



Carnegie Shul Chatter

February 28, 2024



Light candles 5:54pm — Shabbat Services 9:20am

Shabbat Services

Carnegie Shul hybrid services begin at 9:20am. Join us in the synagogue, or attend virtually. If you haven't received our Zoom link for services, please contact our secretary, Rosalyn Hoffman at rjlynman@yahoo.com. The complete Torah reading, in Hebrew and English, can be found at https://www.chabad.org/parshah/torahreading_cdo/aid/2492674/jewish/Ki-Tisa-Torah-Reading.htm

To Be Forgiven

This week's Torah portion includes the building of the golden calf.

It is one Bible story that almost everyone knows. And to me it is one of the most shameful things ever done by the Jewish people.

A lot of commentators provide a lot of excuses; "mitigating circumstances" to explain the behavior of our ancestors, but to me there can be no justifiable excuse for doing this.

These are a people who have just witnessed first-hand some of Hashem's greatest miracles as he freed them from slavery in Egypt and parted the Red Sea for them to pass through.

These are a people who had trembled at the sound of Hashem's voice as he gifted them with the Ten Commandments, and still, when Moses was on Mt. Sinai for a prolonged period of time, they decided that a golden calf might be something better to pray to than the one true God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

And still, despite this terrible

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sin, Moses spoke to God and said, “If You do not forgive them, blot me out from the book that You have written.”

And God did forgive.

And that, to me, is the greatest lesson to take from this Torah portion, the lesson that we have a God who will forgive almost anything, if only we promise to repent and change our ways.

How very fortunate we are to have such a loving God.



Please continue reciting the Prayer for the Welfare of the State of Israel daily and pray for the wellbeing of all of our Israeli brothers and sisters.

Prayer for the Welfare of the State of Israel

“Our Father Who art in Heaven, Protector and Redeemer of Israel, bless Thou the State of Israel which marks the dawn of our deliverance. Shield it beneath the wings of Thy love. Spread over it Thy canopy of peace; send Thy light and Thy truth to its leaders, officers, and counselors, and direct them with Thy good counsel.

“O God, strengthen the defenders of our Holy Land; grant them salvation and crown them with victory. Establish peace in the land, and everlasting joy for its inhabitants.

“Remember our brethren, the whole house of Israel, in all the lands of their dispersion. Speedily let them walk upright to Zion, the city, to Jerusalem Thy dwelling-place, as it is written in the Torah of Thy servant Moses: ‘Even if you are dispersed in the uttermost parts of the world, from there the Lord your God will gather and fetch you. The Lord your God will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it.’

“Unite our heart to love and revere Thy Name, and to observe all the precepts of Thy Torah. Shine forth in Thy glorious majesty over all the inhabitants of Thy world. Let everything that breathes proclaim: The Lord God of Israel is King; His majesty rules over all.”

Amen.

Ki Tisa in a Nutshell

From Chabad.org

Exodus 30:11–34:35

The name of the Parshah, “Ki Tisa,” means “When you take” and it is found in Exodus 30:11.

The people of Israel are told to each contribute exactly half a shekel of silver to the Sanctuary. Instructions are also given regarding the making of the Sanctuary’s water basin, anointing oil and incense. “Wise-hearted” artisans Betzalel and Aholiav are placed in charge of the Sanctuary’s construction, and the people are once again commanded to keep the Shabbat.

When Moses does not return when expected from Mount Sinai, the people make a golden calf and worship it. G-d proposes to destroy the errant nation, but Moses intercedes on their behalf.

Moses descends from the mountain carrying the tablets of the testimony engraved with the Ten Commandments; seeing the people dancing about their idol, he breaks the tablets, destroys the golden calf, and has the primary culprits put to death. He then returns to G-d to say: “If You do not forgive them, blot me out from the book that You have written.”

G-d forgives, but says that the effect of their sin will be felt for many generations. At first G-d proposes to send His angel along with them, but Moses insists that G-d Himself accompany His people to the promised land.

Moses prepares a new set of tablets and once more ascends the mountain, where G-d reinscribes the covenant on these second tablets. On the mountain, Moses is also granted a vision of the divine thirteen attributes of mercy. So radiant is Moses’ face upon his return, that he must cover it with a veil, which he removes only to speak with G-d and to teach His laws to the people.



Haftorah in a Nutshell

I Kings 18:20-39

In this week’s haftorah, Elijah the Prophet demonstrates the worthlessness of the Baal, just as Moses chastised the Israelites for serving the Golden Calf, as discussed in this week’s Torah reading.

The background of this week’s haftorah: King Ahab and Queen Jezebel ruled the Northern Kingdom of Israel, and encouraged the worship of the Baal deity as well as other forms of idolatry. To prove that G-d alone is in control and provides sustenance, Elijah decreed a drought

on the kingdom—no rain fell for three years. When Ahab then accused Elijah of causing hardship for the Israelites, Elijah challenged him to a showdown. He, Elijah, would represent the cause of monotheism, and 850 idolatrous “prophets” would represent their cause. Ahab accepted.

The haftorah begins with Elijah, the Baal prophets, and many spectators gathering atop Mount Carmel. Elijah rebuked the people of Israel, uttering the famous words: “How long will you hop between two ideas? If the L-rd is G-d, go after Him, and if the Baal, go after him.”

Elijah then stated his challenge: “Give us two bulls and let them [the Baal prophets] choose one bull for themselves and cut it up and place it on the wood, but fire they shall not put; and I will prepare one bull, and I will put it on the wood, and fire will I not place. And you will call in the name of your deity, and I will call in the name of the L-rd, and it will be the G-d that will answer with fire, he is G-d.”

The people agreed to the challenge, and the prophets of the Baal were first. The prophets’ entreaties to their god went unanswered. Elijah taunted them: “Call with a loud voice, for you presume that he is a god. [Perhaps] he is talking or he is pursuing [enemies], or maybe he is on a journey; perhaps he is sleeping and will awaken...”

As evening approached, Elijah took center-stage. He built an altar, laid his offering upon it and surrounded it with water. “Lord, the G-d of Abraham, Isaac and Israel,” he declared. “Today let it be known that You are G-d in Israel and that I am Your servant, and at Your word have I done all these things. Answer me, O L-rd, answer me, and this people shall know that You are the L-rd G-d...”

A fire immediately descended from heaven and consumed the offering, as well as the altar and the surrounding water. “And all the people saw and fell on their faces, and they said, “The Lord is G-d, the L-rd is G-d.”

Yahrtzeits

This week the Carnegie Shul acknowledges the yahrtzeits of:

Anna M. Levine
Joseph Harris
Sara Lederstein
Jean H. Leptzig
Jacob B. Klee

Isadore L. Horowitz
Sarah Dickstein Weiss
Marcella Zemon Glantz
Max Roth

May their memories be for a blessing.

Donations

The Carnegie Shul is most grateful for the following recent donation:

Myron Roth

In memory of Bernard Roth