

# Fascinating INSIGHTS

כ' טבת תשפ"ב

December 24, 2021

פרשת שמות

10<sup>th</sup> year, edition 416

Don't miss out on this opportunity! With just a few clicks you too can own this newly released EXTRAORDINARY book by getting it delivered to your door. The book Extraordinary Insights is available for purchase and delivery at <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B09KDW6QVX>. It can also be bought from the author by sending an email to [yalt3285@gmail.com](mailto:yalt3285@gmail.com). The essays contained in this book, written from a Torah outlook, deal with a wide array of assorted topics that are unique, inspiring, interesting, thought-provoking, encouraging, enlightening, and transformational. The more than 70 topics contained in this book include the greatness of our generation, educating children according to their uniqueness, passionate Judaism, overcoming our fears and the astounding future redemption. The book features haskamos from R' Yisroel Reisman, R' Moshe Wolfson, R' Zev Leff, R' Yitzchak Scheiner and others. Over the last number of years these insights have inspired thousands around the world in more than forty countries. This read is for all ages. It has something for everyone, for beginners and scholars, and students and teachers. It makes a great gift for friends, relatives, business associates, and learning partners. Please spread the word about it.



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](mailto:yalt3285@gmail.com). Thank you.

לעילוי נשמת משה בן יצחק יעקב

The weekly Fascinating Insights sheet is also available in FRENCH and HEBREW. To view or download them in these languages, send an email to [yalt3285@gmail.com](mailto:yalt3285@gmail.com) or visit <https://parshasheets.com/?s=Fascinating+Insights>.

This newsletter can also be viewed at <http://www.ladaat.info/showgil.aspx?par=20200425&gil=2725>.

Pour voir ou télécharger la version Française: <https://parshasheets.com/?s=Fascinating+Insights>.

אפשר לקרוא את עלון זה בעברית באתר דרשו.

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 them in your local shul for the public, thereby having a hand in spreading Torah.**

## Erev Shabbos

R' Pam<sup>1</sup> once remarked that what he missed from Europe was the Erev Shabbos. Chatzos came and people stopped their activities, focusing entirely on the holy Shabbos. People would come to shul early and say Shir Hashirim, learn a Sefer on the Parsha and so on. You felt Shabbos coming in. R' Yaakov Kamenetzky expressed it in this way: At the beginning of the 1900s, there was Chillul Shabbos in America. Over the years we recaptured the Shabbos. However, we have yet to reclaim the Erev Shabbos.

Preparing for Shabbos is biblical<sup>2</sup> as it says ביום והיה השי והכינו את אשר יביאו, the sixth day when they prepare what they bring.<sup>4</sup> The importance of preparing for Shabbos is shown in the Gemara<sup>5</sup> that says Eliyahu won't come on Erev Shabbos<sup>6</sup> because of the difficulties this would impose on those who would need to interrupt their Shabbos preparations to greet Eliyahu.

We know there is a special Yetzer Hara of arguing and getting angry on Erev Shabbos. This is demonstrated in the story related in the Gemara<sup>7</sup> of two people whom the Satan regularly incited so that during every twilight period on Erev Shabbos they fought with one another... Why is this so? Because the first sin was on Erev Shabbos.

<sup>1</sup> In 1993, a Sefer Torah was written to coincide with R' Pam's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. Posters with R' Pam's picture were posted informing people of the event. Rebbetzin Pam noticed a poster with her husbands' picture on their block and she felt violated the privacy of her neighbors which were mostly non-Jewish. Since it was late at night, she decided that in the morning she'll remove the poster. The next day she noticed that the sign was gone. Nevertheless, she still felt an apology was due at least to the neighbor whose house was closest to the sign. She went to apologize to the neighbor (Just to get a picture of who these neighbors were: They were Italian and owned a huge German Shepherd dog. Their son who also lived there was a lieutenant in the police force.) explaining that she didn't post the sign but she felt it was a violation of their privacy. Rebbetzin Pam said that the sign was gone although she was unaware of who took it down. Her neighbor interjected and said, "We live next to R' Pam all these years and are so enamored with him, as we never met anyone like him. We admire him! All this time we wanted a picture of him in our house and now the opportunity arrived when we saw that poster. We are the ones

who removed it from the outside so that we can have it in our dining room!" And so it was: This Italian family with their big dog and lieutenant son had a picture of R' Pam hanging in their dining room!

<sup>2</sup> See Biur Halacha 250, s.v. ישיבים. See there regarding one going shopping prior to Shacharis on Friday because preparing for Shabbos is biblical in contrast to Tefila which is Rabbinical.

<sup>3</sup> Shemos 16:5. So, we should bake and cook what we wish to— את אשר תאפו אפו ואת אשר תבשלו בשלו (Shemos 16:23).

<sup>4</sup> The holy Amoraim would prepare for Shabbos in their way. To name just a couple: Rava would salt fish for Shabbos whereas R' Huna would light lamps (Shabbos 119a. See the Rambam, Hilchos Shabbos 30:6). This shows happiness and anticipation for Shabbos. This isn't just for Friday but the entire week like we see with Shamai. Beis Shamai said from Sunday, one should prepare for Shabbos (Beitzta 16a).

<sup>5</sup> Pesachim 13a, Eruvin 43b.

<sup>6</sup> or Erev Yom Tov.

<sup>7</sup> Gittin 52a.

Consequently, the Yetzer Hara has dominance then. We can be caught up in such a rush on Erev Shabbos that it can lead to quarreling. Indeed, **נחש** is rooted in **חיש**, act quickly, rush.<sup>8</sup> To counter this, we need to be ready early.

Erev Shabbos should be peaceful and not rushed. Then we can live up to the words **לקבל שבתות מתוך רוב שמחה**, to receive Shabbos amid abundant gladness.<sup>9</sup> This can be attained by following a unique interpretation of **מת בערב**:<sup>10</sup> make yourself like you are dead on Erev Shabbos. Meaning, that you only deal with matters of Shabbos so that Shabbos can be brought in early and without tension.

We say in Kabbalas Shabbos **פני שבת נקבלה**, let us welcome the Shabbos presence. Another explanation is to put on your Shabbos face (**פני שבת**). All week a person walks around with a face of anxiety, tension and the like. But on Shabbos we should feel as if all our work is done and our worries gone. Our face should feel and look relaxed. This is how we should welcome (**נקבלה**) in Shabbos.<sup>11</sup>

We need to be ready with time to greet Shabbos. We should live up to the words **לקראת שבת לכו ונלכה**, let us go welcome Shabbos.<sup>12</sup> The Rambam<sup>13</sup> writes ...one should wrap himself in Tzitzis and sit with proper respect, waiting to receive Shabbos as one goes out to greet a king. R' Chanina would wrap himself in finery and stand towards evening on Friday and say **בואו ונצא לקראת שבת המלכה**, come, let us go out to greet Shabbos the queen. R' Yanai would put on his Shabbos clothes on Friday and say **בואי כלה בואי כלה**.<sup>14</sup>

One can already feel Shabbos on Erev Shabbos. Indeed, **ערב שבת** means mixture like **תערובת** since Erev Shabbos has the Kedusha of Shabbos mixed into it and one can already feel it on Erev Shabbos.<sup>15</sup> The Meor Einayim would actually feel Shabbos through his Shabbos preparations such as the Mikva and the like. Once, on Erev Shabbos after his preparations, he still felt some Kedusha lacking. He then realized he was wearing his weekday socks!

\*\*\*\*\*

### [Affinity to Infinity](#)

When an opportunity for growth comes our way we must take advantage.<sup>16</sup> If one misses a flight, he also misses the opportunity for the connecting flight. The same applies to life. When one misses an opportunity it is not that one step is missed rather the entire picture is different in the long term.

So, at times, taking just one step forward in Avodas Hashem makes all the difference. Consider what happens when two people are rushing into an elevator, but one of them is a step ahead. This results in that only he will enter the elevator before the doors close. The consequence is that he will reach a high floor while the other person won't. That one extra step made all the difference. The Satmar Rebbe<sup>17</sup> gave this example and taught that if you take one step forward in Avodas Hashem, more than your fellow man, it could be that you aren't just one step ahead of him rather with that extra devotion, you entered a cycle of Divine assistance, which will elevate you to very high levels.<sup>18</sup> There are many levels to climb in Avodas Hashem, and if that extra step is taken, you can be lifted higher.

**Listen to the short Fascinating Insights podcast at <https://jewishpodcasts.fm/fascinating-insights>, where it can also be downloaded!**

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 three books including the recently released **Extraordinary Insights**, in addition to being the host of The Fascinating Insights Podcast. His writings, some of which have been translated into Hebrew, German and French, 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 Kiryat Yearim (where the Aron was for 20 years [Shmuel 1, 7:1,2]) where he studies, writes and teaches. The author is passionate about teaching Jews of all levels of observance.

<sup>8</sup> As in **חיש ונעפה**, כי גז חיש ונעפה (Tehillim 90:10).

<sup>9</sup> **רבוך כל העולמים** on Friday night. When this is done, one can fulfill showing special warmth and love to his wife on Erev Shabbos (Mishna Brura 280:3).

<sup>10</sup> Kesubos 103b. The simple meaning is that if one dies on Erev Shabbos it is a good omen for him. A deeper meaning is that he truly lived his life and fulfilled his purpose and then died (**מת בערב שבת**), so that is a good omen as he is prepared for next world, the world of Shabbos. This is similar to the idea of **בשבת יאכל בשבת**, whoever toiled on Erev Shabbos will eat on Shabbos, meaning one who labored to perform Mitzvos in this world will be rewarded in the next world (Avoda Zara 3a).

<sup>11</sup> See R' Menachem Bentzion Zaks, the son-in-law of R' Tzvi Pesach Frank, in his sefer Menachem Tzion.

<sup>12</sup> Lecha Dodi.

<sup>13</sup> Hilchos Shabbos 30:2.

<sup>14</sup> Shabbos 119a. The Gemara says that one is permitted to run through the public domain just prior to Shabbos so that he can greet the incoming Shabbos and wouldn't be liable to pay for damages (Baba Kamma 32. See the Rambam, Chovel Umazik 6:9).

<sup>15</sup> See **שיחות התחזקות**, Chanuka, ח"ה, 1. To attain the Kedusha of Shabbos, we need **הכנה**, preparation for Shabbos. Although preparation for all Avodas Hashem is important, the only time it is stated explicitly is by Shabbos **ויהי ביום הששי והכינו את אשר יביאו** (Shemos 16:5).

<sup>16</sup> After the fight with the malach of Esav, Yaakov said I won't let you go unless you bless me (Breishis 32:27). The malach of Esav represents the

evil and bad occurrences in the world. When one goes through such events and occurrences, he mustn't just go through them but rather grow through them! This is how we can understand the words of Yaakov: That the malach, who represents the evil in the world, bless him meaning that he should grow through such encounters.

<sup>17</sup> A Jew named Heshy Spitz went traveled to Long Island for business. There he met an elder non-Jew named Jack who asked if he knew the saint Rabbi Teitelbaum (1887-1979). Heshy was bewildered as to how this non-Jew knew R' Teitelbaum, known as the Satmar Rebbe. Jack told him, "When I worked for the fire department, I was making inspections on fire hydrants. On one particular block, there was a car parked in front of the hydrant. Suddenly, the door of a private home where the hydrant was opened and the saint exited. The saint approached me and apologized, as he said, 'I am an old man and walk slowly. I was therefore driven right in front of the house, where I came to comfort a mourner. I apologize as I didn't know it would disturb you. I give you a blessing that you should reach my age and understand how important it is that people treat you nicely.'" Now Jack was in his 80s and felt like the blessing of the Satmar Rebbe came true. When Heshy asked Jack if he can buy the blessing of the Rebbe from him, Jack responded that the blessing was not for sale no matter how much he offered!

<sup>18</sup> There is an expression, "If you don't climb the mountain, you can't see the view."