

Has anyone seen God or not?

Exodus 24:9-11, Exodus 33:11, Exodus 6:2-3; and John 1:18

1. Has seen

- A. ([Gen. 17:1](#)) – “Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, “I am God Almighty ; Walk before Me, and be blameless;
- B. ([Gen. 18:1](#)) Now the LORD appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, while he was sitting at the tent door in the heat of the day.”
- C. ([Exodus 6:2-3](#)) – “God spoke further to Moses and said to him, “I am the LORD; 3and I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as God Almighty, but by My name, LORD, I did not make Myself known to them.”
- D. ([Exodus 24:9-11](#)) – “Then Moses went up with Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, 10and they saw the God of Israel; and under His feet there appeared to be a pavement of sapphire, as clear as the sky itself. 11Yet He did not stretch out His hand against the nobles of the sons of Israel; and they saw God, and they ate and drank.”
- E. ([Num. 12:6-8](#)) – “He said, “Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, I, the LORD, shall make Myself known to him in a vision. I shall speak with him in a dream. 7”Not so, with My servant Moses, He is faithful in all My household; 8With him I speak mouth to mouth, Even openly, and not in dark sayings, And he beholds the form of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid To speak against My servant, against Moses ?”
- F. ([Acts 7:2](#)), “And he [Stephen] said, ‘Hear me, brethren and fathers! The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran...’”

2. Has not seen

- A. ([Exodus 33:20](#)) – “But He [God] said, “You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live !”
- B. ([John 1:18](#)) – “No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.”
- C. ([John 5:37](#)) – ““And the Father who sent Me, He has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form.”
- D. ([John 6:46](#)) - “Not that anyone has seen the Father, except the One who is from God; He has seen the Father.”
- E. ([1 Tim. 6:15-16](#)) – “He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, 16who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen.”

It is evident above that God was seen. But, considering the "can't-see-God" verses, some would understandably argue that there would be a contradiction. One explanation offered is that the people were seeing visions, or dreams, or the Angel of the LORD ([Num. 22:22-26](#); [Judges 13:1-21](#)) and not really God Himself. But the problem is that the verses cited above do not say vision, dream, or Angel of the LORD. They say that people saw God ([Exodus 24:9-11](#)), that God was seen, and that He appeared as God Almighty ([Exodus 6:2-3](#)).

At first, this is difficult to understand. God Almighty was seen ([Exodus 6:2-3](#)) which means it was not the Angel of the Lord, for an angel is not God Almighty, and at least Moses saw God, not in a vision or dream, as the LORD Himself attests in [Num. 12:6-8](#). If these verses mean what they say, then we naturally assume we have a contradiction. Actually, the contradiction exists in our understanding, not in the Bible--which is always the case with alleged biblical contradictions.

The solution is simple. All you need to do is accept what the Bible says. If the people of the OT were seeing God, the Almighty God, and Jesus said that no one has ever seen the Father ([John 6:46](#)), then they were seeing God Almighty, but not the Father. It was someone else in the Godhead. I suggest that they were seeing the Word before He became incarnate. In other words, they were seeing Jesus.

If God is a [Trinity](#), then [John 1:18](#) is not a problem either because in John chapter one, John writes about the Word (Jesus) and God (the Father). In verse 14 it says the Word became flesh. In verse 18 it says no one has seen God. Since Jesus is the Word, God then, refers to the Father. This is typically how John writes of God: as a reference to the Father. We see this verified in Jesus own words in [John 6:46](#) where He said that no one has ever seen the Father. Therefore, Almighty God was seen, but not the Father. It was Jesus before His incarnation. There is more than one person in the Godhead and the doctrine of the Trinity must be true.