**Shabbos Beraishis – וביום השביעי שבת וינפש**

**Shabbos is Coming!**

We love Shabbos. Why? We could get a whole range of answers on that question. Recharge, refresh, reflect or regain perspective. Any or all the above. For many, it’s a day that we can’t wait till it will come. For some, however, it is a day that they cannot wait till it will be over. It is so sad, that for many of our brothers and sisters, Shabbos is so misunderstood. To them, it is an onerous burden. The seemingly restrictive nature of Shabbos, discourages many of our brethren from committing to full Shmiras Torah and Mitzvos. If only they could experience the Shabbos transformation that offers every Yid a chance to be carried to a different, more beautiful and delightful place, every week.

The epic Avodah of the Cohein Gadol, detailed in Mussaf of Yom Kippur, is a highlight of the Yom HaKadosh. The heartfelt poetry of the פיוט, recalls, in magnificent detail, the glorious era of Avodas Bais HaMikdash. The illustrious Rav J. B., Yoseif Ber, Soloveitchik, zt”l, recalled his childhood years, standing next to his father, R’ Moshe Soloveitchik, zt”l and even his sainted grandfather, HaGaon R’ Chaim, on Yom Kippur. He observed with awe, how they seemed to be transported back to the actual Avodah. They were enraptured and enthralled. Truly, he could sense how, to them, אמת מה נהדר היה כהן גדול. Then, continuing the Piyutim describing how all of that became lost in the dark desolation of the Churban, they were, wistfully, forced back to face the sad state of our Galus.

The Rav recalled a similar phenomenon back then, when, in the gathering darkness of Motzei Shabbos, he wandered into a local Shtiebel. The “Oilam” sat in the shadows, singing longingly, the songs of Shabbos. Nobody was in a rush to go back to the harsh reality of the workaday world. One older fellow, dressed in a worn and frayed “Kapota”, approached the young boy. Don’t you know me, he asked. It’s me, Yankeleh Tregger, Yankeleh the Porter. Yes, it really was Yankeleh. Yet, it wasn’t Yankeleh. The careworn lines in his face were replaced with a serene and relaxed smile. He walked straight, with an easy gait, instead of his familiar, stooped shuffle. Was that really Yankeleh Tregger? He looked more like a nobleman or country squire. Thinking back to that moment, Rav Soloveitchik realized that these Yidden were not just enjoying the soul-stirring melodies. No. They were reveling in the sweetness of Shabbos. They lived for Shabbos. To them, the Rav understood, the six days of work, were a burdensome interference. When will it already be Shabbos again? Why is Shabbos over so quickly? They, like his father and grandfather, during Avodas Yom Kippur, were briefly elevated to another, more beautiful world. And then it was over. Back to the sad realities of the day-to-day. Those Yidden couldn’t wait for Shabbos to come. Nowadays, said the Rav, people can’t wait for Shabbos to end. Instead of lingering in the deliciousness of Shabbos, they run out the door with a “Goodbye, I’ll see you next week”.

We should cherish Shabbos. We should look forward to the opportunity for the slower pace of the Teffilos, the blessing of family and friends gathering together to enjoy Shabbos meals, filled with song, far away from burdens and concerns. For now, though, Shabbos is the vehicle through which we can continue and maintain the spiritual cleansing and upliftment of the Yomim Noraim and Zman Simchaseinu. Whatever inspiration and boost we gained from that experience, is not meant to simply disappear into some storage space, along with the Sukka decorations or Machzorim. Those hours and days of Avodah and Simcha shel Mitzvah, can provide a whole year of closeness with Hashem. Shabbos Kodesh is the best storage space for that inspiration. Mizmor Shir L’Yom HaShabbos. You, I and the whole world are waiting to sing the song of Shabbos. Let’s start with this Shabbos Beraishis, the Shabbos of new beginnings.

Have a wonderful Shabbos and a Gut Gebentshed Yur, yk

**L’Ravcha d’Milsa Weekly Almanac**

**Isru Chag Succos – 24 Tishrei**

**Ribnitzer Rebbe zt’l, R’ Chaim Zanvil Abramowitz** (1995)

The Ribnitzer Rebbe zt’l, was known in his lifetime as a great tzadik and a miracle worker. Thousands of people worldwide, flocked to the Rebbe for blessings. The Rebbe’s genuineness was of a uniqueness that was unmatched. Someone who was close to the Rebbe asked him if he should change his nusach from nusach ashkenaz to nusach sefard. The Ribnitzer pushed him off. He persisted, “But Rebbe, I want to daven the same nusach that the Rebbe does!” The Rebbe responded, “I daven from a nusach?!?” He klapped on his chest and said, “I daven from here. I don’t know about any nusach..”

The Rebbe’s Tzidkus was unparalled as well. While in Russia under the communists the Rebbe wanted to make sure that the Jewish women would eat food that was properly shechted. He gave them a unique offer. If they would bring their chickens to him to shecht, he would take off the feathers for them and clean their chickens too. This was unprecedented. He did so out of a deep and profound love of Klal Yisroel.

All were convinced, beyond a shadow of a doubt, of the efficacy of the Rebbe’s tefilos, when they witnessed and experienced miracles in all aspects of life, from health problem to resolutions of financial issues. Since his passing, his graveside has become one of the most visited gravesites in New York with literally thousands of people coming to pray and pour out their hearts, davening for Heavenly mercy in the merit of this Holy Tzadik. There are endless stories of those whose prayers have been answered and many people can attest to the remarkable developments that they witnessed after davening at the Rebbe’s tzion. It seems that at any time of day or night, there are always people praying at the Rebbe’s kever.

Rabbi Dovid Sitnik, the menahel of Yeshiva Siach Yitzchok in Far Rockaway once asked the Rebbe of the significance of the words, “Bereishis Barah.” He answered, “The first thing is that a person has to be healthy.” Rav Sitnik asked, “What does being healthy mean?” The Rebbe answered, “What does it mean? To have Hashem send you moichin – Chochma and Bina.” Rav Sitnik persisted, “How does a person become healthy?” The Rebbe’s answered personified his very essence, “By doing for other people, by doing for other people.”

The Rebbe was born in Botsani, Romania, but the actual year of the Rebbe’s birth remains in question. Some list the Rebbe’s year of birth as 1902, but others, including singer Mordechai Ben David, who was a close follower of the Rebbe and his gabbai, maintain that the Rebbe was born in 1893, making him 102 at the time of his petira.

Orphaned at the tender age of three, the Rebbe was raised by Reb Avraham Matisyahu of Shtefaesht, who was known as a great miracle worker and was a grandson of the famous R’ Yisroel of Rushin, zt’l. The Ribnitzer spent much of his life living in Russia under Communist rule. There, under the most difficult circumstances imaginable, he practiced Yiddishkeit to its fullest. He served Klal Yisroel as a mohel, shochet and chazzan for many years. The Rebbe was jailed, interrogated and even placed in front of a firing squad for his actions. However, somehow, someway, he always managed to miraculously escape and continued living as a Torah Jew in the USSR.

The Ribnitzer was extremely meticulous in maintaining his spiritual purity by immersing in a mikvah a minimum of twice a day, and often more than that. Back in Russia, where the only option for a mikvah was the frozen river water near his home, the Rebbe would cut a hole through the thick ice and immerse himself in the frozen water to fulfill his minhag and obtain that lofty level of purity and holiness.

It is said that when the Rebbe lived in Russia, he would arrive home from tevila with his entire body encased in ice. A long-time companion who once accompanied the Rebbe to the river recalls that on one particular occasion it was so cold that the water froze over the Rebbe’s head as he toveled himself in the frigid waters. Terrified, his companion tried cracking the ice and after a long time, the Rebbe emerged calmly from the water. Asked how he managed to get through the ice, the Rebbe simply replied, “I davened.”

The Rebbe was known in Russia as a “Gutte Yid”, someone whose brachos always seemed to come true and whose tefilos were always answered. Even the non-Jews in Russia had great respect for the Ribnitzer. It is said that even members of the KGB were known to have brought their wives and children to the Rebbe to receive his blessings. Stories of the Ribnitzer’s miracles in Russia abound including the time that the Rebbe’s tefilos brought Eliyahu HaNavi dressed as a Nazi General, ordering a group of Nazi soldiers to leave the Rebbe’s town. Another time at a Bris, a child was bleeding uncontrollably. The Rebbe miraculously stopped the bleeding with his tallis.

The Rebbe is known to have fasted every day that is halachically permitted to do so from the 1930’s on. He was the last of the great Rebbes to remain in Russian up until the early 1970’s. It was then that he emigrated to Eretz Yisroel where he spent one year living in Yerushalayim. From there the Ribnitzer Rebbe moved to America, living first in Boro Park, then in Los Angeles and Seagate, finally settling in Monsey.

While the Rebbe, who always avoided any type of fanfare, hoped to be able to maintain a low profile in America, his reputation preceded him. People came from far and wide to seek his guidance and his brachos. Despite the numerous hours spent with those who came for advice and more, the Ribnitzer spent endless hours immersed in learning and in his Tikun Chatzos, with sackcloth and ashes. This special Tefila of his was known to last from six to seven hours each night, if not longer. The Rebbe cried so much during Tikun Chatzos that by the time he was finished, the ashes mingled with his tears and he would be sitting in mud. The Ribnitzer Rebbe often spent his entire day immersed in tefila and, more times than can be listed, had to remove his tefillin late on Friday afternoon because Shabbos was coming.

He often did not recite Havdala until close to dawn on Sunday morning. There were those who said of the Ribnitzer that he was on such a high level that he was simply not of this generation. It was almost as if he was one of the talmidim of the Baal Shem Tov, zt’l.

While the Ribnitzer was not blessed with any children of his own, the hundreds of “Chaim Zanvil”s who carry his name today are incontrovertible proof of the tremendous impact he had upon Klal Yisroel. All those who knew the Ribnitzer Rebbe felt as if they were his own children. Thousands make an effort to remember the Rebbe on his yahrtzeit, both at his kever and at a special Seudah held in his honor, generally the first communal event held after the Yomim Noraim. May the zechus of this great tzaddik and his legacy of purity and righteousness continue to inspire us to rise to greater heights in Avodas Hashem, in learning Torah, and in being Gomel Chesed for others - each and every day of our lives. (Rabbi Yair Hoffman)

**Shabbos Beraishis, Shabbos Mevorchim -27 Tishrei**

**Rabbeinu Yitzchak Hazaken bar Shmuel (the Ri Hazaken),** of the Baalei Tosfos (1120-1200). The Ri’s maternal grandfather was Rashi’s son-in-law, Rav Meir ben Shmuel. He was thus a nephew and a disciple of Rabbeinu Tam and the Rashbam (both sons of Rav Meir ben Shmuel). He was also a grandson of one of Rashi's leading students, Rav Simcha of Vitry (author of Machzor Vitry). The Ri directed the yeshiva at Ramerupt after Rabbeinu Tam moved to Troyes. Thereafter, he founded the yeshiva at Dampierre. The Ri Hazaken succeeded Rabbenu Tam as head of the academy in Ramerupt, France. Among Rav Yitzchak's students were Rav Shimshon of Sens (who edited many of our Tosefos, wrote important works in his own right, and led 300 families to settle in Eretz Yisrael in 1211), Rav Yitzchak ben Avraham ("Ritzba"), and Rav Baruch, author of Sefer Haterumos. The Ri also was a kabbalist who lived an ascetic life and observed two days of Yom Kippur (presumably for the same reason that Jews in the diaspora observe two days of other holidays). Ri had at least two sons, both of whom died in his lifetime: Rabbenu Elchanan and Rabbenu Shlomo.

Motzei Shabbos Beraishis - Eretz Yisroel moves back to Standard Time

Monday, Parshas Noach- 29 Tishrei

**Shimon Hatzadik** of the Anshei Knesset Hagedola, ending the era of Neviim and ushering in the Tekufah of The Tannaim, 313 BCE.

Wednesday, Parshas Noach **– 1 Cheshvan**

**Rav Yisrael S(ha)pira, the Bluzhover Rebbe** (1989). A grandson of the Bnei Yissoschar, Rav Tzvi Elimelech of Dinov. One of the most venerated Rabbonim of post-war generation. His war-time stories of survival and Yiras Shomayim are epic.

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*A gut gebenshted yur, yisroel kleinman*