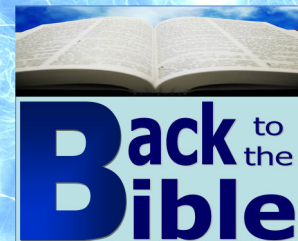


"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,
and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105).

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FOR THE RECORD

Sunday Bible Study	26
Sunday AM Worship	37
Sunday PM Worship	19
Wed. Bible Study	19
Offering	\$1640



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Times of Services:

Sunday

Bible Study:... 10:00am
AM Worship:...11:00am
PM Worship:...6:00pm
2nd Sunday:.....1:30pm

Wednesday

Bible Study:.....7:00pm

Radio Program

Sunday:.....7:30am
"Back to the Bible"
AM 580 WSKK
93.5 FM

**We Extend A
Warm & Cordial
Welcome
To All Our
Visitors!**

Kissing the Calf

By Bill Lambert

An unusual statement is made in Hosea 13:2, where the Lord is indicting Israel for the sin of idolatry. It reads, "And now they sin more and more, and have made them molten images of their silver, and idols according to their own understanding, all of it the work of the craftsmen: they say of them, Let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves." It is thought by some that only those who made the actual sacrifices could come close to the images, so those who blindly followed the lead of their ungodly leaders called for these privileged ones who made sacrifice to kiss or pay their respects to the images on their behalf.

In view of all that God had done for them, it would seem reasonable that Israel would direct their worship toward him, but they did not. No other "gods" were to be worshiped. Through Moses, Jehovah had said, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me" (Exod 20:3-5).

[Continued Inside]

Not only was there specific instruction forbidding the worship of these false gods, but God also warned them that they would be influenced by the idolaters if they did not expel them. He said, “Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee: But ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves: For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God: Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice” (Exod 34:12-15). The reality of that had come to pass -- they worshiped the false gods of the people whom they were supposed to have displaced when they entered Canaan. They had real dedication to the object of their worship. They were willing to go to great expense, employing their most talented men in the creation of the tangible representation of that which was a creation of their imagination. That which they worshiped did not exist, except in their rash and foolish minds.

These “gods,” we reason, are the mere products of man’s vain imagination. They are void of understanding -- unhearing, uncaring, and powerless. We marvel sometimes at the ignorance and gullibility of people who would bow before an image or altar and expend effort and money in maintaining them.

We are correct in our assessment of the worthlessness and vanity of idolatry, but if we are not extremely careful, we may be guilty of making idols of those things around us. Many of the things to which we attach such great importance are transitory and illusory. As we fervently, and sometimes recklessly, pursue our varied selfish interests, service to God becomes less and less important to us. We may still pay lip service to God, attending some, or even most of the services designed to encourage genuine worship and devotion to our heavenly Father. Jesus spoke of those of his day who only “talked the talk” but did not “walk the walk.” He said of them, “Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me”(Mark 7:6). He later warned, “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven” (Matt 7:21). Why will we allow the transitory “things” -- cars, houses, vacations, sports, recreation, etc., to eclipse our real purpose? We are not suggesting that we do without these things, only that we realize what is truly important and not risk cheating ourselves out of heaven in the hunt for that which is “new, better, bigger, or more fun.” The inspired apostle Paul admonished Christians to focus on that which was truly essential when he wrote, “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth” (Col. 3:1-2). The world and its “things” are unworthy of the attention we give to them.

We may not “kiss the calf” ourselves in giving ourselves to worldliness and

covetousness, but we may put those who are ungodly on a sort of pedestal, encouraging them to “kiss the calf” in our behalf. The worldly minded individuals in the entertainment world, those who are wealthy, or those who have attained position and power sometimes become idols to those who are not so favored. We must remember the words of Solomon, “Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the LORD all the day long” (Prov 23:17).

ARE WE LISTENING? -- “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever” (1 John 2:15 -17).

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“For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (II Peter 1:16-21).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- June 25 – Prayer Service
- July 2 – Men’s Business Meeting & Ladies’ Bible Class after Evening Worship
- June 9 – Preach & Eat & 1:30 Worship Service
- July 20-22 – Barn Meeting in Lansing – 7:00 pm (Robert Taylor speaking Thur-Fri)
- Please give support money for Chinese orphans to Minnie Kennell