

MEETING THE GOD OF REALITY

A Devotional Meditation on Vayera (And I Appeared)

Exodus 6:2-9:35; Ezekiel 28:25-29:21; Zechariah 8:20-23; Luke 1:30-33

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It's easy to maintain the fiction of devotion to God as long as we keep him confined to the spiritual realm. As long as faith is simply the hope of an ethereal heavenly reward, then we can do whatever we please in the here-and-now. The problem is, our Creator is the God of the here-and-now as well as the by-and-by, and from time to time he reminds us of that. He is very much part of our reality, and that's what makes true devotion to him both uncomfortable and rare.



Photo by Tim Mossholder, Wagon Mound, New Mexico, December 11, 2023, [on Unsplash](#).

It's always been that way. We can see how God intersects with human reality through these instructions to Moses:

Say therefore to the people of Israel, "I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from slavery to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment. I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. I will bring you into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. I will give it to you for a possession. I am the LORD."

Exodus 6:6-8 ESV

Some would prefer to relegate the Exodus account to myth and legend. And yet, those ancient words of God are relevant to our reality because the descendants of those ancient Israelites are still here. They are the Jewish people, and they have returned to that very same geographical location God spoke about to Moses: the Promised Land he himself had guaranteed as the possession of Israel's Patriarchs and their descendants. We can go to that place right now and walk on the same ground the Patriarchs walked. It is also the land where Yeshua walked, and that's why this connection to Israel's land and people is part of both the Christian and the Jewish reality. In the end, those realities are the same because the same God of Abraham established them.

It might be said that the Christian reality has focused more on the spiritual truth of God's Kingdom. We are, after all, devoted to the King, Messiah Yeshua. We know he is the King because the angel Gabriel declared that when he told Mary about the child she would bear:

He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.

From this we learn that our Lord is the Son of God and Savior of the world. We follow Yeshua's teachings because they are instructions about how to live at peace with God and men. That's a good start, but unless we connect our Savior with the physical people and the geographical place called Israel, our understanding of Messiah's Kingdom is at best theoretical.

Our Jewish brethren are good at emphasizing the historical and geographical reality of God's Kingdom. That's why they say every year at Passover, "Next year in Jerusalem." It's also why Jews have mourned and prayed and repented for millennia in expectation that God will end their exile and restore them to the very same land to which he led them in the days of the Exodus. Their prayers have not been in vain. The proof of that is the reality of the Jewish State of Israel. It's the sign that there is a God, and that he is willing and able to come through on his promises. And yet, for the most part, Jewish people have missed the King. That means all their commendable devotion to the Torah, the land, and the God of Israel has missed the power of the direct connection to the King.

We will understand in time why this disconnect between the two halves of God's Covenant People was necessary. The multitudes from the nations who have proclaimed their loyalty to Messiah Yeshua – the one we first met as Jesus Christ, Son of David – needed only that. The reality of the Kingdom has permeated hearts on every continent over the last two thousand years, creating a people from those who were not a people and transforming them from the inside out through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Over those same centuries, Jewish saints have carried the oracles of God in their hearts and in their Torah scrolls even as they were persecuted from one city to another, often by the very ones who should have been the first to defend them and seek to learn from them. They have, as a people, remained true to the Covenant calling of Israel, walking it out as faithfully as they could in expectation of the restoration of the Kingdom to Israel and the revelation of Israel's Messiah.

Now we are here in the fullness of time, just as Moses appeared before Pharaoh in the fullness of time. Back then, God intervened in human history to establish his people Israel in the land where he had placed his name. Now he is intervening in human history to remind both Jews and Christians that his name remains on that particular land, and that both of them have a connection to it. As God said through Zechariah:

Thus says the LORD of hosts: Peoples shall yet come, even the inhabitants of many cities. The inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, "Let us go at once to entreat the favor of the LORD and to seek the LORD of hosts; I myself am going." Many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem and to entreat the favor of the LORD. Thus says the LORD of hosts: In those days ten men from the nations of every tongue shall take hold of the robe of a Jew, saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you."

Zechariah 8:20-23 ESV

This is why the Kingdom of Heaven is inseparable from the land of Israel and God's capital city of Jerusalem. We know the King. Now let's learn about his Kingdom. It's not difficult to find; it's the one place on earth to which all roads lead.