



Parshas Ki Tisa 2019, empathetic leadership

This week's Parsha Perspective is in honor of the speedy recovery of Batsheva Sarah Bas Chana, Sasson Betzalel Ben Batya, Shaul Ben Berta, and Sapir Bas Ariela.

This week's Parsha Perspective is dedicated to the memory of Shlomo Ben Edward and Edward Ben Shaul. May their souls be uplifted and their memories a blessing.

Our Parsha tells us the story of our biggest lapse of judgment in our history, a mistake that almost caused G-d to destroy the Jewish nation. A transgression that killed thousands of people and has consequences is felt till this very day, the sin of the Golden Calf.

The story begins when G-d tells Moshe Rabbienu to come back up the mountain after the giving of the Torah. He was to stay on the mountain for forty days and nights to study the Torah and bring down the Luchos to the Jewish people.

However, while he was up there, some people intentionally miscalculated his return date and began to spread the word that Moshe had died. They went to Aaron and Chur, Miriam's son, demanding they make an Idol to lead them in Moshe's stead.

Chur tried to talk them out of it; he told them that Moshe's return was imminent and there was no need to worry. But his relentless refusal infuriated so they decided to kill him. Aaron realized he had no choice but to follow their plan or face a similar fate.

He told them to gather all their gold and bring it to him so he could create the Idol. Secretly he hoped that it would take a while for them to collect it, and Moshe would come back before they were done.

However, he was mistaken; before he knew it, the Jewish people quickly collected all their gold and brought it before him. Having no other choice, Aaron put all the gold into a fire, and the gold took the form of a calf. The Jewish people began dancing around the Golden Calf, believing it was their leader and representative before G-d.

Meanwhile, G-d told Moshe that he must go down the mountain because his nation had sinned, so Moshe gathered the Luchos and headed down. As he came down, Moshe saw the Golden Calf and the people dancing around it, and he decided to throw the Luchos on the ground, shattering them instantly.

Moshe quickly burnt the Golden Calf and ground it into a fine powder, and he gathered the tribe of Levi to punish those who participated in the sin. Moshe turned to G-d and begged Him for mercy. He told G-d that if He was to destroy the Jewish nation, G-d should erase his name from the entire Torah.

However, a question comes to mind: the last verse of the entire Torah is, *"And all the strong hand, and all the great awe, which Moses performed before the eyes of all Israel."* Rashi explains that the action done in front of the Jewish people was breaking the Luchas. What was so compelling about Moshe breaking the Luchas that we end off the Torah on this seemingly negative action?!

Furthermore, Rashi quotes the Gemora in Yevamos 62a, that G-d said to Moshe, thank you for breaking the Luchas. **Why was G-d happy that Moshe broke the Luchas?**

The Rambam on Pirkei Avos 2:10 quotes Gemora Shabbas 105b, “**Anyone who gets angry it is as if he worships idols.**” It shows a lack of faith in G-d, for we must believe that everything G-d does is for the good.

Consequently, if we get angry at something that happens to us, it reveals a lack of trust in G-d, and therefore it is compared to idol worship. The breaking of the Luchas defines Moshe’s Legacy because, at that moment, he essentially joined the Jewish people in their sin of idol worship by angrily shattering the Luchas.

Therefore, he was now able to empathetically intercede on their behalf before G-d and beg for mercy. He was able to understand where the Jewish people were coming from and help the Jewish nation find a path to repentance.

Moshe was the greatest leader in Jewish history because he chose the Jewish people over G-d. He told G-d that if He did not forgive the Jewish nation, he must erase him from the Torah completely. Showing us what a true leader is.

In our daily life, we must lead by example, whether in business or by friends and family. It is imperative that we do not judge people who do not act like us but rather serve as role models for the correct way it should be done.

By seeking to understand their actions from a non-judgmental perspective, it becomes possible for you to create a plan of action that will genuinely help them steer themselves toward success.

*“A good leader leads the people from above.
A **great** leader leads the people from within.”*

*Have a meaningful Shabbos,
Rabbi Sholom Yemini*