

THAT'S MY ELIAHU

by Rabbi Label Lam

And Moshe spoke before HASHEM saying, "They, the Children of Israel will not listen to me and how will Pharaoh listen to me and I am of uncircumcised lips. (Shemos 6:12)

Why does Moshe go backwards to the old excuse of the speech impediment? His argument seems strong enough that he feels that the Children of Israel won't listen and how much more so Pharaoh.

The Sefas Emes offers the following amazing insight on the verse, "Because the Children of Israel will not listen, therefore he was of uncircumcised lips...Speech is in exile as long as the recipients are not ready to hear the word of HASHEM..." He goes on to explain that to the extent that the listener is unavailable, the words are hidden and the more ready the recipients are, the more open and revealed is the message as we find by the giving of the Torah when HASHEM declared, "I am HASHEM..." it's no mistake that the Jewish Nation was at the most pure and ready state to receive that highest and holiest of communications.

Pardon me for mentioning it but there's a Zen saying, "When the student is ready, the teacher appears." If it's true in the universe, it must have a source in Torah. This may be the address for that notion which I believe has broad implications

Many years ago when I had my first few glorious encounters with Shabbos and I had just started to wear a slim silk Yarmulka precariously upon my curly crop of hair. A relative from the west coast I had never heard about had contacted my uncle because she was living in Brooklyn and was about to get engaged. She wanted to invite east coast relatives to her wedding. I was given the contact info. I went to Brooklyn for Shabbos and she got engaged. I met her brother Eliahu who was learning in Lakewood. He was a quiet fellow and almost subliminally suggested multiple times, "Why don't you go to Ohr Somayach?!" I didn't know what in the world he was talking about. I thought a fly was buzzing about my head.

Within a short period of time the government job I had been working at fell through because the comptroller ran Venezuela with the money he should have been paying to vendors. I retired to my family's house in the quiet suburbs of New York while trying to figure out what the next great thing should be.

One day I was wearing my Tefillin, davening, and writing into the late morning when a knock came to the door. I asked from inside who was there. A young voice answered, "We'd like to talk to you about

reading the Bible." I told them that I'm sort of reading the Bible right now but I didn't think this was the appropriate time. They got more excited and insistent and then I just opened the door and there posing before me were two clean cut looking guys with broad smiles and black books.

When they saw me with my Tefillin, their jaws dropped. No one said a word. They looked at each other, a classic double-take, and they just started to run. They scampered up the block at top speed and disappeared around the corner. I stepped out to witness this queer phenomenon and when they were out of sight I said to myself, "Why don't I go to Ohr Somayach!?" That day I made the trek to Yeshiva where I would stay and learn for many years, now.

I am reminded of what Rabbi Eliahu Dessler ztl. writes, that when Eliahu comes to announce Moshiach's arrival at the end of times, he will not make grand pronouncements but rather he will speak into the ears of individuals, one from a city or a family and suggest they do Teshuva. The person will think it's his own thoughts, but it's really the voice of Eliahu.

When we made a Bris for our youngest son five years ago I forgot to include one of the honors on my list. I was asked, who's your honoree for Kise' Shel Eliahu (Seat of Elijah). At that moment my cousin Eliahu had just arrived from Lakewood. I said, "That's my Eliahu!" DvarTorah, Copyright © 2007 by Rabbi Label Lam and [Torah.org](https://torah.org).