



## **We Won't Move Without You**

*Then the Lord said to Moses, "Leave this place, you and the people you brought up out of Egypt, and go up to the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, saying, 'I will give it to your descendants.' I will send an angel before you and drive out the Canaanites, Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. Go up to the land flowing with milk and honey. But I will not go with you, because you are a stiff-necked people and I might destroy you on the way." When the people heard these distressing words, they began to mourn... Ex 33:1-4a*

## **Getting on the Same Page**

*The book of Exodus continues the story of the redemptive history that God began in the book of Genesis. The original purpose of Exodus was to help the people of Israel understand their identity as God's special people, and to learn about their covenant obligations to him. They were to see themselves as God's "firstborn son" (Ex. 4:22–23) and as a "kingdom of priests" (19:5–6), called to bring God's blessings to the nations. Exodus describes how the Lord delivered Israel from Egyptian oppression, brought her into covenant relationship with himself at Mount Sinai, and came to dwell in her midst in the tabernacle.*

*God's main purpose in delivering the people of Israel out of Egyptian oppression was so that he "might dwell among" them. To understand why God desired to dwell in Israel's midst, we must consider the book of Exodus within the larger framework of redemptive*

*history. The Creator-King's original intention was that he might dwell among his people, who would be a flourishing human community in a paradise-kingdom beginning in Eden and spreading throughout the whole. The book of Revelation shows that these original creation intentions remain God's purpose for his people, and his purpose will be fulfilled at the end of history (Rev 21–22). In those last two chapters of the Bible, as in the Bible's first two chapters, we see God dwelling with his people. In the book of Exodus we see this as well, as Israel learns about their covenant relationship with God, and as he dwells among them through the tabernacle.*

## Discussion Questions

### Getting Started

- In what moments do you consider the presence of God in your daily life?
- How often do you find yourself considering the importance and influence of His presence in your life?
- What does relying on God's power and presence look like in your daily life?

### Study

Read Ex 33:1 – 34:7 Together

- What attribute of God did you see in this week's passage that particularly struck you? How should it change the way you pray, think, speak or act this week?
- Consider Ex 33:1-11. Imagine you are one of the Israelites in the camp. What would you feel in this situation? Looking back on the past few months, what regrets would you have? What hopes do you have?
- In 33:12-23, what exactly does Moses request of God? What does God agree to do? What does He not agree to do? What does the text say is God's motivation for responding the ways in which He does?
- In Exodus 33:12–13, how does Moses' first request show a passion for God's presence? How does God's reply (Exodus 33:14) show his passion to provide his presence?
- In Exodus 33:15–16, how does Moses' second request show a passion for God's presence? How does God's reply (Exodus 33:17) show his passion to provide his presence?
- In Exodus 33:18, how does Moses' third request show a passion for God's presence? How does God's reply (Exodus 33:19–23) show his passion to provide his presence?
- How did Israel go from "Everything the Lord has said we will do," to building a false god in scarcely over a month? Why is it so easy to become forgetful of God's mercies?
- God describes Himself as compassionate, slow to anger, gracious and abounding in loving-kindness (Ex 34:5-7. Where do you see these qualities in chapter 33?

### ***Application Questions***

- If you were honest, how often do you function as a practical atheist (unaware and unconcerned about the power and presence of God in your life)?
- In what area of your life are you the most aware of God's presence and are dependent on God's power?
- What areas of your life do you need to cultivate a greater awareness and dependence on God's presence and His power?