

Parshas Vayigash

This week's Parsha is Vayigash, where Yosef reveals himself to his brothers and is reunited with his father. After having prepared the land to host Yakov and family, we are exposed to the purpose of this historical episode, which is the beginning of the realization of the covenant between Hashem and Avraham, that the Jews would have to go to Egypt before redemption, wealth, and the giving of the Torah.

In the 6th Aliya Perek 46 Posuk 28, the Torah says, Yakov sent Yehuda ahead to Yosef to prepare the settlement in Goshen (the best of the land that Yosef prepared for his family to reside), before his arrival, and they arrived in the land of Goshen." The posuk says Lehoros Lefanav-to prepare ahead, as Rashi explains from Onkelos, to show him how to settle the land, and continues, according to the aggadic explanation, it means to establish a Yeshiva, from which to teach Torah (which derives from Hora'ah to teach) and to emanate.

Yehuda is the progenitor of Mashiach ben Dovid, and Yosef is the progenitor of Mashiach ben Yosef, whose role is to prepare the land. Yehuda, in establishing the Yeshiva on the physical land that Yosef prepared, is a model for our times, indicating that both aspects are interconnected in achieving ultimate redemption, which is unfolding now.

Our role in Golus, now, is to act like Yehuda, to bring houses of study wherever we can, in a land that the descendants of Yosef are preparing for us to welcome Mashiach. These pieces are aligning to bring us closer to the ultimate redemption, i.e., the outcome of the Jews' sojourn in Egypt, Golus, and redemption. We are entrenched in our Golus and will receive our redemption. However, the preparation was undertaken by both progenitors of the redemption, Yosef and Yehuda. Yehuda undertakes the spiritual preparation, and Yosef prepares the physical surroundings (i.e., the land of Goshen, as elucidated in the pesukim).

I now understand the mission of the Rebbe Rashab (5th Lubavitcher Rebbe), who established Tomchei Temimim, a yeshiva intended to spread across the darkness of Russia and other regions of Europe, and eventually globally, wherever Jews may be found. The Rashab entrusted his son, the Rayatz (the 6th Lubavitcher Rebbe), with the central mission of proliferating the Yeshivas, regardless of how complex and life-threatening that mission may have been. The critical aspect being that, unlike other denominations of Judaism, which aimed to protect their students from outside influences and remain untroubled by outside forces by staying small, the Rashab's and Rayatz's mission was to establish as many houses of learning, and network of Jewish education that made them one of the most powerful forces in

Jewish life in the early 20th century. Then, the Rayatz's son-in-law, the Ramash (Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi MM Schneerson, 7th rebbe), further developed this mission by expanding the Yeshiva mission to the Shluchim mission, which his father-in-law had initiated. In this way, by extending Jewish life to every corner of the world where Jews may be found, the Hora'ah of the Torah can be disseminated through Torah and Mitzvos, thereby carrying Yehuda's mission from this parsha into our times.

Meaning by the Rebbe paving the way to spread the light of Torah, he accomplishes Yehuda's mission, coupled with the physical preparation of Yosef, which will inevitably result in the ultimate redemption, Mashiach. Just as it happened in Yosef and Yehuda's time, and again after the first Beis Hamikdash was destroyed, and we got to rebuild the second, so too will our Golus end. Every prophecy has been realized (beginning with the promise to Avraham that the Jews would go to Egypt and leave with Rechush Gadol, so too must all the other prophecies come true). Although Yosef and Binyamin wept on each other's necks (45:14), about which Rashi explains that this was as a result of the future destruction of the 2 Beis Hamikdash in Binyamin's territory, and the destruction of Shiloh in Yosef's territory.) These were prophecies both saw about each other, which, in hindsight, we know were

fulfilled; it can only mean that our redemption will take place.

Therefore, we must continue the mission of Yehuda and Yosef, who oversee preparations for both the physical and spiritual dimensions of our world, so that we may welcome Mashiach Now.

Good Shabbos!