



# Our Speech Redeemed

**A**lthough Mitzrayim is known for promiscuity as it is called Ervas Haaretz, the Zohar (2:25b. See Sefas Emes, Pesach, 5632) says that in Mitzrayim, their Dibur; speech was in Galus. Consequently, we were sent to Paroh, which consists of the same letters as Peh Raa; evil mouth. Actually, these two- the Bris Mila and Bris Halashon- are interrelated as it says Shamru Imrasecha Uvrisha Yintzoru; observed Your word and preserved Your Bris (Devorim 33:9. Yosef, the one who corresponds to the Bris, knew all languages. Additionally, the Yerushalmi- Terumos 1:4- renders Ervas Davar; shameful thing as Ervas Dibur; shameful speech). Indeed, the term Mila means a Bris and a word. Furthermore, Mila has a Gematria of 85, the same as Peh- 85. Moreover, the Chassam Sofer points out the initials of Ma Yisron Lbaal Halashon (see Taanis 8a) which deals with speech, spell Mila (Drashos Chassam Sofer, pg 107). So, Ervas Haaretz also alludes to that the Dibur of Mitzrayim was derogatory. This explains why Moshe was a Kevad Peh U'kvad Lashon; heavy of mouth and speech (Shemos 4:10) in Mitzrayim. (Additionally, it was there that Moshe spoke Loshon Hora on the Jewish people- Shemos 4:3, Rashi.) However, after Matan Torah, Moshe could speak normally, as it says Elah Hadevorim (Devorim 1:1).

When the enslavement began there was a place called Pison which after the enslavement was called Pi Hachiros (Shemos 1:11, 14:2, Rashi s.v. V'yachanu). Pison is a contraction of Peh Saum; a closed mouth. Pi Hachiros means a free mouth as it was after the enslavement.

The Pasuk states Lo Yecheeratz Kelev L'shono; no dog shall sharpen its tongue (Shemos 11:7). The dog represents Loshon Hora as we are taught, it is fitting to throw one who speaks or accepts Loshon Hora to the dogs (Pesachim 118a). It is because of negative speech we were tyrannized with crushing labour (Shemos 2:14, Rashi). R' Mordechai Bennet therefore explains that Lo Yecheeratz Kelev..., which is stated after the enslavement, is a symbol that we had no damage in speech anymore.

The Pesukim in Va'era express five terms of redemption (Shemos 6:6-8). These correspond to

the five parts of the mouth- tongue, teeth, palate, lips, and larynx- that create all sounds that we use for expression. To illustrate: the letter Hey is pronounced with the larynx, Peh with the lips, Yud with the palate, Dalet with the tongue and Zayin with the teeth.

The written Torah begins with a Beis- Breishis- whereas the oral Torah starts with a Mem- Maamasi (Brochos 1:1). In this fashion, we can comprehend the Gemoro that teaches on V'dibarta Bam (Devorim 6:7) - speak in Torah and not other matters (Yoma 19b), as Bam is an acronym for Breishis and Maamasi (Peninim MiShulchan HaGra, Vaeschanan). An incredible insight is shown to us in the way we pronounce the Mem. Our lips are closed at the start, followed by it opening, and when we finish saying the Mem our mouth closes again. There are two types of Mem- open and closed (the one that ends a word). Shas begins with a Mem and ends with it in the word Boshalom (Uktzim 3:12) because our speech should begin and end with Torah (Zera Kodesh, Pesach. Taamai Haminhagim, pg 548). When Devorim Betalim get mixed in- that is Galus Mitzrayim. Now let us take a look at the word Mitzrayim. It starts and ends with a Mem. However, the middle three letters spell Yetzer since that is where the Yetzer Hora infiltrates. In fact, the letters that comprise Paroh spell Peh Raa.

In order to receive the Aseres Hadibros (Dibur; speech), we had to leave Mitzrayim. Where did we receive the Aseres Hadibros? Midbar Sinai, since through Sinai we learned how to be a M'edaber (speaker), the same word as Midbar (desert). Now we can appreciate another explanation in Chad Gadya which we say at the end of the Haggada. It refers to the Aseres Hadibros which was said in one utterance (Gadya as in the term Haggada)- Shemos 20:1. This alludes to the idea that we should have one speech- Chad Gadya- Torah. In fact, we find that Dibur refers to Sinai (Chullin 136b).

In this light the Tolna Rebbe explains the order of the Haggada. Karpas, he says, forms an acronym of Klal Rishon Peh Sasum; the first rule is that we

should have a closed mouth. Then Yachatz Magid- we should cut our speech in half as we should only speak properly and when necessary. How does the Mesachta on Pesach- Pesachim- begin? It deals with speech-speaking in Loshon Naki; refined language and Derech Ketzara; concise (Pesachim 3. The Sefas Emes- Pesach, 5642, s.v. Ha'gimel- says the three festivals correspond to Machshava, Dibur, Maaseh and it is Pesach that lines up with Dibur).

We have two Brisos on our body- Bris Mila and the Bris Halashon. Just as the Bris Mila gives life, so too, we need to give life through our mouth. The words Chai Chai Hu Yoducha (Yeshaya 38:19) refer to the two life forces- the Bris and the mouth. This is done by giving encouragement to others and the like. Therefore, the word Sach; speech, has the same sum as Chaim, 68. In this way, we can grasp Vayehi Haadam Lnefesh Chaya (Breishis 2:7)- we have the power to give life to the world through our speech as Targum Unkolos there says Ruach Mimalila; a speaking spirit. Now we can appreciate on a deeper level Hakol KolYaakovVhadayim Yedai Esav (Breishis 27:22)- we can make our words like Kol Yaakov (Torah, giving encouragement and so on) or like Yedai Esav- where it can hurt other people.

This Pasuk of Hakol KolYaakov- speech- was said on Pesach. In fact, Matza has a sum of 135, the same as Hakol, since Matza is called Lechem Oni because Lechem Sheonin Alav Devorim Harbeh; bread upon which we declare many things (Devorim 16:3. Pesachim 115b). With this we can grasp another meaning in Chad Gadya: we should have one speech. This means we should use our speech only for good- no Loshon Hora, insults, foul language or the like. The Tiferes Shlomo explains Matzos Tachel B'makom Kadosh (Vayikro 6:9) as put Matzos in a holy mouth.). Is it any coincidence that Gadya has the same equivalent to Chai (18) since one's speech should be used to give life.

Pesach is about rectifying speech and as we know that Pesach is a contraction of Peh Sach; a mouth that speaks (Shaar Hakavanos 82a). The rest of the year we need to practise Syag Lchochma Shtika and Emor Me'at Vaaseh Harbeh - (Avos 3:17, 1:15) to limit our speech. However, on the night of Pesach, it is Kol Hamarbeh Lisaper... Harei Zeh Meshubach.

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*Thank you.*

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