

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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Aaron and one's "HIGHER POWER"

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Striving to be more inclusive in religion characterizes our times. Consequently, the biblical concept of One God has eroded into any anonymous power you choose. For example, we are encouraged to look favorably upon Alcohol Anonymous' twelve step program even though the program encourages one to get in touch with a "Higher Power".

Should we overlook the misconceptions of God because one might be helped in their alcohol dependency, or assisted in improving one's psychological outlook? Does it matter how Jehovah is represented?

When Moses had not returned from the mountain, the Israelites implored Aaron to, "make us gods which shall go before us..." (Exodus 32:1). Aaron responded by having a molten image of a calf formed. He presented the image to the people saying, "These are thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt" (Exodus 32:4). Aaron was not encouraging the people to acknowledge a new God for He "built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation and said, 'tomorrow shall be a feast to

Jehovah'" (Exodus 32:5). Aaron merely changed how Jehovah was represented before the people.

Jehovah condemns the practice of making a graven image of any likeness to worship and serve. "For I Jehovah thy God am a jealous God..." (Exodus 20:4). This is a commandment in addition to: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3). Aaron's sin was not in that he introduced a new god to replace Jehovah, but that he was trying to present an image representing Jehovah.

Exalting your "higher self" is replacing Jehovah with another god: "Yourself". This violates the first commandment. Recognizing a "Higher Power" as your god encourages the representation of Jehovah in anyway one sees fit.

There is only one God. "Thus saith Jehovah, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, Jehovah of hosts: I am the first and the last; and besides me there is no God...Is there a God besides me? Yea, there is no rock; I know not any (Isaiah 44:6,8). We cannot encourage one to seek any "higher power" to be their rock or source for strength. Jehovah is the only rock.

Aaron seemed to lose sight of Jehovah's jealous character. Jehovah had chosen Moses to lead His people. It was not a matter of indifference to God for this leadership to be represented in anyway Aaron saw fit. Today Jehovah speaks to us through His Son, Jesus the Christ (Hebrews 1:2). We must "hear ye Him" (Matthew 17:5). Peter saw Jesus as fulfilling Moses' prophecy: "A prophet shall the Lord God raise up unto you like unto me; to him shall ye hearken in all things whatsoever he shall speak unto you. And it shall be, that every soul that shall not hearken to that prophet, shall be utterly destroyed from among the people" (Acts 3: 22-23).

We cannot applaud the Muslims for worshipping the God of Abraham, when they have replaced Jesus with Mohammed. Jehovah has appointed Jesus, His Son, to guide us, not a substitute. One lesson from Aaron is that it does make a difference how God is represented. Aaron and the children of Israel suffered the consequences for ignoring it. Today, may we not let the popularity of being inclusive blind us from this fact and that the One God is jealous.