

## Aim of lesson

That we should appreciate what the glory of God is.

## Bible background

Exodus 33 & 34.

## Outline of lesson

### What Moses had seen of God

Begin with the workbook, and work through it together up to the references to Exodus 33:13,18. Moses had seen a great deal of God's actions

### Moses' need of God

At this point fill in the background by reminding them that the children of Israel had made a golden calf. Then read Exodus 32:30 – 33:4, taking parts, and Exodus 33:12-19 (or 12-23). Bring out here how Moses had grown spiritually. He did not just want God to smooth the way for him, Exodus 33:2,3. He wanted the presence of God with him. He valued the company of God as that of his greatest friend, Exodus 33:15.

## The Glory of the LORD

Now take the class to Exodus 34, to God's declaration of his glory. Read together Exodus 34:4-8, and get the class to fill in the middle section in the workbook. Make sure that they understand the vocabulary and the ideas of mercy and justice.

Based on the text of the NIV, the qualities of God could be listed like this:

- Compassionate and gracious
- Slow to anger
- Abounding in love and faithfulness
- Maintaining love to thousands
- Forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin.
- He does not leave the guilty unpunished ...

One possible explanation of the last point is that God waits for three or four generations of wickedness, when there is no longer hope of a new generation learning anything good from an older one, before completely destroying in judgement. This was the case with the inhabitants of Canaan about to be destroyed by the Israelites, (see Genesis 15:16).

The more common understanding is that children suffer from the effects of their parents' misdemeanours.

### Who else was this important to?

The next section of the workbook may be completed fairly quickly. Its purpose is to show how this important declaration of God's character is appealed to by other men of God:

- Hezekiah
- The people in the time of Nehemiah and Ezra
- David
- Joel
- Jeremiah
- Jesus

In the workbook the box headed 'Jesus' is intended to guide the class to look at each part of God's declaration of his glory and think what Jesus did in his life to illustrate it, e.g. merciful – 'Father, forgive them they know not what they do'. John wrote of Jesus – 'we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth' (John 1:14 ESV).

## Digging deeper

### Visions of God

This section looks at the experiences of three other prophets – Isaiah, Ezekiel and the apostle John, who all saw visions of the glory of God.

## Relevance to our lives

Encourage the class to think how we can share God's glory in showing these characteristics that he considers central to character, rather than seeking the 'showy' glory of fame or popularity.

## Prayer

Lord of Glory, thank you for showing us the fullness of your glory through your son Jesus. Help us to seek to share in those characteristics you count as your glory.

## Other suggestions for activities

- Using Exodus 34:4-8, the class might like to trace back how these characteristics had been seen by the Israelites during their lifetime.
- A dialogue could be prepared between Moses and Joshua after this event, relating what had happened.