



THE LEARNING IS
FOR A MERIT FOR
THE HOLY AUTHOR
OUR TEACHER
HARAV SHIMSHON
CHAIM BEN REB
NACHMAN MICHAEL
NACHMANI.
PASSED AWAY 6
ELUL 5539 (1779)

B'SIYATTA D'SHEMIYAH

ZERA SHIMSHON

Fascinating excerpts and intriguing discourses from the works of the great Gaon and kabbalist Morainu HaRav Shimshon Chaim ben Reb Nachman Michael Nachmani Author of *Zera Shimshon* and *Toldos Shimshon* who lived almost 300 years ago.

HE PROMISED THAT WHOEVER LEARNS HIS WORKS WILL SEE HELP WITH CHILDREN, LONG LIFE, AND PARNASSAH. MANY PEOPLE CAN ATTEST TO THEIR PERSONAL SALVATIONS!

Rosh Hashana

אֶפְשָׁר מֶלֶךְ יוֹשֵׁב עַל כִּסֵּא דִין, וְסִפְרֵי חַיִּים וְסִפְרֵי מָתִים פְּתוּחִין לְפָנָיו, וַיִּשְׁרָאֵל אוֹמְרִים שִׁירָה (ראש השנה לב):

Is it possible that while the King is sitting on the throne of judgment, with the books of life and the books of death open before Him, the Jewish people recite songs of praise? (*Rosh Hashana* 32b)

It is written in the *Gemara* (*Rosh Hashana*) that the *malachim* asked *Hashem*: why don't the Jewish people sing praise to *Hashem* by saying *Hallel* on *Rosh Hashana* and *Yom Kippur*? *Hashem* answered: Is it possible that while the King is sitting on the throne of judgment, with the books of life and the books of death open before Him, the Jewish people recite songs of praise?

The *Zera Shimshon* asks two questions on this *Gemara*.

First, what exactly was bothering the *malachim*? We know that *Hallel* is not said on every occasion — for example, it is not said on *Shabbos*, because there is no specific reason to say it. So why did the *malachim* assume that the Jewish people were supposed to say *Hallel* specifically on *Rosh Hashana*? What obligation were they failing to fulfill by not saying it that caused the *malachim* to criticize them?

Second, what is the meaning of *Hashem*'s answer?

It is written in *Tehillim* (101:1), "I shall sing of kindness and judgment". The *Gemara* in *Berachos* learns from this *possuk* that a person must praise *Hashem* not only when He shows kindness, but also when *Hashem* deals with him harshly. If so, why should the fact that the books of death are open and a person may be facing harsh judgment prevent him from singing praise? Even in such a situation, the *Gemara* teaches that a person should praise *Hashem*.

Zera Shimshon answers that the second question is really the answer to the first. This was precisely the *malachim*'s argument: since we learn from the *possuk* that one must praise *Hashem* for judgment just as for

kindness, the Jewish people should seemingly be obligated to sing praise even on *Rosh Hashana* and *Yom Kippur* even though that they are days of judgement.

Hashem answered that this is indeed true — but only *after* the judgment has been rendered. Once the *din* has been rendered, a person must accept and justify *Hashem*'s judgment and praise Him for it. Whatever *Hashem*'s verdict is, that verdict is given with our best interest in mind. *Hashem* loves us and does only what is truly good for us. But before the verdict is issued, while the case is still open and the *dayan* has not yet ruled, one cannot act as though he has already won. It is *paskened* in *Shulchan Aruch*, *Choshen Mishpat* (9:1), that just as it is *assur* to bribe a *dayan* with money, it is also *assur* to bribe him with words. Therefore, to sing joyous praise at that stage would give the appearance of *shochad*—of trying to curry favor with the Judge before the verdict is issued.

In other words, the praise itself is not the problem, we have to praise *Hashem* for everything He does. The problem here is the *timing*. Once judgment has been rendered, even *din* calls for praise. But while the judgment is still underway, that same praise could appear to be *shochad*—an attempt to influence the judgment.

It might seem a little strange that, according to the *Zera Shimshon*, *Rosh Hashana* is essentially a joyful day that is fitting for the recitation of *Hallel*. This is not the simple impression one usually has when thinking of *Rosh Hashana*. But, the truth is, this is not a novel idea of the *Zera Shimshon*. It is already stated in *Tanach*, in black and white—clear and big like *Kiddush Levana* letters!

The only place in *Nach* where the *Yom Tov* of *Rosh Hashana* is described is in *Nechemiah*, and there it is written:

"Then *Nehemiah*...and *Ezra* ..and the *Levi'im*...said to all the people, 'This day is holy to *Hashem* your God; neither mourn nor weep,' for all the people were weeping when they heard the words of the *Torah*. And he said to them, 'Go, eat fat foods and drink sweet drinks and send portions to whoever has nothing prepared, for the day is holy to our Master, and do not be sad, for the joy of *Hashem* is your strength'. And the *Levi'im* quieted all the people, saying, "Hush, for today is *kadosh*, and do not be sad. Then all the people went to eat and to drink and to send portions and to rejoice greatly, for they understood the words that they informed them of."

Rosh Hashana is the day that we re-coronate *Hashem* as King of the world. We therefore have to look within ourselves and improve whatever needs to be corrected so that we can be the best we can be, so *Hashem* will continue to give us the privilege to be His servants and emissaries. At the same time, there is great joy in recognizing *Hashem's* kingship and having the

opportunity of serving Him. In this sense, *Rosh Hashana* is a day of both introspection and joy.

As this is the last *Zera Shimshon* I will be sending in the year 5786, I want to take this opportunity to thank all of you who learn the *Torah* of *Zera Shimshon*. It means a great deal to know that his *Divrei Torah* are being learned, shared, and passed on.

I wish each and every one of you that, in the *z'chus* of learning the *Divrei Torah* of *Rebbi Shimshon Chaim ben Nachman Michael*, *Hashem* should answer all of your prayers and grant you and your families a *k'siva v'chasima tova*—a year of good health, prosperity, and many, many *besuros tovot*.

May we all merit to see the fulfillment of the final *beracha* of *Zera Shimshon* for those who learn his *Divrei Torah*: "They shall see the glory of *Hashem*, the beauty of our God. And He shall raise a banner to the nations, and He shall gather the lost of Israel," quickly and in our days, *amen*.

(Adapted by *Rabbi Shevach Pepper* from *Zera Shishmon Parshas Emor derush 17*)

HaRav Shimshon Nachmani, author of *Zera Shimshon* lived in Italy about 300 years ago in the time of the *Or HaChaim HaKodesh*

The Chida writes that he was a great *Mekubal* and wrote many *sefarim* including *sefarim* about "practical *kabbalah*" and asked that all of his *sefarim* be buried after he passes away except for *Zera Shimshon* and *Niflaos Shimshon on Avos*.

HaRav Shimshon Nachmani had one child who died in his lifetime (hence the name "*Zera Shimshon*") and in the preface he promises for people who learn his *sefarim* after he dies "... And your eyes will see children and grandchildren like the offshoots of an olive tree around your tables, wise and understanding with houses filled with all manner of good things... and wealth and honor..."

To dedicate a week of *Zera Shimshon* for a *yahrtzeit*, a *zechus* for a *refuah* or *shidduch*, or in honor of a *simcha* — contact:

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