

# Vaera, Torah

Exodus 8:16-9:35

And the LORD said to Moses,  
“Early in the morning present  
yourself to Pharaoh, as he is  
coming out to the water, and say to  
him, ‘Thus says the LORD: Let My  
people go that they may worship  
Me.

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.

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

שמות ח'ט"ז-ט"ח:ל"ה

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה הֲשִׁיבֶנּוּ  
בבֹּקֶר וְהִתִּיצַב לְפָנַי פְּרַעֲהַ הַיָּה  
יֹוצֵא הַמַּיִמָּה וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵלָיו כֹּה  
אָמַר יְהוָה שְׁלַח עַמִּי וַיַּעֲבֹדֵנִי:  
כִּי אִם־אֵינְךָ מְשַׁלַּח אֶת־עַמִּי הַיְהוּדִי  
מִשְׁלִיחַ בָּךְ וּבַעֲבָדֶיךָ וּבַעֲמָלֶיךָ  
וּבְבָתֶיךָ אֶת־הָעֶרֶב וּמָלְאוּ בָתֵי  
מִצְרַיִם אֶת־הָעֶרֶב וְגַם הָאֲדָמָה  
אֲשֶׁר־הֵם עָלֶיהָ:  
וְהַפְּלִיתִי בַיּוֹם הַהוּא אֶת־אֶרֶץ גֹּשֶׁן  
אֲשֶׁר עַמִּי עֹמֵד עָלֶיהָ לְבִלְתִּי  
הָיֹת־שָׁם עֶרֶב לְמַעַן תִּדַּע כִּי אֲנִי  
יְהוָה בְּקִרְבֵי הָאֶרֶץ:  
וְשִׁמַּתִּי פֹדֶת בֵּין עַמִּי וּבֵין עַמָּךְ  
לְמַחֵר יִהְיֶה הָאֵת הַזֶּה:

know that I the LORD am in the midst of the land.

And I will make a distinction between My people and your people. Tomorrow this sign shall come to pass.”

And the LORD did so. Heavy swarms of insects invaded Pharaoh’s palace and the houses of his courtiers; throughout the country of Egypt the land was ruined because of the swarms of insects.

Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, “Go and sacrifice to your God within the land.”

But Moses replied, “It would not be right to do this, for what we sacrifice to the LORD our God is untouchable to the Egyptians. If we sacrifice that which is untouchable to the Egyptians before their very eyes, will they not stone us!

וַיַּעַשׂ יְהוָה כִּן וַיָּבֵא עָרֹב כָּבֵד  
בֵּיתָהּ פְּרַעֲהַ וּבֵית עֲבָדָיו  
וּבְכָל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם תִּשְׁחַת הָאָרֶץ  
מִפְּנֵי הָעָרֹב:  
וַיִּקְרָא פְּרַעֲהַ אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וּלְאַהֲרֹן  
וַיֹּאמֶר לָכֵן זָבַחוּ לֵאלֹהֵיכֶם  
בְּאֶרֶץ:  
וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה לֹא נִכּוֹן לַעֲשׂוֹת כִּן  
כִּי תוֹעֵבַת מִצְרַיִם נִזְבַּח לַיהוָה  
אֱלֹהֵינוּ הֵן נִזְבַּח אֶת־תוֹעֵבַת  
מִצְרַיִם לְעֵינֵיהֶם וְלֹא יִסְקְלֵנוּ:  
דָּרוֹךְ שְׁלִשֵׁת יָמִים נִלְךְ בַּמִּדְבָּר  
וְזָבַחוּ לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ כַּאֲשֶׁר  
יֹאמֶר אֱלֹהֵינוּ:  
וַיֹּאמֶר פְּרַעֲהַ אָנֹכִי אֲשַׁלַּח אֶתְכֶם  
וְזָבַחְתֶּם לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם בַּמִּדְבָּר  
רַק הֲרַחֵק לֹא־תִרְחִיקוּ לְלַכֵּת  
הָעִתִּירוּ בְּעַדִּי:  
וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה הֲנִי אָנֹכִי יוֹצֵא  
מִמֶּעַמְךָ וְהִעֲתַרְתִּי אֶל־יְהוָה וְסָר  
הָעָרֹב מִפְּרַעֲהַ מִעַבְדָּיו וּמִעַמּוֹ

So we must go a distance of three days into the wilderness and sacrifice to the LORD our God as He may command us.”

Pharaoh said, “I will let you go to sacrifice to the LORD your God in the wilderness; but do not go very far. Plead, then, for me.”

And Moses said, “When I leave your presence, I will plead with the LORD that the swarms of insects depart tomorrow from Pharaoh and his courtiers and his people; but let not Pharaoh again act deceitfully, not letting the people go to sacrifice to the LORD.”

So Moses left Pharaoh’s presence and pleaded with the LORD.

And the LORD did as Moses asked:

He removed the swarms of insects from Pharaoh, from his courtiers, and from his people; not one remained.

But Pharaoh became stubborn this time also, and would not let the people go.

מָחָר יָק אֶל־יִסְף פְּרֹעֶה הַתֵּל  
לְבַלְתִּי שְׁלַח אֶת־הָעָם לְזִבְחַ  
לַיהוָה:

וַיֵּצֵא מֹשֶׁה מִעַם פְּרֹעֶה וַיַּעֲתָר  
אֶל־יְהוָה:

וַיַּעַשׂ יְהוָה כַּדְּבַר מֹשֶׁה וַיִּסַּר  
הָעָרֹב מִפְּרֹעֶה מֵעַבְדָּיו וּמֵעַמּוֹ לֹא  
נִשְׁאַר אֶחָד:

וַיִּכְבַּד פְּרֹעֶה אֶת־לְבוֹ גַם בַּפְּעַם  
הַזֹּאת וְלֹא שְׁלַח אֶת־הָעָם: {פ}

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה בֹּא  
אֶל־פְּרֹעֶה וּדְבַרְתָּ אֵלָיו כֹּה־אָמַר  
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי הָעַבְדִּים שְׁלַח  
אֶת־עַמִּי וַיַּעֲבֹדְנִי:

כִּי אִם־מֵאֵן אַתָּה לְשַׁלַּח וְעוֹדָךְ  
מִחֲזִיק בָּם:

הִנֵּה יַד־יְהוָה הוּיָהּ בְּמִקְנֶךָ אֲשֶׁר  
בַּשָּׂדֶה בַּסּוּסִים בְּחֻמְרִים בְּגַמְלִים  
בַּבָּקָר וּבַצֹּאן דְּבַר כָּבֵד מְאֹד:

וְהַפְּלָה יְהוָה בֵּין מִקְנֶה יִשְׂרָאֵל  
וּבֵין מִקְנֶה מִצְרַיִם וְלֹא יָמוּת

The LORD said to Moses, “Go to Pharaoh and say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD, the God of the Hebrews: Let My people go to worship Me.

For if you refuse to let them go, and continue to hold them, then the hand of the LORD will strike your livestock in the fields—the horses, the asses, the camels, the cattle, and the sheep—with a very severe pestilence.

But the LORD will make a distinction between the livestock of Israel and the livestock of the Egyptians, so that nothing shall die of all that belongs to the Israelites.

The LORD has fixed the time: tomorrow the LORD will do this thing in the land.”

And the LORD did so the next day: all the livestock of the Egyptians died, but of the livestock of the Israelites not a beast died.

When Pharaoh inquired, he found that not a head of the livestock of

מִכָּל־לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל דָּבַר:

וַיִּשֶׁם יְהוָה מוֹעֵד לֵאמֹר מָחָר

יַעֲשֶׂה יְהוָה הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה בְּאֶרֶץ:

וַיַּעַשׂ יְהוָה אֶת־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה

מִמַּחֲרַת וַיָּמַת כָּל מִקְנֵה מִצְרַיִם

וּמִמִּקְנֵה בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא־מַת

אֶחָד:

וַיִּשְׁלַח פַּרְעֹה וְהִנֵּה לֹא־מַת

מִמִּקְנֵה יִשְׂרָאֵל עַד־אֶחָד וַיִּכְבַּד

לֵב פַּרְעֹה וְלֹא שָׁלַח אֶת־הָעָם:

{פ}

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וְאֶל־אַהֲרֹן

קָחוּ לָכֶם מִלֵּא חֲפְנֵיכֶם פִּיחַ

כַּבָּשָׁן וְזָרְקוּ מֹשֶׁה הַשָּׁמַיְמָה לְעֵינַי

פַּרְעֹה:

וְהָיָה לְאַבְקָה עַל כָּל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם

וְהָיָה עַל־הָאָדָם וְעַל־הַבְּהֵמָה

לְשָׁחִין פָּרַח אֲבַעְבַּעַת בְּכָל־אֶרֶץ

מִצְרַיִם:

וַיִּקְחוּ אֶת־פִּיחַ הַכַּבָּשָׁן וַיַּעֲמְדוּ

לְפָנַי פַּרְעֹה וַיִּזְרַק אֹתוֹ מֹשֶׁה

Israel had died; yet Pharaoh remained stubborn, and he would not let the people go. Then the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “Each of you take handfuls of soot from the kiln, and let Moses throw it toward the sky in the sight of Pharaoh. It shall become a fine dust all over the land of Egypt, and cause an inflammation breaking out in boils on man and beast throughout the land of Egypt.” So they took soot of the kiln and appeared before Pharaoh; Moses threw it toward the sky, and it caused an inflammation breaking out in boils on man and beast. The magicians were unable to confront Moses because of the inflammation, for the inflammation afflicted the magicians as well as all the other Egyptians. But the LORD stiffened the heart of Pharaoh, and he would not heed

הַשְׁמִימָה וַיְהִי שִׁחִין אֲבַעְבְּעֹת  
פָּרַח בְּאָדָם וּבַבְּהֵמָה:  
וְלֹא־יָכְלוּ הַחֲרֹטְמִים לַעֲמֹד לִפְנֵי  
מֹשֶׁה מִפְּנֵי הַשִּׁחִין כִּי־הָיָה הַשִּׁחִין  
בְּחֲרֹטְמָם וּבְכָל־מִצְרַיִם:  
וַיִּתְנַק יְהוָה אֶת־לֵב פְּרֹעֹה וְלֹא  
שָׁמַע אֱלֹהִים כְּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה  
אֶל־מֹשֶׁה: {ס}  
וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה הַשְׁכֵּם  
בִּבְקָר וְהִתִּיצֵב לִפְנֵי פְרֹעֹה וְאָמַרְתָּ  
אֵלָיו כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי  
הָעִבְרִים שְׁלַח אֶת־עַמִּי וַיַּעֲבֹדְנִי:  
כִּי | בַּפֶּעַם הַזֹּאת אֲנִי שֹׁלֵחַ  
אֶת־כָּל־מַגְפְּתֵי אֱלֹהֶיךָ וּבַעֲבֹדְיֶךָ  
וּבַעֲמֹק בַּעֲבוּר תִּדְעַ כִּי אֵין כִּמְנִי  
בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ:  
כִּי עָתָה שְׁלַחְתִּי אֶת־יָדֵי וְאֶף  
אוֹתְךָ וְאֶת־עַמְּךָ בַּדָּבָר וְתִכָּחַד  
מִן־הָאָרֶץ:  
וְאוֹלָם בַּעֲבוּר זֹאת הָעֲמֻדָתִיךָ  
בַּעֲבוּר הָרֵאֲתָךְ אֶת־כַּחֲסִי וְלִמְעַן

them, just as the LORD had told Moses.

The LORD said to Moses, “Early in the morning present yourself to Pharaoh and say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD, the God of the Hebrews: Let My people go to worship Me.

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.

I could have stretched forth My hand and stricken you and your people with pestilence, and you would have been effaced from the earth.

Nevertheless I have spared you for this purpose: in order to show you My power, and in order that My fame may resound throughout the world.

Yet you continue to thwart My people, and do not let them go!

סִפֵּר שָׁמַי בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ:

עֹדֶךָ מִסְתּוֹלֵל בְּעַמִּי לְבַלְתִּי  
שְׁלָחֵם:

הִנְנִי מִמְטִיר כְּעֵת מָחָר בְּרֹד כָּבֵד  
מְאֹד אֲשֶׁר לֹא־הָיָה כָּמֹהוּ  
בְּמִצְרַיִם לְמִן־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה וְהַיּוֹם  
וְעַד־עַתָּה:

וְעַתָּה שְׁלַח הָעֵז אֶת־מִקְנֶךָ וְאֶת  
כָּל־אֲשֶׁר לְךָ בַשָּׂדֶה כָּל־הָאָדָם  
וְהַבְּהֵמָה אֲשֶׁר־יִמָּצָא בַשָּׂדֶה וְלֹא  
יֵאֱסֹף הַבֵּיתָה וַיֵּרֶד עֲלֵהֶם הַבְּרֹד  
וּמָתוּ:

הִירָא אֶת־דְּבַר יְהוָה מִעַבְדֵי  
פְּרַעֲהַ הַנִּיס אֶת־עַבְדֵי  
וְאֶת־מִקְנֵהוּ אֶל־הַבָּתִּים:  
וְאֲשֶׁר לֹא־שָׂם לְבֹו אֶל־דְּבַר יְהוָה  
וַיַּעֲזֹב אֶת־עַבְדֵי וְאֶת־מִקְנֵהוּ  
בַשָּׂדֶה: {פ}

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה נִטֵּה  
אֶת־יָדְךָ עַל־הַשָּׁמַיִם וַיְהִי בְרֹד  
בְּכָל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם עַל־הָאָדָם

This time tomorrow I will rain down a very heavy hail, such as has not been in Egypt from the day it was founded until now.

Therefore, order your livestock and everything you have in the open brought under shelter; every man and beast that is found outside, not having been brought indoors, shall perish when the hail comes down upon them!”

Those among Pharaoh’s courtiers who feared the LORD’s word brought their slaves and livestock indoors to safety;

but those who paid no regard to the word of the LORD left their slaves and livestock in the open.

The LORD said to Moses, “Hold out your arm toward the sky that hail may fall on all the land of Egypt, upon man and beast and all the grasses of the field in the land of Egypt.”

So Moses held out his rod toward the sky, and the LORD sent

וְעַל-הַבְּהֵמָה וְעַל כָּל-עֶשְׂב הַשָּׂדֶה  
בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם:

וַיֹּט מֹשֶׁה אֶת-מִטְּהוֹ עַל-הַשָּׁמַיִם  
וַיְהִי נָתַן קָלֹת וּבָרָד וַתַּהַלֵּךְ אֵשׁ  
אֶרְצָה וַיִּמָּטֵר יְהוָה בָּרָד עַל-אֶרֶץ  
מִצְרַיִם:

וַיְהִי בָרָד וְאֵשׁ מִתְּלַקַּחַת בְּתוֹךְ  
הַבָּרָד כַּבֵּד מְאֹד אֲשֶׁר לֹא-הָיָה  
כִּמְהוּ בְּכָל-אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מֵאִז  
הָיְתָה לְגוֹי:

וַיֹּךְ הַבָּרָד בְּכָל-אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם אֶת  
כָּל-אֲשֶׁר בַּשָּׂדֶה מֵאָדָם  
וְעַד-בְּהֵמָה וְאֶת כָּל-עֶשְׂב הַשָּׂדֶה  
הִכָּה הַבָּרָד וְאֶת-כָּל-עֵץ הַשָּׂדֶה  
שָׁבַר:

רַק בְּאֶרֶץ גֹּשֶׁן אֲשֶׁר-נָשָׂם בְּנֵי  
יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא הָיָה בָרָד:

וַיִּשְׁלַח פַּרְעֹה וַיִּקְרָא לְמֹשֶׁה  
וַלְּאַהֲרֹן וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם חֲטָאתִי  
הַפֶּעַם יְהוָה הִצִּדִיק וְאֲנִי וְעַמִּי  
הַרְשָׁעִים:

thunder and hail, and fire streamed down to the ground, as the LORD rained down hail upon the land of Egypt.

The hail was very heavy—fire flashing in the midst of the hail—such as had not fallen on the land of Egypt since it had become a nation.

Throughout the land of Egypt the hail struck down all that were in the open, both man and beast; the hail also struck down all the grasses of the field and shattered all the trees of the field.

Only in the region of Goshen, where the Israelites were, there was no hail.

Thereupon Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron and said to them, “I stand guilty this time. The LORD is in the right, and I and my people are in the wrong.

Plead with the LORD that there may be an end of God’s thunder

הַעֲתִירוּ אֶל־יְהוָה וְרַב מְהִיֵּת קִלְתֹּ  
אֱלֹהִים וּבָרָד וְאַשְׁלַחָה אֶתְכֶם  
וְלֹא תִסְפּוּן לַעֲמֹד:

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו מִלְּשָׁה כְּצִאתִי  
אֶת־הָעִיר אֶפְרַשׁ אֶת־כַּפֵּי  
אֶל־יְהוָה הַקְּלוֹת יַחְדָּלוּן וְהַבָּרָד  
לֹא יִהְיֶה־עוֹד לְמַעַן תִּדַּע כִּי  
לִיְהוָה הָאָרֶץ:

וְאַתָּה וְעַבְדֶּיךָ יִדְעֵתִי כִּי טָרָם  
תִּירְאוּן מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים:  
וְהַפְּשִׁתָּה וְהַשְׁעֲרָה נִכְתָּה כִּי  
הַשְׁעֲרָה אָבִיב וְהַפְּשִׁתָּה גִבְעָל:  
וְהַחֲטָה וְהַכְּסַמְתָּ לֹא נָכוּ כִּי  
אֶפִּילֹת הִנֵּה:

וַיֵּצֵא מִלְּשָׁה מֵעַם פְּרַעֲהַ אֶת־הָעִיר  
וַיִּפְרֹשׂ כַּפָּיו אֶל־יְהוָה וַיַּחְדְּלוּ  
הַקְּלוֹת וְהַבָּרָד וּמָטָר לֹא־נָתַף  
אֶרֶצָה:

וַיֵּרָא פְּרַעֲהַ כִּי־חָדַל הַמָּטָר וְהַבָּרָד  
וְהַקְּלוֹת וַיִּסֹּף לַחֲטֹא וַיִּכְבַּד לְבוֹ  
הוּא וְעַבְדָּיו:



and of hail. I will let you go; you need stay no longer.”

Moses said to him, “As I go out of the city, I shall spread out my hands to the LORD; the thunder will cease and the hail will fall no more, so that you may know that the earth is the LORD’s.

But I know that you and your courtiers do not yet fear the LORD God.” —

Now the flax and barley were ruined, for the barley was in the ear and the flax was in bud;

but the wheat and the emmer were not hurt, for they ripen late.—

Leaving Pharaoh, Moses went outside the city and spread out his hands to the LORD: the thunder and the hail ceased, and no rain came pouring down upon the earth.

But when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunder had ceased, he became stubborn

וַיִּחַזַק לֵב פַּרְעֹה וְלֹא שָׁלַח  
אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה  
בְּיַד־מֹשֶׁה: {פ}

and reverted to his guilty ways, as did his courtiers.

So Pharaoh's heart stiffened and he would not let the Israelites go, just as the LORD had foretold through Moses.