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ט"ז מרחשון תשפ"ו

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L'Refuah Shleima Danielle bat Lucie and Rafael ben Danielle

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Happy with a Part, Rich in the Whole

The mishna says איזהו עשיר השמח בחלקו, who is wealthy, he who is happy with his lot.¹ As R' Dr.

¹ Avos 4:1.

Joseph Breuer² (1882–1980) grew older and began to lose some of his abilities, he would explain איזהו עשיר השמח בחלקו to mean: Who is wealthy, one who rejoices in part of himself, meaning one who is still happy with whatever abilities and faculties function, finding contentment in the faculties and strengths that remain.



Reverse Expansion

We are taught that *be'ra karei d'avuha*, a son is the "leg" or extension of his father.³ But there's another way to understand it. Sometimes, it's the child who leads the parent—guiding them, shaping them, and even elevating them. Children have specific needs⁴ that may draw parents in directions they wouldn't have otherwise gone. For example, a parent might choose to move to a different country if they believe it will benefit their child. In doing so, it's the child who leads the parent to a new phase of life.

But the influence goes deeper than logistics. A child can also bring out hidden qualities in a parent. A particularly challenging child may awaken patience that the parent never knew they had. That child is, in a sense, leading the parent toward inner growth — offering an opportunity for *tikun*, refinement of character.

Another example: a child who is especially needy may require constant care and attention. The parent, by responding with love and consistency, strengthens their own capacity for compassion and attentiveness.

A child with health issues may bring his parents to the hospital where the parents rectify spiritually what needs to be rectified there.

In this light, *be'ra karei d'avuha* reflects a profound truth: while parents may guide their children, children also guide their parents — helping them become who they are meant to be. They extend and expand their parents.⁵

The Missing Years

² R' Dr. Joseph Breuer, son of R' Dr. Solomon Breuer, a grandson of R' Samson Raphael Hirsch, escaped with his family following Kristallnacht in November 1938, arriving in the United States in February 1939. He was the last Rosh Yeshiva of the Frankfurt Yeshiva and the founding rabbi of Congregation Khal Adath Jeshurun and Yeshiva Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch in Washington Heights, New York.

³ See Eruvin 70b, Kesubos 92a, Rashi s.v. *k'baal chov*.

⁴ It has been said, "Don't push Hashem into your children's hearts. Bring them into your heart and if Hashem is there, they'll find Him."

The pasuk⁶ tells us we were in Mitzrayim for 430 years.⁷ The intense bitterness of the enslavement was 86 years. With this we can explain וחמשים עלו בני ישראל מארץ מצרים,⁸ we left Mitzrayim after serving just 1/5 of the time, as 86 of 430 is 1/5.

According to this we need to make up 344 years (for the difference between 430 and 86). These years were fulfilled during times of persecution like when the gemara says it was a שעת השמד (time of persecution) against the Jews. The various persecutions in exiles we have endured are calculated towards the missing 344 years, as these years were supposed to be in Mitzrayim. An allusion to this is found in the word שמד, which has a gematria of 344, the number of years missing from Mitzrayim!

Reserved Mitzvos

We know that the mitzvos of tzitzis and tefillin are applicable the entire day. This leads us to the question as to why we wear them particularly only during shacharis.



The Meshech Chochma⁹ cites the gemara¹⁰ that in the merit of Avraham saying אמ מחוט ועד שרוך נעל,¹¹ that he would refrain from taking the spoils of Sedom, his children were merited the mitzvos of tzitzis and tefillin. Now, the gemara elsewhere¹² tells us that Avraham instituted shacharis. Consequently, since shacharis is Avraham's tefilla, and because tzitzis and tefillin are in his merit, we have the practice to specifically wear them during shacharis.

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, 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 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.

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⁵ We must always remember: We are not displaced; we are dispatched. Hashem sends us to different places for various reasons.

⁶ Shemos 12:40.

⁷ See Rashi there.

⁸ Shemos 13:18.

⁹ Breishis 14:23.

¹⁰ Chullin 88b-89a.

¹¹ Breishis 14:23.

¹² Brachos 26b.