

CURIOSITY

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Lesson: Exodus 3:2-6

Curiosity is a wonderful thing. It leads us to find out about things, to grow in knowledge and wisdom. You know the old saying, “Curiosity killed the cat.” But this only refers to idle curiosity, which has no use in view. The good kind of curiosity is very worthwhile, for it leads us to discover good and useful things.

Moses was curious when he turned aside to see this strange sight—a bush that was on fire but yet did not burn up. How could this be? If he hadn’t been curious, if he hadn’t wanted to find something out, then he would have missed a very great experience. For the Lord spoke to Moses from the burning bush.

Here, the Lord told Moses His name. And He sent Moses back to Egypt to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt and to freedom in the land of Canaan. Did you know that it was near this very spot that the Lord gave Moses the Ten Commandments on the mountain, in the third month after they left Egypt? In fact, “Sinai,” which became the name of that mountain, comes from a Hebrew word meaning “bramble” or “bush.” So Mount Sinai got its name from the burning bush.

This was a good name for the mountain, because the burning bush represents the Lord’s Word. And it was on the mountain nearby that the first part of the Word to be revealed was given—the Ten Commandments.

But why should the Word be represented by a burning bramble bush? First of all, the tangled thorny branches of such a bush give us a good picture of how the letter of the Word appears. The letter of the Word may seem to be a tangled and confused collection of stories and teachings, which are hard to understand, and even seem harsh at times. For example, is the Lord an angry God who punishes, or a gentle, loving God who forgives? Both ideas may be found in the letter of the Word.

But as we investigate more deeply, we begin to see that the whole Word reveals the Lord’s Divine love—this is the “fire” that burns in the midst of the bush. Within all the stories and teachings of the Word is Divine love.

We can get an idea of how this is from the way a parent seems angry with a very small child who goes in the street. To the child, the parent just seems angry and punishing. But really the parent is acting only from love and concern for the child’s safety. The child just can’t understand this yet. Similarly, the Lord sometimes *appears* to be angry in the Word. But as we grow

in understanding, we can come to see that this was just the way people sometimes saw Him, and that really the Lord always speaks and acts from the greatest love.

To see this, we must be willing to “turn aside” as Moses did—turn aside from our worldly concerns, our worldly ways of thinking and acting—and learn about spiritual things. We must make an effort to understand the Word, think about it, and live by it. Moses had to remove the shoes from off his feet as he approached the burning bush. So we must remove low, selfish, earthly thoughts from our minds as we approach the study of the Word.

Then, we too, will see a great vision. We will see the Lord’s Divine love. And we will feel the warmth of this love, in the Word and in all creation.

So it is good to be curious in the right way—that is, from a love of finding out the truth and learning to live a good and useful life. And the best thing of all to be curious about is the Word Itself. Let us “turn aside and see this great sight”