

The Spiritual Significance Of The Number Twelve

The Number Of Christ

by Mike Vinson

1 Corinthians 3:11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, **which is Jesus Christ.**

Ephesians 1:11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:

Twelve is the number in scripture which is one more than eleven; eleven being the number of the disintegration of fleshly perfection, twelve reverses that process of disintegration. Twelve is therefore the number which demonstrates spiritual foundation, spiritual perfection and completion. This is true whether it is concerned with the seed of the serpent as symbolized by Ishmael and his "twelve princes," or whether it is dealing with the seed of the woman, as symbolized by Isaac who later, after the natural was manifested first, had Jacob who also had 'twelve princes.'

But it is essential that we realize that the unveiling of Jesus Christ includes "the marred vessel," first.

The first scripture which demonstrates the significance of this number twelve has to do with the foundation, not of God's elect, but of God's rejected "seed of Abraham:"

Genesis 17:20 And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation.

So why is Ishmael brought to our attention before Jacob with His twelve sons? Here is why:

1 Corinthians 15:46 Howbeit **that was not first which is spiritual**, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.

The unveiling of Jesus Christ entails the first Adam first. That "first" Adam, with...

1 John 2:16 ...**all that is in the world**, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

...is what Christ means when He says "I am the Alpha... the beginning... that which is first."

This first Adam, our flesh in us, is loathe to relinquish it's supremacy, and when we discover that the flesh has to be forfeited we cry out with Abraham:

Genesis 17:18 And Abraham said unto God, **O that Ishmael might live before thee!**

But this simply cannot be tolerated:

Genesis 21:9 And **Sarah** saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking.

Genesis 21:10 Wherefore **she said** unto Abraham, **Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac.**

Genesis 21:11 And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son.

Genesis 21:12 And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that

Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.

Who said "cast out the bondwoman and her son? It was Sarah. But what are we told in Galatians four? Ishmael is the seed of the serpent in type:

Galatians 4:28 Now **we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.**

Galatians 4:29 But **as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit**, even so it is now.

Galatians 4:30 Nevertheless **what saith the scripture?** Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.

Galatians 4:31 So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.

We have been led to believe that since we are "in Christ," and are therefore the spiritual "seed of Abraham," that therefore we are God's elect and cannot be rejected. But what does Christ tell us about such carnal minded thinking?

Genesis 21:13 And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, **because he is thy seed.**

Both the son of the bondwoman and the son of the freewoman are "thy seed... the seed of Abraham."

John 8:31 Then said Jesus to **those Jews which believed on him**, If ye continue in my word, [then] are ye my disciples indeed;

John 8:37 **I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you.**

John 8:38 I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with **your father**.

John 8:39 They answered and said unto him, **Abraham is our father.** Jesus saith unto them, **If ye were Abraham's children**, ye would do the works of Abraham.

John 8:41 **Ye do the deeds of your father.** Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.

John 8:42 Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.

John 8:43 Why do ye not understand my speech? [even] because ye cannot hear my word.

John 8:44 **Ye are of your father the devil**, and the lusts of your father ye will do. **He was a murderer from the beginning**, and **abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him**. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

It was "those Jews which believed on Him" who were "of your father the devil." Can this possibly have an application to God's elect?

Romans 11:19 Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that **I** might be grafted in.

Romans 11:20 Well; because of **unbelief they were broken off**, and thou standest by faith. **Be not highminded**, but fear:

Romans 11:21 For **if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.**

Romans 11:22 Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, **if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.**

So after the natural is made manifest, then the spiritual foundation of God's people is manifested. But look at what is still right there within the sons of the freewoman:

Genesis 35:22 And it came to pass, when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with **Bilhah his father's concubine**: and Israel heard it. Now **the sons of Jacob were twelve**:

Genesis 37:2 These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, [being] seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad was with the sons of **Bilhah**, and with the sons of **Zilpah**, **his father's wives**: and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report.

What God's people "come out of " is God's people. This Is, Was and Will Be true. The "twelve thousand from each of the twelve tribes of Israel" are redeemed out of **every** kindred and tongue and people and nation."

Revelation 5:9 And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every **kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation**;

Revelation 5:10; **And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.**

There must be twelve thousand from each of the twelve tribes to begin the government of God on this earth. Anything less is "one is not:"

Genesis 42:13 And they said, Thy servants are twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and, behold, the youngest [is] this day with our father, and one is not.

God's elect must be "separated from their brothers."

Deuteronomy 33:13 And of Joseph he said, Blessed of the LORD be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath,

Deuteronomy 33:14 And for the precious fruits [brought forth] by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon,
Deuteronomy 33:15 And for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills,
Deuteronomy 33:16 And for the precious things of the earth and fulness thereof, and [for] the good will of him that dwelt in the bush: let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren.

What does twelve mean?

Genesis 49:28 All these are the twelve tribes of Israel: and this is it that their father spake unto them, and blessed them; every one according to his blessing he blessed them.

This is all type and shadow of God's elect. God's elect are the spiritual "twelve tribes of Israel."

Galatians 6:15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

Galatians 6:16 And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

And here is the God's Word version of these verses:

Galatians 6:15 Certainly, it doesn't matter whether a person is circumcised or not. Rather, what matters is being a new creation.

Galatians 6:16 Peace and mercy will come to rest on all those who conform to this principle. They are the Israel of God.

Even in the wilderness twelve is the number of spiritual foundation.

Exodus 15:27 And they came to Elim, where were twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm trees: and they encamped there by the waters.

This happens before Israel even comes to Mount Sinai. We develop our spiritual foundation very early on. Then we build on that foundation with wood, hay and stubble before we learn to build with gold, silver and precious stones.

1 Corinthians 3:1 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

1 Corinthians 3:2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.

1 Corinthians 3:3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

1 Corinthians 3:4 For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?

1 Corinthians 3:5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?

1 Corinthians 3:6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

1 Corinthians 3:7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

1 Corinthians 3:8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

1 Corinthians 3:9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, [ye are] God's building.

1 Corinthians 3:10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

1 Corinthians 3:11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 3:12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

1 Corinthians 3:13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day [of judgment] shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

1 Corinthians 3:14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

1 Corinthians 3:15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

1 Corinthians 3:16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

1 Corinthians 3:17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

1 Corinthians 3:18 Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.

1 Corinthians 3:19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

1 Corinthians 3:20 And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.

1 Corinthians 3:21 Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours;

1 Corinthians 3:22 Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours;

1 Corinthians 3:23 And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

The 'shew bread' symbolizes God's word, which is Christ. It consisted of twelve cakes made with finely ground flour.

Leviticus 24:5 And thou shalt take fine flour, and bake twelve cakes thereof: two tenth deals shall be in one cake.

Each part of the body must do its part in dedicating the tabernacle.

Numbers 1:44 These are those that were numbered, which Moses and Aaron numbered, and the princes of Israel, being twelve men: each one was for the house of his fathers.

The cross is itself foundational to our walk:

Numbers 7:84 This was the dedication of the altar, in the day when it was anointed, by the princes of Israel: twelve chargers of silver, twelve silver bowls, twelve spoons of gold ;

The altar is where we lay our lives down to Christ. 'The altar' is the cross.

Mark 10:21 Then Jesus beholding him loved him [The rich young ruler who had kept the law flawlessly "from my youth up."], and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me.