

THE CHABAD WEEKLY

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❖ PARSHAT KI SISA

This week's Torah portion, Ki Tissa, contains one of the most misunderstood occurrences to be recorded in the Torah -- the sin of the Golden Calf. This sin was so great that its consequences are still being felt today, thirty-three hundred years later. For, as a result of the sin, G-d promised that every punishment that would ever befall the Jewish people would contain an element of chastisement for this grievous transgression. And yet, as it appears in the Written Torah (without the accompanying commentary), the entire account is illogical and difficult to understand. How could the same Jewish people who had just left Egypt under miraculous circumstances, received the Torah at Mount Sinai amidst open miracles and actually heard the voice of G-d utter the first two of the Ten Commandments, stoop so low as to worship a molten image?

Closer study reveals, however, that the Jewish people were not seeking a substitute for G-d in the Golden Calf; what they desired was a substitute for Moses, as expressed in the verse, "And the people saw that Moses was delayed in coming down ...and they said [to Aaron]: Get up, make us a god...for this man, Moses, who has taken us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him." Without Moses, the Jewish people were in a quandary. Moses was the intermediary that connected them to G-d Above, as it states, "I stand between G-d and you." Moses was the medium through which the Children of Israel were freed from Egypt and through whom they received the Torah, to the point where "the Divine Presence spoke from his throat."

Moses is referred to as "a man of G-d," for despite the fact that he was mortal, Moses existed on a spiritual plane on which he was totally united with the Divine. His function as intermediary between man and G-d served to strengthen the Jews' belief in the Creator, for it is difficult to believe in a G-d one cannot see. When the Jews beheld a human being on such a G-dly level, it strengthened their faith in G-d and connected them to Him in a tangible manner. In this light, the mistake they made is far easier to comprehend. When Moses did not reappear when they expected him, the Jewish people feared they had lost the means by which they bound themselves with the Infinite. They rightly understood that such an intermediary needs to be completely united with G-d; having just witnessed the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai, at which G-d descended in a "supernal chariot" bearing the face of an ox, they decided to forge a calf of gold that would closely resemble it.

The Jewish people were correct in their recognition of the need for an intermediary between man and G-d in the form of a G-dly human being; there was also nothing wrong with their choice of an inanimate object to draw holiness down into this world (G-d's voice would later issue forth from between the cherubim -- fashioned in the form of two angels -- above the holy ark in the Sanctuary). Rather, their error was in taking into their own hands a matter which can only be determined by G-d. Only G-d has the authority to decide how His holiness will be transmitted; only He may choose the correct medium. (From: L'Chaim 5755 #356, Adapted from the works of the Rebbe.)

"When you take a census...every man shall give G-d an atonement for his soul...This they shall give...a half-shekel." (30:12-13) QUESTION: Rashi writes that Moshe had difficulty understanding what Hashem was telling him; therefore, He showed him a fiery coin which weighed a half-shekel. Why was it so difficult for Moshe to comprehend? ANSWER: When Hashem spoke about the half-shekel, He called it "kofef nafsho" --

"atonement for the soul" -- for Torah violations. Moshe could not comprehend how money can accomplish forgiveness for the soul. Therefore, Hashem said to Moshe, "Zeh yitnu" - They should give just such a coin (a fiery coin). The giving of a coin in itself cannot atone for a grave sin such as worshipping the golden calf. However, if one gives with warmth and enthusiasm that stems from the fiery core of the Jewish soul, then a half-shekel can truly become the cause of forgiveness, even for sins that affect the essence of the Jewish soul.

"You will see My back, however, My face will not be seen." (33:23) QUESTION: Rashi explains that Hashem showed Moshe the "keshet shel tefillin" -- the knot of the tefillin. There are different customs concerning how to make the knot of the tefillin worn on the head. (See Magen Avraham, Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 32:52.) What kind of knot was on Hashem's tefillin? ANSWER: The tefillin consist of two parts. One is placed on the hand and the other, on the head. The hand represents inter-human relationships (bein adam lechaveiro). With our hands we extend aid and assistance to our friends. The head is the seat of the human intellect by which we perform mitzvot between man and Hashem (bein adam leMakom).

There are people who excel in their inter-human relationships but who are lacking in their connection with Hashem. On the other hand, there are people who study Torah diligently and consider themselves close to Hashem, but unfortunately, their behavior leaves much to be desired in their inter-human relationships. The proper thing for a Jew is to excel in both. Moshe asked Hashem to show him His glory so that he would have a better understanding of what Hashem wants of the Jewish people. (From: Vedibarta Bam by Rabbi Moshe Bogomilsky)

"And the Children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations ."(31:16) The Hebrew word for "their generations" ("le'doroteihem") can also be read "le'diratam" -- "in their home." According to the Talmud, every Jew is accompanied home from the synagogue Friday night by a good angel and an evil one. If the angels find the home ready for Shabbat, the table set and a spirit of peace prevailing, the good angel gives a blessing that it also be thus the following week, to which the evil angel must answer "Amen." The Torah is therefore alluding to the fact that in order to receive the angel's blessing, we must beautify the Shabbat and make it noticeable in our homes. (From: L'Chaim 5755 #356)

❖ LAWS OF SHABBAT - 39 Melachot:Dosh (Threshing)

Nursing an infant: Nursing an infant on Shabbos is permissible only if the child feeds directly from the mother. However, pumping (or expressing) the milk into a bottle or container to save for later use is Mefarek (Toldah of Dosh) M'deoraisa. If the child is ill and cannot nurse directly from the mother, the milk may be saved in small increments (in a bottle or the like) for the baby.

A nursing mother who is experiencing pain due to fullness, may express or pump (with a hand pump, not an electric device) the excess milk for relief. However, the milk must go directly to waste. It should not be collected in a cup or other container, even if it is to be discarded. A practical solution is to pour some liquid soap into the cup beforehand. In this way the excess milk becomes immediately unusable. (From: The 39 Melochos by Dovid Ribiat)

AVODA (TRANSLATED AS "SERVICE" AND "STRIVING") IS NOT THE STRIVING THAT AVODA (SERVICE) ITSELF BE TRUE; (1) RATHER, TRUTH ITSELF IS AN AVODA, THAT THE "FINGERNAILS" BE TRUE. (2) WHY DOES THAT SURPRISE YOU? HE SAW THE ATTRIBUTE OF TRUTH," THE TALMUD DECLARES,(3) "AND HE PROSTRATED HIMSELF."

FOOTNOTES: (1) NOT DECEPTIVE OR ILLUSORY, THAT IT BE PENETRATING RATHER THAN SUPERFICIAL, ENDURING "FINGERNAILS" ARE PART OF MAN BUT VIRTUAL THOUGHTS, EMOTIONS, RELATIONS WITH OTHERS, ETC. BUT EVEN IN THE ALL-BUT-REDUNDANT, THE FURTHEST EXTREMITIES. (3) SANHEDRIN 111A. WHEN G-D SHOWED MOSHE HIS THIRTEEN ATTRIBUTES OF MERCY - SH'MOT 34:6 - MOSHE FELL ON HIS FACE, AS TOLD IN VERSE 8. THE TALMUD ASKS WHICH OF THE ATTRIBUTES IMPRESSED MOSHE SO, AND ANSWERS, THE ATTRIBUTE OF TRUTH. (FROM REBBE'S HAYOM YOM 20 ADAR 1)

The world is not obstructing you - it is challenging you.

- The Rebbe

PARTICIPATE IN WEEKLY CLASSES

<u>Sunday</u>	8:00 AM	Gemara-Tractate Berachot (men)
<u>Monday</u>	8:00 PM	Chumash (men and women)
<u>Tuesday</u>	8:00 PM	Gemara-Tractate Baitza (men)
<u>Wednesday</u>	8:30 PM	Halacha and Tanya (women)
<u>Thursday</u>	10:00 AM	Chassidus (women)
<u>(NEW)</u>	7:00 PM	Learning Hebrew
	8:00 PM	Class for Beverly Hills Highschool Students
<u>Daily</u>	6:45 to 7:15 AM	Chasidus
	Between Mincha and Maariv	Halacha

Sunday: 9:00 AM

SHABBAT PARSHAT KI SISA

February 25, 2000

Candlelighting: 5:28 PM

Friday Mincha: 5:40 PM

LATEST TIME FOR SHEMA: 9:16 AM

SHABBAT MORNING

- Tanya 8:45 AM
- Shacharit 9:30 AM followed by Kiddush & Cholent
- Megillas Esther 4:35 PM
- Mincha 5:20 PM followed by Seuda Shlishit
- Shabbat ends 6:28 PM

Anyone who would like to sponsor a Kiddush or Seuda Shlishit can contact Rabbi Shusterman at (310) 271-9063.

Happy Birthday to Yaakov Yehuda Shusterman, Gilda Beroukhim, Mahnaz Levine.

GOOD SHABBOS!

K There will be no class on Sunday, Feb. 27

DAILY MINYONIM:

Shacharit: Mon-Fri: 6:00 AM & 7:30 AM

