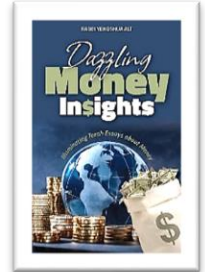
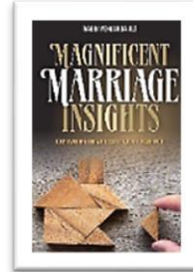
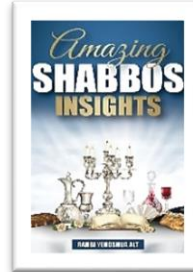
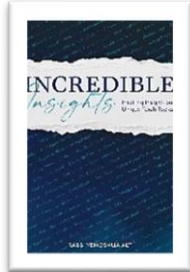


Fascinating INSIGHTS

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Forward From Failure

Observing the masses, we notice that some may capitulate in despair upon failing¹ in a certain area. An example of this is one who wakes up late. He may feel that since he messed up the beginning of his day, he may as well mess up the rest of the day.² We need to salvage what we can and never³ despair.⁴

The Kotzker Rebbe remarked that just as in business one doesn't give up⁵ if he is not successful,⁶ one should do the same in spirituality.⁷ An expression to keep in mind: "Pain is temporary. Quitting lasts forever."

It has been said, "Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall." Another saying: "It is better to try and fail and to try and fail again than to try and fail and fail to try again."

Natural Pearls form when an irritant, usually a parasite, works its way into an oyster, mussel or clam. As a defense mechanism, a fluid is used to coat the irritant. Layer upon layer of this coating, called "nacre," is deposited until a lustrous pearl is formed. So, a pearl is formed from rough times! Indeed, מרגליות, pearls is a contraction of מר גלית, revelation from the bitter since a pearl comes to being through irritation.

¹ It has been said, "Failure inspires winners and defeats losers."

² A saying to keep in mind is, "We were not born winners or losers. We were born choosers."

³ R' Nachman of Breslov remarked, "We need to start over each day and sometimes many times a day."

⁴ Sichos Haran 48. If one was involved in a car accident, he wouldn't continue to smash into others. In this way there will be damage control. Likewise, in spirituality one needs to pick himself up when he falls and not let there be a domino effect.

⁵ We can take a lesson of not giving up and starting even at an old age from Colonel Harland Sanders (1890-1980), the founder of KFC (Kentucky Fried Chicken). He tried to start several companies and was fired from a number of jobs. At the age of 65, after running a restaurant for several years, Colonel Sanders found himself penniless. He retired and received his first social security check which was \$105. Colonel Sanders loved to share his fried chicken recipe and opted to sell the world on it. He traveled door to door to houses and restaurants all over his local area, but was met with little enthusiasm. He started traveling by car to different restaurants and

cooked his fried chicken on the spot for restaurant owners. If the owner liked the chicken, they would enter into a handshake agreement to sell his chicken. He was turned down 1,009 times before his chicken was accepted once! By 1964, Colonel Sanders had 600 franchises selling his trademark chicken. He sold his company for \$2 million dollars (\$15.3 million today). At the time of his death, there were around 6,000 KFC locations in 48 countries. Today, there are more than 25,000 KFC restaurants in over 145 countries and territories around the world and has 820,000 employees. This man started at the age of 65, when most retire, and built a global empire out of fried chicken.

⁶ Someone once wrote: "Success is failure turned inside out.

The silver tint of the clouds of doubt,
and you can never tell how close you are,
It may be near when it seems so far;
so stick to the fight when your hardest hit,
it's when things seem worse, that you must not quit."

⁷ It has been said, "It is not how hard you hit. It is how hard you can get hit and keep moving forward. That is how winning is done."

The greatest mistake people make is confusing the word fail with the word failure. Just because you failed, it doesn't make you a failure. Learn why you failed and then you will be better off than a person who never failed. The more failures one has, the closer he is to success (if he learns from those failures).⁸



One major piece of advice that made the wealthy Jewish philanthropist Bernie Marcus successful was what his mother ingrained in him in his childhood: "There will be setbacks in your life. But don't be discouraged. You must move on!" In 1978, Bernie Marcus was fired from a do-it-yourself hardware store called Handy Dan. Just one year after being fired, Marcus teamed up with a fellow businessman by the name of Arthur Blank to start a little store called The Home Depot. Today, The Home Depot is the largest home improvement retailer in the world with over 2,200 stores with nearly half a million employees and over \$100 billion in revenue.

At times the frustrations of life may get to us causing us to feel like caving in. We need to realize that when one perseveres, he is successful.⁹ "Winners never quit and quitters never win" is a frequently quoted saying. Let us keep in mind "When the going gets tough, let the tough get going." When you are tough on life, life will be easier on you.

During the seven days of inauguration, the Mishkan was erected and dismantled. This alludes to that after one grows spiritually (symbolized by erecting a Mishkan) and then stumbles (represented by the dismantling), he should pick himself up and grow further (signified by erecting the Mishkan again).¹⁰



We know stories of people who descended spiritually, which started with a small sin causing a ripple effect as in עבירה בעבירה.¹¹ We need to let go of the past situations in which we failed.

⁸ There is an expression, "They tried to bury us but they didn't realize that we were seeds."

⁹ A wise man once said: "Success is not final; failure is not fatal. It is the courage to continue that counts."

¹⁰ There was a wealthy person who wanted to build a glorious mansion. As it was nearing completion, he decided that he wanted to put the finishing touches on it. He ascended to the roof to follow through on his plans when suddenly a wind blew him off the roof. Disoriented after falling to the ground, he screamed, "My mansion has fallen." The people nearby told him, "Only you fell but the mansion is still standing. We will get the medical help you need and then you can enjoy your mansion." Throughout life, we build our mansions. However at times we get blown off and think our mansion has collapsed. That is to say, we sin and think all that we have worked to amass is gone. The truth is though, all the Torah, Mitzvos and good deeds remain despite our sins. We just need to get back up on our feet.

¹¹ Avos 4:2.

¹² Breishis 4:6.

¹³ Devarim 34:12, Rashi. The Gemara (Avoda Zara 4b, see Rashi s.v. עשו) says that the Jews made the golden calf in order to give encouragement to Baalai Teshuva.

¹⁴ There is a saying, "Nobody can go back and create a new beginning, but everyone can start today and create a new ending."

¹⁵ Breishis 4:4.

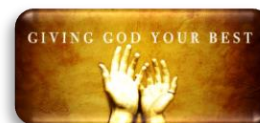
In commenting on the episode of Kayin and Hevel, the Sforno¹² (1470-1550) says that when something needs rectification, don't be pained over the past, rather make an effort in what needs to be fixed up.

The Torah ends with telling us about the shattering of the Luchos which was a result of the grievous sin of the golden calf.¹³ Then we begin again with בראשית. That is בראשית — a new beginning, a second chance.¹⁴

Giving It Your All

What was the difference between the Korbonos Kayin and Hevel?

Hevel brought it from the best, the choicest — מבכרות צאנו ומחלהבהק, Hevel brought of the firstlings of his flock and from their choicest.¹⁵ Rearranging the letters of הבל we notice it spells הלב, the heart, since he brought it with a good heart, from the love of the Mitzva and Hashem. He therefore did it in a nice way. This is why Hashem turned to his Korbon, as the pasuk there tells us.



If it is done in the opposite way, we can apply the pasuk והקים לא טובים, decrees that were not good.¹⁶ This is just as Kayin brought his Korbon from inferior quality¹⁷ since he just wanted to fulfill the Mitzva, to get by.

For this reason, Hashem didn't turn to his Korbon. So Hashem says to him למה חרה לך: why are you annoyed that I didn't accept your Korbon. אם תטיב: if you do Mitzvos with happiness¹⁸ and a good heart, then I will lift up that Mitzva very high as it is pleasing to me. If not (ואם לא תטיב), then לפתח חטאת רבץ, sin crouches.¹⁹

How is this rectified? To do Mitzvos in a nice way. For this reason, the first letters of קדש י-ה-ו-ה, sacred dwelling, spell קין.²⁰ This idea is stated by the Rambam who writes²¹ that although they are all kosher for Menachos, one should bring the best.

This applies to everything we do for Hashem. Examples: Feed the poor from the best of our food, buy a nice Esrog and build a nice shul. With this we can fulfill ואנוהו זה א-לי ואנוהו, to beautify oneself before Hashem in Mitzvos.²²

Rabbi Alt mentored to learn under the tutelage of R' Mordechai Friedlander ז"ל for close to five years. He received semicha from R' Zalman Nechemia Goldberg ז"ל. Rabbi Alt has written on numerous topics for various websites and publications and is the author of six books including the recently released Dazzling Money 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 [Shemot 1, 27]) where he studies, writes and teaches. The author is passionate about teaching Jews of all levels of observance.

¹⁶ Yechezkel 20:25. Siduro Shel Shabbos 5,1,7.

¹⁷ Breishis 4:3, Rashi.

¹⁸ The Chassam Sofer (Al Hatorah, Ki Seitzei, s.v. ki yikach) writes that one doing teshuva must be happy and enthusiastic because teshuva with sadness and laziness is sinful.

¹⁹ Breishis 4:6-7.

²⁰ Tehillim 93:5.

²¹ Issurei Mizbeach, 7:11. The Kesef Mishna on the Rambam (Hilchos Tefillin 3:5) writes in the name of the Shu"t Harambam (289) that in the city of the Rambam, Kortova, there was a chochom who had the same name as the Rambam, R' Moshe Ben Maimon and this person wrote a sefer on Hilchos Tefillin. The people erred in following the order of the parshiyos of tefillin like R' Tam, and with the laws of the parchment. The Rif also holds like this opinion, and even the Rambam himself erred originally and followed this opinion of the sefer of R' Moshe Ben Maimon. The Rambam writes that even when R' Moshe Deri came to Eretz Yisrael, his tefillin was done in accordance with the opinion of that sefer of R' Moshe Ben Maimon. When they showed R' Moshe Deri the words of the previous geonim that argue on the opinion of that sefer, he switched these tefillin and made for himself new tefillin in accordance with Rashi's opinion. The Rambam also relates that there were sages that opened the tefillin of Rav Hai Gaon and the parshiyos were placed in the order of Rashi's opinion.

²² Shemos 15:2. Shabbos 133b.