

# Decoding with Gematria the Number 1737, Jesus Christ's Lifespan in Weeks, according to a XX-Century Mystic

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## Abstract

The paper reports a mathematical exercise, mainly based on Jewish Gematria, to decode the integer 1737, Jesus' lifespan calculated in weeks according to the Italian mystic Maria Valtorta. We show that the sequence of integers  $1000 + 700 + 37 = 1737$  describes the character Jesus, seen as the Messiah. The first two integers can be directly interpreted with Gematria; the third can be related to Jesus' life, both as  $33 + 4$ —the number of years (33) and months (4) of his life—, or as  $34 + 3$ —the calendar year of his death (34, Julian calendar) and the number of days (3) to Resurrection. With the exponential function, other meanings can be extracted from 1737, related to the Act of Creation, in Jewish terms, and/or to the second person of the Trinity, in Christian terms. From the integer 1737, it is also possible to estimate the approximate hour of Jesus' birth and verify the hour of death reported in the Gospels. Since the knowledge and mathematical tools we have used were surely not known to Maria Valtorta, it is surprising to arrive at a self-consistent and coherent framework from what she writes.

## Keywords

Gematria, Maria Valtorta, Italian Literature, Jesus' Lifespan, Jesus' Birth Hour, Jesus' Death Hour, Exponential Function, Natural Logarithm of 2

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## 1. Gematria and Sacred Texts

Gematria is a numerical method of studying and interpreting sacred texts tradition in Judaism (Scholem, 1978; Scholem, 1996; Ginsburgh, 1991; Godwin, 1997; Hoffman, 2000; Locks, 1985; Munk, 1998; Idel, 1988; Sheinkin, 1986; Hardiman, 2019; Crivelli, 2011). The purpose of Gematria is to obtain a deeper understand-

ing of the texts of the Jewish Bible. According to this tradition, the gematrical value of a biblical text is very close to the ultimate truth of God.

In ancient times, this coding was widespread, used also by the Babylonians and the Gnostics of the early Christian era. It appears in the Magi literature and in the literature of interpreters of dreams in Hellenistic Greece. Very likely, we find traces of its use even in the Renaissance, in the painting of the Sistine Chapel's ceiling (De Campos & Da Costa Oliveira, 2018).

The theme of the Sistine Chapel's ceiling, painted by Michelangelo Buonarroti (1508-1512), is the Creation of the universe and the first human beings. All characters converge on the coming of Jesus Christ, the Great Savior. However, curiously, there is no fresco showing Jesus Christ. De Campos & Da Costa Oliveira have noticed that Michelangelo, perhaps by means of the gematria of the Greek alphabet, included Jesus Christ as part of the set of its characters, because, in Greek, the sum of the gematrical values of the words Jesus and Christ gives the number 37, which is the number of characters depicted in the frescoes that form the ceiling of the Chapel.

In the Book of Revelation (Apocalypse), there is an amazing large set of integers. The reader is constantly referred to arithmetic and numbers. Numbers dominate the book in such a manner that it could almost be used as a textbook for primary school mathematics, including fractions, applied mathematics and the major arithmetical operations. Several times, the text asks its hearers or readers to perform arithmetical calculations, to calculate the number (Newton, 2020).

The writers of these sacred texts think that numbers have meaning, and, vice versa, meaning can be expressed in numbers. The underlying concept is that the true meaning of the Bible is deeper than what can be read. The text is a composition of letters that are organized and combined to generate words, phrases and sentences. A number is assigned to each letter with a particular code of Gematria. The number of the letters, when combined to form words, phrases and sentences, can be added up to form a gematrical value that can be related to other words, phrases and sentences (Hardiman, 2019).

The mathematical operations that can be done on the gematrical values include summation, the most common, but also multiplication, division, power elevation and other mathematical functions.

By comparing two or more words or phrases with the same numerical total, conclusions can be drawn about their relationship (Hardiman, 2019). Of course, the possible relationships are so many that the investigation should be carried out by having in mind a possible meaning and verify it with gematria, otherwise one gets lost.

The literature on Gematria and the possible "decoding" of all words, phrases and sentences contained in the Jewish Bible is immense and it is not the purpose of this paper to attempt a review.

In this paper, our aim is to make an exercise, first based on the simplest gematria of adding numbers and later based on more complex mathematical functions never used before in this field, by applying the Gematria to a particular

number, the integer 1737, which, according to the mystic Maria Valtorta (Valtorta, 2006e), is the lifespan of Jesus Christ, calculated in weeks.

After this introductory section, Section 2 recalls the great literary work written by Maria Valtorta; Section 3 studies and discusses the gematrical meanings of 1737 related to Jesus Christ; Section 4 adopts non-linear Gematria to arrive at some very interesting relationships and shows the hour of the day of Jesus' birth and death; finally Section 5 reports some final remarks.

## 2. The Mystic Maria Valtorta

Maria Valtorta (1897-1961) was an Italian mystic writer active in the years of World War II and the few following years. Her literary work, based, as she claims, on mystic visions, whose assessment is, of course, beyond science, contains a detailed life of Jesus, without any explicit dates with respect to the Julian calendar. She sets Jesus' birth on Kislev 25, first day of Hebrews' feast of Hanukkah, and Jesus' age at his death, on a Friday, in 1737 weeks, a curious unit of time. She writes that the Passover of the year of his death fell on Saturday, the day after Crucifixion.

These chronological data are unusual in mystical writings concerning Jesus' life and have raised the question about their coherence and self-consistency. Her data have been studied and turned out to refer to a hidden and coherent chronology of Jesus' lifespan (De Caro et al., 2021c). The astronomical and calendar analysis of these data have allowed (De Caro et al., 2021c): 1) To set Jesus' crucifixion on 23 April 34 (Julian calendar) (Matricciani & De Caro, 2017), the only date that can harmonize the gospel of John with the gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke about the Last Supper date; 2) To verify that the Nativity set on Kislev 25 is compatible only with the Eastern tradition, 6 January 1 AC (after Christ); 3) To assess that the interval between birth and death is exactly 1737 weeks. Maria Valtorta proposes also an original story about the Star of Bethlehem: The Magi would have realized the birth of the Messiah by counting the days elapsed between some astronomical conjunctions, decoding the meaning of the numbers, so obtained, through Gematria, in close agreement with all other details of her narration (De Caro et al., 2021c).

A rigorous and scientific analysis of her great literary corpus on Jesus' life, narrated in her main work *Il Vangelo come mi è stato rivelato* (*The Gospel as revealed to me*), referred to as the EMV in the following, published in 10 volumes (Valtorta, 2001), has evidenced the presence of many data concerning facts and events allegedly occurred 2000 years ago in Palestine, well beyond her knowledge, culture and skills (Matricciani & De Caro, 2017; Matricciani & De Caro, 2018; Matricciani & De Caro, 2020; De Caro et al., 2020). She writes, in real time, on what she sees and hears during many mystical visions, as she claims, in a period lasting several years (Matricciani, 2022). She mentions cities, towns, villages, buildings and palaces, Roman roads, mountain tracks, river Jordan, ports of the Mediterranean, lakes (Tiberias, ancient Meron), creeks, mountains and hills, trees and flowers, fragrances, dresses, food, weather, sceneries and

monuments of Palestine at Jesus' times, a geographical area that she never visited.

This large amount of data is known only to generations of archeologists, historians, Bible scholars, experts of astronomy, epigraphy, topography, geography, meteorology, whose research has taken them decades of studies and efforts. Therefore, it is surprising and unexplainable to find these data, with so many details, in her writings.

Maria Valtorta, bedridden since 1934 because paralyzed below the waist, writes on a small stand, sitting on her bed with shoulders supported by pillows in Viareggio (Tuscany), during World War II and the few following years. In Valtorta's house there was a library with miscellaneous texts but it had been locked by Maria's mother in 1934 and remained so until her death on 4 October 1943. However, in this library there were no books on Palestine that, just in case, Maria Valtorta could consult (Valtorta, 2021). She had only a Bible and an Italian Dictionary. In spite of this complete lack of any data possibly available at her times, every time some of the data she reports have been checked, they are unexpectedly correct, sometimes even anticipating what scholars would find years later her writings (Matricciani & De Caro, 2017; Matricciani & De Caro, 2018; Matricciani & De Caro, 2020; De Caro et al., 2020).

She wrote in Italian 13,193 pages of 122 school notebooks of her time (Pisani, 2010), without making any correction, with a set of fountain pens always filled with ink because she did not know when the alleged visions would come. In these notebooks there are not only the events now published in the EMV, but also many other mystic writings, as she intercalated the pages describing the events on Jesus' life with many pages on various topics, including dictations and monologues addressed to her by the alleged Jesus or by Jesus' mother Mary. All these texts are now scattered partly in the EMV and partly in the following books: *I Quaderni del 1943* (Q43, *The Notebooks. 1943*) (Valtorta, 2006a), *I Quaderni del 1944* (Q44, *The Notebooks. 1944*) (Valtorta, 2006b), *I Quaderni del 1945-1950* (Q45 - 50, *The Notebooks. 1945-1950*) (Valtorta, 2006c), *I quadernetti* (QN, *Small Notebooks*, actually being translated in English) (Valtorta, 2006d), *Libro di Azariah* (AZ, *The Book of Azariah*) (Valtorta, 2006e) and *Lezioni sull'epistola di Paolo ai Romani* (RM, *Lessons on the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans*) (Valtorta, 2006f).

In *Azariah*, Maria Valtorta's guardian angel Azariah dictates her theological and spiritual comments on the readings of 58 holiday masses. In *Lezioni sull'epistola di Paolo ai Romani*, a Holy Author dictates her 48 lessons on the *Epistle to the Romans*. In *I Quadernetti* there is a miscellany of several arguments, including the very interesting writing on the alleged three St Peter's burial sites, which has led to his probable first burial site (De Caro et al., 2020) and has inspired the search of the third and, allegedly, the last site where his remains are supposed to be (De Caro et al., 2021a).

It is in *Azariah* that we find the information on Jesus' lifespan of 1737 weeks in the comment on the readings of Palm Sunday, 14 April 1946, done by Azariah

to Maria Valtorta, “Holy Week, week of pain. But for having always given you his lovelies gems in this week, which is the perfection of his many weeks as a Man—nor does any of all the 1737 weeks which saw Him in the world equal this final one as a Man subject to pain—be grateful to Him as you would be for the most beautiful proof of love.”

### 3. Gematrical Meanings of 1737 Related to Jesus Christ

In our exercise, we decompose the integer 1737 with the aim of finding some relationships with Jesus Christ, who, for Christians, is the Incarnation of the second person of the Trinity, the Word. As John writes in his gospel (John, 1, 1-3): “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be.”

To show possible relationships with Jesus Christ, we decompose 1737 with the sum  $1000 + 700 + 37$  and look for the most significant meaning of the first two integers according to Gematria (Hardiman, 2019), and specifically relate the third to the human being Jesus and his lifespan.

**Table 1** summarizes our proposed meanings. The sequence 1000 to 700 to 37 should be intended as follows: The supra spiritual nature of God (1000, for

**Table 1.** Decoding the integer 1737 according to Gematria, see (Hardiman, 2019), with reference to Jesus’ lifespan.

| Gematrical value | Meaning  | Notes  |
|------------------|--|--|
| 1000             | Supra spiritual nature of God.   | Beyond 400 the supra-spiritual plane represented by 500 up to 1000 is beyond our understanding of existence and can only be alluded to by phenomena expressed through miracles or through our sub-consciousness, and at best can be described as “the next world”.   |
| 700              | Spiritual 7 <sup>th</sup> day, the Shabbath when Heaven and Earth are joined | Mercy seat. Place of atonement. Reconciling God with his people.<br>According to the Eastern tradition Jesus—the reconciliation of God with people—was born on 25 Kislev, a Shabbath according to the EMV (De Caro et al., 2021c; Valtorta, 2006e).  |
| 37               | Jesus lifespan in years (33) and months (4)                                  | Jesus’ death was on Friday, April 23 of the Julian year 34 (De Caro et al., 2021c; Matricciani & De Caro, 2017). The number 37 can also be decoded as $34 + 3$ , i.e., the calendar year of Jesus’ crucifixion (34) and the number of days (3) to resurrection, i.e. the passage from life on Earth to life in Heaven. The integer 37 is also the gematrical value of Jesus + Christ in Greek (De Campos & Da Costa Oliveira, 2018). |

human beings unintelligible) on the Shabbat of Creation joined Heaven and Earth (700). For Christians, the result of this joining is the Incarnation of the second person of the Trinity, action written in the integer 37 which can be decoded as  $33 + 4$ , namely, the number of years (33) and months (4) of Jesus' lifespan, or as  $34 + 3$ , the year of Jesus' crucifixion (Julian calendar year 34) and the number of days (3, i.e. Friday, Saturday and Sunday) to resurrection, namely the passage from mortal life on Earth to eternal life in Heaven. The integer 37 is also the gematrical value of Jesus + Christ in Greek (De Campos & Da Costa Oliveira, 2018).

Besides the decoding proposed above, which uses sums, it is also possible to use non-linear functions to extract from the integer 1737 other meanings related to Jesus Christ, as we show in the next section.

#### 4. Non-Linear Gematria and Hour of Day of Jesus' Birth and Death

Besides the calculations based on sum, division, multiplication and power elevation, it is also possible to make calculations with non-linear functions to extract other meanings from 1737, always related to Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, the Word, through whom all things came to be, as we show now.

Let us consider the ratio  $x$  given by:

$$x = \frac{1737}{358 \times 7} = 0.693136472 \quad (1)$$

The many decimal digits are reported on purpose.

The rationale for considering this particular ratio, from a Christian point of view, is the following. The numerator indicates Jesus' lifespan, in weeks, the denominator indicates the duration of the Act of Creation, in Biblical terms "7 days", involving the second person of the Trinity—"All things came to be through him", the Messiah, whose gematrical value is 358 (Hardiman, 2019). In other words, the ratio (1) expresses the relationship between the two divine activities, Creation and Incarnation, both related to Jesus.

Now, let  $x$  be the input to a function whose output we wish to calculate. This function must have special characteristics which can remind—in a metaphysical perspective, of course—some attributes of God. We think that one such function can be the exponential function, which has the property that exalts the input variable (exponential growth) and has all derivatives equal to the initial function, i.e. to itself (Maor, 1994). In our opinion, to this function we can give the attribute "divine" because it never changes when derived infinite times, it is always identical to itself, like God is.

Now, by assuming the exponential function, from Equation (1), we get the output:

$$y = e^x = 1.999978584 \quad (2)$$

The result is very close to the integer 2, being the difference only  $2 - 1.999978584 = 0.00002145$ . Therefore, in our exercise, we can assume that the

“divine” exponential function giving 2 indicates the second person of the Trinity, in Christian terms, or the process of Creation in Jewish terms (Hardiman, 2019).

Let us proceed with this exercise. To obtain 2 with a very large number of decimal digits, as those reported in Equations (1) and (2)—of course, the final number cannot be theoretically an integer because the natural base “e”, the Napier number, is irrational—it suffices to increase the numerator by 0.00002145 weeks, with the precision reported in Equations (1) and (2). This is a very small increase which corresponds to about 4.5 hours. The exercise can be finished by saying that 4.5 hours is the missing time necessary to complete the last day of Jesus’ lifespan of 1737 weeks. As Jesus died at “about” 15:00 hour—as Matthew (27: 45-50), Mark (15: 34-37), and Luke (23: 44-46) write—on a Friday (i.e., 23 April of the year 34) (Matricciani & De Caro, 2017), by adding 4.5 hours we get 19:30 hours, which is approximately the end of Friday or the beginning of Saturday, as the “beginning” of next day, in the Jewish world, is decided after three stars, at least, are seen after sunset.

An indication of the minimum time at which this decision can be taken is the apparent sunset time in Jerusalem. According to NOAA (<https://gml.noaa.gov/grad/solcalc/sunrise.html>), the apparent sunset on 23 April 34 occurred at about 18:12. After this time, in the dry climate of Jerusalem, the sunlight refracted by the troposphere is still quite bright and stars can be seen only later. The time found above, 19:30, therefore might be a good estimate of the beginning of the Shabbat/Passover on 24 April of the year 34 and therefore, the end of the 1737 weeks mentioned by Maria Valtorta.

However, there is another symmetrical situation when 4.5 hours may be the missing time to complete 1737 weeks, namely the time between the beginning of the Saturday when Jesus was born (Saturday 25 Kislev, see De Caro et al., 2021c) and the time of his birth. Now, according to the Western tradition, the birth was on 25 December 1 BC (before Christ), for the Eastern tradition it was on 6 January 1 AC (after Christ), about two weeks difference (De Caro et al., 2021c). On 25 December the apparent sunset was at 16:46, on 6 January it was on 16:54, therefore, in our exercise, the minimum time of birth was between 21:16 and 21:24. Now, because of the practice of segmented sleep in ancient Mediterranean world (De Caro et al., 2021b), most people were very likely sleeping at these winter hours, it was “night”, therefore these minimum time estimates are likely to agree with what Luke writes (Lk, 2).

## 5. Conclusion

In the paper, we have done some mathematical exercises, mainly based on Jewish Gematria, to decode some data concerning Jesus Christ. Our exercise has been devoted to interpreting the integer 1737—Jesus’ lifespan calculated in weeks according to the mystic Maria Valtorta—with a “decoding” referred to Jesus Christ. We have shown that the decomposition  $1000 + 700 + 37 = 1737$  can describe the character Jesus, seen as the Messiah.

To relate the decoding to Jesus Christ, we have shown that the first two integers (1000 and 700) can be directly interpreted according to Gematria, while the third, 37, can be related to Jesus' life both as  $33 + 4$ , namely the number of years (33) and months (4) of his life, or as  $34 + 3$ , namely the calendar year (34) of his death and the number of days (3) to Resurrection, i.e. the passage from mortal life on Earth to eternal life in Heaven.

Besides the decoding with sums, it is also possible to use non-linear functions to extract from 1737 other meanings related to Jesus Christ. The ratio (see Equation (1)) between Jesus Christ's lifespan, in weeks, and the duration of the Act of Creation, in Biblical terms  $358 \times 7$ , involving the second person of the Trinity, i.e. the Messiah (gematrical value 358) for Christians, can be seen as the input to the exponential function whose output is, with extreme precision, the number 2, which indicates the second person of the Trinity or, in Jewish terms, the process of Creation.

We have also shown that to obtain "exactly" 2 (with the approximation implicit in using Napier's number "e"), it suffices to add only 4.5 hours to  $1737 \times 7 \times 24$  hours. These 4.5 hours can be interpreted as the time necessary to complete the day of Jesus' death (23 April 34) and also to complete the day of Jesus' birth, therefore estimating his birth time.

In conclusion, our exercise has evidenced that some striking relationships can be "extracted" from the integer 1737, intended to be the number of weeks of Jesus' lifespan found in Maria Valtorta's mystical literary works. Since the knowledge and mathematical tools used were surely not known to Maria Valtorta, it is surprising to arrive at some coherent framework from what she writes, as already noticed in the referenced papers for other data and observations present in her writings.

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## Data Availability Statement

Not applicable.

## Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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