

Foundations Devotional

• FOR THE WEEK OF OCT 4 - OCT 10 •

MONDAY // LEVITICUS 23

Part of God's plans for His covenant people included several festivals and holidays that served as a time for the people to gather together and worship God. All of the instructions God laid out for His people in Leviticus were intentional, and each of these festivals had important significance for their relationship with God. The Sabbath, which occurred weekly, was a day of rest and reflection meant to refocus the people's attention on God. The festivals celebrated God's redemption of His people from Egypt and His provisions for their physical and spiritual needs. The Day of Atonement constituted a day of self-denial in which the Israelites confessed their sins and the high priest made an atonement sacrifice. These special periods would also help the people remember God's acts of creation, deliverance, protection, and provision.

TUESDAY // LEVITICUS 26

God reminded His people not to worship idols and to honor the Sabbath. He declared that obedience to His commands would bring blessing and life, while disobedience would bring curse and difficulty. If, after disobeying, His people repented and sought His forgiveness, they could again experience blessing and life. This cyclical pattern of obedience, blessing, disobedience, cursing, and redemption is the running theme throughout all of the Old Testament, and it's not until Jesus comes that the pattern is finally broken. God's favor is not dependent on our obedience. Because of Jesus' obedience, faith in Him is all that is necessary to have a relationship with God.

WEDNESDAY // NUMBERS 11-12

The Book of Numbers picks up with the story of the Israelites' journey from Egypt to the promised land where it left off in the Book of Exodus. After the people built the tabernacle, they resumed their journey to the promised land, but their lack of faith in God again became evident when they complained about their condition. The complaints stirred up God's anger, but Moses interceded on behalf of the people and God held back His anger. This unique relationship Moses had with God stirred up jealousy in his brother, Aaron, and his sister, Miriam. When Miriam criticized Moses' marriage and questioned his leadership, God struck her with leprosy, banishing her from the camp. However, Moses again interceded to God for her healing. Both of these accounts remind us of the human bent toward sinfulness and our need for an intercessor, which we have in Jesus.

THURSDAY // NUMBERS 13-14

The Israelites sent 12 scouts into Canaan, the promised land, in preparation for invasion. Although God had commanded the people to enter the land, ten of the spies returned with a negative report and warned the people not to enter because of the size and strength of the inhabitants. Only Joshua and Caleb urged the people to overcome their fears and to obey God's command to enter. As a result of the negative report, God punished the nation by declaring they would not be allowed to enter Canaan. One of the character traits of God made evident throughout the Old Testament is His justice, which is on display in this tragic scene. Because God is just, He could not allow a rebellious people to claim His blessing. Thankfully, faith in Jesus alone is enough to satisfy God's just wrath against our sin, but God still expects obedience from His people. We are able to obey Him through the power of His Holy Spirit. Growing in obedience and trust is the focus of the Christian life.

FRIDAY // NUMBERS 16-17

As punishment for their disobedience, the Israelites would wander in the desert for 40 years, and most would die there, never seeing the promised land. During their wandering years, the Israelites' rebellion against God grew. Numbers 16-17 describe a rebellion that stirred up against Moses and Aaron's leadership, led by a Levite named Korah. The rebellion was stopped when God supernaturally destroyed the opponents and sent a plague among the Israelites as divine punishment. God then demonstrated His choice of Aaron and his descendants as priests. One of the most dangerous threats to a person's relationship with God is control, or self-sufficiency. This dangerous thought causes us to think we know what is better for our lives and how to achieve it. Until we surrender complete control to God, we are unable to walk in the freedom and peace He offers.

WEEKEND // NEED CATCH UP?