

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

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**).