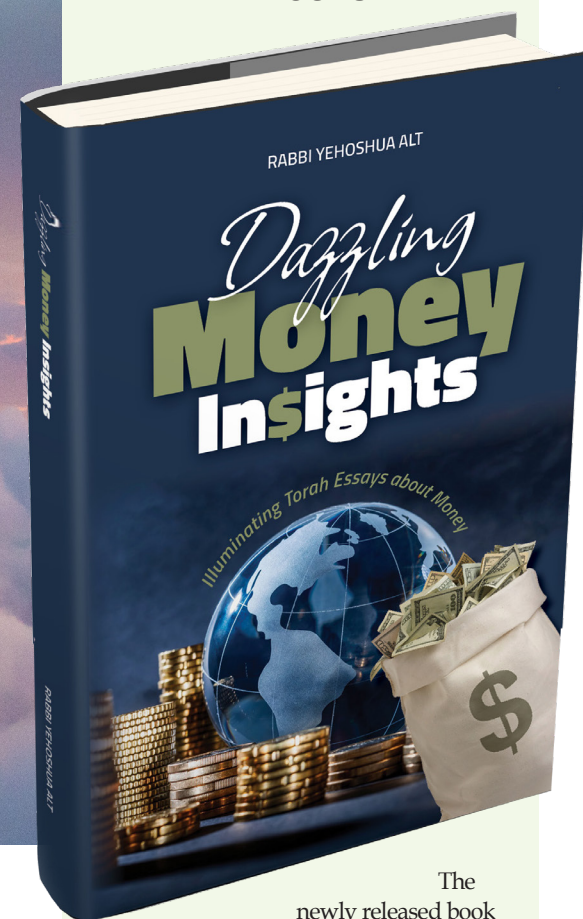


Deceased Ascension

RABBI YEHOSHUA ALT



We are taught that ברא כרעיה דאבוא, a son is the leg (extension) of his father (See Eruvin 70b, Kesubos 92a, Rashi s.v. (כבעל חוב). The Pachad Yitzchak (Igros U'kesavim 242) wonders why this term is used. Why isn't a son called the hand of his father?

There is a concept of a הולך and an עומד. A הולך is one who has the power to keep growing spiritually – like us in this world. The opposite of this is an עומד, which is stationary. For this reason a מלאך is called an עומד (Zecharya 3:7).

After one dies, one no longer has the ability to be a הולך, and as Chazal expound on במתים חפשי that the dead are free from Torah and mitzvos (Tehillim 88:6, Shabbos 30a). Indeed, the term נפטר is rooted in פטור as a dead person is exempt from the mitzvos. This is in contrast to one who is living, as חי is sourced in חייב. This inability for the deceased to become greater applies only to himself. However, his son can elevate him. In the aforementioned Gemara, the term "leg" is used because the son has the ability to elevate his father even after his father has passed away – and the leg is the limb that makes one into a הולך.

This is hinted to in the words of Rebbi who said at the time of his death לבני אני צריך (Kesubos 103a), he wanted his children to instruct them concerning the arrangement of matters after his death. Another explanation is that when one is dying, לבני אני צריך, he needs his children, because they are now the hope for his future in Gan Eden.

The word בן is rooted in בנין, as a son builds and continues his father's existence after he passes away (בת is also associated to building as in חכמות נשים, בנתה ביתה, the wise among women, each builds her house (Mishlei 14:1). Additionally, אב and אמ each begin 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 the א-ב.). On the yahrtzeit of his father, the Ridvaz (1845-1913) came to shul early for Mincha in Tzefas where he lived. He was asked why he was crying, since his father had lived until the age of 80 as well as having passed away more than 50 years prior. The Ridvaz then related the following story to his congregation:

When I was young, my parents hired a מלמד, tutor, for me. My father was in the furnace business when suddenly there was a shortage of cement, hurting his livelihood and making it impossible for him to pay the tutor for three months. The tutor finally said, "If I don't get paid, I can't work".

Suddenly, a wealthy man, who needed a furnace for his daughter and new son-in-law, offered the large sum of six rubles for a furnace. My father discussed this with my mother and she agreed to his plan to dismantle their own furnace and then sell it for six rubles. In this way he could pay the tutor for the three previous and three coming months, as his fee was a ruble per month.

That month my family had no hot food and also had to shiver from the cold Russian winter since they had no heat. All this was so that I would have someone to learn with.

This morning it was cold and I wasn't feeling well. I was therefore thinking of having a minyan in my house for my father's yahrtzeit. Then I thought to myself, how could I, after having gone through a freezing winter because of what my father sacrificed.

R' Shlomo Ganzfried tells us there are many stories in Midrashim that show that by the son saying קדיש for his parents, they were saved from judgment. This is why we are accustomed to recite קדיש (Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 26:1). The Biur Halacha states in regard to reciting

קדיש on the yahrtzeit of parents that he brings נחת רוח to his parents, protects them and atones for their souls.

Until when is one obligated in honouring one's parents? The Zohar (Bechukosai 115b) says that one is obligated in honouring one's parents even after they die! (Also see Kidushin 31b – מכבדו בחייו ומכבדו במותו – one should honour one's father during his lifetime and after his death. However, as opposed to honouring living parents, which is a Torah commandment, the Tiferes Yisrael in Pesachim, Chapter 4, Boaz 3 writes that after they pass away, it is a rabbinic obligation.) One does this by following the proper way and improving one's actions. R' Alexander Ziskind (יסוד ושרש העבודה, p. 784) commands his children in his tzavaa that after he dies, to rectify their deeds in the ways of Hashem so that he himself shouldn't have tremendous pain and disgrace from them in the higher world.

What about if one has daughters?

The Yesod V'shoresh Ha'avoda (Shaar 8, Chapter 12) writes, "It seems clear to me that if a person spends some time on Shabbos contemplating new ways to improve his service of the Creator in the coming week, whether it be by elevating his thoughts, refraining from improper speech, increasing his diligence in Torah study, improving his concentration in davening or conducting his business dealings in a scrupulously honest way, it is clear that these plans for improvement are in the category of Torah. Hashem delights in this with his heavenly entourage..." In this way men and women can offer their parents the merit of such Torah.

How can they continue the legacy of their parents? The Kitzur Shulchan Aruch (26:22) writes that the main thing is to go on the proper path and in this way one brings merit to their parents. This is even greater than saying קדיש.

The newly released book "Dazzling Money Insights: Illuminating Torah Essays about Money" is now available (as a paperback and hardcover) for purchase and delivery on Amazon at <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0C6P6H5B1> or by sending an email to yalt3285@gmail.com. This comprehensive book tackles many questions, with life-altering insights. The more than 60 essays found within present the Torah approach to earning and managing money. It makes a great gift for friends, relatives, business associates and learning partners. Purchase it at <https://amzn.to/3eyh5xP>.

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

- What is a tried and tested method for a person to increase his revenue?
- Which mitzvos can a person fulfill through his profession?
- What is the correct way for a person to react when he undergoes a loss of money?
- Is saving money for the future a Torah ideal?
- How can a person transform transient money into an everlasting asset?

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 support or dedicate 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.