

"And the frog(s) came up and covered the land of Egypt." (8:2)

Rashi explains that originally there was only one frog. The Egyptians attempted to kill this frog by beating it. As they continued beating, it divided into swarms and swarms of frogs. *Horav Itze'le Voloshiner z.t.l.* asks what would have occurred if they had not provoked and beat that original frog? Probably nothing! Why, then, did they foolishly continue the beating, only to see their endeavor "backfire" and produce more frogs? He responds that this lack of self-control is human nature. Every provocation encourages a reciprocal response. Each time the Egyptians saw the frogs' "response" they, in reaction, kept on beating uncontrollably.

Reb Itzele states that one should likewise not respond negatively to those who openly provoke the religious community by demanding change within the orthodox milieu. Responding negatively through public debate and protest will not bring about a successful end to this incursion. A charged reaction will only serve to make matters worse. The most effective response to these eruptions is no response.

The *Steipler Rav z.t.l.* attributes the Egyptians' futile persistence to the *middah*, character, of anger. The more the frog multiplied, the greater their anger, and, of course, the more they beat the frog. This incessant behavior is consistent with the irrational nature of the angry individual. If he would only tolerate ridicule without responding, everything would slowly subside. Instead, each increased effort to respond to the source of his anger, his anger regrettably magnifies his anger. As the *Orchos Tzaddikim* writes: When one becomes angry, he should constrain himself to be silent, never permitting himself to raise his voice. One who responds in anger escalates his anger.