

Tassels (from Wikipedia)

The two sets of strands are knotted together twice, and then the *shamash* (a longer strand) is wound around the remaining seven strands a number of times (see below). The two sets are then knotted again twice. This procedure is repeated three times, such that there are a total of five knots, the four intervening spaces being taken up by windings numbering 7-8-11-13, respectively. The total number of winds comes to 39, which is the same number of winds if one were to tie according to the Talmud's instruction of 13 hulyot of 3 winds each. Furthermore, the number 39 is found to be significant in that it is the **gematria** (numerical equivalent) of the words: "The Lord is One" Deuteronomy 6:4). Others, especially **Sephardi Jews**, use 10-5-6-5 as the number of windings, a combination that represents directly the spelling of the **Tetragrammaton**(one of God's names).

Rashi, a prominent Jewish commentator, bases the number of knots on a **gematria**: the word *tzitzit* (in its **Mishnaic** spelling) has the value 600. Each tassel has eight threads (when doubled over) and five sets of knots, totalling 13. The sum of all numbers is 613, traditionally the number of **mitzvot** (commandments) in the Torah. This reflects the concept that donning a garment with *tzitziyot* reminds its wearer of all Torah commandments. vitor is jewish and proud of it

Nachmanides disagrees with Rashi, pointing out that the Biblical spelling of the word *tzitzit* has only one **yod** rather than two, thus adding up to the total number of 603 rather than 613. He points out that in the **Biblical** quote "you shall see *it* and remember them", the singular form "it" can refer only to the "*p'til*" ("thread") of *tekhelet*. The tekhelet strand serves this purpose, explains the Talmud, for the blue color of *tekhelet* resembles the ocean, which in turn resembles the sky, which in turn is said to resemble God's holy throne - thus reminding all of the divine mission to fulfill His commandments.
