

Moses, the mediator between Yah Adonai and Israel

"⁴Adonai spoke with you face to face on the mountain from the midst of the fire. ⁵(I was standing between Adonai and you at that time, to tell you the word of Adonai, because you were afraid because of the fire and did not go up the mountain.)" (Deuteronomy 5:5-6)

At Mount Sinai, Israel encounters *Yah Adonai face to face*, according to verse 4 above, but in verse 5 Moses *stands between The Almighty* and Israel to *mediate* the *divine word*. Indeed, this seems to be Moses's unique place within the story of the Jewish people. He alone regularly communicates with *Yah Adonai face to face* and brings the report of this communication back to the people. Moses, then, indeed is not only the leader and teacher of Israel but he also served as mediator between *Yah Adonai* and Israel.

The Almighty desires to bring us near but his transcendent purity and holiness create a distance that must somehow be bridged in order to get that close. In this week's *Parashah*, Moses is contemplating the end of his life, which also means the end of his mediatory work. We might ask, was his mediation necessary *only* for the first generation, those who received the Torah at Mount Sinai? Can Israel now meet with *Yah Adonai face to face* with no one to stand between them and him? No, Moses says that when he is gone: *"¹⁵Adonai your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your midst—from your brothers. To him you must listen. ¹⁶This is just what you asked of Adonai your God in Horeb on the day of the assembly when saying, 'I cannot continue to hear the voice of Adonai my God or see this great fire any more, or I will die.'*" What kind of heart did this leader/teacher/mediator have?

The promised prophet will be a mediator in the same way that Moses was a mediator. Like Moses, He will hear the voice of *The Almighty* and then He will speak to the people. Through him, *Yah Adonai* will reveal Himself to Israel. *"¹⁹Now whoever does not listen to My words that this prophet speaks in My Name, I Myself will call him to account."* (Deuteronomy 18:19). The *Torah* will conclude at the end of *Deuteronomy* with a statement that the prophet like Moses had not yet appeared: *"¹⁰There has not risen again a prophet in Israel like Moses, whom Adonai knew face to face."* (Deuteronomy 34:10). For us Messianic Jews, of course, this prophet arose many centuries later, in the person of *Yeshua of Natzeret*.

Citing our text from this week's *Parashah*, Peter urges the Jews of Jerusalem to return to *The Almighty* through trusting in *Yeshua*: *"¹⁹Repent, therefore, and return—so your sins might be blotted out, ²⁰so times of relief might come from the presence of Adonai and He might send Yeshua, the Messiah appointed for you. ²¹Heaven must receive Him, until the time of the restoration of all the things that God spoke about long ago through the mouth of His holy prophets. ²²Moses said, 'Adonai your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from among your brothers. Hear and obey Him in all that He shall say to you.'"* *Awesome!*

This is a fitting text as we enter the forty-day period of *teshuvah*, turning or repentance, which traditionally runs from the first day of Elul, which began at sundown August 13, 2026, to the closing of *Yom Kippur*, September 21, 2026. We also, along with our Jewish brothers and sisters in Jerusalem, are called to *repent and turn back*. I won't seek to detail all the possible ways in which we need to turn to *Yah Adonai* again, but will highlight *one example* that Moses and the prophet like Moses provide for us.

When Moses went before *Yah Adonai* to seek forgiveness for Israel after the sin of the golden calf, he revealed the depth of his burden for the people: *"³²Yet now, please forgive their sin. But if not, please blot me out of Your book that You have written."* (Exodus 32:32). He is willing to *forsake all* for his totally sinful people. Moses stands *inseparably* with his people and finds their estrangement from *The Almighty* insufferable. *Yeshua* bears a similar burden for his people. On his way to Jerusalem, he tells the holy city, which represents all Israel: *"³⁴O Jerusalem, Jerusalem who kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often I longed to gather your children to-*

*gether, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!" (Luke 13:34). Later, as "He drew near and saw Jerusalem," Luke tells us, "He wept over her," yearning for her salvation (Luke 19:41). The heart of the mediator is full of unconditional love, mercy and compassion! This is the kind of heart *we all* must have!*

During our season of *teshuvah* this year, it is essential to remember our mediator, *Messiah Yeshua*, the *prophet like Moses*. The promise in *Deuteronomy 18* is familiar enough to us, especially in the Messianic Jewish world, but we need to go beyond mobilizing it as a proof text. Rather, can we join our hearts with *Messiah's heart* for the brood of Israel that he longs to gather under his wings? As we remember our need for restoration during this season of self-examination and repentance, we are thankful for the *One* who stands *before Yah Adonai* on our behalf. But can we also look beyond our own need for restoration and share in the burden that *Messiah Yeshua* carries for the restoration of all Israel? *"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings."* May His longing fuel our prayers this season! *Shabbat Shalom!*