

English

בסייעתא דשמיא

Zera Shimshon

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

The Severity of Stealing Even a Most Minimal Sum

כי יגנב איש שור או שה וטבחו או מכרו חמשה בקר ושלם תחת השור וארבע צאן תחת השה (שמות כא לז):

If a man shall steal an ox or a sheep...

The Gemara in Bava Kama (ק"ט ע"א) states the severity of one who steals even a small amount. א"ר יוחנן כל הגזול את חברו שוה פרוטה כאילו נוטל נשמתו ממנו שנאמר כן ארחות כל בוצע בצע את R' Yochanan said: Anyone who robs even the most minimal amount from his fellow, it's as if he took his soul from him. For it is stated, 'Such are the ways of anyone who steals, he takes away the soul of its owner'.

We can understand how R' Yochanan inferred from the Passuk that one who steals is akin to taking away his victim's soul. However, we need to understand how R' Yochanan inferred that it is referring even to one who steals a most minimal amount, and not specifically to one who steals a more significant sum. Furthermore, the amount which would be akin to taking one's soul, should probably be dependent on the victim's financial stability, for the more prosperous one is, the more he would need to lose before it would be considered as if his soul was taken from him. Thus, how can R' Yochanan make a blanket statement, that one who steals even an insignificant amount - no matter the victim's financial standing - is considered as if he stole his victim's soul as well?



The Mishnah in Shabbos (ק"ד ע"א) discusses the prohibition of bruising animals on Shabbos, and says as follows. שמנה שרצים - The eight 'sheratzim' that are mentioned in the Torah, one who traps them or bruises them on Shabbos is liable.

The word שרץ is the term that the Torah uses when referring to the low-lying animals, which either have no legs and move around

by simply slithering along the ground, or have very short legs and thus appear to move around by slithering along. These שמנה שרצים - eight sheratzim that are mentioned in the Torah, is a reference to the specific eight שרצים about whom the Torah points out that their carcasses convey impurity to the one who touches them. For unlike the taller animals whose carcasses all convey impurity, when it comes to the low-lying animals, it is only these specific eight which convey impurity.

The Mishnah clearly teaches that bruising these animals on Shabbos is Biblically forbidden, however it does not explain under which one of the thirty-nine categories of forbidden labor would the act of bruising an animal be considered.

Rashi cites two opinions about how to classify the act of bruising an animal. The first opinion considers the emergence of some of the animal's blood, which occurs when an animal gets bruised, as an act of 'taking the animal's life', for the Passuk (דברים יב כג) says, - for the blood is the life. Hence, the act of bruising an animal and removing some of its blood would accordingly be classified under the prohibition of שוחט - slaughtering. Rashi cites a second opinion which considers the discoloration of the animal's skin, which occurs when getting bruised, as an act of coloring the skin, and consequently classifies the act of bruising under the prohibition of צובע - dyeing. Tosfos clearly states that the first opinion cited by Rashi is more halachically accepted.



We can explain that R' Yochanan gathered his idea, that stealing even the smallest amount is akin to taking away the victim's soul, from the Halacha that eliminating even just a drop of blood

from an animal is classified as 'slaughtering the animal'. For just as a minimal amount of blood cannot make any significant damage to any being's life, but is nevertheless considered tantamount to 'taking its life' - because after all, 'one's blood is his life' - so too, although indeed stealing a minimal amount won't usually bring about any significant loss, nevertheless, because ultimately one's financial stability is key to his subsistence stability, therefore stealing even just a bit of it, is considered as stealing his soul.

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There are four who have to give thanks

At the offices of the World Organization for Spreading the Torah of the Zera Shimshon we received an emotional call in the week of Parshat Yitro 5784. On the other end of the line, we were told by a very excited groom that he had gotten engaged just a couple of months ago, and the story he told us left us in awe. Here's his account of the events:

My two brothers, my sister and I, the youngest of them all, were not each finding their own marriage partner. This, obviously, caused us great suffering. It hurt me to see time go by and my older siblings not getting married. When it was my turn, I saw how many friends my age started getting married and I hadn't even started dating **shiduchim**. No one was suggesting a candidate to me anytime soon, and not even in the distance. How difficult! How much anguish!

By then, I had heard about the wonderful and auspicious study of the book **Zera Shimshon**. I said to myself, "Our family is in a great crisis. I'm going to set up a study of the book **Zera Shimshon** for forty days in a row in favor of seeing our salvation." I got to work right away and that same day I started studying. Forty days went by, during which I studied the **Zera Shimshon** every day in order that my elder brother might find a wife very soon. Indeed, the blessing promised by the author did not disappoint. After forty days of study, my brother got engaged.

Truth be told, I didn't think salvation would come so quickly. I was very surprised. For some reason, perhaps because of so much emotion, I settled for that joy and left the study of the **Zera Shimshon**. However, from Heaven, they did not let me slacken. I saw that several allusions were sent to me from Heaven that I should continue with the study: once a bulletin of the **Zera Shimshon** came into my hands; on another occasion a friend began to speak to me about the greatness of the **segula** of that study; and as well as these many other varied allusions came to me. So, after a short period of hiatus, I decided to continue the study of the **Zera Shimshon** for the sake of my other brother and sister. Just as I had done at the beginning, I did it again now. Sure enough, my brother and sister each found their match and got engaged. After them it was my turn, and I also found my partner and we got engaged. All of this happened within just six months.

These were the words of that bridegroom. The representative of the organization, on our side of the line,

could not help but begin to exclaim: "**Hodu Lashem ki Tov, ki leolam hasdo...**!" But that groom stopped him immediately and said, "Wait a minute! You haven't heard the main part of the story yet." And he went on to tell:

A few days before the **hilullah** of the **Tzaddik**, author of the **Zera Shimshon**, a candidate was suggested to me who seemed compatible with me. After the due initial investigations, we were able to move forward with the proposal. On the 5th of Elul, I met the father of the young woman in the city where I live, in the morning hours. After my future father-in-law got a good impression of me at our meeting, we arranged that I would meet his daughter in the afternoon. After our successful date, my parents and I realized that it might take several days for the girl's parents to finally decide that we can continue. However, how great was our surprise and excitement when, just a few hours later, the **Shadchan** called us to notify us that the girl's parents had given their immediate final consent and that we could "close the deal" even that same night. They said, "For our part, we can make a **L'chaim** toast today in the city of the bridegroom."

And so it was. Extraordinarily, we organized the toast in our home. In a few short hours our house became a whirlwind of arrangements, **hashty** purchases in the evening hours of drinks, snacks, cakes, flower arrangements, etc. The toast was a success and lasted well into the night. With this event, precisely in the early morning of the day of the **hilullah** of the author of the **Zera Shimshon**, the circle was completed, and we, the four siblings, were all either married or engaged. We reliably feel that **Rabbeinu Hakadosh** pressed from Heaven for my engagement, the last of the four, to be fulfilled precisely on the day of his **hilullah**.

Now that you have heard the whole story, you can definitely exclaim with great intent: "**Hodu Lashem ki Tov; ki leolam hasdo!**".

The bridegroom concluded emotionally: "We must thank **Hakadosh Baruch Hu** for having placed among us **Tzaddikim** by whose merits we see endless salvations."

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