

Psalm 119:105-136

Nun

https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/137068/jewish/Letters-of-Light.htm

Nun is the fourteenth letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Its numerical value is 50.

There are 50 days from Passover to Pentecost, and 49 gates of impurity to come out of until reaching the 50th day. The Jubilee Year falls on the 50th year.

Meanings:

1. Deceit - The Zohar tells us that the nun stands for *ona'ah* — deceit. To the human eye, this world seems to be controlled by the laws of nature, for one cannot see God. This false reality therefore is a total deception.

2. Kingship - Psalm 72:17 speaks regarding the Messiah: "May his name (*Yinon*) endure forever, as long as the sun." According to Rashi, *Yinon* refers to kingship. If we break the word "Yinon" into two—yud and nun—nun means kingship, and putting a yud before a word denotes continuity. Therefore, the name *Yinon* implies that the kingship of Mashiach will endure forever.

3. In Aramaic, nun means a fish . As some sources compare Moses to a fish, a nun, because he was taken out of the water by Pharaoh's daughter, so is Joshua called "ben Nun," the son (disciple) of this great fish (Moses). Why did he merit inheriting the leadership of the Jewish people from Moses? Because he embraced the quality of humility with his entire being.

4. Miscarriage - David was originally supposed to have died through a miscarriage. He was able to survive only because Adam (the first man) bequeathed David seventy of his own years. Adam lived 930 years (**Genesis 5:5**). He was originally supposed to have lived for 1,000 years (Zohar I, p. 168a).

Mashiach, a descendant of David, is called a *bar nafli*, literally translated as the "son of one who has fallen," or a miscarriage. Thus the role of pain and suffering is an important element of Mashiach's presence on earth, according to the rabbis.

5. Miracle - The word nun also means *nes*, miracle. One of the names of Messiah, *Chanina* or "grace," contains two nuns. Two nuns denote *nisei nissim*: many, many miracles. In the era of Mashiach, everyone will witness great wonders and miracles.

Humility

There are two types of nuns. The "bent" nun (*nun kefufah*) either begins or is in the middle of a word. The straight, or final nun (*nun peshutah*), is employed only at a word's end. The Talmud tells us that the *nun kefufah* represents one who is bent over and the *nun peshutah* is one who is straight.

The Maharal explains that the two nuns represent the two fundamental approaches to serving God: fear and love. The first person serves God out of awe, fear. Therefore, he is hunched over. The second person serves God out of love and thus stands straight. This person is also characterized by generosity, because love represents openness. Rashi, with a different view, comments that if a person is “bent over” throughout his life, that means he is humble. He is subservient to law and order, to Torah and to God. In the World to Come he will stand tall and straight, for God will bless him with tremendous reward.

It states in the HaYom Yom: “The unique quality of Mashiach is that he will be humble. Though he will be the ultimate in greatness—for he will teach Torah to the Patriarchs and to Moses—so, too, he will be the ultimate in humility and self-nullification, for he will also teach simple folk.”

Psalm 119:105 - "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

The Word - both the scripture and the Messiah - lets us see ourselves as God sees us, and clarifies for us the world and the ways of God and eternity. It allows us to avoid stumbling blocks and pitfalls, discern true and heretical beliefs, and dispels darkness.

At God's guidance, the immediate path is enlightened for us, as well as the distant destination.

Rashi - I look in the Torah and it separates me from [transgressing] the prohibition, like a lamp which saves a man from [falling into] the pits.

See **Proverbs 6:23** - "For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life:"

The lamp is fed with the oil of the Spirit. The allusion is to the lamps and torches carried at night before an Eastern caravan. - *Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary*

Psalm 119:106 - "I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments."

He is resolved or solemnly purposed, and has publicly declared it. Basically it is like swearing allegiance to God as king, like Israel did in the covenant at Sinai, and in the fields of Moab.

This is the Messiah speaking through David. He did keep the commandments and perform them.

More Affliction

Psalm 119:107 - "I am afflicted very much: quicken me, O LORD, according unto thy

word."

NET - I am suffering terribly. O LORD, revive me with your word!

The Jewish translation has "I have been exceedingly humbled; O Lord, sustain me according to Your word."

Spoken against by princes, reproached by the proud, persecuted without a cause, feeling the full weight of Satan's opposition, the Psalmist/Messiah felt his "affliction" to be grievous, almost intolerable. Being brought near to death, he prays again for the equivalent of the resurrection.

Rashi - This is a sickness that deranges the mind, and it is called **תַּרְוִיחַ** convulsion, in the language of the Mishnah (Chul. 60b).

Psalm 119:108 - "Accept, I beseech thee, the freewill offerings of my mouth, O LORD, and teach me thy judgments."

i.e. the spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise offered freely and not commanded.

- **Psalm 141:2** - "Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice."

- **Revelation 8:4** - "And the smoke of the incense, together with the prayers of the saints, rose up before God from the hand of the angel."

- **1 Peter 2:5** - "...you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

B. Taanit 8a: Rabbi Ami said: The prayer of a man is not answered unless he put his whole soul into it - i.e., if he is not ready to sacrifice his life - as it is written [**Lamentations 3:41**]: "Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heaven."

Psalm 119:110 - "My soul is continually in my hand: yet do I not forget thy law. The wicked have laid a snare for me: yet I erred not from thy precepts."

Targum: "my soul is in danger upon the back of my hands continually"

'To put one's life in one's hand' is a proverbial statement, a metaphor for hazarding it because a treasure carried in the hand instead of being concealed is liable to be lost or snatched away.

Psalm 119:111 - "Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever: for they are the rejoicing of my heart."

- **Jeremiah 15:16** - "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of

hosts."

God's "testimonies" are for believers the Promised Land - an inheritance of salvation and grace in Jesus Christ.

Psalm 119:112 - "I have inclined mine heart to perform thy statutes alway, even unto the end."

"inclined" = *nâṭâh* - to stretch out, bend, incline

The NET has "I am determined to obey your statutes" but the idea of inclining your heart is important.

The Evil Inclination

The *yetzer hara* is the congenital human inclination to do evil. Initially, "man is born a wild ass" (**Job 11:12**).

- **Genesis 6:5** - "And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination (*yetzer* - inclination) of the thoughts of his heart was only evil (*ra*) continually."

At the age of 13, a boy is able to conceive of a love of God and is able to awaken from the *yetzer hara*. Instruction in the Torah is supposed to bend the heart away from self and toward God. But he is also deemed to be an adult, he becomes a "child of the Law" and is judged as an adult. The Sages said entering the 14th year is hinted at when they said, "On the evening of the 14th we search for hametz [leaven] by the light of a candle" (Mishnah Pesachim 1:1) (Sefer Akedat Yitzhak, 61).

David/Messiah speaking in this verse show He fulfilled and completed this process for each of us. Christ completed the Way and is the Way. Walking in faith in Him after accepting our death and identifying with His death on the cross is the only way to overcome the *yetzer hara*.

- **Romans 7:17, 24-25** - "Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me....who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

- **Romans 8:6** - "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."

"minded" = *phrónēma* - inclination or purpose

Samech

Samech (also spelled Samekh) is the fifteenth letter of the Hebrew alphabet. There were 15 steps from the court of Israel to the court of Priests in the Temple, and 15

Psalms of Ascent. The moon is full on the 15th of every month.

Its numerical value is 60. In the Priestly Blessing (**Numbers 6:25-26**) recited every morning there are fifteen words and sixty letters. When the priest blesses the people, he must put his two hands together. According to the Mishnah there are thirty bones in each hand, sixty when the hands are joined. The Mishnah has sixty tractates. Sleep is one-sixtieth of death; a dream is one-sixtieth of prophecy; fire is one-sixtieth of hell; and honey constitutes one-sixtieth of the manna.

The design of the samech is a closed circle. A circle represents infinity, because it has no beginning or end. In Kabbalah the samech represents the infinite power of the *Ein Sof*, God's infinite light.

The circular aspect of the samech represents support, like the rings that encircle and hold together all the elements of the lulav on Tabernacles.

The samech also resembles a wedding band. The Talmud states that the Giving of the Torah at Sinai "was the betrothal ceremony"

When Messiah comes, the Talmud says (Taanis 31a.): God will make a circle for all the righteous [like a samech] and He will sit among them. Every one of them will point with his finger and say, 'This is our God...we have awaited Him and He is here to save us. ...Let us exalt and be glad in His salvation.'

Psalm 119:113 - "I hate vain thoughts: but thy law do I love."

"vain" = *ce`eph* - (not *aven*, the usual word for vain) ambivalent, divided, half-hearted (only used this one time)

i.e. someone of integrity who has no secret agenda. sincere, unmixed

Targum: "I hate those who think vain thoughts"

Rashi - Those who think thoughts of iniquity

- **Psalm 12:2** - "They speak falsehood to one another; with flattering lips and with a double heart they speak."

- **1 Kings 18:21** - "And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word."

- **Matthew 6:22-23** - "The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness.... No one can serve two masters..."

- **James 1:8** - "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways."

Psalm 119:114 - "Thou art my hiding place and my shield: I hope in thy word."

- **Psalm 32:7** - "Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance."

- **Psalm 84:11** - "For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."

- **Colossians 3:2-3** - "Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God."

Psalm 119:115 - "Depart from me, ye evildoers: for I will keep the commandments of my God."

"my God" - the evildoers professed to follow God too, but don't really have faith.

- **Psalm 6:8** - "Depart from me, all you workers of iniquity, for the LORD has heard my weeping. "

- **Luke 13:27** - "...depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity."

Psalm 119:116-117 - "Uphold me according unto thy word, that I may live: and let me not be ashamed of my hope. Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe: and I will have respect unto thy statutes continually."

The Jewish translation has "support me... sustain me..."

The Septuagint has, "Aid me."

"according to your word " = (Targum) in your word or by your word.

Sustain me in the trials and the temptations of life. Help me to bear afflictions without sinking under them; to meet temptations without yielding to them; to encounter opposition without being overcome. - *Barnes' Notes*

Psalm 119:118-119 - "Thou hast trodden down all them that err from thy statutes: for their deceit is falsehood. Thou puttest away all the wicked of the earth like dross: therefore I love thy testimonies."

"for their deceit is falsehood" - their hypocrisy

Looking forward to God's final victory over His enemies, when He "tramples out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored":

- **Isaiah 63:3** - "I trampled them in My anger and trod them underfoot in My fury; their blood spattered My garments, and all My clothes were stained. For the day of vengeance was in My heart, and the year of My redemption had come."

- **Revelation 19:15** - "And from His mouth proceeds a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and He will rule them with an iron scepter. He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God, the Almighty."

Psalm 119:120 - "My flesh trembleth for fear of thee; and I am afraid of thy judgments."

Rashi - "bristles with fear" like **Job 4:15**: "it made the hair of my flesh stand on end"

Ayin

Ayin is the sixteenth letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Its numerical value is 70.

It is silent and does not correspond to any letter in our alphabet. Sort of like a "breathing" indicator in Greek..

The design is a vav contained in a nun. The ayin is actually two eyes united at the optical chiasma—the nerve center that receives and interprets visual impulses—at the back of the head.

Ayin means eyes, as it states (**Isaiah 30:20**) "And your eyes עיניך, *einecha*, shall see your Teacher (i.e., God)." Another verse (**Isaiah 40:5**) reads: "And the glory of God shall be revealed and all flesh shall see together that the mouth of God speaks."

The first word of the Shema שמע is written with a large ayin. It counteracts the suspended ayin in the word "forest" in **Psalm 80**, the exact mid-point of the Book of Psalms: "The boar of the forest (*miyaar*) ravages it [the vine of Israel], and the crawler of the field feeds on it."

It is called the ayin of Esau, עשו, and his descendants, the nation of Amalek.

The boar in the forest is the *yetzer hara*, the evil inclination that seeks to foil God's work in us. The ayin of the Shema overcomes it. Indifference is transformed into a passion for godliness.

"Like one 70 years old"

The Kabbala says there are seven general emotional characteristics. Each one of these seven traits in turn contains ten levels: the three of the intellect and the seven of the emotions. Seventy represents one who is in total control of his emotional attributes and is therefore fit to lead and teach others as a Nasi (prince) in Israel.

The Passover Haggadah quotes Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah: "I am like a seventy-year-

old man and I had never succeeded in proving that one has to recite the [verse about] going out of Egypt [in the third paragraph of the Shema] at night until I found the words of Ben Zoma, who explained the verse 'Remember going out of Egypt all the days of your life' as follows..."

Saying "like one 70 years old" means one who has attained the 70 levels of spiritual refinement.

Obviously, if any of this has validity it applies only to Messiah, since none of us are able to reach that lofty state.

Psalm 119:121 - "I have done judgment and justice: leave me not to mine oppressors."

or "Since I have not oppressed any in my office as king, so wilt thou not suffer me to be crushed by oppression."

Exemplified by the Messiah:

- **Jeremiah 23:5** - "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth."

Psalm 119:122 - "Be surety for thy servant for good: let not the proud oppress me."

"surety" = a guarantee, to insure, to appear on his side, and defend him

- **Hebrews 7:22** - "By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament."

Psalm 119:123 - "Mine eyes fail for thy salvation, and for the word of thy righteousness."

He has almost despaired in looking for, expecting and longing for deliverance and for God to fulfill His promise.

(See previous **Psalm 119:81-82**)

Psalm 119:124-125 - "Deal with thy servant according unto thy mercy, and teach me thy statutes. I am thy servant; give me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies."

Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus:

- **Luke 24:45** - "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures"

Psalm 119:126 - "It is time for thee, LORD, to work: for they have made void thy law."

Rashi - Our Rabbis, however, derived from it [from this verse] that we may transgress

the words of the Torah in order to make a fence and a wall [a safeguard] for Israel, e.g. Gideon and Elijah on Mount Carmel, who sacrificed on high places (Ber. 63a).

The Targum and the Septuagint have: "it is time to do the will of the Lord"

There is an ambiguity in the Biblical Hebrew. The rabbis understood it to mean humans should act on behalf of God. Thus, the verse may be understood as: "They have made void your law, it is time to work for the Lord." This was the basis of many rabbinical innovations after the Temple was destroyed and later. They said "It is better that one letter of the Torah should be uprooted than that the whole of the Torah be forgotten." Of course, this is exactly what Jesus argued against in the "traditions of men" of the Pharisees.

- **Matthew 15:3** - But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?

Psalm 119:127-128 - "Therefore (or "because") I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold. Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way."

Or "according to all thy precepts I direct my goings; and I hate every false way."

Pey

Pey (also spelled peh and pei) is the seventeenth letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

Its numerical value is 80. The Ethics of Our Fathers says: "When one is eighty years old, he has reached a special strength." Moses was eighty years old when he led the Jews out of Egypt and eighty when he transmitted the Torah to them.

G-d told Moses, "*Anochi ehayah im picha*—I will be your mouthpiece." The word *anochi* has the gematria of 81: *alef*=1, *nun*=50, *kaf*=20, *yud*=10. If a person is humble and relies upon God to be his mouthpiece, his power of speech will transcend its natural limits and be a source of strength for others.

Pey means "mouth." The design of the pei is a mouth with a tooth emerging from its upper jaw. It looks just like the letter kaph except for the "tooth."

In **Exodus 1:10**, Pharaoh, whose name also begins with a pei, said, "Let us [confine the Jews to slavery] lest they multiply." The word for "lest" in Hebrew is נִפְּ, pen: *pei-nun*. God was displeased with Pharaoh's declaration, so He "knocked out his tooth" by knocking out the tooth of the pei in Pharaoh's "pen," which made it a kaf. Now the word was no longer pen ("lest") but כֵּן, ken: *kaf-nun*, meaning "surely." Surely the Jews will multiply.

"Pesach" literally means *peh-sach*, "the mouth (peh) talks (sach)." On Pesach, the mouth talks about the wonders and miracles of God. Pesach represents the antithesis of

Pharaoh, who, as the Megaleh Amukos explains, signifies *peh-ra*, a “bad mouth.”

Psalm 119:129 - "Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them.

"wonderful" = *pele'* - wondrous, can also mean hidden

Rashi - They are covered, and your testimonies are hidden from the sons of men.

That's why God needs to open our hearts and minds for us to really understand them. They point to Jesus, which is why the disciples on the road to Emmaus had their hearts burn when Jesus opened the scriptures to them.

- **Luke 24:45** - "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures"

Psalm 119:130 - "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple."

entrance = commencement, beginning, opening

- **Genesis 1:3** - “Let there be light.”

Psalm 119:131 - "I opened my mouth, and panted: for I longed for thy commandments."

"panted" = *sha'aph* - earnestly desire, pant after, sometimes a violent word signifying anger and haste.

As someone who is desperate for air, for water or for food.

Used in a bad and opposite way in **Jeremiah 2:24** - “snuffs up (שאפה) the wind.”

Psalm 119:132-133 - "Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name. Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me."

"order my steps" at the right pace to prevent halting, slipping or stumbling

- **Romans 6:14** - "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace."

Psalm 119:134 - "Deliver me from the oppression of man: so will I keep thy precepts."

Some render it, "from the oppression of Adam"

Rashi - From the evil inclination, which oppresses the people from the good path.

Psalm 119:135 - "Make thy face to shine upon thy servant; and teach me thy statutes."

God's favor and acceptance, as in the High Priestly Blessing:

- **Numbers 6:25** - "The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee"

Psalm 119:136 - "Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law."

Like Lot among the Sodomites was "vexed from day to day,"

And **Jeremiah 13:17** - "But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride; and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the LORD'S flock is carried away captive."

And Jesus weeping over Jerusalem (**Luke 19:41**).