

Friday, March 31, 2023 ▫ Read Exodus 32:25–35

Questions from the Scripture text: What did Moses see in v25? How did they get to be this way? What did it cause, among whom? Where did Moses stand (v26)? For whom did he ask? Who came? On Whose behalf does he now speak (v27)? What does he tell them to carry? Where? To go where? Doing what? To whom? Who do according to what (v28)? With what result? Who speaks to them in v29? What does he tell them to do? Why do they need to be consecrated/cleansed (cf. 28:41)? When does v30 happen? To whom does Moses speak? What does he say they have done? Where is he going now? To do what? To Whom does Moses return in v31? What does he tell Him the people have committed? By making what? What does he hope God is willing to do (v32)? If there isn't forgiveness, what does he ask God to do? Where is his name written? What does Yahweh say He will do to whom (v33)? What does He tell Moses to do with the people in v34? Where is he to lead them? Who will go before Moses? What will happen later? What will happen when that day comes? How does v35 describe that day? Why did Yahweh strike the people? Who, specifically, had produced the calf?

What must happen in response to great sin? Exodus 32:25–35 looks forward to the evening sermon on the coming Lord's Day. In these eleven verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **in response to great sin, there must be death, and there ought to be cleansing, intercession, atonement, and punishment.**

Death. The wages of sin is death. It says much about us that we are horrified by things like v27, but we are not horrified by sin itself. The Levites were given the will to volunteer to be on the Yahweh's side (v26). The whole rest of Israel was supposedly keeping a feast to Yahweh, but when it came to actually honoring Him, no one else could be mustered. We ought to be amazed that any live (cf. Rom 6:23). Obviously, Israel did not take sin with deadly seriousness and were not duly impressed that any of them were still alive. As long as we live, we receive not just "better than" but "opposite what I deserve."

Cleansing. Yahweh gave the Levites a heart toward Him, just as He had chosen the family of Aaron to be priests. The same "filling the hand" phrase is translated "consecrate" in v29 as was in 28:41. The Levites are not themselves clean, but for their role, they must be consecrated. For their role among the nations, Israel as a whole must be clean, must be holy, as Yahweh is holy.

So too, Christians must have the cleansing of imputed righteousness from Christ and the holiness of righteous characters from Christ. And those who are called to office in the home (husband, father) or the church (elder, deacon) must be examples of purity in the life, just as they are set apart to that office by God.

Intercession. Moses has already interceded for Israel, but now he has seen for himself what has been done. The Lord had relented in v14, but after Aaron's doubling down upon his wickedness, and the people's requiring three thousand executions (v28) to restrain their self-expression in their manmade religion (v25), Moses realizes that further intercession is necessary (v30). The Lord Jesus offered Himself up once for all, and believers' sin is entirely atoned for. But, His priestly work continues, always interceding for us by the power of His indestructible life. This is how He saves us to the uttermost (cf. Heb 7:25–27).

Atonement. Moses hopes to "atone" for the people's sin (v30), but he does not mean that he himself can satisfy God's wrath. Rather, he acknowledges in v32 that if there is not forgiveness for sin, then he also cannot hope for anything other than to be blotted out of Yahweh's book. This appears to be the first mention of Yahweh's book of the living and righteous (cf. Ps 69:28), which famously appears several times in Revelation (cf. Rev 3:5, 13:8, 20:15). Moses's hope for the people, and for his own soul, is that Yahweh would provide a way of atoning for their sin and satisfying His wrath.

Punishment. The Lord affirms that anyone whose sin remains cannot be in His book (v33), but that Moses's calling has not been revoked (v34a). There is atonement, but it is not for everyone. There must be punishment on the day of visitation (v34b). As a token of this day, Yahweh strikes the people in v35. This knowledge contributes to our understanding of the cross. There is a great day of visitation yet to come. But Yahweh has already visited earth once. And when He did, He visited His wrath upon Himself at the cross in the place of all whose names will be found in the book of life when it is opened. God cannot stop being God. Justice belongs to His God-ness. Sin must be fully punished. The glory of how He has done this for believers is that there is something said upon the cross that will never be said in Hell: "It has been finished!"

What do you deserve for the "least" of your sins against God? What have been some of your greatest? How many have they been? How can you be ransomed? Cleansed? Consecrated? Forgiven?

Sample prayer: Our soul praise You, O King of heaven, and we bring all that is within us unto You in tribute. For have ransomed, healed, restored, and forgiven us. You are worthy of everlasting power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing, for You have redeemed us and made us kings and priests to our God. So, receive our everlasting praise, by the help of Your Spirit, through Jesus Christ our Lord, AMEN!

ARP103A "O Bless the Lord, My Soul" or TPH239 "Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven"

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Exodus 32 versus 25 through 35. These are God's words. Now, when Moses saw that, the people were unrestrained for Aaron had not restrained them.

To their shame, among their enemies. And Moses stood in the entrance of the camp and said, Whoever is on your side, come to me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together to him. And he said to them, thus says, Yahweh god of israel. But every man put his sword on his side and go in and out.

From entrance to entrance throughout the camp. And let every man kill his brother, every man, his companion. Every man, his neighbor. So, the sons of Levi did according to the word of moses. And about three thousand men of the people fell that day. Then moses said consecrate yourself today to y'all way that he may bestow on you a blessing this day.

For every man, opposed his son and his brother. Now, it came to pass on the next day that Moses said to the people You have committed a great sin. So now i will go up to y'all way. Perhaps i can make atonement for your sin. Then moses returned to the hallway and said, oh, these people have committed a great sin.

And have made for themselves, a god of gold. That yet. Now, if you will forgive their sin, But if not, i pray blot me out of your book. What you have written? And you always said to Moses, whoever says sin against me. How blot him out of my book.

Now therefore, go lead the people. To the place of which i have spoken to you? Hold my angel, shall go before you. Nevertheless in the day when i visit for punishment, i will visit Punishment upon them. For their sin. So y'all have applying to people because of what they did with the calf.

Which Aaron made?

So, for the reading of god's inspired and at work

Moses now is responding not just to Aaron and the calf, which we saw. To a large extent last week. When he asks, Aaron what did the people do to you that you brought the greatest sin? Upon them. And Aaron had made the calf and that was one big part of The sin and the wickedness the false worship.

Which Moses? Uh, describes to your way. They have made Elohim out of gold. They have made an image. Of god. But, The second part of this in is that the people are on restrained. False worship actions. Go hand in hand with. Idolatrous worship manner. And the One of the great features, one of the signal features.

Of.

Very exciting, anything Physically.

In the mail. Yeah, you can go ahead.

You may need to help. I think they were like five packages. Thank you.

You got it all.

Going to give you all the mail too. There wasn't supposed to be.

One of the signal features of false worship is That is unrestrained. It comes with

It comes with an unrestrained expression of ourselves. People think that that's worshipful, just let yourself go completely and express yourself. But that's because people don't have a living in true. God, who is a consuming fire? And so false worship is distinguished by, it's not being conducted with reference and awe.

But with intensity of self-expression. The people of israel were supposed to be different. They knew the true and living god. The one who had redeemed them from egypt, so that all of the power of egypt, with all of the panoply of the Egyptian.

What is it called when you have tons of different gods? Yeah. Pantheon, the panoply of the pantheon, So oh, all of the power of egypt with all of the panoply of the egyptian pantheon of gods. Against tiny little israel. Well, multiplying, but weak israel? And the one true. And living god.

That was supposed to be the great difference. That yahweh would save this weak people out of egypt. And his great statement about it was then they shall know. That i am your way. And so, israel was supposed to be different than the people of the nations. That when they come to worship they come, With reverence and awe and self-control.

And the restraint of sin. And self-expression because they have a god. Who expresses himself? And they hadn't done that they were unrestrained the people. Sat down to eat and drink and they rose up to play. And they had this completely underrestrained expression themselves that Joshua. Uh, thought was so loud that it might be a war.

And Moses sees verse 25 that the people are unrestrained. For air and had not restrained them. To their shame. Among their enemies.

And so the people Made. With Aaron's calf. False worship. And That's one of the things that doesn't come out too well in the Uh, English translation in verse 35. Where what they did? With respect to the people. Is the same verb as which Aaron made. So Aaron made a calf and the people made false worshipers is the idea but They were unrestrained in their Expression of themselves.

And of course, what do sinners express when they express themselves? Well, It's a nurse express sin. Uh, if you want to know what's in the jelly, donut one way to do it is to squeeze on it. And when you squeeze a sin donut outcomes, the same That's what gets expressed.

From sinners. When they express themselves. And sin requires death. In fact all deserved to die. And yet, the lord has. Already made. Display to them, that there would be some atonement for some Remember. That when the firstborn of the egyptians died, Not that all the egyptians didn't deserve it.

Uh, but when they died, And the lord spared the firstborn of israel in the Passover that initiated having To pay a redemption price. For the firstborn. And so, you have the The fact that the wages of sin is death, Here, when Moses asks, who is on yahweh's side? Um, Very shocking.

That it's just the sons of Levi, or perhaps even just some Of the sons of levi who come to him in verse 26? They no longer have the excuse of. As for this Moses, we do not know what has become of him. He has come down from the mountain.

He has been with Yahweh. For 40 days and 40 nights. He brought the tablets, he's smashed in front of them. And still the people are so far gone by their idolatry. They so much prefer. Their own way over against, y'all always way. That when he says, who is on yahweh's side come to me, he gets this tiny little minority.

A little bit of idolatry goes a long way. In the backsliding of the church. And served dead here at the base of sinai. And so they come and he gives them instruction for being an instrument by which they killed our neighbor and their brother This is very difficult. Surely the, the people deserve it, they all deserve to die.

And, And yet it is hard for us to have enough allegiance to god to recognize That we all deserve to die, including ourselves. But the lord does give to some of these sons of levi. This, this ability of heart and mind. To align themselves with him. And three thousand, they end up killing three thousand.

As they go back and forth. The every man killed, his brother, every man. His companion, may imply even. That it was particularly among the levites. That they had done this. And the lord and messes. It goes on to say, Consecrate yourselves. Fill your hands today. Before yahai. That he made bestow on you a blessing for

every man as opposed to son and his brother.

And this language of filling the hands in verse 29, which is translated consecrate yourselves in our English version here. Appears. Uh appeared also in chapter 28 verse 41, when the consecration Of Aaron. And his sons for the priesthood. And, Um, That reminds us, that. That even the men whom the lord uses, To lead his people on earth, they need.

To be atoned for. They need to be. Uh, cleansed themselves consecrated. These sons of levi. Um, who were an instrument of the lord bringing on some of them. Part of what those people deserved. They also deserved it too. And so, the lord Has to consecrate them. For their service.

So sin. Deserves death requires death. Sinners need cleansing. And they need not just cleansing, but intercession. We, of course deserve death and christ has died for us. When you cleansing, he cleanses us by his blood. But we don't just need death and cleansing. We also need active Active mediation.

Through his once for all sacrifice. The lord jesus is able to save us to the other, most Because he always lives to intercede for us. By the power of his indestructible life. And so Moses says, you have committed a great sin, so now i will go up to yaha he realizes That.

The people's need for intercession is great, he's already interceded once before he came down. And the lord relented. But as you can see here, the people still deserve death. For. He was speaking on you always behalf when he called the sons of levi to his side. And so, He says, i will go up to yaha The lord jesus has offered himself as our.

Intercessor. His death of course, is a once for all day. And it is complete as cleansing. Blood is effective in a way that the blood of bulls and goats or dead levites or dead Israelites. Could not be effective. And he also intercedes for us. And with this intercession. We have also the idea or the need for a tournament.

In this particular word, meaning the The covering over of the sin. So not just cleansing us from. The, the stain of the sin, the unworthiness, the uncleanness, before god, that the sin brings But a covering over of the guilt of the center removal, Of the status of guiltiness. So there's the condition of sinfulness and the status of guiltiness of both, Both have to be dealt with.

So, he He comes to Yahweh. As he's proposed to intercede, and to a toad. And he confesses the great sin and Uh, verse 31 and he asks for forgiveness, Verse 32, and He admits that if there is not forgiveness for sin, then, It's not just the rest of the people.

Moses too. Remember the lord had proposed or told Moses and you get out of Um, get away and don't intercede for them. So that my wrath can burn hot and i'll consume them and all start over the view. I'll make a great nation of you. He had said to moses, But most is a sinner.

And so forgiveness isn't possible. It's not just the rest of the nation that would be blotted out of god's book and be Moses. Who'd be blotted out of god's book, too. He says yet. Now if you'll forgive, If you will forgive their sin. But if not I pray block me out of your book.

Would you have written? You always says to Moses, whoever ascend against me. I'll blot him out of my book. Reminds us that we need. Bulletone, which we need full. Uh, righteousness.

In order for us to enter glory, there cannot be any sin. On our account. That's why you must have Christ and to sacrifice and his righteousness scouted for you. So that So, that on the basis of christ, it's righteousness, being yours. Your name may be found in the book of life.

The last place. We see that there must ultimately be punishment. The lord will visit. And the word punishment here is added and nicking jeans. He says, bold my angel. She'll go before you nevertheless and the day when i visit, i will visit upon them. For their sin. There's a day of visitation.

The lord plagues, the people here in verse 35. And yet the implication in verse 34 is that he's He's talking about a future day and there is a future day even now, yet to come. And which finally, there will be visited upon sin. What's in deserts, Because it deserves much more than That death, which is the end to our Life in this world.

So, i wonder if If you have dealt seriously, thought, seriously about come to terms with. What a dreadful thing sin is. This is why the lord tells us to discipline. Isn't it? Sophia? So that By the discipline by the instruction, and especially by the spirit's blessing of it. Sophia.

That we would. Come to terms with. What our sin is and what it requires. That. Requires death needs cleansing. We need a mediator to intercede for us and pray for us. We need atonement the covering over of the guilt of our sin, not toxic lensing. Of the filth of our sin.

And it requires to be punished and full because the lord doesn't set aside his wrath for no reason. Because wrath must be satisfied. Upon the sin when he visits. You will visit. Sin will be punished. This is why it's so glorious. That there was something that the lord jesus said on the cross.

That will never be said in hell. Which is it has been finished. Post English translation. Say it is finished, but It's in the. Past perfect tense of the verb. That has been finished. And the lord jesus hasn't do it. Indeed. Completed. And during the fullness of god's wrath, For all of the sin of everyone for whom he died.

And so, have you. Come to terms. With how great your sin is your own sin. And what it deserves? And have you laid hold of the fact that the lord For everyone who trusts in christ has fully dealt. With what they're sin needs and desserts.

Her father in heaven, we pray that you would

Help us to see our sin for what it is. We pray that you'd help us to hate it. That this reminder would stir us up against all remaining sinfulness. And resist. Committing any more sin. And when we consider our sinfulness, with our sin before you, we thank you, that you have provided.

All of All of these things for us in christ. And we pray lord for a lost world. Full of people. Who are in danger of perishing? That you would grant. But gospel of christ to go out. That you would bring people to faith. Lord, we see the weakness of the church.

And how those who are in yahweh's side are few. And, The. Harm, that is coming to so many souls in the church. As a result, you do not see. What's in is and what you have done about it. And even more the Multitudes who are outside the church. In an age, in which the church is not evangelizing.

That it might. And so, we pray that Christ who has dealt with sin for sinners. Would be glorified. But you bringing reformation not only to each of our individual lives. And to the life of this house, But to your church as a whole. And we ask it in his name, amen.