

Pebble Counting 3

This third introduction to “Pebble Counting” presents the literary counting system more specifically as an encryption device. Each introduction is freely available at www.pebblecounting.com, along with the translations/studies of Scripture. © Steve, 2026. Progress date: June 14, 2026.

“Pebble Counting” is simply a name to describe a literary counting system believed to be inherent in the Ancient Hebrew/Aramaic *Tanakh* and the Koine Greek *New Testament* Scriptures. The hypothesis presented briefly in the first and second introductions is now restated this way: All Scripture was written with an encrypted numbering system.

This counting system has been uncovered through inductive engagement with Scripture. No artificial intelligence (AI) has been used to date. The extent of engagement currently includes manual translation of 33.34% of Scripture (measured by word count), from across the three languages, the authors, the times of writing, and the genres. Throughout this engagement, no Scripture has yet been identified that does not follow the counting system. Extrapolating this direct engagement to the other books written by the same authors or in the same series (e.g., Luke → Acts, 1 Sam → 2 Sam, Genesis → Deuteronomy, Romans + Ephesians → Pauline corpus), the current progress is indicative of approximately 77% of Scripture. Through reading of other Scripture, the counting system is believed to be used in the majority, if not all, of remaining Scriptures.

This update is being written to restate the findings of “Pebble Counting” in a way that may be useful for engagement with artificial intelligence engines, to verify and to multiply this engagement.

“Pebble Counting” is a base-10 counting system that utilizes tenfold and fivefold sets, corresponding to the tenfold fingers of both hands together, and the fivefold fingers of a single hand. This is the most fundamental presupposition. All other rules are judged in context of complete and flowing literary sets.

The system is based upon counting verb forms. Verbs – including infinitives, participles, and gerunds – receive a single count. The counting system has several degrees of encryption, including:

1. Verbs are attributed to primary literary subject groupings. These primary subjects are discerned inductively. Common subjects include the heavenly realm and the earthly realm; the godly and the ungodly; and the prophet.
2. Being verbs do not increase the count when they are paired with participles or infinitives.
3. Being verbs increase the count to two when they function in the sense of *becoming*. Here, subject and predicate nominative are each counted.
4. The count expands with series of nouns/adjectives, with cardinal numbers, and with Hebrew dual noun concepts. The count expands when adjectives, demonstratives, appositives, and adverbs of degree *follow* the word being modified.
5. Verbs are often paired. A common example is a present tense verb with a participle or infinitive form. Verb pairs may complement a series of nouns, an appositive, or other feature that would increase the count, for an overall twofold count. Verbs for different subjects are generally not paired.

The counting system also has several degrees of self-authentication, including:

- a) When used, Hebrew dual noun concepts – e.g., “eyes (two)” – are often placed as the first two elements of a literary set. This is especially seen in Psalm 119, Isaiah, and Ephesians. Similarly, a preference is observed for placing cardinal numbers as the opening elements of sets, perhaps for emphasis. Verbs of speech are often placed as the last elements of a literary set. Together, these preferences help identify the literary sets.
- b) In longer books, mirroring is evident at thousandfold intervals of the total literary count. See Isaiah, Matthew, Luke, and John.
- c) Literary cross references, having cardinal-number measures given in the text, reach forward and backward across the macrostructure of a book, connecting related contexts. See examples in Genesis and Revelation.
- d) Literary mirroring occurs in local contexts.
- e) Measures of money, length, weight, and time each have direct proportionality to the verb-based counting system. For time, this relationship is evident in both the narrative and prophetic genres.

Large language models (LLM's) utilize volumes of written material to serve as a basis for training. Tokenization and embedding develop from the volume of material. If a large volume of quality, written material is available, the LLM can be trained to produce high-quality content. In languages where the volume of written material is small, the model may have limited results. The present study has not expanded beyond the Ancient Hebrew/Aramaic and Koine Greek used specifically in writing Scripture. It is not known whether the counting system identified here is used in any other writings of these "dead" languages.

In this study, the inputs have been taken from critical text editions of Scripture, which are freely available on the German Bible Society's website. An AI engine would need to be trained to analyze for the counting system, not based upon Modern Hebrew/Greek learning patterns, but within the limited domain of the text of Scripture, where the archaic sequencing of words is crucial to the counting system. The AI training process could involve comparative analysis with the volume of translations/arrangements produced manually in the current study.

As a result of this study, the Ancient Hebrew writing process is believed to have been a non-linear process. Measurements such as the total literary count of a book, time measurements, mirroring points, and other devices at the macrostructural and local context levels, are believed to have been planned out. This planning is especially evident in the apocalyptic, where more than one numerical framework is evident within the same book, including reverse directionalities (e.g., Daniel, Revelation). At the paragraph level, the layout of words in the text is believed to have been developed subject to the completeness and flow of literary sets, whether tenfold (normal condition) or fivefold (plot twist, giving/receiving, destruction, etc.).

If these findings are accurate, it is reasonable that the identification of the literary devices should also be an inductive, non-linear process. Analysis should work from the beginning of a book to the end, and back again; from the sentence level to the macrostructural level and back again. Macrostructural designs should be identified based upon thoroughgoing analysis of literary sets. In turn, macrostructural design should inform decisions about the counting of literary sets in complex passages or in cases where a line of the text is questioned for its originality/authenticity (see, e.g., Matthew and John). Boundary conditions exist for each primary subject, as the literary sets must all be complete by the end of the major section or book. Reverse-direction analysis should be utilized to confirm the counting of complex passages that may not be clear on the forward-direction analysis alone. Since this encryption system arises as an Ancient Hebrew writing device, the learning from one book should be used to inform the analysis being performed in other books of Scripture, for uniformity.

What software platforms will be useful for this work? One of the goals of "Pebble Counting" has been to present the text itself as the central finding. The literary measurements and literary statures that arise from the text are shown directly alongside the text. Concise notes and commentary are placed separately, to the side. A word processor has been utilized for presentation of this study, with support from a spreadsheet for the tabulated literary counts. As the capabilities of AI engines improve, a word-processing software package with integral AI capabilities may be useful to present AI output. Alternately, specialized software program(s) could be developed with integral AI, to track literary counts and present measurements and comments within a more refined model. Such software might allow a user to adjust the way the parts of speech are indicated (font color, underlining, or otherwise). Ideally, the AI capabilities would include the automatic translation of the AI output into an array of reflective languages, for broadest accessibility. Such a software platform could be developed within an existing software package (e.g., Logos, Accordance) or could be stand-alone. Such a software platform should have the ability to download leading models of the literary count for a given book of Scripture, then edit them locally for possible sharpening.

"Pebble Counting" is a finding of literary devices. As literature is a form of art, the literary devices are not always used in the same way. Total literary count, total time conversion value, mirroring devices, literary statures and composite numbers, repetition and placement of words, and other features described in the first and second introductions to this study, are used in unique ways among the books of Scripture. Just as the counting rules yield a constellation of possibilities for the crafting of literary sets, so the local and macrostructural devices bring a great variety of possible designs. This work will benefit those having patience to study and to appreciate this artistic variety, book by book, throughout Scripture. The scale is comparable, perhaps, to learning a language.

Although AI may become quite useful for automating, verifying, analyzing, translating, and presenting the work begun in "Pebble Counting," it will not replace a devotional level of engagement with the text. For those seeking to engage this work, a best use of time would be to try one's hand at translating and discerning the literary sets in a book of Scripture, then compare it with work that has already been done. It is through that endeavor that one may gain a direct appreciation for these literary features of the text. The use of AI should supplement, not replace, such effort.