

“TACT”

Background

In the beginning of Chumash Shemos, we are told that after Yosef and the rest of the *shvatim* died, the Jewish nation was growing exponentially. In this context, the enslavement of the Jewish people began. The Egyptians saw the Jewish people as a threat, and now they were “disgusted by their lives.”

ספר שמות פרק א

יב וְכַאֲשֶׁר יַעֲנוּ אֹתוֹ כֵּן יִרְבֶּה וְכֵן יִפְרֹץ וְיִקְצֹוּ מִפְּנֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל

As they (the Jewish nation) were oppressed, so did they grow and multiply. And they (the Egyptians) were disgusted by the Jewish people.

רש"י על שמות פרק א פסוק יב

ויקוצו - קצו בחייהם ויש מפרשים המצרים בעיני עצמם וק"ל

Rashi - And they were **disgusted** – *They were disgusted with their own lives.*

Questions

That the Egyptians would view the Jewish people as a potential threat and perhaps even as their enemy is certainly understandable. And if we were being told that fear was grounds for the Egyptians to find the Jewish people disgusting, it would also make sense. Yet Rashi is telling us that this disgust was towards themselves; they found their own lives loathsome. Because of their hatred towards the Jewish people, their own lives were vile. Why would their hatred for the Jewish nation make their own lives despicable?