

MAIN POINT: We become like what we worship, for better or for worse. The hope of the gospel is that the one who is worthy of worship has become like us so that he might make us like him.

IDOLATRY AT BASE CAMP (Exod. 32:1-6)

- The impatience of the people led to their idolatry (v. 1).
- That which Israel received as plunder from the Egyptians (cf. Exod. 12:35-36) is used for idolatrous purposes (vv. 2-3).
- **Israel had become like what she worshiped (vv. 4-6, 9, 25).**

INTERCESSION AT THE SUMMIT (Exod. 32:7-14)

- The idolatry of the people demanded the wrath of the LORD (vv. 7-10).
- The intercession of Moses was necessary to mediate between the people and their God and avert divine wrath (vv. 11-14).
 - Moses intercedes on the basis of the fame of the LORD's name and the faithfulness of the LORD to his promises.
- **Moses had become like the one he had worshiped (vv. 11-14, 19, 31-32).**

IDOLATRY DEMANDS JUDGMENT (Exod. 32:15-29)

- Israel's act of idolatry was spiritual adultery, and the breaking of the two tablets was a visual display of Israel's violation of the covenant the LORD had made with her (vv. 15-20).
- While Aaron failed to guard the people (vv. 21-24), the Levites guarded the glory of God with the sword entrusted to them (vv. 25-29).
 - **A greater High Priest was made like us, fought for his people, secured their salvation (cf. Heb. 7:22-28), and entrusted his Apostles with the sword of the Spirit (Eph. 6:17) which cuts deep into the hearts of sinful mankind (cf. Acts 2:37).**

INTERCESSION PROVIDES SUBSTITUTION (Exod. 32:30-35)

- The sin of Israel required atonement (v. 30), for it could not go unpunished (vv. 33-35).
- Moses was willing to die in the place of Israel to atone for their sin (vv. 31-32). He would die, however, for his own disobedience (cf. Num. 20:10-13).
 - **Jesus lived and died as Substitute, rose again from the grave as Victor, and ascended on high as King for all those who would trust in him and turn from their sins (cf. 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:18-22). And by his Spirit, he makes us like himself for his glory.**

RECOMMENDED READING:

Echoes of Exodus: Tracing Themes of Redemption through Scripture
by Alastair Roberts and Andrew Wilson

**Questions/Discovery Points for
Life Groups/Families**

Please Read Exodus 32

1. In what ways does Exodus 32 describe Israel's descent into idolatry? How is Israel described as having become like what they idolatrously worshiped?
2. In what ways does Exodus 32 describe Moses, the one who ascended to meet with the LORD, as becoming like the one he worshiped?
3. Considering the proximity to the actual exodus and how the LORD led the people of Israel to Sinai (in a wedding processional, so to speak), to what can Israel's idolatry be likened?
4. Some may consider the judgment of the LORD through the Levites extreme (cf. Exod. 32:25-29), but how does such judgment help us understand the wickedness of sin? What about the need for intercession, mediation, and atonement?
5. How does Exodus 32 point forward to the hope of the gospel (i.e., the one we worship has become like us so that he might make us like him)?