

G-d Reveals Himself to Moses

Moses took care of the flocks of his father-in-law Jethro.

Once when he had driven his flocks far out in the desert, a small lamb got lost. After searching for it all over the hills of the desert, Moses found it near the Mount of Horeb. He took the tired little animal in his arms and set out to return to the flocks. Suddenly an unusual sight attracted his attention.

He saw a thornbush burst out in flame, but although the flames burned continuously, the bush did not turn into ashes. His curiosity aroused, Moses stepped closer, and out of the thornbush, he heard the voice of G-d calling:

"Moses, Moses!"

"Here I am," replied Moses.

G-d continued to speak to him saying: "Do not draw closer! Take off your shoes from your feet; for the place whereon you stand is holy ground. I am the G-d of your father, of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."

Moses covered his face; for he was afraid to look up to G-d.

G-d then told Moses that He had heard the lamentations of the children of Israel in distress; and that He would deliver them from the hands of the Egyptian oppressors and bring them back into the Promised Land, a land flowing with milk and honey. He, Moses, was the one to go to Pharaoh and lead the Jewish people out of Egypt.

Moses hesitated to accept this great mission. He was afraid he was neither worthy nor able to carry out such a great task. G-d assured him, however, that He would be with him. Still Moses begged to be relieved of this mission. He feared that the children of Israel would not recognize his

authority to speak as their leader. If he told them that G-d had sent him, they would demand to know His name.

Thereupon G?d told Moses to identify Him to the children of Israel as the G?d of their fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Who has now come to redeem them from slavery and take them to the land He had promised their ancestors.

http://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach_cdo/aid/282277/jewish/G-d-Reveals-Himself-to-Moses.htm

The Miraculous Signs

To further impress the children of Israel, Moses was to perform for them miraculous wonders with his staff. It was the staff that Adam had taken out of the Garden of Eden, and that had served Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It had the inscription of G-d's Holy Name on it.

Jethro had taken possession of this wonderful staff after Joseph's death. He planted it in his garden and no one had since that time been able to pull it out of the earth, until Moses came and removed it easily, thus proving his just claim to its ownership.

Now G-d told Moses to throw this staff on the ground. Moses did so, and the staff turned into a serpent. Moses fled in terror, but G-d ordered him to grasp it by its tail: Moses did so, and the serpent changed back into a staff.

Again G-d bade Moses put his hand into his bosom. When Moses took it out it was strickinto his bosom, and when he pulled it out, it was clean as before. Finally, G-d told Moses that if he were to pour water on dry land it would turn into blood. All these signs G-d gave to Moses to be able to impress upon the children of Israel that G-d had sent him to them.

Moses made a final attempt to be relieved of his mission, hoping that G-d Himself would bring about His people's salvation. "I am tongue-tied," Moses pleaded. But G-d told him that the One who gave the human being the ability to hear, see and speak, could surely remedy this handicap! He then told Moses that Aaron would serve as his spokesman.

Then G-d ordered Moses to return to Egypt, since there was no longer any danger for him there.

http://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach_cdo/aid/1650/jewish/The-Miraculous-Signs.htm

Moses Accepted as Leader

Moses returned to his father-in law in Midian, and asked for his approval to return to his brethren in Egypt. Jethro gave him his blessing, and Moses set out for Egypt. G-d then ordered Aaron to meet Moses. They met in the desert by Mount Horeb, where Moses told his older brother of the great Divine mission they were to carry out.

Back in Goshen, they visited the sages and leaders of the children of Israel. Having performed the miracles as G-d had instructed Moses, they told the people of the good tidings. The children of Israel believed in the Divine mission of the sons of Amram, and new hopes and faith filled their hearts.

http://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach_cdo/aid/1651/jewish/Moses-Accepted-as-Leader.htm

Moses and Aaron before Pharaoh

Moses was eighty years old, and his brother eighty-three, when they entered the palace of King Pharaoh. Fearlessly, they went past the heavy guard of men and wild animals that surrounded his inner chambers, and which

permitted no unbidden visitor to enter. Nobody had ever been able to see the King of Egypt in person, and speak to him, except his astrologers and counsellors.

Astonished and frightened by their sudden appearance, Pharaoh asked the two brothers what they wanted. The message sounded like a command: "Thus has the Lord G-d of Israel said, 'Let My people go, that they may feast to Me in the desert.' "

Pharaoh haughtily refused, saying that he had never heard of the G-d of the Israelites, and that His name was not registered in his lists of gods of all nations. He further accused Moses and Aaron of a conspiracy against the government, and of interference with the work of the Hebrew slaves. The miracles they performed in his presence did not greatly impress him, for his magicians could do almost as well.

On the same day Pharaoh ordered his supervisors to increase the demands on the children of Israel and to make their burden still heavier. If they had time to think of liberty and worship of G-d and similar ideas, quite unbecoming of slaves, then they must be getting too much leisure, Pharaoh thought.

Whereas they had been supplied with the raw materials heretofore, they now had not only to produce the same amount of labor, but in addition, they had to procure their own raw materials for the bricks.

The children of Israel were physically unable to cope with such an impossible task, and they suffered even more than before. In desperation the children of Israel bitterly reproached Moses and Aaron for making their fate even worse, instead of helping them.

Deeply hurt and disappointed, Moses prayed to G-d. G-d consoled him and assured him that his mission eventually would be successful, but not before

Pharaoh and all of Egypt would be smitten by terrible plagues, in order to be adequately punished for oppressing the children of Israel.

The children of Israel would then also see and recognize their true and faithful G-d.

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