

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"o, 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.



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## אמרות שמשון

### The Unique Benefit That the Jewish People Acquire by Studying the Torah

כי המצוה הזאת אשר אנכי מצוה היום לא נפלות הוא ממך ולא רחקה הוא (ל, יא):

For this commandment that I command you today, it is not hidden from you and it is not distant.

The Midrash (ח' ב) understands that 'this commandment' that the Torah is referring to, is the Mitzvah of learning Torah. Accordingly, the Midrash goes off topic to discuss the Blessing that one must recite before learning Torah and says as follows. The Sages tell us that Hashem told Israel, "If you recite a blessing before learning Torah, it is for your own benefit that you do so. And lest you say that perhaps it is to your disadvantage that I gave you the Torah, it isn't so, but rather I gave it to you only for your benefit, as even the Heavenly Angels yearned to receive the Torah.

It's difficult to understand what Hashem was implying when He said "If you recite a blessing before learning Torah it is for your own benefit that you do so", for what personal benefit does one gain by reciting a Blessing before learning Torah? Furthermore, what was Hashem suggesting when He said "And lest you say that perhaps it is to your disadvantage that I gave you the Torah"? Why would we entertain this thought, considering that we know that every Mitzvah with which Hashem commanded us is solely for our ultimate benefit; for Him to shower us with much reward in this world as well as in the world to come?

The primary benefit that one gains from learning Torah is clearly delineated in the Gemara Kiddushin (ע"ג) which relates to us Hashem's Own testimony regarding the Torah's unique properties. Hashem said to Israel: My children! I have created the evil inclination, and I have created the Torah as its antidote. If you involve yourselves in the Torah, you will not be delivered into its hand. Yet, nevertheless, only one who learns Torah in the proper manner acquires this great benefit of being protected from the evil inclination.

For the Gemara in Yuma (ע"ב) tells us regarding one who learns Torah, זכה נעשית, זכה נעשית לו סם מיתה - If one is deserving [i.e. he learns Torah for its own sake and not for ulterior motives], the Torah becomes a drug of life for him. But if one is not deserving, it becomes a drug of death to him. [The Torah's effect on the soul is comparable to a drug's effect on the body. A drug must be properly used to cure a person from sickness; otherwise, it can cause his condition to worsen. Similarly, the Torah requires the appropriate usage for its beneficial properties to be effective.]

Indeed, this very negative effect occurred to the Jewish People in the period before the Temple's untimely destruction. As the Gemara in Bava Metzia (פ"א) tells us; What caused the land to fall in ruin?... And Hashem said, "Because they have forsaken My Torah which I put before them"... This means that before they studied, they did not recite a blessing on the Torah. The commentaries explain this to mean as follows. When the Jews didn't make a Bracha before learning Torah, they were

clearly acknowledging that they derived no spiritual pleasure from learning Torah, for otherwise they would need to make a Blessing, as the Gemara in Brachos (מ"ח) says, From where do we derive that a blessing must be recited before

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הרב החסיד רבי מתייתרו ב"ר יצחק אהרן גולדוואג זצ"ל נלב"ע כ"ה אלול תשס"ט ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

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סלים בן חביבה ד"ר דליה בת גורגיה ע"ה ניצן בן אברהם ושרה ד"ר נתן יעקב בן ליוה ד"ר ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

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דניאל אורי בן רגינה מלכה שיחה לששית שפע ברכה והצלחה בכל העניינים ובשורות טובות בקרוב ממש

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#### שפע וברכה

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#### לזכות ולברכה

ההצלחה השותפים התורמים ומשפחותיהם החפצים בעילום שמים שיזכו לשפע ברכה והצלחה בני ברכי חיי אריכי ומנוחי רווחי חנות מכל יוצא זכות הממחר ין בעדם אכיר

#### ברכה והצלחה

רפאל בן סופיה וזוגתו נטלי בת אליסיה לברכה והצלחה בכל העניינים

learning Torah? R' Yishmael said, "It can be derived as follows; if on the sustenance of temporary life, one recites a Bracha, is it not certain that one does so on the sustenance of eternal life in the world to come?" Because the Jews did not derive any spiritual pleasure from learning Torah, it must be that they did not learn Torah with the correct appreciation and attitude. Consequently, not only did their flawed Torah study not have the power to protect them from sin, moreover, it also provoked and prodded their evil inclination to incite them, as the Gemara tells us that לא זכה נעשית לו סם מיתה - *If one is not deserving, then the Torah becomes a drug of death to him.* This incitement caused them to sin, which is what ultimately brought about the destruction of the Temple.



We can now comprehend why the Jews might say "Perhaps Hashem gave us the Torah for our disadvantage", for when one learns Torah with improper intentions, not only does he not get the Torah's benefits of being protected from the evil inclination, but he also gets the negative impact of the incitement of his evil inclination. To this Hashem replied, "It isn't so, for I gave the Torah to you only for your benefit, as even the Heavenly Angels yearned to receive the Torah". Hashem was alluding to the following idea. The Angels fundamentally do not have any evil inclination and thus have so much more to lose by receiving the Torah, for when studied improperly it will bring upon them an evil inclination, which otherwise they would not be afflicted with at all. Nevertheless these very Angels yearned to receive the Torah, for they understood that the Torah's benefits outweigh its potential negative impact. How much more so in regards to us, who in any case have an evil inclination which infuriates us, and worst-case scenario if learned improperly the Torah will only cause it to be more infuriating, should we realize that the Torah's benefits certainly outweigh its possible negativities. We can thus truly grasp that the Torah was indeed given to us solely for our benefit.

רע שמשון פרשתנו אות ג

### Only Prayer in Eretz Yisroel can abolish the evil inclination for idolatry.

וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה הֲנִיךָ שֹׁכֵב עִם אֲבוֹתֶיךָ וְקָם הָעָם הַזֶּה וְזָנָה אַחֲרַי אֱלֹהֵי נֹכַר הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר הוּא כֹּא שִׁמָּה בְּקִרְבּוֹ וְעִזְבוּנִי וְהִפָּר אֶת בְּרִיתִי אֲשֶׁר כָּרַתִּי אִתּוֹ (לא, טז):

– And Hashem said to Moshe, "Behold, you will lie with your forefathers, and the people will rise up and stray after the idols of the foreigners of the Land in the midst of whom they shall be coming, and they will forsake me and annul my covenant that I have sealed with them".

We need to understand what Moshe Rabainu's passing has to do with Klal Yisroel straying and serving the idols, as it seems that the Passuk is clearly attributing their straying to his death.

We can't explain the connection by saying that Klal Yisroel would never have "strayed after the idols of the foreigners of the Land" while Moshe Rabainu was still in their midst, because we find that many times Klal Yisroel *did* stray from the proper path and *did* sin even as long as Moshe was still alive.

There is something else that seems difficult to understand. We find that Hashem told Moshe as follows; וְהָיָה כִּי יִקְרָא אֶת יְהוֹשֻׁעַ וְהִתְצַבּוּ: קרא את יהושע והתיצבו; – "Behold, your days are drawing near to die; summon Yehoshua and both of you shall stand in the Ohel Moed and I shall instruct him" ... And Hashem said to Moshe; "Behold, you will lie with your forefathers...". It would clearly seem that Hashem told Moshe to summon Yehoshua because He wanted to instruct Yehoshua, but the Passuk goes on to say; וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה - And Hashem said to Moshe, and only after Hashem concluded talking to Moshe did He begin to talk to Yehoshua. What we need to understand is, why didn't Hashem first tell Moshe what he wanted to tell him and only afterwards tell him to call Yehoshua? Seemingly, Hashem wanted Yehoshua to hear Him telling Moshe "Behold, you will lie with your forefathers, and the people will rise up and stray after the idols etc.". Why was it important for Yehoshua to hear this?

We can explain all of this with a Gemara in ערכין דף לב ע"ב where the Gemara says as follows; דבעי רחמי על יצר דעבודה זרה ובטליה וכי והיינו דקא; קפיד קרא עילויה דיהושע וכי בשלמא משה לא בעא רחמי דלא הוה זכותא דארץ ישראל - Ezra Prayed to abolish the evil inclination for idolatry ... and that is why the Verse is severe toward Yehoshua... it is understandable why Moshe did not pray to have the evil inclination for idolatry abolished because he did not have the Merit of Eretz Yisroel but Yehoshua who did have the Merit of Eretz Yisroel why did he not Pray for this?

According to this we can understand why Hashem told Moshe, very explicitly and in the presence of Yehoshua, "you are about to lie with your forefathers", and hence will not be entering Eretz Yisroel, which is why you won't be able to Pray on behalf of Klal Yisroel, and without your Prayers "the people will rise up and stray after the idols of the foreigners of the Land in the midst of whom they shall be coming". All this was said to Moshe in front of Yehoshua so that Yehoshua should realize and understand that because he will merit to enter Eretz Yisroel it will be up to him to Pray for the abolishment of the evil inclination for idolatry.

רע שמשון פרשת וילך אות ב

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

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USA - Rabbi Menachem Binyomin Paskesz 347-496-5657 mbpaskesz@gmail.com  
Zera Shimshon c/o Rabbi B Paskesz 1645 48th Street, Brooklyn NY 11204

Eretz Yisroel - Rabbi Yisroel Silberberg  
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