

## **Reckoning the Number of the Beast - A New Approach**

**Pedro Carvajal, PhD**

pedro.carvajal@urjc.es

[Go directly to the text of the paper](#)

### **Abstract**

The aim of this paper is to offer a possible solution to one of the most interesting enigmas of antiquity: the identity of the Beast of Revelation, hidden behind the number 666.

It provides a new approach, developed based on the similarities found between Revelation 13:18 and John 21:24, obtaining a paradoxical result (a relationship between the Divinity of the Old Testament and the identity of the Beast), that may have interesting religious and philosophical implications.

Keywords: The Beast of Revelation, Triangular Numbers, *The Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians of the 16th and 17th Centuries*, Yeshua, algebra, Gospel of John

## **Calculer le Nombre de la Bête - Une nouvelle approche**

**Pedro Carvajal, PhD**

### **Résumé**

Le but de cet article est d'offrir une solution possible à l'une des énigmes les plus intéressantes de l'Antiquité : l'identité de la Bête de l'Apocalypse, qui se cache derrière le nombre 666.

Il consiste en une nouvelle approche, développée sur la base des similitudes trouvées entre Apocalypse 13:18 et Jean 21:24, permettant l'obtention d'un résultat paradoxal - une relation entre la Divinité de l'Ancien Testament et l'identité de la Bête - qui pourrait avoir des implications religieuses et philosophiques intéressantes.

Mots-clés : La Bête de l'Apocalypse, les Nombres Triangulaires, *Symboles Secrets des Rosicruciens des XVIe et XVIIe Siècles*, Yeshoua, Algèbre, Évangile de Jean

## **Calculando el Número de la Bestia - Un Nuevo Enfoque**

**Pedro Carvajal, PhD**

### **Resumen**

El objetivo de este artículo es ofrecer una posible solución a uno de los más interesantes enigmas de la antigüedad: la identidad de la Bestia del Apocalipsis, escondida detrás del número 666.

Proporciona un nuevo enfoque, desarrollado sobre la base de las similitudes encontradas entre Rev. 13:18 y John 21:24, obteniendo un paradójico resultado (una relación entre el Dios

del Antiguo Testamento y la identidad de la Bestia) que puede tener interesantes implicaciones religiosas y filosóficas.

Palabras clave: La Bestia del Libro del Apocalipsis, Números Triangulares, *Los Símbolos Secretos de los Rosacruces de los siglos XVI y XVII*, Yeshua, Álgebra, Evangelio de Juan

## **Calculando o Número da Besta - Uma Nova Abordagem**

**Pedro Carvajal, PhD**

### **Resumo**

O objetivo deste artigo é oferecer uma possível solução para um dos enigmas mais interessantes da antiguidade: a identidade da Besta do Apocalipse, oculta por trás do número 666.

O texto fornece uma nova abordagem, desenvolvida com base nas semelhanças encontradas entre Apocalipse 13:18 e João 21:24, obtendo um resultado paradoxal (uma relação entre a Divindade do Antigo Testamento e a identidade da Besta), que pode ter implicações religiosas e filosóficas interessantes.

Palavras-chave: A Besta do Apocalipse, Números Triangulares, *Os Símbolos Secretos dos Rosacruzes dos séculos XVI e XVII*, Yeshua, álgebra, Evangelho de João

## **Die Zahl des Tieres – eine neue Betrachtung**

**Pedro Carvajal, PhD**

### **Zusammenfassung**

Wir versuchen in dieser Abhandlung eine mögliche Lösung für eines der interessantesten Mysterien vorzustellen: es geht um die Identität des Tieres in der Offenbarung und die Zahl 666.

Dieser neue Ansatz ergibt sich aus Gemeinsamkeiten, die gefunden wurden in der Offenbarung 13:18 und bei Johannes 21:24. Ein verblüffendes Ergebnis (eine Beziehung zwischen den Gott des Alten Testaments und die Identität des Tieres) ergab sich hieraus und könnte zu interessanten religiösen und philosophischen Folgerungen leiten.

Schlüsselwörter: das Tier der Offenbarung, Dreieckszahlen, *die geheimen Symbole der Rosenkreuzer vom 16. und 17. Jahrhundert*, Joshuah, Algebra, die Offenbarung von Johannes

### **Introduction**

Deciphering the identity of the Beast hidden behind the number of the Beast is one of the greatest challenges of a spiritual nature bequeathed to us by antiquity. For the purposes of this research, the King James Version of the Bible was used.

The conundrum arises from a verse from the Book of Revelation, “Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the Beast, for the number is that of a man and his number is six hundred and sixty-six” (Rev. 13:18).

In *The Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians of the 16th and 17th Centuries*, one of the most important contributions to Rosicrucian literature, 666 appears in at least four plates (Book 2, pages 48, 53, 54, and 57).

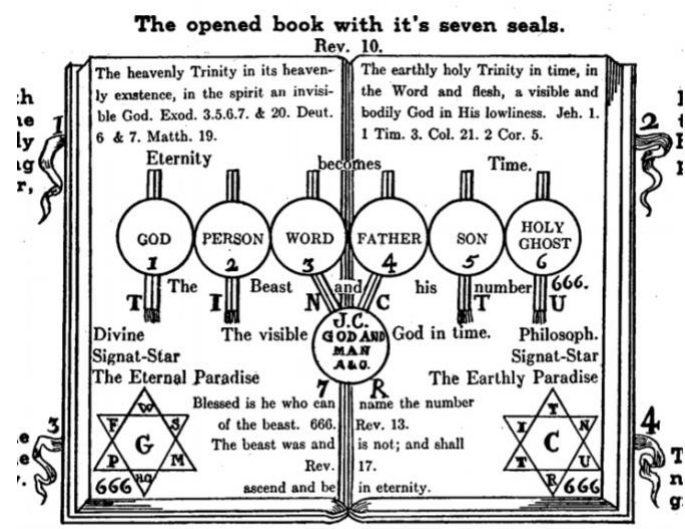


Figure 1. An excerpt from page 54 of *The Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians of the 16th and 17th Centuries*, which encourages the study of the 666: “Blessed is he who can name the number of the beast.”

Several methods<sup>1</sup> were used to unravel the mystery, albeit with such unsatisfactory results that the theologian Irenaeus of Lyon, archbishop during the second century CE, counseled waiting for the solution only when the Apocalypse is fulfilled. According to Michael<sup>2</sup> the dominant method is gematria, a system of assigning numerical values to the letters of the Hebrew and Greek alphabets, a method that gives numerical values to words.

$$\begin{aligned}
 & \text{Τιταν (Titan)} \\
 & T + \epsilon + \iota + \tau + \alpha + \nu \\
 & 300 + 5 + 10 + 300 + 1 + 50 = 666
 \end{aligned}$$

Figure 2. A Gematria example.

As Fiorenza<sup>3</sup> shows, “it was easy to transcribe letters into numbers but almost impossible to reverse the procedure, since many possible words might add up to a given number.” For 666 we might obtain such widely diverse identities as *Nero Caesar*, *Diocletian Augustus*, *Vicarius Filii Dei* (the Pope), *Lateinos* (the Romans), and *Titan* (Titus Caesar).

Putting to one side gematria, Kabbalah, and other complex techniques that search for spiritual meaning through numerology, this paper approaches the matter as if it were an algebraic game, with the rules for solving it found in Revelation itself. This paper seeks to uncover one of the possible encoding systems that could have been used by the author to encrypt the name of the Beast.

## The Miraculous Fish

Solving a riddle by relying on only one single element of observation, Revelation 13:18, can be an exceedingly complex task. Therefore, the first goal of this paper is to determine whether such a coding system had been used on any other occasion. Accordingly, this paper begins with two basic premises present in Revelation 13:18: the first premise is that such a system was designed to hide the identity of an important person in the text; and the second is that a number was used to play an important role in the solution to this hidden identity.

According to the tradition formalized by the Fourth Council of Toledo in 633, the Gospel of John and the Revelation to John are both works written by the same author. Moreover, since researchers such as George Raymond Beasley-Murray<sup>4</sup> have shown that both texts have enough in common to suggest that they were written by the same person, it is in these texts that this paper focuses its search, discovering in chapter twenty-one of the Gospel a riddle based on both premises.

“This is the disciple who is testifying to these things and wrote these things, and we know that his testimony is true” (John 21:24).

The person to whom this passage refers, the author of the Gospel himself, was known as “one of [the] disciples, whom Yeshua loved,” and he attended the Last Supper (John 13:23). This person also accompanied the Teacher while he was on the cross (John 19:26) and was the second person after Mary Magdalene to witness the empty sepulcher (John 20:4). He would be named again on two other occasions, and he was placed alongside Peter at Lake Tiberius (John 21:7, 21:20).

Despite its importance to the text, at no point is his identity made clear, as is also the case with the Beast.

As for the matter of numbers, the second premise, the following passage appears in the same chapter: “So Simon Peter went over and dragged the net ashore full of one hundred fifty-three large fish” (John 21:11).

As F. H. Colson<sup>5</sup> pointed out, 666 and 153 are the only two triangular numbers higher than ten in the whole of the New Testament. Triangular numbers are those numbers that are the summation of the natural order of numbers and can be represented in the form of a triangular<sup>6</sup> dot pattern. So, the pattern begins 1, 1+2, 1+2+3, 1+2+3+4, etc., and the numbers themselves are 1, 3, 6, 10, 15, 21, etc.

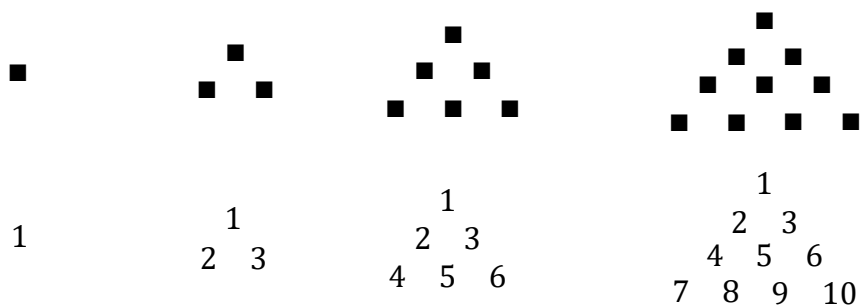


Figure 3. Examples of Triangular Numbers.

The Gauss formula for triangular numbers is:  $T_n = \frac{n(n+1)}{2}$  e.g.  $10 = \frac{4(4+1)}{2}$ .

They were discovered by Pythagoras, “the father of numbers.” The Pythagoreans conferred pseudo-religious qualities upon triangular numbers, especially the 10, which they called Tetractys: “Bless us, divine number, thou who generatest divinities and people,” “source of the eternally flowing creation”; and perhaps to conceal information, “see what you thought to be four was really ten and a complete triangle and our password.”<sup>7</sup>



Figure 4. The Tetractys on page 55 of *The Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians of the 16th and 17th Centuries*.

Considering that there are only forty-four triangular numbers between 1 and 999, the probability of two of them being used by chance is less than 0.2 percent, a number low enough to suggest that they were not chosen randomly.

$$Probability = \frac{44}{999} \cdot \frac{43}{998} = 0.1898\%$$

They also share an uncommon algebraic curiosity that I have calculated: they can be expressed as the sum of their numbers raised to higher powers.

$$153 = 1^3 + 5^3 + 3^3$$

$$666 = 6^3 + 6^3 + 6^3 + 6 + 6 + 6$$

Figure 5. These figures show that 153 and 666 can be derived in various related arithmetical ways.

According to Bannister<sup>8</sup> there is an architectural relationship between 153 and 666. The transverse width of the Constantinian Basilica of Saint Peter in the Vatican, built in the fourth century to enshrine the grave of the first Pope, was 153 roman feet, the perimeter of the nave was 666, and the perimeter of the transept was 755 (the gematria of “Peter”).

There is another matter to be considered as well when dealing with the issue of numbers. John is usually quite imprecise in his Gospel<sup>9</sup>; however, in verse 21:11 he not only specifies the exact number of fish but also their size (“large”), as if both facts were important.

Wright demonstrated that the Book of the Wisdom of Solomon, a canonical text that, like Revelation, was written in Greek, used the word “justice” and others, to separate the different

sections that compose it. This leads us to think that “large” could be used for the same purpose.<sup>10</sup>

Unlike in Revelation,<sup>11</sup> at no point is the identity of the author of the fourth gospel specifically indicated in the text itself. Johannes Beutler,<sup>12</sup> drawing upon historical sources, has demonstrated that the gospel has been attributed to someone named John since at least the second century CE.

Friar Luis de León, a professor of philosophy at the University of Salamanca who was imprisoned by the Spanish Inquisition in 1572, thought that in order to search for the hidden meaning of the Scriptures it was necessary to “*contar las palabras*” (“count the words”). Counting the number of times that the name *ιωαννης*, or John, appears in the text,<sup>13</sup> starting with “In the beginning was the Word” (John 1:1) and continuing until *μεγαλων*, or “large,” appears in John 6:18; we can see that it does so a total of exactly seventeen times, a figure that coincides with the number 17’s triangular base of 153, which is derived from  $1 + 2 + \dots + 17$ . For the final total, we used the *Codex Sinaiticus*, the oldest complete extant version of the New Testament.

Although it may seem that these connections are the result of mere chance – that there is in fact no real relationship between the 153 fish, the 17 appearances of the name John in the text, or the number 36’s triangular number of 666 found in Revelation 13:18, derived from adding  $1 + 2 + \dots + 36$  – a close examination of the text will reduce the likelihood that they are the product of sheer coincidence.

I have found that in Revelation, the word *θηριου*, or Beast, appears a total of thirty-six times,<sup>14</sup> the seventeenth of which being in Revelation 13:18, where it serves as a unifying nexus, which I have found, between 17, 36, and the Beast, a nexus that is unlikely to be the result of mere chance.

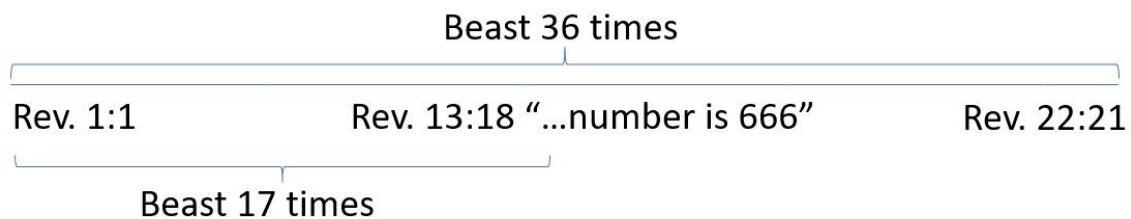


Figure 6. A visual of the unifying nexus between 17, 36, and the Beast.

In Revelation there are 3560 words, and only “Beast” is repeated exactly 36 times, the probability of this happening is  $\frac{1}{3560} = 0.029$  percent. Moreover, since between Rev. 1:1 and Rev 13:18 there are 2550 words and Beast is the only one repeated exactly 17 times, we would have a probability of  $\frac{1}{2550} = 0.039$  percent. The probability of both things happening at the same time, is close to 0.001 percent.

Under the assumption that this is not simply a coincidence, we are confronted with a coding method, the outcome of which is as predictable as the conclusion that the Gospel of John was in fact written by someone named John. Moreover, it is highly unlikely that, during the so-called “miraculous catch of fish,” when the resurrected Yeshua appeared at Lake Tiberias, anyone would concentrate on counting and measuring the size of fish rather than paying full attention to such a miracle. Instead, this episode appears to offer a clue about the method we should employ to solve an even greater mystery.

To test the validity of the procedure, I used one of the most important verses in the Gospels, John 1:14: “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.” The traditional interpretation of that verse is: the Messiah is the Word.

“Word” is the translation of the Greek *Logos* (Λόγος), and “Messiah” the translation of *Christos* (χρ).

In the whole Gospel of John, *Codex Sinaiticus*, I have found only two words that are repeated 17 times, in other versions of the Scriptures there are more<sup>15</sup>, one of them is *Logos*<sup>16</sup> and the other one is *Christos*.<sup>17</sup>

### He Is the Eighth

In the previous section, this paper identified a coding system – one that is simple to execute but difficult to detect if its existence is unknown – based on a triangular number (153), a key related concept (“large,” the size of the 153 fish of John 21:11. This could be used, as in the Book of the Wisdom of Solomon, to separate the part of the text that begins in John 1:1 and continues until the first occurrence of “large” in John 6:18, where we must count the name “John”), a place to begin the counting (“in the beginning...”), and a name that is repeated a number of times equal to the base of the aforementioned triangular number (17).

Below, this paper shall draw upon this mathematical model to examine Revelation 13:18: “Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the Beast... his number is six hundred and sixty-six.”

As was the case with the “153 large fish,”<sup>18</sup> in this case by proximity “his number is 666” is significant. To determine what this “number” is, this paper searches for a reference in Revelation itself that would point toward the answer. In the *Codex Sinaiticus*, Revelation 17:9 begins with the same words as Rev.13:18, although their order is changed.

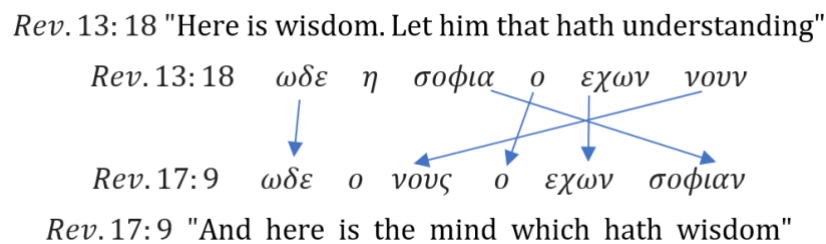


Figure 7. A diagram showing how the beginning for both Revelation 17:9 and Revelation 13:18 in the *Codex Sinaiticus* are similar.

This parallelism continues with a sentence in Revelation 17:7: “I will tell thee the mystery of the woman and the beast that carrieth her, which had the seven heads and ten horns.” With this sentence, the author could be directing the reader to that section of the text so as to help solve some of the difficulties generated by the riddle that he himself has posed. Accordingly, if attention is then turned to Revelation 17:11 – “And the Beast that was and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven” – it is possible to find “eighth,” the numerical reference which is important to this paper.<sup>19</sup>

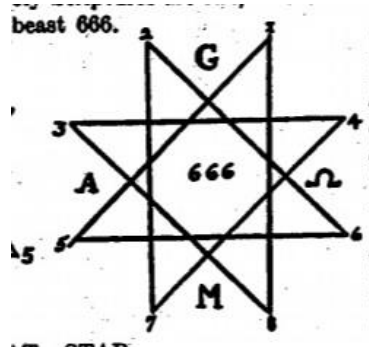


Figure 8. Revelation 17:11 states: “He (the Beast) is the eighth.” This illustration is the 666 and eight-pointed star from page 57 of *The Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians of the 16th and 17th Centuries*.

As for where to start the counting, for the miraculous catch of fish this paper begins with John 1:1 (“In the beginning was the Word...”). As with 153 and 666, the only triangular numbers larger than ten to appear in the New Testament, there are only two books in the Sacred Scriptures that begin with “εν αρχη...”, or “in the beginning”: namely, the Gospel of John and Genesis. We therefore seek the beginning in the second of these, basing our search on the expression “he is the eighth, and is of seven” (Rev. 17:11).

In the Bible, there are four complete series consisting of seven elements. Three of these series are found in Revelation (Revelation 6:1: “I watched as the Lamb opened the first of the seven seals”; Revelation 6:3: “When the Lamb opened the second seal”; Revelation 8:1: “When he opened the seventh seal.” Also, there are seven cups in Revelation 8:6, and seven trumpets in Revelation 16:1) and one in Genesis, namely the seven days of creation, in the context of which the surprising eighth member out of a group of seven might in fact be one of the days of the week, specifically the one following the seventh day,<sup>20</sup> when “He rested from all the work of creating that He had done” (Gen. 2:3).

It could be argued that at no point does an eighth day appear in Genesis. In order to refute this claim, this paper shall demonstrate the existence of a link between the “first day of the week” and the word “eighth” found in the Gospel of John and expressed by means of the successive appearances of the resurrected Christ before the apostles.

The last of these appearances takes place during the miraculous catch: “This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples after he was risen from the dead” (John 21:14). Let us examine when the previous two take place.

The first occurs on “the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them. Peace be unto you” (John 20:19); and the second “after eight days again his disciples went within, and Thomas with them, then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst and said, Peace be unto you” (John 20:26).

During these appearances, both the apostles and Yeshua appear at the same place. Moreover, the latter uses precisely the same words, creating a parallelism between them wherein the only variables that differ (other than the absence of the apostle Thomas) are the days on which they take place: specifically, the first day of the week following the Passion in the first appearance, and the eighth day after the same in the second.



Up to this point, this paper has relied upon the triangular number thirty-six (36) and a point of departure (Gen. 1:1), but a new problem now emerges: identifying which version of the Scriptures should be used, given that there are notable differences among them.<sup>21</sup>

Analyzing semantic issues, Fernández<sup>22</sup> believed that the version used primarily by the editors of the four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) was the first translation of the Bible in any language other than Hebrew, the Greek εβδομηκοντα, known in Latin as the *Septuagint*.<sup>23</sup>

Here this paper reaches a crucial turning point, since the name this paper seeks to reveal is repeated exactly thirty-six times between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 2:3 in the version of the Bible known as the *Septuagint*, and it would appear to reveal the being whom the author of Revelation believed was the Beast of the Apocalypse. The only word that appears the number<sup>24</sup> of times indicated is θεός, or the Divine.

This is an idea that indeed is stressed in Genesis itself, since it calls θεός the first thirty-six times, differentiating it from Κύριος ὁ θεός, or Lord Divine, on the thirty-seventh mention.

## Conclusion

The analysis of 153 as a triangular number began when Augustine of Hippo observed that it is the sum of the natural numbers from 1 to 17. Augustine considered that 17 was the result of adding the ten commandments plus the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Jerome taught that there are 153 species of fish in the Mediterranean, and this means that there will be those in the church from every type of human.

As Colson<sup>25</sup> argued, the triangularity of 666 was not known by any of the early Christian exegetes, maybe because the calculation of high triangular numbers was a difficult process with Greek notation.

As far as 666 is concerned, as Michael and Bodner point out, there is no procedure that tries to solve this mystery by resorting to triangular numbers.

This paper shows a new approach to solving the 666 conundrum, based on a coding method found in chapter 21 of the Gospel of John.

The advantages of this approach over other competing models are:

- In contrast to alphanumerical methods such as gematria, by means of which we might obtain such widely diverse identities as *Nero Caesar*, *Diocletian Augustus*, *Vicarius Filii Dei*... this system offers one single solution.
- It uses exclusively mathematical methods that had already been developed and that were widely in use during the period in which the Gospel of John was written.
- It is consistent with the different verses that refer to the number concerned, including Revelation 13:17, when mention is made of the “number of his name,” which in this case would be 36; or Revelation 13:18, which indicates that it is the “number of man,”<sup>26</sup> for Thomas, this expression may mean that it is a number comprehensible to human intelligence, one that does not require divine assistance to interpret.

It is possible that this conclusion may be related to parallels between the Gospel of John and gnostic ideas explored by authors such as Kurt Rudolph, Elaine Pagels, Rudolf Bultmann, or Raymond Brown. These ideas hold that the salvation of the soul is not achieved by faith but rather by the knowledge of secrets that are accessible only to an elite group of initiates.<sup>27</sup>

According to this mythology, one perfect being was located at an apex beneath which, at a much lower level, could be found the “perverse Demiurge” who created the world and who governs it,<sup>28</sup> an idea that would accord with the conclusion our model has provided us. Finally, I would like to state there is no clear answer for the question “what is the meaning of the Number of the Beast?”

The popular Christian conception, initiated by Irenaeus of Lyon in the second century CE, identifies 666 with the Antichrist, but the truth is that in the Scriptures there is no evidence linking the two concepts, since the Antichrist is never mentioned in the Book of Revelation. In *The Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians of the 16th and 17th Centuries*, page 57, it is mentioned “the great wondrous beast 666”, “the hidden, holy wondrous cipher, being full of divine secrets.”

### **Conflict of Interest**

The author declares no conflict of interest.

### **Bibliography**

---

- Bannister, Turpin C. “The Constantinian Basilica of Saint Peter at Rome.” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 27, n°1 (1968): 3–32.
- Baukhams, Richard. “The 153 Fish and the Unity of the Fourth Gospel.” *Neotestamentica* 36, n° 1/2 (2002): 77-88.
- Beasley-Murray, George Raymond. “The Relation of the Fourth Gospel to the Apocalypse.” *The Evangelical Quarterly* 18 (1946): 173-186.
- Beutler, Johannes. *A Commentary on the Gospel of John*. Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2017.
- Bodner, Keith and Strawn, Brent. “Solomon and 666.” *New Testament Studies* 66, n° 2 (2020): 299-312.
- Brown, Raymond. *The Gospel According to John*. New York: Doubleday & Co, 1970.
- Bultmann, Rudolf. *Theology of the New Testament*. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2007.
- Colson, FH. “Triangular numbers in the New Testament.” *The Journal of Theological Studies* 16 n°10 (1914): 67-76.
- Dantzig, Tobias. *Number. The Language of Science*. New York: Pi Press, 2005.
- Doresee, Jean. “Gnosticism.” In the *Historia Religionum*, edited by C. Juoco Bleeker, 533-580. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1969.
- Gumerlock, Francis X. “Nero Antichrist: Patristic Evidence for the Use of Nero’s Naming in Calculating the Number of the Beast (Rev. 13:18).” *Westminster Theological Journal* 68, n° 2 (Fall 2006): 347-360.
- Fernández Marcos, Natalio. *Septuaginta versus Biblia Hebraea: la Biblia de los Cristianos*. Madrid: CSIC, 2011.
- Fiorenza, Elisabeth Schüssler. *Revelation: Vision of a Just World*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991.

- Kiley, Mark. "Three More Fish Stories (John 21:11)." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 127, n° 3 (2008): 529-531.
- Michael, M. G. "Demystifying the Number of the Beast in the Book of Revelation: Examples of Ancient Cryptology and the Interpretation of the '666' Conundrum." In *IEEE International Symposium on Technology and Society*, edited by K. Michael, 23-41. Wollongong: IEEE, 2010.
- Pagels, Elaine. *Los Evangelios Gnósticos*. Barcelona: Ed Crítica, 1982.
- Rudolph, Kurt. *Gnosis: The Nature and History of Gnosticism*. Edinburg: T&T Clark, 1983.
- Schmidt, Carl. *Pistis Sophia*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1978.
- Thomas, Robert L. *Revelation: An Exegetical Commentary, vol. II*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1995.
- Unknown Frater. *Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians of the 16th and 17th Centuries*. San Jose: AMORC, 1935.
- Valdez, Adylson. "El número 666 y las Doce Tribus de Israel." *RevistB* 68, n°3/4 (2006): 191-214.
- Wright, Addison G. "The Structure of the Book of Wisdom." *Biblica* 48, n° 2 (1967): 165-84.

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Gumerlock analyzed whether this hidden identity corresponds to Emperor Nero (Francis Gumerlock, "Nero Antichrist: Patristic Evidence for the Use of Nero's Naming in Calculating the Number of the Beast [Rev. 13:18]." *Westminster Theological Journal* 68, n° 2 [Fall 2006]: 348). Bodner related the question to 1 Kings 10:14 and King Solomon (Keith Bodner and Brent Strawn, "Solomon and 666." *New Testament Studies* 66, n° 2 [2020]: 303). Valdez studied its symbolic aspects (Adylson Valdez, "El número 666 y las Doce Tribus de Israel." *RevistB* 68/3-4 [2006]: 193).
- <sup>2</sup> M. G. Michael, "Demystifying the number of the beast in the book of Revelation: examples of ancient cryptology and the interpretation of the '666' conundrum," in *IEEE International Symposium on Technology and Society*, ed. K. Michael (Wollongong: IEEE, 2010), 27.
- <sup>3</sup> Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Revelation: Vision of a Just World*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 86.
- <sup>4</sup> George Raymond Beasley-Murray, "The Relation of the Fourth Gospel to the Apocalypse," *The Evangelical Quarterly* 18 (1946): 186.
- <sup>5</sup> FH Colson, "Triangular Numbers in the New Testament," *The Journal of Theological Studies* 16, n°10 (1914): 67.
- <sup>6</sup> Plato in the *Timaeus* indicated that the equilateral triangle symbolizes divinity and proportion. Triangle is the most stable and resistant geometric figure. In the Christian tradition, the equilateral triangle symbolized God and the Holy Trinity.
- <sup>7</sup> Tobias Dantzig, *Number. The Language of Science*, (New York: Pi Press, 2005), 42.
- <sup>8</sup> Bannister, Turpin C., "The Constantinian Basilica of Saint Peter at Rome," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 27, n°1 (1968): 20.
- <sup>9</sup> "They were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes" (John 21:6). "For it was about the tenth hour" (John 1:39), "so the men sat down, in number about five thousand" (John 6:10), "they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits" (John 21:8).
- <sup>10</sup> Addison G. Wright, "The Structure of the Book of Wisdom," *Biblica* 48 n° 2 (1967): 168.
- <sup>11</sup> "And he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John" (Rev. 1:1).
- <sup>12</sup> Johannes Beutler, *A Commentary on the Gospel of John*, (Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2017), 21.
- <sup>13</sup> John 1:6, 1:15, 1:19, 1:26, 1:28, 1:32, 1:35, 1:40, 1:42, 3:23, 3:24, 3:25, 3:26, 3:27, 4:1, 5:33, 5:36
- <sup>14</sup> Rev. 11:7, 13:1, 13:2, 13:3, 13:4, 13:4, 13:4, 13:11, 13:12, 13:12, 13:14, 13:14, 13:15, 13:15, 13:15, 13:17, 13:18, 14:9, 14:11, 15:2, 16:2, 16:10, 17:3, 17:7, 17:8, 17:8, 17:11, 17:12, 17:13, 17:16, 17:17, 19:19, 19:20, 19:20, 20:4, 20:10. It also appears in 6:8, only there it does not refer to the Apocalyptic being but rather to the "wild beasts of the earth."

---

<sup>15</sup> “Seventeen is the number of occurrences of “Sign” in John. This 17 is an allusive indicator of Jesus the sign-maker.” (Mark Kiley, “Three More Fish Stories (John 21:11),” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 127, n° 3 (2008): 530).

<sup>16</sup> John 1:1, 1:1, 1:1, 1:14, 4:37, 6:60, 7:36, 8:37, 10:35, 12:38, 12:48, 14:24, 15:25, 17:17, 18:9, 18:32, 21:23.

<sup>17</sup> John 1:20, 1:25, 1:41, 3:28, 4:25, 4:29, 7:26, 7:27, 7:31, 7:41, 7:41, 7:42, 9:22, 10:24, 11:27, 12:34, 20:31.

<sup>18</sup> In the *Codex* both terms appear located in front of the numbers: “μεγαλων (large) 153” and “αριθμος (number) γαρ αυτου εστιν (of it is) 666.”

<sup>19</sup> An idea supported by a mathematical game,  $666 = 1 + 2 + \dots + 36$ , as  $36 = 1 + 2 + \dots + 8$ , the number of the Beast would be the eighth number of the series formed by double triangles.

<sup>20</sup> 2 Enoch 33:1 “And I appointed the eighth day also, that the eighth day should be the first-created after my work, and that the first seven revolve in the form of the seventh thousand.”

<sup>21</sup> Gen. 2:2 appears in the Masoretic Hebrew (“And on the seventh day God [the Divine] ended his work which he had made...”), whereas in the Septuagint we have “and God [the Divine] completed in the day sixth his works....”

<sup>22</sup> Natalio Fernández, *Septuaginta versus Biblia Hebraea: la Biblia de los Cristianos*, (Madrid: CSIC, 2011), 7.

<sup>23</sup> The author of Revelation must have also been aware of this problem since, as Fernández has pointed out, during the era in which he wrote it there were already several versions in existence. Accordingly, we believe that the author must have given us some clue about which one should be used.

“I will tell thee the mystery of the woman and the beast that carrieth her, which had the seven heads and ten horns,” Rev. 17:7. “Seven heads and ten horns” is an expression that is repeated in Rev 12:3, 13:1, 17:3. The text itself provides an explication of the expressions “the seven heads [...] are seven kings” (Rev. 17:10) and “the ten horns which you sawest are ten kings” (Rev. 17:12): to wit, the fact that both the heads and horns are kings indicates that the texts are homogeneous to a certain degree and suggests another logical possibility (Prov. 25:2 “It is the glory of God to conceal a matter and the glory of kings to investigate a matter”). The use of triangular numbers leads us to believe that the author of Revelation had some knowledge of Pythagorean mathematics (according to Colson, the Pythagoreans conferred pseudo-religious qualities upon triangular numbers) and might very well have been familiar with what is known as the “Table of Pythagoras.” Situating 7 at one of that table’s axes and 10 at the other gives us  $7 \times 10 = 70$  (“*Septuagint*” literally means seventy).

<sup>24</sup> Gen. 1:1, 1:2, 1:3, 1:4, 1:4, 1:5, 1:6, 1:7, 1:7, 1:8, 1:8, 1:9, 1:10, 1:10, 1:11, 1:12, 1:14, 1:16, 1:17, 1:18, 1:20, 1:21, 1:21, 1:22, 1:24, 1:25, 1:25, 1:26, 1:27, 1:27, 1:28, 1:29, 1:31, 2:2, 2:3.

<sup>25</sup> Colson, “Triangular,” 75.

<sup>26</sup> The following expression does not appear in the *Codex Sinaiticus*: “ωδε (Here) η σοφια (wisdom) εστιν (is) ο εχων (he who has) νουν (knowledge) ψηφισατω (calculate) τον αριθμον (the number) του θηριου (of the Beast) αριθμος (number) γαρ (because) αυτου (of it) εστιν (is) εξακοσια εξηκοντα εξ (666).”

<sup>27</sup> “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God” (John 17:3).

<sup>28</sup> Jean Doresee, “Gnosticism,” in the *Historia Religionum vol 1*, ed. Claas Juoco Bleeker (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1969), 562.