



## Anger

**"Y**ou are driving me crazy little frog! Your croaking is making me deaf! I am going to put an end to you."

*With that, the angry Mitzri picked up a big stick and struck the frog with a mighty blow. Much to his surprise, the frog did not die. Rather it multiplied into several frogs, all croaking into the Mitzri's ears.*

"You lousy frogs! You can't get away with this! I'll kill you all!"

*And so, the Mitzri began angrily striking frog after frog. Each blow only produced more and more frogs, more and more croaking. As the number of frogs grew and grew, the Mitzri's anger grew and grew. And so the plague went. The Mitzrim themselves filled the land of Mitzraim with frogs.*

**T**he Steipler, in his sefer Bircas Peretz, points out the irony of the situation. The Mitzrim were disgusted with the *tsefardeah*, and wanted to kill them. However, they reacted with anger. With each frenzied blow, the frogs increased. They should have seen this and realized that their anger was counterproductive. Not only was it not helping them to get rid of the frogs, rather it was creating more, more, and more frogs. Didn't they realize this? No, because this is the destructive power of anger. It blinds a person to the devastation that it causes. And so, each angry reaction goes like the *makkat tsefardeah*. A quiet calm approach will allow emotions to slowly cool down. The anger will evaporate and the matter will be settled. However, a heated reaction will only bring another irritated response, just as each fierce blow brought more frogs. Tempers will escalate, and soon the fire engulfs everything. Therefore, the Steipler advises silence as the best response to anger. Time will pass, and the temper will cool. Peace will prevail, and bring along with it Hashem's blessings. As our sages say, "The only vessel which can hold blessing is peace."

### Kinderlach . . .

*"That's it! I am fed up! I must have told him 1000 times not to do that. I explained to him how it bothers me. He just continues to do it! I am going to scream at him. That will solve the problem." Kinderlach, will screaming really solve the problem? Surely not. It will only bring an angry reaction. That, in turn will provoke more rage. The vicious cycle will just escalate and escalate just as the frogs increased and increased. There is only one way to stop it. Silence. Accept the things you cannot change and calmly deal with the others. You will prevent the plague from spreading. Anger is a makko. Let us not suffer its destructive force.*

## Shema Yisrael

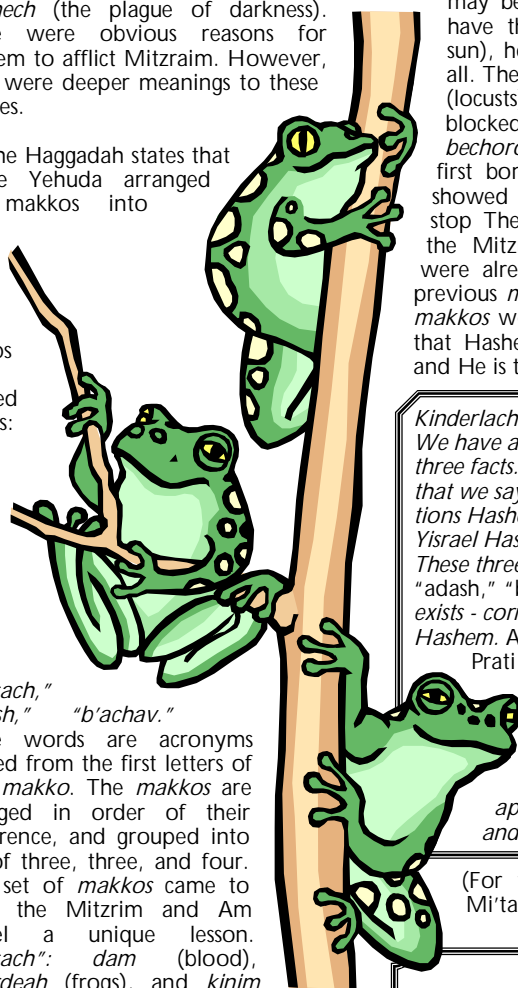
**T**he *Eser Makkos* (Ten Plagues). A time of terrible suffering for the Mitzrim. They were punished *middah kinaged middah* (measure for measure) for the atrocities that they committed to Am Yisrael. The Jewish people, on the other hand, had reasons to be happy. The slavery was finally over, and their oppressors were getting what they deserved. They also became wealthy by selling water during *makkat dam* (the plague of blood), and by locating the valuables of the Mitzrim during *makkat choshech* (the plague of darkness). These were obvious reasons for Hashem to afflict Mitzraim. However, there were deeper meanings to these plagues.

**T**he Haggadah states that Rebbe Yehuda arranged the makkos into

groups that formed words:

*"Datsach," "adash," "b'achav."*

These words are acronyms formed from the first letters of each *makko*. The *makkos* are arranged in order of their occurrence, and grouped into sets of three, three, and four. Each set of *makkos* came to teach the Mitzrim and Am Yisrael a unique lesson. *"Datsach"*: *dam* (blood), *tsefardeah* (frogs), and *kinim* (lice) proved the existence of Hashem. *Dam* overturned the notion that the river was a god by turning it into blood, thereby killing it and everything in it. The *tsefardeah* sanctified Hashem's name by jumping into fiery ovens, something that a regular frog would never do. Even Paroh's wizards admitted that the plague of *kinim* was "Hashem's finger". These three *makkos* proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that Hashem's existence could not be denied.



**"A**dash" demonstrated Hashem's rule over the world in the form of *Hashgacha Pratis* (private supervision) over each individual. The plagues of *arov* (wild animals), *dever* (cattle disease), and *shechin* (boils) affected only the Mitzrim, their livestock, and their land. The Jews, who merited Divine Protection, were not touched. Only A Being who controls every detail of the world could accomplish such a thing.

**"B**achav" demonstrated *"Ein ode milvado"* (Devarim 4:35), that Hashem is The Only Power in the universe. There may be other entities that appear to have their own power (such as the sun), however Hashem controls them all. The plagues of *borod* (hail), *arbeh*, (locusts), and *choshech* (darkness), all blocked out the sun. Also, *makkat bechoros* (the plague of death of the first born) was at night. All of these showed that the sun had no power to stop The Almighty. The other gods of the Mitzrim, the Nile and the sheep were already proven powerless by the previous *makkos*. To sum it up, the *esser makkos* were a big lesson for the world that Hashem exists, He runs the world, and He is the only power.

### Kinderlach . . .

*We have an easy way to remember these three facts. The first verse of Kriyas Shema that we say every morning and night mentions Hashem's name three times: "Shema Yisrael Hashem Elokeinu Hashem Echad." These three correspond to "datsach," "adash," "b'achav". Datsach - Hashem exists - corresponds to Shema Yisrael Hashem. Adash - Hashem is Mashgiach Prati - that is Elokeinu. B'achav - He is The Only One - refers to Hashem Echad. Remember this every time that you say Kriyas Shema, kinderlach. Watch your love and appreciation of Hashem grow and grow.*

(For further explanation, see Sefer Mi'tamei HaShulchan)

### Parasha Questions

- How did Moshe bring on the makko of borod? (9:22-23)
- Who was afflicted with shechin? (9:10-11)
- Which plague was equal to all of the others? (9:14 and Rashi).
- Why could the Bnei Yisrael not offer up korbonos in Goshen? (8:22 and Rashi).
- Which makko was referred to as the "Finger of Elokim"? (8:15)
- Why could Moshe not strike the offer (dirt) to bring on the kinim? (Rashi 8:12)