

Christophanies In The Writings

Review: All OT appearances of God or the Lord are Christophanies

Definition: In a Christophany the Lord appeared in one location in an actual visible definite way. They are not permanent or lasting, but temporary to that moment of history. Christophanies are not an incarnation but a presentation. He appeared as a human or angel but did not become human or angel. He temporarily took the form but not the nature of a man or an angel.

Numbers 20:1-13 – the second striking of the Rock

This event is connected to the earlier one in Exodus 17:1-7 / 1 Cor 10:4

The Lord stood on the rock as it was struck

Paul proclaims that the rock followed them and was Christ

Setting: Israel is thirsty and quarrel with Moses (20:2-5)

Moses and Aaron seek the Lord

The glory of the Lord appeared to them (Christophany)

The Lord gives specific instructions: take the staff and speak to the Rock

Moses took the staff (but did not speak to the Rock)

Moses struck the rock twice (in frustration with the people)

The Lord brought forth water from the Rock

The Lord pronounces judgment on Moses

Moses did not believe the Lord and uphold Him

Moses ruined the message in the type

Christ will only be struck once on the Cross

Presentation: Lord as provider of Israel's needs & as Lord of the Message

Purpose: The Lord meets the immediate need & teaches critical lesson

Numbers 22:22-35 - appearance to Balaam

Setting: Balak King of Moab tries to hire Balaam to curse Israel

The Lord commands Balaam not to go

Balaam initially refuses out of obedience to the Lord

Balaam continues to ask the Lord for permission

The Lord gives him a new direction to go with them

But God's anger was kindled because he went

The Angel of the Lord took his stand in the way as his adversary

Donkey saw the Angel of the Lord

The Angel of the Lord was standing in the road with a drawn sword

Then the LORD opened the eyes of Balaam

He saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, with his drawn sword

Presentation: The Lord as the Protector of Israel

Purpose: The Lord insures Israel will not be cursed

Joshua 5:13-15 - The Lord appears to Joshua

Setting: Just prior to the beginning of the conquest of the Promised Land
Behold, a man was standing before him with his drawn sword in his hand
Joshua asked are you for us or for our adversaries?

No; but I am the commander of the army of the LORD

Now I have come

Take off your sandals from your feet

For the place where you are standing is holy

Presentation: The Lord as the Commander of the army of the Lord

Purpose: the Lord reveals His involvement in the coming battles

Judges 2:1-5 - appearance to Israel at Bochim

Setting: Israel's failure in Chapter 1 to complete the conquest of the Land

The angel of the LORD went up from Gilgal to Bochim

Gilgal is where the Commander of the Lord's army appeared

Bochim is where He reappears

Gilgal = beginning of conquest / Bochim = end of conquest

I brought you up / I brought you into / I swore to give / I said

You shall make no covenant / You shall break / But you have not obeyed

So now I say, I will not drive / they shall become / their gods shall be a snare

Presentation: The Lord as the Judge of Israel

Purpose: The Lord holds Israel accountable to their previous assignment

Judges 6:11-23 - appearance to Gideon

Setting: 6:1 - Israel did evil / the Lord gave them into Midian's hand 7 years

Now the Angel of the Lord came and sat under the terebinth at Ophrah

The Angel of the Lord appeared to him and said to him

The Angel of the Lord vanished from his sight.

Presentation: The Lord as the One Who calls for special assignments

Purpose: The Lord appears to call Gideon to save Israel

Judges 13:1-7 - appearance to Samson's mother

Setting: 13:1 - Israel again did evil / Lord gave them to Philistines 40 years

The Angel of the Lord appeared to a barren woman of Israel

You shall conceive and bear a son

The child shall be a Nazarite to God from the womb to his death

Presentation: The Lord as Provider of a son of deliverance

Purpose: The Lord enables Samson's mother to give birth to a special son

Judges 13:8-25 - appearance to Samson's parents

Setting: Manoah's prayer (13:8) / God listened to his prayer (13:9)

The Angel of the Lord came again to the woman

Manoah came to the man and asked him questions

What is your name?

Why do you ask my name seeing it is wonderful? (Psalm 139:6)

The angel of the LORD went up in the flame of the altar

Presentation: The Lord as the Wonderful One

Purpose: The Lord confirms His assignment for them to parent Samson

1 Kings 19:1-8 - two appearances to Elijah

Setting: Elijah flees Jezebel into the wilderness in fear for his life

An Angel touched him and provide food for him

The Angel of the Lord came again a 2nd time, touched him & provided food

Presentation: The Lord as Provider and Restorer

Purpose: The Lord strengthens His servant for the journey ahead

2 Kings 1:1-4 - appearance to Elijah

Setting: Ahaziah king of Israel is injured & inquires of Baal-Zebub

Baal-Zebub = lord of the flies (giver & remover of diseases)

The Angel of the Lord directed Elijah to rebuke the king for his idolatry

Presentation: The Lord as the Protector of His own Name

Purpose: The Lord reminds the king there is the One true God in Israel

2 Kings 1:9-15 - appearance to Elijah

Setting: Elijah sends the king the message that he will die in this judgment

The king sends 3 companies of 50 soldiers to bring Elijah to him

The Angel of the Lord directs Elijah to go with the third captain to the king

Presentation: The Lord as Protector of His messengers

Purpose: The Lord assures Elijah of safety in his assignment to the king

2 Kings 19:32-36 - appearance against Assyria

Setting: the king of Assyria invaded Israel & Isaiah prophesied deliverance

The Angel of the Lord went out & struck down 185,000 Assyrians

Presentation: The Lord as the Protector of Jerusalem

Purpose: The Lord guards His covenant people

1 Chronicles 21:1-17 - appearance to King David

Setting: King David sinned by numbering Israel

God was displeased and He struck Israel

The Lord offered David to choose one of three judgment options

David chose option 3 with the Angel of the Lord

God sent the Angel to Jerusalem to destroy it

The Lord relented from the calamity

The Angel of the LORD stood by the threshing floor of Ornan

David saw the Angel of the Lord standing between earth & Heaven

In His hand a drawn sword stretched out over Jerusalem

Presentation: The Lord as the One who judges

Purpose: The Lord holds the King and Israel accountable for their sin

1 Chronicles 21:18-28 – appearance to Ornan

Setting: the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite

The Angel of the Lord commanded Gad to speak to David

Ornan was threshing, saw the Angel with his 4 sons and hid

David buys the site, builds altar, sacrifices & the Angel puts away His sword

Presentation: The Lord as the Merciful One

Purpose: The Lord relents of the deserved judgment because of the sacrifice

Isaiah 6:1-4 - a heavenly appearance to Isaiah

Setting: the year King Uzziah died (2 Chronicles 26:1-15)

John 12:41 - Isaiah saw His glory and spoke of Him

I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne... the train of His robe

My eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts

Presentation: The Lord as the high and exalted One

Purpose: The Lord encourages Isaiah & Israel in a time of uncertainty

Daniel 3:19-28 - The Lord in the fiery furnace

Setting: Nebuchadnezzar casts the three into the furnace (3:13-21)

The flame of the fire killed the soldiers that took the three to be burned

The King sees four unbound men walking unhurt in midst of the fire

The appearance of the fourth man was like a son of the gods

This is a shared Christophany: revealed to Nebuchadnezzar & the three

Presentation: The Lord as a Son of the gods

Purpose: The Lord encourages Israel in a time of captivity & persecution

Zechariah 1:7-13 - appearance to Zechariah

Setting: During the rebuilding of the temple in the return from captivity

The Angel of the Lord standing among the myrtle trees

The Angel of the Lord intercedes with the Lord for Jerusalem (Heb 7:25)

Presentation: The Lord as Intercessor for His people

Purpose: The Lord encourages Jerusalem in an uncertain time

Zechariah 3:1-7 - second appearance to Zechariah

Setting: soon after the vision of chapter 1

Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the Lord

Haggai 1:1 - Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest

Joshua was standing before the angel, clothed with filthy garments

The Angel said to those standing before Him:

Remove the filthy garments from him

Behold, I have taken your iniquity away from you

I will clothe you with pure vestments

The Angel of the Lord solemnly assured Joshua

Presentation: The Lord as the heavenly High Priest

Purpose: The Lord restored the high priest to ministry