

בס"ד

Ohev Yisroel
Parshas Noach
5770

*The dove returned to him toward evening, and there was a freshly-plucked olive leaf **in its beak**. Noah then knew that the water had subsided from the earth. (Bereishis 8:11)*

ספר בראשית פרק ח:יא

וַתָּבֵא אֵלָיו הַיּוֹנָה לְעֵת עֶרֶב וְהָיְתָה עָלֶיהָ זֵית טָרֵף בְּפִיהָ וַיֵּדַע נֹחַ כִּי קָלוּ הַמַּיִם מֵעַל הָאָרֶץ:

Rashi: . . .The Midrash Aggadah explains the word טָרֵף (plucked) as an expression of food, and interprets בְּפִיהָ (in her beak) as an expression of speech. It [the dove] said: Let my food be as bitter as an olive in the hands of the Holy One, blessed be He, and not as sweet as honey in the hands of flesh and blood.

The Ohev Yisroel, the Apter Rov wants to explain the comment of Rashi.

Hashem did not give the power of speech to the birds. The olive leaf in the dove's beak, so to speak, spoke on her behalf. She wanted to communicate an important point, and devised the idea to pluck a leaf from an olive tree whose **fruit tastes bitter**. "This is what Hashem has provided for us and it is good", her action implied; it was as if she actually made the statement to Noach herself.

Says the Ohev Yisroel, the dove's message became an expression well known to people in his times. If a person was too talkative, not knowing when to keep his mouth shut, they would say about him, "He certainly has no leaf in his mouth". Such a person spit out of his mouth anything on his mind without considering a more subtle or refined way of expression.

The Ohev Yisroel wants us to understand a deeper message.

Aggadah (homiletic texts) are really written in code. Chazal (our Sages) are not only teaching us something about doves and olive leaves. Chazal are teaching us about ourselves. Doves and olive leaves are the medium for the message.

The dove pointed out that more important than food be tasty and filling, it should be clearly from Hashem, even if it is bitter. Divine providence should be always evident.

The Apter Rov wants us to be careful before we speak.

What Hashem sends us is not always easy to accept or what we think we really need. Nevertheless, our challenge is to accept what Hashem brings us without complaint. By definition, whatever Hashem brings us is good, no matter how difficult it is to discern that it is truly good. We need to communicate carefully and wisely and to indicate yes, although things are difficult, there is no better way since this is straight from Hashem.