



דעם רבינ'ס א ווארט

A Word on the Parsha

Compiled By:
Rabbi Mendel Vogel

מקץ

וַיֹּאמֶר פַּרְעֹה לְכָל-מִצְרַיִם לְכוּ אֵל-יוֹסֵף
אֲשֶׁר-יֹאמַר לָכֶם תַּעֲשׂוּ (מא, נד)

Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, "Go to Yosef; what he tells you, do."

Rashi reveals the background of this *possuk*: When the *Mitzri'im* ran out of food due to the famine, they went to Yosef, knowing that he had grain stored away from before the famine (all the grain which they had stored had rotted unnaturally). Yosef said to them that he would give them grain on condition that they have a *bris*. When they came to Pharaoh to complain, Pharaoh—realizing that there was something unnatural happening here—commanded them to listen to Yosef and give themselves a *bris*.

The question is: Why did Yosef demand from the *Mitzri'im* to give themselves a *bris*—a mitzvah they were never commanded to perform? The question becomes stronger when taking into account how Rashi explains the *possuk* in Parshas Noach: "וְיֹאֵר אֶת דַּמְכָם לְנַפְשֵׁיכֶם אֲדַרְשׁ"; "But your blood, of your souls, I will demand [an account]"; that the intention is to forbid *B'nei Noach* from shedding their own blood—how is it possible that Yosef demanded from them to shed their own blood unnecessarily?!

The explanation is as follows: When Hashem commanded Avraham Avinu to perform a *bris* upon himself and his household, He also required him to give a *bris* to "those [who

were] purchased for money"—meaning servants (this mitzvah applies to all descendants of Avraham, as well, as the Torah states clearly).

Since Yosef was the ruler of the land, and without him "no one would raise his hand or foot in all the land of Mitzrayim"—they were his subjects and living under his authority—they were considered his servants, and he was therefore required to ensure that they had a *bris*.

Now we can also appreciate the precise wording of Rashi—"לְפִי שְׁהִיָּה יוֹסֵף אוֹמֵר לָהֶם שְׂיִמּוּלְדוּ"—implying that Yosef had been speaking to them about this *all along*: Since the *Mitzri'im* were considered his servants and needed to be circumcised, Yosef had ordered them to do so in the very beginning of his rule—years before the famine. The masses, however, did not heed Yosef's command. It was only when the famine forced them to turn to Yosef for grain that they accepted the conditions Yosef made.

Takeaway: *Yidden* are referred to as "the flock of Yosef" and have the ability to remain steadfast in their *Yiddishkeit* wherever they may be—even in a place where people are very far from *Elokus*. One should not feel intimidated by unholiness that may surround him, and should ensure that he remains complete in his Torah and mitzvos. Furthermore, we all have the ability to be a positive influence on the world around us—both on *Yidden* and, *l'havdil*, on *umos ha'olam*.

(*Likkutei Sichos* vol. 30, p. 223)

ויגש

וְאֶת־יְהוּדָה שְׁלַח לְפָנָיו אֶל־יוֹסֵף לְהוֹרֹת
לְפָנָיו גִּשְׁנָה וַיָּבִיאוּ אֶרְצָהּ גִּשְׁן (כו, כח)

He sent Yehuda ahead of him to Yosef, to direct him to Goshen, and they came to the land of Goshen.

This needs some clarification: Why did Ya'akov need to send Yehuda ahead to prepare the way for the rest of the family? Yosef was the ruler in Mitzrayim, and he certainly could have taken care of any necessary preparations!

By sending Yehuda to Mitzrayim, Ya'akov sought to emphasize that even when a *Yid* is in *golus*, he remains above it and not subject to its limitations. Ya'akov was not satisfied with having Yosef prepare the way for the family, since Yosef was a part of the Egyptian government—appointed by Pharaoh himself. Even after his appointment to the position of viceroy, he was still a subject of Pharaoh and had to answer to him. He was therefore not the right person to express the complete independence of a *Yid*.

Ya'akov sent Yehuda, since Yehuda in particular expresses the boldness and strength of a *Yid*, how even in *golus* he is not subject to the will of the non-Jews around him. An example of this is when Yosef insisted that Binyamin stay with him to become his slave after the incident with the “stolen” goblet. Yehuda stood up to him forcefully, without fear of Yosef's power and status.

Takeaway: When a *Yid* rises above the restrictions and limitations of *golus*, and stands firm in his *Yiddishkeit*, in the end he will overcome all the difficulties of *golus*, and eventually become a “ruler” over the *golus*.

(Toras Menachem Hisva'aduyos 5752 vol. 2, p. 66)

ויחי

וַיִּשְׂאוּ אֹתוֹ בָנָיו אֶרְצָה פְּנֵן וַיִּקְבְּרוּ אֹתוֹ
בְּמִצְעַרַת שְׂדֵה הַמַּכְפֵּלָה (נ, יא)

And his sons carried him to the land of Canaan, and they buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah.

Targum Yonasan on the *possuk* relates that when Eisav heard that the *shevatim* were going to bury their father in *Me'aras Hamachpeila*, he went there himself to prevent it. He barred their way until Dan's son Chushim took a sword and severed Eisav's head. Eisav's head fell to the ground and rolled into the cave, coming to a stop next to the burial spot of his father, Yitzchok.

This incident seems puzzling: How can it be that the head of the wicked Eisav is buried right next to Yitzchok—after all, it is a clear *halacha* that we do not bury a *rasha* next to a

tzaddik (so much so, that when the body of a *novi sheker* was thrown into the *keiver* of Elisha *hanovi*, Hashem performed a miracle and the false prophet was resurrected)?

The truth is, however, that the wickedness of Eisav was only with regards to his “body”; i.e. Eisav as he appeared in a physical body in this world. With regards to his “head”—i.e. his spiritual source—he is connected to Yitzchok and possesses high and lofty sparks of holiness. Thus, we find very lofty souls who descended from Eisav, such as Reb Meir and Onkelos (we also find that it is mainly descendants of Eisav who become *geirim*, in contrast to the descendants of Yishmael).

When the head of Eisav was separated from his body, it was also separated from the “*rasha*” of Eisav, and could therefore be buried next to Yitzchok.

Takeaway: If this is true about Eisav—that no matter how low he fell he still remained connected to Yitzchok, and Yitzchok never gave up on trying to reveal Eisav's potential—how much more so is it true for us, to whom Hashem declared at *matan Torah*: “אנכי ה' אלקיך”, thus establishing that the life and vitality of every *Yid* is *Elokus*. Certainly, then, it is our duty and responsibility to be *mekarev* every single *Yid*, and to dig—sometimes a lot—until finding within him the wellsprings of the *neshama*.

(Likkutei Sichos vol. 15, p. 193)

שמות

וַיִּירָא מֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמֶר אֲכֵן נֹדַע הַדָּבָר (ב, יד)

Moshe became frightened and said, "Indeed, the matter has become known!"

Why does the Torah need to inform us of the fact that Moshe was afraid, a seemingly insignificant detail in the story? After all, it was not the fear that caused him to flee Mitzrayim, but rather Pharaoh's attempt to have him executed.

It must be that there is indeed, a connection between Moshe's fear and the events which followed--namely, Pharaoh's attempt to have Moshe executed:

If Moshe had trusted Hashem completely with absolute confidence that he would not be harmed, this would have resulted in the entire incident being forgotten, and he would not have had to run away. It was only because of a deficiency in his own *bitachon* (which led to his fear) that Pharaoh heard about the incident and sought to harm him.

Takeaway: The power of *bitachon* is so strong that it has the ability to protect a person from any trouble that may come his way. As the Rabbeim put it: “טראכט” גוט וועט זיין גוט”.

(Likkutei Sichos vol. 36, p. 1)