

Tabernacle, Part 3: I Want to Meet With You!

After the fall of Adam and Eve, meetings with God became very rare. At times, God would come down and visit His people. Those visitations were the exception and not the rule.

In Genesis 5:24, we are told “Enoch walked with God; and He was not, for God took him.”

This was an amazing story of a life of fellowship with God. Enoch was walking with God and did not go home for supper, for God took him. Enoch was taken so that he did not see death, (Hebrews 11:5). Jude tells us that “Enoch... prophesied about the Lord coming with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deed...” (Jude 14-15) During Enoch’s lifetime, God did not openly dwell with men.

We do not read of this type of thing happening often.

The next closest thing to what happened with Enoch was when Elijah was caught up by a whirlwind into heaven.

When God would come down, He rarely spoke to the whole congregation of people.

Throughout the history of the Old Testament, only a small number of people had a visitation or message from God.

The Lord told **Abraham** to: “Get out of his home country,” (Genesis 12:1). He was to change his position and focus on life. He looked for a city whose builder was God.

Jacob was alone and asleep at Bethel when he saw the angels of God ascending and descending on a ladder and he saw Jehovah, (Genesis 28:11-13). He did not know God was there when he lay down to sleep.

Moses was alone when he heard the call of God from the burning bush, (Exodus 3:1-10). Moses did not know God was present until he turned aside to see the burning bush. Then he heard God say: “*This is holy ground.*”

Elijah was alone on Mt. Horeb when a great and strong wind tore the mountains, and after the wind an earthquake and after the earthquake a fire, and then he heard the still small voice of God speaking, (1 Kings 19:11-12).

Ezekiel was alone by the river Chebar when the word of the Lord came and the hand of the Lord was upon him there. He looked and saw the angels of God and saw the “throne of God and the likeness of the glory of the Lord,” (Ezekiel

1:1-28).

Daniel was alone when he saw the "Ancient of Days was seated upon the fiery throne," (Daniel 7:9-10).

Samuel was serving the Lord by assisting Eli the priest of Shiloh. 1 Samuel 3:1 tells us, "in those days messages from the Lord were very rare, and visions were quite uncommon." Samuel had been trimming the wicks in the holy place, yet, he had not heard the voice of God. One night while lying down, the Lord called to Samuel and he did not know that it was the Lord.

Isaiah saw the Lord sitting on a throne in the year that King Uzziah died, (Isaiah 6). When God came near, He required Isaiah to change his focus from an earthly kingdom to a heavenly kingdom. He said: "I saw the Lord, high and lifted up," (Isaiah 6:1). That changed Isaiah's position and focus and his life was never the same.

Isaiah 64:1–2 NKJV Oh, that You would rend the heavens! That You would come down! That the mountains might shake at Your presence— As fire burns brushwood, As fire causes water to boil— To make Your name known to Your adversaries, That the nations may tremble at Your presence!

The heavenly vision of the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, transformed Isaiah. *Once He witnessed the Lord in His glory, the holy angels, and heard the sounds of worship in heaven, he could not have enough.* Isaiah needed more of God. He was terrified and he was changed. He knew he was undone and unclean. Isaiah knew that Israel truly needed God. They needed to know the power of the presence of God.

This theme is taken up several times in the Old Testament.

God warned Moses about the future actions of his people. He said they would forsake the Lord and would serve gods that were the work of men's hands.

Then God told Moses: *"But if from there you seek the Lord your God, you will find him if you look for Him with all your heart and with all your soul."*

(Deuteronomy 4:29 NIV)

In Proverbs 8:17 God said, *"I love them that love Me; and those that seek Me early shall find Me."*

God told Jeremiah (29:13): *"And you shall seek Me, and find Me, when you shall search for Me with all your heart."*

Yet, the people consistently lived outside of that glory and fellowship with God Almighty.

God wanted more than that for them. God wanted to have constant fellowship with them. He wanted them to have more than an occasional encounter.

It is difficult to understand how far sinful people are from God. Even though some people seem to be relatively good they are far from God.

In Romans 3:23 we are told: “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

God wants us to know and fellowship in His glory, but sin has robbed us of that place. Because God's love is so great, and His mercy, grace, and forgiveness are so complete, we may underestimate what God has done to bring us in.

God Almighty wants to draw us aside into a place of fellowship with Him.

We catch a glimpse of God's awesome and terrible glory and power when Israel camped below Mount Sinai.

They came out of Egypt and the pillar of cloud and pillar of fire led them through the wilderness. God went to extra-ordinary lengths to make His presence and glory knowable and accessible. Their sin continued to hinder a close fellowship with Him.

The place God made for Adam was inaccessible. Sin had excluded him.

Now God was coming down to meet with His people on Sinai.

The glory of the Lord was so great that the mountain appeared to be on fire. When God came down, they could not even set foot on Sinai, the mountain of God.

The Psalmist David asked: “Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? Or who may stand in His holy place?” (Psalm 24:3) He answered his own question: “He who has clean hands and a pure heart...” That remained the problem for we have all sinned and fall short of God's glory.

In the wilderness, God provided the tabernacle as a place of meeting.

This was the whole concept of the tabernacle. The Tabernacle was a Tent of Meeting, a place to meet with God.

God set aside the place and time to meet with Him.

Everything about the place of meeting demonstrated the holiness of God and sinfulness of man. Everything demonstrated the grace of God that opens up a way for fellowship and access into God's glory and presence. Access into the holy place was behind the curtains and veil. It was limited to the one man

who made intercession for the whole congregation.

God's glory and manifest presence is not open to everyone.

He will only reveal Himself to those who seek Him with a whole heart. God's recognized presence and glory dwells outside the realm of the natural or common man. God is not base and common. God is pure and undefiled. He is separate, lofty and holy. He is high and lifted up.

To enter into and enjoy His holy presence, we must come aside and apart from the world.

In the Tabernacle, God provided a way to know Him and find help.

This was a place to come and meet with God. It was the place to find mercy and help for times of need. It was a holy place where God would come down. This was the place of forgiveness and atonement for sin. God was calling them to come aside and find Him.

God is calling people to come to Him.

In Acts 7:3 Stephen said: *The God of Glory appeared unto Abraham and said... "Get out of your country and from your relatives."* The God of glory called out to Abram above all the gods of the Chaldeans. Abraham heard the voice of God and responded.

Moses was out on the backside of the wilderness for 40 years. *Then one day, the "Burning Bush" appeared. Moses said: "I will draw near; I will turn aside and see this great wonder." From the bush he heard the voice: "Moses, Moses" — "Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground."* He was on holy ground. His shoes were off his feet in the presence of God.

Samuel was asleep in Eli's house when the Lord came calling to him in the night. He had trimmed the lamps in the tabernacle, but he did not know God. Then God came to him in the night season. God called three times before Samuel was able to respond.

David was tending his father's sheep. David was far away from the city, away from the world, living a secret life with God. Out in the field, He found the living God. God delivered him from the lion and the bear. **David said:** *"The Lord, called me from following the sheep."* His heart was captured by God.

Isaiah saw the Lord *"sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple."* When he saw His glory, he was overwhelmed with his own uncleanness. Nothing compares with the glory of the Lord God Almighty. That day all the glory of the world faded from view.

God had made a time to meet with them.

The almighty God pursued them. He wanted to draw them unto Himself. He wanted to set them aside from the things that had preoccupied their lives. God was ready to tabernacle with them.

God wants to dwell among us. He has been calling out to us.

2 Corinthians 3:16 NKJV Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

The veil separated them from the presence and glory of God. The veil is not taken away until one turns to the Lord. Israel could not enter into the fellowship that Moses had because of sin. The only way the veil can be taken away is in Christ. When we respond to His call, God will remove the veil that has hidden His glory.

God is indicating vital, powerful, anointed, emotional, and real fellowship with you.

He is calling us aside to meet with Him. He has prepared the place. He has come down. He is looking for anyone who will turn aside from other things.

He is still saying: *"When you shall search for Me with all your heart... you will find Me."* (**Jeremiah 29:13**)

When we respond and turn, God will remove the veil and show us His glory.

2 Corinthians 3:18 NKJV But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.