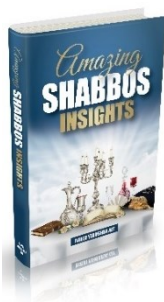


Fascinating INSIGHTS

כ"ט' אב תשפ"ב
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פרשת ראה
10th year, edition 450

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Serendipitous Surprise

On a visit to Yad Vashem, R' Berel Wein toured the Children’s Memorial, the tribute to the 1.5 million children, under age 12, slain by the Nazis. R' Wein was expecting to see pictures of the murdered children, recordings of their names and maybe even a video depicting the horrors the children endured. He expected statistics about the children and informative pamphlets and books. However, that wasn’t the case, as he entered an underground room — 8 to 10 stories in height — which was completely dark. In the middle of this darkness, there was a single burning candle. The light of this single candle was multiplied infinitely in all directions by a series of glass panels and

mirrors that lined the walls, floors and ceiling. Countless specks of light were visible in the otherwise dark room. He heard a recorded voice being broadcast throughout the room, reciting the names of the murdered children, as well as their age and country of origin. “Simcha Katz, three years old, Vilna.” “Sarah Jacobowitz, six years old, Sarajevo.” A seemingly endless litany of names.

When R' Wein exited this cavern, he thought, “I did not hear my name. I am of the age...” He took this as a lesson that he had much to accomplish and would always strive for the next level. “If I can take one more boy into yeshiva or give one more drasha, I will.”

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With this, R' Wein explained why Hashem referred to Moshe by this name throughout the Torah — the name that Paroh's daughter coined¹ (and not by one of his other nine names²). Each time Hashem called Moshe, it was a reminder that he had been saved from the water, unlike the many thousands that Paroh killed.

We must take this lesson to heart as every Jew alive today was personally saved from the murdered in the annals of history. What will you do with your time in this world?

Miss Match

A father was troubled about his daughter that did not find her match after dating for years. That night, the Yehudi Hakadosh appeared to him in a dream saying that there are three types of *zivugim*—the *zivug* of Shabbos and the Jewish people, the *zivug* of the body and soul and the *zivug* of a husband and wife. These three *zivugim* are only in the hands of Hashem and only He can pair them. This is alluded to in the words מאשר שמנה להמו והוא יתן אשר, his bread will have richness and he will provide.³ What are the letters that are above the letters that comprise the name אשר (אשר) can be understood as the letters above א, ש, ר, as מ means “from” or “more than,” meaning that which is above)? Above an א is a ב,⁴ above a ש is a ת and above a ר is a ש. These letters spell שבת. This alludes to the *zivug* of Shabbos and the Jewish people. The word שמנה is comprised of the same letters as the word נשמנה. נשמנה also means fat, alluding to the material body. Consequently, we have an allusion to the *zivug* of the body and soul. Lastly, the word להמו corresponds to the *zivug* of a husband and wife because a woman is called “the bread of man.” This is the deeper meaning in מאשר שמנה להמו והוא יתן: These three *zivugim* only Hashem can give.

When this father woke up from this dream, it became enrooted in him to the extent that he reached the level of emuna that only Hashem is able to find a shiduch for his daughter. Once he attained this emuna, Hashem immediately sent the match for his daughter who soon became engaged.

R' Yitzchak Scheiner would quote the gemara⁵ that says forty days before the formation of an embryo, a bas kol proclaims, the daughter of So-and-so is destined

for So-and-so. He would say that when his wife, who was R' Baruch Ber Leibowitz's granddaughter, was born, a bas kol declared, Esther Leah bas R' Moshe (the granddaughter of R' Baruch Ber) will marry Yitzchak Aryeh ben R' Dov (referring to R' Yitzchak Scheiner). He continued: “Where was Yitzchak Aryeh at the time? In Pittsburgh! I was three years old when my wife was born in Vilna in 1925. How does such a match come about? There are many reasons that this match shouldn't logically have come to fruition. Firstly, she was in Vilna and I was in Pittsburgh. That is 5,960 miles away! Furthermore, this Yitzchak Aryeh had hardly glanced at a gemara. How will he marry the granddaughter of R' Baruch Ber?”

A Shining Son

The name for father is אב, which is comprised of the first two letters of the *alef-beis*. This is to signify that it all begins with the father.

Why is a son called בן? The last letter of אב is ב which stands for בן. The first letter of בן is ב, demonstrating that the son continues where the father left off. The second letter of בן is ן.

The final ן is the longest and straightest letter in the *alef-beis* and therefore connotes continuity. For example, while a person who learns is called a לומד, when the ן is added, we obtain the word למוּדן, a person who is constantly and deeply involved with study. Similarly, a person who gets angry is called a כועס. When we add the ן we get כעסן, a person that is habitually angry. So the word בן conveys the idea that the son takes the path of the father and stays on it.⁶

We can now understand why the word בן has the same root as the word for בונה, builds. The son builds on the achievements of his father, continuing the same way without deviation.⁷

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 four books including the recently released *Amazing Shabbos 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, 7:1,2]) where he studies, writes and teaches. The author is passionate about teaching Jews of all levels of observance.

¹ See Shemos 3:4.

² See Vayikra Rabba 1:3 that Moshe had ten names.

³ Breishis 49:20.

⁴ The numerical value of the letter א is 1 while ב is 2. Therefore, ב is above an א, meaning it has a higher numerical value.

⁵ Sota 2a.

⁶ Children are expensive to raise in addition to the fact that they often cause their parents much heartache. So why do so many people want to have children? This is explicated by R' Dessler (Michtav M'Eliyahu, volume 1, p. 36) with the two motivations of why people desire to have children. One is that we feel that children will be a continuation of ourselves after we leave the

world. The second is that we have an innate need to have someone on whom to lavish love and kindness. This is why childless couples will often adopt children and raise them as their own. Some will even have a dog or some other pet to lavish affection upon as if they were children. This is a clear indication of the deep-seated power of giving in the human soul.

⁷ The word בנה is also associated with building as in חכמות נשים בנותה, the wise among women, each builds her house (Mishlei 14:1). Additionally, בן אב and אב each begins with א, whereas בן and בת begin with ב. This alludes to the idea that one's children continue the existence of their parents, as the ב follows the א in א-ב.