

A coherent explanation for all the Triangle Numbers in John and Acts, as well as 666 in Revelation

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Abstract

A coherent explanation for all of the triangle numbers in John and Acts is presented, including the famous four numbers – 120, 153, 276 and 300, as well as the number 666 in Revelation.

This is achieved via the identification of deeper triangle number concepts – Triple Triangle Numbers, and Triple Triangle-Pair Numbers – which appear to be used by the author of John and Acts.

Previously it does not seem that a coherent explanation for these triangle numbers, and in particular the choice of which triangle numbers to include, has ever been presented, making this potentially noteworthy.

The paper concludes suggesting that the number 666 has more to do with the concept of a triangular or three-fold god (the 'holy trinity', in modern terms) than the devil, as well as offering an explanation for why the earliest Christians often used the triangle as their preferred symbol, rather than the cross.

This paper builds on work by Joe Atwill. For potential implications of this work see my 11th article.

Introduction

This article will focus solely on the Triangle Numbers (TNs) in John and Acts in the Christian New Testament, and how they form a geometric puzzle relating to the concept of a triangle, via the numbers 180 and 666. I will exclude discussion of whether 666 might relate to any particular Emperor.

In biblical studies, it is well known that John and Acts contain a surprising number of three-digit Triangle Numbers, namely 120, 153, 176 and 300. This has been commented on for centuries, however an explanation for why those particular ones are there, has never been identified.

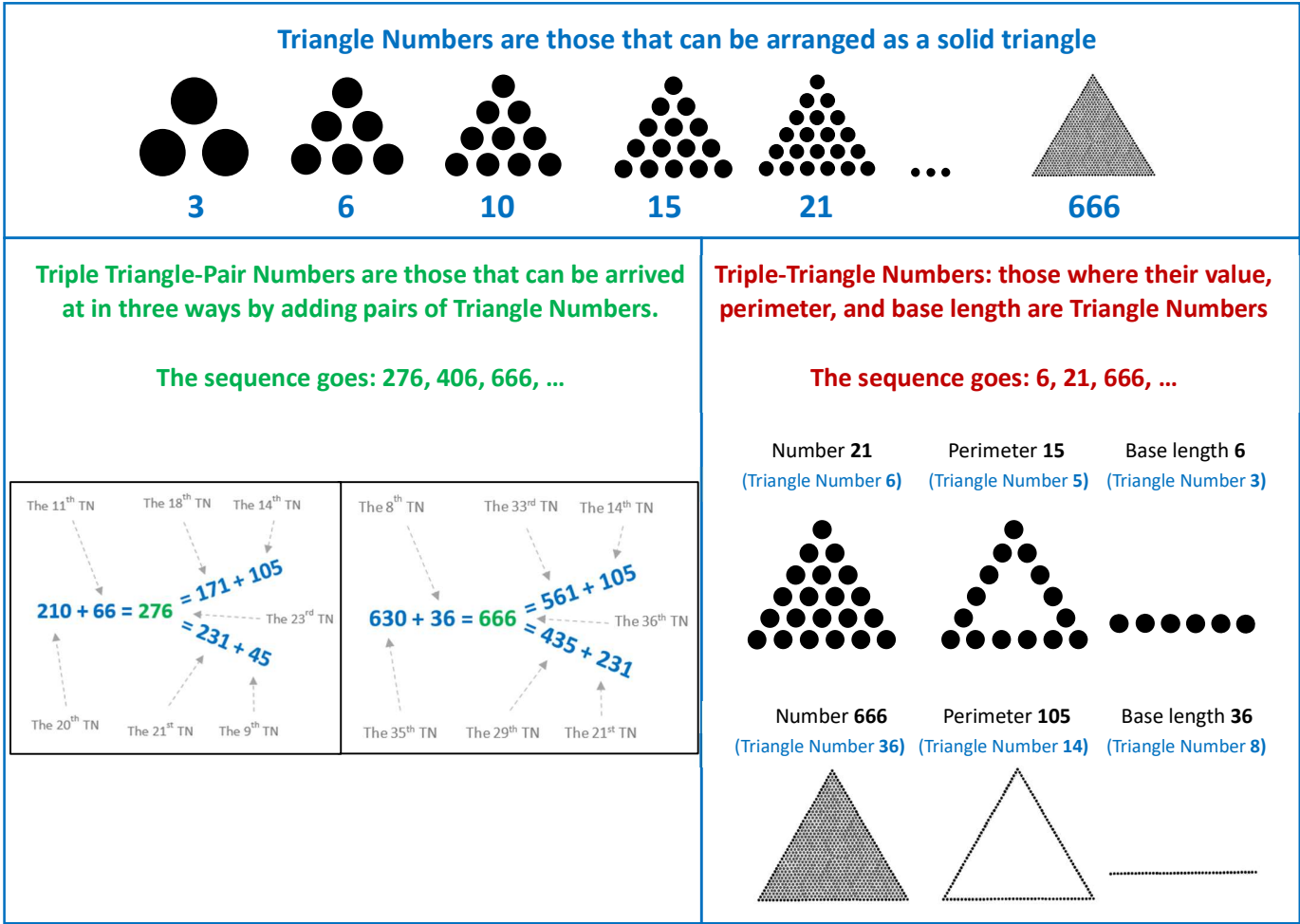
As readers may know, **Triangle Numbers** (aka ‘triangular numbers’ or for short, ‘TNs’) are those that can be arranged as a solid triangle. They are very well known in mathematics and the sequence goes as follows: **1, 3, 6, 10, 15, 21... 120... 153... 276... 300... 666...** With the exception of 21 and 666, all of these are mentioned explicitly in John or Acts, with the four large ones being almost famous:

- **Acts** refers to **120** people and then to **276** people. These are the 15th and 23rd Triangle Numbers.
- **John** refers to **153** ‘great’ fish and **300** denarii (coins depicting people) - the 17th and 24th Triangle Numbers.

I will argue that there are two ‘deeper’ triangle concepts at play, which have not been noticed before:

- **Triple Triangle Numbers** are a special type of Triangle Number: Those where not only the value, but also the perimeter, and the base length are Triangle Numbers. Neglecting the trivial ‘1’, the first three examples are **6, 21 and 666**.
- **Triple Triangle-Pair Numbers** are another special type of Triangle Number: Those that are the sum of two pairs of Triangle Numbers in three separate ways. The first three examples are **276, 406 and 666**.

Illustration



How I will show that these numbers point towards the concept of a triangle, and indeed the number 666:

In this paper I will show the specific reason that each of the Triangle Numbers were included: **1, 3, 6, 10, 15, 120, 153, 276, and 300**.

I will demonstrate that each one is included because they are required in the most noteworthy Triangle Number calculations that point to the two numbers that evoke three-ness more than any others: The numbers 180 and 666.

Some readers might not take my word regarding these two special sequences of Triangle Numbers, or that their common denominator is the number 666, so I begin by demonstrating what the two sequences are.

Note – for brevity I will refer to ordinary Triangle Numbers simply as TNs.

Demonstrating that 276, 406 and 666 are the first three Triple Triangle-Pair Numbers

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
		1	3	6	10	15	21	28	36	45	55	66	78	91	105	120	136	153	171	190	210	231	253	276	300	325	351
1	1	0																									
2	3	0																									
3	6	1																									
4	10	0																									
5	15	0																									
6	21	1																									
7	28	0																									
8	36	1																									
9	45	0																									
10	55	1																									
11	66	1																									
12	78	0																									
13	91	1																									
14	105	0																									
15	120	1																									
16	136	1																									
17	153	0																									
18	171	1																									
19	190	0																									
20	210	1																									
21	231	2																									
22	253	0																									
23	276	3																									
24	300	0																									
25	325	0																									
26	351	1																									
27	378	1																									
28	406	3																									
29	435	0																									
30	465	0																									
31	496	1																									
32	528	0																									
33	561	1																									
34	595	0																									
35	630	0																									
36	666	3																									

The table on the left shows all possible ways to add two Triangle Numbers (TNs) together that sum to 666 or less. Those sums that produce a TN are highlighted (mostly using grey boxes).

For each TN, the yellow column shows how many ways it can be arrived at by adding two other TNs together – it is rarely possible in more than one way.

There are three TNs which stand out, in that this can be done in three ways; these are 276, 406 and 666 (in each case highlighted in color).

These are the special type of TN that I refer to as Triple Triangle-Pair Numbers.

Demonstrating that 6, 21, and 666 are the first three Triple Triangle Numbers

An easy way to determine the sequence of Triple Triangle Numbers is to note that *by definition* they are a subset of “doubly triangular” numbers (i.e. those where the value and the base length are both TNs).

“Doubly triangular numbers” are well-known and established number sequence (see e.g. Wikipedia). Biblical scholars have long considered it significant that 666 is one. Neglecting 0 and 1, the sequence is: **6, 21, 55, 120, 231, 406, 666, ...**

The perimeter of the *n*th Triangle Number is $3x(n-1)$. So we can list the *doubly* triangular numbers with their perimeters:

Triangle	3rd	6th	10th	15th	21st	28th	36th
TN	6	21	55	120	231	406	666
Perimeter	6	15	27	42	60	81	105

All that is required is to observe that for the ones I have highlighted in the middle of the sequence (in red), their perimeters are not TNs. Eliminating those four, we arrive at the sequence of Triple Triangle Numbers (shown in green), i.e.: 6, 21, 666, ...

How I will demonstrate a coherent explanation for the author's choice to include each of the Triangle Numbers (TNs):

Step 1. I will explain the presence of the TN 276, in that it is used because its unique and special triangular property (the first Triple Triangle-Pair Number). **Step 2.** I will also show that 6 and 21 are included in John/Acts in a manner indicating that they are being used in context of them being Triple Triangle Numbers. Together those first two observations lend confidence the author was using these deeper triangle number concepts.

Step 3. Noting that the author is using deeper triangle concepts and the numbers 6 and 21, I will use this to explain the presence of 153, and how its presence is used to point the reader to the number 180 – the internal angle of all triangles.

Step 4. Again based on knowing it's about deeper triangle number concepts (step 1) and the number 180 (step 2) I will then explain the presence of the TNs 300 and 120, and as **Step 5**, also the TNs 3, 6, and 10.

Step 6. I will then bring this together to show that the author is posing a numerical riddle: Firstly that the author is highlighting 180 as the internal angle of all triangles, and secondly the author is highlighting two special sequences of TNs, whose unifying common denominator is 666.

Concluding by identifying the coherent pattern: Along with the number 3 (which appears so repeatedly in Acts), the numbers 180 and 666 are those that have the most significant connection with the concept of a triangle. Knowing this we can see a coherent purpose behind the inclusion of all of these TNs – **an effort to covertly include a message that God is threefold or triangular, or - to put it in more modern terms - has the form of a Holy Trinity.**

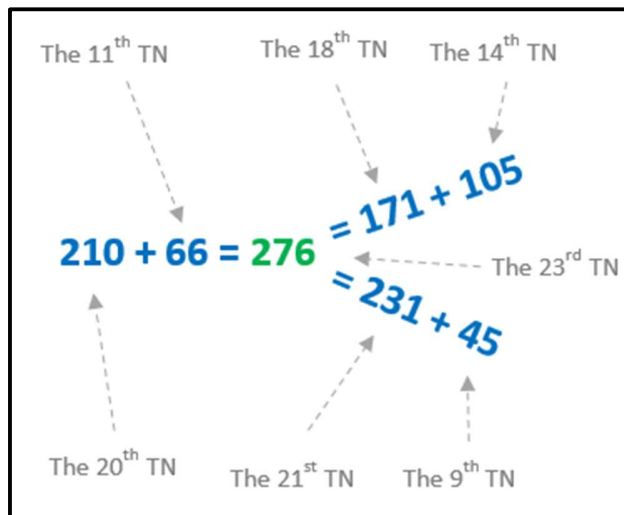
Step 1. The significance of the number 276 being present:

276 is the lowest TN that can be arrived at in three ways by adding pairs of TNs together (i.e. the first Triple Triangle-Pair Number), as demonstrated on page 3.

The author's choice to include the first Triple Triangle-Pair Number points to a desire to emphasize the number three – e.g. a three-fold nature of god (in modern terms, the holy trinity), but does so subtly via this numerical puzzle.

The first three Triple Triangle-Pair Numbers are **276, 406** and **666**. Calculations for the number 276 are shown to the right, or for the others see page 3.

As I progress through my explanation, I will use red to keep track of those TNs in John, Acts and Revelation which I have explained – in the manner shown below.



So far I have only explained the number 276, so my list is colored in as follows: **1, 3, 6, 10, 15, 21, 120, 153, 276, 300, 666.**

How can we be confident that this is significant?

Many scholars have written about the famous TNs in John/Acts, even as far back as Augustine (4th Century AD), noting that 153 (in John) was the 17th TN and proposed that TNs were used in relation to the concept of the Trinity. But neither he nor Jerome (also 4th Century) could explain why those particular TNs are used.

A more modern example is the Anchor Bible Commentary (1980s). What insight does it offer? It suggests the triangular nature of the numbers 120, 153 are seen as symbolic of 'completeness', the triangular nature of 276 is symbolic of 'divine assurance, and the triangular nature of 666 represents among other things, 'wisdom and knowledge'. The standard to beat is therefore *very low*.

It's odd that nobody appears to have noticed that 276 is the first TN that is the sum of a trio of TN pairs. This becomes obviously significant once it is observed that 666 (the most famous TN in the Bible, whose value is stated to be significant) is the 3rd example.

By the end of this article I will show that all the TNs used in John and Acts are those that are involved in the most noteworthy sums relating to either 666 (the number most linked to TNs) or 180 (the internal angle of all triangles), and that when this is seen, it becomes clear that this (the special triangle mathematics behind 276) is significant.

Step 2. The significance of the number 6 being present, and the number 21 being alluded to:

In isolation, if a document mentioned 6 and 21 this would be unremarkable – they are quite common numbers.

6 and 21 are the first two Triple Triangle Numbers (not to be confused with Triple Triangle-Pair Numbers).

Triple Triangle Numbers are special in that not only is their value a TN, but also their perimeter and their base length too. The first three Triple Triangle Numbers are **6**, **21** and **666**.

I will now show that John and Acts don't merely mention the numbers 6 and 21, but rather, they do so in a manner which indicates they are being used in the context of them being Triple Triangle Numbers.

The first Triple Triangle Number – 6.

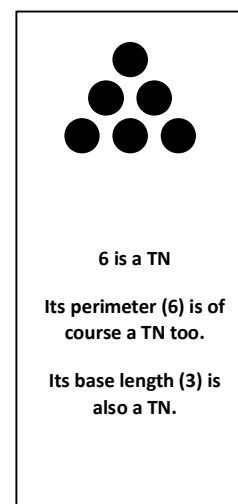
If an author wished to highlight the number 6 as being a Triple Triangle Number, they would associate the following numbers: **1, 2, 3 and 6** on the basis that:

- **6** is the **1st** non-trivial Triple Triangle Number,
- Its perimeter is **6** - the **3rd** TN,
- Its base length is **3** - the **2nd** TN.

And indeed in the opening section of John, it arranges these exact numbers **1, 2, 3 and 6** together in Jesus' story, as follows:

- In John 1 in his **first** miracle (i.e. miracle **1**), Jesus fills **6** jars with wine, which have a volume..
- ..described as being "**2**..
- or **3**" measures apiece.¹

The presence of all four numbers together, suggests the author of the Gospel of John has chosen to present 6 in the context of it being a Triple Triangle Number.



The second Triple Triangle Number – 21.

With 21 it is similarly true that merely finding it mentioned would be unimpressive.

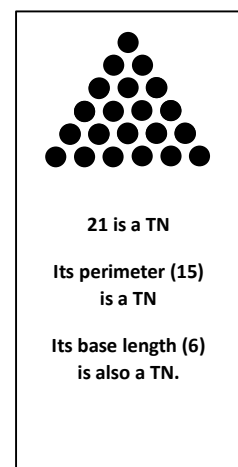
If the author wished to highlight the number 21 as being a Triple Triangle Number, they would associate the following numbers: **2, 6, 15 and 21**, on the basis that:

- **21** is the **2nd** Triple Triangle Number.
- Its perimeter is **15**, and
- Its base length is **6**.

The author of Acts arranges these exact numbers **2, 6, 15 and 21** together in Jesus' story as follows:

- Acts contains **21 TNs**² of which the number three appears **15** times, and others **6** times.
- Acts contains **21 words relating to threeness**³ again arranged in groups of **15** and **6**.

And to find the number **2** in all this, simply notice that the author provided those numbers in two ways.



Coloring in those TNs whose presence has been explained so far, our list is now as shown below:

1, 3, 6, 10, 15, 21, 120, 153, 276, 300, 666.

¹ And this is the first of 'six' miracles. Each of them is interesting in their own right (they are omitted here for brevity).

² The 21 Triangle Numbers are: Fifteen instances of the number 3, two instances of the number 6, and one of each of 10, 15, 120 and 276. I exclude the number one since to people in that era it would not have been seen as a triangle number (since it can't be arranged to form a triangle).

³ Here I include all words relating to three-ness, namely three, third, 'three-year' and 'three-story'. The 21 locations are calculated as follows:

There are 15 instances of the word 'three' (Acts 5:7, 7:20, 9:9, 10:16, 11:10, 11:11, 17:2, 19:8, 20:3, 25:1, 28:17) as well as four cases 28:11, 28:12, 28:15, 28:17 saying 'third', and 20:9 saying 'third-story' and 20:31 saying 'three-years'.

For completeness, I exclude Acts 3:1 which says 'ninth hour' (modern translations often say third hour for historical reasons) and Acts 2:41 which has as a single word the number '3000', and also the number 'three' appearing only in some manuscripts of Acts 10:19, as it is not in most of them, whilst in others it says 'two' – this appears to be later authors filling in the gaps in the text.

Step 3. The significance of the number 153 being present – (Jesus catching 153 ‘great’ fish)

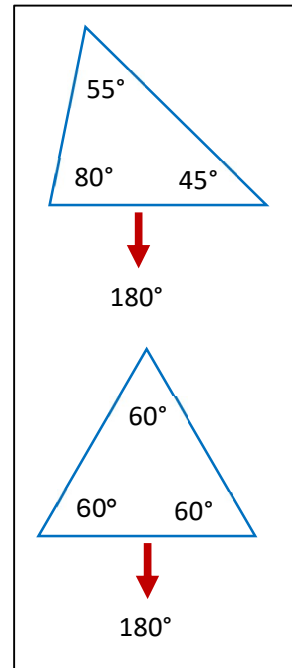
Much has been made of this number in Christian literature, for example identifying it as the 17th TN and trying to accord meaning to the number 17. Only by paying attention to the Triple Triangle Numbers (described earlier) can we see the real significance of the number 153, which is twofold:

153 is special because it is the only TN which when added to Triple Triangle Numbers, produces the number 180 i.e. the internal angle of all triangles⁴.

The calculation is $153 + 6 + 21 = 180$ (6 and 21 being the first two of those special Triple Triangle Numbers discussed on the previous page).

Since 180 was extremely well known to be the internal angle of all triangles (indeed since long before the 1st Century), a TN related puzzle that points to that number suggests the author may be pointing the reader towards the concept of... *a triangle!*

There’s also a second reason that 153 is an especially significant TN, and again this has to do with its relationship to Triple Triangle Numbers, but I’ll explain that later.



Step 4. The significance of the numbers 120 and 300 being present:

Having identified that the author may be hinting towards the number 180 – the internal angle of all triangles – the purpose of 120 and 300 becomes clear.

It turns out that there is no pair of TNs that can be added, multiplied or divided to arrive at exactly 180, leaving subtraction as the only option, and:

300 and 120 are the first⁵ pair of three-digit TNs which can be used in a simple sum to arrive at 180.

Adding these to the list of TNs whose presence has been explained so far, gives us:

1, 3, 6, 10, 15, 21, 120, 153, 276, 300, 666.

Step 5. The significance of the number 10 being present in both John and Acts

Simply finding the number 10 in a document does not seem interesting, as it is a common number. However, observe that I have now explained every single TNs found in John and Acts except the number 10. This suggests that 10 is present intentionally.

It turns out that there is another important calculation linking TNs to the number 180.

10 is needed in the only calculation in which the product of three consecutive TNs is 180.

The fact that the three numbers in question are the first three TNs helps to ensure it would be seen as significant. The calculation is simply: $3 \times 6 \times 10 = 180$.

This explains why the author felt it important to include the number 10 – indeed in both John and Acts.

Adding this one, our list is as follows:

1, 3, 6, 10, 15, 21, 120, 153, 276, 300, 666.

⁴ The system of measuring 360 degrees in a circle was introduced in the 2nd Century BC, therefore in the 1st Century AD the internal angle of all triangles would indeed have been seen as 180.

⁵ There is one lower option, 190 minus 10, but that doesn’t involve a pair of 3-digit Triangle Numbers. It’s likely the author considered 300-120 to be a far preferable sum to use because it involves only 3-digit numbers, and – very speculatively – perhaps also because multiplying them together gives the number 36 thousand (36 being of interest to the author, since this puzzle is all pointing to 666 which is the 36th Triangle Number).

Summary

I've now coherently explained the choices behind all of the Triangle Numbers (TNs) explicitly mentioned in John and Acts, including all four of the large TNs that stand out as so obviously noteworthy. This has never been done before.

But, given that it is emphasized in Revelation, why is the most 'triangle-related' TN of all – 666 – absent?

If you wanted to create a puzzle leading a 1st Century reader to the concept of triangles, you'd hide messages to do with triangles. You might repeatedly use the number 3 (as Acts does), or to hide a riddle pointing to the number 180.

But it is hard to see any number being more relevant to triangles, than the number 666. Of its numerous connections:

- 666 is the 36th TN, which very unusually⁶ is itself the square of a TN.
- The number of digits/letters it has is also a TN:
 - Firstly in terms of conventional digits – i.e. there are three digits.
 - Also when written in Latin (DCLXVI) – i.e. there are 6 letters, which is also a TN.
 - Also in the original Greek text of Revelation, the word for 666 has an extremely unusual form, where it is written using just *three* letters.
- All three digits; 6, 6 and 6, are themselves TNs.
- You can even remove a digit and the result (66) is still a TN.
- Finally – and perhaps most significantly - 666 is both:
 - A Triple Triangle Number – and indeed the 3rd one, and
 - A Triple Triangle-Pair Number – and indeed the 3rd one.

The fact that John and Acts aim to promote this message but omits the number 666, demands explanation.

The reason 666 is absent, yet appears in Revelation in the sentence “let he who has wisdom calculate the number.... 666”:

The reason 666 is absent in John and Acts, is that it is the solution to the numerical riddle posed by John and Acts (along with the number 180).

The solution: Solving the puzzle involves the reader identifying that the author is intentionally using Triple Triangle Numbers and Triple Triangle-Pair Numbers, and that the third member of both sets is the three digit TN 666. The reader is similarly led to identify that the author is pointing at the number 180, the internal angle of all triangles. From this a reader might infer that the author is implying that the nature of God is triangular or a 'Trinity'.

This also explains the appearance of 666 in a book that is named 'Revelation' – i.e. the Book of Revelation deliberately 'reveals' the solution to the riddle, albeit taunting the uninformed reader that they need “wisdom” to calculate it, and declining to disclose how to calculate it, or even which two books contain the riddle that it presents the answer to.

Adding this final TN, 666, to those that we have explained, our list is now complete – as below:

1, 3, 6, 10, 15, 21, 120, 153, 276, 300, 666.

So the approach in this paper not only explains every triangle in John and Acts, but also the famous one in Revelation.

But there's still a few other triangle number calculations to mention:

Another way that 666 is related to the number 3 is that it is the sum of 3x the 12th triangle number, plus 3x the 12th square (144), so in a *sense*, 666 could be seen as **six 'notional twelves'**. This may explain why John and Acts contain exactly six explicit references to 'the twelve'⁷. It might also explain why Revelation mentions the number 144, referring to the wall which had three gates and 12 foundations, as being 144 cubits and this being a measurement made by an angel.

⁶ Of the first ten thousand triangle numbers, only 6 have this property. The next two examples are the 48th TN (1225) and the 288th TN (41616).

⁷ John 6:67, John 6: 70-71, John 20:24, Acts 6:2, and Acts 1:26 (Adding Matthias to restore 'the twelve'). Notice that these can be readily divided into three which emphasise the group being complete, and three which emphasise a particular member of the group.

What about that second reason I had promised for the inclusion of the number 153 (Jesus catching 153 ‘great’ fish)?

Having explained how the texts point to 666, I will now show that there is a bit more going on. It turns out that our two special sequences of TNs have *two* numbers in common, not one.

It seems that the author may have known that along with 666, the number 3081 also appears in both sequences. The author may have found this difficult to ignore, since although it is not a tidy 3-digit number like 666 is, the number 3081 is nonetheless:

- The first TN that can be arrived at in more than three ways by adding pairs of TNs.
- The first Triple Triangle Number, where in addition to its value, periphery, and base length, its “top surface” is also a TN (i.e. the periphery excluding the base).

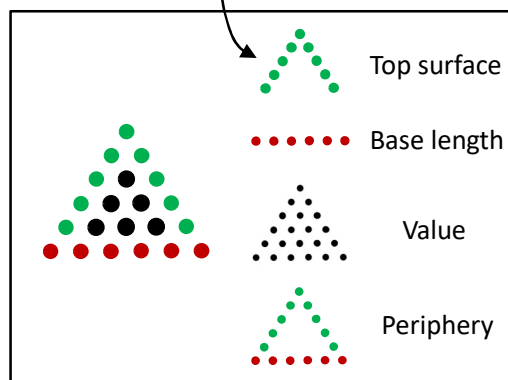
These relationships are illustrated below

The sequence of **Triple Triangle Numbers** is as follows (see illustration below right for context):

Triangle number	Its value	Ways in which it can be seen as triangular
3	6	3 (base length, periphery, and value are all TNs)
6	21	3 (ditto)
36	666	3 (ditto)
78	3081	4 – (base length 78, periphery 231, value 3081 and top surface 153)
496	123256	3 again

And the sequence of **Triple Triangle-Pair Numbers** is as follows:

Triangle Number	Its value	Ways in which it is the sum of a pair of TNs
23	276	3
28	406	3
36	666	3
41	861	3
61	1891	3
66	2211	3
78	3081	5
86	3741	3



Why this shows that there was a strong reason for the author to have included the famous TN 153.

From the illustration above it is clear that the ‘triangular significance’ of 3081 is nearly as great as for 666, so it would be a little strange if the author didn’t take advantage of it to strengthen the message that there is a triangular nature to Jesus’ divinity (e.g. a Holy Trinity).

Mentioning 3081 explicitly risked making it obvious to 1st Century readers that the author is intentionally inserting TNs. So a more subtle and clever approach would be to instead include the number 153 – i.e. the value that makes 3081 stand out from the other Triple Triangle Numbers.

I already explained earlier in this article that 153 is significant because it is the only TN that can be added to Triple Triangle Numbers to produce 180 (the internal angle of all triangles), so we actually have **two** ways that the number **153** subtly evokes this ‘great’ sequence⁸ – the Triple Triangle Numbers.

So, this not only shows why the author needed to include the number 153, but why, when Jesus is described helping to catch **153** fish, **two** ships haul them in, and they are described as ‘**great**’ fish.

⁸ Indeed, it’s likely the author saw this ‘great’ sequence as itself forming a triangle, as illustrated here:

6
21
666
3081

Summary of relevant numerical relationships discussed in this paper.

The numbers and calculations in this paper are summed up in the diagram below.

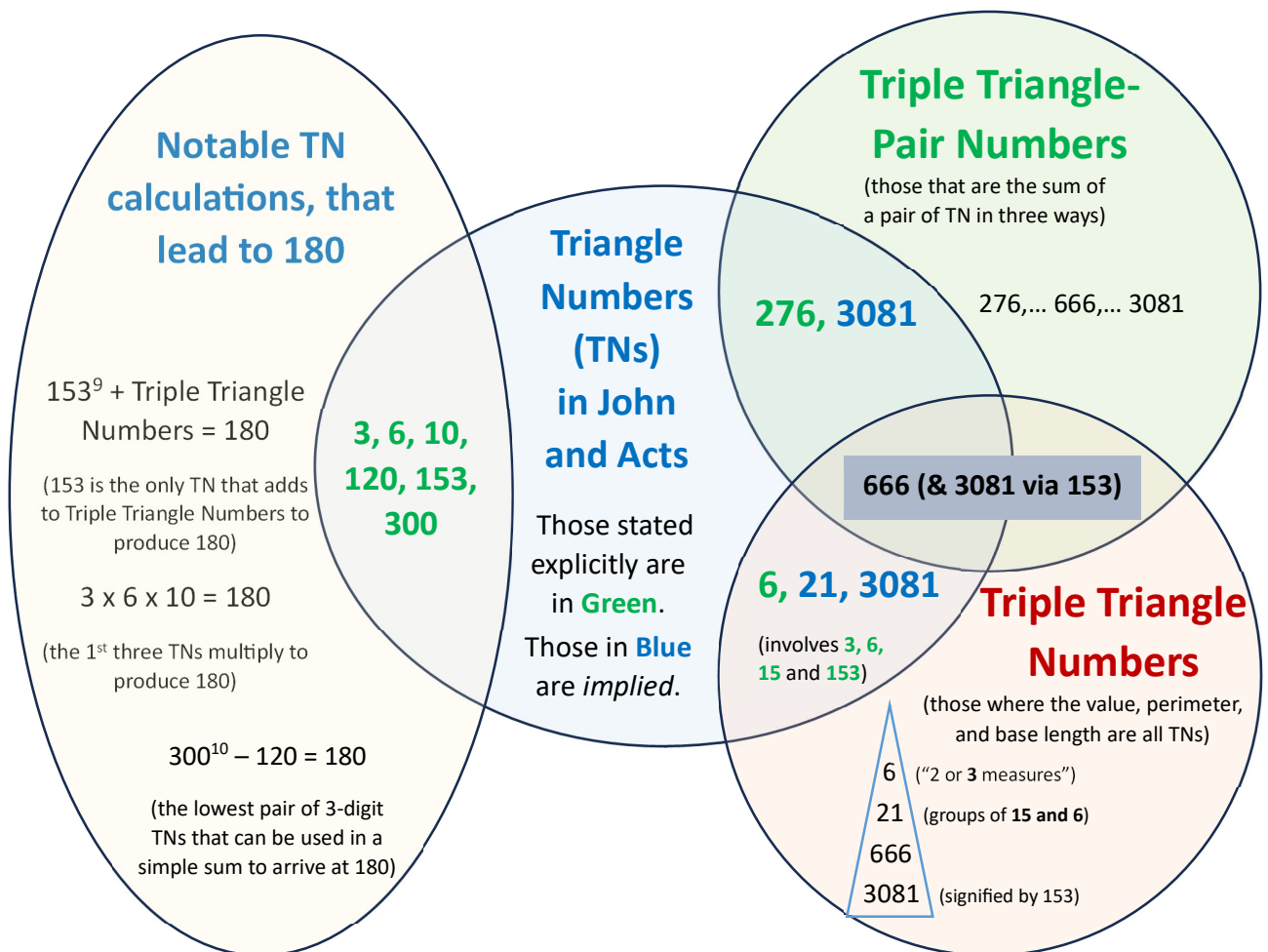
Every TN stated in John and Acts (and also some that are implied) – is either:

- Required by one of the noteworthy TN calculations that point to 180 (internal angle of all triangles), or
- Required by one of the noteworthy TN calculations that point to the number 666.

By doing this, the author creates a puzzle, such that by solving it, the reader is led to see that the texts are written to emphasize the concept of a triangle.

The message in Revelation lends greater confidence to this view, by telling us that there is an answer to a difficult riddle which requires insight and ‘calculation’, and that the answer is the number 666. In doing so, Revelation goes out of its way to write that number using three letters, which highlights that this has everything to do with the number 3.

The author’s message is fairly clear: That Jesus’ divinity has a triangular form, or to put it in modern terms; a Holy Trinity.



Footnotes 9 & 10. There is another possible reason the author may have had for including the triangle numbers 153 and 300. This is that 153 and 300 are involved in the small number of ways that a trio of TNs can be added together to produce 666, and indeed would be of particular interest to the author if they (as appears to be the case) wished to avoid mentioning 21, 78 and 105¹¹.

Those particular trios of TNs that sum to 666 are: $300 + 300 + 66 = 666$, $300 + 15 + 351 = 666$, and $153 + 78 + 435 = 666$.

Footnote 11. The author needed to avoid mentioning 78 and 105 because – as I will shortly come to – the point of the triangle number puzzle is for the reader to identify the missing number in the sequence, which is 666, and indeed its base length and perimeter 78 and 105, the 8th and 14th TNs, in order that the reader might perceive hidden meaning in the story of the Doubting Thomas which involves the numbers 8 and 14.

Could I have cherry picked the calculations that happen to involve numbers found in John and Acts, and ignored the rest?

It turns out that there aren't many other calculations that would have made more sense for the author to use, if the author wanted to leave a subtle yet unambiguous trail of breadcrumbs that nobody would notice.

Some examples that illustrate this:

- Surely it might have been sensible to highlight the first TN which is also a cube number? But... there isn't one.
- Surely it might have been sensible to highlight the first pair of TNs which add or multiply to give 180? But... there aren't any.
- Surely it might have been sensible to highlight that trio of TNs that multiply together to give 666? But... there isn't such a trio.
- Similarly, to mention the number 406 (the second Triple Triangle-Pair Number) would have made it obvious that it's a sequence leading to 666 (since 276 and 406 would then provide a numerical sequence, with 666 being the next step).
- Similarly, to mention the numbers 6 and 21 together, let alone the number 3081, would have made it obvious that this was a sequence of figurative numbers, for which 666 was the missing example.
- Similarly, to mention 36 and 105 (the base length and perimeter of 666, the 36th TN) would have made it very obvious that the author is referencing the number 666.

So my point is that when you look for the noteworthy calculations that would make sense to include, but which wouldn't give the game away, the numbers required for that set of calculations are the very ones we find mentioned in John and Acts.

To sum up - The author seemed concerned about creating a subtle set of pointers, which would go unnoticed by most readers. The author uses 276 to highlight the sequence of Triple Triangle-Pair Numbers (which has 276 and 666 as its first and third members), and very subtly uses 6, 21 and 153 to emphasize the sequence of Triple Triangle Numbers (which again has 6, 21 and 666 as first three members), thereby signifying that the common denominator of those sequences is 666.

Indeed, the only obviously missing numbers are the base length and circumference of 666, which are the 8th and 14th Triangle Numbers, however as I will show in my next paper, the author did include these two numbers – in particular in relation to the strange story of the Doubting Thomas. Thomas is the disciple introduced by John who wasn't mentioned in the synoptic Gospels, and who volunteers to die in a grave that Jesus performs a resurrection over. Thomas is one of the twelve who was called 'the twin', a motif which we find mirrored in Acts where it mentions the Gemini, the famous twins who are one of the twelve zodiac signs.

In my book, and in my next paper, I discuss why the author seems to be pointing the reader to Thomas' story. However, this takes us beyond simply solving the puzzle, and into the potential meaning and doctrine that the author may have been seeking to convey.

Conclusion

Revelation doesn't suggest the 'mark of the beast' has anything to do with the devil. This idea was developed in later centuries as a matter of Church tradition. I do accept that the idea is so firmly entrenched via modern popular culture that a movie or book about the devil is not considered complete without referencing the number 666, but it is nonetheless a tradition that has no strong basis in the Bible. It's possible that Revelation offers some criticism of those who follow the second beast rather than the first beast, but it is not equating the second beast with the devil or indeed Satan.

Noting the above, one conclusion we can draw from this paper, is that the number of the second beast in Revelation (i.e. 666) clearly relates to a Trinitarian or Holy Spirit doctrine, that John and Acts are very subtly promoting, and not to the devil.

Revelation openly acknowledges the existence of a puzzle but without disclosing how to solve it or even where to find it. It says "Let he who has wisdom calculate the number... which is the number of a man... and is the number of the [second] beast... and his number is 666". Given how subtle and difficult the puzzle is, presumably it was not intended to be solved. Rather, the solution was intended to be revealed to by priests to their followers. Revelation therefore does not aim to reveal the solution to the uninitiated, and instead is written to provide a source of confirmation for those to whom the revelation has already been made.

With that said, I will reserve discussion of further insights such as what the author might be saying about the *identity* of the Holy Spirit, and I leave this to my book (see Amazon) and my 11th article (see my profile on academia.edu). I think it suffices in this paper to simply show what the puzzle is, and how it can be solved.

Further reading

To understand what is going on here, I refer readers to my 9th article (see my profile on academia.edu) or indeed my book (see amazon). These describe the key discovery resulting from my research effort, that enable us to understand who created the Gospel story of Jesus, precisely when, where, and indeed why, along with the evidence that backs it up.

Credit: As with my other papers, this builds on the remarkable work by Joe Atwill – In this case, his second book 'Shakespeare's Messiah'. I consider it very remarkable that Joe was able to determine that the riddle points readers to the numbers 8 and 14 (the numbers of the triangle numbers that are the base length and circumference of the triangle number 666) in the story of the Doubting Thomas (the twin), *despite him not being aware of* the concept of Triple Triangle Numbers or indeed Triple Triangle-Pair Numbers.