

Fascinating INSIGHTS

ז' אדר תשפ"א

February 19, 2021

פרשת תרומה

9th year, edition 374

COMING SOON Bez"H

The book Incredible Insights

To purchase the book, Fascinating Insights, send an email to yalt3285@gmail.com or visit <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B08929ZCNM>.

To join the thousands of recipients and receive these insights free on a weekly email, obtain previous articles, feedback, comments, suggestions (on how to spread the insights of this publication further, make it more appealing or anything else), to sponsor this publication which has been in six continents and more than forty countries, or if you know anyone who is interested in receiving these insights weekly, please contact the author, Rabbi Yehoshua Alt, at yalt3285@gmail.com. Thank you.

לעילוי נשמת מרדכי ישראל צבי בן משה אהרן

This newsletter can also be viewed at <https://www.dirshu.co.il/category/הורדות-עלויות/fascinating-insights/> and <http://www.ladaat.info/showgil.aspx?par=20200425&gil=2725>

Archives: <https://parshasheets.com/?s=Rabbi+Yehoshua+Alt>

To view these essays in German, please visit <https://judentum.online/>

Please feel free to print some copies of this publication and distribute it in your local Shul for the public, having a hand in spreading Torah.

The Presents of Presence

Many people go through life rarely ever living in the present. This point is brought forth from the following: A child in elementary school can't wait for high school. In high school, he can't wait for post-high school. After that, he can't wait to get married. He gets married and then he can't wait to have children. He has children and then he can't wait until they get older. When that happens, he can't wait until they get married. And so on.

Here is a poem that speaks on this topic:

It was spring, but it was summer I wanted,
The warm days, and the great outdoors.
It was summer, but it was fall I wanted,
The colorful leaves, and the cool, dry air.
It was fall, but it was winter I wanted,
The beautiful snow, and the joy of Chanuka.
It was winter, but it was spring I wanted,
The warmth, and the blossoming of nature.
I was a child, but it was adulthood I wanted,
The freedom, and the respect.
I was 20, but it was 30 I wanted,
To be mature, and sophisticated.
I was middle-aged, but it was 20 I wanted,
The youth, and the free spirit.
I was retired, but it was middle-age I wanted,
The presence of mind without limitations.
My life was over, and I never got what I wanted.

With this, we can appreciate the saying that goes, "Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, today

is a gift. That is why they call it the present." In light of what we mentioned, we can understand a novel interpretation of ועתה ישראל מה' אלהיך שאל מעמך living in the present (עתה) is what Hashem asks of us.

A Thrown Throne

It is because of Amalek that when it says the "the throne of Hashem" it is written כס י-ה, and not כסא י-ה. This is because Hashem's name and throne will not be whole until עמלק is eradicated.² In fact, the words מלחמה לה' בעמלק ("Hashem maintains a war against Amaleik") can be interpreted as the war with Amaleik is with Hashem's name, י-ה-ו-ה. That is, to make it incomplete.

In a similar vein, in the Megila it doesn't say Hashem's name rather when it says המלך it refers to Hashem.⁴ We know that המן descends from עמלק. It therefore is no surprise that המן shares the same Gematria as כס י-ה as well as המלך, 95. When עמלק is eradicated, Hashem's name and throne will be complete- כסא י-ה-ו-ה. Thus, מזהה אמהה,⁵ I shall surely wipe out the memory of Amalek, yields the same sum as כסא י-ה-ו-ה, 107.⁶

When the Chofetz Chaim saw the new chair that was bought for him, replacing his shaky unstable chair, he commented that it says כי יד על כס י-ה ("For the hand is on the throne of Hashem"). If Hashem's chair isn't complete, how can mine be?!

The letters missing from כס י-ה are the א from כסא and ה, ה-ו-ה. Now we can appreciate the phrase ונהפוך הוא,⁷ as it refers to the letters ה, ו, א that are missing

¹ Devarim 10:12. In this manner we can grasp עליה אלי ההרה והיה שם ascend to me to the mountain and remain there (Shemos 24:12): עליה אלי ההרה, to climb the spiritual mountain and שם והיה שם, be there, be present. Sometimes we can be so distracted by other things or can be focused on the end goal that we aren't present along the way.

² Shemos 17:16, Rashi. They brought ספק, doubt, into the world and hid Hashem. Thus, עמלק has the same equivalent as ספק, 240. How was Purim brought about? Through a גורל, lottery, (that which is random, counteracting עמלק).

³ Shemos 17:16.

⁴ Although Hashem's name is not explicitly mentioned in the Megila, it is hinted to. The following are some examples: the first letters of י-ה-ו-ה spell וכל זה איננו שוה לי י-ה-ו-ה are והמן היום אני ראשון ואני אחרון ומבלעדי אין (Esther 5:4, 13). In this way, we can interpret אני ראשון ואני אחרון ומבלעדי אין, I am the first and last, besides me there is no G-d, (Yeshaya 44:6): Hashem is in the first and end letters of phrases in Megilas Esther. Hashem, not Achashverosh (See Kav Hayashar, chapter 99).

⁵ Shemos 17:14.

⁶ The Pasuk (Shemos 17:16) says מלחמה לה' בעמלק ("For the hand is on the throne of Hashem: Hashem maintains a war against Amaleik"). The sefer Bris Kehunas Olam (authored by R' Yitzchak Isaac Katz of Koritz who was a student of the Magid of Mezrich) points out that כס י-ה has a gematria of 95, the same as המן who descends from Amaleik that makes Hashem's name and throne incomplete—כס י-ה, and not כסא י-ה-ו-ה. On the other hand, כס י-ה מלחמה ל-י-ה-ו-ה, because he fights to restore Hashem's name and throne.

⁷ Esther 9:1. Another meaning in ונהפוך הוא is that הוא is an acronym for ושהי, אהשורוש, המן, as they had their destiny reversed.

from כס י-ה. Putting (ונהפוך) these letters back into כס י-ה, it becomes complete- כסא י-ה-ו-ה. In this way, R Yisrael of Ruzin explains, in his Sefer Ner Yisrael,⁸ what we say in Shacharis after Shema: הוא קים ושמך קים וכסאו נכון. He and His name endure and His throne is well established. הוא are the letters missing because of Amalek. So, when הוא קים (He endures) then ושמך קים (His name endures) and therefore וכסאו נכון (His throne is well established).⁹ This is when Hashem chose Tzion and desired it for His dwelling place, will be fulfilled, as הוא are the letters missing from י-ה. The letters of הוא will be put back into מושב—His throne (מושב) and name (לו).

The Pasuk states וכל קרני רשעים אגדע תרוממנה קרנות צדיק, all the pride of the wicked I shall cut down, exalted shall be the pride of the righteous.¹² The Bnei Yissaschar¹³ explains it literally as if we take the corners (קרני) of the word רשעים we have רם. This has a Gematria of 240, the same as עמלק. Hashem will cut down (אגדע) Amalek and then it will be תרוממנה קרנות צדיק. That is, if we take the corners of the word צדיק, we get קץ, the ultimate future. Then Hashem's name and throne will be complete.

When the גאולה will come, the ה and ו of Hashem's name will be restored. For this reason, the word גאולה rearranged spells והגא, as those letters will be redeemed by Hashem's name being complete.¹⁴

People daven for many things—health, wealth, livelihood, etc. But all we need to daven for is for Hashem's name to be restored because when this happens, our issues will be solved. This is how ימלא י-ה-ו-ה (“may Hashem fulfill all your requests”) can be interpreted: Hashem's name being full (י-ה-ו-ה) is all that we need to ask for.

Caving Kedusha

When R' Yisrael Salanter was in Odessa, he witnessed Chillul Shabbos for the first time. Upon seeing a Jew smoking he fainted. However, the next time he saw this he didn't faint. He then said to himself, “I must leave this place,” as he was desensitized to Chillul Shabbos.¹⁶

In regard to Yaakov and Lavan it says איננו עמו...¹⁷ Lavan is not like he was to me in earlier days as Lavan was very dishonest. A deeper meaning is encoded in these words: I (Yaakov) got so accustomed to his evil ways since the way he appears to me today is not the same as he did in the past, as his deceitful behavior doesn't bother me as much. Thus, I must leave this place, as the narrative continues, שוב אל ארץ אבותיך, return to the land of your fathers.¹⁸

R' Shalom Shwadron¹⁹ (1912-1997) once passed by a sewer which was being worked on. He was appalled upon seeing the workers there eating their meal in the sewer. After passing by them daily, he realized that one can get accustomed to anything.²⁰

At times we may see one who grew spiritually when learning in Yeshiva in Eretz Yisrael. However, a short while after returning to Chutz Laaretz, he falters in his spirituality. This is because although at first upon returning to Chutz Laaretz he may be shocked at the promiscuity and the like, he gets accustomed to it after a while.

The Pasuk states by the Mabul²¹ that Hashem saw the earth, והנה נשחיתה, it was corrupted. Another interpretation is that Hashem saw it was נשחיתה, meaning they didn't feel anything was wrong with their behavior. This can be compared today to those who use foul language as part of their vernacular without even realizing anything is wrong with what they say.

Rabbi Alt merited to learn under the tutelage of R' Mordechai Friedlander ztz"l for close to five years. He received Semicha from R' Zalman Nechemia Goldberg ztz"l. Rabbi Alt has written on numerous topics for various websites and publications and is the author of the Sefer, Fascinating Insights: Torah Perspectives on Unique Topics. His writings inspire people across the spectrum of Jewish observance to live with the vibrancy and beauty of Torah. He lives with his wife and family in a suburb of Yerushalayim where he studies, writes, and teaches. The author is passionate about teaching Jews of all levels of observance.

⁸ This is also said in the name of R' Avraham Yaakov of Sadigura (Taamai Hamin Hagim, p. 340).

⁹ The first letters of הוא ושמך אחד, He and His name will be one (see Zecharia 14:9) are ה,ו,א—the letters missing because of Amaleik.

¹⁰ Then, אנכי אנכי הוא מנחמכם, I comfort you, (Yeshaya 51:12) will be fulfilled, as I will comfort you with the letters ה,ו,א (Tzavrei Shallal, Mayana Shel Torah, Shoftim, Haftora).

¹¹ Tehillim 132:13. See Chida in Simchas Haregel.

¹² Tehillim 75:11.

¹³ Adar 2:8:11.

¹⁴ Rashi (Vayikra 26:42) tells us that in five places Yaakov is spelled with a ו (אליה) while in five places Eliyahu is missing a ו (יעקוב). Yaakov took this letter from Eliyahu's name as security so that Eliyahu will come and herald the redemption of Yaakov's children. So, the number of places where the ו, which has a gematria of 6, is exchanged between Yaakov and Eliyahu is 5, which is the numerical value of ה. This alludes to the ו that are missing from Hashem's name because of Amaleik that will be returned in the future when Eliyahu heralds the redemption.

¹⁵ Tehillim 20:6. See Baal Shem Tov, Beshalach, footnote 19.

¹⁶ There is a criminological theory known as the broken windows theory which states that visible signs of crime, anti-social behavior and civil disorder create an urban environment that encourages further crime and disorder, including serious crimes.

¹⁷ Breishis 31:2,3.

¹⁸ In a similar fashion we can interpret הסרתי מסבלי שכמו (Tehillim 81:7): remove from me the fact that I tolerate Galus.

¹⁹ R' Shalom Shwadron wrote, annotated and edited more than 25 Sefarim, mainly those penned by his grandfather, the Maharsham. He also edited and published two famous Mussar texts composed by his teachers: Ohr Yahu by R' Leib Chasman and Lev Eliyahu by R' Elya Lopian.

²⁰ In 1966, at age 21, the American economist Robert Frank arrived in Nepal for two years to teach high school math and science as a Peace Corps volunteer. He was assigned to a one-room hut with no running water or electricity. At first, he was in shock and despair as he came from comfortable America. But he was surprised at how quickly he felt comfortable in his modest new home. He said, “What was astonishing to me was that within a day or two, everything seemed normal.” This was because everyone else around him had the same conditions. After his first month of work there, he received his first paycheck—\$40 for the month. He then set his heart on returning to America because how could he survive on such a minuscule amount of money. Then he discovered that in that part of Nepal no one earned more than \$30 monthly. He stayed and later said that he never felt healthier or happier in his life than when he did living on \$40 a month in a one-room hut without running water or electricity.

²¹ Breishis 6:12. See R' Shimshon Rafael Hirsch in his commentary.