

# The Golden Calf

## Quote:

“He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.”

Proverbs 28:13

Mark above or below  
Exodus 32

## Israel’s Failings

The events of this chapter are used by Paul to remind believers of their responsibilities to the Truth (1 Cor 10:6-7). Steps in backsliding on the part of the people are: [1] Their impatience in the absence of Moses (Exod 32:1a); [2] Their craving for visible signs in worship (vv. 1b-4); [3] Their compromising of divinely established forms of worship (v. 5); [4] Their surrender to carnal passions (v.6). Here, Christ is revealed in type in the actions of Moses, who ascends into the heights, promising to return (Jn 14:3; Acts 1:11).

In his absence, some forget his promised return (2 Pet 3:3-4; Lk 12:45), and make themselves gods (2Tim 3:1-4; 4:3-4). Like Christ, Moses returns unexpectedly, in "an hour when they looked not for him" (Lk 12:46), punishing evil doers (vv. 46-47) who are naked to their shame (Rev 16:15).

## Bible Marking

### Exodus 32:1

**“when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount”** - there was not any real delay in Moses' return (Deut 9:9-11), but it seemed so to the people who were without visible leadership. See the danger of this attitude: Matt 24:48; 2 Pet 3:4; Rev 16:15. The claim of delay was the first step in their apostasy.

**“For as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him”** - Their unbelief was similar to the “last-day-scoffers” against whom Peter warned the first century believers (2 Pet 3:3-4).

### Exodus 32:4

**“These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt”** - It reminded them of the Egyptian gods. ie. The goddess Hathor (often depicted as a cow). Hathor was the goddess of love, happiness, dance and music. (see v6) See the divine explanations: Acts 7:39-40; Ezek 20:8; 23:8; Psa 106:19-20.

### Exodus 32:5

**“And Aaron made proclamation, and said, Tomorrow is a feast to Yahweh”** - Sought to divert idolatry into more acceptable forms of worship. Jeroboam did likewise (1 Kg 12:28), and the early Christians who mixed pagan ideas with the Truth thus forming the Catholic Church.

Mark the chapter  
breakdown by the verses noted

### Exodus 32 - The Broken Law: Israel’s Lapse Into Idolatry

32:1-6 - Israel lapses into Idolatry

32:7-14 - Moses’ Intercession

32:15-18 - The Return of Moses and Joshua

32:19-24 - Moses’ Anger: He Breaks the Tablets

32:25-29 - Levi Slays the Disobedient

32:30-35 - Moses Returns to Intercede

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**Exodus 32:27**

Christ demands of his followers a similar dedication: a service to him which takes precedence over nearest and dearest (**Matt 10:37**).

**Exodus 32:31**

**“Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold”** - Moses frankly confessed the sin of the people, and expressed his complete detestation of their action.

**Exodus 32:32**

**“And if not, blot me, I pray Thee out of Thy book which Thou hast written”** - Both Moses and Paul (**Rom 9:2-3**) were prepared to sacrifice their lives as substitute offerings for the sins of Israel, but such is rejected. God had promised from the beginning (**Gen 3:15**) a Redeemer able to provide the required atonement.

**Exodus 32:33**

**“Whosoever hath sinned against Me, him will I blot out of My book”** - Yahweh’s justice requires that the sinner personally bear the consequence of his sin (**Ezek 18:20**).