

The Amazing Revelation of Sar Shalom Chasam Sofer and Maor V'Shemesh

Yaakov Made a "Kesones Passim" with Holy Names from Birkas Kohanim to Protect Yosef from Adversity

In this week's parsha, parshas Vayeishev, we read (Bereishis 37, 3): "וישראל אהב את יוסף מכל בניו כי בן זקונים הוא לו ועשה לו כתונת פסים" — and Yisrael loved Yosef more than all his sons, because he was a son of his old age; and he made him a "Kesones passim" (a striped tunic). Rashi provides clarification based on the following Midrash (B.R. 84, 8): "פסים על שם צרות שהגיעוהו, פ"א פוטיפר, סמ"ך סוחרים, יו"ד ישמעאלים, מ"ם מדינים" — the word פסים (literally translated as "striped") relates to the troubles he would experience; the letter "pei" relates to Potiphar, the letter "samech" to the merchants ("socharim"), the letter "yud" to the Yishmaelim, the "mem" to the Midyanim. We must endeavor to explain what prompted Yaakov to do such a thing — to make a garment for Yosef foretelling the future troubles he would endure. What did Yaakov hope to accomplish?

Additionally, the Midrash states (ibid.): "פסים. רבי שמעון בן לקיש בשם רבי אלעזר בן עזריה, כתיב (תהלים סו-ה) לכו וראו מפעלות אלקים, וכתיב בתריה הפך ים ליבשה, למה וישנאו אותו, בשביל שיקרע הים" — Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish states in the name of Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah, concerning the sale of Yosef, the passuk states (Tehillim 66, 5): "Go and witness the acts of G-d." Subsequently, it states (ibid. 66, 6): "He transformed the sea into dry land." Why did they hate him? So that the sea would split before them. The word פסים is a contraction of פס ים — an allusion to the splitting of the sea. The commentaries on the Midrash explain the significance of this comment based on the Midrash Tanchuma (Vayeishev 9) on the passuk (Bereishis 39, 2):

"וינס ויצא החוצה. אמר לו הקב"ה, אתה נסת ויצאת חוצה, חייך הים יגוס מפני ארונך, שנאמר (תהלים קיד-ג) הים ראה וינס"

— "He fled and went outside." HKB"H said to him, "You fled and went outside, I swear ("on your life") that the sea will flee at the sight of your coffin, as it states (Tehillim 114, 3): "The sea saw and it fled."

This is the interpretation of Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah's statement: "למה וישנאו אותו" — why did HKB"H arrange for the tribes, who were all tzaddikim, to hate Yosef? He answers: "בשביל שיקרע הים לפניהם" — so that they would sell him and he would end up in Mitzrayim; there, he would have to endure the difficult test involving his master's wife; nevertheless, he would remain true to his kedushah by fleeing and running outside; in this merit, the sea would split before them: הים" — ראה וינס. For this reason, Yaakov made the "Kesones passim" for Yosef; the word פסי"ם is a contraction of פס ים — alluding to the fact that this garment, which aroused the brothers' hatred, caused the sea to split for Yisrael — as its name indicates פס ים, the sea split.

Notwithstanding, this requires further explanation. It is quite true that as a result of the brothers' hatred Yosef was sold and ended up in Mitzrayim, there he was tested, and in his merit the sea split for Yisrael. Yet, why did HKB"H arrange for the miracle of "krias Yam Suf" to evolve specifically by means of the "Kesones passim" that Yaakov made? As we have learned, the name פסי"ם, meaning stripes, was given by ruach hakodesh alluding to פס ים, the splitting of the sea. This all suggests an intimate connection between the "Kesones passim" and "krias Yam Suf."

The "Kesones Passim" Provided Protection

Let us begin by addressing the brothers' act of stripping Yosef of this unique tunic. The passuk states (Bereishis 37, 23): "ויהי כאשר בא יוסף אל אחיו ויפשיטו את יוסף את כתונתו את כתונת הפסים אשר" — and it was, when Yosef came to his brothers they stripped Yosef of his tunic, the "Kesones passim" that he wore. Later on, it states (ibid. 31): "ויקחו את כתונת יוסף וישחטו" — שער עזים ויטבלו את הכתונת בדם, וישלחו את כתונת הפסים ויביאו אל אביהם, ויאמרו זאת מצאנו הכר נא הכתונת בנך הוא אם לא, ויכירה ויאמר כתונת בני חיה" — רעה אכלתהו טרוף טרוף יוסף" — they took Yosef's tunic, and they slaughtered a male goat, and dipped the tunic in the blood.

They dispatched the "Kesones passim" and they brought it to their father, and said, "We found this; identify, if you please: Is it your son's tunic or not?" He recognized it and he said, "My son's tunic! An evil beast devoured him! Yosef has surely been torn to bits!"

If we analyze the pesukim carefully, we find that regarding the taking of the tunic from Yosef and the dipping of the tunic in blood, the Torah only describes it as a plain tunic, "kusones"; it does not employ the term "Kesones passim": "ויקחו את כתונת יוסף" וישחטו שעיר עזים ויטבלו את הכתונת בדם". Only when the garment is finally sent to Yaakov, does the passuk employ the description "Kesones passim": "וישלחו את כתונת הפסים ויביאו אל אביהם". This is somewhat peculiar and deserves investigation. Had the Torah mentioned initially that the shevatim took Yosef's "Kesones passim," then it could have continued to refer to it as merely a "kusones"; it would have been understood that the text was referring to the "Kesones passim" mentioned earlier.

I would like to provide my own explanation for this peculiar phenomenon based on the impeccable teachings of the esteemed Chasam Sofer in Toras Moshe HaShalem (Vayeishev 159b). He explains that it was necessary for the shevatim to strip Yosef of his special tunic before selling him. For, Yaakov had made this tunic for his son with the name designed to afford protection; hence, they were unable to sell him so long as he wore the "Kesones passim." Here is what he writes:

"ויפשיטו את יוסף את כתונתו את כתונת הפסים. יש לדקדק כפל הלשון את כתונתו את כתונת הפסים. ונראה כי הכתונת הפסים עשה לו יעקב על השם פסי"ם [אחד מהשמות של ברכת הכהנים], כי [הוא] שם של שמירה שלא ישלוט בו שום בריה. ואולי שם זה היה מועיל גם כדי שלא יוכל שום אדם ליגע בו, וכאשר הפשיטו ממנו את כתונתו, ממילא נתפשט גם כתונת הפסים אשר עליו, ו'את' פירושו כמו עמו, וזו ויפשיטו את יוסף את כתונתו את כתונת הפסים, היינו עם כתונת הפסים".

It seems that Yaakov made the tunic with the name פסי"ם — one of the holy names from Birkas Kohanim. This name affords protection against all other creatures. When they stripped Yosef of his garments, this included his ordinary tunic as well as the "Kesones passim." This interpretation is derived from the word "את", which implies "with it." In other words: **"They stripped Yosef of his tunic" — "את כתונתו" —** of his ordinary tunic along with the "Kesones passim."

Let us expand on the words of the Chasam Sofer based on Rashi's commentary: "ויפשיטו את יוסף את כתונתו את כתונת הפסים אשר עליו" - "את כתונתו, זה חלוק, את כתונת הפסים, הוא שהוסיף לו אביו יותר על אחיו".

In other words, the shevatim stripped Yosef of the two tunics he was wearing — the ordinary tunic which Yaakov gave all of his sons and the special tunic given only to Yosef. Concerning this matter, the Maharal writes in Gur Aryeh (ibid.):

"את כתונת הפסים הוא שהוסיף לו אביו. פירוש מה שכתוב את כתונתו את כתונת הפסים, דמשמע שני כתונות היו לו, ואין דרך לאדם להיות לו שני כתונות, לכך אמר הוא שהוסיף לו אביו, כי הוסיף לו אחת לחשיבותו, ועשה אותה של פסים, ולא היתה זאת על בשרו כדי שלא תתמלא זיעה... כך היה ליוסף כתונת פסים על החלוק, ולפיכך כתיב 'אשר עליו' מפני שהיתה למעלה על גבי החלוק".

It was not the typical practice for a person to wear two tunics. Therefore, Rashi specifies that this was an additional garment that his father Yaakov gave him. This garment was intended to reflect his importance. This garment was not in direct contact with his skin, so as not to become full of sweat. Thus, Yosef's "Kesones passim" sat on top of his ordinary tunic. Therefore, the passuk indicates "אשר עליו"—which literally means: **"which was on top of it"**, the ordinary tunic.

Similarly, the Sifsei Chachamim on Rashi, writes in the name of the Maharshal:

"כתב מהרש"ל. פירש הרא"ם שהכל אחד הוא, שלא היה עליו אלא כתונת אחד של פסים, וכן אמר הכתוב את כתונתו, ואיזה זה כתונת הפסים שעליו, דאין לומר שהיה לו שתי כתונות זה על גב זה, דאין נקרא כתונת אלא זה שעל גבי בשרו.

אבל לא נראה לי אלא שהיה לו שתי כתונות זה על גב זה, אחד על גבי בשרו משום הזיעה שלא יקלקל את כתונת הפסים, והם הפשיטו שניהם כאחד, שהיו אוחזין בתחתונה והיו מפשיטין שניהם כאחד, ולכך אמר אשר עליו, רצונו לומר הכתונת הפסים אשר על האחר, והטעם שהיו אוחזין בתחתונה, כדי להראות לו שלא על מה שהוסיף לו אביו כתונת הפסים עשו זאת, אלא בשביל דבתו רעה ובשביל חלומותיו עד כאן לשונו".

The Re'em explains that Yosef was only wearing a single tunic, the "Kesones passim." The Maharshal disagrees and writes that he wore two garments — one against his skin, beneath the "Kesones passim," to prevent this special garment from being soiled and ruined by sweat. The brothers stripped him of both simultaneously; they grabbed the bottom garment and removed both together as one. The reason they grabbed the bottom garment was to show Yosef that they did not do this to him because their father gave him an additional garment — which he did not give them — but rather because of his harmful gossip and his dreams.

So, we see that the Chasam Sofer provides us with a novel interpretation of the passuk: "ויפשיטו את יוסף את כתונתו את כתונת הפסים אשר עליו".

“they stripped Yosef of his tunic, the **"Kesones passim" that was on him.** In truth, they were unable to cause harm to the "Kesones passim" directly, because Yaakov made it by employing the holy names which afford protection. Knowing this, the shevatim cleverly removed Yosef's garments by grabbing hold of the bottom garment adjacent to his body. Inevitably, they also succeeded in stripping him of the "Kesones passim," without actually touching it.

A Similar Explanation from the Maor V'Shemesh

We should note that the Maor V'Shemesh provides a similar explanation to that of the Chasam Sofer, regarding how the brothers stripped Yosef of the "Kesones passim":

“קשה מפני מה הפשיטו הכתונת הפסים מעליו, האם היה הכתונת הפסים אשר עליו למחסה ולמסתור מפני הנחשים ועקרבים. ונראה לבאר על פי פשוטו, דהנה ידוע שיעקב מסר ליוסף השם כ"ב אותיות היוצא מברכת כהנים, ובפרט השם פסי"ם אשר הוא מסוגל לחן ולשמירה, ולכן עשה לו כתונת פסים בכוונה זו על פי היחוד וצירוף של השם כ"ב אותיות.

והנה אחי יוסף היו מסופקים ביוסף, שראו אותו הולך במקום סכנה למדבר, והלך יחידי ושום מורא לא עבר על ראשו, ובפרט במה שהלך אצל אחיו, שהיה יודע בהם שהיו שונאים אותו, אם הוא סומך את עצמו על צדקו, או רק על סמך השמירה שעשה לו אביו במה שהלבישו כתונת הפסים שהוא מסוגל לשמירה כנ"ל, כי בודאי עשאו אביו על פי כוונת השם של כ"ב אותיות כנ"ל. ולמען יעמדו על המבחן הפשיטו מעליו הכתונת, ואם גם אז לא יוזק הוא בודאי מחמת צדקו, והוא מהראוי שצדיק באמונתו יחיה, ואם אינו צדיק כל כך אזי יוזק”.

He adds that it was known that Yaakov had taught Yosef the name of twenty-two letters, which emanates from Birkas Kohanim. In particular, he taught him the name פסי"ם, which is able to provide favor and protection. This was Yaakov's intent when he made the "Kesones passim" for Yosef, utilizing the deeper meanings and permutations of the name of twenty-two letters.

Yosef's brothers had their doubts concerning Yosef. They saw him walking about fearlessly in dangerous places and dangerous situations. They were uncertain whether he relied upon his own righteousness or the protection of the "Kesones passim" — which his father had given him for protection, having certainly been made with the name of twenty-two letters in mind. To resolve this uncertainty they removed the special tunic as a test. If he remained unharmed even without the protection of the "Kesones passim," it would prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that he was protected by his own righteousness — and

he was in fact a tzaddik. Otherwise, he would be susceptible to harm and adversity.

According to the Maor V'Shemesh, however, they removed the "Kesones passim" itself from Yosef's body. This clearly differs from the explanation of the Chasam Sofer we learned above.

This enlightens us regarding the specific language employed by the passuk: ויקחו את כתונת יוסף וישחטו שעיר עזים ויטבלו את הכתונת בדם. Here the term "Kesones passim" is not mentioned; the passuk merely employs the term "kusones." For, in reality, they could not and did not desire to dip the "Kesones passim" — which Yaakov Avinu himself had made employing the unique aspects of the names of protection — in blood. Therefore, they cleverly took the undergarment, worn in contact with his flesh, and dipped it in the blood. They presented the "Kesones passim" along with that garment:

“וישלחו את כתונת הפסים ויביאו אל אביהם” — they brought the undergarment to their father along with the "Kesones passim" worn on top of it, so that Yaakov would recognize it as belonging to Yosef. “ויאמרו זאת מצאנו” — we found both of these garments together; “הכר נא הכתונת בנך הוא אם לא” — does this bloody garment belong to your son Yosef? “ויכירה” — he identified it as Yosef's because of the "Kesones passim" that was with it; “ויאמר כתונת בני” — he concluded that his son Yosef had been devoured by a wild animal.

Now, we can appreciate why Yaakov made a "Kesones passim" for Yosef, where the word פסי"ם is an acronym for פוֹטִיפָר מִדְיָנִים — **Potiphar, "socharim" (merchants), Yishmaelim and Midyanim.** For, Yaakov divined by means of ruach hakodesh that Yosef would have to endure adversities from each of these categories. Consequently, with his great kedushah, he cleverly devised a method to protect Yosef; he made him a "Kesones passim" endowed with all sorts of names, offering his son tremendous protection — both physical and spiritual. The shevatim, however, cleverly stripped Yosef of the "Kesones passim," enabling them to sell him to the merchants — Yishmaelim and Midyanim — who ultimately sold him to the Egyptians.

Based on what we have just learned, we can comprehend why the Torah states concerning Yaakov (Bereishis 37, 35): “וימאן להתנחם ויאמר כי ארד אל בני אבל שאולה” — **he refused to be comforted, and he said, "For I will go down to the grave mourning over my son."** Rashi explains that he feared that

he would go down to Gehinnom. Based on what we have learned, we can suggest an explanation. Yaakov thought that the "Kesones passim" he had made had failed to protect Yosef from being devoured by a wild animal. This led him to conclude that the garment's failure to protect his son was due to his own inadequacy. Therefore, he refused to be comforted and remarks: **"For I will go down to the grave mourning over my son"** — I surely deserve to go to Gehinnom, because it is my fault that my son was harmed; the names that I used to make the "Kesones passim" did not protect him.

Yaakov Protected Yosef with the "Kesones Passim" that Was Returned to Him

Every intelligent person must surely be struck by the incredulity of this interpretation. It seems inconceivable that Yaakov Avinu, the elite of the Avos, would have gone to the trouble of making a "Kesones passim," endowing it with the powers of various holy names to protect Yosef, which ultimately served no purpose; for Yosef's brothers cleverly and simply removed it from his person by means of his undergarment.

Nevertheless, come and witness the wonders of Hashem's Torah through the teachings of the great Sar Shalom of Belz, zy" a, in Midbar Kadesh (Vayeishev). He, too, adopts the approach of the Chasam Sofer that Yaakov Avinu made the "Kesones passim" with protective, sacred names. He, however, adds his own explanation regarding how the shevatim were actually able to strip Yosef of the garment and sell him. Although they may have used the undergarment to remove the "Kesones passim," the protective names of the "Kesones passim" should have protected Yosef from this ploy as well; it should have prevented them from removing it even by means of this trick.

So, he provides an answer based on what we have learned in the Gemara (Shabbas 10b): **"לעולם אל ישנה אדם בנו בין הבנים, ובשביל משקל שני סלעים מילת שנתן יעקב ליוסף יותר משאר בניו נתקנאו בו — a person should never give one of his sons preferential treatment over his other sons; because Yaakov gave Yosef two selaim's weight of fine wool more than he gave his other sons, they envied him--ultimately leading to the descent of our forefathers to Mitzrayim. According to this explanation, there was an inherent flaw in the "Kesones passim" that Yaakov made especially for Yosef. It weighed two selaim more than the other shevatim's tunics. This flaw is what allowed them to strip Yosef of his tunic. Here is what he writes:**

"והנה מה שהפשיטו מעליו את כתונת הפסים, לפי שידעו גודל כוח הקדושה שהמשיך יעקב לכתונת זו, ושהיא תהיה שמירה עליו מכל הקמים, אבל מכל מקום לא הועיל הדבר לגמרי, כיון שבגמרא תפסו את יעקב על זה, ששינה בנו מן הבנים במה שהוסיף לכתונת זו משקל ב' סלעים מילת, כי יעקב היה יכול גם בכתונת פשוטה להכניס כוח השמירה, ולא היה צריך להוסיף משקל ב' סלעים, ולכך לא עמדה לו שמירה זו לגמרי, ומכל מקום האחים ידעו שכל זמן שכתונת זו עליו, לא יוכלו לשלוט עליו ולהרע לו, ולכך הפשיטו ממנו כתונת זו."

The brothers were well aware of the awesome power Yaakov had instilled in this garment; they were aware of the incredible protection it offered. Nevertheless, as the Gemara teaches us, Yaakov was guilty here of a minor impropriety, which the shevatim used to their advantage. He showed Yosef preferential treatment by making his tunic out of a greater amount of fine wool than the tunics of his brothers. Yaakov could very easily have made Yosef's tunic without the added weight of wool and still endowed it with the same protective powers. As a result, the garments' protection was not absolute. Still, the brothers knew that as long as Yosef still wore the tunic, they could not harm him or overwhelm him. Therefore, they devised a way to strip him of the unique garment.

To this the esteemed Sar Shalom adds an amazing chiddush. On the one hand, it is true that the shevatim stripped Yosef of the "Kesones passim," so that they could successfully overwhelm him; however, they then proceeded to return this powerful garment to Yaakov. This enabled Yaakov to continue to influence Yosef with his kedushah and protect him. This allowed Yosef to maintain his level of kedushah and withstand the difficult test which confronted him in the form of his master's wife. Here is what he writes:

"ובזה שחזר כתונת זו אל יעקב, ניתוסף ממילא קדושה גם ביעקב, שהיה צריך עכשיו להמשיך קדושה והתחזקות ליוסף הצדיק במקום שהוא, ואם לא היתה הכתונת חוזרת אליו אפשר לא היה בכוחו של יעקב לעשות כן. ולכך נרמז מיד ענין הניסיון של יוסף במה שאמר יעקב (בראשית לז-כ) חיה רעה אכלתהו, ופירש רש"י ז"ל שנצנצה בו רוח הקודש וראה ענין אשת פוטיפר עמו, וברוב קדושתו המשיך אליו התחזקות במקום שהוא."

When the "kusones" returned to Yaakov, it automatically enhanced Yaakov's kedushah. He required this added kedushah to extend kedushah and support to Yosef HaTzaddik in his present whereabouts. Therefore, he immediately alludes to Yosef's ordeal by saying: **"A wild animal has devoured him."** As Rashi explains, Yaakov was inspired via ruach hakodesh and envisioned Yosef's encounter with Potiphar's wife; hence, he applied his kedushah to support and assist his son.

Thus, we see that Yaakov's act of making the "Kesones passim" — endowed with the protection of the holy names — was not for naught. For, the woolen tunic was ultimately returned to Yaakov, and with its powers he was able to afford Yosef protection in Mitzrayim. This allows us to better understand what the Torah states concerning Yosef HaTzaddik's difficult ordeal (ibid. 39, 12): "ותתפשהו בבגדו לאמר שכבה עמי, ויעזוב בגדו בידי וינס ויצא החוצה" — **she grabbed hold of him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me!" But he left his garment in her hand; he fled and ran outside.** Based on the Gemara (Sotah 36b), Rashi comments: "באותה שעה" — **at that precise moment, the image of his father appeared to him in the window.**

Based on what we have learned, we can interpret the passuk as follows: "ותתפשהו בבגדו" — she was able to grab hold of him by his garment, because he was no longer protected by the "Kesones passim"; he was wearing a garment that his master had given him, devoid of any protective powers. So what did that tzaddik do? **"He left his garment in her hand; he fled and ran outside"** — in order to reconnect with the kedushah of the "Kesones passim," which was currently in his father's possession. **"At that precise moment, the image of his father appeared to him in the window."** In other words, the image of his father with the "Kesones passim" appeared to him in the window; thus, he was influenced by the protective names, allowing him to overcome his yetzer and maintain his kedushah.

Now, with great pleasure, we can appreciate the words of the Midrash. Yaakov was inspired via ruach hakodesh to call the tunic he made for Yosef "בסי"ם - ב"ס י"ם" — alluding to the splitting of the sea on behalf of Yisrael. As we have learned, the sea split for Yisrael in the merit of Yosef HaTzaddik remaining staunch in his kedushah in the face of his ordeal. As the Midrash states regarding the passuk: "הים ראה וינס" — the sea saw Yosef's coffin and fled in the merit of his fleeing from Potiphar's wife. As explained, Yosef succeeded in maintaining his level of kedushah due to the power of the "Kesones passim," which remained in Yaakov's possession. Hence, we find a direct connection between the "Kesones passim" Yaakov made to protect Yosef and "krias Yam Suf" — alluded to by the very name "בסי"ם - ב"ס י"ם".

Yosef Sanctified Himself and Paved the Way for All of Yisrael

Like a faithful servant in the presence of his masters, I would like to propose an explanation based on the sacred words of

Sar Shalom and the Chasam Sofer, zy"a. Why indeed did HKB"H orchestrate the events in such a manner that the shevatim's ploy to strip Yosef of the "Kesones passim" succeeded? After all, in the end, the "Kesones passim" returned to Yaakov and he was still able to afford Yosef protection in Mitzrayim from his own location. Seemingly, it would have been better for Yosef had the shevatim not succeeded in taking the "Kesones passim" away from him.

Now, we did learn from the esteemed Sar Shalom, zy"a, that the shevatim succeeded because of a minor impropriety committed by Yaakov; he preferentially made Yosef's tunic with two selaim more of fine wool than the other brothers' tunics. Nevertheless, this too was certainly ordained from above, so that the shevatim would succeed in stripping Yosef of his garment. For, Scriptures states explicitly (Mishlei 12, 21): "לא יאונה לצדיק כל און" — **no iniquity will befall the tzaddik.** Therefore, we must endeavor to explain why the events evolved in this manner.

It appears that we can provide an explanation based on the following Midrash (V.R. 32, 5): "יוסף ירד למצרים וגדר עצמו מן הערוה" — **Yosef went down to Mitzrayim and guarded himself against sexual immorality; in his merit, Yisrael were able to guard themselves. Rabbi Chiya bar Abba said: The guarding against immorality alone was sufficient cause for Yisrael to be redeemed.** We learn from this Midrash an incredible chiddush. Yosef HaTzaddik was subjected to this difficult test in Mitzrayim, so that he would pave the way for all of Yisrael to maintain their kedushah.

With this in mind, we can provide a very nice explanation for the Midrash cited above: "הים ראה וינס. ראה ארונו של יוסף יורד לים." — **the sea fled at the sight of Yosef's coffin, just as he fled and ran outside.** We have learned in another Midrash (B.R. 5, 5): "תנאין התנה הקדוש ברוך הוא — עם הים שיהא נקרע לפני ישראל" — **HKB"H made a pact with the sea that it would split on behalf of Yisrael.** That being the case, why did the sea not split until it saw Yosef's coffin? According to this Midrash, it was obligated to split before the people of Yisrael to comply with its pact with HKB"H.

Let us propose the following explanation. The sea initially refused to split for Yisrael, because it believed that based on the natural order of things, it was impossible for Yisrael to maintain their kedushah in Mitzrayim, the seat of immorality.

So, if these people entering the sea had interacted and intermingled with the Egyptians, they no longer qualified as Yisrael. Its pact with HKB"H only demanded that it split for Yisrael. However, upon seeing Yosef's coffin — the tzaddik who sanctified himself in Mitzrayim and thus paved the way for all of Yisrael to also maintain their kedushah — the sea realized that the conditions of the pact were still valid. These people were worthy of the name Yisrael and were worthy of having the sea split on their behalf.

This provides us with a better understanding of Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah's elucidation as to why Yaakov called the "kusones" "בסיים": **"Why did they hate him? So that the sea would split before them. בסיים is a contraction of בסיים."** The entire drama that played out between Yosef and his brothers ultimately resulted in him sanctifying himself in Mitzrayim and withstanding the difficult ordeal with the wife of Potiphar. This all evolved because of the "Kesones passim," which the shevatim returned to their father, Yaakov. As a consequence, Yosef paved the way for all of Yisrael to sanctify themselves in Mitzrayim. It turns out, therefore, that the sea split solely because of the "Kesones passim." Hence, the "kusones" was called "בסיים", a contraction of בסיים — alluding to "krias Yam Suf."

This enlightens us as to why HKB"H orchestrated the events in such a manner that the shevatim were able to strip Yosef

of the "Kesones passim." As we learned, they succeeded only because of a minor flaw and impropriety; Yaakov had given Yosef preferential treatment; his tunic was of a higher quality than the tunics of his brothers; it possessed two selaim more fine wool than the other tunics. Had they not been able to strip him of the "Kesones passim," they would not have been able to sell him to the Yishmaelim, and he would never have ended up in Mitzrayim. Had he not landed in Mitzrayim, he would not have been subjected to the ordeal with his master's wife, and he would not have paved the way for all of Yisrael to successfully maintain their kedushah. Then the sea would not have split for them.

Therefore, HKB"H arranged that the shevatim would be able to strip him of the "Kesones passim" by removing the undergarment from his body. In this manner, they gained possession of the "Kesones passim," in order to send the two garments together to their father, Yaakov. Prior to sending the powerful "kusones" to Yaakov, however, they managed to sell Yosef to the Yishmaelim, who in turn sold him to the Midyanim, who in turn sold him to the Egyptians. This set the stage for his difficult ordeal in Mitzrayim, enabling him to pave the way for all Yisrael to withstand the immorality of Mitzrayim and maintain their standards of kedushah. In this merit, the sea split for Yisrael at the time of the exodus from Mitzrayim.



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