

“Although you intended me harm, G-d intended it for good: in order to accomplish—it is as clear as this day – that a vast people be kept alive.” (50:20)

Yosef was assuaging his brothers' guilt, saying that Hashem “caused” him to be brought to Egypt in order to set in motion the vehicle for ultimately saving them. They were simply

pawns in Hashem's Divine plan. The commentators question the meaning and purpose of the words, “*It is clear as this day.*” What is the reference to “this day”? The *Ozrover Rebbe, z.l.*, in his *sefer Be'er Moshe*, posits that the “*kayom ha'zeh*,” “this day,” is a reference to another instance in which the phrase “this day” is used: In *Parashas Vayeishev*, when recalling the incident of Yosef *Ha'tzaddik* and the promiscuous wife of Potiphar, the *Torah* says, “*Then there was an opportune (this) day when he (Yosef) entered the house to do his work*” (39:11). This *pasuk* serves as the preface, leading up to the incident in which Potiphar's wife did everything possible to seduce Yosef. Her blandishments and ensuing threats fell on deaf ears. Yosef could not be persuaded to sin. He maintained his purity, triumphing over the overwhelming challenge presented by this iniquitous woman.

The *Ozrover* explains that Yosef's ability to restrain himself, to overcome the natural desires this woman was attempting to arouse, was a merit, which foreshadowed future events for *Klal Yisrael* in Egypt. Yaakov's descendants were to be slaves in a country in which wanton immorality was an inherent part of the culture. Egypt was the most depraved country. To be able to overcome the challenges of such an environment, *Klal Yisrael* needed special *zechusim*, merits. They were bequeathed these merits through Yosef *Ha'tzaddik*. His strength of character and fortitude in the face of overwhelming challenge on “that day” formed the basis for *Klal Yisrael's* ability to withstand temptation during their tenure in Egypt.

This is the meaning of “*kayom ha'zeh*”, Yosef was inferring to his brothers that he was “sent” by Hashem to Egypt to save “this day,” a reference to the “day” that Potiphar's wife attempted to seduce him. His ability to withstand the challenge to his purity on that day saved “a vast nation,” namely *Klal Yisrael's* spiritual/moral purity. Because of him they did not become victims of the moral decadence of Egypt.