

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.



Terumah תשפ"ז

• Zera Shimshon - the Limud that brings Yeshuos •

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אמרות שמשון

The Menorah as a Symbol of the Soul Within Man (Part 1)

"And they shall make for Me a Sanctuary, and I will dwell in their midst." (*Shemot* 25:8)

The Human Body as a Sanctuary Housing the Soul (the Menorah)

The expression "I will dwell in their midst" can be understood as "within each person." The plain sense of the verse suggests that every human being possesses a sanctuary within. Thus our Sages taught in the *Gemara* (*Taanit* 11a): "A person should always see themselves as if a sacred Presence dwells within them," as it is written: "for the Holy One is in your midst" (*Hoshea* 11:9).

Therefore, it is appropriate to interpret that in the craftsmanship of the *Menorah*, there is an allusion to the soul residing within the body. That is: the human being as a whole is like a Sanctuary, and the soul is comparable to the *Menorah*.

"You shall make a Menorah of pure gold": This alludes to the soul, which is pure and is compared to gold. Just as gold was not created for common use, but exclusively for the *Beit Hamikdash* (*Bereshit Rabbah* 16:2), likewise it was not fitting for the body – which is matter and dust – to utilize the soul, which is a Divine portion from on High.

"Of one piece shall the Menorah be made, its base and its shaft": The soul comes into the world to exert effort, for "man is born for toil" (*Iyov* 5:7), and through that effort, one receives their reward. Whether in physical

matters and those of this world – represented by **the base**, the lower part – or in matters of the World to Come – represented by **the shaft**, the principal part – everything is of one piece. As our Sages said: "If someone says: 'I did not exert myself and [yet] I found,' do not believe him" (*Megillah* 6b). Effort is always necessary, and only through it is the reward attained.

"Its cups, its knobs, and its flowers shall be out of it":

Our Sages taught (*Vayikra Rabbah* 30:12) that Israel is divided into four groups:

Those who possess Torah and *mitzvot* are like the *etrog* (citron), which has taste and aroma.

Those who possess Torah but not *mitzvot* are like the *lulav* (palm branch), which has taste but no aroma.

Those who possess *mitzvot* but not Torah are like the *hadas* (myrtle), which has aroma but no taste.

Those who possess neither Torah nor *mitzvot* are like the *aravah* (willow), which has neither taste nor aroma.

These four groups are hinted at here:

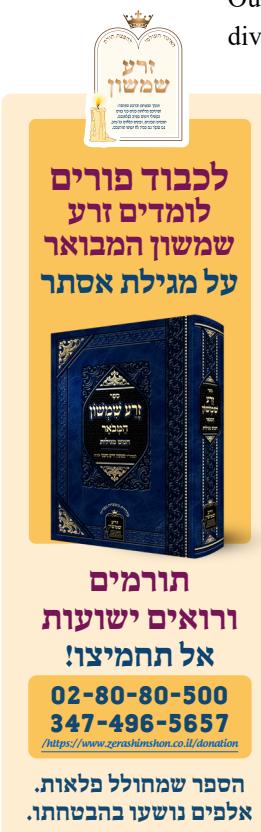
The cups represent those who have Torah but not *mitzvot*; there were twenty-two cups in the *Menorah*, alluding to the twenty-two letters of the Torah.

The knobs, similar to apples – as Rashi explains – have taste and aroma, representing those who possess both Torah and *mitzvot*.

The flowers have aroma but no taste, representing those who possess *mitzvot* but not Torah.

These three groups perfect the soul and make it worthy of the light of Life. In contrast, those who possess neither Torah nor *mitzvot* are not mentioned, as they contribute no rectification.

(*Zera Shimshon, Parshat Terumah, Art. 12*)



The Menorah as a Symbol of the Soul Within Man (Part 2)

"And they shall make for Me a Sanctuary, and I will dwell in their midst." (Shemot 25:8)

Human Actions, Torah, and the Illumination of the Soul

The human being, by housing the soul within the body, has six aspects, as our Sages taught (*Chagigah* 16a): "Three [aspects] resemble ministering angels and three resemble animals. [Man] has understanding, walks upright, and speaks in the Sacred Tongue like the angels; [on the other hand,] he eats and drinks, reproduces, and excretes like the animals."

This is what the verse alludes to: "Six branches issued from its sides" from the central Menorah, which represents the soul, whose axis is the study of Torah and the fulfillment of *mitzvot*. These six actions are divided into two groups:

Three branches of the *Menorah* on one side, the right, corresponding to the angel-like aspects.

Three branches of the *Menorah* on the other side, the left, corresponding to the animal-like aspects.

"Three cups shaped like almonds on one branch, a knob and a flower [...] so for the six branches": This again alludes to those who occupy themselves only with Torah, those with Torah and *mitzvot*, and those with only *mitzvot*. The three cups indicate that one who studies Torah must divide their time into *Mikra* (Scripture), *Mishnah*, and *Talmud* (*Kiddushin* 30a), and they also allude to the levels of interpretation: *pshat* (simple sense), *remez* (allusion), and *drash* (homiletic), which are accessible to all.

"And on the Menorah itself, four cups": This corresponds to the central and main axis of the *Menorah* – the soul itself – which can reach even the fourth level, *sod* (secret), thus forming the acronym *PaRDeS*.

"A knob under two branches...": Actions are paired with one another. Opposite eating and drinking is understanding; opposite reproduction is walking upright; and opposite excretion is speaking

in the Sacred Tongue. Even when certain actions lower the human being, the Torah elevates and balances them.

Therefore, the branches were joined by the knobs: to teach that in all these six actions, there must be Torah and *mitzvot*. In eating, guarding the *mitzvot* and speaking words of Torah; in thought, reflecting on Torah; in reproduction, acting with holiness; in walking, not going without Torah or *mitzvot*; even in the washroom, avoiding the forbidden and, when permitted, using the Sacred Tongue (Hebrew).

There were five knobs on the central body of the *Menorah*, alluding to the five levels of the soul: *nefesh*, *ruach*, *neshamah*, *chayah*, and *yechidah*. And there were three flowers, corresponding to the three pillars on which the world stands: judgment, truth, and peace (*Avot* 1:18), and also to Torah, Divine service, and acts of kindness.

"Their knobs and their branches shall be out of it":

That is, both human actions and the study and fulfillment of *mitzvot* must be performed *leshem Shamayim* (for the sake of Heaven), for the good of the soul.

"All of it, a single piece of pure gold":

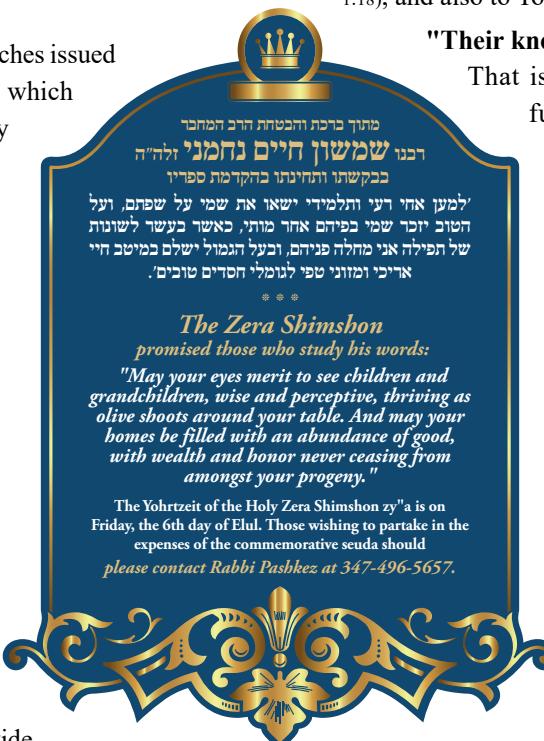
The perfection of the soul requires effort and constancy until it becomes completely pure gold. That is why the *Menorah* was made of a single block, for the righteous have a single heart directed toward their Father in Heaven.

"You shall make its lamps, seven [...] and they shall give light toward its front": The soul must be illuminated with Torah and *mitzvot* performed with joy and a good heart. The seven lamps allude to the seventy years of human life: throughout them, the soul must shine and not be contaminated with transgressions, which are performed in darkness.

"And its tongs and its snuff dishes shall be of pure gold": Even when a person is occupied with material affairs and bodily needs, their acts must be "pure gold" – with honesty and faithfulness, without profaning the Name of Hashem.

"And see and make according to the model shown to you on the mountain": This alludes to what our Sages said (*Shabbat* 152b): "Return it with purity just as it was given to you." That is, we must strive so that, even after living in this world, our soul remains as pure as the day it was entrusted to us.

(*Zera Shimshon, Parashat Terumah, Art. 12*)



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