

Six Feet, by Barbara Snyder

The practice of *gematria*, or the spiritual interpretation of numbers, is one technique for understanding sacred texts, especially the Old Testament. Numbers correspond to letters, letters add up to numbers and scholars open up vast new meanings hidden in these texts while adding and correlating.

The Number 6 is used as a symbol of completion in the Bible. According to the Bible, the world was flooded by God at the moment when Noah was **6** hundred years old. It is also written that Leah had **6** sons and a **Hebrew** slave was supposed to work only **6** years and after that period he should be released.

God also commanded the Israelites to harvest their land for six years and then let it rest the seventh year. The seventh year is called the Year of Jubilee. God's command isn't just pure agricultural genius, it's also to illustrate God's power to restore what He has made.

Six represents completion because something that is surrounded on all six sides—north, south, east, west, above and below—is complete. Similarly, we find that when the Jewish people left the land of Egypt, G-d surrounded them with six Clouds of Glory. It is no coincidence that this pandemic occurs right smack in the midst of one of the most important Jewish holidays, Passover.

But let us remember, God created man on the sixth day.

So, here we are, mid-pandemic and we have been instructed to keep our distance. Six feet apart. Is the number arbitrary? Is anything in this world really arbitrary? Who came up with six feet, not seven, not five.

Maybe I am a bit too religious, but there are no coincidences and maybe there are messages galore. At some point, there will be a new normal and it will be founded on what we have learned.

Maybe we are to in each other's faces. Maybe we don't take care of our words and actions and we need to be a bit a part. Maybe we should not settle but work harder towards perfection. Maybe we can learn to be better, to mind our words and actions, to stop hating, to be so much nicer. Maybe being six feet a part is a way to tame our words and actions. Maybe this is our Year of Jubilee, when we quietly restore ourselves, taking time to reflect and regain our balance and our soul.

The sixth letter of the *Hebrew alphabet* is the *vav*. The design of the letter *vav* is a hook. The form of the *vav* can also represent a chute which connects a higher level to a lower level. A

hook is something that holds two things together. It is also a means to connect the spiritual and the physical.

Is it too far of a stretch to think that we have badly strayed from the values of faith and kindness, care and love, and God? Without faith and values, what are we? We are six feet apart, alone and isolated.