

Zera Shimshon

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



אמרות שמשון

The Reward Bestowed Upon Those Who Led the Jewish People into The Red Sea

וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה מִה תִּצְעַק אֵלַי דְּבַר אֵל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּסְעוּ: (שמות יד, טו)

Hashem said to Moshe: Why do you cry out to Me? Speak to the Jewish people and let them journey!

After the Jews left Egypt, the Egyptians pursued them until they came upon the Red Sea, at which point they were unable to continue. Hashem then told Moshe that the Jews need to do nothing but go forward, and the Sea will not stand in their way.

The Gemara in Sotah (70b) discusses the Jewish People's reaction when being commanded to walk into the Sea's raging waters. R' Meir said: When the Jewish People stood upon the edge of the sea, the tribes competed with one another, each one exclaiming "I will descend first into the sea". Thereupon, the Tribe of Binyamin sprang forward and descended first into the sea... In reward, Binyamin the righteous merited to host the Holy Shechinah [i.e. the Holy of Holies of the Bais Hamikdash, wherein the Ark was set, was situated in the territory of Binyamin]. R' Yehudah said to R' Meir: The incident was not as you described it; rather each tribe exclaimed "I will not be the first to descend into the sea". At that point, Nachshon ben Aminodov, the Nasi of the Tribe of Yehudah, leaped forward and descended into the sea first... In reward for Nachshon's willingness to sacrifice himself, the Tribe of Yehudah merited to establish dominion over the Jewish People.

We need to understand, firstly, from where stems the dispute between R' Meir and R' Yehudah regarding whether the Tribes were prepared to leap into the Sea? Secondly, what was the particular measure for measure in the reward that was bestowed upon trailblazer, and why did the measure for measure differ in that according to R' Meir the Tribe of Binyamin merited hosting the Holy Shechinah, whereas according to R' Yehudah the Tribe of Yehudah merited to establish dominion over the Jewish People?

After commanding the Jews to journey into the water, Hashem told Moshe as follows. "And you, lift up your staff and stretch out your arm over the Sea and split it". The Midrash records a conversation that followed between Hashem and Moshe regarding this commandment to split the Sea. Moshe said to Hashem: You say to me that I should split the Sea and make it into dry land, but it is written, 'For I have set sand as a boundary against the Sea as a permanent law that cannot be broken'. Behold, You have sworn that you will never split the Sea. Hashem replied to him: I am the One who stipulated that the Sea should flow for all time, so did I also stipulate originally that one day in the future I will split it before the Jews when they will leave Egypt. Immediately, Moshe listened to Hashem and went to split the Sea. But when Moshe went to split the Sea, the Sea did not accept upon itself to be split... When Moshe heard this, he went to Hashem and said, "The Sea does not want to split". What did Hashem do? He, so to speak, put

His right hand upon Moshe's right Hand... Immediately, the Sea saw Hashem and fled...

The Yefei To'ar asks; how was the Sea able to refuse at first to split, being that, as the Midrash clearly says, Hashem had originally stipulated that the Sea would need

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to do so at the time of the exodus from Egypt? He answers that although it was indeed stipulated that the Sea would split for the Jews, nevertheless, the Sea's ministering angels argued that the stipulation was only that the Sea would do so only if the Jews would be deserving of this great miracle, and because, upon leaving Egypt, the Jews were not very righteous and deserving, the Sea was not obligated to split before them.



In light of the Sea's contention to refrain from splitting, we can understand the opinions of R' Meir and R' Yehudah, according to their respective opinions in another matter, as recorded in the Gemara Kiddushin (נ"ז ע"ב) as follows. *The Passuk states: You are children to Hashem [i.e. the Jewish People enjoy the special favored status of being 'Hashem's children']. This means that at a time when you act in the manner of children [i.e. with devotion to Hashem and the Torah], you are called 'children of Hashem'; but when you do not act in the manner of children, you are not called 'children of Hashem'. These are the words of R' Yehudah. R' Meir disagrees and says: In either event you are called 'children of Hashem'.*

Consequently, because, when leaving Egypt, the Jews were not on too great a level, therefore according to R' Yehudah they did not carry the special status of being 'Hashem's children', and thus indeed, as the Sea claimed, they were not worthy of having the Sea split before them. We can therefore understand why no one vied for the privilege of walking into the waters of the Sea; for they did not feel

that the sea would split for them. Hence - *each tribe exclaimed "I will not be the first to descend into the sea"*. Whereas according to R' Meir, the Jewish People nonetheless did carry the status of 'Hashem's children', and thus *were* worthy of the Sea splitting for them. Hence - *the tribes all competed with one another, each one exclaiming "I will descend first into the sea"*.

Correspondingly, according to R' Yehudah, when Nachshon ben Aminodov demonstrated his faith in Hashem by leaping into the water - while all the Tribes refrained from doing so, as they weren't prepared to ignore their lack of merit and simply put their trust in Hashem - he sanctified Hashem's Kingship and Dominion by showing that Hashem is the true King Who reigns over nature. In merit of sanctifying Hashem's kingship and reign, Nachshon appropriately merited the kingship over the Jewish Nation. However, according to R' Meir, *all* the Jewish People were prepared to leap into the water, and all that the Tribe of Binyamin essentially had over their brethren was the trait of alacrity in his service to Hashem. The reward for this trait is, as the Gemara in Brachos (מ"ז ע"ב) tells us, that the one who is swift and enters to pray first, merits to *'take reward corresponding to all who come after him'*, which means that he will be the conduit to transmit and allocate the reward to all who come after him. The Tribe of Binyamin, as well, merited as reward for their alacrity to be the host of the Holy Shechinah, which is the channel through where the flow of blessings comes to the Jewish People.

זרע שמשון פרשתנו אות ז

Letter received in the system

גבורת שמשון סיפורי ילופה

My name is EB. I'm from Buenos Aires, Argentina.

On Sunday, the 16th of Cheshvan, I was davening Shacharis when I began hearing a whistle in my right ear. A couple of hours later, the whistle subsided, but I noticed a significant reduction in my hearing capability.

I consulted an otorhinolaryngologist, who ordered an audiometry test (the images have been viewed by us and are in our system). The diagnosis was confirmed: sudden unilateral hearing loss. He explained that the cause of this condition is often unknown and that approximately 40–50% of people recover their hearing. He prescribed a treatment involving strong corticosteroids for one month to see if it would help.

From the moment this condition began, I resolved to

strengthen my study of the Zera Shimshon. I started printing the Zera Shimshon Meboar each week for study and began sharing his divrei Torah during the week and on Shabbos.

Baruch Hashem, today, after two months since the onset of symptoms, I had another audiometry test (the images have been viewed by us and are in our system), which confirmed that my hearing in the right ear has been fully restored. I am convinced that studying this sefer has been a tremendous merit in Shamayim, contributing to my recovery.

Thank you for all your efforts in disseminating the chiddushim of the Zera Shimshon.

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