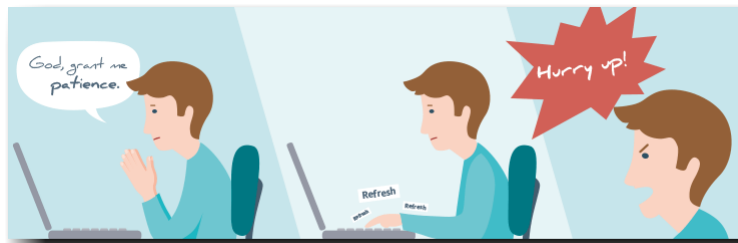


The Problem...

1. Why were the Israelites frustrated with Moses?
2. Why did they and why do we need “a god who will go before us?”
3. To what event did Israel ascribe to the gold calf god? Proof of Aaron’s contribution to this assertion?
4. What soft-shoe dance did Aaron do in response to the reverence for the gold calf god?
5. When and why were the Israelites partying?
6. To whom did the Lord God ascribe the ownership of the Israelites?
7. Why was the Yahweh the Lord God ticked with Israel?
8. Provide three words to describe how you felt when not only were you not thanked for some cool/good thing/idea you did/had, but someone else got the credit for what you did:

9. What stupid things have you done because of your impatience and being tired of waiting?



EXODUS 32

When the people saw that Moses was so long in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said, “Come, make us a god who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don't know what has happened to him.”

² Aaron answered them, “Take off the gold earrings that your wives, your sons and your daughters are wearing, and bring them to me.” ³ So all the people took off their earrings and brought them to Aaron.

⁴ He took what they handed him and made it into an idol cast in the shape of a calf, fashioning it with a tool. Then they said, “This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.”

⁵ When Aaron saw this, he built an altar in front of the calf and announced, “Tomorrow there will be a festival to the LORD.” ⁶ So the next day the people rose early and sacrificed burnt offerings and presented fellowship offerings. Afterward they sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in revelry.

⁷ Then the LORD said to Moses, “Go down, because *your* people, whom *you* brought up out of Egypt, have become corrupt. ⁸ They have been quick to turn away from what I commanded them and have made themselves an idol cast in the shape of a calf. They have bowed down to it and sacrificed to it and have said, ‘This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.’ ”

The Solution...

1. The Lord God Yahweh was understandably angry. To what extent was the elimination of several thousand people a rational solution?
2. To what extent is the Lord God Almighty rational?
3. Lest we get too self-righteous, we may want to ask who else has argued for the elimination of the descendants of Abraham? Why eliminate them?

4. Why are “these” people (note the new adjective) stiff-necked?⁴ Who else called believers “stiff-necked?”⁵
5. Why do we call some people stubborn and others steadfast?
6. Would the descendants of Moses made a great nation? Moses: a cowardly stuttering murderer with stage fright... Or, a great leader who overcame the greatest power in the known world... Or, a dude who relented and did indeed follow the will of the Lord God?
7. Why did Moses seek Yahweh the Lord God’s favor? When have you “sought His favor?” For what purpose?

8. What was Moses’ basic argument to change the mind of Yahweh the Lord God?

9. So, about what and why did the Lord God change His mind about destroying Israel?

⁴Another view of “stiff-necked”—“Jews were stiff-necked,” says Rabbi Ami, “in the sense that they were ready to die for their faith. As Gersonides (Ralbag) explained in the 14th century, a stubborn people may be slow to acquire a faith, but once they have done so they never relinquish it.” (Feb 17, 2022)

⁵Consider also Moses (Deut 31:27), author of 2 Kings (17:14), author of 2 Chronicles (30:8), Nehemiah (Neh 9:17), Jeremiah (Jer 19:15) and Stephen (Acts 7:51).

EXODUS 32

⁹“I have seen *these* people,” the LORD said to Moses, “and they are a stiff-necked people. ¹⁰Now leave me alone so that my anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them. Then I will make *you* into a great nation.”

¹¹But Moses sought the favor of the LORD his God. “O LORD,” he said, “why should your anger burn against your people, whom you brought out of Egypt with great power and a mighty hand? ¹²Why should the Egyptians say, ‘It was with evil intent that he brought them out, to kill them in the mountains and to wipe them off the face of the earth’? Turn from your fierce anger; relent and do not bring disaster on your people. ¹³Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac and Israel, to whom you swore by your own self: ‘I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and I will give your descendants all this land I promised them, and it will be their inheritance forever.’ ¹⁴Then the LORD relented and did not bring on His people the disaster He had threatened.