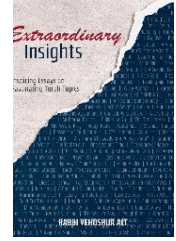
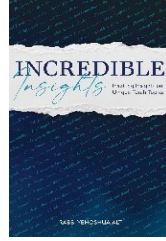
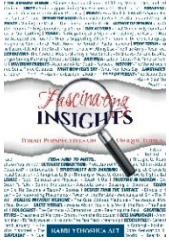


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י"ט' אייר תשפ"ב
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Extricate the Intricate

The gemara¹ tells us that the 39 melachos necessary for the construction of the Mishkan are those that are forbidden on Shabbos. This is indicated by the juxtaposition of the prohibition to do work on Shabbos with the section concerning the construction of the Mishkan.²

The Baal Haturim³ points out that if we count the words from the beginning of Parshas Vayakhel, which discusses Shabbos, until the word *השבת*,⁴ we come to 39! Additionally, because the word *לעשת* is spelled without a ו, it spells (9) *תשע* ל, (gematria of 30). That is 30 and 9 which is 39, alluding to the 39 melachos. This is what we cannot do on Shabbos but can do (*לעשת*) on the six days of the week (The letter ו which is missing in the word *לעשת* has a gematria of 6.).

Essentially, the 39 melachos are 39 curses.⁵ The 39 are broken up into four parts starting with *סידורא דפת*, the labors that constitute the order of making bread.⁶ Putting so much effort in order to eat bread originates from the curse caused by Adam as it says *בזעת אפריך תאכל להם*,⁷ by the sweat of your brow shall you eat bread.

If we calculate the curses that arose because of the sin of Adam including those of the snake, Adam, Chava and the ground, we come to the number⁸ 39!⁹ In fact, *לט* (gematria 39) means a curse as in the Targum Onkolos on *ארור* which is *ליט*.¹⁰ On Shabbos we don't perform these 39 as it is *bracha*, the opposite of *klalla*, curse, like it says *ויברך אלהים את יום השביעי* Hashem blessed the seventh day.¹¹

Adam's sin occurred prior to Shabbos. However, Shabbos wasn't affected by the sin as the light that shone (Ohr Haganuz) prior to his sin continued until after Shabbos.¹² So on Shabbos we don't perform the 39 melachos, *klallos*, curses, as it is a day of *bracha*!

¹ Shabbos 49b, See Shabbos 70a.

² Rashi s.v. *k'neged* to Shabbos 49b.

³ Shemos 35:1, s.v. *la'asos*.

⁴ Shemos 35:3.

⁵ Shomer Emunim Drush Habitachon, chapter 2. See Noam Elimelech, Devarim, s.v. *od b'pasuk*.

⁶ Shabbos 74b. This consists of the actions necessary in producing the lechem hapanim in the Mishkan.

⁷ Breishis 3:19.

⁸ If Adam would not have sinned there would be no need to work for clothing, food, etc. Consequently, there would not be 39 melachos.

⁹ The Tikunai Zohar (Tikun 48) says that the snake, Adam and Chava each received ten curses while the ground received nine.

¹⁰ As in Devarim 27:15.

¹¹ Breishis 2:3.

¹² Breishis Rabba 11:2. We don't say "goodnight" on Shabbos (rather we say Good Shabbos) since Shabbos is entirely light. The gemara tells us (Moed Katan 24a) that there is no observance of mourning on Shabbos. This is because during the week, the conduct of Hashem is through a malach whereas on Shabbos it is through Hashem himself, and it says in regard to Hashem *chedvah bimkomo*, delight is in His place (Divrei Hayamim 1, 16:27).

Due to the sin of Adam, which caused the 39 melachos, good and evil became intermingled.¹³ Through the 39 melachos, we raise the sparks that got mixed in evil.¹⁴ Shabbos, on the other hand, is מעין עולם הבא,¹⁵ a semblance of the world to come—a day that is above and beyond. It is like Adam before the sin,¹⁶ which is shown by the fact that we don't perform the 39 melachos.

Process of Progress

There are two elements: male and female. The male element is that initial burst of excitement just as it is with his contribution to the creation of a child.¹⁷ Contrary to this is the female element which is working through a process. This is just as we see in her contribution to a child where she takes his initial flash (i.e the seed) and develops it into a child over the course of nine months.

The male element is just a fleeting gift. It gives us a flash of awareness of what we can reach if we are willing to go through the process of the female element, but then it disappears, leaving only a vague memory behind. This is why זכר, male element, is related זכר, memory.

This idea finds expression with those who become baalei teshuva. When one starts to become religious, he is eager and enthusiastic. This is the male element, the initial burst of excitement. After a while, the fire dissipates and he is left to undergo the female element with self-improvement. In this way we can grasp קדוש ימינו כקדם¹⁸ to bring back the days of old, when we saw what we could accomplish from the initial spurt of excitement.

A similar example is with a boy that returned to America from yeshiva in Eretz Yisrael or a girl straight out of seminary. They spent their time in Eretz Yisrael, soaking it all in and they come back having made serious changes in their lives (this is the male element). Yet, a few months later, they don't look the same as they did when they initially arrived. They find it very hard to keep up the flame of their inspiration. This is when they need to remember the female element and climb their way up the ladder of growth.¹⁹

When Hashem took us out of Mitzrayim (which occurred on Pesach) it was a flash of the male element. Dazzling miracles. Even the lowest person was brought to the heights of prophecy. And then it was over and we were discarded into the wilderness, a limiting place. There was no more excitement

rather just moving forward. It took seven weeks (which are the weeks of sefira) for us to bring ourselves back to the level of prophecy that was handed to us freely by the shores of the sea and be ready to receive the revelation.

Deathlessness

We know of the concept of reincarnation. Do you know who was reincarnated as Yaakov Avinu? The answer is R' Yehuda Hanasi, also known as Rebbe. Let's explore this deeper and see allusions to this.

1) Yaakov has a special connection with Shema. One place we see this is when Yaakov and Yosef met, Yaakov was saying shema.²⁰ Rebbe who was the redactor of Mishnayos, begins shas with shema.²¹ Moreover, which shema does he begin with? shema of nighttime. This connects with Yaakov who instituted maariv, the nighttime tefilla.²²

2) The first three brachos in Shemoneh Esrei correspond to the three avos. The first bracha, which concludes מגן אברהם, of course parallels Avraham. The second bracha, אתה גבור, which is called גבורות correlates with Yitzchak, whose trait is גבורה. The third bracha—אתה קדוש—matches up with Yaakov about whom it says יעקב יקדוש.²³ This connects with Rebbe who is called רבינו הקדוש.²⁴

3) Rebbe tells us that the proper path one should choose for himself is להיות תפארת לעשה ותפארת לו מן האדם, whatever is a credit to himself and earns him the esteem of fellow men.²⁵ This connects with Yaakov whose trait is תפארת.

4) Rebbe, who lived in Tzipori for 17 years, intimates that he was a spark—a latter-day incarnation—of Yaakov when he cites the pasuk that he applied to himself, ויהי יעקב בארץ מצרים, שבע עשרה שנה, Yaakov lived in Mitzrayim 17 years.²⁶

5) גיצין של יעקב אבינו ר' יהודה הנשיא, a spark of the soul of Yaakov.²⁷

6) The Gilyon Hashas²⁸ tells us every Shabbos following Rebbe's death, he would come to his house wearing Shabbos clothes and make kidush for his living family members.²⁹ How are we to understand this since one who is dead is exempt from Mitzvos? This is because Rebbe was לא מת just like Yaakov.³⁰

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

¹³ Nefesh Hachaim 1:6, See Derech Hashem 2:4. Before the sin of Adam, there was no subjectivity. This is just as 1 and 1 is 2 which is not bad or good rather it is just a fact. So, the snake had to come from the outside because there was no evil on the inside of Adam. Evil became part of Adam only after the sin. As a result, we need the death experience, since evil is part of us. Through Techias Hamasim, we come back with purity and holiness.

¹⁴ See Likutai Torah, Behar.

¹⁵ Brachos 57b. Shabbos is 1/60th of olam haba. This is what is meant in יום שכלו שבת ומנוחה להדי העולמים, the day which will be completely a Shabbos and rest day for eternal life which alludes to the next world after the final redemption (in Birchas Hamazon).

¹⁶ The Ramban (Devarim 30:6) tells us that in the days of Moshiach, the choice of goodwill be natural. It will be like Adam before the sin (see also the Maharal in Derech Chaim 4:18, Netzach Yisrael 46 and Daas Tevunos 40 and 44. See also Shabbos 151b).

¹⁷ Since it is so appealing to start something new and exciting, we may flit from one exhilarating experience to the next, dropping it as soon as the going gets rough. We get excited about a new diet but then give up. This is the male element without the accompaniment of the female counterpart. Life can then become a series of ongoing thrills with the charge getting weaker each time in our endless search for real joy.

¹⁸ Eicha 5:21.

¹⁹ The reality is that a person can't always be on the top level. People rise and fall. This is just as it says והחיות רצוה ושוב, to and fro (Yechezkel 1:14). This is just as we see in the world: there is light and darkness, purity and impurity, exile and redemption, falling and rising, closeness and distance, winter and summer, inhale and exhale. It is similar to a pulse which goes

up and down. Even in regard to the Kohen Gadol, it says אל יבא בכל עת אל הקודש (Vayikra 16:2), even the holiest person in the world can't always be on top. This is the natural process of growth. We rise and we fall. Then, we pick ourselves up again. Back to the original high.

²⁰ Breishis 46:29, Rashi. Another place we see this is when Yaakov wanted to reveal to his sons the end of the withdrawal of Hashem's right hand but the Shechina departed from him. Yaakov said maybe there is a blemish among my children like Avraham who had Yishmael or Yitzchak who had Esav. His sons answered him אחד אלהינו ה' and explained just as there is only One Deity in your heart so there is only One Deity in our heart... (Pesachim 56a).

²¹ Brachos 2a. Shas begins קורין את שמע בערבין, from when may we recite shema in the evenings?

²² See Ben Yehoyada, Brachos 2a.

²³ Yeshaya 29:23.

²⁴ Shabbos 118b.

²⁵ Avos 2:1. This is when one goes in the דרך האמצעי, middle path, and not to either extreme (Bartenura, s.v. כל). This is what the trait of Yaakov, תפארת, is, the proper balance.

²⁶ Breishis Rabba 96:5. See Eitz Yosef, Vagshal edition, citing the Kabbalist R' Emmanuel.

²⁷ Pri Tzadik, Balak 13. We find the same idea by Rebbe as by Yaakov regarding not acting for physical pleasure (see Breishis 29:21, Rashi) as the Gemara says ולא נהניתי ואפילו באצבע קטנה, I didn't benefit from worldly pleasures even according to the toil of my little finger (Kesubos 104a. See also Avoda Zara 11a.).

²⁸ Kesubos 103a, s.v. כל.

²⁹ R' Bachaye (Breishis 49:33) tells us that Rebbe's holiness was such that death held no power over him. He was therefore able to return to this world after death. This same idea also applies to Yaakov.

³⁰ The gemara (Taanis 5b) says that Yaakov never died—יעקב אבינו לא מת.