

January 7, 2018 Evening Worship  
"The Golden Calf" / Exodus 32:1-11

I. *It was a product of impatience –*

Now when the people saw that Moses delayed coming down from the mountain, the people gathered together to Aaron, and said to him, "Come, make us gods that shall go before us; for *as for this Moses*, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him." (Exodus 32:1 NKJ)

1. *This is an important passage for us living in the age of microwave ovens, instant everything and fast results Christianity!*
2. *What this passage teaches us is that the quick and easy is not usually the BEST –*

"Enter by the narrow gate; for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. <sup>14</sup> "Because narrow *is* the gate and difficult *is* the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it. (Matthew 7:13-14 NKJ)

II. *It was the product of imagination and material wealth, rather than godly education and spiritual wealth –*

And Aaron said to them, "Break off the golden earrings which *are* in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring *them* to me." <sup>3</sup> "So all the people broke off the golden earrings which *were* in their ears, and brought *them* to Aaron. <sup>4</sup> And he received *the gold* from their hand, and he fashioned it with an engraving tool, and made a molded calf. (Exodus 32:2-4A NKJ)

1. *Break off your golden earrings, give me your money, honey! How like many TV preachers?*
2. *Golden Calf, probably meant to be a symbol of God's strength, maybe His patience, yet it was:*
  - A. *Something they could see*
  - B. *Something they could touch*
  - C. *Something they could dance around*
  - D. *A sin that leads to more sin, see point IV.*

III. *It's creation, and Israel's proclamation about it, was a blatant sin against the Second Commandment and a symptom of hatred of God -*

Then they said, "This *is* your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!" (Exodus 32:4 NKJ)

"You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of *anything* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth; <sup>5</sup> you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth *generations* of those who hate Me, <sup>6</sup> but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments. (Exodus 20:4-6 NKJ)

1. *We tend to think REAL SINS are only those committed against our fellow man –*

<sup>13</sup> "You shall not murder. <sup>14</sup> "You shall not commit adultery. <sup>15</sup> "You shall not steal. <sup>16</sup> "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. <sup>17</sup> "You shall not covet your neighbor's... (Exodus 20:13-17 NKJ)

2. *Yet, ignoring these sin's which are directly against God leads eventually to God's abandoning us to our own ways, which ultimately okays all sin –*

And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; <sup>29</sup> being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; *they are* whisperers, <sup>30</sup> backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, <sup>31</sup> undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; <sup>32</sup> who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them. (Romans 1:28-32 NKJ)

IV. *The first sin of making this carved image, led to more and MORE SIN –*

So when Aaron saw *it*, he built an altar before it. And Aaron made a proclamation and said, "Tomorrow *is* a feast to the LORD." <sup>6</sup> Then they rose early on the next day, offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. (Exodus 32:5-6 NKJ)

1. Aaron built the calf, then the altar
2. He made proclamation and announced a feast
3. They rose EARLY, showing their readiness to commit sin
4. Offered both burnt offerings and peace offerings, giving this statue the worship which only God Himself deserved
5. They indulged their fleshly desires: eating, drinking and playing!

V. See what God sees in this dreadful scene:

1. Corruption –

And the LORD said to Moses, "Go, get down! For your people whom you brought out of the land of Egypt have corrupted themselves. (Exodus 32:7 NKJ)

*This is what sin does it corrupts things, including people –*

A. Such corruption led to the great flood –

The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.<sup>12</sup> So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. (Genesis 6:11-12 NKJ)

B. Such corruption is what Scripture and especially Jesus tells us is part of the nature of Hell –

"And they shall go forth and look Upon the corpses of the men Who have transgressed against Me. For their worm does not die, And their fire is not quenched. They shall be an abhorrence to all flesh." (Isaiah 66:24 NKJ)

"If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched--<sup>44</sup> "where `Their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.'<sup>45</sup> "And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame, rather than having two feet, to be cast into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched--<sup>46</sup> "where `Their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.'<sup>47</sup> "And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire--<sup>48</sup> "where `Their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.' (Mark 9:43-48 NKJ)

2. Speedy disobedience –

They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them. (Exodus 32:8A NKJ)

Right after the ten Commandments were given the first elaboration on a command was on this very breaking of the second command –  
`You shall not make *anything* to be with Me-- gods of silver or gods of gold you shall not make for yourselves. (Exodus 20:23 NKJ)

*More than anything else they should have known this was WRONG, but how quickly they go wrong!*

3. Dishonor, hatred expressed toward God Himself, in the making of this idol and identifying it with God –

They have made themselves a molded calf, and worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said, `This *is* your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!" (Exodus 32:8B NKJ)

4. He sees the people's stiff-necked nature –

And the LORD said to Moses, "I have seen this people, and indeed it is a stiff-necked people! (Exodus 32:9 NKJ)

5. He sees wrath-worthy sin and communicates His willingness to unleash that wrath to Moses –

"Now therefore, let Me alone, that My wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them. And I will make of you a great nation." (Exodus 32:10 NKJ)

VI. Moses' prayer, intercession saves the people here:

Then Moses pleaded with the LORD his God, and said: "LORD, why does Your wrath burn hot against Your people whom You have brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? (Exodus 32:11 NKJ)

1. God knew Moses would have such a reaction!

2. In His intercession Moses is a type of Christ –

But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood.<sup>25</sup> Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

<sup>26</sup> For such a High Priest was fitting for us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; (Hebrews 7:24-26 NKJ)

*Arnold A. Brevick*