

Ki Sisa 2017

1.

Golden calf

How could the Jews who experienced so many miraculous miracles stoop so low and worship a golden calf? Rabbi Chaim Shmuelevitz (Sichos mussar mamer 55) **explains** that idolatry is different than every other sin. Tzaddikim occasionally stumble with other sins unlike idolatry. The yeitzer hara isn't able to convince the tzaddik to worship idols as stated in mesechas Shabbos (105b). The Gemara informs us of the yeitzer hara's strategy. The yeitzer hara first says to violate a small sin. The next day it says transgress a bigger sin etc. The yeitzer then finally says worship idolatry. The yeitzer hara tacitly works in stages. It knows the tzaddikim won't originally worship idols. However, the yeitzer will slowly trap them. The Jews in the desert reached a very high level. A maidservant at the splitting of the sea witnessed even that which Yechezkel didn't witness. They stooped from such a high level to such a low level. That being so; how did the yeitzer hara get them to sin so drastically and not gradual? The pasuk (Shemos 32) states that Moshe delayed from descending from Har Sinai. They then gathered and decided to make the golden calf. The Gemara in Shabbos (88) explains that they miscalculated the times. The Satan then showed them Moshe's coffin. Aaron then said that we don't know what happened to Moshe. Since they were scared, the Satan was able to cause them to do sins that they would have never normally have done. **The Satan doesn't need to gradually cause someone to perform a big when he is scared. This is how the Satan caused these important Jews to sin. They lost hope and became depressed.**

2.

Shabbos

The Gemara in Shabbos (10b) relates a conversation between Hashem and Moshe. Hashem told Moshe that He has a good gift; Shabbos. This is similar to a chason who gives gifts to his kala and vice versa. If they keep the gifts then their relationship is still good. However, if the gifts are returned then it's obvious that the relationship is over. The same applies to Shabbos. The special gift of Shabbos testifies to the eternal covenant between us and Hashem. If the Jews remove their gift, Shabbos, then this testifies that the connection between them and Hashem has been severed. With this we can understand one of the zemiros on Shabbos. We say (Shabbos zemer) 'Anyone who sanctifies Shabbos properly and guards it from being profaned, his reward is great according to his action.' 'כל מקדש שביעי כראוי לו, כל שומר שבת כדת מחללו, שכרו הרבה מאד על פי פעלו.' The Chafetz Chaim says there are two types of people who keep Shabbos. One is careful not to desecrate any of the 39 Melachos. The other person is at a higher level though, because he sanctifies Shabbos by feeling the loftiness of Shabbos and recognizing that there is something special about Shabbos. This person gets a lot of reward! These two types of people are incomparable! Each of them gets rewarded, but it's in relation to how much they put in. **Someone who actively sanctifies Shabbos by singing zemiros and goes out of his way to be proactive and bask in the kedusha (holiness) of Shabbos is doing a lot more than someone who merely sits around passively and makes sure *not* to do anything bad.**

The heart is essential for survival. It is possible to live without many limbs. Conversely, it is impossible to live heartless. Shabbos is the heart of the Jewish people. Since there are

unfortunately so many Jews who desecrate Shabbos, mashiach hasn't come yet. Why do so many people unfortunately violate Shabbos? The yeitzer hara says how can you keep Shabbos and not work; you will lose out on so much money. The truth is the opposite is true; in Shabbos's merit we will be more financially successful during the weeks work. We will be repaid for abstaining from working on Shabbos. We find this by the mann as well. Even though this is illogical and unexplainable, nevertheless this is the actuality. The Gemara in Beitza (16a) states that all of one's income is determined or Rosh Hashana except for the money that is spent Shabbos, Rosh Chodesh, Yom Tov and chinuch (Jewish education). (כל מזונותיו של אדם קצובים לו מראש השנה ועד) יום הכפורים, חוץ מהוצאת שבתות והוצאת יום טוב, והוצאת בניו לתלמוד תורה. שאם פחת פוחתין לו, ואם הוסיף תלמוד = תשרי. The Beur Hativ (242, 2) points out that the word תשרי stands for this. (מוסיפין לו תלמוד = תשרי. The Gemara says that regarding the aforementioned exceptions the more one spends the more one will receive. The Gemara in Shabbos (104a) explains that someone who goes to purify himself will be given siyata dishmaya. (בא ליטהר מסייעים אותו.) The Chafetz Chaim was in Warsaw he was informed that Shabbos was publically being desecrated. He told them that when two countries wage war against each other, after many people die, they need to temporarily stop fighting in order to clean up all of the dead bodies so that they won't get eaten by the birds. The wounded soldiers must be transferred to the hospital. Those who were wounded in the hand or foot could be healed. However, it is pointless to transfer someone who has an incurable crushed brain and will die within a few hours, to the hospital. The Torah informs us that there are various types of sins. Some are worse than others. A public desecration of Shabbos is a very serious sin. We must try to cause others to keep Shabbos. There is another story of a Rav who invited the Chafetz Chaim to his city to speak to the Jews there about the importance of not publically desecrating Shabbos. He told them that Shabbos is our souls and it is impossible to survive without it. No loss will result because of observing Shabbos.

Shabbos is a sign between us and Hashem as stated in the pasuk (31, 17). Signs on top of stores indicate what the purpose of the store is. When the store is closed the sign isn't lit up. However, once the sign is removed it is known that the store is closing down or has closed down. The same applies to Shabbos. Shabbos symbolizes that Hashem created the world over a period of six days and rested on the seventh day. **Our Shabbos observance demonstrates that we acknowledge that Hashem created the world and that He is the master over everything and that we are obligated to do his will. The sign isn't removed if we transgress a mitzvah, it just isn't lit up. However, if we violate Shabbos then the sign is completely removed and our faith in Hashem is uprooted.** The Rambam (hilchos Shabbos perek lamed) says one who sins is called a sinner. However, one who publically violates Shabbos is like a goy (non-Jew).