

Exod 04-08-01b

Now, when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people assembled about Aaron and said to him, Come, make us a God who will go before us. As for this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him. Aaron said to them, Tear off the gold rings which are in the ears of your wives, your sons and your daughters, and bring them to me.

Then all the people tore off the gold rings which were in their ears and brought them to Aaron. 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. Aaron made a proclamation and said, Tomorrow shall be a feast to the lords. The next day they rose early, offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings.

And the people sat down to eat and to drink and rose up to play. Then the Lord spoke to Moses, Go down at once, for your people whom you brought up from the land of Egypt have corrupted themselves. They have quickly turned aside from the way which I commanded them.

They have made for themselves a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed to it, and said, This is your God, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt. The Lord said to Moses, I have seen this people, and behold, they are an obstinate people. Now then let me alone, that my anger may burn against them, and that I may destroy them, and I will make of you a great nation.

Going back up to verse 1, the Hebrew here is really instructive. Your first phrase, Now when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain. The word here for delay is boshesh, b-o-s-h-e-s-h.

And any time you have the o-e sound in a Hebrew verb, that's the gerund. That's like putting ing on an English word. You take the verb and instead of boshesh, or bosh, or yabosh, or some other, there's all kinds of weak verbs and different ways that you can end up with this construction.

But when you have o-e, that's ing. So Moses was delaying. But the root of this is very fascinating because the actual verb from which this comes is bush.

As in the name of our current president, bush, b-u-s-h. And bush, or bosh, it's bait, and then the wow, which is u or o depending on how you're doing it. Bosh is the common form, b-o-s-h.

If you think about ish bosheth, ish man bosheth of foolishness, bosh in its root form means shame or humiliation or foolishness. And it came to be used, this verbal form came to be used for a delay because this is sort of the embarrassment of being late. If somebody, I mean

nobody knows this better than Dan, Dan has an appointment book and people are supposed to show up at a certain time and either the hygienist is there or the assistant and Dan has reserved time and he has allocated time for whatever they need.

And if someone doesn't show up when they're supposed to, some abstract someone other than me or any of my family, but if somebody doesn't show up when they're supposed to, it kind of throws a kink into the works. And when you do come in and you're late, it's humiliating and it should be, rightfully so. You said you would be at a place, you didn't get there.

It's, well, so this is the link here between delay and the root word from which it comes, which is shame or humiliation, bosheth. See Saul's actual, his son's name was Ish-baal, man of the Lord, but they called him Ish-bosheth as a nickname because he was a fool. And people got to where baal, it's sort of like our word gay.

You know, we used to have songs in the gay old summertime and a lot of your Christmas songs still use the word gay in its healthy, normal sense. I think it's a shame that the perverts have co-opted a perfectly good word. It used to be a girl's name.

I'll bet you there's not an American girl on this planet now named gay. But it used to be, it used to be a common girl's name. What's the name of the plane that dropped the atomic bomb in Olegay? It used to be a fine name and it's just been ruined.

Anyhow, baal used to be a perfectly fine name for Lord in the ancient Near East. But when they began to talk about baal as this particular Canaanite deity, quote unquote, this pagan object of worship, then Israelites started shying away from baal. This was in the days when they finally started conquering the land so that you could have a child born to Saul who was named Ish-baal and it's okay, but by the time of David, people don't want anything to do with a name that has baal in it and so they change it, Ish-bosheth.

So this is particularly apropos here because this is a condemnation of Moses. They're not just shrugging their shoulders and saying, who knows what happened to Moses. They are assigning shame and humiliation to Moses.

He is inexcusably late. He's left us down here. We're milling about day after day after day.

How long is Moses on the mountain, by the way? What do we sing about in our world is not my home? I got saved 40 years ago. Well, he's been up there, he will be there a total of 40 days. 40 is the universal biblical number of testing.

This is a test. If you don't see the answer you're looking for, if you don't see the guidance you are awaiting, if you're camped at the foot of the mountain and you don't know what your next destination is, I know people are in that situation, camped next to the laundry room waiting for their next destination, but there is a waiting test. You have to wait.

And sometimes God says, I have the answer, but I'm not telling you. I just want to see how long

you can wait. How patient can you be? How faithful will you be while you're waiting? How distractible will you be? How will this go during the time of waiting? You and I are in a waiting period.

We are saved, but we have not yet been given all of the fruit of that salvation. We are not delivered from sin. We are not delivered out of this corrupt mortal body.

We're not delivered out of the fallen world. We're not delivered from the wiles and the machinations of Satan. We are like David, who as a youth was anointed to be the king of Israel and told he would surely sit on the throne, and yet it is years before he receives the fulfillment of that promise.

And the interim time is a time of testing. It is a time of waiting. The people at the foot of the mountain, God knows good and well that they're down there.

He knows good and well that they're getting impatient. Three days goes by, four days, a week goes by, eight, nine, ten days. You think about how long a month is in our modern day.

As fast as time goes, a month is a pretty long time, especially if you're waiting for something that you're anxious for. It's going to be a whole other month. You use up all of your paycheck, it's going to be a whole other month before you get another one.

It can be a long time. So, this begins to wear and to drag, and they begin to blame Moses. Why doesn't the guy come down? Now, who's in charge of the meeting on the mountain? Did God say to Moses, come up here? Or did Moses say to God, come down here? Put this in your planner, God.

I'd like you to meet me on the mountain at such and such a time, and then I've got to be back, so we've got to keep the meeting short. Obviously, God is in charge of this. So, it is easy, and it's one of the most common forms of sin that we commit against one another, is to take things that are really outside anyone's control and assign blame to a person.

We like to put a face on a problem. In fact, we like to put a face on all kinds of things. There's stuff going on in the world.

There's a tangled bureaucracy in our intelligence services, and so the candidates for the non-incumbent party are doing their best to put President Bush's face on all of the things that are wrong in the world today. That he is somehow directly culpable for this. Well, people enjoy this.

This hooks into our sinful nature. We like to say, yeah, if we just get rid of him, all of these problems will go away. I wish that there was a way, somehow, for God to have a giant drive-in theater screen and show us where we would be today if the presidential election four years ago, if the chads had swung the other way.

I would just like to see where we would be, and I think all mouths would be stopped. It's just my

opinion. Anyway, the people saw that Moses delayed, and remember, this is Bosch.

Moses foolishly doesn't come back when he's supposed to. He humiliates himself. He's not where he's supposed to be.

So, the people assembled. If you think and dig around in your brain hard enough, you can arrive at the Hebrew verb here for the people assembled. We did a whole book study that has this verb as the root of its title.

This is the Hebrew verb, kahal, from which we get kohel, O-E, assembling, the assembling one. Kohelet is the one who is assembling, who is in the ongoing act of drawing and calling people together. Kohel, this is kahal, which means to assemble.

The people assembled around Aaron and said to him, Already we have a clue that this is not going to be a good thing, because this is dissension in the ranks. This is like your toilet backing up the wrong way. I mean, things are supposed to flow in one direction.

They're not supposed to flow back the other direction. You don't have the people telling the leadership what they are supposed to do. Now, how do I know he's the leadership? What did Moses say right before he went up on the mountain? If you've got any problems, Aaron and her are in charge.

Remember that? The people assembled about Aaron, and where is her? Where is Joshua? Where is Caleb? We know that there are some men who are faithful servants of God who are not going to be participants in this. Joshua is what? Halfway up the mountain? Where is... Of course, we don't know about Caleb yet. The spies have not been sent into the land, but he is certainly around, and he seems to be a man of faith, as demonstrated later.

Certainly there are those in Israel, this is the point, like her and like Caleb and others, who are not going to be willing participants in this, but they are not heard. They don't have a platform. They don't have a standing.

They do not stand up in the assembly and say, Men of Israel, hear my voice. They are outvoted. They are shouted down.

There is no way for them to have an influence. We find ourselves in this position quite often, don't we? We are caught up in a group that is headed a certain way, and either explicitly or implicitly, we are shouted down. We can't have an influence.

We can't make a difference. Some of us have been in churches that were headed in a direction, and there just wasn't anything to do. Sometimes you can be in a family that is headed in a certain way, and there is nothing you can do.

You can be in the workplace. You can be in the military, and a decision can be made. I will never forget, as long as I live, being at the artillery school, and training is all important.

You need to practice how to deliver artillery shells onto targets. So ideas about how to do training effectively, cost effectively, ammunition is expensive. How can you simulate artillery fire? Well, there was a great idea when computers first poked their nose over the horizon.

They said, let's get computerized training. So they developed a computerized system for those who watch where the rounds impact and send corrections back to the guns. They said, you know, we can put this on a giant movie screen up in the front of the classroom, and we can have specially programmed projectors hooked to a computer, and when the observer sees that the burst, the impact is 400 meters to the left and 400 meters short on the picture there, we can feed that correction into the computer, and it will move the burst from the perspective of the picture and the perspective of the observer 400 meters.

It will apply his correction, and then he can see how close or over he was, and there's actually a terrain map, a little grid in the computer, and it knows where to put the burst on the picture. Well, that's great. It's also important to exercise the gun crews, loading, cutting, powder charges, all of their procedures for safety and not blowing themselves up, making sure that they set off accurate quadrant deflections and elevations and so on.

Well, someone then had the grand idea, let's wire this all together so that the simulated observer on the simulated slide projector, when he gives his corrections, will not only go to the projector, but will be sent down to a gun crew who will actually set off the corrections on a weapon, and instead of firing this expensive ammunition, we'll get a plastic artillery shell and put in there with a minuscule charge, and we'll actually fire the, and they'll be reusable. We'll fire them out, and you can bring them back and shoot them again, and it's like dummy ammunition, but they'll actually, then we'll hook a computer to the gun and measure and see if they set off the right stuff or not, and then maybe we can actually have sensors on the gun that will figure out what the gun was actually set to and send that back to the projector, so it will put the rounds where the gun crew put them, rather than where the observer asked for them. Captain Hall, what do you think of this idea? I think it is the stupidest thing since God made Adam, because the expense of the computers at that time exceeds, you could buy untold pallets, shiploads of ammunition, and shoot it to your heart's content and never approach the cost of this computer system, plus you're degrading the training of the observer, because he gets no training when the gun crew doesn't set off the right information.

It does him no good to say, write 400, add 400 over, and have his rounds go somewhere off the map. How does that train him? It was just complete, total confusion, but the lowly captain down at the enlisted instruction branch got completely shouted down, and so our wonderful government spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on a prototype of this, and got the plastic rounds, not the least of which, one of my paragraphs was, who are you going to send down range to try to find all these plastic things that just went, this is kind of like shooting a rubber band or letting air out of a balloon, I mean they had no ballistic properties whatsoever, they're just going to go off in some random direction, so the troopies are out there in the hot sun trying to find these plastic rounds to bring back to the guns to shoot again. I mean the whole

thing was just somebody's idea on paper that would get them their army commendation medal or something for having a great, oh Colonel so and so came up with this great idea.

Anyway, I just feel better having gotten that off my chest. But you can fill in your experience of the same thing, you can see the train wreck coming, you can see the engines approaching each other, you sound the warning and people say, what's the matter with you, they crash, and then nobody remembers that well, I mean you don't want to say I told you what you do, but you shouldn't. But no one seems to remember that well, if you had listened, if you had had any sense and asked somebody who knows, you would have never embarked on this futile course in the first place.

This is where the faithful are in Israel, in this chapter. I ask myself, where are they? Where are your faithful people? Surely every single one of them isn't sitting down to eat and drink and rising up to play. And they're not, but they're shouted down, they're not heard.

So what about those people? Sometimes we are those people, aren't we? What is required? Do you throw yourself against the onslaught and sacrifice yourself hopelessly and futilely? You don't see these guys coming out and getting slapped down or killed or stoned or anything. They recognize that there's no stopping this train, there's no stopping this movement of the people, and they just have to bide their time. They have to put their trust in God individually.

They will live in the nation. They will suffer the consequences along with everyone else. They cannot make their voice heard, and they just have to trust God.

Now, does Hur survive this? Does Caleb survive it? In fact, everybody's going to survive it. Amazingly enough, this heinous breach God just gave them the Ten Commandments, because the echo of the sound has hardly left the air yet. And they're already breaking like the whole first tablet.

Have no other gods before me. Make unto thee no grave an image. And do not take the Lord's name in vain.

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. They've declared a whole new Sabbath here. Aaron says, the next day is a Sabbath.

It has nothing to do with God's Sabbath. It's just a complete trashing of the whole first table of the law. And God says, Moses, you stand right over here.

I'll be right back. I just have a nation to wipe out. I'll come back and we'll start with you.

And Moses is going to stand in the breach, much as the Lord Jesus does for us. Assembled Cahal about Aaron and said to him, by the way, when you think about Ecclesiastes, Kohelet, this reminds us that we assemble around something, don't we? We either point our attention to solving the immediate problem and we assemble around that and we come up with a solution and we all agree and everybody likes it. All of these people are in agreement.

There's a great consensus in Israel. All the people assemble around Aaron. Great consistence.

Everybody's poking each other in the ribs saying, oh yeah, this is what we need to do. This will solve it. And yet it's totally wrong.

We either assemble around the truth of God and that is our encampment or we're assembling around a human solution. So Aaron, this puts him kind of on the spot. He knows better.

God didn't make him the second in command because he was a slouch. I mean, he's a good leader. He knows what's supposed to take place.

And you get the idea here that Aaron is saying, well, let me set a condition that they won't meet. Let me put a difficulty in their path that will deflect them. He'll say, all right, if you want to go this way, you're going to have to give up your gold jewelry thinking maybe that they won't because ornamentation, who's going to give up the jewelry? This is not the men digging in their war chest and pulling out the nest egg for a rainy day.

Tear off the gold rings. Break off the gold rings is what this says in Hebrew. Break them off.

You would actually have these put on and they're sort of a permanent thing. It's like the Ubengis or some of these other natives that put stuff in and it doesn't come off. The coilneck people, whatever that is, that's on and it doesn't come off.

So you have to destroy them to get them loose. You have to break them. Break off the gold rings which are in the ears of who? Your wives, your sons, and your daughters.

These are status symbols. These are booty given to them by the Egyptians that their artisans have installed and oh, here's this beautiful jewel-encrusted thing. I'll stick it in your ear for you and you can wear it always.

It's a sign of your victory and a sign of your deliverance. And it's a gift basically from God through the hands of the Egyptians. Tear them off.

Your wives, sons, and daughters. Bring them to me. Well, the people say, fine.

And they do. And I think it probably, my guess is it kind of took Aaron aback. He was hoping they would say, not our earrings.

My wife will never stand for that. I can't diminish myself in the end, but they do. They bring it all to Aaron.

He took it from their hand and fashioned it with a graving tool and made it into a molten calf. There's been a lot of debate about the Hebrew that is used right here because this is not, as you might expect, a solid gold cast idol. This is made of wood and it is overlaid with gold or gold leaf, hammered sheet of gold.

I know this is true and we'll see it later on, but let me give you some examples because I ask myself, of all of the things in God's universe that they could make, why a calf? Could have made an eagle. Could have made a badger. They could have made anything, but they make a calf.

Why a calf? Why not a fish? Why not a wild boar? Why not a ram? Any particular animal. Let me give you, this is a handout that shows some Egyptian implementations of oxen and calves. I think probably what Aaron made is most like this first one.

This sort of looks like a totem. Could have been standing on its four legs, but I think because he made it in a very short time and it takes time to create something with all of the formation of the legs and you'll notice that first one also has a little bit shorter horns because it is a calf, not a bullock, not an ox. So if I had to guess, this is something you can stand up in the middle of the camp.

It's got some height to it. But these are all representations from ancient Egypt and are related to the Apis Bull cult. I want to read you a little bit about this because the Apis Bull worship in Egypt goes back before the time of Israel, before the time of Joseph.

It goes back, according to the scholars, to something like 3000 BC when the worship of bulls began in Egypt. Let me read you a little bit of this. There are several elements in here if you listen closely that I think you will find a link here in Exodus.

Deification of animals in ancient Egypt existed even before the country's unification around 3100 BC. Communities worshipped their own deities, many of which were represented in animal form. Although there is no clear-cut reason for the deification of animals, it has been surmised that some animals may have achieved their godly status because they helped humans.

Whereas the more dangerous and feared animals, like jackals, may have been worshipped as a way to appease them. So which would this be? We are not trying to appease the jackal god or the eagle-headed god who can pick your flesh apart. We are instead looking at one that has been of some help.

What do they say after Aaron creates this? This is the god that brought us out of the land of Egypt. He is a helper god. In any case, it is believed the deities needed to be given a recognizable form so that the divine force would not seem so abstract to the masses.

By the way, this is a secular article. This is from a website talking about if you are going to visit Egypt, here are the things to see. Here is how to understand what you are seeing.

It is called touregypt.net. A lady named Anita Stratos wrote this feature about Apis Bull worship. She knows nothing of Christianity or the Bible or anything else. She is just talking about if you want to visit Egypt, here is something to look at.

But listen to what she says. It is believed deities needed to be given a recognizable form so that

the divine force would not seem so abstract. We like concrete things rather than the abstract, don't we? Something you can see.

A familiar image such as that of an animal gave people a more concrete concept of the powers of that specific deity which is why one deity could be represented by several different images. In essence, the powers and traits of the god were conveyed by the form or forms that it took. In this way, it was more easily understood.

Now, what is it about a calf? It is helpful, it is not harmful, so we are not appeasing it, we are worshipping it. Why a calf? For one, you have decades of observation of the Apis cult in Egypt to go by, more of which we will see in a moment. But, the nice thing about a calf is what is one of their complaints out wandering around in the land? We are eating the manna, where is the beef? So, if you are going to create a god, well, let's make a beef god.

This is what we are thinking about. This is the concretization, this is the manifestation in material form of the lust of their heart. When I dream, I dream of calfy, I dream of beefy with the light brown hair.

This is the objectification of my desire. I really want a steak. It is a calf.

The other thing is, it is a calf and not a bull. You would think, well, if you are going to create a god, let's create a strong bullock with the great curling horns. That is what the Apis cult was in Egypt, right? Why not copy that? Well, you think about it.

They are at the inception of their nation. They are at their beginning. They are in the process of becoming something great, but they know that they are not.

The difference between a bullock and a calf is the difference between mature strength and potential. Have you ever tried leading a bull? I have, after it walked through about four or five fences because it smelled cows on the other side of the hill. Matthew and I went all the way around that big hill in front of our folks' place because a big old bull was downwind of something.

The fences were like gossamer spider webs to him. He just walked through them, paid them no heed because he wanted to be over there. And trying to get him back, you can't really very easily control a bull.

This is why they used to put rings in their noses because you control them with pain. A calf, on the other hand, you can do just about anything you want. You put a rope around his neck, you can control him.

You can manipulate him. So if you're going to have a God of your own making, let's have one we can control. Let's have one we can worship and we can dream about eating him, but we're not worried about him trampling us or goring us.

When you go over there to Spain and Pamplona or wherever it is, they don't have the running of the calves, do they? Oh, let's run with the calves. That's not a symbol of strength. It is something you can control.

So this is what we do when we create our own gods, don't we? We create something that is the objectification, the materialization of what we want, and we maintain control of it. We can decide when and where it's going to be an issue and when and where it's not going to be an issue. And that is rife in our culture today where standards and integrity only apply when I want them to apply.

If I make a contract with you, I want you to operate with morality and integrity. But if I have a higher need, well, then I want to be able to set that aside. It's all about what I find best for me.

Well, during the early dynastic period in Egypt, animal gods were gradually anthropomorphed so that they would have human heads or animal heads on human bodies, that kind of thing. You've seen these, you know, the human with the eagle head and the sphinx type of thing. But among the most important animal cults were the bull cults, which appeared in Egyptian writings as far back as the first dynasty.

The ancients believed that the powerful bull represented the personality of the king. Slate palettes dating as far back as 3100 B.C. even show the kings as bulls. So, in Egypt, this carried some baggage in terms of leadership and in terms of kingship.

400 years after this, the Israelites are going to assemble around Samuel and what are they going to say? Give us a king. They assemble around Aaron and they say, Give us a god. But the form of the god that they choose has kingly roots, has kingly associations.

The bull was chosen because it symbolized the king's courageous heart, his great strength, virility and fighting spirit. Bull's horns even embellish some of the tombs of courtiers who served some of those kings. It goes on to talk about how they identified an apis bull that had a particular set of markings and so on.

The apis bull was originally considered to be the incarnation of the god Ptah. P-T-A-H. The god Ptah.

Listen to this. You know who Ptah is? Creator of the universe, master of destiny. That's the Egyptian god Ptah.

Created the universe, shapes the destiny of all men. Apis bull is the incarnation of him. Later, the apis bull became widely known as the incarnation of Osiris, the god of embalming and cemeteries.

When Ptah himself took on funerary characteristics and became associated with Osiris, Plutarch wrote that the apis was a fair and beautiful image of the soul of Osiris. At any rate, only one bull was considered to be sacred to apis at a time where a replacement could be sought upon the

death of the bull. An apis calf could be identified by certain distinct markings.

The black calf had a white diamond on its forehead, an image of an eagle on its back, double the number of hairs on its tail, and a scarab mark under its tongue. Since the apis was so sacred, it stands to reason that its mother, referred to as the Isis cow, was revered as well. When you think about other forms of idolatry that have happened in human history, you have something that is considered holy, and then you go back and say, well, the mother is holy also.

The birth of an apis calf, listen to this, just had a calf born in Israel, didn't we? A golden calf. The birth of an apis calf was a time for celebration among ancient Egyptians, since this meant that a living god had been born into their midst. According to Herodotus, this religious belief was desecrated in 525 B.C. by the Persian king Cambyses when he overtook the holy city of Memphis.

Herodotus states that the day after Cambyses' bloody battle, he awoke to discover the Egyptians in Memphis celebrating. Upon asking why a defeated people would rejoice after being so brutally beaten, he was told that a living god had just been born. Cambyses demanded that this god be brought before him, and when he was presented with the apis calf, he laughed and called the Egyptians pagans and fools.

He then stabbed the calf, which eventually caused the calf to die, at which point Cambyses had it cooked and served at a banquet. Horrified Egyptians considered this blasphemy to be the reason for all of Egypt's future tragedies. Egyptians celebrated the festival of the apis bull, which lasted for seven days.

Throngs of people gathered in Memphis to watch priests lead the sacred bull in a hallowed procession through the welcoming crowds. It was thought that any child who smelled the breath of the apis had the ability to predict the future. In fact, the apis itself was often consulted as an oracle.

Egyptians asked the bull a question and then offered it food. If the bull ate the food, it was a good omen. A rejection of the food was a bad omen.

When Egypt fell under the rule of the Ptolemies, a new god was created by Ptolemy, and this was Serapis. It was a famous ship in British naval history named the Serapis. Serapis was invented by Ptolemy who was trying to unite the Greeks and the Egyptians together.

He combined the Greek gods Zeus, Asclepius, remember the god of healing that we studied, and Dionysus, as well as the Egyptian deity Osiris, and the sacred apis bull cult. He kind of wadded them all up and said, Serapis. Notice, Ser-apis.

So this was sort of the Zeus-apis combination. Although the god had a Greek appearance, it also had some of the features of an apis bull as well as an Egyptian name. Serapis was declared a god of fertility and so on.

But, listen to this. When an apis bull died, the body was embalmed and entombed with great ceremony, such as would be afforded royalty. After preparation of the body and internal organs, the crouching bull was intricately bandaged, artificial eyes were inserted, its horns and face were either gilded or covered with a gold leaf mask.

The head of the apis bull upon its death was gilded, covered with gold, and it was covered with a shroud. The point of this is, there were antecedents in the living memory of Israel for bull worship and calf worship. It was associated with kingship, it was associated with creation, it was associated with destiny.

And yet, this is not a complete abandonment of the God of Israel. Notice, once Aaron makes this, and by the way, he would have created, as was often the case when you make a large idol, you create it out of wood and then overlay it with gold. And when it says molten, you can find this, if you go over to Isaiah chapter 30, you find him talking about the fact that they make these images and overlay them with silver and with gold, but they're made out of wood.

So this is hammered gold. We know this because of what Moses is going to do with the calf later on. It is first burned, then what's left is ground to powder.

You can't burn solid gold, gold doesn't burn, but the wood underneath certainly does. So he packed it in pieces, he lit it on fire, and to get the gold leaf all off and so on, Moses isn't going to sit there and scrape all the gold off. He just busted the thing up, burned it, and what was left, which is going to be a combination of carbon and gold leaf, he ground into powder.

So when it says that Aaron fashioned it with a graving tool and made it into a molten calf, you melt the gold and make a sheet out of it, and then you hammer the sheet all over the wooden form. That's how he made it. And he said, this is your God, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt.

The word here when it says, make us a God, this is your God, this is Elohim. And you have a hard time knowing whether it should be little G or big G, because it is the plural of majesty, im of course, like my im, waters. This is your God, this is your Elohim, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt.

By the way, it is interesting that when they first say, as for the man, Moses, who brought us up from the land of Egypt, it is not brought us up. It has caused us to go. It's a hyphial, which is the causative stem.

They're not giving Moses any credit. They're saying it's Moses fault that we ever left in the first place. And you get the idea that the Israelites are considering turning around and returning to Egypt with this calf as their symbol so that when they approach Egypt, they essentially have the apis calf, the birth of a new God in their midst.

They have acknowledged that a God has been born in their midst and it is the God of the Egyptians. They were just mistaken. Really, their God is the God.

It's all one. It's all the same. It's syncretism.

It's mixing and amalgamating everything together. They can now return to Egypt and say, well, we misunderstood. It was actually the same God you worship all along.

And we figured that out and here's the apis calf. This is what is suggested, at least, in this shape. This is the Elohim, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt.

He built an altar before it. He made a proclamation and said tomorrow shall be a feast to Yahweh. The name that God gave Moses on Sinai to identify him to the nation, Yahweh, the personal name of God, is what is invoked here.

Tomorrow is a feast to Yahweh. So this is not a total refutation. It is a modification.

I will remake the God who brought us out of the land of Egypt in a concrete form that I can manage, that I can manipulate, that I can use and accomplish my objectives. Does this happen today? We see it all around us. It's a lot easier to see in others than it is to see in ourselves.

But we can do this. We can use God as the genie of the lamp. We can decide that he's okay as long as things are going well, but when the chips are down, now I'll really get interested in God.

So the next day they arose early and offered burnt offerings, brought peace offerings, and the people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play. This word play is from the Hebrew word tsacaq, T-S-A-C-H-A-Q, tsacaq. This is the word from which Isaac got his name.

Sarah laughed. Yitzkaq, Yitzaq. It means to be amused, to sport.

It can mean to mock. It means to have a good time with something. It's used of, I believe it was Abimelech who saw Isaac and his wife.

And it's a funny thing because in the same sentence it says Yitzkaq was tsacaq with his wife, sporting, was amusing himself. Well, they are amusing themselves. They are not interested in what God thinks.

They are not interested in pleasing God. This is the question we must ask ourselves. When I got up this morning and contemplated my day, who am I trying to please? If we sit down to eat and drink and rise up to amuse ourselves, all of Psalm 106 comes into play and God will get our attention if we don't focus our own attention on the reason why we are here.

That thing we talked about on Friday night. What is the point of our salvation? It is to live to please the Lord. No other life has any meaning.

No other life has any point. No other life has any joy or any purpose or any future for us than a life that centers on God, His plan and His purpose. We are out of time for this morning.

We will pick up here in verse 7 next time. Father, thank You for the privilege of studying Your

Word. Thank You for clearly illustrating Your will and Your calling for us.

We pray that God the Holy Spirit will minister these truths to our souls. We ask it in Jesus' name.
Amen.