

# 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.



Shavuot תשפ"ו

• Zera Shimshon - the Limud that brings Yeshuos •

ג'יין 394

## אמרות שמשון

### Shavuot - matan torah

#### Why The Jewish People Received the Torah Only Three Months After Leaving Egypt

בחדש השלישי לצאת בני ישראל מארץ מצרים ביום הזה באו מִדְּבַר סִינַי. (שמות יט, א)

*In the third month from the Exodus of the Children of Israel from Egypt, on this day, they arrived at the Wilderness of Sinai.*

The Midrash (ילקוט שמות רמז ע"ב) discusses the reason why the Jewish People received the Torah specifically in the third month of their exodus from Egypt. *Why was the Torah given in the third month from the exodus, and not in the second or fourth, or any other month?* R' Hoshaya said, R' Chiya the Great taught me as follows: *A convert, a redeemed captive, and a freed slave, may not get married to a Jewish man until three months have passed since her conversion, redemption and release. The Jewish Nation is referred to as converts, as the Passuk states, כִּי גֵרִים הֵייתֶם - 'for you were converts'; and as captives, as the Passuk states, וְהָיוּ שָׂבִים לְשִׁבְיָהֶם, when the Jewish People will be redeemed from their ultimate exile they will 'be captors over their captors'; and as freed slaves, as the Passuk states, אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מֵהֵיטֵב לָהֶם עֲבָדִים, I am Hashem Who took you out of the land of Egypt from being their slaves. Therefore, Hashem - as the groom - also said, "I shall wait three months and only then shall I give the Torah to My Jewish People".*

The question that the Midrash poses, as well as the form in which it was presented, seems quite difficult to understand. Firstly, it seems that what prompted the Midrash to ask the question was the fact that the Torah was specifically given in the third month; this is hard to understand, for had the Torah been given in any other month, the same question could have been asked, 'why was the Torah given in that month'? Secondly, if all that bothered the Midrash was the fact that the Torah was given specifically in the third month, then why was there a need for the Midrash to explicitly enumerate the second and third month when asking

the question, 'Why was the Torah given in the third month from the exodus, and not in the second or fourth month'; it would have sufficed to simply ask, 'Why was the Torah given in the third month'. And lastly, after enumerating the second and fourth month, the Midrash goes on to ask about all the months in general, 'Why was the Torah given in the third month from the exodus, and not in the second or fourth, or any other month'. If the intended question of the Midrash was indeed to merely ask one general question, 'Why was the Torah given in the third month and not in any other month', then why was there a need to initially mention exclusively the second and fourth month, and only afterwards ask about all the other months of the year; it could have just asked to begin with, 'Why was the Torah given in the third month from the exodus, and not in any other month'.



There are commentaries who ask the same question as the Midrash; if Hashem's intention in redeeming the Jewish People was in order to give them the Torah, then why didn't He give it to them immediately after they left Egypt? Why did Hashem wait until the third month to give them the Torah?

The commentaries explain that Hashem wanted the Jewish People to be purified of all their impurities before receiving the Torah. Because a person is made up of four physical elements - earth, water, air and fire - they would need to purify these four elements before being able to receive the Torah. Therefore, Hashem waited three months before giving them the Torah, so as to refine their first three elements during these three months, and then, while actually giving them the Torah, Hashem revealed Himself in all His Glory in a fiery revelation, so as to refine their fourth element of fire.



We can explain that when the Midrash asked, 'Why was the Torah given in the third month from the exodus, and not in the second or fourth, or any other month', this question was actually in reference to the very explanation that the commentaries offer about why the giving of the Torah was delayed until the third month.

When the Midrash asked, 'Why wasn't the Torah given in the second month', the intended question was as follows. Because we know that the manna that the Jewish People ate in the desert was a most spiritual bread and angelic substance, it is therefore obvious that the Jews would not be able to eat this most spiritual substance so long that their physical



#### הוצאת הגליון והפצתו לזכות

##### להצלחה וברכה

##### מדדכי בן רחל

לישועה והצלחה בכל העניינים בריאות איתנה פרנסה בשפע מתוך מנוחת הגוף והנפש בלי שום הפרעות ורדיפות ושיתבשר בשורות טובות בקרוב ממש

##### לעילוי נשמת

האשה החשובה מרת ברכה איידל רחל בת הרב חיים יעקב ישראל זילברברג ע"ה נלב"ע י"ט שני שלח השבועות ז' סיון תשס"ב ת.ג.ב.ה.

elements hadn't yet been entirely cleansed. Therefore, when the Jews started eating the manna in the second month, it would seem to be a clear indication that their physical elements had already been cleansed out at that time. Hence the Midrash asked; granted that Hashem delayed giving the Torah until after the cleansing of the People's elements, nevertheless there was no need to wait until the third month, for it's quite obvious that the cleansing had already occurred by the second month.

The Midrash then asked, 'Why wasn't the Torah given in the **fourth month**'. What the Midrash meant was as follows. If in fact the three-month delay was in order to cleanse their three elements, and the fourth element was cleansed by the most magnificent Heavenly revelation; then why indeed was it necessary for Hashem to reveal Himself in a supernatural exposure in order to cleanse the fourth element, when it could have been done just the same by delaying the Torah just one more month - until the fourth month - and there would have been no need for this once-in-history revelation.

And finally the Midrash asks, 'Why was the Torah given in the **third month from the exodus, and not in any other month?**' The Midrash is asking that if the point of the delay was in order to wait until the elements were cleansed, then the third month doesn't seem to be the opportune time to give the Torah, for it appears that their elements were still not completely cleansed at that time. The indication for this is due to the fact that so soon after receiving the Torah the Jewish People sinned severely with the Golden Calf.

The Midrash thus asks that if the reason for delaying the giving in the Torah was so that their elements should be cleansed prior to receiving the Torah, then the third month was not yet the right time either; rather it would have been appropriate to delay it until another month when they would indeed be cleansed.

## **Why the Women Deserved To Receive the Torah Before the Men**

**וּמִשָּׁה עֲלָה אֶל הָאֱלֹקִים וַיִּקְרָא אֵלָיו ה' מִן הַהָר לֵאמֹר כֹּה תֹאמַר  
לְבֵית יַעֲקֹב וְתִגִּיד לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל (שְׁמוֹת י"ט, ג):**

***So shall you say to the House of Yaakov, and relate to the Children of Yisroel.***

Rashi explains that this Passuk is coming to imply that Hashem was commanding Moshe to give over the Torah in the following order. He was first to give the Torah to **בית יעקב** - the 'House of Yaakov', which refers to the women, and only afterwards was he to give it over to **בני ישראל** - the 'Children of Yisroel', which is referring to the men.

The Yalkut Reuvaini (פ' בראשית) brings the following perplexing Midrash. כשעלה משה לרקיע, שמע להקב"ה דקא קרי חוה. אמר לו, רבון דעלמא האי חוה מאי היא. אמר לו, אם כל חי. רבון דעלמא אם כן תקראנה חיה. אמר לו, חוה במספר קטן אם חי. *When Moshe ascended to Heaven he heard Hashem calling out "Chavah". Moshe asked Him, "Master of the world, why "Chavah"?" Hashem replied, "Because she was the mother of all the living". Moshe went on to ask, "If so let her be called "Chayah"?" To which Hashem*

*replied, "Chavah has the numerical value of 'The mother of all the living'."*

This Midrash begs for an explanation. Firstly, why was Hashem calling out 'Chavah' when Moshe was ascending to heaven to acquire the Torah; what was the implication of that statement? Secondly, it seems from Hashem's reply, that when Moshe asked, "האי חוה מאי היא" he meant to ask why Adam called her by that name. It's hard to believe that Moshe didn't know the reason why Adam called her 'Chavah'; after all Hashem's reply is already clearly mentioned in the Torah; ויקרא האדם שם (בראשית ג' כ') - *The man called his wife's name Chavah, because she had become the mother of all the living.*

The Maharsha in Kesubos (ס"ד ע"א) says that when Adam called his wife 'Chavah', referring to her as 'the mother of all the living', he was actually alluding to her being the 'primary source of life for all the living'.

This is hard to understand, as the Gemara in Kiddushin (ל' ע"ב) clearly says, *There are three partners in the creation of a person, Hashem, his father and his mother;* accordingly, the mother is the source for only one third of the child's life, and if so how can Adam allude to her being the 'primary source for all the living'? We can explain Adam's reasoning as follows. The Gemara in Sanhedrin (י"ט ע"ב) says *הכותב עליו הכתוב - Whoever raises an orphan in his home is regarded as if he had fathered him.* Because the women are the ones who primarily raise the children, Adam was correct in considering the women as the 'primary source of all the living'.

In view of this, we can understand the Midrash. When Hashem was calling out "Chavah" as Moshe was approaching to receive the Torah, He was indicating to Moshe that the Torah was to be given over first to the women.

When Moshe heard this, he asked, "האי חוה מאי היא" as if to say, "Why do the women deserve to receive the Torah before the men?" Hashem replied, "אם כל חי", alluding to the Maharsha's explanation of what Adam had in mind when he called his wife 'Chavah'; that the women are **אם כל חי** - the 'primary source for all the living', since they are the ones who primarily raise the children. Hashem was indicating that not only are the women considered to be the 'primary source for their physical needs', but they are the 'primary source for their spiritual life', too. It is the women who primarily raise the children in the Torah way, bringing them up as righteous Jews, showing them the beauty of the Torah and teaching them to keep its laws. As such, they deserved to receive the Torah before the Men, for they are essentially the ones who pass on the Torah torch from one generation to another, maintaining the Jewish Nation.

Upon hearing this, Moshe asked "If so let her be called 'Chayah'?", with which he meant to ask that if the women were indeed so essential to the continuity of life, physically and spiritually, why not just call her 'Chaya', the name of 'Life' itself? To this Hashem answered that the name 'חוה', too, alludes to 'Life', in that its numerical value corresponds to 'אם כל חי' - the primary source for all the living.

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