

The Burning Bush

God appears to Moses in a bush that burns but is not consumed, calling him to deliver Israel from Egypt.

Exodus 3:1-22 • Exodus 4:1-17

CHARACTERS: Moses, God

THEMES: God's call, Holy ground, God's name revealed, Overcoming excuses

FORTY YEARS HAD passed. Moses had fled Egypt after killing an Egyptian who was beating a Hebrew slave. Now he was a shepherd in Midian, tending the flock of his father-in-law Jethro.

Moses led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire, it did not burn up.

'I will go over and see this strange sight,' Moses thought. 'Why doesn't the bush burn up?'

When the Lord saw that Moses had gone over to look, God called from within the bush, 'Moses! Moses!'

'Here I am,' Moses replied.

'Do not come any closer,' God said. 'Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground. I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' Moses hid his face, afraid to look at God.

'I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt,' the Lord continued. 'I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers. So

I have come down to rescue them and bring them into a good and spacious land, flowing with milk and honey. So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people out of Egypt.'

Moses began making excuses. 'Who am I to go to Pharaoh?' God answered, 'I will be with you.'

'What if they ask Your name?' God replied, 'I AM WHO I AM. Tell them I AM has sent you.'

'What if they don't believe me?' God gave Moses signs—his staff became a snake, his hand became leprous and was healed.

'I am slow of speech!' Moses protested. God's anger burned. 'Your brother Aaron can speak for you. Now go!'

The shepherd who had fled Egypt as a fugitive would return as God's chosen deliverer.

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