

Zera Shimshon

Profound Divrei Torah culled from the writings of the Gaon and Mekubal Rav Shimshon Chaim ben Rav Nachman Michael Nachmani zy" a, 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

What Caused Yaakov to Start Observing Shabbos

וינתר יעקב לבדו ויאבק איש עמו עד עלות השחר (לב, כה):

Yaakov was left alone, and a Man wrestled with him until the break of dawn:

ויבא יעקב שלם עיר שכם אשר בארץ כנען כבאו מפדן ארם ויחן את פני העיר (לג, יח):

Yaakov arrived intact at the city of Sh'chem which is in the Land of Canaan, upon his arriving from Padan-Aram, and he encamped before the city:

The Midrash (בר"ר י"א ז) brings the following; אברהם שאין כתוב בו שמירת שבת, ירש את העולם במדה שנאמר וכו' אבל יעקב שכתוב בו שמירת שבת שנאמר ויחן את פני העיר, נכנס עם דמדומי חמה וקבע תחומין מבעוד יום, ירש את העולם שלא במדה שנאמר – Avraham, with regard to whom the observance of Shabbos is not written, inherited the world in a limited measure... But Yaakov, with regard to whom the observance of Shabbos is written, as is stated, 'And he encamped before the city'; meaning that Yaakov arrived at the city before sunset on Friday afternoon, and established the two-thousand-amah Shabbos boundary for himself while it was still day, inherited the world without a limited measure...

The Commentators explain that although the Gemara in Yuma (כ"ח ע"ג) says that אברהם אבינו קיים כל התורה כולה – Avraham Avinu fulfilled the entire Torah; even so, in regards to Shabbos, Avraham had no choice but to refrain from its observance. This was in accordance to the Gemara in Sanhedrin (נ"ח ע"ג) which states that עכו"ם ששבת חייב מיתה – A non-Jew who ceased working for an entire day is liable to death; Avraham Avinu was not certain whether he had

the status of a Jew and was permitted, and even commended, to observe Shabbos, or if he had the status of a non-Jew and was prohibited from doing so. Therefore, he had no choice but to be stringent and desecrate Shabbos.

We need to understand why Yaakov, who did observe Shabbos, was not faced with the same doubt and uncertainty that gave his Grandfather, Avraham, no choice but to desecrate Shabbos. Furthermore, we don't find any reference of Yaakov observing Shabbos until after his encounter with the Angel, which would seem to imply that only after that encounter did Yaakov start observing Shabbos. That definitely begs for an explanation; what happened at that encounter that gave Yaakov reason to start observing Shabbos?

It seems from the Pesukim, that the Angel who struggled with Yaakov all night could not defeat him until the break of dawn, and even then it was only due to the "Shira", the Praise of Hashem that the Angels sing, that he was able to defeat Yaakov. What's this all about?

We can explain this all through the following. The Gemara in Sanhedrin (צ"ג ע"א) states that גדולים צדיקים יותר ממלאכי השרת – The righteous are greater than Angels. The reason for this superiority is because the righteous not only study the Torah, but also observe its Mitzvos, while the Angels can only study the Torah, and the Gemara in

Bava Kamma (י"ז ע"א) says that גדול למוד התורה שהלמוד מביא – The study of Torah is important because it leads to the performance of Mitzvos. This clearly indicates that studying Torah is secondary to its practice, and due to this superiority, the Angel was unable to overpower Yaakov throughout the night.

But at the crack of dawn, when it was time for the Angels to sing "Shira", this Merit shone in virtue of the Angel. This is because Tosfos in Sanhedrin (ל"ד ע"ב) writes that although the Angels can sing Hashem's praise every day,

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Klal Yisroel can only sing it on Shabbos, and since at that time Yaakov was still not observing Shabbos, he never had the opportunity to sing the "Shira". Thus, this merit of the "Shira" gave the Angel superiority, and enabled him to defeat Yaakov.



When Yaakov saw what had occurred, that the Angel was unable to defeat him the whole night, he realized that it must have been

because of his superiority over the Angel, which was due to his observance of the Mitzvos. It was then that Yaakov understood that it must be that he has the full status of a Jew, as the Mitzvos of a non-Jew would not be on a high enough level to make him superior to an Angel. As soon as he realized that he is considered a complete Jew, he started to observe Shabbos, just as he observed the rest of the Torah.

זרע שמשון פרשת וישלח אות י"א

The Zohar Hatorah Yeshiva

Learning That Inspires Every Student

A prominent place is held by the study of the Zera Shimshon in the advanced yeshiva Zohar Hatorah, located at 39 Sorotzkin Street in Jerusalem. In this yeshiva, led by the esteemed Rav Betzalel Toledano, shlita, nearly 100 students gather every Wednesday night to study a derush (discourse) from the Zera Shimshon together. Although this initiative comes from the students themselves and takes place outside the established study schedules, it has become an integral part of the yeshiva's culture.

One of the outstanding students carefully selects the topic of the discourse and meticulously prepares to deliver the class so that all attendees can enjoy and benefit from the learning. The young man **Yitzhak Malka**, one of the organizers of this special activity, shares that the students eagerly anticipate this session throughout the week. Many rearrange their plans to ensure they don't miss this weekly class. The study of the Zera Shimshon significantly enhances the unique atmosphere of the yeshiva, and the students feel deeply connected to this sacred learning. "It feels as if the soul of the tzadik envelops us while we learn," the young men comment. They also note that after the study, the parsha takes on a new and clearer meaning. Some have even witnessed personal blessings and salvations as a result of this learning.

Yitzhak Malka shares an interesting episode:

"The first student who took responsibility for preparing photocopies and materials for the participants got engaged just a few weeks after taking on this sacred task for the class. This event sparked great enthusiasm among the students. After his wedding, I assumed responsibility for preparing the materials. To my surprise, a week later, I was accepted into an evening kollel I had been trying to join for a long time without success. Time and again, I had been told, 'The kollel is full; no additional students can be admitted.' But as soon as I took on this commitment to support the Zera Shimshon study in the yeshiva, the doors opened. The joy I felt at that moment is indescribable."

David Reginiano, who organizes and leads the class with tireless dedication, shares:

"Even in the weeks when there is a special event that occurs on Wednesday, the study session is not canceled but rescheduled for another day. The students are unwilling to forgo this class under any circumstances, which demonstrates how important this study is to everyone in the yeshiva."

"I want to take this opportunity to express our deep gratitude to the World Organization for the Dissemination of the Torah of the Zera Shimshon, which provides tremendous support to ensure the success of this learning. We highly recommend replicating this model in other yeshivot and batei midrash. It is both a merit and a blessing. The World Organization for the Dissemination of the Torah of the Zera Shimshon offers extensive help and guidance to those who wish to start similar classes."


"Finally, a special blessing to my dear brother, **Yaakov Reginiano**, who took on the cost of providing refreshments for the benefit of the participants. Thanks to him, there is a special and pleasant atmosphere during this sweet and wonderful study. May he be blessed with abundance, life, sustenance, and all the blessings of the tzadik. Amen v'amen."

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A Fascinating Insight

into Zera Shimshon Classes Around the World

★★★



Zohar Hatorah Yeshiva



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