

BITACHON LESSON FROM THE PARSHA

פרשת וַיְהִי בְּשַׁלַּח פְּרַעֲהַ תִּשְׁפֹּׁ - There's No Plan B

וַיֹּסֶב אֱלֹהִים-יִם אֶת הָעָם דֶּרֶךְ הַמִּדְבָּר יַם סוּף

Hashem led the people around, by the way of the wilderness by the sea of reeds (Shemos 13:18)

Rashi comments: **הִסְבֵּם מִן הַדֶּרֶךְ הַפְּשׁוּטָה לְדֶרֶךְ הַעֲקוּמָה** - He turned them from the straight route to follow the circuitous route.

The Midrash (Shemos Rabbah 20:18) teaches:

וַיֹּסֶב אֱלֹהִים-יִם אֶת הָעָם מִכָּאן אֲמָרוּ רַבּוּתֵינוּ (פְּסָחִים צַט:) אֲפִילוּ עֲנִי שְׁבִישְׁרָאֵל לֹא יֵאָכֵל עַד שִׁיבָה שָׂכָךְ עֹשֶׂה לָהֶם הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא שֶׁנֶּאֱמָר וַיֹּסֶב אֱלֹהִים-יִם
From this Posuk Chazal derive that even a pauper may not eat [on Pesach night] unless he is reclining, as this is what Hashem did to them as well.

This Midrash is a bit perplexing. How exactly did Chazal see the Mitzvah of **הַסִּיבָה** (reclining) in this Posuk? Just from the similarity of the word **וַיֹּסֶב** – which means He led them around – to the word **הַסִּיבָה** – which means reclining?

There has to be more depth to this association than just the fact that these are two similar sounding words, as seemingly the two are not related.

Why did Hashem have to take Klal Yisroel in a roundabout way, which seemingly made the trek longer and more difficult than necessary? Because the Yidden were afraid, as the Posuk suggests? The Yidden just witnessed the Hand of Hashem – ten *Makos* and the wonder of *Yetzias Mitzrayim* – as never before experienced. They walked right out of *Mitzrayim* without lifting a weapon or firing a single shot. Surely Hashem could do the same thing to the *Pelishtim*, should they even attempt to lift a finger to fight with the Yidden. It is very difficult to fathom what this fear the Yidden had was all about.

Obviously, Hashem could have effortlessly taken them right through the *Pelishtim* and make it a smooth and uneventful passage. Hashem hardened the hearts of Paraoth and the Egyptians at will, and could easily have removed any vestige of fear from the hearts of the Yidden.

Hashem took the Yidden a roundabout way to teach them – and to teach us – an important lesson for life. Hashem was saying *"What to you looks crooked and out of the way, to Me is straight and direct, and what to you looks straight and logical, to Me is often clear that it is actually crooked and the wrong direction"* **כִּי לֹא מִחֲשַׁבּוֹתַי מִחֲשַׁבּוֹתֵיכֶם וְלֹא דַרְכֵיכֶם**
For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways," says Hashem (Yeshayahu 55:8)

Hashem had a plan that included taking the Yidden through the desert for 40 years, giving them the Torah on *Har Sinai* (הַהָר הַזֶּה) - *בהוציאך את העם ממצרים תעבדון את האלהים על ההר הזה* (Shemos 3:12), teaching them the lessons of the Mann, the Ananei Hakavod and the Be'er. Hashem had an intense 40-year training regimen for His children that was ultimately for their benefit and the benefit of Klal Yisroel for the rest of history. To an observer it may appear to be "out of the way", too long, too arduous, too demanding, too many Nisyonos, too many falls, too many mishaps, too many losses, too much pain. The reality, though, is that it was all calculated, pre-planned and pre-destined by Hashem for the benefit of Klal Yisroel.

What looked like was derailing us was actually exalting us! That's what **וַיֹּסֶב** is all about. It wasn't Plan B, it was plan A all along!

One who is stricken with poverty may think "Why me?!", "Why does there have to be poverty in the world altogether?", "Why is my situation so bitter?"

The answer to all these questions is **וַיֹּסֶב אֱלֹהִים-יִם אֶת הָעָם דֶּרֶךְ הַמִּדְבָּר יַם סוּף**

On Pesach when we express our Emunah and Bitachon, even the poorest among us must recline like a royal king, because he has to know and believe that poverty exists as part of

Hashem's plan. His being given the Nisayon of poverty – as are everyone's Nisyonos in whatever area they may be – was tailor-made by Hashem specifically for him.

Our job is to do *Ratzon Hashem* and recline like kings, as all Yidden are royalty, despite any challenges they may face.

Our Nisyonos are *Ratzon Hashem*! Our specific life situation is *Ratzon Hashem*! Our very existence is *Ratzon Hashem*! Each and every one of us is part of Hashem's plan.

Our life is not a detour. Every bump, every fall, every twist and every obstacle is precisely as it's supposed to be. In whatever situation we find ourselves, we can be 100% sure that we landed there due to **וַיֹּסֶב אֱלֹהִים-יִם**, and no matter how difficult it may feel, we need to recline like royalty and accept Hashem's plan – which is always Plan A – with dignity.

**כִּי לֹא
מִחֲשַׁבּוֹתַי
מִחֲשַׁבּוֹתֵיכֶם
וְלֹא דַרְכֵיכֶם
דַּרְכֵי**

Good Shabbos!