

English

בסייעתא דשמיא

Zera Shimshon

Profound Divrei Torah culled from the writings of the Gaon and Mekubal Rav Shimshon Chaim ben Rav Nachman Michael Nachmeni zy"l, author of Sefer Zera Shimshon on Chumash and Toldos Shimshon on Pirkei Avos, who promised that all who study his words will be blessed with an abundance of good, wealth and honor, and will merit to see children and grandchildren thriving around their table.



תשפ"ז Vayeira

• Zera Shimshon - the Limud that brings Yeshuos •

עין 417

אמרות שמשון

Why the men of Sodom were punished with blindness, and why the salt of Sodom blinds the eyes

"They struck the men who were at the entrance of the house with blindness, both small and great, so that they wearied themselves trying to find the door."

(Bereshit 19:11)

We can explain why they were punished specifically with blindness: the principal sin of the people of Sodom was their evil eye — their envy and covetousness for the property of others, as explained in the *Midrashim*. Therefore, measure for measure, they were punished in the eye and became blind.

We may add another explanation. In the Talmud (*Eruvin* 17a) it is taught that the salt of Sodom blinds the eyes. This can be understood in light of what the *Midrash* says (cited in *Levush, Orach Chaim* 167): "When there is salt upon the table, the table becomes an altar of atonement, and the salt protects from misfortune."

But Lot's wife refused to bring salt to the table for the guests, as the *Midrash* (*Bereshit Rabbah* 50:4) recounts.

Therefore, since there was no salt upon their table, they lost the protection and atonement that salt on the table provides, and misfortune befell them — the plague of blindness — precisely the very affliction against which salt was meant to protect. For this reason, from that time onward, it was established that the salt of Sodom blinds the eyes and causes blindness.

(Zera Shimshon, Parashat Vayeira, art. 15)

The double expression "bless, i shall surely bless you" - indicating that even one who performs a mitzvah unintentionally receives reward

"Bless, I shall surely bless you and multiply, I shall surely multiply your offspring, like the stars of the heavens and like the sand that is upon the seashore; and your offspring shall inherit the gate of their enemies." (*Bereshit* 22:17)

We must understand the double expression in the verse,

"barekh avarekhekha" (בָּרַךְ אֲבָרְכְּךָ) — "Bless, I shall surely bless you."

This may be explained in light of the Talmud (*Makkot* 12a) concerning the verse, "If he shall go out, the murderer shall at all go out..." (*Shemot* 35:26). From here it is derived that a person who has killed unintentionally and leaves his city of refuge deliberately becomes liable to death at the hands of the blood-avenger (*go'el hadam*), who incurs no guilt in killing him. But how do we know that even if the unintentional murderer left his city of refuge inadvertently the same law applies? The repetition of the phrase "[if] the murderer shall at all go out" teaches that whether he went out deliberately (*bemездid*) or inadvertently (*beshogeg*), his death at the hand of the *go'el hadam* is unavenged — "his blood shall be upon his own head."

So too here: HaKadosh Baruch Hu wished to promise that not only one who performs a *mitzvah* with full intent (*bemездid*) receives blessing, but even one who performs it without intention (*beshogeg*), or by chance, is likewise granted great reward.

As the *Midrash* teaches (*Yalkut Shimoni, Vayikra, remez* 479):

"Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah said: 'It is written (*Devarim* 24:19):

"When you reap your harvest in your field and forget a

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sheaf in the field, do not go back to take it; it shall be for the stranger, the orphan, and the widow, so that Hashem your G-d may bless you in all the work of your hands". The verse assigns blessing even to one who performs a *mitzvah* unwittingly — as in the case of one who forgot a sheaf in the field'."

"Likewise," continues the Midrash, "if a person had a coin tied in his cloak and it fell without his knowing, and a poor man found it and sustained himself with it — the Torah grants him blessing, as if he had forgotten a sheaf in the field."

(Zera Shimshon, Parashat Vayeira, art. 24)

גבורת שמשון סיפורי ילופה

Rabbeinu Settled the Debt... in More Than One Sense

Rabbi Shmuel Weinberger of Bnei Brak, Israel, relates:

With the help of Heaven, I have the privilege of studying the **Zera Shimshon** on a regular basis. In addition, I try to give other Jews the opportunity to share in the merit of studying its teachings. After concluding my regular class on the **Or HaChaim**, I devote another ten minutes to publicly studying the **Zera Shimshon**, a *sefer* renowned for its special spiritual merit.

Although I had heard about the greatness of the author's promise and the extraordinary salvations associated with the study of this *sefer*, that was not my primary motivation. I simply wanted to bring satisfaction to the author of the **Zera Shimshon** in Heaven, just as he himself requested in the introduction to his work.

This is what I did for several years.

Recently—**baruch Hashem**—my family grew, and we found ourselves needing to enlarge our apartment. For some time I was occupied with obtaining the necessary building permits, and as soon as I received the long-awaited approval, I began requesting estimates from several contractors.

However, although I had believed until then that the expansion project was within my reach, I soon realized that I simply could not afford such an enormous expense. The money just wasn't there.

For several days I walked around discouraged and deeply worried, thinking to myself:

"There is no way I can afford such a tremendous expense, yet at the same time I cannot continue living in such a

cramped apartment. If I do one, I'm in trouble; and if I do the other, I'm also in trouble."

Then, one Thursday night, as I was on my way to the class in which I customarily also studied the **Zera Shimshon**, I thought to myself:

"But I have the promise of the tzaddik, the author of the **Zera Shimshon**! Surely I am worthy of seeing it fulfilled. Never before have I asked for anything in the merit of studying his *sefer*. But now I desperately need the 'check' he gave us to be honored: 'houses filled with every good thing.' I have no idea how it will happen, but what he wrote cannot be disputed."

With sincere and simple faith in his promise, I delivered that class while offering heartfelt prayers to Hakadosh Baruch Hu, asking to merit witnessing Hashem's salvation very soon.

Had I not experienced it myself, I would never have believed it. But reality is stronger than any doubt.

The following week I received a phone call from a Jew who had owed me a very large sum of money for many years. Long ago I had given up all hope of ever recovering it, and I had virtually forgotten that the debt even existed.

With great joy, he told me:

"Baruch Hashem! I am now able to repay everything I owe you, and within the next few days you will see the full amount of the debt deposited into your bank account."

Rabbeinu, the **Zera Shimshon**, settled the debt... in more than one sense.



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Translated and written by Rabbi Moshe Spira - yomospira@gmail.com

To receive the Seforim of the Zera Shimshon or for sponsorships and donations please contact:

USA - Rabbi Menachem Binyomin Paskesz 347-496-5657 mbpaskesz@gmail.com
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