

BEING A G-DLY BEING

by Rabbi Label Lam

Now it came to pass in those days that Moshe grew up and went out to his brothers and looked at their burdens, and **he saw an Egyptian man striking a Hebrew man of his brothers**. He turned this way and that way, and he saw that there was no man; so he struck the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. **He went out on the second day**, and behold, two Hebrew men were quarreling, and he said to the wicked one, "Why are you going to strike your friend?" (Shemos 2:11-13)

Moshe was pasturing the flocks of Yisro, his father in law, the chief of Midian, and he led the flocks **after the free pastureland**, and he came to the mountain of God, to Horeb. (Shemos 3:1)

after the free pastureland: to distance himself from [the possibility of] theft, so that they [the flocks] would not pasture in others' fields. — Rashi

What important character traits did Moshe display that made him worthy of being chosen to be the leader of the Jewish People? Actually, the Ramchal in Derech Etz Chaim suggests that the thinking person should ask, "What did the early ones, the fathers of the world, do that G-d desired them? What did Moshe Rabeinu do? What did David, the Moshiach (chosen of) HASHEM do?"

The Talmud tells us that a Jew is recognizable by three distinct traits; "Baishanim, Rachamnim, v' Gomlei Chassdim- a sense of shame, mercifulness, and doing acts of kindness" (Yevamos 79A). Moshe the holy teacher of all Jews was the exemplar of all three of these dimensions. What is the specialty of these particular character traits? The Mishne in Pirke Avos states "Jealousy, Desire, and Honor Seeking take a man out of the world." Those selfish forces are the negative versions of the three soulful and positive qualities that are distinctive about a Jew and of course Moshe our teacher too.

Desire- is that private battle between the person and himself. In the selfish and physical realm the indulgent person unapologetically yields to his lower urges. If he has a conscience, an inner pride, then he doesn't allow himself to disappoint himself. That would be the essence of the Baishon, the person with a sense of shame. Somebody once said that "self-esteem is the reputation you have with yourself". That is the heart of the Baishon!

Moshe is described as shepherding his father-in law's sheep in the desert for fear of grazing in another's field. He went to great efforts to distance himself from any wrong. He is conscience centered and trustworthy to his own golden standards.

The jealous person is different than the one with an appetite. He doesn't know he wants a thing until he sees his friend with one. He is in a false competition with others. When somebody achieves some quality or object he perceives it was taken from him. He is stimulated by his subjective study of what others have more of and better than he.

The Rachaman, however, the merciful individual cannot bear to witness suffering. He is deeply empathetic and personally pained by the anguish he senses in others. When Moshe saw a Jew being hit by an Egyptian it was as if he was being hit. It drove him to take a strong action.

The glory seeker is in competition with HASHEM! He does not want anyone and certainly not the Almighty to tell him what to do. He wants to be the boss! He is persistently resisting authority to the extent that he crowns himself a mini-god. The Gomer Chessed becomes G-d-like by emulating the Creator and giving to those who are even out of sight or undeserving. That *Moshe went out a second day* after a confrontational episode on the first day he witnessed the suffering of his brothers, he was **being a G-dly being**.