

Fascinating INSIGHTS

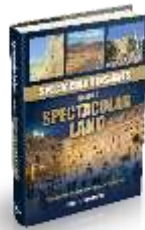
כג' אלול תשפ"ו
September 4, 2026

פרשת נצבים-וילך
14th year, edition 630

Final opportunity!

A Spectacular book about Eretz Yisrael

Special dedication opportunity. As we have arrived at the final stages before publication, this is the final opportunity for contributions or dedications for the book titled "Spectacular Insights about a Spectacular Land." Create an eternal merit through Torah with a dedication. Dedications can be given from Maisei money and can be paid out over time in payments. They can be L'Tlui Nishmas, L'Refuah Shleima, an advertisement for a business, for someone trying to find their shidduch, in honor of a special occasion, in honor of a family member or friend or any other dedication that your heart desires. This is in addition to sharing in the merit of the life-changing Torah learned by each reader. For more information or if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at yalt3285@gmail.com or send a WhatsApp to +972 54 849 5217. Donations can also be given via Zelle with the email address parshadt28@gmail.com or by credit card at <https://tinyurl.com/5n7n486a>. Any amount is welcome.



To purchase any of the author's books (hardcopy or e-book) and get it delivered to your door, visit <https://amzn.to/4bHjc13>, send an email to yalt3285@gmail.com or send a WhatsApp to +972 54 849 5217. Alternatively, you can call or text (443) 826 8493 (United States). You can also scan the following QR code:



TRANSFORMING THE WORLD THROUGH FASCINATING TORAH INSIGHTS

Argentina • Austria • Australia • Belgium • Brazil • Canada • Chile • China • Czech Republic • England • France • Germany • Gibraltar • Holland • Hungary • India • Israel • Italy • Mexico • Panama • Poland • Russia • South Africa • Switzerland • Ukraine • United Arab Emirates • United States • Venezuela

Spread the Torah. Win a Book! Print this Fascinating Insights Torah sheet for your shul, email it to others or share it on WhatsApp to share fascinating and inspiring Torah with your community, and email yalt3285@gmail.com to enter a raffle to win an insights book of your choice. It's a win-win: your community enjoys thrilling Torah, and you get a chance to win a great book!

Columbus and the Jews

In 1492, by order of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, hundreds of thousands of Jews from Spain, the largest and most affluent Jewish community in the world, were ordered to either convert to Christianity or leave their homes by the Ninth of Av. Hundreds of Jewish communities that had existed in Spain for more than 500 years disappeared almost overnight, as the Jews were forced to abandon their homes, leave Spain and become refugees.

As *hashgacha* had it, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella were the same monarchs who financed Christopher Columbus's voyage to discover America. Columbus set sail from Spain soon after the Edict of Expulsion took effect, forcing the Jews to leave the country. He reached the New World on Hoshana Rabbah.



Columbus's discovery of America led many Jewish Marranos to flee there to escape the Inquisition and practice Judaism openly. Over the centuries, America continued to serve as a haven for Jewish refugees fleeing persecution. Millions of Jews from Europe, Arab lands, the Soviet Union, and Iran came to America to rebuild their lives in freedom and security. As one door closed in Jewish history, another started to open.

On his voyage to the New World in 1492, Christopher Columbus took along a Jewish interpreter named Luis de Torres. He was hired because he spoke Hebrew, Arabic and Aramaic, as Columbus expected to meet people in Asia who spoke those languages. Born Yosef ben Ha'levi Ha'ivri in Spain, Luis de Torres converted to Catholicism just before the voyage to escape the Spanish Inquisition.

On this voyage, Columbus used astronomical tables and navigational

instruments developed by R' Avraham Zacuto (1452–1515),¹ the renowned Jewish astronomer and mathematician.

Standing Against Injustice

When Moshe saw the Egyptian beating a Jew, the Torah says that "he turned this way and that way, and saw that there was no man" before striking the Egyptian. Yet clearly there were people there, because afterward it became known and he was informed upon to Pharaoh.²

The deeper meaning is that Moshe looked around and saw that although people were present, there was "no man," meaning no one willing to stand up against the injustice of the Egyptian beating the Jew and confront the Egyptian. The people saw what was happening, but as slaves they had become accustomed to silence and to going along with the tide.

Moshe therefore acted upon the teaching later expressed in Pirkei Avos³ במקום שאין אנשים השתדל להיות איש, in a place where there are no men, strive to be a man. When no one else was prepared to stand for truth, Moshe chose to become that person.

To join the thousands of recipients and receive these insights free on a weekly email or WhatsApp, obtain previous articles, feedback, comments, suggestions (on how to spread the insights of this publication further, make it more appealing or anything else), to sponsor this publication which has been in six continents and more than forty countries, or if you know anyone who is interested in receiving these insights weekly, please contact the author, Rabbi Yehoshua Alt, at yalt3285@gmail.com or WhatsApp +972 54 849 5217. Thank you.

The Greater Commoner

In addressing a particular question, the gemara⁴ states: הדיוט מהדיוט עדיף ליה, it is preferable to derive the law of a korban brought by a common person from another korban brought by a common person.

¹ In 1492, he was forced to flee Spain, taking refuge in Portugal. For a brief time, he became court astronomer of King John II and Manuel I, advising the latter on Vasco de Gama's expedition to India. However, Manuel I decided to marry Isabella of Aragon, who told him that the marriage was conditional on expelling all Jews in Portugal. R'

Avraham Zacuto was forced to flee once again, getting captured twice by pirates before staying in Tunisia. Eventually, he was forced to flee once again, this time to Turkey, where he was for the remainder of his life.

² Shemos 2:12-15.

³ 2:5.

⁴ Menachos 76a.

On a deeper level, these words can be read as a broader insight into human nature: we are often more influenced by those we perceive as similar to ourselves. Inspiration feels more attainable when it comes from someone "like us." This is how we can understand the words ⁵הדיוט מהדיוט עדיף ליה.



For example, if you see a Rosh Yeshiva immersed in learning on a plane, it may not necessarily move you to open a sefer. You might instinctively say, "He's a Rosh Yeshiva, that's who he is." But if you notice an ordinary fellow passenger, someone who seems like a regular working person, quietly learning during the flight, it can strike a different chord. Suddenly, it feels within reach, and you may be inspired to follow suit.

Another example: when a renowned tzaddik displays extraordinary patience, it can feel distant, almost expected. But when an average person like someone waiting in a long line or dealing with a frustrating situation responds with calm and dignity, it leaves a powerful impression. It shows that such behavior is not reserved for the great; it is something each of us can live up to.

This brings to mind the following episode. A highly successful person in Torah and in business once gave a shiur in a certain shul in New York. After the impressive shiur, the congregants told the Rav: "Even if you would give 1,000 shiurim, it would not be as popular as his. This is because that person lives in our world and he succeeds on the highest level in

spirituality although he faces the same challenges we do every day."

Enjoying this publication? Help spread it further. Feel free to print some copies of this publication and distribute them in your local neighborhood and shul(s) for the public, thereby having a hand in spreading Torah and changing the lives of others.

Sons and Souls

In the gemara we come across the name Rav Papa. He had ten sons, which many people know from mentioning them at a siyum mesachta. Who were these ten sons?

R' Meir Poppers⁶ (1624–1662) tells us that the soul of Rav Papa was sourced in Yosef Hatzadik. Therefore, he had ten sons, in order to complete the ten sons that Yosef Hatzadik was lacking. As we find in the gemara⁷ that ten drops of semen exited from between Yosef's fingernails due to the intense temptation he experienced. Through this he lost the ten sons that he should have produced. Now Rav Papa completed those ten sons through his own children.

The weekly Fascinating Insights sheet is also available in FRENCH, HEBREW and YIDDISH. To view or download them in these languages, send an email to yalt3285@gmail.com.

This newsletter can also be viewed in English at <https://tinyurl.com/4cp9hf4k>.

<https://tinyurl.com/vn5mea84> דעם נחלעטער קען מען אויך זען אויף אידיש ביי
Pour voir ou télécharger la version Française:
<https://tinyurl.com/sjezdssn>.

<https://tinyurl.com/6hrukutw> אפשר לקרוא את עלון זה בעברית באתר דרוש:

L'Refua Shleima Meir Shalom ben Nechama Aliza, Danielle bat Lucie,
Rafael ben Danielle and Naomi Devorah bas Daniel Noach

Rabbi Alt merited to learn under the tutelage of Rabbi Mordechai Friedlander ztz"l for close to five years and received semichah from Rabbi 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 thirteen fascinating and popular books. His writings, many of which have been translated into Yiddish, Hebrew, German, Spanish 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 lectures, writes and teaches, and is passionate about inspiring Jews of all levels of observance. He can be reached at yalt3285@gmail.com or on WhatsApp at +972 54 849 5217.

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, Yiddische Vinkel, and more.

that his Kabbalistic writings, in which he recorded the Arizal's teachings, should be divided into three parts. He followed this directive and divided it into three parts: Derech Eitz Chaim, Pri Eitz Chaim and Nof Eitz Chaim.

Afterwards, he stayed in Istanbul from Purim until Shavuot, where he continued his work, and upon arriving in Krakow, he completed writing his edition. He remained in Krakow until 1654 when he embarked for Yerushalayim which took an entire year, leaving him sick and exhausted upon arrival. R' Meir Poppers has 39 works that have "Ohr" ("light") as the beginning of their titles, in reference to his name "Meir" ("one who illuminates"), including Me'orei Ohr, Ohr Hayashar and Ohr Tzadikim. He passed away at the age of 38, the same age as the Arizal and was buried on Har Hazeisim.

⁷ Sota 36b. Also, Pirkei Drebi Eliezer, Chapter 38.

⁵ R' Eli Stefansky.

⁶ Ohr Haneir, Entry Rav Papa. R' Meir Poppers, one of the foremost Kabbalists in the generation following the Arizal. Recognizing his extraordinary aptitude and finding no suitable study partner at his level in Poland, his parents sent him to learn in Yerushalayim at the age of thirteen. There he learned Kabbalah teachings from many tzaddikim, including the physician R' Yaakov Tzemach.

Following the Chmielnicki massacres of 1648-1649, R' Meir left Yerushalayim for Poland to inquire after the welfare of his family. En route, he spent eight days in Damascus with R' Shmuel Vital, the son of R' Chaim Vital. While there, he discovered a handwritten note from his host's father, R' Chaim Vital. The note stated