

ing impatient. In all such cases the sensuous appeals powerfully.

3. *The material form of idolatry*—calf worship, vs. 2-4. The giving of the golden earrings shows either utter hopelessness or fanaticism. Aaron formed the image, perhaps making a wooden mold overlaid with gold. The Israelites were familiar with animal worship in Egypt, and perhaps had traditions of its existence in Chaldea, whence Abraham, their ancestor had come.

4. Consider *the sin itself*. (1) They break the Second Commandment, seeking to worship God by means of images. Even Aaron seems to have been converted to the prevailing view; at any rate, he at last consented to the people's proposal. They were aggressive, v. 22. (2) They indulged in immoral conduct (vs. 6, 19); a very sad picture of the people who had seen the glory of God in the Mount, ch. 24 : 16.

5. Picture *the wrath of Jehovah*, vs. 7-10. Make vivid the dramatic scene at the mountain top, where the Lord sends Moses down to bring home to the people their sin. Bring out the vileness of the people's sin ("they have corrupted themselves"), and their gross ingratitude in "turning aside" so quickly from God their Deliverer, and their folly in thinking that the molten calf could be a representation of the living God.

Trace briefly the intervening events : the Lord's declaration to Moses of His fierce anger, Moses' pleading for the people (vs. 11-14), his great indignation as seen in the breaking of the tables of stone, the destruction of the idol, the punishment of the people, his rebuke of Aaron and Aaron's apology, the punishment of the ringleaders, vs. 15-29.

6. Study *Moses' prayer*, vs. 30-35. Note the confession and intercession. If God would forgive—but the thought of so great forgiveness is beyond words—if not, Moses wishes to perish with his people (compare Paul, Rom. 9 : 3). God's answer is that judgment is moral. The people who sinned must suffer, but He calls the nation to go forward to better things, ch. 33 : 1-3.

Let the teacher emphasize the necessity of always keeping the heart free from opposition to God.

### For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

A sharp contrast, as in a drawing in black and white, attracts attention. Begin this Lesson, therefore, by bringing out (by questions) the contrast between the scene on Mt. Sinai, and in the plain below : *On Sinai*, God in His majesty (go back to ch. 19) and love (see preface to the Ten Commandments, ch. 20 : 2) giving Moses His Commandments and the instructions for His worship (a word or two about the directions for the tabernacle which was to be built, its priests and its services, chs. 25-30), and the final solemn giving to Moses of the tables of stone "written with the finger of God", ch. 3 : 18; *In the Plain*, the sad story which forms the Lesson for the day.

Read the story with the scholars verse by verse. The Ten Commandments had just been given. The people, as well as Moses, had heard them (ch. 19 : 9).

*Verse 1.* Points : (1) What short memories we are apt to have of favors rendered us. "This Moses !" they speak of him in scorn, although he had been their deliverer, and God had, a score of times, shown forth His power through him. They were forgetting God, as well as scorning God's servant. (2) The evil influence of a bad training. They had been brought up in Egypt, where idols were everywhere. Now they call out for an idol.

*Verses 2, 3.* "And Aaron said". Have the scholars recall Aaron's opportunities of knowing the true God, as joined with Moses from the very first in God's revelations of Himself. Does Aaron now despair of Moses, and distrust God ? That is one view of the case. Or, is he afraid of the people, and therefore yields to them ? That is another view. Have the scholars point out the sin, in either case. Note the price the people were willing to pay—the most precious things they had. If they did this for a false religion, what should we do for the true ?

*Verses 4-6.* Explain about the calf as an Egyptian god, and the process of making it; and how all that vs. 5 and 6 tell, is just what would be done in the worship of the true God. Which Commandment did they break ? "Rose up to play". Among the Israelites, sociable feasts at which families and neigh-