



SAVED TO SERVE
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HAVE YOU SEEN GOD?

1. In this Sabbath School Lesson, we will study the Bible to understand the meaning of “no man hath seen God at any time.” Critics argue that the Bible contradicts itself because the accounts of Abraham, Jacob, and Moses declare that they saw God. Read 1 John 4:12 and John 1:18 for context.
2. Genesis 18 speaks about Abraham in the plains of Mamre. What does Genesis 18:1 say God did?

3. When Abraham looked up, who did he see? Genesis 18:2 _____
4. Besides God the Lord, who were the two other men that appeared to Abraham? Genesis 18:22; Genesis 19:1

5. **Note:** It is commonly seen throughout scripture that spiritual beings, such as God and the angels, will sometimes transform themselves into human form when interacting with men (see 2 Corinthians 11:14-15).

“...Angels actually come to our world. Nor are they always invisible. They sometimes veil their angelic appearance, and appearing as men, they converse with and enlighten human beings.” {15LtMs, Ms 29, 1900, par. 28}

6. What did Jacob say in Genesis 32:30?

7. How did God appear to Jacob when He wrestled with him? When did Jacob know that it was God? Genesis 32:24, 25

8. So far, we have discovered that God veiled Himself as a man when appearing to Abraham and Jacob. Let us see why God does this. When God first created Adam and Eve, they were able to see His face and His full glory. What caused God to hide His face from us as humans? Isaiah 59:2

9. What is God clothed with, which Adam and Eve were also clothed with before they sinned? Psalm 104:2; Genesis 1:26

“As man came forth from the hand of his Creator, he was of lofty stature and perfect symmetry. His countenance bore the ruddy tint of health and glowed with the light of life and joy. Adam's height was much greater than that of men who now inhabit the earth. Eve was somewhat less in stature; yet her form was noble, and full of beauty. **The sinless pair wore no artificial garments; they were clothed with a covering of light and glory, such as the angels wear. So long as they lived in obedience to God, this robe of light continued to enshroud them.**” {PP 45.3}

10. What does 1 John 1:5 say about God?

- a) In contrast to God, who are enshrouded in darkness? John 1:4-5, 9

11. 1 Timothy 6:16 is key to understand the statement, “no man hath seen God at any time.” Fill in the blanks. Who only hath immortality, _____ in the _____ which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath _____, nor can _____: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.

12. **Note:** The scriptures on question 10 and 11 are revealing to us that no man has seen or can see the **full light** of God's glory and look Him in the face because we are sinners and sin cannot abide in the fullness of His presence without being consumed (Hebrews 12:29).

13. What would happen to unrepentant, wicked sinners if they were to look God in the face with the full brightness of His glory?
2 Thessalonians 2:8

14. Let's look at the experience of Moses to better understand this topic. How does Exodus 33:11 describe the way God spoke to Moses?

a) **Note:** Read Deuteronomy 34:10. It shows us that no other prophet was as privileged to speak to God and see God in the same way as Moses. We will know confirm this in the following points.

15. Exodus 33:11 says that God spoke to Moses face to face. In the same chapter, what petition did Moses ask of God?
Exodus 33:18

16. What did God say Moses could not see, and why? Exodus 33:20

17. God honored the request of His servant Moses to reveal to him His glory. Where did God place Moses? Which part of God was revealed to Moses? Exodus 33:21-23

18. **Note:** It is clear within the context of Exodus 33 that Moses **did not see the face of God with the fullness of His glory**. If that were the case, Moses would not have petitioned God to show him His glory. When God revealed to Moses His glory, He declared His character to Moses and allowed Moses to see His back parts.

19. Numbers 12:8 makes these points even clearer. How did God speak to Moses? What word describes what Moses beheld?
Numbers 12:8

20. **Note:** The number for the word "similitude" in the Hebrew Lexicon of the Strong's Exhaustive Concordance is 8544. It means "shape, embodiment, image, or likeness." Moses was privileged to see the similitude or figure of God; a privilege which was not granted to any other prophet! Furthermore, God spoke to Moses as a friend would, mouth to mouth, and not through visions or dreams (Numbers 12:6-8; Deuteronomy 4:12). See the quotation below for confirmation.

"The Lord granted the earnest entreaty of his servant. "And the Lord said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken; for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name. **And he said, I beseech thee, show me thy glory.** And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee, and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. **And he said, Thou canst not see my face; for there shall no man see me, and live. And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock. And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock; and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by. And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts; but my face shall not be seen.**" {3SG 289.1}

"Never before was fallen man thus favored of God. As he laid upon Moses the great work of leading his people through to the promised land, he condescended to manifest to him his glory as he never had to any others upon the earth." {3SG 289.2}

21. What happened to Moses' face as a result of being in mount with God? Exodus 34:29-30

22. What did Moses have to do when in the presence of the children of Israel after coming down from the mount?
Exodus 34:33-35

23. Who does the veil, which covered the face of Moses, represent? Hebrews 10:19-20 (Note: The veil which separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place in the earthly sanctuary also represents the same).

24. How did Jesus veil Himself so that man could see the face of God and to them could be revealed God's character? Philipians 2:5-8

"...In these words is announced the fulfillment of the purpose that had been hidden from eternal ages. Christ was about to visit our world, and to become incarnate. He says, "A body hast Thou prepared Me." Had He appeared with the glory that was His with the Father before the world was, we could not have endured the light of His presence. That we might behold it and not be destroyed, the manifestation of His glory was shrouded. His divinity was veiled with humanity,—the invisible glory in the visible human form." {DA 23.1}

25. When Jesus returns to Earth the second time and the corruptible bodies of the righteous saints are glorified and made new, then we will be able to see the face of God with all the fullness of His glory! However, for us to see God then, we must begin to behold His glory now. As we close, meditate on the practical things we can do to see God's glory. How did Jesus respond when Philip asked, "show us the Father?" John 14:7-9

a) Therefore, how can we see the Father practically today? John 1:29; John 5:39

26. What else shows us God's glory? Psalm 19:1; Genesis 1:1

27. As we behold Jesus through the Bible and through nature, we will soon reflect His character. What blessing will He then pronounce on us so that we can see God? Matthew 5:8

"...Just so must men look upon the Son of Man as their Saviour unto eternal life. Man had separated himself from God by sin. Christ brought his divinity to earth, veiled by humanity, in order to rescue man from his lost condition. Human nature is vile, and man's character must be changed before it can harmonize with the pure and holy in God's immortal kingdom." {2SP 133.1}