

Message from Robin+

Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. Then Moses said, "I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up." When the Lord saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." Then he said, "Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." He said further, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

Then the Lord said, "I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them. So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt."

*But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" He said, "I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain." But Moses said to God, "If I come to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?" God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." He said further, "Thus you shall say to the Israelites, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" *God also said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the Israelites, 'The Lord, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you': This is my name forever, and this my title for all generations. Exodus 3:1-15**

This is a well-known scripture passage and one of my favorites. As I sit with this from my good and broad land beside the sea, there is so much depth to this passage I have not before considered. Moses was keeping the flock – there's not much more mundane work than staring at sheep all day long for a living. Even so it was work and shepherds must remain on guard for predators, check sheep for insect infestations and skin diseases, and constantly lead them to green pastures and a water supply.

So it's interesting to me that God must appear in a flaming bush. It's ridiculously obvious that God wants to get Moses' attention! It makes me wonder how many other ways God had already tried to no effect. Once God knows Moses is paying attention, God reveals not only God's plan but God's name to Moses. God says a lot to Moses, and there are many details. In fact, God says, "So come, I will send you..." making Moses the one to implement the plan.

Aren't we often like Moses? "Who, me? Oh no, I am not qualified, I don't have those gifts or skills. I'm happy to help, but I couldn't possibly be the leader of your plan."

What I think Moses forgot, what we all forget, is that God is the one in control, that God has a perfect plan, and that when God is calling us, God will make it so. What I noticed this time when I read the story is that God says, "I have observed the misery of my people, I have heard their cry, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them."

Think about that. God is observing everything about your life right now. God is waiting to deliver you and bring you to a land where there is more than you can ask or imagine. How do we become aware of God's plan for us and then how do we make ourselves available to become a part of it? What are our burning bushes to get our attention? What has to happen in our lives to cause us to turn aside from the mundane, going through the motions, busy lives we lead so that we too might see and hear God and know that we are on holy ground?