

# Fascinating INSIGHTS

ג' סיון תשפ"ה  
May 30, 2025

פרשת במדבר  
13<sup>th</sup> year, edition 578

**I am excited to announce that the newly released book "Astounding Torah Insights about the Human Body" is now available (as a paperback, hardcover and digitized version) for purchase and delivery on Amazon at <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0F6TRBKF1> 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](mailto:yalt3285@gmail.com).**

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

**What is the significance of the lashon hakodesh names for various body parts?**

**Where does the Torah hint to different ways of breathing?**

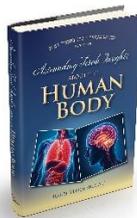
**What is the spiritual connection of the esophagus and trachea located in the neck?**

**Where in the Torah do we find handshakes mentioned?**

**What is the Torah's perspective on healthy eating and exercise?**

**This insightful book explores these questions and many more, offering profound insights. More than 70 meticulously crafted essays are included, illuminating the Torah's approach to the human body. With this indispensable guide, readers are empowered to achieve a richer understanding of these essential 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>. And please spread the word about it!**



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[A Gazan Rabbi, Mufti and Missionaries](#)

R' Nissim Ochana<sup>1</sup> (1882–1962) served as Chief Rabbi of Gaza until 1912. During his tenure,

<sup>1</sup> He was born in Algeria and immigrated to Eretz Yisrael as a child. By age 21, he was ordained by the Sefardi Chief Rabbi R' Yaakov Shaul Elyashar, R' Chaim Moshe Elyashar and R' Shmuel Salant. At 22, he married the daughter of a later Sephardi Chief Rabbi R' Nachman Betito. During his Gaza

tenure, he also established a Jewish cemetery, built a mikveh, and founded a Talmud Torah. After his wife's death in 1912, he returned to Yerushalayim and remarried to the daughter of the kabbalist R' Yitzchak Moshe Fereira. In 1913, he was invited to serve as Rabbi of the Syrian-Jewish

Jewish-Muslim religious relations were relatively cordial. Gaza's mufti, Sheikh Abdullah El-Alami sought



his help responding to Christian missionary arguments which he encountered. The two met twice a week for Torah study. When R' Ochana later became the Chief Rabbi of Chaifa, he published the mufti's theological responses (originally written in Arabic) in a sefer titled Da Ma Shetashiv L'Epikoros ("Know What to Answer the Heretic").

In the introduction to Da Ma Shetashiv L'Epikoros which he published in 1959, R' Ochana writes: "Among these [tracts handed out by the missionaries] was a book called 'A Word of Truth,' in which they proved that the Koran is a collection of material from the Torah, the Prophets and Talmudic stories, rather than, as they [Muslims] are told, prophesy of the prophet Muhammad. The mufti of Gaza, Sheikh Abdullah El-Alami wanted to prove to the missionaries that the Koran is, after all, true, as what it says is found in the Torah, the Prophets and Talmudic stories, contrary to the verses found in the New Testament and the verses they brought in support of yeshu, which do not apply to him and do not prophesize about him in any way at all. That mufti turned to me. And he visited me twice a week in my home, regularly bringing me questions about all the chapters and verses found in the New Testament, and demanding that I give him clear answers from the Bible itself. He sat down and wrote out all the answers in Arabic. I have preserved his handwritten notes to this day. And that is how this book was written, with clear proofs for all generations."

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Lawless and Flawless

We have a principle that the more spiritual something is, the less the physical laws of reality apply to it. There are many examples of this. Eretz Yisrael, which is holier than other lands,<sup>2</sup> is called *eret hatzvi*, the land of the deer.<sup>3</sup> A deer's skin is not large enough to accommodate its body.<sup>4</sup> The same is with Eretz

community in New York where he served for less than two years. During World War One, he served as Rabbi in Malta, Egypt. In 1920, he became Rabbi of Port Said and, in 1935, he served as Raavad in Cairo and Deputy Chief Rabbi of Egypt. He was known and respected by Egypt's ruling class, including King Fuad I to whom he was invited several times to have tea. In 1947, R' Ochana returned to Eretz Israel and became the Sephardi Chief Rabbi of Chaifa. R' Ochana authored Na'eh Meshiv (a halachic responsa) and the aforementioned Da Ma Shetashiv L'Epikoros, was the father of nine children.

<sup>2</sup> Mishnayos Keilim 1:6.

<sup>3</sup> Daniel 11:41.

<sup>4</sup> The skin of a deer contracts after it is removed from the deer's body (Rashi s.v. *ein*).

<sup>5</sup> Gittin 57a. The question is asked why Eretz Yisrael is called *rechavah*, a spacious land (Birchas Hamazon) when it is so small. With this concept we can understand why this is so. Where there is kedusha, the less the physical laws apply, and therefore it expands to accommodate more people.

<sup>6</sup> Avos 5:7. See there for other miracles that occurred on a daily basis in the Beis Hamikdash.

<sup>7</sup> Yoma 21a. See Rashi s.v. *tzefufim* and *mishtachavim*.

<sup>8</sup> Volume 3, p. 131, s.v. *oydikra*.

<sup>9</sup> Megila 10b. Also see *Vayikra Rabba* 10:9.

Yisrael. When people live there, it expands to accommodate them.<sup>5</sup>

The mishna<sup>6</sup> relates that no one said to his friend, "The space is insufficient for me to stay overnight in Yerushalayim." This was despite the many people who would come for Yom Tov. Another miracle was that when the Jewish People would be *oleh l'regel*, went up on pilgrimage, they stood crowded together, yet prostrated themselves in ample space (*omdim tzefufim u'mishtachavim revachim*).<sup>7</sup> Incidentally, the Chassam Sofer<sup>8</sup> tells us that the miracle of *omdim tzefufim* was that in such a holy place that was so above nature, it could be so crowded. Bowing with ample space in such a holy place is not a novelty! Another wondrous occurrence was that which the gemara<sup>9</sup> tells us, that the Aron stood miraculously in the Kodosh Hakdoshim without taking up any space (*makom aron ein min ha'midah*).<sup>10</sup>

This concept is also shown in regard to food, specifically with the *lechem hapanim* which was as fresh and warm when removed from the shulchan as when arranged there the previous Shabbos.<sup>11</sup> It remained fresh it had remained there for an entire week. Here too, this is in contrast to the laws of physical reality, where bread left out becomes stale.



This idea applies to people as well, as we see with Moshe Rabbeinu. When he ascended the mountain to receive the Torah, he didn't eat or sleep for 40 days!<sup>12</sup>

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 thousands of Torah articles on numerous topics for various websites and publications and is the author of ten books including the recently released "Astounding Torah Insights about the Human Body." 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.

You can now download the weekly Fascinating Insights Torah sheet from the following websites: Dirshu, Torah Lectures, Torah Table, Ladaat, Chidush, Kol Halashon, Gilyonos, Din Online, Alon Olam, Parsha Sheets, Yiddishe Vinkel, and more.

<sup>10</sup> Sefer Bamidbar begins (Bamidbar 1:1) with Hashem speaking to Moshe in the desert of Sinai in the Tent of Meeting on the first of the second month in the second year (*b'echad la'chodesh ha'sheini ba'shanah hashainis*). The Ohr Hachaim is bothered by the inconsistency. It starts with the general (desert), continues with the specific (ohel moed) and then continues by saying the specific (first day of the second month) followed by the general (second year). What is the explanation for this? In light of what we mentioned, we can understand the layout of the pasuk we began with. It is in fact in the proper order! Because the ohel moed contains more holiness, it is therefore bigger than the desert. Consequently, the general follows the specific in both places in the pasuk.

<sup>11</sup> Yoma 21a.

<sup>12</sup> Devarim 9:9,18. Even today, we hear of gedolim who sleep just a few hours a night. There were some who lived on naps alone and yet they had no problem functioning and accomplishing day after day. How is it possible for someone such as R' Moshe Feinstein to write Dibros Moshe on Shas, Darash Moshe on Chumash and Igros Moshe, all while taking care of the Jewish people, his family and congregation?! Our history is replete with gedolim who accomplished beyond the natural capabilities of man.