

SEED & BREAD

FOR THE SOWER ISA.55:10 FOR THE EATER
BRIEF BIBLICAL MESSAGES FROM

THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY

Otis Q. Sellers, Bible Teacher

* **SIX, SIXTY, SIX** * **Plus Addendum** (Later, by David R. Hettema)

Those who have come under my oral ministry have discovered that it is my understanding that the years of God's government of the earth will be seven hundred in their totality. This statement has been circulated by those who heard it, so I have been constantly importuned for information concerning this. Since my understanding of this has been mostly based upon intimations, clues, and glimmers of truth, I have been somewhat hesitant to set it forth in written form.

I suppose that all who do Biblical research wish at times they could set forth fragmentary and unfinished ideas in printed form without people thinking that a final and definitive conclusion has now been chiseled into imperishable granite which shall stand forever as the final word on the subject dealt with. Any such conclusion will be far from correct concerning this present dissertation on "Six hundred, sixty, and six."

It was and is the declaration of Solomon that " **It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honor of kings is to search out a matter**"(Prov. 25:2). The knowledge of God's concealed truths is usually gained by tracing out the intimations to it that are scattered throughout the Bible. These allusions to the truth are regularly ignored by the average Bible reader, but the real lover of God's truth will carefully note these faint glimmers, meditate upon them, and hide them in his heart, maybe for many years, as he waits for more light on the subject.

Any logical student must admit that there is divine truth concealed in the number six hundred, sixty-six. If there is not, then we may as well borrow King Jehoiakim's penknife (Jer. 36:23) and excise these words from our Bibles.

I first heard of "six, sixty, six" in a wild sermon on prophecy. The message was intended to frighten the hearers into taking some action to save themselves from the

awful terrors this number was supposed to represent. I do not think the message accomplished much, but it did prompt me to go to my Bible to see what it actually said concerning this figure. I found there in Revelation 13:16-18:

And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark, in their right hand, or their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. 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, three score and six.

For several years I tried to analyze this passage in the hope of finding what the writer was telling us, but the results were nil. However, the effort put forth did impress these words on my mind and I could bring them before me as light might be given upon them from other Biblical statements. So lacking understanding I refrained from putting into action the Biblical admonition: "Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast."

This exercise of mind took place about fifty-five years ago. Since then I have discovered that many people are quite superstitious about the number six. To them it is an evil number that forebodes no good, and when it is tripled it is to them the symbol of all that is malevolent. There is nothing in the Bible to support this, and I reject this gullibility as being sheer nonsense. There is nothing evil or satanic about the number six. If anyone wants to make a contribution of \$666.66 to this ministry it will be received with thanksgiving both to God and to the one who gives it.

In the Revelation passage we have the suggestion that there is truth concealed in this number. This is indicated by the words, "**Here is wisdom,**" and the directive that those who have understanding should "**count the number of the beast.**" Most interpretations of this passage begin with the assumption that the problem is one of *gematria*, which is the reckoning of the value of letters in a name, after the manner of the Hebrews and Greeks. They did not have the Arabic numerals and used letters instead. When such interpreters came upon a prominent name, the value of which letters came to 666, they would shout from the housetop that this one was or is the beast of Revelation 13.

The vast number of names that have been put forth is sufficient to show the error of this. Most of those who have followed the historical method of interpreting Revelation have settled on Nero, whose name in its Hebrew form is spelled Neron, which when its letters are added up yields the number 666. This leaves us with nothing in the way of truth. Nero does not fill the bill, even though some of his characteristics were in accord with the description of the beast given here.

I am familiar with all the explanations that any serious expositor has written on this passage. I have recently read again all that twelve commentators have written concerning it. There is no solid teaching in any of them. However, through the years I have come upon certain intimations of truth that should be considered and developed.

At this point it must be said that the conclusions set forth will not be received by those who reject the Biblical revelation of a pre-advent period of divine government over this earth. By "pre-advent" I mean before the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

That such a period of divine government precedes the second coming and the millennium is a truth that I have researched, developed, and proclaimed over the past thirty-three years. Thousands of students of God's Word have seen fit to consider and to receive my findings. The reader can locate the place of this long period of divine government by referring to Issue No. **SB129**, "The Order of Events." In this he will note that the world is now living under God's dispensation (administration) of grace, and that this will continue until the *epiphaneia* (blazing forth) of the glory of the great God, even our Savior Jesus Christ. (Not to be confused with the *epiphaneia* of His parousia. See Titus 2: 13 and 2 Thess. 2:8). It is the blazing forth of His glory (Isa. 40:5) that will introduce and inaugurate the kingdom of God upon the earth.

The reader is also asked to note in the chart that the kingdom of God concludes in a seven-year period that is designated as the revolt against the kingdom, a revolt that is put down by the return of the Lord Jesus to the earth to be personally present for a thousand years. Thus we know that the time period of the revolt is seven years and the years of His parousia will be a thousand. But as to the length of time of God's manifest government (Psa. 67:4), no time period seems to have been revealed. However, it could be that we have been surrendering too easily to our ignorance. It may be that the exact time is somewhere revealed, it being the glory of God to conceal a matter.

Most Biblical students are familiar with the main outlines of Daniel's prophecy of Israel's seventy weeks (Dan. 9:24-27). These they know to be weeks of years, that is 490 years. They also know that the last week (seven years) of this period is the most amazing of all. In this period there is one actor who is most prominent. He is called "the prince that shall come" (Dan. 9:26); "the abomination of desolation" (Matt. 24: 15); "the antichrist" (1 John 2:8).

Inasmuch as before this seven-year period begins, the divine restraints that have characterized God's government have been removed (See Issue No. **SB113**) and no human physical opposition is permissible (Matt. 26:52) he quickly gains dominion over the entire earth. In his subtle machinations he makes and confirms a seven-year

covenant with the redeemed and restored nation of Israel, but in the exact middle of that period he breaks the covenant and begins a final supreme attempt to exterminate Israel, both as a nation and people (Psalm 83:2,4).

None of these events will take the wise and understanding people of the earth by surprise. The people of God can mark the day the covenant is confirmed and count forward 1260 days (42 months, or three and one-half years) and on that day the covenant will be broken. Then they can begin to count again and in 1260 days more the man of sin will be destroyed by the blazing forth of the Lord's personal presence. See 2 Thess. 2:8. From these times, given in advance, the actual day of the return of the Lord Jesus will be known.

Of course many will cite Matt. 24:36 that declares no man knows the day or the hour. That was true then and it is still true today, but this passage does not say no one will ever know. A later revelation declares something different. See 1 Thess. 5:4. It is my understanding that the light, truth, and knowledge that will flow from God during His government will allow God's people to know exactly where they stand time wise in relationship to the consummation of that eon.

There is wisdom in the number six, sixty, six. The reader of Revelation is told to count (keep track) of the number of the beast. But where does he begin to count? What does he start with? It is evident that 666 is a number that God established and caused it to be recorded in His Word over 1900 years ago. And while it is "the number of a man," no man made up this number, or gave it its significance. The one who someday will take it as his own symbol was not in existence when John wrote, and he is not in existence today. He appears late in the kingdom, and when he is manifested it will be seen that he is the supreme one among the tares, the "sons of the wicked" (Matt. 13:38) whom Satan plants among "the sons of the kingdom." He will appropriate to himself this number, using it as a symbol of his claimed divinity. Little will he realize that he has taken to himself the very number that is indicative of the year of his destruction.

As stated before, the day of His destruction is the day of the second coming of Christ. We are not going to live out our days under God's government in ignorance of the times and the seasons. The two greatest events in connection with the manifest kingdom of God are its inauguration and its consummation. Its beginning is marked by the divine assumption of sovereignty and its consummation is marked by the personal return of Jesus Christ. It is my conviction that there will be 666 years between these two events.

The Acts period was "the blade and ear" stages of the kingdom of God (See Issue No. **SB048**). It was thirty-three years plus long. If we take this and add it to the 666

years we will have 699 years plus and thus be in the 700th year of the kingdom of God.

We cannot begin to "count the number" now. The divine clock of the kingdom stopped running at Acts 28:28. when it will start running again no one knows. But God's people can start counting on the day He assumes sovereignty, takes to Himself His great power, and governs the world. In the meantime we will do well to remember the words of Dr. E.B. Pusey: "Prophecy was not given to enable us to prophesy, but as a witness to God when the time comes."

There is wisdom in six, sixty, six. Do not shy away from it.

End Issue No. SB151

Published Aug. 10, 1982

ADDENDUM TO 666, RE-THINKING 666, BUT NOT AS YEARS

PROGRESSIVE BIBLE STUDY CHANGES OUR THINKING

By David R. Hettema

Anyone who makes a study of a subject in the Bible becomes aware that there are many related facts which must come together like the pieces of a puzzle in order to realize and understand the truth of the subject. If a fact or a piece of the puzzle will not fit the subject at hand, you put it aside; it possibly belongs to some other puzzle or subject yet to be solved.

Many believers have studied under the late Otis Q. Sellers and have followed his progressive search for Biblical truth. He brought forth fact after fact, and piece by piece he fitted together and recovered the truth of the pre-millennial kingdom of God. This great truth itself represents the missing piece in the great puzzle of Biblical prophecy, providing answers to questions that have perplexed sincere students for many years.

Otis never faltered in his search for truth, having no fear of changing from what he had previously believed and published. He always said without apology "My latest light will always be found in my latest writings." Progressive Bible study will always bring changes, sometimes large and sometimes small, but we must be always willing to follow the truth.

In **1982** Mr. Sellers wrote Seed & Bread number **SB151** titled 666, a four page pamphlet that is full of interesting Biblical information, but also setting forth the mistaken idea that the numbers 666 stood for years, also the total length of the first stage of the kingdom of God including the 33 years of the Acts period would be 699 years. He also stated that what he had set forth was subject to change. Here is a quote from his article:

"I suppose that all who do Biblical research wish at times that they could set forth fragmentary and unfinished ideas in printed form without people thinking that a final and definitive conclusion has now been chiseled into imperishable granite which will stand forever as the final word on the subject dealt with. Any such conclusion will be far from correct concerning this present dissertation on Six hundred, sixty and six."

In the 18 years that have passed since this article was published, progressive Bible study has forced the realization upon us that 666 cannot mean years because that theory leaves us with 176 years of time in the kingdom prior to God calling and returning His people to the promised land. There is no prophecy or activity set forth in the Old or New testament that fits this void of 176 years. 666 surely has some other meaning, but it does not fit as years in the time frame of revealed truth.

Published, 01-15-00