

"A journey of three days we will go into the wilderness" (8:23) - דרך שלשת ימים נלך במדבר (ח:כג) - Why was the request of Moshe to Pharaoh to allow the Israelites to leave Egypt for **only** three days. Obviously, from his first interaction with G-d, the purpose of his being sent to Egypt was to "bring forth My people, the children of Israel out of Egypt", completely? (3:10) What would be gained by requesting an insignificant three-day celebration?

Quoted in the name of Rabbi Moshe Isserles (1503-1572, Poland), known as the "Rema", Moshe's request was not his own. G-d already warned Moshe at the Burning Bush that Pharaoh would immediately deny any demand for freedom for the Israelites (3:19). The strategy was feigning a request to punish Pharaoh for being indifferent to G-d's will. Had the request been to immediately free all the millions of Israelites, it would have been understood as an unreasonable request and Pharaoh's refusal to comply would have been understood and justifiable. Therefore, Moshe, in the name of G-d, demanded a bearable proposal.

The arrangement would be to honor G-d's request for His people to leave Egypt for three days to celebrate a holiday in His name. Pharaoh's refusal of this modest and sensible request exposed his stubbornness and savagery. This would legitimize all the deserved retribution inflicted on Pharaoh.

- Shabbat Shalom