



Adapted from the sefer חמין במוצאי שבת and חזון דזעיר אנפין collections of maamarim given by the Tolner Rebbe shlita at Seuda Shlishis and Melave Malka

Melave Malka Parshas Vayigash 5760

The Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh asks why Yosef repeated the phrase אני יוסף (בראשית מ"ה:ג"ד) twice when he revealed himself to his brothers.

ויאמר יוסף אל אחיו אני יוסף העוד אבי חי ולא יכלו אחיו לענות אתו כי נבהלו מפניו.

ויאמר יוסף אל אחיו גשו נא אלי ויגשו ויאמר אני יוסף אחיכם אשר מכרתם אתי
מצרימה

The Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh answers that when his brothers didn't respond after the first time he identified himself, Yosef was concerned that they either were afraid of him, and therefore unable to respond, or that they didn't believe he was Yosef.

To calm their first concern, he said אני יוסף אחיכם, informing them that he felt brotherhood as if they had never wronged him. He also connected the word אחיכם to אשר מכרתם אותי מצרימה to tell them that even while they were actually selling him, his feelings of brotherhood never diminished.

To address their suspicion that he may not be Yosef, he said, אשר מכרתם אותי מצרימה. No one else could have known about that event.

Sefer Toras Avos (Slonim) brings the following story:

“Once the *Saba Kadisha* of Slonim zy”a paid a *bikur cholim* visit to Harav Hatzadik Rav Yosef Dlotich z”l, who had the *zechus* of learning from the *Saba Kadisha* of Lechovitch zy”a. The Rebbe asked him to tell over



[1]

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something he had heard in Lechovitch. Rav Yosef related something he had heard about that *peirush* of the *Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh*.

“If the Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh was able to write the *peirush* that even while he was being sold, Yosef’s feelings of brotherhood didn’t diminish, it must be that the Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh was on such a *madreigah*”

The *Beis Avrohom* of Slonim told this story and added,

“They say that when the Lechovitcher zy”a was being taken to prison in chains because someone had informed on him, he went with the same great *simchah* as when he walked his daughter to the *chupah*. He said, ‘It was indeed a great *nisayon* to rejoice while being taken to prison. However, it still can’t compare to the *nisayon* of Yosef Hatzadik. There, it was his own flesh and blood brothers who sold him to Mitzrayim. That is an extremely difficult *nisayon*, and his feelings of brotherhood at that moment were a great *chidush* and accomplishment.

The *Sfas Emes* (תרל"ז ד"ה ועתה) comments on the continuation of Yosef’s words in the next *pasuk*

וְעַתָּה אֵל תַּעֲצֹבוּ וְאַל יִחַר בְּעֵינֵיכֶם כִּי מִכְרֹתֶם אֹתִי הִנֵּה כִּי לְמַחֲיָה שָׁלַחֲנִי אֱלֹקִים
לְפָנֵיכֶם

(And now, don’t be sad and don’t let there be anger in your eyes because you sold me here, for it was for sustenance that Hashem sent me before you).

“The *Midrash* (ב"ר כ"א:ו') says that the word *ועתה* represents *teshuvah*, as the *pasuk* says (דברים י"י:ב) וְעַתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל מָה ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ שֶׁאֵל מַעֲמֹד כִּי אִם (And now Yisrael, what does Hashem your G-d ask from you but to fear him...)

Based on the *Sfas Emes*’ lesson that the word *ועתה* represents *teshuvah*, it is possible to say that when Yosef saw that his brothers did *teshuvah* and regretted what they had done, (as they revealed by saying אָבֵל



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אֶחָיוּנוּ and, as the Midrash says, they were willing to pay a high price to redeem Yosef), he taught them *how* to do *teshuvah*. He instructed them not to do *teshuvah* out of sadness, but to maintain a state of *simchah*.

He said, "ועתה" - when you do *teshuvah* for your deeds, "אל תעצבו" - don't do it with sadness. He then presented them with a *kal va'chomer*. "I, Yosef am a flesh and blood human being, and there is no *tzadik* in the world who does only good and never sins. Nevertheless, if my sense of brotherhood didn't weaken, even at the moment you sold me into slavery, and I continued to love you, is it not a *kal va'chomer* that Hakadosh Baruch Hu still loves you at every moment. Therefore, you must not be sad."

My ancestor Rav Zusha of Anipoli zy" a said, "Would that I could love the greatest *tzadik* as much as Hakadosh Baruch Hu loves the greatest *rasha*." If a person would only remember how much Hashem loves him, he wouldn't sin. He wouldn't want to cause "the opposite of *nachas ruach*" to one who loves him. We are meant to combine *ahavah* and *yirah* in our *avodas Hashem*.

We are constantly attacked by the *yetzer hara*, whose hatred for every Jew is immeasurable. One of the great *Baalei Hamussar*, Rav Yitzchak Blazer of Petersburg zt"l commented on Chazal's statement, (הובא בשבט (מוסר פכ"ה) - רשעים מלאים חרטה - *reshaim* are full of regret. He explained that the *yetzer hara*'s hatred is so intense, that even after he causes a *rasha* to sin, he also makes him regret what he did. He can't bear seeing the *rasha* enjoy his transgression. "Could there be", asked Rav Yitzchak, "someone who hates us more than that."

Our generation, the last before the *geulah*, is a time of darkness and *hester panim*. Nonetheless, we can derive much *chizuk* by remembering that Hashem's love for us has never diminished. Even as we rebel against Him and transgress His *mitzvos*, we remain his beloved children. We must remember the *pesukim*,



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בְּנִים אַתֶּם לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם – (דברים י"ד: א")

כִּי נַעַר יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֶהְבֶּהוּ – (הושע י"א: א)

אֶהְבֹּתִי אֶתְכֶם אָמַר ה' – (מלאכי א"ב: ב")

The love described in these *pesukim* remains forever, and no amount of water can extinguish its fire. Even at a time of *din* and punishment, Hashem has mercy on us and loves us.

The *Rikanati* (פרשת בשלח), writes:

“You will never find *din* that doesn't contain *rachamim*. As Chazal said, (יומא ע"ה.) “Hashem cursed the woman, and all run after her. He cursed the snake, and his sustenance is easily found.... Understand this concept for it will eliminate many doubts.”

From all these sources we learn the magnitude of Hashem's love for us, whether we sin by mistake or even intentionally. If we remember His love, we will be able to return to him with complete and joyful *teshuvah*. As Yosef instructed his brothers וְעַתָּה אֵל תֵּעָצְבוּ וְאַל יַחַר בְּעֵינֵיכֶם – And now, don't be sad and don't let anger be in your eyes. He knew that on their way back to Eretz Yisrael they would be immersed in the process of *teshuvah*. He warned them not to do so with sadness, and not to be angry with themselves because of the damage they caused. He wanted them to remember that even as they mistreated him, he never stopped loving them. That message would help them realize that Hashem still loves them, no matter what they have done.

If the *yetzer hara* tries to tempt us to commit *aveiros*, we must defend ourselves by remembering Hashem's love. That will awaken our love of Hashem, and those who love don't rebel.

We approach the days of שׁוֹבֵבִים. The Arizal revealed that these days are imbued with the power to help us repair the damage caused by even the



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most serious *aveiros*, and free the sparks of *kedushah* that were trapped in the *klipah* as a result of our *aveiros*. By awakening ourselves to do *teshuvah* with *simchah*, we will have the *zchus* to repair any damage that we may have caused, ונזכה לביאת משיח צדקנו בב"א.



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