

Wynndale Presbyterian Church

Sunday School Lesson Notes
An Introduction to Theophany
Sunday, July 2, 2023

Looking at **Theophany** from the **50,000ft view**

1. WHAT is a theophany?

- A Greek compound word (*theos*) + (*phainein*, meaning “to appear”) = “an appearance of God.”
- A definition used in worship: “anytime God appears in a visible form that humans can see.”

2. WHAT’s the PURPOSE of theophany?

- Main purpose: To make God’s presence known. Theophanies are always divinely initiated.
- Other purposes:
 - To command = Exodus 3 with Moses and the Burning Bush
 - To judge = Job 38:3 and 40:7 with, “Dress for action like a man, I will question you...”
 - To encourage = Joshua 5:13-15, Isaiah 6:1-6
 - To invoke awe = Daniel 3:30

3. Are there different TYPES of theophany?

- YES! God can appear as whatever He wishes, but some common ones seen in Scripture are: (*these Scripture verses are only a few examples, not all*)
 - Thunderstorms = Exodus 19:16
 - Heavenly courtrooms = Isaiah 6:1-6, Daniel 7
 - Human = Exodus 24:9-11; 33:22-23
 - Warrior = Joshua 5:13-15
 - Chariots = Ezekiel 1:15-21, Psalm 18:10
 - Glory & clouds = Exodus 40:34-38, 1 Kings 8:10-11
 - An “*imprint*” of God’s glory = Exodus 34:29-35
 - Fire = Genesis 15:17-18, 1 Kings 18:20-40
 - The “Angel of the LORD” = Genesis 16, Judges 13

4. WHY are there theophanies?

- To bring HOPE
- Pointing to a future day where there’s permanent, everlasting communion with God and His people. Theophanies in the Bible are *temporary*. Jesus Christ is the ultimate theophany that is *everlasting*.