

Daily Teaching
24 Kislev 5768
Tuesday, December 4, 2007

Miketz #3

from Harav Yitzchak Ginsburgh

23 and 37 in Bereisheet

One of the most important and ubiquitous pairs of numbers (a numerical *michlol*, in Hebrew) in the Torah in general and in regard to creation in particular is 23 and 37.¹ These two numbers are first and foremost the numerical values of the names of the two higher aspects of the soul, called the surrounding aspects (*makifim*): the singular one, **יחידה** = 37 and the living one, **חיה** = 23. Before looking at some of the appearances of these numbers in context of creation let us mention that the soul (especially its two surrounding aspects) is to the body as the light of a *sefirah* is to its vessel. 23 itself is the numerical value of the word **זו**, which means "glow" and is one of the 13 different Hebrew synonyms for "light." Therefore, in our selection of numerical finding involving 23 and 37 in creation, we have stressed those that relate to light:

- The third verse of the Torah, and hence the third verse of *parshat Bereisheet*, describes the creation of light. It reads: "God said: 'Let there be light!' and there was light" **אור ויהי אור** and has exactly 23 letters. The numerical value of the word "light" **אור** itself is $207 = 9 \cdot 23$!
- The first and last words of the first three verses of the Torah are: **בראשית... הארץ**. **אור** **והארץ... המים**. **ויאמר... אור** "In the beginning... the earth. And the earth... the waters. [God] said... light." Their *gematria* is 2070, or the product of 10 and the value of "light" **אור**, 207. But 2070 is also the product of 90 and 23). 2070 is also 6 multiplied by 345, the value of "Moshe" **משה**, indicating that the average value of each word is "Moshe."
- Before light was created, the Torah says: "And the spirit of God hovered over the face of the waters" **ורוח אלהים מרחפת על פני המים**. The numerical value of these words is $1369 = 37^2$.
- Finally, the numerical value of the entire first verse: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" **בראשית ברא אלהים את השמים ואת הארץ**, is 2701, the product of 73 and 37, where 73 is the numerical value of "wisdom," **חכמה**.



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23 and 37 in Miketz

We have already mentioned that *parshat* Miketz is the tenth *parshah* in the Torah. The *gematria* of **מִקֵּץ** "Miketz" is $230 = 23 \cdot 10$. Even more beautifully, 23 is the tenth prime number, while 37 is the 13th prime number (13 is the 7th prime number, thus revealing another mathematical relationship between these two pairs of numbers).

Let us look at the first verse in our *parshah*: "It came to pass at the end of two full years that Pharaoh was dreaming, and behold, he was standing by the Nile," **וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ** **וְהָנָה עַמְדָּה עַל הַיָּאָר** **שְׁנַתִּים יָמִים וּפְרַעְהָ חָלֵם וְהָנָה עַמְדָּה עַל הַיָּאָר**. In a beautiful example of self-reference, the first verse of the 10th *parshah* has 10 words. This verse also has 37 letters.²

The initials of the first 6 words, **ח ל מ ש י ו** are 370 , or $10 \cdot 37$. There is a further case of self-reference here, because 370 is also the value of the first letter filling of the name of the *parshah* "Miketz" **מִקֵּץ**, which is **מִם קוֹף צַדִּי**.³

Squares and triangles

The *gematria* of these six words is $1600 = 40^2$. 1600 is also the *gematria* of a verse that reveals that the redemption, the freeing of Zion, depends on justice and charity: "Zion will be redeemed through justice and her returnees through righteousness" **צִיּוֹן בַּמִּשְׁפָּט** **וְהָנָה עַמְדָּה עַל הַיָּאָר**.⁴ Indeed the value of "Zion," **צִיּוֹן**, is exactly equal to the value of "Joseph," **יוֹסֵף**, revealing an even stronger and more beautiful link between the two verses!

The remaining words in the verse, "And behold he was standing by the Nile" **וְהָנָה עַמְדָּה עַל הַיָּאָר** $= 496 = \Delta 31$, the *gematria* of "kingdom" (or "kingship"), thus alluding to the king, to Pharaoh himself.

Thus, the first verse of the *parshah* divides grammatically and numerically into two units with 6 and 4 words each. The division of 10 into 6 and 4 echoes the filling of the letter **י**, **י** were the three letter complete the equation $\text{י} = \text{י} + \text{ד}$, or $10 = 6 + 4$.

So now we have found that the 10 words of the first verse of the *parshah* divide into 6 words whose numerical value is a square number and 4 words whose numerical value is a triangular number. Indeed, this same pattern is found in the 5th and 6th words of the verse, "and Pharaoh was dreaming" **וּפְרַעְהָ חָלֵם**. "And Pharaoh," **וּפְרַעְהָ** $= 361 = 19^2$; "was dreaming," **חָלֵם** $= 78 = \Delta 12$!

The *gematria* of the two words "two full years" **יָמִים שְׁנַתִּים** is 900, or 30^2 , which in Hebrew notation can be written as **ל"ב**, the secret of the Jewish mystical heart, as explained elsewhere.⁵ Because these two words are made up of 9 letters, it follows that the average value of each letter is 100, or 10^2 . But, 100 is exactly the value of the second word "full [years]," **יָמִים**.

The numerical value of the rest of the words in the verse (other than "two full years" **יָמִים שְׁנַתִּים**), **וְהָנָה עַמְדָּה עַל הַיָּאָר** **וּפְרַעְהָ חָלֵם וְהָנָה עַמְדָּה עַל הַיָּאָר** is 1196, or the product of 23 and 52, or the product of "Havayah," **יְהוָה**, and "God [of]," **אֱלֹהֵי**.

The Nile

The 10th word of the first verse (the 10th word of the 10th *parshah*⁶) is “the Nile,” **הַיַּאֵר**. In Kabbalah, the Nile symbolizes the unveiling of the essential concealment of the light that is contained within the source of all light, the highest aspect of the *sefirah* of crown. In Hebrew, there are altogether 10 vowel signs, which naturally correspond to the 10 *sefirot*.⁷ The vowel sign that corresponds to the crown is the *kamatz* (ָ), whose name in Hebrew is spelled **קַמֶּץ**,⁸ a permutation of the name of our *parshah* “*Miketz*,” **מִקֶּץ**!

The value of “the Nile,” **הַיַּאֵר**, is 216 or 6^3 , a very important number in Kabbalah. In the whole *parshah*, there are 6 instances of this word, all in reference to Pharaoh’s dream, while in the rest of the Book of Genesis it does not appear at all. The total *gematria* of this word in our *parshah* is therefore $6 \cdot 6^3 = 6^4 = 36^2 = 1296$. 36 is the value of **הַיַּאֵר** in ordinal reckoning.

Now, the first word of the Torah and the first word of *parshat Bereisheet* is **בְּרֵאשִׁית**, “In the beginning,” which comprises 6 letters. The *Zohar* discusses the division of the first word into **בְּרֵא שִׁית**, meaning “[He] created six,” alluding to the six days of creation and the six thousand years that the world will exist in its present state. If we add the value of **בְּרֵאשִׁית** (913) to the value of the six appearance of **הַיַּאֵר** (1296) we get 2209, which is 47^2 , or “selflessness,” **בְּטוֹל**, squared, a number that expresses the consummate experience of the *sefirah* of wisdom, alluding once more to the two wisdoms that make up the number of verses in our *parshah*, as explained in our first teaching on the *parshah*.⁹

Throughout the entire Bible, the word “the Nile” **הַיַּאֵר**, appears 25 times. The breakup is as follows:

6 times in the Book of Genesis (**בְּרֵאשִׁית**)

15 times in the Book of Exodus (**שְׁמוֹת**)

4 times in the Book of Daniel (**דְּנִיאֵל**)

If we add the *gematria* of the Hebrew names of these books together and add to that the value of 25 instances of “the Nile,” **הַיַּאֵר**, we get 7154, or $49 \cdot 146$, where 146 is the number of verses in both *parshat Bereisheet* and our *parshah*, *Miketz*.

¹. The second most important numerical *michlol* is 7 and 13, as explained elsewhere.

². The mathematical signature of a verse is defined as the number of letters times the number of words it contains. In this case, the signature is $10 \cdot 37 = 370$, the first filling of the name of the *parshah*, **מִקֶּץ**, as we shall see.

³. The careful reader will have noticed that we filled the letter **צ** of **מִקֶּץ** as **צְדִי** and not the customary **צְדִיק**. Without going into all the historical details, until the time of the Arizal it was customary to fill the letter *tzadik* as **צְדִי** (pronounced: *tzadi*). However, the Arizal revealed that the word *tzadi* in Aramaic means “chaos” (see Onkelos’ translation to the Genesis 1:2), while the word *tzadik* in Hebrew means “a holy and righteous individual.” Thus, the filling **צְדִי** is the filling that corresponds with the World of Chaos, while the filling **צְדִיק** corresponds to the World of Emanation, the World of Rectification. Of course, in reference to Pharaoh, a source of impurity and spiritual chaos in the world, it is fitting that we use the **צְדִי** filling.

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4. Isaiah 1:27.
 5. See <http://www.inner.org/goldjewelry/aboutjewelry/aboutmysticalheart.php>.
 6. See our past teachings on *parshat Vayeitzei!*
 7. See *What You Need to Know About Kabbalah*, p. 140 for the full correspondence.
 8. The letters קמץ allude to the three highest aspects of the crown, whose lights are described as אור קדמון, אור מצוחצח, and אור צח. 3 times the value of “light” אור is equal to כתר, the Aramaic rendering of “crown.”
 9. 47 is also the value of the two words בני טוב, which describe God’s satisfaction with creation in *parshat Bereisheet*.