

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.



תשפ"ו Re'eh

• Zera Shimshon - the Limud that brings Yeshuos •

406 עין

אמרות שמשון

A Warning Against Imitating the Nations' Practice of Setting a Table to Strengthen Their Good Fortune

"Take heed lest you be ensnared into following them after they have been destroyed before you, and lest you inquire about their gods, saying, 'How do these nations serve their gods? I, too, will do the same.' You shall not do so to Hashem, your G-d, for every abomination that Hashem hates they performed for their gods; they even burned their sons and their daughters in the fire for their gods." (Devarim 12:29–31)

One may ask why the verse says, "How do these nations serve their gods?", using the present tense. It would seemingly have been more appropriate to say, "How did they serve them?", in the past tense, since the verse is speaking about a time after those nations had already been destroyed, as it continues: "after they have been destroyed before you."

Furthermore, it is difficult to understand why the verse finds it necessary to warn here, "You shall not do so to Hashem, your G-d," when the Torah has already warned against idolatry and prescribed its punishment through the commandments, "You shall have no other gods" and "You shall not bow down to them."

This may be explained as follows.

It was well known that, in those days, the pagan nations were accustomed to setting a table in honor of their *mazal* (fortune), believing that by doing so they would draw good fortune upon themselves.

See what the Beit Yosef writes (Yoreh De'ah, at the end of ch. 179), where he strongly objects to those who customarily prepared a table with various foods on the night before a *brit milah*, believing that this would bring good fortune to the infant who was about to be circumcised. There he writes that

this practice is precisely what the verse refers to as "those who set a table for Gad" (Yeshayah 65:11), adding that this was also Bilam's practice, and therefore it is forbidden to act in this manner.

Based on this, our verse may be understood.

Certainly, when the Children of Israel entered the Promised Land, they would wage war against those nations, defeat them, kill many of their inhabitants, and inherit their land.

Nevertheless, those few who managed to escape and survive, seeing that their fortune had abandoned them, would do everything in their power to regain their good fortune. Following their customary practice, they would set a table in honor of their *mazal*, convinced that this would restore their favorable fortune and enable them to regain their former power. It is precisely against this that the verse issues its warning.

It might happen that the Children of Israel, observing what those nations were doing in order to restore the power of their fortune, would say: "We, too, will do the same—but for the sake of Heaven—in order to strengthen our good fortune and thereby remain in the Land of Israel."

Therefore, the Torah warns: "You shall not do so to HASHEM, your G-d, for every abomination that Hashem hates they performed for their gods."

In other words, the verse here is not speaking about the sin of idolatry itself. Rather, it warns against engaging in superstitious practices, magical rites, and beliefs connected with *mazal*.

This also explains perfectly why the verse states: "Lest you inquire about their gods, saying: 'How do these nations serve their gods?'" Indeed, the verse refers to the concern that the Children of Israel might observe what those nations that survived after the conquest of the Land and managed to escape were doing, as they attempted through various practices to strengthen and restore the influence of their *mazal*.

Against this, the Torah warns them not to imitate their customs.

(Zera Shimshon, Parashat Re'eh, art. 2)

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In Honor of the 6th of Elul, the Hilula of the Zera Shimshon, z"l

We are now just a few days away from the hilula of that holy and exalted tzadik, Rabbeinu Rabbi Shimshon Chaim, son of Rabbi Nachman Michael Nachmani, z"l.

We have merited that, in our generation, many people are connected to his soul and regularly study his Torah teachings, thereby meriting an extraordinary abundance of salvations beyond comprehension. **Fortunate is our portion, and pleasant is our lot!**

Many people ask what else would be appropriate to do for the benefit of the soul of the Zera Shimshon and to bring satisfaction to his spirit, whether as a request for a future salvation or as an expression of gratitude for a salvation already received.

In honor of the day of the hilula, we wish to publicize what we have heard on several occasions while visiting the homes of great rabbis: those whose financial contributions enable more people to study the Torah of the Zera Shimshon merit salvations with even greater force—worthy shidduchim, children, abundant livelihood, nachat from their children, safeguarding and protection, wealth and honor, good counsel, deliverance from legal proceedings, and much more—dews of salvation and blessing.

We therefore turn to you with a heartfelt appeal: Please lend us your support and participate through a regular recurring donation, so that we can meet the considerable expenses involved in disseminating the Torah of the Zera Shimshon!

In this way, you become active partners in the Torah study of tens of thousands of people throughout the world and acquire a share in all the vast and extensive work carried out, with the help of Heaven, by the World Organization for the Dissemination of the Torah of the Zera Shimshon:

The Heichal HaYeshuot Zera Shimshon (Zera Shimshon Hall of Salvations), which operates throughout the year at 10 HaTzvi Street in Jerusalem, where people connect with his soul and study his teachings; numerous classes held regularly before large audiences in the Beit Midrash; **the publication of the works of the Zera**

Shimshon in magnificent editions; the Zera Shimshon HaMevoar publishing project, which provides a genuine means of understanding all of Rabbeinu's teachings; the translation and publication of the works of the Zera Shimshon in a variety of languages; the preparation and weekly distribution of tens of thousands of Zera Shimshon newsletters in eight languages across 26 countries; a network of kollelim whose avreichim regularly study his teachings; the establishment of classes throughout the world; Kol Zera Shimshon, where thousands of classes can be heard in a variety of languages; and the holding of the great hilula gathering and the Sifvotav Dovevot events, attended by thousands of members of the Jewish people.

The merit of an individual performing a mitzvah cannot be compared to that of many people performing it together. Through a regular recurring donation, one can merit joining the multitude participating in this mitzvah and acquire an everlasting partnership in all these tremendous activities undertaken for the elevation of the tzadik's soul.

At this time, the World Organization is working intensively on major projects aimed at increasing the number of people studying Zera Shimshon throughout Jewish communities around the world.

The Zera Shimshon needs your help! With your support, we will be able to continue fulfilling his unique and heartfelt plea.

And in the merit of fulfilling the request of the Zera Shimshon by enabling the masses to merit studying his teachings, you will surely merit that all the blessings of the Zera Shimshon be fulfilled for you and your families:

"May your eyes behold children and grandchildren, like olive shoots around your table, wise and understanding; and homes filled with every good thing. May neither wealth nor honor ever depart from your descendants. Long life, children, children endowed with long life, sustenance, and even more abundant sustenance for those who perform acts of lovingkindness."

At all the hilula gatherings, prayers will be offered for the salvation of the donors, and the donors' names will be given to the great Torah Sages of the generation, who will pray on their behalf while studying the Zera Shimshon.

Your name must be there!

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