

Devotions Blog

Burning Bush

By Shelley S. Cramm In: [Garden Design](#) on Oct 27, 2022



Fall color blazes brilliantly by now for many of you, and no plant dazzles better than burning bush. Leaves of this special shrub, *Euonymus alatus*, turn riotous red in autumn, commanding attention and drawing tree canopies' color down to the ground. To be clear, *Euonymus* is not a Bible plant. It is a deciduous shrub native to central Asia, not the Holy Land.

However, its common name makes a Biblical metaphor, its attention-getting, showy seasonal color a comparison to the moment that the LORD attracted Moses' eye, revealing His fiery glory in the midst of a [bush that did not burn up](#).

There the Angel of the Lord showed Himself to Moses in a burning fire from inside a bush. Moses looked and saw that the bush was burning with fire, but it was not being burned up. Exodus 3:2 NLV

The Lord marked the beginning of Moses' mission to bring the Israelites out of bondage in Egypt with this momentous display. The flames were a hint of the sizzling encounters that would unfold at Mount Sinai, bequeathing God's Holy Words to His people. For Moses to later steadily remind the Israelites that God is a consuming fire—

The Lord your God is a raging fire, a God who does not tolerate rivals. Deuteronomy 4:24 GW

Know therefore today that he who goes over before you as a consuming fire is the Lord your God. Deuteronomy 9:3 ESV

—speaks a subtle understatement of the ages! Moses spent 40 days enveloped in God’s flaming presence, yikes! This is a lot to contemplate, considering the forest fires brushing close to communities recently on the Pacific coast. The Israelites were so awestruck by the fierce intensity—trumpets blaring, mountain smoking, lightning bolting—they were [afraid to go up with Moses in the first place](#).

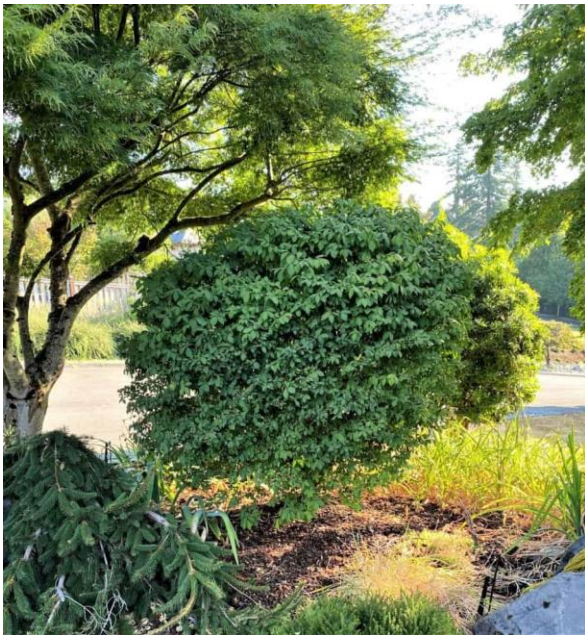
Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they took their place at the foot of the mountain. Now Mount Sinai was completely covered with smoke because the Lord had descended on it in fire, and its smoke went up like the smoke of a great furnace, and the whole mountain shook violently. Exodus 19:17-18 NET

The glory of the Lord appeared to the children of Israel to be a consuming fire on the mountaintop. Moses entered into the midst of the cloud and climbed up the mountain.

He remained on the mountain for forty days and forty nights. Exodus 24:17-18 NCB

Burning bush served as a symbolic signpost, heralding the era of God’s awesome display of power and ferocious splendor for the Israelites to leave bondage and become God’s holy people.

Plant Burning Bush



Burning bush is a hardy shrub suitable for gardens in zones 4 to 8. Most of the year it is an unassuming plant with dull, dark green foliage and stiff, fortified branches, easily going unnoticed. The shrub endures hot sun with modest watering once established, adapts to most soil types, and requires little fertilizer or finicky fussing.

Except shearing. “Bush” may be a euphemism, because the shrub grows quite large, to 20 feet tall by 20 feet wide, and spreads easily by runners and volunteer seedlings. Beware! In northern climates, it is borderline invasive. Attentive forming and shaping will keep the bush right-sized for your garden, as a shielding hedge or specimen planting.

And then the fall arrives! The fantastic leaves burn bright with color, sweeping away any grievances toward rigorous, out-of-bounds growth with drama and captivating color.

Refer to these websites for more information on burning bush plant care:
TheSpruce.com; ThisisMyGarden.com; Texas A&M AgriLife
and WARNING! in Pennsylvania, burning bush is banned, as Horticulturist George Weigel Reports

Keep the Fire Burning

Moving out from Sinai in the Scriptures, we are shown the seat of God's fiery nature: His throne. Daniel viewed His flaming majesty:

As I watched the vision unfold, thrones were set in place, And the Ancient of Days took His throne above all. His clothes were the purest white, as white as snow, and the hair of His head was like the finest wool. His throne was a flaming fire, set on wheels that blazed like the sun. Daniel 7:9 VOICE

And John saw the Lord Jesus similarly fashioned in his revelation:

I saw a gold menorah with seven branches, And in the center, the Son of Man, in a robe and gold breastplate, hair a blizzard of white, Eyes pouring fire-blaze, both feet furnace-fired bronze, His voice a roar, right hand holding the Seven Stars, His mouth a sharp-biting sword, his face a blinding sun. Revelation 1:12-16 The Message

God's righteous rule is white-hot pure, fashioned and flame-tested, veiling His place as eternal King. Jesus alluded to His involvement in this regal destiny when he quipped:



I have come to set the earth on fire and how I wish it were already ablaze with fiery passion for God. Luke 12:49 TPT

Since we are receiving our rights to an unshakable kingdom, we should be extremely thankful and offer God the purest worship that delights his heart as we lay down our lives in absolute surrender, filled with awe. For our God is a consuming fire. Hebrews 12:28-29 TPT

Pure Worship

A simple shrub or two of burning bush in our gardens may seem like more than a landscape away from all the ferocity the Lord fired up in the Sinai and throughout His Word...and don't we go to our gardens to retreat from riots and rancor? Why would we invite a fiery blaze to our tranquil

yards? Yet don't keep your distance! There is another mention of burning bush from the blessing spoken over Joseph:

“Blessed by God be his land: The best fresh dew from high heaven, and fountains springing from the depths; The best radiance streaming from the sun and the best the moon has to offer; Beauty pouring off the tops of the mountains and the best from the everlasting hills; The best of Earth’s exuberant gifts, the smile of the Burning-Bush Dweller. Deuteronomy 33:13-16 The Message

This passage soothes with pleasant descriptions of holy life. Gentle watering in dewdrops and underground springs; sunshine and moonlight beaming to bring bright fruitfulness and quiet evening walks; a sense of eternal contentment in the vistas to hills and mountains that go on forever—all bucolic gifts bestowed by the blazing, holy “Burning-Bush Dweller.” This Word invites us to hold the tension between good and holy, peace and passion, gentleness and ferocity. Let the fleeting color of burning bush fuel a blazing, barefoot, forever intimacy with I AM.

Closing Prayer

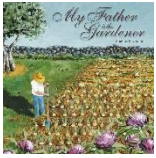
O Lord, You call us to a holy life, hallelujah! Your holiness is everything our souls long for, a yearning that burns deeper than our awareness. Help me with a huge measure of faith to endure the burning You bring, actual or allegorical, to the distractions and addictions in my every day that keep me from standing before you on Holy Ground. May I walk through the fire and delight with You in a dross-free life, O marvelous “Burning-Bush Dweller!” I love You, Lord, and look forward to a more wholesome understanding of Your love. In Jesus name, Amen.



*burning bush brings the radiant color in fall tree canopies down to ground level,
where our Consuming-Fire God will meet us, too*

Let my people go, so that they may worship me. Deuteronomy 9:1 NIV





Do you love connecting God's Word to your gardening work? You will love my new book, *My Father is the Gardener*, *Devotions in Botany and Gardening of the Bible*, [order at this link](#).



The burning bush is thought by many Biblical botanists and scholars to have been a bramble; read from [Bible Brambles and Pentecost](#) the Devotions Blog for more garden devotion



Ready for more? **Egypt** is a devotional series in [God's Word for Gardeners Bible](#) from the **Garden Tour** section, beginning on page a-14

Photo Credits:

I borrowed most of the photos in this blog – in Texas, our burning bushes will not blaze color for several more weeks! Feature photo: ©2013 Eric Hunt, *Euonymus alatus*, Species from China, Japan, Korea, Common name: Burning Bush, Very common landscape plant here in the Central South, Photographed in the parking lot at my office, Little Rock, Arkansas, [From Flickr photos](#); ©2017 Moein Moradi photograph of burning fire [From Pexels.com](#); A big thank you to my mom, Charlotte Macfee, for her snapshots of her former garden in Camas, WA, which inspired me to pursue God's Word concerning the burning bush

ESV denotes Scripture quotations taken from The ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®). ESV® Text Edition: 2016. Copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. The ESV® text has been reproduced in cooperation with and by permission of Good News Publishers. Unauthorized reproduction of this publication is prohibited. All rights reserved.

GW denotes Scripture quotations taken from GOD'S WORD®, © 1995, 2003, 2013, 2014, 2019, 2020 by God's Word to the Nations Mission Society. Used by permission.

The Message denotes Scripture quotations taken from *THE MESSAGE*, copyright © 1993, 2002, 2018 by Eugene H. Peterson. Used by permission of NavPress. All rights reserved. Represented by Tyndale House Publishers, a Division of Tyndale House Ministries.

NCB denotes Scripture taken from the SAINT JOSEPH NEW CATHOLIC BIBLE® Copyright © 2019 by Catholic Book Publishing Corp. Used with permission. All rights reserved."

NET designates Scripture quoted by permission from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996, 2019 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://netbible.com> All rights reserved.

NIV denotes Scripture quotations taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. www.zondervan.com The "NIV" and "New International Version" are trademarks registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica, Inc.®

NLV denotes Scripture quotations taken from the New Life Version, copyright © 1969 and 2003. Used by permission of Barbour Publishing, Inc., Uhrichsville, Ohio 44683. All rights reserved.

TPT denotes Scripture quotations taken from The Passion Translation®. Copyright © 2017, 2018, 2020 by Passion & Fire Ministries, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved. ThePassionTranslation.com

VOICE denotes Scripture quotations taken from The Voice™. Copyright © 2012 by Ecclesia Bible Society. Used by permission. All rights reserved.