week) this discovery is interesting. Here the factor 7 appears twice: 7 words, 28 (7x4) letters. Verse 2 has 14 words and 52 letters. 14 is 7x2. That also is interesting. But 52 is 7x7+3. There are 3 letters too many, if this verse should have 7x7=49 letters, as verse 1 has 7x4=28 letters. Verse 27 has 13 words and 50 letters. 13 is one less than 14; 50 is one more than 49. No word in these three verses has as many as 7 letters.

The facts just stated are obvious facts. What do they mean? If the fact that verse 1 is a perfect example of 7s appearing in both words and letters means that its text has been perfectly preserved, are we to infer that verse 2 has been imperfectly transmitted to us, because it has 52 letters? Or does this verse have a different numeric structure? 52 is 13x4. Should 13 be regarded as its basic number? The number of words is not 13 but 14. Verse 27 has 13 words. Its 50 letters are not a multiple of 13 but of 5. Do the 50 letters mean that there should be 15 words? Do the 13 words mean that there should be 52 letters (13x4)? If the same numeric factor should appear in both the words

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3. In writing Hebrew the definite article, the conjunction "and," also certain very short prepositions, are joined to the word which follows, pronominal suffixes to the word which precedes. Thus, "in the beginning," "and the earth," "in his (own) image," etc., are counted as single words. This is not the case in Greek.

and the letters of a perfectly preserved verse, then verses 2 and 27 are both imperfect– their text is corrupt. On the other hand, if this symmetry between words and letters means that verse 1 is an especially important verse, are we to infer that verses 2 and 27 are relatively unimportant? Is the verse which tells us that God created the heaven and the earth of more intrinsic significance or more precious than the one which declares with emphatic iteration that God created man, created him in His own image?

Turning to the New Testament and taking the first chapter of John's Gospel as an example we observe there also some interesting facts. Verse 1 consists of 3 brief sentences and has 17 words (5+7+5) and 51 letters (14+22+15). 51 is 17x3. Verse 2 has 7 words but only 24 (not 28) letters. Verse 6 has 8 words (not 7) and 50 letters (not 49). One of its 8 words has 7 letters. Verse 18 has 15 words (not 14) and 76 letters (not 77). Two of its 15 words have 7 letters each. Verse 29 has 21 words (7x3) and 93 letters (not 91, which would be 7x13)**.** If we divide verse 29 into two parts, taking John's words, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" by themselves, the first part of the verse has 10 words and 51 letters, the second has 11 words and 42 letters (7x6). Not one of the 21 words in this verse has 7 letters. No one of these four verses shows any obvious numeric symmetry between words and letters. The number 7 appears only sporadically in them. Are they then all imperfectly preserved? Are they relatively unimportant verses? Or, is a different and perhaps far more intricate numeric factor concealed in them?

Words and Names

A somewhat different class of numeric phenomena appealed to by Panin and Sabiers consists in the number of the occurrences of specific words or names. Thus Sabiers makes much of the fact that the name of Moses occurs 847 times (7x121) in the Bible. He points out that a supposedly reliable concordance gives the total as 846, through failure to include all of the occurrences in Hebrews. In view of the importance which Sabiers attaches to the number 847, it is to be noted that the name of Moses occurs once in the disputed passage John

7:53-8:11. This means that this one occurrence of the name is required to make up the total 847. Without it the number would be only 846. Does this prove the genuineness of the passage in question? If it does, we have here a very simple solution of a problem which has long perplexed scholars. But this solution at once raises the question why this special numeric factor (the 7) appears in the occurrences of the name of Moses and not in the case of the names of many other biblical personages.

The name of Moses' brother Aaron appears 346 times in the OT and 5 times in the NT, a total of 351 times. 351 is one more than 350 (7x50). 346 is three more than 343 (7x7x7). 5 is two less than 7. Is there something wrong with the occurrences of this name? Or, was Aaron relatively unimportant? The names of three patriarchs and three kings may help to answer this question. Abraham's name occurs 175 times in the OT, 73 in the NT, a total of 248. 248 is not a multiple of 7, nor is 73. But 175 is 7x25. Does this mean that Abraham is relatively unimportant in the NT? Paul does not seem to have thought so. Isaac is named 112 times in the OT, 20 in the NT, 132 in all. 112 is 7x16. 132 is one less than 133 (7x19) and 20 is one less than 21 (7x3). The name Jacob (used of the patriarch and of the tribes descended from him) occurs 349 times in the OT, 25 in the NT, 374 in all. 349 is one less than 350 (7x50) and six more than 343 (7x7x7). The three kings who ruled over all Israel were Saul, David, and Solomon. Saul is mentioned 397 times in the OT, once in the NT, making 398. 398 is one less than 399 (7x57). David's name appears 1066 times in the OT, 59 in the NT, 1125 in all. 1066 is two more than 1064 (7x152) and 1125 is two less than 1127 (7x161). The name of Solomon occurs 293 times in the OT, 12 in the NT, a total of 305. 293 is one less than 294 (7x7x6). 305 is three less than 308 (7x44). What do such facts as these indicate if not that the exact number of times a name occurs in the Bible is entirely meaningless. The fact that Moses is mentioned more than 800 times and David more than 1100 times indicates the prominent part which they played in the history of Israel and of world-redemption. But the precise figures 847 and 1125 have no numeric significance whatsoever.

"Vocabulary" Words

As an instructive illustration of the lengths to which the study of the open phenomena of Bible Numerics can be carried we turn to Matthew 1. Sabiers points out 19 numeric "features" in verses 1-17 and a like number in verses 18-25. Some of these features are relatively simple and easy. Others are complicated. Taken together they serve to show how many different methods can be utilized in the search for numeric factors. We have seen that the words in a passage may be counted. That is simple. Then the number of different words ("vocabulary words") can be determined ("and" is a single "vocabulary word" which appears a dozen times in Matt. 1). Then the number of forms (nominative, genitive, accusative, case) in which these words occur can be counted. The words can be classified and grouped (names of men, of women, kings, countries, cities, etc.). And in each group of words some striking numeric factor may be discovered. Verses 18-25, for example, have 161 words (7x23) and 77 "vocabulary words" (7x11). A very simple example is the name Babylon. It occurs once in verses 1-17, but in the Greek as in the English it has "exactly" 7 letters. So it is "Feature Nineteen" in Sabiers' discussion of verses 1-17.

A Complicated Example of Numerics

In his 29 page Introduction to the *Numeric Greek New Testament,* Panin has given an example of a really complicated problem in Numerics which appears in Matthew 1, and of the way in which it is to be solved. In counting the words in this chapter he has ascertained that the name of Christ which occurs once in each of the four verses, 1, 16, 17, 18, occupies in the sequence of the total number of words in the chapter the positions or places, 4, 246, 275, 282. In other words, at its first occurrence it is the 4th word in the chapter, at its last occurrence, the 282nd. These four numbers apparently have no special numeric significance. At least Panin does not point out any. But the total of these four numbers is 807. By adding the numbers 4 and 275 together (these are the odd numbers, 1 and 3, of the four) and the numbers 246 and 282 together (the even numbers, 2 and 4 of the

four), two further totals, or sub-totals, as we might call them, 279 and 528 are secured. Any real warrant for this is not apparent. Suffice it to say that these three totals give Mr. Panin three additional numbers to experiment with. Beginning with 807 he tells us that 807 is (31x13x2)+1 or (8x101)-1 or 3x269. If the reader is not familiar with the subject of Bible Numerics, he will want to know what is the meaning of the parentheses and of the "+1" and which follow them. Mr. Panin explains this to mean that 807 (being 806+1) is the "neighbor" of 806 which is 31x13x2; and it is also the "neighbor" of 808 (being 808-1) which is 8x101. 807 is itself only 3x269, a relatively significant combination. Similarly, 279 is 31x9 or (8x35)-1 or 3x3x31. For 8x35 is not 279 but 280. And 528 is (31x17)+1 or 8x2x3x11 or 3x176. For 31x17 is not 528, it is 527. Why then are the numbers 806 and 808 referred to together with 807; and the number 280 along with 279; and the number 527 with 528? The answer is obviously because 807 has no 31 or 8 in it. But 806 has the one (31) and 808 has the other (8). 279 has 31 in it, but no 8. This is supplied by 280. 528 has an 8 but no 31. So the 31 is supplied by 527. Hence, by making use of its "neighbors" Panin is able to conclude that the number 807, which is the principal total and includes the other two, "is so divided between the two *odd* places, 1, 3, and the *even* places 2, 4, as to produce all the three factors 3, 8, 31, in the division." And he concludes with the amazing statement: "The chance for this being accidental, UN*designed* is one in 31x31x13x8x8x8x3x3x3x2, or 345,406,464." Whether the chance of this being undesigned is one in nearly 350 million or one in a million million does not interest us. What does interest us exceedingly is this. Mr. Panin mentions three factors (3, 8, 31). 31 occurs only in 279. It does not occur in 807 or 528, but only in their respective "neighbors" 806 and 527. 8 occurs only in 528 and in the "neighbors" of the other two, 808 and 280 respectively. In other words, two of the three factors are found in only one of the three numbers. In the case of the others, a "neighbor" has to be called-in to assist. 808 helps out on 8. 806 and 527 help out on 31.

Thus, Bible Numerics gives a strange meaning to the old saying, "A miss is as good as a mile." As ordinarily understood, this means

that a miss is a miss, whether the margin of error be great or small. But according to Mr. Panin, it would seem a miss of +1 or -1 is almost or quite as good as a hit. It isn't exactly in the family, but it is in the "neighborhood." And so the number 807 can call in the numbers 806 and 808 to rejoice with it over Mr. Panin's remarkable discovery! This use of "neighbor" numbers, it will be observed, makes it perfectly absurd to argue that there is any special significance in the fact that the name of Moses occurs exactly 847 times. The number 846, which is the number given in the severely condemned concordance, being the "neighbor" of 847, would answer quite as well; or the other "neighbor" (848), for that matter. What caps the climax of absurdity in this elaborate numerical calculation is this. One of the three factors in the three totals which we have just been considering is stated to be 3 (3, 8, 31). Any child knows, or can easily prove to himself, that of any three consecutive numbers one will always be divisible by 3. In the case of 806, 807, 808, it happens to be 807 which is so divisible; and the same applies to 279 and 528. But Panin's use of the neighbors of these numbers makes it absurd to attach any importance to the presence of the number 3 in any one of them. If it were not present in the numbers themselves, the neighbors would readily supply it. So much for the open numeric phenomena.

II. The Hidden Numeric Phenomena

By hidden numeric phenomena we mean those numerical values of words which cannot be determined, as in the cases already discussed, by simply counting them, or their letters, or the frequency or places of their occurrence, but are based on the numeric value of the letters themselves, these letters being now looked upon no longer as *letters* but as *numbers*. It is a well-known fact that the Greeks of NT times and still earlier used the 24 (originally 26) letters of their alphabet as figures (taken consecutively to represent first the digits [1-10], then the tens [20-90], then the hundreds [100-800],) with the result that *Alpha* stood for 1 and *Omega* for 800. Thus the name Abraham

(spelled Abraam) would have the numeric value 145 (1+2+100+1+1+40). By this means every word in the Greek New Testament can be given a numeric value; and it is claimed that a similar use of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet was made in the case of the OT. Two matters must be dealt with at the outset.

In the first place, while it is perfectly true that the Greeks used the letters of their alphabet as numerals, there is no proof that this was ever done in writing the Hebrew text of the OT. There the numbers are always written out (e.g., "when Abraham was ninety and nine years old"). We find the same style of writing on the Moabite Stone (850 B.C.), on the Siloam Inscription (730 B.C.), and on the documents in alphabetic script recently discovered at Ras Shamra (Ugarit), which date from about the time of Joshua. It has often been asserted, by Petrie recently, that some of the alleged mistakes in numbers in the OT can be explained as due to the confusion of letters (used as numerals), which closely resembled one another. But this is speculation, and does not suffice to prove the use of letters as numerals in the OT. This would limit the application of this numeric system to the NT. And even in the NT numbers are ordinarily spelled out just as in the OT.[4]

In the second place, it is to be carefully noted that the linguistic and numeric uses of the Greek alphabet were two distinct functions, quite independent of each other. The fact that a Greek *Alpha* may represent both "a" and "1" does not prove that it means or can mean both at the same time. Let us take a simple illustration. Our telegraph companies distinguish two main classes of dispatches, those in "open" script and those in "code." If a message is in ordinary English and has a simple, intelligible meaning, it is assumed to be in open script. Such a message would be, "I am sending you fifty dollars." It may, of course, have a hidden meaning agreed upon between sender and receiver. "Fifty" might mean "fifty thousand," and "dollars" might stand for "soldiers." But there would be nothing in the message itself

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4. The mystical number 666 is an exception, as it is sometimes. written simply with the three Greek letters for 600, 60, and 6. The fact that, so spelled, it is perfectly unintelligible as a word, proves that the letters are used as figures. We also find numbers written with letter-figures in the Papyri.

to indicate this. On the other hand, the message might be clearly in code, e.g., "I am sending you URUGB WLOOZIH." The last two "words" are meaningless as words. A skillful decipherer would quickly discover that here the old formula known as Athbash has been made use of. This means that the two unintelligible words represent "fifty dollars" spelled out by using the letters of the alphabet reversed: e.g., z for *a, y* for *b, x* for *c,* and so on. The point of the illustration is this. The fact that the two words "fifty dollars" make sense and have an obvious meaning and appropriateness is *prima facie* evidence that the one message is in open script and has no hidden meaning. The fact that the other two words do not make sense indicates that there is a hidden meaning, that the message is partly in code. Apply this to the question of Bible Numerics. Even if it be granted that letters were used to write numbers in biblical times and by biblical writers, this does not prove that they were always so used, or that a mysterious numeric meaning is to be sought for in combinations which clearly spell intelligible words. The two uses are distinct. The fact that a store-keeper may use letters on the price-tags of his goods, so that his clerks may be sure of the selling price while the customer is kept in ignorance of it, does not justify the inference that when he writes a business letter and says, "The price of sugar is six cents a pound," each letter of the word "six" has a hidden and mysterious meaning. The two things are quite distinct. Yet Mr. Panin and his disciple Mr. Sabiers insist that in the case of the Bible no such distinction is to be made. The letters are to be regarded as having, in addition to their obvious value as letters spelling intelligible words, a hidden numeric value, or even several such cryptic values. This is an assumption which seems on the very face of it to be absurd. It cannot be accepted without very careful scrutiny.

Genesis 1:1

We have seen that the first verse of Genesis has 7 words and 28 letters. These are the open features. The hidden numeric value of the verse is quite different; it is 2701, the value of the 7 words lying between 86 for the word "God" *(Elohim)* and 913 for the phrase (writ-

ten as a single word) "in the beginning." This is because each of the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet is assigned a numeric value lying between 1 and 400. Let us examine this new array of numeric phenomena. 2701 is one less than 2702 (7x386). So the total for the verse is not a multiple of 7. It is only the "neighbor" of such a multiple. Of the 7 individual words or phrases only one, the word "created" (bara), having the value 203, is a multiple of 7 (7x29). So 7 does not figure conspicuously as a hidden factor in this verse. But at this point a discovery is made. No one of the three words, "God," "the heaven," and "the earth" is a multiple of 7. But when the numeric values of these "three important nouns" are added together (86+395+296) the total is 777, a striking number. So Sabiers remarks: "Is it not strange that the numeric value of these words is a value which divides perfectly by seven?– a value which is an exact multiple of seven? Notice that the numeric value of the words is not 776 or 778, but exactly 777. If the numeric value were 776 or 778, it would not divide evenly by 7." Such a statement as this raises the question in our minds whether Sabiers has mastered the "neighbor" doctrine of his teacher. 776 and 778 are "neighbors" of 777. Perhaps the "neighbors" are ignored or rather scorned because they are not needed or helpful under the circumstances! Regarding the number 777 Sabiers goes on to say that the number 7 "occurs in a strange manner beneath the surface, beyond the view of those who merely 'read' the words or surface of the Hebrew text." It is "mysteriously hidden" and only discovered "by special investigation and special counting." To this the reply may well be made: "Is it not strange that no one of the three words which make up this total is itself a multiple of 7? 'God' misses it by +2, 'the heavens' by +3, 'the earth' by +2. So of course by adding up the 2 and 3 and 2 we get the 7 which makes the total a multiple of 7. Is it not strange that the important word 'God' needs the help of the words 'the heaven' and 'the earth' in order to become by this indirect means a multiple of 7? Is it not strange that the numeric value of the entire verse is 2701? If it were 2702, it would be a multiple of 7. But it is not 2702, nor is it 2700. It is 2701, which is *not* a multiple of 7."

The Biblical "Writers"

Mr. Panin pointed out some years ago that there are 21 "writers" of books "named" in the OT. To this Sabiers, apparently with Panin as his authority, adds 5 NT "writers" to make a total of 26 for the entire Bible. The names of these 26 writers have a numeric value of 7931 (7x1133). The reader's attention is called to the fact that the OT writers number 21 (7x3). The equally important, though inconvenient, fact that the NT writers are 5 and not 7 is ignored. But this deficiency for the NT is made up for, it would seem, by the fact that the numeric value of these 5 NT names is "exactly" 4123 (7x589), while that for the 21 OT names is 3808 (544x7).

Let us examine this phenomenon of the biblical "writers." Of the 21 OT writers, there are only three whose names contain the number 7: Obadiah (91=7x13), Haggai (21=7x3) and David (14=7x2). Of the three the name David needs a word of explanation. Like many other names in the OT, including some of the 21, this name is spelled in more than one way. In Samuel-Kings, for example, it is spelled in a way which gives the numeric value 14. But in Chronicles it is spelled[5] in a way which gives the value 24. This latter value being 10 more than 14 is not a multiple of 7, and if we were to add 10 to the total for the OT and to the grand total for OT and NT combined, the number 7 would then appear as a multiple in neither. Are we then to conclude that in several hundreds of occurrences in the OT the name of David is incorrectly spelled?

Of the 26 names of biblical "writers" the first to be listed is Moses. This name is certainly an important one in the Bible. We have seen that great significance is attached to the fact that it occurs 847 (7x121) times in the Bible. We observe then with some surprise that Moses is not one of the names which have a numeric value that is a multiple of 7. Our surprise is increased when we note what the numeric value of this name is which occurs more often than any other except David. The numeric value is 345. Why is this remarkable? It

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5. Hebrew words were originally written without the vowels. But certain of the long vowels were often indicated by a "vowel letter". In the case of the long "i", the vowel-letter was "y". This means that David could be written either DWD as in Samuel-Kings, or DWYD as in Chronicles.

is because 343 would be a name of almost unique numeric value. 343 is 7x7x7, the cube of 7. The name Moses misses this very significant number by two.

Sabiers tells us, without enumerating them, that there are "38 or more profound numeric features" in the name Moses. He fails to mention this profound numeric feature that fails to occur, fails by such a slight margin, a tantalizing deficiency of two. If it were a deficiency of only *one,* the "neighbor" principle might be invoked. But even that is not available.

Many other features found in the OT group of 21 "writers" might well be considered. According to "Feature Six" (Sabiers), of the 21 names of "writers," 7 only are "named" in the NT (Moses, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Hosea, Joel). This ignores Solomon and Jonah, both of whom are included in the list of 21 writers and they are certainly "named" in the NT. This invalidates three of the ten "features" stressed by Sabiers. It is remarkable that both Panin and Sabiers should have made such an obvious slip.

The "Writer" James

Turning our attention to the five NT "writers," we notice something that is worse than a slip. These writers are James, Peter, Jude, Paul, John. Since these are NT writers and their names all appear in the NT, their names are either Greek or have a Greek form. We are entitled to expect them to be used as they are spelled in the NT. In the Greek all five end in "s"; and James, Peter, and Paul all have the ending "os" of the so-called second declension. This ending has the numeric value of 270. We observe with no little surprise that in the case of the names Peter (755) and Paul (781), this ending is included in the total. In the case of the name James (i.e., *Iakobos)* the ending "os" is not counted. With the ending, the name James would have the value 1103; without it the value is 833. 1103 is not, as is 833 (7x119), a multiple of 7. If used, it would change the total for the 5 NT writers and for the 26 biblical writers to one which would not be divisible by 7. Why then is this ending omitted in the case of the name James?

The answer to this question is to be carefully considered, because it shows with the utmost clearness the extremes to which a convinced numericist may be prepared to go in his quest of numeric factors. 833 is not the numerical value of the name James, as that name is spelled in the NT. It is not the numerical value of the name Jacob, as that name is spelled in the Hebrew of the OT. It is the spelling in the NT of the OT patriarch, Jacob. It is arbitrarily used in this list of NT writers in preference to the NT spelling of the name of the writer James, simply because it lends support to that theory of numeric value which the other spelling would oppose. But it is not fair to "juggle" with words in this way. In the NT the spelling without the ending always refers to the patriarch Jacob; and the name then appears as Jacob in our English Bible. The name spelled with the ending is used of James the son of Zebedee and of the others bearing that name in the NT, notably of the author of the epistle of James. Whether this inconsistency goes back to Panin or the blame is to be placed on Sabiers we do not know. In Panin's booklet, *Inspiration of the Hebrew Scriptures Scientifically Demonstrated* (1928), only the OT "writers" are discussed; and the features that are pointed out differ considerably from those given by Sabiers. But whoever is responsible, such a gross inconsistency should be corrected. It is misleading to those who are ignorant of the facts. To those to whom the facts are known, it is an illustration of ingenuity in manipulating the facts which is decidedly damaging to the theory which these alleged facts are cited to prove.

"Place Value" in Numerics

The examples of hidden numeric values which have been discussed are based on the assumption that the numeric use of the Hebrew and Greek alphabets is applicable to the linguistic phenomena of the Bible, to the OT as well as to the NT. Cogent reasons have been given, we believe, for rejecting both the theory and its application. It is to be noted, therefore, that Panin does not even stop with what we may call the historically accredited method of using these alphabets. In his *Numeric Greek New Testament* Panin draws a dis-

tinction between "numeric value" and "place value." What is place value? The place value of a letter is, he tells us, its *place* in the alphabet regardless of its numeric value. Thus *Omega* has, as we have seen, the numeric value 800. But *Omega* is the last letter of the Greek alphabet, which has 24 (originally 26) letters. So the place value of *Omega* is 24. Panin gives no proof that the Greek alphabet was ever so used, that *Omega* ever had the value 24 (or 26?). But obviously such a use of it opens up another numeric vista, which like the one just considered has almost boundless possibilities. Thus, Panin illustrates *place value* by the phrase "Abraham to David" in Matthew 1:17. There are 7 syllables, he tells us, in this phrase, which is probably the reason it attracted his attention. The numeric value is 1569, which is not a multiple of 7, though the sum of its four figures (1+5+ 6+9) is 21 which is 3x7. But 1569 is a "neighbor" of 1568 which is 7x7x2x2x2x2x2, which is "a multiple of seven sevens with seven factors." This means, if it means anything, that the phrase we are considering is to shine in a reflected light. It is not a multiple of 7. It does not have seven 7s with 7 factors. But its "neighbor" has. What more could we ask? But apparently the numericist does, in this instance, want something more. So he notes that the "place value" of these three words is 119 (34+47+38), which is 7x17. And in the place values of the syllables (e.g., Abraam is 1+20+13) various interesting features can be discovered. The longest of the 7 syllables has the value of 42, which is 7x6. Subtract 42 from 119 and the remainder is 77. So 6 of the 7 syllables have, taken together, a place value of 77. Furthermore, if we add the two 7s of 77 together, the result is 14 or 7x2. This serves to show how "place value" can come to the aid of "numeric value," when "numeric value" happens to be found only in the "neighbor" of a word or phrase, and not in that word or phrase itself.

Numerics, An Endless and Unprofitable Study

The subject of Bible Numerics is inexhaustible. We stop at this point to sum up our conclusions briefly. They are two in number. The first and most obvious conclusion is that it is only when attention is concentrated on the cases in which the theory works and the far

more numerous cases where it does not work are ignored, that the theory becomes at all plausible, not to say convincing. The second conclusion is that the great variety of means by which the numeric features and factors in a passage are discovered is a proof of the difficulty of discovering them and of the ingenuity which is required on the part of the discoverer. If the numericist counts the letters in a word or sentence, the words in a sentence or in a more or less arbitrarily defined passage, the *occurrences* of a name or a specific "vocabulary" word, the places of its occurrence, the totals and sub-totals formed by adding these places of occurrence, the various *kinds* and classes of these specific words; if he counts the "numeric value" of the words as determined by the value of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet or of the Greek alphabet as these have been actually used, and adds to these a use of the Greek alphabet (and also of the Hebrew alphabet?) peculiar to numericists; if to the results thus obtained he applies the "neighbor" principle, which brings to the aid of any given number the numbers on either side of it as helpers, so that in the case of *seven,* for example, out of every seven chances three (the number itself and its two neighbors) are always available; if he adds the further principle that in case seven cannot be discovered as a factor almost any other number (e.g., 2, 3, 4, 8, 13, 31), which occurs in a more or less noticeable "pattern" may serve the purpose; if the numericist has at his command all of these means, and doubtless many others, of discovering numeric features in the Bible, then it would be passing strange if he could not find a surprising number of striking and even amazing numeric phenomena in any verse which may happen to attract his attention. But this does not prove that any significance or importance attaches to these discoveries.

> If it were really the case that back of and in addition to the simple sense of a phrase, verse, or passage in the Bible, as determined by the meaning of the words used as words, there is an intricate numerical pattern which is intended both to safeguard and guarantee their

correctness and also to indicate their importance, then we would be obliged to confess that the Apostle Paul erred greatly when he said "spiritual things are spiritually discerned"; he should at least have added "and mathematically." For on this theory the mathematical interpretation of Scripture assumes the utmost importance. The many who "merely 'read' the words or surface" of their Bibles must sit reverently at the feet of the mathematically minded few who are able "by special investigation and special counting" to discover things which have been so "mysteriously hidden for centuries" that it is only within a generation that they have been made available to the generality of Christians. And these ordinary Christians must accept with implicit faith the conclusions of the mathematical experts unless they are prepared to spend years of arduous toil in investigating and checking them for themselves. But the Bible is not a book for mathematical experts to exercise their ingenuity on. There is not a scintilla of real evidence to show that the writers of the Bible were conscious of writing "numerically," or were aware that back of their words there is a hidden numeric cryptogram of such importance that men are justified in devoting their lives to the discovery and elucidation of its mysteries. Careful examination of the

"astounding discoveries" that are appealed to by the Numericist as proving the correctness of the theory shows that these striking "facts" are arbitrarily selected and that they are exploited with utter disregard of the far larger body of facts which opposes and disproves it. Bible Numerics has a certain fascination. But its wizardry reminds us of the obfuscating *abracadabra* of alchemist and astrologer; it is not marked by the simplicity of the Gospel. We do not question the good intentions of the devotees of Bible Numerics. But we are persuaded that they are endeavoring to defend the Bible by a method which has warrant neither in Scripture nor in common sense.

Such Phenomena Can Be Found Anywhere

Finally, since the claim is made by the advocates of Bible Numerics that the numerical features they have discovered are distinctive and found only in the Bible, it may be well to point out that similar phenomena can be found elsewhere, if we have only the patience and perseverance to seek them. We shall confine ourselves to a single pattern of alleged numerical structure. Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heaven and. the earth," having 7 words and 28 (7x4) letters is regarded as a striking example of heptadic structure. Since this discussion was begun with an examination of the date number 1776, we will turn first to the Declaration of Independence. The opening words of this famous document are "When in the course of human events" (probably relatively few Americans can repeat it *verbatim* much farther than this). Here we have 7 words and 28 letters! We turn next to the Constitution of the United States. It begins with the words "We the people of the United States" also 7 words and

28 letters! This may seem striking and significant, as if intended to indicate at the very outset the great importance of these documents. But let us look a little further. In Bancroft's History we run across these words: "Such was the counsel of John Adams" (Vol. viii. p. 37). This sentence is not written in italics. It is not especially emphatic. But it likewise has 7 words and 28 letters!

Let us now turn to every-day life. Such sentences as the following are not at all extraordinary. We have all used them or sentences very like them. "We had tea and toast for breakfast"; "They have not had their dinner yet"; "They had bread and milk for supper"; "Will you please pass me the butter?"; "I would like another cup of coffee"; "Hurry, girls, or we'll miss the train"; "The train started as we got aboard"; "Their silly talk bored me to death"; "I enjoyed every minute of the time." And so on. Every one of these sentences has 7 words and 28 letters! Does that fact have the slightest significance? Does it add anything to their meaning? Does it account in any way for their use? Did anyone, unless he was playing a game of logomachy or working out a problem in gematria, ever count them to determine their numerical structure? Such questions answer themselves. The solemnity of the words, "We the people of the United States," is not increased one iota by the fact that the phrase has 7 words and 28 letters. The words, "I would like another cup of coffee," do not acquire added point and urgency because of this same fact.

The attempt to find mysterious numerical patterns and values in sentences, words, and phrases which have a plain and obvious meaning, whether the meaning is sublime or trite or trivial, whether it is found in the Bible, or in a masterpiece of secular literature, or in the commonplaces of ordinary life, is to say the least a tremendous waste of time and effort; and, what is far more important, resting as it does on principles that are, demonstrably false, it may lead to serious and disastrous consequences. A man who rests his faith in the inerrancy of the Bible on Bible Numerics is trusting in a broken reed, which if he leans on it will go into his hand and pierce it.