

**Bible Passage:** Exodus 32-34**CHRIST CONNECTION:** Moses talked to God for the people. When we sin, Jesus talks to God for us. Jesus never sinned. God forgives those who trust in Jesus.**Key Passage:** Let's worship God. Psalm 95:6**Big Picture Question:** *What is worship? Worship is celebrating the greatness of God.*

## LEADER DEVOTIONAL

After all God had done for the Israelites, the story of the Israelites' worshiping a golden calf may seem surprising. How could God's people turn so quickly from God, who delivered them from slavery and provided for them, even after they explicitly agreed to do everything He had commanded? (See Ex. 24:3.) When we think about the reasons why Israel fell into idolatry, we recognize that we are vulnerable to the same follies.

First, we fail to obey God's Word. The Israelites disobeyed the second of the Ten Commandments: "Do not make an idol for yourself." This might sound like an easy commandment to keep; you aren't crafting little statues to worship, right? Idolatry is dangerous because it's rooted in the heart. Our idols don't always look like golden calves. Idols are anything or anyone our sinful hearts look to, seeking what only God provides—such as true joy, meaning, or hope.

Second, we distrust God's purposes. The Israelites stopped trusting in God, who showed Himself to be powerful and good. They wanted their false god to save them. They thought God's plan wasn't working, so they made a plan of their own. Are you ever tempted to do the same? When we forget who God is and think too highly of ourselves or others, we put a person in the place of God.

Third, we forget God's grace. Aaron gave credit to the man-made idol for bringing the Israelites out of Egypt. We might convince ourselves that our success comes from the work of our own hands or the favor of other people. When we forget that every good gift comes from God, we fall into idolatry.

Finally, we fail to use our gifts to the glory of God. Don't miss that the Israelites used the plunder from Egypt—God's provision to them—to make the calf. We too can often use the gifts God has given us for our own satisfaction and to draw attention to ourselves, rather than to the One who gave them to us.

God was angry with the Israelites. He is a jealous God who will not give His glory to another. (See Isa. 42:8.) Yet we see how Moses stepped in between God and the people to intercede on their behalf. As those who have Jesus Christ as our Mediator, we trust in His power to overcome our idolatries and empower us for His mission.

### TERMS TO KNOW

**Idolatry: the worship of idols or excessive devotion to, or reverence for some person or thing. An idol is anything a person puts in the place of God. Idolatry is a sin.**

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## WELCOME

Play music in the background as you greet preschoolers and welcome them to class. As children enter, have them decorate a paper bag. They will place their crafts, coloring pages, and activity pages, in the bag for easy transportation home. After children are finished decorating their bags, line them up outside the classroom along the wall for easy distribution and pick-up.

*\*\*\* Please remember to reference the class schedules posted in your room for the timing of your class's various activities.*

## ACTIVITY PAGE

Lead preschoolers to complete the activity page: Match the Shadows

*Say: Look at the calf on your activity page. In today's Bible story, God's people broke their promise to worship only God. They worshiped a statue of a calf they made out of gold!*

## BIBLE STORY

### The People Worshiped a Golden Calf

Moses and the Israelites set up camp in front of *a mountain called Mount Sinai (SIGH nigh)*. Moses went up the mountain, and God talked to him. Moses was up on the mountain for a long time. The people at the bottom of the mountain were tired of waiting.

*Where is Moses? What is taking him so long? they wondered.*

**The people went to Moses' brother, Aaron. "We need a god to lead us because we do not know what happened to Moses," they said. So Aaron collected gold from the people and made a statue of a calf for them to worship.**

**God saw what the people were doing, and He was angry. Moses rushed down the mountain, carrying two stone tablets from God. When Moses saw the people dancing in front of the golden calf, Moses smashed the tablets at the bottom of the mountain. Then he destroyed the golden calf.**

**The next day, Moses went back up the mountain to talk to God. "Please forgive these people," Moses said to God. God said, "When it is time to punish them, I will punish them for their sin."**

**God gave Moses more laws and instructions. God said to Moses, "The Lord cares about His people. He is good to them. But He will punish the guilty."**

**Moses bowed down and worshiped God. "Lord, please go with us," he said. "Forgive our sin, and accept us as Your people."**

#### **Christ connection**

*SAY: Moses talked to God for the people. When we sin, Jesus talks to God for us. Jesus never sinned. God forgives those who trust in Jesus.*

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## CRAFT

### Decorate a number one

See example in your bin to make *There is 1 true God!* craft.

*Say: There is only one true God. He is the only one who deserves our worship. God created the world and is in charge of everything. We sin and treat other things like they are more important than God. We deserve to be punished, but God sent Jesus to be punished for us. When we trust in Jesus, God will forgive our sin and give us life with Him forever.*

## ACTIVITY

### PLAY "SIMON SAYS" WITH A MEDIATOR

Play "Simon Says" using the traditional rules with the following variation. Designate one child to be Simon and another child to speak for Simon. Instead of Simon calling out a direction, he will whisper the direction in the ear of the speaker. Then she will give the direction to the group. After a few rounds, choose another Simon and speaker and play again.

*Say: The speaker talked to the group for Simon. When God's people sinned by worshiping an idol, Moses asked God to forgive them. Moses talked to God for the people. When we sin, Jesus talks to God for us. Jesus never sinned. God forgives those who trust in Jesus. Because of Jesus, we can talk to God freely.*

## SNACK AND PRAYER

Wash hands or use hand sanitizer. Serve a snack. Show the Bible story picture poster as you ask the following questions. Retell parts of the Bible story as needed.

*Say: What was your favorite part of today's Bible story?*

*Say: What did you learn about God in today's Bible story?*

*Say: What did the people worship instead of God?*

*Say: **What is worship? Worship is celebrating the greatness of God.***

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## CLOSING ACTIVITES

Before doing closing activities, please have the children help you clean up the toys and materials that have been used today. After the room is cleaned up, set out markers or crayons and let kids work on today's **Bible Story Coloring Page** until their parents arrive. You can also choose a book to read to the children as they color or for those who don't want to color. Please make the effort to have the children quietly engaged when parents arrive. When parents arrive to pick up their children, tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well today.

## BEFORE YOU GO...

Please clean up by doing the following:

- 1) Clean any used toys with provided alcohol wipes.
- 2) Use sanitizing spray to wipe down tables.
- 3) Sweep up any cracker crumbs or dirt.
- 4) Please return your bin, binder, and sign-in clipboard to the resource room across from Toddler A.