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תשפ"ה RAV BRAZIL PARSHAS VAYECHEE

### THE TEN MARTYRS & BROTHERS, THE FOUR DAMAGES, AND SHABBOS

The *sefarim* tell us that the punishment of the *Shevatim* for their selling of Yosef came in the form of the Romans executing the Ten Martyrs which we mention on Yom Kippur in the *piyut* *הזכרה אלה* in *tefilas Musaf*. Some learn that the ten brothers of Yosef were even reincarnated in the Ten Martyrs to receive their punishment. This interpretation seems to favor the opinion that Yosef did **not** forgive his brothers for their cruelty towards him as we find in the Medrash Shochar Tov 1 *רבי אבין אומר בכל דור ודור עדיין חטא של מכירת יוסף קיים*.

The Meshech Chachma (vayikra 16,30) writes that this lasting punishment is alluded to in the Yom Kippur *Mussaf davening* in the ending of the *beracha* of *Shemoneh Esrai* *כי אתה סלחן לישראל ומחלן לשבטי ישורון*. The mentioning of forgiveness for the *Shevatim* refers to the selling of Yosef. This could be the reason why the *avodah* for the atonement of this *aveirah* that we beseech on Yom Kippur is performed in the *Beis Hamikdash* proper and not in the courtyard. The reason being that the *Kodesh* and *Kodesh Kadoshim* were located in the land of Binyamin who did not participate in the sale of Yosef, in contrast to the courtyard which was the property of *Yehudah* who did play a major role in selling Yosef.

According to the above point of view, why did their punishment of *tikkun* become so delayed to be actualized only after the *Churban* of the Second *Beis Hamikdash*? To understand this we have to first examine the beginning Mishnah in *Meseches Baba Kama*. *ארבעה אבות נזיקין*. *השור והבור והמבעה וההבער*. There are four categories of damages, an ox, a pit, a tooth, and fire. One is responsible to pay damages caused by his ox by stepping on a vessel, his digging of a pit in public, damages brought about by his animal having pleasure such as eating a neighbor's grass, and lighting a fire which spread and caused damage.

We suggest that this Mishna can be understood in a deeper allegorically level alluding to the sale of Yosef. There are physical damages and spiritual ones. For instance *Chazal* say that if one causes an individual to sin he is worse than killing him (*במדבר רבה כא ה*). We also find that the entire Aggada of the *Churban Beis Hamikdash* was written in *Meseches Gittin* in the *perek* called *הניזקין* damages. By selling Yosef to *Mitzrayim*, a country steeped in decadence and immorality, they willfully were complacent with damaging Yosef's spiritual's identity and making a *churban* of him. In the *sefer Bais Yishai* he writes that the selling of Yosef took place on *Asarah B'taiveis* a fast day established on account of the beginning of the siege around *Yerushalyim* leading up to the *Churban*. We can glean from the above that spiritual damages also fall under the category of *נזיקין*.

This first Mishna of *Baba Kama* hints to a few clues that strongly support such an interpretation of *מכירת יוסף*. There are ten *Mishnayos* in this *perek* which symbolizes the ten brothers who sought to damage Yosef spiritually. One of my *bachurim* Avi Miller brought another *remez* to this in that the Mishna begins with *ארבעה אבות*. The Pachad Yitzchak ztl writes that Yosef's role in building *Klal Yisrael* was both an *Av* and *Shevet*. Yosef after succeeding to

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pass the test of immorality with the wife of Potifar, thereby implanted a protection to all of *Yisrael* to restrain from immorality in *Mitzrayim*. This achievement merited him to belong partially in the category of *Avos* מעשה אבות סימן לבנים. So the words of אבות ארבעה lend themselves to be a reference to our "Fourth" Father, Yosef.

The ending lines of this first *perek* specifically mentions the greatness achieved by Yosef. So the first word of the *perek* is ארבעה referring to Yosef, the end of the *perek* speaks about Yosef, and in between them the contents are נזיקין. Furthermore, the word נזיקין contains in it the word זקן which also refers to Yosef as he is described as the בן זקנים.

Let us examine the first damager the שור and how it relates to יוסף. Yosef is called a שור as the *passuk* (Devarim 33,17) says בכור שורו הדר לו. In the *beracha* to Shimon (Bereishis 49,6) שור וברצונם עקרו שור they intended to uproot Yosef (Rashi). Yosef was sold to the *Yishmealim* who brought him down to *Mitzrayim* as the *passuk* says (Bereishis 39,1) מיד הישמעאלים אשר הורידוהו. The sale of Yosef is hinted in the *gematriah* of הישמעאלים which equals the word שור. Furthermore, the *passuk* (Yeshaya 1,3) says ידע שור קונהו that a bull recognizes its master. In the *sefer* רננים כנף רננים he explains that it is not only the old master for whom the bull is willing to work, but the same drive instantly applies even to its brand new owner קונהו. It is as if the bull knows exactly what it was created for and does not change its nature at all. Yosef is called a שור because he understood that he was created to serve Hashem and he never changed his purpose and mission whether he was in *Eretz Yisrael* with his father or in *Mitzrayim* all alone. As the *Avnei Nezer* writes on the *passuk* קמה אלומתי וגם נצבה he never lost any of his *madraigos*. This is how the Chofetz Chaim ztl translated the *passuk* ומי יקום במקום קדשו מי יעלה בהר ה' ומי יקום במקום קדשו to remain on top.

This *passuk* ends with עמי לא התבונן, however my nation did not delve deep enough to understand their owner Hashem. Here too we find an allusion to *Mechiras Yosef*. Yosef was deeply connected as one to his creator. The hint to this is the word קנהו (master) is *gematriah* יהוסף the name that he was given with the added letter ה after he overcame his ordeal with the wife of Potifar. However this is in contrast to עמי which is referring to the Ten *Shevatim* from which evolved *Klal Yisrael*, upon whom the Navi says לא התבונן they did not understand Yosef's relationship of righteousness with Hashem. A hinting to this pshat is the *gematriah* of עמי לא together with its five letters which equal יוסף.

The second damager is the בור the pit into which his brothers threw him. Some *meforshim* learn that they knew that inside the pit were snakes and scorpions which would kill him. They might have thought that since it was indirect murder they would not be responsible. The Torah writes that there was no water inside. Water symbolizes Torah. By throwing him inside that were saying that he deserved death because he was void of Torah as the *Chazal* say

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(Sotah 5) כל המתגאה חכמתו מסתלקת ממנו (Sotah 5). Since Yosef acted with haughtiness he has lost his Torah. Therefore he is like a בור which translates as an עם הארץ and cannot lead *Am Yisrael*.

The third damager agent in the Mishnah is מבעה which refers to teeth. Yosef is hinted in מבעה symbolizing the mouth and *koach of dibbur*. The Baal Haturim writes that Yosef learned *Mishnayos Torah Be'al Peh* from his father which is hinted in the acronym of זקנים. The word שן is the root of ושנתם and משנה. The brothers' selling of Yosef was damaging and hindering his learning of Torah to be infused into *Klal Yisrael*.

The fourth agent of damage is fire. The *passuk* says בית יעקב אש בית יוסף להבה ובית עשו לקש that Yaakov is fire, Yosef is the flame, and Aisav is the straw that will be set aflame by Yosef. For as soon as Yosef was born, Yaakov was ready to leave Lavan because Yosef was the antagonist and defeater of Aisav. By the brothers' ridding of Yosef they were damaging this spiritual power invested in Yosef on behalf of *Am Yisrael*. Secondly, the brothers were fiery angry with hate and jealousy which caused them to damage Yosef by attempting to extinguish his fire by selling him.

As we just explained, this Mishnah alludes to the treacherous sale of Yosef by his brothers and the different aspects of damage that was done to him. The Halacha is that if the one desires to pay for his damages with land then he must pay with a land level of the highest quality category עדיית as the *passuk* says מיטב שדהו ומיטב כרמו ישלם (Shmos 22,4). With this we can answer why was the punishment of the ten brothers of Yosef delayed all the way up to after the *Churban Habayis*? The *payit* itself answers the question as Caesar said to them ואתם קבלו דין שמים עליכם כי מימי אבותיכם לא נמצא ככם "now you must accept the verdict of heaven upon yourselves for since the days of your forefathers there has not existed your equal. If they were alive I would sentence them before you". Since their selling of Yosef was tantamount to incredible spiritual damage to Yosef who as we said above possessed the characteristics of the *Avos*, the punishment payment had to be specifically in the מיטב form of the עשרה הרוגי who had no equal caliber since the *Shevatim*.

According to the opposing opinion that claims that Yosef **did** forgive them, how then can we explain the death of the Ten Martyrs as a *tikkun*? We can explain this as follows. *Chazal* learn that Yosef kept the Shabbos. However, the *Zohar Hakadosh* says that Yosef's *madraigah* was שבת קודש. Therefore the *Mekubalim* write that this was the blemish in the sale of Yosef to *Mitzrayim*. Removing an object from a רשות היחיד לרשות הרבים is a act of *Chilul Shabbos*. Similarly, removing Yosef *Hatzadik* from *Eretz Yisrael* where עיני ה' אלקיך בה which parallels the spiritual dimensions of a יחידו של עולם, רשות היחיד, and then selling him to *Mitzrayim* which is full of *avoda zarah* and the opposite *kedushas Habris*, is tantamount to *Chillul Shabbos* and blemishing the *Bris Milah*.

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It could very well be that Yosef did forgive the brothers for their selling of him to *Mitzrayim* as a slave. However, they still had to contend with the *Chillul Shabbos* and *Bris Milah* that this same sale affected in Yosef. This was out of the hands of Yosef to forgive since they blemished the Shabbos itself.

In the *Kinnos* of *Tisha B'av* we find a similar *Payit Arzei Halavanon* concerning the *Asarah Harugai Malchus*. On *Tisha B'av* the *Payaton* elaborates on the death of Rabbe Eliazar Ben Shamuah. He was killed while he was saying the Kiddush missing the last word **לעשת** from **ויכולו**. He was the last one of the Ten Martyrs. *Chazal* say **הכל הולך אחר הגמר**. Therefore the ending tells us that all of the Ten Martyrs were atoning the *aviera* of the Ten Brothers which they didn't correct, and that was the defiling of Shabbos who was Yosef. This is hinted in the *gematriah* of **לעשת** which equals **אברהם יצחק יעקב ויוסף**. They didn't realize that Yosef was the fourth Av of *Yisrael* and their actions were **מחלל השבת**. The word **לעשת** means to fix and repair Rashi (Breishis 1,7). It is also *gematriah* **חילול השבת** with its nine letters. This is hinting that the **עשרה הרוגי מלכות** were executed to fix the **חילול שבת** by their sale of Yosef.

Now let us revisit the Mishna and see how this same list of damages to Yosef was also a **Chillul Shabbos**. Concerning Shabbos the *passuk* says (Shmos 31,13) **לרעת כי אני ה' מקדישכם**. This corresponds to **ידע שור קונהו** that because we are given a *neshamah yesairah* we have greater clarity to recognize Hashem as the sole creator and sustainer of the universe. **בור** when one digs deep enough he can find water. Shabbos which is **יומא דנשמתא**, one can remove his earthliness and discover the **מים עמוקים בלב איש**. Shabbos is also a day of **מבעה** we use our mouths to learn Torah, *daven* extra and sing praises to Hashem **טוב להודות**. We reach the fourth level in creation called "מדרב"ר". Yet the nature of teeth is sometimes they are revealed when one talks and other times they are not seen. On Shabbos our speech must be controlled and elevated as the *Navi* says **ולדבר דבר** We must refrain from Shabbos prohibited talking. Lastly, the Shabbos infuses a **הבער** a fire of *deveikus* and inspiration into the heart of a Yid. A fire has two functions, one to destroy and the other to enlighten. The *neshamah* of Shabbos aids us to **סור מרע** and enlightens to **עשה טוב**.

In conclusion we have a spectacular *gematriah* in this sugya **שור בור מבעה הבער** adds up to **שבת קודש**. This shows that these four aspects damaged Yosef and the Shabbos that he personified. The way to rectify the *Mechiras* Yosef is to enhance our Shabbos with all its trimmings and to demonstrate how precious and cherished it is to us. Every bit of added effort will help hasten to bring the *galus* to its close.

Gut Shabbos,  
Rav Brazil