

Exodus 32:3-4

So all the people broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them to Aaron. And he received the gold from their hand, and he fashioned it with an engraving tool, and made a molded calf. Then they said, "This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!"

The Ten Commandments and Moses. Hopefully we are all familiar with the story beyond just watching a movie about it. Today's devotional verses are the part of the story where Moses went up on Mount Horeb when he received the Ten Commandments from God and talked with God for 40 days and nights, which covers about 8 chapters in Exodus.

† ***So Moses went into the midst of the cloud and went up into the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights. Exodus 24:18***

But I don't want to focus on the time frame here, but rather something else that we are all guilty of, and that is that, ***"all the people broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them to Aaron."***

Aaron had not yet been made high priest at this time, so the purpose of the people bringing their gold (or for us would be our hard earned money) was not to glorify God, but rather to waste all that they labored for because they gave it to a false god.

"What do you mean labored for, the Egyptians gave them these things." You may be thinking. No, they labored for this money because they were not paid slaves. So think of it as God was giving them the back pay due them.

† ***"And I will give this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians; and it shall be, when you go, that you shall not go empty-handed. But every woman shall ask of her neighbor, namely, of her who dwells near her house, articles of silver, articles of gold, and clothing; and you shall put them on your sons and on your daughters. So you shall plunder the Egyptians." Exodus 3:21-22***

Pretty much the Egyptians had paid the Children of Israel for their years of labor while in Egypt. So yes, they did work hard and earned this gold (money).

One side note; they worked 7 days a week, no weekends, no vacations, no holiday or sick pay. But that's for another devotional.

So Israel worked their hands to the bone for this gold that they had, and what did they do with it? They squandered it by giving it to a false god which profited them nothing. In fact, do you

remember what was done with the gold that was given to Aaron, (who made a calf (false god) out of it) after Moses came down from the mountain and saw what they had done?

† ***So it was, as soon as he came near the camp, that he saw the calf and the dancing. So Moses' anger became hot, and he cast the tablets out of his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain. Then he took the calf which they had made, burned it in the fire, and ground it to powder; and he scattered it on the water and made the children of Israel drink it. Exodus 32:19-20***

If you think about it, what happens with anything you drink? Yep it turns into waste (pee or poop, okay I said it lol). Israel took their hard earned money and pretty much flushed it down the toilet (spiritually speaking).

God has given us jobs so that we can earn money to live. We are to use it to buy food to eat, to pay our bills, give back to the Lord, and yes, even to enjoy life. But we are not to take what God has provided for us and just throw it away. Playing the Lotto or gambling is throwing God's provision down the toilet. Wasting your money on drinking and drugs and partying is flushing God's blessings down the toilet. Buying useless things is throwing away God's blessing down the toilet.

Maybe one of the reasons you don't tithe is because you choose to waste your money on useless things first, therefore you have nothing left for God?

† ***The first of the firstfruits of your land you shall bring into the house of the LORD your God. Exodus 23:19a***

The first of your firstfruits means to give to God first, even before taxes are taken out, and not your leftovers. If you have bills to pay like rent or mortgage, utilities, car payments, internet, etc. are you not quick to pay them off first, even before eating sometimes?

† ***And when you offer the blind as a sacrifice, Is it not evil? And when you offer the lame and sick, Is it not evil? Offer it then to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you favorably?" Says the LORD of hosts. Malachi 1:8***

It's like God is saying that you honor and fear your landlord, the utilities company's, the bank and the government more than you do Him.

So, what are you doing with God's blessings?

One other thing to note is that:

† ***Then they rose early on the next day, offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Exodus 32:6***

If you read how God provided, it says that God provided manna every day for 40 years. So while they got up early to worship a false god (the calf they had made) there was manna on the ground that morning. God will always provide for us, even when we are wasteful. But maybe the reason you have so little, is because you are wasteful with God's blessings and you are not thankful by giving back to God what HE has provided (Blessed) you with.

† ***"Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, and this temple to lie in ruins?" Now therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts: "Consider your ways! "You have sown much, and bring in little; You eat, but do not have enough; You drink, but you are not filled with drink; You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm; And he who earns wages, Earns wages to put into a bag with holes." Haggai 1:4-6***