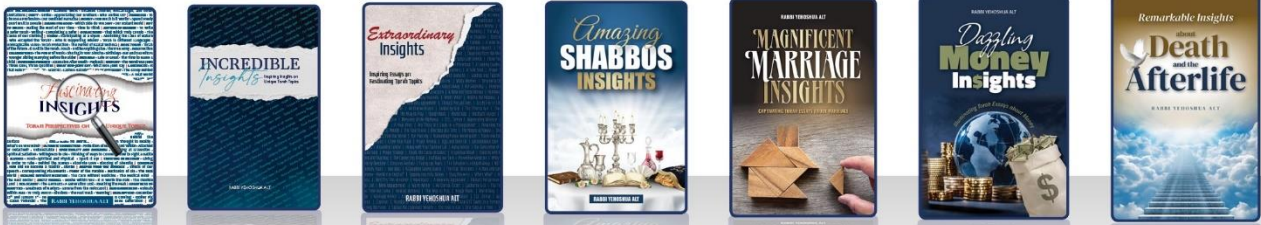


Fascinating INSIGHTS

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לעילוי נשמת הירש בן שלמה
ומנחם מענדיל בן יוסף מאיר

[The Holocaust and Moshiach](#)

One day during the Holocaust, after a grueling workday in a slave labor camp, R' Yechiel Michel Schlager¹ and R' Moshe Nossan Notta Lemberger² engaged in conversation. R' Schlager shared with R' Lemberger the following calculation.



The gemara³ says that Moshiach will not come until there are no more souls in *guf* (the name of a chamber in Heaven that is inhabited by the souls waiting to be born). Moshiach will not come until all the souls there are born. R' Schlager explained, "If a person doesn't fulfill his potential, then his soul must undergo

reincarnation, and this prevents a new soul from being born. Because Hashem saw that there were an immense number of souls waiting in *guf*, this is what had to happen. The six million kedoshim will surely not need to undergo reincarnation, thereby permitting the birth of new souls."⁴

In conclusion, the six million kedoshim paved the way for the birth of new souls, ultimately facilitating the arrival of Moshiach sooner.

[Amicable Acquaintance](#)

Once when R' Shraga Feivel Mendlowitz was giving a shiur (where each person needed to bring their own chairs). Two boys entered each bringing their own chair. R' Shraga Feivel said to the boys, "Both of you came to the shiur and needed chairs. Why didn't you each bring a chair for each other? Then you would each be

¹ He was a Rav and halachic authority in addition to authoring sefarim including Mishberei Yam.

² R' Moshe Nossan Notta Lemberger (1909-1982) was the foremost student of the Maharshag. He was appointed to the Beis Din in Makava in 1936 and appointed Rav of Makava in 1944 following the death of his grandfather-in-law, who held this position previously. Soon after he was deported with his family, first to Bergen-Belsen and then to Theresienstadt. He worked there in the bakery and spent his free time writing

his Torah insights on the slips of paper that were given to him by other prisoners in exchange for bread. These were published after the war. In 1952 He moved to Eretz Yisrael and settled in Kiryat Ata, where he rebuilt the Makva community. He opened a yeshiva and served as Rosh Yeshiva until his passing.

³ Yevamos 62a.

⁴ In R' Schlager's sefer, Afikei Yam, 24-25.

performing a chessed.”⁵ A question we should ask ourselves each day is, “What did you do for someone today?”⁶



The act of giving is eternal while taking is momentary. There is a saying, “After 120 years, you take what you give, not what you have.”

The Kli Yakar tells us that when Moshe took the bones of Yosef it says *עצמות יוסף עמו*.⁷ Moshe took this with him, eternally as that was a Mitzvah. This is in contrast to the rest of the Jews who were busy with the spoils from Mitzrayim, that which is temporary.



One day, Dovid, a ten-year-old boy from Lakewood rode his bike to learn in Beis Midrash Gavoah. Due to the scorching heat, he was very thirsty, and with his only dollar on him, he decided that he would buy a cold soda. When he arrived at the yeshiva, he met a collector from Eretz Yisrael. Dovid thought, “I can satisfy my thirst with a cup of water. Let me give him the dollar.” He then happily handed the collector the dollar!⁸

Well-known psychologist Dr. Martin Seligman suggests integrating acts of kindness into your routine to observe the impact on your mood. As an illustration, he recounts a situation at the post office with lengthy lines due to a one-cent increase in postage. Dr. Seligman purchased strips of penny stamps and

generously distributed them to individuals waiting behind him to buy a supply of penny stamps. Dr. Seligman reports that the several dollars he spent on stamps that day provided him with one of the most satisfying experiences of his life.

Mendel Teitelbaum, a Gerrer Chassid, once asked his father, R' Yitzchak Dovid Teitelbaum,⁹ if a story he heard about him during the Holocaust was true. The story was that when his father received his bread ration in Auschwitz, he would cut it in half, keeping half for himself and giving the other half bit by bit to those who were starving. His father confirmed the veracity of the story and then told his son where he got this trait from. Since there were no fridges or freezers, one could only prepare enough food for that day. On one cold snowy night, in his little town of Sheps, Poland, when his mother made soup for dinner, she served her husband, herself, and her nine¹⁰ children.¹¹ Suddenly, there was a knock on the door. It was an indigent beggar covered in snow asking for food. His mother told the pauper to go into a certain room in the house to clean himself off from all the snow. While the poor man was doing that, Mrs. Teitelbaum took an empty bowl and removed a spoonful of soup from the bowl of each of the nine children, her husband's and her own. That became the bowl of soup for the pauper. This is where R' Yitzchak Dovid Teitelbaum learned this special trait from.

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 seven books including the recently released “Remarkable Insights about Death and the Afterlife.” 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.

⁵ There are people living in a country where they celebrate Halloween (in which children dress in a costume and go door-to-door asking for candy) and they call Purim the Jewish Halloween. It has been noted that on Halloween, a person knocks on someone's door and says “Give me something” whereas on Purim, we knock on someone's door and we say “Let me give you something.”

⁶ Incidentally, *ואהבת לרעך כמוך* (Vayikra 19:18) can be interpreted to love someone who is like you, that you can be jealous of. It is easy to love someone who is not in your age bracket or that you aren't in competition with.

⁷ Shemos 13:19.

⁸ The story is told of a woman who was buying clothes for her son for Yom Tov. As she was about to leave the store, she noticed a young boy looking longingly at her. She recognized him and knew he came from a poor family. She invited him in and helped him pick out a suit, shirt and shoes for Yom Tov. As she was standing by the cash register, the boy asked her. “Are you Hashem?” She chuckled and said, “No, I am just one of his children.” The little boy replied, “I knew you were related.” Realize that when we give, we are demonstrating that we are related to Hashem.

⁹ He was a wealthy Jew that lived in England. He was a strong financial supporter of the Gerrer community in Arad, Israel.

¹⁰ Tangentially, the command of *כבוד את אביך ואת אמך*, honor your father and mother (Shemos 20:12), can be understood as an instruction to the parents. It means, honoring the fact that you are the parent of this child. Know that Hashem had confidence in you to raise the child and give him what he needs.

¹¹ Children are expensive to raise in addition to the fact that they often cause their parents much heartache. So why do so many people want to have children? This is explicated by R' Dessler (Michtav M'Eliyahu, volume 1, p. 36) with the two motivations of why people desire to have children. One is that we feel that children will be a continuation of ourselves after we leave the world. The second is that we have an innate need to have someone on whom to lavish love and kindness. This is why childless couples will often adopt children and raise them as their own. Some will even have a dog or some other pet to lavish affection upon as if they were children. This is a clear indication of the deep-seated power of giving in the human soul.