

The Inspiration of the Scriptures Scientifically Demonstrated

by Ivan Panin

Letter to the New York Sun

For some months preceding Sunday, November 19, 1899 the New York Sun had been devoting the better part of a page of its Sunday edition to the discussion of the truth of Christianity. On that date it printed a letter from one W.R.L., in which he denounced Christianity, using the old oft-refuted "*arguments*," and challenged "*some champion of orthodoxy to come into the arena of the Sun*," and give its readers some "*facts*" in defence of the Christian religion. The writer had not seen the N.Y. Sun for years; but on his way from South Framingham to Grafton, Massachusetts, a copy of the Sun of that date, left on a vacant seat in the train, 'fell into his hands.' The following letter met that challenge.

The letter was reprinted by the writer himself in a pamphlet of some fifty pages with the Greek text of Matthew i, 1-17 and the vocabularies thereto, enabling the scholarly reader to verify his statements for himself.

Sir: - In to-day's Sun Mr. W.R.L. calls for a "*champion of orthodoxy*" to "*step into the arena of the Sun*;" and give him some "*facts*." Here are some facts:

The first 17 verses of the New Testament contain the genealogy of the Christ. It consists of two main parts: Verses 1-11 cover the period from Abraham, the father of the chosen people, to the Captivity, when they ceased as an independent people. Verses 12-17 cover the period from the Captivity to the promised Deliverer, the Christ.

Let us examine the first part of this genealogy.

Its vocabulary has 49 words, or 7×7 . This number is itself seven (Feature 1) sevens (Feature 2), and the sum of its factors is 2 sevens (Feature 3). Of these 49 words 28, or 4 sevens, begin with a vowel; and 21, or 3 sevens, begin with a consonant (Feature 4).

Again: these 49 words of the vocabulary have 266 letters, or $7 \times 2 \times 19$; this number is itself 38 sevens (Feature 5), and the sum of its factors is 28, or 4 sevens (Feature 6), while the sum of its figures is 14, or 2 sevens (Feature 7). Of these 266 letters, moreover, 140, or 20 sevens, are vowels, and 126, or 18 sevens, are consonants (Feature 8).

That is to say: Just as the number of words in the vocabulary is a multiple of seven, so is the number of its letters a multiple of seven; just as the sum of the factors of the number of the words is a multiple of seven, so is the sum of the factors of the number of their letters a multiple of seven. And just as the number of words is divided between vowel words and consonant words by sevens, so is their number of letters divided between vowels and consonants by sevens.

Again: Of these 49 words 35, or 5 sevens, occur more than once in the passage; and 14, or 2 sevens, occur but once (Feature 9); seven occur in more than one form, and 42, or 6 sevens, occur in only one form (Feature 10). And among the parts of speech the 49 words are thus divided: 42, or 6 sevens, are nouns, seven are not nouns (Feature 12). Of the nouns 35 or 5 sevens, are Proper names, seven are common nouns (Feature 12). Of the Proper names 28 are male ancestors of the Christ, and seven are not (Feature 13).

Moreover, these 49 words are distributed alphabetically thus: Words under A-E are 21 in number, or 3 sevens; Z-K 14, or 2 sevens; M-X also 14. No other groups of sevens stopping at the end of a letter are made by these 49 words, the groups of sevens stop with these letters and no others. But the letters A, E, Z, K, M, X, are letters 1, 5, 6, 10, 12, 22, of the Greek alphabet, and the sum of these numbers (called their Place Values) is 56, or 8 sevens (Feature 14).

This enumeration of the numeric phenomena of these 11 verses does not begin to be exhaustive, but enough has been shown to make it clear that this part of the genealogy is constructed on an elaborate design of sevens.

Let us not turn to the genealogy as a whole. I will not weary your readers with recounting all the numeric phenomena thereof: pages alone would exhaust them. I will point out only one feature: The New Testament is written in Greek. The Greeks had no separate symbols for expressing numbers, corresponding to our Arabic figures, but used instead the letters of their alphabet: just as the Hebrews, in whose language the Old Testament is written, made use for the same purpose of theirs. Accordingly, the 24 Greek letters stand for the following numbers: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 100, 200, 300, 400, 500, 600, 700, 800. Every Greek word is thus a sum in arithmetic obtained by adding the numbers for which its letters stand, or their numeric values. Now the vocabulary to the entire genealogy has 72 words. If we write its numeric value over each of these 72 words, and add them, we get for their sum 42,364, or 6,052 sevens, distributed into the following alphabetical groups only: A-B, have 9,821, or 1,403 sevens: G-D, 1904, or 272 sevens; 3,703, or 529 sevens; TH-R, 19,264, or 2,752 sevens; A-X 7,672, or 1,096 sevens. But the numeric value of the 10 letters used for making these groups is 931, or $7 \times 7 \times 19$, a multiple not only of seven but of seven sevens.

Let Mr. W.R.L. try to write some 300 words intelligently like this genealogy, and reproduce some numeric phenomena of like designs. If he does it in 6 months, he will indeed do a wonder. Let us assume that Matthew accomplished this feat in one month.

2. The second part of this chapter, verses 18-25, relates the birth of Christ. It consists of 161 words, or 23 sevens; occurring in 105 forms, or 15 sevens, with a vocabulary of 77 words or 11 sevens. Joseph is spoken to here by the angel. Accordingly, of the 77 words the angel uses 28, or 4 sevens; of the 105 forms he uses 35, or 5 sevens; the numeric value of the vocabulary is 52,605, or 7,515 sevens; of the forms, 65,429, or 9,347 sevens.

This enumeration only begins as it were to barely scratch the surface of the numerics of this passage. But what is specially noteworthy here is the fact that the angel's speech has also a scheme of sevens making it a kind of ring within a ring, a wheel within a wheel. If Mr. L. can write a similar passage of 161 words with the same scheme of sevens alone (though there are several others here) in some three years, he would accomplish a still greater wonder. Let us assume Matthew accomplished this feat in only 6 months.

3. The second chapter of Matthew tells of the childhood of the Christ. Its vocabulary has 161 words, or 23 sevens, with 896 letters, or 128 sevens, and 238 forms, or 34 sevens; the numeric value of the vocabulary is 123,529, or 17,647 sevens; of the forms, 166,985, or 23,855 sevens; and so on through pages of enumeration. This chapter has at least four logical divisions, and each division shows alone the same phenomena found in the chapter as a whole. Thus the first six verses have a vocabulary of 56 words, or 8 sevens, etc. There are some speeches here: Herod speaks, the Magi speak, the angel speaks. But so pronounced are the numeric phenomena here, that though there are as it were numerous rings within rings, and wheels within wheels, each is perfect in itself, though forming all the while only part of the rest.

If Mr. L. can write a chapter like this as naturally as Matthew writes, but containing in some 500 words so many intertwined yet harmonious numeric features, in say the rest of his days - whatever his age now, or the one to which he is to attain: if he thus accomplish it at all, it will indeed be marvel of marvels. Let us assume that Matthew accomplished this feat in only 3 years.

4. There is not, however, a single paragraph of the scores in Matthew that is not constructed in exactly the same manner. Only with each additional paragraph the difficulty of constructing it increases not in arithmetical but in geometrical progression. For he contrives to write numeric relations to what goes before and after. Thus in his last chapter he contrives to use just 7 words not used by him before. It would thus be easy to show that Mr. L. would require some centuries to write a book like Matthew's. How long it took Matthew the writer does not know. But how he contrived to do it between the Crucifixion, A.D.30 (and his Gospel could not have been written earlier), and the destruction of Jerusalem, A.D.70 (and the Gospel could not have been written later), let Mr. L. and his like-minded explain.

Anyhow Matthew did it, and we thus have a miracle - an unheard-of literary, mathematical artist, unequaled, hardly even conceivable. This is the first fact for Mr. L. to contemplate.

A second fact is yet more important: In his very first section, the genealogy discussed above, the words found nowhere else in the New Testament, occur 42 times, 7×6 ; and have 126 letters, $7 \times 6 \times 3$, each number a multiple not only of seven, but of 6 sevens, to name only two of the many numeric features of these words. But how did Matthew know, when designing this scheme for these words (whose sole characteristic is that they are found nowhere else in the New Testament) that they would not be found in the other 26 books? that they would not be used by the other 7 New Testament writers? Unless we assume the

impossible hypothesis that he had an agreement with them to that effect, he must have had the rest of the New Testament before him when he wrote his book. The Gospel of Matthew, then, was written last.

5. It so happens, however, that the Gospel of Mark shows the very same phenomena. Thus the very passage called so triumphantly in today's Sun a "forgery," the Last Twelve Verses of Mark, presents among some sixty features of sevens the following phenomena: It has 175 words, or 95 sevens; a vocabulary of 98 words, or 2 sevens of sevens with 553 letters, or 79 sevens; 133 forms, or 19 sevens, and so on to the minutest detail.

Mark, then, is another miracle, another unparalleled literary genius. And in the same way in which it was shown that Matthew wrote last it is also shown that Mark, too, wrote last. Thus to take an example from this very passage: It has just one word found nowhere else in the New Testament, 'deadly'. This fact is signaled by no less than seven features of sevens thus: Its numeric value is 581, or 83 sevens, with the sum of its figures 14, or 2 sevens, of which the letters 3, 5, 7, from both the BEGINNING and END of the word have 490, or $7 \times 7 \times 5 \times 2$: a multiple of seven sevens, with the sum of its factors 21, or 3 sevens. In the vocabulary it is preceded by 42 words, 7×6 ; in the passage itself by 126 words, or $7 \times 6 \times 3$, both numbers multiples not only of seven, but of 6 sevens. We have thus established before us this third fact for Mr. L. to contemplate: Matthew surely wrote after Mark, and Mark just as surely wrote after Matthew.

6. It happens, however, to be a fourth fact, that Luke presents the same phenomena as Matthew and Mark; and so does John, and James, and Peter, and Jude, and Paul. And we have thus no longer two great unheard-of mathematical literati, but eight of them and each wrote after the other.

7. And not only this: As Luke and Peter wrote each 2 books, John 5, and Paul 14, it can in the same way be shown that each of the 27 New Testament books was written last. In fact, not a page of the over 500 in Westcott and Hort's Greek edition (which the writer has used throughout) but it can be demonstrated thus to have been written last.

The phenomena are there and there is no human way of explaining them. Eight men cannot each write last, 97 books, some 500 pages cannot each be written first. But once assume that one Mind directed the whole, and the problem is solved simply enough; but this is Verbal Inspiration - of every jot and tittle of the New Testament.

There remains only to be added that by precisely the same kind of evidence the Hebrew Old Testament is proved to be equally inspired. Thus the very first verse of Genesis has seven words, 28 letters, or 4 sevens: to name only two out of the dozens of numeric features of this one verse of only seven words. - N.Y. Sun, Nov. 21, 1899 - Corrected.

To this letter several replies appeared in the Sun, but not a single answer. For in only three ways can it be refuted.

- (a) By showing that the facts are not as here given.
- (b) By showing that it is possible for 8 men to write each after the other 7; for 27 hooks, for some 500 pages to be each in its turn written last.
- (c) By showing that even if the facts be true, the arithmetic faultless, and the collocation of the numerics honest, it does not follow that mere men could not have written this without Inspiration from above.

Accordingly, as many as nine noted rationalists (of whom Drs. Lyman Abbot and Charles W. Eliot are still living) [now in 1927 also gone to where they may know] were respectfully but publicly invited to refute the writer. One was not "*interested*" in the writer's "*arithmetical*" doings; two "*regretted*" that they "*had no time*" to give heed thereto. Another "*did not mean to be unkind*," but ... The rest were silent. For the special benefit of these the writer printed the original data with numerous details, enabling them in the easiest manner to verify every statement made by him, if they wished. And to the best of his ability he has for years seen to it that no scholar whom surely these things specially concern remain in ignorance of the facts here recounted and of like cogency.

A notable exception to the above is a lawyer of standing [now also dead], whose books on Law are deemed as of authority. He had intelligence enough and candor withal to confess that the case for the Bible as made out by the writer is impregnable, that the Bible is thus proved to be an "*absolutely unique book*." This much the case itself exhorts from the but too well equipped writer on - EVIDENCE; and accordingly he henceforth reads the writer's Numerics with intense appreciation. And then, fresh from this confession, he betakes himself once more to the circulation of his anti-Christian books in the writing of which he joys to spend his leisure hours.

In the second letter to the N. Y. Sun the author, in discussing some irrelevant "*answers*" to his first letter, recited the three ways of refuting him and then continued:

No sane man will try to refute me by the second method. To refute me by the first method I herewith respectfully invite any or all of the following to prove that my facts are not facts: namely Messrs: Lyman Abbott, Washington Gladden, Heber Newton, Minot J. Savage, Presidents Eliot of Harvard, White of Cornell, Professors J. Henry Thayer of Harvard, and Dr. Briggs, and any other prominent higher critic so called. They may associate with themselves, if they choose, all the contributors of the ninth edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica who wrote its articles on Biblical subjects together with a dozen mathematicians of the calibre of Professor Simon Newcomb. The heavier the calibre of either scholar or mathematician, the more satisfactory to me.

They will find that my facts are facts. And since they are facts, I am ready to take them to any three prominent lawyers, or, better still, to any judge of a superior or supreme court, and abide by his decision as to whether the conclusion is not necessary that Inspiration alone can account for the facts, if they are facts.

All I should ask would be that the judge treat the case as he would any other case that comes before him: declining to admit matters for discussion as irrelevant when they are irrelevant; and listening patiently to both sides, as he does in any trial.