

# Is Adonikam The Antichrist? Why His Name Totals 666 in Scripture

written by Alfred Persson | November 10, 2025



*Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six (Rev. 13:18 KJV)*

John's words are a challenge to every Christian reading to exercise "critical thinking" (wisdom. reason) to interpret the riddle. Various translations bear this out:

*This calls for wisdom: Let **the one who has insight** calculate the beast's number, for it is man's number, and his number is 666. (NET)*

Wisdom is needed here. Let **the one with understanding** solve the meaning of the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man. His number is 666. (NLT)

Here is the solution to that cipher: Let **one who can reason** figure out the beast's number. It is a man's number: 666. (MIT)

**Riddles are solved by the words used in a riddle, having the insight to see the implied meaning:**

1) “number OF a man” = the number springs from something about the man.

a) *Adonikam had 666 offspring so the number is OF him.*

2) “a man’s number” = the number can substitute for the name because it also identifies him like a name would.

a) **Adonikam is the only man’s name that appears when scripture is searched for “666” or if a “count” occurs.**

The clue that confirms “Adonikam” is the name identified by 666.

John says a “calculation, count” uncovers the name. **The Greek (5585 psephizo) translated “count” literally means “to count one pebble” in a vote.**

A very unusual thing happens when one looks up the name “Adonikam”, both father and his first born are listed under to different numbers separated by ONE:

*NKJ Ezr. 2:13 the people of Adonikam, six hundred and sixty-six;*

*NKJ Neh. 7:18 the sons of Adonikam, six hundred and sixty-seven;*

In other words, if we COUNT 666+1 we arrive at the same name “Adonikam”.

**THAT is the insight or wisdom required to John’s riddle.**

Many insist we use *Gematria* (substituting letters for numbers) to solve the riddle of 666 meaning, although they cannot point to any undisputed[1] examples of its use elsewhere in Scripture. How can we decide this issue?

*John states wisdom is required to solve the riddle.[2] If Gematria revealed the name whose number is 666, it would be wise to use that method. However, Gematria results in too many possible names. Therefore, as John states wisdom is required Gematria is ruled out as a way to solve the riddle.*

What is a riddle? “A question or statement intentionally phrased so as to require ingenuity in ascertaining its answer or meaning, typically presented as a game.”-Oxford Languages

John gamely invites all “that hath understanding count the number”. It follows solving the riddle depends on how the text is phrased.

*Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666. (Rev. 13:18 NKJ)*

*the sons of Adonikam, 666 (Ezr. 2:13 NAS)*

*the sons of Adonikam, 667 (Neh. 7:18 NAS)*

John gives three clues how 666 points to one name.

1) “Calculate the number” (666+1=667 Adonikam).

2) “Number OF a man” (666 sons are “OF” the man Adonikam)

3) “His number is 666” (Only one name Adonikam is associated with the number 666 )

John wasn’t like modern critics, he would consider the difference (666 in Ezra 2:13; 667 in Nehemiah 7:18) in number intentional. Experts in Hebrew Scripture will immediately recognize John’s riddle is similar to an *asymmetric Janus Parallelism* (Gen. 6:3; 49:26; Cant. 2:12; Ezek. 20:37; Dan. 11:35; Nah. 1:8.)

Adonikam had 666 sons or counting from his father also named Adonikam, 667 sons.

From the “Janus” 666 we look back and “count” (5585 ψηφίζω psephizo) “as with pebbles”  $666+1=667$  to “Adonikam” as the Beast’s name.

From the “Janus” 666 we look forward, Adonikam had 666 sons, they are “of” him. Again the name Adonikam appears.

“His [Adonikam] number is 666.” The only name in the Bible closely associated with 666 is “Adonikam”.

**Therefore, solution to John’s riddle is “Adonikam”.**

In 1978 Hebrew Scholar Cyrus Gordon discovered ancient Hebrews used parallelism to communicate meaning, today called *Janus Parallelism*. Examples can be found in Gen. 6:3; 49:26; Cant. 2:12; Ezek. 20:37; Dan. 11:35; Nah. 1:8; Mat. 16:18.

***Janus Parallelism.** This type of parallelism hinges on the use of a single word with two different meanings, one of which forms a parallel with what precedes and the other with what follows. Thus, by virtue of a double entendre, the parallelism faces in both directions. Berlin, A. (1992). Parallelism. In D. N. Freedman (Ed.), The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary (Vol. 5, p. 157). New York: Doubleday.*

Professor of Theology in Berlin E. W. Engstenberg says in his Revelation of St. John commentary:

***Our business is first to discover the name of the beast which furnishes the number 666. And here we must not wander about after our own imaginations. The Seer of the Apocalypse lives entirely in holy Scripture. On this territory, therefore, is the solution of the sacred riddle to be sought. And there also it can be found with perfect certainty. In the whole of the Old Testament there is but one instance in which the number 666 occurs in connection with a name. It is said in Ezra 2:13, “The sons of Adonikam 666.” The name Adonikam must therefore be the name of the beast. It was admirably fitted for being so. It means: the Lord arises,\* and is in excellent agreement with the watch-word of the worshippers of the beast: “Who is like the beast, and who is able to make war with him?” It combines all, that in the preceding***

description had been said to characterize the beast. It is a name of blasphemy; it corresponds to the mouth speaking great things; it accords admirably with the demand upon all the inhabitants of the earth to worship the beast. It points to the war against the saints, and the carrying away of these into captivity, and killing them with the sword. It also perfectly agrees with the description, which St. Paul, in 2 Thess. 2:4, gives of the man of sin: "Who opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." The Lord arises—this name originally consecrated to the true God, and derived from the songs of the church, that celebrate him as the Almighty Being, who rises to avenge his enemies, the beast appropriates to himself, as his adherents had already in ver. 4 claimed for him the name Michael. By this reference of the name to its original destination, its blasphemous character is heightened; q.d. not that one, the miserable product of the vain imaginations and arrogant claims of his wretched worshippers, it is not he who is the Lord, but I, whose omnipotence is palpable to all; it is not he, who arises to help his poor worshippers, and execute vengeance on his enemies, but I that arise to extinguish those wretched saints with their crucified One and their God. Besides, the name Adonikam in its original reference to the living God reacts against the claim, as also the number 666, according to what is presently to be remarked, at once indicates the claim, and marks its presumptuous and shameful character.

[\*Footnote on meaning of Adonikam]

□□□□ without the article is used of the Lord in Ps. 114:7. The Jod is commonly in the proper names a connective vowel, and not the suffix—see Ewald, p. 499, Anm. 2. So also in other proper names, which are compounded of Adon: Adoniram (Jehoram corresponds), the high lord, a designation of him, to whom the bearer of the name was devoted, as so many similar names—for example, Eliah, God-father, Joab, Joel, Jehoshua; Adonijah, the Lord is Jehovah (not my Lord). The □□□□ is used of the Lord, who rises up to the help of his people, and for vengeance on his enemies; comp. □□□□ □□□□ in Ps. 3:7, 7:6, 9:19, 10:12; also Ps. 12:5, 44:26, 68:1. The name took its rise from these passages of the Psalms; as indeed it was very natural that the Psalms, whose words were continually sounding in the ears of the Lord's people, should especially exercise an important influence in the formation of names. A reference is found to those passages even in Is. 33:10. The name Asrikam is formed in the same way; the help (the Lord as helper) rises up, resting on Ps. 44:2.—We must take the name Adonikam in no other signification than that in which it occurs in the fundamental passages; not, for example, with Vitringa in the sense of the Lord's enemy; which is also grammatically inadmissible.—Hengstenberg, E. W. (1853). The Revelation of St. John. (P. Fairbairn, Trans.) (Vol. 2, pp. 69–71). New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. Bolding mine.

QUESTION—What person is indicated by the number 666?

*It may refer to the trinity composed of Satan, the antichrist, and the false prophet. Each have the number 6 symbolizing that they each fall short of divinity whose number is seven [Hu]. All other commentaries consulted simply listed the possibilities that have been suggested by authorities, but none committed themselves to a definite answer.-Trail, R. (2008). An Exegetical Summary of Revelation 12–22 (2nd ed., p. 55). Dallas, TX: SIL International.*

666 is none of those things. Rather, the great revolt against all called God (2 Thess. 2:3-4) prophesied in Daniel and Revelation make 666 the likely “flag” of the revolt against YHWH, similar to the Swastika to Nazis. Sporting the mark to proclaim one’s allegiance to Beast Adonikam merits ETERNAL punishment (Rev. 14:9-12). John also reveals it is mandatory one have the mark to buy and sell (Rev. 13:16-17).

A friend asked, “wouldn’t the Antichrist change his name from Adonikam to hide his identity?” That would not be consistent with the character of the “little horn” who is so boastful against God (Dan. 7:8, 11, 20, 25; 8:9-11, 23-25; 11:36-37; 2 Thess. 2:4; Rev. 13:5-6). Its more likely, if Adonikam isn’t his birth name, that he would change it to “Adonikam” to boast he fulfills the prophecy of the Antichrist.

Beast worshipers will celebrate it...until they don’t. Notice the subtle change, men go from boldly blaspheming “the name of God”, to grudgingly conceding His power as “the God of heaven”. This happens after the fifth bowl, when YHWH God strikes the seat of the beast with darkness causing them to gnaw their tongues for pain (Rev. 16:9-11). They became so weak at the knees upon experiencing God’s awesome power a fresh dose of demonic propaganda was necessary to restore courage (Rev. 16:12-14).

On this see:

War between God and Satan

Another interesting riddle is Samson’s riddle, it reveals a blueprint for solving Biblical riddles. An important clue is the double meaning of the words “lion” and “honey” in the language of Samson and the Philistines:

*The word “lion” in Hebrew (’arî) is almost identical to an Arabic word for “honey” (’ary).-Wolf, H. (1992). Judges. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel (Vol. 3, p. 468). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.*

The Riddle:

*So he said to them: “Out of the eater came something to eat, And out of the strong came something sweet.” Now for three days they could not explain the riddle. (Jdg. 14:14) NKJ*

“Eater” in Hebrew can be a man, beast or insect that “devours with extreme violence” (0398 אָכַל ‘akal Num. 23:24; 1 Ki. 13:28). As the “eater” is “strong” (05794 אָזַז `az) “mighty, fierce” the image of lion naturally arises. Confirming this describes a lion is the irony of taking food from the lion’s mouth, a definite clue.

As for “sweet” honey naturally comes to mind (Jdg. 14:18).

The “lion/honey” homonym is what made this a valid riddle. Notice these points are present in the answer the Philistines gave to Samson:

*What is sweeter than honey? and what is stronger than a lion? (Jdg. 14:18)*

Many commentators object the riddle was unfair, but the context contradicts that claim. They wouldn’t have wasted three days trying to solve it, or by the seventh day threaten the bride’s family if they could have simply objected it wasn’t a fair riddle (Jdg. 14:14-15). Their answer in Judges 14:18 implies they considered it fair, the answer a valid result of the clues in the riddle.

What likely prevented the Philistines from solving the riddle was the presence of many possible “strong eaters” and “sweets” at the feast. That would misdirect their attention away from the solution.

**They broke the first rule for solving riddles, *thinking outside of the box is a must*. It is likely John’s choice of “count” (ψηφίζω) is intended to “misdirect” the uninitiated to the wrong solution. If so, it worked fabulously well. Those in the habit of seeking solution to enigma outside of scripture took the bait with Gematria, as they often do appealing to apocrypha and pseudepigrapha rather than seeking the answer in scripture critically thinking on the context.**

END NOTES

[1]It is disputed Matthew 1:17 is Gematria pointing to David (14). Jesus is the subject, “carrying away into Babylon unto Christ” does not point to David without circular reasoning, eisegesis which contradicts the theory. Other suggested reasons, none of which satisfy: 1) Emphasize importance of Abraham, David and captivity, that the promises of Messianic kingdom fulfilled in Christ; 2) Show God’s grace in Israel’s rise, fall and redemption. 3) Symbolic of completeness (“7” x 2 = 14, thrice for intensity). This is not a complete list; good hunting.

[2] Ὡδε ἡ σοφία ἐστίν: “Here is wisdom” (KJV); “Wisdom is needed here” (NLT); “This calls for wisdom” (NIV); “This is where wisdom is needed” (CJB).

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