

# How Being Stiff-Necked and Spirit-Filled Go Together

One of the most troubling events in the Torah is when the children of Israel made a golden calf while Moses was on Mount Sinai receiving the tablets of stone from G-D. Just think about what is taking place. The Israelites can see the fire lighting on the mountain, and they have heard the voice of G-D. They watched Moses go up the mountain and waited 40 days for his return. In the midst of one of the most awesome experiences with G-D in the history of the world, the children of Israel made a golden calf to replace Moses and began to worship it.

It is important that we remember when Aaron made the calf, he said in Exodus 32:5 that they would worship the golden calf as a feast to G-D: "When Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it. Then Aaron made a proclamation saying, 'Tomorrow will be a feast to Adonai'" (Ex. 32:5, TLV).

The children of Israel coming out of Egypt made a golden calf in order to worship G-D through worshipping it. They did this according to what G-D says in Exodus 32:8-9:

"'They quickly turned aside from the path that I commanded for them. They have made a molten calf, worshipped it, and sacrificed to it, and said, "This is your god, O Israel, that brought you up out of the land of Egypt."' 'Adonai said to Moses, "I have seen this people, and behold, it is a stiff-necked people.'"

Notice that G-D said they turned away from what He commanded them because they were "stiff-necked," or stubborn. In the next verse, G-D tells us the following:

***Get your FREE CHARISMA NEWSLETTERS today! Stay up to date with current issues, Holy Spirit news, Christian teachings,***

## ***Charisma videos & more!***

“‘Now therefore, leave Me alone, so My wrath may burn hot against them, and so I may consume them—and make from you a great nation!’” (Ex. 32:10).

G-D said He was going to wipe out the Israelites not because of the golden calf, but because of their being stiff-necked. They made the golden calf because of stubbornness. They came to a situation where they didn't fully understand, and instead of trusting G-D and His covenant promises, they turned away from Him and His covenant and back to what they knew from Egypt. In Egypt, the people worshipped their many gods by making idols for them. After making the idols, they made sacrifices, worshipped and had feasts of celebration for the gods, not for the idols.

In their fear, the Israelites allowed their stubbornness to control them, and they immediately turned away from G-D's covenant, returning to the way they worshipped in Egypt. We can see that G-D was going to wipe them out because they were stiff-necked and stubborn and turned away from His covenant. They were almost destroyed because of being stiff-necked.

What we don't often pay attention to is that as Moses' conversation continues with G-D concerning the children of Israel and the ramifications of their sin of stiff-neckedness, we find that their relationship with G-D is restored because of this same stiff-neckedness.

In Chapter 33, we read that G-D told Moses He was going to keep His promise to Israel and drive the inhabitants of the promised land out before them, but that He (G-D) would not go into the land with them (Ex. 33:3).

***Breaking news, Spirit-filled stories. Subscribe to Charisma on YouTube now!***

Moses responds to G-D, pleading with Him and saying what we

read in Exodus 34:9: "He said, 'If now I have found grace in Your eyes, my Lord, let my Lord please go within our midst, even though this is a stiff-necked people. Pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for Your own inheritance.'"

Isn't it amazing that Moses asked G-D to "please go within our midst" because the children of Israel were (and are) stiff-necked? Moses tells G-D it is because the children of Israel were stiff-necked that they desperately needed Him to be in their midst. As we read the rest of Exodus 34, we find that G-D accepts Moses' position and renews His covenant promises to Israel.

Moses made a point that is still true today: Unless the presence of G-D remains with His people, our stiff-necked stubbornness will lead us to turn away from His covenant and turn back to the ways of Egypt (the world).

This is the precise reason Yeshua said in John 14:15-17: "'If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. 16 I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper so He may be with you forever—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him. You know Him, because He abides with you and will be in you.'"

In other words, Moses told G-D that the children of Israel were stiff-necked and that it was precisely because of our stubbornness that we desperately need Him to remain present in our midst. G-D responded to Moses by dwelling in the tabernacle, and G-D extended His response to us today through the indwelling of the *ruach* (Holy Spirit).

"Don't you know that you are God's temple and that the *Ruach Elohim* dwells among you?" (1 Cor. 3:16).

***Join Charisma Magazine Online to follow everything the Holy Spirit is doing around the world!***

***Eric Tokajer is the author of "Overcoming Fearlessness," "What***

If Everything You Were Taught About the Ten Commandments Was Wrong?", "With Me in Paradise," "Transient Singularity," "OY! How Did I Get Here?: Thirty-One Things I Wish Someone Had Told Me Before Entering Ministry," "#ManWisdom: With Eric Tokajer," "Jesus Is to Christianity as Pasta Is to Italians" and "Galatians in Context." *Visit his website at .*