

Maamarei Mordechai

הסבר לפי ממש פשוט

Parshas Vaera 5786

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Hashem gives one of His strongest rebukes to Bnei Yisroel.

לֵךְ אָמַר לְבְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲנִי ה' וְהוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מִתַּחַת סִבְלַת מִצְרַיִם וְהַצַּלְתִּי אֶתְכֶם
מֵעַבְדֹתָם וְגָאֵלְתִּי אֶתְכֶם בְּזֵרוֹעַ נְטוּיָה וּבְשִׁפְטִים גְּדֹלִים:

"Therefore, say to Beni Yisroel, 'I am Hashem. I and will bring you out from under the Egyptian burdens, and I will save you from their labors. And I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments.'" (Shmos 6:6).

This conversation occurred while Moshe was still on Har Sinai. Hashem commanded Moshe to go and speak to Bnei Yisroel and gather the elders. (Ibid 3:16). Moshe then went to Mitzrayim alone. (Ibid 4:18 - "And Moshe went"). The narrative continues with "And Elokim spoke to Moshe saying, I am Hashem." (Ibid 6:2). This reflects "And Elokim called to him." (Ibid 3:4). Hashem says He appeared to the avos. (Ibid 6:4). This is like earlier. (Ibid 3:6). Hashem says He established His covenant with them (ibid 6:4) and heard their groans (ibid 6:5). This directly reflects ibid 2:24 and ibid 3:7 respectively. However, when Moshe told Bnei Yisroel that they were going to be saved they could not even hear him out because of their burdens. (Ibid 6:9). This seems to contradict what the Torah writes earlier that they believed. (Ibid 4:31).

Moshe returned from Egypt to Hashem and told Him this. (Ibid 4:1). This reflects "Bnei Yisroel did not hear me, how would Pharaoh?" (Ibid 6:12). Moshe complained he was not a good speaker. (Ibid 4:10). This reflects "Lo! I have covered lips; how can I speak to Pharaoh?" (Ibid 6:30). Hashem says Aharon will help him. (Ibid 4:16). This is reiterated later. (Ibid 7:2). Moshe returned to Yisro to take his leave. (Ibid 4:18). Bnei Yisroel were not yet convinced. It was only after "Aharon spoke all the words that Hashem spoke to Moshe, and he performed all the signs, in the sight of the people" did they believe. These were the ten strikes against Mitzrayim. Then "the people believed...and they prostrated themselves." (Ibid 4:31). This reflects "and the people prostrated themselves." (Ibid 12:27). This was just prior to Makos Bechoros.

Our pasuk not only reiterates the conversation from earlier, it also reiterates the great rebuke Hashem gave Bnei Yisroel. Sefer Shmos commences by repeating that Yaakov went down to Egypt with his family (ibid 1:1), seventy souls (ibid 1:5). It was already stated in Sefer Bereishis. (Bereishis 46:27). Why repeat it?

Then Yosef and all his brothers passed away. (Shmos 1:6). And Bnei Yisroel were so fruitful they filled the land. (Ibid 1:7). Then the Torah says "A new king arose upon Mitzrayim, that did not know Yosef." (Ibid 1:8). It can be read to mean the new king did not know Yosef. It can also mean Mitzrayim did not know Yosef. Mitzrayim is not just a place, it is a territory filled with people. The territory was filled with Bnei Yisroel who filled the land. Bnei Yisroel did not know Yosef! What does this mean?

Yaakov made Yosef swear to bury Yaakov in Maoras Hamachpela. (Bereishis 47:31). He also told Yosef that Hashem would be with you and will return you to the land of your forefathers. (Ibid 48:21). This was said to Yosef but Yaakov used the plural form or “you.” All of them will one day return to Eretz Canaan. Then, he commanded his other children that he must be buried there – not making them swear. (Ibid 49:29). He gives them the whole story of how Avraham purchased the land (ibid 49:30) and who is buried there (ibid 49:31). He then reiterates that the land was purchased. (Ibid 49:31). Why?

Yosef swore to Yaakov “I will do so according to your words.” (Ibid 47:32). Not just “yes” but he would be buried there, too. Yosef told his brothers, “The Lord will surely consider you and will take you up from this land to the Land promised to Avraham, Yitzchok, and Yaakov.” (Ibid 50:24). He then repeated it, “The Lord will surely consider you, and you shall take up my bones from here.” (Ibid 50:25). Before he passed away, Yosef reminded Bnei Yisroel that Eretz Yisroel was theirs for the taking. They did not need to conquer it. Yaakov already promised him that Bnei Yisroel will return to the Land. Yosef in turn promised his brothers that they will return. He reminded them not to forget their rightful heritage, and take him with them.

Yaakov taught that despite the land being sworn to Avraham, Avraham had to suffer the humility of purchasing a plot. Avraham had to purchase a plot but you can just go up and settle the land and conquer it through numbers. Shmos commences reminding Beni Yisroel that they came with seventy but they grew so much they filled the land. If they knew Yosef, if they remembered his promise to them, they would recall it was time to move out and move to Eretz Canaan. Time to take their birthright and inheritance.

“Therefore, say to Bnei Yisroel, ‘I am Hashem.’” I am the same Hashem that appeared to your forefathers.

“I will take you out from under Egyptian’s burdens.” The burdens are not Bnei Yisroel’s; they belong to Egypt. You are only suffering because you remain Egyptians. You have stayed too long in the land. Because of that you are now suffering what was merely destined for the Egyptians. You became one of them so you suffer, too.

“And I will save you from their labors.” Not their enslavement of you. It is their labors. They are the ones that have to labor and work. However, because you stayed, you now pick up their slack. Really, Pharaoh enslaved all his people. (Bereishis 47:23). Since Bnei Yisroel remained they also toil.

“And I will redeem you with an outstretched arm.” You belong in Eretz Canaan. However, now I have to reach from Eretz Canaan all the way into Eretz Mitzrayim and pull you out.

“With great judgments.” Now Hashem has to tally up what suffering the Egyptians caused and what suffering Bnei Yisroel caused on themselves. Only Hashem can make this fine calculation.

This was the great rebuke. Klal Yisroel! Do not stay too long in galus. There are promises made that Eretz Yisroel belongs to us. There are signs when the time is right. When it is right, do not linger. Do not grow too much to fill up foreign lands. If we grow and fill up lands it is time to fill up Eretz Yisroel. When brocho is given make sure it is enjoyed in the correct way and the correct place.