

Sunday Reflection

August 23rd 2020

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NUMBERS



SCRIPTURE

Genesis 28:3

“May God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and increase your numbers until you become a community of peoples.”

HYMN:

When upon life's billows you are tempest tossed
When you are discouraged thinking all is lost
Count your many blessings, name them one by one
And it will surprise you what the Lord has done

Count your blessings, name them one by one
Count your blessings , see what God has done
Count your blessings, name them one by one
And it will surprise you what the Lord has done

Are you ever burdened with a load of care?
Does the cross seem heavy you are called to bear?
Count your many blessings, every doubt will fly
And you will keep singing as the days go by

When you look at others with their lands and gold
Think that Christ has promised you his wealth untold
Count your many blessings wealth can never buy
Your reward in heaven and your home on high

So, amid the conflict, whether great or small
Do not be disheartened, God is over all
Count your many blessings, angels will attend
Help and comfort give you to your journey's end

OPENING WORDS OF WELCOME

Dear friends,

Good Morning, Good Morning, Good Morning,

I would say it, not once, not twice, not even three times,

But a hundred thousand times, If it helped you to know

How precious you are

How wonderful you are

How special you are in God's eyes

and indeed in the life of our worshipping community.

I pray you are all keeping well

And once again thank, each and everyone of you, most, sincerely

For the number of contributions you all make

To our Whats App Service,

Through music, song, readings, prayers and stories

I am the Church

You are the Church

We are the Church together

Our theme today is about **NUMBERS** in the Bible

And we will explore this in a number of different ways

But the first thing we are going to do, is draw closer to God in prayer.

CALL TO PRAYER

How precious to me are your thoughts, O God,

How vast is the sum of them,

Were I to count them,

They would outnumber the grains of sand.

Let us pray

OPENING PRAYER & THE LORD'S PRAYER

Oh how marvellous, oh how wonderful is God's love for me and you.

What are your thoughts with regard to us, dear God?

What are our thoughts about you?

One of our thoughts must surely be,

that you are full of understanding and compassion

We fail you time and time again, yet you continue to love us

and constantly encourage us to mend our ways.

A second thought, we have must relate to your forgiving nature

Repeatedly what we say and what we do, does not match up to your hope for us, yet, time and time again, more often that we can count, you forgive us and inspire us to do better.

Thank you Lord God for the many ways in which you bear patiently with us, giving us opportunities, day by day, to grow in our faith, increase our love for you and rejoice in your presence, all in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord who taught us when we pray to say, Our Father...Amen.

SCRIPTURE

Mark 6:34-44

Five loaves and two fish feed 5,000 people

Jesus and his disciples had been busy all day. People everywhere wanted to see him and hear him tell them stories. They had heard how he could heal the sick, so they brought their friends and relatives. They wanted to hear what he said about God's kingdom.

The day was drawing to its close but there were still many, many people listening to Jesus. They were in no hurry to get home but they were beginning to get hungry.

"We must send the people home to get food in their villages," the disciples said. But Jesus replied, "They can eat here. We must give them some bread."

Many of the disciples grumbled and complained, "we don't have enough money to buy enough food." One of the disciples, named Andrew, said, "There is a young lad here with his packed lunch of five loaves and two fish."

Jesus received the bread and fish, told the people to sit on the ground in groups of about fifty people. Then Jesus gave thanks to God for the food and broke it into pieces. He gave them to his disciples to share out among the crowd.

Everyone ate and had more than enough.

At the end the disciples gathered up enough leftovers to fill twelve baskets.

POEM /HYMN

For the Children

These words can be found as a hymn in Junior Praise No:1

A boy gave to Jesus five loaves and two fish
Not much you might say for a crowd
But Jesus, He took them, and smiled at the lad
Gave thanks to His father and blessed them out loud

The boy then saw Jesus take loaves and the fish
Not much for the folk on that day
But Jesus, He broke them, and smiled at the lad
Gave bits to disciples to then give away

Then all worshipped Jesus as enough loaves and fish
Were given to every one there
But Jesus just watched them, and smiled at the lad
Who'd given his lunch-box for Jesus to share

© 1986, Peter Horrobin

SCRIPTURE

It rained and rained for forty days and forty nights

The beautiful world God had made was ruined. People were arguing and fighting with each other. There was only one good man left. He was called Noah. He had a wife and three sons, Japheth, Shem and ham.

God told Noah to build a great big ark. God said to Noah: "Take into the Ark all your family and two of every kind of animal on the earth. Take food for your family and the animals too. Noah did as God told him.

Noah was six hundred years old when the flood came.

When Noah and his family, along with all the animals were inside, God shut the door of the Ark.

It rained and poured for forty days and forty nights. The earth was flooded. There was nothing left to see. No trees, no fields, no houses, no people.

"When will the rain stop? Asked one of Noah's son's.

Eventually the rain stopped but it took one hundred and fifty days for the water to run back into the soggy ground. Then at last the mountains appeared.

Noah sent a raven out of the Ark, then Noah sent out a dove, but they found no place to rest. A week later Noah sent the dove out again. This time it returned with an olive branch in its beak. It had found a tree.

At last Noah and his family, along with all the animals could leave the Ark and God set the sign of the rainbow in the sky.

HYMN: Junior Praise No: 246

There are hundreds of sparrows, thousands, millions
They're two a penny, far too many there must be
There are hundreds and thousands
Millions of sparrows
But God knows every one and God knows me

There are hundreds of flowers, thousands, millions
And flowers fair the meadows wear for all to see
There are hundreds and thousands,
Millions of flowers
But God knows every one and God knows me

There are hundreds of planets, thousands, millions
Way out in space each has a place by God's decree
There are hundreds and thousands,
Millions of planets
But God knows every one and God knows me

There are hundreds of children, thousands, millions
And yet their names are written on God's memory
There are hundreds and thousands
Millions of children
But God knows every one and God knows me

STORY

By

Barbara

PRAYERS FOR CHILDREN

For this new morning and its light
For rest and shelter of the night
For health and food, for fun and friends,
For every gift your goodness sends
We thank you, gracious God.

Lord God,
You know how many hairs are on my head!
You know what words are on my lips before I speak them
You know when I am happy or sad,
Good, naughty, or driving others mad!
You are familiar with all my ways
How awesome is that!
Thank you God, for making me as I am,
Thank you for knowing me so well

Lord Jesus,
Sometimes I feel no one listens
Dad is working, Mum is busy—everyone has things to do
There is no one to really hear me,
But you do, Lord,
Thank you for loving me as if I was number one
And not someone lost in a great big crowd.

Clips, etc.

From members of

What's App

Relating to

Numbers in some way !!!

BIBLICAL QUIZ
RELATING TO NUMBERS IN THE BIBLE

1. How many books, in total, are in the Bible?
2. How many books are in the Old Testament?
3. How many books are in the New Testament?
4. How many children did Jacob have?
5. How many disciples did Jesus, originally, have?
6. How many loaves did the little lad have in his lunchbox?
7. How many fish did Jesus use to feed the hungry crowd?
8. How many people, in total, were saved in the ark?
9. How many days and nights did the rain pour down?
10. How many days did it take for the water to recede?
11. What age was Noah when he built the ark?
12. How many commandments did Moses receive on tablets of stone?
13. How many friends lowered their sick friend down through the roof to Jesus?
14. How many days was Jonah in the belly of the great big fish?
15. How old was Methuselah?

ANSWERS - BUT NOT IN THE RIGHT ORDER

2 3 4 5 8 10
12 13 27 39 40 66
150 600 969

POEM/SONG FOR THE CHILDREN

One, two, three,

Jesus loves me.

One, two,

Jesus loves you.

Three and four,

Jesus loves you more.

More than anybody's loved you before.

Five, six, seven,

I'm on my way to heaven.

Eight, nine,

Jesus is mine.

Now that we are up to ten,

Let's go back and shout it out again.

SHORT REFLECTION ON NUMBERS IN THE BIBLE

Numbers play a prominent role in the Bible and even though no part of the Bible has a purely scientific or mathematical purpose, numbers appear throughout both Testaments.

It is important to note that the Bible's main functions are historical, theological and literary, perhaps explaining in part why when numbers occur, they are always written out in words rather than represented by symbols, which was a distinct possibility in ancient Semitic writing systems.

Within the Bible there seems to be at least three potential uses of numbers:

- (a) Conventional
- (b) Rhetorical
- (c) Symbolic

Let's take a brief look at each of these potential uses of numbers in the Bible.

(A) CONVENTIONAL USE OF NUMBERS IN THE BIBLE

It is of no surprise that most numbers in the Bible are used in a strictly conventional way to count objects, people or anything else that comes in quantity. Counting and numeration have been around as far back as we have records of humankind.

In Number chapter 1 at verse 1 we read:

“The Lord spoke to Moses in the Tent of Meeting... He said, ‘Take a census of the whole Israelite community, by their clans and families, listing every man by name, one by one...’

This is a traditional and rather conventional use of numbers in the Bible.

SHORT REFLECTION ON NUMBERS IN THE BIBLE continued...

(B) RHETORICAL USE OF NUMBERS IN THE BIBLE

Numbers may be used for literary purposes in the Bible.

Proverbs 30:29-30, provides an example of the rhetorical use of numbers in the Bible, where a move from a lower number to a higher number intensifies the thought being expressed.

“There are **three** things that are stately in their stride,

Four that move with stately bearing:

A lion, mighty among beasts

Who retreats before nothing;

A strutting rooster; a he-goat;

And a king with his army around him.”

(C) SYMBOLIC USE OF NUMBERS IN THE BIBLE

In the Bible some numbers take on symbolic overtones, as they acquired specific symbolic meaning in Biblical tradition.

Such numbers included: one, two, three, four, five, seven, twelve, forty, fifty, seventy, one hundred and one thousand.

Perhaps the most notorious example is Revelation 20:3 and 5, which speak of the “thousand year reign.” If this number was being used in a conventional sense (as when you count something) it would be a literal thousand year period. If, as is assumed, it is being used in a symbolic sense, then it indicates an extremely long period of time.

THE HIDDEN USE OF NUMBERS IN THE BIBLE

The Bible contains no secret or hidden uses of numbers. They are imposed from outside the text and fail to sustain support from more than a few devoted followers and usually only for a brief period of time.

STORY

About TWO Sisters

By

The Minister

SCRIPTURE FROM THE GOSPELS THAT MENTION NUMBERS

Matthew 18:21-22

Peter came to Jesus and asked, ' Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to **seven** times?'

Jesus answered, ' I tell you, not seven times, but **seventy-seven** times.'

Luke 9:1-2

When Jesus had called the **Twelve** together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and heal the sick.'

Matthew 18: 12

What do you think? If a man owns a **hundred** sheep, and **one** wanders away, will he not leave the **ninety-nine** on the hills and go to look for the **one** that wandered off?'

Matthew 26: 34

'I tell you the truth,' Jesus answered, 'this very night, before the cock crows, you will disown me **three** times.'

Matthew 26: 14-16

Judas Iscariot went to the chief priests and asked, 'What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you?' So they counted out for him **thirty** silver coins.'

John 2: 6

Nearby stood **six** stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from **twenty** to **thirty** gallons.

PRAYER

Lord God,

we only have one world

but on this world live millions and millions of people,

How sad it is, dear Lord,

that we cannot live in harmony and peace

There are vast resources, yet many people, more than we can count,
live with little or next to nothing.

We have faith that is strong enough to move mountains
and yet increasingly we cry out, "Lord, we cannot do it,"

Help each of us Lord, to take one day at a time

and fill that day with only that which is good

Help each of us Lord, to take one problem at a time

and solve it in a way that works for the good of all

Help each of us Lord, to respond to one need at a time

and meet it in a way that brings people closer to you

These things we pray because:

Young lives matter, old lives matter

Black lives matter, white lives matter

Every colour of life matters

Rich lives matter, poor lives matter

Full lives matter, empty lives matter

All lives matter, dear God

For each and every one of those lives is precious to you
and should be respected by us, always. Amen

SONG FROM GODSPELL

Day by Day

Day by day
Day by day
Oh Dear Lord
Three things I pray
To see thee more clearly
Love thee more dearly
Follow thee more nearly
Day by day

BLESSING

In Acts chapter 16 at verse 5 we read:
“So the churches were strengthened in the faith
and grew daily in numbers”

Gracious God

In everything we do and say this week
Let our faith grow and the faith of others too
So that daily the Church will grow in numbers

Lord Jesus Christ

In everything we give and receive
Let our faith grow and the faith of others too
So that daily the Church will grow in numbers

Holy Spirit

In everything that lifts us up or brings us down
Let our faith grow and the faith of others too
So that daily the Church will grow in numbers

And may the blessings of
God the Father, Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit

Fill our hearts this day and always
So that daily the Church will grow in numbers.

Amen