

If there should stand up in your midst a prophet or a dreamer of a dream... saying, "Let us follow gods of others... do not hearken to the words of that prophet." (13:2,3,4)

We never cease to be amazed by the sheer brilliance of the *Baal HaTurim* (which was written when the author was seventeen years old). Concerning the word, *b'kirbecha*, "in your midst," he writes: The *gematria*, numerical equivalent, of *b'kirbecha navi* is *zu ha'ishah*, "This is the woman." It is difficult to understand, since the numerical values do not coincide. *B'kirbecha Navi* equal 387, while *zu ha'ishah* equals 324. As a result of the difficulty in understanding his statement, many *girsas*, versions, of the *Baal HaTurim* have deleted this. In his *Kerem HaTzvi*, *Horav Tzvi Hirsh Ferber, zl*, quotes *Torah Shleimah* who cites *Horav Akiva Eiger, zl*, who explains the *Baal HaTurim*. He observes that the religious climate in the period during which the *Baal HaTurim* lived (early 14th century) was ripe with Christianity's allegations of virgin birth and immaculate conception. (The Nazarene who is the Christian godhead is purported to have been born to a woman who conceived immaculately, thereby making the Nazarene the product of a divine intervention. Thus, the dogma claiming him to be the son of god.) As a result, followers of this false messiah were attempting to entice, seduce, compel the uninitiated into falling for this ruse. In response to these false claims, and in an attempt to bolster the faith of his brethren, the *Baal HaTurim* saw fit to include this *gematria*. The fact that it does not coincide is due to a single word, *u'bnah*. It should now read: *Navi b'kirbecha* is the same *gematria* as *zu ha'ishah u'bnah*, "This is (refers to) the woman and her son." Both phrases equal 387. Brilliant!