



Table Talk Parshat Vayigash

בראשית ל"ז:כ"ו-כ"ח

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־אַחִיו מֵהֶבֶץ כִּי נִהְרגָּתָה אֶת־
אֶתְנִינוּ וְכַפְעִינוּ אֶת־צְמָנוּ: לְכָה וְנִמְכְּרָנוּ לִישְׁמָעָלִים
וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־תְּהִרְבּוּ כִּי־אַחִינוּ בָּשְׂרָנוּ הַיָּאָן יִשְׁמַעְנוּ
אֲחִיו: בַּעֲבָרֹת אֲנָשִׁים מִקְרָבִים בְּמִשְׁכָּבִים
נִיעַלְוּ אֶת־יְוֹסֵף מִן־הַבּוֹר וַיִּמְכְּרוּ אֶת־יְוֹסֵף
לִיְּשָׁמָעָלִים בַּעֲשָׂרִים כֹּסֶף וַיַּבְיאוּ אֶת־יְוֹסֵף
מִצְרַיָּה:

Genesis 37:26-28

Then Judah said to his brothers, "What do we gain by killing our brother and covering up his blood? Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, but let us not do away with him ourselves. After all, he is our brother, our own flesh." His brothers agreed. When Midianite traders passed by, they pulled Joseph up out of the pit. They sold Joseph for twenty pieces of silver to the Ishmaelites, who brought Joseph to Egypt.

בראשית מ"ד:ל"ג-ל"ד

וְעַתָּה יִשְׁבְּנָא עַבְדָּךְ תַּחַת הַנֵּעֶר עַבְדָּלָנִי
וְהַנֵּעֶר יַעֲלֵל עַמְּדָאַחִיו: כִּי־אִיךְ אָעַלְהָ אֶל־אָבִי
וְהַנֵּעֶר אִגְנָנוּ אֲתִי פָּנָא אֶרְאָה בְּרָע אֲשֶׁר יִמְצָא אֶת־
אָבִי:

Genesis 44:33-34

Therefore, please let your servant remain as a slave to my lord instead of the boy, and let the boy go back with his brothers. For how can I go back to my father unless the boy is with me? Let me not be witness to the woe that would overtake my father!"

"It is a precise reversal of character. Callousness has been replaced with concern. Indifference to his brother's fate has been transformed into courage on his behalf. He is willing to suffer what he once inflicted on Joseph so that the same fate should not befall Benjamin. At this point Joseph reveals his identity. We know why. Judah has passed the test that Joseph has carefully constructed for him. Joseph wants to know if Judah has changed. He has."

- The Lord Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

"Once Judah, who here represents all the brothers, had reached the stage of not being able to return to his father without Benjamin, being prepared to give his life for him, the wrong they had originally perpetrated against their other brother was atoned for and Joseph could reveal his identity to them."

- Nechama Leibowitz

Let's Talk!

How does Yehuda demonstrate that he has changed from being callous to being empathetic?

How does he show concern for Benyamin? For his father?

How is this different than how he acted during the sale of Yosef?

Yosef remembers being vulnerable, how does he test Yehuda to see if he has changed?

Why was Yosef trying to see if Yehuda changed?

Why is it important to stand up for someone being targeted by others?

How can you stand up for people who are vulnerable?

If you could ask Yehuda anything, what would it be? If you could ask Yosef anything, what would it be?



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