

And there will be hail in the entire land of Egypt, on man and beast, and on all the grass in the land of Egypt. (9:22)

The Torah could have simply stated that hail would rain down throughout the land of Egypt. Recording the detail – man, beast, grass – begs elucidation. The *Brisker Rav*, *zl*, derives from the excess verbiage of the *pasuk* that the *barad*, hail, descended only on those places wherein man or animal were to be found. In those areas uninhabited by man or animal and where grass did not grow, no hail came down. Furthermore, earlier, when Pharaoh was warned to quickly gather the animals to safety, it was not meant specifically to bring the animals inside, so that they be protected by having a roof over their heads. The intention was to inform Pharaoh that the *barad* will fall only on those men and animals that were outside. Those who were under cover, regardless of its flimsy nature, were spared from the effects of the *barad*.

In his *sefer*, *Maasas Hamelech*, *Horav Shimon Moshe Diskin*, *zl*, applies this idea to explain the *pasuk*, *Ha'yarei es d'var Hashem...heinis es avadav v'es mikneihu el ha'batim*; "Whoever ... feared the word of Hashem chased his servants and his livestock to the houses" (ibid. 9:20). Why does the Torah attribute what seems to be a common-sensical decision to *yiraas Shomayim*, fear of Heaven? Any Egyptian that possessed a modicum of intelligence had seen Moshe *Rabbeinu's* warnings materialize into devastating plagues. It was not a question of *yiraas Shomayim*, but rather, of *seichel*, common sense.

We must say, explains *Rav Diskin*, that some Egyptians, for reasons of their own, did not want to take their animals into their homes. Instead, they could have built a simple, flimsy hut to cover their livestock. Indeed, as explained by the *Brisker Rav*, it was not necessary for them to build a solid structure of steel and mortar. As long as it had a cover on top, the livestock would be protected. The mere fact that these Egyptians did not settle for a fragile shack indicated their fear of Hashem. Rather than simply get by, they wanted to carry out the word of G-d.