

Zera Shimshon Revisited

Rabbi Nachman Seltzer

I have written many articles over the years. Hundreds of articles. Many of them have made an impact Boruch Hashem. Once in a while however, I'm zoche to write something whose effect lingers and doesn't go away. Such was the story about the sefer Zera Shimshon. Seven years ago a friend of mine approached me in Ramat Beit Shemesh. If I'm not mistaken we were standing in front of the Gra shul at the time. If I'm not mistaken, he told me the story on a Friday night. He said that he had a story to tell me. It was about his father-in-law. He had been sick. Diagnosed with a dreaded illness. One day, a friend of his, the owner of the seforim store in Manchester told him about a sefer where the mechaber promises great blessings to those who study his works. It was called Zera Shimshon. My friend's shver took the sefer home and began to learn from it. He had a yeshua almost instantaneously.

At the time, I quoted from the bracha that the author of the sefer bestows on those who study his sefer... "And your eyes will see children and grandchildren like the offshoots of an olive tree around your tables, wise and understanding with houses filled with all manner of good things... and wealth and honor....." and the blessings continue. It really is quite a promise.

Zera Shimshon and it's sister sefer Toldos Shimshon were written by Rav Shimshon Chaim Nachmani z'l, a Sephardic talmid chochum and tzadik who passed away without a child in the world to keep his memory alive. For years nobody learned these seforim. Barely anyone even knew about them. Besides, they were written in an old fashioned, hard to make out font that was extremely difficult to read. But after the article about the sefer was printed in Hamodia back in 2007, the world awoke. Suddenly everyone wanted a copy of the sefer. Suddenly it became almost impossible to acquire the Zera Shimshon because people had bought them all. The sefer had gone from something that nobody knew about, to something that everyone wanted. It was incredible to see.

But it didn't end there. Months passed, then years, and people still called me up and emailed me, asking me, almost begging me for details about the sefer. I told them to get in touch with Rav Wagschal from Williamsburg, because his was the contact name and number on the flyleaf. The number was an old one – six digits in all, although Rav Wagschal's address was included. It seemed that those who wanted to possess a copy of

the Zera Shimshon would have to work a that much harder to get it. Five years passed. Still people got in touch, wanting to know to track down the sefer. I heard that it had been reprinted. More then once. And had been sold out again and again. But I had nothing really concrete to tell them. And then, suddenly, everything changed.

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I visited the States early in the summer of 2013. My wife and I were visiting my editor from Hamodia, when my phone rang.

“Hello?”

“Is this Rabbi Seltzer?”

“Speaking.”

“Sholom Aleichem, my name is Binyomin Paskesz and I live in Williamsburg.” Rabbi Paskesz had been trying to track me down. He called my home number in Israel and was informed that I was currently in the States.

“Are you the one who wrote the article about the Zera Shimshon back in 2007?”

“Yes.” My first reaction being that here was another individual who wanted to know where they could purchase the sefer.

“Rabbi Seltzer, I’m one of the people involved in making the Zera Shimshon accessible to the public. People still talk about the article you wrote so many years ago. It’s time for a follow up piece.”

“What do you mean?”

“You have no idea how many miracles have happened to people because they started learning this sefer!”

“Really?”

“I can tell you story after story.”

This was great news. I had never been able to forget about the Zera Shimshon because people were constantly reminding me with their phone calls. But other then that first story that happened in Manchester, I hadn’t had additional personal confirmation about the power that Rav Nachmani’s sefer and promise possessed. Here however was a man who had much to share.

“When can I see you?”

“We can meet in Boro Park tonight,” I told him. We met that evening and Rabbi Paskesz presented me with the newest edition of both Zera Shimshon and Toldos Shimshon. He was overflowing with stories about

these very special seforim and I could see how important he felt they were for the benefit of Klal Yisroel.

“You have to write another piece about this sefer.” He was very insistent. “It’s imperative that everyone knows how amazing this is!”

“Tell me then, how did it all begin?”

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“The story began over twenty one years ago in Williamsburg. Rav Naftali Elimelech Wagschal shlita had been married for over seven years at the time and was waiting desperately for a yeshuah. It was Shabbos afternoon when he discovered the sefer in one of the local Williamsburg shteiblach. It was a version of the Zera Shimshon that had been printed by a chashuve Yid named Reb Reuven Sharf many years earlier. The sefer was old and faded, but the inscription and promise of the author jumped out at him with the force of thunder and he knew that he’d struck gold. Excited beyond words, Rav Wagschal visited the Kasho Rav zatzal, to ask his advice. He showed the rav the sefer and the author’s bracha and asked the him whether he should invest the time and resources necessary to reprint the Zera Shimshon in a format that would allow the average individual to understand and connect with the sefer. The Rav encouraged Rav Wagschal in this formidable task and instructed him to collect money from people who had not yet been blessed with children, to turn the cause into a reality.

The task was long and arduous.

It would take Rav Wagschal four years and fifty eight thousand dollars until the first thousand copies were ready for distribution.

But there is something hidden within the sefer that draws people to it. That makes them want and desire in their homes. Since that first reprinting, Rav Wagschal has reprinted the set of Zera Shimshon another four times for a total of five thousand sets. He is now working on another version, one in which the sefer will be divided into four sections instead of two which will make it even easier to learn from.

And by the way, the Wagschal’s have been blessed with a large family Boruch Hashem.

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Many people have learned from the sefer and were blessed with children. A young couple from Boro Park were desperate for a child when they heard about the sefer and Rav Nachmani’s promise to intercede on their

behalf. The husband learned from the sefer for a year and they were blessed with their bechor on the sixth of Elul, which just happens to be the yahrtzeit of Rav Nachmani, the author of the Zera Shimshon!

Time passed and the couple began longing for another child. The husband was mekabel to learn from the sefer for another year and was blessed with son number two nine months later.

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But the segula doesn't only work when it comes to having children. There was a twenty eight year old bochur from New York who was having extreme difficulty finding a shiduch. Everything was stuck. It was as if the lines to heaven were down. Nothing worked. One day he heard about the sefer and the author's promise. He began learning from the sefer, hoping for a yeshua. Three months later he was engaged.

Another bochur who was twenty four years old had been listening to shiduchim for years. It was like there was a brick wall between him and his wedding. The family had spoken to everyone and tried everything. Then he heard about the Zera Shimshon. Started learning the sefer. Two weeks later he was a choson.

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Rav Wagschal had a neighbor who had been married for four years and hadn't yet been blessed with children. One day the two neighbors happened to get into conversation and the man asked Rav Wagschal for advice.

"Here's what I suggest," Rav Wagschal said. "Buy two boxes of Zera Shimshon, twenty sets in all, and distribute them in different shuls all over Williamsburg. The man listened to him. He purchased the sets of seforim and made his rounds to twenty different Williamsburg shuls where he left a set of Zera Shimshon in each one. Three months later he called Rav Wagschal with the good news. But the simcha didn't end there. Today he's the father of a large family Boruch Hashem."

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I sat next to Rabbi Paskesz in the Aguda of 18th Ave after Maariv was over that night and listened to him as he told me story after story – as he extolled the tremendous gift bestowed upon Klal Yisroel by Rav Shimshon

Nachmani. It boggled the imagination. I had written a story years earlier. People read it around the world. The Jewish people are not like other nations. We are kadosh - holy, we are maaminim bnei maaminim and we take these things seriously. People rushed to possess the Zera Shimshon. I knew that it had been reprinted, that there was a demand for a sefer that had been forgotten, that had never truly quieted down. But I hadn't known of the miraculous stories... of the miracles that had been taking place all over the world....

"And it's not just stories about people experiencing difficulties having children or finding their bashert," Rabbi Paskesz went on, "Zera Shimshon is a major segula for people with health issues as well."

"Give me an example."

"Well the first time you wrote about Zera Shimshon, it was a story about a man from Manchester who was sick and needed a refuah sheleima."

"Other than that story, I mean."

"I can tell you a tremendous story that I heard recently."

"Go on."

"A middle aged couple from New York went to the doctor to show him a growth that had suddenly appeared on the wife's nose. The doctor took it very seriously and sent her for consultations with some very fine doctors, all experts in the field. All concurred that they needed to operate. They agreed upon a tentative date for the operation and at the same time, the husband decided to begin learning Zera Shimshon. Four weeks later the couple returned to the specialist for the final check up before the scheduled surgery and when the doctor examined the wife, he couldn't believe his eyes.

"I don't know what happened since the last time we saw one another, but everything has changed. There is no growth and no reason for surgery. It's a miracle!"

The only unusual element in those dramatic few weeks was the fact that the husband had begun learning Zera Shimshon. Take it as you wish.

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A young man living in Monroe had been married for four years and still didn't have children. Somewhere along the line he was introduced to Rav Wagschal who asked him to donate one thousand dollars which would give him the sponsorship of one parsha in the first renewed version of the Zera Shimshon. He agreed. One month later the young family's situation had completely turned around. Today this man is father to nine children.

He donated three hundred dollars as a deposit in honor of his mother's yahrtzeit for the latest reprinting of the sefer and hopes to donate a lot more when they are ready to go to print.

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But it doesn't even stop there.

A couple with four children were experiencing issues with their sholom bayis when the husband began helping to distribute Toldos Shimshon to different shuls around their neighborhood. Their yeshuah was not long in coming.

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Who says that the sefer is meant just for people who are undergoing a hardship if some kind," continued Rabbi Paskesz. "I know businessmen, successful businessmen in our community, people who are involved in mega deals, who are makpid to learn from the Zera Shimshon before finalizing the details of their contracts. They tell me that doing so brings them great success.

After your original article on the Zera Shimshon was published, a couple read the story in the newspaper, went out and purchased the sefer and saw a yeshua not long afterwards. Today they are the proud parents of a number of children.

The father was so moved by his yeshuah and so filled with gratitude to the Ribono Shel Oilam, that he made sure to tell anyone he could think of whom the sefer could possible help. While sitting in the doctors office a while later, he happened to run into a couple from Lakewood who were having difficulty starting a family. Within minutes, the father was telling them about the Zera Shimshon. They purchased the sefer immediately and were blessed with a child a year later.

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All this," Rabbi Paskesz concluded, "is just the beginning. I am affiliated with "Maftach Shel Bonim" a wonderfully selfless organization which dedicates much time and resources to helping couples around the globe. We are planning a giant suedah in both Eretz Yisroel and the United States on the sixth of Elul, which is the yahrtzeit of Rav Nachmani, the mechaber of Zera Shimshon and Toldos Shimshon. I have no doubt that we

will hear many more miraculous stories of personal deliverance on numerous fronts which we will be sure to publicize.

May all who are involved with this sefer, either through learning it or helping it reach as many people as possible, be granted the things they sorely need as promised by Rav Nachmani in his introduction to his legendary sefer. There have been so many yeshuous - may we be zoche to see the bracha continue until all of Klal Yisroel is learning this chashuve sefer.”

We parted from one another with feelings of mutual friendship in our hearts. How could I not feel warmth and admiration for a person who dedicated so much of his time and energy to helping Klal Yisroel?

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The Zera Shimshon is a gift. A special present from Hashem. Obviously this is a sefer and not something to replace our davening. On the contrary, Rav Nachmani has provided us with a completely unique channel of tefilla. He had tremendous hakaras hatov to any person who learned his Torah and was willing to go to great lengths to help that person. And he did. And he does. Learning Zera Shimshon is like having a truly influential friend intercede for you in the corridors of power, just when you need it most. It's like being able to hire and afford the best, most expensive lawyer in the world. This gift is truly something to take advantage of.

Whereas in the not so distant past it was difficult to get a hold of these precious seferim, today it's not so hard. If it's important to you to acquire your own copy of Zera Shimson and Toldos Shimshon then pick up a phone and call Rabbi Menachem Binyomin Paskesz at 347 496 5657 or email him at mbpaskesz@galaresources.com

Hashem puts resources of many kinds in His world. It's up to us to avail ourselves of their use.

Much Hatzlacha.