



Tiferet

ת פ א ר ת



TIFERET UPDATES

This Week in Tiferet

Tiferet students enjoyed a memorable **Purim** together this year, filled with Torah and fun! First, we spent Shabbat Zachor together here in Ramat Beit Shemesh. In addition to the regular schedule, we were privileged to hear from noted author and lecturer, **Rebbetzin Shira Smiles**, at Seuda Shilshit, who spoke about the spiritual significance of Purim. On Motzaei Shabbat, we held our **Purim chagiga**, filled with music, dancing, and side-splitting comedy by our students and staff. On Purim day, all students were invited to join the Mayer and Rosner families for their seudot at their homes – where every student prepared a dvar Torah in honor of the day! We hope you all enjoyed and grew from Purim as much as our students did this year!

תורת תפארת

Face Time

Rav Elie Mayer (ravmayer@gmail.com)

Parshat Parah - Ki Tisa

In an almost 4000 year history replete with truly great individuals, Moshe Rabbeinu stands as the greatest of all. In our Parsha, Moshe reaches the ultimate level of prophesy, speaking to G-d. However, whenever I read Parshat Ki Tisa I cannot help but feel pained for the tragedy of Moshe. He sacrificed a normal family life with his wife Tzipora and their two children. He descended Har Sinai with the Luchot, only to discover that Am Yisrael declined into avodah zarah. The culmination of his mission, bringing Am Yisrael to Eretz Yisrael didn't materialize and instead ended with his death so close to the finish line -- what tragedy! Yet, to me, the most painful of all is the end of the Parsha. As incorrectly depicted by Michelangelo, Moshe's experience of receiving the Luchot left him radiating light. The people were scared to approach him. *וייראו מגשת אליו*. The navi who sacrificed so much for his people could no longer engage them directly. Moshe reached such dizzying spiritual heights that his people could not relate to him or even speak to him. The one that spoke face to face to Hashem, now could not speak face to face to man.

Despite this, the Torah attests that there was no greater leader. However, our Parsha speaks of another great leader with a very different style - Aaron haKohen. Whereas Moshe was the man of G-d, Aaron was the man of the people. The account of the people's reaction to Moshe's death in contrast to the death of Aaron is striking. The midrash teaches that the entire nation mourned for Aaron and only the students of Moshe Rabbeinu mourned Moshe's death. The Gemara in Mesechet Sanhedrin describes Moshe's leadership as *יקוב הדין את ההר* - the halacha can penetrate the mountain - Halacha conquers all. We follow strict halacha and do not give room to compromise. The Gemara continues: *אבל אהרון אוהב שלום ורודף שלום* - however, Aaron's approach was to compromise and make peace.

The way in which Moshe and Aaron reacted to *חטא העגל* is another interesting contrast between their two models of leadership. Moshe reacted by shattering the Luchot. Aaron's reaction is a bit more curious. In our Parsha, the rabble surround Aaron and said: *קום עשה לנו אלקים*. Aaron didn't rebuke them as one might have expected, rather, he instructed them to give him their gold jewelry and he made the *עגל הזהב* himself. Of course, Aaron's motivation was to both stall and to lessen their culpability through his involvement --taking one for the team.

Continued on pg. 2

Last Wednesday, our students participating in the "Big Sister" program, ran a hamantashen baking event for their "little sisters" in the neighborhood. Kol Hakavod to Dani Samet for organizing such a wonderful chesed event!



MAZAL TOV!

Mazal Tov to Marni (Shubowitz – 5767, 5768) and Joel Eizikovitz on the birth of a daughter, Tzivya Shoshana! May they be zochim to raise her l'Torah, l'chupa u'l'maasim tovim!

Mazal Tov to Becky Zendel (5768) on her engagement to Shai Berliner! May they be zochim to build a bayit ne'eman b'Yisrael!

תורת תפארת (המשך)

The Torah says that Moshe was the greatest man who ever lived and on the other hand, the Mishneh implores us to be of Aaron's students: אוהב שלום ורודף שלום אוהב את הבריות ומקרבן לתורה. Moshe and Aaron led Am Yisrael in very different ways: which one of them is the quintessential leader?

The irony of the Parah Aduma seems to suggest that it is Aaron. The Para Adumah alone purifies Am Yisrael from המת. טומאת המת. The Kohen Gadol is required to be טהור in order to bring the sacrifice but becomes טמא in the process. In effect, the Kohen sacrifices his own purity for the sake of the purity of the Am. The Lubavitcher Rebbe learns from this a precedent for sacrificing some of your own spirituality for the sake of elevating others. This is precisely what Aaron haKohen did with his involvement in חטא העגל. Perhaps, Parshat Parah is telling us that Aaron haKohen's model of compromise and being a man of the people is the consummate Jewish leader.

It is not a coincidence that the parsha of Moshe wearing a mask follows Purim. Perhaps, the custom is less about wearing the mask than putting it on so that we can remove it. We need to be holy and righteous but not at the expense of our relationships. This means removing our masks which interfere with our interpersonal connections and sacrificing a bit of our purity to relate to and inspire those that are not on our level.

A majority of our nation are not openly connected to Torah observance and yet, there are many religious Jews who do not involve themselves in Jewish outreach out of fear of being negatively affected. We need to be leaders who are relatable and willing to sacrifice our purity for the greater good of Am Yisrael. Am Yisrael needs you. May we merit to attain great levels of righteousness and still be able to relate to and inspire those around us.

"Hard To Understand" Batsheva Feldman (5773)

In this week's parsha, after Chet Haegel, Moshe pleads for Hashem to forgive Bnei Yisrael. When Hashem forgives Bnei Yisrael, Moshe sees this as an opportune time to ask Hashem to understand Hashem's Kavodecha, His reasoning why things happen. In response, Hashem tells Moshe that a person can not see Hashem's face and live. He further says that He will then remove His hand and will be able to see Hashem's back but His face will not be seen. Throughout our lifetimes there are many events that occur that we are not able to understand why they are happening and Hashem's wisdom in it. The words of "you will see My back" mean that it is only after some time has passed, one can possibly understand His actions. Only after the fact are we sometimes able to see why it was supposed to happen.

This is very appropriate for right after Purim. Purim is a holiday all about Hester Panim. Hester Panim is the concept of Hashem's face being covered and concealed, so that one is unable to see Hashem as clearly. Throughout the whole saga, Hashem was deeply involved, as always. All of the small things that appeared to be tragic were just part of Hashem's grander scheme. Now we are able to look back and see all the events as complete acts of Yad Hashem. Someone is only able to reach a point of possibly linking together all the facts and recognizing Hashem's ways and behavior only after the fact.

Many times in life things occur that we are unable to understand. Things happen and we view them as disturbances and bumps in the road that completely throw us off the direction of where we thought we were supposed to be going how. We get upset and it seems to us as if it happened for no reason at all. Then later, whether it is days or decades, we look back and stand amazed at things that in our view seemed terrifying. Oncethey are viewed all lined up together it is so clearly Hashem's hand. Other times, it is not clear ever why those events had needed to occur. All of this is from Hashem. Every occurrence in our life is from Hashem. We are not privy to why it needs to be happening but we have the assurance that Hashem is watching us and although we can't see so clearly why - there is a why.