

Chapter 32

The people (Aaron confenting) make & adore the image of a calfe. 7. VVhich God reueiling to Moyfes, 11. he praieth our Lord, for Abraham, Ifaac, and Iacobs sake to spare the people, and performe his promife. 14. VVherewith God is pacified. 15. Yet Moyfes coming from the Mount, and feeing the calfe, and idolatrie, throweth downe the tables and breaketh them, 20. defstroyeth the idol, 21. blameth Aaron, 27. caufeth manie Idolaters to be flaine, 31. and againe prayeth for the people.

And the people feeing that Moyfes made tar-
 iance ere he came downe from the mount,
 being affembled againft Aaron, they fayd:
 Arife, make vs ^agoddes, that may goe before vs: for
 what hath chanced to this Moyfes the man that brought
 vs out of the Land of Ægypt, we know not. ² And Aaron
 fayd to them: Take the golden earlettes from the eares
 of your wiues, and fonnes and daughters, & bring them
 to me. ³ And the people did that he had cōmanded,
 bringing the earlettes to Aaron. ⁴ Which when he had
 receiued, he formed them by founders worke, and made
 of them ^aa molten calfe. And they fayd: Thefe are
 thy goddes Ifrael, that haue brought thee out of the
 land of of Ægypt. ⁵ Which when Aaron had fenne, he
 builded an altar before it, and by a cryers voice pro-
 claimed faying: To morow is the folemnie of the Lord.
⁶ And ryfing in the morning, they offered holocaustes,
 and pacifique hoftes, and the people fate downe to eate,
 and to drinke, and they rofe vp ^bto play. ⁷ And our Lord
 fpake to Moyfes, faying: Goe, get thee downe: thy peo-
 ple, which thou haft brought out of the Land of Ægypt,
 hath finned. ⁸ They haue quickly reuolted from the way,

^a Aaron knew what goddes they ment, to wit, fuch as they had
 fenne worfhipped in Ægypt, and therefore he made them a molten
 calfe. *v. 4.*

^b Exceffe in play called foolifh mirth, is the daughter of gluttonie,
 and mother of Idolatrie. *S. Greg. li. 31. c. 31. Moral.*

that thou didst fiew them: and they haue made to them felues a molten calfe, and haue adored, and immolating hoftes vnto ^ait, haue fayd: Thefe are thy goddes Ifrael, that haue brought thee out of the Land of Ægypt. ⁹ And againe our Lord faid to Moyfes: I fee that this people is ftiffenecked: ¹⁰ ^bsuffer me, that my furie may be angrie againft them, and that I may deftroy them, and I wil make thee into a great nation. ¹¹ But ^cMoyfes befought the Lord his God, faying: Why Lord, is thy furie angrie againft thy people, whom thou haft brought forth of the Land of Ægypt, in great power, and in a ftrong hand? ¹² Let not the Ægyptians fay I befeech thee: He hath craftely brought them forth, that he might kil them in the mountaynes, and deftroy them from the earth: let thyne anger ceafe, and be pacified vpon the wickednes of thy people. ¹³ ^dRemember Abraham, Ifaac, and Ifrael ^ethy feruantes, to whom thou fwareft by thine owne felf, faying: I wil multiplie your feed as the ftarres of heauen: and this whole land, wherof I haue fpoken, I wil giue to your feed, and you fhall poffeffe it alwayes. ¹⁴ And our Lord was pacified from doing the euil which he had fpoken againft his people. ¹⁵ And Moyfes returned from the mount, carying the two tables of teftimonie in his hand, written on both fides, ¹⁶ and made by the worke of God: the writing alfo of God was grauen in the tables. ¹⁷ And Iofue hearing the tumult of the people crying out, faid to Moyfes: The noyfe of battaile is heard in the campe. ¹⁸ Who answered: It is not the crie of men encouraging of fight, nor the fhoute of men compelling to flee: but I doe heare the voice of fingers. ¹⁹ And when he approached to the campe, he faw the calfe, and the daunces: and being ^dvery wrath, he threw the tables out of his hand, and brake them at the foote of the

^a To the molten calfe, which they had made.

^b God faying, *Suffer me*, fignifieth that he could be hindered. *S. Hierom. in Ione. 1.*

^c Not only Gods promife, but alfo his feruants merites are here propofed for procuring mercie to the people. *See the Annotation.*

^d Moyfes the meekeft man on earth (*Nu. 12.*) in Gods caufe was moft zelous againft finne. *S. Aug. q. 144. in Exod.*

mount. ²⁰ And catching the calfe which they had made, he burnt it, and bette it into powder, which he ftrawed into water, and gaue therof drinke to the children of Ifrael. ²¹ And he faid to Aaron: What hath this people done to thee, that thou fhouldeft bring vpon them an heinous finne? ²² To whom he answered: Let not my lord be offended: for thou knoweft this people, that it is prone to euil: ²³ they faid to me: Make vs goddes, that may goe before vs: for vnto this fame Moyfes, that brought vs forth out of the Land of Ægypt, we know not what is chanced. ²⁴ To whom I faid: Which of you hath gold? They tooke, and brought to me: and I caft it into the fire, and ^a)this calfe came forth. ²⁵ Moyfes therefore feeing the people that they were naked (for Aaron had fpoiled them for the ignominie of filth, and had fet them naked among their enemies) ²⁶ and ftanding in the gate of the campe, he faid: If any man be our Lords, let him ioyne to me. And there gathered vnto him al the fonnes of Leui: ²⁷ to whom he faid: This faith the Lord God of Ifrael: Put euerie man his fword vpon his thigh: goe, & returne from gate to gate through the middes of the campe, and euerie man kil his brother, and frend, and neighbour. ²⁸ And ^b)the fonnes of Leui did according to the faying of Moyfes, and there were flaine in that day about three thoufand men. ²⁹ And Moyfes faid: You haue confecrated your handes this day to our Lord, euerie man in his fonne & in his brother, that bleffing may be giuen to you. ³⁰ And when the next day was come, Moyfes fpake to the people: You haue finned a verie great finne: I wil goe vp to our Lord, if by anie meanes I may be able to intreate him for your finful fact. ³¹ And returning to our Lord, he faid: I befech thee: this people hath finned a heinous finne, and they

^a Aaron confeffed the fault briefly, not intending a friuolous excufe: for he could not thinke, but Moyfes knew the truth. *S. Aug. q. 145. in Exod.*

^b Their zeale vfed with authoritie and order here rewarded: which otherwife wanting, when Simeon and Leui flew the Schemites, was blamed by Iacob. *Gen. 34. & 49.*

haue made to them felues goddes of gold: either forgiue them this trespaffe, ³² or if thou doe not, ^a)ftrike me out of the booke that thou haft written. ³³ To whom our Lord answered: He that hath finned to me, him wil I ftrike out of my booke: ³⁴ but goe thou, and leade this people whither I haue told thee: myne Angel fhall goe before thee. And I in the day of reuenge wil vifite this finne alfo of theirs. ³⁵ Our Lord therefore fmote the people for the fault concerning the calfe, which Aaron had made.

ANNOTATIONS

- 4 A molten calfe.) No other reason can be imagined, why the people falling to Idolatrie, required the image of a calfe, rather then of anie other thing, but for that they thought the blacke calfe with white fportes, called *Apu*, or *Serapis*, whom they fawe the Ægyptians eftemed moft of al their goddes, to be the chiefe, or onlie God. And therefore to this famous Idol, they afcribed the benefite of their deliuerie from bondage, faying: *These are thy goddes, o Ifrael, that haue brought thee out of the Land of Ægypt.*
- So they ment not to worfhip our Lord, the true God, in that image, as Caluin would haue it, but the very calfe whose image it was, for adoring immediatly the calues image, *and immolating hoftes to it, (v. 8.)* they protefted that to be their God, which the image reprefted. This appeareth alfo, *Deut. 32. v. 18. God that begat thee thou haft forfaken: and haft forgotten our Lord thy creatour.* And *Pfal. 105. v. 21. They forgot God, vvhich faued them.*
- 11 Moyfes befought.) Albeit Moyfes with moft humble fubmiffion prayed for the people, which God fo accepted, that he was therby pacified, *(v. 14.)* yet Caluin here condemneth him of arrogancie, and pride, as though he imperioufly prefcribed law to God, fpoyling him of his iuftice. Much otherwife S. Hierom (*Epift. 12. ad Gaudent.*) commending his feruent charitie, doubteth not to fay, *Dei potentiam ferui preces impediabant. The feruantes prayers hindered Gods povver,* becaufe God himfelf faying: *fuffer me, that my furie may be angrie againft them, and that*
- This people thought the calfe to be the true God.
- They adored that which the image reprefted.
- Caluin chargeth Moyfes with arrogancie.
- Moyfes charitie concurred with Gods prouidence.
- S. Aug. li. 18. c. 5. ciuit.*
- li. 1. c. 11. para. 9. Inftit.*
- In hunc locum.*

^a Moyfes not content with his owne faluation, would rather perifh with the people, then they fhould al be deftroied: and therefore at his inftance God pardoned them. *S. Hiero. Ep. 12. ad Gaud. & in Ione. 1. S. Aug. q. 147. in Exod.*

I may deftroy them: fhewed his diuine prouidence to be fuch, as he might be ftaied, from doing that vvhich he threatned.

13 Remember Abraham.) It much trubled Caluin, that for obtaining pardon for the people, the Patriarches are mentioned, for whofe fake and merites, mercie, and protection was promifed by God, (*Gen. 18. 22. 26.*) prophecied by Iacob, (*Gen. 48.*) performed here, and in manie other places. And it is a vaine euafion to fay: God fhewed his mercie for his promife only; for he promifed the fame for their merites; as appeareth in the places alleaged. Though al merites procede from Gods grace, firft geuen without merites. *1. Cor. 4. v. 7. S. Aug. de grat. & lib. arb. c. 6.*

God fheweth mercie for the merites of his feruants.

Grace goeth before merites.

*S. Aug. q. 149. in
Exod. S. Chryf.
ho. 42. in
Gen. Theod.
q. 67. in Exo.*