



The Community

Boruch Hashem

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Rabbi's Article

Speaker of the House or Shliach of G-d?

Moses tells G-d (-Exodus 6:30-7:2), "Behold, I am of closed lips; so how will Pharaoh hearken to me?" To which G-d responds, "See! I have made you a lord over Pharaoh, and Aaron, your brother, will be your speaker. You shall speak all that I command you, and Aaron, your brother, shall speak to Pharaoh..." Upon which, Rashi comments, "You shall speak: once every message and message, as you have heard it from My mouth, and Aaron, your brother, will interpret it and explain it in Pharaoh's ears." Meaning, that here, Rashi sees it that Moses is to first speak directly to Pharaoh, in the Holy Tongue, exactly, "As you have heard it from My mouth." After which, "Aaron, your brother, will interpret it and explain it in Pharaoh's ears."

This is different than in the earlier verses of (-ibid 4:10-16), "Moses said to G-d, '...For I am heavy of mouth and heavy of tongue... and He (G-d) said, 'Is there not Aaron your brother... You (Moses) shall speak to him (Aaron)... And he (Aaron) will speak... to the people (Children of Israel).'" And of the proofs that Rashi has, that in our verse, Moses is to be speaking directly to Pharaoh, is because the earlier verse (-ibid 6:26-27) clearly states, "That is Aaron and Moses... They are the ones who spoke to Pharaoh."

However, this proof is problematic, for also earlier (-ibid 5:1-3), "Moses and Aaron came and they said to Pharaoh... And they said, 'The G-d of the Hebrews...'" Meaning, they were already told that Moses spoke directly to Pharaoh, and if it was necessary to tell us the order of Moses first speaking once to Pharaoh in the Holy Tongue ("As you have heard it from My mouth"), while Aaron afterwards would, "interpret it and explain it," then why tell us now, and not at the onset of Moses and Aaron speaking to Pharaoh?

Additionally, Moses already said to G-d, "For I am heavy of mouth and heavy of tongue...", to which G-d already answered, "Aaron your brother... He will speak...", hence, why here again is Moses saying, "I am of closed lips," to which G-d is again responding, "Aaron, your brother, will be your speaker"? Even more so, when (-ibid 4:21-22), "G-d said to Moses, 'When you go to return to Egypt... And you shall say to Pharaoh,'" and hence, Moses knew that he was to speak to Pharaoh, and nevertheless, Moses does not respond with, "I am heavy of mouth." Hence, Moses knew, --that unlike when speaking to the Children of Israel, where only Aaron would be speaking,-- he Moses, --even though Aaron would be coming along to, "be your mouth,"-- would be speaking to Pharaoh.

The Explanation: Originally Moses considered that he was only, "heavy of mouth and heavy of tongue --Rashi: I (do) speak(!) (only that it is) with difficulty," and that he would be able to speak to Pharaoh. However, now Moses realizes that indeed, "I am of closed lips --Rashi: Sealed lips," and cannot speak at all. And hence, maybe he, Moses, should not go along, lest Pharaoh erroneously interprets his silence as being in disagreement with what Aaron is saying! Hence, Moses is now speaking up again, that he, Moses, should not be going at all! And to this, G-d is now telling Moses, "You shall speak," which is not just a command, but a guarantee, in which G-d is telling Moses that Moses will be able to speak because, "every message and message," that he is being sent by G-d, he will be granted by G-d to --be able to-- speak to Pharaoh.

This is what Rashi is teaching us, "Once every message and message, as you have heard it from My mouth," meaning that Moses' job was not to convince Pharaoh, but to be a conduit of G-d's message to Pharaoh, "As you have heard it from My mouth"! And being that Moses was a shliach (emissary) of G-d, hence, he had to deliver the message exactly in the words of the Meshaleach (Sender), in the language of the Holy Tongue, even though (-Rashi, Genesis 50:6), "but you (Pharaoh) do not understand it (Hebrew)"! Why would G-d have Moses do this?!

G-d told Moses, "See! I have made you a lord over Pharaoh --Rashi: To chastise him with plagues and torments." Hence, unlike Aaron, whose job it was to convince ("interpret it and explain it in --i.e. that Pharaoh understand and obey- -Pharaoh's ears") Pharaoh to listen to G-d, Moses' job was to be, "a lord over Pharaoh," and that Moses' words and demeanor make it clear to Pharaoh that these are, 'hard words,' as that of, "chastise him with plagues and torments."

This Week...

FRIDAY, JANUARY 20, 2023 ★ יט' טבת תשפ"ג

Shabbat Candle Lighting: 5:37 PM · Kabbalat Shabbat: 5:30 PM

SATURDAY, JANUARY 21, 2023 ★ כ' טבת תשפ"ג

BIRTHDAY: Rebbetzin Chana (-Link): the Rebbe's mother (1880-1964)

TORAH READING: Va'eira (Exodus 6:2-9:35) · HAFTORAH: Ezekiel (28:25-29:21)

Blessing of a new month · Shacharit: 9:30 AM · Mincha: 5:00 PM · Shabbat Ends: North Miami: 6:32 PM

MONDAY, JANUARY 23, 2023 ★ א' שבט תשפ"ג

Rosh Chodesh (Shevat) (-Link): Recite Hallel and special Musaf services