

Fascinating INSIGHTS

ראש חודש אדר א' תשפ"ד
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The newly released book "Remarkable Insights about Death and the Afterlife" is now available (as a paperback, hardcover and digitized version) for purchase and delivery on Amazon at <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0C9NDCMNC> or by sending an email to yalt3285@gmail.com. Alternatively, you can call 054 849 5217 or 917 732 2371. This extensive and thought-provoking book addresses these questions and many more, providing transformative insights. With a collection comprising over 70 meticulously crafted essays, it eloquently articulates the Torah's viewpoint regarding death and the afterlife. This work stands as an invaluable resource, facilitating readers in acquiring a deeper comprehension of this vital subject. 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.

What is the ultimate way to elevate the soul of one's parents?

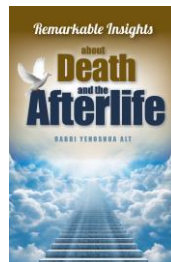
How does the death process rectify a person's soul?

What profound life lessons can we learn from gravestones?

In what ways can the concept of reincarnation help us better understand life?

What is the idea behind davening at gravesites?

What will happen at the Resurrection of the Dead?



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A Unified Division

Given the unprecedented unity among our people nowadays since the outset of the Gaza war, the following essay is fitting.

The pasuk says **הנה מה טוב ומה נעים שבת אחים גם יחד**, how good and how pleasant is the dwelling of brothers, moreover, in unity.¹ How pleasant it is to Hashem when Jews get along. The word **גם** seems unnecessary.

There can be Jews sitting together but since each has their opinions, sentiments and outlooks, there is a unity lacking. It of course is greater when they are in unity although they have different views and opinions.² The pasuk can be understood as how good and pleasant it is to Hashem when Jews sit together (**שבת אחים**) although (**גם**) they have differences, as **יחד** is an acronym for **דעות**, there are differences of opinion.

¹ Tehillim 133:1.

² It has been said, "We don't have to agree with each other but we have to be there for each other."

In a similar vein, R' Dovid Kviat (1920-2009) explained the word גַּם in this pasuk. The Gemara³ tells us that Beis Shamai rules that if one gave a *zonah* wheat kernels as her payment and someone made them into flour or olives made into olive oil or grapes into wine, it is still prohibited for a Karbon. Why does Beis Shamai hold it is prohibited even after they have undergone a change? Because it says the word גַּם there in the pasuk and this comes to include their changed forms—גַּם לרבות שינוייהם. The word הנה מה טוב ומה נעים שבת אהים גם יחד in גַּם includes שינוייהם, Jews of all types—Askenazim, Sefardim, Chassidim, etc. Someone once said, “Differ with people’s opinions but not with people.”



R' Asher Weiss once described the perfect Jew: One with a chassidish heart, a litvish mind, the integrity and honesty of a yekke, the purity of a Hungarian, kavod hatorah of a sefardi and the love of Eretz Yisrael of a dat-leumi Jew.

A Chabad rabbi told a Jew who observed Shabbos, Kashrus and a few other mitzvos that we agree on many more issues than we disagree on. And the things that we agree on are much more important than the things we disagree on. We agree on the value of human life. We agree that Hashem is unique, that He created the Universe and that the continued existence of the world depends on His Will.

We may sometimes let little differences get in the way of our unity.⁴ We must internalize that what connects is far more important and vital than what divides us. If a person is Jewish enough for the Nazis to send him to the gas chambers then he is Jewish enough to be loved.



R' Kalman Krohn was once in a cab in Israel driven by an anti-religious driver. Although R' Kalman tried to be amiable, the driver was curt and abrupt. Suddenly, in the middle of the ride, R' Kalman told the driver “We are

³ Baba Kamma 65b.

⁴ Coach Herb Brooks was hired to train the 1980 US men’s Olympic hockey team. Despite being a team of college all-stars, their team sportsmanship was horrible, and thus their performance was lousy. After an exhibition game, when Brooks noticed the players fighting with each other, he called them back on the ice and had them perform an intense drill, scolding, “Each one of you is wearing a jersey with a name on the back, representing yourselves. That name signifies the skills that you possess and the determination you carry. However, the name on the front of the jersey is far more important. That is the team you play for. It represents the skill sets of all the players combined. When the name on the front of the jersey is placed first then the name on the back of the jersey will truly shine.” Team USA went on to defeat the Soviet Union national team, which had won the

brothers.” With antipathy, the driver tersely retorted “We are not brothers. You are religious and I am not.” R’ Kalman replied, “My rebbe taught me that we are brothers.” Who is that, the driver inquired. The response: “Hitler. He didn’t differentiate between those who were religious and those who weren’t. He killed them all.”⁵

The Ahavas Yisrael of Viznitz would say that one must be good to everyone but not with everyone!!! That is to say, one must be friendly to everyone but not be friends with everyone.



R' Asher Weiss Ahavas Israel R' Moshe Shapiro R' E. Wasserman

[Reflecting Above](#)

We can apply the words of R' Elchonon Wasserman to our current situation.

He spoke in his yeshiva in Baronovich in 1937 when the effects of Hitler were already being felt. He cited the Vilna Gaon who remarks that all that happens in this world is reflected by what is happening in heaven.

“If an enemy like Hitler arose against us, then there must be a great accusation in heaven. So we must silence the accuser rather than repelling Hitler. Even if we can distort the evil plans of Hitler, another perhaps worse more violent enemy may take his place. An analogy for this is that of a store window which displays, for example, plastic fruits that have no taste or aroma. However, they represent the fruits sold inside. Likewise, world events represent what is happening in heaven and that’s where the focus has to be.”

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 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 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.

gold medal in six of the seven previous Olympic games. There is a saying, “Do not aspire to be the best on the team. Aspire to be the best for the team.”

⁵ R' Moshe Shapiro (1935-2017) related that when he was growing up, the Chevron yeshiva would make plays. One year the play was about an irreligious person who was murdered in the Holocaust and ascended to heaven. Now they were going to judge this soul. They acted out the following scene: in heaven, they asked the martyr some questions before he would be able to enter paradise. They asked him, “Did you observe the laws of kashrus?” “No,” was the reply. “Did you keep the laws of Shabbos?” “No.” “Tefillin?” “No.” The question was then posed, “so what makes you Jewish?” The soul answered, “Well, Hitler thought I was Jewish.” This reply caused a commotion in heaven. Finally, they came up with a verdict: “Halacha K’Hitler.”