

# Shattered

Long Beach Alliance Church • March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2012 • Pastor Chris Lankford

**He took this from their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool and made it into a molten calf; and they said, "This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt." Now when Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made a proclamation and said, "Tomorrow shall be a feast to the LORD."  
~Exodus 32:4-5 (NASB)**

## 1) Let's Take Matters Into Our Own Hands

- A) While God has been giving Moses instruction about building the tabernacle and the responsibilities of the priesthood, a great deal of time passes by (Exodus 24:18).
- B) As these "40 days and 40 nights" pass, Moses is physically sustained by God as he fasts from all food and water (Deuteronomy 9:9). But as God & Moses are in the midst of the miraculous, God's chosen people are having an entirely different experience.
- C) There is nothing in the text that indicates Moses had left previously for more than a single day. His long absence is so disturbing to Israel, they decide to take matters of the covenant into their own hands (Exodus 32:1).

- D) It would be easy to take an accusatory tone toward the Israelites, but from their perspective, it seemed that Moses might be gone for good (32:1). They desired to fulfill their end of the covenant relationship, but then made a fatal decision to take matters of worship into their own hands.
- E) Aaron, for his part, seems compelled to participate because of the hostility of the crowd, but is soon a full blown accomplice in fashioning an idol of God which could be worshipped in a more culturally acceptable manner (32:1-4).

## 2) This Is Your God...

- A) Note that Aaron credits the idol with delivering the people from Egypt (32:4) and even worse, as the LORD (32:5).
- B) The people were not worshipping some sort of pagan god, although that certainly would eventually happen, they were trying to worship God in the way they thought best!
- C) The Israelites were clearly violating the second command (20:4) which God had given them and about which Moses had already told the people (24:3).
- D) The people worship their new idol (32:6) with great satisfaction, choosing the physical idol over God, who insists on being believed, not seen. The Israelites were attracted to this physical idol, more than the One, True God.

## 3) Moses Uses Visual Aids In Teaching The People

- A) God informs Moses of the people's sin (32:7-8), threatening to wipe out the Israelites and "start over" with His redemptive plan (32:9-10), only relenting from His anger at Moses' passionate appeal (32:11-14).
- B) When Moses returns to camp with Joshua (32:15-17), he hears the partying of the people (32:18) and smashes the tablets of the Ten Commandments (32:19), symbolic of the people breaking covenant with God. Moses grinds the gold calf to dust and adds it to the Israelite water supply (32:20), so that it will become waste, corrupted and defiled.