

## Spotlight on....The Golden Calf

### Background:

This week's parsha, Ki Tisa, tells the story of the sin of the Golden Calf. This sin is considered to be one of the two most egregious sins that the Jewish people have committed. Even though it clearly is a big deal, it's not even clear what the sin was! And not only that, but Aharon even participates! So how are we supposed to understand what happened?

Let's look at what the Israelites did in the first pasuk of Chapter 32:

<p>When the people saw that Moses was so long in coming down from the mountain, the people gathered against Aaron and said to him, "Come, make us a god who shall go before us, for that man Moses, who brought us from the land of Egypt—we do not know what has happened to him.</p>	<p>וַיֵּרָא הָעָם כִּי־בִשָּׁשׁ מִשָּׁה לָרַדְתָּ מִן־הַהָר וַיִּקְהֵל הָעָם עַל־אֶהֱרֹן וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו קוּמָה   עֲשֵׂה־לָּנוּ אֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר יֵלְכוּ לְפָנֵינוּ כִּי־זָה   מִשָּׁה הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר הֵעֵלָנוּ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם לֹא יָדַעְנוּ מָה־הָיָה לּוֹ:</p>
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Here is Aharon's response in psukim 2-5:

<p>Aaron said to them, "Take off the gold rings that are on the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me." And all the people took off the gold rings that were in their ears and brought them to Aaron. This he took from them and cast in a mold, and made it into a molten calf. And they exclaimed, "This is your god, O Israel, who brought you out of the land of Egypt!" When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it; and Aaron announced: "Tomorrow shall be a festival of the LORD!"</p>	<p>וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־הֶם אֶהֱרֹן פְּרֻקוּ נְזָמֵי הַזָּהָב אֲשֶׁר בְּאָזְנֵי נְשֵׁיכֶם וּבְנֵיכֶם וּבְנִתֵיכֶם וְהָבִיאוּ אֵלָי: וַיִּתְּפְרוּקוּ כָּל־הָעָם אֶת־נְזָמֵי הַזָּהָב אֲשֶׁר בְּאָזְנֵיהֶם וַיָּבִיאוּ אֶל־אֶהֱרֹן: וַיִּקַּח מֵיָדָם וַיַּצַּר אֹתוֹ בַּחֲרֹט וַיַּעֲשֶׂהוּ עֵגֶל מִסִּכָּה וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר הֵעֵלֵנוּ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם: וַיֵּרָא אֶהֱרֹן וַיִּבֶן מִזְבֵּחַ לְפָנָיו וַיִּקְרָא אֶהֱרֹן וַיֹּאמֶר חַג לַיהוָה:</p>
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### Questions:

1. According to the first pasuk, the Israelites wanted to build a new god because they were worried. What was the source of their worry? How would a new god alleviate this concern?
2. What were Aharon's *actions* in response to the Israelites? Did he satisfy their concerns?
3. Where did Aharon say in response to the Israelites? Does this correspond to his actions?
4. Based on your answers to the first 3 questions, do you think Aharon did anything wrong? If so, what did he do wrong? Did he do anything right?