

# DON'T LOSE PATIENCE, AND DON'T RAISE QUESTIONS! BY RABBI DAVID HANANIA PINTO SHLITA

## The Path To Follow VA'EIRA

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### Guard Your Tongue!

#### Revealing Personal Matters

A person to whom his friend reveals personal information regarding his business, or any other personal subject, is forbidden to tell other people what he knows. If he does, he is liable to hurt, embarrass, or otherwise harm the one who entrusted him with such information. Even when a person who confides in him does not mention to keep it a secret, he still does not have the right to reveal what was said, for it should be obvious that the speaker is not interested in having people discuss his private affairs. Similarly, if someone tells his friend a simple piece of information in such a way that he realizes that he wants it to remain a secret, he is forbidden to repeat it to others. For example, if David whispered into the ear of his friend Joseph and said, "I have \$50,000 saved up in the bank," it is forbidden for Joseph to relate this to others. This applies even if David did not explicitly tell him to keep it a secret.

According to the Midrash, Hashem spoke to Moses harshly because he had asked, "Why have You done evil to this people" (Exodus 5:22). Hashem said to Moses: "Oh, for those that are gone and cannot be replaced! Many times did I reveal Myself to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob...and still they did not criticize My ways.... At the start of My commission you inquired of My Name, and at the end you said, 'From the time I came to Pharaoh...he did evil to this people'" (Shemot Rabba 6:4).

We need to understand why the Holy One, blessed be He, criticized Moses for having asked the question, "Why have You done evil to this people?" We also need to understand why Rashi explains the expression, "I appeared" (Exodus 6: 3) as a reference to the Patriarchs. What does Rashi add to the verse, since the names of the holy Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are explicitly mentioned in it? We know that the Holy One, blessed be He, wants every person to follow the paths of the holy Patriarchs, for they cleared the way and showed us what we have to do until the coming of Mashiach (may he come speedily and in our days). It is forbidden for us to deviate from this path by even the smallest degree, as it is written: "You shall not deviate from the word that they will tell you, right or left" (Deuteronomy 17:11).

This is why the Torah dwells at length upon the lives of the holy Patriarchs in Eretz Israel, as well as outside of it, and even describes their way of life in exile. This is meant to encourage us to follow their ways and emulate their deeds. The Patriarchs prayed to Hashem each time they encountered a trial or difficult situation. Thus we can strengthen ourselves by following their example. Furthermore, they certainly saw the entire future of the Children of Israel, and they certainly prayed, and continue to pray, for Hashem to help us in all our sorrows. Consequently, the Patriarchs surely saw all the tragedies that would come upon the Jewish people during the Holocaust. Thus in Hashem's unlimited goodness and compassion, He left us Holocaust survivors in the form of great Torah figures, Rebbes and Roshei Yeshivot who lived through that time and took refuge in parts of Europe, the Holy Land, and America. They expanded upon the Torah to the point that there has never been a greater number of Torah institutions and yeshivot in the world. The expression *ve'nahafoch hu* ("and it was turned around" – Esther 9:1) was fulfilled against the accursed assassins, who wanted to murder and eliminate the entire Jewish people and its Torah. However it was precisely from this tragedy that deliverance sprang forth. The prayers of the holy Patriarchs protected Israel, and from it came some good, meaning the spreading of Torah throughout the world. The Jewish people, thank G-d, are doing fine.

We know that the holy Patriarchs, who traveled throughout the land in every direction, prayed for Heavenly mercy wherever they saw that a tragedy would occur to the Jewish people. This applies not only in Eretz Israel, but also along the path of exile. Everywhere they went, they prayed to Hashem

regarding everything that would happen there until the end of the generations. They prayed that if a Jew must encounter some trial, Hashem should immediately save him from all who would do him harm.

Since we have arrived at this point, we can understand the criticism that the Holy One, blessed be He, made against Moses. Hashem asked him why he did not follow the path of the Patriarchs, who saw everything that would happen to their descendants in every generation and in all their exiles, including the Holocaust, yet they did not protest. The Patriarchs did not ask, "Why will You do evil to this people?" or "Why will You not save Your people?" They could have spoken in this way, since Hashem had only revealed Himself to them by the Name *Shad-dai*, which is more limited than the Tetragrammaton, the Name signifying mercy. If He had revealed Himself to them with the Tetragrammaton, they would have been able to understand that He would act with mercy toward their descendants. Yet as it turned out, they did not protest in any way, nor they did get upset. They were content with knowing that He would put an end to all their suffering by the Name *Shad-dai*. Yet how and in what way? Hashem did not actually tell them when their trials and exile would end! However He did reveal Himself to Moses with the Tetragrammaton, the Name signifying mercy and which indicates that deliverance is close at hand. Yet it was precisely Moses who protested and asked Hashem why He did evil to the people, saying to Him: "You have not saved Your people?"

The Patriarchs never asked such things or even protested, said Hashem, so I long for those who are gone and cannot be replaced! You do not act like them, for they did not raise questions like this or create such problems. Although I did not reveal Myself to them by the great Name filled with mercy, as I did to you, they accepted everything with love.

Such was the criticism that Hashem made against Moses, and He even punished him for not controlling himself. This was in contrast to the holy Patriarchs, who had prepared the way for their descendants after them by teaching that when a person sees misfortunes piling up day after day, he should control himself and realize that this stems from Hashem and that nothing bad comes from Him. Even during times of trial, a person must control himself and act with Hashem in righteousness and simplicity, not raising questions.

This is why the Holy One, blessed be He, criticized Moses, who did not act like the holy Patriarchs. Rather, he protested by asking, "Why have You done evil to this people?" He should have instead learned from the holy Patriarchs – to whom Hashem revealed Himself with the Name *Shad-dai*, not with the Name signifying mercy – and who did not protest to Hashem. Everyone should walk in the ways of the holy Patriarchs and not rebel. They should accept things and realize that everything the Merciful One does is for the good. If a person realizes this, he will be happy in this world and in the World to Come. Amen, may it be so.

# MUSSAR FROM THE PARSHA

## He Rules Over All Things

It is written, “However for this have I let you endure, in order to show you My strength and so that My Name may be declared throughout the world” (Exodus 9:16).

In his book *Chayei Olam*, Rabbi Yaakov Israel Kanievsky Zatzal wrote: “All the signs and wonders that Hashem performed in Egypt were meant to make people know that Hashem rules the world and governs all things. This is why there were many plagues, since it was possible to have made Pharaoh yield with but one plague, by making it last until it was unbearable.” He then goes on and details how people saw Hashem’s power and strength in each plague.

In the plague of blood, people saw that Hashem ruled the waters, just as when the Sea of Reeds split and the waters stood up like a wall. In the plague of frogs, people saw that Hashem ruled the animals that dwell in the waters. In the plague of lice, people saw that Hashem ruled the earth, for the dust of the earth was transformed into lice and attacked only the Egyptians, not the Children of Israel. In the plague of pestilence people saw that Hashem ruled the animals that dwell upon the land, for He decreed that the herds of Egypt would die – which they did – whereas not a single animal among the herds of the Children of Israel died.

In the plague of boils, people saw that human health and illness all come from Hashem. He decreed that the Egyptians would be struck with boils but that the Children of Israel would not, for everything goes according to Hashem’s will.

In the plague of hail, people saw that Hashem is the One Who sends clouds to rain upon the earth. By His decree it turns into hail, and people saw that fire and water make peace to obey Him.

In the plague of locusts, people saw that Hashem controls the wind, for the locusts came upon a powerful wind. When Moses interceded to make them leave, his prayer was answered and the locusts left by a powerful western wind.

In the plague of darkness, people saw that the Creator illuminates the earth. By His decree the luminaries give light, and by His decree they do not and darkness reigns. In the plague of the firstborn, people saw that Hashem governs the lives of men. The firstborn among the Egyptians all died at the same time, as Moses had warned in Hashem’s Name, whereas the firstborn of Israel remained alive.

“They borrowed from the Egyptians” (Exodus 12:35) – they borrowed the most precious objects from them, vessels of silver and gold, clothing, and great wealth. After having experienced such tremendous plagues, people saw that Hashem ruled over favor itself, as it is written: “The L-RD gave the people favor in the eyes of the Egyptians” (v.36). This favor obligated the Egyptians to part from their precious belongings, even though they were completely against it intellectually.

Indeed, Hashem is strong and powerful, completely in control of all things.

## The Faithful Tailor

It is written, “G-d spoke to Moses and said to him: ‘I am the L-RD’” (Exodus 6:2).

Moses complained to Hashem, “From the time I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your Name, he did evil to this people, but You did not rescue Your people” (ibid. 5:23). Thus G-d (the Name signifying justice) spoke to Moses and said: I am the L-RD (the Name signifying mercy). You are complaining because you believe that I am speaking to you with the attribute of justice. However you should realize that that Names of Hashem and G-d are the same. We sometimes think that something stems from justice, yet in reality it stems from mercy. This is how we explain the verse, “We hoped, O G-d, for Your kindness in the midst of Your Sanctuary” (Psalms 48:10): What we believed was “G-d” (justice) was really “Your kindness” (mercy) when we approached His Sanctuary.

A king wanted a magnificent and dazzling garment made, one embroidered with gold and silver thread. An expert tailor was found, and he was given the primary

materials (gold and silver). Some time later the tailor finished the garment and presented it to the king, who was extremely impressed. In fact he wore it to the next royal function. The king’s ministers, however, were overcome with jealousy, and so they approached the king and accused the tailor of being a crook. They claimed that he had been given various kinds of thread worth 10,000 gold coins, yet the garment didn’t even contain 2,000 coins worth! The king summoned the tailor and asked him to prove his innocence, and he replied that he would return with proof in three days. He then took the garment and literally tore it apart until there was nothing left but a heap of threads. He was thus easily able to prove that all the gold and silver he had been given were present in the garment’s tattered remains.

This parable can help us understand the words of the Sages, who said that when Hashem inflicted horrendous suffering on the *asoret harugei malchut* (ten martyrs of the Roman era), the ministering angels asked: “Such is Torah, and such is its reward?” (Berachot 61b). Hashem replied, “One more word, and I will return the world to its original state of chaos!” How is this a valid answer to the angels’ question? The explanation is that Hashem told the angels that although they saw justice being employed in the case of the ten martyrs, it was really a demonstration of mercy. However to clearly prove this to the angels, it would have been necessary to return the world to chaos. To use the analogy implicit in the parable, it would have been necessary to take the world (the splendid garment) and disassemble it in order to make its constituent parts plain to see. Only then would it be obvious that Hashem’s actions stemmed from mercy, not justice. It is only superficially that we perceive the latter, for in this world it is difficult to perceive otherwise.

## Hashem’s Legions

It is written, “Pharaoh will not listen to you, and I will lay My hand upon Egypt and I will bring out et My legions, et My people the Children of Israel, from the land of Egypt with great judgments” (Exodus 7:4).

The second *et* (indicating a definite accusative) is superfluous. The verse should have stated, “I will bring out et My legions, My people the Children of Israel.”

The *Ohr HaChaim* says that if the text had been, “My legions, My people,” it would have meant that there were additional “My legions, My people,” meaning other legions of His in the world. Hashem wanted to highlight the fact that we are the only ones constituting His legions – there are none others – by explicitly stating, “My legions, et [meaning] My people the Children of Israel.” Thus the second *et* clarifies the first.

## As in the Days When You Came Out of the Land of Egypt

It is written, “Moses was 80 years old and Aaron was 83 years old when they spoke to Pharaoh” (Exodus 7:7).

The *Chatam Sofer* (Responso 6:98) says concerning *Mashiach*, the son of David: I would like to forward the hypothesis that what occurred with the first deliverer, Moses, will also occur with the last deliverer, *Mashiach*. Moses lived the first 80 years of his life without knowing or even sensing that he would deliver Israel, since Hashem had to convince him to accept this role. Thus it is stated that Hashem told Moses, “Go, and I will send you to Pharaoh” (Exodus 3:10), even though he initially refused. In every generation since the Temple has been destroyed, a man has been born with the potential to become Israel’s deliverer. When the time comes, Hashem will reveal Himself to him and send him on his mission, even if he will have been unaware of it up until that time. Thus the spirit of *Mashiach*, which will be hidden above until then, will come and rest upon him. We see the same occurrence with Saul, who did not want to be king until Samuel convinced him in Hashem’s Name.

## Stealing the Heart While Dismembering the Donkey

It is written, “The L-RD said to Moses, ‘Strong is the heart of Pharaoh. He refuses to send the people away’” (Exodus 7:14).

The book *Hadar Zekenim* tells the parable of a donkey that was appointed by the king of the animals, the lion, to collect taxes:

# REASONS FOR THE MITZVOT

## Why The Ten Plagues?

Our Sages have said that the ten plagues represented a punishment that was meted out “measure for measure” (Tanhuma, Vayeira 14). This means that the Holy One, blessed be He, struck Egypt with these specific plagues, not others, in order to punish the Egyptians for their cruel treatment of Israel.

We shall give a few examples, taken from the Midrashim, of the *mida keneged mida* (“measure for measure”) aspect of each plague:

1. The Plague of Blood. The Egyptians spilled the blood of Israel like water. Therefore their rivers and waters were transformed into blood, making drinking impossible (Midrash Lekach Tov).

2. The Plague of Frogs. The Egyptians woke the Children of Israel from their sleep by saying, “Get up! Time to work for Pharaoh.” Hashem therefore sent them noisy creatures – frogs – to incessantly croak in their ears (Midrash Lekach Tov).

3. The Plague of Lice. They did not give the Children of Israel access to baths, causing them to be afflicted with lice. The Egyptians were therefore struck by it too (Midrash Lekach Tov).

4. The Plague of Wild Animals. They told the Children of Israel, “Go and catch us bears and lions,” and they made them enter weapon storehouses where hunting animals were kept, all in order to displace the Children of Israel far from their homes in jungle places. The Children of Israel risked their lives in doing so, and therefore Hashem brought all the wild animals of the world upon the Egyptians (Eliya Rabba ch. 7; Shemot Rabba 11:3).

5. The Plague of Pestilence. The Egyptians made the Israelites shepherds of their herds and flocks, and they scattered their cattle upon the hills and in remote places so as to prevent Israel from multiplying. Therefore G-d said: “I will bring them an excellent shepherd,” as it is written: “Behold, the hand of the L-RD is on your livestock” [Exodus 9:3]” (Shemot Rabba 11:4).

6. The Plague of Boils. They had appointed the Israelites to heat warm things for them and to keep cool the things that were cold. The Egyptians were therefore struck with boils so their bodies could not stand either hot or cold (Eliya Rabba ch. 7; Shemot Rabba 11:5).

7. The Plague of Hail. They had made the Israelites planters of their vineyards, gardens, orchards, and trees. Therefore Hashem brought hail upon them to destroy all their vegetation (Eliya Rabba ch. 7; Shemot Rabba 12:3).

8. The Plague of Locusts. They made Israel sowers of their wheat and barley. Therefore Hashem brought the locusts upon the Egyptians, which devoured all that the Israelites had sown for them (Eliya Rabba ch. 7; Shemot Rabba 13:6).

9. The Plague of Darkness. The Egyptians reduced the Children of Israel to slavery, and they were forced to get up before daybreak in order to gather straw for making bricks. They also worked at night to complete the work quota for the day. Because they went out in darkness and returned in darkness, Hashem struck the Egyptians with darkness (Kli Chemda, cited by Me’am Loez).

10. The Plague of the Firstborn. Because the Egyptians killed the Children of Israel, their firstborn were killed, even among their prisoners, for they had all rejoiced in every decree that Egypt had taken against the Children of Israel.

One day the king’s court appeared. The donkey spoke to the fox, a member of the royal court, and said to him: “Pay your taxes!” The fox replied, “Don’t you know that taxes are not collected from members of the king’s court?” The donkey replied, “I collect taxes from the king himself!” The fox went to the king and whispered into his ear, at which point the king had the donkey executed. The king said to the fox, “Dismember the donkey so we can eat it.” As he went about doing this, however, the fox couldn’t resist eating the donkey’s heart. When the king arrived for the meal, he asked where the heart was. The fox replied, “If he had a heart, do you think he would have acted as he did?”

The Midrash states that expression, “Strong [kaved] is the heart of Pharaoh” means that Pharaoh had no heart at all, and in its place he had a *kaved* (“liver” – regarded as the seat of anger [Berachot 61b]).

## No Lack of Water in Pharaoh’s House

It is written, “There will be blood throughout the land of Egypt, both in wood and in stone” (Exodus 7:19).

What was blood doing in wood and stone?

The Maharil Diskin explains that Hashem told Moses that when he would strike the river, all the water in Egypt would be transformed into blood, including the water found in containers. However Pharaoh was unaware of this, and he only noticed that water in the river had turned to blood (something that his magicians could also do). Yet afterwards, Pharaoh went home and saw that water had turned into blood even there. Hence we read, “Pharaoh turned and went into his house, and he did not set his heart even to this” (Exodus 7:23). What did he not set his heart to? To the fact that even within the containers in his home – containers of wood and stone – there was blood!

Some commentators explain that Pharaoh’s house was not affected during the plague of blood, and that he had normal water there. The reason for this was tied to the fact that Moses had grown up in his house. As we know, the Children of Israel become wealthy during the plague of blood, for they sold water to the Egyptians. However since Pharaoh had already invested a part of his wealth in educating their leader Moses, he had thus already paid the Children of Israel. Hence the fact that Pharaoh “did not set his heart even to this” meant that he didn’t care if his people were suffering, since he had water in his house!

## The Magicians Have Left the Building

It is written, “The magicians did the same by their incantations to draw forth the lice, but they could not. The lice infestation was on man and beast. The magicians said to Pharaoh, ‘This is the finger of G-d’ ” (Exodus 8:14-15).

The word *chartumim* (magicians) in v.14 is written with a yud, for they had presented themselves as important magicians, often mentioned in the text up to that point. However the yud is missing in v.15, since from then on we read almost nothing of them.

## EISHET CHAYIL

### The Wife of Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa

Abject poverty ruled in the home of Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa, and one Friday morning there was not even enough flour to make bread for Shabbat. Rabbi Chanina’s wife did not want to be embarrassed before her neighbors, and so she lit her stove in order to make people think that she was using it to cook.

A wicked neighbor of hers thought, “I know that she’s poor, so where did she get enough flour to make bread for Shabbat?” This brazen neighbor went to the home of Rabbi Chanina and walked right in! As she made her way to the kitchen, Rabbi Chanina’s wife was so embarrassed that she hid herself in another room. However when the neighbor entered the kitchen, she could smell the delicious aroma of baking bread. Hashem had performed a miracle for Rabbi Chanina’s wife, and her stove was filled with delicious smelling bread!

# YOUR EYES SHALL BEHOLD YOUR TEACHER

## Rabbi Meshulam Zusha of Anipoli

The saintly Rabbi Zusha was famous in his time. He was the brother of the holy Rabbi Elimelech of Lizensk, as well as the disciple of the Maggid of Mezritch, Rabbi Dov Ber. For many years Rabbi Zusha and his brother exiled themselves, moving from town to town and making tikkunim wherever they went. They returned people to Hashem without anyone ever knowing just how great these two Jews were.

Rabbi Zusha's service of Hashem consisted of an exceptional fear of Heaven. So great was it that the author of the Tanya, Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, said that his service would have been exceptional even for the Sanctuary. When Rabbi Zusha wanted to reprimand someone, he would get within earshot of the person and speak to himself aloud: "Zusha, Zusha! What have you done?" He would then list, one by one, the sins committed by the person in question, whose heart would eventually break and lead him to repentance. It is said that during his self-imposed exile, Rabbi Zusha once arrived in a town where a prominent figure did not want him to stay. Some time later, after Rabbi Zusha had become famous, he returned to that town, but now in a beautiful carriage drawn by two horses. This time, however, the same prominent figure wanted to show hospitality to Rabbi Zusha. He therefore said to him, "When I came here the first time, you didn't even want me to stay! Why have you changed your mind? Is it simply because of my beautiful horse-drawn carriage? Very well then, you can show hospitality to my horses!" On Shevat 2, 5560, the soul of Rabbi Zusha ascended to Heaven, and he was buried in Anipoli. May his merit protect us all.

## A TRUE STORY

### We're Staying With the Goats and Hens!

It is written, "I will bring you out from under the burdens of Egypt" (Exodus 6:6).

Rabbi Nathan, the holy Maggid of Chernobyl, was once staying at an inn run by a Jewish man and his wife. At midnight Rabbi awoke and sat on the floor to recite the Tikkun Chatzot, weeping bitterly as he prayed. This aroused the curiosity of the innkeepers, and the owner quickly came to him and asked, "Why are you crying? Perhaps you're not feeling well?" Rabbi Nathan replied, "No, I'm crying over the destruction of the Temple and our exile. In the past we had the Temple, but it has been destroyed. In the past we were living in a splendid land, but we have been exiled on account of our sins. I'm asking Hashem to quickly send us Mashiach in order to bring us into Eretz Israel." The Maggid then asked the innkeeper if he was ready to go up to the Holy Land. "Let me go ask my wife," he replied. He went and soon returned with a clear answer: "No, we won't be going. We're not leaving the farm, cows, goats, and hens." The Maggid did not leave the man alone: "Are you really alright here, since Tartars often raid Jewish communities and kill those living there?" The innkeeper once again went to ask his wife, and she hurried to answer: "Tell the Rabbi to pray for Hashem to send the Tartars to Eretz Israel, while we stay here with the goats and hens." Concerning the verse, "I will bring you out from under the burdens of Egypt" (Exodus 6:6), the Chiddushei HaRim said: "I will remove your ability to tolerate the suffering that the Egyptians inflict upon you, and I will make you detest the exile."

## A MATTER OF EDUCATION

### The Order of Administering Reproof

It is written, "The heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go" (Exodus 9:7). Many explanations have been given for the fact that the plagues had no effect on Pharaoh. However the most obvious explanation seems to be that as long as Pharaoh's life was not in danger, his pride was more important to him than the good of his country or his people.

In education, it is clear that the best situation is when a student actually heeds criticism, in which case we can reprimand him and explain how he can improve. However students and circumstances are not all the same, and when someone is about to be run over in the street, we don't waste time explaining the situation to him. Instead we pull him to safety and only then explain how he can avoid such situations in the future.

There are some individuals who fail to understand – or who do not want to understand – what we are reprimanding them about. Concerning them it is not, "A hint is sufficient for the wise," but rather, "For the fool, a hint is not enough." In other words, they need to be physically punished. The story is told of a person who stubbornly refused to change his conduct in a certain area, regardless of how often people explained to him why he should. However when he was physically punished, all talk ended and he changed. When he was asked how this happened, he said: "It's been explained to me now." In other words, he only understood the language of force.

Naturally, all attempts at educating a person must carefully examine the situation before resorting to physical punishment, lest this be done out of anger or for some hidden reason. That is, the educator must see that he only has the good of the student in mind. Above all, he must be certain that resorting to physical punishment will be more useful than not. It is important to emphasize, however, that some educators – though not resorting to physical punishment – will employ verbal punishment without end. While it is true that physical punishment carries with it pain that its verbal counterpart does not, verbal punishment still has a tremendous drawback to it. The insult contained in a verbal assault damages the soul more than a physical blow does the body. Furthermore, the sense of injustice and fear caused by a verbal assault generates so much confusion in the mind of the student that he can no longer focus on the educational message behind it. As a result, verbal punishments are more likely to be harmful than beneficial. It is easier to yell at someone than to strike him, for in this way we maintain our self-respect and avoid more problems. The Sages call this "false modesty" (Arachin 16b), which should yield before "reproof for the sake of Heaven." Thus for the good of those we teach, we must carefully weigh matters before acting.

## IN THE LIGHT OF THE HAFTORAH

### To Do With As I Please

It is written, "Behold, I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great serpent... who has said, 'Mine is my river, and I have made myself'" (Ezekiel 29:3).

Our Sages have said, "Pharaoh was one of four men who claimed divinity and thereby brought evil upon themselves. These were Hiram, Nebuchadnezzar, Pharaoh, and Joash King of Judah" (Shemot Rabba 8:2).

From where do we know that Pharaoh claimed to be a god? From the verse that we cited above: "Who has said, 'Mine is my river, and I have made myself.'" In other words, Pharaoh claimed to have created himself. To that Hashem responded, "I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt."

In the book Kochav MeYaakov, the Maggid of Dubno explains this verse with a parable: An individual was invited to the home of a wealthy man, and there he met his servant. Not knowing who he was, the guest asked the servant the identity of the master of the house, the one to whom all this wealth belonged. The servant responded proudly, "I'm the owner of this house, and everything you see here is mine." At that point the real master arrived and said to the servant, "You don't need to go on boasting with your lies. I'm your master and you follow my orders!"

The wicked Pharaoh grew proud in his heart, imagining himself to be the greatest of all rulers, higher than anyone else. Hashem therefore said to him, "I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt." In other words: Know that I am above you and that I control you. You are in my hands, and I can do with you as I please.