

WEEKDAY WORSHIP

October 9-15, 2017

Worship as encounter with the living God cannot be limited to one hour per week. "Weekday Worship" invites you to extend your worship beyond the sanctuary, to hear the story of the Bible as your story, lived out each day of each week. Feedback is appreciated and should be directed to Rita Boyer.

BIBLE READING

This week's reading is: Exodus 32:1–14 (<http://bible.oremus.org/?q=373526852>).

Other readings are: Psalm 106:1–6, 19–23; Philippians 4:1–9; Matthew 22:1–14

The theme is Soothing Our Souls.

We live in a culture where people seek instant gratification. We are not good at waiting but insist that things should happen immediately. While smartphones and highspeed internet may feed those expectations, they are not unique to our contemporary society. In this week's Bible reading, the people turn their backs on the eternal God in favor of a God that they could see and touch in the here and now. Moses and Joshua, his assistant, go up the mountain to meet with God. The people are camped nearby, with Moses' brother Aaron and nephew Hur left in charge. Moses and Joshua are gone for forty days and nights: "forty" being a symbolic number that represents birth, rebirth, and change. The people in the camp below grow restless. Wanting some assurance of God's presence, they turn to the familiar nature religions of the ancient Near East. They make an idol, a golden calf, associated with strength and virility. Worshiping the calf and making sacrifices to it must have brought immediate comfort to their restless, troubled souls. God takes notice, however, and is so angry that God is ready to destroy these "stiff-necked people" (verse 9), while making a great nation of Moses. Moses intervenes on the peoples' behalf, and we catch a glimpse of the surprisingly intimate relationship that God and Moses share. Moses pleads with God who "changed his mind about the disaster that he planned to bring on his people" (verse 14). The human relationship with God invites anger, ranting, pleading, and persuading. It is a dynamic relationship that grows out of God's unfailing love. The promise is not for instant gratification but for eternal love.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

"Questions to Consider" enable you to connect your story to the biblical story. Rather than easy questions to be answered at first glance, these questions or reflections can be returned to and meditated upon throughout the week.

Honest, intimate relationships take time. What is competing for your time? How much time do you devote to deepening your relationship with God?

Continue to reflect upon the worship theme of October 8:

Try to capture the "rules" that guide your life in ten words.

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