

Has Man Seen God or Not?

By: David Sproule

There are some Scriptures that clearly state, “No one has seen God at any time” (**John 1:18**; **1 John 4:12**; cf. **1 Tim. 6:16** **1 John 4:20**). But there are other verses that indicate Moses and company “saw the God of Israel” (**Ex. 24:10**), Jacob saw “God face to face” (**Gen. 32:30**), and Moses spoke with God “face to face” (**Num. 12:8**). How can some Scriptures say that no one saw God and other Scriptures say that people saw God? Isn’t that a contradiction?

Add to that these verses. God said, “You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live” (**Ex. 33:20**), and yet Jacob said, “I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved” (**Gen. 32:30**). Those seem to contradict each other. Don’t they?

Let’s start with the nature of God. This is the key. Jesus tells us that “God is spirit” (**John 4:24**). He is “invisible” (**Col. 1:15**; **1 Tim. 1:17**). Paul further explains that the Lord dwells “in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see” (**1 Tim. 6:16**). It’s not just that “no man has seen” God—no one, by the very nature of God’s essence, “can see” that which is “invisible.”

So then what did those persons “see” when they “saw” the invisible God who cannot be seen? Jesus said that He was the only one to see God in His true essence, as He alone shares that essence (**John 6:46**). So, while “No one has ever seen God,” Jesus, “who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known” (**John 1:18, ESV**). By seeing Jesus in the flesh, man was able to see the Father (**John 14:9**).

When man saw God in the flesh, he was seeing God, but in a human form (not in “His [spirit] form,” **John 5:37**; cf. **Phil. 2:7**). Could this, then, be the same thing that Jacob (**Gen. 32:30**) and Moses (**Ex. 33:11**) saw? That’s the conclusion that follows the evidence, as the Bible does not contradict itself, especially within the same paragraph—“the Lord spoke to Moses face to face...But He said, ‘You cannot see My face...and live’” (**Ex. 33:11, 20**).

Let’s allow the Bible to explain speaking to the Lord face to face. In Numbers 12, the Lord spoke to Aaron and Miriam in “vision” and “dream” (12:1-6), but He spoke with Moses “face to face” (12:8). “Face to face” meant that God was speaking “plainly, and not in dark sayings; And [Moses] sees the form of the Lord.” God spoke in an intimate way with certain Bible characters, revealing Himself (even His “glory,” **Ex. 33:18, 22**) through visible forms and manifestations, as if they were seeing His face. It is a figurative way of emphasizing how close God was with certain ones, but as humans, they were limited to only see God in limited capacities through which God revealed Himself to them. They saw what God wanted His humans to see.

His Glory in His Temple Is Not Found in Gold

By: Selected

Last week we looked at the work David did to gather much of the material for the temple his son, Solomon, was to build. That temple was adorned magnificently because it was built by 183,000 laborers working for seven years. Read the details about it, and you will discover how much gold was used to construct it. It was almost equal to all the gold in Ft. Knox. The estimated value for the cost of all material used to build the temple is \$240,381,000,000.

When Solomon dedicated the temple, the visible manifestation of God coming down and entering it was like what happened at Mt. Sinai when He entered the tabernacle. They literally saw the presence of God entering both of these buildings. Tragically, one great truth was overlooked by those who later worshiped at the temple. It is a truth so many have failed to see in our day. The grandeur of that temple has nothing to do with its appearance. The greatness of that temple is that God was present within it. We would be so much wiser if we comprehended this truth.

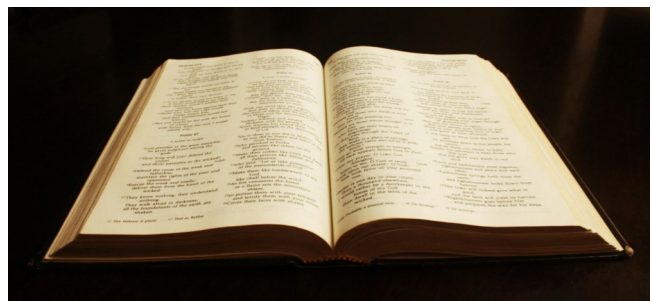
What happened to that temple? A far greater question is why Nebuchadnezzar was used by God to destroy it and to carry its gold furnishings to Babylon. As you read how rapidly the Jews left God following Solomon's death you will readily see the answer. For the next 300 years they worshipped idols (sometimes with the idols being brought into the temple) and there were only four righteous kings who ruled over them.

How did God respond to such gross mockery of His Holy Place and His Most Holy Place?

God is good; He is merciful; He is longsuffering—but He is not mocked. “God is not mocked, for whatever a man sows that he shall also reap” (**Gal. 6:7**). In a vision, Ezekiel described what he saw just before the temple was razed and the prophet shows why it happened.

Read Ezekiel 9-11 as he described what he saw. The glory of God departed from the ark of the covenant and its golden cherub and went to the door of the temple Solomon had built. It paused at the threshold once he saw the cloud and the brilliant light in the temple. However, it only paused at the door, for Ezekiel saw the glory of God leave that building and go to a mountain on the east side of Jerusalem. God will not be mocked. God will not abide in the midst of a rebellious nation. The Lord who was in His holy temple left it.

His glory is not found in our buildings. We glory in the earthly material aspects of what we offer to Him. Solomon's temple is no more (neither is Herod's). His Spirit departed from it, but today He has another temple in which His glory is found today (**Eph. 3:20-21**). Think about it!



Upcoming Events

Today!: Keno Shrum from House to House Heart to Heart will be speaking. Flyers are in the foyer.

February 2: Monthly potluck after morning service and we will be welcoming our new preacher Cody McCoy and his family to Midtown. Please bring a dish to share. We will also have a 12:45pm service to follow.

Feb. 7-9: Midtown will host our Youth Winter retreat for grades 6-12th. Please visit our website to register.

There will not be a February Youth Devotional.

Peach Valley Registration will begin Jan. 31st.

Area events:

Area events/details are posted on the bulletin board in the hallway. Please check them out.

Prayer List

Prayer Requests:

Allen Clifton who will have a biopsy on January 30th.

Joyce Faires who is recovering at home from knee surgery.

Eddie Serenil will have surgery on Jan. 27th.

Members

Jeff Cannady, Jerry FitzSimmons, James Hicks, and Veronica Serenil.

Please get with Kelly Cannady if you would like a picture for the pictorial wall directory.

Please sign up to open/close the building, prepare communion, and host youth devos for 2025. The sign up sheets are on the bulletin board in the hallway.

Service Roster

Week of January 26, 2025

Sunday Morning

Scripture Reading..... Luke FitzSimmons
Song Leader..... Doug Jobes

Opening Prayer.....James Cammock
Closing Prayer.....Rick Bass

Lord's Supper & Offering

Bread..... Bryant Siegel
Cup..... Ken Dorries
Offering..... Lupe Escojido
Assist..... Steve Randle
Assist.....Mike Atkinson
Assist..... Willie Fossati

Sunday Evening

Song LeaderJack Jobes

Opening Prayer..... Steve Randle
Closing Prayer..... Clifton Rutherford

Lord's Supper & Offering.....Bryant Siegel/
Lupe Escojido

Wednesday Evening

Adult ClassCody McCoy
Song Leader Richard Hill
Devotional Kevin Sheeran

Other

Prepare CommunionFerman Rosales

Congregational News For This Week

Birthdays

Amy Silva.....Jan. 26
Julia Atkinson.....Jan. 26
BK York.....Jan. 29

Anniversaries

Lupe & Virginia Escojido.....Jan. 31

If you have any prayer requests, upcoming events to be announced, or updates/corrections please contact our secretary, Nina Siegel, at (361) 573-0030 or email office.midtownchurch@gmail.com

Our Elders

Mark FitzSimmons
Ron White

Our Deacons

James Cammock—Evangelism
Lupe Escojido— Benevolence
Doug Jobes—Safety, Men's Encouragement &
Winter Youth Retreat
Kevin Sheeran—Worship Organization
Bryant Siegel—Education and Finance

Our Minister

Cody McCoy

Weekly Reading

Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I
might not sin against You.
Psalm 119:11

Service Times

Sunday Morning Bible Class.....9:00 A.M.
Sunday Morning Worship.....10:00 A.M.
Sunday Evening Worship.....5:00 P.M.
Wednesday Bible Class.....7:00 P.M.

Attendance Records

Week of January 19, 2025

A.M. Bible Class.....60
A.M. Worship.....87
P.M. Worship.....64
Wednesday Worship.....64

*Financial information is located on the bulletin
board in the hallway.*

Supported Works

John & Carla Moore *Bible Land Passages*

midtown
CHURCH OF CHRIST

5901 N. Main
Victoria, TX 77904
361-573-0030

midtowncoc.org

Weekly Communication! To receive the *Midtown Messenger* and other congregational news to your inbox each week, please email events.midtowncoc@gmail.com.