

PARSHAT SHEMOT  
19 TEVET 5783/ 12 JANUARY, 2023  
EXODUS 1:1- 6:1



Photo by Elizabeth Thompson

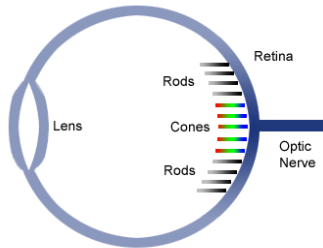
1. So Moses said, "Let me turn aside now and see this great spectacle why does the thorn bush not burn up?" ג וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶסְרֶה-נָּא וְאֶרְאֶה אֶת-הַמְרִאָה הַגָּדֹל הַזֶּה מִדּוּעַ לֹא-יִבְעַר הַסִּנֵּה:
2. The Lord saw that he had turned to see, and God called to him from within the thorn bush, and He said, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am!" ד וַיֵּרָא יְהוָה כִּי סָר לְרִאיוֹת וַיִּקְרָא אֵלָיו אֱלֹהִים מִתּוֹךְ הַסִּנֵּה וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה מֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמֶר הִנְנִי:
3. Rashi: "Turn aside" does not mean just to turn, but to go in a new direction.
4. Turn aside: to defect, to engage in apostasy. *Asurah* which is from the verb סרה which is to turn aside, but also means elsewhere in *Tanach* to **defect**, or from prophets: **engage in apostasy**. Contains a disruption, subversion, a paradigm shift in a point of view. There is some kind of defecting from the path from before.

Deuteronomy 13:5 כִּי דִבֶּר-סָרָה עַל-יְהוָה: "for he urged disloyalty to the Lord your God."

Deuteronomy 19:16 לַעֲנוֹת בֶּן סָרָה: "gives false testimony against him."

Isaiah 1:5 עוֹד תוֹסִיפוּ סָרָה כָּל-רֹאשׁ: "... that you continue to offend?"

5. "What we lack is not a will to believe but a will to wonder. Having a sense of wonder, being able to appreciate the miraculous in everyday life, is the secret to finding the presence of God." *Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel*
6. "There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle." *Albert Einstein*
7. **Averted vision** involves using peripheral or side vision that allows you to see things outside of your direct line of sight. By "turning aside" a faint object can be observed.



8. The text describes a "bush" (Hebrew: *sneh*) on fire, yet the fire does not destroy it. The Talmudic Sages identified the plant as the holy blackberry, *Rubus Sanctus* (in Latin, *sanctus* and in Hebrew *kadosh*), a thorny bush with pink flowers, which reflects the belief that this was in fact the plant through which God first revealed Himself to Moses. "***This (burning) bush produces both thorns and roses,***" our Sages taught (Shmot Rabba, 2:5), "*just like the people of Israel that includes both righteous and wicked.*"



9. Baruch de Espinoza- **Blessed, from a thorny bush.** The Portuguese surname "Spinoza" means "thorny". Beauty is thorny, think of a rose. That is why Baruch de Spinoza designed this seal ring with his initials on the top, a thorny rose in the middle and the Latin word: "Caute" ("Beware") He used it to close his letters with wax seals. "From the thorn comes good; from the thorn comes a rose."

NOTES: