

MOSES TURNED ASIDE

“And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I.”

There wasn't much going on out there. It was the “backside” of the desert (Ex. 3:1). No important meetings like he had in Egypt. No national news or military meetings to demand his attention. In some respects it must have been humiliating for Moses to be a shepherd. Remember: **“every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians.” (Gen 46:34)** But there he was. For forty long years he had been out of the lime light and lost in the vast obscurity on the “backside” of the desert.

Then something unusual happened that interrupted the drudgery of his daily routine. A bush burned with fire but was not consumed. Normally such a dry little shrub would quickly turn to ashes. This bush, however, was not normal. So Moses “turned aside” to see it. When the Lord saw that he “turned aside” something else happened. It was then that God spoke to Moses from out of the midst of the bush.

Note that there seems to be a connection between “turning aside” and the contact that Moses had with God. If Moses had not “turned aside” he might never have heard the voice of God or received the calling or super natural power that we now associate with his ministry.

There is a principle here that we would all do well to consider. God is a jealous God, and does not reveal Himself to a double minded man (Ja. 1:7, 8). When we “turn aside,” however, and totally focus on what God is doing, He speaks to us in ways that others do not understand.

Abraham is the father of the faithful (Gal. 3:29). He believed in the One True God while totally surrounded by idolaters (Josh. 24:2). He did not appropriate the miracle working power of God, however, until he was 99 years old. During his long life he built many altars and manifested a life long commitment to the promises of God. His spiritual journey took him from Ur, to Haran, to the Promised Land, and also to Egypt. He defeated the kings of the East and even paid tithes to Melchizedek. The fact is, however, that even after all of this he had no son by Sarah and his sins were still not yet forgiven. That's when Abraham “turned aside” and viewed the stars of the heavens in a way he had never seen them before. They were the same stars he had seen since childhood, but on this night Abraham connected with God in such a way that the Lord credited his faith as righteousness (Gen. 15:6).

Or consider the story of the woman who had an issue of blood for 12 years. She spent all her money on doctors, and suffered many things from their advice, but only grew worse (Mk. 5:26). By Mosaic Law she was “unclean” and thus forbidden to be in public (Lev. 15). She was so desperate, however, that she dared to violate the law, push through the crowd, and touch the garment of Jesus. “Who touched me?” the Master said (Lk. 8:45). Peter pointed out that lots of people were touching Him. In fact, Jesus was being “thronged” and “pressed” by the crowd. It is possible, however, to casually bump into Jesus without being transformed. You can even feel the heat of a burning bush without “turning aside” to make contact with God. You can also see the stars without penetrating the veil and making a life transforming contact with the Creator.

So, what about you? How many years have you been in the same boring routine on the backside of your desert? What would it take to cause you to give serious consideration to a life changing focus on Christ? Are you prepared to forget your mundane responsibilities long enough to concentrate all of your mental and spiritual energies on a life changing encounter with your Creator? When you are willing to do this, be prepared! For when your heart is right God will find you no matter where you are. Right now the eyes of the Lord range throughout the whole earth in search of those whose hearts are fully committed to Him (2 Chron. 16:9). The question is, when God does manifest Himself to you, will you “turn aside” to meet Him?