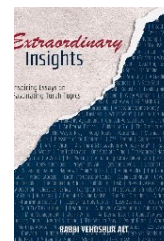
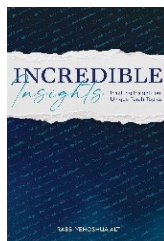


# Fascinating INSIGHTS

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## Buckets with Holes or Whole Buckets

A passenger on an airplane approached the stewardess asking to be put into a first-class seat. She explained to him that that can only be dealt with when he is on the ground. Once the plane is in the skies, it is too late. Similarly, the status of a person in heaven is determined by how he acted while he was down here on earth.

A wealthy but miserly man passed away and was standing in line waiting to hear his final judgment. As he watched the procedure with those in line before him, he became less fearful as he noticed that acts of charity had tremendous influence on the Divine decree; gifts given during one's lifetime would outweigh many sins. And so, when it was his turn to stand before the heavenly judge, he said: "It's true I may not have done all that I should while I was on earth, but permit me to take out my checkbook and write out very large sums for any worthy institutions you recommend." The judge replied, "Here we do not accept checks. We only accept receipts."

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## A Moving Mishloach Manos

One idea of giving Mishloach Manos is to increase unity. What are some ways we can do this?

1) Instead of just giving the Mishloach Manos that we "must" give such as to our friends and neighbors, we should also think of people that we may have had a conflict or some friction with and give them. Perhaps giving to these people is even more important. Purim is a great day

to do this because people's hearts are open and more receptive on this festive day. Someone once put it this way: Make a list of everyone you want to give Mishloach Manos to. Now rip up the list and give Mishloach Manos to those who didn't make it to the list.

2) Another idea is to think of someone who could use encouragement and uplifting. Send this person a Mishloach Manos. It is not about what you give rather about the fact that the person feels like they matter, that someone cares about them, that they were acknowledged.

3) Make something special that you know the person enjoys. We can extend this even further. For example, don't send a Mishloach Manos full of candies and cakes to an older couple that is health-conscious. Similarly, if you know someone is allergic to certain foods, make a special effort to send them that which they aren't allergic to. Then your Mishloach Manos has so much more meaning to them which truly increases unity.

4) Another great idea is to write a letter or at least some nice words in the Mishloach Manos you send. For example, if you send to a teacher of your child, write how much you appreciate the teacher. Or if you give to a neighbor, you can write we are so lucky and grateful to have you as neighbors. This puts some "soul" into the "body" of your Mishloach Manos. This therefore brings feelings of unity.

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[Human Anatomy](#)

The 248 עשה (positive commandments) are the essential means to empower a Jew to create a bond with Hashem. Through the performance of these 248, he constructs his relationship with Hashem. In contrast, the 365 לא תעשה (prohibitive commandments) are not the positive act of building but a preventative measure against anything that will have a deconstructive effect upon his relationship with Hashem.

The 365 לא תעשה can be understood with the following analogy. A train passes from place to place by traveling within the rail lines. The train driver must operate constantly by remaining on the tracks. Similarly, a Jew must operate exclusively within the set confines designated by Hashem. The Torah's dictates are not meant to be inhibitive but are safeguards to keep a Jew on the right path.

The 248 עשה are deeds executed by the 248 limbs that are responsible for action and the 365 sinews are ligaments or tissues that are responsible for maintaining the body parts in their proper position.<sup>1</sup> This is symbolic of the 365 לא תעשה whose role is to provide a rigid framework of law that holds man back from doing anything negative. Alternatively, the 365 לא תעשה deter the bodily sinews from permitting a Jew to pursue an evil path. This development ensures that the body and soul of a Jew are traveling in the same direction.

The 365 לא תעשה parallel the 365 days of the solar year.<sup>2</sup> The sun's movement as viewed by man on earth operates exactly according to its fixed orbit: it rises in the morning, passes across the skies during the day and sets in the evening.<sup>3</sup> It is a picture of consistency, never deviating from its path or from its natural course.<sup>4</sup> The sun is one of the primary forces responsible for the preservation of existence, which couldn't exist without it. The sun is compared to the king of the natural world. Its dominion spans all 365 days of the solar year. Like the sun, man is also considered a king in the lower world. Consequently, not transgressing the 365 לא תעשה guarantees that man will not do anything to alter his existence or the existence of the world.<sup>5</sup> This is in accord with the themes that the 365 לא תעשה are to preserve the relationship with Hashem.

With this we can understand why the 248 עשה are placed on a higher level compared to the 365 as the עשה build a relationship with Hashem in contrast to

the לא תעשה which are a preventative measure not to derail the relationship with Hashem. The 248 עשה being placed on a higher level is shown to us in the halachic principle of עשה דוחה לא תעשה, the performance of a positive commandment pushes aside the noncompliance of a prohibitive commandment.<sup>6</sup> For example, the juxtaposition of tzitzis and shaatnez<sup>7</sup> (a mixture of wool and linen) teaches that the positive fulfillment of tzitzis could even include a shaatnez mix whose prohibition would be pushed aside.<sup>8</sup>

The 248 positive commandments are observed in his love for Hashem which is founded on אהבה, love which has an expansive effect. Love motivates one to act in order to honor Hashem. This is in contrast to abstaining from the 365 negative commandments which is a demonstration of יראה which has a contraction effect.<sup>9</sup> It advances the honor of heaven through avoiding sin by inactivity not to commit a negative sin.<sup>10</sup>

We were created בצלם אלהים<sup>11</sup> in the image of Hashem. The human anatomy is divided into 248 limbs which correlates to the 248 עשה.<sup>12</sup> These 248 relate to his biological composition. Man's machine called the body was designed to fulfill the Divine will. As a result his 248 limbs cry out daily, "עשה אותנו שתחיה בזכותנו", make sure you use us in order that you live in our merit and prolong your days."<sup>13</sup>

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### The Double Month

The miracle of Purim occurred in a leap year in the second Adar.<sup>14</sup> The Tur<sup>15</sup> teaches that the 12 months correspond to the 12 tribes. If that is so, who does the second Adar correspond to on a leap year?

Adar links up with Yosef. Indeed, we know the mazel of Adar דגים, fish, and Yosef is likened to fish which have עין הרע.<sup>16</sup>

We know this is the only month that can be a leap month.<sup>17</sup> It therefore comes as no surprise, as the Kedushas Levi<sup>18</sup> points out, that Yosef has two children who are comparable to shevatim as it says וּמְנוּשָׁה כְּרָאוּבֵן וְשִׁמְעוֹן.<sup>19</sup> They correlate with the two Adars.<sup>20</sup> We can now appreciate the words Yosef said about Efraim and Menashe בני הם אשר נתן לי אלהים בזה ("they are my sons whom Hashem has given me here"), as זה has a numerical value of 12 referring to the 12<sup>th</sup> month which can have two months.

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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 Yiddish, 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, 7:12]) where he studies, writes and teaches. The author is passionate about teaching Jews of all levels of observance.

<sup>1</sup> See Zohar 1, 170b.

<sup>2</sup> Makos 23b.

<sup>3</sup> See Koheles 1:5.

<sup>4</sup> See Sanhedrin 42a.

<sup>5</sup> Maharal in Tiferes Yisrael, chapter 4.

<sup>6</sup> Maharal in Chidushei Agados, Makos 23b.

<sup>7</sup> Devarim 22:11-12.

<sup>8</sup> Yevamos 3b-4a.

<sup>9</sup> See Ramban to Shemos 20:8.

<sup>10</sup> Pachad Yitzchak, Shabbos, 2.

<sup>11</sup> Breishis 1:27.

<sup>12</sup> Makos 23b.

<sup>13</sup> Midrash Tanchuma in Ki Seitzei, 2.

<sup>14</sup> Yerushalmi Megila 1:5. R' Vosner (Shevet Halevi, 10:105:3) writes משנבנס אדר מרבין בשמחה, the increase of joy when Adar comes, surely begins in the second Adar. He later writes there are those who increase in simcha from the first Adar, and he concludes טוב לב משתה תמיד (see also R' Neventzal

among many others in his sefer במועדיהם בירושלים, Purim, p. 98). The Chasam Sofer (Choshen Mishpat, 20) concludes a Teshuva by writing the date, Rosh Chodesh Adar Rishon which is when we increase joy...

<sup>15</sup> Orach Chaim, 417.

<sup>16</sup> Brachos 55b.

<sup>17</sup> Sanhedrin 12a, Rambam in Hilchos Kidush Hachodesh 4:1.

<sup>18</sup> Parshas Shekalim, s.v. טעם. Chidushai Harim, Chodesh Adar, s.v. שמות.

<sup>19</sup> Breishis 48:5. This is one reason given why we have the bracha of ישמך since they were like shevatim.

<sup>20</sup> Maharsha, Sanhedrin 12a, s.v. זוג. Yosef corresponds to Adar. Sometimes he is counted as one while at other times he is like two because of Efraim and Menashe. Incidentally, there are always 12 shevatim. When Levi is removed, Yosef becomes two shevatim (When they traveled and split up the land, Yosef is divided into two).

<sup>21</sup> Breishis 48:9.