
SPRING 2018 * PASSOVER 5778



Newsletter #2

Friends and Colleagues-

DA'AT INSTITUTE for Death Awareness, Advocacy and Training provides innovative death awareness education through lectures, workshops and professional training. We also offer bereavement counseling and hospice support, and publish a series of contemporary death education resources.

This **Passover Edition Newsletter** of the **DA'AT INSTITUTE** presents:

- 1) a short article on missing loved ones at Passover** called "V'higadeta l'vincha: Passover As a Time for Remembering and Memorializing Loved Ones";
- 2) a schedule of upcoming teaching for 2017-19**, including three very exciting programs sponsored by Omega Institute, Aleph - Alliance for Jewish Renewal, and the New York Open Center; and
- 3) a list of current DA'AT INSTITUTE Publications.**

We look forward to staying in touch and welcome your feedback.

Wishing you a meaningful Passover
MAY WE ALL FIND LIBERATION ON THE
EVER-CHANGING JOURNEY OF LIFE!



Reb Simcha Raphael, Ph.D.



KABBALISTIC JOURNEY OF THE SOUL
BIRTH, DEATH, AFTERLIFE & REINCARNATION
IN JEWISH MYSTICISM

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JEWISH AFTERLIFE TRADITIONS THROUGHOUT THE AGES
A Four Day Class with Simcha Raphael



Aleph Kallah
July 2-8, 2018
University of Massachusetts, Amherst
www.aleph.org/kallah



New York
OPEN CENTER
Inspired Learning at 30th & Madison

EXPLORING THE BEREAVEMENT JOURNEY:
AN EXPERIENTIAL WORKSHOP FOR PROFESSIONALS

WITH SIMCHA RAPHAEL, PH.D.

APRIL 14-15, 2018 * 9:30 AM – 5:30 PM
NEW YORK OPEN CENTER

This course is part of New York Open Center's
Integrative Thanatology Certificate Program

V'higadeta L'vincha: **Passover As A Time for Remembering and Memorializing Loved Ones**

Central to Passover is the teaching from Deuteronomy, that it is incumbent upon us to tell our children that once upon a time *"we were slaves in Egypt, and God brought us out of slavery with an outstretched hand, and with great signs and wonders."*

At some point in our personal past, parents or grandparents, aunts, uncles, or teachers introduced us to the mythic tale of Passover. Through story-telling, Seder rituals and a smorgasbord of culinary delights we were initiated into the Passover story. These multi-sensory practices were etched into our consciousness, leaving us with visceral memories of family and friends being brought together, each year at this time, to celebrate an ancient Jewish festival.

Given the powerful imprinting of Passover memories, so often just the sounds, smells, and din and clatter of families gathered together at Seders, evoke poignant recollections of recently-deceased and long-gone family members with whom we have shared Passover throughout the years. Because of this, at times a Seder night can be emotionally difficult, joyous and yet simultaneously bittersweet. This is especially so when there has been a recent death, and the absence of a beloved grandparent, parent or spouse is acutely felt.

As the Seder begins this year, one helpful practice to consider, is asking those present who else they want to invite to the Seder. Make time to go around the table mentioning those who could not be present - perhaps children attending university, or friends and family who have moved away - and symbolically inviting deceased parents and grandparents, and others to the Seder. Saying something like "I want to invite my mother, Rose, who taught me everything I knew about Pesach, and would be delighted to be here with all of us being here tonight" can add a depth dimension to one's Seder.

In some cases, it might be helpful to leave an empty chair in honor of someone who has died. "Zayde Jack always led Seders for us, and since he cannot be here tonight, we want to remember his presence with this empty chair." This practice can help turn mournful longing into a tender memory.

There is often a mistaken belief that if we give voice to missing someone who died, it will evoke sadness or even tears. There is a tendency to want to smooth things over, ignoring the obvious elephant in the room, the unexpressed grief felt particularly if the death is recent. Reality is such that the opposite is true: by acknowledging the loss, naming our collective grief, we open our hearts to remembering the person who has died, with love and with an appreciation of their legacy. And doing this can be very healing.



REMEMBERING THE ANCESTORS
FOUR GENERATIONS AT A PASSOVER SEDER, MONTREAL 1952

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Similarly, we again have a chance to remember loved ones, at the end of the week of Passover, as we prepare for Yizkor. Inherent to Jewish practice is the wisdom to remember deceased loved ones by saying the memorial prayers of Yizkor four times a year. At Yom Kippur, and in the last days of celebration of Sukkot, Pesach and Shavuot, we reflect upon the lives of those who have died, honor their memory and attune to their souls in the world beyond.

This year, on the last day of Passover, it is traditional to light a Yizkor candle at home at sundown and to recite Yizkor prayers in synagogue the next day. Once again, we are given the chance to remember those who imparted to us the Passover story, those with whom we shared Seder foods and sang Passover songs over many years. Reflecting on the light of a Yizkor candle, provides an opportunity to talk about deceased loved ones, share stories of their lives, and in so doing, acknowledge our loves, losses and the lasting legacy parents, grandparents, and others have left behind.

Throughout Passover, as you remember Bubby's matzo ball soup, your father's *Dayenu* melody, or how your mother taught you to set a Passover table with elegance, take the time to share recollections of a person's life and legacy, bring their spirit alive, and acknowledge their role in teaching you Seder traditions and practices. Honor their role as progenitors for you of the tradition that taught us "*we were slaves in Egypt, and God brought us out of slavery with an outstretched hand, and with great signs and wonders.*"

The whole week of Passover is a perfect time to remember loved ones, to honor our ever-changing feelings of grief, and align with the spirit of the person who has died, holding close to our hearts the gifts and the legacy that he or she has left behind.

Reb Simcha Raphael, Ph.D.

Founding Director

DA'AT Institute for Death Awareness, Advocacy and Training

DA'AT INSTITUTE PUBLICATIONS

JEWISH VIEWS OF THE AFTERLIFE

A unique historical and philosophical study tracing the evolution of ideas about individual postmortem survival in Judaism, the most comprehensive examination of life after death in Judaism available in English.

MAY THE ANGELS CARRY YOU:

Jewish Prayers and Meditations for the Deathbed

A collection of traditional and contemporary prayers offering comfort for those on an end-of-life journey, and practical tools for patients, family members, and professional care-givers .

LIVING AND DYING IN ANCIENT TIMES:

Death, Burial and Mourning in Biblical Tradition

An exploration of views of dying, death, burial and afterlife characteristic of ancient Hebrew and Israelite civilization, with reflection on the contemporary relevance of these ancient views of dying and death.

THE GRIEF JOURNEY AND THE AFTERLIFE:

Jewish Pastoral Care for Bereavement

A contemporary psychological approach to grief and bereavement which integrates an understanding of both Jewish death rituals and Kabbalistic teachings on the afterlife journey of the soul

MAY THE ANGELS CARRY YOU - Jewish Songs of Comfort for Death, Dying and Mourning

A collection of original compositions by [Rabbi Geela Rayzel Raphael](#) offering spiritual solace for those dealing with dying and walking mourners' journey of bereavement and healing.

KADDISH ECHOES - POEMS OF NIGHT TIME, POEMS OF MOURNING

A rich tapestry of poetry chronicling the experience of a year of mourning and saying Kaddish for a parent.

POEMS OF LIFE AND DEATH - March of the Living

A collection of poetry written in response to a journey traveling through concentration camps and other sites of the Holocaust in Poland.

Books are available from [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)
Or the [DA'AT Institute Bookstore](#)

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CONTACT DA'AT INSTITUTE:

drsimcha@daatinstitute.net

215.432.1211



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