

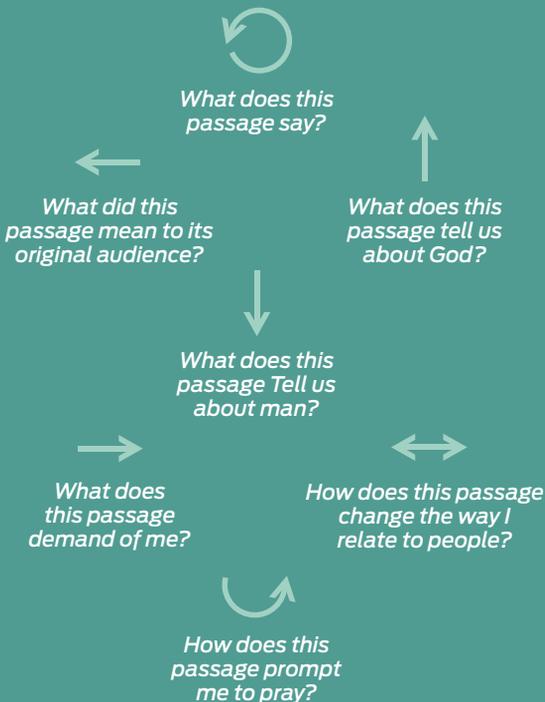
Daily Devotions



Day 1

Exodus 32:1-6

The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



Moses went up the mountain to meet with God. We aren't told how much time had passed, but notice how the people felt about how long he had been gone: to them Moses "delayed" in coming down. This drove them to feel abandoned by Moses and more importantly, God, and to ask Aaron to make an idol.

But notice God's perspective of how long it had been. Later, God told Moses that the people had "quickly" turned away from Him (v. 8). Apparently, the Israelites did not take long to violate the commands they swore to uphold. They acted hastily in calling for Aaron to fashion an idol to worship.

Like the Israelites, our perception of time can mislead us, especially when it feels as if God is not paying attention or has abandoned us. Like the Israelites, we can act hastily and turn from God. This is when we need to remember God is never far off, and He always works in His perfect timing, even if it does not feel that way.

How have you seen the perfection of God's timing?

Exodus 32:7-10

The children of Israel did not just see time differently than God did, they also saw His presence differently. While Moses was up the mountain meeting with God, the Israelites concluded that God was absent and all of His focus was on top of the mountain while they were neglected at its base. They failed to understand that God is omnipresent (not contained in one place) and that He is omniscient (knows and is fully aware of all).

They pleaded with Aaron to make a god they could see, touch, and worship. They thought God was distant from them and they wanted to make a god that would always be present. Notice God's awareness to what happened though. God told Moses exactly what the people did—even what they said. God was not absent. He was not distracted.

The same God who was ever-present with Israel in the wilderness, the same God who was all-knowing of all Israel did, is with us as well. He is just as aware of our lives too. This is a great comfort for us; it reminds us we are never alone and nothing happens to us apart from God's full knowledge and His sovereign hand.

Does God's presence in and awareness of your life encourage you or concern you? Why?

Exodus 32:11-14

God told Moses to stand back so He could wipe the rebellious Israelites off the face of the earth, and He would start a new nation with Moses. This may have been God's way of inviting Moses to speak up for the people. If it was, Moses didn't miss the cue. Although the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and were difficult, Moses stepped forward as the mediator they needed. But don't just marvel in what Moses did, look at how he did it.

Notice that as Moses pleaded for the people, his argument for sparing the people was comprised of three main points: they were God's people, God would not be glorified if He were to wipe them out, and God had made promises to this people. Not a single argument was made on behalf of the people.

So it is with the gospel. Christ is our mediator—a greater One—and He makes constant appeal to the Father on our behalf. Not based on what we have done or might do, but on what He has done and the righteousness He has given us.

How might you be prone to try to rest in your work instead of Christ's work on your behalf? Why?

Exodus 32:15-20

Moses pleaded for the people and God relented in bringing the disaster upon the people. But notice what happened when Moses arrived at the camp. Hearing God explain what the Israelites had done was one thing, but hearing it and seeing it was another. Witnessing how the Israelites had rebelled against God and how they had scorned Him was too much for Moses. He was filled with a righteous indignation that prompted him to act. He burned the golden calf, ground it into a powder, spread it over water, and made the people drink it.

How we view Moses' actions here tells us quite a bit about our view of God. If we see Moses as over-reacting, we might want to pause and consider if we appreciate the gravity of this sin and the holiness of the One it was against. Sin is never to be taken lightly—even by those of us who are in Christ. Yes, all our sin is forgiven, but even the “smallest” sin is still an act of open rebellion against God and dishonors Him.

**How do you tend to view sin?
How does the gospel frame
that perspective?**

Exodus 32:21-35

We have to appreciate Aaron's response to Moses' question of what happened. “It was the people. They made me do it. When I threw the gold into the fire, this calf just happened to pop out!” Yes, we have to appreciate Aaron's response, not because it is admirable in any way, but because we tend to respond the same way to sin.

We deflect. We minimize. We rationalize. We are just like Aaron, and just like our ancient ancestors Adam and Eve in Eden. Our sin keeps us from even owning up to our sin. That is the downward cycle of our hearts and minds.

Thankfully, God has not left us in our depravity. Instead, He has given us new hearts and He is in the process of changing our thinking, to see our sin as He sees it, not as how we prefer to see it.

Christians can make the mistake of languishing in our sin and failing to grasp grace. We can forget that Christ paid for all our sins. At the same time, we are just as prone, if not more so, to view our sin too lightly. We can abuse grace. We want to avoid both extremes and instead see our sin as forgiven, yes, but it still carries consequences for us and those around us.

**What is your perspective of your sin?
Do you tend to minimize it or sink
into it?**