

Church of God Sunday School

THE GOLDEN CALF

Exodus 24:12-18; 32-33:1-11; 34



Moses went up to Mount Sinai to receive the laws of God. He had taken Joshua with him. He had been gone forty days and forty nights. The children of Israel grew weary, waiting for Moses to return from Mount Sinai. They did not know what had become of him. Some of them thought he had died. The people gathered themselves around Aaron and said, "Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him."

Aaron knew better than to worship idols, but he was moved by the people. He told them to bring him the golden earrings that were in their ears. When he had received them, he melted them down. Then he fashioned an idol "with a graving tool." He made a golden calf! (How did God feel when Aaron did that?)

When the people saw the golden calf, they said, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." Aaron built an altar before the calf and proclaimed a feast to the Lord for the next day! Oh, how sad and angry that made God!

Early in the morning, the people arose and offered burnt offerings and made peace offerings to the golden calf. They sat down and ate and drank. They got up and began singing and dancing around the calf and corrupting themselves in sin. Their sins stirred God!

Up on the mountain, Moses had received God's commandments. God had written them, with His own finger, on two tablets of stone (Exodus 31:18). God told Moses to get down from the mountain, for the people had sinned and committed idolatry. God's wrath burned so hot against the Israelite people that He was ready to destroy them and make a great nation out of Moses and his children.

But Moses made supplication to the Lord in Israel's behalf. He said the Egyptians would say that God had only brought the Israelites out of Egypt to kill them in

the mountains. Moses told God to remember His promise to His servants—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: "I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever." The Lord accepted what Moses said. He turned from the judgment that He would have brought upon Israel.

Moses and Joshua then went down from the mountain. Moses carried the two tables of stone containing God's commandments. He heard the people making a great noise.

Joshua spoke first. "There is a noise of war in the camp."

Moses said, "It is not the voice of them that shout for mastery, neither is it the voice of them that cry for being overcome: but the noise of them that sing"

As Moses drew near the camp, he saw the golden calf! He saw the people dancing and rejoicing! Moses became angry at Israel too. He was angry at how quickly the people had turned to idolatry. Suddenly, Moses threw down the tables of stone and broke them at the foot of the mountain! Then, Moses went right to work. First, he took the calf and burned it in the fire. Next, he ground it into powder.

Then, he scattered the powder in the water. But that was not all—Moses made the Israelites drink that water!

Moses dealt with Aaron for making the calf: "What did this people unto thee, that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them?" Aaron told Moses how the people had asked for gods and that he had gathered their golden earrings from them to make the golden calf.

Moses stood in the gate of the camp and called, "Who is on the LORD'S side? let him come unto me." All the sons of Levi gathered together with Moses. Then Moses commanded them: "Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and



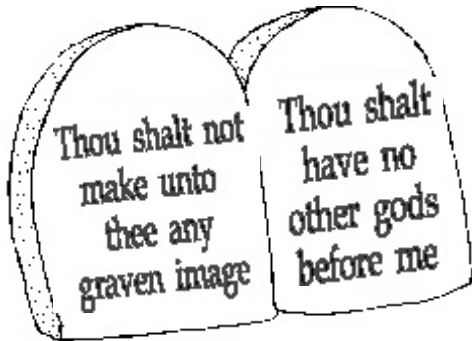
go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour."

The sons of Levi did as Moses commanded them. About three thousand men died that day because they had sinned against God.

The following day Moses made an atonement for the sin of the people. Moses said to the Lord: "Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now . . . forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me . . . out of thy book which thou hast written."

The Lord said to Moses, "Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book." The Lord plagued the people because of the calf of gold. God also told Moses that He would not go among them or He would consume them for being so stubborn toward Him. He would send an angel before them instead.

Moses removed the tabernacle from the camp. All who wanted to seek God had to go outside the camp to the tabernacle. Whenever Moses went into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar stood at the door of the tabernacle, and "all the rose up and worshipped, every man in his tent door."



TRUE OR FALSE:

- _____ The golden calf was made by Aaron.
- _____ God was jealous over the Israelites.
- _____ The golden calf delivered Israel from Egypt.
- _____ The Lord renewed the tables of stone.
- _____ Moses worshiped the calf with Aaron.
- _____ Mount Zion was where Moses talked with God.
- _____ Israel's sin caused God to plague them.
- _____ Moses made an atonement for Israel's sin.
- _____ God would not listen to His servant, Moses.
- _____ Moses' face shone with the glory of God.

God told Moses to cut out two tables of stone like the first ones. God said He would write on them again. Moses cut the stone tablets. He had to go up to the top of the mountain, once more, to receive God's laws. God descended in a cloud upon the mountain. For another forty days and forty nights, Moses was with the Lord. That time, the people did not complain or try to worship another God.

When Moses talked with God, he asked God, again, to pardon the people's great sin. Moses asked God to come back among them. God agreed to come back among the people if they would worship no other god.

At last, Moses came down from the mountain. He did not know that his face shone from being in God's presence. The people were afraid to come near him. When they told him how his face shone, he put a veil over his face. Then, he told them all that God had said to him on Mount Sinai.

MEMORY VERSE:

*"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image."
(Exodus 20:4)*

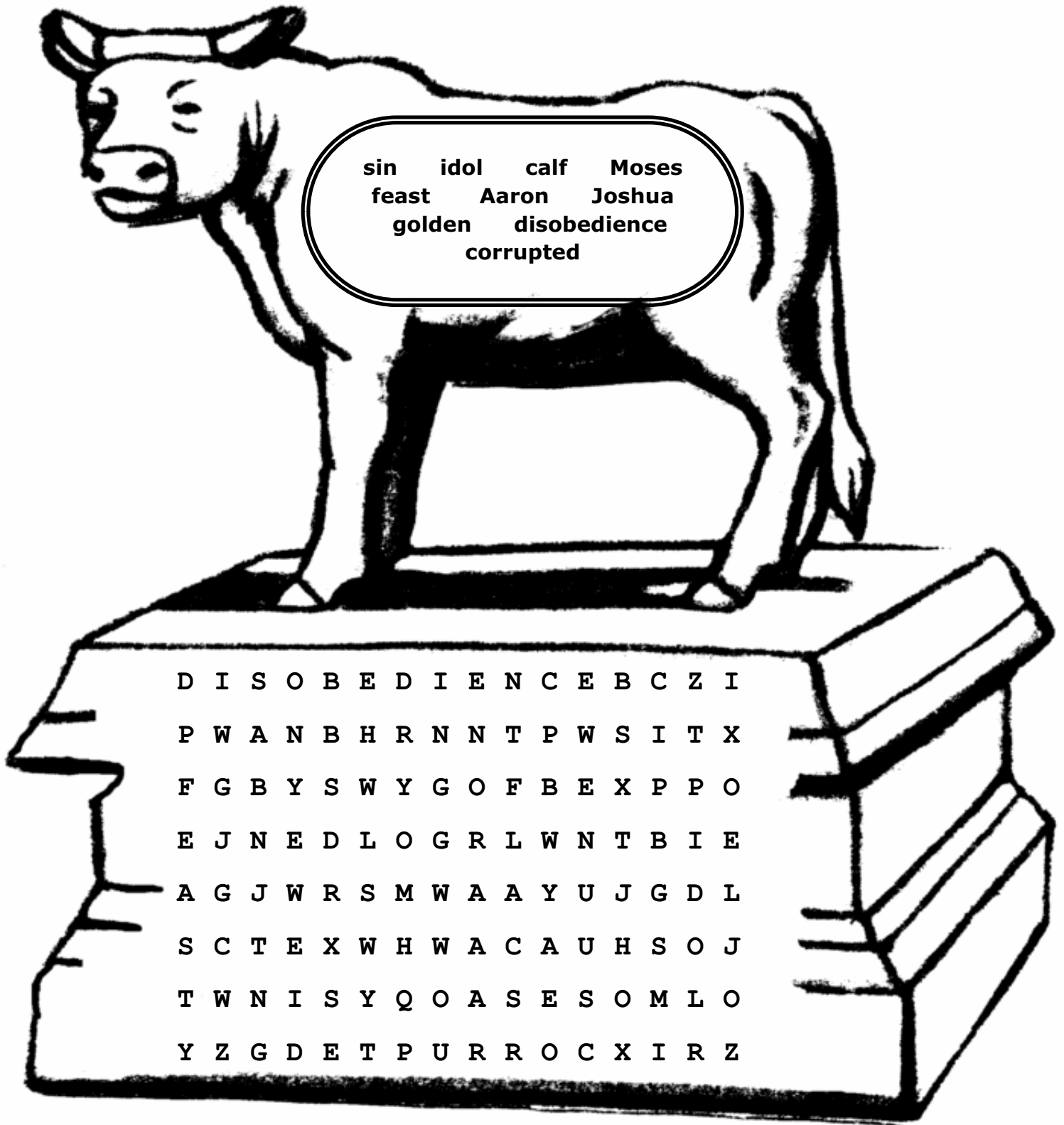


MATCHING:

Draw a line from the name to the word that matches it.

- | | |
|-----------|-------------------|
| 1. Moses | God's true people |
| 2. Aaron | idol worship |
| 3. Calf | Israel's leader |
| 4. Israel | young helper |
| 5. Joshua | Moses' brother |

Word Search





Worshiping the Golden Calf