

Moses (the Back)

Christ (the Mirror)

Heaven (the Full Revelation)

It was Moses' deep desire to see the face of God after a long time without visibly encountering Him.

Face-to-face with God (Theophany)

The scriptures say God spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. This implies an intimate, direct communication what theologians call a theophany, a visible manifestation of God to humans without fully revealing His essence, since God's full glory is too great for fallen humans to withstand.

Exodus 33:11 (NIV)

The Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend. Then Moses would return to the camp, but his young aide Joshua son of Nun did not leave the tent.

But later Moses asked to see God's face, and God warned:

Exodus 33:20-23 (NIV)

But, “he said, “you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live.” Then the Lord said, “There is a place near me where you may stand on a rock. When my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft in the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by. Then I will remove my hand and you will see my back; but my face must not be seen.”

The Invisibility of God’s Essence

This emphasizes the doctrine of Divine Invisibility God’s essence is invisible and unapproachable in His fullness (1 Timothy 6:16). Seeing God’s “face” means experiencing His full glory, which sinful humans cannot survive without atonement.

Moses’ sinfulness and humanity limited his capacity to behold God’s glory fully. Thus, God allowed Moses to see only His “back,” a metaphor indicating partial revelation of God’s presence (a limited view of His glory).

1 Timothy 6:16 (NIV)

Who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see.

The Nature of God Revealed to Moses

When Moses saw God's "back," he understood His character compassion, grace, patience, love, and justice.

Exodus 34:5-7 (NIV)

Then the Lord came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed His name, the Lord. And He passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet He does not leave the guilty unpunished; He punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation."

This passage reveals God's mercy and justice in tension a foundational theme in biblical theology, balancing God's holiness

and love.

The Face (Through the Mirror): Jesus Christ Reveals God

God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to reveal the face of God to humanity. Jesus is the ultimate theophany the full, perfect revelation of God in human form (John 1:14; Colossians 1:15).

John 1:18 (NIV)

No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.

Colossians 1:15 (NIV)

The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

Because no sinful human can see God and live, Jesus' atoning death and resurrection make it possible for us to stand before

God's glory.

Hebrews 9:14 (NIV)

How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death...

Jesus revealed God's true nature as love, perfectly unconditional and sacrificial.

1 John 4:8 (NIV)

Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

Seeing God Face to Face: The Future Hope

Currently, we see God "through a mirror" (Greek: *katoptron*), meaning a partial and indirect vision, a spiritual perception.

1 Corinthians 13:12 (NIV)

For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

The ultimate vision of God beatific vision will happen in heaven, where believers will fully behold God's glory.

Revelation 22:4 (NIV)

They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.

Conclusion and Invitation

The journey to seeing God's face:

- Began with Moses' partial vision (God's "back")
- Was advanced through Christ, God's image on earth (the mirror)
- Will be perfected in heaven when we see God face to face.

Have you received Christ as your Savior? Without Him, no one can withstand God's glory or see His face and live.

God commands repentance and faith, through which sins are forgiven by Jesus' sacrifice.

Acts 4:12 (NIV)

Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.

Choose light over darkness today. Jesus said:

John 3:36 (NIV)

Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on them.

Run to Jesus, receive His grace, and walk in the love of God. The Lord bless you!

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