

Forgiveness and Intercession

Exodus 32:1-14, 30-33

INTRODUCTION:

Israel has a very bad habit—they forgot God! This causes trouble today as it did in Bible times. The Psalmist warns against forgetting God (Psalm 9:17). Our text tells us how Israel broke the first and second commandment (Exodus 20:1-5) by making and worshipping a golden calf.

MESSAGE:

1. The Conclusion (Exodus 32:1-6)

- a. Impatience (verse 1)—Moses was upon the mount praying. The people did not know if he was going to return, so they made an idol. We do not need to see God to worship Him—we worship Him by faith!
- b. Indifference (verses 2-5)—Moses' brother Aaron collected all the earrings, bracelets, etc., and made them into a golden calf. Then Aaron had the gall to make a feast unto the Lord! Here we see a picture of double-minded people holding to the world and at the same time holding a religious profession.
- c. Impurity (verse 6)— After making offerings and sacrifices to the golden calf, the people drank and played. What a mixture of worship and sin!

2. The Condemnation (Exodus 32:7-10)

- a. God's command (verse 7)—He gold Moses to go down and help the people. They had corrupted themselves.
- b. God's controversy (verse 8)—The people had turned aside, worshipping a calf and not the Lord.
- c. God's compassion (verse 9)—Though they had turned aside, still He loved them and was patient and kind. God is longsuffering toward all sinners (2 Peter 3:9). He wants all to be saved (John 3:16-19). If Christians sin, God is willing to forgive them (1 John 2:1).

3. The Concern (Exodus 32:11-14)

- a. The pleading (verse 11) Moses pleads and intercedes for his people. To intercede means to stand between God and man. Do you intercede in prayer for the souls of men?
- b. The problem (verse 12) Moses asks God to be patient with the people to preserve their testimony to the heathen nations.
- c. The promise (verse 13, 14) Moses reminds God of the promise He made to Abraham.

4. The Compassion (Exodus 32:30-33)

- a. The sin (verse 31)—Idol worship is sin. God could not close His eyes to this flagrant breaking of His laws.
- b. The sympathy (verse 32)—Moses prayed, "If someone must be destroyed as punishment, let it be me." Paul displayed this same unselfish compassion (Romans 9:3)
- c. The seperation (verse 33)—God can not tolerate sin (Ezekiel 18:20). All sin, whether committed by a believer or an unbeliever must be punished unless it is confessed and forsaken.

CONCLUSION:

Do you care enough to pray for others? Do you believe they will be lost if they are not born again? (John 3:5). Will you intercede for them, as Moses interceded for the sinners in Israel—or are you unmoved by the doom of the wicked?

—*Croft M. Pentz*