

“Everything that was done there he would do”

Mitzrayim’s Ministering Angel Mistook Yosef for One of His Own Therefore He Handed Over to Him All the Nitzotzei Kedushah

In this week’s parsha, parshas Vayeishev, we read (Bereishis 39, 20): **“ויקח אדוני יוסף אותו ויתנהו אל בית הסוהר מקום אשר אסירי המלך: אסורים ויהי שם בבית הסוהר. ויהי ה’ את יוסף ויט אליו חסד ויתן חנו בעיני שר בית הסוהר. ויתן שר בית הסוהר ביד יוסף את כל האסירים אשר בבית הסוהר ואת כל אשר עושים שם הוא היה עושה. אין שר בית הסוהר רואה את כל מאומה בידו—then Yosef’s master took him and placed him in the prison—the place where the king’s prisoners were confined—and he remained there in the prison. Hashem was with Yosef, and He endowed him with appeal, and He put his favor in the eyes of the prison warden. The prison warden placed all inmates that were in the prison in Yosef’s custody, and everything that was done there, he would do. The prison warden did not scrutinize anything that was in his custody, because Hashem was with him; and whatever he would do Hashem would make successful.**

Careful scrutiny of these pesukim reveals a deeper, concealed issue. It is difficult to comprehend the simple meaning of the statement: **“And everything that was done there, he would do.”** Now, Rashi comments: **“This is to be understood as Targum Onkelos renders it: “It was done by his word.”** In other words, Yosef did not actually do the work himself, but rather all of the work that the prisoners did was carried out under his orders. The difficulty, however, is that the passuk specifically says: **“הוא היה עושה”**—implying that he actually did the work himself. In fact, the Ohr HaChaim hakadosh notes this difficulty and writes: **“ולדבריו למה לא ידבר הכתוב צחות ויאמר בפירוש: על פיו היו עושים”**—so according to Rashi, why didn’t the passuk simply say that they followed his orders?

Additionally, what is the meaning of the statement: **“The prison warden did not scrutinize anything that was in his**

custody, because Hashem was with him; and whatever he would do Hashem would make successful”? This passuk implies that in truth Yosef was in possession of something valuable which was unbeknownst to the prison warden, because Yosef received divine assistance: **“Because Hashem was with him; and whatever he would do Hashem would make successful.”** So, we must endeavor to explain what treasure was in Yosef’s possession that he had to conceal from the prison warden.

I would like to propose my own interpretation of these pesukim. First, however, I would like to address a surprising aspect of Yosef’s personality. Regarding the following juxtaposition of pesukim, Rashi comments in the name of the Midrash (Bereishis 29, 6): **“Now Yosef was handsome of form and handsome of appearance. And it was after these things, that his master’s wife cast her eyes upon Yosef”:** **“Once he saw himself in a position of authority, he began to eat and drink, and curl his hair. HKB”H said, ‘Your father is mourning and you curl your hair? I will incite the bear against you!’ Immediately, ‘his master’s wife cast her eyes . . .”**

The commentaries struggle to reconcile this surprising incongruity regarding Yosef HaTzaddik. What possessed Yosef to spend time curling his hair, to the point that HKB”H was compelled to subject him to the difficult ordeal involving his master’s wife? Similarly, it is difficult to reconcile the Torah’s earlier description of Yosef (ibid. 37, 2): **“והוא נער את בני בלהה”**—**and he was a youth with the sons of Bilhah.** There Rashi explains: **“That he would do things associated with youth; he would fix his hair, he would groom his eyes, so that he should look attractive.”** How is it possible that Yaakov Avinu,

who bequeathed all of his Torah to Yosef, failed to teach him that this type of behavior was unbecoming to him?

Yosef HaTzaddik Gathered Together All of the “Nitzotzei Kedushah” in Mitzrayim

We shall begin to shed some light on the subject based on the following elucidation in the Gemara (Berachos 9b) concerning the passuk (Shemos 12, 36): **“וינצלו את מצרים, אמר: רבי אמי מלמד שעשאוה כמצודה שאין בה דגן, וריש לקיש אמר עשאוה כמצולה—שאיין בה דגים—so they emptied out Mitzrayim”**: **Rabbi Ami said: This teaches that they transformed Mitzrayim into the equivalent of a trap containing no grain. And Reish Lakish said: They transformed Mitzrayim into the equivalent of the depths of the sea where there are no fish.** Our holy sources explain that these are allusions to the fact that Yisrael took all of the “nitzotzei kedushah” out of Mitzrayim, leaving it devoid of kedushah. We find the source for this notion in the writings of the Arizal. He explains that this is why it is prohibited for a Jew to return to Mitzrayim, as indicated by the passuk (ibid. 14, 13): **“כי אשר ראיתם את מצרים היום לא תוסיפו לראותם עוד עד עולם”**—**for that which you have seen in Mitzrayim today, you shall not see them ever again!** Here is an excerpt from the Arizal:

“גאולת מצרים היתה גאולה שלימה, כי אז וינצלו את מצרים, שעשאוהו כמצולה שאין בה דגים, ולא נשאר בהם שום ניצוץ קדושה והיתה גאולת השכינה לגמרי, מה שאין כן בשום גאולה אחרת. וזהו הטעם לזכור יציאת מצרים יותר מכל שאר הגאולות, כי היא גאולה שלימה, אך האחרות צריכין עדיין תשלום, אמנם לעתיד לבוא תהיה גאולה שלימה יותר מגאולת מצרים, כי גאולת מצרים היתה פרטית, אבל לעתיד תהיה גאולה שלימה וכללית בכל העולם, כי אז לא ישאר שום ניצוץ קדושה בכל הגוים אשר הדיחנו שמה.”

The geulah from Mitzrayim was a complete geulah, because they emptied Mitzrayim out; they made it like the depths of the sea, which has no fish; they were not left with a single “nitzotz” of kedushah; it was a complete geulah for the Shechinah; this was not true of any other geulah. This is the reason for remembering the exodus from Mitzrayim more so than any of the other geulos; it was a complete geulah; the others still need to be completed. However, le’atid la’vo, the geulah will be more complete than the geulah from Mitzrayim, because the geulah from Mitzrayim was individualized. In the future, however, the geulah will be comprehensive and encompass the entire world. At that time, not a single “nitzotz” of kedushah will remain among the goyim that He displaced us to.

It is important to introduce a vital principle gleaned from the sacred works of the Avodas Yisrael (Mikeitz). The people of Yisrael would have been incapable of extracting all of the “nitzotzei kedushah” from Mitzrayim, had Yosef not gathered them together first in a single location, and separated them from the tumah of Mitzrayim. Due to Yosef’s efforts, Yisrael were subsequently able to take those “nitzotzei kedushah” with them, when they departed from Mitzrayim, as it is written (Bereishis 47, 14): **“וילקט יוסף את כל הכסף הנמצא בארץ מצרים ובארץ: Yosef gathered all the money that was to be found in the land of Mitzrayim and in the land of Canaan for the purchases that they were purchasing, and Yosef brought the money into Pharaoh’s palace.** Here are his sacred words:

“חלילה לזרע יעקב אבינו ע”ה ולצדיק יסוד עולם, שיהיה מגמתו לאסוף ולצבור כסף וזהב כדרך המוני עם, רק היתה כוונתו לשם שמים ללקט הניצוצות הקדושות ואהבתם וחמדתם, הנקרא בלשון כסף (בראשית לא-ל) כי נכסוף נכספתה, ויבא אותם ביתה פרעה תחת ידו, וממילא אחר כך יקל לבני ישראל להוציא הניצוצות קדושות המכונסין ואסופים... ככתוב וינצלו את מצרים.”

G-d forbid that the offspring of Yaakov Avinu, a”h, and for the epitome of a tzaddik to spend his time gathering and accumulating silver and gold like the ordinary masses. Rather his intention was for the sake of Heaven, to gather the holy sparks . . . referred to in the jargon as “silver” (“kesef”) . . . He brought them to Pharaoh’s palace under his supervision. As a result, it was subsequently easier for Bnei Yisrael to take out the holy sparks that had already been brought in and gathered together . . .

We find the exact same idea expressed by the Chasam Sofer (Vayigash). Here is what he writes:

“וילקט יוסף את כל הכסף וגו’ ויתום הכסף... מרמז כי הכסף הזה שלקטו יוסף קיבל תמימות ונתעלה על ידי יוסף, ובשגם שלקט עמו כל הניצוצות הקדושות המפוזרות כידוע, והביאום לאוצר פרעה, עד עת בוא דבר ה’ להוציא צבאותיו משם, ואז לקטום ישראל במצרים ובים כמבואר אצלנו במקום אחר.”

A similar idea is expressed by the Maor Einayim (end of Mikeitz) more concisely: **“וזהו וילקט יוסף את כל הכסף, היא אהבה מלשון: (שם) נכסוף נכספתי, וצוה להשיב (בראשית מג-כא) כסף איש בפי אמתחתו, להודיע לאביו שיש איש אחד במצרים, שמוציא את האהבה ממצרים ממה שנפלה בקליפת מצרים.”** He points out that the Hebrew word “kesef,” meaning money or silver, also expresses love and yearning, as

seen in the passuk (Bereishis 31, 30). He instructed the “kesef” to be returned to each of his brothers’ saddlebags in order to let his father know that there was an individual in Mitzrayim who was extracting the beloved items from Mitzrayim that had fallen into the klipah of Mitzrayim.

Yosef Who Cherished Shabbas Was a “Nitzotz” of Yosef HaTzaddik

In this manner, I would like to present to our esteemed audience an explanation regarding the matter of Yosef, “the one who cherished the Shabbas.” Chazal teach us that in the merit of honoring the Shabbas, he was privileged to acquire all of his non-Jewish neighbor’s possessions. This is what we have learned in the Gemara (Shabbas 119a):

“יוסף מוקיר שבי הוה [רש״י: “מכבד שבתות”]. ההוא נכרי בשבבותיה דהוה נפישׁי נכסיה טובא, אמרי ליה כלדאי [רש״י: “חוזים בכוכבים”], כולהו נכסי יוסף מוקיר שבי אכיל להו. אזל זבנינהו לכולהו ניכסי, זבן בהו מרגניתא, אותבה בסיינייה [רש״י: “עשה לו כובע של לבד ושכצו במשכצות של זהב, וקבע בו מרגליות, וקבע את זו עמהם”].

בהדי דקא עבר מברא, אפרחיה זיקא שדייה במיא. בלעיה כוורא, אסקוה אייתוה אפניא דמעלי שבתא. אמרי מאן זבין כי השתא, אמרי להו זילו אמטוהו לגבי יוסף מוקיר שבי דרגיל דזבין, אמטוהו ניהליה, זבניה קרעיה, אשכח ביה מרגניתא, זבניה בתליסר עיליתא דיגרי דדהבא, פגע ביה ההוא סבא, אמר מאן דיזיף שבתא פרעיה שבתא.”

Yosef cherished the Shabbas. There was a non-Jew in his neighborhood who had many possessions. The astrologers said to him: “All of your possessions will be consumed by Yosef, ‘the one who cherishes the Shabbas.’” He went and sold all of his possessions and used the proceeds to purchase a pearl, which he placed in his hat. When he crossed over a bridge spanning a river, a gust of wind tossed his hat into the water. A fish came along and swallowed the hat, and the fisherman fished it out of the water just before Shabbas.

They said, “Who will buy such a large fish now, so close to Shabbas?” They were told to go and take the fish to Yosef, “the one who cherishes Shabbas”; he customarily bought large fish in honor of the Shabbas. They brought the fish to him and he bought it. When he cut it open, he found the pearl inside. He sold it for thirteen attics full of gold coins. He encountered a particular elderly gentleman who said to him, “Whoever borrows in honor of Shabbas, the Shabbas repays him.”

It appears that we can interpret this story based on a revelation from the great author of the Chiddushei HaRim in Sefer HaZakus (Likutim page 81). He explains that the Tannaim mentioned in the Gemara possessed a holy spark from the neshamah of their righteous predecessors of the same name. For instance: Rabbi Yehudah was a “nitzotz” of Yehudah, the son of Yaakov; Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai was a “nitzotz” of Shimon, the son of Yaakov; Rabbi Yossi was a “nitzotz” of Yosef HaTzaddik. Accordingly, we can postulate that Yosef, “the one who cherished Shabbas,” possessed a “nitzotz” of Yosef HaTzaddik. In fact, I found this stated explicitly in Ateres Yeshuah (Erev Yom Kippur 2): “כי האי יוסף מוקיר שבתא היה לו בודאי —ניצוץ יוסף הצדיק—that Yosef, “who cherished Shabbas,” most certainly possessed a “nitzotz” from Yosef HaTzaddik.

We can add that the reason Yosef cherished the Shabbas to such a degree was because of the fact that he possessed that “nitzotz.” For we see in parshas Mikeitz how Yosef HaTzaddik honored the Shabbas with royal delicacies. When the shevatim returned to Mitzrayim with Binyamin, it states (Bereishis 43, 16): “ויאמר לאשר על ביתו הבא את האנשים הביתה וטבח טבח והכן”—and he said to the one in charge of his household, “Bring the men into the house,” and have meat slaughtered and prepared. Elucidating this passuk, it states in the Midrash (B.R. 92, 4): “ואין הכן אלא שבת, היך מה דאת אמר (שמות טז-ה) והיה ביום הששי והכינו וגו’;—the Midrash points out that the matter of preparation can only indicate that this was done in honor of the Shabbas, as we learn from the passuk (Shemos 16, 5): “**And it shall be on the sixth day, they shall prepare . . .**” Thus, the Midrash concludes that Yosef observed the Shabbas before it was actually given.

So, Yosef was able to gather together all of the money and silver in Mitzrayim. We learned from our great luminaries that this indicated that he gathered together all of the sparks of kedushah that were controlled by Pharaoh in Mitzrayim. In similar fashion, Yosef, “the one who cherished Shabbas,” succeeded in accumulating all of the sparks of kedushah that were concealed in the possession of the non-Jew. The non-Jew sold everything he owned and acquired a precious pearl that ended up in the hands of Yosef, “the one who cherished Shabbas.” This exemplifies the words of Iyov concerning the money of the wicked (Iyov 27, 17): “יכין וצדיק ילבש”—he (the rasha) prepares and the tzaddik will wear it. (It is very likely

that that non-Jew possessed a “nitzotz” of Pharaoh. So, just as Yosef HaTzaddik accumulated all of the sparks of kedushah in the possession of Pharaoh, Yosef, “the one who cherished Shabbas,” accumulated all of the sparks of kedushah in the possession of the non-Jew.)

How Did the Egyptians Not Think to Prevent Yosef from Extracting the Sparks of Kedushah

It is a well-known fact that the klipos are sustained by the holy sparks located in their midst. Therefore, they do everything in their power to surround and safeguard those sparks, so that Yisrael will not be able to retrieve them. Regarding this phenomenon, the Agra D’Kalla writes (Balak):

”דהנה ידוע חיות אומה היא מחמת איזה ניצוצות מהקדושה השקועים בתוכה, וכשישראל מכררים הניצוצות אזי נשארים האומות פגרים ותתבטל אותה האומה, כאשר כתבנו כמה פעמים מעניני מצרים. והנה הקליפה אשר יש בתוכה ניצוץ קדוש גדול בערך, ומתייראת הקליפה פן יבוא איזה צדיק בקדושתו ויוצא בלעם מפייהם, אזי הקליפה ההיא מיראתה פן יולקח חיותה, משקעת הניצוץ ההוא מאד מאד בתוך עמקי טומאת הקליפות, כמו שאדם מטמין אוצר נחמד במחבואות לבל ישלטו בו זרים, עיין כל זה בגלגולים (שער הגלגולים הקדמה טו) להאריז”ל מענין נשמת אברהם אבינו.”

It is a known fact that the life-force of a nation is due to sparks of kedushah stuck in their midst. When Yisrael successfully clarify the sparks, those nations are left as corpses and that nation ceases to exist . . . So, a klipah that has in its midst a valuable, holy “nitzotz,” and the klipah fears that a tzaddik may come along with his kedushah and remove that swallowed item from its mouth, that klipah—fearing that its life-force will be confiscated—buries that “nitzotz” very deep within its tumah; just like a person buries a coveted treasure in various hiding places, so that outsiders will not be able to access it . . .

With this in mind, the Agra D’Kalla, addresses the passuk (Bamidbar 22, 3): ”ויגר מואב מפני העם מאד כי רב הוא ויקץ מואב מפני: Moav was very frightened of the people, because it was formidable; and Moav was disgusted in the face of Bnei Yisrael. He explains that Moav was sustained by the holy “nitzotz” of David HaMelech, who descended from Ruth the Moabite; that “nitzotz” was still mired within Moav. Therefore: “Moav was very frightened of the people”—lest they come to extract the holy “nitzotz” of David HaMelech; “because it was formidable”—it was extremely valuable and holy; consequently,

“Moav was disgusted in the face of Bnei Yisrael.” He explains the implication of the passuk as follows:

”נראה לי לפרש ויקץ, מלשון קוצים וסייג שעושים גדר לחרם, היינו שעשו קוצים וסייג מטומאת קליפת מואב סביב להניצוץ, מפני בני ישראל, לבל יוכלו בני ישראל ליגע בהניצוץ המגיע להם לקדושה, על כן אמר בני ישראל דייקא, הם הצדיקים החשובים שבודאי לא יבואו לטומאות עצמם בקליפה כי ירחיקו כמטחוי קשת.”

He suggests that the term “ויקץ” is related to the Hebrew word for thorns, “קוצים”, implying that the klipah of Moav surrounded the precious “nitzotz” with a protective barrier of thorns, like a fence around a vineyard, to safeguard it from Bnei Yisrael. Therefore, the passuk specifically mentions Bnei Yisrael, the important tzaddikim, who would certainly not chance contaminating themselves within the klipah.

Thus, we can conclude that the Egyptians utilized their forces of tumah to establish thorny barricades around the sparks of kedushah to safeguard them. We can suggest that this is implied by Rashi’s comment in the name of the Mechilta regarding the passuk (Shemos 18, 9): ”ויחד יתרו על כל הטובה אשר עשה ה' לישראל אשר הצילו מיד מצרים - עד עכשיו לא היה עבד יכול לברוח—Yitro rejoiced over all the good that Hashem had done for Yisrael, that He rescued them from the hand of Mitzrayim”: Up to now, no slave was able to escape from Mitzrayim, because the land was sealed; yet, these went out six-hundred thousand strong. Rashi is alluding to the sparks of kedushah that were analogous to slaves who were unable to escape from Mitzrayim; because the land of Mitzrayim was sealed off by fences and thorns established by the forces of tumah. Yet, when the six-hundred thousand Yisrael left the land, they took out all the sparks of kedushah with them.

So, we can only wonder, why it didn’t occur to the Egyptians to take measures in order to prevent Yosef HaTzaddik from gathering up all the sparks of kedushah in their midst. Not only did they neglect to establish protective measures, but Pharaoh, the Egyptian leader, a representative of the klipah, appointed Yosef as his viceroy. Pharaoh actually gave Yosef the power to accumulate all of the holy sparks located in Mitzrayim, as we learned from the commentaries of the Avodas Yisrael and the Chasam Sofer regarding the passuk: ”וילקט יוסף את כל הכסף הנמצא בארץ מצרים.”

The Egyptians Were Deceived from Above Causing Them to Believe Erroneously that Yosef Was a Sinner

It appears that we can propose a novel idea. The words of Yisrael's sweet psalmist were evident in Mitzrayim (Tehillim 2, 4): "וּשֵׁב בַשָּׁמַיִם יִשְׁחַק ה' יִלְעַג לָמוֹ"—**He who sits in heaven will laugh, the Lord will mock them.** On the one hand, HKB"H, the master orchestrator, subjected Yosef to a difficult ordeal involving matters of kedushah. By withstanding the ordeal, he succeeded in paving the path of kedushah for all of Yisrael. As the Midrash explains (V.R. 32, 5): "יוסף ירד למצרים וגדר עצמו מן הערוה ונגדרו ישראל בזכותו. אמר רבי חייא בר אבא, כדאי היה גדור ערוה יוסף ירד למצרים וגדר עצמו שנגאלו ישראל על ידו"—**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.** Furthermore, Yosef succeeded in gathering together all of the beloved sparks in Mitzrayim. The Torah infers this fact in the following passuk: "וילקט יוסף את כל הכסף הנמצא בארץ מצרים"—as explained by the Avodas Yisrael above: "ולקט הניצוצות הקדושות ואהבתם וחמדתם הנקרא בלשון כסף".

Yet, as explained, there was tremendous concern that the Egyptians would muster up all their powers of tumah in order to prevent Yosef, the quintessential tzaddik, from extracting the sparks of kedushah. Therefore, HKB"H, in His infinite wisdom, arranged for his master's wife to blame him falsely of attempting to sin with her. As a consequence, he was thrown into prison. This misled the Egyptians into believing that Yosef was immoral like them. Therefore, they did not suspect that he intended to remove the sparks of kedushah and took no steps to safeguard them from him. On the contrary, they actually placed him in charge of the holy sparks.

Now, we can begin to comprehend why Yosef, the quintessential tzaddik, spent time curling his hair in Mitzrayim. He sensed via "ruach hakodesh" that he had to conceal from the Egyptians that he was a truly righteous man. Had he not done so, they surely would not have delivered this precious cache directly into his hands. Therefore, he curled his hair and made himself pretty, so that they would think that he was corrupt like them. For this very same reason, he exhibited this immature,

boyish behavior while he was still in his father's home in Eretz Canaan; and Yaakov did not discourage him from doing so. It was essential that his true righteousness not be recognized.

Accordingly, let us reexamine the words HKB"H addresses to Yosef: "**Your father is mourning and you curl your hair? I will incite the bear against you!**" Immediately thereafter, "**his master's wife cast her eyes . . .**" At first glance, it appears as if Yosef was being punished. In truth, however, it was the exact opposite. The reason your father is mourning and you spend time curling your hair is to conceal your true nature, so that you will be able to retrieve the sparks of kedushah from Mitzrayim. Therefore, I will assist you by inciting the bear against you in the form of your master's wife. Because they suspected him of being immoral and corrupt, he was placed in prison; this enabled him to ultimately rule over Mitzrayim and accumulate in his possession all of the "nitzotzei kedushah."

This coincides very nicely with that which is written in parshas Mikeitz (Bereishis 41, 15): "ויאמר פרעה אל יוסף חלום חלמתי ופותר אין אותו, ואני שמעתי עליך לאמר תשמע חלום לפתור אותו, ויען ויאמר פרעה אל יוסף חלום חלמתי ופותר אין אותו, ואני שמעתי עליך לאמר תשמע חלום לפתור אותו, ויען"—**and Pharaoh said to Yosef, "I dreamt a dream, but there is no one who could interpret it. Now I heard it said of you that you hear a dream to interpret it." Yosef answered Pharaoh, saying, "That is beyond me; G-d will respond to Pharaoh's welfare.**" Regarding these pesukim, we find comments from the Chida in Rosh David (Mikeitz) and in the Chasam Sofer based on an elucidation in the Gemara (Sanhedrin 56b) related to the passuk (Bereishis 2, 16): "ויצו ה' אלקים על האדם לאמר - לאמר זו גילוי עריות"—**and Hashem G-d commanded the man, saying"—the term "לאמר" ("saying") indicates sexual immorality.**

Now, Pharaoh believed the false allegations made concerning Yosef. He believed that Yosef wanted to sin with his master's wife and that that was the reason for his incarceration. This is implied by his statement to Yosef: "ואני שמעתי עליך לאמר". In other words, I heard that you are a sexually immoral person—alluded to by the word "לאמר". Furthermore, "**I heard it said of you that you hear a dream to interpret it.**"

To this Yosef replied: "ויען יוסף את פרעה לאמר בלעדי"—that which you heard about me, that I am sexually immoral, it is "**בלעדי**"—**it is beyond me.** That is by no means who I am! Nevertheless, with regards to interpreting your dream: "**G-d**

will respond to Pharaoh's welfare." With this understanding, we can suggest that it was ordained from above that Pharaoh continue to believe that Yosef was sexually immoral by nature; so that he would not hesitate to appoint Yosef as his second in command and to place him in charge of all the "nitzotzei kedushah" in Mitzrayim.

The Prison Warden Was the Head of the Klipah His Prisoners Were the "nitzotzei Kedushah"

In this manner, let us proceed to interpret the pesukim with which we began: "ויתן שר בית הסוהר ביד יוסף את כל האסורים" **the prison warden placed all inmates that were in the prison in Yosef's custody, and everything that was done there, he would do.** Addressing this passuk, the Arvei Nachal (Vayeishev) explains that the prison warden was the head of the klipah of Mitzrayim; the prisoners he was in charge of were the "nitzotzei kedushah" that had fallen into the klipah of Mitzrayim.

Now, according to what we have learned, the Egyptians were deceived from above into thinking erroneously that Yosef sinned with the wife of his master. This scenario was orchestrated so that it would not occur to them that Yosef's mission was to extract the precious from the vile—to clarify the "nitzotzei kedushah" that had fallen into the klipah of Mitzrayim, as indicated by the passuk: "וילקט יוסף את כל הכסף הנמצא בארץ מצרים". Based on this premise, let us shed some light on the deeper meaning of the following pesukim:

"ויקח אדוני יוסף אותו, ויתנהו אל בית הסוהר מקום אשר אסירי המלך שם"—they placed him in the prison where the "nitzotzei kedushah,"

the prisoners belonging to HKB"H, the King of Kings, were located. "ויהי שם בבית האסירים, ויהי ה' את יוסף ויט אליו חסד"—HKB"H delivered to Yosef all of the loving sparks, emanating from the attribute of "chesed." "ויתן חנו בעיני שר בית הסוהר"—it was ordained that he would find favor in the eyes of the klipah of Mitzrayim. Then the passuk depicts the nature of the favor: "ויתן שר בית הסוהר ביד יוסף את כל האסירים אשר בבית הסוהר"—he himself delivered all of the "nitzotzei kedushah," referred to as prisoners, into the charge of Yosef.

Then the Torah teaches us how he did such a thing without suspecting that Yosef was actually an agent of kedushah: "ואת כל אשר עושים שם הוא היה עושה". In other words, the prison warden thought that all of the corrupt acts being performed by the Egyptians were also being performed by Yosef. After all, they believed erroneously that he wanted to sin with his master's wife. Therefore, he did not institute any precautionary measures against Yosef; instead, he placed Yosef in charge of all the prisoners, who were in reality the "nitzotzei kedushah."

The Torah continues: "אין שר בית הסוהר רואה את כל מאומה בידו". Even though Yosef utilized his kedushah to accumulate all of the "kesef" in Mitzrayim, the "nitzotzei kedushah" of love, the prison warden remained unaware of what was happening. "באשר ה' אתו ואשר הוא עושה ה' מצליח"—because HKB"H protected Yosef, so that no one would suspect that he was an operative for the forces of kedushah, who had ended up in Mitzrayim solely for this purpose—to gather together all of the "nitzotzei kedushah" located there for Yisrael to take out with them at the time of the exodus.



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