

# Exodus 32 -34 and 40 reader's theater

## The Golden Calf

CHARACTERS: Narrator 1 & 2, Voice of God, Moses, Joshua, Miriam, Aaron, Israelite 1 & 2, Hur

RUN TIME: 2 minutes per page

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Exodus 32-33

VOICE OF GOD: You must observe My Sabbaths, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, so that you will know that I am Yahweh who sets you apart.

ALL: It is holy.

VOICE OF GOD: Whoever profanes it must be put to death.

AARON: If anyone does work on it, that person must be cut off from his people.

MOSES: Work may be done for six days, but on the seventh day there must be a Sabbath of complete rest, dedicated to the Lord.

VOICE OF GOD: It is a sign forever between Me and the Israelites.

MIRIAM: In six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth,

HUR: but on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.

NARRATOR 1: When God finished speaking with Moses on Mount Sinai, He gave him the two tablets of the testimony,

NARRATOR 2: Stone tablets inscribed by the finger of God.

NARRATOR 1: Meanwhile, back with the 600,000 Israelite men, their wives and children ...

NARRATOR 2: When the people saw that Moses delayed in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron.

ISRAELITE 1: We don't know what has happened Moses.

ISRAELITE 2: So make us a god who will go before us.

AARON: Take off the gold rings that are on the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters and bring them to me.

ISRAELITE 2: Here you go.

NARRATOR 2: Aaron took the gold, fashioned it with an engraving tool, and made it into an image of a calf.

ISRAELITE 1: (in an announcer's voice) Israel, this is your God, who brought you up from the land of Egypt!

AARON: We'll have a festival tomorrow.

NARRATOR 1: The people sat down to eat and drink, then got up to play.

VOICE OF GOD: Moses, go down at once! For your people you brought up from the land of Egypt have acted corruptly.

MOSES: What have they done?

VOICE OF GOD: They have made, bowed down to and brought sacrifices to an image of a calf.

MOSES: They are a stiff-necked people.

VOICE OF GOD: Now leave Me alone, so that My anger can burn against them and I can destroy them.

MOSES: Please, Lord. Don't destroy them. Why should the Egyptians say, 'He brought them out with an evil intent to kill them in the mountains and wipe them off the face of the earth'

VOICE OF GOD: I will destroy them and will make you, Moses, into a great nation.

MOSES: Please, Lord, turn from Your great anger and relent concerning this disaster planned for Your people.

NARRATOR 1: So the Lord relented concerning the disaster He said He would bring on His people.

NARRATOR 2: Then Moses went down the mountain with the two tablets of the testimony in his hands.

NARRATOR 1: They were inscribed on both sides—inscribed front and back.

NARRATOR 2: The tablets were the work of God, and the writing was God's writing, engraved on the tablets.

JOSHUA: Moses, there is a sound of war in the camp.

MOSES: It's not the sound of a victory cry and not the sound of a cry of defeat; I hear the sound of singing!

NARRATOR 1: As he approached the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, Moses became enraged

NARRATOR 2: He threw the tablets out of his hands, smashing them at the base of the mountain.

JOSHUA: What will you do with that horrible calf idol?

MOSES: Burn it up, and grind it to powder, mix it with water and force the Israelites to drink the water.

MOSES: What did these people do to you that you have led them into such a grave sin?

AARON: Don't be enraged, my lord. You yourself know that the people are intent on evil. They made me do it.

MOSES: How?

AARON: They said to me,

ISRAELITE 1: Make us a god who will go before us

ISRAELITE 2: because we don't know what has happened to Moses.

AARON: So I said to them, 'Whoever has gold, take it off,' and they gave it to me. When I threw it into the fire, out came this calf!

MOSES: (to AARON) These people are out of control, because you let them get out of control.

JOSHUA: We look weak before our enemies.

MOSES: (to the people) You have committed a grave sin. Now I will go up to the Lord.

JOSHUA: Perhaps Moses will be able to atone for your sin.

MOSES: Oh, these people have committed a grave sin; they have made a god of gold for themselves. Now if You would only forgive their sin. But if not, please erase me from the book You have written.

VOICE OF GOD: I will erase whoever has sinned against Me from My book. Now go, lead the people to the place I told you about; see, My angel will go before you. But on the day I settle accounts, I will hold them accountable for their sin.

NARRATOR 1: The Lord inflicted a plague on the people for what they did with the calf Aaron had made.

VOICE OF GOD: Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey. I will send an angel ahead of you and will drive out the inhabitants but I will not go with you.

NARRATOR 2: When the people heard this bad news, they mourned and didn't put on their jewelry from Mount Horeb onward.

VOICE OF GOD: You are a stiff-necked people. If I went with you for a single moment, I would destroy you.

NARRATOR 1: Moses set up a tent outside of the camp.

MOSES: If any of you want to consult the Lord, go to the tent of meeting.

NARRATOR 2: Whenever Moses went out to the tent, all the people would stand at the door of his tent, and watch Moses enter.

ISRAELITE 1: Look! The pillar of cloud comes down when the Lord speaks with Moses.

ISRAELITE 2: Let us bow in worship.

JOSHUA: The Lord speaks with Moses face to face, just as a man speaks with his friend.

ISRAELITE 1: You would know, Joshua, because as his assistant, you do not leave the inside of the tent.

## The Lord's Glory

CHARACTERS: Narrator 1 & 2, Voice of God, Moses, Joshua, Miriam, Aaron, Israelite 1 & 2

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Exodus 33-34, 40

VOICE OF GOD: Moses, I know you by name, and you have also found favor in My sight.

MOSES: If I have indeed found favor in Your sight, please teach me Your ways, and I will know You.

VOICE OF GOD: My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.

MOSES: If Your presence does not go, don't make us leave here. How will it be known that I and your people have found favor in Your sight unless You go with us? Your presence distinguishes us from all the other people on the face of the earth.

VOICE OF GOD: I will do this very thing you have asked, for you have found favor in My sight, and I know you by name.

MOSES: Please, let me see Your glory.

VOICE OF GOD: I will cause all My goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim the name Yahweh before you.

MOSES: Lord, you are gracious to whom you will be gracious, and have compassion on whom you will have compassion.

VOICE OF GOD: You cannot see My face, for no one can see Me and live. When My glory passes by, I will put you in the crevice of the rock and cover you with My hand until I have passed by. Then I will take My hand away, and you will see My back, but My face will not be seen.

NARRATOR 1: Afterward, Moses cut two stone tablets like the first ones and climbed Mount Sinai, just as the Lord had commanded him.

VOICE OF GOD: I will write on them the words that were on the first tablets, which you broke.

NARRATOR 2: No one could go near the mountains.

NARRATOR 1: Not even the flocks and herds could graze in front of that mountain.

NARRATOR 2: The Lord came down in a cloud, stood with him there, and proclaimed His name Yahweh.

VOICE OF GOD: I am Yahweh— a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger and rich in faithful love and truth.

MOSES: Lord, you maintain faithful love to a thousand generations, forgiving wrongdoing, rebellion, and sin.

VOICE OF GOD: I will not leave the guilty unpunished.

MOSES: My Lord, if I have indeed found favor in Your sight, my Lord, please go with us. Even though this is a stiff-necked people, forgive our wrongdoing and sin, and accept us as Your own possession.

VOICE OF GOD: Look, I am making a covenant. I will perform wonders in the presence of all your people that have never been done in all the earth or in any nation.

MOSES: All the people we live among will see your awe-inspiring work.

VOICE OF GOD: Be careful not to make a treaty with the inhabitants of the land that you are going to enter; otherwise, they will become a snare among you.

MOSES: We will tear down their altars, smash their sacred pillars, and chop down their Asherah poles.

VOICE OF GOD: You are never to bow down to another god because Yahweh, being jealous by nature, is a jealous God.

MOSES: We will not intermarry with them or make cast images of their gods.

VOICE OF GOD: Observe the Festival of Unleavened Bread for seven days in the month of Abib.

MOSES: You brought us out of Egypt in the month of Abib.

VOICE OF GOD: The firstborn male from every womb belongs to Me.

MOSES: No one is to appear before you empty-handed.

VOICE OF GOD: You are to labor six days but you must rest on the seventh day.

MOSES: Even during plowing and harvesting times.

VOICE OF GOD: Observe the Festival of Weeks with the first fruits of the wheat harvest, and the Festival of Ingathering at the turn of the agricultural year.

MOSES: Three times a year all the Israelite males will appear before you.

VOICE OF GOD: No one will covet your land when you go up three times a year to appear before the Lord your God.

MOSES: We will not present the blood of sacrifice with anything leavened and bring the best first fruits of our land to you, Lord God.

VOICE OF GOD: Write down these words, for I have made a covenant with you and with Israel based on these words.

NARRATOR 1: Moses was there with the Lord 40 days and 40 nights.

NARRATOR 2: He did not eat bread or drink water.

NARRATOR 1: He wrote the Ten Commandments, the words of the covenant, on the tablets.

ISRAELITE 1: Look! Moses is coming back.

ISRAELITE 2: He has the two tablets of the testimony in his hands.

MIRIAM: The skin of his face shines as a result of his speaking with the Lord.

AARON: I am afraid to go near him.

ISRAELITE 1: So are we.

MIRIAM: He calls us so we must come to him.

MOSES: You must do everything the Lord told me on Mount Sinai.

NARRATOR 2: When Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil over his face.

JOSHUA: But whenever Moses went before the Lord to speak with Him, he would remove the veil until he came out.

MIRIAM: After he came out, he would tell the Israelites what he had been commanded.

AARON: Moses' face is always radiant after speaking to God.

MIRIAM: Moses would put the veil over his face again until he went to speak with the Lord.

JOSHUA: The cloud covers the tent of meeting.

AARON: During the night, we can see a fire inside the cloud.

NARRATOR 1: The Israelites set out whenever the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle throughout all the stages of their journey.

MIRIAM: If the cloud was not taken up, we did not set out.

MOSES: and the glory of the Lord fills the tabernacle.

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