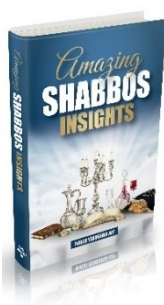


Fascinating INSIGHTS

טו' אב תשפ"ב
August 12, 2022

פרשת ואתחנן
10th year, edition 448

Exciting News! The newly released book “Amazing Shabbos Insights” is now available for purchase and delivery on Amazon at <https://www.amazon.com/dp/BoB4BY8S88> or by sending an email to yalt3285@gmail.com. The more than 70 concise essays contained in this book are designed to cover the entire gamut of Shabbos topics. The essays are unique, inspiring, interesting, encouraging, enlightening and transformational. This book has the ability to significantly enhance your Shabbos. Topics include: Shabbos expenses and other related financial matters, the origin of zemiros and what they accomplish, Shabbos food, the special holiness of Shabbos and Havdala’s significance. This book is for everyone, from beginners to scholars, and students to teachers. It makes a great gift for friends, relatives, business associates, and learning partners. Purchase it at <https://amzn.to/3eyh5xP>. Please spread the word about it.



To purchase any of the other author’s books (hardcopy or e-book) and get it delivered to your door, please send an email to yalt3285@gmail.com or visit <https://amzn.to/3eyh5xP> (where you can also see the reviews).

SPREADING FASCINATING TORAH INSIGHTS ACROSS THE GLOBE

Argentina • Austria • Australia • Belgium • Brazil • Canada • Chile • China • Czech Republic • England • France • Germany • Gibraltar • Holland • Hungary • India • Israel • Italy • Mexico • Panama • Poland • Russia • South Africa • Switzerland • Ukraine • United Arab Emirates • United States • Venezuela

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. Thank you.

The weekly Fascinating Insights sheet is also available in FRENCH, HEBREW and YIDDISH. To view or download them in these languages, send an email to yalt3285@gmail.com or visit <https://bit.ly/3FJ8uEc>.

This newsletter can also be viewed in English at <https://bit.ly/3z9qF5E>.

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

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.

Paragon of Passion

The Gemara¹ tells us דומה... לשיונה פרקו מאה ואחד ואחד, there is no comparison between one who learns something 100 times and 101. Another meaning of this statement is that there is no comparison between one who learns the material 100 times to one who learns it 100 times with the אחד—ה'. Connecting to Hashem while learning may be overlooked but is very necessary.² Before we learn we should say I am learning Toras Hashem.

There are those, including R’ Akiva Eiger, who when for example learning Gemara would say אמר אביי—Abaye says the Ratzon Hashem is... So they would do with all their learning. There were Gedolim who when they didn’t comprehend what they were learning would stop and cry out to Hashem until they got the explanation.

R’ Berel Wein recalled that when he was in seventh grade in the Chicago Jewish Academy, the Rebbe would begin the shiur in the morning with the words we say at shacharis: אשרינו מה טוב חלקנו ומה נעים גורלנו ומה יפה

¹ Chagiga 9b.

² See Nefesh Hachaim 4:7.

ירשתנו אשרינו שאנחנו משכימים ומעריבים ערב ובקר ואומרים פעמים
3, בכלל יום שמע ישראל ה' אלהינו ה' אחד
good is our portion, how pleasant is our lot, and how
beautiful is our heritage. We are fortunate for we come
early and stay late, evening and morning and proclaim
twice daily, Shema Yisrael Hashem Elokainu Hashem
Echad.⁴ Then the Rebbe said, “Now we can learn.” How
many of us say this before we start learning?

Zooming in on Zionists

What can be said of the Zionists who built up the
Land of Israel?

Here is what the great R' Yissachar
Shlomo Teichtal, who was killed in the Holocaust, wrote
about those secular Jews that built Eretz Yisrael:⁵ “They
cherish the land and refuse to desire any other land
besides that of their forefathers. They sacrifice their lives
for it, as is well known. Many have even died for the sake
of the land.⁶ We heard that during the Arab uprisings,
many Jews who were killed in battle said with their last
breaths, ‘there is nothing better than to die for the sake of
our land.’”⁷

Elsewhere, based on the words of R' Yehonasan
Eibshitz,⁸ R' Teichtal writes,⁹ “Now, today (written in 1942)
when even the lowest of Jews have decided to return to
our inheritance (Eretz Yisrael) and they dedicate their lives
to it, refusing to covet any other land, Hashem certainly
considers this teshuva. The fact that they do not fulfill the
mitzvos is because they were not raised and educated in
this spirit. They are like infants who were kidnapped by
non-Jews as the Rambam writes.¹⁰ But the act of aliyah is

unquestionably considered teshuva, and through it they
fulfill the positive commandment of teshuva.”

Abated Adversity

We know that all that Hashem does is for the
best—כל דעביד רחמנא לטב עביד.¹¹ So where do we see that in
the many troubles that the Jewish people have faced
throughout history?

Let's preface our answer with an analogy.
Imagine a government where one that transgresses the
law gets a 50-pound rock thrown at him which can kill him.
What if the offender was the son of the president? The
president can't violate his own law, yet at the same time
he doesn't want to kill his son. What the president can do
is take the 50-pound rock and break it up into smaller
pieces. Then it can be thrown at his son at different times.
In doing so, his son will now survive.

Likewise, Hashem gives us pain in dosages that
we can handle. This way we get what we deserve and yet
still survive. So, it is a kindness that we don't get
punishment all at once rather little by little since this way
we can survive. This can be compared to one collecting a
debt from a friend as he does so little by little.¹²

שלא אחד בלבד עמד עלינו¹³ In this way we can grasp
לכלותנו אלא שבכל דור ודור עומדים עלינו לכלותנו—in every
generation they rise against us to annihilate us, as it is
done little by little, not all at once. This is how we are
saved—הקדוש ברוך הוא מצילנו מידם.

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 [Simuel 1, 71-2]) where he studies, writes and teaches. The author is passionate about teaching Jews of all levels of observance.

³ Interestingly, this tefilla was compiled during a period of intense persecution.

⁴ During the middle of the fifth century the Persian king, Yezdegerd the second, forbade the Jews to observe Shabbos and to recite Shema. His purpose was to eradicate belief in Hashem as the Creator (which is symbolized by Shabbos) and in His Oneness, as it is proclaimed in Shema. To ensure that Shema would not be read in defiance of his decree, the king stationed guards in shul for the first quarter of the day when Shema must be read. To counteract his plan, the Sages instituted two recitations of the first pasuk of Shema—the one read in this tefilla which was to be recited at home and another as part of the Shabbos Kedusha of Mussaf. Although these contain only the first pasuk of Shema, it is sufficient to fulfill the obligation of Shema in cases of extreme emergency (Brachos 13b). Even after Yezdegerd was killed, the two Shema recitations remained as it was, and the one that had been recited at home was included in the part of the tefilla in shul (after Birchos Hashachar).

⁵ Eim Habanim Semaicha p. 169.

⁶ In another place, R' Teichtal writes (Eim Habanim Semaicha pp. 206-7), “In the beginning of the winter of 1942 on Wednesday, Parshas Vayeishev, during my exile, circumstances brought me to Busermin, my former residence. There I visited my student, an eminent Torah scholar, the pious R' Avish Ruttman. He was one of the most extraordinary and devout followers of the great R' Aharon Yeshaya Fisch, Av Bes Din of Yudess who was one of the foremost students of the Kamarna Rebbe who ordained him as rabbi. Once a year he would visit Busermin to spend Shabbos with his followers and admirers. I simply cannot describe his righteousness and piety which surpassed even his greatness in Torah. He was truly a giant among giants. This R' Avish related to me a speech about the Zionist movement that he heard from R' Aharon Fisch's holy mouth. Although many of the generation's Torah leaders strongly opposed this movement R' Fisch said as follows: ‘Leave them alone! We do not truly

know how the redemption will unfold. In one place the Zohar states that Yerushalayim will be rebuilt and the exiles will be gathered before the redemption (See Zohar 1:139a). Elsewhere the Zohar states that the redemption will occur without our intervention (See Zohar 3:221a). Thus, it is unclear what the creator of the world wants. Therefore, if we see that many Jews desire to rebuild the land, even if they are the greatest sinners, who could be so brazen and arrogant to interfere with their work?! Perhaps Hashem wants the rebuilding to be done specifically by people like these. Why must you involve yourself with Hashem's hidden matters?! (Brachos 10a) Hashem knows how to cause things to happen. Leave them alone! These words come from a man who was unique in his generation. The revealed and the hidden as well as supreme wisdom were all unified in him. I subsequently heard this same idea in the name of the Viznitzer Rebbe, R' Yisrael, who was brilliant in both revealed and hidden. Reliable sources told me that they heard directly from his holy mouth that he did not want to join in the ostracism of the Zionists. He felt that Hashem purposely wanted them to rebuild the land because the ruffians (*biryonim*) destroyed our land and the second Beis Hamikdash (See Gittin 56a). Therefore they must rectify their wrongdoing and rebuild our land now.”

⁷ This is a reference to Yosef Trumpeldor. See Encyclopedia Ivrit, Volume 18, p. 931.

⁸ Ahavas Yehonasan, Haftaras Balak, s.v. v'haya.

⁹ Eim Habanim Semaicha, p. 165.

¹⁰ Hilchos Mamrim 3:3.

¹¹ Brachos 60b. We have heard before that Hashem doesn't give us more than we can handle. We must also realize that Hashem doesn't give us less than we can handle.

¹² See Avoda Zara 4a and see Rashi s.v. נפרע and Chinuch 311.

¹³ והיא שעמדה in the Haggada.