



# WEEKLY CELL GUIDE

**9 MAY 2021 | GOD'S MERCY IN OUR REBELLION | EXODUS 32:1-14**

Series: Journeying With God | Speaker: Elder Lee Ee Yang

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## WELCOME

[15 MINS]

You may want to look up the following websites for icebreakers suitable for your cell.

[Ice Breakers 1](#)

[Ice Breakers 2](#)

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## WORSHIP

[15 MINS]

You may select songs like

1. Jesus I come
  2. Jesus we Enthroned You
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## WORD

[45 MINS]

### SPIRITUAL OBJECTIVES

At the end of the sermon discussion, cell members will:

1. Reflect on the altar we have built in our lives and to enthrone God in our hearts
2. To commit our desires to Him for His glory.
3. To be reminded of His mercy, and how we are called to be set apart as living sacrifices

### SERMON SUMMARY

The Israelites grew impatient while waiting for Moses to return from his meeting with God with the Ten Commandments. Elder Ee Yang spoke about the problem of two altars. One was made by Moses with the

fundamental core belief that “We Belong to God” and He would lead them into the Promised Land. The second altar of the golden calf was made by the Israelites with the core belief of self-effort.

Elder Ee Yang also spoke about desires. Desires in itself is not wrong and they are put in our hearts by God to accomplish His purposes for us. However, any desire left unchecked, or not yet surrendered will ultimately lead to sin. Elder Ee Yang also spoke about three aspects of God’s mercy 1) God withheld judgment, 2) God did not forsake His people and 3) extended it to cover all creation.

## **SERMON RECAP**

God brought the Israelites out of Egypt and took them to Mount Sinai, where He revealed to them the fullness of His character and His plans for them to be to Him a kingdom of priests and a holy nation ([Exodus 19:6](#)).

Elder Ee Yang shared how there are privileges and responsibilities in this covenant between God and the Israelites. It is a privilege to be set apart for God. The Israelites needed to be mindful that they represented God in all areas and that they needed to pledge their total allegiance and commitment to God.

He also shared about how the Israelites struggled with the problem of two altars. They already had an altar that indicated that they belonged to God. They were consecrated by Moses ([Exodus 24:3](#)). God also provided Moses with the ten commandments – the laws on how to live a holy life set apart for God. However, they later grew impatient when Moses had not yet come down from the mountain and built another altar of the golden calf, which represents self-effort.

Desire was what prompted the making of the golden calf. Elder Ee Yang shared that there can be godly and ungodly desires. When these desires are pursued, they can lead to very different outcomes. Desires are put in our hearts by God to accomplish His purposes for us. It leads to holiness and righteousness.

However, any desire left unchecked, or not yet surrendered leads to sin. The Israelites had forgotten about the promise they made to God. They depended on their self-effort and engaged in sin ([Exodus 32:6](#)). It is a sobering reminder to be mindful of how we relate to God. Do we seek Him only for what we wish for, or do we seek His Kingdom and His righteousness?

The Israelites had to be held accountable for their sin of breaking their covenant with God. God had wanted to destroy them ([Exodus 32:9-10](#)). However, God in His mercy relented when Moses interceded on their behalf.

### **Three Aspects of God’s Mercy**

#### **1. Withholding Judgment ([Exodus 32:11-14](#))**

The Lord relented and withheld judgement from the Israelites due to Moses’ intercession.

#### **2. Not Forsaking His People**

God did not forsake His people through the journey. God had wanted to send an angel to go before the people and did not want to accompany them for concern that He would destroy them along the way as they were an obstinate people. Moses interceded on their behalf and God relented. ([Exodus 33:1-3](#), [Nehemiah 9:18-21](#)).

Elder Ee Yang also shared about how God led the people with a pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. God’s leading is not functional. It is relational. It contains warmth. Clouds block the sun. Fire gives light and warmth. God provided for them with His tangible love.

#### **3. Covering all creation**

God’s mercy is not limited to the Israelites but to all creation ([Exodus 34:6](#), [Psalm 145:9](#)).

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, God gave Israel a second chance and renewed His covenant with Israel ([Exodus 34:10-16](#)). The following are lessons that we can learn from today’s message:

- Desires are powerful. If our desires go unchecked, it will surely lead to sin

- The Israelites' departed from God's altar and built their own altar of desire.
- As a result, they fell into idolatry. They broke their covenant with God
- Because of God's mercy, He withheld judgment against them. He continued to lead them with tender mercies. He renewed His covenant with them

Elder Ee Yang encouraged us to reflect what altar we are building and to offer our bodies as living sacrifices ([Romans 12:1](#)). He encouraged RiverLifers to approach God's altar with our desires and to align it to His desires. As we align our desires to God, we become ready to receive His promises and become a conduit for the Word of God to become flesh.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. **Elder Ee Yang spoke about the Israelites having two altars. What did the different altars represent? What kind of altar are you building in your life today? In this present day and age, we are called to be living sacrifices. What does it look like?** [10 Mins]

### Leader's Notes

This is a recap and reflect question. One of the altars remind us of how we belong to God while the other one is about our own self-efforts. Altars are also indicators of what we worship. Leaders can also ask members to reflect and share on the reasons we tend to build other altars in our lives, and how we can grow to be more mindful of the counterfeit Gods in our lives and to turn back to God. This question also aims to let members reflect on what it means to be a living sacrifice. Leaders can also get members to refer to this resource: <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/present-your-bodies-as-a-living-sacrifice-to-god>

### Transition

What happened to the Israelites (i.e. building other altars and worshipping other Gods) is a reflection of the struggles Christians face as well. There are times where our worship and devotion may be intentionally or unintentionally misplaced. However, this is part of the journey of being a disciple in Christ and the most important thing is to be aware when we are reminded or rebuked in love, to come back to Him with repentance, and to remember that our identity is found in Him and not in what we do.

2. **Elder Ee Yang spoke about desires – how it can be put in our hearts by God to accomplish His purposes; but how it could also lead to sin if left unchecked or not surrendered to Him. How can we identify if carrying out our desires are done out of the right posture? What are the measures or checkpoints we can put in our lives to empower us to bravely pursue what God has placed in our hearts while ensuring that we do not fall into sin?** [10 Mins]

### Leader's Notes

This is a relate and reflect question. The aim is for members to share and reflect on how desires in itself is not wrong; but to reflect on what is the core belief we are operating out of – is it of a knowing that we belong to God, or out of our own self effort? The aim of the question is for the members to think of practical and concrete steps that can help them identify about how they are managing their desires – does it mean that they become passive and not do anything? How do they manage their own commitments and priorities while pursuing what God has placed in their hearts? Members can also think of concrete steps about measures or checkpoints (e.g. having accountability partners, committing it to prayer, seeking wise counsel, etc). Leaders can also ask members to share about their own personal experiences and the lessons they have learnt from their past personal experiences.

### Transition

Like the Israelites, we are beings created to worship. We all desire to have something or someone to worship – it could be God, ourselves, achievements, etc. Though our hearts often wander, we can be comforted that God will lovingly rebuke us and guide us back to Him in the right time.

3. We see God's mercy displayed in His dealings with the Israelites. We are reconciled back to God because Jesus took on the punishment for our sins. God remains faithful to us even when we are faithless, and He forgives when we return to Him with a repentant heart. Take some time to reflect on God's mercy to the Israelites and to us. Then, share with one another one step you would like to take in your everyday life in response to God's mercy. [15 Mins]

#### Leader's Notes

This is a reflect and response question. If leaders wish to expand on the question, they may ask members to think about how having a keen awareness of the mercy of God look like in our everyday lives. This would include showing mercy to others who may have offended them, showing grace to ourselves when we remember God's mercy towards us, remembering that we are bought at a costly price and to rededicate ourselves to Him, living with an attitude of gratitude, doing all we can to ensure our lives pleases the Lord, etc.

Leaders can also ask members to share if they had spoken about God's mercy to pre-believing friends or recent new believers – how do these friends view God's mercy? Do they feel that it is something that people take for granted, or that it is a precious gift that should be treasured?

#### Closing

We are privileged to be called into a relationship with God, and to be a royal priesthood, to partner with Him to reach those who have yet to know Him. May we continue to be watchful and note who or what is on the altar of our hearts. May we rely on God and walk in mercy and the Fear of the Lord. As we allow Him to be the Lord of our lives, we can trust and obey Him; knowing that the desires He has placed in our hearts will come to pass in His will and time.



Consider dividing the group into micro-groups for a deeper time of sharing as well as praying for the following items:

#### 1. Sermon Application

- We will be reminded that God loves us dearly and has established a covenant with us
- For God to let our hearts be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leading, to be convicted when we may intentionally or unintentionally put ourselves, others or other things as counterfeit Gods instead of God.
- To commit our desires to Him. To seek first His kingdom and His righteousness and seek His timing and will for the desires He has placed in our hearts.
- For His wisdom and strength to live our lives as living sacrifices
- Thank God for how He is both a God of mercy and justice, and how we are recipients of His mercy through the sacrifice of Jesus.

#### 2. COVID-19 in Singapore

- Singapore is currently in Phase 2. Pray for the community cases to go down with time.
- Pray for the government and relevant authorities to have wisdom and strength as they continue to manage the situation
- Pray for the health of those who have recovered or are recovering from Covid-19.
- Continued progress in Singapore to overcome the negative economic and social impact of the current crisis.
- Pray that God's peace upon the land. Pray for those who may be feeling anxious and fearful, to find an anchor in God's sovereignty and love.

### 3. COVID-19 in South Asia

- Swift end to the COVID-19 crisis in the world, especially in India and the rest of South Asia.
  - Healing and comfort for those who are sick and suffering.
  - Protection and guidance for the healthcare professionals who are at the frontline, giving them wisdom, courage and strength to confront this crisis.
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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

[5 MINS]

1. **Bible Reading Plan.** You can access our 2-Year Bible Reading Plan 2021-2022 by visiting <https://rlc.sg/brp2021>.
2. **Season of Consecration.** As part of the call to consecrate, we are rallying every RiverLifer to read the book [Crazy Love](#) by Francis Chan in June. This is to prepare our hearts for the Special e-Gathering and sermon series based on the book in July. The call to consecrate calendar:
  - 2 - 31 May - 30 Days of Prayer & Fasting
  - 5, 12, 19 & 26 May – Consecrate Nights on Wednesdays (8.30pm to 9.30pm)
  - 1 - 30 Jun – Read and reflect on Crazy Love by Francis Chan
  - 3 July (SAT) – Special e-Gathering with Francis Chan
  - A four-part Consecrate sermon series will run on Sundays from April to August.

There is a weekly reflection guide available on our *Becoming 30* website at [rlc.sg/becoming30](https://rlc.sg/becoming30) that you can use as you journey through the 30 days of Prayer & Fasting.

3. **Water Baptism Class.** Sat, 29 May. You can register online via [rlc.sg/baptism-class](https://rlc.sg/baptism-class).
4. **AGM 2021.** This year's Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held digitally on Sun, 20 Jun. Leadership members will be invited to attend. To help facilitate the dispatch of AGM documents, please inform us if you have changed your residential or email address.



"HONOUR GOD WITH EVERYTHING YOU OWN;  
GIVE HIM THE FIRST AND THE BEST."  
PROVERBS 3:9 (MSG)

# Give Digitally

Here are two cashless ways to give your tithes and offering.

## 1. PayNow

Log in to your bank's existing mobile banking app.  
Scan this QR code on the right.

**SCAN ME**



## 2. Interbank Transfer

RiverLife Church Bank Account:  
DBS Autosave 029-902431-0  
Bank Code: 7171  
Branch Code: 029

