

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.



Lech Lecha תשפ"ד

• Zera Shimshon - the Limud that brings Yeshuos •

261 תש"ן

אמרות שמשון

Why Avraham Felt It Fitting To Pitch Sara's Tent Before Pitching His Own

וַיַּעֲמֵק מִשָּׁם הַהָרָה מִקֶּדֶם לְבֵית אֵל וַיֵּט אֶהְלָה, בֵּית אֵל מִיָּמִין וְהָעֵץ מִקֶּדֶם, וַיִּכְנֶן שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ לָהּ, וַיִּקְרָא בְּשֵׁם ה' (בראשית יב, ח)

From there he relocated to the mountain east of Beth El and pitched his tent, with Beth El on the west and Ai on the east, and he built there an altar to Hashem, and he called in the name of Hashem.

When the Passuk writes וַיֵּט אֶהְלָה - and he pitched his tent, it writes אֶהְלָה, ending the word with the letter ה, which implies a feminine form and should thus mean that 'he pitched **her** tent', yet it is pronounced as if it were spelled אֶהְלֹה, ending with the letter ו, which implies a masculine form and is thus understood as 'he pitched **his** tent'. Rashi quotes the Midrash who notes this unusual spelling and explains it as follows. אתה כתיב, בתחלה נטע את אהל אשתו, ואחר כך אתה. The word for 'he pitched **his** tent' is written אֶהְלָה, a spelling which would ordinarily mean 'he pitched **her** tent'; this teaches that Avraham pitched Sarah's tent first, and only afterwards pitched his own tent.

The rationale of this Midrash seems difficult to understand, for although the discrepancy between the spelling, which indicates that Avraham pitched Sara's tent, and the actual reading of the word, which indicates that he pitched his own tent, might indeed suggest that Avraham pitched two tents, one for himself and one for his wife Sarah, nevertheless, it's hard to understand how it implies that Avraham pitched Sara's tent first and only afterwards pitched his own tent.

Moreover, why indeed did Avraham need to pitch two tents; why couldn't one tent suffice for him and his wife Sarah? After all, when Yaakov fled from Lavan's home and Lavan pursued him in search of the missing idols, the Passuk says, וַיָּבֹא לָבָן בְּאֵהָלָה וּבְאֵהָלָה לֵאמֹר וַיִּבְרָא לָבָן שְׁתֵּי הָאִמָּהוֹת וְכֹרֶם - Lavan came into Yaakov's tent, and into Leah's tent, and into the tent of the two maidservants... and Rashi explains that Yaakov's tent was also Rachel's tent because Yaakov was always with her. Thus, if Yaakov's tent sufficed to serve as Rachel's tent as well, why couldn't Avraham's tent suffice to provide for Sarah too?

The Gemara in Sotah (י"א) discusses the manner in which Avraham invited wanderers and travelers to dine and rest. The Gemara also recounts how after dining and resting up, Avraham taught them about Hashem and brought them closer to Him.

וַיֵּט אֶשֶׁל בְּבֵאֵר שֶׁבַע וְכוּ' ר' יְהוּדָה וְר' נַחֲמִיָּה חֲדָא אָמְרַי פְּרִדְסָא וְחֲדָא אָמְרַי פּוֹנְדֵק וְכוּ' - The Torah recounts that 'Avraham set an אֶשֶׁל in Beer Sheva and called there the name of Hashem, Master of the Universe'... R' Yehudah and R' Nechemia disagree as to what that אֶשֶׁל was. One of them understands Avraham's אֶשֶׁל to be the typical אֶשֶׁל which is a tree. Accordingly, he explains that Avraham planted an orchard with many types of fine fruits for the benefit of the guests. The other one understands the word אֶשֶׁל to be an abbreviation of three words, אֵכֵלָה, אִכְלָה, אֶשְׁלָה - eating, drinking and escorting. Accordingly, he explains that Avraham established an inn where travelers could eat and drink, and then be escorted when the time came for them to leave.

וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם בְּשֵׁם ה' אֵל עוֹלָם. אָמַר רִישׁ לְקִישׁ אֵל תִּיקְרִי וַיִּקְרָא אֵלָּא וַיִּקְרֵא, מִלְמַד שֶׁהִקְרִיא אֲבָרָהָם אֲבִינוּ לְשֵׁמוֹ שֶׁל הַקֶּב"ה בְּפֶה כָל עוֹבֵר וּשׁוֹב. כִּיֻּצַּד, לֵאחֲרֵי שֶׁאֲכָלוּ וּשְׁתּוּ עֲמָדוֹ לְבָרְכּוֹ, אָמַר לָהֶם וְכִי מִשְׁלִי אֲכַלְתֶּם מִשֵּׁל אֱלֹהִי עוֹלָם אֲכַלְתֶּם, הוּדוּ וּשְׁבַחוּ וּבְרַכּוּ - The Torah describes that Avraham 'called there the name of Hashem, Master of the Universe'. Reish Lakish said: Do not read it וַיִּקְרָא - Avraham called, but rather וַיִּקְרֵא - Avraham caused others to call. This teaches us that our forefather Avraham taught people to call in the name of Hashem, and thus caused the name of Hashem to be called in the mouth of every passerby. How did Avraham accomplish this? After the wayfarers ate and drank, they would stand up to bless Avraham. Avraham would then say to them, "Was it of my food that you ate? Of course not! You ate from the food of Hashem who is the Master of the entire universe. Thus, you should rather thank, praise and bless He Who spoke and caused the world to come into being".

In light of the fact that Avraham used his tent in order to invite the passing travelers to eat, drink and rest in order to ultimately introduce them to Hashem and to bring them closer to Him, we can understand that he needed private accommodations in which the travelers would feel comfortable to eat and rest. We can thus understand that it wouldn't be proper for Avraham to invite female travelers into his private and secluded lodgings, and hence the need for him to pitch another tent for Sarah, in which she would invite the women and bring them closer to Hashem.

In light of this we can also understand how the Gemara inferred that Avraham pitched Sara's tent before pitching his own tent. This

is in line of the sequence in which Moshe was commanded to teach the Torah to the Jewish People, as the following Midrash (שמו"ר כח ב) explains. כה תאמר לבית יעקב אלו הנשים וכו' ותגיד לבני ישראל אלו האנשים וכו'. למה לנשים תחלה, שהן מזדירות במצוות. דבר אחר, כדי שיהיו מנהיגות את בנין לתורה. - The Torah relates that when Hashem commanded Moshe to teach the Torah to the Jewish People, He told Moshe as follows, 'So shall you say to the House of Jacob and relate to the Children of Israel'; 'So shall you say to the House of Jacob' - this is a reference to the women, 'and relate to the Children of Israel' - this is a reference to the men. And why was Moshe to teach the women first? This is, either, because the women merited to be taught first in virtue of the fact that

they demonstrate alacrity in the performance of the commandments, or because it simply made sense for them to be taught first due to the fact that it is the women who are typically in the home supervising their young children, and it is thus primarily them who will guide their children to follow the path of the Torah.

We can explain that because the tents of Avraham and Sarah were de facto learning centers, teaching the people about Hashem, therefore Avraham similarly felt that it was more appropriate to initially set Sara up to teach the women and bring them closer to Hashem, and only after he set her up and pitched her tent did he pitch his own tent and set himself up to teach the men.

זרע שמשון פרשתנו אות י

A threefold salvation

From Beth Shemesh, Israel, Rabbi Y. M. shares with us his story:

I attend a certain Beit Haknesset on a steady basis; there I pray all the tefilot of the year, including Shabbat and holidays. In this Beit Haknesset there are also four young **avrechim**, married for some time, but who have not yet had the merit of having children. This situation caused pain in the hearts of the other attendees of the Beit Haknesset. Many times, on special auspicious occasions, such as **Zot Chanukah** and the like, the congregants of the Beit Haknesset would gather to pray together for the merit of those four **avrechim**, but we felt that some merit beyond the ordinary was needed in order to trigger the salvation of those **avrechim**. But there is no one who can know the secrets of Hashem, and we have no one to reveal to us what are the necessary merits to be awakened. This was the general feeling.

One day, a little over a year ago, I heard about the auspicious book **Zera Shimshon** and about its author, who promised many salvations for those who studied from his books. And among the blessings he promised is the particular blessing of having children: "... and your eyes will see children and grandchildren, like olive buds around your tables." A spark of hope was kindled in me, and I said to myself that perhaps the salvation that those **avrechim** required was hidden here. With this study we could awaken the necessary special merit.

Without procrastinating, on Friday of that same week, in the morning, I gathered congregants of the Beit Haknesset to carry out together a study of this book with great attendance in

merit that our companions could have children soon. A special enthusiasm overwhelmed the participants and, after about two hours of continuous study, a unanimous decision was made to continue this special study, also in the coming weeks, until our companions each see their salvation.

Thus began the custom of studying **Zera Shimshon** week after week over the course of a year, in which the great majority of the congregants joined the special initiative. And thank God, in the course of this very year three of the four **avrechim** have seen their salvation! Obviously, we continue with the study also for the merit of the fourth **avrech**, with full faith that soon he will also give us the good news that we all long for.

I want to highlight something that moved me a lot. Although attendance at these Friday **shiurim** is not easy, many of the congregants have already let me know that they intend to continue with the study even after we see the salvation of the fourth **avrech**. They said, "We will never abandon this auspicious book."

I appeal to you, please, to establish a **shiur** on this very propitious book, and undoubtedly you will merit to see soon the materialization of the salvation you need. Who does not need salvation of some kind? And if you don't need it, then maybe a friend or a family member does. Please fulfill the request of the Tzaddik, the sacred Rabbi Shimshon Chaim Nachmani, and establish a **shiur** about his book and merit the salvation in favor of you or your dear ones.

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