

Exodus 32:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.

Analysis

The Hebrew בָּשָׁשׁ (boshesh, delayed) suggests Moses tarried beyond expectation. The people's demand לֵאלֹהִים (le'elohim, for gods) uses the plural form, revealing their desire for visible deity rather than the invisible God. Their dismissive reference to 'this Moses' shows how quickly they rejected God's appointed mediator. This apostasy occurred while God was giving the very law prohibiting idolatry, demonstrating human depravity's depth even among covenant people who had witnessed miraculous deliverance.

Historical Context

This occurred on Mount Sinai around 1446 BC, approximately 40 days after Israel received the Ten Commandments. Moses was receiving the full law code on the mountain while the people grew restless below.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. What 'delays' in God's timing tempt you to take matters into your own hands?
2. How does impatience with God's appointed leaders lead to spiritual compromise?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּרְא	הָעָם	כִּי	בִשְׁשָׁה	מֹשֶׁה	לָרֶדֶת	מִן
saw	And when the people	H3588	delayed	that Moses	to come down	H4480
H7200	H5971		H954	H4872	H3381	
הָרָר	וַיִּקְהָל	הָעָם	עַל			
out of the mount	gathered themselves together	And when the people				
H2022	H6950	H5971				
אֶחָד	וַיֹּאמֶר	אֵלָיו	קוּם	עֲשֵׂה	לָנוּ	אֱלֹהִים
unto Aaron	and said	H413	unto him Up	make	H0	us gods
H175	H559		H6965	H6213		H834
הָעַלְנוּ	לִפְנֵי	כִּי	יְהִי	מֹשֶׁה	הָאִישׁ	הַבֹּרֵא
H1980	before	H3588	H2088	that Moses	the man	H834
H6440			H4872	H376		H5927
יָמָא	מִצְרַיִם	לָא	יְדַעְנוּ	מָה	הָיָה	לֹא
us up out of the land	of Egypt	H3808	we wot	H4100	H1961	H0
H776	H4714		H3045			

Additional Cross-References

Acts 7:40 (References God): Saying unto Aaron, Make us gods to go before us: for as for this Moses, which brought us out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.

Deuteronomy 9:9 (Parallel theme): When I was gone up into the mount to receive the tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant which the LORD made with

you, then I abode in the mount forty days and forty nights, I neither did eat bread nor drink water:

2 Peter 3:4 (Parallel theme): And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

Exodus 24:18 (References Moses): And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and gat him up into the mount: and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights.

Matthew 24:48 (Parallel theme): But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;

Acts 17:29 (References God): Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.

Acts 19:26 (References God): Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands:

Exodus 14:11 (References Moses): And they said unto Moses, Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt?

Exodus 13:21 (Parallel theme): And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night:

Exodus 32:11 (References God): And Moses besought the LORD his God, and said, LORD, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand?