

Exodus 32:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Aaron said, Let not the anger of my lord wax hot: thou knowest the people, that they are set on mischief.

Analysis

Aaron's response אֶל־יִחָר אֶף אֲדֹנָי (al-yichar af adoni, Let not my lord's anger burn) attempts to deflect Moses' righteous fury. His characterization אַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ אֶת־הָעָם כִּי אֶת־הָעָם הוּא בָרָע (atah yada'ta et-ha'am ki vera hu, you know the people, that they are set on evil) shifts blame entirely to the people, using בָרָע (vera, set on evil) to portray them as intractably wicked. This is classic excuse-making: minimize personal responsibility, blame circumstances and others, appeal to the accuser's sympathy. Aaron's plea reveals fear of man rather than fear of God.

Historical Context

Aaron's response contrasts sharply with godly leaders who accept responsibility (David in 2 Sam 12:13, Nehemiah in Neh 1:6-7). His excuse-making prefigures all human tendency to justify sin.

Related Passages

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How do you shift blame when confronted with sin?

2. What does Aaron's response teach about the difference between godly contrition and worldly excuse-making?

Interlinear Text

אָמַר	אָהֲרֹן	אֵל	חַר	אֵף	אֲדֹנָי	אֶתְּהָ
said	And Aaron	H408	wax hot	Let not the anger	of my lord	H859
H559	H175		H2734	H639	H113	
יָדָעְתָּ	אֶת	הָעָם	כִּי	בָרַךְ עַ	הוּא:	
thou knowest	H853	the people	H3588	that they are set on mischief	H1931	
H3045		H5971		H7451		

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 9:24 (References Lord): Ye have been rebellious against the LORD from the day that I knew you.

Exodus 16:20 (Parallel theme): Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses; but some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms, and stank: and Moses was wroth with them.

Exodus 14:11 (Parallel theme): 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 15:24 (Parallel theme): And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink?

1 Samuel 15:24 (References Lord): And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and thy words: because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice.