

word “powerful” (עז) is itself related to 770 as its value is 77, one-tenth of 770. Multiplying the “powerful” by 10, we sweeten it.

This *gematria* is related to understanding because that is the *sefirah* in which all the harsh judgments are sweetened, since it is the source of all harsh judgments. Just as Samson said, the powerful (עז) is sweetened. We can add that through the song and prayer with which we pray to God, all the harsh judgments that afflict us are sweetened. Indeed, on the first night of the year, we will be eating an apple dipped in honey, in order to sweeten these harsh judgments.

Victory and Acknowledgment: Enemies Fall

Alluding to the two feet and thereby to the *sefirot* of victory and acknowledgment are the words, “A thousand will fall at your side and ten thousand on your right”⁶ (יפל מעדך אלף ורבבה מימינך). This verse is similar to the final words of the Ba'al Shem Tov's father to his young son not to fear anything, because if he fears only the Almighty, all of those who want to harm him will simply fall to his side. The value of these words is 770.

To further delve into the relationship between this verse and the coming year, let us ask: What figure does the number 770 relate to? In other words, to what geometrical symmetrical sets of figures does 770 belong to? The answer is obtained by first observing that $770 = 2 \cdot 385$. 385 is a three-dimensional square pyramid, or in other words, $385 = 1^2 + 2^2 + 3^2 + 4^2 + 5^2 + 6^2 + 7^2 + 8^2 + 9^2 + 10^2$. So, since 770 is two of these square pyramids of 10, its figure is a 3 dimensional diamond of 10.

Now let us look at this verse more carefully. The three words that make up the first half (and which correspond to victory) are: יפל = 120, מעדך = 154, אלף = 111. Their sum is 385, exactly the value of “Divine Presence” (שבכינה) and half of 770! It follows then that the sum of the remaining two words, which correspond with acknowledgment, ורבבה מימינך, is also 385! There is no more beautiful allusion to two halves that come together to form 770.

Wisdom: Thought and Action The soul has three garments, also called its servants: thought, speech, and action. They serve the soul by revealing the inner state of the soul. 770 is equal to the value of the two garments, “thought” (מחשבה) and “action” (מעשה), the inner and external garments of the soul. Bringing these two garments together reminds us of the sages' saying that, “A good thought [intent to do something good], the Almighty casts it into action [even if you were not able to manifest your good intent].” In other words, even if a Jew has a good thought about doing some *mitzvah* or a

good deed, but he is not able to complete it, the Almighty, who reads the mind and the heart will treat it and give reward as if the action was actually carried out.

The thing to know about a “good thought” (מחשבה טובה) is that it is equal to “a good year” (שנה טובה). So the best time to have a good thought is on *Rosh Hashanah*, and by praying and singing to God, God will cast our good thought into action and bless us with a good and sweet year.

Crown, Knowledge, and Beauty: Eleven, Wits, and Body

When we write the word “nine” (תשע) backwards we get another, quite rare, word in Hebrew: עשת. The *Radak* writes⁷ that this root has 2 meanings, with the second meaning dividing into 2. The later researchers into the Hebrew language say that there are 3 different meanings to this root. The first meaning is found in the verse, “His hands are like rods of gold set with emeralds; his belly is polished ivory overlaid with sapphires”⁸ (ידיו גלילי זהב ממלאים בתרשיש מעיו עשת שן (מעלפת ספירים). According to *Rashi* and others, the word עשת here should be understood like a body, a physical reality. It should be clear that this meaning of עשת corresponds to the *sefirah* of beauty, which in the human form is represented by the body.

A second, entirely different meaning that this word has is usually translated as “wits,” as in the verse, “His breath will leave him, he will return to his earth; on that day he has lost his wits”⁹ (תצא רוחו וישב לארמתו ביום ההוא אברו (עשתנתיו). When a person passes away, he loses his consciousness, his wits. Clearly, the meaning of עשת as wits corresponds with the *sefirah* of knowledge.

The third meaning of the word עשת is found in the number “eleven” (עשתי עשר), which is like the word עשת added to “ten” (עשר). Since it means “eleven” this by itself would be a reason to correspond this meaning with the crown, which is described as the “uncountable one,” i.e., the eleventh *sefirah*. This description of the crown as “the uncountable one” was one of the Rebbe's favorite idioms. It is not surprising then that 770 is a multiple of 11, and not just any multiple but $770 = 11 \cdot 70!$

(Excerpted from transcript of the *farbrengen* of 1st of Elul, 5769)

Notes:

- 1) Genesis 28:14. 2) See Obadiah 1:20. 3) Isaiah 1:19. 4) See Tanya *Igeret Hakodesh* 8 and especially *Ibid.* 14, in relation to *Rosh Hashanah*. 5) Judges 14:14. 6) Psalms 91:7. 7) *Sefer Hashorashim*, s.v. עשת. 8) Song of Songs 5:14. 9) Psalms 146:4.

We wish you the entire Jewish people a ketivah vachatimah tovah, a good and sweet year, a year in which we merit seeing the true and complete redemption.