



“Sin & the Need for Godly Leadership” (Exodus 32)

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v.4 Please note that Aaron fashioned this idol with a tool. The Egyptian god Apis and the Phoenician god Baal were both depicted as bulls, so it’s no surprise Aaron made a calf, because this is what they had been familiar with in Egypt.

vv.5-6 This is incredible, a festival to the Lord yet bowing to an idol. This reminds me of the story in II Kings 17, when the king of Assyria brought people from Babylon and the surrounding nations to settle in Samaria, after he deported many Israelites to Assyria. See II Kings 17:25-33.

Exodus 20:3 You shall have no other gods before me.

v.7 It is interesting that the Lord says “your people.”

v.8 It’s been about 5 months since they left Egypt, and less than forty days since Moses went up the mountain.

vv.9-10 I will never forget a message by Gayle Erwin on a trip to Israel years ago. We were by the Dead Sea near the site where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found. I don’t remember all the details of the message, but one of the main points was the record of Israel’s history as a people and how stiff-necked they were. See Deut.9:4-7, 13, 24; Ex.33:3, 5; II Kings 17:13-14; Jer.7:25-26; Acts 7:51.

vv.11-14 Note that Moses says “why should your anger burn against **your** people.” Prayer makes a difference. We need to be interceding for people so that God will spare them eternal damnation. Moses prayed for Aaron too (Deut.9:20).

v.19 This is symbolic of the people breaking God’s commandments; Rom.3:23.

v.21 Aaron was a failure as a leader.

vv.22-24 He not only failed as a leader, but when confronted he failed to confess.

vv.31-32 This shows Moses’ love for these people. See also Rom.9:3; The book referred to here? See Psalm 69:28; Luke 10:19-20; Rev.20:12-15; 21:27.

v.35 These are people who did not repent. Even with repentance, there are consequences to our sin.

- Gal.6:7-8 Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

LESSONS

- Man's proneness to sin
 - James 1:14...each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed.
 - Rom.7:14-25
- The daily battle
 - The great challenge of the Christian life is that it is so daily.
 - I Cor.15:31-34
- The opportunity to repent after failure
- Importance of godly leadership
 - II Kings 17:21...Jeroboam enticed Israel away from following the Lord and caused them to commit a great sin.
 - Luke 17:1-3a...Things that cause people to sin are bound to come, but woe to that person through whom they come. It would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a millstone tied around his neck than for him to cause one these little ones to sin. So watch yourselves.
 - I Kings 21:25 There was never a man like Ahab, who sold himself to do evil in the eyes of the Lord, ***urged on by Jezebel his wife.***
 - Judges 2:7-13ff, 19; 4:1; 8:33; 18:1; 19:1; 21:25; II Chron.26:5; I Cor.7:14.
 - Ezekiel 22:30 I looked for a man among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, but I found none.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A GODLY LEADER

1. Is a leader
 - They don't follow or give in to the crowd; Moses was a leader; Joshua was a leader; Elijah was a leader; Esther was a leader; Daniel, Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego were leaders.
 - Pilate was not a leader
 - King Saul was not a leader (I Samuel 13:5-15); Saul's son Jonathan was nothing like his father (I Samuel 13:23-14:23); David was a leader (I Samuel 17:1-50).
 - Most people are not godly leaders but rather ungodly followers (Matt.7:13; Acts 19:32).
2. Humble
 - Moses was the most humble man (Num.12:3)
 - King Saul started out a humble man, but quickly became filled with pride; see I Sam.10:22b; 15:12, 17.
3. Don't make excuses for failure

- What a lame excuse Aaron gave for his failure!
 - See I Sam.15:20-24
 - When confronted by Nathan the prophet, King David made a clean confession with no excuses. See Psalm 51:4-9.
4. No idols in their life
- I John 5:21 Dear children, keep yourselves from idols.
 - There were four gods the Israelites worshipped in history: Baal was associated with sexual immorality, Molech with pleasure, Mammon with greed, and Ashteroth with love and romance.
 - Exodus 20: 3 "You must not have any other god but me." (NLT)
 - What Is An Idol? Any person or thing that contends with God for my time, energy, affection, and money.
 - When you follow the trail of your time, energy, affection, and money, you find a throne. And whatever or whoever is on that throne is the object of your worship.
 - Potential Idols:
 - o A PERSON may become an idol in my life
 - Matthew 10: 37 "Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me;
 - Luke 14:20...I just got married, so I can't come.
 - My idol could be ME! I Sam.15:12...Saul...has set up a monument in his own honor.
 - o A POSSESSION may become an idol in my life
 - Col.3: 5 Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.
 - Rich young ruler
 - Luke 16:13 No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and Money.
 - o A PASSION may become an idol in my life
 - A goal, a dream; success, etc.
 - Matthew 16:21 What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul?
 - o A PLEASURE
 - Luke 8:14 ...as they go on their way they are choked by life's worries, riches, and pleasures...
 - Fishing, golfing, cycling, sports, etc.
 - Why Is There Such Potential For Idolatry? God created man to worship; If man does not worship God, he will worship some-thing or some-one other than God (see Rom.1:21-22, 25)
5. Willing to take a stand for the Lord, even against close friends & family members.
- Luke 14:26 If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters – yes, even his own life – he cannot be my disciple.
6. Leads whether anyone follows or not

The times in my life I was not a leader:

- Freddie Gage Crusade, Rodney Byrd
- After Johnny Patterson committed his life to Christ at the Freddie Gage Crusade; Saw Johnny just a few yrs. ago at my first high school reunion and met his live in girlfriend. Johnny tried to be a leader but crumbled at the pressure of the crowd.
- When my cousin Russell enticed my older brother and me to smoke a joint with him.
- When the friends I was with partying one night wanted to throw bottles at the entrance doors to our high school...

When I became a leader:

- The day that I walked down an aisle at Emmanuel Baptist Church....Myra Jordan...

CONCLUSION

- I close with one last characteristic of a godly leader. Godly leaders call people to repentance. That's what Moses did here. His servant Joshua did the same years later, after the people once again became involved in sin and idolatry. See Joshua 24:2-24, 31.