

The Passover Story

Chapter Four: The Beginning of the Redemption

The children of Israel could no longer bear their terrible suffering as slaves. Their cries for help and their prayers, coming from the very bottom of their hearts, broke through the heavens.

G-d remembered His promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob- that He would take the Israelites out of Egypt- and decided that the time had come to help them.

At that time, Moses was working as a shepherd, taking care of the flocks of his father-in-law Jethro.

Once when he was watching his flocks in the middle of 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 started to walk back to the rest of the sheep. Suddenly, an unusual sight attracted his attention.

He saw a thorn bush on fire- but even though the flames were burning, the bush did not turn into ashes. Curiously, Moses stepped closer, and from the bush, he heard G-d's voice calling his name.

"Moses, Moses!"

"Here I am," replied Moses.

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

Moses covered his face, afraid to look up to G-d.

G-d then told Moses that He had heard the cries of the Jews, and that He would save them from the Egyptians and bring them back to the Promised Land, the

land of Israel. He, Moses, would be 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 capable of carrying out such a big, important job. G-d assured him, however, that He would be with him. Still, Moses begged G-d to give this mission to someone else. He was worried that the Jews would not believe that G-d had chosen him as their leader and that they would ask him to tell them G-d's name as proof that what he was saying was true.

G-d then told Moses to answer the Jews by telling them that the G-d who had sent him was the G-d of their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Who had now come to free them from slavery and take them to the land He had promised their ancestors.

G-d also told Moses to prove that he was really sent by G-d by performing miracles with his staff- which was the same staff as the one that Adam had taken out of the Garden of Eden and had belonged to Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This staff, engraved with G-d's holy name, was a special staff with special powers.

The last Jew to own this staff had been Joseph. After Joseph's death, Jethro- who had worked as an advisor in the Egyptian palace- had taken ownership of this staff. When he had moved to Midian, he had planted it in his garden, and since that time, no one had been able to pull it out of the ground until Moses came and removed it easily.

At this point, G-d told Moses three miraculous things to do, two of them with his staff, to prove to the Jews that he had been sent by G-d.

First, He commanded Moses to throw this staff to the ground. Moses did so, and the staff turned into a snake. Moses pulled back in terror, but G-d ordered him to grasp it by its tail: Moses obeyed, and the snake turned back into a staff.

Then, G-d told Moses to put his hand to his chest. He did, and immediately, his hand was stricken with a disease called leprosy. G-d told him to put his hand to his chest again, and when he pulled it out, it was back to normal.

Finally, G-d told Moses that if he were to pour water on dry land it would turn into blood.

Moses tried once more to get out of his mission, hoping that G-d would save the. "I have a stutter," Moses pleaded. "I can't speak properly." But G-d told him that the One who gave the human being the ability to hear, see, and speak could surely cure him of this handicap! He then told Moses that Aaron, his older brother, would act as his spokesman, repeating everything he said in a clear voice.

After this, G-d ordered Moses to return to Egypt, since there was no longer any danger for him there, and get started on his mission.

Additional resource: Click [here](#) to watch an entertaining video about Passover.