

Exodus 32:31

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Moses returned unto the LORD, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold.

Analysis

Moses returns (וַיָּשׁוּב מֹשֶׁה אֶל־יְהוָה, vayyashov Moshe el-Adonai) to renew intercession. His cry אָנָּה (anna, Oh!) expresses deep anguish. The repeated phrase חַטָּאת הָעַם־הַזֶּה חַטָּאת גְּדוֹלָה (chata ha'am-hazeh chata'ah gedolah, this people has sinned a great sin) emphasizes enormity. The specific sin—וַיַּעַשׂוּ לָהֶם אֱלֹהִי זָהָב (vaya'asu lahem elohei zahav, they have made for themselves gods of gold)—is stated plainly before God. Moses doesn't minimize or excuse but confesses fully, prerequisite for atonement. The plural 'gods' (אֱלֹהִי, elohei) may reflect the people's plural declaration (v4) or emphasize the sin's multiplied wickedness.

Historical Context

Moses' confession before God models proper intercession: acknowledge sin's full reality without excuse or minimization. Only honest confession precedes genuine forgiveness (1 John 1:9).

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does your confession before God honestly acknowledge sin's true nature?
2. Why must intercession begin with truthful acknowledgment rather than excuse-making?

Interlinear Text

וַיָּשָׁב מֹשֶׁה אֶל יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר אֲנִי אֲחַטָּא
returned **And Moses** ^{H413} **unto the LORD** **and said** **Oh** **have sinned**
H7725 H4872 H3068 H559 H577 H2398

הָעָם הַזֶּה חָטָא חַטָּא גָדֹל וַעֲשֵׂה לָּהֶם אֱלֹהִים
this people ^{H2088} **sin** **a great** **and have made** ^{H0} **them gods**
H5971 H2401 H1419 H6213 H430

זָהָב:
of gold
H2091

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 20:23 (References God): Ye shall not make with me gods of silver, neither shall ye make unto you gods of gold.

Exodus 32:30 (Sin): And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up unto the LORD; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin.

Daniel 9:8 (Sin): O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee.

Daniel 9:11 (Sin): Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him.

