

Encounter(ing) God

LORD, Our Father Part 2

Dave Buehring

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Review of an Introduction to Our Series on ENCOUNTERING GOD – Father, Son and Holy Spirit

“...you thought I was one like yourself.” Psalm 50:21 — He’s NOT!

- 1) Contrast “Knowing About” and “Encountering” God
 - a. Knowing – *aware and informed*
 - b. Encountering – *revealing (seeing) and transforming*
 - Often, we are content to live in the “land of knowing” when God desires for us to press in to the “place of encounter” (pay attention to what the Lord is showing me).
 - c. The image of God you carry around in your heart and mind affects the way you live your daily life.
 - d. “What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.”¹ A.W. Tozer
- 2) Isaiah 6 – the process of encounter
 - a. Upward – Inward – Outward
 - b. All begins with the upward view – seeing what God is really like
 - c. Transforms us first on the inside, then via outward expressions of obeying God
 - Abraham & Sarah – Joshua – Mary – Zacchaeus – Peter – Paul, etc.
- 3) Three Barriers to Encountering God
 - a. Our Approach to the Scriptures – Doctrines/dos-and-don'ts vs God’s character!
 - b. Influence of Authority Figures – Shapes our hearts and minds; He’s not a big one of us!
 - c. Satan’s Strategy – To distort, disfigure, and deface God
 - Seeking God (See King God)

Moses’ Background

- 1) 40-40-40 / 120 years (Egypt/desert/journey)
- 2) That last set of 40 years as Israel’s leader
 - a. Burning Bush, in obedience he goes to Pharaoh; make bricks without straw
 - b. 12 Plagues, the last being the death of the first-born; Pharaoh yields, lets people go
 - c. Begin their journey to God’s “Promised Land”; Cloud by Day, Pillar of Fire by Night
 - d. Parting of the Red Sea; Fed by Manna from Heaven; Drank water coming from a rock
 - e. The people’s murmurings throughout...
 - f. The 10 Commandments – “The tablets were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, engraved on the tablets.” (Exodus 32:16)

¹ A.W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy* (Zondervan, November 15, 1978) 1

- Tablets written on both sides by the hand of God Himself! (**Exodus 32:15**)
- **Exodus 32** – Golden Calf – breaking covenant with God, while Moses was with God
 - God wipes them out/starts over with Moses; Moses intercedes and God relents
- Moses, wanting to be sure of God’s forgiveness and presence moving forward – “show me your glory...”

Moses’ Encounter with God the Father – Exodus 33-34

- 1) **Exodus 33:18-23** – immediate backdrop
- 2) **Exodus 34:5-8** – more auditory than optical revelation of God
 - Asks Him to “show me your **glory**” and God reveals His **character** to Moses!
 - What were Moses’ expectations? More fire like burning bush and pillar of fire at night? A flash of light? See his face?
 - The **LORD** twice – like being announced, declared, pay attention
 - **LORD** (*all caps*) appears about 7,000 times in our Bibles
 - In the Scriptures, a person’s name reflected one’s character.
 - Abraham – “Father of a great multitude” ~ Eve – “Living” (Mother of all Living) ~ Jesus – Savior.
 - Names were important – pointed to one’s disposition, personality and mission in life.
 - In **Exodus 3:13**, at the Burning Bush, **Moses asked God what He should tell the Israelites when they asked who sent him. “I AM”.**
- 3) **Ye-Ho-VAH**
 - a. The Self-Existing One; He Who Is
 - b. This is a **proper name** (like James or John) built out of the word for “I AM”, reminding us that God absolutely is.
 - c. Some Hebrews viewed it as too sacred a name to utter aloud, so over time started to substitute “Adonai” (My Lord) in its place, especially when speaking.
 - d. Creation of the Tetragrammaton (four letters) – YHWH – (**You**d – **He**y – **Va**v – **He**y)
 - In our Bibles
 - **LORD in capital letters = Personal Name**
 - **Lord in lower case letters = title of authority**
- 4) LORD – this is how the self-revealing of God the Father to Moses begins. Repeated twice.
- 5) Remember, names reflect one’s character or who they are. What does this name reflect to us about God our Father?
- 6) **The core of LORD can be understood in three ways...**
 - a. **Beyond Comprehension**
We live in a world where we are constantly trying to comprehend life, each other, circumstances that come our way — and when we can’t understand we get frustrated, angry, and even depressed. One thing we need to get our heads and hearts around is that we have a Father in Heaven who is beyond comprehension!
 - **Self-Sufficient** – hard for us to relate: we are dependent upon blood, air, food & water, relationships, resources, etc.
 - God is NOT dependent on anyone or anything for His existence; completely independent of any other being or cause

- The LORD lacks NOTHING – **Acts 17:24-25**
 - Created everything out of one resource – HIMSELF! **John 1:3**
 - People, animals, plants, places, foods, music, etc.
 - God does not need help – He does not NEED you!
 - *He didn't create man because He needed us – rather because His love*
 - God has complete life in Himself – **Psalm 50:9-12**
 - God is enough all by Himself; He is absolute perfection
 - He stands alone in this – no one else can say this about themselves
- **Boundless** – again, hard to relate to: we are limited to time, place, knowledge, one life, etc.
 - In His Person, the LORD has absolutely ZERO limitations
 - Time – **2 Peter 3:8**
 - Knowledge – too amazing, wonderful – **Psalm 139:1-6**
 - Indeed, He knows it all, the end from the beginning
 - Knows the heart of men and women – **Psalm 44:21**
 - Understanding beyond measure – **Psalm 147:4-5**
 - Although we don't understand – He does!
 - Counsel and Wisdom – **Romans 11:33-34, 36**
- b. **Beyond Compare**

We live in a world where we compare almost everything with something else: place, position and power are some often competed over the most. Yet, our Father...

- **His Majesty – Sovereign Ruler of All**
 - The LORD reigns – **Psalm 93:1-2**
 - In all the Earth – **Psalm 8:1**
 - Far above all rule and authority (Father did it) – **Ephesians 1:20-23**
 - Above every name, every knee will bow at His glory – **Philippians 2:9-11**
 - All families and nations will worship Him – **Psalm 22:27-28**
 - **His Might**
 - He is mighty – **Psalm 93:4**
 - Nothing is too difficult for God – NOTHING – **Jeremiah 32:17, 27**
 - Saves – **Zephaniah 3:17**
 - Mighty in Battle – **Psalm 24:8**; Defeats enemy/no competition – **Psalm 68:1-2**
 - Executes Justice – **Psalm 99:4**
 - Delivering / Rescuing / Redeeming / Reviving – Matchless in Might!
- c. **Beyond Corruption**
- Everything and everybody is falling apart: emotionally, physically. Even our sin-filled planet seems to be groaning. The world – and all of us – are passing away! We will not last! Things made by human hands don't last. Yet, our Father...
- **Holy** – Worshiped constantly for this in Heaven – **Revelation 4:8-10**
 - Thomas Watson - "Holiness is the most sparkling jewel of God's crown, it is the name by which He is known."²

² <https://twitter.com/thethomaswatson/status/734021036719624192>

- R. L. Dabney wrote, “Holiness is to be regarded not as a distinct attribute, but as the result of all God’s moral perfection together.”³
- Means separate, set apart – **1 Samuel 2:2**
- Separate from everything He has made – more glorious, beautiful and full of splendor! Unparalleled. Amazingly “Other” than us. – **Exodus 15:11**
 - Not “in” the trees, in the ocean, in the mountains, in the snowfall...
- Set apart in truth
- Set apart from sin – no darkness in Him – **1 John 1:5**
- Free – *set apart* from circumstances, viruses, physical things, catastrophes, changes – nothing impacts Him
- **Everlasting**
 - Always has been and always will be; before there was a beginning! **Psalm 90:1-2**
 - His years have no end – Psalm **102:25-27**
 - Unchanging – no variation, shadow of turning – **James 1:17**
 - Never lacks energy – will not faint or grow weary (*of us!*) – **Isaiah 40:28**

YHWH / LORD – Beyond Comprehension – Beyond Compare – Beyond Corruption

Creation Revealing “the Beyonds” of the LORD, Our Father

In order to appreciate this section more fully, watch the accompanying slides on the sermon video.

- 1) Life Forms – A life form is an entity or being that is alive. In 2016, scientists reported that 1 trillion species are estimated to be on Earth currently with only one-thousandth of one percent described!
- 2) Blood Vessels – Though blood vessels are relatively small, the network is amazingly long. In fact, if they were laid out in a line, they would measure more than 60,000 miles in length. Considering that the circumference of the Earth is 24,873.6 miles, according to NASA, that means your blood vessels could circle the globe 2½ times!
- 3) Time – Scientists discovered years ago that at the speed of light, or 186,000 miles per second, time could cease to exist in space. On a space mission traveling at that speed, an astronaut could take 40 years out and 40 years coming back. When back on the earth, he wouldn't have aged while the people here would be 80 years older.

Let me give you an idea of how fast that is. Let's say you point a .22 rifle into the air and pull the trigger. If that bullet traveled at the speed of light - 186,000 miles per second - it would have circled the earth seven times before you even took your finger off the trigger.

- 4) Galaxies – Because of the Hubble Space Telescope, we can see things we didn't even know existed. There are some 50 billion known galaxies out in space, and we live in one of them, the Milky Way, which is among the smallest of all those galaxies.

³ <https://biblioskolex.wordpress.com/2018/08/26/john-macarthur-on-r-l-dabney/>

- 5) The Stars – At a time when less than 5,000 stars were visible to the human eye, God stated that they were innumerable and that He called each one by name. Today astronomers estimate that there are “ten thousand billion trillion stars” – that is a 1 followed by 25 zeros!
- 6) Pale Blue Dot – In 1990, as the Voyager 1 spacecraft was about to leave our solar system, NASA scientists turned the spacecraft’s camera and took one last picture of Earth from 3.7 billion miles away. It was dubbed the “Pale Blue Dot” by astronomer and astrophysicist Carl Sagan. In reflections on the photograph, Sagan wrote: “That’s here. That’s home. That’s us. On it everyone you love, everyone you know, everyone you ever heard of, every human being who ever was...on a mote of dust suspended in a sunbeam.”⁴

Where is God the Father inviting you to encounter Him afresh today?

Discussion Questions

1. Explain the difference in the Bible between “LORD” and “Lord.”
2. How did God the Father reveal himself to Moses?
3. What does His name reflect to us about God our Father?
4. What is the aspect of God that is hardest for you to comprehend?
5. What is one of God’s primary attributes that awes you the most?
6. How and why do you find personal peace and confidence in your relationship with God?

⁴ <https://www.businessinsider.com/pale-blue-dot-carl-sagan-2016-1>