

Moses Deliverance – Exodus 3-4:1-17

Moses was taking care of his father-in-law's flocks. He led Jethro's flocks to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him from inside a burning bush. Moses saw that the bush was on fire, but it didn't burn up. So, Moses thought, "I will go closer to see this strange sight."

God called out from the bush, "Moses. Moses."

"Here I am," said Moses.

Don't come any closer. Take off your sandals for the place you are standing is holy ground. I am the God of your father. I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob."

When Moses heard these words, he turned his face away. He was afraid to look at God.

The Lord said, "I have seen my people suffer in Egypt. I have heard them cry out because of the slave drivers. I am concerned for their suffering. I have come down to save them from the Egyptians. I will bring them up out of the land and bring them to a good land. A land with room, a land flowing with milk and honey. It is the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites.

"Israel's cry for help has reached me. I have seen the way the Egyptians beat them down. So now, I am sending you to Pharaoh. I want you to bring the Israelites out of Egypt. They are my people."

But Moses spoke to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh? Who am I that I should bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"

God said, "I shall be with you. I will give you a miraculous sign to prove that I have sent you. Bring my people to this mountain to worship me."

Moses said to God, "Suppose I go to the people of Israel and say to them that the God of their fathers has sent me. Suppose they ask, 'What is His name?' What should I tell them?"

God replied, "I am who I am. Tell them that I am has sent you. Say to them you were sent by the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob. Remember me by that name for all time to come. Now, go and gather the elders of Israel. Tell them that I will bring them to a promised land. The elders of Israel will listen to

you. Then you must go to Pharaoh and tell him that you are taking the people on a journey of three days. You want to go into the desert to offer sacrifice to the Lord God.”

“The Pharaoh will not listen to you. He will not let you and your people go. Only a mighty hand could make him do that. So, I will reach out my hand and will strike the Egyptians with all kinds of miracles. After that, he will let you go.”

“I will cause the Egyptians to treat you kindly when you go. Every woman and all her neighbors will give you all articles made from silver or gold. And ask them for clothes for your children. In that way you will be taking the wealth of Egypt along with you.”

Moses answered, “But what if the elders of Israel won’t believe me? What if they say, ‘The Lord didn’t appear to you.’ Then what do I do?”

The Lord said, “What do you have in your hand?”

Moses said, “My staff.”

“Throw it on the ground.” Immediately, it turned into a serpent and Moses ran in fear. But the Lord said, “Pick it up by the tail.” And when Moses did, it turned back into a staff.

The Lord said, “When they see this sign, they will believe that the Lord appeared to you. They will know that I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob.”

Then the Lord said to Moses, “Put your hand inside your cloak. Now take it out.” When Moses had done this, his hand was white as snow and covered in leprosy.

“Now put your hand back inside your cloak. Now take it out.”

When Moses had done that, his hand was restored.

The Lord said, “If they don’t believe the first miracle, then maybe they will believe the second. And if they don’t believe either miracle, get some water from the Nile River. When you pour it on the ground, it will turn to blood.”

Moses said to the Lord, “I have never been eloquent of speech. I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.”

The Lord said, “Who makes man able to speak? Who makes man able to hear? Who makes man able to see? It is I, the Lord. Now go, I will teach you what to say.”

But Moses said, “Oh please, Lord, send someone else.”

Finally, the Lord’s anger burned against Moses. “Wait for your brother, Aaron, the Levite. I know he can speak well. He is already on his way to meet you, and when he sees you his heart will be glad. Put your words in his mouth. Tell him what to say. I will help both of you speak. He will be your mouth for you. And you will be like God to him.”

“Now go. And take your wooden staff with you. You will be able to do miraculous signs with it.”