

# Zera Shimshon

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



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## אמרות שמשון

### Hashem Does Indeed Complete the Years of The Righteous

ויהיו חיי שרה מאה שנה ועשרים שנה ושבע שנים  
שני חיי שרה (בראשית כג, א):  
**Sarah's lifetime was one hundred years, and twenty years, and seven years; the years of Sarah's life.**

The Midrash [בר"ר נח א] expounds on the Torah's recording of Sarah's age as follows. יהיו חיי שרה מאה שנה. יודע ה' ימי Sarah's - תמימם וכו', כשם שהן תמימים כך שנותם תמימים. *lifetime was one hundred years... The Passuk says 'Hashem knows the days of the perfect', just as the righteous are perfect so are their years perfect.* [i.e. Although the simple meaning of the phrase תמימם ימי is, 'days of the perfect', nevertheless the Midrash interprets it here to mean, 'days that are perfect'].

The 'perfect years' that the Midrash is referring to, is to that which the Gemara in Sotah [יג ע"ב] teaches us regarding the life span of the righteous. ויאמר אליהם בן מאה ועשרים שנה אנכי היום. שאין ת"ל היום, היום מלאו ימי ושנותי, ללמדך שהקב"ה משלים שנותיהם של צדיקים מיום ומחדש *On the day of his death, Moshe told the Jewish people as follows, "I am a hundred and twenty years old today".* Now, it was not necessary for the Torah to say 'today', [i.e. for the meaning would have been the same if Moshe would have simply said, 'I am a hundred and twenty years old']. *Why then did he add 'today'? To tell us, "Today my days and years have been filled. On this day I was born and on this day I shall die".* The Torah saw fit to report this in order to teach you that Hashem completes the years of the righteous from day to day and from month to month, [i.e. Hashem allows the righteous to live out their final year until the very day in which they were born] as it is written that Hashem said, "The number of your days I will complete".

In view of this concept, we need to understand why we

seldom find righteous people dying on the exact date that they were born.



The Mishna in Arachin (לא ע"א) teaches that one who sells his home, located within a walled city, may redeem the house up until an entire year passes from the day of the sale, as the Passuk says, וקם, שנה תמימה. *But if it is not redeemed until a full year has passed from the sale, then the house... shall pass in perpetuity to the one who purchased it.* The Mishnah then discusses what the Torah is alluding to when it says 'a full year'. כשהוא אומר תמימה להביא את חדש העיבור רבי אומר - *When the Passuk states, 'a full year', it is alluding to include the intercalary month of a leap year. But Rabbi says: The phrase 'a full year' comes to give him a year and its intercalary days.*



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The subject in dispute is as follows. The solar year [which is made up of three hundred and sixty-five days] exceeds the lunar year [which is made up of three hundred and fifty-four days] by eleven days.

In order to consistently realign the two calendar years, an intercalary month is inserted into the lunar calendar every few years, making it a leap year. These inserted months allow the lunar calendar to make up the for those years which fell short of the solar calendar by eleven days.

The Sages understood that 'a full year' is alluding to those extra intercalary lunar months. Therefore, if the house was sold during a leap year, the original owner retains redemption rights for a full thirteen months

after the sale date. Rabbi disputes this, and understands 'a full year' to allude to a full solar year, and therefore, irrelevant of whether the house was sold during a leap year or an ordinary year, the original owner retains redemption rights for a full solar year; which is eleven days longer than a regular lunar year.



In view of this idea, we can explain the concept that Hashem 'completes the years of the righteous from day to

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day and from month to month'. For the 'complete years' that it is referring to, are truly complete, as they include the extra eleven days by which the solar year exceeds the lunar year, as well as the intercalary months that are regularly added to the lunar year. In other words, the righteous merit extraordinarily long years. For on the one hand the righteous merit that every year of their lives is calculated to include the eleven extra solar days, while on the other hand, they also merit to the intercalary months which are inserted at intervals into the lunar years. For although those months are only inserted into the shorter lunar years, and the righteous have lived their years according to the solar calendar, nevertheless, in His Mercy, Hashem adds days to the lives of the righteous in every way and method possible.

In light of this, we can understand why the righteous don't die on the very date that they were born, for when taking into account all those extra days and months that are added to their years, their 'complete years' end on a very different date than that of their birthdate.

(זרע שמשון פרשת חיי שרה אות ב)

### ***How Avraham Assured A Respectful Funeral for His Wife Sarah***

**וַיִּקָּם שָׂרָה עֶפְרוֹן אֲשֶׁר בְּמַכְפֵּלָה אֲשֶׁר לְפָנַי מִמְדָּא. הַשְּׂדֵה וְהַמְעָרָה אֲשֶׁר בּוֹ וְכָל הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר בַּשְּׂדֵה אֲשֶׁר בְּכָל גְּבֻלוֹ סָבִיב. לְאַבְרָהָם לְמִקְנָה לְעֵינַי בְּנֵי חַת בְּכָל בְּאֵי שַׁעַר עִירוֹ. וְאַחֲרָי כֵּן קָבַר אַבְרָהָם אֶת שָׂרָה אִשְׁתּוֹ אֶל מְעַרְת שָׂרָה הַמַּכְפֵּלָה עַל פְּנֵי מִמְדָּא הוּא חֶבְרוֹן בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן. (כג, יז-יט):**

***And Efron's field, which was in Machpailah, stood... as Avraham's, as a purchase, in the view of the children of Chais... and after that Avraham buried Sarah, his wife, in the cave of Machpailah...***

It seems interesting that the Torah would need to specifically emphasize that 'after that Avraham buried Sarah, his wife, in the cave of Machpailah', when it would seem obvious that Avraham would bury Sarah in the cave only after buying it from its owner.

Furthermore, the Midrash (נ"ח ט) expounds on this Passuk and says the following. וה"ד רודף צדקה וחסד ימצא חיים צדקה וכבוד. ואחרי כן קבר אברהם. וה"ד רודף צדקה, זה אברהם וכו'. *And after that Avraham buried Sarah, his wife. This is what is alluded to by that which is written, 'One who pursues righteousness and kindness will find life, righteousness and honor'. 'One who pursues righteousness' - is referring to Avraham..., 'and kindness' - this, too, is referring to Avraham who extended kindness to Sarah...*

This Midrash definitely needs explanation, for what does Avraham's kindness to his wife Sarah have to do with this Passuk that says 'and after that Avraham buried Sarah'; for the act of kindness that Avraham did when burying his wife would not be sufficient for the Midrash to praise him about, as that is the basic duty of every husband to his wife. We therefore need to understand; which outstanding act of kindness

did Avraham do for his wife, that the Midrash praises him for?



The Passuk tells us that Avraham requested of the children of Chais, אִם יֵשׁ אֶת נַפְשְׁכֶם לְקַבֵּר אֶת מְתֵי מִלְפָנַי שְׁמַעוּנִי וּפְגַעוּ לִי בַעֲפְרוֹן בֶּן צַחַר. וַיִּתֶּן לִי אֶת אֶרֶץ מַכְפֵּלָה אֲשֶׁר לוֹ וכו'. *"If it is truly your will to bury my dead from before me, hear me, and intercede for me with Efron the son of Zochar. Let him grant me the Cave of Machpailah which is his..."*. The simple meaning of Avraham's request of לי ופגעו לי is that Avraham requested of them to intercede with Efron on his behalf. The Midrash (נ"ח ט) expounds on this request and explains it as if it were to mean that he requested of them to meet Efron. אִם יֵשׁ אֶת נַפְשְׁכֶם פְּגַעוּנִי לִי סַרְסוּרִי לִי וְאִם לֹא צְלוּ לִי. *"If it is truly your will to bury my dead from before me, hear me, and meet with Efron on my behalf to discuss my procuring his plot and act as a middleman with him to make a deal for me, and if he is not willing to sell his field to me, implore him on my behalf"*. This elucidation of the Midrash needs clarification, for one only needs to take a middleman when he wants to negotiate on the price; why would Avraham request of them to act as middlemen when we see later on that Avraham was ready to pay for the lot any amount that Efron would request of him and he didn't attempt at all to negotiate on the price? Furthermore, one never needs more than one middleman, whereas Avraham asked this entire tribal family, the children of Chais, to act as middlemen on his behalf. Why the need for so many middlemen?

We can explain that in truth Avraham had no need for any middlemen at all, and definitely had no need for a whole family of middlemen; when Avraham requested of them to act on his behalf as middlemen, his intention in this request was only that they be around and available to participate in Sarah's funeral and to escort her to her final resting place, for once they shut their businesses to be available to act on Avraham's behalf as middlemen, they would stay on to give Sarah her proper respect.



Accordingly, we can understand what the Torah meant to imply by emphasizing that 'after that Avraham buried Sarah, his wife...'. For the preceding Passukim tell us how Avraham bought the Cave of Machpailah from Efron in the presence of the children of Chais; thereby indicating that the children of Chais were all standing there during that purchasing ceremony, and immediately after the ceremony, while they were all still standing there, Avraham buried Sarah in their presence, thereby giving Sarah a most befitting and respectful funeral.

We can thus also understand the Midrash that praises Avraham's pursuit of kindness and associates Avraham's kindness to his wife, Sarah, with the Passuk, 'And after that Avraham buried Sarah, his wife'; as this is the very act of kindness that the Midrash is referring to, that Avraham went out of his way to ensure a proper and respectful funeral for Sarah.

(זרע שמשון פרשת חיי שרה אות ה)

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