

Exodus 32-33

Day 1

The Golden Calf. Read Exodus 32:1-14

1. As Moses was on the mountain, what did the people ask for and why? 32:1 (How long was Moses on the mountain? 24:18)

- Consider: What could they see as they asked for this? 24:17

2. How did Aaron act on the people's ideas? 32:2-4a Why do you think he went along with them?

- What did the people call Aaron's creation? 32:4b
- What did that encourage Aaron to do? 32:5 (How did he tie in the Lord?)



3. Compare the Lord's words and commands in 20:2-5 to the people's response in 32:4-6.

God's words/commands	The people's words/actions
<i>Ex 20:2 "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. 3 You shall have no other gods before Me." NAS</i>	32:1,4
<i>Ex 20:4 "You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. NAS</i>	32:4
<i>Ex 20:5 "You shall not worship them or serve them..." NAS</i>	32:5,6

FYI: A molten calf "In ancient Near Eastern cultures a young bull or ox was associated with strength, lordship, fertility, and morally degrading rituals."
- The Woman's Study Bible (155)

"The bull was also a well-known symbol for the worship of Baal in Canaan. The Israelites worshiped this new false image along with their worship of the Living God. They were guilty of *syncretism* - blending the worship of false gods with the worship of the true God. Tragically, they abandoned the living God for a false god at the very time that God was reaching out to them."
- The Nelson Study Bible (157)

4. What did the people's idolatry include? 32:6,19

- What words did God use to describe their actions? 32:7,8 Their attitude? 32:9

Digging Deeper

How did Stephen describe their actions and hearts? Acts 7:39,41,51

FYI: "rose up to play: This is a tasteful way to speak of gross immorality among the people of Israel. Their worship included eating, drinking (in the sense of drunkenness) and sexual immorality." - David Guzik

5. What action did God want to take? 32:10

- Note: What did God ask Moses to do? 32:10a (What does this imply about the influence of Moses intervention?)

6. How did Moses respond to the Lord's offer? How tempting do you think this was? 32:11 (Note the change from "your people" 32:7 to "Your people" 32:11)

7. What appeals/arguments did Moses make?

- 32:12
- 32:13

8. How did the Lord respond to Moses? 32:14

- Why do you think God included Moses in His decision? See Psalm 106:23 (Do you think the Lord knew what Moses was going to say?)

Changed/repented OT:5162 *Nacham*; to sigh, i.e. breathe strongly; by implication, to be sorry, i.e. (in a favorable sense) to pity, console... - Strong's Concordance

Applying the Word: What things do you turn to when the Lord seems removed or you doubt His involvement in your life? What was the result of setting your hope on something other than God versus setting your mind on His faithfulness during those times?

Day 2

Moses Confronts Aaron and the People. Read Exodus 32:15-29

9. What precious possession did Moses have as he came back down? 32:15,16
10. What did the people's revelry sound like to Joshua and Moses? 32:17-18
11. When Moses actually saw the people, what was his reaction? 32:19a (What do you think might have happened if God had approached Moses at this point instead of earlier?)
- Imagine contending with the ungodly culture of Egypt, and then finding your fellow believers not showing faith in God. How distressing a world was Moses living in?
12. What would Moses' actions have communicated to the people?
- 32:19b
 - 32:20 (See Isaiah 44:9)
13. What excuses did Aaron give for what happened? (What tone do you hear in Moses' question to Aaron? 32:21)
- 32:22
 - 32:23
 - 32:24
14. What would you say about these excuses and the amount of personal responsibility Aaron took?
- How does this compare to Adam and Eve's excuses in Genesis 3:12,13?
15. Apparently, what was continuing to go on? 32:25

16. What opportunity for repentance did Moses give the people? 32:26 (For how many came forward see Numbers 3:39.)
17. What was the consequence for continued rebellion? 32:27,28 (How had the Lord warned them earlier? Ex. 22:20)
- What does the command “*his brother...his companion...his neighbor*” (32:27) say about the difficulty of what had to be done? (What was at stake? 32:10)
18. Since this was the people that God was using to be a missionary nation to the world, what do you think would have happened if their actions had gone unchecked?
19. How did Moses commend the people? 32:29

Applying the Word: *Have you ever have trouble confessing or admitting your sin? What happened?*

Day 3

Moses Pleads for the People Again. Read Exodus 32:30 – 33:11

20. Because of the people’s sin, what did Moses propose to do? 32:30 (How confident was He?)
21. What did Moses first acknowledge to the LORD? 32:31
- What was his first appeal? 32:32a
 - What was his second appeal? 32:32b (*What does this say about his heart for the people?*)

Digging Deeper
Compare Paul’s heart in Romans 9:1-3.

22. How did the Lord reply to Moses' request? 32:33 (See Ezekiel 18:4)

- Why wasn't Moses' offer sufficient? Psalm 49:7,8

23. What sacrifice was sufficient? Underline the phrases that describe what Christ became.

- 2 Corinthians 5:21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. NIV
- 1 Peter 1:18-19 you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ. NAS

24. How did the Lord assure Moses? 32:34a

- What happened to the people? 32:35

Digging Deeper

From Deuteronomy 9:18-20, what other things do you learn about this time that Moses spoke with the Lord?

FYI: "It is not clear whether this Lord plagued the people after Moses' prayer or if this passage refers to the judgment God had already sent upon the people...It is possible that this refers both to the punishment of the Lord for this particular sin and to later plagues (punishments) that would befall the Israelites in the wilderness as they continued to disobey the Lord."
- The Nelson Study Bible (159)

25. In spite of their rebellion, what blessings did God continue to give the people?

- 33:1
- 33:2

26. What blessing was removed and why? 33:3 (What does the repeated use of "obstinate/stiffnecked" (32:9,33:3,5) say about the people's relationship with God?)

FYI: "This was a challenge to Moses and the nation as a whole. God told them they could have the Promised Land, but He would not remain with them in a close, personal way. If they were satisfied with that arrangement, it would prove they only loved God's blessings and not God Himself. If they challenged God - pleading with Him for His presence, not only His blessings - it would show a genuine heart for God Himself. This was the first step towards spiritual restoration and revival in Israel."
- David Guzik

27. How did the people react? 33:4-6 (Why do you think they were told to take off their jewelry?)

28. After this corporate failure to follow God, where did Moses pitch his tent and what did he call it? 33:7a



29. What could people do if they wanted to seek the LORD? 33:7b How would this be a test?

- What does this indicate about the plans God had made? Ex. 25:8 (Where was the actual tabernacle located later? Numbers 2:2)

30. How did God meet with Moses? 33:9

- What did the people do in response? 33:10

31. How close was Moses' relationship with the Lord? 33:11 See also Numbers 12:6-8.

32. What role did Joshua have? 33:11 How is this similar to what he had done earlier 24:13 (What kind of preparation would this be for future leadership?)

Applying the Word: *From Moses' example, what would you say about the significance of one person's life and their prayers? Who prays for you? What does that mean to you? How do you discipline your prayer life to be focused on others, not just yourself?*

Day 4

Moses Intercedes Again. Read Exodus 33:12-23

33. What concern did Moses still have? 33:12a (See 32:3,4) Of what did he remind God?

34. What request did he make? 33:13 (Mark the word "favor/grace" in 33:12-17.)
(Considering the close relationship Moses already had with the Lord (33:11a), what do you think he was asking for? Why do you think he wanted more?)

IT'S HEBREW TO ME: "**favor/grace**" Strong's OT:2580 *chen*; graciousness, i.e. subjective (kindness, favor) or objective (beauty): KJV - favour, grace (-ious), pleasant, precious, [well-] favoured.

35. On what grounds did Moses feel he could make these requests?

- 33:12 “*You say/You have been telling me*”...
- 33:12 “*Moreover, you have said*”...
- 33:13 “*Consider/remember*”...

36. How did the Lord respond? 33:14 What does this indicate about Moses’ desires?

37. What demand did Moses make? 33:15 (Do you think he was doubting the Lord’s answer or something else?)

38. What arguments did He give for why the Lord should go with them? 33:16 (Why do you think Moses had the courage to confront and even challenge the Lord?)

FYI: “Moses was determined to have God’s presence with Israel as close as possible. This was the next step towards revival and restoration of Israel’s relationship with God...Moses was bold in drawing near to God, but he based the boldness on the **grace** God had already shown to him. This was a good ground for drawing near.”
- David Guzik

39. How did the LORD respond and why? 33:17

- Why do you think Moses found *favor/grace* (“pleasant, agreeable”) in the Lord’s sight?

Digging Deeper

What attitude can we have in prayer? Hebrews 4:13-16

What confidence? Psalm 34:15

What assurance? Romans 8:15, 26-28

FYI: “God’s grace was accompanied by His intimate knowledge of and care for Moses, represented in the expression **I know you by name.**”
- The Nelson Study Bible (160)

40. What did the Lord’s response cause Moses to ask for next? 33:18 (How would this go beyond 33:11,14?)

41. What did God say He would show Moses? 33:19 (What adjectives did God use to describe Himself?)

42. In showing Moses his goodness (33:20-23):

- Why did it need to be a partial revelation? 33:20 (See John 1:18)
- How did the LORD protect Moses? 33:21,22
- What was Moses allowed to see? 33:23

FYI: "The use of words such as hand, back, and face is anthropomorphic, a way of describing God, who is Spirit, in terms familiar to humankind. Whatever Moses experienced was only a glimpse of what is still to be experienced! Human language is simply too limited to express the mysteries these verses describe." - The Nelson Study Bible (161)

43. What do you think made God willing to show Moses more? (See Luke 8:18)

44. How are we allowed the privilege of seeing the glory of God?

- John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. NIV
- 2 Corinthians 4:6 For God... is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. NASU
- Colossians 1:15 [Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. NIV
- Hebrews 1: 3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. NIV

Digging Deeper

What glory do we look forward to? Colossians 3:4

Applying the Word: How often do you ask God to know Him more? Compare Paul's prayer in Ephesians 3:14-19. Why would God desire that kind of request?