

Foundations Devotional

• FOR THE WEEK OF SEPT 20 - SEPT 26 •

MONDAY // EXODUS 19-20

Following God's miraculous work to get His people out of Egypt, the Israelites journeyed through the desert, eventually setting up camp at Mount Sinai. On that mountain, God spoke to Moses, telling him that if the Israelites would remember what He had done and obey Him, they would demonstrate that they were His special and holy people. God made good on His promise to Abraham to make a great nation out of Abraham's descendants, then He gave them the Ten Commandments to help them know how to live as His chosen people. The first four commandments focused on the people's relationship with God, while the next six focused on the people's relationships with one another. The ultimate goal of the Ten Commandments was to highlight the people's need for God and point them toward holiness.

TUESDAY // EXODUS 24-25

In Exodus 21-23, God gave the Israelites further instructions for worship and living. Then the Israelites made a covenant with God in which they promised to obey Him. The ritual sacrifice Moses performed to seal the covenant foreshadowed the death of Jesus on the cross—the animal's blood was shed as a sacrifice for the sins of the people, which made a way for them to unite with God in this covenant. Following the dictation of the Law, God next laid out very specific instructions for the building of a tabernacle, a place set aside for His presence to dwell, in which they could worship Him regularly. Chapter 25 gives details for the ark, the table, and the lampstand. Each item was intentionally designed to point the worshipers to God, and they were made of a wide range of natural materials, meaning everyone was able to give an offering to help build the sanctuary (25:1-9). Giving is built into our relationship with God as an act of worship.

WEDNESDAY // EXODUS 26-27

The tabernacle was a large tent used for gathering to worship. Because of the way God designed it, the tabernacle could be taken apart and carried as the people continued on their journey to the promised land. The tent served as a reminder of God's constant presence and their need to center life on Him, no matter where they went. The veil of the tabernacle, described in Exodus 26:31-35, separated the ark of the covenant and the mercy seat of God from the rest of the tabernacle and all the people. In other words, it separated the people from the presence of God. This is why it's so significant that when Jesus died on the cross, the veil was ripped in two (Luke 23:45). Jesus' sacrifice made access to God possible for all people, as it still does today.

THURSDAY // EXODUS 28-29

Along with the instructions God gave Moses for building the tabernacle and its components, He also provided instructions for the creation of the priestly garments—particularly the robes, ephod, and breast-piece worn by the high priest. Once the tabernacle had been constructed and furnished and the priestly garments had been created, everything needed to be dedicated and consecrated for worship. As part of that, God asked the people to give Him their best as an offering, and doing so became a regular part of their faith in and obedience to Him. As it did for the Israelites, giving God our best, not what's left over, honors Him and shows our gratitude to Him for giving us His best through Christ.

FRIDAY // EXODUS 30-31

As God wrapped up His instructions for the tabernacle, He described the Day of Atonement—one day a year in which the high priest made a sacrifice on behalf of the sins of all the Israelites. The writer of Hebrews tells us that the Day of Atonement pointed forward to the sacrifice of Jesus, whose death on the cross cleanses us from our sins once and for all (Heb. 9:24-28). Before appointing men to head up the building projects, God told the people to contribute money to the project. God's final instruction to the people was a reminder not to work on the Sabbath. Building a place for worship was going to take a lot of work, but it did not exclude the people from worship itself.

WEEKEND

Finish up any you haven't done from above!