

Freedom is Worship (Exodus 34:5-8)

Video 2

We can't help but be worshippers, but – as we've seen – what we centre our lives around is critically important. What we trust for our ultimate security and happiness couldn't be more crucial.

We may place our trust in all sorts of things, but they can't see us through. They will always let us down. We're not free.

Yet God is the eternal One, the self-existent One. He is the one who always was, always is and always will be. Everything else comes and goes. Everything else ends. But God remains the same.

Unlike everything and everyone else, he is able to see us through.

And he wants to see us through too.

We see that in Exodus' high point. God proclaims his name – he reveals what he's like. Everything we've seen him doing so far in Exodus is exemplified in this description. Here's how God describes himself:

The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished.

God is able to see us through. But as we see here, God *wants* to see us through. It's who he is:

He is gracious and compassionate. He knows we're weak and need help. And he delights to give it to us.

He is slow to anger. He doesn't write us off on the basis of our worst moments.

He is abounding in love and faithfulness. He stands by us and pursues us in affection, even when we go astray.

He forgives wickedness, rebellion and sin. Worshipping the wrong things inevitably causes us to damage ourselves and others. We need to be forgiven. And God delights to do so.

And yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished. As the God of love, he will make sure that justice will be done. Nothing will be swept under the carpet.

The truth is that we centre our lives around other stuff because we're looking for these things. We want to be seen. We want to be loved. We want to be forgiven. We want justice.

Yet these other things we worship fail us. And if we're not careful, we can become enslaved to chasing after something that will never work.

Only God will give us these things. Nothing else can.

But perhaps you noticed a tension in this description of God. How can God forgive wickedness without leaving the guilty unpunished? How can God ensure that justice is done, and yet be slow to anger?

We see the answer as the Bible's story plays out. As this very God steps into human time and space. Jesus is punished for our guilt. Justice is done but falls on him. So that we might only know God's love.

This is our God. He is worthy of worship.

More than a millennium before Jesus, Moses didn't know the full scale of God's goodness. And yet even he is floored as he glimpses what God is like:

Moses bowed to the ground at once and worshipped.

And similarly, when we see how much better God is than anything else we might worship. As we glimpse his care, commitment, and power. We'll want to centre our lives around *him*.

We'll want to be his worshippers with our every breath.

It's enough to transform your entire life.

And, if it hasn't already, to set you free.