



Christophanies in the Old Testament - Part I

December 13, 2015




The Definition of a Christophany

- A Christophany is a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus Christ, the second Person of the Trinity.
- These bodily appearances are found only in the Old Testament and anticipate the incarnation of Jesus Christ.
- All Theophanies are Christophanies - the manifestation of Jesus Christ in a human form.



The Definition of an Anthropomorphism

- Is a literary device that ascribes human traits, ambitions, emotions, or entire behavior to animals, non-human beings, natural phenomena, objects.
 - Theologically it is a device that God, who is a Spirit, uses to communicate spiritual truths to connect with mankind. He ascribes physical human attributes and actions to Himself to identify with man and for us to be aided in our understanding of God's work.
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Examples of OT Anthropomorphism

- **Numbers 11:23**, And the LORD said unto Moses, Is the LORD'S hand waxed short? thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass unto thee or not.
- **1 Kings 8:15**, And he said, Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, which spake with his mouth unto David my father, and hath with his hand fulfilled *it*, saying,
- **Psalms 34:15**, The eyes of the LORD *are* upon the righteous, and his ears *are open* unto their cry.

Interpretive Guidelines to Determine if a Christophany

- Is the Person identified as the Second Person of the Trinity?
- Is the Person identified as God by His attributes or titles?
- Is the Person described by characteristics reserved only for deity?
- How do others respond towards this Person?
- Does the Person receive worship without being corrected?
- Are there cross references in the Bible acknowledging that the Person is the Son of God?

All Theophanies are Christophanies

- **John 1:18**, No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared *him*.
- **John 4:24**, God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth.

Father Divine - Reverend M.J. Divine




The History of Joseph Smith - chapter one

- **17** It no sooner appeared than I found myself delivered from the enemy which held me bound. When the light rested upon me I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other— *This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!*



The Pure in Heart will see Jesus Christ

- Jesus Christ was seen in the Old Testament by means of Christophanies
 - Jesus Christ was seen in the New Testament by means of His incarnation
 - Believers will see Jesus Christ in His resurrected form in Heaven
 - **Matthew 5:8** Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God.
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The Angel of the Lord = Jesus Christ

- The Angel of the Lord is distinct from God the Father. **Zechariah 1:12**
Then the angel of the LORD answered and said, O LORD of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years?
¹³ And the LORD answered the angel that talked with me *with* good words *and* comfortable words.
- The Angel of the Lord serves in the same role as does Christ in the New Testament.
- Once the Son of God came in permanent incarnate form the ministry of the Angel of the Lord seems to vanish.
- The phrase, the Angel of the Lord, is another title ascribed to Jesus Christ.





I. The Christophany with Adam and Eve: Redemption and Restoration

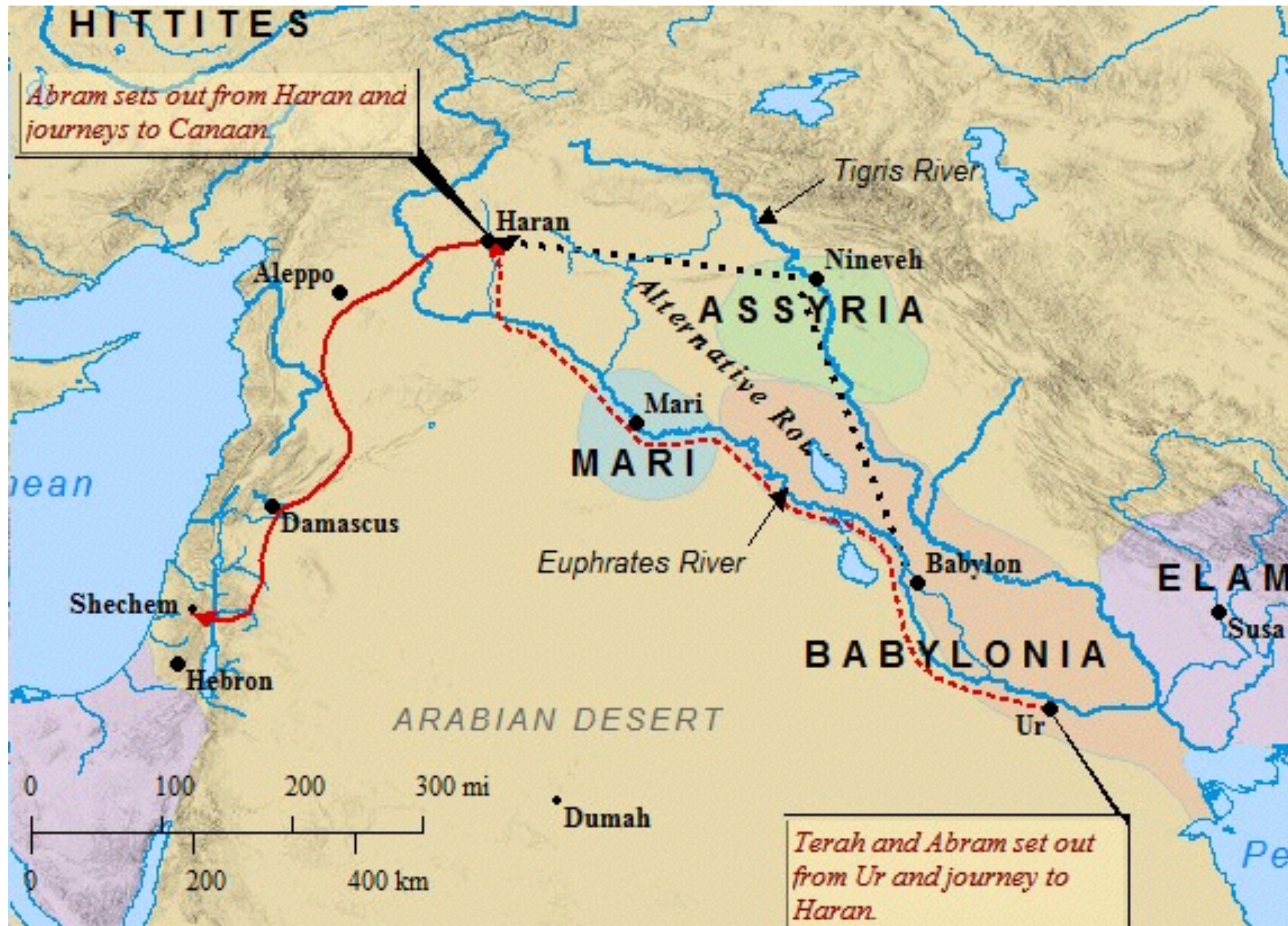
- **Genesis 3:8**, And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.
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The Promise of the Woman's “seed” Crushing the Head of the Serpent

- **Genesis 3:15**, And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

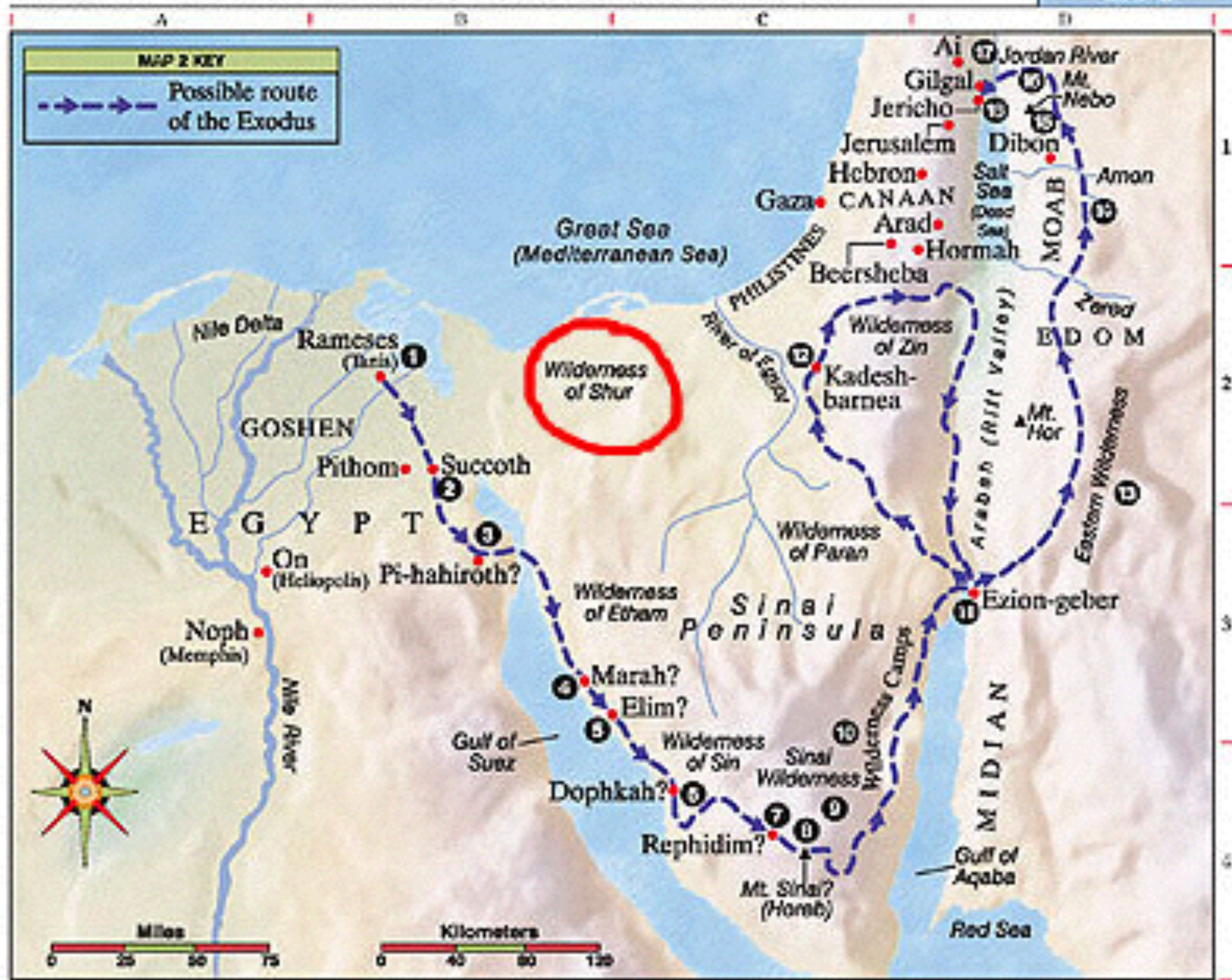




The Appearance of Jesus to Abraham

The Promise of “Seed”

- **Genesis 12:7**, And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.
- **Genesis 15:18**, In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:
- **Genesis 22:18**, And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.








II. The Christophany with Hagar: Return and Refuge - Beerlahairoi -

- **Genesis 16:7**, And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur.





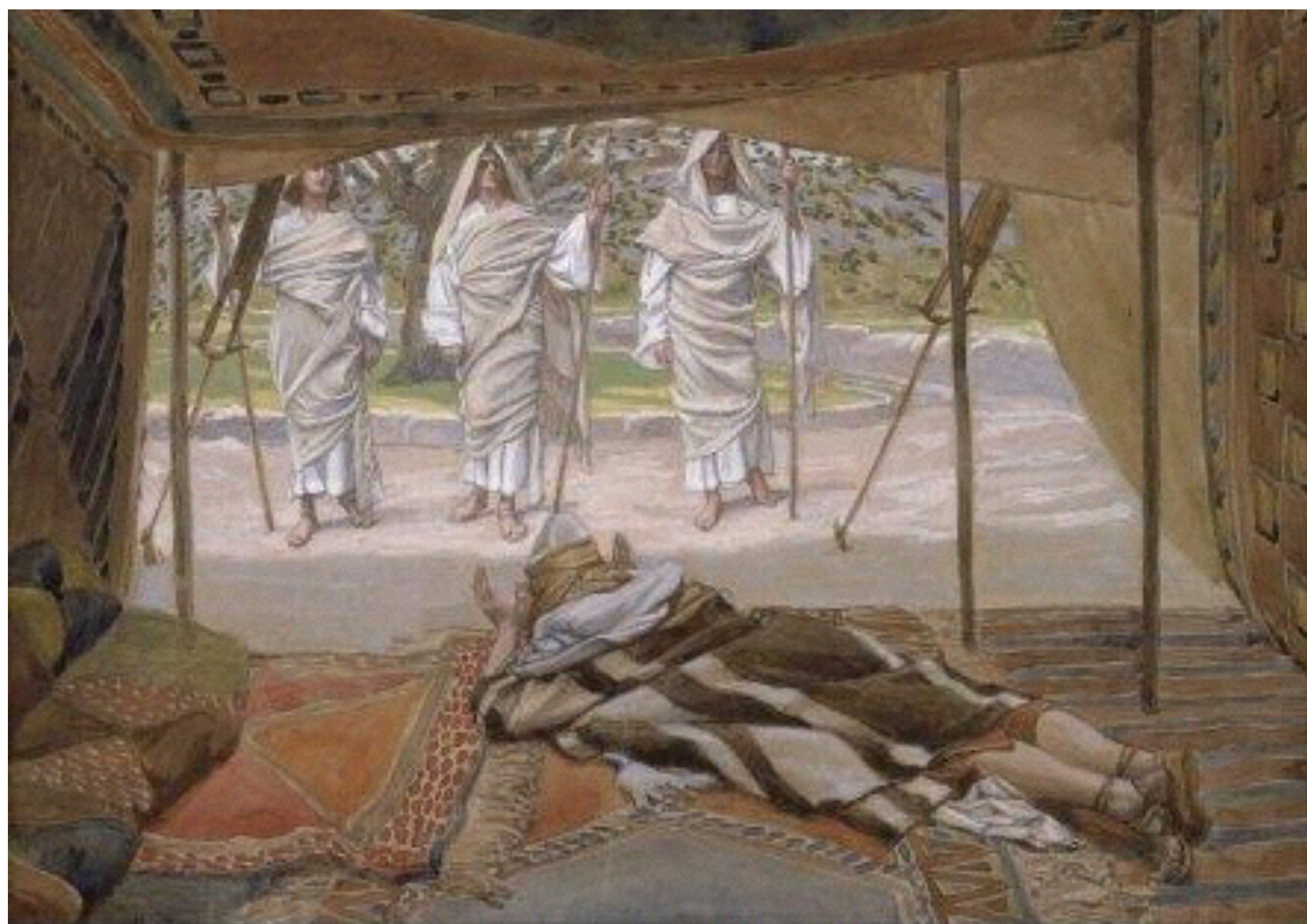
The Lord Appeared to Abram when he was 99 years old

- **Genesis 17:1**, And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I *am* the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.
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The Lord Appeared unto Abraham in the Plains of Mamre

- **Genesis 18:1**, And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day;






"The LORD and the two angels"
by James Jacques Joseph Tissot (1836-1902)



III. The Christophany with Abraham

Reminder and Renewal

Promise of a Son - “seed”

- **Genesis 18:2**, And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw *them*, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground,
 - **Genesis 18:16**, And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom: and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way.
 - **Genesis 18:22**, And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the LORD.
 - **Genesis 19:1**, And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing *them* rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground;
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The Christophany with Abraham: Reminder of God's Promise and Power

- **Genesis 18:13**, And the LORD said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old?
- **Genesis 18:14**, Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.
- **Genesis 18:33**, And the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.



The Angel of the Lord

God's Provision - Jehovahjireh

- **Genesis 22:11**, And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here *am* I.







The Angel of the Lord

The Blessing of Obedience:


“I will multiply thy seed”

- **Genesis 22:15** And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, ¹⁶ And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only *son*: ¹⁷ That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which *is* upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;





The Angel of the Lord and the Servant

Isaac is 40 - needs a wife and a son

- **Genesis 24:7**, The LORD God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land; he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence.
 - **Genesis 24:40**, And he said unto me, The LORD, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way; and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my kindred, and of my father's house:
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The Lord Appeared unto Isaac during the time of a famine

- **Genesis 26:2**, And the LORD appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: ³ Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swear unto Abraham thy father;
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The Lord Appeared unto Isaac

- **Genesis 26:24**, And the LORD appeared unto him the same night, and said, I *am* the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I *am* with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake.
²⁵ And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the LORD, and pitched his tent there: and there Isaac's servants digged a well.



Jacob's Dream of the Ladder


- **Genesis 28:12**, And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. ¹³ And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I *am* the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;

God Appeared to Jacob at Bethel

- **Genesis 35:1**, God said to Jacob, "Arise, go up to Bethel and dwell there. Make an altar there to the God who appeared to you when you fled from your brother Esau."
- **Genesis 35:7**, And he built there an altar, and called the place Elbethel: because there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother.
- **Genesis 48:3**, And Jacob said unto Joseph, God Almighty appeared unto me at Luz (i.e. Bethel) in the land of Canaan, and blessed me,



In a Dream - the Angel of God Tells Jacob to Return to His Home

- **Genesis 31:11**, And the angel of God spake unto me in a dream, *saying*, Jacob: And I said, Here *am* I.
 - **Genesis 31:13** I *am* the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar, *and* where thou vowedst a vow unto me: now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy kindred.
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IV. The Christophany and Jacob

- **Genesis 32:24**, And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.
- **Genesis 32:25**, And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.





God Appeared unto Jacob Again

- **Genesis 35:9**, And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padanaram, and blessed him. ¹⁰ And God said unto him, Thy name *is* Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel. ¹¹ And God said unto him, I *am* God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins; ¹² And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land. ¹³ And God went up from him in the place where he talked with him.




In Genesis Christ Appeared to:

- Adam and Eve - After they had sinned
 - Abraham - After he had moved to a new place
 - Hagar - After she had been rejected
 - Isaac - When he had no wife or family
 - Jacob - When he was running from problems
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ALL THE APPEARANCES OF CHRIST HAD THREE THINGS IN COMMON

1. Each Appearance was related to the Promised “Seed” - the incarnation of Jesus Christ
 2. Each Appearance took place when someone was going through a difficult trial
 3. In Each Appearance, Christ met the deepest needs of the person afflicted
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INVITATION TO COME TO CHRIST BY FAITH

Dear God,

I need You. I repent of my sins and believe that Jesus is God and that He died for my sins and rose again. Please save me from my sins.

I pray in Jesus' Name, Amen.

