

No.
204

***"IF YE THEN BE RISEN WITH CHRIST, SEEK THOSE THINGS WHICH
ARE ABOVE, WHERE CHRIST SITTETH ON THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD."***
COL.3.1

SCRIPTURE NUMERATION.

"SIX".

An Address (revised)

At Campbell Road, Bow, E.,

28th May, 1913

by

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SCRIPTURE NUMERATION." SIX "

An Address by Mr. P. W. Heward,
At Campbell Road, Bow, E.,
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Passages read:-

Exodus 16.22-26;; 20. 9-11;; 24.16; 25.31-35, Isa.6.1-9.

Our subject this evening, dear friends, is the word "Six" as it occurs in the Bible. I need hardly say that the word "Six" is found a number of times, not only in the form "six", but also in compounds like sixty or six hundred, even as far as six hundred thousand. We have a contrast between six hundred chariots and the six hundred thousand of Israel's redeemed ones. Apart from these passages that directly mention six, we have some "sixes" of another character. Six words come together, or a word is used six times, or two threes are mentioned, or a dozen is divided up into two parts. There are thus many examples throughout the precious Scriptures. I want at the outset to add one or two passages to those we have heard, and then to seek some general lessons. Let us turn to 2 Samuel 6.13. "And it was so that when they that bare the ark of the Lord had gone six paces, he sacrificed oxen and fatlings". 2D.20, "And there was yet a battle in Gath, where was a man of great stature, that had on every hand six fingers, and on every foot six toes, four and twenty in number; and he also was born to the giant". 2 Kgs. 11.3. Verse 1 speaks of the destruction of all the family of Ahaziah, verse 2 of the escape of Joash, and verse 3 adds "And he was with her hid in the the house of the Lord six years". Prov. 6.16. "These six things doth the Lord hate; yea, seven are an abomination unto Him: a proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, etc." Dan 3. Here we have the golden image which Nebuchadnezzar the king set up, and in connection with it we read of a height of sixty cubits and a breadth of six cubits. Thus we have collected a few occurrences as a groundwork.

Now what is the meaning of six in Scripture? or rather, what is part of the fulness of God's teaching? We notice at the outset it is an even number, and even numbers are usually "earthly" in some way. Two is the number of earthly witness. Four is the number of *that* which is world-wide, - the four winds of heaven. Six is another earthly number. Eight speaks of the resurrection of the dead. Ten-fellowship manifested on earth. On the contrary, odd numbers speak somewhat strikingly of God. One of His unity, and three of His triunity; five of His law and grace, and seven of His perfection; nine of His judgment, and so forth. Six, therefore, is, in some respects an earthly number. It brings before us. I believe, that which is complete as an earthly work; not complete from the heavenly standpoint of added rest, - that is the number seven; but complete on earth as a WORK. If there be a work of evil, its completeness is manifestly saddening. Hence the completeness of evil must be a contrast with seven which reminds of the perfection of God. Moreover, six will thus become man's falling short of God, or if we take it with relation to the number five, it is man's stepping over God's law; man's transgression, i.e. if taken in connection with evil. But, in the ordinary way, six is simply the number of a complete work, that complete work being viewed as an earthly one. With this general idea in our mind, we can consider one or two passages. We have had brought before us Nebuchadnezzar's sixty and his six. Goliath is marked by the number six, and another one born to the giant, who had the six fingers, is marked by the same number. Here we have man's "greatest", man's glory, even as we shall afterwards find the highest number of man is 666. But inasmuch as six is a complete work on the earth, you will not be surprised to find this number is frequently used with regard to Israel. We read, for example, of the names

of Israel's twelve tribes written on two onyx stones, six on each stone. In like manner the table of shewbread was marked by two rows of six leaves. God's provision for need here. Here we have a suggestion of a work on earth, - the two sixes making twelve, with the "friendship" of two works on earth of God that are complete, would undoubtedly suggest governmental perfection, of which twelve is a picture again and again in Scripture.

Having the general thought in our mind, we can understand something of the force of the SIXTH hour in Scripture "At the sixth hour there was darkness over the land". Why the sixth hour? The number of a complete work. It was fitting then that our beloved Lord should be marked out as the One Who was bearing wrath; for having come to do a certain work, and having become the Obedient One up till death, He was competent to bear the wrath of God in the place of poor guilty sinners. Again, we find our beloved Lord sitting down on a well, at the sixth hour. A complete work is suggested, and then time to rest. The sixth hour has been reached, but though it is time to rest, He goes on with His loving work when the woman of Samaria comes out. In like manner Peter is on the house-top at the sixth hour. He is approaching the seventh, and he would have a rest, but the Lord is pleased to interrupt that rest, first by a vision, and then by certain men who came from Cornelius. But this is more clearly marked out in connection with the number six as to days. In Gen. 1, we read of man created on the sixth day. The climax of God's creative work was on the sixth day. It was earthly. The sixth day is plainly earthly. You will notice how that whereas in the first day we have the mention of light, and in the fourth day we have the mention of the lightbearers, it is not so with regard to the sixth day. There is nothing of the same heavenly aspect in it. God's work is from heaven, but the creation is upon this earth. It may be pointed out in the structure of Gen. 1, that the first day is like the fourth day, - light. The second day is like the fifth day, - it has both heaven and earth brought before us. The firmament is mentioned just as in the fifth day we have the fowl that fly in the open firmament. The third day is all earth, the sixth day is all earth. The third day like the sixth day is two-fold. The waters gathered together, and then the earth brings forth creatures. The sixth day is first dealing with the creation of animals, secondly with the creation of man. There is a wonderful structure. Indeed, as a rule, six divides up into two threes, or very frequently. So this first week divides up into two threes. God is not the author of confusion. Dear friends, everything is beautifully arranged in His own beautiful wisdom. The scientist looks at science, or at least, uses his faulty knowledge of God's wonderful unveiling in nature. Even though his knowledge be faulty, he is compelled, if he has any respect or reverence at all, to admire the majestic works of God in nature. The believer looks at Scripture with like eyes. Aye, he should look at Scripture with spiritual eyes, and should rejoice to find that we have in this book an arrangement equally wonderful with the arrangement of the sun, moon and stars; and in one sense more wonderful than the arrangement of all nature is the arrangement of Scripture. Oh that we may bow our heads and worship.

The six days of Gen. 1 are connected with the six days of Exod. 20. 8-11. God did His work in six days. Six days shalt THOU labour and do all thy work. That was the commandment to Israel. It belonged to an earthly people, and it particularly mentions they were to rest on the seventh day, including the stranger in THEIR GATES, showing that it concerned an EARTHLY people with an earthly land. The sabbath was not only a seventh day but THE seventh day, implying six previous days. It, therefore implied that people had an earthly work to accomplish first, and Israel never properly kept the Sabbath, they never "did" all their work, for the true work of a man is to please God, and a natural man has never accomplished that. So their sabbath-keeping was merely outward, merely religious, not a real work acceptable to the Lord. Obviously, however, their breaking the Sabbath was a still more grievous sin, but their keeping of it would not have been satisfactory unless they had looked off themselves on to the work of Another, even the Lord Jesus Christ. Six days is, therefore, the Divine expression to bring before us a complete work. In like manner, in Exod. 24, we are told about the sight of

the glory of the Lord like devouring fire for SIX days. God would bring them down before Him, and the Sabbath day He called up Moses into the mount. You recollect how, in the last week of our Lord's life, He worked for six days, and then on the sixth day He not only worked, but He was the Suffering One Who died, that, at the end of that sixth day, His body might be laid in the tomb and rest His appointed sabbath, and be raised the first day of the week. Six days, therefore, bring before us a work upon earth. May I, in this connection, call your attention to the six waterpots in John 2? The six empty waterpots bring before us JEWS. Filled with water, they seem to show us John's disciples; changed to wine, Christ's true followers. An empty waterpot! Such is man by nature, even though he be religious. Waterpots filled with water, - such were the disciples of John. There was some Divine work in that wondrous ministry of John, but it was not complete. Then our beloved Lord came, and changed everything. Just as the water was changed to the wine, so He graciously gives, through His finished work, unto His people that wine of the Gospel which contains no ferment, and no corruption, which indeed makes glad their HEART. Six in THAT passage plainly gives us the idea of a complete work in the earth. I believe that the Lord's disciples divide up into two sixes, just as the tribes of Israel divide up into two sixes, and as we have the two sixes on the high priest's onyx stones, and as we have seen on the table of shewbread. You will not forget that everything in Scripture is symbolic as well as literal, for God has power over numbers as well as power over things.

We next come to consider the relation of six to seven. Six with regard to seven often implies a falling short. Seven is perfection. It is rest, rest following work, rest beyond work. Moreover, it brings before us in various places a completeness which six cannot show, for six is only a completeness of certain works. Let me illustrate what I mean. Six things the Lord hates, yea seven are an abomination unto Him, - Seven denoting an absolute completeness, emphasizing this thought beyond that which the number six could do. Hence seven sometimes contains all the thoughts of six, plus something more. Often, however, it is in some respects contrasted with six. Six working days, one sabbath day. Here is the contrast. Six branches out of the lampstand. One centre shaft from which they all came. Here is the contrast. Christ's people are nothing as an earthly people, but when they are linked with Himself there is a completeness and a perfection and a gloriousness. In this connection may I just remind you again of the six years of Joash. Athaliah reigned for six years, but the seventh year brought a change. Joash, belonging to that family to which God promised to give the kingdom, Joash is brought out, yet almost an infant, but he is made the king. You know how Jehoida the priest showed them the king's son. The purpose of God must stand. God never changes His mind, and, therefore, after the six years, the one whose life, as it were, has been hanging on a thread, is manifested as the king's son. Athaliah is slain, the land is quiet in that SEVENTH year.

In Acts 11 Peter says six brethren accompanied him when he went to Cornelius, so that with those six, he made the number seven, and we have brought before us a beautifully complete work. Indeed without Peter's own journeying there would have been an incompleteness, for those six would have been very Jewish, they would have thought of an earthly relationship to God. We are particularly told that those of the circumcision who went with Peter were ASTONISHED, but Peter, the seventh one, said, Can any forbid water that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit as well as we. Peter was the one in whom God graciously worked that the Gentiles might be brought into the wondrous manifest fellowship of the Lord's redeemed.

There were six cities of refuge, three on each side of Jordan, for six often divides up into two threes, but those six cities of refuge, though complete in an earthly sense, were not complete in a spiritual sense. Christ is the City of Refuge for His people. The six lead up to Him. He is the Seventh. Aye, He is more than the Seventh, He is the Only City of Refuge, He is the Heavenly One, the Heavenly Place of Escape for poor guilty sinners. And He is THE High Priest, the One Who died, and NOW never dies, to give absolute and eternal freedom. Oh, dear friends, if we have been brought to Him how happy are we, how complete is His saving work for those of us who deserve nothing but judgment; only the wrath of God did we

deserve, and only the grace of God have we received.

Then further, we come to ponder that wondrous number 666. Will you turn with me to Rev. 13? We read in the last verse, "Here is wisdom, Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast; for it is the number of a man, and his number is Six hundred threescore and six". This is most wonderful, for first of all as written in the Greek it is written thus $\chi\zeta\varsigma$ appearing to be the first and last letter of "Christ" ($\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\varsigma$) with the serpent letter in the middle. Here is a man who pretends to be Christ, but is really Antichrist with the serpent inside. Moreover the last letter is not exactly the last letter of the word "Christ", but something else; it only LOOKS like it. So here we have Satan's counterfeit, beginning apparently well, beginning apparently satisfactorily, the serpent wrapped up in the middle, and in the end though appearing and professing to be Christ, being actually far off from Him. Beginning as a Christian, ending up as that which is Satanic, the one cast out, for "S" takes the place of the lost Greek "F". Again, the number 666 could also be brought before us with a threefold "S". S.S.S. This is rather suggestive, for "S" was, I believe, one of the special letters used among the heathen in connection with their wicked mysteries, it was one of their secret meaning letters. Here then we have the S.S.S. Furthermore, in counting in the Greek, α is 1, β is 2, γ is 3, δ is 4, ϵ is 5; the next letter of the Greek alphabet should really be six, but it is not. Another letter is put in for six, as we have seen, so that six is the first number that seems to be inserted wrongly. It is that which intrudes, and thus we have brought before us six hundred and sixty six. God speaks of the man of sin as the intruding one, the one wrongly stepping in. The name of the letter that creeps in is Stigma, and "stigma" is still the name of a mark that is normally unsatisfactory. Men will be "compelled" to receive Antichrist's mark, his stigma; they will be compelled to receive it, and it will be an awful curse to receive such a stigma. How much better to receive the stigma, as men esteem it, of suffering for Christ's sake. It is well to endure for Him, for He loved us and we love Him. The number 666 is impressive in several ways. Among the Latins, counting is, as you know, by certain letters, but that for a thousand has only been used later. Everything short of a thousand is comprised in the following letters, and everyone will see they make up 666:- D, C, L, X, V, I. All the letters the LATINS use make up 666. It would seem therefore that the number 666 is the climax of Roman calculating. It falls short of the thousand, even as Methuselah fell short of the thousand, that the thousand might be the number connected with Christ. There is no thousand till He comes as King, and He will reign as King a thousand years. But Antichrist is the 666. You know very well, too the relationship that 666 bears to a thousand. It is practically two-thirds. It therefore bears a relationship that shows distinctly a falling short, and we know with regard to Israel that two parts will follow evil, but the third part will be spared, for the Lord will graciously save. Here then we behold man's calculating and man's glory and man's wisdom. It is rather remarkable, furthermore, that all the numbers from one, two, three, four, five, right up to 36 added together make 666, but 36 is itself six multiplied by six. Hence 6 - 36 all added together is an intensely "six" form, and 666 is the most "six" combination you can possibly obtain, among numbers under a thousand. It therefore shows us, I presume, man's complete work; Antichrist is man's climax. Here is "the man of sin". Oh dear friends, how solemn to see man's climax. What a contrast with the Lord of Glory. What a contrast with that Obedient One have we here. Man's disobedience, Man's evil. Antichrist will soon arise. May we be contrasts with all that leads up to his manifestation, contrasts in the enabling of the Holy Spirit.

The last point on our outline contains a misprint. But you will doubtless realise the purport of it. It means that it is important not only to study this subject, but to find out and to know, in truth, if we are indeed those redeemed by the blood of Christ. The number 666 impresses this on our hearts and minds, for a time is coming when every man who follows man will be sunk to hell, and as we think of that time when men will be marked with the brand of the devil, and be seen as the servants of Antichrist, it becomes us to ask ourselves if we are redeemed, that so we are marked in our lives by the work of the Lord, and living to His glory. Beloved friends,

it is not enough to be clever, it is not enough to search into the precious book that God has given. We need to be those who, rejoicing in the finished work of Christ and His poured-out blood, are seeking to live godly and soberly and righteously, that if trouble comes we may be faithful, and so when our Lord comes we shall reign with Him. Blessed are those servants whom their Lord when He cometh will find devoted to Himself, pleasing Him in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. We have not been saved without a Divine purpose; because of a finished work we are accepted, because of a finished work we are in Christ, that we should no longer have the finished work of sin, ^{but broken off from the wild vine, broken off from the finished work of sin} we should seek, on resurrection ground, to please Him Who has made us His by wonderful love, made us His so that our whole life should be devoted to His service, - made us His, that we should lay aside every weight, and run with patience the race set before us; made us His, that we should be to the praise of the glory of His grace Who hath graced us, for we are graced, indeed, in the Beloved! To Mary of old the words were uttered, "Hail, thou that art HIGHLY FAVOURED", and the word signifies "having been graced". To us, surely, if in Christ Jesus, these words come once more in living power, as Eph. 1 shows. We have been wonderfully graced, and there is a fulness of grace in our beloved Lord, for He is FULL of grace and truth, that out of His "fulness" we may receive. Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need, Heb.4.16.