

# THE COMMUNITY PARSHA SHEET



PARSHAT KI TISSA

London's Leading Young Professionals Platform and Jewish Communal Centre



**RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL**  
*TAL Founder & Director*

## LADIES AND THAT SPECIAL ROSH CHODESH CONNECTION!

Ki Tissa begins with the final details about the Sanctuary, including a collection of half a shekel coins from the people that was to serve as a census.

The coins were also a means of atonement for participating and witnessing without protest the sin of the Golden Calf.

Rashi comments that G-d showed Moshe, "a kind of coin of fire, the weight of which was a half-shekel, and He said to him, 'Thus shall they give.'"

The commentators ask why did G-d have to show Moshe a coin of fire, and what is the significance of the half coin?

There was a time in history when the Jewish people were on a spiritual low worshipping idols, yet interestingly enough, they were winning their battles. G-d told the prophet Hosea, "Ephraim is united in idol-worship [joined to idols], let him alone" (Hosea 4:17). From this our Sages (Bereishit Rabbah 38:6) derive that the power of peace and unity is so great that even when the Jewish people, G-d forbid, sin, if unity prevails among them, G-d does not rebuke or punish them.

The construction of the Mishkan was a means of attaining forgiveness for the worshipping of the golden calf. The half-shekel teaches us that no Jew should consider himself complete. He must know that he needs to be united with the collective Jewish people. When there is peace and unity among the Jewish people, Hashem says, as it were, 'I have no dominion over them.'

As the Alshich comments, Kol Yisrael Arevim Zeh la-Zeh - all of Israel are responsible for one another. Each of us individually is less than whole, symbolized by the half shekel - we must join others to be in complete service to Hashem. We find a similar idea when the ten brothers of Yosef sold him down to Egypt. Our Sages (Shekalim 3b) say that he was sold for 10 silver Dinarii, equating to 5 shekels. Split between the brothers, each brother received a half shekel. The half shekel donations given by Jewish nation were to atone for Yosef's brothers' sin. We would think that Yosef's sale was hundreds

of years earlier and had nothing to do with the collection. But G-d was relaying that the reason we were sent into exile in Egypt was because of the lack of unity between the brothers. Now that the Mishkan (which represented the centre of the camp with G-d's Presence shining through) was being built, it was time to atone for the past and build a united future.

There is a further beautiful idea.

Man alone or woman alone constitutes only half of a unit, as the Zohar says: Bar nash be'lo iteta peleg gufa ["a man without a woman is half a person [or] body"]. Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch says that the word kallah (bride) means completion, as in ba-yom kalot ha-mishkan (the day the Tabernacle was completed).

In marriage, the partners complete and fulfil themselves.

So long as we act in unity, we create a strong unbreakable bond. In the wilderness however there was disagreement between husband and wife.

After the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai, Moshe went up the mountain for 40 days to receive the 10 Commandments. As a result of a minor miscalculation, the Jewish men believed that Moshe had died, and they beseeched Aaron to make for them a "god" to go with them in the desert.

The Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer (45) explains what happened behind the scene: "And Aaron said: Take the earrings from your wives, sons and daughters, and bring them to me" (Shemot 32:2). The women heard and refused to give their jewellery to their husbands, but said: "You want to make a calf with no power to save? We will not listen to you." G-d gave them reward in this world that they keep Rosh Chodesh more than men, and in the next world they merit to renew themselves like Rosh Chodesh.

As the women did not participate in the sin of the Golden Calf, they did not need to give half a shekel. The men who sinned and witnessed the sinners all had to give half as a symbol that they acted like a half and not like a whole. Talking about unity in the community and bringing all of Am Yisrael together needs to start by building a strong Jewish home. One where both the husband and wife are united. When they are, then that leads to a greater unity amongst the people. Here the ladies possessed a stronger Emunah and devotion to G-d and were not

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ר' יוסף בן אהרון ז"ל

22ND ADAR I 5784

SHABBAT BEGINS:  
17:26pm

SHABBAT ENDS:  
18:29pm



**DVAR TORAH**  
Rosh Chodesh Connection  
By Rabbi Jonathan Tawil



**DVAR TORAH**  
Parsha Insights  
By Rabbi David Baadani



**DVAR TORAH**  
Parshat Ki Tissa  
By Rabbi Danny Fisher



**OUR CHAHAMIM**  
Rabbi Eliyahu Hacohen



**HALACHOT**  
By Rabbi Eli Mansour



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strayed by the evil inclination.

Looking further into the Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer, we can ask why the women were rewarded with the special observation of Rosh Chodesh?

The Tur adds in the name of his brother, Rabbenu Yehuda (author of Responsa Zichron Yehuda), that the festivals (Pesach, Shavuot, and Sukkot) correspond to our Patriarchs and the twelve new months (Rashei Chodashim) correspond to the twelve tribes. Each one of our forefathers and the twelve tribes merited to have a festival attached to them. When the Jewish nation sinned in the incident regarding the Golden Calf, Rosh Chodesh was taken away from the men and given to the Jewish women as a commemoration that they were not involved in this sin.

Why should Rosh Chodesh be given to the women as a reward? What is the link between the women not willing to give up their precious jewellery for the ill-fated Golden Calf and the concept of celebrating the reappearance of the moon every month?

Women had the ability to see beyond the

very frightening situation the Jewish people experienced after Moshe went up to receive the Torah and tarried on his way back. As far as the Jewish men were concerned, all hope was lost. There was no leader, no shepherd, no one to guide them through the desert to Israel. How could Moshe be late? He must have died! And in fact the Midrash tells us that Satan showed the Jewish people a vision of their beloved leader lying lifeless on a cot in heaven, to scare them.

But the women could not be convinced to sink into such utter despair. When things seemed dark and hopeless, they knew that light was just around the corner. Patience and trust in G-d would be all that would be needed to get through the "bad" times and into the good ones. Like the moon, becoming brighter and bigger only after it disappears completely into darkness, they knew that better times were on the way. It was impossible to them that G-d would leave them stranded after having just received the Torah 40 days earlier. They were willing to believe in the power of renewal and trust G-d no matter how difficult things seemed. It is therefore the

women that have this special monthly celebration as the new moon begins to shine, to commemorate their powerful faith and the light of hope within.

We too as the Jewish people are compared to the moon. Though we are small, and wane at times with suffering being an integral part of our history among the nations, the Jew knows never to give up. As an individual and as a nation, he will rise up again and light up the night.

We live with this belief in the power of miracles, that G-d supervises over the world and is not dependent on predictable laws of nature. The Jewish nation has a special relationship with G-d and even when on the lowest of spiritual rungs, about to assimilate and disappear, G-d maintains His constant love, as a father loves his son.

Let us take the lessons learnt from the fiery coin, from being half of a whole and increase in unity and understanding of one other in full faith that G-d is always watching over us and has given us the power of renewal and change, the gift of expanding, brightening and growing big again even after we might have been diminished.



**RABBI DAVID BAADANI**  
*Director - TAL Chazanut Program*

## PARSHAT KI TISSA

Our sages say. 'אין קטגור נעשה סגור', An accuser is unable to function as the counsel of defence. For example. On Yom Kippur, the high priest would enter the Holy of Holies to atone for the people of Israel, wearing special clothes, white clothes, and not the usual gold clothes that were used by him during the rest of the year. The presence of gold on the garments of the High Priest would have reminded G-d of the episode of the golden calf.

On the other hand, The fragments of the tablets broken by Moshe Rabbeinu when he found the people of Israel at the sin of the

golden calf, a sin whose consequences affect the world to this day, seemingly were meant to resemble the sin more than anything else. Why did G-d command Moshe Rabbeinu to place these fragments inside the Ark in the הקדשים קודש?

When Moshe broke the tablets, the hearts of עם ישראל were broken along with them. Just before that, Israel was on the top of the world. From a group of slaves subjugated to Egypt they became a free nation, the chosen nation, the people who merited to see the sights of G-d at the Red Sea, and at Mount Sinai.

By committing this horrible sin they proved themselves unworthy of receiving the tablets. Their hearts broke and with it the

image of wholeness, of perfection, and their pride was broken too. At that point they were זוכה to humility, and with this humility they were worthy of receiving along with the second tablets the oral Torah which is 'אֶרְכָּה מֵאֶרֶץ מִדְּהַר וְנִרְחַב מִנִּי יָם' longer in measure than the earth and broader than the sea.

We understand from this that, the fragments of the tablets are not a reminder of their sins before G-d, but of their broken hearts and humility and, as Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kotzk said: 'There is nothing more whole than a broken heart'. For only through the cracks of the heart can the divine light penetrate and illuminate.



**RABBI DANNY FISHER**  
*Director - TAL Boys After School Programs*

## פרשת כי תשא

In this week's Sedra we find the famous words we say in קידוש every week.

.....'בני ובני ישראל אות היא לעולם Between myself and שבת, בני shall be a sign'.

Shabbos is called a sign- אות. In what way is Shabbos like a sign?

The Chofetz Chaim gives the following parable:

When one owns a shop and wants to attract customers what do they do?

They put up a big sign in the front of their shop, stating the name of their shop. They also display items that that can be bought in the shop in the display window. The sign tells the public that they are open for business; it is an indicator as to what is

going on inside the shop. However, if the shop were to close down, they would remove the sign, consequently everyone would know that this shop is no longer in business.

When one keeps Shabbos, what are they doing?

They are stating to the world that they "are in business", the business of serving Hashem. They are displaying to the world



that they understand and realise the importance of Shabbos in their lives and the integral part it plays in the life of Jew. The

realization that Hashem created the world in 6 days and rested on the seventh, and that therefore we too must rest. Shabbos is

a "sign" that one is wearing and displaying to the world that they have Emunah and are "in the business of Hashem".



## OUR CHAHAMIM

### Rabbi Eliyahu Hacohen of Casablanca

Kandil el Bled ("Master of the City") was the name that the Jews of Morocco gave to Rabbi Eliyahu Hacohen. The saintly Rabbi Eliyahu was greatly venerated by Moroccan Jews. At the end of every Shabbat, the Jews of Casablanca came to his tomb to light candles and partake of the Melava Malka meal in honor of the Tzaddik. Rabbi Eliyahu Hacohen was buried in the middle of town in Casablanca. One day, the Arab authorities decided to construct a highway. To carry out this project, they wanted to take the grave of the saintly Rabbi Eliyahu and move it to the new cemetery in Casablanca. The transfer of the grave of their saintly and venerated Tzaddik rattled the Jews to their foundation of their

souls. But what could they do against the government's decision?

The day arrived and the Arab workers came to transfer the grave to the new cemetery. But as soon as they began to dig around the grave, they were stuck in place, not being able to move their feet or their hands. Seized with terror, friends of the workers went to the Rabbinic Center of Casablanca and related what had just happened. As soon as they heard, the Jews began to pray, and thanks to their prayers, the Arabs who had been paralyzed were able to move their limbs.

Finally, the authorities received from the Rabbis of Casablanca the authority to transfer the grave of the saintly Rabbi Eliyahu to the new cemetery. They promised that the transfer would

be done with the respect due to the Tzaddik, and that around the grave they would build a magnificent mausoleum for those who would come there to make a pilgrimage. In addition, the government decided to distribute money to the poor of the city.

This incident occurred around 1963.

To the south of Casablanca, in the village of Ben Hamad, lies buried Rabbi Yechia Lechdar. According to tradition, Rabbi Yechia was the brother of Rabbi Eliyahu of Casablanca.

Jews would gather beside his grave for the "Mimuna" feast and Lag BaOmer. Rabbi Yechia was a Tzaddik, renowned for his miracles. Many sick individuals who came to make a pilgrimage to his gravesite returned healed.



## HALACHOT BY RABBI ELI MANSOUR

### Reciting a Beracha Over a Cooked Fruit or Vegetable

The Shulhan Aruch (Orah Haim 202:12) addresses the question of whether the Beracha one should recite on a fruit or vegetable depends on whether the food was eaten raw or cooked. He establishes the basic rule that if a fruit or vegetable is commonly eaten both raw and cooked – such as apples – then the Beracha remains the same regardless of how one eats the food. Whether one eats such a food raw or cooked, he recites "Bore Peri Ha'etz" (in the case of a fruit) or "Bore Peri Ha'adama" (in the case of a vegetable). Thus, one who eats an apple recites "Bore Peri Ha'etz" whether he eats it raw or cooked. Likewise, raw and cooked tomatoes are deemed equally edible, and thus one who eats a tomato in either state recites the Beracha of "Bore Peri Ha'dama," as Hacham Ovadia Yosef rules in his work Hazon Ovadia (Laws of Berachot, p. 143).

If, however, a fruit or vegetable is generally eaten only cooked or only raw – such as potatoes and eggplant, which are generally eaten only after they are cooked – then one who eats it in the deviant manner recites

the Beracha of "She'hakol." Thus, for example, a person who eats a raw potato will recite "She'hakol," whereas one who eats a baked or boiled potato recites the Beracha of "Bore Peri Ha'adama."

The Halachic authorities address the question of which Beracha one recites over a food that normally loses its flavor when cooked unless it is cooked with other foods. A cucumber, for example, is generally eaten raw, as cooking is detrimental to its flavor. Some people, however, cook or fry cucumbers with meat and other foods, and the cucumbers become flavorful as a result of the foods with which they are cooked. Which Beracha should a person recite over the cucumbers in such a case?

The Ben Ish Hai (Rabbi Yosef Haim of Baghdad, 1833-1909), in Parashat Pinchas (7), rules that in this case one must recite "She'hakol" over the cucumbers. Since the cucumbers have lost their intrinsic flavor, and are tasty only as a result of the accompanying foods, they are "downgraded," so-to-speak, to the generic Beracha of "She'hakol." Hacham Ovadia Yosef, however, in his work Halichot Olam (vol. 2, p. 97), disagrees. In his view, since

the cucumbers are currently flavorful, they warrant the recitation of "Bore Peri Ha'adama" despite the fact that their flavor is the result of their exposure to other foods. This case commonly arises in restaurants that serve cooked or steamed vegetables. These dishes often contain vegetables that one would normally eat only raw, but become flavorful when they are cooked with the other vegetables. According to Hacham Ovadia Yosef, one who eats such vegetables recites "Bore Peri Ha'adama" despite the fact that they are normally eaten only in their raw state.

**Summary:** A fruit or vegetable that is commonly eaten both raw and cooked requires the Beracha of "Ha'etz" (for fruits) or "Ha'adama" (for vegetables) regardless of whether it is raw or cooked. If a fruit or vegetable is commonly eaten only raw or only cooked, then one who eats it in the unusual manner recites "She'hakol." If a vegetable is commonly eaten only raw, and is eaten cooked only when it is prepared with other foods, such as meat, then one recites "Ha'adama" even when it is cooked, provided that it has a favorable taste.





## WEEKLY PARSHA OVERVIEW

### Parshat Ki Tissa

Moshe conducts a census by counting each silver half-shekel donated by all men age twenty and over. Moshe is commanded to make a copper laver for the Mishkan. The women donate the necessary metal. The formula of the anointing oil is specified, and Hashem instructs Moshe to use this oil only for dedicating the Mishkan, its vessels and Aharon and his sons. Hashem selects Betzalel and Oholiav as master craftsmen for the Mishkan and its vessels.

The Jewish People are commanded to keep the Shabbat, an eternal sign that Hashem made the world. Moshe receives the two Tablets of Testimony on which are written the Ten Commandments.

The mixed multitude who left Egypt with the Jewish People panic when Moshe's descent seems to be delayed, and so they force Aharon to make a golden calf for them to worship. Aharon stalls, trying to delay them. Hashem tells Moshe to return to the people immediately, threatening to destroy everyone and build a new nation from Moshe. When Moshe sees the camp of idol-worship, he smashes the Tablets and destroys the golden calf. The sons of Levi volunteer to punish the transgressors, executing 3,000 men.

Moshe ascends the mountain again to pray for forgiveness for the people, and Hashem accepts his prayer. Moshe sets up the Mishkan, and Hashem's clouds of glory return. Moshe asks

Hashem to show him the rules by which He conducts the world, but he is granted only a small portion of this request. Hashem tells Moshe to hew new Tablets, and reveals to him the text of the prayer that will invoke Divine mercy.

Idol worship, intermarriage and the combination of milk and meat are prohibited. The laws of Pesach, the first-born, the first-fruits, Shabbat, Shavuot and Succot are taught. When Moshe descends with the second set of Tablets, his face is luminous as a result of contact with the Divine.

Rabbi Sinclair,  
Seasonsofthemoon.com



1 How many "geira" are in a shekel?

30:13 - Twenty.

2 What was the minimum age of military service in the Jewish army?

30:14 - Twenty.

3 What were the three different types of terumah used for?

30:15 - For the adanin (sockets), for the purchase of communal sacrifices, and for the building of the Mishkan.

4 The Jews were counted after Yom Kippur and again after Pesach. Both times they numbered the same amount. How can this be? Didn't some 19-year olds turn 20 during that six month period?

30:16 - Their ages were calculated based on Rosh Hashana, not based on their individual birthdays.

5 How many ingredients comprise the incense of the Mishkan?

30:34 - Eleven.

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