

## FAMOUS FORTIES: ONE OF GOD'S SPECIAL NUMBERS?

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God's CrossWord Puzzle, Prophetic Pairs, Divine Inspiration Of God's Word, Forty From Genesis To Caleb, Forty During The Judges, Forty During The Kings, Forty During The Prophets, Forty And The Heathen, Forty And Human Lifespan, Forty And Moses, Forty And Elijah And Jesus, Forty And Christian Era

As I point out in a number of my other articles, God's Holy Word is similar to a great CrossWord Puzzle. When we first come to Christ, and begin to study His Word, our particular puzzle is for the most part blank. We might have the word "Salvation" filled in, but that will be about it. While we may possess all of the "Word Clues" which are necessary in order to find the answers that we need, and thus fill in the remaining blank spaces in our understanding, it isn't until we begin to study and work with those clues, or verses, by the power and anointing of God's Holy Spirit, that we can begin to make progress towards our ultimate goal; which of course is having a completed puzzle. It is for this reason that the Apostle Paul admonishes us to:

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

2 Timothy 2:15, KJV

There is a common belief amongst students of the Bible, that the Old Testament is the New Testament concealed, and the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed. In other words, many of the events which have already occurred, and which will yet occur during the New Testament era, are hidden in the writings of the Old Testament Prophets. Thus, when these prophecies come to pass, the New Testament has revealed what was hidden in the Old Testament for many years. I like to refer to these Scriptural links as Prophetic Pairs. The ones

which I find most exciting, are those which bear a striking similarity in their Scriptural references. Sometimes, these similarities are quite obvious, while at others, a little bit of arithmetic, such as addition, is necessary in order to show their common denominators. Following is a small list of Biblical jewels which I personally have discovered during the course of my studies. I hope you will enjoy them:

Old Testament :	New Testament Link:	Old Test. Math:
Isaiah 17:12-13	Revelation 17:15	(2 + 3 = 5)
Isaiah 21:9	Revelation 14:8 18:2	(2 x 2 = 4) (2 x 9 = 18)
Jeremiah 7:18	Revelation 18:7	(obvious)
Isaiah 47:7-8	Revelation 18:7	(4 + 7 + 7 =18)
Daniel 2:44	Matthew 21:42-44	(obvious)
Micah 5:2	Matthew 2:5-6	(obvious)
Zechariah 4:1-4	Revelation 11:3-4	(4 - 1 = 3)
Zechariah 14:4-5	Jude 1:14-15	(obvious)
[none]	Philippians 3:21 1 John 3:2	(obvious) (obvious)

The very fact that these books and prophecies were written literally hundreds and hundreds of years apart, by authors who never knew each other, is an amazing confirmation of how one and the selfsame Spirit inspired their thoughts and their words. As we are told by the Apostles Peter and Paul:

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:"

2 Timothy 3:16, KJV

"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

2 Peter 1:21, KJV

". . . My heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the king: my tongue is the pen of a ready writer."

Psalms 45:1b, KJV

So as you can see, the Holy Scriptures contain quite a few numerical mysteries; only a few of which I have personally discovered to date. In addition to these Prophetic Pairs I have just shared with you, it appears that there are also certain numbers in the Bible which have special significance for the Lord. These include the numbers three, seven, twelve and seventy. Another one is no doubt the number forty. This will become quite obvious to you as you read the following interesting information.

Most people know that the rains which occurred during the Flood in the days of the Patriarch Noah, lasted for a period of forty days and forty nights. Isaac was forty years old when he married his wife Rebekah. Jacob, or Israel, was also embalmed in Egypt for forty days before being taken to Canaan for his burial. The forty years that the children of Israel spent wandering in the wilderness, was based upon their murmuring following the forty days that the Hebrew spies spent in the land of Canaan. Forty-five years later, at the age of eighty-five, Caleb reminded Joshua that at the time they and the other spies undertook this mission, he was forty years old. Consider these verses which confirm these things:

"For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth . . . And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights . . . And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth . . . And it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made:"

Genesis 7:4, 12, 17, 8:6, KJV

"And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padanaram, the sister to Laban the Syrian."

Genesis 25:20, KJV

"And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father: and the physicians embalmed Israel. And forty days were fulfilled for him; for so are fulfilled the days of those which are embalmed: and the Egyptians mourned for him threescore and ten days."

Genesis 50:2-3, KJV

"And they returned from searching of the land after forty days . . . But as for you, your carcasses, they shall fall in this wilderness. And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness. After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise."

Numbers 13:25, 14:32-34, KJV

"Forty years old was I when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadeshbarnea to espy out the land; and I brought him word again as it was in mine heart."

Joshua 14:7, KJV

During the period of the Judges which followed the deaths of Moses, Joshua, and Caleb, we see that some of these anointed leaders ruled for a period of forty years. It appears that the Lord gave the Israelites forty-year periods of rest, or multiples of the same, when they obeyed His chosen leaders, while at other times, He gave them forty-year periods of war, as is made clear by these verses:

"And the land had rest forty years. And Othniel the son of Kenaz died."

Judges 3:11, KJV

"So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. And the land had rest fourscore years."

Judges 3:30, KJV

"So let all thine enemies perish, O LORD: but let them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might. And the land had rest forty years."

Judges 5:31, KJV

"Thus was Midian subdued before the children of Israel, so

that they lifted up their heads no more. And the country was in quietness forty years in the days of Gideon."

Judges 8:28, KJV

"And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD delivered them into the hand of the Philistines forty years."

Judges 13:1, KJV

"And it came to pass, when he made mention of the ark of God, that he fell from off the seat backward by the side of the gate, and his neck brake, and he died: for he was an old man, and heavy. And he had judged Israel forty years."

1 Samuel 4:18, KJV

Following the period of the Judges, the first three kings of Israel -- Saul, David and Solomon -- also ruled for forty years each; as did some of their descendants. It was also during the period of the Kings that the Philistine giant, Goliath, challenged Israel for forty days before he was destroyed by young David. The construction of Solomon's Temple began four hundred and eighty years, or a total of twelve forty-year periods, after the liberation from Egypt occurred. Consider the following Scriptural proof:

"And afterward they desired a king: and God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years."

Acts 13:21, KJV

"David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years."

2 Samuel 5:4, KJV

"And the days that David reigned over Israel were forty years: seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three years reigned he in Jerusalem."

1 Kings 2:11, KJV

"And the Philistine drew near morning and evening, and presented himself forty days."

1 Samuel 17:16, KJV

"And the time that he reigned over Israel was forty years; seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three years

reigned he in Jerusalem. And he died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honour: and Solomon his son reigned in his stead."

1 Chronicles 29:27-28, KJV

"And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD."

1 Kings 6:1, KJV

"Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD at Jerusalem in mount Moriah, where the LORD appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite. And he began to build in the second day of the second month, in the fourth year of his reign."

2 Chronicles 3:1-2, KJV

"And the time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was forty years."

1 Kings 11:42, KJV

"And Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel forty years."

2 Chronicles 9:30, KJV

"In the seventh year of Jehu Jehoash began to reign; and forty years reigned he in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Zibiah of Beersheba."

2 Kings 12:1, KJV

"Joash was seven years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Zibiah of Beersheba."

2 Chronicles 24:1, KJV

Towards the end of the period of the Kings, the Prophet Jeremiah also warned the land of Judah for forty years, up to the very day that Jerusalem fell to the forces of King Nebuchadnezzar. The Prophet Ezekiel was likewise given instructions from the Lord which involved a forty-day period which was related to the forty years of rebellion by Judah. Consider the following verses which verify these various

points:

"The words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests that were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin: To whom the word of the LORD came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign. It came also in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah the son of Josiah king of Judah, unto the carrying away of Jerusalem captive in the fifth month."

Jeremiah 1:1-3, KJV

"And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year."

Ezekiel 4:6, KJV

When the Lord prophesied against the enemies of Israel, we also discover that the number forty sometimes came into play. The Prophet Jonah warned the Assyrians in Nineveh to repent for a period of forty days; and the land of Egypt was chastised for a forty-year period, as can be seen by the following verses:

"Behold, therefore I am against thee, and against thy rivers, and I will make the land of Egypt utterly waste and desolate, from the tower of Syene even unto the border of Ethiopia. No foot of man shall pass through it, nor foot of beast shall pass through it, neither shall it be inhabited forty years."

Ezekiel 29:10-11, KJV

"And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown."

Jonah 3:4, KJV

In the Book of Psalms, King David also informs us that the normal life span allotted to man by the Lord, is fourscore years; that is, eighty years, or two periods of forty years each. It is apparently for this very reason that the age of forty is referred to as the prime of one's life:

"The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if

by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away."

Psalms 90:10, KJV

In light of the previous Scriptures, which reveal the Lord's apparent interest in the number forty, consider now the very interesting association this same number makes between the Prophets Moses and Elijah, and Jesus. Notice first of all, that the life of Moses is neatly divided into three periods of forty years each. In the first verse below, Stephen is referring to the time when Moses visited his Hebrew brethren in bondage, slew the Egyptian, and then fled out of Egypt at the age of forty, as is explained by the verses which follow that first one. Forty years later, at the age of eighty, Moses witnessed the "Burning Bush", and returned to Egypt where he appeared before Pharaoh with his older brother, Aaron. Finally, Moses died on the top of Mount Nebo forty years later, at the age of one hundred and twenty, after leading the children of Israel through the wilderness:

"And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel."

Acts 7:23, KJV

"And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren. And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand. And when he went out the second day, behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow? And he said, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian? And Moses feared, and said, Surely this thing is known. Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian: and he sat down by a well."

Exodus 2:11-15, KJV

"And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sina an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush."

Acts 7:30, KJV



"And Moses was fourscore years old, and Aaron fourscore and three years old, when they spake unto Pharaoh."

Exodus 7:7, KJV

"And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho. And the LORD shewed him all the land of Gilead, unto Dan . . . So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD. And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Bethpeor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day. And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated."

Deuteronomy 34:1, 5-7, KJV

While these points are indeed interesting, and show the importance of the number forty in Mose's personal life, what I really wish to call to your attention, is the fact that, just as Moses performed a complete fast during two forty-day periods when he received the Commandments twice from the Lord on the top of Mount Horeb, or Sinai, the Prophet Elijah also fasted for a period of forty days and forty nights when he went to Mount Horeb as well. It was there that the Lord spoke to him in a still small voice. Not only that, but in the Gospels, we are also told that Jesus likewise fasted for a period of forty days and forty nights in the wilderness prior to revealing Himself to Israel. Consider the following verses which validate these points:

"And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and gat him up into the mount: and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights."

Exodus 24:18, KJV

"When I was gone up into the mount to receive the tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant which the LORD made with you, then I abode in the mount forty days and forty nights, I neither did eat bread nor drink water . . . And it came to pass at the end of forty days and forty nights, that the LORD gave me the two tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant . . . And I fell down before the LORD, as at the first, forty days and forty nights: I did neither eat bread, nor drink water, because of all your sins which ye sinned, in doing wickedly in the sight of the LORD, to

provoke him to anger . . . Thus I fell down before the LORD forty days and forty nights, as I fell down at the first; because the LORD had said he would destroy you . . . And I stayed in the mount, according to the first time, forty days and forty nights; and the LORD hearkened unto me at that time also, and the LORD would not destroy thee."

Deuteronomy 9:9, 11, 18, 25, 10:10, KJV

"And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again. And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee. And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God."

1 Kings 19:5-8, KJV

"Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred."

Matthew 4:1-2, KJV

"And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness. And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him."

Mark 1:12-13, KJV

"And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered."

Luke 4:1-2, KJV

That last set of verses presents us with a very interesting possibility. While up until now, I have always assumed that Jesus' fast occurred while He wandered in the Jordan River Valley after being baptized by John, that may not have necessarily been the case. Notice that Luke specifically tells us that Jesus "returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness". It sounds to me as if

perhaps the Lord went in a direction opposite to the Jordan River. Is it possible that He may have travelled south to Mount Horeb, that is, to Sinai? This would certainly follow the pattern of Moses and Elijah more perfectly. Of course, this is merely speculation on my part, and I cannot prove this point beyond a shadow of a doubt.

What I also find rather interesting is that, in the previous verses, we see that just as Elijah was provided with food by the Angel prior to beginning his forty-day fast, Jesus was also ministered to by Angels when His fast and temptation by Satan was over; which in itself was a fulfillment of yet another prophecy spoken by King David:

"Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him."

Matthew 4:11, KJV

"There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone."

Psalms 91:10-12, KJV

You will recall that this was one of the very temptations which Satan used against Jesus. He twisted the meaning of God's Word in order to try to get Jesus to tempt His very own Father:

"Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

Matthew 4:5-7, KJV

The association between our Lord's Earthly Ministry, and the number forty, does not end there. Based upon Luke's comments which are found in the Book of Acts, we are told that after His Resurrection from the Dead, Jesus also appeared to His followers for a period of forty days. The Apostle Paul tells us that He in fact showed Himself to over five hundred of His

Disciples, beginning with Cephas, or Peter, so that there would be absolutely no doubt regarding His Resurrection; even though the Jews did their best to conceal the fact by inventing the story that His body had been stolen by His Disciples:

"The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen: To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:"  
Acts 1:1-3, KJV

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time."  
1 Corinthians 15:3-8, KJV

"One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone."  
John 1:40-42, KJV

"And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon."  
Luke 24:33-34, KJV

"Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done. And when they were assembled with the

elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept. And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day." Matthew 28:11-15, KJV

In addition to these points, if it is true that Jesus was crucified in the year 30 A.D. as is commonly believed by most people, then the destruction of Jerusalem at the hand of General Titus and his Roman legions, would have occurred exactly forty years later in 70 A.D. In other words, just as the Lord gave the Jerusalemites forty years to repent of their sins prior to the invasion by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, He also gave them forty years to repent before He brought upon them the invasion by General Titus, which was actually initiated by his father, Emperor Vespasian.

As a final interesting point regarding the number forty, consider the fact that, based upon the year of our Savior's glorious Resurrection from the snares of death, right now, we are currently in the middle of the fortieth jubilee, or fifty-year period, since that Blessed Event. Whether or not this fact has any significance in regards to God's overall Plan of Redemption remains to be seen. It is interesting to note though that it was in the year of the jubilee that liberty was proclaimed throughout the land, as we can see by the following verses:

"And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubile to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family. A jubile shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of thy vine undressed. For it is the jubile; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field."

Leviticus 25:8-12, KJV

How fitting it would be indeed for the year of our liberty from this life, and from this sinful body of flesh, to arrive sometime during this current jubilee. For as Jesus Himself said when He first began His Earthly ministry:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

Luke 4:18-19, KJV

And let us not forget some of my other favorite verses concerning this subject, as written by the Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the Romans. In the eighth chapter he wrote the following:

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."

Romans 8:18-23, KJV

With these wonderful verses, I am going to bring another article to a close. I trust that you have found these facts interesting; and I hope that they have not only been an inspiration in your life, but that they will also serve as a helpful tool, which you can use to convince others of the veracity and Divine Origin of God's Holy Word.

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