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פרשת ויחי

At times one may despair of progressing in his learning since the amount of Torah there is to learn seems so overwhelming as it is ארכה מארץ...ים; its measure is longer than the earth and wider than the sea.[[1]](#footnote-2)Furthermore, the more we learn, the more we realize there is to learn- Tanach, Mishnayos, Bavli, Yerushalmi, ShulchanAruch with its commentaries, Mishna Brura, Midrash,Mussar, the many Seforim and so on.

What is a solution to counter this feeling? We should take great pride in each little bit that we do as this can spur us to accomplish a lot more. In this light, R’ Chaim Volozin explains איזהו עשיר השמח בחלקו; who is wealthy- one who is happy with his lot, as referring also to spirituality.[[2]](#footnote-3) In fact, in Volozin they would learn a page of Gemara daily completing Shas in less than 8 years, so they saw how vast the Torah is. In a similar way, this is how we can translate[[3]](#footnote-4)לב חכם לימינו ולב כסיל לשמאלו; the heart of a wise man is to the right and the fool to the left. Since LoshonHakodeshis written from right to left the pages one learns is on the right side of the Sefer. Accordingly, the heart of a wise man is to the right as he sees what he has accomplished which encourages him to accomplish more. This is different than the fool who thinks of how much there is still yet to do, leading him to despair. With this we can appreciate חזק חזק ונתחזק as we should get Chizuk by realizing what we just accomplished.

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Making a Siyum as well as attending one is nothing minor. In fact, the Yam Shel Shlomo[[4]](#footnote-5) writes that it is a big Mitzvah to take part in the happiness of the one who finished the Mesachta even if you didn’t finish it. This is just as Abaye did even when he himself didn’t finish it.[[5]](#footnote-6) The Gra[[6]](#footnote-7) equates one who takes part in a Siyum with the one who finishes. He says a hint to this in the word סיום in which the hidden and revealed letters have the same equivalent (סמך, יוד, וו, ממ). That is, ס is the same as מך (60), י as וד (10), ו and ו, מ and מ. This shows that the one who completed the material (hinted to in the revealed letters as he expressed the words) and the one who takes part (hinted to in the hidden letters as he didn’t learn it) are both equal.

Even the food from a Siyum has special Kedusha to it. R’ TzadokHakohen (1823-1900) would only eat from a Seudas Mitzvah. He therefore made a Siyum daily and that was his food for the day.[[7]](#footnote-8) We know even nowadays of stories of people who were healed and had salvations from taking part in R’ Chaim Kanievsky’s annual Siyum on Erev Pesach.

One who is at the bedside of one who passes away, can get פי שנים; double, just as Elisha by Eliyahu.[[8]](#footnote-9) This is comparable to a fire which gets bigger before it is extinguished. For this reason, the ChassamSofer lamented that he wasn’t by his Rebbi, R’ Nosson Adler’s bedside when he died. This concept also applies by a Siyum as this is why we say הדרן עלך twice at a Siyum.

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Did you ever wonder who Yaakov was reincarnated as? The answer is R’ Akiva. The following are some of the hints to this:

1) The letters of אביר יעקב[[9]](#footnote-10) rearranged spellרבי עקיבא.

2) There were22 yearsthat R’ Akiva was by נחום איש גם זו. This is the same number of years Yaakov was away from his father,and that Yosef was separated from Yaakov after his brothers sold him.[[10]](#footnote-11)

3)Both Yaakov and R’ Akiva married wives named רחל.[[11]](#footnote-12)

4) At the time of his **death**, R’Akivarecited שמע.We know Yaakov also recited שמעwhen he saw Yosef and then said אמותה הפעם; I can **die** this time. We also know that his sons recited Shema prior to his death.[[12]](#footnote-13)

5)Yaakov is the pillar of Torah as he was anאיש תם...אוהלים. Similarly, R’Akiva is the father of תורה שבעל פה. Indeed, the Gemaras that deal with קבלת התורהare found in Mesachta Shabbos in פרק ר' עקיבא. In fact, he would expound mounds of Halachos from each קוץ; point.[[13]](#footnote-14)

6) Each of them are known for their humility. Yaakov said קטנתי... and R’ Akiva submitted himself completely to Hashem at the time of his death. Thus, the root of each of their name is עקב which symbolizes humility as in עקב ענוה.[[14]](#footnote-15)

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Yosef was one who always connected events to Hashem as in אלה-ים חשבה לטובה, ,למחיהשלחני אלה-יםבלעדי אלה-ים יענה את שלום פרעהand so on.[[15]](#footnote-16) This feature plays itself out in that Yosef was an interpreter of dreams as this is connecting a dream to its interpretation. For this reason,פתר; to interpret, is composed of the same letters as תפר; to sew, as sewing is connecting two ends. In a similar fashion, the lettersפרת; cows, which were in Yosef’s dream is also comprised of these letters.Is it any wonder that it states in connection to Yosefבין **פרת** יוסף בין **פרת** עלי עין as פרת also consists of these letters.[[16]](#footnote-17)

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Yaakov possesses the trait of אמת[[17]](#footnote-18) as it saysתתן אמת ליעקב.[[18]](#footnote-19) He is also known as the pillar of Torah- which is called תורת **אמת**.[[19]](#footnote-20)Indeed, the Gemarateaches that אמת refers to Torah.[[20]](#footnote-21) In fact, we see this literally as it saysראש דברך אמת; the beginning of your words are true. That is,[[21]](#footnote-22) theעשרת הדברות begin with**א**נכי ה' אלה-יך, Mishnayosstarts **מ**אמתי and Gemara with **ת**נא, thereby spelling אמת.

אמת is that which is totally true, flawless. Thus, its letters range from the beginning-א, middle-מ[[22]](#footnote-23) and end-ת of the א-ב.[[23]](#footnote-24)This is in contrast to the letters of שקר which are at the end of the א-ב in addition to that its letters are not in sequence. For this reason, it contains the same letters as קשר; knot, that which is jumbled together. This is also why the letters ofאמת have a firm base on which they stand since truth lasts and as inשפת אמת תכון לעד, ראש דברך אמת ולעולם, תורת אמת וחיי עולם and as the Gemara says קושטא קאי.[[24]](#footnote-25)Now we can grasp a deeper meaning in יעקב אבינו לא מת as it refers to the trait of Yaakov- אמת, as it never dies rather it is everlasting.[[25]](#footnote-26)This is unlikeשקר which stands on only one legsince it doesn’t last as in ארגיעה לשון שקר; a false tongue is only for a moment.[[26]](#footnote-27)Similarly, it says שקר אין לו רגלים.[[27]](#footnote-28)

The Zohar teachesישראל ואורייתא קןדשא בריך הוא חד; the Jews, Hashem and the Torah are one.[[28]](#footnote-29) By each of these we find אמת since the world needs all three. In regard to Hashem it says ה' אלה-ים אמת. Torah is called תורת אמת (also, the Zohar says in בריך שמיה- אלהא קשוטואוריתה קשוט; the G-d of truth whose Torah is truth). Finally, we inherited אמתin our genes from Yaakov whose trait is אמת. If one of these is missing, the world can’t exist: the Gemara teaches that if there is no Torah, the world can’t exist. Obviously, without Hashem there is no world. Lastly, Rashi[[29]](#footnote-30) says the world was created for us.

Just as the Torah is אמתso is each of its letters as well as its crowns on the letters. Hence, there is no extra letter in the Torah. Now we can appreciate the prohibition of בל תוסיף and בל תגרע; don’t add or subtract from the Torah.[[30]](#footnote-31)For this reason, even the crowns of the letters are expounded upon. It follows that a Navi is forbidden to innovate without basis.[[31]](#footnote-32)

The word אמת yields a sum of 441. Adding up these digits we arrive at a total of 9 (4+4+1).[[32]](#footnote-33)It is because of this that we see unique qualities with this number:

A) When we multiply a number by 9 and add up the digits of the sum, it will always equal 9. To illustrate: 9 multiplied by 3is27 and 2 added to 7 is 9. 11\*9 is 99. 9+9 is 18 and 1+8 is 9. 25\*9is 225 and 2+2+5 is9.[[33]](#footnote-34)

B) Let’s take a random number- for example13. 1+3 is 4. 4 subtracted from 13 is 9! Let’s pick another random number: 167. 1+6+7 is 14 and 14 subtracted from 167 is 153. 1+5+3 is 9!

C) Invert any random number. Take the number 523. Subtract 325 (invert) from 523 and we get 198. 1+9+8 is 18 and 1+8 is9! One last example: invert 61 to 16. 61-16 equals 45, and 4+5 is 9!

We should all merit to see the truth of the Torah!

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1. Iyov 11:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Avos 4:1. The ChidushaiHarim would say on the Rashi that says when Shabbos comes in we should view as if all our work is done, that it also refers to our spirituality.Therefore, we should enjoy Shabbos and let go of our learning goals (of course we should learn on Shabbos, but we shouldn’t feel that pressure which would remove pleasure from Shabbos). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Koheles 10:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. End of the 7th chapter in Baba Kamma, s.v. גרסינן. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Abaye would make a יום טוב for the רבנן when a young scholar would complete a Mesachta (Shabbos 118b-119a). This is a source for making a Siyum upon completing a Mesachta. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. PeninimMishulchanHagra, תשנז- ירושלים, pg 267 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. On Shabbos, R’ Tzadok would finish the long Mesachta Shabbos and the difficult MesachtaEruvin (as Eruv applies to Shabbos). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. Melachim 2, 2:9-11. In a similar way, the Kassover explains Rashi (Breishis 28:10) who says that when a Tzadik leaves a place, he makes an impression…- that even after the Tzadik leaves, an impression of Kedusha remains. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. Breishis 49:24 [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. Megila 17a [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. Rochel was Yaakov’s main wife (31:33, Rashi. 46:19, Rash). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. Brachos 61b.46:29, Rashi.Pesachim 56a. It is obviously no coincidence that the initials of**י**ש **ק**ונה **ע**ולמו **ב**שעה **א**חתspell עקיבא. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. Menachos 29b [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. Breishis 32:11. Mishlei 22:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. 50:20, 45:5, 41:16, [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. 49:22 [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. It is because Yaakov possessed this trait of אמתthat he was concerned maybe there was a blemish in his children (Pesachim 56a). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
18. Micha 7:20. Just as Avraham was tested in that which challenged his personality as he personifies Chessed and was tested by the עקידה, the same is with Yaakov. He was put in the position to receive the Brachos through deceit, the opposite of his quality of אמת. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
19. This is in accordance with Chazal who teach the Torah was given in threes- Moshe is the third in his family,Tanach is composed of three parts and so on (Shabbos 88a). So Yaakov who is the third of the Avos is the pillar of Torah. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
20. Brachos 5b.Also, the Torah is called תמימה(Tehillim 19:8) and Yaakov was anאיש תם. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
21. Tehillim 119:160 [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
22. Yerushalmi Sanhedrin 1:1, seeKorbonHaeidahs.v. שאין. See Shabbos 55a, Rashiחותמו. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
23. The Maharal (NesivHaemes, 1) points out there are 13 letters until the letter מ in the א-ב and 13 after, since אחד is 13 in Gematria.אחד is symbolic of אמת as 13 and 13 is 26, the equivalent of י-ה-ו-ה, and the Gemara teaches the seal of Hashem is אמת (Shabbos 55a). This is why Hashem who is אמת- ה' אלה-ים אמת (Yirmiya 10:10)- is also ה' אחד (Devarim 6:4). [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
24. Shabbos 104a.In thought there is one purpose for something in contrast to the physical world. For example a chair was intended for people to sit on but one can also use it to stand on, to reach an object and so on. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
25. Baal Shem Tov, Masei, s.v. והנה.אמת is complete all the way and not if most of it is אמת. This is shown to us in the word אמת as if we remove the א of אמת we get מת, the opposite of אמת which is that which is everlasting. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
26. Mishlei 12:19 [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
27. Tikunai Zohar, 22.Consequently, a snake has no feet since he brought שקר to the world and שקר אין לו רגלים. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
28. The following is a hint to this: we are compared to stars- כוכב. כוof כוכבis 26 in Gematria referring to Hashem- י-ה-ו-ה and כב is 22 referring to the Torah as there are 22 letters in the א-ב.Another allusion to this is in what we say in Shabbos Zemiros- בווין תתקטר as it is all contained in the letter ו. The letter ו can be spelled 3 ways: וו, ואו, ויו. וו has a Gematria of 12 alluding to the 12 Shevatim where we descend from. ואו is 13 in Gematria, the same as אחד referring to ה' אחד. ויו is 22 in Gematria referring to the Torah (which is comprised of the 22 letters of the א-ב). So we see ישראל ואורייתא קןדשא בריך הוא חד. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
29. Breishis 1:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
30. Devarim 13:1. See Devarim 4:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
31. Shabbos 104a. see NefeshHacahim 1:22 [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
32. סיון, the month the Torah was given in, adds up to 126. 1+2+6 is 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
33. The number 9 illustrates אמת since it is the highest one can grab onto here as 10 is always above and beyond. The 10thSefira is כתר; crown, which is above the head, 1/10 goes to Maaser (Hashem), י- the 10th letter- is the only letter that doesn’t touch the line symbolizing it is higher than the rest, and so forth. Parenthetically, the letter before ט is ח and the letter after is י, spelling חי. This is what אמת is, as the snake is the one who brought שקר and death to the world (so we see that אמת is associated with life). [↑](#footnote-ref-34)