
The Relationship Between the Jewish People and God as a Relationship of Gratitude and Worship

The nature of the relationship between the Jewish people and God has always, from creation to 2016, been one of gratitude and worship. Even in times of punishment like the story of Job, and in fear of God's wrath, we still look up to him with appreciation and veneration. The stories of Adam and Eve, Abraham, and Moses exemplify the nature of the relationship between human and divine as one of a grateful supplicant and a divine guardian worthy of eternal reverence.

In the biblical account of Adam and Eve after they tasted "the tree of knowledge of good and evil" (Genesis 2: 17), they are grateful for the creation of the universe and of humanity, a thought Jewish people today echo in their prayers. Even before "the fall of man", God does not wish for Adam and Eve to stay away from the tree because he wants them to stay ignorant, rather, he says "that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:17). God wants to protect his creations, and would not humanity be more pure without some seed of evil attached to that heart of goodness? Jewish people are also grateful to God for his creation of the universe as inherently good. Many prophets wished to bring people back towards that innate goodness. In the story of Abraham, the relationship between him and God becomes one covenantal in nature.

God promises Abraham that he will be the "father of a many nations" (Genesis 17: 5), offers protection of him and his bloodline, and gives them the land of Israel as the Promised Land. God makes the Jewish people his chosen people as long as they honor the covenant, a wish of many prophets. God tells Abraham that there will exist a bond between humans and God for the rest of time, and the Jewish people enjoy a special relationship with him. The biblical account of Moses tells readers of the Ten Commandments, the God-given mandate that outlines the nature of the relationship between humans and the divine. God tells Moses, "I have also established a covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers" (Exodus 6: 4). Moses appears in the Torah as the manifestation of God's will to free the Jewish people from bondage in Israel and deliver them into the Land of Milk and Honey, as promised to them in God's covenant with Abraham.

The Jews flee to Israel, and God protects them once again, perpetuating their gratitude until this day and as long as the Jewish people exist as a community. God is presented as Tzur, the Rock, the Protector of the Jewish people. These biblical stories reveal the relationship between human and divine, and its evolution throughout the history of the Jewish people. Yet, it remained one of gratitude and reverence, one between the supplicant and its protector, from creation to modern-day. This idea has defined the Jewish people and created the religion of Judaism as we know it now.