

# LBT's From Light to Liberation: *Revelation*

Week of February 28, 2021 / 16 Adar 5781

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**Framing:** Throughout the biblical narrative, our ancestors often have personal encounters with the divine. In these moments of revelation, the individuals emerge from the event with a deeper understanding of themselves, their role as leaders of the Jewish people and their place in the swath of human history. Below we have shared the text of Moses' encounter with the divine at the scene of the burning bush. We encourage you to read this narrative slowly and parse different features of the text to understand Moses' encounter with the divine: the location, the actions that are taken both by God and Moses, the hesitancy of Moses to understand the moment, and the various aspects of the conversation that occurs between God and Moses. Jews have been interpreting these verses through the lens of their own lived experiences for over 2500+ years - so don't be shy!

## **Exodus 3:1-14**

(1) Now Moses, tending the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian, drove the flock into the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. (2) An angel of the Eternal appeared to him in a blazing fire out of a bush. He gazed, and there was a bush all aflame, yet the bush was not consumed. (3) Moses said, "I must turn aside to look at this marvelous sight; why doesn't the bush burn up?" (4) When the Eternal saw that he had turned aside to look, God called to him out of the bush: "Moses! Moses!" He answered, "*Hinneni*, Here I am." (5) And God said, "Do not come closer. Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place on which you stand is holy ground. (6) "I am," God said, "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.

**Q: Share a time you have had a spiritual experience? Do spiritual experiences and a relationship with the divine overlap or do you think of them as distinct?**

(7) And the Eternal continued, "I have marked well the plight of My people in Egypt and have heeded their outcry because of their taskmasters; yes, I am mindful of their sufferings. (8) I have come down to rescue them from the Egyptians and to bring them out of that land to a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey, the region of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. (9) Now the cry of the Israelites has reached Me; moreover, I have seen how the Egyptians oppress them. (10) Come, therefore, I will send you to Pharaoh, and you shall free My people, the Israelites, from Egypt." (11)

But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and free the Israelites from Egypt?" (12) And God said, "I will be with you; that shall be your sign that it was I who sent you. And when you have freed the people from Egypt, you shall worship God at this mountain." (13) Moses said to God, "When I come to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is God's name?' what shall I say to them?" (14) And God said to Moses, "Ehyeh-Asher-Ehyeh/"I will be what I will be." God continued, "Thus shall you say to the Israelites, 'Ehyeh sent me to you.'"

**Questions for Reflection:**

1. God is one way to translate one of the names of the divine. This text presents us with a unique name of God showing God's role as the past, the present, and the future. What is your understanding of the divine's role? Is there a name that best fits your understanding?
2. In what ways does your mindfulness practice invite you to reflect on your relationship with the divine? How does this impact the way in which you interact with the world around you?