

PARSHAT SHEMOT 5782
EXODUS 1:1-6:1
19 TEVET 5782/23 DECEMBER 2021



The Basket of Apples
Painting by Paul Cezanne

TO TURN ASIDE IS TO SEE MORE

1. וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶסְרֶה-נָּא וְאֶרְאֶה אֶת-הַמְרָאָה הַגָּדוֹל הַזֶּה (Exodus 3:3)
“Let me turn aside and I shall see this great sight...”

סרה - to turn aside, to defect, to engage in apostacy

2. “Turn aside.” This does not mean just to turn, but to go in a new direction. (Rashi)
3. “Who am I?” (Exodus 3:11)
4. “I will be with you.” (Exodus 3:12)

5. I have seen the sun break through
to illuminate a small field
for a while, and gone my way
and forgotten it. But that was the pearl
of great price, the one field that had
the treasure in it. I realize now
that I must give all that I have
to possess it. Life is not hurrying
on to a receding future, nor hankering after
an imagined past. It is the turning
aside like Moses to the miracle
of the lit bush, to a brightness
that seemed as transitory as your youth
once, but is the eternity that awaits you.

(R. S. Thomas, "A Bright Field.")