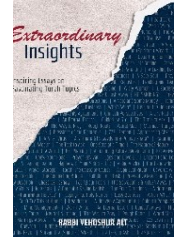
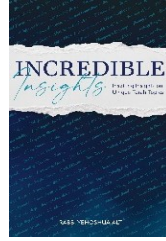


Fascinating INSIGHTS

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[Aisle in the Domicile](#)

Taking a look at some sefarim, we see how the cleaning for Pesach impacted the learning of gedolim.

The Mordechai¹ (c. 1250-1298) cites the words of Rabbeinu Meir: "... on Erev Pesach where we are so busy getting rid of the Chametz from all sides, I turned away from all that I was busy with to answer your question, in an abridged way..."

In a letter the Chassam Sofer² (1762-1839) wrote to a Dayan he concludes, "since I am outside my learning room because the righteous women are cleaning for Pesach, I am not able to be as lengthy as needed."

The Noda B'Yehuda³ (1713-1793) wrote, "In these days of Nissan, I am so busy with the Tzibur to teach them Halachos concerning Pesach. Additionally, I don't have an empty place and I am walking from room to room and corner to corner since we are cleaning for Pesach. Therefore I will respond in short..."

[Marvelous Month](#)

Nissan is no ordinary month rather it is extra special. This is how the Ohr Hachaim⁴ explains ראש חודשים, Nissan, as ראש is the choicest as in ראשם, choice spices,

since Nissan is the greatest of all months.⁵ The Siduro Shel Shabbos⁶ writes that ראש חודשים refers to the head like the head of a person where the powers of the body and its vitality come from the head. In the Sefer Maggid Masharim,⁷ the Maggid tells R' Yosef Karo that עתך עת דודים,⁸ your time was the time of love, refers to the holy days of Nissan.

R' Tzadok Hakohen⁹ teaches that the month of Nissan includes all the Kedusha of the 12 months. The Shela¹⁰ informs us that each day in Nissan is like Rosh Chodesh as it says ראש חודשים הזה, each day of this month is like a Rosh Chodesh. As a result, there is no Tachanun this entire month.

In a letter dated Motzai Shabbos, Parshas Acharei Mos in the year תרמ"ו (1886), the Avnei Nazer¹¹ writes to R' Chaim Berlin, who asked him questions on matters regarding Pesach, "It is hard for me to answer because these days of Nissan are so precious as it is יחשב, an hour is like a day. However, since I was asked very much for an answer as it is for his Oneg and Simchas Yom Tov, I took a little time to answer." In fact, the Shem Mishmuel testifies about his father, the Avnei Nazer, that in the days of Nissan he would go around in the upper worlds and

¹ Baba Kamma, Remez 55.

² שו"ת חתם סופר, Orach Chaim, 1:136.

³ Mahadura Tinyana, Orach Chaim, 57.

⁴ Shemos 12:2.

⁵ Shemos 30:23.

⁶ ויש לומר, s.v. 6:3:1.

⁷ Beginning of Parshas Emor.

⁸ Yechezkal 16:8.

⁹ Pri Tzadik, Parshas Hachodesh, 2. R' Tzadok Hakohen says elsewhere (מחשבות הרוץ, p. 63, s.v. וכלל) that on Rosh Chodesh Nissan one can attain the great light from the light of Moshiach.

¹⁰ Meachta Pesachim, Perek Ner Mitzvah, 6.

¹¹ שו"ת אבני נזר, Orach Chaim, 336. The Chidushai Harim (Likutai Harim, Nissan, s.v. שם החודש) points out that the name Nissan represents the supernatural, as ניסן is sourced in נס, miracle, that which is above nature. Each person can remove himself from his negative nature.

because of the great Kedusha of these days, he didn't need to sleep!¹²

A Call from the Wall

The sun sets in the west, which heralds in darkness. In fact, the word מערב, west is rooted in ערב, evening, because the west brings forth the evening with darkness.¹³ Once it is dark, one's vision of the world is naturally blurred. Indeed, the word ערב is related to תערובות, mixture symbolizing mix-up, blurriness and confusion.

Crying likewise blurs one's vision.¹⁴ In fact, the word בכי, crying, which is an expression of confusion as it is related to מבוכה, confusion and impasse,¹⁵ indicating blurriness and confusion. Similarly, the word דמע, tear, is related to מדומע,¹⁶ mixture and lack of clarity,¹⁷ indicating blurriness and confusion.¹⁸ It therefore is no surprise that the initials of רחל מבכה על בניה, Rochel **cries** for her children,¹⁹ מערב spell.

With this we can understand the idea behind the name כותל מערבי, the Western Wall, as the Shechina cries over the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash.²⁰ The term מערב is used as it symbolizes the blurriness and confusion which is a result of the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash.

The word מערב which is comprised from the initials of the words רחל מבכה על בניה can refer to the מערבי, as it is only Rochel's plea that Hashem accepted and therefore promised to redeem the Jewish people in her merit.²¹

Pesach of Prayer

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

In the story of Purim, Mordechai made a three-day fast in the middle of Nissan which included the night of Pesach.²² This seems puzzling since he had until the next Adar to make this three-day fast. Why did he pick the night of the Seder, the night we have Matza, Marror, the four cups and so on? Indeed, Rashi translates מעבר מדרכי that he transgressed the law of fasting on Yom Tov.²³

The Tiferes Shlomo teaches that the word הגדה is related to המשכה, pull as the Targum Unkolos on is ומשכו²⁴ and נגידו, since tremendous כוחות come down on the night of the Seder.²⁵ The Divrei Chaim comments on the words in the Haggada שאינו יודע לשאול את פתח לו that he doesn't realize that the gates from ת to א (all gates) are opened up on this night.²⁶

In the מה נשתנה it says וכאן הבן שואל, the child should say the מה נשתנה. During the Seder in the year תר"ד (1844) the father of the Beis Ahron said this also means here on the night of the Seder is where, we, the children of Hashem can make requests. כל דצריך ייתי ויפסח—for anything you need pour out your heart in Tefila.²⁷

The Gemara²⁸ tells us Matza is called לחם עני since לחם שעונין עליו דברים הרבה, we declare many things upon the Matza like the Haggada and Hallel.²⁹ עונין means to answer as in meaning Hashem answers our requests on יענך ה' this night. This is the meaning in לחמא עניא which refers to Matza and עניא means to answer. This explains why the Targum Unkolos on Matza פטירה, to open up³¹ as it opens up enormous abundance. With this we can comprehend why this was the time picked for the fast and Tefila to remove the decree of Haman. Let us all take advantage of the special opportunity the night of the Seder affords.

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, 7:1,2]) where he studies, writes and teaches. The author is passionate about teaching Jews of all levels of observance.

¹² אביר הרועים, 264, 299.

¹³ This is of course in contrast to the east where the sun rises. This is shown to us in the word מזרח, east which is rooted in זרח, shine.

¹⁴ See Shabbos 151b.

¹⁵ See Esther 3:15.

¹⁶ The term דמאי, produce that one isn't sure if it was tithed also relates to this, as it expresses the idea of confusion (See Melech Shlomo to Demai 1:1).

¹⁷ With this we can explain why דמע, tear, and מדע, why, are comprised of the same letters, as a question symbolizes confusion.

¹⁸ In light of what we mentioned about the word ערב and בכי, we should note that the connection of darkness of night and crying is shown in the word לילה, night, as it is comprised of the same letters as ילה which means a cry.

¹⁹ Yirmiya 31:14. When one cries, he feels lost. So, what occurs when one cries? Water streams forth from his eyes as water is a dissolver and this is how he feels—dissolved, low. This also explains why one can't talk when he is crying, since he feels confused.

²⁰ See Likutai Moharan 67:1.

²¹ The Midrash relates that all the Avos and Imahos attempted to appease Hashem when King Menashe introduced idolatry into the Beis Hamikdash (Melachim 2, chapter 21). However, He rejected all their pleas until Rochel called her own magnanimity to her sister Leah. When Leah was fraudulently married to Yaakov in place of Rochel, Rochel didn't let jealous resentment lead her to protest. Why then should Hashem be so zealous in punishing His children for bringing idols into His Temple? Hashem accepted her plea and promised that the Jewish people would be redeemed eventually, in her merit (Rashi to Yirmiya 31:14).

²² Pirkei Drebi Eliezer, chapter 49. See the Midrash (Koheles Rabba 8:5, Yalkut Shimoni 978) of Esther being busy with Biur Chametz (see the Maharzu).

²³ Megila 15a. Esther, 4:17, Rashi. See Pirkei Drebi Eliezer, chapter 50. It says וצומו עלי ואל תאכלו ואל תשתו שלשת ימים, fast and don't eat or drink for three days (Esther 4:16). Isn't it obvious that if one fasts that there will be no eating or drinking? On Pesach we have the Mitzvah of eating Matza and Marror and drinking the four cups. This is what is meant by ואל תשתו, referring to not eating Matza and Marror and drinking the four cups (Taamai Haminhagim, p. 371).

²⁴ Breishis 37:28.

²⁵ Pirkei Drebi Eliezer (chapter 32) tells us that on the night of Pesach, אוצרות טללים נפתחים, storehouses of dew (bounty) are opened.

²⁶ R' Moshe Kobriner remarks on יודע לשאול את פתח לו that he doesn't know how to daven so open him up.

²⁷ Tiferes Shlomo, s.v. כל.

²⁸ Pesachim 36a. it is also called לחם עוני because it is made only with water. This is in contrast to לחם עשירה which can also be with oil, wine, milk and honey (see Yerushalmi Pesachim 2:4, Rambam in Hilchos Chametz Umatza 6:5).

²⁹ In the Sefer Darkei Chaim V'Shalom (אות תרכג) it cites the custom of the Minchas Elazar that after Pesach he wouldn't wash his Kittel that he wore on Pesach in order not to remove the uncleanness from the Matza and wine from Seder night. This was so that on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur when he wears his Kittel the merit of the Matza would be there. Only prior to Pesach did he wash it.

³⁰ Tehillim 20:2.

³¹ As in פטר רחם. See Shemos 13:6.