

# Burn Baby Burn

Long Beach Alliance Church • June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2010 • Pastor Chris Lankford

**The angel of the LORD appeared to him in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, yet the bush was not consumed.**

**~Exodus 3:2 (NASB)**

## 1) Moses The Shepherd

- A) Moses was nearly forty years old (cf. Acts 7:22-29) when he fled Egypt for the Midian desert (Exodus 2:15-25). Moses marries, has children, and establishes himself as a shepherd in Jethro's\* family for the next forty years (Exodus 3:1, cf. 7:7).
  
- B) Moses is pasturing Jethro's flock away from the traditional location of Midian, near an area called "Mount Horeb," a location which is difficult to determine, but is probably consistent with Mt. Sinai (thus, "the mountain of God," 3:1) in the Southern Sinai region.

\* In the previous chapter Moses' father-in-law was called Reuel (2:18), while here he is referred to as Jethro (3:1) and in Numbers 10:29 as Hobab (see Judges 4:11). The difficulty can be resolved once the ambiguity of the terminology is recognized. The term designating male in-laws is nonspecific. The term referred to a woman's male relatives and could be used for her father, brother or even grandfather. Most solutions take account of this. Perhaps Reuel is the grandfather head of the clan, Jethro is the father of Zipporah and technically the father-in-law of Moses, and Hobab is the brother-in-law of Moses, Jethro's son. Alternatively, Jethro and Hobab could both be brothers-in-law, and Reuel the father. Collected from *The IVP Bible Background Commentary on the Old Testament*, ©2000, by John H. Walton, Victor H. Matthews and Mark W. Chavalas.

## 2) The Call Of Moses

- A) The angel of the Lord<sup>†</sup> appears to Moses in the form of a bush which is burning, but is not consumed by the fire (3:2). While a burning bush would not have been unique in the desert, the absence of consumption was remarkable and attracted Moses' attention (3:3).
  
- B) As Moses draws near, the God speaks to Moses in an audible voice which Moses understands and to which he responds (3:4). Moses is told to not approach the burning bush, but rather remove his sandals as a sign of reverence, because he is on holy ground (3:5).
  
- C) God identifies himself to Moses as the historical God of Moses' forefathers, which terrifies Moses and causes him to hide his face for fear of death (3:6; cf. Exodus 33:20; Judges 6:22-23, 13:22).

## 3) The Commissioning Of Moses

- A) God remembers the oppression of His people at the hands of Egypt (Exodus 3:7, 9) and announces their deliverance to Moses and promise of a land for their possession (3:8).
  
- B) God then announces to Moses that He is sending him to Pharaoh to deliver the Jews from Egypt (3:10), a shocking proposal for Moses who immediately objects (3:11). God reminds Moses that the presence of the Lord will be with him, which will be all he will need to face the challenges which are ahead (3:12).

<sup>†</sup> Appearances of "the angel of the Lord" are known as a "theophany," an occurrence when God revealed himself to people in the form of an angel. Manoah and his wife received news of the birth of Samson from an angelic figure whom they later recognized as God himself (Judges 13). Many, if not most, evangelical scholars believe that the angel of the Lord is a pre-incarnation appearance of Jesus Christ. This is true as well of other theophanies in human and non-human form. Occasionally, these theophanies are more specifically referred to as 'christophanies'. Neither the OT nor the NT directly identifies Jesus Christ with the angel of the Lord. Scholars, though, reason backward from the teaching of the NT (John 1:18) that no-one has seen God the Father. Collected from *The IVP New Dictionary Of Theology, "Theophany"*, ©1988, by Tremper Longman III.