

PLEASE DAVEN FOR CHAIM LEIB BEN SHEINA ITA HA'LEVI LIRFUOH SHLEIMOH B'KOROV

SEDRAH SELECTIONS PARSHAS VAYIGASH 5775 BS"D

Ch. 44, v. 18: "Va'yigash eilov Yehudoh" – And Yehudoh came close to him – When Yehudoh saw that their words, that the guilty one be put to death and his brothers be enslaved, and their later suggestion that Binyomin should not be killed, but all should be enslaved were all not accepted, and instead there was a lighter sentence, that they were all free to go, except Binyomin, who would be enslaved, he realized that it was an auspicious time to ask for further mercy and attempted to have Binyomin freed and he would be enslaved in his stead. (Rabbi Chaim Vi'tal in Eitz Hadaas Tov)

Ch. 44, v. 18: "Va'yomer bee adoni" – And he said please my master – The pristine translation of "bi" is "in me." Yehudoh's message to Yoseif was that he was endowed with kingship and he serves as the conduit for kingship for the world. Since he heard in their conversation that Yoseif was acting as if he had mastery over all the brothers Yehudoh responded that mastery and kingship emanate from himself for the whole world. (Rabbi Yehoshua Apter in Ohev Yisroel)

Ch. 44, v. 18: "Y'da'ber na av'd'cho dovor b'oznei adoni" – May your servant please speak a matter into the ears of my master – I suggest that your servant who set out after us and found the royal goblet in Binyomin's sack should have a talk with you. He was surely in on the plot of framing Binyomin, and he will tell you who slipped the goblet into his sack. (Kli Yokor)

Ch. 44, v. 19: "Ha'yeish lochem ov o och" – Do you have a father or a brother – Your complaint of having your special goblet through which you divine being stolen seems to be a spurious claim. If it is truly so why did you ask if we have a father or brother when you could have arrived at the answer by use of your goblet? (Rabbi Matisyohu Shtrashan)

Ch. 44, v. 20: "V'ochiv meis" – And his brother is dead – Earlier they said "einenu," he is not to be found. These two expressions mean the same thing, as we find by the death of Chanoch, "V'einenu ki lokach oso Elokim." (Riv"o)

Rashi says that Yehudoh did not say the truth here, as Yoseif might still be alive. As this seemingly erratic ruler was so demanding he feared that he might ask them to produce Yoseif if he is only not to be found. He therefore changed to "he is dead."

The Meshech Chochmoh writes that Yehudoh said that Yoseif was dead because he was sure that it was the case. Given that Yoseif's soul was so tied up in his father's he surely would have communicated with him if he were still alive.

Ch. 44, v. 20: "Va'yivo'ser hu l'vado" – And he alone was left – That which is of value that is left is expressed with the word form "shaar." The word form "nosar," which is used here connotes unworthy leftovers. Yehudoh expressed himself this was because the sons of Rochel brought him trouble. Yoseif's dreams were an infringement on his kingship and Binyomin, whom he guaranteed to remain safe, was now in grave danger of never returning to his father. (Haksav V'hakaboloh)

Ch. 45, v. 1: "V'lo yochole Yoseif l'his'a'peik l'chol hanitzovim olov" – And Yoseif was unable to restrain himself before all those who stood by him – This is the common translation. However, Haksav V'hakaboloh explains "l'his'a'peik" in the reverse manner. Just as we find the words "afikei mayim," which mean those who gush forth water, so too here, it means that Yoseif was unable to let out all his pent up words because of all his servants who stood there. He first had to hurry them out and then speak to his brothers.

Ch. 45, v. 3: "Ha'ode ovi chai" – Is my father still alive – There was a powerful chastisement in the word "ovi." He should have said "ovinu," as Yaakov was THEIR father. He said to them that they didn't treat their father as a beloved father, causing him much pain in selling Yoseif. This is why they could not respond to him, because they were frightened on account of his stinging rebuke. (Kli Yokor)

Ch. 45, v. 3: “Ki nivhalu miponov” – Because they were frightened from his face – Earlier “Va’yisna’keir a’leihem,” he hid his holiness and they thought of him as an idol worshipping king. Now that he let be known his true identity he allowed his holy countenance to be seen. This startled them greatly. (Rabbi Tzodok haKohein, Rabbi Mordechai Gifter)

Ch. 45, v. 4: “Ani Yoseif asher m’chartem osi Mitzroimoh” – I am Yoseif whom you have sold to Egypt – I am the same person with the same sanctity as when you sold me. Egypt has not affected me negatively. (Holy Admor of Kotzk)

Ch. 45, v. 11: “V’chilkalti os’cho shom” – And I will sustain you there – Why didn’t Yoseif suggest that Yaakov stay home and he would send him sustenance to Canaan? He was afraid to do this because the Egyptians would likely complain that he was sending the best of the stored food out of the country to his father’s family. (Why wasn’t this concern also relevant when sending food to Goshen?) (Meshech Chochmoh)

Ch. 45, v. 12: “Ki fi hamda’beir a’leichem” – That my mouth is speaking to you – Rashi comments that Yoseif spoke to them in Loshon Hakodesh. The verse earlier says that Yoseif said, “Your eyes see and Binyomin’s eyes see.” The gemara Megiloh says that with these words he equated them. Just as he had no hatred in his heart for Binyomin, as Binyomin was not involved in his sale, so too, he harboured no hatred for them. He was confident that based on his not hating them they would in turn not hate him, “K’mayim ponim el ponim.....” To prove this point he sent out his servants and was alone with them when he revealed that he was Yoseif. There obviously there would be a great risk of their attacking him on the spot, so why did he send his servants away? This shows that he was confident that their attitude towards him reflected his towards them. Perhaps he was not truly sure of this but was caught in a conundrum of not wanting to embarrass them in front of his servants. To dispel this he ended with “Ki fi hamda’beir a’leichem.” Since they heard him speaking Loshon Hakodesh he could have kept his servants and guards in the royal chamber and spoken to them in Loshon Hakodesh, which his servants would not understand, in turn causing them no embarrassment. Nevertheless, he sent them out. This makes Yoseif’s claim that he harboured no ill will towards them and was confident that they would feel the same towards him watertight. (Rabbi Shoul of Amsterdam)

Ch. 45, v. 15: “Va’yeivk a’lei’hem” – And he cried on them – He cried because he saw that in the future their souls would enter the “asoroh harugei malchus.” “A’lei’hem” is “al,” yud is ten, hei is harugei, mem is malchus. (Ro’isi)

Ch. 45, v. 18: “V’etnoh lochem es tuv eretz Mitzrayim” – And I will give you the good of the land Egypt – His intention was the area of Goshen, but his mouth said the land of Egypt. This was like a prophecy that the bnei Yisroel would empty out the whole land of Egypt upon their exodus. (Riv”o)

#### OROH V’SIMCHOH - MESHECH CHOCHMOH ON PARSHAS VA’YIGASH

Ch. 46, v. 2: "Va'yomer Elokim l'Yisroel b'marose haLAYLOH" - We find a second communication from Hashem to Yaakov taking place at night in the beginning of parshas Va'yeitzei, "Va'yo'len shom ki vo hashemesh, Va'yomar Ani Hashem Elokei Avrohom" (Breishis 28:11,13). Yet by Avrohom and Yitzchok we find no nocturnal communication. The MESHECH CHOCHMOH explains that a prophecy received at night symbolizes that Hashem will be with him even when he is in the darkness of golus, as the gemara Megiloh 29a says, "When the bnei yisroel descended to Egypt the Divine Spirit descended with them. When the bnei Yisroel descended to Babylonia the Divine Spirit descended with them. (Although Avrohom also left Eretz Yisroel, this was only for a short period of time, and he intended to, and indeed did return. Yaakov, however left Eretz Yisroel knowing that he would not come back alive, as is indicated in the wording of verse 4, "Onochi eireid imcho Mitzraymoh v'Onochi aalcho gam oloe" - I will go down WITH you, and I will bring you back up." With regard to descending to Egypt, Hashem will descend WITH Yaakov, but upon return Hashem will bring Yaakov, not ascend with him.)

The gemara Brochos 26b says that Yaakov established the evening prayers, corresponding to the burning of the organs and fats of the sacrifices that were brought by day in the Beis Hamikdash. This corresponds to his life, where he lived in Eretz Yisroel, symbolized by day, and completed his life in Mitzrayim, compared

to night. Just as sacrifices, once their processing of the blood service has been completed by day, their burning on the altar may be done by night as well, so also Yaakov, who began his life in Eretz Yisroel and received prophecy there, was promised by Hashem that His Divine Spirit would not depart from him even upon descending to Egypt. This is similar to the ruling that Hashem does not give prophecy outside of Eretz Yisroel, unless the prophet has already received prophecy in the past in Eretz Yisroel, as explained in the gemara Mo'eid Koton 25a, as per Rashi there d.h. "shehoyoh kvar."

He adds that this is also the intention of the verse in T'hilim 20:2, "Yaancho Hashem b'yom TZOROH y'sa'gevcho Elokei YAAKOV." When one is in a TZOROH, when he does not see the "countenance of Hashem shining upon him," he prays to the G-d of Yaakov, because Hashem promised Yaakov of all the forefathers that He would be with him even when in golus, a time and place of great difficulties. The MESHECH CHOCHMOH ends by saying that we can learn a very practical lesson from this. We are now in "golus." As long as we behave in a manner becoming of the children of Yaakov, by retaining the Torah's values, we are connected to the "day" of the Beis Hamikdosh, and thus will merit to also have Hashem's Holy Spirit with us, even during the "night" of "golus," just as a prophet who once received prophecy in Eretz Yisroel is able to also receive it in the diaspora. If we disconnect from the sanctity of "day," we cannot expect a connection with Hashem during the "night."

Ch. 47, v.1: "V'tzonom uvkorom" - Everyone and everything that Paroh mentioned in 45:19, were mentioned by Yoseif to Paroh upon their arrival, except for the women, who were mentioned by Paroh, "v'linsheichem." The MESHECH CHOCHMOH explains that because of the negative experience that Soroh had with the king of Egypt (Breishis 12:12-20), Yoseif was reluctant to even mention women. Rabbi Yehudoh Kuperman shlit" a adds that it seems that a word to the wise is sufficient, as when Paroh noticed that Yoseif did not mention women, he likewise did not mention them in verse 6. However, Rabbi Kuperman offers that there is a simple reason for Paroh's mentioning women, as he was offering wagons for transportation for men, women, belongings, etc. In our verse Yoseif advises Paroh of the arrival of his family and its entourage. In verse 6 Paroh discusses their settling into the country. We see that they are discussing where to reside. These are matters that are decided by men.

#### CHAMISHOH MI YODEI' A – FIVE QUESTIONS ON THE WEEKLY SEDRAH – PARSHAS VA'YIGASH 5775 – BS"D

1) Ch. 45, v. 17: "Zose asu taanu es b'irchem" – Thus shall you do load your animals – The words "zose asu" seems totally superfluous. "Do this" is usually a response to some reluctance on the other party's position or a counter offer to his plan. Here we see no reluctance and no previously offered alternative plan.

2) Ch. 46, v. 17: "Ulchu bo'u" – And go come – The word "bo'u" is problematic.

3) Ch. 46, v. 28: "V'es Yehudoh sholach l'fonov Goshnoh" – And he sent Yehudoh ahead of him to Goshen – Rashi says that Yehudoh was sent to establish a house of Torah study. If so, why not send either Shimon or Levi, who were destined to be Torah teachers?

4) Ch. 47, v. 8: "Kamoh y'mei shnei cha'yecho" – How old are you – What prompted this unusual question?

5) Ch. 47, v. 18: "Bashonoh hasheinis" – In the second year – Rashi says that this is the second year of the famine. Accordingly, the time line here is before Yaakov's descent to Egypt with his family and his meeting with Paroh, as is explained by Rashi in verse 13. In verse 18 Rashi says that once Yaakov descended to Egypt the famine came to an abrupt end. He bolsters this with the words of the Tosefta on the gemara Sotah.

The obvious question that comes to mind is: Wouldn't the trust in Yoseif's interpretation of the dreams, that there would be 7 years of famine following the 7 years of abundance, be compromised?

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ANSWERS:

#1

A concept mentioned in Sedrah Selections parshas Mikeitz 5765 on a similar expression might be applied here as well. In 41:34 we have, “Yaa’sseh Pharoh v’yafkeid p’kidim.” The verse could have easily said “Yafkeid Paroh p’kidim.” The insight was offered that Yoseif advised Paroh to appoint people as agricultural ministers who would assure that there would be food stored during the years of bountiful produce. However, Yoseif advised Paroh to do this in a manner that would be abundantly clear that he was the big mover and shaker, and thus not lose his popularity as the top man in the country to a lesser person, who might well become the national hero by virtue of his saving the day (seven years) and staving off starvation of the masses.

Similarly here, Paroh advised Yoseif to tell his brothers to provide all the accommodations to move Yaakov and his household to Egypt in a most comfortable manner, promising him all that he needed in Egypt as well. However, Paroh knew quite well that if the “encouragement” to move came solely from Paroh himself, Yaakov might be reluctant to make the move. He therefore told Yoseif to tell his brothers, “zose asu .....” Make this “your doing,” that all his sons eagerly agree with the idea that Yaakov leave Eretz Yisroel to live in Egypt. (Nirreh li)

#2

Rabbeinu Toviah says that the intention is to not tarry in Canaan. Just as when you came here you wanted to purchase food and head back home immediately, so too, you should go and return with alacrity.

Targum Yonoson ben Uziel and Onkelos seem to be bothered with this and therefore deviate from their regular translation of “asu,” and instead say “ovilu,” transport.

Perhaps, based on the maxim that when the bnei Yisroel go into the Diaspora the Holy Sh’chinoh also escorts them and is reduced into residing in the Diaspora, and also based upon the interpretation of “BO el Paroh,” that Hashem told Moshe to COME to Paroh, rather than GO, because He told Moshe that the Holy Sh’chinoh would accompany him, here too, when leaving, they will be accompanied by the Holy Sh’chinoh, and when returning to Egypt the Holy Sh’chinoh will go into exile with them, as per the words “uvo’u eilai” of the next verse. (Nirreh li)

#3

Rabbi Leff answers that the migration of the bnei Yisroel to Egypt had the halachic status of “kibush,” gaining mastery over the land they would occupy. This required the action of a king, hence Yehudoh. Another answer: Although in general a top-notch pedagogue is the best choice to establish a learning institution, here something else was needed. The bnei Yisroel were embarking upon living in a land that was totally foreign to their value system. Even if one is very learned, his continued Torah existence is extremely tenuous when challenged by living in an environment that is in complete conflict with his values. This requires establishment of a system that is strongly based on negation of the surrounding environment and its false values. The M.R. relates that the chariots Paroh sent had avodoh zoroh symbols etched into them. Yehudoh destroyed them, notwithstanding that Paroh would take note of this upon their return to Egypt. Someone with such fortitude is the man to establish a “beis hatalmud.” (Nirreh li)

Note that there are other opinions as to what sort of wagons were sent. See the Moshav Z’keinim.

#4

1) M.R. says that Og was one of Paroh’s advisors and was present at the time of their meeting. Yaakov had a similar appearance to Avrohom. Og mistakenly thought that he was indeed Avrohom and related this information to Paroh. Paroh was shocked that Avrohom could still be alive and therefore asked his age.

2) Many years earlier, when Avrohom came to Paroh, the entrance to the royal chamber was very low. This necessitated bowing down and entering. Just inside this entrance there was a graven image to which one would automatically bow down. A miracle occurred and when Avrohom was about to enter the top of the doorway stretched itself upwards and Avrohom did not have to bow down. Afterwards the doorway returned to its previous dimensions. This was recorded on a wall of the inner chamber. The same happened when Yaakov appeared in front of Paroh. Paroh therefore thought that it was Avrohom who came to him. This is why he asked his age. (Mahar”i Chalavoh)

3) “Kamoh” is not a question. Rather, it is an exclamation of “How extremely many are the days of your life!” This is similar to “Moh rav tuvcho” (T’hilim 31:20). (Rabbi Yoseif Ibn Kaspi who heard this from an elderly person from Provencia)

4) Paroh, as a child, was sent to Avimelech to be trained in royal protocol, as was the common custom of the day. He saw Yitzchok there, and Yaakov, who looked similar to Yitzchok, was mistaken for him. (Paa'nei'ach Rozo)

5) When Yaakov met Paroh a conversation took place before these words of Paroh. Yaakov insisted that Paroh grant him permission to return to Eretz Yisroel whenever he wished. If not, he was ready to return immediately, as he had already been reunited with Yoseif, and he would purchase food for the remainder of the famine. It was at this point that Paroh mentioned Yaakov's old age. He taunted Yaakov, saying that he was so old that he would not outlive the five remaining years of famine. Why bother returning to Eretz Yisroel and depending upon shipments of food? Yaakov responded that he was actually not all that old. (Rabbi Yehudoh Chosid in the name of his father)

#5

The Ramban on verse 19 deals with this. We might answer this by taking note that in the dream of the 7 fat ears of grain and 7 emaciated ones the verse says that the fat ones were "olos b'ko'neh echod," growing on one stalk. This is not mentioned by the thin ones. Albeit, the 7 years of abundance were continuous, symbolized by "olos b'ko'neh echod," we do not have this by the thin ones, those representing the years of famine. (Trumas Hadeshen in Biurei Mahara"i)

Indeed, there was a total of 7 years of famine, with the last five years commencing at the death of Yaakov, as mentioned in the M.R. Although the Torah does not elaborate on Yoseif's telling this detail to Paroh, he might have told him this, or at least after the fact he might have told him that this was indicated in the dream.

According to the understanding of the Chizkuni of "bashonoh hasheinis" this question is preempted. He says that "the second" year is the second year after Yaakov descended to Egypt. He explains that people put away a sufficient amount for their needs and had enough money for purchasing food after that, for four years. At this point they came to Yoseif penniless, and offered their cattle. This carried them through the fifth year, their fields through the sixth year, and selling themselves into slavery through the seventh year. During the seventh year Yoseif gave them seed for planting, and it grew during the end of the seventh year, as the famine was to end after seven years. According to this the 7 years of famine were continuous.

According to the Tosefta that the famine was broken into a two year period and another five year period after the death of Yaakov, a problem in parshas Va'yichi is resolved. Yoseif meets very stiff resistance when wanting to accompany his father on his final trip to be buried in Chevron. As related in the gemara Sotah, Yoseif tells Paroh of the vow he made to his father to bury him in Chevron and uses this as a strategy to force Paroh to agree to let him go and to bury his father in Eretz Yisroel. Besides this, Paroh has the youngest generation of the bnei Yisroel and all their cattle remain in Egypt as a sort of surety that they would return. Why was he so afraid? Yoseif was a king in Egypt, accorded all honours, and his family has been well settled in over the last 17 years.

Since the famine resumed after the death of Yaakov, as it could have had an affect during the 70 days that Yaakov lay in state, Paroh probably panicked. It was a most inopportune time for Yoseif, the man who single-handedly took charge during the previous years of famine, to leave. (Nirreh li)

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