



TOWARDS MEANINGFUL SHABBOS

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Kabbalat Shabbat

Though interrupted frequently in the last few months between summer break, Chagim, and then the war, we will hopefully now get back on track to a more consistent column, in which we will continue to focus on our Shabbat experience and how to make it more meaningful. May our efforts to improve our connection with Shabbat be a zchut to bring home the hundreds of men, women, and children who were tragically taken hostage on Shabbat. In addition, thousands of our dedicated Chayalim have been unable to celebrate Shabbat properly over the past few weeks (though many have managed to hold beautiful makeshift pre-Kabbalat Shabbat services in Gaza)— May our increased connection to Shabbat be a merit for them as well.

In my last article, we discussed a specific experience I had davening Kabbalat Shabbat a few weeks ago in the wake of the war, but in truth, the Tefilla of Kabbalat Shabbat is always very special. There is a unique quality to this Tefilla, different than the rest of the Tefillot, which seems to pull at our Neshamot. The Kabbalists explain that this is because we receive a special Neshama as we enter into the Shabbos. The **Ari** says that sparks of additional Kedusha enter into the world from the moment that mincha is recited. This time period is a time which is an עת רצון, an

auspicious time for תיקון, for improvement of ourselves and the world around us.

Kabbalat Shabbat is the Tefilla in which we go out to greet the Shabbat. We are so excited that Shabbat is coming that we go the extra step and go out to meet Shabbat and escort her in. This concept is already mentioned in the Gemara (Shabbat 119a), which explains that Rabbi Chanina would wrap himself in a garment and say בואו ונצא לקראת שבת המלכה - let's go out and greet the Shabbat Queen. Rabbi Yannai would put on his Shabbat clothing and say בואי כלה בואי כלה - Enter Bride, enter Bride.

The **Piskei Teshuvot** explains that in the 16th century, the students of the Arizal in Tzfat took this concept found in the Gemara and expanded on it by going out to the fields and singing a set formula that they had created to be recited at the onset of Shabbat. This formula, which has spread almost universally among the various communities across the world, includes reciting six specific chapters of Tehillim followed by "Lecha Dodi", and then concluding with two more chapters of Tehillim.

The **Ishei Yisrael** says that the first six chapters of Tehillim that we recite correspond to the six days of creation, which end with the onset of Shabbat symbolized by Lecha Dodi. These chapters describe what it will be like when

Mazal Tov to

Rabbi Yaakov & Sheila Iskowicz and family
on the birth of a **granddaughter**

there is universal recognition of Hashem's kingdom in this world. This is the ultimate goal that we are looking forward to when we reach the שבת שכולו, the day which is an Eternal Shabbat, the coming of the Mashiach. Throughout the six days of the week and throughout the years preceding the ultimate Geula, we work towards achieving this goal. Every Shabbat, we experience a taste of this vision. If we tap into it, we can experience a watered-down version of Hashem's clear rulership over the world. But this is just a glimpse of what is to come, a time when everyone in the entire world will recognize Hashem's complete sovereignty with total clarity.

Let's look briefly at these first six chapters of Tehillim:

Mizmor 95 לכו נרננה לה -

We begin by calling out to Am Yisrael to join together to praise Hashem for all aspects of creation – והוא עשהו, ובשת די – He created everything including the entire land and sea. We are in awe of the fact that we have the zchut to be His nation (אנחנו) (אם as long as we follow His will עם מרעיתו) (בקולו תשמעו). We remind ourselves at the end of this mizmor that we messed this up for ourselves at one point in history – אשר נשבעתי – Hashem swore that He would not let us enter into Eretz Yisrael after we committed the sin of the Meraglim. In theory, this is a very sad statement and it always bothered me that we sing in such an upbeat way but I think the point is that this was only temporary. We messed up big time but yet eventually Hashem took us back and brought us into Eretz Yisrael once we were deserving again. The point being that this relationship is in our hands – if we want to be Hashem's nation, we can be, as long as we

make the right choices.

שירו לה' שיר חדש. שירו לה' כל הארץ - Mizmor 96

We now call on the entire world to recognize Hashem's greatness – הרבו לה' משפחות עמים, we are waiting for that time when Hashem's sovereignty will be accepted universally.

ה' מלך תגל הארץ - Mizmor 97

Once it becomes crystal clear that Hashem runs the world, the Tzadikim will be rewarded for their faith (שמחו צדיקים) (ברה) and the Reshaim will be so embarrassed that they ever denied His existence. (יבושו כל עבדי פסל).

מזמור שירו לה' שיר חדש - Mizmor 98

This chapter is parallel to Mizmor 96 with many of the same words and phrases. The difference is that here we see a world in which we can simultaneously have the world recognizing Hashem (לעניי הגוים גלה צדקות) but at the same time, see clearly that Bnei Yisrael is in a different realm and we are His chosen people (זכר חסדו ואמונתו לבית ישראל).

ה' מלך ירגזו עמים - Mizmor 99

Here we talk about the ability for us to connect and interact with Hashem once we recognize Him in his entirety. והוא יענם, קוראים אל ה', והוא יענם.

מזמור לדוד הבו לה' בני אלים - Mizmor 29

Once we've recognized Hashem both as the Jewish nation and as the world as a whole and we are able to connect to Him, we now see Hashem in every aspect of nature. Everything is suddenly viewed through the prism of the voice of Hashem.

קול ה' על המים... קול ה' שובר ארזים... קול ה' חוצב להבות אש.... קול ה' יחיל מדבר -

Hashem's voice is found in the water, the trees, in fire, in the desert. Every force of nature joins together, כבוד, כולו אומר - they all proclaim His glory and יושב ה' מלך - Hashem is crowned King forever. לעולם

To conclude, as Rabbi Eliyahu Munk writes beautifully in his Sefer **Olam HaTefillot** - *With this prophetic and uplifting look into the future, we now prepare to usher in the Shabbat with joy. These six chapters of Tehillim should serve, at the threshold of Shabbat, to inspire us with the exaltation and imbue us with the serenity and peace of mind that our Rabbis refer to as the Neshama Yeteira.* ■



Be'er Tziporah a"h - Bottled Water Gemach



Walking down King George St. in Jerusalem and want a cold bottle of water?
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In loving memory of Yoni's wife
Tziporah a"h, a true Eishes Chayil, always full of chessed, kindness and laughter, and brought life and strength to so many people, that she touched! She was like Aron, who loved peace and pursued peace.

Yoni thanks Hashem for having the opportunity of having Tziporah in his life, to learn of her caring, patience and happiness, to overcome her challenges. May Tziporah's Neshama be a light onto the world, in a time of darkness, and may her Neshama shine to Gan Eden. Yoni misses Tziporah with tears in his eyes, as Hashem gave him a gift, a crown jewel, now he returns her to Hashem.

With thanks and Toda. Love, Yoni

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