

### Background

#### 1. Shemot 4:31

And the nation trusted, and they heard that G-d had recalled the Children of Israel and that He had seen their suffering, and they bowed.

#### 2. Shemot 6:9

And Moshe spoke thus to the Children of Israel, and they did not listen to Moshe, because of short spirits and hard labour.

### Approach 1: The message changed

#### 3. Shemot 6:6-8

Therefore, tell the Children of Israel, "I am Gd, and I will take you out from under the strain of Egypt, and I will rescue you from their labour, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and great judgments. And I will take you to Me as a nation, and I will be your Gd, and you will know that I am Hashem your Gd, who has taken you out from under the strain of Egypt. And I will bring you to the land, for which I have raised My hand to give it to Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov, and I will give it to you as an inheritance; I am Gd."

#### 4. Midrash, Mechilta d'Rabbi Yishmael, Bo, Pische 5

ר' יהודה בן בתירא אומר הרי הוא אומר "ולא שמעו אל משה מקוצר רוח וגו'" - וכי יש לך אדם שהוא מתבשר בשורה טובה ואינו שמח? נולד לך בן זכר, רבך מוציאך לחירות, ואינו שמח?

אם כן למה נאמר "ולא שמעו אל משה"? אלא שהיה קשה בעיניהם לפרוש מעבודה זרה שנ' "ואומר אליהם איש שקוצי עיניו השליכו ובגלולי מצרים אל תטמאו." (יחזקאל כ:ז) ואומר "וימרו בי ולא אבו שמוע וגו' ואעש למען שמי לבלתי החל וגו'" (שם ה-ט) הה"ד "וידבר ד' אל משה ואל אהרן ויצום אל בני ישראל" (שמות ו יג) - צום לפרוש מעבודה זרה.

Rabbi Yehudah ben Beteira said: It says, "And they did not listen to Moshe, because of short spirits, etc." – Is there anyone who is told good news, and is not happy? You have a son, your master is freeing you, and he is not happy? If so, why does it say, "And they did not listen to Moshe"? But in their eyes it was tough to separate from idolatry, as in Yechezkel 20:7-9. Thus it says [after this], "And Hashem spoke to Moshe and Aharon, and He commanded them to the Children of Israel." He commanded them to separate from idolatry.

### Approach 2: The work changed

#### 5. Rashi to Shemot 6:9

כל מי שהוא מיצר, רוחו ונשימתו קצרה ואינו יכול להאריך בנשימתו.

Anyone who is in pain, his spirit and breath are short, and he cannot extend his breathing.

#### 6. Ramban to Shemot 6:9

שלא הטו אוזן לדבריו מקוצר רוח, כאדם שתקצר נפשו בעמלו...

They did not incline an ear to his words due to their short spirit, like one whose spirit is short due to his struggle...

### Approach 3: The message changed

#### 7. Machzor Vitry 262

כדרך המנחמים לנחם מעט מעט. שהאומ' לנחרב נחמה יותר מדאי דומה כמי שאומר למחזיר על הפתחים למחר אתה מלך שאינו מאמין. כמו שנאמר ולא שמעו אל משה מקוצר רוח ומעבודה וגו'.

This is the like the way of comforters, who console little by little. One who would declare too much consolation to the ruined would be like someone who says to someone who begs door-to-door, "Tomorrow you will be king." He would not believe it. It is as it is said, "And they didn't listen to Moshe, because of short spirits and labour, etc."