

Parshas Vayechi

This week's parsha concludes the first Chumash- Bereishis, with Yaakov giving his sons different blessings and words of Chizzuk. In the times we live in, the whole Chumash has been a script of the way the world works and our resolve as a nation, and we will prevail because of the outcome of how the Torah tells us this.

Since the beginning of creation, Hashem recorded how society acts, how Jews relate to their surroundings, and, therefore, practically how we have to live today.

The Rebbe in Lekutei Sichos Volume 25 explains the Gemara in Berachos 5b: "A prisoner cannot free himself from jail." This means that to be free from confinement, salvation must come from an external source. Yaakov and Yosef differed on where they wanted to be buried. Yaakov wanted to be buried in Eretz Yisroel right away, whereas Yosef wanted to remain with the people in Egypt (until their salvation), which is why Yaakov made Yosef swear that he would be buried in Eretz Yisroel. Their belief was based on the idea that Yaakov said their future release from exile would be by him being out of the land, whereas Yosef believed in accompanying the Jews in Egypt.

Regardless of their position and the subsequent conversations recorded in the Torah, we are given insight into where our salvation in this current exile will come from. It will come from outside of us, meaning from an entity external to the trials and tribulations of exile. This salvation will be unlike anything we have ever seen, to follow that rule explained in Berachos. Yet, even in exile, we have beacons that remain

with us to help us while we remain in confinement.

The Torah and Mitzvahs, practically, are the method and roadmap to navigate the time spent in confinement. Through the culmination of practice and servitude to Hashem, we can be redeemed in a revealed and clear fashion. Since history showed that both Yaakov and Yosef were critical in the salvation (Yosef's casket remaining in Egypt, and Yaakov having been transported to Eretz Yisroel) from Egyptian exile, we certainly know that the same salvation is coming for us.

Even in these dark times, where tropes, antisemitism, and the state of Jewish relationships with our surroundings are precarious. We are specifically fighting our distant cousins, who invoke their own interpretation of God's word to try and eradicate us. Even their mission, which may, to the world, be shrouded in peace and spirit, is tarnished and not true. The truth is in the Torah because even in those times, the same type of precarious relationship occurred (i.e. eventually, the Egyptians enslaved the Jews even after all they had done). Nevertheless, we prevailed and were redeemed.

May the redemption happen sooner than later, and may our external salvation arrive speedily in our days. Good Shabbos