

**The Meaning of Seventy - שבעים**

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**Introduction**

In this study I would like to study the meaning and significance of number *seventy* (שבעים), as taught in the Torah, by Chazal.[[1]](#footnote-1)

I would like to start by giving a working definition of the number seventy.[[2]](#footnote-2)

**The number seventy signifies a primary way of establishing an elevated connection, of building a community**. The number 70 is the expanded sense of 7, the world with a sense of completion. Seventy is intimately associated with **concept and with actualization**.

We will see that seventy normally appears in situations of judgment, the establishment, or rendering, of justice. It nearly always appears as the *seventy* surrounding the *one*. In a sense, seventy will often appear at the conception of a community that will establish justice and will be contrasted by an exceptional one.

We will discover that while there are a few nuances to this definition, never the less this is the root definition.

Seventy is a number that, in essence, is the number seven times the number ten. If we visualize this number it would look like this in English: 70. By visualizing this number, in English, we learn that it forces us to focus on the *seven* because the zero has no value, per se. The value of the zero is to force us to a higher perspective where we can see that the number seven has been *elevated*. This elevated number demonstrates the essential meaning of seventy. It is an elevated *seven*. However, until we understand the number *seven*, and what it means to be ‘elevated’, we cannot grasp the true significance of the number seventy.

To begin to grasp the true significance of the number seventy, let’s review what we have already learned about the number seven. Seven, in essence, is the number of *connection*.[[3]](#footnote-3) For example, we connect with the six days of work by resting on Shabbat. The six sides of a cube are connected at the center of the cube. Now that we have a basic understanding of seven as the number of connection, let’s begin to understand what it means to elevate the number *seven* by adding a *zero*.

When we studied the number ten, we learned that the essence of this number is *a unity composed of parts*. From that study we came to understand that this basic understanding allowed us to see that the number ten applies to entities like Mashiach, the Bne Israel,[[4]](#footnote-4) and the Torah. It is also instructive to view the Bne Israel as a community or congregation. This view will help give us some understanding later in this study. These entities, Israel, Mashiach, and Torah, are quite instructive because each of them represents an entity that is *elevated*.

*Mashiach* is elevated over other kings,

the *Bne Israel* are elevated over other nations, and

the *Torah* is elevated over other books.

Further, the root for each of the above entities is best described by a Jewish community, a minyan. This community, Israel, is supposed to be a *living Torah* with Mashiach as the head of this communal body.

Now that we have a small grasp of the number *ten* and the number *seven*, let’s put them together.

Seventy, as we mentioned before, is a number that, in essence, is the number *seven* times the number *ten*. Seventy is an elevated number directly linked to the number seven, the number of *connection*.

Maharal of Prague writes that the number seven represents the entirety of this natural world, which was created in seven days and which will last for seven thousand years.[[5]](#footnote-5) And *any number* times ten represents its expanded full potential, so that seventy of something represents all the potential facets of that thing (lit. a communal connection) in the natural world.

To begin to solidify this concept in our minds it would be useful to have a couple of examples.

Consider ‘wine’ as it relates to the number seventy. The Hebrew word for wine is yayin - יין. The Gematria of יין is seventy. When do we take wine? We take wine *every time* *we want to ascend* from one spiritual level to the next *and connect with that higher level*. The community of Israel will take wine as they enter Shabbat in order to *elevate* themselves to the level that Shabbat provides and to *connect* with their work of the previous six days by resting. We take wine at the end of Shabbat because we want to *ascend* from Shabbat to the next week at a higher level than the previous week, and to *connect* with the higher soul that accompanied us on Shabbat. We take wine at a brit in order to ascend with this mitzva to the covenant which now includes a new member of the community. We take wine at a wedding when the couple is *elevated* to a new creation joins our community, that starts out is a sinless state, and they *connect* with each other for the very first time. Thus it is that we take wine at every opportunity where a mitzva allows us special *elevation and connection to the community*. Further, not only are we elevating and connecting ourselves, but we are also connecting with all members of the covenant, the community of Israel, and with a specific mitzva that was given to the Jewish people.

These special times are what bind us as a community and to each other and to HaShem. At a brit we are adding a new member to our community. On Shabbat we are connecting with the community in the fulfillment of the Shabbat mitzvot. At a wedding, the whole community connects together to provide for the kallah (bride) and to bring joy to the kallah and chassan (the bride and groom). From this we understand that our elevated connections are intimately related to *connecting* and *elevating* the community.

From this we understand why יין, wine - yayin, has the Gematria of seventy.

Now, let’s begin to delve deeper into the Torah to flesh out our understanding of the significance of the number seventy.

HaShem, Who has **seventy** Names, gave the Torah, which has **seventy** names,[[6]](#footnote-6) to Israel, which has **seventy** names, which originated from the **seventy** souls that went down to Egypt with Yaakov, and were chosen from among the **seventy** nations, to celebrate **seventy** holy days in the year (52 of Shabbat and 18 of Yom Tovim [festival days], including [intermediate days] Chol HaMoed); the Torah was transmitted to **seventy** Elders.[[7]](#footnote-7)

The first use of the word Hebrew word *seventy* - שבעים, in the Torah, is found in:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 4:24*** *If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy -* *and sevenfold.*

Chazal teach that *the concept* embodied in a Hebrew word is created when the word is first used in the Torah. Thus Bereshit 4:24 represents the creation of the number *seventy*! Now, Lamech was the seventh generation from Cain and therefore he is intimately associated with the number seven. Thus the seventh man teaches us about ten times seven.

Lamech is comparing himself to the first intentional murderer who connected with his brother in an evil way. HaShem assures Cain that he will survive, or connect with life, for seven generations. Lamech, on the other hand, in an *unintentional* murderer. Because his act was unintentional, he declares that he will survive for seventy and seven fold generations. He views his connection with this world as being more elevated than Cain’s because his sin was unintentional. The Midrash speaks of this time frame.

***Midrash Rabbah - Genesis XXIII:4*** *AND LAMECH SAID UNTO HIS WIVES, etc. (IV, 23 ff) R. Jose b. R. Hanina said: He summoned them to their marital duties. Said they to him: ‘To-morrow a flood will come-are we to bear children for a curse?’ He answered, ‘FOR HAVE I SLAIN A MAN FOR MY WOUNDING-that wounds should come to me on his account! AND A YOUNG MAN CHILD FOR MY BRUISING-that bruises should come upon me![[8]](#footnote-8) Cain slew, yet judgment was suspended for him for seven generations; for me, who did not slay, surely judgment will wait seventy-seven generations!’[[9]](#footnote-9) (Rabbi said: This is a reasoning of darkness [i.e. fallacious]:. for if so, whence is the Holy One, blessed be He, to exact His bond of debt?*

Notice also how closely the Midrash associates ‘judgment’ with the number seventy. As we study this number, pay attention to the remarkable associations that this number has with judgment. But, I am getting ahead of myself. We still have a bit more of a foundation to lay before we can appreciate this interesting tidbit.

At this point we need a bit more understanding about Lamech and his deed, so I am going to enlist Rashi’s[[10]](#footnote-10) help.

**Bereshit (Genesis) 4:19 And Lamech took himself two wives:** It was not necessary to elaborate on all this, but it did so to teach us from the end of the section that the Holy One, blessed be He, kept His promise when He said, “vengeance will be wrought upon Cain sevenfold,” and Lamech arose after he had begotten sons and raised the seventh generation, and he slew Cain. This is what is meant by [Lamech’s statement] “for have I slain a man by my wounding, etc.”.[[11]](#footnote-11)

**two wives:** So was the custom of the generation of the flood, one [wife] for propagation and one for marital relations. The one who was for marital relations would be given a potion of roots to drink, so that she should become sterile (in some editions, the following does not appear), and he would adorn her like a bride and feed her delicacies, but her companion was neglected and was mourning like a widow. This is what Job explained:[[12]](#footnote-12) “He feeds the barren woman who will not bear, but he does not adorn the widow”. [This is] as explained in the Aggadah of Chelek.[[13]](#footnote-13)

**Adah** She was the one for propagation, called so because she was despicable to him and removed from him. עָדָה is the Aramaic translation of סוּרָה , turn away.

**Zillah** She was the one for marital relations, [so named] because she would always sit in his shadow (בְּצִלוֹ). These are the words of Aggadah in Genesis Rabbah.

**Bereshit (Genesis) 4:23 hearken to my voice** - For his wives separated from being intimate with him because he had slain Cain and Tubal-Cain, his (Lemech’s) son. [The story was] that Lamech was blind, and Tubal-Cain was leading him. *He spotted Cain, who appeared to him as an animal, and he told his father to draw the bow, and he killed him. As soon as he learned that it was his grandfather Cain, he clapped his hands together [in anguish] and clapped his son between them and killed him. So his wives separated from him, and he attempted to appease them.*

**hearken to my voice** to hearken to me to agree to live with me, for was the man I killed, killed because of my wounding? Did I wound him intentionally, that the wound should be attributed to my name? And the child I killed, was he killed by my bruising, i.e., on account of my [intentional] bruising? This is a question. Did I not do it inadvertently and not intentionally? This is not my wound, and this is not my bruise. פֶּצַע is a wound inflicted by a sword or an arrow, machadure in Old French.

**Bereshit (Genesis) 4:24 If Cain be avenged sevenfold** Cain, who killed intentionally, was given an extension until seven generations. How much more should I, who have killed unintentionally, be given many times seven.

**seventy-seven fold** Hebrew שִׁבְעִים וְשִׁבְעָה An expression meaning many sevens is used here. So did Rabbi Tanchuma explain it. [This does not appear in extant editions of Tanchuma, but in Yalkut Shimoni it is quoted from Tanchuma]. In Midrash Genesis Rabbah (23:4): Lamech did not kill anyone, but his wives separated from him after they had fulfilled [the commandment of] propagation, because a decree had been issued to destroy Cain’s seed after seven generations. They said, “Why should we give birth in vain? Tomorrow, the Flood will come and inundate everything!” He answered them, “Have I slain a man for whom I should be wounded? Did I slay Abel, who was a man in stature and a child in years, that my seed should be annihilated for that iniquity? If Cain, who killed, was given an extension of seven generations, I, who did not slay - how much more so should I be given an extension of many sevens!” Now this is an absurd deduction from a minor to a major case, [because] if so, the Holy One, blessed be He, could not exact His debt nor fulfill His word.

**Bereshit (Genesis) 4:25 And Adam knew, etc.** Lamech came to the first man (Adam) and complained about his wives. He (Adam) said to them, “Is it for you to be so strict concerning the decree of the Omnipresent? You perform your commandments, and He will do His”. They [the wives] said to him, “Correct yourself first. Haven’t you separated from your wife already one hundred and thirty years since death was decreed because of you?” Immediately, “And Adam knew, etc”. What is the meaning of עוֹד [again]? This is to say that his desire [for Eve] was increased above his previous desire.[[14]](#footnote-14)

From Rashi’s comments on Bereshit 4:23, we can see that Lamech is telling his wives that they can cohabit with him and *conceive* children because he was an accidental man-slayer. As we shall see, the number seventy signifies *conception* and daat[[15]](#footnote-15) as its primary way of establishing an elevated connection, of building a community. Thus we see that it is *daat* and *conception* which are the primary focus for Lamech and his wives. It is the conception that adds new members to our community.

Lamech understood that as an *un-intentional* manslayer he was at a higher spiritual level then Cain who was an *intentional* murderer.

**In The Eyes**



The Hebrew letter *Ayin* - ע, has the value of seventy. The meaning of the Hebrew letter *Ayin* - ע, is ‘eye’. The *letter* Ayin - ע, when spelled out – as עין, spells the *word* Ayin which means an *eye*. Thus we understand that the meaning of the letter Ayin (ע) is related to an ‘eye’. Rabbi Yitzchak Ginsburgh teaches us that an Ayin (ע) is a picture of the two eyes and the optic nerves entering the brain.

The letter Ayin contains some clues as to the meaning of seventy since this is the numeric value of the Ayin. Indeed, Ayin, seventy, represents not only “eye” but it may also refer to “source, well, spring, fountain, or origin”. This association endows many words featuring the Ayin with a special resonance.

Because the *letter* Ayin - ע, and the *word* Ayin - עין, both speak of an eye, we understand that the number seventy, both in the Torah and in later rabbinic thought, represents *totality*. Though we see many things when we open our eyes, never the less we see only *one* picture. This can be understood by understanding, as the proverbial saying goes, that *seeing is believing,* because when we see, we see in totality, we see the whole picture all at once. Seeing requires no work. That is why seeing is believing. In the Olam HaBa, the next world, reality will be instantly apparent. The Olam HaBa is *seeing*. Sight is the most elevated and convincing of faculties: once we have seen something with *our own eyes*, it is virtually impossible for other sensory evidence or rational proofs to refute what we now know. In Hebrew, knowledge is the ultimate form of *connection* (the meaning of seven). Seeing, which is external to a person and does not need interpretation, the sight speaks for itself.

The eyes are the most *elevated* (the meaning of ten) and most refined sense in the body. This is why they are located towards the top of the head, higher than any other sense. They instantly unify any collection of objects into a single picture. Thus we understand that their very nature speaks of the number seventy, and hence so also does the Gematria of the Ayin - ע.

The Beit HaMikdash was called the “eye of the world”. The eye is a physical organ but it receives something that is about as non-physical as you can get - light. The eye is the gateway to a non-physical existence called light. The Bet HaMikdash was called “the eye of the world” because it was the portal for The Light.

With this background for the eye, let’s take a look at a specific passage which tells us a deep mystical idea about eyes.

***Tehillim (Psalm) 116:1-9*** *I love HaShem, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. 2 Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live. 3 The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow. 4 Then called I upon the name of HaShem; O HaShem, I beseech thee, deliver my soul. 5 Gracious is HaShem, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful. 6 HaShem preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me. 7 Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for HaShem hath dealt bountifully with thee. 8 For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling. 9 I will walk before HaShem in the land of the living.*

For You have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from falling. . .”

In this spirited chapter of Tehillim, King David sings of his gratefulness to HaShem for saving him from his enemies, and for taking away his suffering. King David thanks HaShem for saving three parts of his body from harm:

1. His soul from death,
2. his eyes from tears, and
3. his legs from stumbling.

Why is King David only thanking HaShem for these three benefits? Did not King David thank HaShem for saving his entire being from harm? Perhaps these three items are representative of the entire human being. Consider this thought. There are three parts of man:

1. His body (or physical side)
2. his soul (or non-physical side)
3. his existence as a thinking, functioning human being (or the connection of his body and soul).

When King David praises HaShem for saving his soul from death, he praises HaShem for the entire metaphysical side of himself.

When he thanks HaShem for saving his eyes from tears, he is praising HaShem for saving the part of him that is a *connection* of body and soul: The eyes do not enter the world as our arms and legs do; they are stuck in their sockets. Yet, they can only see things that are inside the physical world. They are *in* the physical world, but not *of* the physical world.

Chazal explain that the role of our right and left eyes is different. The right eye is meant for viewing others positively, always observing, and catching their good qualities. The left eye, which is judgmental and critical, should be directed inwards, at oneself. Indeed, just as our eyes function together so is our ability to see the good in others dependent on our ability to justly criticize ourselves for all of our shortcomings, and our distance from the Almighty. Thus with our eyes we can either build or destroy a community. We can use our eyes to make the communal connection greater or we can use our eyes to erode and break down the connections we have to our community.

Rabbi Chaim of Volozhin, the student of the Gaon of Vilna, offers the following explanation in his work, *Nefesh HaChayim*. Human beings discern physical phenomena mainly by utilizing the power of vision. Their eyes and ears are mainly employed to serve as gateways to ideas and thoughts. Stated another way, the physical world is a detectable reality that we actually see; our awareness of anything spiritual is in our thoughts expressed in the medium of concepts and ideas.

We ‘see’ physicality; we ‘hear’ spirituality.

Central to the Torah’s approach to justice is that two *eye* witnesses are required to establish the facts in a given case.

We see plurality and we unify this plurality of objects, in the eyes. Though we have two eyes (plurality), we see one (unity) image. This same concept is found with the two or three eye witnesses required to convict a man of sin. Though there are a plurality (two or three) of witnesses, their testimony must present a single (unified) version of the events associated with the sin. Thus we see that seventy is associated with judgment. The process of elevating and connecting disparate objects into a single picture is the task performed by the eyes.

***Debarim (Deuteronomy) 19:15*** *One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established.*

Here, with the *Ayin* - ע (the Hebrew word for eye with a value[[16]](#footnote-16) of seventy), we see that *eyes* are associated with making a correct judgment. Life is one judgment after another; correct judgments lead to our growth in the community and eternal reward in the, Olam HaBa, the world to come, whereas bad judgments lead to just the opposite.

Sight is the most convincing of faculties: Once we have seen something with *our own eyes*, it is virtually impossible for other sensory evidence or rational proofs to refute what we now know. Because of this, we must develop eyes which see like the eyes of HaShem. HaShem’s “eyes[[17]](#footnote-17) - Ayin” are the *standard for judgment*.

***Shemot (Exodus) 15:26*** *And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of HaShem thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am HaShem that healeth thee.*

In order to see with HaShem’s eyes, we must not purposely blind our eyes, our *judgment*, by taking a bribe.

***Shemot (Exodus) 23:8*** *And thou shalt take no bribe: for the bribe blinds the wise, and perverts the words of the righteous.*

As an aside, if we use the Torah to make our living, then we will blind our eyes. In some way, when our living is dependent on our teaching, then we teach to maximize our wages rather than teaching to maximize the truth. This is a big problem with most preachers today. They cannot teach the truth without losing their wages.

**In The Ketoret**

Four of the eleven ingredients in the ketoret,[[18]](#footnote-18) the incense, weigh seventy maneh.

The ketoret, offered up twice a day, symbolized Israel’s desire to serve HaShem in a pleasing way. This offering was brought twice daily, once as part of the Shacharit (morning) service and once as part of the Mincha or Musaf (afternoon) service. This happened seven days a week, every day of the year, including Shabbat and Yom HaKippurim. Five pounds ofketoret was burnt daily, half in the morning and half in the afternoon.

On Yom HaKippurim, three extra maneh of ketoret were offered by the High Priest. This means that more ketoret was offered on Yom HaKippurim than on any other day. Yom HaKippurim, as most folks know, is a solemn day of atonement and *judgment*. This provides another connection of the number seventy to judgment.

In addition, The High Priests repeated trips into the Holy of Holies represent the act of marriage. The incense and the blood are offered in the Holy of Holies at the ecstatic moment[[19]](#footnote-19) when new life is *conceived*. Thus we see that the ketoret’s four ingredients of *seventy* maneh represents *conception* as we saw with Lamech, in the first use of the number seventy.

**In the Alefbet**

We see the unity and the plurality in the Hebrew letters alef - א and Ayin - ע. Rabbi Yitzchak Ginsburgh[[20]](#footnote-20) explains this concept:

“In general, whenever seventy is found in the Torah, the seventy surround one, just as phonetically the “intangible” sound of the alef, one, is enclothed” in the more “tangible” sound of the Ayin, seventy. The seventy nations of the earth surround Israel as “seventy wolves around a sheep”. In the Temple, on Shemini Atzeret, the eighth and concluding day of Succoth, one ox, symbolizing Israel, was offered after the seventy bull offerings of Succoth. The seventy descendants of Yaaqov surround their father Yaaqov who descended with them to Egypt.

***Sukkah 55b*** *R. Eleazar stated, To what do those seventy bullocks [that were offered during the seven days of the Festival] correspond? To the seventy nations.[[21]](#footnote-21) To what does the single bullock [of the Eighth Day] correspond? To the unique nation.[[22]](#footnote-22) This may be compared to a mortal king who said to his servants, ‘Prepare for me a great banquet’; but on the last day he said to his beloved friend, ‘Prepare for me a simple meal that I may derive benefit from you’.*

So, in Rabbi Ginsburgh’s example, we see that *seventy* is often juxtaposed with, or surrounds, the *one*. This again presents us with a picture of plurality and unity, an *elevated connection* between the one and the seventy. This idea of leadership and justice is a key communal connection. Without a functional justice system, no community could survive.

**PaRDeS**

The Sages indicate that there are seventy levels of Torah interpretation[[23]](#footnote-23) which are built according to the acronym: **P**a**RD**e**S**. Another way of referring to the levels of PaRDeS is as the *Seventy Faces of Torah*.[[24]](#footnote-24) The concept of a face is something that reveals on the outside that which is hidden on the inside. The Torah provides some insight into this definition of *face*:

***Shemot (Exodus) 33:20*** *No one can see My face because no man can see Me and live!*

This was, in essence, what HaShem told Moshe Rabbeinu on top of Har Sinai. As the Kabbalists explain, “face” here refers to a more direct revelation of HaShem, which is the end result of successfully entering PaRDeS to the greatest extent possible.

The number seventy is called the “number of wisdom”. A wise man always elevates his connections, he always strengthens his community, as we shall soon understand.

פרדס **- P**a**RD**e**S** is the Hebrew word for orchard. Pardes is actually a roshei teivot (literally, “heads of words”), an acronym for the words:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| פשאת | **P***shat* » **simple** understanding |
| רמס | **R***emez* » **hinted** meaning |
| דרש | **D***rush* » **allegorical** explanation |
| סוד | **S***od* » **esoteric** understanding |

To understand the concept of PaRDeS in this world, HaShem gave us a picture by way of His Temple. The Holy of Holies in the Temple was separated from the rest of the Sanctuary by a curtain. The walls of the Sanctuary building separated it from the rest of the Temple Mount. The Temple Mount was separated from the rest of the holy city of Jerusalem by the *kotel* – the wall surrounding it on all sides. Jerusalem was separated from the rest of the country by its enveloping city walls. Thus, to reach the Holy of Holies, one had to enter the city gates; gain access to the Temple courtyard; have the right of entry into the Sanctuary and be the most privileged of privileged to pass beyond the curtain before the Holy of Holies.

The same structure is also evident within the Torah:

“The apprehension begins from the hidden Torah, and only afterwards does one apprehend the remaining portions of the Torah, and only in the end does one apprehend the revealed Torah”.[[25]](#footnote-25)

Seventy, the value of sod, alludes to a high degree of unrevealed, inner meaning.[[26]](#footnote-26)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| סוד (*sod*): | ס *samech* - 60 |
|  | ו *vav* - 6 |
|  | ד *dalet* - 4 |
| TOTAL |  70 |

Sod is the Hebrew word for secret. This suggests that that there is something secret about the number seventy. A secret, in the Torah, is **not** something which is intentionally withheld, because the purpose of the Torah is to reveal rather than to conceal. A secret, in the Torah, is something that is impossible for a man to explain. For example, it is impossible to explain how to hit a home run in baseball. There are simply no words, or actions, that a coach can provide to the athlete. The coach leads the athlete with, words and demonstrations, to the edge of understanding. However, unless the athlete falls in on his own, he can never hit a home run.

So it is with the secrets of the Torah. The Hakham[[27]](#footnote-27) can lead his talmid to the brink, with words, and pictures, but the talmid must *fall in* on his own.

A teacher desperately wants to teach his talmidim all of the secrets of the Torah, but unless his talmidim are led by HaShem to go beyond what is possible in this world, then they cannot apprehend the secrets of the Torah.

***Pesachim 112a*** *‘More than the calf wishes to suck does the cow desire to suckle.’*

One can readily understand that it is the sod, the secrets of then Torah that have the real power to build a community and connect that community to HaShem.

**In Wine**

The Hebrew word for wine is yayin - יין. The Gematria of יין is seventy. When do we take wine? We take wine *every time* *we want to ascend* from one spiritual level to the next. We take wine as we enter Shabbat in order to elevate ourselves to the level that Shabbat provides. We take wine at the end of Shabbat because we want to ascend from Shabbat to the next week at a higher level than the previous week. We take wine at a brit in order to ascend with this mitzva to the covenant. Thus it is that we take wine at every opportunity where a mitzva allows us special *elevation*. Further, not only are we elevating ourselves, but we are also connecting with all members of the covenant and with a specific mitzva that was given to the Jewish people. From this we understand why יין has the Gematria of seventy.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| יין (*yayin*):  | י *yod* - 10 |
|  | י *yod* - 10 |
|  | ן nun - 50 |
| TOTAL |  70 |

The letter *Ayin* - ע represents the number *seventy*, which is also the Gematria of the Hebrew word for “wine”.[[28]](#footnote-28) It is also the Gematria of the word “sod”, or “secret”, which alludes to Kabbalah. Hence, the Talmud states:

***Eruvin 65a*** *Anyone who becomes settled through wine has the knowledge (Daat) of his Creator ... has the knowledge (Daat) of the Seventy Elders; wine was given with seventy letters,[[29]](#footnote-29) and the mystery* (of Torah) *was given with seventy letters* (sod, mystery, also equals seventy), *when wine goes in, secrets go out.*

Here we see that Daat, knowledge – *connection*, is clearly connected by the Gemara to the number seventy. Now the *ultimate* *connection* is at the ecstatic moment[[30]](#footnote-30) when the sperm and the egg connect. Thus, we see that seventy and conception / connection are firmly connected together. This elevated connection is used to connect new members to our community.

When wine enters, secrets escape.[[31]](#footnote-31) The Gemara sends mixed signals as to whether wine is good or bad:

***Great Sanhedrin 70a*** *R. Hanan said: The only purpose for which wine was created was to comfort mourners and requite the wicked,[[32]](#footnote-32) for it is written, Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish [i.e., the wicked], and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts.[[33]](#footnote-33) R. Isaac said: what is meant by, Look not thou upon the wine when it is red?[[34]](#footnote-34) — Look not upon the wine, which reddens the faces of the wicked in this world and makes them pale [with shame] in the next. Raba said: Look not thou upon the wine ki yith’addam: look not upon it, for it leads to bloodshed [dam].[[35]](#footnote-35)*

And, lest you forget where this is found in the Talmud, it is on the 70th page, the Gematria of wine itself. And, furthermore, lest you under appreciate the potency of wine, the Gemara concludes by saying:

***Sanhedrin 70a*** *And Noah began to be a husbandman, and he planted a vineyard, — R. Hisda said in R. ‘Ukba’s name, and others state, Mar ‘Ukba said in R. Zakkai’s name: The Holy One, blessed be He, said unto Noah: ‘Noah, shouldst thou not have taken a warning from Adam, whose transgression was caused by wine?’ This agrees with the view that the [forbidden] tree from which Adam ate was a vine. For it has been taught: R. Meir said: That [forbidden] tree from which Adam ate was a vine,*

At least according to the one who held that the tree that Adam ate from was actually a vine. Indeed, according to the Shlah HaKodesh,[[36]](#footnote-36) that had been Noach’s intention in planting a vine the moment he had descended from the Ark, and why he had been unclothed at the time he became drunk: he was trying rectify the sin of Adam and, in fact, and not even drunk enough wine to become drunk in the first place.

The Leshem concurs: [[37]](#footnote-37) Noach also stumbled in this manner, putting himself into a test without HaShem’s permission. His intentions had been purely for the sake of Heaven, wanting to rectify the sin of Adam. But he stumbled and this is what it says:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 9:20-21*** *And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard: 21 And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent.*

**Avraham**

Abram was *conceived* when his father, Terah, was seventy years old. Thus we see *conception* of the beginning of the covenant people, the Jewish people, is associated with seventy. Now, not only was Abram conceived but with his conception we have the conception of the Jewish people.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 11:26*** *And Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran.*

Both Abram and the Jewish people kept the Torah.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 26:5*** *Because that Avraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.*

This links seventy with judgment, Torah, and with the giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai.

It is also worth noting that Terah’s *seventy* years surrounded Abram’s *one* year.

In Shemot (Exodus) 12:40 we read that the Jews were in Egypt for four hundred and thirty years. Rashi explains that these years were counted from the time of the Covenant Between The Pieces[[38]](#footnote-38) until the Exodus. One can thus calculate that Avraham was seventy at the Brit bein HaBetarim. This accords with what is taught in *Seder Olam[[39]](#footnote-39)* that our forefather Avraham was seventy years old when HaShem spoke to him at the Brit bein HaBetarim.[[40]](#footnote-40)

This covenant is the formalizing of the relationship that was define the Jewish people. In essence, this is the genesis, the conception, of the Jews. No wonder it took place when Avraham was seventy years old.

***Midrash Rabbah - Numbers XIV:11*** *When the Holy One, blessed be He, made a covenant with Avraham between the pieces,[[41]](#footnote-41) the latter was seventy years old, the decree between the pieces having been uttered thirty years before Isaac was born-these are the words of R. Jose--in order to fulfill what it says in Scripture, And it came to pass at the end of four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt (Ex. XII, 41).[[42]](#footnote-42)*

Since the physical world was designed and “constructed” according to the Torah, which is the “blueprint” for creation, anyone who studies the world in search of spirituality, will, by definition, gain wisdom.[[43]](#footnote-43) This is, according to the Midrash, how Avraham discovered the existence of HaShem, and this is why HaShem first communicated with Avraham in his seventieth year.

**Languages**

As we shall see, HaShem designed the human community to have seventy languages after the confusion of Babel. This community was to have an *elevated* *connection* with HaShem through the Jewish people. These seventy languages, and Hebrew, were the vehicle for the transmission of HaShem’s word to the whole earth. These seventy nations, one for each language, surrounded the one nation, the People of Israel. It was through the transmission of the Torah, in Hebrew and the vernacular, to each of the seventy nations, that was to bring justice to the nations. It was through this language that the Jews were to lead the nations back to Gan Eden, back to HaShem.

Let’s begin to explore this concept in detail.

***Debarim (Deuteronomy) 1:5*** *On the other side of the Jordan, in the land of Moav, Moshe began to declare this Torah, saying...*

Rashi explains that Moshe explained the Torah in seventy languages.

***Rashi to Debarim 1:5 - explained this Law*** *- He explained it to them in seventy languages.[[44]](#footnote-44) Hakethav Vehakabbalah explains this to mean that Moses gave them seventy interpretations to every passage.*

This is a very strange explanation: The Jewish people certainly did not know seventy languages, and even if they had, what would be the purpose of translating into seventy languages, since they surely understood Hebrew best of all?

Rashi's explanation expresses an important idea. The seventy languages represent the seventy cultures of the world. Moshe wished to teach the Children of Israel that the Torah has something to say to every culture.

The number seventy is critical in the turning points of history. Consider that after the flood, seventy nations descended from Noach and that seventy languages emerged at the building of the tower of Bavel, both major turning points in history. The Gemara alludes to both when it teaches us that HaShem communicated in all seventy languages at Har Sinai.

***Shabbat 88b*** *R. Johanan said: What is meant by the verse, The Lord giveth the word: They that publish the tidings are a great host?[[45]](#footnote-45) — Every single word that went forth from the Omnipotent was split up into seventy languages.[[46]](#footnote-46) The School of R. Ishmael taught: And like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces.,[[47]](#footnote-47) just as a hammer is divided into many sparks,[[48]](#footnote-48) so every single word that went forth from the Holy One, blessed be He, split up into seventy languages.[[49]](#footnote-49)*

***Midrash Rabbah - Exodus V:9*** *It says: And all the people perceived the thunderings (Ex. XX, 15). Note that it does not say ‘the thunder’,[[50]](#footnote-50) but ‘the thunderings’; wherefore R. Johanan said that God’s voice, as it was uttered, split up into seventy voices, in seventy languages, so that all the nations should understand.[[51]](#footnote-51) When each nation heard the Voice in their own vernacular their souls departed,[[52]](#footnote-52) save Israel who heard but who were not hurt.[[53]](#footnote-53)*

This text compares the revelation at Sinai to a hammer striking a rock and sending sparks flying; like the sparks, Torah itself shot forth at the instant of revelation in seventy languages, corresponding to the seventy nations.[[54]](#footnote-54) Incredibly, at the moment when Israel received the Torah, the essence of Israel’s identity as a unique and separate nation, everyone else heard it too, and in their own languages!

Therefore, the seventy panim, faces, of Torah must also reflect the gaze of the seventy nations. Each nation has a perspective on Torah that is already built into the structure of Torah itself. In other words, we Jews cannot fully understand Torah, that is, how to live an Torah life in response to the Divine intention that pulses through our world, unless we learn not only how each Jew understands it, but also how each nation understands it as well. This concept helps us to understand the importance of Mashiach’s command to His Apostles:

***Mordechai (Mark) 16:14-16*** *Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen. 15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*

These same seventy languages also played a crucial role for Yosef when he went down to Mitzrayim.

Our Sages tell us that when Paro appointed Yosef as second in command, his officers complained that it was disrespectful for a person who was bought as a slave to be their leader. Paro responded that he saw kingly greatness in Yosef. The officers replied that if he indeed had kingly qualities, he should know all seventy languages. The angel Gabriel came and taught Yosef all seventy languages. Yosef had difficulty understanding them until Gabriel added a letter ‘Hey’ to Yosef’s name which enabled him to retain the languages. The next day Yosef was able to respond to any language that Paro conversed in. However, when Yosef spoke to Paro in Hebrew, Paro did not comprehend. He asked Yosef to teach him Hebrew, but Paro could not grasp it. Paro made Yosef swear that he would not reveal to the Egyptians that he did not know the Hebrew language.

***Midrash Rabbah - Numbers XIV:5*** *SEVENTY SHEKELS, AFTER THE SHEKEL OF THE SANCTUARY (VII, 49). This alludes to the fact that Gabriel came and added to Joseph’s name one letter from the name of the Holy One, blessed be He, and taught him seventy languages; as is borne out by the text, He appointed it in Joseph (Yehosef)[[55]](#footnote-55) for a testimony, when he[[56]](#footnote-56) went forth against the land of Egypt. The speech I had not known I understood (Ps. 81:6).[[57]](#footnote-57) Had he not done so the Egyptians would not have accepted Joseph as a ruler*

**Seventy Nations**

There were seventy original nations of the world (according to the seventy descendants of Noach):

***Debarim (Deuteronomy) 32:8*** *When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel.*

Incidentally, since these 70 nations of the world don't include the nation of Israel, it seems that when the number 70 is used in a symbolic sense, there is always one "extra." For that reason, the number 70, when it appears symbolically in various places in the Torah, is really 71.

It is important to note that the number seventy is used in connection with the nations of the world, we know that there are seventy nations from Shemot:

***Shemot (Exodus) 1:5*** *And all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls: for Joseph was in Egypt already.*

We can also see that the number of Gentile nations is seventy from the Gemara:

***Sukkah 55bR.*** *Eleazar stated, To what do those seventy bullocks [that were offered during the seven days of the Festival] correspond? To the seventy nations.[[58]](#footnote-58) To what does the single bullock [of the Eighth Day] correspond? To the unique nation.[[59]](#footnote-59) This may be compared to a mortal king who said to his servants, ‘Prepare for me a great banquet’; but on the last day he said to his beloved friend, ‘Prepare for me a simple meal that I may derive benefit from you’.*

Thus we see that there are seventy Gentile nations, but they are **never** enumerated as *seventy*, in the written Torah! Additionally, the Zohar teaches that “all seventy nations are subcategories of Esau and Ishmael”.[[60]](#footnote-60) Here is the traditional and the kabbalist’s list of those nations (there is a glossary in at the end of this paper to explain the terms used here):[[61]](#footnote-61)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Traditional Counting[[62]](#footnote-62)** | **Kabbalistic Counting** |
| 1. Gomerite Nation |  |
| 2. Magogite Nation | 1. Magogite Nation - Chachmah shebe Chesed |
| 3. Madaiite Nation | 2. Madaiite Nation - Binah shebe Chesed |
| 4. Yavanite Nation |  |
| 5. Tubalite Nation | 3. Tubalite Nation - Daat shebe Chesed |
| 6. Meshekhite Nation | 4. Meshekhite Nation - Chesed shebe Chesed |
| 7. Tirasite Nation | 5. Tirasite Nation - Gevurah shebe Chesed |
| 8. Ashkenazite Nation | 6. Ashkenazite Nation - Tiferet shebe Chesed |
| 9. Rifathite Nation | 7. Rifathite Nation - Netzach shebe Chesed |
| 10. Togarmahite Nation | 8. Togarmahite Nation - Hod shebe Chesed |
| 11. Elishahite Nation | 9. Elishahite Nation - Yesod shebe Chesed |
| 12. Tarshishite Nation | 10. Tarshishite Nation - Malchut shebe Chesed |
| 13. Kittite Nation | 11. Kittite Nation - Chachmah shebe Gevurah |
| 14. Dodanite Nation | 12. Dodanite Nation - Binah shebe Gevurah |
| 15. Cushite Nation |  |
| 16. Mitzraite Nation |  |
| 17. Putite Nation | 13. Putite Nation - Daat shebe Gevurah |
| 18. Canaanite Nation |  |
| 19. Sebaite Nation | 14. Sevaite Nation - Chesed shebe Gevurah |
| 20. Chavilahite nation | 15. Khushite-Chavilahite Nation - Gevurah shebe Gevurah |
| 21. Sabtahite Nation | 16. Savtahite Nation - Tiferet shebe Gevurah |
| 22. Raamahite Nation |  |
| 23. Sabtecaite Nation | 17. Savtekhaite Nation - Netzach shebe Gevurah |
| 24. Shebaite Nation | 18. Khushite-Shevaite Nation - Hod shebe Gevurah |
| 25. Dedanite Nation | 19. Dedanite Nation - Yesod shebe Gevurah |
| 26. Nimrod |  |
| 27. Ludite Nation | 20. Mitzraite-Ludite Nation - Malchut shebe Gevurah |
| 28. Anamite Nation | 21. ‘Anamite Nation - Chachmah shebe Tiferet |
| 29. Lehabite Nation | 22. Lehavite Nation - Binah shebe Tiferet |
| 30. Naftuchite Nation | 23. Naftuchite Nation - Daat shebe Tiferet |
| 31. Pathrusite Nation | 24. Pathrusite Nation - Chesed shebe Tiferet |
| 32. Kasluchite Nation(out of whom came The Philistine Nation) | 25. Philistine Nation - Gevurah shebe Tiferet |
| 33. Kaftorite Nation | 26. Kaftorite Nation - Tiferet shebe Tiferet |
| 34. Sidonite Nation | 27. Sidonite Nation - Netzach shebe Tiferet |
| 35. Chethite Nation | 28. Chethite Nation - Hod shebe Tiferet |
| 36. Yevusite Nation | 29. Yevusite Nation - Yesod shebe Tiferet |
| 37. Amorite Nation | 30. Amorite Nation - Malchut shebe Tiferet |
| 38. Girgashite Nation | 31. Girgashite Nation - Chachmah shebe Netzach |
| 39. Chivite Nation | 32. Chivite Nation - Binah shebe Netzach |
| 40. Arkite Nation | 33. ‘Arkite Nation - Daat shebe Netzach |
| 41. Sinite Nation | 34. Sinite Nation - Chesed shebe Netzach |
| 42. Arvadite Nation | 35. Arvadite Nation - Gevurah shebe Netzach |
| 43. Tzemarite Nation | 36. Tzemarite Nation - Tiferet shebe Netzach |
| 44. Chamathite Nation | 37. Chamathite Nation - Netzach shebe Netzach |
| 45. Elamite Nation | 38. ‘Elamite Nation - Hod shebe Netzach |
| 46. Asshurite Nation | 39. Asshurite Nation - Yesod shebe Netzach |
| 47. Arpakhshadite Nation |  |
| 48. Ludite Nation | 40. Ludite Nation - Malchut shebe Netzach |
| 49. Aramite Nation |  |
| 50. Utzite Nation | 41. Utzite Nation - Chachmah shebe Hod |
| 51. Chulite Nation | 42. Chulite Nation - Binah shebe Hod |
| 52. Getherite Nation | 43. Getherite Nation - Daat shebe Hod |
| 53. Mashite Nation | 44. Mashite Nation - Chesed shebe Hod |
| 54. Shelachite Nation |  |
| 55. Eberite Nation |  |
| 56. Pelegite Nation |  |
| 57. Yoqtan Nation |  |
| 58. Almodadite Nation | 45. Almodadite Nation - Gevurah shebe Hod |
| 59. Shelefite Nation | 46. Shelefite Nation - Tiferet shebe Hod |
| 60. Chatzarmavethite Nation | 47. Chatzarmavethite Nation - Netzach shebe Hod |
| 61. Yerachite Nation | 48. Yerachite Nation - Hod shebe Hod |
| 62. Hadoramite Nation | 49. Hadoramite Nation - Yesod shebe Hod |
| 63. Uzalite Nation | 50. Uzalite Nation - Malchut shebe Hod |
| 64. Diqlahite Nation | 51. Diqlahite Nation - Chachmah shebe Yesod |
| 65. Obalite Nation | 52. Ovalite Nation - Binah shebe Yesod |
| 66. Abimaelite Nation | 53. Avimaelite Nation - Daat shebe Yesod |
| 67. Shebaite Nation | 54. Shevaite Nation - Chesed shebe Yesod |
| 68. Ophirite Nation | 55. Ofirite Nation - Gevurah shebe Yesod |
| 69. Chavilahite Nation | 56. Chavilahite Nation - Tiferet shebe Yesod |
| 70. Yobavite Nation | 57. Yovavite Nation - Netzach shebe Yesod |
|  | 58. Shemian Nation - Hod shebe Yesod |
| Israel is not counted among the seventy nations. | 59. Arpakhshadian Nation - Yesod shebe Yesod |
|  | 60. Shelachian Nation - Malchut shebe Yesod |
|  | 61. Everian Nation - Chachmah shebe Malchut |
|  | 62. Pelegian Nation - Binah shebe Malchut |
|  | 63. Reuian Nation - Daat shebe Malchut |
|  | 64. Serugian Nation - Chesed shebe Malchut |
|  | 65. Nachorian Nation - Gevurah shebe Malchut |
|  | 66. Nachorite Nation - Tiferet shebe Malchut |
|  | 67. Lotite Nation - Netzach shebe Malchut |
|  | 68. Ishmaelite Nation - Hod shebe Malchut |
|  | 69. Esavite Nation - Yesod shebe Malchut |
|  | 70. Israelite Nation - Malchut shebe Malchut |

61 of these nations are identical in each list making a conflict only in the identities of the remaining 9 (or 11 if one uses the Arizal count of 72 nations) from the total listed above of 80.

**The seventy[[63]](#footnote-63)**



When I was examining this example, I needed to understand Yaaqov and his family in order to understand why these two examples of seventy are associated by the Torah. So, before we come to a conclusion on these seventy nations, let’s go examine Yaaqov and his family.

**Yaaqov and his family**

***Shemot (Exodus) 1:5*** *And all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls: for Joseph was in Egypt already.*

On a Pshat level, we see that Yaaqov and his family, of seventy, were connecting together for the first time in Egypt. This gives us a superficial understanding of seventy.

Although there were seventy souls in the family of Yaaqov, the singular form of the word “soul” (*Nefesh*) is used to describe them, as the Midrash explains:

***Midrash Rabbah - Leviticus IV:6*** *Of Jacob, on the other hand, there were seventy souls, and yet the word used of them in Scripture is “soul”, as it is written, And all the Nefesh [sing., soul] that came out of the loins of Jacob, etc.[[64]](#footnote-64)*

Seventy is a double-sided coin, representing on one hand the ultimate unity, and on the other hand, the epitome of disunity. When Yaaqov and his household traveled down to Egypt to be with his son, Yoseph, the Torah tells us, “All the offspring of Yaaqov, seventy soul.” Not souls, in the plural form, but the singular word, *soul*. They were a single community, a single family. Yet, when they came together in Egypt, it was the very first time that the Jewish family, the Jewish community, were together as a single entity. The commentaries explain that the degree of unity among the family members was such that they were as one man, one soul, one drive.

***Shemot (Exodus) 1:5*** *And all the soul* (Nefesh[[65]](#footnote-65) - נפש) *that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy soul* (Nefesh - נפש)*: for Joseph was in Egypt already.*

We can understand that seventy is also tied up with the concept of unity. These seventy who went down to Egypt were still a single soul, a single family.

Our pasuk, in Shemot 1:5, did not illuminate this issue of seventy for me, so I began investigating the context of this pasuk. The context begins in v.1 by telling us the names of the Bne Israel who went down to Egypt with Yaaqov. It then proceeds to tell us the names of his twelve sons. After our pasuk, the Torah tells us that Yosef and his generation died followed by the fact that the Bne Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceedingly mighty; and the land was filled with them. Whew! So, the context is that we started off with Yaaqov and his twelve sons who became seventy when they went into Egypt. While in Egypt they became a mighty nation.

So, what is going on here? To answer this we need to examine a critical part of our pasuk, namely that *Yosef was already in Egypt*. From this we understand that Yosef was there and the other sixty-nine folks connected with Yosef and there, in Egypt, the family was united for the first time. From our study on the birth of the Bne Israel as a nation (in a study titled THE BIRTH), we saw that this union of Yosef with the rest of his family was the *conception* of the nation of Israel, which was quickly followed by the implantation of the fertilized ovum into the womb of Egypt. The moment of Yaaqov’s descending into Egypt represents the point of conception of the Jewish Nation which, according to Torah, undergoes a two hundred and ten year gestation period[[66]](#footnote-66) before being born through the Exodus from Mitzrayim. Curiously, 210 is three times *seventy*. Thus we understand that not only was the number seventy associated with the going down to Egypt, but seventy was also associated with their exodus as well.

It is worth noting that a pregnancy has an unusual Torah aspect to it:

***Niddah 30b*** *R. Simlai delivered the following discourse: What does an embryo resemble when it is in the bowels of its mother? Folded writing tablets. Its hands rest on its two temples respectively, its two elbows on its two legs and its two heels against its buttocks. Its head lies between its knees, its mouth is closed and its navel is open, and it eats what its mother eats and drinks what its mother drinks, but produces no excrements because otherwise it might kill its mother. As soon, however, as it sees the light[[67]](#footnote-67) the closed organ[[68]](#footnote-68) opens and the open one[[69]](#footnote-69) closes, for if that had not happened the embryo could not live even one single hour. A light burns above its head and it looks and sees from one end of the world to the other, as it is said, then his lamp shined above my head, and by His light I walked through darkness.[[70]](#footnote-70)*

Thus the light that burns above its head is the light of the Torah being taught to the fetus by its angel.

This conception of the Bne Israel was the ultimate connection of the sperm and the egg. After this fertilization, the number of cells rapidly multiplied as we see v.7:

***Shemot (Exodus) 1:7*** *And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them.*

Thus we see that the number seventy is associated with an intimate connection and the very beginning of a birth process. From this we understand that the full potential of this connection is that the connection multiplied. This brings us back to our definition of seventy which we explored in the introduction:

*Any number times ten represents its expanded full potential* – so that seventy of something represents all the potential facets of that thing, namely *connecting*, in the natural world. As the sperm and the egg connected, so also did all of the subsequent souls connect as the baby began growing in the womb of Egypt. Bear in mind that the end of this birth process is the receiving of the Torah. The Bne Israel were born, as a nation, in order to *guard and keep the Torah in the service of HaShem*.

**Seventy Elders**

While they were still in Egypt, the Bne Israel had had seventy Elders; as it says:

***Shemot (Exodus) 3:16*** *Go, and gather the elders of Israel together.*

But these new Elders were those who were then the Israelite “officers” whom Pharaoh set over the children of Israel. When the children of Israel failed to meet the quota of bricks set by Pharaoh, the taskmasters would beat the officers, as it is written:

***Shemot (Exodus) 5:14*** *And the officers of the children of Israel, which Pharaoh’s taskmasters had set over them, were beaten, and demanded, Wherefore have ye not fulfilled your task in making brick both yesterday and today, as heretofore?*

These officers allowed themselves to be beaten for the people’s sake, and did not hand them over to the taskmasters, saying: It is better that we be beaten, and the rest of the people should not be harmed.

Therefore, when HaShem said to Moses, “Gather to Me seventy men”, and Moses said, “My Master, I do not know who is worthy and who is not worthy”, HaShem said: “Those whom you know to be the elders of the people and officers over them”. Those officers who gave themselves over to be beaten over the brick quotas, they shall now be *elevated* to this greatness.[[71]](#footnote-71)

***Yoma 28b*** *R. Hama b. Hanina said: Our ancestors were never left without the scholars’ council. In Egypt they had the scholars’ council, as it is said: Go and gather the elders of Israel together;[[72]](#footnote-72) in the wilderness they had the scholars’ council, as it is said: Gather unto Me seventy men of the elders of Israel;[[73]](#footnote-73)*

Thus the seventy elders who had connected, in love, to the Jews in Egypt, were elevated to an even higher connection with their brothers by becoming *judges* who would bring peace between them by providing *justice*. Now, we understand why there were seventy. There were seventy because they had already made a *connection* with the Bne Israel and they were now being elevated to a position where they could become even more connected.

We find the number seventy in the desert in the days of Moshe, in the form of “seventy Elders”. These seventy Elders[[74]](#footnote-74) accompanied Moses up on Mt Sinai:

***Shemot (Exodus) 24:1*** *And he said unto Moses, Come up unto HaShem, thou, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and worship ye afar off…*

Thus, we see that Torah was transmitted to seventy Elders.[[75]](#footnote-75) This is also echoed in the Mishna.

***Avot chapter 1*** *mishna 1. Moses received the Torah at Sinai and transmitted it to Joshua, Joshua to the Elders, and the Elders to the Prophets, and the Prophets to the men of the great synagogue.*

***Shemot (Exodus) 24:12*** *And HaShem said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them. 13 And Moses rose up, and his minister Joshua: and Moses went up into the mount of God. 14 And he said unto the elders, Tarry ye here for us, until we come again unto you: and, behold, Aaron and Hur are with you: if any man have any matters to do, let him come unto them. 15 And Moses went up into the mount, and a cloud covered the mount.*

Now picture what happened at Mt. Sinai. Moshe is at the top with Yehoshua a little further dawn. Finally, Aharon, Nadab, and Abihu are closer to the bottom of the mountain. At the base of the mountain, between the mountain and the people, are the seventy Elders. In a sense, the seventy Elders surround Moshe and they interface HaShem’s justice with the people.

The task of these Elders was to bring justice to the Bne Israel. When this event occurred, the seventy Elders received *prophecy* and were elevated in order to judge and connect the Bne Israel with HaShem. Yet again we see seventy associated with judgment and an elevated connection.

Sometime later we see these seventy Elders at the Tabernacle of the Congregation as the people are about to be judged for complaining about the lack of meat.

***Bamidbar (Numbers) 11:16-17*** *And HaShem said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men[[76]](#footnote-76) of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee. 17 And I will come down and talk with thee there: and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone. 18 And say thou unto the people, Sanctify yourselves against tomorrow, and ye shall eat flesh: for ye have wept in the ears of HaShem, saying, Who shall give us flesh to eat? for it was well with us in Egypt: therefore HaShem will give you flesh, and ye shall eat. 19 Ye shall not eat one day, nor two days, nor five days, neither ten days, nor twenty days;20 But even a whole month, until it come out at your nostrils, and it be loathsome unto you: because that ye have despised HaShem which is among you, and have wept before him, saying, Why came we forth out of Egypt? 21 And Moses said, The people, among whom I am, are six hundred thousand footmen; and thou hast said, I will give them flesh, that they may eat a whole month. 22 Shall the flocks and the herds be slain for them, to suffice them? or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, to suffice them? 23 And HaShem said unto Moses, Is HaShem’s hand waxed short? thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass unto thee or not. 24 And Moses went out, and told the people the words of HaShem, and gathered the seventy men of the elders of the people, and set them round about the tabernacle. 25 And HaShem came down in a cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass, that, when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease.*

These seventy Elders are given some of Moshe’s spirit so that they can assist in the judgment of community matters and minor cases.

Why are there seventy Elders? The Torah is silent on this issue but we can begin to understand by understanding the meaning of the number seventy. First, recall that there were seventy souls that originally went down into Egypt. Secondly, the number seventy alludes to the letter “Ayin”, which has the numerical value of seventy, and means “eye”. These Elders, who would judge the people with the gift of Torah knowledge, became the “eyes” of the people.

***Shemot (Exodus) 24:9-11*** *Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: 10 And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. 11 And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink.*

***Midrash Rabbah - Leviticus XI:8*** *.... AND THE ELDERS OF ISRAEL... (IX, 1). R. Akiba said: Israel may be compared to a bird: even as a bird is unable to fly without wings, so, too, are Israel unable to do anything without their elders.[[77]](#footnote-77) R. Jose b. Halafta said: A great thing is scholarship:[[78]](#footnote-78) If they [who possess it] are old, they are beloved; if they are young, their youthfulness is a secondary factor.[[79]](#footnote-79) As R. Simeon b. Yohai taught: Not in one passage nor in merely two passages do we find that the Holy One, blessed be He, accorded honour to the Elders, but in many places. At the [burning] bush: Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, etc.[[80]](#footnote-80); in Egypt: And thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt;[[81]](#footnote-81) at Sinai: Come up unto the Lord, thou, and Aaron... and seventy of the elders of Israel;[[82]](#footnote-82) in the wilderness: Gather unto Me seventy men of the elders of Israel; in the Tent of Meeting,... AND THE ELDERS OF ISRAEL; and in the Time to Come, too, will the Holy One, blessed be He, accord honour to the Elders, as it is written, The moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed; for the Lord of hosts will reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His elders shall be Glory.[[83]](#footnote-83) R. Ishmael b. R. Bibi and R. Simeon and R. Reuben said in the name of Hanina: The Holy One, blessed be He, will appoint for Himself an academy of elders of His own. This is [indicated by] what is written, ‘For the Lord of hosts will reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His elders shall be Glory.’ It is written here, not ‘before elders’, but ‘Before His elders shall be Glory’.*

*R. Abin said, in the name of R. Ishmael b. R. Joshua: The Holy One, blessed be He, will in the Time to Come sit as in a goren (court-room), with the righteous sitting before Him, like that [goren mentioned in the verse], Now the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah sat each on his throne, arrayed in their robes, in a threshing floor--goren.[[84]](#footnote-84) Were they then sitting in a threshing-floor? Surely, what is intended is the same as what we have learnt in a Mishnah: The Great Sanhedrin were seated in the formation of a semicircular goren, so that they [i.e. the members of the court] could see one another.[[85]](#footnote-85) [King] Solomon said: I saw Him [as it were] confined in the midst of them; this is [indicated in] what is written, Her master[[86]](#footnote-86) is known in the gates, as He sitteth with the elders of the land.[[87]](#footnote-87)*

From the above Midrash we understand that the Great Sanhedrin is a continuation of the original seventy Elders which were appointed in the wilderness. Since the job of the Great Sanhedrin was to serve as the highest court of the land, we can deduce that the primary job of the seventy Elders was to judge the people.

***Midrash Rabbah - Numbers XV:25*** *AND I WILL COME DOWN AND SPEAK (XI, 17). This serves to inform you that the day of the appointment of the elders was as dear to the Holy One, blessed be He, as the day on which the Torah was given; for in that connection it is written, The third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people (Ex. XIX, 11), and also in connection with the appointment of the elders the expression ‘coming down’ is used. To what may this be compared? To the case of a king who had an orchard. He hired a keeper for it and paid him wages for the care of it. After a time the keeper said to the king: ‘I am unable to look after the whole of it alone. Bring other additional men to help me watch over it. ‘Said the king to him: ‘I gave you the entire orchard to watch, handing to you all the fruits resulting from your care of it, and now you say: “Bring me additional men to help me watch!” I will bring others to help you watch. You must realize, however, that I will not pay them wages for watching from my own funds but that they will receive their wages from the payment that I have been giving to you!‘*

The appointment of the Elders, a body which simultaneously extends and diffuses Moses’ authority and leadership role, is interpreted here as a significant development. These seventy Elders serve to institutionalize the presence of the Divine presence among the people. They create a forerunner of the Great Sanhedrin (originally located adjacent to the Temple, in the Chamber of Hewn Stone), a body composed of men of learning and authority, powerful and charismatic moral personalities to guide the people. As Rambam states:[[88]](#footnote-88) *they embodied a combination of transmission of the tradition and their own innovative, creative power—by issuing edicts, interpreting the Torah using hermeneutic tools, etc. They were clearly a much more innovative element than the priesthood*, containing within themselves the seeds for change, even radical change.

The seventy Elders were elevated from their peers and put into an office that provided justice for the people through prophecy with the help of HaShem. They provided an elevated connection between the people and HaShem to insure that justice prevailed.

**The Great Sanhedrin**

The Gemara teaches us that the seventy Elders are the fore-runner of the Great Sanhedrin (סנהדרין).

***Sanhedrin 2a*** *The great Sanhedrin consisted of seventy-one members; the small Sanhedrin of twenty-three. Whence do we deduce that the great Sanhedrin is of seventy-one? — It is said, gather unto me seventy men;[[89]](#footnote-89) with Moses at their head we have seventy-one.*

Thus, we understand that the Sanhedrin consisted of seventy members plus the Nasi, the President.

The task of the seventy Elders and the task of the Sanhedrin were the same. Both groups of men were elevated from their peers and put into an office that provided justice for the people with the help of HaShem. They provided an elevated connection between the people and HaShem to insure that justice prevailed.

**Chamber of Hewn Stone**

The courtyard of the Gentiles (seventy nations) surrounded the Temple (the one courtyard if Israel). Connecting the Courtyard of the Gentiles with the courtyard of Israel was the Chamber of Hewn Stone where the Great Sanhedrin met for judgment. The Great Sanhedrin of seventy judges and the Nasi, the Prince, was the highest Halachic authority of Bne Israel; it judged the most difficult cases.[[90]](#footnote-90)



The seventy elders surround Moshe and, likewise, the seventy sages of the Great Sanhedrin surround the “prince” (or מופלא, “wondrous one”, from פלא, “wonder”, the inverted spelling of alef, אלף, “one”) of the Great Sanhedrin.”[[91]](#footnote-91)

The Chamber of Hewn Stone was the place of *daat* which connected the holy and the profane, which connected the world with the Jews.

**In the Mishna**

There are exactly seventy-one Mishnayot in the Mishnaic Tractate of Sanhedrin, the judicial court that contains seventy members plus the Nassi, the president.

**In the Psalms**

Psalm 20, which begins with the words “For the Conductor, a psalm of David …”, is recited daily towards the end of the Shacharit prayer service. In this psalm, we beseech HaShem that He answer us when we are in great pain and distress. The Vilna Gaon*[[92]](#footnote-92)* notes that there are seventy words in this Psalm, corresponding to the seventy years of travails and suffering, referred to in the classic texts as the “birth pangs of Messiah“, that the Jewish people will have to experience before the Messiah comes and redeems us.

The Zohar compares pre-messianic times to the seventy cries of a woman in labor. The Zohar[[93]](#footnote-93) notes that there are seventy words in Psalm 20, which correspond to the seventy cries of the laboring woman. Thus the birth pangs of a woman in labor allude to the birth pangs that the world will experience in days just before Mashiach come.

***Tehillim (Psalm) 20:1*** *HaShem shall answer you on a day of trouble…*

Arizal says that Psalm 20 is good to say for mercy on a woman in labor. It has nine pesukim (verses)[[94]](#footnote-94) corresponding to nine months of labor and seventy words corresponding to the seventy pains of childbirth.[[95]](#footnote-95) The Chida says that one should say it twelve times and then say a special Yehi Ratzon.[[96]](#footnote-96)

Hence, the number **seventy** is associated with redemption. This is why, according to the Vilna Gaon, we recite Tehillim 20 every weekday morning; it speaks of redemption, and it precedes the tefillah, the prayer, of redemption, *“And a redeemer will come to Tzion ...”* As one might have expected, it happens to have seventy words.

According to the Zohar, the days before Mashiach will be divided into two periods: a period of seventy years, which is alluded to in the seventy words of Psalm 20, and a period of nine months corresponding to the nine verses of that same Psalm. In the nine months of the galut (exile), troubles will increase, there will be great fear, and then Mashiach will be revealed.[[97]](#footnote-97)

**In Psalm 90**

***Psalms 90:10*** *“The days of our years among them are seventy years, and if with strength (Gevurah din), eighty.*

**In Psalm 21**

***Tehillin (Psalm) 21:5*** *He asked life of Thee, Thou gavest it him; even length of days for ever and ever.*

The Zohar and the Midrash both see that David was supposed to die three hours after he was born. However, David’s soul requested life and Adam donated seventy years of his life, to David. David is speaking of these seventy years when he asked for life and it was given to him.

***Midrash Rabbah - Numbers XIV:12*** *It is in allusion to the seventy years which Adam deducted from his total number of years and gave to David the son of Jesse.*[[98]](#footnote-98) *Adam, in fact, should by right have lived a thousand years; as it says, For in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die*[[99]](#footnote-99) *(ib. III, 17), and a day of the Holy One, blessed be He, is a thousand years; as it says, For a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.*[[100]](#footnote-100)

***Soncino Zohar, Bereshith, Section 1, Page 91b*** *When God showed Adam all future generations, he saw them all in the Garden of Eden in the form which they were destined to assume in this world. When he saw David-so we have been told-with no span of life at all apportioned to him, he was grieved, and gave him seventy years of his own; that is why Adam lived seventy years short of the thousand, the rest being given to David. The fact of David's only having seventy years from Adam, the first man, symbolises something in the higher world, as does everything here below.*

In Kabbalah and in the Midrash, the three letters of ‘Adam – אדם’, the first man and all-inclusive soul-root of mankind, stand for א – **A**dam, ד – **D**avid, ם - **M**ashiach. As an aside, note that the order is *Adam* then *David*, followed by *Mashiach*. Time wise, it is well known that Adam came at the beginning, from the standpoint of time, and that Mashiach comes at the end of time. This suggests that David comes at the middle of time. Thus it is interesting to note that the middle, in terms of David life, was the year 2889 AM.[[101]](#footnote-101) In 2889 AM David was thirty-five years old, this was the midpoint of his life.[[102]](#footnote-102) Thus we understand that Adam came 2889 years before David and that Mashiach will come 2889 years after David.[[103]](#footnote-103) Curiously, 2889 years from the midpoint of David’s life, will be *seventy years* after the formation of the state of Israel in 5708. 2889 years after David will be the year 5778!

The number seventy signifies a primary way of establishing an elevated connection, of building a community. It normally appears in situations of judgment – the establishment, or rendering, of justice. It nearly always appears as the *seventy* surrounding the *one*. In a sense, seventy will often appear at the conception of a community that will establish justice and will be contrasted by an exceptional one.

The number seventy speaks of an *elevated connection, of building a community*. Thus we understand that the seventy years that Adam gave to David are a signal that both Adam and David were responsible for building an elevated community. Adam was the basis for all mankind and David was the King who elevated the community of Israel to a kingdom that will be restored in the day of Mashiach.

**Exile**

Seventy seems to have significance not only in regard to numeric quantity, it also relates to Time quantification such as the seventy years of Babylonian exile:

***Yeremiyahu (Jeremiah) 25:11*** *And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.*

Each of the three main exiles are linked to the number seventy. The Children of Israel numbered seventy as they came to Egypt. We remained in the Babylonian exile for seventy years. In the current exile we are cast to the mercy of the seventy nations.

(Seventy is also the numerical value of the Hebrew phrase “Gog and Magog”.)

Failing to let the land keep its Sabbath automatically incurs exile:

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 26:37*** *Then the land will be appeased of its sabbaticals, all the days of desolation, and you are in the land of your enemies, then the land will rest, and be appeased of its sabbaticals.*

The Galut of Egypt lasted 70 x 3 = 210 years.

The Galut of Bavel lasted 70 x 1 = 70 years.

At the end of the period of the kings of Israel, the Babylonians came and took most of the Bne Israel into captivity. The captivity lasted seventy years.

**Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) 29:10** *So says HaShem: After seventy years of Bavel are completed, I will remember you and fulfill My good word concerning you, to return you to this place.*

**Daniel 9:2** *I, Daniel, pondered in the books the number of years of the word of God that came to Yirmeyahu the prophet regarding the completion of the destruction of Yerushalayim: seventy years.*

To begin with, it is important to point out that the seventy-year exile was seventy years long for a reason. HaShem warned that, in response to disobedience:

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 26:33-34*** *I will disperse you among the nations, and will draw out a sword after you; your land will be desolate and your cities destroyed. Then the land will enjoy her rests, as long as it remains desolate.*

The land remained desolate for seventy years, corresponding to the seventy Shmita cycles that went unobserved prior to the destruction of the Temple and the exile of the nation. The Torah states that:

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 25:2-4*** *Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, when you come into the land which I will give to you, then the land should rest; it is a rest to HaShem. Six years you should sow your field, and for six years you can prune your vineyard, and gather in your produce. In the seventh year it will be a rest for the Land, a rest to HaShem; you must not sow your field or prune your vineyard.*

So we know why HaShem sent the Bne Israel into captivity in Bavel, but, why did He wait till they had failed to observe 490 years of Shmita? Why did He wait precisely that amount of time?

Clearly HaShem was doing something else and communicating *another* message. I believe that HaShem wanted to use the number seventy to tell us something about Shmita. Shmita allows the land to rest, everyone knows this. But, Shmita also allows us the time to increase our Torah study time and get to know HaShem better. When HaShem waited for four hundred and ninety years (seven times seventy years) before He punished us, He was telling us that the mitzva of Shmita allows us an *elevated* *connection* to Him, through the land. Further, Shmita elevates us by revealing our trust in HaShem. It is also noteworthy that the mitzvot, and particularly the Shmita observance, binds us together as a *community*. No other community on earth observes the Shmita. When we are the only ones… we notice.

**During Esther’s time**

**The number seventy shows up many times with regard to the Megillah of Esther.**

While we were in Bavel, the events recorded in the Megillah of Esther took place. The number of *pesukim*, from when Haman was elevated to his powerful position[[104]](#footnote-104) until the *pasuk* that records the kings order to hang him on his own gallows,[[105]](#footnote-105) are counted, they total *seventy!* —one *pasuk* for each of the seventy days Haman ruled!

***Midrash Rabbah - Numbers XIV:12*** *From the verse, After these things did king Ahasuerus promote, etc. (Est. III, 1) to the verse, So they hanged Haman (ib. VII, 10) there are seventy verses. At the end of seventy he was hanged on fifty.[[106]](#footnote-106)*

Mordechai, the hero of the Megillah of Esther, knew *all* ***seventy***languages (a prerequisite for being on the Great Sanhedrin). For, Bigsan and Seresh had spoken in their native tongue, Tarsian, and, had assumed that Mordechai couldn’t understand a word they were saying. Why else would they have discussed so delicate a matter and risked their lives in front of a stranger, and a Jew yet!

**Daniel’s Seventy Weeks**

Daniel’s prophecy of the seventy weeks[[107]](#footnote-107) is part of the division of his book[[108]](#footnote-108) that records visions of future earthly kingdoms (both human and divine). In the context of chapter 7, the archangel Gabriel explains to Daniel that seventy weeks are required to fulfill the petition Daniel has made concerning the restoration of Israel.[[109]](#footnote-109) Daniel’s prayer had been based on his observation[[110]](#footnote-110) of the seventy years prophecy in Jeremiah 25:11-12; 29:10.

Yirmeyahu chapter 25, in the fourth year of Yehoyakim (eighteen years prior to the destruction of the First Temple). These seventy years of Bavel's dominion are repeated again in perek 29. These seventy years should not be confused with the seventy years that transpired from destruction of the Temple until beginning of the second Temple mentioned by Zecharya (1:12 & 7:5).

**Babylonian Captivity**

***Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) 29:10*** *So says HaShem: After seventy years of Bavel are completed, I will remember you and fulfill My good word concerning you, to return you to this place.*

The redemption through Mordechai came seventy years after the exile. As we know from many places, the number “seventy” is associated with redemption. Even more so, it is associated with an *elevated* *connection*. This exile produced the Talmud Bavli which has elevated our connection with HaShem and drawn us together as a community. A community that has become part and parcel with the oral Torah.

***Daniel 9:2*** *I, Daniel, pondered in the books the number of years of the word of G-d that came to Yirmeyahu the prophet regarding the completion of the destruction of Yerushalayim: seventy years.*

The seventy years of exile came to an end with the death of Haman, the chief antagonist in the Purim story, whose rise and fall occurred in seventy days, recorded in seventy verses in Megillat Esther. He, of course, was the direct descendant of Amalek, whose name means: ayin-malak (Ayin-mem-lamed-kuf) the “severed eye”. The holiday of Purim is all about Ayin and the number seventy.

Indeed, seventy is the number of nations that emerged from Noach after the Flood, from which all the nations of the world have descended one way or another, except for the Jewish people. The Jewish nation is the seventy-first nation, and our language is the seventy-first language, the one which Pharaoh could not learn.

In fact, seventy is the number of days of the week, times ten. This is because each of the seven days of the week are rooted in one of seven sefirot, Chesed through Malchut, each of which have ten sefirot of their own, in an ideal state. Thus, each of the days of the week represent ten sefirot, making seventy altogether, which are the root of the nations of the world.

Thus, seventy is the number that represents this world, and if so, then Amalek can also mean, “severing of seventy,” or the cutting off of this world. In other words, it is Amalek’s raison d’etre to make this world, Olam HaZeh, an independent reality, severed from Olam HaBa, the World-to-Come. This way, everyday life ceases to be a means to an end, but an end unto itself.

**In The Calendar**

Jews celebrate seventy holy days in the year: Fifty-two Sabbaths plus eighteen festivals:

Passover (seven days)

Shavuot

Rosh HaShana (one long day)

Yom HaKippurim

Succoth (eight days)

Thus we understand that there are exactly seventy days in a year called moedim as defined in Vayikra (Leviticus) 23: 52 Sabbaths, seven days of Pesach, one day of Shavuot, one day of Rosh HaShana, one day of Yom Kippurim, seven days of Succoth and one day of Shemini Atzeret.

Now it is taught in the Holy writings that Yaaqov died on the first day of Succoth, the Feast of Tabernacles, and that the Egyptians wept for him *seventy* days,[[111]](#footnote-111) since he had brought great blessings to their land, and with his arrival a terrible famine ceased. If you count seventy days from the first day of Succoth, it falls on the 25th day of Kislev, the first day of Chanukah!!!

This is why the exile that led to the Purim victory lasted seventy years, and why Haman’s seventy-day reign of terror is told within seventy lines of Megillat Esther. This is also why there was seventy amot[[112]](#footnote-112) from the Mishkan courtyard until the curtain of the Kodesh Kodashim, the Holy of Holies: Seventy represents an elevated connection.

**Hence, seventy, and therefore the letter “Ayin”, is a number that represents redemption**, of the soul and the body, which, of course, Amalek and his doubt[[113]](#footnote-113) come to “cut off.”

**The Omer**

The barley for the omer was planted seventy days before Pesach in order for the barley to be harvested for the omer. This barley permitted the entire community to experience an *elevated* *connection* to the land by permitting all new grain to be eaten. That same omer would provide us an elevated connection to HaShem through this offering.

***Menachoth 85a*** *How was [the field] prepared? In the first year it was broken up and in the second year it was ploughed twice, and it was sown seventy days before the Passover so that it might be close upon the [increasing strength of the] sun;*

From this we learn that the sprouting of barley is like the conception of a child. Once the fertilized ovum is implanted in the uterus it is like a seed of barley planted in the ground. The seventy days thus alludes to ‘conception’ of the barley and its elevation as the omer in the Temple. This omer of barley will permit Israel to eat the grain of the land.

We will offer the omer for the forty-nine days between Pesach and Shavuot. Thus the omer of barley is used to connect Pesach to its *atzeret*, to Shavuot.

**At Succoth**

During Succoth in the time of the Holy Temple, a unique sacrifice was offered on the altar, with a unique intention.

In chapter 29 of the book of Bamidbar (Numbers), the Torah outlines the sacrifices which are to be offered over the span of the festival. Counting the number of bulls which are offered over the seven day period, we find that the total number was seventy. And in chapter 10 of the book of Bereshit (Genesis), there are seventy nations mentioned. These are the primordial nations, sometimes referred to as the “seventy languages,” which represent all humanity. The Talmud[[114]](#footnote-114) teaches that the seventy bulls that were offered in the Holy Temple served as an atonement for the seventy nations of the world. Truly, as our Hakhamim observed, “if the nations of the world had only known how much they needed the Temple, they would have surrounded it with armed fortresses to protect it”.[[115]](#footnote-115)

Here we can already sense that inherent within the very nature of the festival, an inexorable bond as expressed through its sacrificial requirements, links it to the earth’s peoples. Succoth was mandated by HaShem to be a festival for all the world.

***Sukkah 55b*** *R. Eleazar stated, To what do those seventy bullocks [that were offered during the seven days of the Festival] correspond? To the seventy nations.[[116]](#footnote-116) To what does the single bullock [of the Eighth Day] correspond? To the unique nation.[[117]](#footnote-117) This may be compared to a mortal king who said to his servants, ‘Prepare for me a great banquet’; but on the last day he said to his beloved friend, ‘Prepare for me a simple meal that I may derive benefit from you’.*

The seventy bulls lead up to a day of intimacy with HaShem, a day which contains an *elevated* *connection* of the community, both the Jews and the Gentiles, with HaShem.

The seventy bulls offered on the seven days of Succoth are offered in the following amounts: thirteen on day one, twelve on day two, eleven on day three, ten on day four, nine on day five, eight on day six, and seven on day seven. These seventy bulls were for the seventy nations.

On the eighth day, Shemini Atzeret, one bull was offered for Israel. Thus we see that the seventy bulls surround the one bull for Israel.

These bulls provide atonement for the nations and for Israel. Again we find that seventy is associated with judgment.

**Miscellaneous Uses of Seventy**

***Horayoth 10a*** *They once traveled on board a ship. R. Gamaliel had with him some bread only, while R. Joshua had with him bread and flour. When R. Gamaliel’s bread was consumed he depended on R. Joshua’s flour. ‘Did you know’, the former asked him, ‘that we should be so much delayed that you brought flour with you?’ The latter answered him, ‘A certain star rises once in seventy years and leads the sailors astray,[[118]](#footnote-118) and I suspected it might rise and lead us astray.’*

**\* \* \***

There are seventy words in the *Kiddush*.

**\* \* \***

The second camping-place of the Israelites on the march from Egypt. It had twelve springs and *seventy* palm-trees.[[119]](#footnote-119)

**\* \* \***

Mahara”l writes that the number seventy is critical in the turning points of history: After the Flood, seventy nations descended from Noach; seventy languages emerged at the building of the Tower of Babel; the Jewish nation began with the seventy people who came with Jacob to Egypt; and in the World to Come, the seventy prime nations will recognize HaShem as the One and Only Ruler of the world.

**\* \* \***

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Seventy** | **Connection** | **Elevation** | **Surrounded** |
|  |  |  |  |
| Yaaqov’s family. Ex. 1:6 | With Joseph and sons. | A family becomes a nation. | By seventy nations. |
|  |  |  |  |
| 70 Elders. Ex. 24:9 | With Moshe and Priests. | 70 Men become Judges. | The Bne Israel. |
|  |  |  |  |
| The Sanhedrin | The Prince | Justice | The seventy judges. |
|  |  |  |  |
| Terah’s age when Avraham was born. Gen. 11:26 | Avraham | The first man to be circumcised. | By Terah’s years when Avraham was born. Gen. 11:26 |
|  |  |  |  |
| The courtyard of the Gentiles. | With HaShem through the Priests. | All the nations of the earth. | The courtyard of Israel. |
|  |  |  |  |

**\* \* \***

Mashiach also appointed seventy shelachim (messengers) to transmit His oral Torah to the Jews.

***Luke 10:1*** *After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.*

***Luke 10:17*** *And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.*

**\* \* \***

Traditional rabbinic sources state that the Second Temple stood for 420 years and based on the 2nd-century work Seder Olam Rabbah, place construction in 350 BCE (3408 AM), 166 years later than secular estimates, and destruction in 70 CE (3829 AM).

6 X 70 = 420

**70 In The Sephirot**

What is the common thread that runs through the years 1948, 1967 and 2024, as well as the years 2005 (Gush Katif) and 1492 (Expulsion from Spain)? What is the concept of the Sod Ha'ibur - the Secret of the Leap Year, or, more literally, the Secret of the Pregnancy? What can we observe about the 19 year cycle of the Jewish calendar, which contains 7 leap year? What is special about the 8th year of that cycle? What is the 9 month 'birthing' process that begins every leap year - in Av of the year before? What starts to be revealed in the end of Tishrei of a leap year? What is behind the concept of the 70 day period from 25th of Adar until the 6th of Sivan? How does this explain the 70 days from 28th of Iyar (Yom Yerushalayim) and the 9th of Av? What did the Chofetz Chaim predict about where in the world would remain safe during World War II? What is the unique power of Moshiach ben Yosef in destroying the Persians (Iran) and facing off with the nations of the world? Find out all this and more in this 17th edition of the Moshiach Podcast.

<https://yeranenyaakov.blogspot.com/2023/10/year-8-and-9-months.html>

<https://geulahperspectives.blogspot.com/2023/10/moshiach-17-1948-1967-2024.html>

I heard this idea from rav Ari Goldwag.

It is well known that the 50 days between Pesach and Shavuot are associated with the seven lower sephirot. As we count the omer we meditate on the lower seven sephirot.[[120]](#footnote-120) The lower seven sephirot are manifest in the world through the counting of the omer.

3 hidden

7 revealed

--------------

10 sephirot

49 (7 x 7) days between Pesach and Shavuot correspond to the 7 revealed sepirot.

21 (3 x 7) days before Pesach (Adar 25) correspond to the 3 hidden sephirot.[[121]](#footnote-121) **Adar 25 was the Creation of the heavens and earth**.[[122]](#footnote-122) In this example of seventy, we see that from the creation of the world till the giving of the Torah, demonstrates that the world was created only so that the Bne Israel could accept the Torah.

49 days plus 21 days = 70 days

between Adar 25 and Sivan 6.

The ultimate unification of the community of Israel was established with the giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai where Rashi teaches us that we stood at that time as one man, completely unified with one heart.

Another example: The first day of Chankah is 70 days after the day of Succoth. So also is each subsequent day of Chaunkah 70 days from the corresponding day of Succoth. There is a conception followed 70 days later by a birth. That which is conceive on Sukkoth is born on Chanukah. It is worth remembering that Chanukah is a *second* *chance* to celebrate Succoth. That suggests that the eighth day of Chanukah is a *second chance* to celebrate *Shemini Atzeret / Simchat Torah.* It is a second chance to celebrate Succoth because we were too busy fighting on Succoth. This suggests that there is a close connection between the massacre that occurred on Shemini Atzeret / Simchat Torah (5784 – 2023) and the eighth day of Chanukah when we light all eight candles on our chanukiyah.

\* \* \*

Now it is taught in the Torah that Jacob died on the first day of Succoth, the Feast of Tabernacles, and that the Egyptians wept for him seventy days.[[123]](#footnote-123) These days of mourning bring us to Succoth. Yaakov’s journey to Machpela will begin on Succoth.

\* \* \*

**From Yom Yerushalayim[[124]](#footnote-124) (Iyar 28) till Tisha B’Av is 70 days.**

Temple was destroyed on Tisha B’Av and 1900 years and 70 days earlier, we gained the Temple mount again.

**From Tisha B’Av (Av 9) till Shemini Atzeret is 70 days.**

The place where we spent time with HaShem in an exclusive manner on Shemini Atzeret was destroyed seventy days and 1900+ years earlier. The place where the Torah was kept in a hidden manner (Holy of Holies) was destroyed on Tisha B’Av is celebrated in a very public manner sevet days and 1900+ years later.

**From Shemini Atzeret till the eighth days of Chanukah is 70 days.**

This suggests that in two periods of 70 days we went from the destruction of both the first and second Temples, on Tisha B’Av, to the date when the Temple was re-dedicated after being cleased and restored in the days of the Maccabees. We went from the disasters to the restoration.

**If we go forward another 70 days, from the 8th day of Channukah, we come Purim.**

Now we go from the churban, the destruction, of both Temples, by our enemies, and we come to Purim which was the celebration of the destruction of our enemies.

**If we go forward another 70 days, from Purim (Adar 14), we come to Lag B’Omer on Iyar 18.**

The minor holiday of Lag BaOmer commemorates three historical events:

1. The end of a period of mourning for thousands of students of Hakham Akiva who died in a plague, the great plague Askera, during the counting of the omer. This respiratory plague is the worst of all 913 known fatal diseases and is often a punishment for slander and malicious gossip.

 2. The anniversary of the death of the author of the Zohar, Hakham Shimon Bar Yochai. On this day he revealed the deepest secrets of the Torah, as found in the Zohar, and it was the day his soul ascended to it’s source.

3. Bar Kochba’s revolt against the Romans. This was an attempt at ushering in the Messianic era.

Lag BaOmer is an oasis of joy in the midst of the sad Sephirah period which is almost unnoticed by most contemporary Jews. Yet it contains historic lessons of such great severity that this generation must not only unravel the mystery of Lag BaOmer but will discover that its own fate is wrapped in the crevices of its secrets. **Lag BaOmer, according to our Sages, deals with the deepest secrets of the future Messianic Age**. These are the inner secrets of the Torah which are revealed on Lag BaOmer, to the diligent talmid. Because it contains these secrets, we cannot discuss it openly or directly, but rather we must hint towards these answers and the talmid must “fall in” on his own.

Thus, we have seven periods of 70 days which take us forward and backward from destruction to restoration.

## Table of Seventy Days

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Shabbat HaGadol(Nisan 12) | till | Sivan 23 | 70 days | The Sabbath before Pesach is called “Shabbat Hagadol” (Lit. The Great Sabbath) when we read the haftorah which tells us of the “Great (Gadol) and Awesome day”, before the redemption when Elijah the Prophet will come with his unique message found in Malachi 3:4-24. One of the reasons this haftorah is chosen is because on Pesach the world is judged for its crops. Our Sages relate that for not observing the laws of the tithes, famine (remember Ruth!) comes. On Sivan 23, Mordechai's edict to save the Jews is sent. Esther 8:9-11, Mid. Rab. - Gen C:7  |
| Destruction decree(Nisan 13) | till | Letters sent (Sivan 23) | 70 days | Recall, in Megillat Esther, that the original decree calling for the destruction of the Jews was sent out on the 13th day of Nisan (3:12). Several days later Haman was hanged and Esther pleaded from the king to repeal this decree (8:3‑6). Achashverosh agreed; however, the actual letters were not sent out until the 23rd of Sivan - some two months later (8:9)! What took so long? By carefully comparing these two dates, we again find an amazing reminder of Yirmiyahu's prophecy of the seventy years. Between the 13th of Nisan until the 23rd of Sivan - 70 days elapsed (17+30+23). During these seventy days, all of the Jews throughout the Persian empire were under the tremendous peril of impending destruction, thinking that their doom was inevitable. Could this be an ironic reminder to the Jewish people that they had not heeded Yirmiyahu's prophecy of what he expected from Bne Israel once the seventy years had expired?  |
| Passover 7th day  | till | Tammuz 3 | 70 days | Pesach is the celebration of our redemption from Egypt after 10 great miracles, includng the 7th plague of hail mixed with fire. On Tammuz 3, HaShem took some of the hail leftover from the plague and hurled them at Gibeon in the days of Joshua. At the same time Joshua ordered the sun and the moon to stand still. |
| Pesach Sheni(Iyar 15) | till | Shivah Asar B’Tammuz(Tammuz 17) | 70 days | The second Passover allowed those who were defiled by the dead on Passover to have a korban Pesach. On Tammuz 17 the luchot were broken, the korban tamid was discontinued, Jerusalem’s walls were breached, Apostamus burnt the Torah scroll, and an Idol was placed in the Temple. These 5 things defiled the Temple. |
| Lag B’Omer(Iyar 18) | till | Rosh Hodesh Av(the 9 days) | 70 days | Lag B’Omer is an oasis of joy in the midst of the sad Sephirah period. **Lag BaOmer, according to our Sages, deals with the deepest secrets of the future Messianic Age**. Rosh Chodesh Av begins a period of -mourning leading up to Tisha B'Av, the ninth day of Av on which both Temples in Jerusalem were destroyed. |
| Yom Yerushalim(Iyar 28) | till | Tisha B’Av(Av 9) | 70 days | Temple was destroyed on Tisha B’Av and 1900+ years earlier, and 70 days later, we gained the Temple mount again. |
| Shavuot | till | Tu B’Av | 70 days | Shavuot was the betrothat of the Bne Israel to HaShem. Tu B’Ab is focused on the love between Husband and wife, between Israel and HaShem. Our Sages point out that virtually every major holiday will pale away after the Mashiach arrives and Tu B’Ab will come to the forefront. When we look at the structure of Pesach, we see that the first and last days are Yamim Tovim, with a bridge of Chol Hamoed. In the future, Tisha B’Av will become a moed. The seventh day after Tishah B’Ab will be the culmination of that festival of redemption — Tu B’Ab. Just as the seventh day     marks the height of Pesach, so, too, Tu B’Ab will be the peak of the festival of redemption. |
| Shivah Asar B’Tammuz (Tammuz 17) | till | 4th Day of Creation(Elul 28) | 70 days | On Tammuz 17 the luchot were broken, the korban tamid was discontinued, Jerusalem’s walls were breached, Apostamus burnt the Torah scroll, and an Idol was placed in the Temple. Each of these five removed the light of world. On the fourth day God created the sun, moon, and stars. |
| Tammuz 18 | till | Rosh Hashana(Tishri 1) | 70 days | On Tammuz 18 Moses ascended Mt. Sinai to atone for the sin of the golden calf. The erev rav had made a different god. On Hoshana Rabba we crown HaShem as our King. |
| Tisha B’Ab (Ab 9) | till | Shemini Atzeret(Tishri 22) | 70 days | On Tisha B’Av God judged His people by destroying His House. On Shemni Atzeret we hang out with HaShem to enjoy each other’s presence. |
| Tu B’AV | till | Tishri 27 | 70 days | Tu B’Ab is focused on the love between Husband and wife, between Israel and HaShem. Our Sages point out that virtually every major holiday will pale away after the Mashiach arrives and Tu B’Ab will come to the forefront. When we look at the structure of Pesach, we see that the first and last days are Yamim Tovim, with a bridge of Chol Hamoed. In the future, Tisha B’Av will become a moed. The seventh day after Tishah B’Ab will be the culmination of that festival of redemption — Tu B’Ab. Just as the seventh day     marks the height of Pesach, so, too, Tu B’Ab will be the peak of the festival of redemption. The Anshe Knesset HaGedolah weakened the yetzer hara of illicit relations after three days of prayer, on Tishri 27. Yoma 69 |
| Elul 25 | till | Kislev 7 | 70 days | From the creation of the world, when God said, “Let there be light”, till seventy days later when the Zohar says: I SEE HIM BUT NOT NOW: since some of these things were fulfilled at that time and some later, while some are left for the Messiah. We have learnt that God will one day build Jerusalem and display a certain fixed star flashing with seventy streamers and seventy flames in the midst of the firmament, and it will shine and flash for seventy days. It will appear on the sixth day of the week on the twenty-fifth of the sixth month, and will disappear on the seventh day after seventy days.[[125]](#footnote-125) On Kislev sven, Yehoiakim burned the scroll dictated by Jeremiah. ***Jeremiah 36:23*** *Taanit, concluding chapter* |
| Rosh Hashana(Tishri 1) | till | Kislev 13 | 70 days | On Kislev 13, Ezra and the Israelites returned to Jerusalem, from Babylon. They left on the 12th day of Nisan. Ezra 8:31-32. O Rosh Hashana we crown HaShem King. It is a day of remebrance. |
| Yom Kippur | till | Kislev 21 | 70 days | From the day of Atonements till Ezra has the people put away foreign wives and delivers an address exhorting the people to keep the Torah.Ezra 9:5-15 |
| Succoth(Tishri 15) | till | 1st day of Chanukah(Kislev 15)  | 70 days | From the Yom Tob of Succoth when we rest in HaShem’s protection in our Succah, till the first day of Chanukah when we rest from a victorious war gainst our enemies by relighting the menora in the Temple. Yaakov died on this date and was mourned for seventy days. After they traveled for a day, Yosef declared a seven day mourning for his father, thus he established chanukah. |
| Hoshana Rabbah(Tishri 21) | till | 7th day of Chanukah(Tevet 1) | 70 days | Hoshana Rabbah means: “bring us great salvation, please”. On Chanukah we celebrate the great salvation from the Syrian-Greeks. |
| Shemini Atzeret(Tishri 22) | till | 8th day of Chanukah(Tevet 2) | 70 days | On Shemni Atzeret we hang out with HaShem to enjoy each other’s presence. The date when the Temple was re-dedicated after being cleansed and restored in the days of the Maccabees. We went from the disasters to the restoration. |
| Heshvan 27 | till | Tu B’Shevat(Shevat 15) | 70 days | Noach leaves the ark, receives the rainbow covenant, and plants a grape tree. Tu B’Shevat is the new year for trees. The Pri Tzaddik points out, it is not called the "Rosh Hashanah for the trees," but for "the tree" (singular); whenever the word "tree" is used, it always refers to Torah, which is called "Aitz Chaim," the Tree of Life. |
| 1st day of chanukah(Kislev 25) | till | Adar 7 | 70 days | Mattathias the priest (Maccabee) rises up to lead the Jewish people against the Syrian Greeks in a war of independence. 70 days later we see the birth of Moshe the priest is born to lead the Jewish people in redemption. Moshe also died on this day. |
| 8th day of Chanukah(Tevet 2) | till | Purim(II Adar 14) | 70 days | Now we go from the rest from destroying our enemies, and we come to Purim which was the celebration of the destruction of our enemies. |
| Asarah B'Tevet(Tevet 10) | till | Purim Katan(I Adar 14) | 70 days | Babylonian emperor Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to Jerusalem on Tevet 10. The Talmud[[126]](#footnote-126) suggests we avoid doing anything sad on Purim Katan, such as giving eulogies or saying the penitential prayer, called Tachanun*.* |
| Tu B’Shevat(Shevat 15) | till | II Adar 25 | 70 days | Tu B’Shevat is the new year for trees. The Pri Tzaddik points out, it is not called the "Rosh Hashanah for the trees", but for "the tree" (singular); whenever the word "tree" is used, it always refers to Torah, which is called "Aitz Chaim", the Tree of Life. This is an allusion to the fact that Noach’s world was a re-creation which mirrored creation. Seventy days later we come to the date of the creation of the world, when God said, “Let there be light”. |
| Tu B’Shevat(Shevat 15) | till | Nisan 26 |  | Tu B’Shevat is the new year for trees. The Pri Tzaddik points out, it is not called the "Rosh Hashanah for the trees", but for "the tree" (singular); whenever the word "tree" is used, it always refers to Torah, which is called "Aitz Chaim", the Tree of Life. Nisan 26  Joshua, disciple of Moses, dies.  Taanit 1,  Bava Batra 14b |
| I Adar 5(or Shevat 5) | till | Passover 2nd day(Nisan 16) | 70 days | Barley for the wave offering on Nisan 16 is planted 70 days before Passover on I Adar 3.[[127]](#footnote-127) On I Adar 3, Ezra's temple is complete and inauguration begins. Ezra 6:15 |
| Shevat 7 | till | Passover 2nd day(Nisan 16) | 70 days | Barley for the wave offering on Nisan 16 is planted 70 days before Passover on I Adar 3. - Mechilta D’Rabbi Ishmael 16:35 |
| Purim (II Adar 14) | till | Lag B’Omer(Iyar 18) | 70 days | The end of the Sephirah period of mourning. The anniversary of the death of the author of the Zohar, Hakham Shimon Bar Yochai. On this day he revealed the deepest secrets of the Torah, as found in the Zohar, and it was the day his soul ascended to its source. Lag B’Omer is an oasis of joy in the midst of the sad Sephirah period. **Lag BaOmer, according to our Sages, deals with the deepest secrets of the future Messianic Age**. |
| II Adar 3 | till | Pesach Sheni(Iyar 14) | 70 days | Adar 3 is when Ezra's temple is complete in 516 BCE. Ezra 6:15 Ezra returned to the Land of Israel from Babylonia. The Children of Israel celebrate the inauguration of the Temple, day 1. Malbim (Artscroll Tanach, Ezra, page 147) The second Passover allowed those who were defiled by the dead on Passover to have a korban Pesach.  |
| II Adar 25 (Let there be light) | till | Shavuot (Sivan 6) | 70 days | **Adar 25 was the Creation of the heavens and earth**. In this example, we see that from the creation of the world till the giving of the Torah, demonstrates that the world was created only so that the Bne Israel could accept the Torah.  |

Heshvan 27 > Tu B’Shevat > II Adar 25 > Shavuot > Tu B’Av > Tishri 27

Yom Yerushalyim > Tisha B’Av > Shemini Atzeret > Chanukah 8 > Purim > Lag B’Omer > Rosh Chodesh Av

Tammuz 28 > Yom Kippur > Kislev 21

Tammuz 18 > Rosh Hashana > Kislev 13 >

Yom Yerushalyim > Tisha B’Av > Hoshana Rabba > 7th day of Chanukah

II Adar 3 > Pesach Sheni > Shivah Asar B’Tammuz > Elul 28 (4th day of creation)

Passover 7th day > Tammuz 3

\* \* \*

From Tammuz 17 till Rosh HaShana is 70 days. The sin of the golden calf took place on Tammuz 17. On that day we made an idol our king. Seventy days later, on Rosh HaShana, we declare HaShem to be our King.

\* \* \*

From Shevat 1 till Nisan 10 is seventy days. There are 70 days from the 1st Shevat when Moshe began to expound the Torah,[[128]](#footnote-128) until 10th Nisan when they crossed the Jordan, during which time neither they, nor their children had been punished.

\* \* \*

From Tisha B’Av, on Ab 9, till Shemini Atzeret is seventy days.

Just as the atzeret of Shavuot (the moment of revelation at Sinai) comes after the 49 days of counting the Omer, so also does Shemini Atzeret come after the 49 days of Elul + the days of Tishri (Rosh Hashana is 49 hours and is considered one long day). Each of these days is a kind of atzeret, a pause, a day of extra connection with God at the end of a long journey. The Torah is given on the atzeret of Shavuot and we rejoice in the Torah (Simcha Torah) on Shemini Atzeret. Clearly there is a very dynamic connection between these two periods of forty-nine days!

On Tisha B’Ab, five national calamities occurred:

* 1. Acceptance of the spies’ report.
	2. The first Temple was destroyed.
	3. The second Temple was destroyed.
	4. The Bar Kochba revolt was crushed.
	5. The Temple area was plowed.

Thus the place where we spent time with HaShem in an exclusive manner on Shemini Atzeret was destroyed seventy days and 1900+ years earlier. The place where the Torah was kept in a hidden manner (Holy of Holies) was destroyed on Tisha B’Av is celebrated in a very public manner seventy days and 1900+ years later.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

In the eighth cycle of the 19 years, we have the following leap years (pregnant years). Note that each of the years listed in this table are exactly 19 years apart:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **5708****1948** | **5727****1967** | **5746****1986** | **5765****2005** | **5784****2024** |

1948 - State of Israel

1967 - 6 day war

1986 - Pollard arrested. New Israeli shekel.

2005 - Gave up Gush Kativ

2024 - Gaza massacre.

In a leap year (*a pregnant year -* שנתהעיבור *- shenat haibur*), unusual events begin in Av. This is because the earliest date one can intercalate the calendar is in Av.[[129]](#footnote-129)

Yosef’s power is secretly coronated in Av, and is revealed in Adar – to the greatest extent that is possible for it to be revealed. Whatever began in Av of 5783 is currently being revealed in Adar of 5784. Thus we have nine (9) months between Av and Adar bet. The Haggada says that nine are the months of childbearing, of pregnancy. Av is the conception of that which will be born in Adar. Never the less, that which was conceived in Av becomes visible three months later, just as a pregnant woman begins to show three months after conception.

The Gemara says, as I understand it, something happens in every leap year. Every time we have a leap year in the third year, the sixth year, the eighth year etc. of the 19 year cycle, every time you have a leap year something is conceived in a hidden way – in Av - and is revealed at the end of those nine months and moves forward the Messianic process.

Three months after a woman becomes pregnant she begins to show her pregnancy. This suggests that three months before Heshvan, in the leap year of the cycle, (Av, Elul, Tishri) the conception of an issue which will manifest at the end of Tishri.

* The expulsion of Gush Kativ (August 15, 2005 – Av 10, 5783) and economic reform led directly to Hamas being able to massacre people on Tishri 22, 5784.
* Judicial reform in Av (Av 8, 5783 – July 23, 2023) led to the massacre of the Jews on Shemini Atzeret (October 7, 2023 - Tishri 22, 5784)

The advent of Mashiach ben David happens because Mashiach ben Yosef dies in the war.

19 Year Cycle – Cyan years are leap years (in the coming table), Jewish ‘leap year’ – In Hebrew שנת העיבור - shenat haibur. Literally *shenat haibur* means ‘pregnant year,’ and there is actually, an underlying connection between the concept of pregnancy and the Jewish leap year. Kabbalah teaches us that the ‘pregnant year’ includes a deep secret about the world and the Jewish path. Let us take this opportunity to delve deeper into understanding the significance of the Hebrew calendar in general, and the secret of *shenat* *haibur* in particular.

Watch the month of spring (Aviv), and observe Pesach to Hashem your G-d: for in the month of spring Hashem your G-d brought you out of Egypt by night.”[[130]](#footnote-130)

Rashi explains that the word Aviv indicates the season in which ripe ears for the Omer offering is produced. The Torah instructs us to watch before the month of Pesach (Nissan) whether this would be the case, if not then we must intercalate the year.”[[131]](#footnote-131) This is the most well-known Torah source for establishing a pregnant year. Therefore, we need to adjust our lunar calendar to the solar calendar by adding an extra month before the month of Pesach, whenever the discrepancy between the lunar and the solar cycle adds up enough days to fill a month.

**The Secret of the Pregnant Year (Sod HaIbur)**

The reason Jewish leap year is called a ‘pregnant year’ rather than a ‘leap year’ is explained through the concept in Kabbalah called sod haibur – The secret pregnancy.[[132]](#footnote-132)This inner secret symbolizes that our bleak mundane reality carries within it a secret higher level of reality – the pregnancy of a new reality growing within the womb of the established realm. Just as pregnancy entails the existence of a fetus growing within the womb of the mother, the hidden reality of sod haibur keeps growing within our revealed level of existence. It demonstrates the existence of the renewal within the established. Within the framework of year, grows the pattern of months. Just as pregnancy is hidden and not recognizable until at least a third of its term, likewise the external established world is pregnant with an inner hidden spiritual reality.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **YearofCycle** | **Cycle 1** | **Cycle 2** | **Cycle 3** | **Cycle 4** | **Cycle 5** |
| 1 | 57011941 | 57201960 | 57391979 | 57581998 | 57772017 |
| 2 | 57021942 | 57211961 | 57401980 | 57591999 | 57782018 |
| 3 | 57031943 | 57221962 | 57411981 | 57602000 | 57792019 |
| 4 | 57041944 | 57231963 | 57421982 | 57612001 | 57802020 |
| 5 | 57051945 | 57241964 | 57431983 | 57622002 | 57812021 |
| 6 | 57061946 | 57251965 | 57441984 | 57632003 | 57822022 |
| 7 | 57071947 | 57261966 | 57451985 | 57642004 | 57832023 |
| **8** | **5708****1948** | **5727****1967** | **5746****1986** | **5765****2005** | **5784****2024** |
| 9 | 57091949 | 57281968 | 57471987 | 57662006 | 57852025 |
| 10 | 57101950 | 57291969 | 57481988 | 57672007 | 57862026 |
| 11 | 57111951 | 57301970 | 57491989 | 57682008 | 57872027 |
| 12 | 57121952 | 57311971 | 57501990 | 57692009 | 57882028 |
| 13 | 57131953 | 57321972 | 57511991 | 57702010 | 57892029 |
| 14 | 57141954 | 57331973 | 57521992 | 57712011 | **5790****2030** |
| 15 | 57151955 | 57341974 | 57531993 | 57722012 | 57912031 |
| 16 | 57161956 | 57351975 | 57541994 | 57732013 | 57922032 |
| 17 | 57171957 | 57361976 | 57551995 | 57742014 | 57932033 |
| 18 | 57181958 | 57371977 | 57561996 | 57752015 | 57942034 |
| 19 | 57191959 | 57381978 | 57571997 | 57762016 | 57952035 |

It is well known that when a man makes an intimate connection with his wife, he has knowledge (Daat) of his wife. Thus, we can say that conception occurs with Daat, the action that comes immediately after Keter, Chakma, and Bina.

***Eruvin 65a*** *Anyone who becomes settled through wine has the knowledge (Daat) of his Creator ... has the knowledge (Daat) of the Seventy Elders; wine was given with seventy letters,[[133]](#footnote-133) and the mystery* (of Torah) *was given with seventy letters* (sod, mystery, also equals seventy), *when wine goes in, secrets go out.*

Adar 25 was the day that Miriam conceived Yeshua and visited Elizabeth. This ties the conception of the Living Torah with the creation of the world. Further, seventy days after Adar 25 brings us to Sivan 6, the day of the giving of the Torah. Now Yeshua is the Living Torah.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Tishri 15 (Succoth day 1) | Kislev 25 (Chanukah day 1) | 70 days |
| Tishri 16 (Succoth day 2) | Kislev 26 (Chanukah day 2) | 70 days |
| Tishri 17 (Succoth day 3) | Kislev 27 (Chanukah day 3) | 70 days |
| Tishri 18 (Succoth day 4) | Kislev 28 (Chanukah day 4) | 70 days |
| Tishri 19 (Succoth day 5) | Kislev 29 (Chanukah day 5) | 70 days |
| Tishri 20 (Succoth day 6) | Kislev 30 / Tevet 1 (Chanukah day 6) | 70 days |
| Tishri 21 (Succoth day 7) | Tevet 1 (Chanukah day 7) | 70 days |
| Tishri 22 (Shemini Atzeret / Simchat Torah) | Tevet 2 (Chanukah – day 8) | 70 days |

**Glossary**

* **Chachmah** means wisdom, insight
* **Binah** means comprehension, understanding
* **Daat** means knowledge
* **Chesed** means kindness, inclusiveness, merging
* **Gevurah** means strictness, limiting
* **Tiferet** means beauty, balance
* **Netzach** means victory, talent
* **Hod** means splendor, riches
* **Yesod** means foundation, formation, action
* **Malchut** means kingship, authority, final form
* **shebe** means “within”

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1. Our Sages [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Incidentally, since the 70 nations of the world don't include the nation of Israel, it seems that when the number 70 is used in a symbolic sense, there is always one "extra." For that reason, the number 70, when it appears symbolically in various places in the Torah, is really 71. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The Hebrew word ‘Daat‘ is a good alternate word for ‘connection’. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Bne Israel = The Children of Israel. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Six thousand years, plus a thousand-year [Sabbath](sabbath.html) - see [Talmud](orallaw.html) [Bavli](bavel.html) Sanhedrin 97a [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. There are seventy facets to Torah. - Zohar, Bereshit 36 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Midrash Yelamdeinu [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. According to this he had not slain anyone. Other legends, however, relate that he accidentally killed Cain, and he argued that his punishment would be deferred for a greater time than that of Cain, who *intentionally* murdered Abel. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. To their objection that a Flood was imminent he replied that it would certainly be postponed for many generations. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. **Ra**bbi **SH**lomo **I**tzhaki;  [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. From sources quoted on verse 23 [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Iyov (Job) 24:21 [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Great Sanhedrin. ch. 10, not found in our edition, but in Gen. Rabbah 23:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Genesis Rabbah 23:4:5. See also Eruvin 18b. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. [Daat](daat.html) is first used in the Torah (Bereshit – Genesis 4:1) to describe [marital relations](marriageact.html), the ultimate form of [knowledge](knowledge.html), of daat. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Gematria [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. The value of seventy. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Ketoret is the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) transliteration of *incense*. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. This is the sharp sense of arrival, of being THERE. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. *The Hebrew Letters: Channels Of Creative Consciousness*, by Yitzchak Ginsburgh [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Seventy is the traditional number of [Gentile](gen-jew.html) nations, and the seventy bullocks are offered to make atonement for them. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Israel [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Midrash Otiyot d’Rabbi Akiba [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. See the study titled: [REMEZ](remez.html). [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. The Vilna Gaon. - the book of “Siddur” [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. *The wisdom in the* [*Hebrew*](hebrew.html) *alphabet: the sacred* [*letters*](letters.html) *as a guide to* [*Jewish*](gen-jew.html) *to Jewish Deed and Thought***,** By Michael L. Munk [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Hakham means “wise one” and is used as a title by the sfardim for their Rabbis. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Which is what caused the Sotah (A Sotah is a woman accused of adultery) to stray, and therefore, what the Nazir vowed to avoid. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Rashi: the Gematria of yayin, wine, is seventy. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. The sharp sense of arrival. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. [Numbers Rabbah](orallaw.html) 10; Tanchuma 8 [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. The wicked are thereby rewarded for the little good they do in this world (Rashi). [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Mishle (Proverbs) 31:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Ibid. 23:31 [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. יתאדם כי translated ‘when it is red’, is taken as reflexive of דם ‘blood’. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Isaiah Horowitz, (c. 1565 – March 24, 1630) [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Sha’arei Leshem, p. 343 [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Brit bein HaBetarim [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. *Seder Olam*, The Rabbinic View Of Biblical Chronology, translated and with commentary by Heinrich w. Guggenheimer, page 8 [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Bereshit (Genesis) 15:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Cf. Bereshit (Genesis) 15:9 ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. The actual sojourn of Israel in Egypt was only [two](two.html) hundred and [ten](ten.html) years. The figure 430 can only be obtained by reckoning the period as beginning thirty years before the birth of [Isaac](isaac.html). [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Torah [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. From [Midrash](orallaw.html) Tanchuma 2; Gen. Rabbah 49; see Sotah 32a [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Tehillim (Psalms) 68:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. The traditional number of the languages of man, i.e., the Torah was given to all humanity. Cf. M. Joseph, Judaism as Creed and Life, pp. 157 seq. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah) 23 [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Perhaps referring to the sparks that fly off when it beats the anvil. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Commentators differ as to the exact point of the comparison; v. Sanh., Sonc. ed., p. 214, n. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. The Heb. is ha-koloth (plural), not ha-kol (singular). [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. A poetic way of saying that the Divine truths promulgated at the Revelation were intended for all mankind, and were not to be the prerogative of Israel. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. A vivid metaphor describing their fear (Y.T.). [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. For on the contrary this Revelation was their charter of life. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. [Babylonian Talmud](orallaw.html), *Shabbat* 88a. The passage draws the metaphor of the hammer and rock from Jeremiah 23:29. Other *midrashim* teach that although the nations were offered the Torah, they did not accept it; e.g., *Pesiqta Rabbati* 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. [Hebrew](hebrew.html) יהוסף formed by the addition of ה to the usual יוסף. This name is found in Psalm 81:5, the psalm for [Rosh HaShana](teruah.html). [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. I.e. Joseph. E.V. ‘He’, i.e. God. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. The rendering is based on the [Midrashic](orallaw.html) interpretation. E.V. ‘The speech of one that I knew not did I hear’. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Seventy is the traditional number of Gentile nations, and the seventy bullocks are offered to make atonement for them. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Israel [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Nitzutzei Orot (Ramaz), Zohar III 227b [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. <http://www.wikinoah.org/en/index.php/Attributes_of_the_Seventy_Nations> [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Pesiqta Zutresa; Torah Sheleimah 9:110 [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. From Meam Loez, Genesis IV 3b, page 473. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Shemot (Exodus) 1:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. The Hebrew is indicating a single soul. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. A thirty week old fetus is considered viable. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Lit., ‘went out to the air space of the world’. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Its mouth and the lungs. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Its Navel and the hole between the [two](two.html) upper chambers of the heart. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Iyov (Job) 29:3. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. [Midrash](orallaw.html) Tanhuma [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Shemot (Exodus) 3:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Bamidbar (Numbers) 11:16. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. According to the [Midrash](orallaw.html) Rabbah - Numbers 13:20, these elders received prophecy when they were gathered to Moshe, [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Midrash Yelamdenu [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. This refers to the seventy elders, who, together with Moses, were traditionally regarded as the first great Sanhedrin of seventy one (seventy Elders plus Moshe). [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. A term synonymous, in Rabbinic literature, with scholars. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Lit. ‘old age’, ‘maturity’. V. preceding note. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. The important thing about them being that they are scholars, not that they are youths. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Shemot (Exodus) 3:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Shemot (Exodus) 18 [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. Shemot (Exodus) 34:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 24:23 [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. I Kings 22:10 [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. Sanh. IV, 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. The ordinary translation is ‘her husband’, the husband of the ‘woman of valor’. The Haggadist here renders ‘her (Israel’s) Master’, ‘Lord’, i.e. God. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. Mishlei (Proverbs) 31:23 [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. Mamrim 1.1-2 [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. Bamidbar (Numbers) 11:16. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. Devarim 17:8 [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. *The* [*Hebrew*](hebrew.html)[*Letters*](letters.html)*: Channels of Creative Consciousness***,** By Yitzchak Ginsburgh [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. In *Yahel Ohr* 2:119:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. Zohar 3:249b, Siddur Ha'Rashash [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. The first verse introduces the psalm and is not counted. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. Divrei Torah 3:30 [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. Avodat HaKodesh [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. Zohar Chodosh, Balak, from Derech Kochav MeYaakov, Even Shleima, Chapter 11, section 5 [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. By prophetic insight Adam is supposed to have foreseen that David would die on the day of his birth, and so he presented him with a share of his own life. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. Tehillim (Psalms) 3:17 [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. Tehillim (Psalms) 10:4. [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. AM: **Anno Mundi** (Latin: "in the year of the world"), abbreviated as AM or A.M., refers to a **Calendar** era based on the Biblical creation of the world. [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. *The Jewish Timeline Encyclopedia*, by Mattis Kantor, page 41. [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. 2889 plus 2889 equals 5778. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. Esther 3:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. Esther 7:10 [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. I.e. after seventy verses we read that he was hanged on the gallows whose height was fifty cubits. [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. Daniel 9:24-27 [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. Ibid. chapters 7-12 [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. Ibid. 3-19 [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. Ibid. 2 [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
111. Bereshit (Genesis) 50:3 [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
112. 18.9–22.7 inches. [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
113. Amalek has the same gematria as sufek the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word for 'doubt'. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
114. Sukkah 55b [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
115. Bamidbar Rabbah 1, 3 [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
116. Seventy is the traditional number of Gentile nations, and the seventy bullocks are offered to make atonement for them. [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
117. Israel. [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
118. Who steer their course by the stars. [The star with which R. Joshua was acquainted has been identified as Halley’s comet whose periodic time is about 75 years. Brodetsky, Z. disputes this view, since one of the periodic returns of Halley’s comet was in the year 66, whereas the journey of R. Gamaliel to Rome was in the year 95. It remains nevertheless remarkable that the periodic time of at least one comet was known to R. Joshua in the second century, about 1500 years before this phenomenon became known even to the most civilized nations. V. Feldman, W.M. Rabbinical Mathematics, pp. 11 and 216.] [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
119. Shemot (Exodus) 15:27, 16:1; Bamidbar (Numbers).33:9, 10 [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
120. Chessed, Mercy - Gevurah, Strength - Tif'eret, Beauty - Nezah, Victory - Hod, Glory - Yesod, Foundation - Malchut, Kingship [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
121. Chakmah, Wisdom - Binah, Understanding - Daat, Knowledge [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
122. First day of Creation, according to R. Yehoshua. Rosh Hashanah 19a [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
123. Bereshit (Genesis) 50:3 [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
124. Yom Yerushalayim (Jerusalem Day) is the anniversary of the liberation and unification of Jerusalem under Jewish sovereignty that occurred during the Six Day War. It is one of four holiday (in addition to Yom HaShoah, Yom HaZikaron, and Yom HaAtzmaut) that were added to the Jewish calendar in the 20th century. Yom Yerushalayim is celebrated on the 28th of the month of Iyar (one week before Shavuot). [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
125. Soncino Zohar, Bemidbar, Section 3, Page 212b [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
126. Megilah 6b [↑](#footnote-ref-126)
127. Menachot 85a, Tosfot “VeZorah”, Baba Metzia 106a, Tosfot “VeKayyma” [↑](#footnote-ref-127)
128. Debarim (Deuteronomy) 1:3 [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
129. maharsha on Sanhedrin 12a - “Those who would gather gathered,” however, in the areas under the rulership of Yishmael to set the ‘appointee’ [i.e. the leap month{\*}], and this was necessary to be done in a hidden and secretive manner so that Esav and the powers of the ס”מ would not realize. Therefore they did this in the month that Aharon Hacohen passed away [i.e. Av], to prevent Esav from realizing that they were gathering to add a month to the year. This subterfuge would be accomplished because it was the month that Esav and the forces of evil had succeeded in destroying the Temple {\*} This could very well be a reference to MBY, not a leap month. Perhaps he is appointed in Av. This would explain the simcha of Av in the times of Moshiach. I would guess that he must be appointed in Av, like the Maharsha says, in order to trick Esav and the Satan, who believe they have power then. Moshiach is born from the ashes of the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash; Israel is born from the ashes of the Holocaust. Esav believes he is destroying, and Hashem uses his destructive acts for building. [↑](#footnote-ref-129)
130. Debarim (Deuteronomy) 16:1. [↑](#footnote-ref-130)
131. Rashi, Debarim (Deuteronomy) 16:1. [↑](#footnote-ref-131)
132. See for example*Zohar*, part 3, 216a. [↑](#footnote-ref-132)
133. Rashi: the Gematria of yayin, wine, is seventy. [↑](#footnote-ref-133)