

“And speak to the rock.” (20:8)

Horav Leib Eiger, z.l., related that when he was a young boy studying with his grandfather, *Horav Akiva Eiger, z.l.*, the *Nesivos*, *Horav Yaakov, z.l.*, *m'Lissa*, once came to visit. It so happened that the *Chasam Sofer, z.l.*, *Rav Akiva Eiger's* son-in-law, was also visiting at the time. *Rav Akiva Eiger* was overjoyed with his distinguished guests. Thus, he asked his *rebbetzin* to prepare a suitable meal for them. He asked a student from the *yeshivah* to serve the guests.

During the meal, *Rav Akiva Eiger* asked the *Nesivos* to honor them with a discourse in *Halachah*. *Rav Yaakov* lectured impressively as befitted a gathering of such distinguished Torah luminaries. When he finished, *Rav Akiva Eiger* asked the *Chasam Sofer* for his opinion on the *dvar Torah*. The *Chasam Sofer* responded that, in his opinion, *Rav Yaakov's dvar Torah* was refutable, and he proceeded to do so. *Rav Akiva Eiger* noticed that *Rav Yaakov* seemed to feel ill at ease as a result of the *Chasam Sofer's* critique of his *dvar Torah*. He immediately called over the young student who had been serving them and asked, “What is your opinion regarding the dispute between the two lions of Torah?”

“In my opinion, the novelae rendered by the *Nesivos* appears to be correct.” He proceeded to lecture in support of the *Nesivos*, basically responding to each of the *Chasam Sofer's* questions.

As soon as the student finished speaking, the *Chasam Sofer* broke out in tears, saying, “Really, I am correct, but what can I do? If my father-in-law would decree upon a stone that it should speak, it would say anything that he would want it to say.”

When *Rav Leib* completed the story he said, “Do not think that the *Chasam Sofer* did not mean what he was saying. He sincerely believed that *Rav Akiva Eiger* had the power to make a stone speak. The young man who served them, for the most part, was not able to hear their Torah dialogue. Furthermore, while he was certainly an excellent student, he was nowhere in the league of these Torah giants. Yes, it was in my grandfather's power to make a stone speak.” [This is a homiletical rendition of the *pasuk*.]