

Zera Shimshon

Profound Divrei Torah culled from the writings of the Gaon and Mekubal Rav Shimshon Chaim ben Rav Nachman Michael Nachmani zy"z, 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"ה Ki Sisa

• Zera Shimshon - the Limud that brings Yeshuos •

עלין 333

אמרות שמשון

Understanding The Discrepancy Between the Two Sets of Tablets

וְאַתָּה דַּבֵּר אֶל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר אַךְ אֶת שַׁבָּתִתִּי תִשְׁמְרוּ כִּי אוֹת הוּא בֵּינִי וּבֵינֵיכֶם לְדַרְתֵּיכֶם לְדַעַת כִּי אֲנִי ה' מְקַדְּשְׁכֶם: (שמות ל"א, י"ג)

And you speak to the Children of Israel, saying, "Observe my Shabbos, for it is a sign between Me and you for your generations, to know that I am Hashem, Who sanctifies you".

The Gemara in Shevuos (כ"ג) discusses a discrepancy which we find in the wording of the mitzvah of Shabbos which is written in the Ten Commandments. In the Ten Commandments which were written on the first set of tablets, and are quoted in Parshas Yisro, the Torah writes זָכוֹר - **Remember the Shabbos day**. This is a reference to a positive commandment; hence, it is a commandment to honor Shabbos by performing certain distinct deeds and actions on the day of Shabbos. However, in the Ten Commandments which were written on the second set of tablets, and are quoted in Parshas Va'eschanan, the Torah says, שָׁמֹר אֶת יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת - **Guard the Shabbos day**. This is a reference to a negative commandment, which would thus infer a commandment to honor Shabbos by refraining from doing certain mundane deeds and actions on Shabbos. The Gemara finds this hard to comprehend; since both sets of tablets were the exact words and commandments that Hashem gave over to the Jewish People at Sinai, which word did Hashem indeed use when giving over this commandment?

The Gemara goes on to explain it as follows. זָכוֹר ושְׁמֹר דִּבְרוּר. The Gemara goes on to explain it as follows. *The Commandments to 'Remember the Shabbos day' and to 'Guard the Shabbos day', were pronounced by Hashem in a single utterance, something that the human mouth cannot utter and*

the human ear cannot hear. The Sages thus teach us that, indeed, Hashem miraculously uttered both versions simultaneously.

We still need to understand, however, why the Torah specifically chose the first Tablets to cite the mitzvah of Remembering to honor Shabbos by performing honorable actions, while in the second Tablets it chose to cite the mitzvah of Guarding Shabbos by refraining from doing everyday actions?



The Gemara in Avodah Zara (ה"א) states the following virtue and advantage that the first set of tablets had over the second set. לא רבי יוסי אומר, לא קיבלו ישראל את התורה אלא כדי שלא יהא מלאך המות שולט בהן, שנאמר, אני אמרתי אלהים אתם ובני עליין כלכם, חבלתם. R' Yose said: *The Jewish Nation accepted the Torah only so that the Angel of Death should not prevail over them, as the Passuk in Tehillim states, 'I said: You are angelic, sons of the most high'. However, you have corrupted your deeds through worshipping the golden calf, and therefore the Passuk continues, 'but like men you shall die'.*



In view of this concept, we can understand the discrepancy that the Torah established between the mitzvah of Shabbos that was commanded before the Jewish People sinned with the golden calf and was written in the first tablets, and the mitzvah of Shabbos which was commanded after they sinned with the golden calf and was written in the second set of tablets.

Before the Jewish People sinned with the golden calf, they were on a most high angelic level, and thus had no need to work even on the weekdays, for all their physical needs were prepared for them by others. This is a state to which the Jewish Nation will return once again in the Messianic era, as the Prophet Yeshaya (ה) describes, *Foreigners will stand and tend to your flocks*. Furthermore, they had no need to eat and drink, as that is a most earthly and mortal function of which angelic beings have no need to partake. Therefore, at that point in

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time, the most prominent distinction between Shabbos and a typical weekday would not have been with regard to the prohibited actions, for in their angelic level they would not have had any association with any of those affairs, even during the weekday. Rather, the distinction would have primarily been by the performance of honorable actions in the honor of Shabbos. Hence, at that time, the Torah commanded us **זכור את יום השבת** - **Remember the Shabbos day**, which is a reference to honor Shabbos by performing distinct honorable deeds.

On the other hand, after the Jewish People sinned with the golden calf, they reverted to their mortal state, and returned to their earlier status of needing to work hard in order to provide the materialistic needs and provisions for themselves and their families. Therefore, going forward, the primary distinction of Shabbos would be refraining from the work with which they are occupied the entire week. Hence, from the time on, the Torah commands us **שמור את יום השבת** - **Guard the Shabbos day**, which is a reference to honoring the Shabbos by refraining from doing the mundane on Shabbos.

(זרע שמשון פרשתנו אות ד)

How Hashem's Promise to Give the Land to The Jewish People Protected Them from Annihilation

זָכַר לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק וּלְיִשְׂרָאֵל עֲבָדֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ לָהֶם בְּךָ וּתְדַבֵּר אֱלֹהִים אֲרֻכָּה אֶת זֶרְעֲכֶם כְּכֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְכָל הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת אֲשֶׁר אֲמַדְתִּי אֲתָן לְזֶרְעֲכֶם וְנָחֳלוּ לְעֹלָם (שמות ל"ב י"ג)

Remember Avraham, Yitzchak and Yisrael Your servants, that You swore to them by Your very Self, and You told them, "I shall increase your offspring like the stars of the heavens, and the entire land of which I spoke, I shall give to your offspring and they shall have it as a heritage forever".

After the Jews sinned with the Golden Calf, Hashem told Moshe, "Let My anger burn against them and I shall annihilate them". Moshe then prayed on his Nation's behalf, and beseeched Hashem to remember that which He swore to the forefathers, that *'He will increase their offspring like the stars of the heavens, and that He will give the entire land of which He spoke to their offspring'*.

We can understand why Moshe would plead that Hashem remember that which He swore 'that He will increase their offspring like the stars of the heavens', for that itself was a reason why Hashem should forgive the Jews and not annihilate them. But what benefit was there for Hashem to remember that He swore to give the entire land to the Jews? On the contrary, their sin itself was a reason that they should no longer be worthy of receiving the Land.



The Mishnah in Kiddushin (ס"ט) teaches us the following Halacha. האומר *If one says to a women, "You are betrothed to me on condition that I will give you two hundred zuz", the law is that this women is betrothed to him, and*

he shall give it to her. [The Gemara goes on to discuss the meaning of these last words, 'and he shall give it to her'.] יתן רב והוא אמר ויהא יתן רב יהודה אמר לכשיתן וכו'. מאי בנייהו איכא בנייהו שפשטה ידה וקבלה קידושין מאחר. לרב Rav Huna said, *this means that he should give her the money whenever he wishes. Once he pays her, the betrothal takes effect retroactively from the time that he performed the marriage act. But Rav Yehudah said, it means that when he gives her the money, the betrothal takes effect; it does not take effect retroactively... What is the practical difference between these two opinions? The difference between them is with regard to a case in which the woman extended her hand and accepted a betrothal proposal from another man before the original suitor gave her the two hundred zuz. According to Rav Huna, the betrothal of the second man is not valid, while according to Rav Yehudah, it is valid.* [i.e. According to Rav Huna, the first man's betrothal takes effect retroactively, preempting the betrothal of the second man. According to Rav Yehudah, however, the first man's betrothal goes into effect only after he actually gives the two hundred zuz, and thus, since the second man betrothed the women before this money was given, the second man's betrothal is valid.]



When Hashem gave the Torah to the Jewish Nation, it was, so to speak, an act of betrothal, through which the Jewish People were bound to Hashem and his Torah. Correspondingly, when Hashem told our forefathers that He would give the Land to their offspring, it was as if He betrothed the Jewish Nation on condition that He would give them that Land.

Accordingly, we can explain why Moshe found it important to mention Hashem's promise to give the Land to the Jewish People when beseeching Hashem to forgive the Jews for the sin of the golden calf. Because the giving of the Land to the Jewish people was a condition upon which their betrothal and bond to the Torah was dependent, therefore, at least according to Rav Yehudah, so long that Hashem did not give them the Land, they were essentially not yet 'betrothed' to Him. Hence, the Jewish People were not yet committed to the Torah, and thus Hashem could not hold their sins against them, and could not be angry at them.

And even according to Rav Huna, whose opinion is that when the Land would eventually be given to them the betrothal would be effective retroactively, and as a result the Jewish people were indeed bound to the Torah and obligated to keep its laws even before receiving the Land, nevertheless, Moshe claimed that because Hashem swore to our forefathers to give the Land to the Jewish People, He was still obligated to do so even after they sinned. Accordingly, Moshe asserted, once they would enter the Holy Land that in itself would suffice to bring upon them forgiveness, as the Passuk in Parshas Haazinu (ל"ב כ"ג) says, *and His land will atone for His people*, as well as the Passuk in Yeshaya (ל"ג כ"ד) says, *The people dwelling there shall be forgiven of sin.*

(זרע שמשון פרשתנו אות יח)

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