

# Journey INTO THE Bible

## Supplemental Material

Genesis, Part Two: Lesson Four

Genesis 32—37

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## Seeing God Face to Face

According to texts such as Exodus 33:20 and Judges 13:22, there is the conviction that one cannot see God and live. Clouds and smoke, therefore, are employed as buffer zones between God and humans. For example, Isaiah experiences God in the temple that is filled with smoke and says: "...my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!" (Isaiah 6:5). God's glory is the reality that shields a person from God's direct presence. Only rarely does the Old Testament speak of a person seeing God face-to-face and surviving. Moses was one such exception (Deuteronomy 34:10). It should be borne in mind that these circumlocutions for God's presence are linked to the nature of Israel's religion, which was opposed to icons. Since Israel did not permit any images of God, it necessarily had to devise other expressions for capturing the reality of the God in their midst.

In this regard, a rather interesting New Testament text related to God's face is 2 Corinthians 4:6: "God...has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Paul is speaking of the inauguration of the end-time. The light for that event is the splendor of glory on the face of Jesus. He is humanity as God intended humanity to be—the perfect image of God.