



The Father



Jesus saith unto [Mary], Touch me not;
for I am not yet ascended to my Father:
but go to my brethren, and say unto them,
I ascend unto my Father, and your Father;
and to my God, and your God.
John 20:17



Dedicated to Our God and Our Father



Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.
James 4:8



While I have studied, pondered and prayed over the scriptures for more than 40 years, it is only recently that the LORD, the Most High God, our Father, has opened my eyes to see how involved He was with the fathers from Adam to Jacob and then with Moses and a few others after Moses.

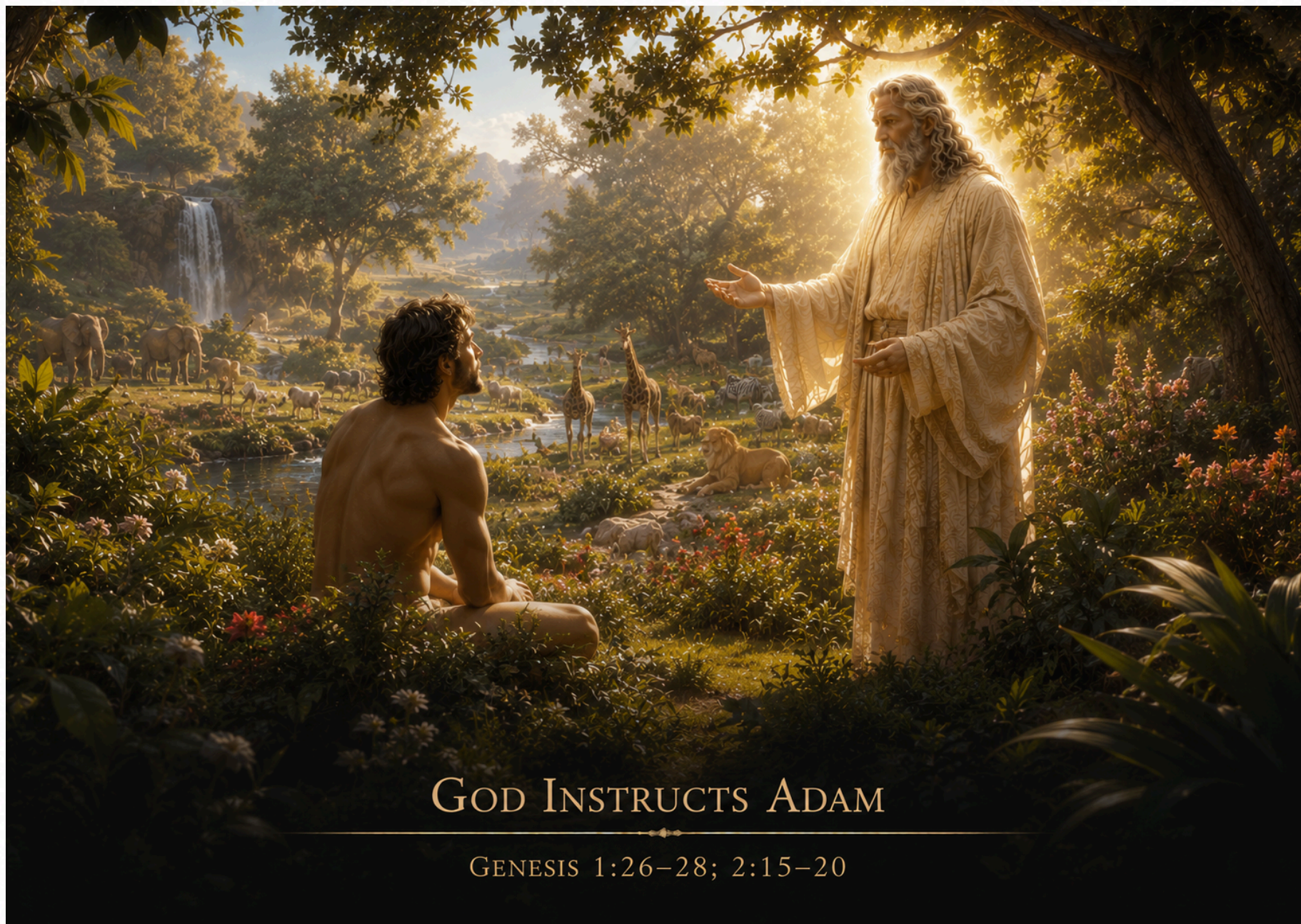
I wanted to bring to life many of the experiences God had with his children that are recorded in the scriptures showing it is possible to know God as Jesus encouraged us to do. These experiences have a common thread, they usually come after many years of faithfulness.

Joseph



In Genesis, Moses gives us a glimpse into the relationship God has with Adam. God creates this world and then prepares a special garden and places Adam in the garden and gives it to Adam to take care of. God teaches Adam about the garden and explains that he may eat freely of all the fruits except for the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

Then God does something remarkable, He brings all the animals to Adam and asks Adam to name them. Adam was his son, as the gospel of Luke tells us. God trusted Adam with the task, and I can imagine the love and joy He felt as He watched His son name the animals.



GOD INSTRUCTS ADAM

GENESIS 1:26–28; 2:15–20



Adam noticed, all the animals had help meets, but he did not, he was alone.

God then brought a woman to Adam to be his help meet and he lovingly gave her the name Eve.



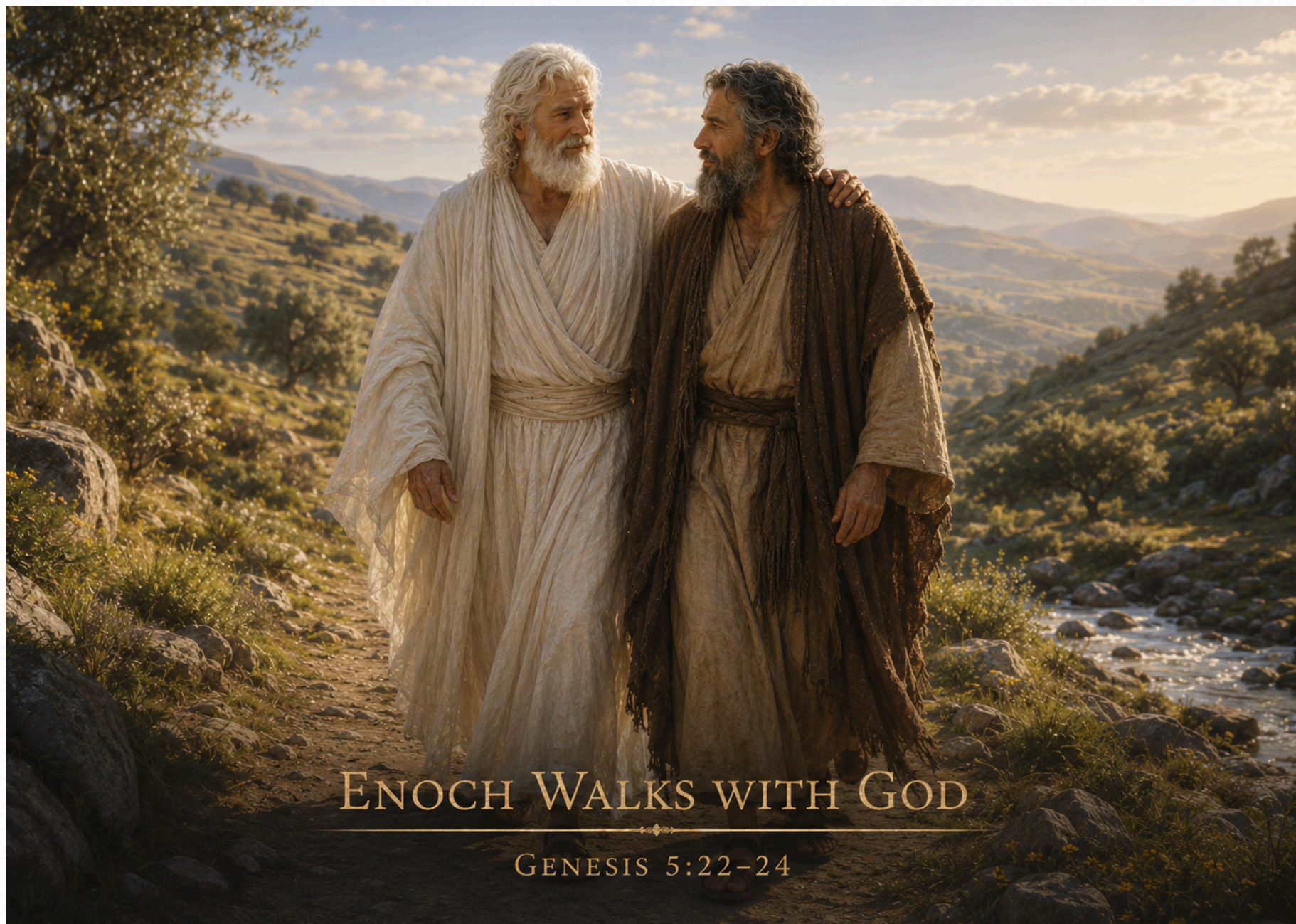
THE LORD BRINGS EVE TO ADAM

GENESIS 2:21-24



The next story Moses gives us about God visiting someone on earth is when He walks with Enoch. Enoch was 65 years old at the time and walked with God for 300 years while raising his family and having many more sons and daughters. Then, instead of dying, Enoch was simply taken by God.

During the first 243 years that Enoch walked with God, Adam was still alive. I imagine the discussions Adam and Enoch would have had as they shared their experiences with God, for Adam knew what it was like to be in the presence of God, and so did Enoch. It is always wonderful to talk with someone who understands your experiences because they have lived them too.





What is remarkable to me, which I only noticed recently, is that Moses used the same phrase for Enoch's great-grandson Noah. Noah also walked with God before the flood. Even though the majority of the people of the world were becoming more wicked and violent, Noah remained righteous, and God called him to build an ark and take some of his family through the flood.

While Moses never tells us that Methuselah and Lamech walked with God, they both had the opportunity to talk with Adam, and obviously with their father and grandfather Enoch. So even if they did not have that experience themselves, and they may have, they could still share in the joy of Noah walking with God, and talk about the experiences of Adam and Enoch. What marvelous experiences those must have been.



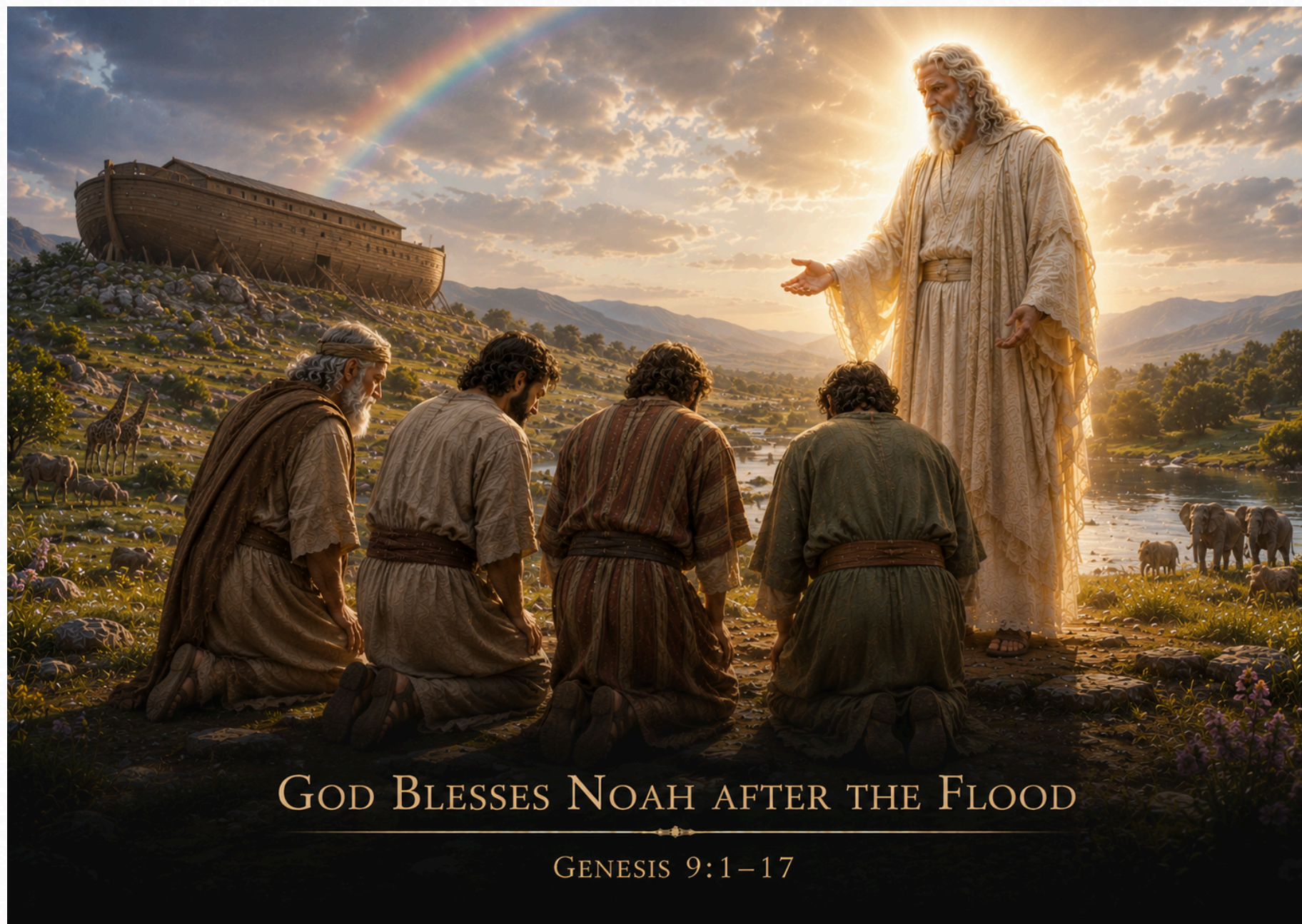
NOAH WALKS WITH GOD

GENESIS 6:9



After the flood God then comes to Noah and his sons and makes a covenant with them to never flood the earth again and gives them the same charge he gave Adam, to multiply and replenish the earth and have stewardship over all living things.

How wonderful it would have been for Noah to now have three of his sons to have seen God.



GOD BLESSES NOAH AFTER THE FLOOD

GENESIS 9:1–17



Noah died 350 years after the flood, Abram (Abraham) was 58 and Shem outlived Abram (Abraham). He surely met and knew both men and likely questioned them closely about life before the flood, what they knew of Adam and Enoch, and their own experiences of seeing God, which would have strengthened his faith.

When Abram (Abraham) was 75, God told him to leave his country, his family, and his father's household and go to a land God would show him. God promised to make a great nation through him and said that through him all the families of the earth would be blessed. Abram (Abraham) obeyed, taking Sarai (Sarah), Lot, and all they'd gathered in Haran, until they reached Canaan and Shechem, near the great tree of Moreh, among the Canaanites. There God appeared again, promising the land to his descendants, and Abram (Abraham) built an altar to mark it.



THE LORD APPEARS TO ABRAM

GENESIS 12:7



Not long after that experience Abram (Abraham) was told by God that his heir would come from his loins, Sarai (Sarah) and Abram (Abraham) were unable to have children so Sarai (Sarah) gave Hagar to Abram (Abraham) as a wife so maybe her handmaid could provide the heir. Contention arose between Sarai (Sarah) and Hagar and Hagar ran away.

How sad and lonely Hagar would have been. Then the Angel of the LORD comforts her and encourages her to return and submit to Sarai (Sarah), letting her know she was pregnant and the child would be a son, wild and energetic and be known among the family. He also shared with her that her posterity would be great in number and this is a great blessing for her.

Moses made it clear that God spoke to Hagar.



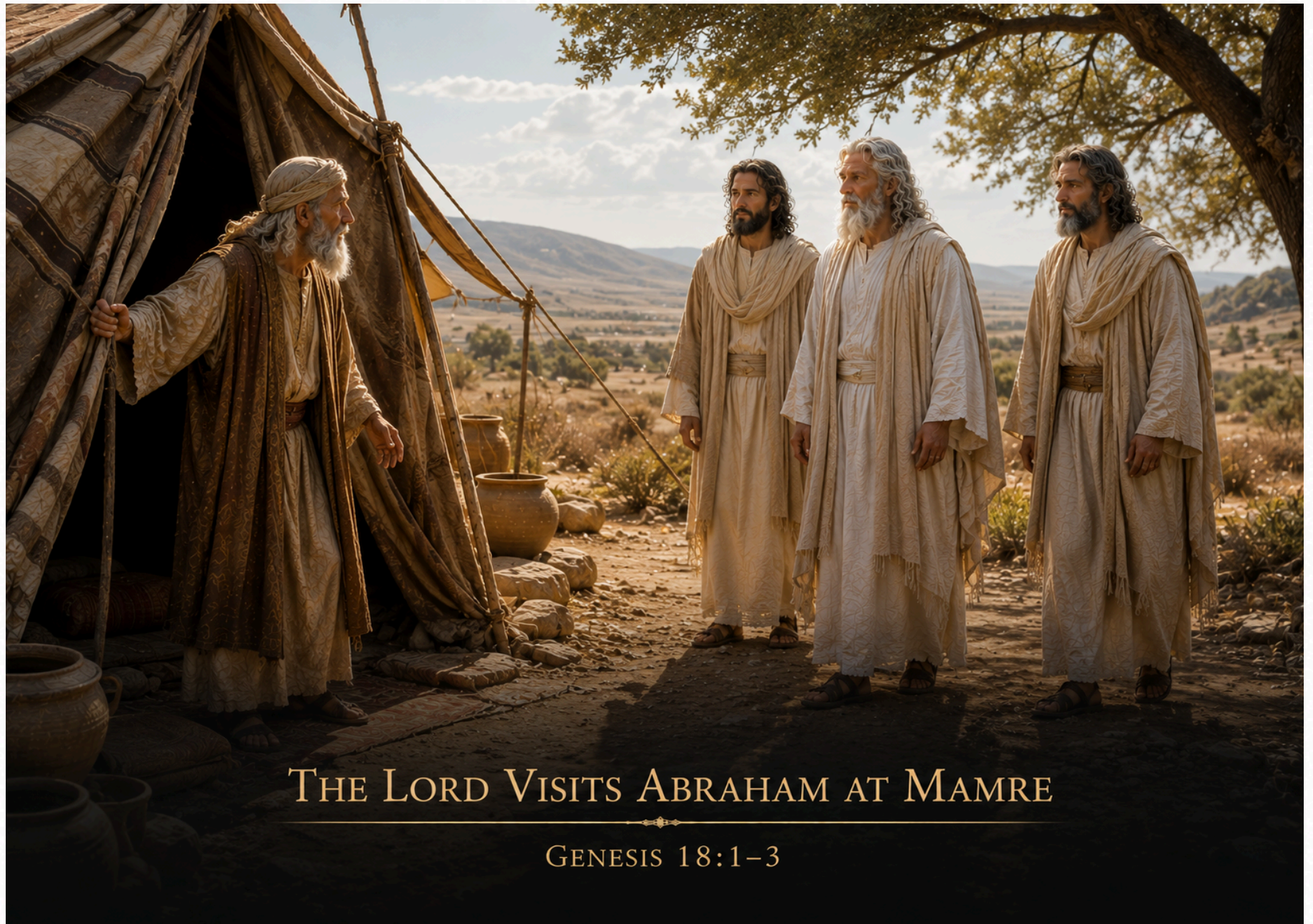
HAGAR IS FOUND BY THE LORD

GENESIS 16:7-13



When Abram was 99, God appeared to him and renewed the covenant with him, confirming that through his seed he would be blessed and that he would not be able to count the number of posterity he would have. At this time he gave Abram a new name Abraham and Sarai was called Sarah, and yet Sarah still had not had any children.

Not long after God with two angels came to Abraham, and Abraham fed them. In this visit God told Abraham Sarah would give birth to a son who would be Abraham's heir.



THE LORD VISITS ABRAHAM AT MAMRE

GENESIS 18:1-3



Isaac was the covenant son and was taught by Abraham in the ways of God, how to worship Him and live a righteous life. I am sure Abraham would have taken Isaac to meet Shem, so that both Shem and Abraham could share with Isaac their experiences of visiting with God. However Isaac still needed his own experiences with God. He could hear Abraham and Shem talk about what they had experienced, but in the end Isaac had to know God for himself.

Over his life Isaac followed the directions he received from God through the Spirit. Moses tells us that God visited Isaac twice between the ages of 75 and 100. The first time was during a famine. God told Isaac not to leave the land and promised that He would be with him and bless him. Years later God appeared to Isaac again and personally renewed with him the covenant He had made with Abraham.



THE LORD APPEARS TO ISAAC

GENESIS 26:24-25



Jacob is often portrayed as a trickster who manipulated his way into God's blessings. I see him differently. He valued his relationship with God, desired to follow Him, and God blessed him for it.

When Jacob left home, he knew Esau had intentions to kill him.

Twenty years later Jacob returned at God's command, greatly blessed with wives, children, servants, and flocks. Fearing Esau, he divided his family into two camps to protect them, should Esau attack one group, the other might still escape.

Left alone, Jacob encountered a man, and the two ended up wrestling through the night.



JACOB WRESTLES WITH GOD

GENESIS 32:24-28



When the man dislocated Jacob's hip, Jacob realized this was no ordinary man and held on for a blessing. It was God. He blessed Jacob, changed his name to Israel, and renewed the covenant with him personally, the same covenant he had made with Isaac and with Abraham. Jacob declared, "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."



JACOB IS BLESSED AT PENIEL

GENESIS 32:26-30



Moses was born approximately 300 years after Jacob and Joseph died. After being raised in Pharaoh's house for 40 years he fled Egypt and ended up living with Jethro and his family, marrying one of his daughters. Jethro was a descendant of Abraham through one of the sons Abraham had with his wife Keturah. No doubt Moses learned about the God of Jacob, Isaac, Abraham, Shem, Noah, Enoch and Adam from Jethro. Jethro would have taught him how they worshiped, lived lives of righteousness and came into the presence of God. This fits the same pattern I see with the fathers. Before they came into the presence of God, they had already been taught about Him and learned how to worship Him.



THE LORD CALLS MOSES
FROM THE BURNING BUSH

EXODUS 3:2-6



God heard the cries of Israel under Egyptian slavery and sent Moses to deliver them through many miracles. However, after leaving Egypt they quickly began to complain and murmur.

At Mount Sinai, God promised that if they obeyed Him and kept His covenant, they would be His treasured people, a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. They agreed. However, when God spoke from the mountain amid thunder, lightning and cloud, they were afraid and asked Moses to speak with God for them.

Moses took seventy elders up the mountain, where they saw God and ate before Him. Moses remained there another forty days, but Israel made a golden calf, returned to Egyptian-style worship, and broke the covenant they had just made.

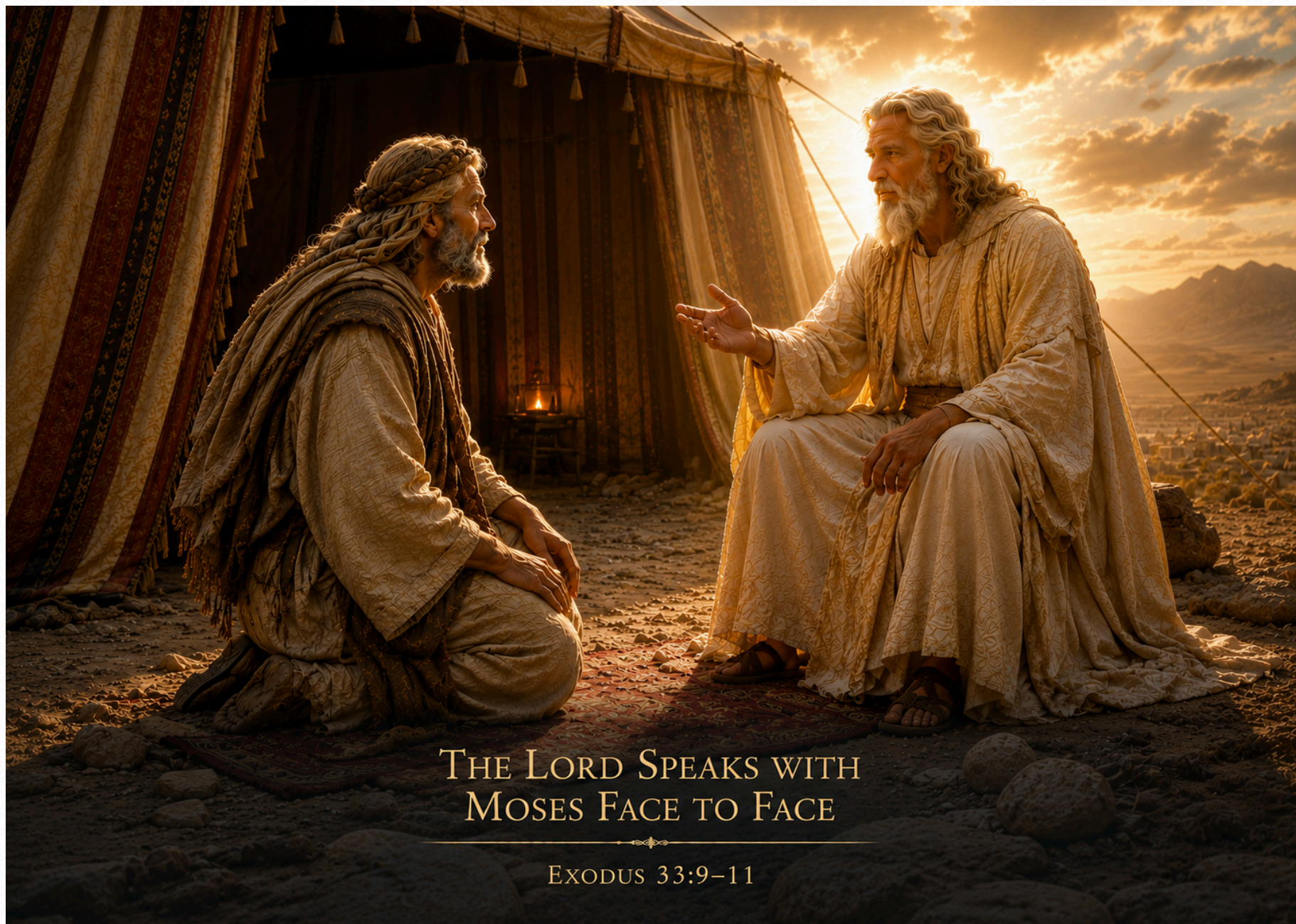


THE ELDERS OF ISRAEL SEE GOD

EXODUS 24:9-11



After the golden calf incident God continued to talk with Moses in a tent outside the camp and establish what is now known as the law of Moses which could teach, restrain, and point Israel toward the Messiah, but it could not justify, give life, remove sin, or make them perfect. Salvation came through the Messiah.



THE LORD SPEAKS WITH
MOSES FACE TO FACE

EXODUS 33:9-11



Even though God spoke regularly with Moses, Moses desired to see the full glory of God. God explained that if a man saw His face while He revealed His full glory, he would die. God loved Moses and was compassionate toward him, so He told Moses to stand in the cleft of a rock while He passed by. God covered him so he could experience His glory, and after He had passed, Moses was allowed to look upon His back.

After this experience, when Moses returned to the camp, his face shone so brightly that the children of Israel were afraid of him, and he had to cover his face with a veil.

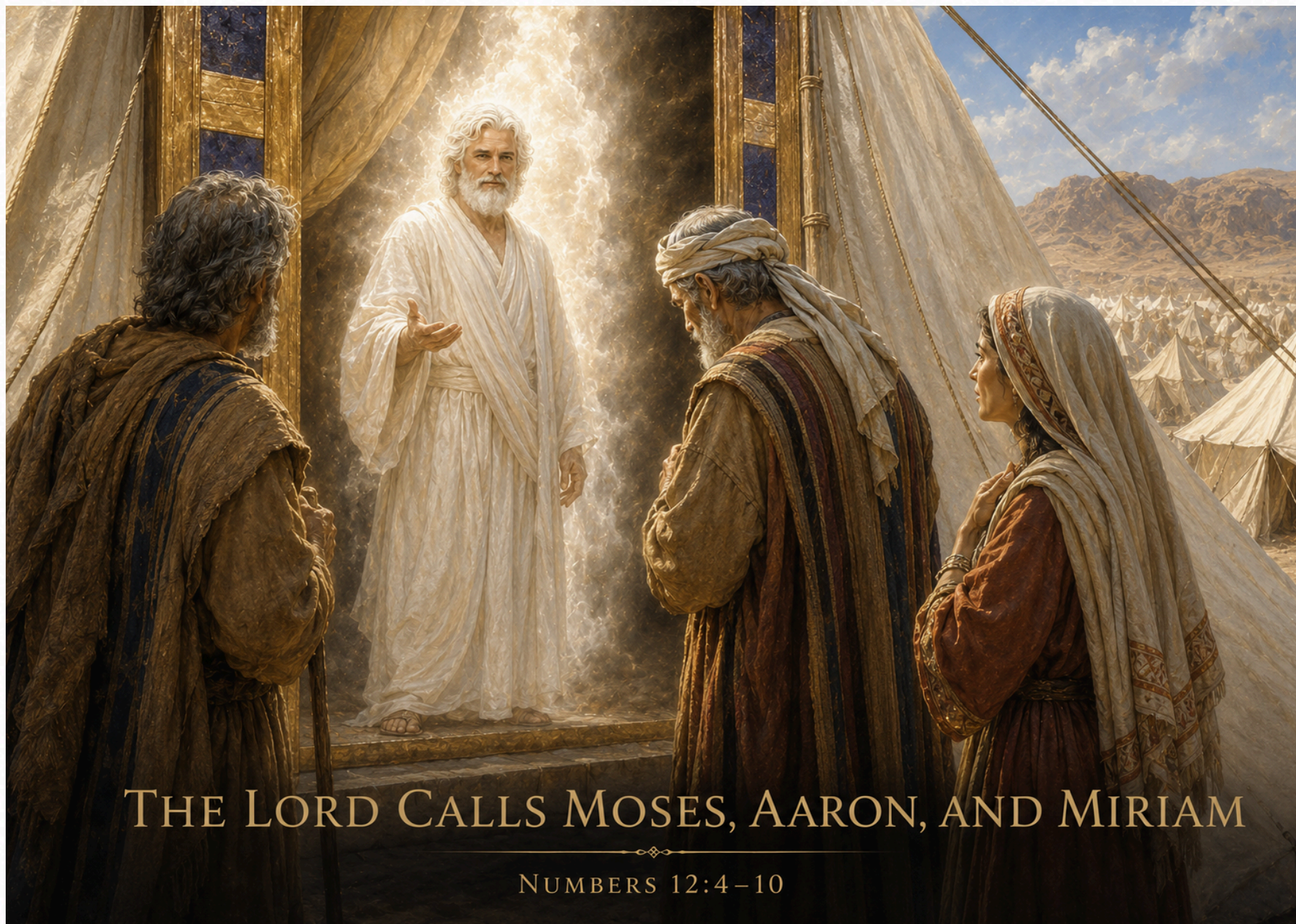


MOSES SEES THE LORD'S GLORY

EXODUS 33:18-23



Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses and questioned why God should speak through him differently than through them. God heard them and called all three to the tabernacle. He explained that He normally spoke to prophets through dreams and visions, but with Moses He spoke plainly and directly. God then rebuked them, Miriam was struck with leprosy, and Moses prayed for her healing.



THE LORD CALLS MOSES, AARON, AND MIRIAM

NUMBERS 12:4–10



As Joshua approached Jericho, he saw a man standing before him with a drawn sword. Joshua asked whether he was for Israel or for their enemies. The man said He had come as the Captain of the LORD's host. Joshua fell before Him and asked what He wanted him to do. He told Joshua to remove his shoes because he was standing on holy ground.

The LORD then told Joshua exactly what to do at Jericho. Israel was to march around the city once each day for six days, with the priests and the ark going with them. On the seventh day they were to circle the city seven times, the priests would sound the trumpets, the people would shout, and God said the walls would fall.



THE LORD CAPTAIN OF HIS HOST APPEARS TO JOSHUA

JOSHUA 5:13-15



Gideon was threshing wheat in hiding because Israel was being oppressed by the Midianites. A man sat down under an oak tree nearby and spoke to him, saying that the LORD was with him and that he would help deliver Israel; though Gideon didn't yet realize he was speaking with the LORD.

Gideon struggled to understand why God would choose him, but he asked the man to wait while he prepared an offering.



THE LORD APPEARS TO GIDEON

JUDGES 6:11-18



Gideon brought the meat and unleavened bread and set them on the rock, just as he'd been told. The LORD touched the offering with the tip of his staff, and fire burst from the rock and consumed it. That's when Gideon realized he'd been talking to the LORD himself, and he was terrified, he'd seen God face to face, which he believed meant death. But the LORD spoke to him: "Peace. Don't be afraid. You will not die." Gideon then built an altar there and named it Yahweh-Shalom, "The LORD is Peace."



GIDEON SEES THE LORD

JUDGES 6:19–24



Manoah's wife had not been able to have children. The LORD appeared to her and told her that she would have a son who would begin to deliver Israel from the Philistines. When she told Manoah what had happened, he prayed and asked God to send the man again so they could learn how to raise the child. God heard his prayer, and the LORD returned and spoke with them together.

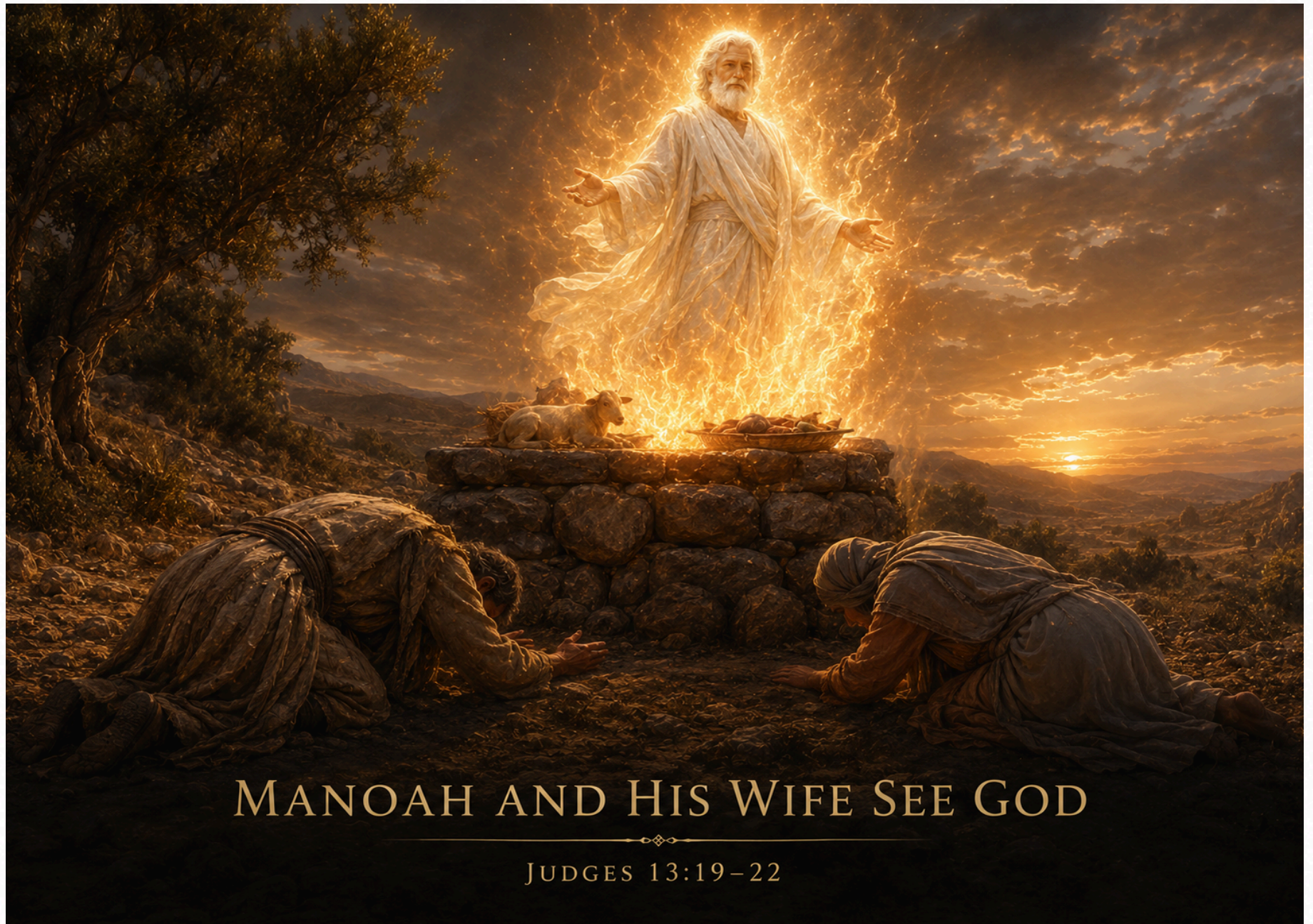


THE LORD APPEARS TO MANOAH AND HIS WIFE

JUDGES 13:3-23



Manoah prepared an offering to the LORD. As the flame rose from the altar, the LORD ascended in the flame and disappeared from their sight. Manoah and his wife fell to the ground, and Manoah then understood whom they had been speaking with, saying, “We shall surely die, because we have seen God.” His wife calmly reminded him that if God had wanted to kill them, He would not have accepted their offering or promised them a son.

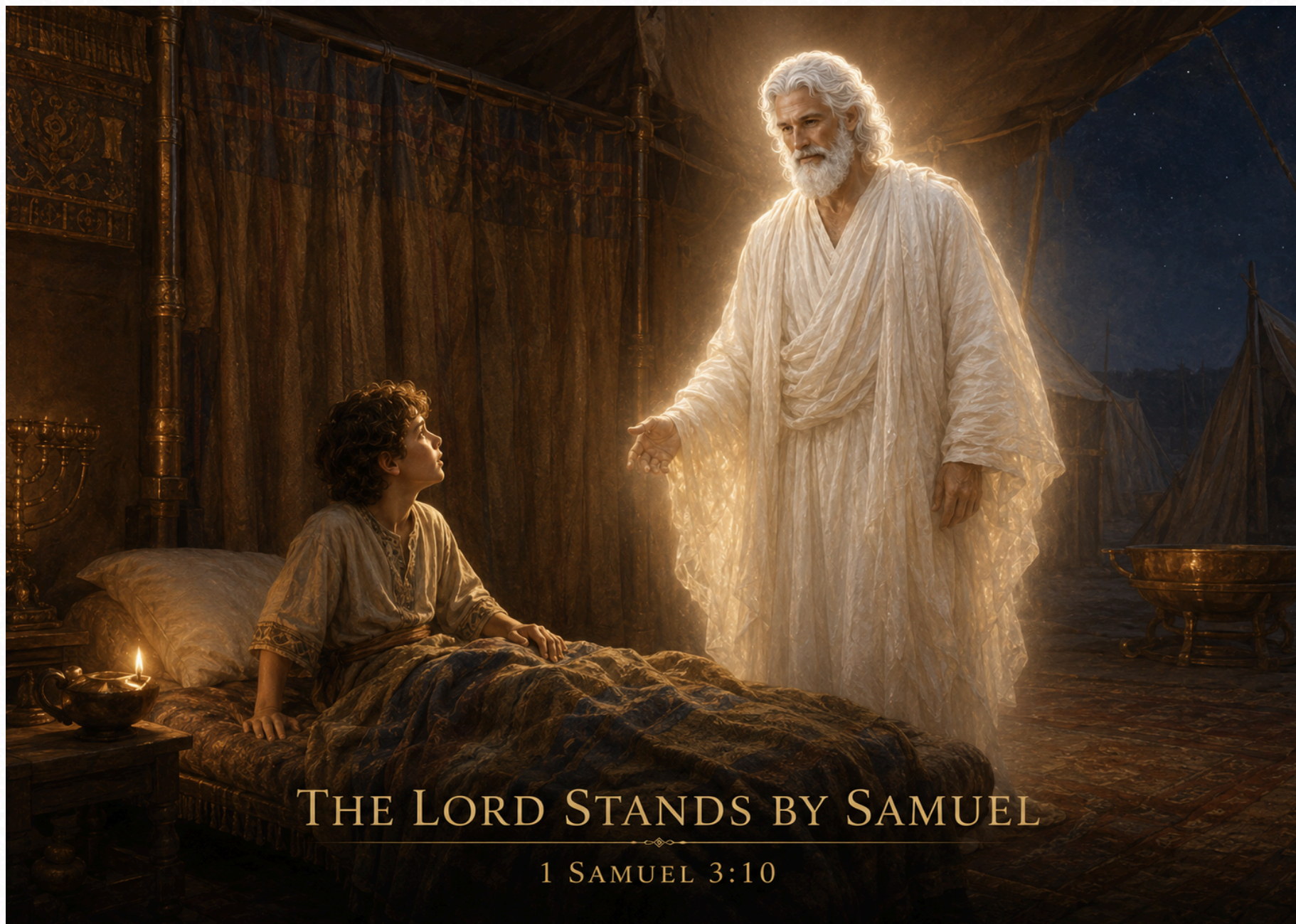


MANOAH AND HIS WIFE SEE GOD

JUDGES 13:19-22



Samuel was still a boy serving at the house of the LORD when he heard his name called during the night. At first he thought Eli was calling him. After this happened a few times, Eli understood that the LORD was speaking to Samuel and told him what to say. The LORD then came and stood there, called Samuel by name, and gave him a message concerning Eli and his family.



THE LORD STANDS BY SAMUEL

1 SAMUEL 3:10



As Samuel grew, the LORD continued to be with him and established him as a prophet. The LORD appeared to Samuel again at Shiloh and revealed Himself to him through His word. Samuel's relationship with God did not end with his first experience.



THE LORD APPEARS AGAIN TO SAMUEL

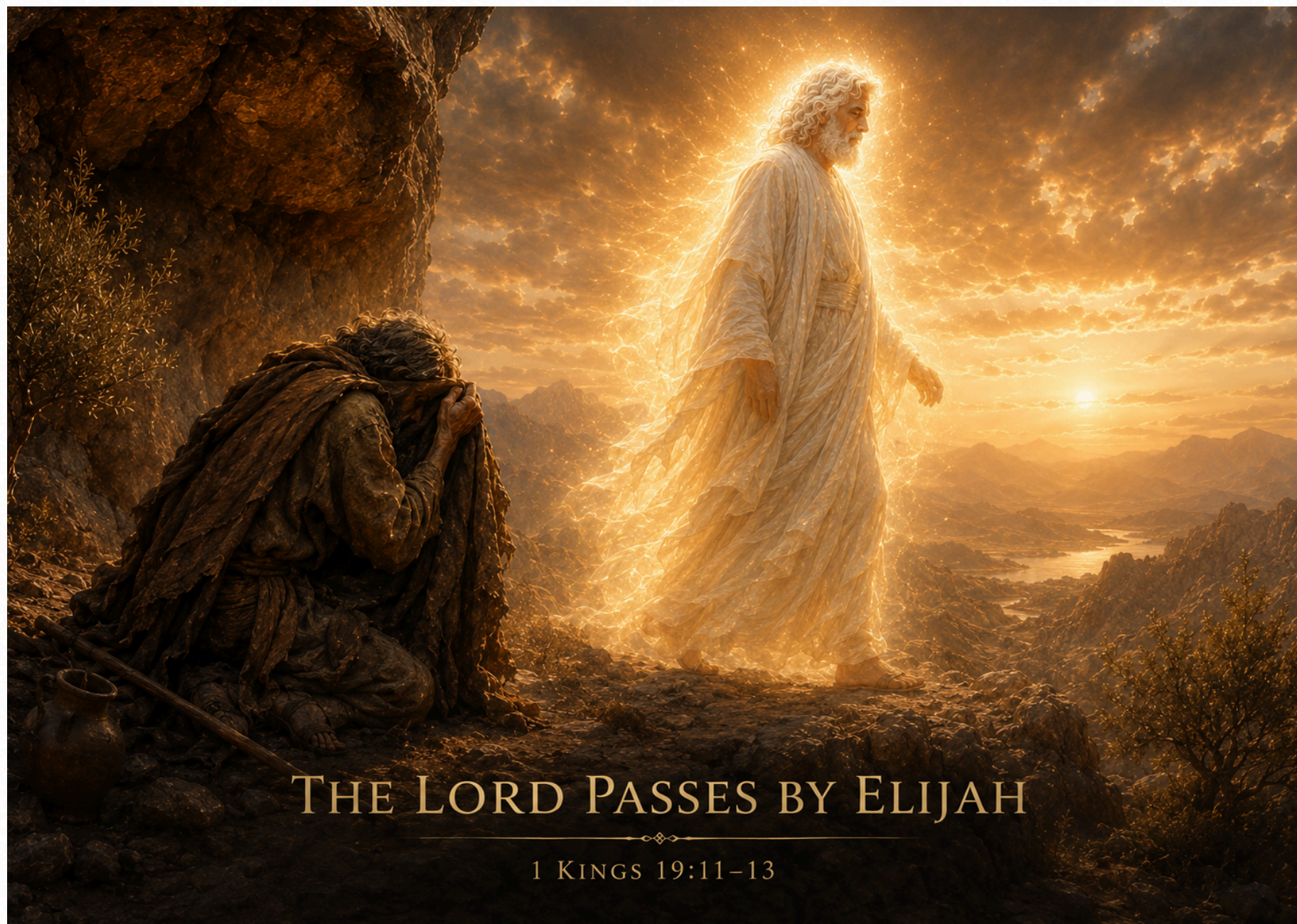
1 SAMUEL 3:21



Elijah had done what the LORD asked him to do. He had stood against Ahab and Jezebel, challenged the prophets of Baal, called Israel back to God, and watched the LORD answer by fire.

However, Jezebel still wanted him dead, and Elijah fled into the wilderness. He became so discouraged that he asked God to take his life. He felt like he had failed and that he was alone.

The LORD fed him, strengthened him, and brought him to Horeb. There Elijah experienced the wind, earthquake and fire, and then the still small voice. Elijah covered his face with his mantle and stood at the entrance of the cave as the LORD passed by and spoke with him explaining he was not alone and would be blessed. God gave Elijah more work to do and told him that He had preserved seven thousand in Israel who had not bowed to Baal.



THE LORD PASSES BY ELIJAH

1 KINGS 19:11-13



And this is life eternal, that they might know thee
the only true God, and Jesus Christ,
whom thou hast sent.

John 17:3

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice,
and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him,
and he with me.

Revelation 3:20

If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love
him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.”

John 14:23





Jesus spoke of the Father in 182 verses, more than any other single topic!

Matthew: 5:16, 45, 48; 6:1, 4, 6, 8–9, 14–15, 18, 26, 32; 7:11, 21; 10:20, 29, 32–33, 40; 11:25–27; 12:50; 13:43; 15:13; 16:17, 27; 18:10, 14, 19, 35; 20:23; 23:9; 24:36; 25:34; 26:29, 39, 42, 53; 28:19

Mark: 8:38; 9:37; 11:25–26; 13:32; 14:36

Luke: 2:49; 6:36; 9:26, 48; 10:16, 21–22; 11:2, 13; 12:30, 32; 22:29, 42; 23:34, 46; 24:49

John: 1:14, 18; 2:16; 3:35; 4:21, 23–24, 34; 5:17, 19–24, 26, 30, 36–38, 43, 45; 6:27, 29, 32, 37–40, 44–46, 57, 65; 7:16–18, 28–29, 33; 8:16, 18–19, 26, 28–29, 38, 42, 49, 54–55; 9:4; 10:15, 17–18, 25, 29–30, 32, 36–38; 11:41; 12:26–28, 44–45, 49–50; 13:1, 3, 16, 20; 14:2, 6–8, 10–13, 16, 20–21, 23–24, 26, 28, 31; 15:1, 8–10, 15–16, 21, 23–24, 26; 16:3, 5, 10, 15, 23, 25, 27–28, 32; 17:1, 3, 5, 11, 21, 24–25; 18:11; 20:17, 21



Jesus taught us to put the Father first, pray to Him, trust Him, forgive others, and seek to do His will. Again and again Jesus explained that He came from the Father, that the Father had sent Him, and that He was doing the Father's work rather than His own. Jesus taught that the Father loves His children and knows what they need. He hears their prayers, gives the Holy Spirit, reveals truth, forgives, and prepares His children for His kingdom. Near the end of Jesus's life He prayed, "not my will, but thine, be done," taught that eternal life is to know the Father and the Son whom He sent, and after His resurrection said He was returning to "my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God."