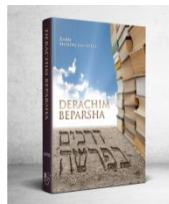


# דרכים בפרשה ויגש

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

*Then Yosef said to his brothers, "Come forward to me." And when they came forward, he said, "I am your brother Yosef, he whom you sold into Mitzrayim.*

When Yosef revealed himself to his brothers, they were afraid of him. He implored them; "Come close to me, please" (v4), which Rashi describes אמר עכשו אחי ראה אותם נטוים לאחור, - He saw that they recoiled and he said to himself "Now my brothers feel ashamed". He therefore called to them *tenderly and pleadingly*." Yet what did Yosef proceed to tell them? Instead of soothing words, instead of assuring them, he turned to them and reminded them that he had been sold. He also repeats this several times: ועתה אל תעצבו ואל יחר בעיניכם כי מכרתם אתי הנה כי למחיה שלחני *And now, be not distressed, nor reproach yourselves for having sold me here.*" He then says, "*And now, it was not you who sent me here, but Hashem*" It was as if he were saying, "You sold me, but it was Hashem Who sent me." Does this seem like a way of calming his brothers, who were afraid that he would avenge himself? Was this a way of showing them that he felt no resentment for what they did to him? Could this be the right time to confront and lecture them? If not, then why remind them of the painful incident of his sale?

I saw in the sefer Eitz Chaim (Telz) that Rav Boruch Sorotzkin zt"l asked this question and gives the following explanation (in my *nussach*): Picture the scene of a child that makes some serious trouble and now must face the consequences. Perhaps the child will talk about anything and everything under the sun including the weather, while avoiding the one thing that needs to be addressed. The uncomfortable feelings at that moment will definitely remain there until the elephant in the room is finally spoken of. Yosef understood this all too well. Rather than letting the awkwardness and uneasiness of the situation fester, with the brothers walking on eggshells, thinking that at any second it will be brought up, Yosef decides to clear the air and address it straight away at the very first possible moment allowing them the ability to move on.

Looking carefully at the words of Yosef, we can suggest another idea. What is the difference between "selling" and "sending,"? Two people can do the same thing, and yet, for one it would be an aveira and for the other a mitzvah. This is because everything depends on intention. Although the brothers had ruled that Yosef was *chayav misa*, and although they had acted based on a *din Torah* (they even involved Hashem, in selling him) when they sold Yosef, Chazal understand that they were mistaken and therefore they sinned in a very subtle way. Their *kavana* was proper but in the end, they were wrong and they now felt guilty.

Nevertheless, when we look at things in retrospect, from the higher viewpoint of the Torah, we see that למחיה שלחני כי *"Hashem sent me ahead of you to ensure your*

*survival.*" There was something deliberate and hidden in his sale, the goal of which was to ensure that Klal Yisroel would live and survive. Perhaps, this is what Yosef was trying to tell his brothers, and it is why he said to them: אל תעצבו ואל יחר בעיניכם כי מכרתם אתי הנה כי למחיה שלחני אלקים לפניכם *"Do not be grieved, and let it not be evil in your eyes."* In other words: "There is no reason to be sad, nor is there any reason to be afraid of me. As soon as I was sold - when I realized that things did not depend on me, but rather, that I was merely a שליח, that something was being accomplished **through me** - I understood that it was Hashem's will and that גם זו לטובה *-this too is for the good.* 'I was certain that everything that the Hashem does is for the good, and I was only waiting to see when I would understand what His intentions were. That is why you have absolutely nothing to fear from me, because from my point of view there is no reason to be angry. It is all what HaShem wants. That is how I have seen things from the moment I was sold until now.

Looking at everything that Yosef went through, he should have lost all hope and ability to withstand the even the smallest tests. Yet, from the second he was handed to the Yishmaelites, until the brothers arrived in Mitzrayim, Yosef lived with the simple *emunah* that he was sent. Imagine Yosef in the jail with the Butler and the Baker. The two of them were on "death row", and Yosef walks in and asks why they seemed depressed? When one sees his life as a *shlichus/mission*, there is no room for depression. Each new setting that Yosef would find himself in meant he was one step closer to completing his mission.

When an item or a person gets sold, the item or person is not asked. The transaction is strictly between the buyer and the seller. However, with a *shlichus*, it is upon the person to accept his mission and represent the sender. The brothers thought that they sold him down to Mitzrayim, thus forcing him into a terrible situation. Yosef responded that he fully accepted and embraced the mission that HaShem was sending him on and therefore he endured and succeeded.

The Midrash (Rabbah 89:3) writes about Yosef, אשרי הגבר *"Happy is the man who has made Hashem his trust - this refers to Yosef. The reason is that a person who trusts in Hashem is happy, being content with his lot both in this world and in עולם הבא. He experiences neither agonies nor doubts, and he has no desire to avenge himself or harbor any resentment. He won't get upset or angry, because his entire life is filled with pure happiness in doing the ratzon HaShem. As a result, what Yosef told his brothers demonstrated that not only was he not lacking sensitivity, but rather, this was all part of a grand plan and they were a part of it.*

On a practical level as well, if someone hurts or upsets us, we can immediately forgive him, since this represents Hashem's will. Of course it is difficult to do, but if we think about with clarity, we realize that it comes from HaShem and it is another step in our *shlichus*. And if we find that we do get angry, then besides for working on the *middah* of *ka'as/anger*, perhaps we should give our *bitachon* a reality check and see how we can strengthen it.

Good Shabbos, **מרדכי אפפול**