

Zera Shimshon

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



Behar-Bechukotai תשפ"ו • Zera Shimshon - the Limud that brings Yeshuos • 392 אין

אמרות שמשון

Because of sin, we need to work the land

"Speak to the Children of Israel and say to them: 'When you come into the land that I give you, the land shall rest, a Shabbat for Hashem. Six years you shall sow your field and six years you shall prune your vineyard and gather its produce.'" (Vayikra 25:2-3)

It requires analysis that the verse begins in the plural: "when you come," and concludes in the singular: "six years you shall sow your field." Furthermore, one must understand that from the wording of the verse "six years you shall sow," it appears that this is a commandment and an obligation to sow throughout all six years. Why does the verse employ such language, if there is no obligation to sow during the six years, and one may even leave his field fallow if he wishes? The obligation is to let it rest in the seventh year, while in the other years each person may do with his field as he desires.

It can be explained that in the future there will be abundance, and the Children of Israel will not need to exert themselves in any work for their sustenance. So it was also at the beginning of Creation, were it not for the fact that Adam HaRishon sinned and was punished, and it was decreed upon him: "by the sweat of your brow shall you eat bread" (Bereshit 3:19).

The verse thus comes to allude that so it will be in the time when all the Children of Israel are righteous: they will not need to perform any labor at all, and the statement "the land shall rest, a Shabbat for HASHEM" will be fulfilled constantly, for their work will be done by itself, and there will be no need to work the land, just as it will be in the future. Then the land will rest continually, and the Children of Israel will not need to perform any labor.

However, even at that time, if there is among them an individual who does not do the will of HAKADOSH BARUCH HU and is not worthy of this, he is not permitted to refrain from working the land, for he is not deserving that a miracle be performed for him, nor is he permitted to impose himself upon the community. Therefore, he is obligated to exert himself and work; and regarding this the verse states "six years you shall sow your field" in imperative language, for he is obligated in it.

It is also stated in the singular, to allude that even in a time when

for the majority their work is done by others and in a miraculous way, that individual cannot rely on his merit and must work the land himself, for he is not permitted to rely on a miracle nor to impose himself upon the community.

(Zera Shimshon, Parashat Behar, end of article 1)

A person is obligated to love the mitzvot and hate transgressions

"If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments and perform them." (Vayikra 26:3)

It must be analyzed why there is a repetition of three different expressions in the verse: "you shall walk," "you shall keep," and "you shall perform," which seemingly have the same meaning.

Additionally, one must analyze why in the rebuke it does not say the opposite—"If you do not walk in My statutes and do not keep My commandments"—but instead completely changes the language. One must also understand what is written in the rebuke (Vayikra 26:14): "And if you do not listen to Me and do not perform all these commandments," which also appears to be repetitive.

It can be explained that indeed, a person is obligated to love the mitzvot and to hate transgressions. For one who does not have a deeply rooted love in his heart for the mitzvot, even if he does not sin, he will not have the necessary diligence to fulfill them and will not be able to attain purity and perfection. Conversely, one who does not have a firm hatred in his heart toward transgressions is very likely to stumble into sin.

According to this, the verse teaches us the path to achieving perfect fulfillment of the mitzvot, and this is only possible through love of the mitzvot and hatred of transgressions. Therefore, the verse uses the dual expressions "you shall walk" and "you shall keep" to allude to these two aspects: "if you walk in My statutes"—to allude to hatred of transgressions, that he not only refrains from committing them but flees from them, which demonstrates the extent of his rejection; "and you shall keep My commandments"—that he should have a complete love and longing for the mitzvot, "keeping" in the sense of awaiting and yearning, as when Yaakov Avinu heard the dreams that Yosef had, about which the verse says: "and his father kept the matter" (Bereshit 37:11)—; and then, certainly, "you shall perform them," for only in this way does one come to fulfill them properly.

(Zera Shimshon, Parashat Bechukotai, article 3)

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Chapter 5 Mishna 3

"Ten tests our Patriarch Abraham was tested with, and he withstood them all, to make known how great was Abraham's love [for the Creator]."

Abraham Also Withstood Tests He Was Not Obligated to Endure

We must understand why the Tanna felt the need to say "and he withstood them all" — could anyone think that Abraham would not withstand them? And further, why does it say "to make known how great was Abraham's love [for the Creator]" rather than "to make known his merit [for successfully enduring them all]"?

One could explain that, in fact, there were two tests that Abraham was not strictly obligated to endure. In the first, the furnace of Ur Kasdim, there is a disagreement as to whether the Patriarchs were obligated by the Torah's commandments before it was formally given. Therefore, he may not have been obligated to give up his life — since he might still have been considered a *ben Noach* (a descendant of Noah), and as such, it would have been forbidden for him to harm himself, in keeping with the verse (*Bereishit* 9:5) in which

Hashem warns Noah and his descendants: "And surely your blood of your lives will I require."

Also in the final test, the binding of Yitzchak, Abraham could have objected to God: "Yesterday You told me (*Bereishit* 21:12), 'For in Yitzchak shall your seed be called,' and now You say to me (*ibid.* 22:2), 'and offer him there as a burnt offering.'"

Nevertheless, because Abraham saw that his entire generation was sinning through idolatry, he gave up his life out of love for God and in sanctification of His Name. And out of that same love, he also gave over his son Yitzchak. Therefore, the Tanna emphasized "and he withstood them all" to teach that he fulfilled everything God commanded him — even that which he could have been exempt from. And all this was "to make known how great was Abraham's love [for the Creator]," for he was permitted to give up his life out of his great love for God.

Chapter 5 Mishna 6

"And seven traits of the Sage: [...] and regarding what he has not heard, he says: 'I have not heard.'"

Do Not Issue Rulings on One's Own Authority if Not Heard from One's Teacher

It is difficult to understand what the Tanna means when he says that the Sage, concerning something he has not heard, says "I have not heard."

To explain the intent of the Tanna, we must first cite what *Kevod Chachamim* says (in his work *Kevod HaBayit, Sukkah* 28a): "A Sage must not issue a new ruling based on his own

understanding unless he heard it from his teacher. And if his teacher is not available, he must gather other sages to see whether they agree with him."

According to this, the Tanna is teaching us that when a Sage has not heard a teaching from his teacher, he should not rule independently, but rather tell the other sages: "I have not heard this," and therefore, "I need you to deliberate with me in order to decide the law in this case."

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Translated and written by Rabbi Moshe Spira - yomospira@gmail.com

To receive the Seforim of the Zera Shimshon or for sponsorships and donations please contact:

USA - Rabbi Menachem Binyomin Paskesz 347-496-5657 mbpaskesz@gmail.com
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Eretz Yisroel - Rabbi Yisroel Silberberg
052-716-6450 zera277@gmail.com

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