

Parashat Vayigash / פרשת מקץ

Shabbat Tevet 6, 5768, Dec. 15, 2007
MATSATI.COM / Rightly Dividing The Word of G-d
<http://www.matsati.com> | matsati@matsati.com

God begins by shining a light in the darkness of our hearts

This Weeks Reading List:

Torah: Genesis 44:18-47:27

Haftarah: Ezekiel 37:15-37:28

B'rit HaChadashah: Ephesians 2:1-10

In this week's parsha, we find that Ya'akov reveals himself to his brothers, and then brings his family down to Mitzrayim (Egypt) to be with him. The purpose is to save his family from the devastating famine that is occurring over all the land. Ya'akov intends for his family to remain with him in Mitzrayim because 5 more years of famine still remain. Interestingly we now find that G-d has been working in Yoseph's brothers lives too. Previously we have seen how G-d has been working in Yoseph's life to bring him into a powerful position in Mitzrayim. In Parashat Vayigash we find G-d is also working in his brothers lives. An example of this is found in Y'hudah's response to Yoseph. G-d worked in Y'hudah's heart to become a man who was willing to selflessly lay down his life for his younger brother Benyamin.

Genesis 44:18-45:2

44:18 Then Y'hudah approached Yosef and said, "Please, my lord Let your servant say something to you privately; and don't be angry with your servant, for you are like Pharaoh himself. 44:19 My lord asked his servants, 'Do you have a father? or a brother?' 44:20 We answered my lord, 'We have a father who is an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one whose brother is dead; so that of his mother's children he alone is left; and his father loves him.' 44:21 But you said to your servants, 'Bring him down to me, so that I can see him.' 44:22 We answered my lord, 'The boy can't leave his father; if he were to leave his father, his father would die.' 44:23 You said to your servants, 'You will not see my face again unless your brother is with you.' 44:24 We went up to your servant my father and told him what my lord had said; 44:25 but when our father said, 'Go again, and buy us some food,' 44:26 we answered, 'We can't go down. Only if our youngest brother is with us will we go down, because we can't see the man's face unless our youngest brother is with us.' 44:27 Then your servant my father said to us, 'You know that my wife bore me two sons: 44:28 the one went out from me, and I said, "Surely he has been torn to pieces," and I haven't seen him since. 44:29 Now if you take this one away from me too, and something happens to him, you will bring my gray hair down to Sh'ol with grief.' 44:30 So now if I go to your servant my father, and the boy isn't with us - seeing how his heart is bound up with the boy's heart - 44:31 when he sees that the boy isn't with us, he will die; and your servants will bring the gray hair of your servant our father down to Sh'ol with grief. 44:32 For your servant himself guaranteed his safety; I said, 'If I fail to bring him to you, then I will bear the blame before my father forever.'

44:33 Therefore, I beg you, let your servant stay as a slave to my lord instead of the boy, and let the boy go up with his brothers. 44:34 For how can I go up to my father if the boy isn't with me? I couldn't bear to see my father so overwhelmed by anguish." 45:1 At last Yosef could no longer control his feelings in front of his attendants and cried, "Get everybody away from me!" So no one else was with him when Yosef revealed to his brothers who he was. 45:2 He wept aloud, and the Egyptians heard, and Pharaoh's household heard.

Do you see how G-d worked in the darkest spot in Y'udah's heart? G-d had softened his heart to one of selflessness. The darkest spot in the hearts of Yoseph's brothers was that they had plotted to kill him, and then sold him into slavery. By selling Yoseph into slavery his brothers were treating him as a "chattel slave" one which has absolute legal ownership of a person including the right to buy and sell them, they had essentially disowned their brother and considering him dead to their family and sold him into bondage. This was a very heavy burden his brothers had to bare over the years, and is the place G-d was working in them, to make their hearts more humble and selfless. Now I would like to take this a step further and discuss how God begins his work in the darkest spot in our hearts.

There is an interesting parallel here where we have the concept of light versus darkness, and where G-d begins his work by bringing the light of life, forgiveness, salvation, into the darkness that is found in men's hearts. This parallel is found in the beginning ministry of Yeshua HaMoshiach. Yeshua started his ministry in the city of K'far-Nachum a seaport city on the border of Naftali. Naftali is the sixth son of Ya'akov one of the twelve tribes of Israel. The tribe of Naftali lay in the north-eastern corner of the land of Israel bound on the east by the Jordan River and the lakes of Merom and Galilee, and on the north it extended far into Coele-Syria, the valley between the two Lebanon ranges. The territory of Naftali extended to about 800 square miles, being twice that of Issachar. The region around Kedesh, one of its towns was originally called Galil, which is a name given afterwards to the whole northern division of Canaan. A large number of foreigners settled there among the mountain area and thus it was called "Galil of the Goyim" (Galilee of the Gentiles). It is here that we find Yeshua beginning his ministry in Matthew 4:12-20

Matthew 4:12-20

4:12 When Yeshua heard that Yochanan had been put in prison, he returned to the Galil; 4:13 but he left Natzeret and came to live in K'far-Nachum, a lake shore town near the boundary between Z'vulun and Naftali. 4:14 This happened in order to fulfill what Yesha'yahu the prophet had said, Matt4:15 "Land of Z'vulun and land of Naftali, toward the lake, beyond the Yarden, Galil-of-the-Goyim 4:16 the people living in darkness have seen a great light; upon those living in the region, in the shadow of death, light has dawned." 4:17 From that time on, Yeshua began proclaiming, "Turn from your sins to God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near!" 4:18 As Yeshua walked by Lake Kinneret, he saw two brothers who were fishermen -- Shim'on, known as Kefa, and his brother Andrew -- throwing their net into the lake. 4:19 Yeshua said to them, "Come after me, and I will make you fishers for men!" 4:20 At once they left their nets and went with him. (CJB)

מתתיהו 4:12-20

- 4:12 וַיְהִי כִשְׁמֵעוֹ יֵשׁוּעַ כִּי נִסְגַּר יוֹחָנָן וַיָּשָׁב הַגְּלִילָה׃
- 4:13 וַיַּעַזְבֵם אֶת־נִצְרֶת וַיָּבֹא וַיֵּשֶׁב בְּכַפְר־נַחֲוִים עַל־שְׂפַת הַיָּם בְּגִבּוּלֵי זְבֻלֹן וְנַפְתָּלִי׃
- 4:14 לְמַלְאָכָה אֶת־אֶתְרֵי־נְאֻמָּה בְּיַד־יֵשׁוּעַ וְהוּא הִנְבִּיא לְאִמֹּר׃
- 4:15 אֶרְצָה זְבֻלֹן וְאֶרְצָה נַפְתָּלִי דָרָךְ הַיָּם עֲבָר הַיַּרְדֵּן גְּלִיל הַגּוֹיִם׃
- 4:16 הָעַם הַזֶּה לְכִים בַּחֲשֹׁךְ רָאוּ אֹרֶךְ יָדוֹלִי יֵשְׁבִי בְּאֶרֶץ צְלֻמֹּנוֹת אֹרֶךְ נֶגְהָ עָלֵיהֶם׃
- 4:17 מִהֵנָּה הִיא הַחֵל יֵשׁוּעַ לְקַרְאֵם וְלֵאמֹר שׁוּבוּ מִדַּרְכֵיכֶם כִּי מִלְכוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם קָרְבָה לָבֹא׃
- 4:18 וַיִּתְהַלֵּךְ יֵשׁוּעַ עַל־יַד יַם־הַגְּלִיל וַיֵּרָא שְׁנַי אַחִים שֹׁמְעוֹן
- הַנִּקְרָא פֶּטְרוֹס וְאַנְדְרֵי אַחִיו פִּרְשִׁים מִכַּמָּרֶת עַל־פְּנֵי־הַיָּם כִּי דִיֻּגְיָם הָיוּ׃
- 4:19 וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם לָכוּ אַחֲרַי וְאֶעֱשֶׂה אִתְּכֶם לְדִיֻּגֵי אָדָם׃
- 4:20 וַיַּעֲזְבוּ אֶת־מִכְמָרוֹתָם כִּרְגַע וַיֵּלְכוּ אַחֲרָיו׃

So we find Yeshua is beginning his ministry in a seaport town, the next question is why and how does this relate to Hashem beginning His work in the darkness of our hearts? Interestingly seaport cities are generally some of the darkest places where a lot of wickedness take place, the reason is such cities become major places of business, including trading, money, and prostitution. An example I would like to give relating to the wickedness of seaport cities is by looking at an ancient Phoenician seaport city called Tyre (Tzor, צור). It was located on the Mediterranean coast in the area that is today called southern Lebanon just north of the border of Israel. Tyre was originally founded on an island and adjacent mainland which was probably a colony of Sidon (Tzidon). Sidon was one of the oldest Phoenician cities but Tyre eventually exceeded Sidon in fame and prosperity. According to ancient accounts, “Tyrian merchants were



the first who ventured to navigate the Mediterranean waters and founded many costal colonies in the neighboring islands of the Aegean Sea, Greece, and on the northern coast of Africa and at Carthage, etc. Tyre became a grand city as evidenced today by the remains of its Arch of Triumph ruins. Tyre however eventually fell and became ruin because of its great wickedness and idolatry. Its destruction could very possibly have been predicted by numerous prophets in the Tanach (see *Isaiah*

23:1, Jeremiah 25:18-22, Ezekiel 28:1-10, Amos 1:9-10, and Zechariah 9:2-4). The reason Tyre is such a good example is because Yeshua used Tyre in His denouncement of the people of Korazin and Bethsaida for their refusal to repent and believe on Him in *Matthew 11:21-22*.

Matthew 11:21-22

11:21 "Woe to you, Korazin! Woe to you, Beit-Tzaidah! Why, if the miracles done in you had been done in Tzor and Tzidon, they would long ago have put on sackcloth and ashes as evidence that they had changed their ways. 11:22 But I tell you it will be more bearable for Tzor and Tzidon than for you on the Day of Judgment! (CJB)

מתתיהו 11:21-22

11:21 אוי לך כּוֹרַזִין אוי לך בֵּית־צַיְדָה כִּי לֹא נַעֲשׂוּ בְּצוֹר וּבְצִידוֹן הַנִּפְלְאוֹת אֲשֶׁר נַעֲשׂוּ בְּתוֹכְכֶן כִּבְרָ שָׁבוּ בִשְׂקֵי וְאַפְרָ׃
11:22 אָפֶס אָנִי אֵימֶר לָכוּ נִגְהָ יְהִיָּה יוֹם הַמִּשְׁפָּט לְצוֹר וּלְצִידוֹן מֵאֲשֶׁר לָכוּ׃ (HNT)

The reason Yeshua decided to begin his ministry in a seaport city, which quite possibly is the darkest place in Israel was for the reason behind why he had come into this world. The reason Yeshua had come into this world was to be a light unto the darkness, not only to reveal G-d's truth but to also offer salvation to all who come to Him by faith.

John 1:4-9

1:4 In him was life, and the life was the light of mankind. 1:5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not suppressed it. 1:6 There was a man sent from God whose name was Yochanan. 1:7 He came to be a testimony, to bear witness concerning the light; so that through him, everyone might put his trust in God and be faithful to him. 1:8 He himself was not that light; no, he came to bear witness concerning the light. 1:9 This was the true light, which gives light to everyone entering the world. (CJB)

יוחנן 1:4-9

1:4 בו נמצא חיים והחיים הם אור האדם:
1:5 והאור זה החן בן שך ונתן שך לא יכילנו:
1:6 איש היה בארץ יוחנן שמו אשר שלחו אלהים:
1:7 הוא בא לעדות להעיד על-האור למען יאמינו כלם על-ידו:
1:8 ולא הוא היה האור כי אם בא להעיד על-האור שהוא:
1:9 הוא אור אמת אשר בא לעולם להאיר לכל-אדם: (HNT)

The purpose behind G-d's desires is to bring us from the darkness and wickedness in our hearts to the point of repentance, and turning from our ways, then to forgiveness and salvation and finally fellowship with Him. Hashem sent the light of the world, the memra, the living and creative Word of G-d into this world to help us to be overcomers by trusting in Adonai and being faithful to Him. In this week's parsha we find a parallel in the ministry of Yeshua HaMoshiach. The parallel is that God begins in the darkest place of our heart to bring about change. Yeshua began his ministry in a seaport city, so that he could proclaim the reason for his coming into this world, to be a light in the darkness. Have you placed your faith and trust in the light of life? The purpose of G-d's word is to shine a light into the darkness of our hearts, if you ask Yeshua to come into your heart, ask the Father in Heaven to forgive you, and to send his spirit to dwell in you and to comfort you, G-d will place His peace, and His joy inside your heart so no matter where life brings you, you will always have hope, always have peace, and always have joy and always have G-d near.

There is no greater purpose in life than to have the joy of Adonai and to serve Him!

Prayer

Avinu u'Melechainu (Our Father and Our king),

I thank you for the many layers of revelation and the meaningful parallels you have given us which are found in the scriptures. I thank you for your mercy and grace and all that you have done for me. Please have mercy on my soul, and forgive me for the wickedness that I have done, and the wickedness that is found in my heart. Help me to become the man/woman that you would want me to be. Help me to let your light of life shine through me and that I might have the opportunity and courage to speak to others openly about my faith in the living G-d. I ask that Yeshua would come into my heart, to make me a changed person, to help me to have joy, peace, and true life. I thank you and I praise you forever and ever.

Anachnu teppilah b'shem Yeshua Hamoshiach. Amen! (אמן! ישוע המשיח בשם יי)אנחנו תפללה

Be Blessed in Yeshua our Messiah

הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:

Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,
"Yeshua" King Messiah for ever and ever