# Numerology in the Gospel of John I: A contribution to the understanding of the numbers (2:6).

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**Summary**

For the Fathers the number six expresses the completeness and is related to (re-creation) of the world. For many contemporary readers the six water-pots are a symbol of the imperfect purification which will be substituted by the incarnated and crucified resurrected Logos through the baptism and the blood donation. The Messianic dinner is established between the Jewish in Cana of Galilea. The phrase two or three measures express the volume of stone water-pots probably not only literally but also in a poetic way. Therefore, the abundance/and richness arrive from just the presence of Jesus as in the first sign he does not speak or order for the transformation of water to wine. The presence of two consecutive numbers recalls for a gradual or climactic scheme to intensify the content of the sentence. Remarkably this does not appear only in Bible but also in modern Greek poetry and music.

**Key Words:** Number six, measures, synthetic parallelism, climax scheme

**Introduction**

As it is well known, numbers in Bible and especially seven are recognized to have not only an arithmetic value but also a symbolic meaning[[1]](#footnote-1). There is ample evidence that numbers in the time of Jesus were not only recognized as tools for routine calculations in their daily life or scientific work but also as symbolic entities. The understanding of the symbolic and allegoric meaning of these numbers allows the faithful person to enjoy and comprehend the scriptures as well as reveal new theological meanings[[2]](#footnote-2). Any interpretation that does not deviate from the basic Christian dogma offers new spiritual enjoyment to the faith people. Of course, the existence of the opposite view does not escape our notice[[3]](#footnote-3). This opposing view considers the effort to understand the symbolism of numbers as a “waste of time” and rather a “destructive occupation”[[4]](#footnote-4). We support the first view as the examples in Bible where the numbers are set in purpose to show symbolic meaning are numerous. We cannot deny for example the often accounting of the number seven in Revelation to be accidental. It appears that Jewish were borrowed some symbolism from the Babylonian[[5]](#footnote-5), Egyptian and Greek with which the Jews came in contact[[6]](#footnote-6). Greek symbolism of numbers and mathematics was introduced by Pythagoras[[7]](#footnote-7) (c. 570-490 BC), Plato (427-347) and continued with neo-Pythagoreans and neo-Platonists[[8]](#footnote-8). In Plutarch (c45-120 AC) works examples of isopsephy (i.e., On the E of Delphi) and numbers symbolism are found (i.e., On Isis and Osiris, The Roman and Greek questions). The active symbolism of the numbers is well understood as Gnosticism a trend of the following second and third centuries introduced extensive numeric symbolism[[9]](#footnote-9). Philo who also lived at the times of Jesus Christ wrote a lot of works which contain allegory on the numbers (c. 25 BC – c. 50 CE).

In East Church Clemens (150-211-216 AC), Origen (c185-251 AC) and Saint Cyril from Alexandria (378-444 AC) were the first to introduce heavily the number symbolism. Saint Gregorius Nazianzenous (329-390 AC), Gregorius Nyssenus (335-395 AC) and John Chrysostom (c 344-407) were also using a moderate number symbolism. Saint Gregorius Nazianzenous was the one that urges faithful people to get in the deep understanding of numbers[[10]](#footnote-10). Saint Maximus the Confessor (580-662 AC) was the most systematic and deepest theologist in providing allegoric meaning to numbers. He expressed the term “allegoric” as the message of the meaning of the numbers and other Biblical events directly by the Holy Spirit. According to the “spiritual state of the father” the Holy Spirit could accommodate his need (PG 90.317, 536). This is the reason that scriptures are not interpreted by a unique way (PG 90.463).

In the Western Church Saint Augustine (354-430 AC) also systematically used symbolic way to interpret numbers. Saint Augustine considered numbers (mathematics) as the study of divine ideas. Numbers are originating in God’s minds. The central premise of Saint Augustine approach was widely applied for one thousand and five hundred years. Saint Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274 AC), another very important father of Western Church differed on some of the details -for example, he viewed mathematical knowledge as abstraction from experience rather than as *a priori* knowledge as did Saint Augustine, but he accepted the central premise. Today, this perspective is largely disappeared and that is the reason we have difficulty to understanding the symbolism of numbers in Bible[[11]](#footnote-11). From the above reasons J.N. Sanders and B.A. Mastin realized that it is a standing temptation to read in allegorical interpretation into all numbers in the Fourth Gospel; many no doubt have a symbolic significance[[12]](#footnote-12).

In two articles, which refer to the beginning and the end of the action of the Lord Jesus in John, we will consider the meaning of the numbers in John, considering the interpretation of the Fathers and the modern Scholars.

The chapter two of the John Gospel starts with the information that “and the third day was a marriage in Cana of Galilee” and Jesus was bidden with his disciples. His mother was already there. When the wine failed his mother said it to him. Although Jesus answered in a peculiar way that “his time is not yet come” his mother feels the incoming miracle and says to servants “whatsoever are told do it” (2:1-5). Indeed the “first sign” of Jesus will be performed on the six water-pots (or pitchers) of stone set there after the Jew’s manner of purifying, containing two or three firkins a piece. These will be filled with water and Jesus will order them to bear them unto the ruler of the feast who will confirm the conversion to wine (2:9).

Gibson mentions that these larger than the vessels water pots were used for carrying water ([John 4:28](http://biblehub.com/john/4-28.htm)). These were placed in the outer court, away from the guest-chamber. It is natural that an eyewitness should remember the number and know roughly their size. Mikvaot (= Jewish ritual baths) and other stone vessels were developed during Christ times as an explosion for the religion purification and as a passive resistance against the characteristics of the Roman civilization which were considered unsurpatory[[13]](#footnote-13).

In general, the water is often mentioned in John Gospel in various narratives as a symbol of change-transfiguration that incarnated Logos offers. Christ being wearied with his journey on Jacob’s well (4:6) appears as a donor of “living water”, a water that whoever drinks never gets thirsty again as it becomes a well of water springing up within him for eternal life (4:14). He substitutes now the sheep gate pool Bethesda (5:2) curing a thirty-eight-year sick person that he had no man, when the water is troubled by the angel, to put him into the pool (5:7). In the same place he treated a man who was blind from his birth. In the last day of Tabernacle feast invites in the Temple, which was expected to function in the Eschatological Days as a “living fountain” if any man is thirst, to come unto him and drink (7:37) because from within him shall flow rivers of living water (7:38). From the side of the crucified new Adam came out blood and water (19:34) to form the Church.

In this article the interpretation of the meaning of the numbers of John 2:6 will be sought. These numbers include the six stone water-pots that contain two or three firkins a piece. The interpretation will cover representative Fathers and Ecclesiastical Authors from West and East as well as contemporary interpreters.

1. **The six stone water-pots containing two or three firkins a piece.**

The word “μετρητής (firkin)” is met in Josephus (37-c100 A.C.), but not as a measurement unit,[[14]](#footnote-14) and not in and Philo (c. 25 BC – c. 50 CE). According to Origen (Principles 4.2.5) the Evangelist mentioning the two or three “μετρητές” reflects the crypto Jewish. These are cleaned from the scripture word in a (a) psychic and (b) spiritual way thus in two “μετρητές” but also (c) according to the flesh (σαρκικά) thus in three «μετρητές». The six firkins symbolize the six days of creation and it is a perfect number (see also Philo, *De opificio mundi* 1:89). By perfect number we mean that the sum of its dividends come to the number: 6=1(6:6) +2(6:3) +3 (6:2) =6.

Saint Augustine (354-430 AC) (PL 35.1461) pointed out: «But what means this: They contained two or three metretæ; apiece? This phrase certainly conveys to us a [mysterious](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/10662a.htm) meaning. For by metretæ he means certain measures, as if he should say jars, flasks, or something of that sort. Metreta is the name of a measure and takes its name from the word measure. For μέτρον is the Greek word for measure, whence the word metretæ is derived. They contained, then, two or three metretæ; apiece. What are we to say, brethren? If He had simply said three a piece, our mind would at once have run to the [mystery](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/10662a.htm) of the Trinity. And, perhaps, we ought not at once to reject this application of the meaning, because He said, two or three apiece; for when the Father and Son are named, the [Holy Spirit](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07409a.htm) must necessarily be understood. For the [Holy Spirit](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07409a.htm) is not that of the Father only, nor of the Son only, but the Spirit of the Father and of the Son. For it is written, if any man [love](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/09397a.htm)s the world, the Spirit of the Father is not in him ([1 John 2:15](http://www.newadvent.org/bible/1jo002.htm#verse15)). And again, whose has not the Spirit of Christ is none of His ([Romans 8:9](http://www.newadvent.org/bible/rom008.htm#verse9)). The same, then, is the Spirit of the Father and of the Son. Therefore, the Father and the [Son](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/14142b.htm) being named, the [Holy Spirit](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07409a.htm) also is understood, because He is the Spirit of the Father and of the Son. […] That is the reason why it is not said, some containing two metretæ; apiece, others three apiece; but the same six water-pots contained two or three metretæ; apiece. It is as if he had said, when I say two apieces, I would have the Spirit of the Father and of the Son to be understood together with them; and when I say three apiece, I declare the same Trinity more plainly».

John Chrysostom (349-407 A.C. PG 59.135) does not comment on the number of the firkins but he is giving a valuable information about their previous use. «It is not without a reason that the Evangelist says. After the manner of the purifying of the [Jews](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08399a.htm), but in order that none of the unbelievers might suspect that lees having been left in the vessels, and water having been poured upon and mixed with them, a very weak wine had been made. Therefore, he says, after the manner of the purifying of the [Jews](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08399a.htm), to show that those vessels were never receptacles for wine. For because Palestine is a country with but little water, and brooks and fountains were not everywhere to be found, they always used to fill water-pots with water, so that they might not have to hasten to the rivers if at any time they were defiled but might have the means of purification at hand. And why was it, that He did not the [miracle](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/10338a.htm) before they filled them, which would have been more marvelous by far? For it is one thing to change given matter to a different quality, and another to create matter out of nothing. The latter would indeed have been more wonderful but would not have seemed so credible to the many. And therefore, He often purposely lessens the greatness of His [miracles](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/10338a.htm), that it may be the more readily received. But why, says one, did not He Himself produce the water which He afterwards showed to be wine, instead of bidding the servants bring it? For the very same reason; and also, that He might have those who drew it out to [witness](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15677a.htm) that what had been effected was no delusion since if any had been inclined to be shameless, those who ministered might have said to them, We drew the water, we filled the vessels».

Saint Maximus the Confessor (580-662 AC) provides allegoric interpretations to the Abbot of Libya Thalassios who asked him several questions on difficult chapters of Bible. The 40th question of Thalassios was about the mystic meaning of the six firkins. Saint Maximus answered that six firkins represent the “natural power” which implements the Divine Commandments. Unfortunately, humans emptied the knowledge of the “natural power” in the futile materialism. Jesus had come to fill them with good wine. The number six symbolizes the creative power of the nature for the following reasons: (a) declares the six creative days by God in the Genesis of the world; (b) it is a perfect number as it is already explained; It appears that Saint Maximus uses identical allegoric elements as Origen. (c) Consists of the same parts (3+3); (d) Jesus as the Logos of love is expressed in six general ways taking care of the bodies and spirits of: (1) hungry; (2) thirsty; (3) aliens; (4) naked; (5) sick and (6) prisoners (PG 90.396-403).

Saint Maximus provides an explanation why the water-pots contained two or three firkins: (a) The natural (physical) theory is the knowledge of body and spirit “δύο μετρητές”; (b) The feasible in our nature theological mystagogy is understood as the knowledge and enlightening of Holy Trinity, thus the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit “τρεις μετρητές”. Finally, Saint Maximus wishes all faithful people to implement Cana marriage. Very clearly bridegroom is the human mind that marries the virtue. When Jesus is invited, he honors this spiritual marriage and makes it concrete in such a way to produce many spiritual children. Jesus is then visiting us with his mother to return us back the lost knowledge due to our sins and leads us to “theosis”. The knowledge of the nature is forcified and in a way is gingered from theosis to remain unchanged. Theosis resembles with wine quantity that strengthens the water.

Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274 A.C.) mentions that in the mystical sense, the six water jars signify the six eras of the Old Testament during which the hearts of men were prepared and made receptive of God’s Scriptures and put forward as an example for our lives. He describes the interpretation of Saint Augustine in more detail way. “The term metretes, according to Augustine, refers to the Trinity of persons. And they are described as two or three because at times in Scripture three persons in the Trinity are distinctly mentioned: “Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit” (Mt 28:19), and at other times only two, the Father and the Son, in whom the Holy Spirit, who is the union of the two, is implied: “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him. Or they are described as two on account of the two states of mankind from which the Church arose, that is, Jews and Gentiles. Or three on account of the three sons of Noah, from whom the human race arose after the deluge»[[15]](#footnote-15).

Martin Luther (1483-1546 A.C.) interprets that the six water-pots of stone, for the purification of the Jews, are the books of the Old Testament which by law and commandment made the Jewish people only outwardly pious and pure; for which reason the Evangelist says, they were set there after the Jews' manner of purifying, as if to say: This signifies the purification by works without faith, which never purifies the heart, but only makes it more impure; which is a Jewish, not a Christian or spiritual purification. There being six water pots signifies the labor and toil which they who deal in works undergo in such purification; for the heart finds no rest in them, since the Sabbath, the seventh day, is wanting, in which we rest from our works and let God work in us. For there are six workdays, in which God created heaven and earth, and commanded us to labour. The seventh day is the day of rest, in which we are not to toil in the works of the Law, but to let God work in us by faith, while we remain quiet and enjoy a holiday from the labours of the Law. The water in the pots is the contents and substance of the Law by which conscience is governed and is graven in letters as in the water-pots of stone. And they are of stone, as were the tables of Moses, signifying the stiff-necked people of the Jews. For as their heart is set against the Law, so the Law appears outwardly to be against them. It seems hard and difficult to them, and therefore it is hard and difficult; the reason in that their heart is hard and averse to the Law; we all find, feel and discover by experience that we are hard and averse to what is good, and soft and prone to what is evil. This the wicked do not feel, but those who long to be pious and labor exceedingly with their works. This is the significance of the two or three firkins apiece»[[16]](#footnote-16).

Calvine (1509-1564 A.C.) is giving the following interpretation. «And there were there six water-pots of stone. According to the computation of Budaeus, we infer that these water-pots were very large; [ …] . Christ supplied them, therefore, with a great abundance of wine, as much as would be sufficient for a banquet to a hundred and fifty men. Besides, both the number and the size of the water-pots serve to prove the truth of the miracle. If there had been only two or three jars, many might have suspected that they had been brought from some other place. If in one vessel only the water had been changed into wine, the certainty of the miracle would not have been so obvious, or so well ascertained. It is not, therefore, without a good reason that the Evangelist mentions the number of the water-pots, and states how much they contained[[17]](#footnote-17).It arose from superstition that vessels so numerous and so large were placed there. They had the ceremony of washing, indeed, prescribed to them by the Law of God; but as the world is prone to excess in outward matters, the Jews, not satisfied with the simplicity which God had enjoined, amused themselves with continual washings; and as superstition is ambitious, they undoubtedly served the purpose of display, as we see at the present day in Popery, that everything which is said to belong to the worship of God is arranged for pure display. There was, then, a twofold error: that without the command of God, they engaged in a superfluous ceremony of their own invention; and next, that, under the pretense of religion, ambition reigned amidst that display. Some Popish scoundrels have manifested an amazing degree of wickedness, when they had the effrontery to say that they had among their relics those water-pots with which Christ performed this miracle in Cana, and exhibited some of them, which, first, are of small size, and, next, are unequal in size. And in the present day, when the light of the Gospel shines so clearly around us, they are not ashamed to practice those tricks, which certainly is not to deceive by enchantments, but daringly to mock men as if they were blind; and the world, which does not perceive such gross mockery, is evidently bewitched by Satan»[[18]](#footnote-18).

In contrast to the Fathers and Philo, who consider number six as a perfect number, the contemporary interpreters think that is not a complete number as it is less by one from the number seven (6=7-1) which is well known to symbolize completeness in the Bible[[19]](#footnote-19). Thus, the Jewish purification is not complete and needs Jesus Christ as the seventh water-pot to lead in a complete purification[[20]](#footnote-20). This interpretation of number six is especially eminent between 1953-decade of 1970, the time that Second Quest is predominated and the difference between Jewish and Christianity is accentuated[[21]](#footnote-21). The presence of the six water-pots impresses the high necessity in the Greek-Roman ages for purification. The water-pots to be easily accessible were laid in the dining room or in a passage near the yard or atrium where existed *an impluvium***.** In addition,these were made of the stone to secure the highest possible purity of the vessels and the hands after washing (Lev 11:33). Thus, John who is aware of the Jewish customs[[22]](#footnote-22), expresses the antithesis between the older Jewish laws regarding the purification and the “ecstatic wine” of the New Testament referred to those who will be born from water and spirit. With Cana sign is shown that we have all received gracefor the law was given through Moses, grace and truthcame through Jesus Christ. (1:16-17)[[23]](#footnote-23). Of course, the Bridegroom Jesus asseverates that salvation comes from Jewish (4:22) as he is also Jewish (4:9)[[24]](#footnote-24). As he is the lamb of God clears the sins of the world and through his blood cleans the world[[25]](#footnote-25).

The number six may interconnect with the number of Jesus’ disciples including him. In the marriages people offer gifts. Jesus offers with his five disciples the best quality wine that people ever sampled. The six water-pots full of wine is the best reward for the hospitality and attention that Jesus and his five disciples had.

May be this specific beginning of the signs by Jesus symbolizes his declare to transfer the spiritual wine in the world through his water-pot-flesh and the testimony of the other five disciples. It must be noted that in the sign of multiplication of the five loaves and two fish he is with all twelve disciples and the five thousand people will not only be satiated but also will result with left over of twelve baskets (6:13). It may not be accidental that in these two signs, where Jesus provides the in need by the people as a gift, there is a correspondence between the material of the miracle with the presence of the disciples. In his mission to transfigure the dessert hearts of the gentiles to salvated fountains with living water nobody is in excess.

If every water-pot contained two or three measures, the total quantity of the water which is converted into wine nanged to the huge volume of 492-737 liters, as each measure was equivalent with nine gallons or approximately forty-one liters. The apothegmatic water-pot which was used for oil, wine and wheat contained up to fifty liters. This high quantity in water-pots mentioned by John aims to show the great and exact gratitude of the sign. The richness of the gift constitutes one of the characteristics of the specific Gospel. It is remarkable to note that if the Evangelist mentioned the source of the water and not the water-pot it would not be a way to measure the quantity of the water. We can compare the six stone water-pots with: (a) twelve baskets that were left over after the satiation of five thousand people from five loans and two fishes; (b) the pound of ointment of pure nard, very precious that Mary used and anointed the feet of Jesus; (12:3) (c) one hundred liters of myrrh and aloes with which Nicodemus anointed the burial body of Jesus (19:39) and (d) 153 great fish which his disciples fished after the order of the resurrected Jesus (21:7).

The magnitude of the oncoming sign appears more intense on the audience as the question “what has this concern of yours to do with Me,woman? (2:4) to her mother who notified him “that they have no wine (2:3)” does not point the extension of the offer of Jesus to the couple. After the water-pots have been filled with water the transformation of the water into wine is performed[[26]](#footnote-26).

Of course, these quantities are small in relation to corresponding Jewish and first Christian descriptions of messianic age as these are mentioned in Ι Enoch (10.19.2), Baruch (29:5) and Hierapolis Papias (cf Ireneos, Against Heresies 5:33.3-4). This is since Evangelist wishes his data to testify a real history. It must be noted that Jesus does not create a seventh water-pot[[27]](#footnote-27). In any case Jesus provides Life and offers an abundance of gift more than the expectation (Joh 10:10)[[28]](#footnote-28).

They have been reported also the following extreme allegoric interpretations: (a) the six water-pots express the 6000 cosmic years[[29]](#footnote-29); (b) if we multiply the number of water-pots with their maximum volume (3X6) it comes out the number eighteen which symbolizes the first letters of word Jesus ΙΗΣΟΥΣ (IH=10+8)[[30]](#footnote-30). This semeiology meets for the first time in Barnavas Epistle (9:8)[[31]](#footnote-31).

**2. Two or three firkins as a poetic and a climax scheme in John Gospel**

We have already pointed out that in 2:6 are mentioned the two or three measures of liquids that water-pots can contain. J.J. Davis studied the rhetorical use numbers and more specifically the formula X/X+1 where X represents any number and X+1 its greater number by one. This formula is not met only in the Bible but also in myths of Cananite-Ugaritic mythology like that of the king Keret[[32]](#footnote-32) (Epic of King Keret, is an ancient Ugaritic epic poem, dated to Late Bronze Age, circa 1500 – 1200 B.C.)[[33]](#footnote-33). This climax scheme **(**X**/**X+1) functions in Semitic text as a synthetic parallelism.

Α chapter from Isaiah supports in our view the climax meaning of the scheme Yet gleanings will be left in it like the shaking of an olive tree, Two *or* three olives on the topmost bough, Four *or* five on the branches of a fruitful tree, Declares the LORD, the God of Israel. (Isa 17:6 The New American Standard Bible (NASB)[[34]](#footnote-34). It is the prophesy against Syria and the king of Israel. The meaning of the chapter is that the destroy will be not total but some of the population will survive. To express this reality the prophet uses metaphors and moments from the rural life. During the collection of olives usually on the high branches are left ***one or tw*o** which cannot be gathered. In Deuteronomy is clearly stated that these remaining oils belong to the foreigner, the fatherless, and the widow, so that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands (24:19). The second scene is the use of the sticks to collect the olives. At the side branches are left ***four or five*** olives. In this climax scheme are used the numbers four and five which are greater than two and three. As some olives remain on the tree, the same way God cares to raise from ashes his people through the ages without being destroyed from an invasion. Thus, the purpose of the author is to show the result through the progressive increase of the numbers. In reality, this fundamental operation of this idiom is to strengthen the parallelism in such a way the listener/reader to imprint in his heart its echo[[35]](#footnote-35).

**Conclusions**

A. For the Fathers the number six expresses the completeness and is related to (re-creation) of the world. For many contemporary readers the six water-pots is a symbol of the imperfect purification which will be substituted by the incarnated and crucified resurrected Logos through the baptism and the blood donation. The Messianic dinner is established between the Jewish in Cana of Galilea. Next, in Chapter four participants in the messianic dinner is Samaritan woman and a gentile nobleman.

B. The phrase two or three measures express the volume of stone water-pots probably not only literally but also in a poetic way. Therefore, the abundance/and richness arrive from just the presence of Jesus as in the first sign he does not speak or order for the transformation of water to wine. The presence of two consecutive numbers recalls for a gradual or climactic scheme to intensify the content of the sentence. Remarkably this does not appear only in Bible but also in modern Greek poetry and music.

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2. See (a) Robert D. Johnston, *Numbers in the Bible, God’s Unique Design in Biblical Numbers* (Michigan: Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49501, 1990). (b) Ed Vallowe, *Biblical Mathematics. Keys to Scripture Numerics. How to count the Bible* (Lexington: The Olive Press, 2014) (c) J. Kalvesmaki, *Number Symbolism in Platonism and Early Christianity*, Center for Hellenic Studies, Trustees for Harvard University Washington, DC. Distributed by Harvard University Press Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, England 2013. (d) A. Schimmel, *The mystery of numbers* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press (1993). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. John, J. Davis, *Biblical Numerology*. *A Basic Study of the Use of Numbers in the Bible* (USA: Baker Book House Company, 1991). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. O. Thompson Allis, *Bible Numerics* (Chicago, Illinois, USA: Moody Press, 1946). (c) A. Schimmel, *The mystery of numbers* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press1993). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. M.R.P. Mc Guire, *Numerology*, New Catholic Encyclopedia (USA: Thomson Gale, 2002), 475. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. H. Gabai, *Judaism, Mathematics, and the Hebrew Calendar* (USA: Jason Aronson Inc, 2002) 71-117. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Pythagoras believed that numbers are of divine feature. John Chrysostom was against this idea of Pythagoras and expressed the view that “God is superior the numbers” (Ἀριθμοῡ γάρ τὸ θεῑον ἀνώτερον καὶ χρόνων ἀκολουθίας) (PG. 59.31). [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. K Barry, *The Greek Qabalah, Alphabetic Mysticism and Numerology in the Ancient World* (York, Beach, Maine: Samuel Weiser, Inc. 1999). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. J. Kalvesmaki, *Formation of the Early Christian Theology of Arithmetic. Number Symbolism in the Late Second and Early Third Century*. Washington DC 2006. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Καί σύ δ’ ἄν κατά σαὐτόν ἀναλεγόμενος, πολλούς τηρήσαις ἀριθμούς ἔχοντας τὶ τοῦ φαινομένου βαθύτερον (PG 36.428). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. J. Bradley, *An Augustinian Perspective on the Philosophy of Mathematics* 1-13 <http://www.calvin.edu/~braj/AugustinianPerspective.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. J.N. Sanders and B.A. Mastin (London: Adam Charles Bleek, 1968) pp 110-111. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. S. Gibson, *The Final Days of Jesus: The Archaeological Evidence*, (NY, USA: Harper Collins, 2010) 127. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. *Προϊόντι δὲ εἰς τὴν πολεμίαν Τίτῳ προῆγον μὲν οἱ βασιλικοὶ καὶ πᾶν τὸ συμμαχικόν ἐφ᾽ οἷς ὁδοποιοὶ καὶ* ***μετρηταὶ*** *στρατοπέδων. ἔπειτα τὰ τῶν ἡγεμόνων σκευοφόρα καὶ μετὰ τοὺς τούτων ὁπλίτας αὐτὸς τούς τε ἄλλους ἐπιλέκτους καὶ τοὺς λογχοφόρους ἔχων κατόπιν δ᾽ αὐτῷ τοῦ τάγματος τὸ ἱππικόν* (*De bello Judaico* 5,47). [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. St Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Gospel of John*. Chapters 1-5. Translated by Fabian Larcher, James Weishpeif with introduction and notes by Daniel Keating and Mathew Levering. (Washington: Catholic University of America Press 2010) 139. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. http://www.martinluthersermons.com/ Luther, Sermon for the Second Sunday after the Epiphany; John 2:1-11. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. The editor points out that the exact size of the firkin cannot be easily ascertained. If «μετρητής» be here used by the Evangelist as a purely Greek word, we must conclude it to be an Attic measure, which was nearly equal to nine English gallons. If, again, it be placed here as a substitute for the Hebrew word Bath, as the Septuagint has done in 2Chronicles 4:5, it will probably be rated at seven gallons and a half. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. John Calvin, C John, vol. 1, a new translation from the original Latin by the Rev. William Pringle, Grand Rapids, MI Christian Ethereal Library (<http://www.ccel.org>ommentary on the Gospel According to John) pp. 50-51. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. L. Morris, *The Gospel according to John*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995) 161 and. R. Deines, *Jüdische Steingefüsse und Pharisäische Frömmigkeit: Ein archäologisch-historischer Beitrag zum Verständnis von Joh 2,6 und der jüdischen Reinheitshalacha zur Zeit Jesu*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2/52 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 1993) 369. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. F.J. Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, Sacra Pagina 4 (Collegeville, Minnesota, Liturgical Press, 1998) 72. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. D. Gibson, D. Mckinley, *The Jesus Code*, St. Martin’s Press New York, 2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. C.S. Keener, *The Gospel of John, A commentary* (USA: Baker Academics 2012) 509-511. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. A. Schlatter, *Der Evangelist Johannes* (Stuttgart: Calwer 1948) 69. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. D. Moody Smith, *John* (Nashville: Abingdon Press 1999) 84. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. G. Wheaton in his dissertation entitled *The role of Jewish Feasts in John’s Gospel* [Scotland, University of St. Andrews, 2009] 34) provides references of many interpreters of six water-pots as symbol of incompleteness. He claims that this conception is for narrative purposes without blaming the incompleteness of the Jewish Law. He just makes appreciable the reality that *indeed, we have all received grace after grace from His fullness* (Joh 1:16). [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Chr. Karakolis, *The Theological Meaning of Miracles according to John Gospel* (Thesalloniki: Pournaras editions, 1996) *85.* [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. L. Morris, *The Gospel according to John*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1995) 160-61. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. J. Ramsey, *The Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 2010) 148-149 [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. A.D. Delimpasis, (*Pascha of our Lord, Creation-Renovation and Apostasy [*Athens 1995]193) provides references in which is shown that during Jesus’ age the cosmic year was not the 6000. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. H.A. Hutmacher, *Symbolik der biblischen Zahlen und Zeiten* (München: F. Schoningh 1993) 199. In this book the author provides a plethora of Bible chapters in which the symbolic meaning of the numbers is explained. The imagination of the author to find gematrias (words that symbolically correspond to numbers) is impressive. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. *Λέγει γάρ «Καὶ περιέτεμεν Ἀβραὰμ ἐκ τοῦ οἴκου αὐτοῦ ἄνδρας* ***δεκαοκτὼ καὶ τριακοσίους****». Τίς οὖν ἡ δοθεῖσα αὐτῷ γνῶσις μάθετε ὅτι τοὺς δεκαοκτὼ πρώτους καὶ διάστημα ποιήσας λέγει «τριακοσίους». Τὸ δεκαοκτὼ Ι [δέκα] Η [ὀκτω] ἔχεις Ιησοῦν Ὅτι δὲ ὁ σταυρὸς ἐν τῷ Τ ἤμελλεν ἔχειν τὴν χάριν λέγει καὶ τοὺς τριακοσίους Δηλοῖ οὖν τὸν μὲν Ἰησοῦν ἐν τοῖς δυσὶν γράμμασιν καὶ ἐν τῷ ἑνὶ τὸν σταυρόν* (9,8). [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. <http://members.bellatlantic.net/~vze33gpz/canaanite-faq.html> (therein references). [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. A. Davis, *Biblical Numerology. A Basic Study of the Use of Numbers in the Bible* (USA: Baker Book House Company, 1991) 93-102. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. F. Skolnik, Numbers, *Encycopaedia Judaica*, (Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2007) 337. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. J. Blenkinsopp, *A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* *The Anchor Bible v. 19, Isaiah 1-39 (*USA: Doubleday, 2000*)* 305. This climactic of the meaning remains alive and is manifested in our days in poetry and music in Greece. An example is the song awarded the Oscar prize in 1960 called “The children of Piraeus” (The lines and music are written by Manos Chatzidakis). <http://www.stixoi.info/stixoi.php?info=Lyrics&act=details&song_id=2505> [↑](#footnote-ref-35)