



never pronounce. By contrast, only a lesser Name was revealed to the Patriarchs.

What is meant by this reply? Are the Patriarchs higher or lower than Moses? Is Moses being reprimanded or encouraged? One way of explaining this riddle is in terms of the inner workings of an individual. Moses represents the Mind; the Patriarchs the Heart.

Moses taught the wisdom of the Torah: hence he expresses the Mind. Further, there is an ancient teaching that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob represent three aspects of an emotional relationship with G-d: Love, Awe and Mercy respectively. Thus they collectively represent the Heart.

The Mind becomes perplexed and asks questions, while the Heart forges straight ahead, filled with passion beyond reason. At the same time the Heart often perceives existence in a very fragmented way: this it loves, that it hates. The Mind, by contrast, can perceive a unifying structure which links all.

The Tetragrammaton, the essential Divine Name, expresses the absolute unity of G-d and the unifying principle of all existence. The lesser Names are Divine, but they express the multiplicity and diversity of Nature which G-d created.

Moses has the quality of Mind, which both asks questions and can ultimately discern the unity of all. The Patriarchs represent the Heart, which has the ability to go forward without reservations, yet which in itself cannot achieve the highest level of unity. We, as individuals, combine these qualities. We need the enthusiasm of the Heart blended with the Mind's ability to find unity.

This explains G-d's puzzling answer to Moses and to each of us. In order to leave our personal Egypt, we need to join and balance the Mind and the Heart: through that, as in the time of Moses, we will forge ahead, and ultimately gain freedom...<sup>3</sup>

1. Exodus 6:2-9:35. 2. Before Moses came, the Egyptians supplied straw to the Jewish slaves, which they used to make bricks. Now no straw will be given, but the same quota must be produced. 3. See the Lubavitcher Rebbe's *Likkutei Sichot*, vol.3 pp.854-62.

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*SEDRA VA'ERAH***WARMING UP**

Sam wasn't feeling very good about himself. Class four just had recess, and all the boys had stood around him in a circle.

Dave was the first one to speak. "Hey Sam - betcha you spent five hours studying for the math test last night!"

Chaim continued. "No - you probably first copied out all the notes, in your perfectly neat handwriting, so let's see...it probably took you 7 hours!"

At that point all the boys chuckled, while some muttered, "teacher's pet" and "goody goody" under their breath.

Sam's cheeks turned crimson. He couldn't help it. Schoolwork was important for him, and he tried his outmost to succeed. Why would that be a reason for his classmates to make fun of him?

As the bell rang, and all the boys playfully piled back into the classroom, Sam dragged his feet in, behind the boisterous bunch. He didn't notice the laughter around him, the good natured cheer of the others, nor the fact that his teacher was right behind him.

Mr Cohen could see that something was terribly wrong. "Sam? What's the matter?" Sam looked up, brushed aside a tear, and in a low voice, explained that the others were teasing him, just because he was studious. Mr Cohen looked serious as he walked straight up to the teacher's desk, put his briefcase down, and wrote 'TEN PLAGUES' on the blackboard.

Charles put up his hand. "Mr Cohen, this week is Sedra Va'erah, and seven of the ten plagues happened to the Egyptians in this Sedra. The plagues came because the Egyptians were enslaving the Jews, and not letting them free."

Mr Cohen nodded. "What happened in the first plague?"

Paul answered. "All the water in Egypt turned to blood - even the bathing and drinking water!"

Mr Cohen nodded again. "If the ten plagues happened so many years ago, why do we still speak about them? Can you tell me an idea we learn from them?"

Sam ventured his hand. "Probably because there is a lesson to be learned, even now, although I am not sure what that could be..."

Mr Cohen wrote the word 'WATER' and the word 'BLOOD' on the board. "Boys," he said, "water is coldness, apathy, simply not caring. Blood shows life, warmth, and energy.

"G-d is giving a hint to us about how we should live. We need to move from the coldness and apathy of water to the warmth of blood. That is the way to get out of every kind of Egypt, every kind of limitation. We should live our lives with excitement and energy. G-d is hinting to us that we should throw ourselves into whatever we are doing 100%. Imagine someone performing a task half-heartedly, compared to someone who gives it his all. Who do you think will do a better job? Who do you think will succeed?"

Suddenly, the boys all looked at their classmate Sam. They realized the benefits of really caring and working hard for school. Dave, the very same one who had been making fun of Sam earlier, said in a loud voice. "Sam...I am really sorry for making fun of how much time you spend on your schoolwork.....can I join you tonight?"

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