

GROWTH

At The

SHABBAT TABLE

7th Edition
By Michael Sionov
BS"D

PARSHAT SHEMOT

An Eternal Bush

Throughout Sefer Bereshit, we find our forefathers receiving Divine prophecy, but the Torah doesn't illustrate the scene of how exactly G-d appeared to them or spoke to them. Yet, at the start of Sefer Shemot, the Torah paints the picture of Moshe taking notice of an inconsumable thorn-bush on fire, and only then G-d revealing Himself to Moshe. Why was this backdrop a necessary component behind this prophecy specifically?

R' YY Jacobson shared a profound insight. Through the burning bush, Hashem was demonstrating an eternal lesson to Moshe before he was to embark on this historic journey. It wasn't just the actual prophecy, but *how* the revelation took place, that was essential. All previous prophecies in Sefer Bereshit were conveyed to individuals, albeit ones that would father nations, but individuals at the time, nonetheless. This communication to Moshe wasn't as an individual to take a personal journey or to go here or do that; this was the journey to assume the position of a leader. The Midrash explains that he didn't just observe a burning bush; he observed much of Jewish history. In his first moment as a leader, he observed a phenomenon within this manifestation: a people who often would, tragically and horrifically, be subjected to flames of hatred, flames of animosity, and flames of envy that would generate violence, discrimination, persecution, and even genocide. Moshe Rabbeinu viewed this not just on a national level but on an individual level as well; he saw that much of life would entail challenges and difficulties. This idea, which can be very discouraging, is revealed to Moshe with another dimension: the bush is not being destroyed. Hashem is signifying that at the core of *Am Yisrael* and the core of every individual Jew is a sense of invincibility. There is something within us that is indestructible, and the Jews should never abandon hope in feelings of destructiveness, despair, or depletion.

The first thing Moshe is being taught as a leader, to empower himself and others, is that as strong as the fire and danger may be, and as powerful as the adversity may present itself, even in seemingly irresolvable situations, nothing is here to ultimately destroy you...

Impressed?

*There was once a man in Bnei Brak building a beautiful villa, and a kollel man was walking by the street as the construction was taking place. He noticed that the architect, the builder, and the owner were having an argument outside the villa. The debate was whether to make the walkway and porch out of marble, or Jerusalem stone. Unexpectedly, the simple kollel man interrupted the discussion: "Excuse me, can I give my opinion?" They were all taken aback. This was an expensive project, with professional and experienced opinions debating the matter. The owner of the house responded, "You sit in yeshiva all day; what do you know about marble or Jerusalem stone? We're not interested in your opinion." The young man was unfazed and announced: "No, I think you need my opinion. I think it would be much nicer if you did it in marble." The owner was dumbfounded. "What makes you think you have a say over here?" The young man responded: "The outside of your house – the porch and the stairway – who are you making it for? You're making it to rip out the eyes of everyone passing by the street. You're making it for me! You're making it to impress me; you're living *inside* the house! So if you're making it to impress me, I'm telling you what I like..."*

If everything in life is about impressing others, then everybody else has a right to tell you what impresses them...

Don't lose your identity; make sure to hold on to the right, healthy perspective.

(R' Zecharia Wallerstein)

"A word of encouragement during failure is worth more than an hour of praise after success."

Refuah Sheleimah, b'toch she'ar cholei Yisrael:

Ariel Ben Frida Frida Bat Yaffa Miriam Bat Bakol Shira Chaya Bat Rachel Esther Bat Frida
Rahamim Ben Shifra Yitzchak Ben Naama Chaim Avraham Ben Shifra Zisel Yakov Gedalia Ben Rachel