

Shvilei Pinches

Parshas Vaeira

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The Amazing Revelation of the Divine Kabbalist the Rama of Pano

Moshe's Neshomeh Originated in Adam HaRishon's Trachea that Did Not Protest Against Eating from the Tree of Knowledge

This week's parsha, parshas Vaeira, is the second parsha in sefer Shemos. In it, we continue to learn about Moshe Rabeinu's mission to facilitate Yisroel's exodus from Egypt by means of the miraculous ten plagues that HKB"H visited on Egypt. It behooves us, therefore, to explore several matters in greater depth:

- a) The possuk reads (6,9): **וידבר משה כן אל בני ישראל ולא שמעו אל משה מקוצר רוח ומעבודה קשה, וידבר ה' אל משה לאמר, בא דבר אל פרעה מלך מצרים וישלח את בני ישראל מארצו, וידבר משה לפני ה' לאמר, הן בני ישראל לא שמעו אלי ואיך ישמעני פרעה ואני ערל שפתים."**

So Moshe spoke accordingly to Bnei Yisroel; but they did not listen to Moshe due to shortness of breath and hard work. Hashem spoke to Moshe, saying: "Come speak to Pharaoh, king of Egypt, that he send Bnei Yisroel from his land." Moshe spoke before Hashem, saying: "Behold, Bnei Yisroel have not listened to me, so how will Pharaoh listen to me? Furthermore, I have a speech impediment!"

Rashi comments: **"זה אחד מעשרה קל וחומר שבתורה"—This is one of ten kal va'chomers that appear in the Torah.** The commentators on the Torah are perplexed by an obvious difficulty: This kal va'chomer is inherently problematic; for, the possuk itself explains the reason for Bnei Yisroel's refusal to listen to Moshe--**"מקוצר רוח ומעבודה קשה", due to shortness of breath and hard work.** Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, however, was not subjected to these same circumstances. How, then, can this kal va'chomer be applied to Pharaoh? How are we to understand this kal va'chomer?

- b) It is worthwhile to try and make sense of Moshe Rabeinu's surprising behavior concerning this mission. He was the greatest of all of the prophets and HKB"H, Himself, attests to the fact that (Bamidbar 12,7): **"בכל ביתי נאמן הוא, פה אל פה אדבר בו ומראה ולא בחידות ותמונת: —In my entire house, he is the trusted one. Mouth to mouth do I speak to him, in a clear vision and not in riddles, at the image of Hashem does he gaze.** Here, HKB"H says to him (Shemos 3,10): **"ועתה לכה ואשלחך אל פרעה והוצא את עמי בני ישראל ממצרים"—And now, go and I will send you to Pharaoh and you shall take My people, Bnei Yisroel, out of Egypt.** Despite all of HKB"H's appeals--which are recorded and repeated in the narrative--Moshe

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Rabeinu adamantly refuses to accept upon himself the mission of taking Yisroel out of Egypt. He persists in his refusal until HKB”H allows Aharon to join him. It is important to try and comprehend what prompted Moshe to decline acceptance of HKB”H’s mission.

- c) In parshas Shemos, it states (4,10): **וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל ה' בִּי ה', לֹא אִישׁ דְּבָרִים אֲנִי גַם, לֹא אִישׁ דְּבָרִים אֲנִי גַם**—**Moshe replied to Hashem: “Please, my Lord, I am not a man of words, also not since yesterday, nor since the day before yesterday, nor since You spoke to Your servant, for I am heavy of mouth and heavy of speech.”** It is astonishing that HKB”H—Who was certainly well aware of Moshe’s speech difficulties—chooses him, nevertheless, to redeem Yisroel from Egypt. Also, viewed in this light, what is the crux of Moshe’s claim: **“לֹא אִישׁ דְּבָרִים אֲנִי גַם”**—**“I am not a man of words?”** Additionally, what message does Moshe Rabeinu convey when he says: **“גַּם מִתְמוּל גַּם”**—**“also not since yesterday, nor since the day before yesterday, nor since You spoke to Your servant?”** For, where do we find any evidence that HKB”H had spoken with Moshe prior to that encounter?
- d) We must also explain why Moshe declines HKB”H’s request that he go and take Yisroel out of Egypt with the following humble assertion (Shemos 3,11): **“מִי אֲנִי כִי אֵלךְ אֶל פַּרְעֹה?”**—**“Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh?”** Yet, when HKB”H sends him to deliver the Torah to Yisroel, we do not find any protest whatsoever from Moshe Rabeinu; he does not say: Who am I that I should go? In fact, just the opposite is true; he accepts that task gladly and wholeheartedly.

Moshe Rabeinu’s Neshomeh Originates from Adam HaRishon’s Trachea

Let us begin to resolve these inquiries based on an enlightening introduction from the teachings of the divine kabbalist, the Rama of Pano, zy”a, in Asarah Maamaros (maamar Tzivakos Hashem, part 1, chapter 13). He helps us see Moshe’s roles in the exodus from Egypt and at the giving of the Torah in a much clearer light. Here is the gist of his hallowed words with some additional explanation:

Among the two hundred and forty-eight limbs and three hundred and sixty-five sinews that HKB”H created in Adam HaRishon, he created two especially vital organs—the trachea and the esophagus. The trachea’s function is to allow speech to become a reality. The possuk states explicitly (Devarim 6,7): **“וְדַבַּרְתָּ בָם”**—**and you shall speak of them.** Our blessed sages expound the meaning of these words in the Gemorah (Yoma 19:): **“וְדַבַּרְתָּ בָם, בָּם יֵשׁ לָךְ רִשּׁוֹת לְדַבֵּר וְלֹא בְדַבְרִים אֲחֵרִים”**—we are obliged to utilize our faculty of speech solely for speaking divrei Torah, or for matters that constitute a preparation or aid to divrei Torah. The function of the esophagus, on the other hand, is to introduce food and drink into the body for sustenance.

When HKB”H created man, He immediately imposed upon him a positive commandment and a prohibitory commandment—a mitzvat aseh and a mitzvat lo ta’aseh—pertaining to the esophagus. The positive command was (Bereishis 2,16): **“מִכָּל עֵץ הַגֶּן אֲכֹל תֹּאכַל”**—**of every tree of the garden you may freely eat;** the prohibition was (ibid.): **“וּמֵעֵץ הַדֶּעַת טוֹב וְרַע לֹא תֹאכַל מִמֶּנּוּ”**—**but of the Tree**

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of Knowledge of Good and Bad you may not eat. By transgressing and eating from the Tree of Knowledge, Adam caused a defect in the esophagus allowing it to fall into the domain of the “klipah”—forces of evil. By contrast, the trachea—which is not used for eating—was not harmed directly when Adam partook of the Tree of Knowledge. Yet, Adam HaRishon defended himself by claiming (ibid. 3,12): **“האשה אשר נתת עמדי היא נתנה לי מן העץ ואוכל”**—**The woman whom you gave me to be with, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.** Rashi comments: **“כאן כפר בטובה”**—here he displayed that he was ungrateful. As a result, the trachea was also damaged slightly; for, this inappropriate comment came out of the trachea.

We know that all souls, neshamos, were contained within Adam HaRishon’s anatomy. This is explained in the Midrash as follows (S.R. 40,3): **“עד שאדם הראשון מוטל גולם, הראה לו הקב”ה כל צדיק וצדיק שעתיד לעמוד ממנו, יש שהוא תלוי בראשו של אדם, ויש תלוי בשערו, ויש שהוא תלוי במצחו, ויש בעינו, ויש בחוטמו, ויש בפיו, ויש באזנו”** According to the Midrash, HKB”H showed Adam every tzaddik that was destined to descend from him—some were associated with his head, some with his hair, some with his forehead, some with his eyes, some with his nose, some with his mouth, and some with his ears.

The Rama of Pano teaches us that Moshe Rabeinu’s neshomeh was associated with Adam HaRishon’s trachea and did not wish to derive any benefit or enjoyment when Adam ate from the Tree of Knowledge—since the trachea does not derive pleasure during the process of eating. Now, we find in the Gemorah (Pesachim 108.): **“שמא יקדים קנה לושט”**—that there is a possibility that food will enter the trachea before entering the esophagus—in which case the trachea does come in contact with the food. Even so, Moshe was extremely careful to avoid any contact or benefit from a prohibited source. This is implied in the praise HKB”H bestows upon Moshe (Bamidbar 12,7): **“בכל ביתי נאמן הוא”**—**in My entire house, he is the trusted one;** he refused to derive any pleasure from stolen material when Adam HaRishon ate from the Tree of Knowledge.

Seeing as he was not harmed and was not a direct participant in the partaking of the Tree of Knowledge, he merited bringing down bread from heaven for Yisroel which was free of waste and excess. Furthermore, when he ascended to the heavens, the narrative records (Shemos 34,28): **“ויהי שם עם”**—**ה’ ארבעים יום וארבעים לילה לחם לא אכל ומים לא שתה”**—that he was there with Hashem for forty days and forty nights and did not eat or drink; he bathed in the splendor of Hashem’s Presence and was able to sustain himself without food or water. Lastly, in the merit of not following Chava’s advice and not partaking of the Tree of Knowledge, he was permitted to separate from his wife at the time of the revelation at Sinai—matan Torah.

The Trachea Was Guilty of Not Protesting

The Rama adds an important and novel point (ibid. chapter 19). Despite what we have learned thus far, the trachea—from which the sound or speech emanates—also shared some degree of guilt and was affected by the sin. It should have protested vehemently and cried out to all of the neshamos that were

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part of Adam HaRishon, admonishing them not to eat from the prohibited Tree of Knowledge. For failing to do so, it was punished by being exiled to the land of Cush and being forced to seek refuge in Midian—in keeping with the punishment of one who causes a death inadvertently. Had the trachea voiced its protest, maybe Adam HaRishon would not have sinned and would not have had to die.

This is why Moshe was handed over to the executioner in Egypt, who attempted to kill him by means of a sword to his throat—the very location where speech emanates from and which contains the organ that was guilty of not protesting against Adam HaRishon. As pointed out, however, he refused to derive pleasure from eating that which was prohibited and, essentially, acted like an unwilling, unfeeling participant resembling a piece of stone. Therefore, he was rewarded measure for measure when his throat miraculously became like a pillar of marble devoid of feeling. This is how he was saved from Pharaoh's sword, as Moshe states (Shemos 18,4): **“וּיְצִילֵנִי מִחֶרֶב פְּרַעֲהוֹ”**—**and He saved me from Pharaoh's sword.** This is the gist of the Rama of Pano's remarkable explanation.

The sefer Amudehah Shivah applies this idea to explain the possuk in parshas Behaalotcha (Bamidbar 12,1): **“וַתְּדַבֵּר מִרְיָם וְאַהֲרֹן בְּמֹשֶׁה עַל אֹדוֹת הָאִשָּׁה הַכּוּשִׁית אֲשֶׁר לָקַח כִּי אִשָּׁה כּוּשִׁית לָקַח”**—**Miriam and Aharon spoke against Moshe regarding the Cushite woman he had married, for he had married a Cushite woman.** Rashi explains that they were objecting to the fact that he had separated from his wife. Hashem responds to their objection: **“וַיֹּאמֶר ה'... לֹא כֵן עֲבַדִּי מֹשֶׁה בְּכָל בֵּיתִי נֶאֱמָן”**—**“הוא—Moshe stands apart; he is my most trusted servant.** How does this response actually address their objection concerning his separation from his wife? Based on what we have established above, the reason Moshe Rabeinu is the most trusted is because he did not participate or derive pleasure from the stolen fruit of the Tree of Knowledge and was not swayed by Chava's advice to Adam HaRishon. Consequently, he was permitted to separate from his wife; this was the rebuttal to Aharon and Miriam's claim.

Following the Rama of Pano's line of reasoning, we can suggest an additional thought on this subject. The reason Moshe separated from his wife was to make amends for the defect to the trachea caused by Adam HaRishon's ungrateful comment to HKB”H: **“הָאִשָּׁה אֲשֶׁר נָתַת עִמָּדִי”**—**the woman whom you gave me to be with.** Seeing as Moshe Rabeinu's neshomeh originated from Adam HaRishon's trachea, it was incumbent upon him to help rectify that impropriety. He chose to deprive himself by separating from his wife, thus atoning for Adam HaRishon's ungrateful behavior.

A very nice allusion to this fact can be found in the Gemorah (Shabbos 87.) which lists Moshe's separation from his wife among the three things that Moshe did of his own accord and which the Holy One, Blessed is He, concurred with. The Gemorah queries: **“וּמִנְלַן דְּהַסְכִּימַי הַקַּב”ה עַל יְדוֹ, דְּכָתִיב: וְשׁוּבוּ לָכֶם לְאֹהֲלֵיכֶם, וְכָתִיב בְּתַרְיָה וְאַתָּה פָּה עִמּוֹד עִמָּדִי”**—**And from where do we know that HKB”H agreed with him? For it is written: Go say to them, “Return to your tents,” and after that it is written: But as for you [Moshe], stand here with me.** HKB”H instructs all of Yisroel to return to their tents, meaning to their wives, except for Moshe; he is instructed to remain and stand **“עִמָּדִי”**—with

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me. Based on our previous discussion, we can suggest that HKB”H alludes to Moshe by means of the word “עמד” the reason that he must separate from his wife. Since you, as part of Adam HaRishon, said: “האשה אשר נתת עמדי”, you demonstrated that you were ungrateful regarding the mate that had been provided for you. So, now you must atone by not returning to your current wife.

“Moshe Taught Us the Commandments of the Torah”

Based on this foundation of the Rama of Pano, we can begin to comprehend, to a small degree, why Moshe did willingly accept the task of giving the Torah to Yisroel. As we have learned, Moshe Rabeinu was part of Adam HaRishon’s trachea and refused to derive any benefit from the stolen fruit of the Tree of Knowledge; nevertheless, he was guilty of failing to raise his voice in protest in an attempt to prevent Adam HaRishon and the other neshamos from partaking of said prohibited tree.

This might explain why Moshe Rabeinu consented to teach the Torah to all of Yisroel. Due to his extreme humility, he perceived that HKB”H chose him for this task to make amends for his shameful silence at the time of Adam HaRishon’s sin—and not because he attributed any greatness to himself. He was chosen to teach all of Yisroel the Torah and make up for not having done so when they were all still part of Adam HaRishon’s anatomy. This is the reason that he rebukes all of Yisroel before his death, as it is written (Devarim 1,1): “אלה הדברים אשר דיבר משה אל כל ישראל”—**These are the words that Moshe spoke to all of Yisroel**; he wished to make amends for having failed to do so when they were all contained within Adam HaRishon.

How beautifully this explains why he decided to separate from his wife specifically at the time of matan Torah. Upon careful scrutiny, we find that he failed in two regards when he was part of Adam HaRishon—one passive and one active. How so? His passive failing was that he sat by quietly without protesting against Adam HaRishon and the other neshamos in an attempt to prevent them from eating from the Tree of Knowledge. He failed in an active manner by saying: “האשה אשר נתת עמדי”—**the woman you gave me to be with**; he responded ungratefully to HKB”H’s kindness.

To correct these two flaws simultaneously, HKB”H chose him to give the Torah to Yisroel. He taught them which actions to pursue actively and which to avoid; this served to atone for his silence and failure to teach the other neshamos right from wrong concerning the Tree of Knowledge. By sanctifying himself and separating from his wife at the time of matan Torah, he atoned in an active manner for his previous ungrateful behavior concerning his wife. As mentioned previously, HKB”H acquiesced to Moshe’s decision and responded by saying: “And you stand here with me,” “עמדי”; this demonstrated that He accepted Moshe’s action as an atonement for having said: “The woman that you placed with me,” “עמדי”.

Moshe’s Speech Was Healed at Matan Torah

I have given much thought and consideration to the matter of Moshe’s speech impediment. The Midrash teaches us that his handicap lasted only until matan Torah and then it was healed (D.R. 1,1):

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“אלה הדברים אשר דיבר משה אל כל ישראל וגו’, משה עד שלא זכה לתורה כתיב ביה, לא איש דברים אנכי, כיון שזכה לתורה נתרפא לשונו והתחיל לדבר דברים, מנין ממה שקרינו לא לא—Before receiving the Torah, Moshe describes himself as לא איש דברים אנכי—not a man of words. After receiving the Torah, we find that his speech problems were cured; this fact is indicated by the possuk: **אלה הדברים אשר דיבר משה**—these are the words that Moshe spoke.

Based on the foregoing discussion, we can propose the following explanation. Moshe’s speech difficulties prior to matan Torah were a result of his failure to protest vocally against Adam HaRishon and the other neshamos. Since HKB”H deals with tzaddikim in a very precise and strict manner, he was punished tit for tat—for failing to utilize his powers of speech when necessary, he lost his powers of speech to a certain degree.

By giving all of Yisroel the Torah and instructing them in the ways of wisdom and proper, ethical behavior, he made amends for his previous failure to guide and rebuke them. Having made amends for his previous wrongdoing, his faculty of speech returned to normal.

This is what the Midrash came to teach us. We might even suggest that the Midrash finds an allusion to all of this in the very pesukim which it quotes. The Midrash asks: Where do we find that Moshe was cured of his speech impediment? It answers that we deduce this from the possuk: **אלה הדברים אשר דיבר משה**. Now, the first letters of the words **אשר דיבר משה** spell out the name **אדם**. This alludes to the fact that when Moshe began teaching over the Torah to all of Yisroel—**אל כל ישראל**—he had in mind to atone for his failure to teach them when they were all contained within the being of Adam HaRishon.

The Exile in Egypt Was a Result of the Sin of the Tree of Knowledge

In this manner, let us continue our journey and address the issue of Moshe Rabeinu’s reluctance to accept HKB”H’s mission to take Yisroel out of Egypt. The possuk states (Devarim 4,20): **‘ואתכם לקח ה’—ויוציא אתכם מכור הברזל ממצרים להיות לו לעם נחלה כיום הזה**—**But Hashem has taken you and removed you from the iron crucible, from Egypt, to be a nation of heritage for Him, as of this very day**. Rashi explains that a “crucible” is a vessel used to purify gold. This teaches us that the purpose of the exile in Egypt was to purify the neshamos of Yisroel in this iron furnace as a preparation for receiving the Torah on Har Sinai. The commentators are bothered, however, trying to understand why the process was so severe. What was Yisroel’s sin? Why did they need to endure such hardships in Egypt in order to achieve purification?

A legitimate solution to these questions can be found in the Arizal’s Shaar HaPesukim (Shemos). In essence, he explains that all of those neshamos of Yisroel that suffered and endured the exile in Egypt were originally contained in Adam HaRishon when he committed the sin of eating from the Tree of Knowledge. To remedy the damage caused to these neshamos, they were required to endure many

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reincarnations, gilgulim—a process necessary to purify them and cure them of all their ills. In fact, they were initially reincarnated into the generation of the flood; however, they were still so infected with evil that they continued their destructive ways.

Next, they were reincarnated into the generation of the dispersion. Once again, they persisted in their evil ways and failed to correct the defects in their souls. The possuk records that (Bereishis 11,5): **“וירד—Hashem descended to look at the city and the tower that the sons of Adam built.** Here we find a clear cut allusion to the fact that these were the very souls contained within Adam HaRishon’s being. Their third reincarnation was into the people of Sedom. There, too, they failed to change their ways and continued to cause more damage—as it says in the possuk (ibid. 13,13): **“ואנשי סדום רעים וחטאים לה’ מאד”—Now the people of Sedom were wicked and exceedingly sinful toward Hashem.**

After these three unsuccessful reincarnations, these neshamos were reincarnated a fourth time into the Bnei Yisroel in Egypt. By enduring the excruciating hardships of slavery in Egypt, they were purified to the point of meriting to receive the Torah. Just as they were punished for their destructive ways during the times of the flood, Pharaoh similarly decreed (Shemos 1,22): **“כל הבן הילוד היאורה—every male child born shall be thrown into the river.** In both instances, the mode of punishment involved water.

Corresponding to the sins committed in the generation of the dispersion (Bereishis 11,4): **“הבה נלבנה—Let us make bricks. . . to build the city and the tower, we find a similar decree and punishment in Egypt (Shemos 1,10): “הבה נתחכמה לו... וימררו את חייהם—Let us come up with a plan to deal with them. . . They made their lives miserable with hard work, with mortar and with bricks.** Corresponding to the generation of the dispersion’s plan to build the city and the tower, they were punished in Egypt by being forced to build storage cities for Pharaoh (ibid. 11): **“ויבן ערי מסכנות לפרעה את פיתום ואת רעמסס”—they built the cities of Pithom and Raamses.**

In this manner, the Arizal explains the reason that Moshe Rabeinu was the vehicle for the redemption from Egypt. As we have seen, Moshe represented the good and untainted part of Adam HaRishon that did not participate in the sin involving the Tree of Knowledge. Just as Adam HaRishon contained in his being all of the neshamos of Yisroel, so, too, we find that Moshe was equivalent to all of Yisroel. This is stated explicitly in the Midrash Tanchuma (Beshalach): **“משה ובני ישראל, משה שקול כנגד כל—ישראל.”** Therefore, after Yisroel in Egypt had corrected the flaws and had purified themselves of the sins of the previous generations—the sin of the Tree of Knowledge and the sins of the three generations of the flood, the dispersion and Sedom—they were ready to be led out of Egypt and to receive the Torah on Har Sinai—led by Moshe, the good part of Adam HaRishon.

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Moshe Maintained that He Caused the Egyptian Exile

Now, we have shed some light on the matter of Moshe's reluctance to accept Hashem's mission to take Yisroel out of Egypt. We learned from the Rama of Pano that although Moshe—as a part of Adam HaRishon's trachea—did not participate or derive benefit from the sin of the Tree of Knowledge, he still was not guilt-free. He felt that he should have cried out and voiced his protest when Adam HaRishon and the other neshamos were eating from the tree.

Therefore, he blamed himself for the sin of the Tree of Knowledge. It is very possible that had he protested out loud, they would not have eaten the forbidden fruit. If so, it was his fault that all of those neshamos that reincarnated into Yisroel in Egypt had to suffer the hardships of slavery. Seeing as he bore the blame, he felt that he was unworthy to be the agent of the redemption.

With this background, we can begin to comprehend the hidden meaning behind Moshe Rabeinu's statement to HKB"H (Shemos 4,10): **וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל ה' בִּי ה', לֹא אִישׁ דְּבָרִים אֲנִי גַם מֵתְמוּל גַּם** (Shemos 4,10): **וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל ה' בִּי ה', לֹא אִישׁ דְּבָרִים אֲנִי גַם מֵתְמוּל גַּם** -- Moshe replied to Hashem: **"Please, my Lord, I am not a man of words, also not since yesterday, nor since the day before yesterday, nor since You spoke to Your servant, for I am heavy of mouth and heavy of speech."** In other words, even in the past, when I was part of Adam HaRishon's trachea, I demonstrated that I was not a "man of words"—for, I did not protest nor did I cry out to prevent Adam HaRishon from partaking of the Tree of Knowledge.

"גַּם מֵאִזְ דִּבַּרְתָּ אֵל עַבְדְּךָ" -- **nor since You spoke to Your servant**—this refers to when HKB"H spoke to Moshe when he was still incorporated within the being of Adam HaRishon, and He said to him (Bereishis 2,17): **"וּמֵעֵץ הַדַּעַת טוֹב וְרַע לֹא תֹאכַל מִמֶּנּוּ"** -- **but of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Bad you may not eat.** Even then I did not admonish Adam HaRishon not to violate Hashem's command. The proof of the fact that I sinned is evident from my punishment: **"כִּי כָבֵד פִּה וְכִבְדַּ לְשׁוֹן אֲנִי"** -- **for I am heavy of mouth and heavy of speech.** Clearly, I was punished measure for measure for failing to speak up and protest. It turns out, therefore, that I caused all of the neshamos that sinned with the Tree of Knowledge to reincarnate into the neshamos in Egypt. How, then, can I possibly go to lead them out of Egypt?!

Moshe Was the Most Humble of All Men

This also provides us with a deeper insight into the statement (Bamidbar 12,3): **וְהָאִישׁ מֹשֶׁה עֲנִיּוֹ** -- **Now the man, Moshe, was exceedingly humble—more so than any other man on the face of the earth!** The commentators are puzzled by how this was possible. After all, Moshe took Yisroel out of Egypt, he split the sea, he brought down the "mahn," and he gave them the Torah—the reason for all of creation. How is it feasible that he could have performed all of these feats and, yet, remained the humblest person on earth?

Shvilei Pinches

Parshas Vaeira

The explanation for his extreme humility is concealed within the possuk itself: **“והאיש משה עניו מאד”** **“מכל האדם אשר על פני האדמה”**. He considered himself to be more lowly **“מכל האדם”**—than any of the other neshamos that were contained within Adam HaRishon (which embodied the entire future of the human race). Only he, originating from Adam HaRishon’s trachea, the source of speech, had the ability to protest and warn them not to violate the prohibition against eating from the Tree of Knowledge; and he did not do so. In his mind, the only reason that he was chosen to give Yisroel the Torah, was to make amends for not teaching them to abide by Hashem’s word to begin with—concerning the Tree of Knowledge. This was his humble assessment of his own achievements.

At this point, we can return to the kal va’chomer elucidated by Moshe: **“הן בני ישראל לא שמעו אלי”**—**Behold, Bnei Yisroel have not listened to me**. When he approached Bnei Yisroel and they refused to listen to him, he concluded, due to his great humility, that they blamed him for their being in exile in Egypt—since he did not protest and prevent them from eating from the Tree of Knowledge.

If so, he continues, **“ואיך ישמעני פרעה”**—**how will Pharaoh listen to me?** When I approach him to request that he release Yisroel from slavery and send them out of Egypt, he will mock me. He’ll say, “Look who’s talking! Aren’t you the one responsible for them being in this exile?” And the proof that I am responsible, because of my failure to protest, is evidenced by the fact that I have a speech impediment, **“ואני ערל שפתים”**—this handicap is my punishment. How, then, can I possibly be the one to go before Pharaoh?!