


Israel's Idolatry: The Golden Calf

Exodus 32:1-6


Presented by Bob DeWaay
October 4, 2009



Overview of bigger section

A 32:1-6 Crisis of the golden calf
 B 32:7-14 Moses intercedes and God relents
 C 32:15-29 Confrontations through Moses
 D 32:30-35 Will God forgive them?
 D' 33:1-6 God will not go with them.
 C' 33:7-11 Face to face: Tent of meeting
 B' 33:12-17 Moses intercedes, God will be with them
 A' 33:18-23 God's glory: God will be gracious

(Adapted from *Exodus* James K. Bruckner)



The people want a tangible God

■ Exodus 32:1

Now when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people assembled about Aaron and said to him, "Come, make us a god who will go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him."



A God who can be seen

"In order to help his people understand the truth, Yahweh insisted on being believed in rather than being seen. It was so much easier to believe in something that could actually be seen. The Israelites were powerfully attracted to the latter option."

(James Bruckner, *Exodus* p. 663.)



They "plunder" the gold that should have been used for the tabernacle

■ **Exodus 32:2**

Aaron said to them, "Tear off the gold rings which are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me."



They violate the 2nd Commandment

■ **Exodus 32:3, 4**

Then all the people tore off the gold rings which were in their ears and brought them to Aaron. He took this from their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool and made it into a molten calf; and they said, "This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt."

Jeroboam makes two golden calves

- **1Kings 12:27-29**

“If this people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will return to their lord, even to Rehoboam king of Judah; and they will kill me and return to Rehoboam king of Judah.” So the king consulted, and made two golden calves, and he said to them, “It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; behold your gods, O Israel, that brought you up from the land of Egypt.” He set one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan.

They choose to worship Yahweh by a means He has not ordained

- **Exodus 32:5**

Now when Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made a proclamation and said, “Tomorrow shall be a feast to the LORD.”

They “fellowship” with an idol

- **Exodus 32:6**

So the next day they rose early and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.

Later this event is recited in the Psalms

■ **Psalm 106:19 - 21**

They made a calf in Horeb And worshiped a molten image. Thus they exchanged their glory For the image of an ox that eats grass. They forgot God their Savior, Who had done great things in Egypt,

Implications and Applications

1) During the period in which Christ delays His return we must believe what we cannot see

2) We must learn from the golden calf incident not to commune with pagan spirituality

3) Experiences do not create faith nor do they cause it to persevere

1) During the period in which Christ delays His return we must believe what we cannot see

■ **Hebrews 11:1**

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

➤ God and His future promises are unseen

➤ When sickness, lack of jobs, lack of money or other crises befall us, we must continue to believe God and His promises

1) During the period in which Christ delays His return we must believe what we cannot see

■ **Hebrews 12:18**

For you have not come to a mountain that can be touched and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind, and to the blast of a trumpet and the sound of words which sound was such that those who heard begged that no further word be spoken to them.

1) During the period in which Christ delays His return we must believe what we cannot see

■ **Hebrews 12:22**

But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,

1) During the period in which Christ delays His return we must believe what we cannot see

■ **Hebrews 12:24, 25**

and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel. See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape who turn away from Him who warns from heaven.

2) We must learn from the golden calf incident not to commune with pagan spirituality

■ **1Corinthians 10:7-10**

Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, “The people sat down to eat and drink, and stood up to play.” Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in one day. Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents. Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer.

2) We must learn from the golden calf incident not to commune with pagan spirituality

■ **1Corinthians 10:11-12**

Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall.

2) We must learn from the golden calf incident not to commune with pagan spirituality

➤ We need to take heed ourselves and not assume this only applies to other churches or other types of Christians

➤ Because judgment is delayed, Christians fall into sins such as fornication or adultery and think it is ok because no judgment falls

3) Experiences do not create faith nor do they cause it to persevere

■ **John 12:37**

But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him;

3) Experiences do not create faith nor do they cause it to persevere

■ **Hebrew 3:15-16**

“Today if you hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts, as when they provoked Me.”
For who provoked Him when they had heard? Indeed, did not all those who came out of Egypt led by Moses?

3) Experiences do not create faith nor do they cause it to persevere

■ **Hebrew 3:17-19**

And with whom was He angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? And to whom did He swear that they should not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient? And so we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief.

