

# Fascinating INSIGHTS

כז' טבת תשפ"ג  
January 20, 2023

פרשת וארא  
11<sup>th</sup> year, edition 469

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](mailto:yalt3285@gmail.com) or visit <https://amzn.to/3eyh5xP> (where you can also see the reviews).

**Exciting News!** The newly released book "Magnificent Marriage Insights: Captivating Torah Essays about Marriage" is now available (as a paperback and Hardcover) for purchase and delivery on Amazon at <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0BRDH7WG7> or by sending an email to [yalt3285@gmail.com](mailto:yalt3285@gmail.com). This comprehensive book tackles many questions, with life-altering insights and practical approaches. The more than 60 essays found within can facilitate bringing your dating journey to a happy ending and enrich any marriage. 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.

Some of the questions discussed in this book are the following.

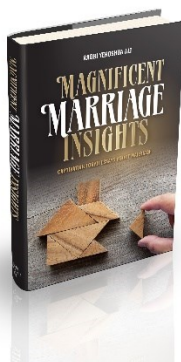
Why do some people have a quick and smooth dating journey while others must travel along a lengthy and arduous path?

What is the Torah prescription for working on a marriage?

How are miscarriages viewed through the prism of Torah?

What is the Torah perspective on changing diapers and taking out the garbage?

Does marriage terminate with the death of a spouse?



## 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](mailto:yalt3285@gmail.com). Thank you.

לעילוי נשמת חיה רחל בת ישראל

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](mailto: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>.

<https://bit.ly/38RvdTI> דעם נודלעטער קען מען אויך זען אויף יידיש ביי

<https://bit.ly/3mGmEOZ> אפשר לקרוא את עלון זה בעברית באתר דרשו:

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.**

### Caring Kindness

Kindness is what makes humanity endure, since everyone needs the help of his fellow man. Think of just some of the acts of kindness that are necessary for humanity to function properly: speaking out a worry to a confidant, borrowing an item from a neighbor, a person to cheer you up when you are down, help with after birth,

getting a ride, people to assist you in carrying heavy items, having a mentor and the many kindnesses that parents do for their children. Even after a person passes away, he is dependent on the kindness of others — the arrangements for the funeral, handling the burial, etc.

Kindness can also include services you provide for pay. In a discourse R' Yeruchum Levovitz gave on the

second day of Shavuous,<sup>1</sup> he emphasized that it is a mistake to think that a storeowner who earns a living through buying and selling is not engaged in chessed. A person is unclothed, barefoot, hungry, and thirsty and a storeowner provides him with clothing, shoes, food and drink. Can there be a greater chessed than that? And if you argue that he is taking money for his services, is it wrong for him to support his family in this way? However, a person can erase all of this achievement with one silly thought — if he thinks that he is doing it all for his own benefit. So, for example, if a person is a baker, he should think, “my main goal in baking bread is that a Jew should have what to eat. But because I and my family need to eat as well, I have to earn money from baking bread because otherwise, I will be unable to bake tomorrow and help people again.”



\*\*\*\*\*

Tenuous Tenure

Thinking about the day of death can help us live life! In fact, one way to combat the yetzer hara is to remind ourselves of the day of death.<sup>2</sup>

If we would jot down our own eulogy, what would it say? If we would write two eulogies — one that would mention what people would say about us if we were to die today and the other the ideal eulogy about how we would like to be remembered — how would these two differ? And if we read our ideal eulogy daily how would we be different?

Hoping to improve their lives by simulating their deaths, more than 25,000 people have participated in mass “living funeral” services at the Hyowon Healing Center in South Korea in the first seven years of its existence (opened in 2012). Many have taken part in this event, from teenagers to retirees, donning shrouds, taking funeral portraits, penning their last testaments, and lying in a closed coffin for around ten minutes. Funeral company Hyowon began offering the living funerals to help people appreciate their lives, and seek forgiveness and reconciliation with family and friends. Participants were led through a dark and eerie staircase by a man dressed as a “jeoseung saja,” the Korean version of a grim reaper, into a dimly lit room filled with coffins and chrysanthemums. Here people dressed up in shrouds and solemnly wrote their last will and testament to their loved ones, while some read their will aloud. One participant said, crying, “My son, the moment you were born into this world, you became my most important treasure. It is with

<sup>1</sup> Daas Chochma U’mussar, 1:56.

<sup>2</sup> See Brachos 5a.

<sup>3</sup> Vayikra 26:42, Rashi.

<sup>4</sup> Gur Aryeh, Vayikra 26:42.

<sup>5</sup> See Mishlei 6:1,3.

a breaking heart that I have to leave you behind. Please take care of your father, and I hope that you will remember me always and cherish the memories that we made.” After a sizeable portion of the group read their farewells, the lights went out, they entered their coffins and lied down. An “angel of death” arrives and closes the coffins, leaving the participants in utter darkness and silence, to offer a ten-minute death experience.

\*\*\*\*\*

Handshakes

It is commonplace to have agreements and pledges among other things done with a handshake. But do we see any places involving a handshake in the Torah? In five places, Yaakov’s name is written full, with the letter ו (יעקוב), while Eliyahu is spelled missing a ו in five places (אליה). Yaakov took a letter from Eliyahu’s name as security so that Eliyahu will come and herald the redemption of Yaakov’s children.<sup>3</sup> The Maharal<sup>4</sup> explains that the giving of a security was sealed by a handshake.<sup>5</sup> The letter ו resembles a finger, so five of them represent the hand, which finalizes the giving of security. By taking the ו from Eliyahu five times, Yaakov took his “hand” as a security to ensure that he would redeem his children. This is also alluded to through the fact that the numerical value of ו is six and five multiplied by six is 30. This leads us to the Mishna<sup>6</sup> that says that the hand is composed of thirty segments.



Where do we find in the Torah a source for shaking a person’s hand when you greet them? R’ Dessler<sup>7</sup> (1892-1953) once explained that greeting and blessing someone (when you greet a person with *shalom*, it is a form of bracha) with a handshake is sourced in the Torah. Why did Yaakov need to put his hands on Efraim and Menashe when giving them a bracha?<sup>8</sup> The answer is that when there is a connection between the one giving the bracha and the one receiving it, through the hands, at the time of the giving of the bracha, the bracha has a stronger effect. Similarly, the Tiferes Shlomo<sup>9</sup> (1801-1866) says that the hands serve as the conduit for the bracha. This is why people greet each other with a handshake.



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 five books including the recently released *Magnificent Marriage 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.

<sup>6</sup> Ohalos 1:8.

<sup>7</sup> Sefer Zikaron to Michtav M’Eliyahu, 2.

<sup>8</sup> Breishis 48:14.

<sup>9</sup> Tiferes Shlomo, Moadim, Shemini Atzeres, s.v. *shivas*. See also Rimzei Pesach, s.v. *mipnei*. Also Cited in Shalom Rav, p. 72.