Moses' Finest Hour

Exodus 32; Galatians 6:1-2

Life of Moses

Great Moments from Moses' Life

- 40 years old, leaves palace, chooses to suffer affliction with his own people
- 80 years old, stands before Pharoah and says, "Let my people go!"
- Stands at Mount Nebo and looks into the Promised Land

Moses' Finest Hour

- Moses faces a crisis at the base of Mount Sinai
- The people are full of rebellion and apostasy
- Moses' reaction to their sin reveals his strong character and a deep compassion

1. The People's Rebellion

The People's Rebellion, Moses' Reaction, and insight for us as we face people today.

When the people saw that Moses was so long in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said, "Come, make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don't know what has happened to him." **Exodus 32:1**

Aaron answered them, "Take off the gold earrings that your wives, your sons and your daughters are wearing, and bring them to me." **Exodus 32:2**

He took what they handed him and made it into an idol cast in the shape of a calf, fashioning it with a tool. Then they said, "These are

your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt." **Exodus 32:4**

Their hearts turned back to Egypt
"But our fathers refused to obey him. Instead, they rejected him and in their hearts turned back to Egypt. **Acts 7:39**

The People Indulge in Pagan Revelry
So the next day the people rose early and sacrificed burnt offerings and presented fellowship offerings. Afterward they sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in revelry. **Exodus 32:6**

Moses saw the dancing
When Moses approached the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, his anger burned and he threw the tablets out of his hands, breaking them to pieces at the foot of the mountain. **Ex. 32:19**

Aaron let them get out of control
Moses saw that the people were running wild and that Aaron had let them get out of control and so become a laughingstock to their enemies. **Exodus 32:25**

They had temptations—and we have temptations too.
Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did. Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written: "The people sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in pagan revelry." **1 Corinthians 10:6-7**

Warning
And we should not commit sexual immorality as some of them did.
1 Corinthians 10:8

So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! **1 Corinthians 10:12**

2. Moses' Response

The People's Rebellion, Moses' Reaction, and insight for us as we face people today.

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Go down, because your people, whom you brought up out of Egypt, have become corrupt. **Exodus 32:7**

1. Moses prays for the people

Moses intercedes for the people

Now leave me alone so that my anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them. Then I will make you into a great nation." **Exodus 32:10**

But Moses sought the favor of the Lord his God.
"O Lord," he said, "why should your anger burn against your people, whom you brought out of Egypt with great power and a mighty hand? **Exodus 32:11**

Why should the Egyptians say, 'It was with evil intent that he brought them out, to kill them in the mountains and to wipe them off the face of the earth'? Turn from your fierce anger; relent and do not bring disaster on your people. **Exodus 32:12**

Moses intercedes for the people
Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac and Israel, to whom you swore by your own self: 'I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and I will give your descendants all this land I promised them, and it

will be their inheritance forever.' "
Exodus 32:13

Then the Lord relented and did not bring on his people the disaster he had threatened.
The Lord relents, and shows mercy
Exodus 32:14

God listens to the cries of His people
"Come now, let us reason together," says the Lord. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool. **Isaiah 1:18**

Righteous prayer is powerful and effective
Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is

powerful and effective.
James 5:16

When Moses approached the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, his anger burned and he threw the tablets out of his hands, breaking them to pieces at the foot of the mountain.
Exodus 32:19

2. Moses responded in a display of anger

What really made Moses mad
Moses saw that the people were running wild and that Aaron had let them get out of control and so become a laughingstock to their enemies. **Exodus 32:25**

In your anger, do not sin
"In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are

still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. **Eph. 4:26-27**

He said to Aaron, "What did these people do to you, that you led them into such great sin?"
Exodus 32:21

3. Moses confronted the leaders responsible

Aaron's excuse
"Do not be angry, my lord," Aaron answered. "You know how prone these people are to evil. They said to me, 'Make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don't know what has happened to him.' **Exodus 32:22-23**

So I told them, 'Whoever has any gold jewelry, take it off.' Then they gave me the gold, and I threw it

into the fire, and out came this calf!" **Exodus 32:24**

When leaders need to be confronted

Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. **Gal. 6:1-2**

So he stood at the entrance to the camp and said, "Whoever is for the Lord, come to me." And all the Levites rallied to him. **Exodus 32:26**

4. Moses punished the offenders

Then he said to them, "This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: 'Each man strap a sword to

his side. Go back and forth through the camp from one end to the other, each killing his brother and friend and neighbor.' " The Levites did as Moses commanded, and that day about three thousand of the people died. **Exodus 32:27-28**

Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.
Rom. 12:17-19 | Deut. 32:25

Speak the truth plainly, don't sugar coat it
Again, if the trumpet does not sound a clear call, who will get ready for battle? **1 Cor. 14:8**

Then Moses said, "You have been set apart to the Lord today, for you were against your own sons and brothers, and he has blessed you this day." **Exodus 32:29**

The next day Moses said to the people, "You have committed a great sin. But now I will go up to the Lord; perhaps I can make atonement for your sin." **Ex. 32:30**

5. Moses loved the people

**If we're going to influence the sinful world around us,
we first of all have to genuinely care about people and be able to show that.**

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the

Father, full of grace and truth.
John 1:14

We need the same balance as Jesus, we need to be full of grace and truth.

Moses, full of grace and truth
Moses' Finest Hour
So Moses went back to the Lord and said, "Oh, what a great sin these people have committed! They have made themselves gods of gold. But now, please forgive their sin—but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written."
Exodus 32:31-32

Atonement could be through one who was without blemish
Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. **John 15:13**