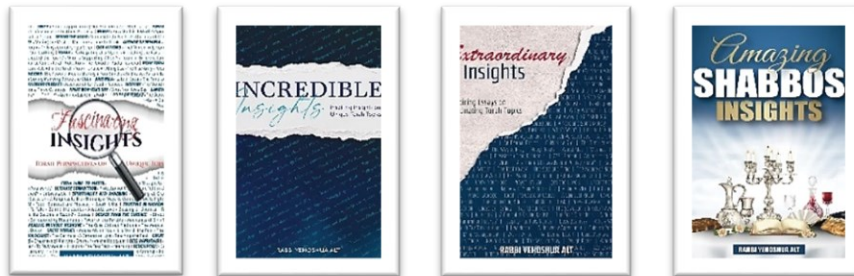


Fascinating INSIGHTS

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Economics

R' Simcha Wasserman would explicate that in economics there is the sphere of the individual's domain and the community's domain. When it comes to the total national wealth, it makes no difference to the nation's wealth, in a particular sense, whether that wealth is concentrated in a few hands or distributed equally among everyone. The nation is still wealthy and a wealthier nation can accomplish more. Even a poor man that lives in a wealthy nation has certain advantages.

The same is true in the Jewish community as when someone is learning he is adding to the public good. The Torah scholar adds to the accumulation of Torah and causes the entire nation to become rich. When the Chofetz Chaim lived, the entire Jewish people were rich.¹ Conversely, when he died, the entire nation became poorer.



Death and Beyond

After Adam sinned the forces of evil became an integral part of man's composition and the world. As a result, the whole of mankind became a composite of good and evil. Under these conditions man can't reach the ideal state of perfection because he can't separate the forces of evil from those of good and dedicate all of his deeds towards the good. To correct this, death was ordained as a vital part of man's existence. This process, as well as whatever else transpires over the body and soul after death, starts the process that will lead to the separation of

¹ R' Simcha Wasserman described the scene at the third Me' of Shabbos at the Chofetz Chaim's small house in Radin which he attended regularly. The entire yeshiva would come to hear him. Up to 40 people would

squeeze into his house while the remainder stood outside listening through the window.

evil from good. This will bring man back to the primary state of Adam before the sin.

The Arizal² teaches: “All sins and transgression that man commits on his own not excluding Adam’s sin surely brings upon man a *klipah* (an exterior of impurity) and the foulness of the snake (*zuhamas ha’nachash*) relative to the nature of his sin. Nevertheless, everything depends upon man’s repentance which is capable of pushing away the defilement that clings to him as a result of his sins. However the defilement and the *klipah* that clings to all the neshamos after man has sinned is no longer dependent upon repentance (alone) and he is compelled to (the state of) death. Afterwards the defect will be amended through death... The reason for this is because the sin of Adam was very severe...³ Therefore the *klipah* cannot be separated from man until death. Then man is buried and his flesh decomposes in the earth and this *klipah* detaches itself from him.” The Arizal explicates “After man is buried in the ground following death, then immediately four malachim come and degrade the ground of his kever... Then they return his soul to his body as in his lifetime because the *klipah* still clings and is connected to the soul and body and doesn’t detach itself from them and therefore his soul and body must become one again. Then the same malachim hold on to him from different ends, shake him and hit him with sticks of fire in the same way a person would hold a tallis from its two ends and shake it out from the dust that has clung to it, until the *klipah* becomes separated from them completely. This is why this is referred to as *chibut ha’kever* — the way a person bangs his tallis and shakes it.” So the time for receiving one’s just reward is after techias hamaisim in a renewed world. He will be ready to benefit now that he has been purified.



Once death has been decreed upon man meaning the separation of body and soul for the sake of their reuniting afterwards, it is appropriate that during this period of separation there be set aside a place both for the body and soul, permitting each one to attain its goal. The body must return to its source, to the earth from which it was taken as it says, “for you are dust and to dust you will return.”⁴ There it will decompose, lose its physical form and undergo estate of judgment and *tikunim*. In contrast, the neshama must wait while the body undergoes this process of atonement and purification before they reunite. The *olam ha’neshamos* was designated as the

place for the soul during this time frame. In this place, the neshamos can rest. The place where the neshamos rest is called Gan Eden. During this period the neshamos will be in a state of elevation and joy, somewhat like what they will experience at the time of the ultimate reward in *olam haba* (proportional to their achievements in this world). This means to say that just as the reward of *olam haba* is reflective of a person’s accomplishments while in this world, so too the experience of the neshama within the *olam ha’neshamos* is proportional to its previously accomplished deeds and spiritual level. However, true perfection and its complete reward can only be attained when the body and soul reunite after techias hamaisim, in *olam haba*.

Mitzvah of Multiplying

There is a disagreement as to how we fulfill the mitzvah of פרו ורבו, be fruitful and multiply. Beis Shamai’s opinion is that it is fulfilled by having two boys while Beis Hillel opines that it is with one boy and one girl. The law follows Beis Hillel.⁵ This is hinted to where it discusses פרו ורבו in the word וכבשה,⁶ which is an acronym for ואין הליכה, ⁷ *ואין הליכה*, the law does not follow the opinion of Beis Shamai.

Only a man is commanded in פרו ורבו.⁷ The Meshech Chochma⁸ explains this is because of *deracheha darchei noam*, the ways of the Torah are pleasant,⁹ and women go through the pain of pregnancy and childbirth. For this reason, before the sin of Adam where this pain didn’t exist, both Adam and Chava were commanded in פרו ורבו.

The Ran¹⁰ writes that even though a woman is not commanded in פרו ורבו, she still has a mitzvah because she helps her husband fulfill this mitzvah.¹¹

Cumbersome Collectors

Some people may have a negative feeling when they see individuals collecting money (such as “not another collector”). Here are some valuable thoughts that should take the place of that.

- 1) When a person sees collectors, he should have a reflex thought: “Baruch Hashem I am part of such a nation! This person is collecting because he knows that Jews give money and help. Which other nation is like this?!”
- 2) Be thankful that you are not in his position and don’t need to suffer the embarrassment of collecting.
- 3) If you have the means to give charity, then be grateful for the opportunity to be in that position. Not everyone is as fortunate as you are.

Rabbi Alt merited to learn under the tutelage of R' Mordchai 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*. 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.

² Shaar Hagilgulim, Hakdama 23.

³ This explains the statement (see Shabbos 55b and Shaar Hagilgulim, Hakdama 23) that there were those that died, like Binyomin and Yishai, only as a result of the *etyo shel nachash*, the snake’s counsel — they never sinned and died only because the snake incited Chava to violate Hashem’s command, thereby bringing death to the world. Even though they didn’t sin, they still had the *klipah* and the *zuhamah* from Adam which is only amended through death.

⁴ Breishis 3:19.

⁵ Shulchan Aruch, Even Ha’ezer, 1:5.

⁶ Breishis 1:28.

⁷ Shulchan Aruch, Even Ha’ezer 1:1,13.

⁸ Breishis 9:7.

⁹ Mishlei 3:17.

¹⁰ Kidushin, Chapter 2, s.v. *ika d’amari*.

¹¹ See also the Tzitz Eliezer 6:42:4:1.