

## Shemot 5785

### Rashi on Exodus 4:10

NEITHER FROM YESTERDAY [NOR FROM BEFORE YESTERDAY] — This teaches us that for an entire period of seven days God had been endeavouring to persuade Moses at the thornbush to go on his mission, for the terms מתמול and שלשום and מאז דברך imply three days, and the three-fold ג which is mentioned here point to three extensions of the period, making six in all, and therefore he had now reached the seventh day when he further said to him, (Exodus v. 13) “Send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom Thou wilt send” — until God became angry with him (Exodus v. 14), and he accepted the mission (cf. Leviticus Rabbah 11:6, and Seder Olam ch. 5). All this reluctance was because he was unwilling to assume any dignity that would make him superior to his brother Aaron who was older than he and was also a prophet, as it is said (I Samuel 2:27) that the man of God spoke to Eli, the high-priest, in God’s name, “Surely I revealed myself unto the house of thy father when they were in Egypt” — thy father means Aaron. Similar in : (Ezekiel 20:5, 7) “And I made myself known unto them in the land of Egypt ... and I said unto them, “cast ye away every man the detestable things of his eyes”, and that prophecy was spoken to Aaron.”

SLOW OF SPEECH (lit. heavy of mouth) — I speak heavily (with difficulty).

### Exodus Rabbah 1:26

The magicians of Egypt were sitting there, and said: ‘we are afraid of this one who takes your crown and places it on his head, lest he be the one regarding whom we said that he is destined to wrest your kingdom from you.’ Some of them said to behead him, some said to burn him. Yitro was sitting in their midst and saying to them: ‘This boy has no intelligence. Rather, test him. Bring before him a bowl with gold and a hot coal. If he extends his hand to the gold, he has intelligence and [you should] execute him; and if he extends his hand to the coal, he has no intelligence and he has no sentence of death.’ Immediately, they brought it before him and he extended his hand to take the gold. Gabriel came and pushed his hand. He seized the coal and placed his hand with the coal into his mouth, and his tongue was burned. From that he became “slow of speech and slow of tongue” (Exodus 4:10).

### Ramban on Exodus 4:10

In line with the plain meaning of Scripture, the purport of the verse is as follows: [Moses said,] “For I am slow of speech from heretofore and from time past, for I have been slow of speech

from my youth on and all the more now that I am old, *and also now since Thou hast spoken unto Thy servant*, for Thou hast not removed the defect in my speech when Thou didst command me to go to Pharaoh to speak in Thy name. How then can I go before him?” Now Moses out of his great desire not to go [on the mission] did not pray before G-d, blessed be He, that He remove his defective speech from him, but he argued: “Since You have not removed my slowness of speech from me from the time You spoke to me to undertake this mission, do not command me to go, for it is inconceivable that the Master of everything should send a man *of uncircumcised lips* to a king of the nations.” And since Moses did not pray [for the removal of his defect], the Holy One, blessed be He, did not desire to heal him. Instead, He said to him, *I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt speak*, meaning that “you will be able to correctly express the words which I will put in your mouth.”

### **Rashi on Exodus 7:2**

THOU SHALT SPEAK once, every separate message just as you have heard it from My mouth, and your brother Aaron shall express it in eloquent language and explain it in Pharaoh’s hearing.

### **Rashi on Exodus 14:13**

WHEREFORE CRIEST THOU UNTO ME? — there is no mention that he prayed to God concerning this, but this teaches us that Moses stood in prayer. Whereupon the Holy One, blessed be He, said to him, “It is no time now to pray at length, when Israel is placed in trouble”. Another explanation of *מה תצעק אלי* (taking it in the sense of “Wherefore criest thou? *אלי* it is to Me — concerns Me”) — upon Me rests this matter and not upon thee. The idea contained in this explanation is similar to what is expressed elsewhere: (Isaiah 45:11) “Concerning My sons and concerning the work of My hands will ye command Me?” (Mekhilta)