

# THE DELIGHT OF DISCOVERY

## A Holy Land Christophany

### Christophany

Seeing Jesus in the Bible. The entirety of Scripture is a revelation of the Person of Jesus Christ and His incredible work upon the Cross. And not just in the symbols, such as the ark of Noah, the manna, the rock in the wilderness, the tabernacle and temple, the high priest, and the king of Israel—but also in the themes, the circumstances, the characters, the stories, the literary styles, and the geography. Jesus is the histories of Israel re-enacted in a singular human life, the law of God incarnate, the proverbs come to life, the prophecies fulfilled ... He is the Word of God made flesh.

### A Trip to the Holy Land

*Seeing the pages of Scripture in living color*

### The Declaration

Remember this and stand firm, recall it to mind, you transgressors, remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, **declaring the end from the beginning** and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, “My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose...”

**Isaiah 46:8-10** (ESV)

In the **beginning** God created the heavens and the earth.

**Genesis 1:1**

### Beginning: בראשית (bereshit)

Hebrew Picture: the son [of] God [is] destroyed by His own arm [or work] on the cross

Grammar:

Beginning

Bet (preposition “through”) + Reshit (“first born”) – “through the first born”

**Through the firstborn**, God created the heavens and the earth.

**Genesis 1:1**

### את (Aleph-Tav)

In the beginning God (את) created the heavens and the earth.

**Genesis 1:1**

"I am the **Alpha and the Omega**, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

**Revelation 1:8**

**Through the firstborn**, God (אָלֶפֶת וְתָוִם – "the Aleph and Tav" | "the Alpha and Omega") created the heavens and the earth.

**Genesis 1:1**

For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. **All things were created through Him and for Him**. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.

**Colossians 1:16-17**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. **All things were made through Him**, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

**John 1:1-3**

By **the word of the LORD** the heavens were made, And all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.

**Psalms 33:6**

## **The Carpenter**

"Is this not the **carpenter's** son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas?"

**Matthew 13:55**

"Is this not the **carpenter**, the Son of Mary, ..."

**Mark 6:3**

## **Tektōn**

Literally: stone mason, architect, or craftsman

## **Why Rocks?**

Rock: a symbol and reminder of where you find your foundation, strength, immovability, defense, means of safety, protection, and refuge

*The term "Rock" is used in the Old Testament as a label for God alone (no man is called a rock):*

**He is the Rock**; His work is perfect; for all His ways are just. He is a God of faithfulness and without injustice; righteous and upright is He.

**Deuteronomy 32:4**

There is none holy as the LORD, for there is none besides You, and **there is no rock like our God.**

**1 Samuel 2:2**

[David] said: The LORD is **my rock** and **my fortress** and my deliverer; the God of **my strength [my rock]**, in whom I will trust; my shield and the horn of my salvation, my fortress and my sanctuary; my Savior, You save me from violence.

**2 Samuel 22:2-3**

For who is God except the LORD? Or who is a rock besides our God?

**Psalm 18:31**

Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built upon the **foundation** of the apostles and prophets, **Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, ...**

**Ephesians 2:19-20**

Also see: Genesis 49:24; Deuteronomy 32:4, 32:15, 32:18, 32:30, 32:31, 32:37; 1 Samuel 2:2; 2 Samuel 22:2-3, 22:32, 22:47, 23:3; Psalm 18:2, 18:31, 18:46, 28:1, 31:3, 42:9, 61:2, 62:2, 62:6-7, 71:3, 78:35, 89:26, 92:15, 94:22, 95:1, 144:1; Isaiah 8:14, 17:10, 51:1; Romans 9:30-33, 1 Peter 2:4-8, Revelation 21:14

## **Caesarea Philippi**

- Caesarea Philippi stands in a lush area near the foot of Mount Hermon
- After the death of King Herod, his son Philip the Tetrarch, renamed the city after himself and Caesar Augustus - who originally gave control of the area to King Herod.
- In Old Testament times, the northeastern area of Israel became a center for Baal worship. Eventually, worship of the baals was replaced with worship of Greek fertility gods (such as Pan).

### ***Gates of Hades***

- The cave in the mountain was referred to as “The Gates of Hades” - the location where Pan and other fertility gods lived during the winter before re-emerging each spring. In order to entice the gods’ return each spring, the people would often engage in prostitution, bestiality, and the like.
- During the time of Jesus, Caesarea Philippi would be similar to a “red light district” - a city of people knocking (literally and symbolically) on the “Gates of Hell”
- It was here that Jesus asked His disciples the question, “Who do you say that I am?” - becoming a critical turning point in the ministry of Jesus (specifically as recorded in Mark’s Gospel) as He presses toward the Cross

When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, “Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?” They said, “Some say that You are John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or

one of the prophets.” He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

**Matthew 16:13-20**

- Peter: “little pebble” or “stone”
- “Upon this rock” – what rock?
- You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.

**Jesus, the Rock (our foundation, strength, immovability, defense, means of safety, protection, and refuge), who is the Firstborn, born as a lowly Tektōn (a stone mason or craftsman) is The Craftsman and Architect of all creation ... for it was through the firstborn, God (“the Alpha and Omega”) created the heavens and the earth.**

## Desperation & Dependence

*Why this land?*

- The crossroads for ancient trade and war
- Coastal Plain, Central Mountains, Wilderness
- Wilderness: a desert
- A lack of water
  - Sea of Galilee (lowest fresh water lake in the world)
  - Jordan River – from Mount Hermon in the North, flowing into the Sea of Galilee, descending into the Dead Sea

### From Adam to Death

So it was, when the people set out from their camp to cross over the Jordan, with the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people, and as those who bore the ark came to the Jordan, and the feet of the priests who bore the ark dipped in the edge of the water (for the Jordan overflows all its banks during the whole time of harvest), that the waters which came down from upstream stood still, and rose in a heap very far away **at Adam, the city that is beside Zaretan. So the waters that went down into the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, failed, and were cut off;** and the people crossed over opposite Jericho.

**Joshua 3:14-16**

## Why This Land?

*It is a place of desperation and dependence*

### ***En Gedi***

A Psalm of David when he was in the wilderness of Judah.

O God, You are my God; early will I seek You; my soul thirsts for You; my flesh longs for You **in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water.**

**Psalm 63:1**

### ***A Dependence on God and no other***

And it shall be that if you earnestly obey My commandments which I command you today, to **love the LORD your God and serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul**, then **I will give you the rain** for your land in its season, the early rain and the latter rain, that you may gather in your grain, your new wine, and your oil. And **I will send grass** in your fields for your livestock, that you may eat and be filled. Take heed to yourselves, lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them, lest the LORD's anger be aroused against you, and He shut up the heavens so that there be no rain, and the land yield no produce, and you perish quickly from the good land which the LORD is giving you.

**Deuteronomy 11:13-17**

### ***A Picture of Dependence***

And the children of Israel ate **manna** forty years, until they came to an inhabited land; they ate manna until they came to the border of the land of Canaan.

**Exodus 16:35**

## The Death

*Led as a Lamb*

### **Triumphal Entry**

Now when they drew near Jerusalem, and came to the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Loose them and bring them to Me. And if anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and immediately he will send them." All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying:

*"Tell the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your King is coming to you, Lowly, and sitting on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.'" [Zechariah 9:9]*

So the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them. They brought the donkey and the colt, laid their clothes on them, and set Him on them. And a very great multitude spread their clothes on the road; others cut down branches from the trees and spread them on the road. Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: "Hosanna to the Son of David! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' Hosanna in the highest!"

**Matthew 21:1-9**

- Why a donkey? ... a sign of peace

Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, saying, "**If you had known, even you, especially in this your day**, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, **because you did not know the time of your visitation.**"

**Luke 19:41-44**

- Fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy (Daniel 9)

## **The Roman Triumph**

The Bible tells us that Jesus was born during the reign of the Roman emperor Caesar Augustus, who was the son of the assassinated Julius Caesar. Caesar Augustus vowed to build a temple to honor his murdered father and to hold a dedication ceremony to proclaim his father as divine. During that ceremony, a comet streaked through the sky—a sign that Caesar Augustus declared as confirmation that he himself must be “the Son of God,” if his father, Julius Caesar, was God. From that period on, the Roman people believed Caesar Augustus to be the divine “Son of God.” What began as a way to honor conquering generals soon became limited to the emperors, proclaiming their sovereignty and divinity. The [Roman Triumph] ceremony began with the Roman soldiers who assembled at the Praetorium, where the guards were stationed. Then a purple robe (the color of royalty) would be placed on the emperor and a wreath would be placed on his head. “Hail Caesar!” they would shout, and the people would chant, “Triomphe!” as the emperor and the guards wound their way along the Via Sacra in Rome to arrive at the Capitoline, or “head hill.” There, a bull would be sacrificed by someone who had been carrying an instrument of death. The emperor would then be offered a bowl of wine, which he would refuse or sometimes pour out on the head of the sacrificial bull. Finally, the emperor would ascend the steps of the Capitoline, accompanied by someone on his left and someone on his right. The entire

population would declare him as their “savior”—their divine Caesar, proclaiming, “Hail Caesar, Lord and God!” Then they would all look for signs in the heavens to confirm their leader’s coronation. Ray brilliantly described how the description of Jesus’ last days in Mark’s gospel, including Jesus’ suffering, perfectly paralleled the Roman procession known as a triumph. After Jesus had been sentenced to death by Pontius Pilate, He was taken to the Praetorium in Jerusalem by the Roman guards. There, they stripped Him, threw a purple robe over Him, and placed a crown of thorns on His head. Then they mockingly worshiped Him, shouting, “Hail, the King of the Jews” and bowed down to Him, striking Him and spitting on Him. After they had tired of this sport, they led Him away along the Via Dolorosa to be crucified. Jesus carried His own cross (instrument of death) until He collapsed beneath it. A passerby, Simon of Cyrene, was forced to carry Jesus’ cross for Him to Golgotha (“the Place of the Skull”). There, the soldiers laid Jesus on the cross and crucified Him along with two revolutionaries, one on His left and one on His right. They offered Him sour wine, which He refused. Pontius Pilate had insisted that a sign (a titulus—a placard that identified His so-called crime) reading “THE KING OF JEWS” be nailed to Jesus’ cross. As He suffered, the crowd around Him taunted Him, “Hail, the King of the Jews.” They hurled blasphemies and insults on Him. Once Jesus gave up His spirit, there was an earthquake and the curtain at the entrance to the Holy of Holies in the temple was split in two from the top to the bottom. Signs, indeed. But perhaps the greatest irony was what was said by the Roman centurion who had watched the entire event: “Surely this man was the Son of God!” (Mark 15:39).

**Kathie Lee Gifford & Rabbi Jason Sobel**

*The Rock, the Road, and the Rabbi, Chapter 22*

### **Crucifixion on Passover**

Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household. And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take it according to the number of the persons; according to each man’s need you shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it.

**Exodus 12:3-7**

One Hebrew teacher said that “there is historical evidence that the lamb was roasted upright on a pomegranate pole with a crossbar through its shoulders. ... The pomegranate

pole was used, because as a dry wood it would not boil.” Boiling was prohibited in preparing the lamb. He also stated that “the pomegranate is symbolic of royalty and the priesthood. Another interesting point is that the entrails were tied around the head so everything could be roasted evenly without boiling. This resembles the crown of thrones.”

[You were redeemed] with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

**1 Peter 1:19**

The Jewish family usually put the family name around the neck of the lamb as they took it to the Temple to be sacrificed. This was to ensure that they received their own lamb back for the Passover dinner.

Now Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. Then many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. Therefore the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'He said, 'I am the King of the Jews.'" Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written."

**John 19:19-22**



And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "**My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?**"

**Matthew 27:46**

**Psalm 22**

**My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?** Why are You so far from helping Me, And from the words of My groaning? ... But I am a [scarlet] worm, and no man; A reproach of men, and despised by the people. All those who see Me ridicule Me; They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, "He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him; Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!" ... I am poured out like water, And all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It has melted within Me. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And My tongue clings to My jaws; You have brought Me to the dust of death. For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and

My feet; I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots.

**Psalm 22:1, 6-8, 14-18**

Now it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth until the **ninth hour**. Then the sun was darkened, and the **veil of the temple** was torn in two. And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, "Father, 'into Your hands I commit My spirit.' " Having said this, He breathed His last.

**Luke 23:44-46**

### **Golgotha and the Sign of the Curse**

Then He said, "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you."

**Genesis 22:2**

So Abraham **took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son**; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together.

**Genesis 22:6**

Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. But the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" So he said, "Here I am." And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me." Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son. **And Abraham called the name of the place, The-LORD-Will-Provide**; as it is said to this day, "In the Mount of the LORD it shall be provided."

**Genesis 22:9-14**

*Though Jewish legends states that Abraham offered Isaac up as a sacrifice on the temple mount (threshing floor of Arunah) ... the topography of the land and the account in Genesis makes it seem that it was likely that Abraham offered Isaac at Golgotha (at the top of Mount Moriah ... Jerusalem).*

### **A Sign of the Curse**

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole garrison around Him. And they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him. When they had **twisted a crown of thorns**, they put it

on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!"

**Matthew 27:27-29**

Then God said, "Because you ... have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': "Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. **Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you ...**

**Genesis 3:17-18**

### **The Resurrection: The Feast of First Fruits**

But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the **firstfruits** of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. But each one in his own order: **Christ the firstfruits**, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming.

**1 Corinthians 15:20-23**

And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, **the firstborn from the dead**, that in **all things He may have the preeminence**.

**Colossians 1:18**

### **The Delight**

[Your Word is to] be desired more than gold,  
Yea, than much fine gold;  
Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

**Psalm 19:10**

Delight yourself in the LORD ...

**Psalm 37:4**