

The God Who Makes Himself Known

Scripture Reading — Acts 9:1-19

As [Saul] neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice. . . . — Acts 9:3

In a mystical scene in *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back*, Luke Skywalker is learning to get in touch with the Force, training under the little Jedi master Yoda. The Force, it seems, is not a personal being, and it has a dark side as well as a bright side. Using the Force requires supreme concentration, and Luke is able to float upside down in the air until he is distracted for a moment and comes crashing down.

Our infinite personal God is quite different from the Force, which of course isn't real. We do not have to go through yoga-like training, as if to work ourselves into a deep state of mystic concentration to get in touch with our better side, or whatever you want to call it. God is there, and although we cannot see him, he made us like himself, for fellowship with himself. Jesus said (in prayer to God the Father), "This is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent" (John 17:3). God takes the initiative and reveals himself, sometimes even to those like Saul, who hated him.

To grow to know God, however, calls for repentance and humility. "For this is what the high and exalted One says—he who lives forever, whose name is holy: 'I live in a high and holy place, but also with the one who is contrite and lowly in spirit'" (Isaiah 57:15).

Prayer

We kneel before you, awesome and holy God. Receive us and teach us to know you, we pray. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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