

# Deuteronomy 9:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the LORD said unto me, Arise, get thee down quickly from hence; for thy people which thou hast brought forth out of Egypt have corrupted themselves; they are quickly turned aside out of the way which I commanded them; they have made them a molten image.

## Analysis

**And the LORD said unto me, Arise, get thee down quickly from hence; for thy people which thou hast brought forth out of Egypt have corrupted themselves.** God's words reveal both His holiness that cannot tolerate sin and His covenantal grace that distinguishes between the faithful mediator and the unfaithful people.

The command arise, get thee down quickly indicates urgent judgment. While Moses communed with God, receiving revelation for Israel's blessing, the people below were breaking the covenant through idolatry. The speed required shows the seriousness of their sin and the immediacy of God's response to covenant violation.

Notably, God says thy people which thou hast brought forth rather than 'My people.' This rhetorical distancing reveals God's righteous anger at Israel's betrayal. They have forfeited their privileged status through rebellion. Yet God's continued conversation with Moses indicates the possibility of restoration through the mediator's intercession.

The word corrupted translates a Hebrew term meaning to ruin, destroy, or act

perversely. Israel has not merely made a mistake but has fundamentally perverted their covenant relationship with God through idolatry.

## Historical Context

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While Moses received the law on Mount Sinai, Aaron supervised construction of a golden calf at the people's demand. This represented not just generic idolatry but likely adoption of Egyptian religious practices or Canaanite Baal worship symbolized by bull imagery.

This incident revealed Israel's spiritual immaturity and the persistent temptation to syncretism - mixing worship of Yahweh with pagan religious forms.

## Related Passages

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**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

## Study Questions

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1. What does God's rhetorical distancing ('thy people') teach us about how sin affects our relationship with Him?
2. Why did the people turn to idolatry so quickly after experiencing God's deliverance from Egypt?
3. How does the mediator role of Moses point forward to Christ's better mediation?
4. What forms of idolatry tempt believers today to corrupt their worship of God?
5. How should the urgency in God's command shape our view of sin's seriousness?

## Interlinear Text

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מִן הַמִּתְמָר תַּיְאֵר  
quickly get thee down unto me Arise and I will say  
H2088 H3381 H6965 H413 And the LORD said

רֵאשׁ רַע עַמּוּד שְׁחִתְבָּכְרִי  
H834 H5971 H3588 have corrupted from hence for thy people  
H7843

מִן מִתְמָר תַּיְאֵר  
quickly turn aside out of Egypt which thou hast brought forth  
H4480 H4118 H4714 H3318

לֹא עֲשֵׂה כְּזִיתְבָּרְאֵשׁ רֵאשׁ רַע  
H0 H6213 H6680 which I commanded them they have made out of the way  
H834 H1870

מִתְמָר  
molten image  
them a molten image  
H4541

## Additional Cross-References

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**Deuteronomy 31:29** (References Lord): For I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days; because ye will do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger through the work of your hands.

**Judges 2:17** (References Lord): And yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the LORD; but they did not so.