

----- The Letter Ches -----



1. Gematriya = 8. The number seven symbolizes the complete purpose of human existence, combining the spiritual level of the Shabbos with the physical effort of the week. Going beyond 7, the number 8 symbolizes man's ability to transcend the limitations of physical existence.
2. Ches stands for that which is on a plane above nature, the metaphysical Divine.
3. The number eight is involved in various aspects of the Temple service & in other Mitzvos, which all illustrate the symbolic means in the life of every Jew by which he can raise himself towards the Divine:
 - 8 holy vestments of the Kohen Gadol
 - 8 varieties of spices for the the oil of anointment (4) and for the incense (4).
 - 8 poles for carrying the Ark, Table, Golden Alter, & Copper Alter.
 - 8 Musical instruments
 - Animals can be offered as sacrifices from the eighth day of birth.
 - 8 days of preparation until the Mishkan was inaugurated.
 - Circumcision is on the eighth day.
 - 8 threads of Tzitzis
 - Shmini Atzeres
4. Ches starts the word "Chein" — חן — which means grace or favor. (cognate with חנם - free - Hashem is the gracious One, Who favours man with His kindness, even at times and in situations where man's merits are inadequate.
5. Ches stands for חיים (chayim) - life. It is written in the Torah with its roof rising to a point; symbolizing both Hashem (who is called the living G-d who dwells on high) and the righteous (who continue to live on after death, by virtue of their spiritual heritage they bequeath to prosperity.)
6. Ches is phonetically similar to Cheit - sin - חטא. If sinner does Teshuva, he will be able to live again.
7. According to the Beis Yosef, the Cheis consists of 2 spear-shaped Zayin's side by side with a roof over them (according to the Arizal it consists of a Zayin and a Vav). It is called Ches from Chas - חס - meaning distorted; since the shape appears as if the two spear-shaped Zayin's have been distorted at the top to form a combining bridge.
8. Halacha of Shabbos - removal of the roof from the Ches, is pushed for desecrating the shabbos, as it creates 2 letters.
9. Man has to balance the two Zayins: passive trust in the חר , sustainer of the world; and active enterprise, symbolized by חרץ, armament. The harmonious synthesis of these two

seemingly antithetical positions is portrayed by the letter Ches, which combines within itself the 2 Zayin's, which unite to symbolize the living יה God Who dwells on high.

10. In conclusion, by dedicating himself to the service of God, man can resolve the contradiction between human endeavour and trust in Him. Thereby man can deserve to be graced with **יה** and **יהים**.
11. Based on the authority given to the Sages, some letters that are similarly enunciated are interchangeable under certain conditions. this is the case with Ches & Heh, which are both guttural letters.
12. The difference between the words Chometz **חמץ** and Matzah **מצה** is the small difference between a Ches **ח** and a ה Heh .
13. The *ches*, according to the *AriZal*, is a fusion of two letters: the *vav* and the *zayin*. On top of the *vav* and *zayin* is a bridge that unites the two. In essence, *vav* represents the male principle, the husband. *Zayin* represents the female principle, the wife. The bridge that links them is G-d. The Maggid of Mezritch illuminates the verse "The woman of valor is the crown of her husband" as: the *zayin*, the crown, signifies the position of the woman of valor safeguarding the man.
14. The *vav*, designed as a downward chute, alludes to the benefactor of the male. The gematriya of Zayin, seven alludes to the shabbos - the female - or recipient of the six previous days. "One who prepares food before shabbos, eats on the shabbos.
15. The design of the *ches* is representative of another type of bridge. If the relationship between *vav* (man) and *zayin* (woman) is to be complete, the two are united beneath a *chuppah*, a marriage canopy. The form of the *ches* looks like a marriage canopy. The word *chuppah*, חופה, even begins with a *ches*, for the word *chuppah* means *ches po—ches* (G-d, man and woman) is *po* (here). *Ches* is the heart of marriage. Man and woman are truly united only when they are joined beneath the *chuppah* with the third partner, which is G-d.

----- The Letter Tes -----



1. *Tes* is the ninth letter of the *alef-beis*.
2. The design of the *tes* is like a pot, a vessel with an inverted rim, representing hidden or inverted good.

3. Tes represents a man bending his head to G-d in prayer and thanks. How are the two connected? We have explained the letter *ches* as representing the concept of marriage. After the union between husband and wife, then, G-d willing, there's a conception. The *tes* represents the hidden good that resides within the womb (the vessel) of the mother. This hidden good is actualized through a person's prayers to G-d, asking Him for a healthy child.
4. The numerical value of *tes* is nine. This corresponds to the nine months of pregnancy. Furthermore, the number nine is a "true" number. Truth or אמת (*emes*), is spelled *alef*—the first letter of the *alef-beis*; *mem*—the middle letter; and the *tav*—the last letter. The lesson is that something that is true must be true at the beginning, middle, and end.
5. What makes nine a "true" number is that if you multiply any whole number by nine, the sum of its digits is also nine; e.g., two times nine is eighteen; one plus eight is nine. Three times nine is twenty-seven; two plus seven is nine. Nine times nine is eighty-one; eight plus one is nine. Finally, the *gematria* of *emes* is 441: *alef*=1, *mem*=40, *tav*=400. 4 and 4 and 1=9. Nine represents the number of truth.
6. The Hebrew Letter Tes stands for the word Tov, 'good'. The first time the letter Yes appears in the Torah is in the word Tov - טוב.
7. If a person sees the letter Tes in his dreams, it is a 'good sign' (Baba Kama 55a).
8. Hashem Himself is the essence of all good. all He created is good. whatever his gracious will causes to happen is good. The world He created is good. Hashem is called "HaTov VehaMeitiv" - the Good One who does good.
9. Only Hashem know s what is and defines what is good. Man's subjective nature i s not capable of truly understanding what is good.
10. When man follows the guidelines set by the Creator, the world remains good. But even when man fails and pollutes the goodness of the world , Hashem grants him the gift of Teshuva, which is also called Tov, because it allows man an opportunity to convert his sins into merits.
11. According to the *Midrash*), the name *tet* alludes to the word *tit*, which means mud. This is a reference to the earth from which Adam, the first human being, was created. When God created the first human, His response was more than just *tov*, it was "*tov me'od*," very good.
12. Accordingly, without faith, people could consider certain events that befall them to be as foul a nd unwanted as mud. However, if a person believes in Hashem's eternal beneficence, the righteous person trusts that whatever Hashem does is for the best.
13. Tes is the least common letter in the entire Five books of the Torah. From among all the 22 letters the letter Tes appears the lest in the entire Torah, and in that sense the letter Tes is a concealed letter, as it represents 'concealed good'.
14. The shape of Tes turns 'inward', hinting at the Tov ha-Ganuz, the 'Hidden Goodness' that is enfolded within.
15. The letter Tes is also shaped like a womb, as the goodness hidden during apparently harsh conditions is like an unborn baby hidden within a womb. Often, it is precisely in the darkest hour when the greatest potential for an even greater light is born.
16. Tes is symbolic of humility. One of Moshe's names, the humblest person, is Tuvia - טוביה.
17. This connection between the letter ט and the word for a humble person ענו is symbolized in the very structure of the letter Tes. Its right side portrays a man bending his head in humility before the One symbolized by the straight upright left side, Hashem.
18. The Talmudic term for divorce is called a "Get" - גט. The Vilna Gaon explains: in the entire Torah the letters ג and ט are nowhere next to each other - neither within one word nor even as the last and first letters of adjacent words. Since these letters are always separated from each other, they are an appropriate title for an instrument that separates husband and wife from another.



1. The tenth letter of the *alef-beis*—and also the smallest—is the letter *yud*.
2. The design of the *yud* is a point: a dot which represents G-d's essential power; the one G-d Who is indivisible.
3. The *yud* looks like a flame that soars ever higher, representing the soul of a Jew yearning to unite with G-d.
4. The *yud* represents the method by which the blessing descends from G-d to His people. The letter *yud* when spelled out is י-ו-י. The *yud* represents a seminal drop, the concentrated power of G-d. The *vav* represents a descent, for its form is that of a chute—and through this the blessings of G-d travel downward to our world. The *dalet*, having height and width, represents the physical world, signifying how G-d's blessings are manifest in every aspect of nature. This teaches us that G-d's blessings don't only reside in heaven. They flow down to this corporeal world and endow us with physical health, sustenance and success.
5. Every letter of the *alef-beis* begins with the *yud*, a point. This illustrates the inherent spirituality of every letter of the Hebrew alphabet, and that the Torah and G-d's teachings are all for the sake of the *Yid*, or Jew.
6. The numerical equivalent of the *yud* is ten.
7. Ten is the first of the two digit numbers and represents a completeness in the process of counting.
8. The number ten is a fundamental building block for every aspect of Creation.
 - Ten Utterances of Speech through which G-d created the world.
 - Ten generations from Adam to Noah
 - Ten generations from Noah to Abraham.
 - Ten tests of avraham
 - Ten plagues that G-d brought upon the Egyptian people.
 - Ten miracles that He performed for His people to save them from those plagues.
 - G-d challenged the Jewish people with ten tests in the desert.
 - Ten Commandments.
9. The meaning of *yud* is a *Yid*— יד—a Jew.
10. The *yud* can also represent a *yad*— יד—a hand, which is an allusion to G-d, for we say that G-d took us out of Egypt with a mighty hand.
11. Two *yuds* constitute a vital force in two of G-d's names: The first name of G-d, the Tetragrammaton, is spelled יהוה—*Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei*. The Tetragrammaton represents G-d as He is *beyond* nature. The second name of G-d is *A-donai*—which is א-ד-נ-י—*Alef-Dalet-Nun-Yud*. It signifies how G-d, the Master of the universe, manifests Himself *in* nature. The *Yud* at the beginning of the Tetragrammaton and the *Yud* at the end of *A-donai* come together—a *Yud* followed by another *Yud*—to represent a fusion of these two expressions of G-dliness. This fusion is an affirmation of the fact that while we live in a physical world of “natural” order, G-d is truly the one and only creator of nature.

12. The *yud* is also the first letter in the two names for a Jew. The first name is ישראל (*Yisrael*). Jews are called *b'nei Yisrael*—the children of Israel. *Yisrael* means both לי ראש—“I am the head,” and ל-אשר—“minister of G-d.” The terminology “minister of G-d” represents the spiritual aspect of a Jew when he prays, studies Torah, performs acts of loving-kindness and all the other *mitzvos*.
13. The second name for a Jew is *b'nei Yaakov*—the children of Jacob. *Yaakov* is a phonetic fusion of the letter *yud* and the word *akeiv*. *Yud* represents G-d. *Akeiv* means “heel,” the lowest part of man. The heel is what we use to tread upon the earth. Therefore, the mission of a Jew is to go forth into the depths of the materialistic world and infuse it with the *Yud* of G-d, with G-dliness.
14. The word Yehudah (i.e., *Yehudi*)—the Jew—also begins with a *yud*. Yehudah means “praise” and “acknowledgment” (etymologically, it stems from the word *hod*, to praise). A Jew, by nature, praises G-d. But this isn’t merely enacted once or twice in a lifetime, or even once or twice a day. Praise is expressed every moment of our earthly existence. This is the *yud* that is placed before the root word *hod*, “to praise.” It represents a Jew’s continuous, innate desire to praise G-d.
15. The Talmud teaches that Hashem created the World to Come with the letter *Yud*. It represents the metaphysical realm.
16. Maharal: In smallness lies essence, which is devoid of such physical ballast as space, time, or matter.
17. The *Yud* consists of three parts: a prong pointing upwards to the One above, a prong directed downwards to the earth, and the middle part uniting both. The shape of the *yud* is symbolic of a person in prayer. His eyes are lowered in humility as he stands before the king, while his heart is directed upward, toward heaven.