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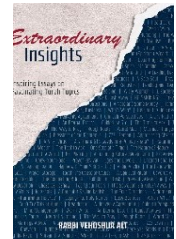
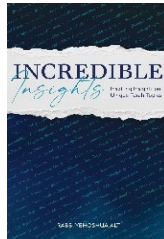
יב' שבט תשפ"ב

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לעילוי נשמת ר' משולם הלוי בן ר' אשר אנשיל

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The Precious Gift of Shabbos

The Gemara relates that Hashem told Moshe I have a wonderful gift in my treasure house and its name is Shabbos. I want to give it to the Jewish people, go and inform them.¹ The Sefer Sifsei Kedoshim explains this Gemara with a story. R' Shmuel Shmelke once encountered a poor person and didn't have anything to give him. He therefore gave a precious ring he had in his possession. When his wife realized this, she got so upset since it was worth a lot of money. The Rebbe then said if it is worth that much, let me go tell the poor person how much the ring is truly worth so that he doesn't sell it for cheap. In this way we can grasp the above Gemara as we must know the true value of Shabbos. Therefore, לך והודיעם, inform the Jews about the value of Shabbos.

The word שבת is related to tranquility, serenity as in שובה ונחת, stillness and peacefulness, and as in נפשי ישובב, restores my soul.² The evil forces desist on Shabbos as the Zohar³ tells us, "When Shabbos arrives... all harsh judgements are removed... all wrathful dominions and bearers of grievances flee..."

We need to experience a genuine Shabbos. R' Moshe Leib Sassover⁴ would give the following analogy: There was someone who wanted to invite a great person. He therefore ordered the highest quality of everything—the finest delicacies, top musicians, funniest comedians, the best lighting and so on. However, he forgot to invite the guest. The same is with many people in regard to Shabbos as they prepare the best foods, wear their finest clothing, wipe the floor clean, prepare beautiful Shabbos candles and so forth. However, they forget to invite Shabbos! In this way we can comprehend v'karasa l'Shabbos,⁵ as one needs to also invite Shabbos.

There was a Jew from Yerushalayim who would say, "Hashem, You gave me challa for Lechem Mishna,⁶ wine for Kidush and Havdala, and all that I need for Shabbos. Now, please give me Shabbos for Shabbos." We need to experience the joy, sweetness and holiness of Shabbos.⁷

The Shela comments on וקראת לשבת ענג that Shabbos should have an ענג from you.⁸ That is, from the way you daven, learn⁹ and the like.¹⁰

¹ Shabbos 10b.

² Yeshaya 30:15, Tehillim 23:3. Tangentially, we don't say good night on Shabbos (rather we say Good Shabbos) since Shabbos is entirely light.

³ Teruma 134:1.

⁴ R' Dovid Hager of Zabolotov (1797-1848) married the righteous Rebbitzin Pesya Leah, who was the daughter of R' Moshe Leib of Sassov. Following R' Dovid Hager's passing, his wife would receive k'vitlach by his followers.

⁵ Yeshaya 58:13.

⁶ Incidentally, the Netziv (Mashiv Davar 1:21) writes that Lechem Mishna can be two slices of bread, and not two whole challas.

⁷ See Orach Chaim 262:3.

⁸ In a similar fashion, the Chassam Sofer commented on ה' להיות בנועם ה' ("to behold the sweetness of Hashem"), that Hashem should get pleasure from the way we serve him. There is a concept that Mitzvos actually cry

out to a person to fulfill them whether it is the Mitzva of Tzitzis, Tefillin and the like. This is the deeper meaning of שישמע למצותיך ("praiseworthy is the person who obeys your commandments"): praised is the person who listens to the Mitzvos that are requested from him to fulfill them (שיחות בעבודת ה', p. 15).

⁹ R' Dessler said that he remembers when he was around the age of 9, his father and uncle would arise at around midnight on Shabbos and learn together for about 9 hours until shacharis. His mother would also arise, and learn Ramban, Midrash and Malbim on the Parsha (Michtav Meliyahu, 1, p. 25).

¹⁰ In 1995, R' Yaakov Bender was traveling to his nephew's aufruf which was being held in Stamford, Connecticut. Although he left early on Friday, he wasn't able to arrive in Stamford before Shabbos, due to a massive snowstorm. In fact, of the twelve cars that left Lakewood to attend the aufruf, only four made it in time for Shabbos. With minutes before

Shabbos has the ability to bring us close to Hashem as it says ¹¹ואני קרבת אליהם לי טוב¹¹, as קרבת, closeness, shares the same Gematria as שבת, 702. How does one feel the light of Shabbos? The Lechivitzer¹² remarks on *levu alai... va'ani pore'a*¹³ (“borrow the funds needed for Shabbos and I, Hashem, will repay your loans”), that לוו can mean connect as in ילדה אישי, my husband will become attached.¹⁴ So, connect with Hashem and then ואני פורע, He will show you the light, as פורע can mean to reveal as in כי פרע, it was exposed.¹⁵

Constructive Construction

With all the construction taking place in the Holy Land, some may find it to be a nuisance as it causes the streets to be more congested, the loud noise from the construction which begins at an early hour, areas are more crowded as more people move in and so on. How do great people view it?

R' Yosef Chaim Zonnenfeld rejoiced in seeing the construction and expansion of Yerushalayim. During the last summer of his life in 1932, when he was already very weak and could no longer travel by foot, he would often take taxis to visit Yerushalayim's new neighborhoods. As he passed through the new sections of the city his face would radiate joy and he would murmur *bonei Yerushalayim Hashem*, Hashem is the builder of Yerushalayim.¹⁶

R' Yosef Chaim saw the rebuilding of Yerushalayim, even new buildings built and inhabited by non-Jews as a preparation for the redemption. On a walk through the neighborhoods of Talabia and Katamon, he couldn't conceal his excitement over one of the large newly constructed buildings. Someone accompanying him remarked that the excitement was out of place since the building belonged to non-Jews. R' Yosef Chaim responded, “What's the difference? Their ancestors destroyed the land. Are they not required to assist in its rebuilding? Don't worry, all these beautiful and palatial buildings will one day be ours.” Waving his hand over the panorama of the ever-expanding new city, R' Yosef Chaim exclaimed with fervent joy: “I remember when this entire area was the desolate home of wilderness creatures. Now I have merited to see all this built and flourishing!”

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Rabbi Alt merited to learn under the tutelage of R' Mordechai Friedlander ztz"l for close to five years. He received semicha from R' Zalman Nechemia Goldberg ztz"l. Rabbi Alt has written on numerous topics for various websites and publications and is the author of three books including the recently released *Extraordinary Insights*, in addition to being the host of *The Fascinating Insights Podcast*. His writings, some 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. He lives with his wife and family in Kiryat Yearim (where the Aron was for 20 years [Shmuel 1, 7:1,2]) where he studies, writes and teaches. The author is passionate about teaching Jews of all levels of observance.

Shabbos, R' Bender exited the highway and eventually knocked on some random person's door. Although he explained to the Spanish woman who answered the door what Shabbos was, she couldn't comprehend it. It was after sunset when he mentioned that they have luggage in the car, hoping that she would bring it in since he couldn't tell a non-Jew directly to do *melacha* for him on Shabbos. She was happy to be of help and she said, “Sure you can bring your luggage in!” He explained to her it's Shabbos and he is unable to bring in the suitcases. Then he asked for the bathroom so that everyone can get dressed for Shabbos. He saw the light was off so he asked her about it. She told him where the light was, but he explained it was Shabbos and therefore can't turn on the light. Then she placed toilet paper in the bathroom and he explained that tissues are preferable because on Shabbos we can't rip. After getting dressed for Shabbos, they asked her for directions on how to walk to Stamford. She gave them a pen and paper to start writing the directions until R' Bender explained it is Shabbos and he is not allowed to write. Situations like this arose many more times during that brief stay in the Spanish woman's house and he explained each time that it's Shabbos and he is therefore restricted. In the end, they walked 1½ hours until they eventually arrived at the *aufruf*—soaked and soiled. When R' Bender recalls that Shabbos, he says, “What an unbelievable, powerful Shabbos! I never sacrificed so much for Shabbos!”

¹¹ Tehillim 73:28.

¹² *Toras Avos*, Drachim in Avodas Hashem.

¹³ Beitza 15b.

In a letter R' Yisroel Reisman penned in August, 2019 after arriving in Israel in the summer for a few weeks, he wrote, “We describe Yerushalayim as *yefei nof*, the beautiful kallah. Well, the kallah is more beautiful than ever. I arrived here with great anticipation and was not disappointed. The Yichud room was special. Yerushalayim embraced me and assured me direct reception in my Torah learning and a direct line for my tefillos. The reception here is extraordinary. Direct. I stood on Har Hazeisim and looked towards Yerushalayim. I have a new understanding of a prophecy of Zecharia. As you may know, from Har Hazeisim, we can clearly see the Har Habayis and the Domes of Shame. But I saw much more. As far as the eye could see, to the left and to the right, North and South, there is a panorama of new homes and yeshivas. The eye can also see for miles eastward, beyond the Old City. For a moment, I felt like Moshe Rabbeinu, feeling the joy of gazing into the Land from the top of the mountain. I saw thousands, perhaps ten thousand buildings and apartments in one exciting moment. Arab East Jerusalem is dwarfed by a tidal wave of our new elegant, tall and holy buildings. **The long-exiled children of Yerushalayim are coming back.** When I was born, the mountains that neighbor Yerushalayim were empty. *Shualim halchu bah*.¹⁷ **Sixty years ago, there were only scattered neighborhoods, with small buildings. And now! There are more Jews within my vision, today, than there were in all of Israel, a century ago.** Far more. I swelled with pride as I looked around me, again and again. I could barely contain myself. And I've been reviewing the image in my mind's eye ever since. That's only me. Imagine the joy that the kallah is feeling. No wonder she opens her heart to all who want to feel her. And now I get it. Zecharia has a prophecy of the days of Moshiach. In a powerful prophecy, he speaks of Har Hazeisim splitting in half. Why? It was never clear. But now it is. When I was born, Har Hazeisim's view—what the mountain saw all day, all year—was primarily a view of the two unfortunate mosques. Little else. It was that way for centuries. Today, the Mountain rejoices in its unique view of the return. The Mountain too swells with pride. **Every week, a new building! Cranes that reach higher and higher heavenward!** The pride of Har Hazeisim. In a moment of joy, the mountain will strain in all directions. And it will split to provide a direct path to the Har Habayis. The joy is there, already. It is a mystery that it doesn't split right now.”

¹⁴ Breishis 29:34.

¹⁵ Shemos 32:25. The Pasuk זכור את יום השבת לקדשו, remember the Shabbos day to sanctify it (Shemos 20:8) can be understood in conjunction with the actions of Shamai. If Shamai came across a superior animal anytime during the week he would say this should be put aside for Shabbos. If he later came across a better animal, he would designate this one instead for Shabbos (Beitza 16a, see Mishna Brura 250:2). So, לקדשו is a contraction of ליקדשו, to sanctify Shabbos with the 6 days of the week, as 6 has a Gematria of 6.

¹⁶ Tehillim 147:2. In a letter dated the first of Elul in 1903, R' Yosef Chaim Zonnenfeld wrote to his brother, R' Shmuel, a community leader in Ostrah, Moravia: “In the 31 years since my arrival more changes have taken place than in the previous thousand years combined. More than one thousand Jewish houses have been built here. The Holy City itself has expanded and buildings have been built in Yerushalayim more beautiful than we ever hoped for. Railway construction is progressing further; new settlements are springing up; areas ruled by desolation and emptiness for countless generations have now clothed themselves in life and growth. Everywhere, there are lush gardens and blossoming orchards. Is it possible not to see the hand of Divine Providence in all this? We must labor in the resettlement of the land with trust in Hashem Who gave us His Holy Torah. Surely, if we are faithful to the Torah we will merit to live here securely and we will always find mercy, kindness and grace...”

¹⁷ See Makos 24b.