

January 5, 2013 – Shemot

Beginning the Book of Exodus, we concentrated on what is called the episode of Moses at the burning bush, especially chapter 3, verse 11: “But Moses said to God, ‘Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and free the Israelites from Egypt?’” We studied the Torah text, as well as commentary by Rashi and several modern rabbis, and there was a spirited discussion centered around a number of questions. We asked, “Why did God use a bush to make contact with Moses when no such devices were necessary when God spoke to Abraham or Jacob?” Also, “Why was Moses the one God chose?” And, “Why did God choose to free the Israelites?” And finally, “Why did God wait 400 years before deciding it was time to free the Israelites?”

There are many possible answers to those questions, and we explored some of them—not only those of the rabbis, but our own.