

PREPARING AT HOME

October 16-22, 2017

Focus reading: Exodus 33:12–23 (<http://bible.oremus.org/?ql=374216270>).

Other lectionary readings: Psalm 99; 1 Thessalonians 1:1–10; Matthew 22:15–22

Theme: Our Whole Selves

We speak of God's presence with us as a certainty; yet we cannot point to a tangible reality. Even so, there are times when we can feel God's closeness. There are also times when God seems far away, and we yearn for some material evidence. Surely we can identify with the people of Israel who seek God's presence on their wilderness journey. Over and over again, they ask to be reassured of God's presence. Here we find Moses seeking that same reassurance. He has accepted God's call to lead the people to the land God has promised, but Moses knows that he cannot do it alone. He needs help. He wants God to show him what to do. God promises divine presence and rest. Moses continues to plead with God, saying that it is God's presence that will show that the people of Israel are special to God. Continuing to seek reassurance and "proof" of their unique relationship with God, Moses asks to see God's glory. It was believed and here is affirmed by God that no one could see God and live. God is Creator, not a created being, and cannot be seen by any created beings. We can only see the result of God's presence and actions. We cannot see the being we call God. How God is present with us is a mystery, and it is a mysterious encounter that Moses has in this passage. It is an encounter that provides him with what he needs to continue leading the people through the wilderness to the land of promise.

SEEING GOD

Moses wants to see God, but no one can actually see God. If you could see God, what do you think you would see? Draw a picture. Younger children may draw an older man or a Santa Claus-like character. Encourage older children to consider that God does not have a human body (otherwise, how could God be everywhere at the same time?). How do you picture the "glory of God?"

I WONDER

Play "I wonder" with your child this week. What do you wonder about God? What would you like to ask God?

PRAYER

Powerful and gracious God,
You know us by name and love us.
We are special to you, and we love you.
We give thanks for all of the times we see
the wonderful things you are doing.
Help us to pay attention and to be thankful.
Amen.

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