

"And the frogs died out of the houses, out of the courtyards, and out of the fields." (8:9)

The second plague to strike Egypt was frogs which swarmed all over the land. They found their way into every house, into the bedrooms, even into the ovens and kneading troughs. The *Midrash* extolls the virtue of these frogs. Their devotion to serving Hashem at the expense of their own lives has served as a paradigm of exemplary *Kiddush Hashem*. Their willingness to enter the burning hot ovens was totally alien to their natural instincts for survival. Yet, they overcame their very nature to serve Hashem. When the day arrived for that plague to subside, the frogs from all over Egypt died and were gathered into heaps. The whole land smelled from the foul stench.

What happened to the frogs that entered the ovens? Did they also die as the others did? The *Yalkut Shimoni* states that the frogs who entered the ovens did not die. They disappeared somehow, but not by death. They followed Hashem's command, defying nature, and entered the deadly ovens. For this act of self-sacrifice they merited to conquer death. What a lesson in *Kiddush Hashem*! Faith so absolute that defies nature must triumph over death. *Moreshe Moshe* points out that this has been our legacy throughout history. *Torah* observance defies explanation and rationalization. As we face the constant challenges to our faith, we must stand resolute and courageous, prepared to shoulder the burdens against all odds, even if we do not feel we have the means. We will continue to defy the elements as we have always done, as we await that moment of glory and peace that the advent of *Moshiach* will bring.