

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.



אמור תש"פ • Zera Shimshon - the Limud that brings Yeshuos •

גליון 85

How The Descendants Of Eisav Were Able To Defeat King Shaul

וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה אָמַר אֶל הַכֹּהֲנִים בְּנֵי אַהֲרֹן וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם לִנְפֹשׁ לֹא יִטְמָא בְעַמְּיָו (ויקרא כא א)

Hashem said to Moshe,
"Say to the Kohanim, the sons of Aharon..."

The Midrash (ילקוט שמעוני רמז תרכו) expounds on this Passuk as follows. מלמד שהראה הקב"ה למשה, דור דור ודורשיו, דור דור ושופטיו, דור דור ומלכיו, והראהו את שאול ואת בניו נופלים בחרב. אמר לפניו, רבש"ע, מלך ראשון שיעמוד על בניך ידקר בחרב. אמר לו הקב"ה, ולי - אתה אומר, אמור אל הכהנים שהרג שמקריגין אותו. Hashem showed Moshe all of the future Leaders, Judges and Kings that He will appoint over the Jewish Nation. Hashem also showed Moshe how King Shaul and his children will fall to the enemy's sword. Moshe told Hashem, "The first King that You anoint over Your children shall be slain with the enemy's sword?" Hashem responded, "To me you say this? 'Say to the Kohanim' whom he killed, and who accuse him". [Ed note: We need to realize that King Shaul was of the greatest of our People, and it is beyond our comprehension to understand why he felt it was permitted and even necessary for him to kill the Kohanim, nevertheless, according to his level of greatness, Hashem did consider it a sin.]

We need to understand what it was that troubled Moshe. Moshe asked, 'The first King that You anoint over Your children shall be slain with the enemy's sword?'. It seems that he was only disturbed because it was Shaul, who was the first anointed king, that was slain by the enemy's sword. Why would he be less bothered if it was the second or third king, or if he was slain in any other manner other than by the enemy's sword?

Additionally, we need to understand Hashem's response. For Hashem's reply, 'Say to the Kohanim whom he killed, and who accuse him', implies that it was only because of the accusation of the Kohanim whom he killed that Shaul deserved to be slain. Why would he not deserve to be punished for the sin itself, even without their accusation?

The commentaries discuss why it was specifically the tribe of Binyamin who merited to have one of its own tribe members, King Shaul, to be anointed as the very first king over the Jewish People. They explain it as follows. After Yaakov left Lavan's home, he made his way back to his father. On the way, he and his children met his brother Eisav, and in order to appease him they bowed to him in an expression of honor. At that moment when they bowed to Eisav, they had essentially subjugated themselves to him, and no longer had the ability to take away reign over the land from his descendants. Only Binyamin, who was not born at that time and therefore never bowed before Eisav, was able to take their reign away and bring it over to Yaakov's descendants.

When Yitzchok blessed Eisav before he passed away ועל חרבך תחיה, he said, (בראשית כ"ז מ) - By your sword shall you live. What bothered Moshe was; how can it be that Shaul, who merited to take the reign from the descendants of Eisav due to his being a descendant of Binyamin who never bowed and subjugated himself to Eisav, will be slain by Eisav's descendants over whom he had essentially defeated.

Furthermore, the Zohar (פרשת בלק) tells us that when Hashem offered the Torah to Eisav's descendants they told Him that they, who live by their sword, cannot accept the Torah, which clearly prohibits killing people. Rather, they told Hashem, let Him offer the Torah to the descendants of Yaakov. Hashem asked them, "How can I [so to speak] convince Yaakov's descendants to accept the Torah?" To which

they replied, "Bequeath them a portion of our blessing, so that they too can use the sword, at least when punishing those who deserve to die". Accordingly, Moshe was additionally bothered; how can it be that Eisav's descendants, who granted at least partial rights over the sword to the Jewish People, should be able to use the sword to slay Shaul, who was anointed king over the Jewish People?

To this Hashem replied, "Say to the Kohanim whom he killed, and who accuse him", with which He was alluding to the following. When Shaul slayed the Kohanim unlawfully, he had essentially used the power of Eisav. By doing so, he had submitted to Eisav's power, in direct contrast to his grandfather Binyamin, who had never submitted to Eisav. As such, in accordance to his



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own actions, he no longer deserved the kingship which he only inherited due to his grandfather never having deferred to Eisav. And although his grandfather's merit was not diminished, nevertheless because the Kohanim whom he slayed were accusing him, their accusations towards him overpowered his grandfather's merits, and thus Eisav's descendants were able to overcome him. Additionally, because he unlawfully used Eisav's sword to slay the Kohanim, he himself deserved to be slain by Eisav's sword, as well.

(זרע שמשון פרשתנו אות א)

The Severity of Not Receiving Forgiveness after Causing Pain to Another

This week's Parsha, Parshas Emor, discusses all of the Yomim Tovim, and mentions the Yom Tov and atonement of Yom Kippur as well. Therefore, the Zera Shimshon feels it proper to discuss a very important lesson in regards to one achieving atonement for his sins.

In the Sefer Shmuel (שמואל א' כח טו), we find an incident which occurred on the eve of a major battle that the Jewish Nation, with Shaul at their head, was to wage against the Philistines. Shaul was deeply afraid, and desperately sought Heavenly counsel. When Hashem ignored his entreaties, Shaul enlisted a forbidden medium, the witch of Endor, to achieve communication with the spirit of the Navi Shmuel, who had just recently passed away. The Gemara in Brochos (יב ע"ג) quotes a Passuk from that dialogue between Shmuel and Shaul, and learns the following important lesson.

Anyone who commits a sin and is embarrassed of it, is forgiven for all his sins, as seen from the following. It is stated: 'And Shmuel said to Shaul, "Why did you disturb me, to raise me up?" Shaul replied "I am in great distress, and the Philistines are at war against me; Hashem has turned away from me and does not answer me anymore, neither through the hand of the prophets nor in dreams, so I called upon you to inform me what I should do.' Now, Shaul did not mention the fact that he was not answered through the Urim VeTumim [a slip of parchment upon which was written the unutterable name of Hashem and was inserted into the breastplate worn by the Kohen Gadol, through which one was able to seek Heavenly guidance] as well, and this is because he was embarrassed of the fact that he had killed the residents of Nov, the city of Kohanim [after accusing them falsely of knowingly aiding an enemy of the king, which indeed was an act of treason punishable by death], and therefore didn't feel comfortable telling Shmuel that Hashem hadn't answered him through the Kohen Gadol who wore the Urim VeTumim either, as that might prompt Shmuel to reply that this was Shaul's just compensation for having ordered the execution of the Kohanim of

the city of Nov. The Gemara continues on and concludes its proof that one who is embarrassed about his sins is forgiven. And from where do we know that he was forgiven by Heaven for his sins? For it is stated: 'And Shmuel said to Shaul "Tomorrow you and your children will be with me", which although primarily was informing Shaul that he and his sons would be killed the next day in battle and would join Shmuel in the Next World, nevertheless, Reb Yochanan said that these words of Shmuel also allude to the fact that Shaul would join Shmuel in his enclosure in Gan Eden. Since Shaul was destined to enter the enclosure in Gan Eden that was occupied by the great Navi Shmuel, his sin of killing the Kohanim of Nov must have been forgiven.



The Navi (שמואל ב' כא א) speaks about a three-year-long famine that the Jews suffered from a short time after Shaul's death, and relates as follows. *In the days of Dovid there was a famine for three years..., Dovid inquired of Hashem, and Hashem said "It is for Shaul (i.e. as a punishment for that which the nation has not mourned him sufficiently after his tragic death in battle, for despite Shaul's shortcomings, he was nevertheless of the greatest and most righteous men) and for Shaul having killed the Givonim. The Gemara in Yevamos (ע"ג ע"ב) explains that although we don't find anywhere that Shaul killed any Givonim, nevertheless, since the Givonim were dependent upon the Kohanim of the city of Nov for their food and basic sustenance, therefore when Shaul killed the Kohanim of Nov, he in effect deprived the Givonim of their sole source of support, and it was thus considered as if Shaul had actually killed them.*

The commentaries ask; if Hashem forgave Shaul for his sin in killing the Kohanim of Nov, how can it be that, nevertheless, Hashem punished the Jews on account of Shaul causing the Givonim to lose their source of income, which in essence was only an offshoot of the sin of killing the Kohanim of Nov, for which Shaul had already been forgiven?



We can answer this question as follows. The Mishnah in Yevamos (פ"ג ע"ב) teaches us the following in regards to the severity of hurting another person. *For sins between man and Hashem, Yom Kippur atones, but for sins between man and his fellow, Yom Kippur does not atone until he appeases his fellow. Because Shaul never asked forgiveness from the Givonim for having caused them to lose their source of their livelihood, therefore, although Shaul's sin of killing the Kohanim of Nov was forgiven in respect to his offense to Hashem, nevertheless, in regards to his offense to the Givonim, because he never got their forgiveness, it still remained un-forgiven; hence, the drastic punishment of the Jews suffering through a three-year-long famine.*

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