

Fascinating INSIGHTS

כה' 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/B0C9NNDMNC> 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?



To purchase any of the author's other books (hardcopy or e-book) and get it delivered to your door, please send an email to yalt3285@gmail.com or visit <https://amzn.to/3eyh5xP> (where you can also see the reviews).

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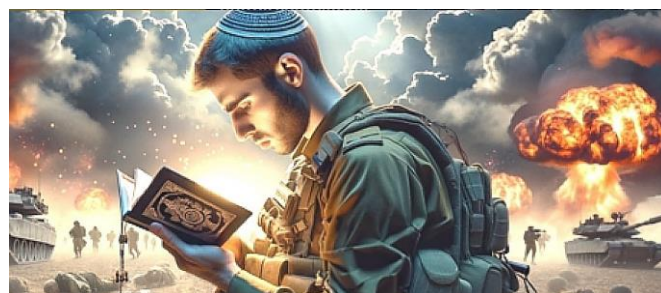
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לעילוי נשמת הירש בן שלמה
ומנחם מענדיל בן יוסף מאיר

The Way of War

It says מגן אם יראה ורמה בארבעים אלף ישראל¹, was even a shield or a spear seen among 40,000 in Israel.¹ The Tanna Dvei Eliyahu² comments that 40,000 from the Jewish people go out to war and there is amongst them one pair of Torah scholars, it is like they are holding a shield and a double-edged sword. R' Asher Weiss explains that a מגן, shield is a defensive weapon while a רמה, spear is an offensive weapon. An army invests in offense and defense in order to be victorious. Corresponding to this is the *Milchamta Shel Torah*. In Torah the one asking the question is the one on the offensive and the one answering is on the defense. In this way the *Milchamta Shel Torah* provides strength to the soldiers.



Milchamta Shel Torah can also remove war. Through engaging in Torah which is like fighting, as in fact it is called *Milchamta Shel Torah*, other fighting (wars and the like) can be removed, thereby increasing peace in the world. This explains the dictum that Torah scholars increase peace in the world since through the Machlokes of Torah, there can be more peace in the world.³

¹ Shoftim 5:8.

² Chapter 10.

³ Drashos Chassam Sofer, p. 806.

Saved By Death

We have a principle that the death of a great person can save the lives of many others. The Chofetz Chaim had a son-in-law who passed away at a very young age. His daughter asked him why Hashem took her husband, as there are so many other people in the world. The Chofetz Chaim answered gently, "It was either your husband or a quarter of the world."



The story is told that on Sunday, the 17th of Cheshvan in 1984, the Baba Sali⁴ said, "I see that much Jewish blood will be spilled — children and adults, simple and great people." He then davened and fasted that entire day, despite being over age 90." The next morning following Shacharis, he announced with a sigh of relief that the terrible calamity was averted as one of the tzadikim gave away his life for the generation. People who heard this didn't know if he was speaking of himself. As they were wondering the Baba Sali asked which tzadikim of Yerushalayim were sick. On Wednesday, R' Mordechai Sharabi suffered a heart attack (1912-1984). One of R' Sharabi's students, R' Yosef Dayan asked the Baba Sali to daven⁵ to which he responded, "I davened and did many *tikunim* for R' Sharabi but I feel like a wall is blocking me which is preventing my tefilla from ascending to heaven. It seems that Hashem wants to take R' Sharabi's soul and it is impossible to prevent it. Tomorrow his soul will return to Hashem." These words came true R' Sharabi's soul returned to its Maker on that fateful day in Cheshvan.



⁴ The Baba Sali's (1890-1984) mother raised him in an atmosphere of kedusha where his crib was brought to the Beis Midrash so that he could hear the sounds of Torah learning even in his infancy. His brother R' Dovid Abuchatzzeira who was 24 years older than him became his spiritual mentor. The Baba Sali's greatness is attested in what happened in 1920 when he was 30-years-old. He visited R' Shlomo Eliezer Alfandri, also known as the Sabba Kadisha, who lived to be 105. When the Baba Sali entered, the Sabba Kadisha, who was 95 at the time, stood up and asked the Baba Sali for a bracha.

⁵ We know that the tefillos of the Baba Sali were very impactful as is illustrated in the following story. During one Elul the plane R' Yosef Raful was traveling on was hijacked, and held in the Jordan desert. His nephew Dovid Raful went to the Baba Sali asking him to daven for his uncle and

Distracted Dogs

R' Mendel Futerfass⁶ (1907-1995) spent many years in a Siberian gulag until Stalin's death in 1953. Reflecting on an experience, he imparted a profound lesson to his students.



Once a non-Jewish Russian peasant related to him that he had plans on escaping utilizing the twenty seconds where he can be out of view when the guards change their shift. Aware of guard dogs trained to maul escapees, the peasant planned to place meat in the forest to divert them. R' Mendel decided to watch the daring escape when the time came. Observing the escape, R' Mendel witnessed the guards' futile attempts to stop the escapee. Despite releasing the vicious dogs, the dogs returned, lured by the bait. In a fit of rage, a guard fatally shot the dogs. Perplexed, R' Mendel later at a favorable moment inquired about the seemingly counterproductive act. "If these dogs are trained well, why did you shoot them?" The guard explained that these dogs were trained for that specific moment, and their disregard for fulfilling their mission in favor of a piece of meat led to the death they deserved."

R' Mendel drew a parallel to life. Life is a school and life's circumstances develop all the skills for you to fulfill your mission. Then will come the moment when your mission needs to be fulfilled and someone will throw a piece of meat. Rather than chasing the fleeting temptation stay focused on the mission.

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.

all the passengers. When he arrived at the Baba Sali's home he saw the table set for a big meal. The Baba Sali just washed and urged his guests to wash. The Baba Sali said that he was fasting and had not slept since the plane was hijacked but the night before he said that he knew his tefillos were answered. The Baba Sali was making a seuda to celebrate the occasion and said that they will come home before Rosh Hashana. This is what happened as one hour prior to Rosh Hashana R' Yosef Raful landed in America.

⁶ R' Futerfass operated clandestine *Chadarim* in the Soviet Union, which he was incarcerated for in the Siberian gulags. He later related that one of the ways he kept his sanity was to constantly engage his mind in the practice set forth by the Baal Shem Tov that from everything that a person sees or hears, he should derive a lesson in his service of Hashem. After leaving Russia, the Lubavitcher Rebbe instructed him to serve as *Mashpia* in the Yeshiva of Tomchei Temimim in Kfar Chabad, in Israel. He arrived there in the summer of 1973.