

## Lesson #3-5

# *The Golden Calf*

Exodus 32:1-14



### Key Verse:

And the Lord changed [God's] mind about the disaster that [God] planned to bring on [God's] people.  
Exodus 32:14

### The Point:

Even when we turn away, God remembers God's promises and welcomes us back.



## *Introduction*

The Israelites waited a long time before God freed them from slavery. They learned that God would always come through for them. Still, the Israelites grew impatient when Moses was on the mountain meeting with God. They asked Aaron to make them gods out of gold. They worshipped a calf statue. God told Moses what the people had done. God was angry with the Israelites for forgetting their commitment to God. Moses reminded God of how much God loved the Israelites and of the promises God made to Abraham. God gave the Israelites a chance to repent and remember the covenant with God.

### The Point

**Even when we turn away, God remembers God's promises and welcomes us back.** Even though the Lord was clear about how the Israelites should offer their worship, the people followed their fear, rather than their faith. God kept the promise to deliver and care for the people by delivering them from slavery and caring for them through miraculous means. But, the people created an easy religious practice, rather than waiting with patience and discipline for Moses to return. We, too, turn away from God to follow an easier way, but God always forgives us and welcomes us back into relationship.

# Activities a la Carte

## Activities

## Supplies

### Introduction

#### *Making Rules*

Discuss rules.

10 min.

† None

### Learning the Story

#### *The Golden Calf*

Tell the Bible story.

15 min.

† Bibles

### Activities

#### *Modern Idols*

Find idols in today's world.

10 min.

† Magazines  
† Glue sticks  
† Scissors  
† Construction paper

#### *Intercessory Prayer*

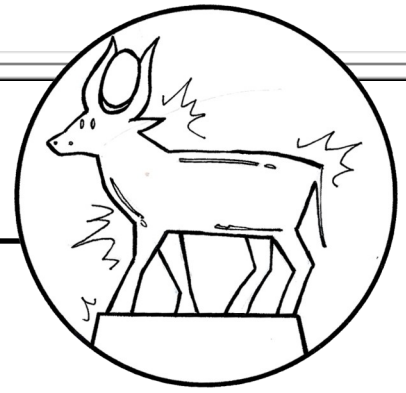
Compose a corporate prayer.

10 min.

† Paper  
† Pens or pencils

### Prayer

# *God's Story @ Home*



## *Introduction (10 minutes)*

### *Making Rules*

Discuss rules.

*Supplies:*

† None

*Instructions:*

1. Discuss with your family the rules that you each have in your home. Remember to listen to everyone and give everyone a chance to contribute.
2. Discuss:
  - **Why are rules important?**
  - **How do rules make things both easier and more difficult?**
3. **Today, we will hear about what happens when Moses went to spend time with God, receiving the rules that will govern their relationships with each other and with God. Just like some of us, they have a difficult time following rules!**

## *Learning the Story (15 minutes)*

### *The Israelites Forget God's Promise*

Tell the Bible story.

*Supplies:*

† Bibles

*Instructions:*

1. Read Exodus 32:1-14 by taking turns or one person reading the passage. Do not read silently, though, as that would leave out pre-readers. Discuss:
  - **Who are the main characters?**
  - **What is the focus of the action?**
  - **What types of pantomime actions would best represent the Israelites' activity?**
2. Invite family members to read the parts of Moses, the Lord, Aaron, and the Narrator. Pantomime the actions of the Israelites that they discussed after their first reading.
3. After the second reading, discuss the following questions:
  - **Why did the people ask Aaron to build them a god to worship?** *[They feared that Moses might not return.]*
  - **Why could they not wait for Moses to return?**
  - **What makes you doubt that God will provide?**
  - **What kinds of false idols do people worship today?**

## *Activity (15 minutes)*

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### *Modern Idols*

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Find idols in today's world.

#### *Supplies:*

- † Magazines
- † Glue sticks
- † Scissors
- † Construction paper

#### *Preparation:*

1. Collect magazines that can be cut up.

#### *Instructions:*

1. **Fear brought the Israelites to the place where they thought they needed to take things into their own hands. They created a god that they could worship according to their own rules. Sometimes we turn ordinary things into gods by placing more value on them than we should. We end up worshipping those items and what they do for us, turning them into idols.**
2. **Create a collage of the different things that people worship instead of God. Cut out words and pictures from the magazines, and glue them on a piece of construction paper. As you work, talk about the pictures and words you find, and what they mean to you.**

## *Activity (10 minutes)*

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### *Intercessory Prayer*

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Compose a corporate prayer.

#### *Supplies:*

- † Paper
- † Pens or pencils

#### *Instructions:*

1. **The Lord was very angry with the people for worshipping idols, and vowed to destroy them, leaving Moses alone to fulfill the covenant of making a great nation of Abraham's people. Moses pled with the Lord and was able to convince the Lord to spare the people.**
2. **We can use Moses' pleas as a guide for our prayers of intercession to God. First he asked God to have mercy on the people. Then, he asked specifically for what he would like God to do. Finally, he asked God to remember the promise made to the people.**
3. **Work together to write several prayer petitions asking for help using this format. First, ask for God's mercy or attention. Second, name a specific request that you would like God to attend to. Finally, ask God to remember the promise God made to care for us.**



## *Sending the Story (5 minutes)*

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Make a point to come together to pray. Use the following or say your own prayer.

**Let's share in a time of prayer. I will begin by offering a prayer of confession, then we will continue by offering our intercessory prayer petitions we composed as a family. Please end each petition with "Lord in your mercy," and we will respond, "Hear our prayer."**

**Let us pray: Living God, you brought the Israelites out of Egypt and toward a land of promise. But their fear and uncertainty led them to doubt you and to worship on their own terms. Hear our prayers of confession for the times we have worshipped false gods.**

Allow for individual confessions, silent or out loud.

**Forgive us and welcome us back into your favor.**

**Now, hear our prayers and speak to us... Offer prayer petitions here.**

**For all this we pray. Amen.**

If you have the "Living the Word: Sharing God's Story @ Home" sheet, remember to use it throughout the week as a part of your family devotions!