

### Call of the Wild (Vaera)

*“Nature has been for me, for as long as I remember, a source of solace, inspiration, adventure, and delight; a home, a teacher, a companion.” -Lorraine Anderson*

Pharaoh has a slave rebellion brewing. A discredited former prince of Egypt has taken up their cause. He is imposing and impressive, and though Pharaoh suspects Moses is resorting to cheap magic tricks, there is something threatening, even frightening about the tall Hebrew leader.

Pharaoh wants a break. But he is behind schedule and over budget on his grand construction projects. The priesthood has been snickering behind his back about his poor leadership and even questioning his divinity.

All Pharaoh wants to do is get out of the palace. He wants to breathe some fresh air and cool his heels in the soothing water of the Nile.

Ibn Ezra (on Exodus 8:16) claims that it was the custom of monarchs to go out to the river every morning. It is good for the eyes, Ibn Ezra explains. Imagine how flummoxed Pharaoh must have been to be greeted by Moses on his lone foray into the tranquility of nature.

May we remember the nature that we have access to and likewise drink in its healthy and reviving effects (without rebel leaders interrupting our sojourn).

Shabbat Shalom,

Ben-Tzion

*Dedication*

*To the Iranian protestors.*