

'Whoever has any gold jewelry, take it off.' Then they gave me the gold, and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf!"

Our pastor at Bethany Bible Fellowship Church in Hatfield spoke about this incident in one of his messages, and when he read this verse he said, "Stuff happens!" . . . Aaron said, "I threw the gold into the fire and out came this calf. Stuff happens!"

Now continuing in verse 25 . . .

{25} Moses saw that the people were running wild and that Aaron had let them get out of control and so become a laughingstock to their enemies. {26} So he stood at the entrance to the camp and said, "Whoever is for the LORD, come to me." And all the Levites rallied to him. {27} Then he said to them, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'Each man strap a sword to his side. Go back and forth through the camp from one end to the other, each killing his brother and friend and neighbor.'" {28} The Levites did as Moses commanded, and that day about three thousand of the people died.

This is the background to this second desire -- the desire to make God tangible and substantial and physically real.

Now it is true that the Israelites had waited a long time for Moses to come back from the top of Mount Sinai, and they didn't know when he was coming back or even if he was still alive after forty days. When the calf was finished the people held this great feast and sang and danced in honor of their golden idol.