

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.



Balak תשכ"ד

• Zera Shimshon - the Limud that brings Yeshuos •

299 ז'יין

אמרות שמשון

When Hashem Bestows Good Upon the Jewish People He Doesn't Always Bestow It Upon the Nations as Well

הן עם לְבָדֵד יִשְׁכֵּן וּבְגוֹיִם לֹא יִתְחַשֵּׁב. (במדבר כג ט)

Behold! It is a nation that dwells in solitude, and it is not reckoned among the nations.

The Gemara in Sanhedrin (ל ט א) recounts a dialogue which centers around the message that Bilaam's words convey.

A heretic once said to R' Avina: It is written, 'And who is like Your people, Israel, one nation in the land?' This Passuk implies that Israel is unique among the nations of the world. But why indeed are they unique? They should be lumped together with all the other nations, as it is written, 'All the nations are like nothing before Him', and Israel is not excluded from this all-inclusive reference of 'all the nations'. R' Avina answered him: Prophets from among you [i.e. the non-Jewish Bilaam] have testified about us that we are not included in the Passuk's reference of 'all the nations'; for Bilaam had said, 'and among the nations you are not counted'. R' Elazar contrasted the following two Passukim. It is written, 'Hashem is good to all', but elsewhere it is written, 'Hashem is good to those who wait for Him', which indicates that He is only good to righteous people. We can, however, solve this contradiction through an analogy to a man who has an orchard. When he irrigates, he irrigates the entire orchard, but when he hoes, he hoes only around the good trees which are among them. When the farmer irrigates the orchard, he irrigates all the trees, for he waters the entire orchard in one shot, and thus won't prevent the water from reaching the bad trees. But when he hoes, he must dig around each tree individually, and therefore he only hoes around the good trees, but doesn't bother with the bad ones.

There is so much in this Gemara that needs to be understood. First of all, what exactly were the heretic and R' Avina arguing about? They don't seem to be disagreeing regarding anything practical.

Furthermore, why did R' Avina need to point out to the heretic that it was a 'prophet from among you' who testified that 'among the nations you are not counted'? Why wouldn't it be sufficient for R' Avina to plainly mention that it was a Passuk which clearly attested to this idea? After all, the heretic himself quoted a straightforward Passuk to demonstrate his position. And lastly, what does R' Elazar's question and analogy have to do with the conversation that the Gemara just recounted between R' Avina and the heretic?



The Midrash (במדבר כ ט) quotes these words of Bilaam and expounds on them as follows. *Behold! It is a nation that dwells in solitude. This means that when the Jewish People rejoice, they rejoice alone [i.e. without the other nations taking part in their bounty] but when the other nations rejoice, the Jewish People benefit along with each one of them.*



We can explain that the point of discussion and argument between R' Avina and the heretic was centered around this very idea that the Midrash expresses - that when the nations rejoice the Jews rejoice with them, but when the Jewish People rejoice the nations do not rejoice along with them.

In view of this, the heretic asked a question based on the notion that the Midrash (ילקוט'ש בראשית רמז קיא) writes, that while still in their mother's womb, Yaakov and Eisav made a deal between themselves. They agreed that Eisav would inherit this world and all the pleasures and enjoyments that this world offers, while Yaakov would inherit the World to Come. Nevertheless, the Midrash (בר"ד סג א) also tells us that years later, when Yaakov purchased Eisav's firstborn seniority, he also purchased along with it a bit of this world so that his descendants would be able to enjoy a bit of what this world has to offer.

The heretic thus told R' Avina as follows: **The Passuk implies that Israel is unique among the nations of the world.** This is a reference to the fact that the nations do not get to rejoice along with the Jews, while the Jews do get to rejoice along with nations. He then went on to ask: **But why indeed are they unique? They should be lumped together with us.** His intention was as follows. "I can understand why the Jewish People have the right to rejoice along with the nations,

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אליאס בן אסתר זוגנו סופיה בת אסתר שיובו להצלחה וברכה בכל עסקיהם מתוך מנחת הנון והנפש בל שום טרדות ודאגות וחיוכים הנונים לבנותיהם

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רפאל בן סופיה זוגנו נטלי בת אליסיה שיובו להיפקד כושך בקרוב הצלחה מרובה פרנסה טובה ועשירות וברכה בכל העניינים

because after all Yaakov bought some of this world on behalf of his descendants. But I cannot understand why the Jewish People should rejoice on their own right without the nations rejoicing along with them, when after all, the pleasures of this world essentially belong to Eisav and not to Yaakov".

R' Avina answered: **Prophets from among you [i.e. the non-Jewish Bilaam] have testified about us that we are not included in 'all the nations'. For Bilaam had said, "and among the nations you are not counted"**. R' Avina's intention was as follows. Although in accordance of the deal, Yaakov and his descendants indeed had only minimal rights to this world, nevertheless, years later Yitzchok blessed Yaakov - *May Hashem give you of the dew of the heavens and of the fatness of the earth, and abundant grain and wine...* through which Yaakov and his descendants regained full rights to this world and to all its pleasures. And thus, the Jewish People indeed have the rights to rejoice in their own right, and the nations don't have the right to rejoice along with them. And although Yaakov obtained Yitzchak's blessings only as a result of his misleading Yitzchak to think that he was actually blessing Eisav,

nevertheless, Eisav's descendants ultimately conceded and acknowledged that Yaakov rightfully merited Yitzchak's blessings. For it is written that the non-Jewish Bilaam himself said, 'and among the nations you are not counted', which, as the Midrash expounds, alludes to the fact that when the Jewish People rejoice, they rejoice alone, for no other nation rejoices along with them; which is a clear allusion that Yaakov attained the Blessings from his father, and thus his descendants can enjoy and rejoice in this world on their own rights.

Nonetheless, we still need to understand this phenomenon. Why indeed do the Jewish People get to rejoice along with the nations, but the nations do not get to rejoice along with them? It was to explain this that R' Elazar stated the analogy, comparing it to a farmer's treatment of his orchard. Similarly when bestowing goodness upon the world; when Hashem bestows the goodness in a general manner, He does not withhold the good from the unworthy nations of the world. But when Hashem bestows the good through individual consideration, He only bestows it upon the righteous Jewish People, but not upon the unworthy nations.

אות ז זרע שמשון פרשתנו

גבורת שמשון
סיפורי ישועה

Tzedaka saves from the bad decree

Rabbi J. S. L. tells his miraculous anecdote:

I took the initiative to make a money donation to the World Organization for the Dissemination of the Torah of Zera Shimshon to be distributed among people of few resources. I made this donation for the elevation of the soul of the author of Zera Shimshon. Among the beneficiaries of this donation were a widow and a Talmid Chacham.

Regardless of this act, I had a trial pending. Due to certain legal complications, I had been prevented from leaving the country. To clarify this situation, my case was going to be deliberated in court, before four judges, who would determine if I could leave the country. I was very pleasantly surprised when I heard the result of the deliberation: three of the four judges sided in my favor and I could now leave the country freely.

*Immediately after the trial I called the World Organization for the Dissemination of the Torah of Zera Shimshon and recited the verse **Hodu Lashem ki tov, ki leolam hasdo** according to the wonderful explanation of the author of Zera Shimshon. Those of the Organization listened with joy to the salvation I had experienced and told me that, "coincidentally," that same day they had distributed a good portion of the donation I had made to them to **Talmidei Chachamim** who are dedicated to the Torah of Zera Shimshon.*

How wonderful!

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