

# 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.



## How Being Scattered Across the Globe Throughout Our Many Years in Exile Was To Our Benefit

וְהִיא שְׁעֵמֶדָה לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ וְלָנוּ שֶׁלֹּא אֶחָד בְּלִבָּד עָמַד עָלֵינוּ לְכַלּוֹתֵנוּ, אֲלֵא שְׁבָכָל דּוֹר וָדוֹר עוֹמְדִים עָלֵינוּ לְכַלּוֹתֵנוּ וְהַקְדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא מְצִילֵנוּ מִיָּדָם.

*It is that pledge to Avraham Avinu that has sustained our forefathers and us; that it has not been merely one nation who has risen up against us determined to destroy us. Rather, in every generation they rise up against us to destroy us, but Hashem always rescues us from their hands.*

The simple reading of this passage in the Haggadah clearly appears to be conveying that this itself 'that it has not been merely one nation who has risen up against us determined to destroy us' is what 'sustained our forefathers and us'. It would seem that the Haggadah is implying to us, that only because of Hashem's pledge to Avraham at the covenant, that He would watch over the Jewish people and protect them from all the nations that will rise up against them, did He exile them, scattered, across many lands. Consequently, it was not



merely one nation who stood up against the Jewish people; rather it was many host-nations who had the ability to do so.

This idea appears to be quite difficult to comprehend, for how can it be that it would be safer and more secure for the Jewish people to be scattered across many lands and to consequently have to confront many host-nations rising up against them, rather than to be exiled together to one land and to confront only one single host-nation who would seek to destroy them.



The Gemara in Pesachim (פ"ד ע"ג) brings the following. R' Oshaya said: "What is the meaning of that which Devorah and Barak praised Hashem, upon their miraculous victory over the army of Sisra, when they said as follows; צְדָקַת פְּרוּזוֹנוֹ - 'They will recount the righteous deeds that Hashem performed, for His open cities in Israel'. [According to its literal

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translation, the Passuk predicts that the Jewish people will thank Hashem for being able to live securely in open and un-walled cities.] *This Passuk can be interpreted* [through transposing the letters ר and ז in the word פרוזנו - His open cities, and thus yielding the word פזרונו - He scattered them] *to mean that Hashem performed a righteous deed with the Jews in that He scattered them among the nations". This was a point that was mentioned in the following conversation, in which a certain apostate said to R' Chanina, "We are better than you.*

*Concerning you it is written, (מלכים א' י"א ט"ז) כי ששת חדשים ישב שם וגו' - 'For six months the Jews stayed there until they had destroyed all the males of Edom. But as for us, you have been with us for many years and we have not done anything to you". R' Chanina responded to him, "With your consent, I will let one of my students reply". R' Oshaya*

*then came forward and responded to the apostate and said; "You have not eliminated the Jews only because you do not know how to do it! If you were to say 'Let us destroy all of them', that option would be ruled out because not all the Jews are under your control, for they are scattered among several nations, and if you were to decide to kill only those who are under your control, that option would be ruled out as well, because through the efforts of the Jews who would survive in other countries, you will be called a genocidal*

*government, and your reputation will be tarnished". Upon hearing his reply, the apostate said, "I swear by the wall of the Romans that it is with this thought that we go up and down, as we constantly grapple with this very dilemma".*



According to this notion we can understand why it was indeed more secure for the Jewish People to have always been scattered and dispersed across many lands throughout their years in exile, and how this was actually part of Hashem's master plan in protecting His chosen and beloved people. For had the entire Jewish nation all been exiled to one land, their host-nation would have been much more motivated and prepared to annihilate them, and only because no single nation has ever hosted the Jewish nation in its entirety did they never actually destroy us.



We can now truly appreciate the passage of the Haggadah where we say, *שהיא שעמדה לאבותינו ולנו, שלא אחד, שלא אחד, - It is that pledge to Avraham Avinu that has sustained our forefathers and us; that it has not been merely one nation who has risen up against us determined to destroy us, for it was indeed only in the merit of Hashem's pledge to Avraham Avinu that we were exiled to many lands, and were thus confronted throughout our years in exile by the many host-nations who were constantly rising up, trying to destroy us.*

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