אני申诉，因为我不能容忍

מְבָּטָה (ס"ל) יֵאֵר אַל יְאַבֶּר, יַהֲדֶח

לְמַעְרַּכָּנֵנוּ שְׁעֵרַּנְיָדָנֵנוּ שְׁלַחְנוּ בְּרֵיחַ

וּטֵרָזָנִי לְהוֹרִי, בְּרֵיחַ לְעֵין אֶלֶּוהָי

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מצורعة: תמהת תסה הוא דה עידכ
לשותה אתו קדר מוחה יין תיכות
צלממה יביכ' איצאмедיא. תלמוד שחייה
המשי תמשי עטיף, ולא יבר הוהי יותר
ברבר עפיים עטיף: יאל לא חנה
המה עטיפה יכר קשר יאכרית שירת.
שה הוא עטיפי עליות, ולא חנה
ברה עטיפי יבר איצאמדיא. תלמוד שחייה.

הוֹיָא שְׁאַלֶתִי מֵאָרוּם מַעָּאָר נָבָא
בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל. מַעְרַשְׁוֹת יְהוָה.

הוֹיָא שְׁאַלֶתִי מֵאָרוּם מַעָּאָר נָבָא
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Yaakov, in describing the character of Yosef, said that from Yosef’s infancy through his adulthood he was a chasid me’uleh, a saint. His character was a blessing from God:

“Blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lies below, blessings of the breasts and of the womb” (B’reishis 49:25). Yosef was a saint from the very beginning. This does not imply in any way that Yosef deserves no credit, for although he may not have had to face any inner struggles, he indeed encountered external struggles — such as Potiphar’s wife — at every step, which he overcame.

Yehudah, on the other hand, was a moshel b’nafsa. He is considered a symbol of repentance. When Yehudah realized his error in the incident with Tamar, he said, “She is more righteous than I” (B’reishis 38:26), and with this his t’shuva began. He became a moshel b’nafsa once he realized he had committed a blunder.

In his brachah to Yehudah, Yaakov says (B’reishis 49:8-9):

Yehudah, your brothers shall praise you; your hands will be on the neck of your enemies; your father’s sons will bow down before you. Yehudah is a lion’s whelp; from the prey, my son, you have elevated yourself; he stooped down, he crouched as a lion, and as a lioness, who shall raise him up?

Originally, Yehudah was a lion’s whelp, impelled by various drives, but he elevated himself from the prey. After selling Yosef, Yehudah, the lion, which is the symbol of freedom, was willing to subordinate himself and surrender his freedom to save Binyamin.

Of the two character types, the chasid me’uleh and the moshel b’nafsa, a person who is to be a ruler must have the character of a moshel b’nafsa. The majority of the populace has little in common with the chasid me’uleh. Any man, however, can be a moshel b’nafsa if he sets his mind to it. Thus, Yehudah was most fit to be the king of B’nei Yisrael.
The selling of Yosef for a pair of shoes, however, seems inhuman and, as we have said, must be understood in a figurative sense. To properly understand the meaning of the Midrashic interpretation of the verse in Amos, we must take note of the Midrash (B’reishis Rabbah 87:5) which says, “במדבר יעבדו המantaged — we must refuse to commit a sin. As proof, the Midrash cites the pasuk (B’reishis 39:18) “And Yosef refused,” referring to Yosef’s refusal to succumb to the temptations of Potiphar’s wife. The same Midrash also says, “במדבר יעבדו המantaged — we must not refuse to fulfill a mitzvah. The proof for this comment is the pasuk in D’varim (25:7) in which the woman who is to participate in chalitzah says, “יושב נ الفوركس — My yavam refuses.” This Midrash, on a superficial level, seems axiomatic and superfluous. The definition of aveira is something which shouldn’t be done, and the definition of mitzvah is something which should be done. Why is it necessary to bring proofs for these axioms? The answer is that the word יושב, refusal, employed by the Midrash, has a peculiar meaning, different from יושב, “doesn’t want.” The Vilna Gaon, in his commentary on Yeshayah, says that there are no synonyms in the Hebrew language. There are always subtle differences between terms which, at first blush, appear to be identical. יושב, says the Gaon, is a refusal based on caprice, with no reason behind it, while יושב is a refusal grounded in logical reasons. Based on this distinction, we can better comprehend the parshah of yibum and chalitzah and thus explain the meaning behind the Midrash we cited.*

The mitzvah of yibum is a chok, a statute, but not in the same sense that the mitzvah of Parah Adumah, of bringing the red heifer, is a chok. The mitzvah of Parah Adumah is not dictated by common sense, and even after the Torah commanded it, we cannot understand it; it is beyond the inquisitive grasp of our limited minds.** But the mitzvah of yibum (D’varim 25:5-10), even though we might not have conceived it on our own, can be understood once the Torah mentions it.
Two brothers, who throughout their lives shared many joys and sorrows, were very close until one of them died childless. Through marrying his sister-in-law, says the Torah, the surviving brother will perpetuate the memory of his deceased brother. We don’t understand how; it’s a chok. However, once we know the chok, we can comprehend why the surviving brother is to marry his sister-in-law. If he doesn’t want to do this chesed for his unfortunate brother so his memory does not sink into oblivion, Beis Din calls him to make a declaration. He says "כבר יותר לגורך לברך" — “I don’t want to take her [as a wife].” By using the verb " PSU " he is saying that his refusal is not a caprice but is grounded in reason. He says that it’s not a match, that he and his sister-in-law are incompatible, and, from a psychological point of view, what he says makes sense. So the Torah says, spell out to him that the real reason for his refusal is that he’s not interested in doing chesed, and that what he is saying is just rhetoric. His sister-in-law says, "אמר לי אחרים" — my brother-in-law’s refusal is in the category of הרוא, grounded in caprice.

The sister-in-law then performs chalitza — she takes the shoe off his foot. What is the significance of this action? We find that Moshe was told, at the burning bush, to remove his shoes. In the Beis HaMikdash, too, one must remove his shoes. The shoe is an instrument of adaptation. Through adaptability, every species has been able to survive the elements of nature which try to destroy it. Without shoes, a person is not protected against the elements and can become maladjusted. Adaptability, symbolized by the shoe, is very important. Without it, we couldn’t survive, and it is the main function of science and technology to provide more and more instruments of adaptability.

This, though, is true only when one is standing on mundane ground, when one is involved in general matters. On holy ground, however, a person must remove his shoes — he is not to adapt. The goal of religion is not to provide man with happiness, but to arouse man from his spiritual lethargy. Man is not to adapt to the spiritual demands of society. The modern trend in ethics is the utilitarian approach, which declares that morality changes as society changes. But this is the approach of paganism, not of Judaism.

The Torah tells the yevamah to remove the shoe of her brother-in-law in order to demonstrate the blatant truth: his decision is grounded in rationalization and selfishness. He is stepping with his shoes upon holy ground, and if he wants to lead a selfish life, he should state the truth.

Why does the Torah say in regard to Yosef’s refusal to succumb to the temptation of Potiphar’s wife that he used the method of והוא? Didn’t he have very good rational arguments for turning her down? Actually, Yosef could have found rationalizations for succumbing to Potiphar’s wife. Driven from his home by his brothers, he realized that he would be imprisoned for not complying with her requests.
There was no adequate reason for his noble actions. When our ancestors threw themselves into the fires with their children during the Crusades, was it based on reason? Was Rebbe Akiva’s decision to forfeit his life based on logic? Similarly, Yosef’s decision to sacrifice his career was made without a rational explanation. As the Midrash says, we learn from Yosef that one must resist an aveira with the approach of הָאֵרָה. Even if you have a heter, you should run away from an aveira.

When Amos said that Israel would be punished for selling a righteous man to obtain money with which to buy shoes, he didn’t mean this in a literal sense. The hashgachah brought about circumstances which convinced Yosef’s brothers that he was bent on procuring Yaakov’s brachah for himself, to the exclusion of all others. For this they bear no guilt. It was implanted in their minds that they would be completely left out of the heritage of Avraham and would go the way of Esav and Yishmael. It was not inhuman of them to sell their brother under such circumstances. Their sin was that they resorted to the utilitarian approach.

On a pasuk in D’varim (15:20), “וַעֲרֵד צְדָקָה וְרָאָה” — “Righteousness, righteousness, you shall pursue,” Targum Yonasan explains that you must pursue righteousness through righteousness, and that is why the word tzedek — righteousness — is repeated in the verse. The Torah is thus highlighting the principle of כַּעֲרֵדָה מְזוּשָׁע אֲנִי הַיָּקִיעָה — the end does not justify the means. This was precisely the crime described by Amos as selling a poor man for shoes. The brothers were convinced that the whole future of Knesses Yisrael would be threatened were Yosef not eliminated from the scene. Certainly their goal was sublime, but it does not justify their action. They were treading on holy ground with their shoes on.