



A VORT FROM THE ROSH YESHIVA

פרשת מקץ

וְיִהְיֶה מִקֵּץ שְׁנַתִּים יָמִים וְכוּ'. (בראשית מא, א)

It happened at the end of two years to the day ... (Bereishis 24:10-21)

"וְדַבֵּר שְׁפִתַיִם אֶךָ לְמַחְסוֹר" (משלי יד), עַל יְדֵי שְׂאֵמֶר לְשֵׁר הַמְּשָׁקִים (מ, יד): "זְכַרְתִּנִּי וְהִזְכַּרְתִּנִּי"
נִתּוֹסַף לּוֹ שְׁנַתִּי שְׁנַיִם, שְׂנַאָמֶר: וְיִהְיֶה מִקֵּץ שְׁנַתִּים יָמִים.

"אֲשֶׁרִי הַגִּבֵּר אֲשֶׁר שָׁם ה' מִבְּטַחוֹ" (תהלים מ), זֶה יוֹסֵף. "וְלֹא פָנָה אֶל רֵהֲבִים" (שם), עַל יְדֵי שְׂאֵמֶר
לְשֵׁר הַמְּשָׁקִים (מ, יד): "זְכַרְתִּנִּי וְהִזְכַּרְתִּנִּי" נִתּוֹסַף לּוֹ שְׁנַתִּי שְׁנַיִם. (מדרש רבה פט)

"But talk of the lips brings only loss," (Mishlei 14) – because he said to the chamberlain of the cupbearers, "Remember me ... and mention me [to Pharaoh]" (40:14), two years were added, as the possuk says "It happened at the end of two years."

"Praises to the man who made Hashem his trust," (Tehillim 40) - this refers to Yosef. "And turned not to the arrogant - because he said to the chamberlain of the cupbearers, "Remember me ... and mention me [to Pharaoh]" (40:14), two years were added, as the possuk says "It happened at the end of two years." (Bereishis Rabbah 89)

Chazal tell us that Yosef's time in prison was extended for two years as punishment for relying on the cupbearer's promise to remember him. Accordingly, the *possuk* is indicating that at the precise end of those two years, Yosef's salvation finally came.

Let us examine the nature of Yosef's sin and see what lessons we can learn from it.

The *possuk* in last week's *parshah* (40:14-15) brings Yosef's plea to the cupbearer: כִּי אִם זְכַרְתִּנִּי אֶתְּךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר יִיטֵב לְךָ וְעָשִׂיתָ נָא עִמָּדִי חֶסֶד וְהִזְכַּרְתִּנִּי אֶל פֶּרְעָה וְהוֹצֵאתִנִּי מִן הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה. כִּי גִבַּב גִּנְבַּתִּי מֵאַרְץ הָעִבְרִים וְגַם פֹּה לֹא עָשִׂיתִי מְאוּמָה כִּי שָׂמוּ אֹתִי בְּבוֹר וְהִזְכַּרְתִּנִּי אֶתְּךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר יִיטֵב לְךָ וְעָשִׂיתָ נָא עִמָּדִי חֶסֶד וְהוֹצֵאתִנִּי מִן הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה. *If only you would think of me with yourself when he benefits you, and you will do me a kindness, if you please, and mention me to Pharaoh, then you would get me out of this building. For indeed I was kidnapped from the land of the Hebrews, and even here I have done nothing for them to have put me in the pit.* The Midrash above implies that most of Yosef's lengthy impassioned plea was not what the *possuk* in Mishlei termed "talk of the lips." Yosef was held accountable and punished solely for that which he beseeched - זְכַרְתִּנִּי וְהִזְכַּרְתִּנִּי, *Remember me ... and mention me*. Why was his entire plea not considered a lack of *bitachon*, and why does the Midrash only criticise Yosef for this double request to be mentioned to Pharaoh?

The *Meforshim* question what Yosef did wrong. One is obligated to do *hishtadlus* as Chazal expound upon the *possuk* (Devarim 14:29): אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשֶׂה: לְמַעַן יְבָרְכֶךָ ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכֹל מַעֲשֶׂה יָדְךָ אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשֶׂה. *In order that Hashem, your God, will bless you in all your handiwork that you may undertake.* The implication of the *possuk* is clear that one *may* – indeed, *should* - work for a livelihood, and that Hashem will bless him, not punish him, for doing so. We see this in the example of Yakov, who took the necessary steps to be saved from Eisav by sending him numerous presents. If so, why was Yosef punished for taking the initiative to secure his freedom? Surely Yosef had the right, if not the duty, to seek his freedom!

The Rosh Yeshiva *shlita* teaches that by understanding the deeper meaning of Yosef's plea, we can grasp the crux of the matter here. The *possuk* (40:14) states: כִּי אִם זְכַרְתִּנִּי אֶתְּךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר יִיטֵב לְךָ וְעָשִׂיתָ

