



Make Your High Holidays Count Teacher's Guide

Gematria is a system in which Hebrew letters correspond to numbers. The basic system can be used to represent math with Hebrew letters. However, interpretive tradition has used gematria as a means to gain a deeper understanding of Biblical texts, and the world at large, through the numerical values associated with various words. Gematria is one of the interpretive principles of Midrash, and it is one of the important principles of the Kabbalists. Note that there are different systems of gematria. Some systems do assign values (500-900) to the סופיות (final letters) of the *Aleph-Bet*. However, the basic system, which is being used here, assigns values to the Hebrew letters through ת, "Tav."

$$861 = (5+50+300+5) + (300+1+200) \quad \text{ראש השנה} = 861$$

$$\text{חי} = 18$$

$$\text{אלול} = 67$$

$$\text{כל נדרי} = 314$$

$$\text{יום כפור} = 362$$

$$\text{שברים} = 552$$

$$\text{תקיעה} = 585$$

$$\text{שופר} = 586$$

$$\text{תרועה} = 681$$

$$\text{תשובה} = 713$$

$$\text{תשירי} = 910$$

What number does your Hebrew name make?

= _____

יום כפור	תקיעה	תרועה	תשובה	חי
שופר	שברים	כל נדרי	תשירי	אלול



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ו 6	ה 5	ד 4	ג 3	ב 2	א 1
ל 30	כ 20	י 10	ט 9	ח 8	ז 7
צ 90	פ 80	ע 70	ס 60	נ 50	מ 40
	ת 400	ש 300	ר 200	ק 100	

To create other numbers, simply combine letters. For example:

11 = יא'

25 = כה

183 = קפג

1478 = תתתרעח

Note: 15 and 16 are written טו and טז because yud-hei written together form one of God's names and yud-vov together look too much like part of God's four-letter name.

When reading Hebrew letters, the following groupings have the same value:

נ \ ן

מ \ ם

כ \ ך \ ם \ ן

ב \ ם

ש \ ך

צ \ ץ

פ \ ף \ ץ \ ן

When writing gematria, use only the characters in the chart (no final letters or dots).