

(July 14, 1748), Maria Theresa revoked the edict of Dec. 18, 1744, "on account of the pressure from the foreign ambassadors," and the Jews were allowed to return to Prague.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Kaufmann, in *Grätz Jubelschrift*, pp. 279-313; Krenkel, *Die Englische Intervention zu Gunsten der Böhmschen Juden*, in *Monatsschrift*, xlv, 177 *et seq.* For an account of the expulsion of the Jews from Prague, Wolf, *Die Vertreibung der Juden aus Böhmen*, in *Jahrbuch für Gesch. der Juden*, iv, 145-261.

G.

A. R.

**BURNING BUSH.**—**Biblical Data:** The name commonly given to the tree from which the angel of Jehovah manifested himself to Moses in a flame of fire; the distinctive feature of the revelation being that the tree was not consumed (Ex. iii. 2-4).

—**In Rabbinical Literature:** The discrepancy between Ex. iii. 2, where it is said that an angel appeared to Moses in the burning bush, and verse 4, where it is stated that God spoke to Moses out of the bush, is answered in various ways by the Midrash. According to one opinion, an angel appeared first and after him the Shekinah; while according to others the appearance of the angel merely indicated to Moses that the Shekinah was near, and this angel



"Moses at the Burning Bush."

(From the Sarajevo Haggadah, 14th century.)

was Michael (or, as some say, Gabriel), the constant attendant of the Shekinah. When Moses beheld this heavenly apparition other persons were with him, who did not, however, perceive anything. According to Joshua b. Karhah (Rabban Gamaliel, Num. R. xii. 4) God revealed Himself to Moses for the first time in a thorn-bush to prove to him that "nothing"—not even such an insignificant plant as the thorn-bush—"is void of the Shekinah." The thorn-bush itself receives various symbolic interpretations. Thus, as this shrub is among the least of the plants, so Israel occupied a lowly and despised position in Egypt. As the thorn-bush is used for a hedge, so Israel is a fence and protection for the other nations. The burning but not consuming fire of the bush indicated to Moses that Israel would successfully endure all the sorrows and pains inflicted upon it by the Egyptians. It was "heavenly fire" (compare Darmesteter, in "Rev. Etudes Juives," i, 186 *et seq.*), that burns and consumes not (Ex. R. ii. 5).

J. SR.

L. G.

—**Critical View:** The word rendered "bush" (סנה) is found only in this passage and in Deut. xxxiii. 16, where, however, it is possible that the right reading is "Sinai." It is generally held that a thorn-bush of some sort is meant; but the exact species has not been determined. The ground about the bush was holy (verse 5), showing that the place was a residence of the Deity.

The main purpose of the theophany is made plain by the context. YUWHI, whose seat was in Mt. Sinai, was about to take the Israelites as a people under His direct protection and to deliver them from bondage; and after their deliverance they were to enter into a covenant with Him at this sacred spot (iii. 7-12). The motive of the special mode and form of the apparition may be arrived at as follows: God's self-manifestation in fire is a familiar episode in ancient Israel. Indeed, this appearance to Moses has its counterpart in the greater display of lightnings and thunderings in the same region in the presence of the whole of Israel, when the covenant was actually made. On the latter occasion, and in the other theophanies (Ps. xviii. 8, 12 *et seq.*; 1. 3; Micah i. 4; Hab. iii. 3 *et seq.*; compare Deut. iv. 24; Heb. xii. 29), the fire is destructive; whereas here it is shown to be harmless by the preservation of the tree that was enveloped in its flames.

The explanation is found in the particular design of the revelation. Fire is an emblem of the purity or holiness of God; while, ordinarily, this attribute is represented as being visibly displayed when God intervenes in the way of judgment and retribution, the object here is to show that YUWHI brings Israel into a sure relation to Himself, which means preservation or salvation.

The sacred tree has not an equal significance. The burning bush is not to be compared with the sacred terebinth and other trees which play so large a rôle in the earlier history of Israel, and which have a permanent sanctity of their own. It was, however, a living thing, the only object on Sinai that had life in it; and it belonged, moreover, to a class of objects often made the abode of divinity. The explanation often given, that the bush symbolized the people of Israel unconsumed by the oppression of Egypt, can not have been the primary meaning of the phenomenon.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** W. R. Smith, *Religion of the Semites*, pp. 193 *et seq.*; Baudissin, *Studien zur Semitischen Religionsgeschichte*, ii, 223; Georg Jacob, *Altarabische Parallelen zum Alten Testament*, Berlin, 1897; Löw, *Aramäische Pflanzennamen*, Nos. 219, 275; and the commentaries on Exodus of Dillmann, Keil, Holzinger, and Strack.

J. AR.

J. F. McC.

**BURNING OF THE DEAD.** See CREMATION.

**BURNT OFFERING.**—**Biblical Data:** The ordinary translation in modern versions of the Hebrew "olah" (עֹלָה). This term does not mean literally "burnt offering," but "what is brought up" or presented to the Deity. The name is a translation of the Septuagint rendering, which is itself based upon the descriptive phrase often attached to "olah" in the ritual prescriptions: "an offering made by fire unto the Lord" (Lev. i. 9 *et seq.*). A synonym is