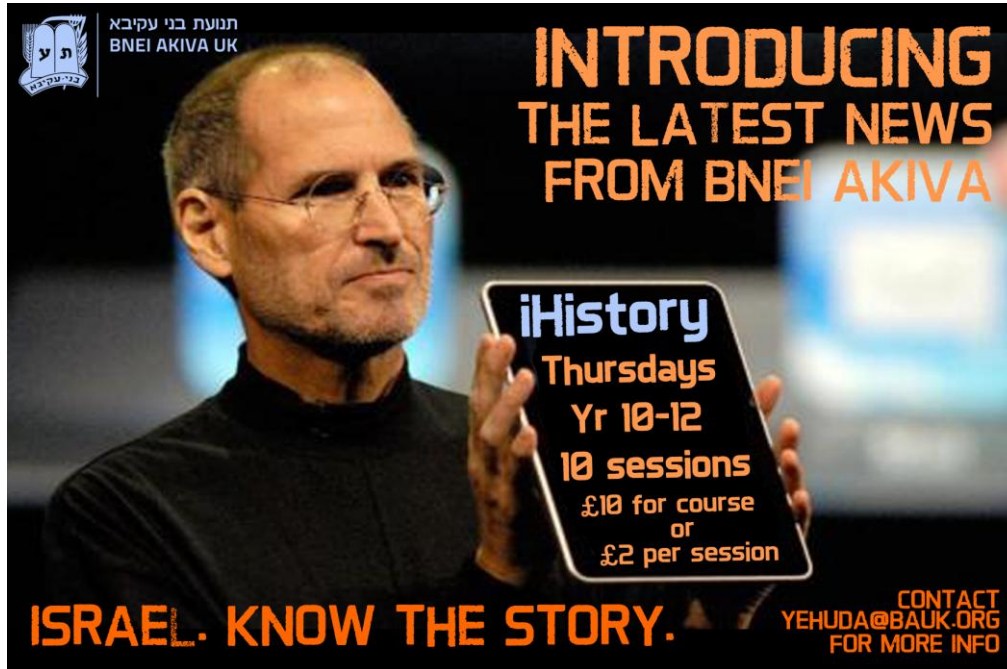


Coming Up...

Full details of all our events are available on our Facebook page, or call the Bayit on 0208 209 1319 to speak to one of the team.

- Kivun – our Hadracha training programme for Shevet Tzion, is occurring on Motzei Shabbat in Hendon, and on Sunday Edgware. For full information, email adam@bauk.org or marina@bauk.org
- Do you want to be really informed about the facts of Israel's history without any politics or propaganda? If you are in years 10-12, come to iHistory – an interactive and exciting new programme to expand your knowledge – every Thursday at 18:30 at the London Bayit. Contact yehuda@bauk.org for more information
- We are proud to be holding an Aliyah Pilot Trip on 14th-21st June 2015 for Bogrim. Register by Sunday to receive the early bird discount! For full information, contact Rav Ari at rav@bauk.org



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Volume 21 - No 20
16th Adar 5775
7th March 2015



Shabbat Lashem 'ושבתה הארץ שבת לה'

כי תשא - Ki Tisa

Stand Up And Be Counted

Jack Cohen

After being petitioned by the masses for a replacement for Moshe, Aharon collects all the golden jewellery of the people, and fashions it into a Golden Calf (Shemot.32:4). In the aftermath of this incident, Hashem punishes the people for their sins with a plague (Shemot.32:35), and refuses to dwell amongst them (Shemot.33:3).

Rashi attempts to rationalise the actions of Aharon during this episode. He explains that Aharon was stalling for time, and trying to make Bnei Yisrael see sense, and yet, in Devarim (9:20) we learn that Hashem still wanted to destroy Aharon. Why?

We can suggest that it was because Aharon appears to shirk all responsibility for his actions. First, he tells Moshe that nothing was his fault, and that the sin occurred because the Bnei Yisrael were predisposed towards evil. Next, he claims that rather than telling the people to give him their jewellery, he merely asked them if anyone had gold. Finally, he denies actively making the Golden Calf at all! (Shemot.32:24).

We now take a brief detour to the start of the Parasha; here, Moshe is instructed to conduct a census by collecting money for the construction of the Mishkan where Hashem could live amongst the people. We are told:

"בַּפֶּקֶד אֵת כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֵת אֵלֶיהֶם בְּהֶם נִגְף בְּפֶקֶד אֵת אֵתָם וְנִתְּנוּ אִישׁ כֶּסֶף נַפְשׁוֹ לַיהוָה
"Let each one give to the Lord an atonement for his soul when they are counted; then there will be no plague among them when they are counted." (Shemot.30:12).

How are these seemingly separate events linked? We saw that the sin of the Golden Calf was the result of Bnei Yisrael channelling their collective resources into doing bad, this brought a plague and the removal of Hashem from their midst. Conversely, we have just seen that through the census, they were able to channel their collective resources into doing good, in this way ridding themselves of plague and bringing Hashem into their midst.

By teaching us about the Golden Calf and the census, Ki Tisa gives us a masterclass in collective responsibility. We learn from Aharon that distancing ourselves from a wayward Bnei Yisrael is futile, we learn from Hashem that instead, we must each do our bit for Klal Yisrael, and only like this will we be able to create a better future for all.

Jack Cohen is in Shevet Hagevurah and was a Madrich on H Course Machane 5775

This week's edition of Shabbat Lashem is sponsored l'ilui nishmat Ben Weller – 'Dov Ber ben Ezriel Ze'ev' on the occasion of his yahrtzeit.

Editor's Corner

Shalom!

We enjoyed a brilliant Purim! On Wednesday night, we held a Megillah reading in Salford and a bogrim's party in Edgware. On Thursday, there were lively Megillah readings in the London and Manchester Batim, as well as a seudat Purim at the London Bayit! Additionally, we visited numerous schools to spread the Purim fun!

Birmingham, London, and Leeds Limmud continue to thrive, with over 70 people per week coming to learn Torah weekly!

Shabbat Shalom!

THIS WEEK'S SHABBAT TIMES

	🕒	🕒
London	17:35	18:38
Manchester	17:40	18:46
Birmingham	17:37	18:47
Cambridge	17:30	18:40
Leeds	17:33	18:43
Liverpool	17:41	18:52
Jerusalem	17:00	18:17

To receive Shabbat Lashem by email every Friday, or for sponsorship details, send an email to shabbat@bauk.org



Insight and Inspiration on the Parasha

Rav Ari Faust, Rabbinical Shaliach

The Object and the Objective

Moshe Rabbeinu had a long, illustrious career as the leader of Am Yisrael. He is credited with being at the forefront of many key historical events: The exodus from Egypt, giving and teaching the Torah, guiding Am Yisrael through the wilderness and preparing them for their entry into Israel are just a few examples of this. But there is one act of leadership which exemplifies Moshe's greatness, which the Torah emphasizes as his lasting legacy; it is one which at first-glance seems so negligible we would possibly have considered it more of a failure than success. In our *parasha* we read about the sin of the Golden Calf. Upon bearing witness to his nation's behavior, Moshe throws the *luchot* – the tablets – to ground, shattering them to pieces (Shemot 32:19):

"... As soon as he came close to the camp, that he saw the calf and the dancing; and Moshe's anger waxed hot, and he cast the tablets out of his hands, and broke them beneath the mount."

The Torah, foreshadowing Moshe's destruction of the *luchot*, expresses how special they were (v. 15-16):

"... tablets that were written on both their sides ... were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tablets."

This begs the question question: How could Moshe have destroyed such a prized possession? It cannot be that he acted carelessly, simply out of anger. The support for this – which makes the question even stronger – is that the Torah testifies that this decision was in fact laudable. In summarizing Moshe's life, the Torah concludes in its very last *pasuk* (Devarim 34:12):

"... For all the mighty hand, and all the awesome greatness, which Moses performed in the sight of all Israel."

Rashi comments that these words allude to Moshe's most significant achievements. What did Moshe perform "before the eyes of all Israel"? He decided to destroy the *luchot* before the eyes of the nation. In fact our sages (Shabbat 87a) teach that Hashem praised Moshe for his decision! Why is the destruction of the *luchot*, so creditable, and why does it become Moshe's most memorable and lasting legacy?

This week we celebrated Purim. Haman's hatred towards the Jews was triggered by Mordechai who refused to bow before him. One must wonder why was Mordechai so adamant not to bow to Haman – nowhere is it implied that it was meant to be any more than a polite gesture and form of greeting? Also, what made Haman extrapolate that Mordechai's behavior reflected the attitude of the entire people? The Midrash (Esther Rabbah 6:2) explains that Haman wore an idol around his neck and thus Mordechai refused to bow, as by bowing to Haman one would be bowing to an idol. What is the Midrash's intention with this commentary? If Haman truly wore an idol, than bowing to him would be strictly prohibited by Jewish law; why then did all Jews not follow Modechai's example?

The answer to both of these challenges is one and the same: Haman had just received a promotion, becoming the king's chief minister (Esther 3:1). He became euphoric by his new-found stature and importance. Haman allowed this power to get-to his head; it inflated his larger-than-life ego, led him to idolize himself and attempt to transform himself into a cultural idol. Even if bowing to Haman did not constitute a strict *halachic* violation, Mordechai would still have nothing to do with it. A fundamental Jewish belief is that preoccupation with ego blocks the divine light from shining through. Each person is able to be a vessel through which Godliness is manifest in the world, and an encounter with all creations can be an encounter with The Creator. This is only if we keep perspective on context, and don't ascribe independent significance to that person or object.

This was exactly Moshe's concern: After the Golden Calf, Am Yisrael could have been lead to ascribe independent holiness to the *luchot*. While it would have been amazing to have an object which is "the work of God", the risk was that they would have veered us away from God was too, instead of directing us to an encounter with Him. The broken *luchot* were kept in the holy-of-holies in order to underline this message.

Our attitude towards life can be divided into two: Emphasizing the manifestation of Hashem in the world, or emphasizing our ego. The message we learn from Mordechai, and the last legacy taught by the Torah about Moshe, is that with the right attitude everything about us can contribute towards the manifestation of God, making our world more Godly.

Rav Ari Faust is in Shevet Yechiam, and is Shaliach for Bnei Akiva and the Jewish Agency for Israel

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Ashdod

Michael Blank

Ashdod is, perhaps, the epitome of the renaissance of which Israel represents. The Tanach (Shmuel I, chapter 5) tells us that when the Philistines took the Ark of the Covenant, they took it to Ashdod. This was not a friendly place in Biblical times; indeed, it remained unconquerable even for Judah haMacabee.

Then, from about the 7th century it was under Arab control, and known as Ishdud. By 1945, there were some 4,620 Arabs to 290 Jews, and was a thriving agricultural town growing citrus fruits, bananas and cereals. During the War of Independence, it was the northernmost stronghold for the Egyptian army, but when the IDF captured it in November 1948, the few hundred remaining Arab residents left for the Gaza strip.

Now, however, Ashdod is a thriving hub of Israeli society. It is the multicultural melting pot-Israel's microcosm-with Russians, Arabs, French, Moroccans and Ethiopians. It's population is also highly varied across the religious spectrum. Ashdod is Israel's busiest port, providing Israel with a gateway to the world. As with Israel's story, Ashdod has gone from being a town that was a shame to the name of God to being a great city that is an example to the world.

Michael Blank is in Shevet Shvut and was Rosh of H Course Machane 5775