

»»» COMMUNITY KIDS «««

THE PEOPLE WORSHIPED A GOLDEN CALF

Exodus 32-34



FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS:

- **Mornings:** Praise God for being compassionate and merciful. Thank Him for not immediately giving us the punishment we deserve when we sin, and for giving us the opportunity to be forgiven through faith in Jesus.
- **Evenings:** Ask God to help you trust Him more than anything else. Have you ever trusted in your own ability, other people, or other things more than God? Why does God deserve to be first in our lives?

»»» MAIN IDEAS:

CHRIST CONNECTION

THIS IS THE BIG IDEA OF HOW THIS WEEK'S BIBLE STORY POINTS TO JESUS:

MOSES ACTED AS THE PEOPLE'S MEDIATOR, STANDING FOR THEM BEFORE GOD. MOSES COULD NOT DO ANYTHING TO MAKE UP FOR THEIR SIN, BUT WE HAVE A BETTER MEDIATOR—JESUS. JESUS PAID FOR OUR SIN ON THE CROSS AND STANDS FOR US BEFORE GOD. WHEN WE TRUST IN JESUS, OUR SINS ARE FORGIVEN.

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What is worship?

Worship is celebrating the greatness of God.

Dear Families,

After all God had done for the Israelites, the story of the Israelites' worshipping a golden calf may seem surprising. How could God's people turn so quickly from God, who delivered them from slavery and provided for them, even after they explicitly agreed to do everything He had commanded? (See Ex. 24:3.) When we think about the reasons why Israel fell into idolatry, we recognize that we are vulnerable to the same follies.

First, we fail to obey God's Word. The Israelites disobeyed the second of the Ten Commandments: "Do not make an idol for yourself." This might sound like an easy commandment to keep; you aren't crafting little statues to worship, right? Idolatry is dangerous because it's rooted in the heart. Our idols don't always look like golden calves. ***Idols are anything or anyone our sinful hearts look to, seeking what only God provides—such as true joy, meaning, or hope.***

Second, we distrust God's purposes. The Israelites stopped trusting in God, who showed Himself to be powerful and good. They wanted their false god to save them. They thought God's plan wasn't working, so they made a plan of their own. Are you ever tempted to do the same? ***When we forget who God is and think too highly of ourselves or others, we put a person in the place of God.***

Third, we forget God's grace. Aaron gave credit to the man-made idol for bringing the Israelites out of Egypt. We might convince ourselves that our success comes from the work of our own hands or the favor of other people. ***When we forget that every good gift comes from God, we fall into idolatry.***

Finally, we fail to use our gifts to the glory of God. Don't miss that the Israelites used the plunder from Egypt—God's provision to them—to make the calf. ***We too can often use the gifts God has given us for our own satisfaction and to draw attention to ourselves, rather than to the One who gave them to us.***

God was angry with the Israelites. He is a jealous God who will not give His glory to another. (See Isa. 42:8.) Yet we see how Moses stepped in between God and the people to intercede on their behalf. ***As those who have Jesus Christ as our Mediator, we trust in His power to overcome our idolatries and empower us for His mission.***

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

For Fun: Bake cookies together as a family. Allow each family member to help in the process. While the cookies bake in the oven, talk about how hard it is to wait on something you really want—like cookies. Talk with your kids about how our impatience often reveals what we truly desire most. Pray as a family that God would work in your hearts to desire Jesus and His will more than anything.

To Serve: Take some time this week to clean out a closet or toy box. As you prepare to donate or get rid of items, talk about how we all desire to have things that make us feel happy or more popular. Discuss with your kids how our "stuff" can be an idol—something that we love or trust to satisfy more than God. Ask God to cleanse your heart of any idols and to help you look to Him as your only need.



UNIT MEMORY VERSE:

Come, let's worship and bow down;
let's kneel before the Lord our Maker.
For he is our God, and we are the people of
his pasture, the sheep under his care.

Psalm 95:6-7