

Foundations Devotional

• FOR THE WEEK OF SEPT 27 - OCT 3 •

MONDAY // EXODUS 32-33

The Israelites were guided by God's presence through the desert and heard Him speak to Moses on Mount Sinai, but even those awe-inspiring encounters with God did not keep them from sinning. Moses' prolonged absence from the Israelites—while he was on the mountain receiving instructions from God—led them to demand Aaron make a representation of God. Taking gold earrings from the women and children, Aaron made a golden calf, and the people held a great feast sacrificing to this idol. Like the people the apostle Paul condemned in Romans 1, the Israelites preferred to worship created things rather than the Creator Himself. In response to this sin, God threatened to destroy the people, but Moses interceded on their behalf, leading God to spare them. Our sin, too, warrants death, but Jesus interceded on our behalf, and the wrath that we earned was poured out on Him as He hung on the cross.

TUESDAY // EXODUS 34-36:1

Out of anger for the people's idolatry, Moses broke the first pair of stone tablets on which God had inscribed His Commandments. But as has been proven throughout Genesis and Exodus, God's faithfulness to His people is not based on their actions; it is rooted solely in His character. God renewed His covenant with Moses and inscribed a new set of tablets. When Moses ascended Mount Sinai again, God declared His Name and nature, causing Moses to worship Him. In chapter 33, Moses asked to see God's glory, and on the mountain God granted him that request. When Moses came down from the mountain, his face shown with the light of God's glory. He then gathered the Israelites together, reminded them of God's laws, and put them to work building God's tabernacle. With this, God's plans were in motion following the golden calf diversion.

WEDNESDAY // EXODUS 40

The Israelites assembled the tabernacle and all its components just as God instructed. It was a concerted effort on the part of Moses' leadership, the skill of numerous craftsmen, and the gifts of many people. After the tabernacle was constructed, Moses consecrated it and appointed Aaron and his sons as priests. Then, God's glory filled the tabernacle, an act showing His approval of their obedience and His presence among them. Additionally, the cloud of God's glory in the temple became the guide for the Israelites' journey. The people had come a long way from their time as slaves in Egypt, despite their repeated sin and disobedience along the way.

THURSDAY // LEVITICUS 8-9

The tabernacle was a place where God's presence could dwell among His people. For this reason, the people needed to know how to live properly in His presence, which is the purpose of the Book of Leviticus and the priesthood it describes. The role of a priest was one of a mediator between God and the people. God would speak to the people through the priests, and the priests would speak to God on behalf of the people. The priests also offered sacrifices to God on behalf of the people's sins. While the Levitical priests served God's purpose well during their time, they are a reminder for us that Jesus is the better priest, as Hebrews 7 describes. The Levitical priests were human. Therefore, each of them eventually died because of their sin. Their ability to atone for the people's sins was limited at best. As our great High Priest, however, Jesus is sinless and eternal, meaning His sacrifice is perfect and everlasting.

FRIDAY // LEVITICUS 16-17

One of the most important parts of the priests' job was overseeing the Day of Atonement. This day was set aside as the only day of the year when the high priest could enter the holy of holies and appear before the ark of the covenant. On the Day of Atonement, the high priest offered sacrifices to seek God's forgiveness for the sins of the people. From the beginning, God has made a way for His sinful people to remain in fellowship with Him, even though they can do nothing to deserve it. The Day of Atonement served this purpose until the crucifixion of Jesus, at which time animal sacrifices for sins were no longer required thanks to the bodily sacrifice of Jesus Himself. Today, God continues to draw His people back to Him when they sin through the conviction of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the very presence of God living in every follower of Christ, and He guides us toward holiness and Christlikeness.

WEEKEND // FINISH UP ANY FROM ABOVE