



When a Hebrew letter is written the way it sounds—*Lamed-Mem-Dalet*—it is called the *millui*—expansion of the letter because the hidden part, the *Mem-Dalet*, has been revealed. The *Mem* and *Dalet* were always there to the ear, just not visible to the eye.

For this reason, the *Mem* and *Dalet* also teach us about the nature of the *Lamed*. It's like knowing someone in your office for years one way, and only discovering a “hidden” side of their personality when you see them at home with family. The “new” knowledge reflects on the “old” knowledge as well.

We've already discussed *Mem* and *Dalet* on their own, but not as members of the letter *Lamed*. They're like the soul of the letter, and like all souls, they run the show from behind the scenes, like the engine under the hood of

a car.

Together, *Dalet-Mem* spelled the Hebrew word *dum*, blood. Aside from being the basis of physical life, it is also symbolic of a way of life. This is why God made the Nile river turn into blood for the first plague in Egypt, to signal to the Jewish people how they had become just like the Egyptians.

Man is called *Adam* because the *Aleph*, alluding to God,¹ represents his Godly soul while the *Dalet-Mem*, spelling blood, represent his body. A non-spiritual person is only *dum*, whereas a spiritual person has all three letters and is a true *Adam*.

As a free person too, because the *gematria* of *Adam* and *geulah*—redemption—are the same. And since, as the *kabbalists* explains, each plague revealed God more, the *Aleph* of the Jewish people was enlarged until they became Adam again. Redemption was the automatic result of that.

This was the essential difference, again, between the knowledge of the *Aitz HaDa'as Tov v'Ra* and that of the *Aitz HaChaim*. The knowledge of the *Aitz HaDa'as* only makes a person better at what they do, a function of the *dum* part of man. It is the knowledge of the *Aitz HaChaim*—Torah—that enhances a person's *Aleph* and makes them into a true *Adam*.

This is what the *millui* is teaching us. Don't just learn,

¹ Because God is One, and *aluph*—chief, the real Commander-in-Chief.

as most of the world does. Learn specifically that which will elevate you from being only on the level of *dum* to reach the level of *Adam*. Being only on the level of *dum* is to be just a little more than the animals, but being an *Adam* means living *in the image of God*.

The *Arizal* calls such a person an *Adam Shalaim*—a *Complete Adam*. He also outlines how a person goes about achieving this ultimate state of being:

A person who only performs *mitzvos* merits the [level of soul] *Nefesh* [which corresponds to the world] called *Asiyab*, but not more...it hasn't any light or intelligence to understand. If they make an effort to learn Torah, learning, thinking about, and constantly teaching the Oral Law for its own sake, they will merit the [level of] *Ruach* which is from [the world of] *Yetzirab*...Then their *Nefesh* will be filled with the spirit of wisdom, and their *Nefesh* will ascend from [the level of] *Asiyab* to [the level of] *Yetzirab*. If they learn the Hidden Wisdom, the secrets of the Torah (*Kabbalah*), they will then merit the [level of soul] *Neshamah*, which is from [the level of] *Beriyab*. Then the *Neshamah* will give off light in the *Ruach* within the person and increase their level and wisdom. [At that point] they will be called *Adam Shalaim*—*Complete Person*, regarding whom it says: “*God made man in His image*” (*Bereishis* 1:26). (*Sba'ar HaGilgulim*, Introduction 18)

This is how a person goes beyond *dum*, an incomplete person, to become an *Adam*, a complete person. Not all knowledge is liberating and, in fact, some can be enslaving. The knowledge of the *Aitz HaDa'as* led to exile of mankind, but not so much as punishment as consequence. Just as the *gematria* of Adam is equal to *geulah*—redemption—the *gematria* of *dum* is equal to *golab*, a person in exile.

We learn a lot from the part of the *Lamed* that we see. We learn even more from the part that we don't.