

SHABBAT SHALOM. Today is 18 Adar 5780, Parshat Parah. We read from two Sifrei Torah. In the second Sefer Torah we read Parshat Parah, the law of the Red Heifer (Chukat, Numbers 19:1-22). Some say that the obligation to read Parshat Parah is from the Torah. The special Haftorah is for Parshat Parah. We omit Av HaRachamim.

TORAH DIALOGUE

(p. 352 Hz) (p. 540 S) (p. 331 Hi) (p. 484 AS)

KI TISSA כִּי תִּשָּׂא Exodus 30:11

[Compiled by Rabbi Edward Davis (RED),  
Rabbi Emeritus and Sephardic Minyan Rabbi  
Young Israel of Hollywood-Ft. Lauderdale]

1. In the beginning of the Sidrah, Hashem orders a national census. Some people died in the debacle of the Golden Calf, and Hashem wanted to record how many died by recording how many survived. The Midrash relates a story of a shepherd whose sheep suffered a disease, and the shepherd wanted to know how many sheep survived. But that Midrash is quite insufficient. Hashem is all-knowing. He knows exactly how many people died and how many are living. And if Moshe wanted to know, well, the Torah says that the census was Hashem's idea. Commentators state that Hashem ordered the census to demonstrate that Hashem loves Bnei Yisrael. It was important for Hashem to show His love for Klal Yisrael. It is important for a parent to show his love for a child after punishing the child! Hashem was showing Bnei Yisrael that after they repented for the sin of the Golden Calf, they were in good standing with Hashem. Ki Tissa: Raise them up in My eyes and in their own eyes.

2. The Hebrew word "V'NaTNU" is a palindrome. It reads the same frontward and backward. They will give. The Baal HaTurim (Rabbi Yaakov ben Asher, 1269-1343, one of the sons of the Rosh) states that we learn from this, that when one gives to Tzedakah, the money will come back to the donor. He will not miss it. The trop on the word V'NaTNU is a Kadma V'Azla, which literally means "get up and go." A person should relish the opportunity to give Tzedakah. He should run after a needy person. The Talmud (Shabbat 104) states that the way of the Baal Chessed is to run after poor people. (Seemingly, Hashem has assisted us in this Mitzvah. He has arranged for many people to come knocking at our door to ask for our Tzedakah funds. But Hashem doesn't really give them blue cards to authenticate their requests. He keeps us in the dark, and still tests us by seeing how we respond to so many solicitors.)

3. Kohanim and kings were anointed with the anointing oil that Moshe made in the desert. The Kohan Gadol was anointed, but not regular priests. After anointing Aharon's sons, the regular Kohanim who followed inherited their father's Kehunah. No anointing was necessary. But the High Priest was anointed. The only kings who were anointed were the descendants of King David. King Solomon was anointed because of the dispute of his brother Adoniyahu, who tried to be king. Whenever the transition of king to son was peaceful, the new king did not require anointing. When there was a dispute, the anointing oil was used. Yo'ash was anointed because of the dispute involving his grandmother Attaliah (Kings II, 11:12). Yeho'achaz was also anointed because his brother Yehoyakim wanted to become king since he was two years older than his brother.

4. Commentators write that the people wanted a Golden Calf to replace Moshe, whom the people thought had died atop Mt. Sinai. Why didn't they just appoint Aharon in Moshe's place. Aharon was Moshe's partner in confronting Pharaoh in Egypt. Perhaps the people had embraced Aharon as a true friend. He was famous as a true pursuer of peace. He was too close to the individuals of the nation, and people were too close to Aharon. They would not stand in reverence if Aharon were their king. Another interesting tidbit in human nature: When the people later donated to the building of the Mishkan, they received a full accounting of the usage of the gold and silver. When they donated to the Golden Calf, they were never told how much was donated and the accurate usage of the gold. That part of human nature is still very much evident in our day as well. (RED)

5. For the most part, the women in TaNaCH were quiet spectators allowing the men to lead the family/people. When the question of who should be the heir to Avraham, Sarah stood up and directed Avraham regarding Yitzchak, and Hashem agreed with her. Rivkah also stepped in to orchestrate Yaakov becoming the heir to Yitzchak. Miriam involved herself in the leadership of Klal Yisrael. In the debacle of the Golden Calf, the women did not want to donate. And they led the donations for the Mishkan. Their reward was Rosh Chodesh, which is a special day for the women. The moon wanes and becomes smaller, reminding us of the downward spiral that exists for Jews in our history. When times are bad, the time comes for our women to show us that there is an optimistic future. That is the connection between the women and Rosh Chodesh! (Rav Soloveitchik)

MAFTIR PARAH פָּרָה

(p. 652 Hz) (p. 898 S) (p. 584 Hi) (p. 838 AS)

The special portion instructing Bnei Yisrael in the purification ritual of the red heifer was unique and wondrous. Yet, it was also important. Just as man cannot live without sin, he cannot live a totally pure life, without ever coming in contact with a human corpse. In all cases, man must strive for purity, and purity is attainable. Prior to ascending to Jerusalem to bring the Passover sacrifice, each person needed to strive for ritual purity.

HAFTORAH EZEKIEL יְחֻקָאֵל 36:16

(p. 999 Hz) (p. 1194 S) (p. 960 Hi) (p. 1216 AS)

This week's haftorah, read in conjunction with Parshat Parah, describes the Jewish people's state of purity in the time of Mashiach. The prophet Yechezkel says in Hashem's name, "And I will sprinkle pure waters upon you which will purify you from all your impurities and repulsive actions." Yechezkel refers here to the Jewish people's ultimate perfection when Hashem will totally cleanse them from sin. The prophet compares this experience to purification from ritual impurity. It is worthwhile to focus on the particular symbolism he used. He did not compare their purification to the traditional immersion process, rather to the purifying waters of the red heifer. This detailed and mysterious procedure purified one from his direct contact with a corpse. Such contact transferred a severe state of ritual impurity which required a unique purification process. Yechezkel's symbolism suggests a direct corollary between association with sin and association with death. Apparently, ultimate removal of any relationship to sin is similar to removal of the ritual effects of death.

QUESTIONS FOR PARSHAT KI TISSA 5780  
by Rabbi Edward Davis

**I. From the Text**

1. At what age was a man able to be counted in the census? (30:14)
2. Who were the two men designated to lead the crafting of the utensils in the Mishkan? And what tribe were they from? (31:2,6)
3. Where did Aharon get the gold to build the Golden Calf? (32:3)
4. What argument did Moshe present to Hashem in his plea for mercy for Bnei Yisrael in the aftermath of the Golden Calf incident? (32:12,13)
5. What did Moshe do with the Tablets when he saw the Golden Calf? (32:19)

**II. From Rashi**

6. To what purpose was the silver used in the census of the half Shekel? (30:16)
7. Shabbat is described as a sign between Hashem and Bnei Yisrael. What does the sign signify? (31:18)
8. Which came first, the command to build the Mishkan or the sin of the Golden Calf? (31:18)
9. What made Bnei Yisrael think that Moshe had died atop Mt. Sinai? (32:1)
10. How did Moshe infer that the sin of the Golden Calf was Hashem's doing? (32:31)

**III. From the Rabbis**

11. What punishment did the Kohen receive for performing a service in the Mishkan without first washing his hands and feet? (Ibn Ezra)
12. What led Aharon to build a Golden Calf? (Ramban)
13. At the end of the Parshah, Moshe appears with a divine radiance on his face. How long did this "radiance" last? (Rav Saadya Gaon)

**IV. Haftorah. Parah. Ezekiel**

14. What punishment was reserved for Bnei Yisrael for contaminating Eretz Yisrael?

**V. Relationships**

- a) Chur - Moshe
- b) Aharon - Chur
- c) Chur - Betzalel
- d) Elazar - Eliezer
- e) Miriam - Uri

ANSWERS FOR PARSHAT KI TISSA5780

1. At the age of 20.
2. Betzalel of the tribe of Yehudah, and Oholiav of the tribe of Dan.
3. The people donated their gold earrings.
4. Moshe asked Hashem to go easy on Bnei Yisrael because what would Egypt say. And to remember Hashem's promise to the Patriarchs.
5. Moshe threw down the Tablets and broke them.
6. The silver was used to cast the sockets in the Mishkan.
7. Shabbat is a sign of Hashem's choice of Israel.
8. According to Rashi, the sin of the Golden Calf came first.
9. A legend relates that Satan caused Bnei Yisrael to see a bier in the sky on which lay a figure resembling Moshe.
10. Hashem gave them too much gold.
11. He is liable to death by Hashem.
12. He thought that Bnei Yisrael was asking for a Golden Calf to better serve Hashem in Moshe's absence, and not for idolatry.
13. Until he died.
14. Exile.

**Relationships**

- a) Uncle Moshe
- b) Uncle Aharon
- c) Grandfather Chur
- d) First Cousins
- e) Grandmother Miriam