



Va'era

Shemot (Exodus) 6:2 - 9:35

Va'era begins with G-d reviewing His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. "I have heard the cries of the Israelites," G-d says, "and I will now fulfill my promise to them, redeeming them from slavery and bringing them into the land which I promised to their ancestors." (Exodus 6:5).

When Moses tells all this to the Israelites, they will not listen. So Moses appeals to G-d claiming that if the Israelites will not heed him, how can he hope to convince Pharaoh? G-d tells Moses that Aaron will be the spokesman before Pharaoh, and that although G-d's signs and wonders will be many, Pharaoh will, in the beginning, refuse to give in. This is because G-d is going to harden Pharaoh's heart.

When Pharaoh refuses to allow the Israelites to journey into the wilderness to worship G-d, the plagues of blood and frogs occur. However, Pharaoh's magicians duplicate these occurrences. When the third plague, lice, afflicts the land, the magicians become fearful and tell Pharaoh that this act is the finger of G-d. But it is only with the fourth plague, swarms of insects, that Pharaoh begins to show signs of softening, offering to allow the Israelites to worship G-d within the land of Egypt. Once the plague abates, however, Pharaoh changes his mind, and the fifth, sixth, and seventh plagues (cattle disease, boils and hail) follow in swift succession.



Jewish Community Center of Paramus
E. 304 Midland Ave., Paramus NJ 07652
Phone: (201) 262-7691 Fax: (201) 262-6516
© 2007 Jewish Community Center of Paramus