

Fascinating INSIGHTS

ז' 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?

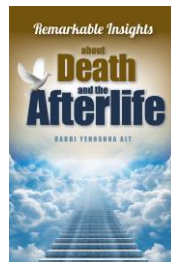
How does the death process rectify a person's soul?

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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Extinction of Distinction

Since the inception of the Gaza war, the Jewish people have been saying special Tehillim. In the paragraph we say after Tehillim, we say **אחינו כל בית ישראל הנתונים בצרה**, ובשביה...המקום ירחם עליהם ויוציאם מצרה לרוחה, our brothers, the entire family of Israel who are in distress and captivity...Hashem should have mercy on them and remove them from distress to relief. This formula seems problematic. Why does it say **כל בית ישראל**, if not all Jews are in distress and captivity?

The answer is that when a slight number of Jews are in trouble, we feel their pain as if we are all in that situation.

In the early 1950s, a large group of Yemenite Jews left their native land and immigrated to Israel. Since this took place shortly after the establishment of the state of Israel, there was little money available. As a result, the Israeli government erected rows of tents for the new immigrants. This is where they lived in the harsh winter doing the best to skirt the ubiquitous thick mud. Hearing about the newcomers' dire situation, R' Yitzchak Dovid Grossman's parents—R' Yisrael Grossman and his wife—

traveled to Rosh Ha'ayin where these immigrants were and went from tent to tent introducing themselves to every family. They offered to take care of their children in Yerushalayim (where the Grossmans lived) for as long as they need if the families didn't feel capable of caring for them at that time.¹ This offer was despite the fact that the Grossmans had ten kids of their own in a small apartment. Fifteen Yemenite children came with the Grossmans to Yerushalayim. Two slept in the Grossman house while the rest were divided among the neighbors. R' Yitzchak Dovid Grossman recalled that for the next few years, he slept in the same bed as two Yemenite boys!²



A man named Yeshaya Goldstein was on board a flight when a non-Jew in the neighboring seat initiated a conversation. Although he wasn't in the mood of talking, he decided to continue the conversation so that he could make a kidush Hashem with the contents of the discussion. The conversation turned to the Jewish community and Yeshaya told him what it's like in his community, "Where I live, if someone finds money, they post a sign saying, 'Whoever lost a sum of money should call this number.' In the building I live in, we have a free lending service for chairs, tables, stamps, cribs, strollers, car seats and more." He then told the man about different Jewish organizations such as chaverim and hatzalah. The non-Jew was so amazed that he began to tell other people on the flight, "Are you aware that the Jews do all types of selfless acts?"

In 2021, there was a father, who was religious on a rudimentary level, whose daughter became ill, sending her to the hospital. He said that from the moment his daughter arrived at the hospital he came to the realization that being born Jewish is equivalent to winning the lottery. He explained that the patients in hospital beds near where his daughter was were for the most part alone. One child nearby had a visit from her mother every other day because she was busy taking care of the other children since she was unable to find someone to babysit. This is in contrast to his situation where once it became known in the Jewish community that this daughter was in the

¹ The Chofetz Chaim would relate the following story. In 1794, R' Yaakov Kranz, known as the Dubno Magid, once met a blind widower strolling with his son in the streets of Vilna. While most people didn't pay much attention to them, the Dubno Magid greeted them warmly. They told him about their great poverty and the lack of heat and food in their home. The Dubno Magid welcomed them into his home so they could warm up and eat dinner. He also hired a tutor to teach the son Torah, and he himself would learn with the boy the Aggadik (i.e., non-legal) parts of the Torah, meeting with him in regular Friday night sessions. From then on, they became part of the Dubno Magid's family. He continued to care for this child after the child's father, R' Yehuda Aharon, Rav of Komarow, died before the age of 40. This child became the great Torah personality, R' Shlomo Kluger. (Interestingly, in his work Chochmas Shlomo, Even Ha'ezer 1:1, R' Kluger analyzes whether one fulfills the mitzvah to "be fruitful and multiply" through adoption.) The Chofetz Chaim would say that many people saw the blind pauper walking with his son and felt bad about their predicament. But whereas for them, that's where it ended, for the Dubno Magid it began. He showed concern, welcomed them, fed them and paid for a tutor for the child. If the Dubno Magid had not reached out to them, the Jewish Nation would have been bereft of a

hospital, many people showed solicitude and began to act. This included babysitters that were arranged, health advisors offering their advice, food coming in bulk and people who came to visit his daughter. He remarked, "I didn't do anything to deserve it. I was just simply born Jewish."³

A well-known Rabbi, who was raised with little money, related that when he was 10, he once heard his mother say to someone on the phone, "I sometimes wish I was wealthy." He was flabbergasted when he heard this because wealth was never a value to his mother. Then he heard the next words his mother uttered: "There are so many people I wish I could help who don't have what they need. But I just don't have the money."⁴

[Providential Passing](#)

The Midrash⁵ tells us that before a person is born a malach shows him where he will die and where he will be buried. In this way we can understand the pasuk לאדם נתן, when his spirit departs he returns to his earth.⁶ R' Chaim Kanievsky when comforting bereaved families would say based on this that it seems that one's burial ground is predestined as is the place where one will die. In certain circumstances people may blame themselves for the death of a loved one believing they could have done a more intense medical intervention or they shouldn't have traveled to the place where their loved one died. They must understand that all that transpired was previously put in place by Hashem.



Once, R' Yeruchom Levovitz heard of a tragic accident in which people traveling in a wagon were killed. He viewed the tragedy with Divine Supervision⁷ and remarked, "Look how Hashem placed all these people who all needed to meet their fate, on the same wagon, at the same time."



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.

great Torah personality. The Chofetz Chaim would conclude, "How many more Shlomo Klugers are out there that we just pass by?"

² There is a saying, "I don't know great people. I know common people who do great things."

³ Mark Twain observed: "The Jew is not a burden on the charities of the state or of the city; these could cease from their functions without affecting him. When he is well enough, he works; when he is incapacitated, his own people take care of him. And not in a poor and stingy way, but with a fine and large benevolence. His race is entitled to be called the most benevolent of all races of men" ("Concerning the Jews," *The Complete Works of Mark Twain*, p. 266).

⁴ The Tiferes Shlomo writes that he heard from R' Dovid Lelover, "How can you call me a tzadik if I still feel love of my children more than for a fellow Jew?"

⁵ Tanchuma Pikudei 3.

⁶ Tehillim 146:4.

⁷ For the believer in G-d, there is only one question: Why do tragedies happen? If you don't believe in G-d then everything else (about life) is a question.