

Fascinating INSIGHTS

כ"א מרחשוון תשפ"ה
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פרשת חיי שרה
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The newly released book "Exhilarating Torah Insights on Recreation and Vacation" is now available (as a paperback, hardcover and digitized version) for purchase and delivery on Amazon at <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0DF4ZHPKJ> or by sending a WhatsApp to +972 54 849 5217. Alternatively, you can call 054 849 5217 (Israel) or 917 732 2371 (United States) or send an email to yalt3285@gmail.com.

Some of the questions discussed in this book are the following.

What role does recreation play in our service of Hashem?

What does the Torah teach us about music?

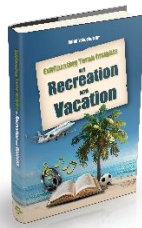
What lessons can we glean from specific types of recreation, such as sports?

Is there a mitzvah to take a vacation?

What does the Torah say about comedy and humor?

This insightful and thought-provoking book delves into these questions and many more, offering profound insights. With over 50 meticulously crafted essays, it masterfully conveys the Torah's perspective on recreation and vacation. As an indispensable guide, this work will enable readers to attain a deeper understanding of these important topics.

It makes a great gift for parents, siblings, friends, relatives, neighbors, business associates, acquaintances and learning partners. Purchase it at <https://amzn.to/3eyh5xP>.



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Videos, Voicenotes and Voicemails

The pasuk tells us מות והיים ביד לשון, death and life are in the power of the tongue.¹ Why does it say the word ביד? Wouldn't it make more

sense to just say מות והיים בלשון? What is the word ביד adding?

The Torah is eternal and timeless, speaking not only to its original audience but to

¹ Mishlei 18:21.

every generation. Once upon a time, if someone wanted to spread negative or positive speech, they would do so solely with their mouth. Today, however, there are many ways to “speak” — through typing on a keyboard, sending an email or tapping out a text message. Our words, once the product of our mouths, now often flow through our יד, hand, onto a screen. With this modern lens, the word ביד makes perfect sense: now, our hand can indeed “speak,” through our words, whether life-giving or destructive, being communicated by our fingertips.

Taking it even further, technology has enabled us to combine speech and hand in a new way. With videos, voicemails, and voice notes, we can use both לשון and יד working in harmony to convey our message. In this sense we can explain ביד לשון: the hand and tongue are now partners in amplifying our voices — for good or for bad. In this light, the pasuk's words are not just a reminder but also a call to awareness of the power of our words, however we choose to send them out into the world.



Swerving from the Weekday

It says שבת משוש לבנו נהפך לאבל מהולנו, gone is the joy of our hearts, our dancing has turned into mourning.²

Another interpretation is that שבת משוש לבנו, Shabbos is the happiest day. However, for some people it's the opposite because of the weekday (נהפך לאבל מהולנו). That is, many people get so accustomed to what they do during the week that when Shabbos comes, they feel like it interferes. They can't look at their phones, they can't earn money, they can't smoke, they can't drive and the like. We must realize

what a special gift Shabbos is and do specific actions each day in anticipation of the coming Shabbos.³



² Eicha 5:15.
³ See Beitza 16a.

The Stabbing During Birchas Hamazon

The Mishna Brura⁴ cites that one reason for covering a knife (or removing it from the table) at Birchas Hamazon is based on the following incident. Once a person reached בונה ירושלים in Birchas Hamazon which reminded him of the *churban*, destruction of the Beis Hamikdash. As a result of the distress over the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash, he stabbed himself.

A question arises: if this happened only once, why make a rule to remove the knife?



The Skver Rebbe offers an insightful answer. We are not worried concerned that people today might harm themselves in this way, as the pain of the *churban* doesn't affect us so intensely. However, every Jew should know that there was once a Jew who felt the *churban* so deeply that he actually stabbed himself! Removing the knife serves as a reminder of how profoundly the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash can impact a person. This can help a person become more sensitive to the *churban*.

Rabbi Alt merited to learn under the tutelage of R' Mordechai Friedlander ztz"l for close to five years and received semichah from R' Zalman Nechemia Goldberg ztz"l. Rabbi Alt has written on numerous topics for various websites and publications and is the author of nine books including the recently released "Exhilarating Torah Insights on Recreation and Vacation." His writings, many 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. His shiurim can be found on various websites including Kol Halashon's. Rabbi Alt lives with his wife and family in Kiryat Yearim (where the Aron was for 20 years [Shmuel 1, 7:1,2]) where he studies, lectures, writes and teaches. The author is passionate about teaching Jews of all levels of observance.

⁴ 180:11.