

Dr. Robert Vannoy, Exodus to Exile, Session 5A, Golden Calf and Tabernacle Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Vannoy, Exodus to Exile, Session 5A, Golden Calf and Tabernacle, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

This lecture by Robert Vannoy explores the biblical narrative of the Golden Calf and the Tabernacle in the book of Exodus. It analyzes Moses' intercessory role after the apostasy, God's willingness to relent, and the subsequent renewal of the covenant. The lecture grapples with the meaning of Moses breaking the tablets and the violent response against the idolaters. It also addresses source-critical views on the Tabernacle. Vannoy further investigates the symbolic and typological significance of the Tabernacle. Finally, it emphasizes how the Tabernacle foreshadows Christ, the Church, individual believers, and the New Jerusalem, connecting the Old Testament symbol to its New Testament fulfillments.

2. 20 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Vannoy, Exodus to Exile, Session 5A – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament → Historical Books → Exodus to Exile).



**Vannoy_ExtoExile_S
ession05A.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Vannoy, Exodus to Exile, Session 5A, Golden Calf and Tabernacle

Okay, here's a detailed briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided lecture excerpts, along with relevant quotes:

Briefing Document: Robert Vannoy, "Exodus to Exile," Lecture 5A: Golden Calf and Tabernacle

I. Main Themes:

- **The Golden Calf Apostasy and its Consequences:** The lecture focuses on Israel's sin with the Golden Calf (Exodus 32-34), Moses' intercession, God's response, and the renewal of the covenant.
- **Intercession and Repentance:** A significant portion is dedicated to the effectiveness of intercessory prayer and the importance of repentance in altering God's judgment.
- **The Significance of the Tabernacle:** The lecture explores the construction of the Tabernacle (Exodus 35-39) and its meaning as a symbol of God's presence among His people. It also addresses historical interpretations of the Tabernacle, both responsible and irresponsible.
- **Typological Interpretation:** The lecture concludes with a discussion of how to properly interpret the tabernacle typologically, referring to the work of Gerhardus Vos and Biblical Theology.

II. Key Ideas and Facts:

- **Moses' Intercession and God's Relenting:** Moses pleads with God to "Turn from your fierce anger and relent. Do not bring disaster on your people" (Exodus 32:12).
- The lecture emphasizes the word "relent" (Hebrew: *naham*), noting its connection to repentance.
- "Then the Lord relented, and did not bring on his people the disaster that he intended" (Exodus 32:14).
- The lecture draws a link to Jeremiah 18:7-8, where God states his conditional response to repentance.

- James 5:16 ("The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective") is cited to illustrate the efficacy of prayer.
- **Moses' Anger and the Destruction of the Tablets:** Moses' anger at the sight of the Golden Calf leads him to break the tablets of the Ten Commandments: "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).
- The lecture discusses Gispén's interpretation that Moses' act was wrong, but the lecturer suggests it was a symbolic act representing the breaking of the covenant.
- **Aaron's Excuse and the Levites' Action:** Aaron's attempt to evade responsibility for the Golden Calf's creation is highlighted: "I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf!" (Exodus 32:24).
- The Levites' obedience to Moses' command to execute idolaters is presented as a difficult but necessary act to maintain the integrity of the covenant. About three thousand people died (Exodus 32:28).
- The Levites turned the curse given by Jacob to blessing due to their allegiance to God during this incident.
- **Moses' Offer to Be Blotted Out:** Moses' willingness to sacrifice himself for the people's sin is compared to Paul's sentiment in Romans 9:3: "But now, please, forgive their sin...but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written" (Exodus 32:32).
- The lecture explores different interpretations of "the book," suggesting it could be the Book of the Living or the Book of the Redeemed.
- The Lord's response, "Whoever has sinned against me I will blot out of my book" (Exodus 32:33), emphasizes God's sovereignty in judgment.
- John Calvin's commentary is used to show how 'the book' can be understood metaphorically, as a symbol of God's decree.
- **God's Presence vs. An Angel:** The lecture addresses the shift from God's direct presence to the promise of an angel leading the Israelites. God says, "My angel will go before you" (Exodus 32:34) but "I myself will not go with you!" (Exodus 33:3).

- Moses intercedes for God's presence, leading to God's relenting: "The Lord said to Moses, 'I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you and I know you by name'" (Exodus 33:17).
- **The Tent of Meeting and Source Criticism:**The lecture addresses critical scholarship that sees a discrepancy between a "primitive tent of meeting" (Exodus 33:7) and the more elaborate Tabernacle described elsewhere.
- It refutes the idea that the Tabernacle never existed, arguing that Exodus 33:7 simply refers to a tent Moses used for meeting with God outside the camp.
- **The Covenant Renewed and the "Cultic Decalogue":**The lecture addresses the critical theory that Exodus 34 represents a "Cultic Decalogue" (J source) distinct from the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20 (E source).
- It argues that Exodus 34 contains commands related to worship practices in response to the Golden Calf incident, but does not replace the original Ten Commandments.
- "Chisel out from stone tablets like the first. I will write on them the words that were on the first tablet" (Exodus 34:1).
- **Moses' Radiant Face (or Horns):**The lecture explains the Vulgate's translation of Moses' face as "horned" due to the ambiguity of the Hebrew word *qaran*.
- It uses Michelangelo's statue of Moses with horns as an example of this interpretation.
- **Interpreting the Symbolism of the Tabernacle:**The lecture warns against irresponsible and overly speculative interpretations of the Tabernacle's materials and colors.
- It uses Patrick Fairbairn's advice in *The Typology of Scripture* to emphasize the importance of seeing the materials and colors primarily as expressions of the magnificence and glory of God, rather than seeking hidden meanings.
- The lecture uses the typological insights of Gerhardus Vos, who stated that types must grow from a symbol which "profoundly portrays a certain fact or principle or relationship of a spiritual nature in a visible form." A type "relates to what will become real or applicable in the future."

III. Key Quotes:

- "Turn from your fierce anger and relent. Do not bring disaster on your people." (Moses' plea, Exodus 32:12)
- "Then the Lord relented, and did not bring on his people the disaster that he intended." (Exodus 32:14)
- "I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf!" (Aaron's excuse, Exodus 32:24)
- "But now, please, forgive their sin...but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written." (Moses' willingness to sacrifice himself, Exodus 32:32)
- "Whoever has sinned against me I will blot out of my book." (God's response, Exodus 32:33)
- "My angel will go before you." (God's promise, Exodus 32:34)
- "I myself will not go with you!" (God's statement, Exodus 33:3)
- "I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you and I know you by name." (God relents, Exodus 33:17)
- "Chisel out from stone tablets like the first. I will write on them the words that were on the first tablet." (Exodus 34:1)

IV. Implications:

- The lecture provides insight into the nature of God's relationship with humanity, highlighting His willingness to respond to repentance and intercession.
- It demonstrates the consequences of sin and the importance of maintaining covenant faithfulness.
- It offers a balanced approach to interpreting the symbolism and typological significance of the Tabernacle, avoiding both overly literal and excessively speculative interpretations.
- The emphasis on responsible interpretation of scripture and understanding the text within its historical and theological context is very useful.

4. Study Guide: Vannoy, Exodus to Exile, Session 5A, Golden Calf and Tabernacle

Exodus: Golden Calf and Tabernacle – A Study Guide

I. Quiz

Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each:

1. What three arguments did Moses use in his first intercession to persuade God to relent from destroying the Israelites after the Golden Calf incident?
2. Explain the significance of the Hebrew word *naham* in the context of God's "relenting" in Exodus 32.
3. How does Moses' behavior change between his time on the mountain and his return to the camp in Exodus 32? What might his actions symbolize?
4. Summarize Aaron's "lame excuse" for the creation of the Golden Calf and how Deuteronomy 9:20 adds to the account.
5. What was the significance of the Levites' actions in Exodus 32:25-29, and how did this relate to Jacob's curse in Genesis 49:5-7?
6. What was Moses asking God to do when he said, "Blot me out of the book you have written," and what are the two main interpretations of this "book?"
7. Explain the significance of God's statement in Exodus 32:34 that "my angel will go before you" versus God's presence going with them. What was the ultimate resolution to this issue in chapter 33?
8. Describe the critical scholars' view of the tent of meeting (ohel moed) in Exodus 33:7, and how it differs from a traditional understanding of the Tabernacle.
9. What is the "Cultic Decalogue" in Exodus 34, and how do source critics use it to support their Documentary Hypothesis?
10. Explain why Michelangelo sculpted Moses with horns on his head, and what this reveals about the translation of Exodus 34:29 in the Latin Vulgate.

Quiz Answer Key

1. Moses argued based on God's reputation among the nations, God's covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and the potential for God to bring disaster on His people. These arguments appealed to God's character and promises.

2. *Naham* is often translated as "repented" or "relented." It highlights that God responds to the repentance and intercession of His people, and that the relationship between God and His people is one of forgiveness and grace.
3. On the mountain, Moses is an intercessor, but upon returning to the camp, he displays anger at the people's idolatry. His breaking of the tablets symbolizes the breaking of the covenant between God and Israel.
4. Aaron claimed that the people wanted a god to lead them, so he simply threw gold into the fire, and a calf appeared. Deuteronomy 9:20 reveals that God was angry enough with Aaron to destroy him, but Moses interceded on Aaron's behalf as well.
5. The Levites' actions demonstrated their loyalty to God by executing idolaters, regardless of familial ties. This obedience reversed the curse Jacob pronounced on Levi in Genesis 49, turning it into a blessing of being set apart for God's service.
6. Moses was offering to take the penalty for the people's sin. The "book" is interpreted either as the Book of the Living (i.e., a request to die) or as the book of the Redeemed (i.e., exclusion from salvation).
7. God's statement to send an angel instead of His presence indicated a withdrawal of His intimate fellowship with Israel due to their sin. Ultimately, Moses' intercession led God to relent and promise that His presence would go with them.
8. Critical scholars see the tent of meeting in Exodus 33:7 as an earlier, more primitive version of the Tabernacle, attributed to the "E" source. They believe the detailed descriptions of the Tabernacle are a later "P" source projection from exilic times.
9. The "Cultic Decalogue" in Exodus 34 refers to a series of commandments related to ceremonial worship. Source critics view it as a different version of the Ten Commandments from the "J" source, contrasting with the "E" source of Exodus 20.
10. Michelangelo sculpted Moses with horns because he was influenced by Jerome's Latin Vulgate translation of Exodus 34:29, which mistranslated the Hebrew word *qaran* (to send out rays) as *qeren* (horns).

II. Essay Questions

Consider these essay questions, drawing on the provided source material.

1. Discuss the significance of Moses' role as an intercessor in Exodus 32-34, examining the arguments he uses, the responses he receives from God, and the implications for understanding God's character and relationship with humanity.
2. Analyze the symbolism of the Golden Calf incident in Exodus 32, exploring its implications for Israel's covenant relationship with God and the dangers of syncretism.
3. Compare and contrast the traditional understanding of the Tabernacle with the critical scholars' perspective, focusing on the Documentary Hypothesis and its impact on interpreting Exodus 33:7 and the surrounding narrative.
4. Evaluate the different approaches to interpreting the symbolism of the Tabernacle, drawing on Fairbairn's advice and Vos's understanding of the relationship between symbol and type.
5. Explore the typological significance of the Tabernacle, using Vos's framework to connect the tabernacle with Christ, the Church, the individual Christian, and the New Jerusalem. How does this typological interpretation enhance our understanding of redemptive history?

III. Glossary of Key Terms

- **Apostasy:** The abandonment or renunciation of a religious or political belief.
- **Covenant:** A binding agreement or promise between two parties, often used in the context of the relationship between God and humanity.
- **Cultic Decalogue:** The series of commands found in Exodus 34, which some scholars believe to be an alternate version of the Ten Commandments, focusing on ceremonial worship.
- **Documentary Hypothesis:** A theory that the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible) was compiled from several independent sources written at different times.
- **Intercession:** The act of pleading on behalf of another.
- **Immutable:** Unchanging or unchangeable.
- **Omniscience:** The state of knowing everything.
- **Relent:** To abandon or mitigate a harsh intention or cruel punishment. The Hebrew word *naham* is often translated "repented."
- **Symbol:** In religious significance, something that profoundly portrays a certain fact or principle or relationship of a spiritual nature in a visible form.
- **Syncretism:** The amalgamation or attempted fusion of different religions, cultures, or schools of thought.
- **Tabernacle:** A portable sanctuary used by the Israelites during their wanderings in the desert, serving as a dwelling place for God's presence.
- **Type:** A person, thing, or event in the Old Testament that foreshadows or prefigures a corresponding person, thing, or event in the New Testament.
- **Typology:** The study and interpretation of types and symbols, especially in the Bible.

5. FAQs on Vannoy, Exodus to Exile, Session 5A, Golden Calf and Tabernacle, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Here is an 8-question FAQ based on the provided text, formatted in markdown:

1. What does it mean that God "relented" after Moses' intercession regarding the Golden Calf incident?

The Hebrew word translated as "relented" is *naham*, which can also mean "repented." The text explains that Moses' prayer urged God to revise what He initially said He wanted to do. This doesn't mean God is changing His ultimate purpose, which is immutable, but rather that He responds to repentance and prayer. God has sovereignly arranged it so that he chooses to use the prayer of people to bring about the results that without those prayers I think you could say would not have happened. This is in line with passages like Jeremiah 18:7-8, where God says that if He pronounces judgment and the people repent, He will relent, and vice versa.

2. Why did Moses destroy the tablets of stone when he came down from Mount Sinai? Was this the right action?

The text doesn't explicitly state whether Moses was right or wrong. Instead, it suggests that the breaking of the tablets was a symbolic act. Israel had broken the covenant with God through idolatry. The destruction of the tablets symbolized the breaking of that covenant. Moses isn't rebuked for it, and God simply tells him to bring two more tablets to be inscribed. One commentary suggests that presenting the tablets alongside the calf would have been a better lesson in comparative religion, but the lecturer disagrees.

3. What was Aaron's role in the Golden Calf incident, and what was his excuse to Moses?

Aaron played a significant role in the creation of the Golden Calf. While he claims that the people demanded a god and he simply threw gold into the fire, and the calf "came out," the text implies he was more actively involved, even fashioning the calf with a tool. His excuse to Moses is a "lame" attempt to avoid responsibility. Moses also interceded on behalf of Aaron, and the Lord turned away his anger from Aaron as well.

4. Why were the Levites instructed to kill members of their own families and neighbors who participated in the idolatry?

This was a demonstration of the seriousness of God's commands and Israel's commitment to being a holy nation set apart. The text acknowledges this is a difficult and violent action to understand, but it is presented as something demanded by God. It was crucial for establishing Israel's covenant relationship with God and preventing them from falling back into pagan practices.

5. What is the significance of Moses offering to be "blotted out of the book" if God would not forgive the people's sin?

Moses' offer is a powerful act of intercession, similar to Paul's sentiment in Romans 9:3. Commentators debate the exact meaning of "the book." It could refer to the Book of the Living (life itself) or the Book of the Redeemed. The lecturer leans toward the latter, suggesting that Moses was proposing to take the penalty for the people's sin by being removed from among the redeemed. This is ultimately not accepted by God who says, "I will blot out of my book whoever has sinned against me".

6. What is the significance of God sending an angel instead of His own presence with the Israelites?

God's initial decision to send an angel rather than His presence was a consequence of the Israelites' stiff-necked nature and the potential for His wrath to destroy them. However, Moses interceded, arguing that the Lord's presence was essential for their journey. God relented and promised to go with them. This highlights the importance of God's personal presence and guidance for His people.

7. What are the differing critical theories of the "Cultic Decalogue" in Exodus 34?

Source critics propose that Exodus 34 contains an alternate version of the Ten Commandments, referred to as the "Cultic Decalogue" and attributed to the J source, while the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20 are attributed to the E source. This "Cultic Decalogue" emphasizes ceremonial worship. However, the lecturer argues that Exodus 34 doesn't change the Ten Commandments. God instructs Moses to write the same words on the new tablets. The additional regulations about worship are given in response to the Golden Calf incident.

8. How should the symbolism of the Tabernacle be interpreted?

The text cautions against overly speculative interpretations. The materials and colors were primarily chosen to convey the magnificence and glory of God's presence. While deeper spiritual meanings shouldn't be sought arbitrarily, there is a legitimate typological significance. Following Gerhardus Vos, the lecturer notes that a type can never be a type independently of its first being a symbol. The symbol must portray some spiritual truth of a present reality, and then be typological of a later edition of that same truth in redemptive history. For example, the truth symbolized by the Tabernacle (God dwelling in the midst of his people) reappears in Christ, the Church, the individual Christian, and the New Jerusalem.