

Fascinating INSIGHTS

יז' אדר תשפ"ג
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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/BoBRDH7WG7> or by sending an email to 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.

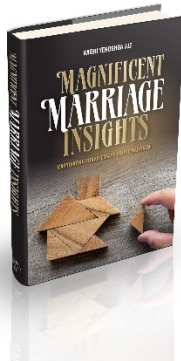
Why do some people have a quick and smooth dating journey while others must travel along a lengthy and arduous path?

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?



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Cohesive Conglomerate

Each of the eleven spices of the ketores¹ emits a good smell, except for the חלבנה which is foul smelling. Putting all the spices together is a symbol of unity,² as we

include every Jew to become our united nation, even those who are "foul-smelling,"³ the sinners.⁴ Furthermore, the word קטרת is related to קטר, a knot, which symbolizes unity by connecting pieces together.

¹ Shemos 30:34, Rashi s.v. u'levona.

² It has been said that unity doesn't mean we are all the same rather it means we love and respect one another despite our differences.

³ A chassid once related a question from his Rebbe to the Lubavitcher Rebbe on the gemara (Brachos 57a) that says even the empty ones among you are as full of mitzvos like a pomegranate. If they are empty, how can you say they are full of mitzvos? The Lubavitcher Rebbe said he

had the same question but asked it differently — if they are filled with mitzvos, how can you say they are empty?

⁴ See Krisus 6b. Even the Jew with a deficiency in his Judaism should feel that not only is he included (which is hinted to in the word צדיקים — צדיקים, רשעים, בינונים, רשעים) but also העולם נברא בשבילי נברא העולם, the world was created for me (Sanhedrin 37a). An allusion can be found in the word חלבנה לומר: חלבנה העולם (R' Shmuel Brazil).



The gemara⁵ tells us that Jews, unlike other nations, are called אדם. Why are only we referred to as אדם? Other ways to say “man”— גבר, אנוש, איש — have plural forms (אנשים, גברים). Only אדם does not have a plural form, because we are one entity. When something happens to a Jew in one place, a Jew in another place feels it. There is a unity unique to the Jewish people. Similarly, the word נפשות (plural) is used to refer to the *eino-yehudim*, whereas the Jews are called a singular נפש.⁶ This is because of this unique unity that we are privy to.

A non-Jew, who recently died, admitted to keeping a *yarmulka* in his car because he knew that if he ever was stuck by the road and put on a *yarmulka*, a Jew would stop to help him.

An article written in January 2009 in *The Forward* said the following: According to Rubashkin’s lawyer, when Rubashkin was denied bail, there were more than 30 people that offered to put up their homes as collateral if Rubashkin was released on bail. Multiple groups were formed to raise money for his legal costs, and a delegation of rabbis representing a cross-section of the Orthodox community traveled to Iowa to visit Rubashkin in jail and make a plea for his release. Guy Cook, Rubashkin’s Des Moines-based lawyer, who was in private practice for nearly 30 years, said this is very unusual. He said he has never seen another client receive the sort of support that Rubashkin has been given. “This is a community that really feels an obligation to defend one of their own.”⁷



The Way to Pray

After the sin of the golden calf, Moshe said to Hashem, ועתה אם תשא חטאתם ואם אין מחני נא מספרך, if you would but bear their sin, but if not then erase me from Your book.⁸ Rashi comments, “Erase me from the entire Torah, so they shouldn’t say about me that I wasn’t worthy enough to daven for them.” Although Hashem forgave us, still, Moshe’s name is not mentioned in Parshas Tetzaveh. What did Moshe do to deserve this?

⁵ Yevamos 61a.

⁶ Bereishis 46:26, Rashi.

⁷ What a privilege to be part of such a nation. Which other nation would you find someone like Gary (Chaim Yosef) Apfel, a lawyer in Los Angeles, who worked four and a half years pro bono to have Shalom Mordechai Rubashkin released from prison?!

⁸ Shemos 32:32.

⁹ Rosh Hashana 18a.

The Nesivos Shalom explains that Moshe erred when he said וְאִם אֵין יְסוּחֵם, if You won’t forgive them..., as why did Moshe even consider such a possibility? He should have believed that since he was davening for their forgiveness, his tefillos would certainly be answered, because we believe in the power of tefilla.



The gemara⁹ relates a case where two people were confined to a bed with the identical illness. One recovered while the other didn’t. Why? Because one davened and was answered while the other person davened and wasn’t answered since one davened a complete tefilla meaning he concentrated properly and thus he was answered whereas the other didn’t. How could it be that two people that are deathly ill and one wouldn’t have kavana? Because they don’t truly believe in tefilla. They reason that according to nature there is no natural salvation, and the doctors already despaired. So both daven with kavana but only one believes in his tefilla.¹⁰

The story is told that during a drought, farmers came to their rabbi seeking guidance, desperate for direction as their lives depended on proper rainfall. Their rabbi told them, “Meet me on the hilltop by the town’s entrance at exactly noon tomorrow. Come ready to pray. We will ask G-d for rain and He will hear our prayers.” The farmers were relieved. When they show up the following day, their rabbi turned them away. He said to them, “Did you believe that G-d would hear your prayers and bring rain?” They nodded. “Then where are your raincoats? If we expect G-d to answer we must ready ourselves for His blessings.”

We must believe that our tefillos will be answered. R’ Yitzchak Isaac of Kamarna translated¹¹ לֹא יִהְיֶה דְבַר כָּל הַיְצֵא מִפִּי יַעֲשֶׂה, as follows: Don’t hope¹² that your tefillos will be answered (לֹא יִהְיֶה דְבַר). Rather הַיְצֵא מִפִּי יַעֲשֶׂה, feel that it will certainly be effective.

The Chazon Ish once told R’ Shmuel Greinman that it seems in Heaven they concealed advanced knowledge about the coming Holocaust from us because had we known, we would have davened and maybe there wouldn’t have been a destruction!



Rabbi Alt mentored to learn under the tutelage of R’ Mordechai Friedlander זצ”ל for close to five years. He received semicha from R’ Zalman Nechemia Goldberg זצ”ל. Rabbi Alt has written on numerous topics for various websites and publications and is the author of the 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 Yearam (where the Aron was for 20 years [Shmuel 1, 71,2]) where he studies, writes and teaches. The author is passionate about teaching Jews of all levels of observance.

¹⁰ See Shemen Rosh, Ki Sisa. In such a situation one should say that Hashem can do anything. He made the sickness and He also can heal a person from it (See Brachos 10a with the story of Chizkiyahu and that “even if a sharp sword rests upon one’s neck he shouldn’t refrain from davening for mercy.”)

¹¹ Bamidbar 30:3.

¹² יִהְיֶה can mean hope as in יִהְיֶה יִשְׂרָאֵל, let Israel hope (Tehillim 130:7).