

Lunchtime Torah Express - Bo

Ramban on Exodus 10:2:1

In Shemot Rabbah, I have seen it stated: “*And that thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son.*” The Holy One, blessed be He, informed Moses what plague He is about to bring upon them, and Moses wrote it down with a hint: *And that thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son, and of thy son’s son*, which is an allusion to the plague of locusts, just as it is said [of the locusts in the days of the prophet Joel], *Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children*, etc.”

Who is meant to be impacted by the plagues?

Exodus 7:16-17

(16) And say to him, ‘יהוה, the God of the Hebrews, sent me to you to say, “Let My people go that they may worship Me in the wilderness.” But you have paid no heed until now. (17) Thus says יהוה, “By this you shall know that I am יהוה.” See, I shall strike the water in the Nile with the rod that is in my hand, and it will be turned into blood;

Exodus 8:17-18

(17) For if you do not let My people go, I will let loose swarms of insects against you and your courtiers and your people and your houses; the houses of the Egyptians, and the very ground they stand on, shall be filled with swarms of insects. (18) But on that day I will set apart the region of Goshen, where My people dwell, so that no swarms of insects shall be there, that you may know that I יהוה am in the midst of the land.

Exodus 9:13-14

(13) יהוה said to Moses, “Early in the morning present yourself to Pharaoh and say to him, ‘Thus says יהוה, the God of the Hebrews: Let My people go to worship Me. (14) For this time I will send all My plagues upon your person, and your courtiers, and your people, in order that you may know that there is none like Me in all the world.

Exodus 10:1-2

(1) Then יהוה said to Moses, “Go to Pharaoh. For I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his courtiers, in order that I may display these My signs among them, (2) and that you **may recount** in the hearing of your child and of your child’s child how I made a mockery of the Egyptians and how I displayed My signs among them—in order that **you may know** that I am יהוה.”

Sforno on Exodus 10:2:1

ולמען תספר, and so that you Israelites will be able to tell about My attributes and remember this throughout future generations.

"And you shall know" You and your generations and the Egyptians.

Ibn Ezra on Exodus 10:2:1

AND THAT THOU MAYEST TELL. God spoke to Moses, who is equivalent to all of Israel. Similarly, *that ye may know that I am the Lord* means that all Israel shall know the aforementioned. The Torah speaks in human terms when it says, *I have wrought*, for it pictures God as acting as a human being who arranges events in order to avenge himself upon another.

Or HaChaim on Exodus 10:2:2

I believe that first and foremost God wanted to make it plain that it was not His purpose to bring on the plague as an act of revenge on Pharaoh. Rather, the miracle was designed to strengthen Israel's faith in G'd so that they would remember these miracles forever. This could be achieved only if G'd not only performed the miracle without hurting any Israelite by it but that Pharaoh himself would be so impressed by the miracle that it would also impress God's power on the minds of the Israelites in an unforgettable manner. ... Although God had demonstrated miracles which clearly proved His power, this would not have sufficed to make a lasting impression on the Israelites unless He had at the same time proven that He distinguished miraculously between the guilty and the innocent, i.e. between the Israelites and the Egyptians and that the miracles had hurt **only** the guilty parties.

Rav Menachem Leibtag: "Let my people go: Hoax or Plea?" Tanach Study Center

"Moshe does not lie to Pharaoh, nor does he deceive him. He simply claims the legitimate right of religious freedom for an oppressed people! Furthermore, God has every intention to actually lead Bnei Yisrael on this journey to worship God at Har Sinai (see 24:5-8, and Ramban & Ibn Ezra on 3:12!). Basically, God can demand that Pharaoh grant religious freedom to an oppressed people, but He can't expect him to act as an ardent supporter of Zionism."

Marc Gitler

Interestingly there are a series of lovely Hasidic ideas that add a layer of meaning to the words in an individual's spiritual journeys to God. When

you approach God bring your youth, that is to say, your sense of wonder curiosity and excitement. Bring your old, meaning, your wisdom and experience.