



## Parshat Ki Tisa

By: Rabanit  
K. Sarah Cohen

PARSHA

HALACHA

STORY

Q&amp;A

SHIURIM

JOKE

RIDDLE

QUOTES

DAVEN FOR

PARSHAT KI TISA

In what is probably the most anti-climactic event in Jewish history, the nation that was about to receive the Torah Ha'kedoshah from Moshe Rabeinu (a"h) turns away from the will of Hashem. After 40 days they begin to worry that Moshe Rabeinu will never return and they panic. A new leader is created by the people - The Golden Calf. The Torah describes the scene in Sefer Shemot:

"The people offered (the calf) peace offerings and they sat down to eat and drink and they got up to revel."

Hashem immediately commands Moshe Rabeinu to descend Har Sinai in order to admonish the corrupt nation.

As Moshe Rabeinu comes down the mountain he hears tumultuous shouts emanating from the people who were celebrating their new found god. His talmid, Yehoshuah (a"h), also hears the sounds and declares, "the sound of battle is in the camp."

Moshe Rabeinu listens and amends the theory stating, "It is not the sound of victory, nor the sound of defeat. I hear the sound of distress."

When Moshe Rabeinu sees the Golden Calf he breaks the Luchot and restores order, sanity and the belief in

Hashem.

What is odd about the episode is the contrast of the sounds made and the sounds heard. If the Bnei Yisrael reveled and celebrated then why did Yehoshuah hear sounds of war and how did Moshe Rabeinu hear sounds of distress? They should both have heard the sound of celebration and festivity. The answer can be explained with a story.

Rav Chaim of Sanz (a"h) had a custom: he would test the local children on a monthly basis. The children would recite orally from the Mishnah or Gemara and Rav Chaim would reward them generously with candy and money.

Once, there was a group of secular Jews who decided to fool Rav Chaim. They taught a Talmudic selection to a gentile child and reviewed it with him until he knew it perfectly. They dressed him like a Chasidic child and had him stand in line with all the other children to be tested.

The rabbi listened to the young boy intently. The other children were puzzled: they did not remember this boy from their cheder, yet they were amazed at the remarkable fluency he displayed in reciting his piece.

Rav Chaim was not impressed at all. He turned to the young man and said, "Please tell your father that there are better ways to earn a few coins!" With that he dismissed the child.

REFUAH SHLEIMAH  
&  
HATZLACHAH

Yonah bat Henya  
 Michael ben Yonah  
 Ro'ee ben Rachel  
 May bat Ilana  
 Ben Tzvi ben Ilana  
 Gidon ben Esther  
 Esther bat Mazal  
 Yosef ben Devorah  
 Yaffa bat Rivka  
 Baruch Chai ben Zoya  
 Rivkah bat Malkah  
 Nissan ben Liza  
 Gavriel ben Toviyo  
 David ben Liza  
 Baila Chava  
 bat  
 Sorka  
 Freida Leah  
 bat  
 Pesha Rachel  
 Yehoshuah Mordechai  
 ben  
 Leah Gita  
 Chaim Yehudah  
 ben  
 Aidel

The secularists were shocked. "How did the Rabbi know?"

Their curiosity forced them to approach Rav Chaim who smiled and said, "There are two ways to say the Gemara. One is filled with spirituality. The child's body is swaying and filled with the emotion of Torah. The other is just repetitive rote. This young man lacked the fire and the true joy that the Jewish children have when learning Torah. I knew he was not one of ours."

The Jews got up to revel around the golden calf. Moshe Rabeinu and Yehoshuah however knew the difference between true joy and confusion. The revelry of the people was in essence distressed but it was masked with drinks and noise makers.

True joy is coupled with a certainty and a sense of direction; something lacking for those Jews celebrating the idol. The Jews may have gotten up to celebrate, but it was no celebration. It may have looked like a party to the untrained eye, but Moshe Rabeinu knew the true sound of joy. It did not exist with the Golden Calf.

True joy is the harmony of spirituality and contentment. Superficial sounds of euphoria and celebration are heard by those with true insight as sounds of battle and distress.

**HALACHAH CORNER**

**QUESTION:** Do we believe someone who claims he's a Kohen?

**ANSWER:** The Gemara draws a distinction between the status of a Mamzer and that of a Chalal. A Mamzer is a child of a forbidden union, such as if a married woman had an adulterous relationship. The child from this union has the permanent status of Mamzer, which forbids him or her from marrying (though a Mamzer and a Mamzeret may marry one another).

The term "Chalal" refers to the product of a union between a Kohen and a woman forbidden only to Kohanim. For example, if a Kohen marries a divorcee, in violation of the Torah prohibition, the product of this marriage is called a Chalal, or a Chalah in the case of a girl. A chalal is not considered a Kohen, even though his father is a Kohen and his last name is "Cohen." A chalah may not marry a Kohen, even though her father is a Kohen, since she was born from a relationship that violated the laws of the Kohanim. Unlike a Mamzeret, however, she may marry non-Kohanim.

The Gemara states that "Jews recognize the Mamzerim among them, but do not recognize the Chalahim among them." This means that the phenomenon of Mamzer is generally widely publicized and when there is a Mamzer, people know about it. Therefore, when two people decide to marry, it is not necessary for each to do thorough investigations to ensure that the other is not a Mamzer or Mamzeret.

The status of Mamzerut is well-known and therefore in the absence of any particular reason to suspect that somebody has this status, there is no need to thoroughly investigate a potential spouse's family background to check for "Mamzerut."

The status of "Chalalut," however, is not widely known. People are not necessarily aware when a Kohen marries someone forbidden to him and it is therefore possible for a person to be a Chalal or Chalah without it being public knowledge. Therefore, we cannot automatically trust a person who claims to be a Kohen.

Continued on page 3

## HALACHAH

Continued

Of course, if one comes from a family that is well-established as proper Kohanim, then we certainly treat him as a Kohen. But if a person is not from one's own town and no one in the community knows him, we cannot automatically accept his claim of being a Kohen.

The Shulchan Aruch states that the individual in such a case should not be given the first Aliya and should not recite Birkat Kohanim - and certainly would not be given Terumah in the days when Kohanim received Terumah - until his background is investigated and he is determined to be a proper Kohen. Since the status of "Chalalut" is not widely publicized, a person's claim to be a proper Kohen cannot be accepted without some research into his background.

The Rama (a"h) disagrees with the ruling of the Shulchan Aruch. He claims that in our day and age, we can accept a person's claim that he is a Kohen and call him to the Torah as a Kohen. From the Shulchan Aruch, however, as mentioned, it emerges that we cannot trust a person's claim even with respect to the Aliya to the Torah. Therefore, if a person moves into the community and claims to be a Kohen, his background should be checked before he is treated as a Kohen.



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### WITH A LITTLE FAITH

Yisrael was sitting at his daughter's Sheva Berachot and eating the appetizer when his mechutan leaned over to say something.

"Look Yisrael, I know you committed to giving \$50,000 for the wedding. The truth is that the last few years have been good for me. I mean really good. I'm letting you off the hook and I'll pick up the tab all by myself. I just didn't want to say anything before the wedding because I wanted to make sure you're the type of people who can take on responsibility."

Needless to say, Yisrael enjoyed the Sheva Berachot immensely.

Most people who marry off their children wonder, "Where is the money going to come from?" With a little faith, it can come from the guy sitting next to you at the table. And in answer to your question, I do not know if the mechutan in this story has another son.

### QUOTES

\*\* "It is the unseen and the spiritual in people that determines the outward and the actual."

\*\* "Happiness cannot be traveled to, owned, earned, worn or consumed. Happiness is the spiritual experience of living every minute with love, grace, and gratitude."

## DELICIOUS

As Reb Meir of Premishlan arrived in the village, the townspeople gathered to greet him. Reb Meir and his chasidim were taken to the home of Reb Shimon who was an outstanding baal tzedakah. Since it was almost time for Shabat, everyone hurried to make certain that everything would be ready in time for candle lighting.

That Friday night in shul was filled with excitement and anticipation. All the people were so happy to have such a prominent Rebbe in their community. They all focused on the Rebbe as they watched him daven with tremendous kavanah.

Following Kabbalat Shabat and Arvit, the Rebbe walked back to the home of Reb Shimon, where he would spend a most memorable night. The zemirot were beautiful, the Divrei Torah were deep and meaningful. Only the food left quite an impression that the Rebbe and his chasidim would not forget for some time.

When Reb Meir made Hamotzi and tasted the Challah, he immediately realized that this was no ordinary Challah.



There was something very unique about this Challah; it had the taste of Gan Eden. Reb Meir inquired as to who baked the Challah, to which Reb Shimon replied, "My wife." Reb Meir then asked Reb Shimon to find out from his wife what ingredient was placed into the dough that made the Challah taste so special.

When Reb Shimon asked his wife, she explained that she was not the one who baked the Chalot that week. An orphan girl had knocked on their door earlier that day and asked if she could do some work around the house for a nominal fee. Reb Shimon's wife was anxious to help this young girl and offered to let her bake the Chalot.

The search for the missing ingredient continued. The 11-year old girl was called in and was asked what she added to Challah recipe that enhanced its taste.

"I didn't put anything different than what I usually put," said the girl.

Curious to get to the bottom of this mystery, the Rebbe asked the girl to explain the step by step process of the making of the Challah. The little girl explained that she had rolled out the Challah in the manner that she remembered her mother rolling out the matzah dough.

The Rebbe smiled as the girl remembered how her mother would take out the rolling pin and along with the repetitive motions, she would sing the melodious tunes of Hallel.

The girl stopped while she reflected for a moment how her mother had passed away not too long ago. And then she continued to speak, "I sang the songs my mother used to sing; the songs of Hallel. And I couldn't help but cry. I was crying and braiding the Challah," she explained.

A meshulach from Bnei Brak was on a fundraising trip and stopped in New York. He visited the home of a wealthy philanthropist who was unfortunately childless. After the rich man handed the check to the meshulach, he asked him to do him a favor upon returning to Eretz Yisrael.

The Rebbe smiled, thanked the girl and wished her well. He was happy that he had solved this mystery of the Challah and that he finally knew what the added ingredient was.

"I now know why the Challah had the taste of Gan Eden. Life my dear students, is not simple. And for as many moments of joy as we experience, there always seems to be even more pain at times. But when a young girl can transform her tears into the song of Hallel, then we have experienced a small taste of Gan Eden."



## THANK YOU

Dear Friends,

I want to personally thank so many of you for your generosity of spirit and support over the chag. Your contributions to our wonderful organization will help enhance our upcoming projects and bring them to fruition. I had the zechut of visiting the talmidot in several neighborhoods this Purim and I was welcomed with such a grace and warmth. Thank you for your hospitality and kindness. I truly appreciate everything you all do to ensure that we continue to spread Torah to women around the world.

I was especially moved by the women of New Jersey (Teaneck) who opened their hearts and homes to me with such warmth and respect for Torah. You all made me feel so special - Ashreichem.

I wanted you all to know that B'ezrat Hashem every dollar that was raised over this chag will be used for the sake of the continuous spreading of Torah to women in all parts of the world. B'ezrat Hashem in the coming months we will be launching the first "for women by women" website for Torah learning and you will have had the zechut to be a part of this momentous project. I will as well be visiting various neighborhoods to teach classes on Mikveh and Shalom Bayit - offering women the spiritual side of the mitzvot that surround these two subjects. All this and so much more will be made possible because of your contributions and dedication to the fortification of Torah learning for women.

My mission these next 2-3 years is to inspire as many women around the world as possible in areas of Emunah, Taharat Ha'mishpachah, Shalom bayit, Tzniyut and Ahavat Hashem. I pray that we will have success in this endeavor and with Hashem's help and your continued support - we will bring Mashiach be'karov.

All My Love,  
K. Sarah Cohen



### RIDDLE

As a whole I am both safe and secure. Behead me and I become a place of meeting. Behead me again and I am the partner of ready. Restore me and I become the domain of beasts.

WHAT AM I?

Answer on page 9



### JOKE

A man wanted to be charitable and told the homeless man at his door, "If you paint my porch in the back of the house, I'll give you \$100.00".

Later that day, the homeless man knocks on the door and says, "I'm all done. And by the way, it's not a porch it's a Mercedes."

### THOUGHT OF THE DAY

This is what is most characteristic of Torah Law: It teaches that the normal mood of one's life should be not the bowed down, broken feeling - rather the joy of life faithfully devoted to service of Hashem.

(Rav Shimshon Rafael Hirsch)

**ATTENTION LADIES**

Call us to host a learning group in your community.

**(347) 430-5700**

Rabanit K. Sarah Cohen will be speaking on the following dates:

**Date:** March 19, 2017

**Time:** 7:45pm

**Place:** 1288 West Laurelton Parkway,  
Teaneck, NJ 07666

**Date:** April 26, 2017

**Time:** 8:15pm

**Place:** 902 Ocean Prkwy #6D, Bklyn, NY

**Date:** April 29, 2017 - Shabat

**Time:** 5:00pm

**Place:** 1364 E7th - Bklyn, NY

**Date:** April 30, 2017

**Time:** 7:45pm

**Place:** 1100 Trafalgar St. - Teaneck NJ

**Date:** May 10, 2017

**Time:** 8:15pm

**Place:** 902 Ocean Prkwy #6D, Bklyn, NY

**Date:** May 21, 2017

**Time:** 7:45pm

**Place:** 275 Taft Court, Paramus NJ

**Date:** May 24, 2017

**Time:** 8:15pm

**Place:** 902 Ocean Prkwy #6D, Bklyn, NY

**Date:** June 07, 2017

**Time:** 8:15pm

**Place:** 902 Ocean Prkwy #6D Brklyn, NY

**Date:** June ?? - To Be Announced

**Time:** 7:45pm

**Place:** Teaneck NJ

**Date:** July ?? - To Be Announced

**Time:** 7:45pm

**Place:** 1288 West Laurelton Parkway  
Teaneck, NJ 07666

**Date:** August ?? - To Be Announced

**Time:** 7:45pm

**Place:** 115 Addison Rd.  
Bergenfield, NJ 07621

## *INTRODUCING...*

### A SPECIAL PROGRAM FOR LADIES

The Rabanit will now be offering INDIVIDUAL, one-on-one classes on the phone for women who wish like to learn ONE topic in depth.

The advantage of the private classes is the ability to learn the subject of your choice in a deep and detailed manner - and the opportunity to ask questions and receive undivided attention.

#### HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS:

1. Choose a topic from the list below
2. Call our office and schedule your appointment for the time and day that best suits you
3. Depending on the topic you choose, an email with any materials you require for the lectures will be sent to you so you can follow along as you learn together with the Rabanit.
4. Payment for the series is made at the commencement of your classes.
5. You are now ready to begin your enlightening journey!!

Below is the list of topics:

SHABAT  
EMUNAH & BITACHON  
THE SECRET OF THE MIKVEH  
SHALOM BAYIT  
TEFILAH  
WOMEN IN JEWISH HISTORY  
THE PARSHAH IN DEPTH  
BREISHIT

Call To Begin Your Journey  
(347) 430-5700

We're beginning our second  
cycle

## ANNOUNCEMENT

Audio-visual shiurim of

**Rabanit**

*Kineret Sarah Cohen*

Are Now Available For Viewing At

**[www.torahanytime.com](http://www.torahanytime.com)**



**Instructions:** Register for free and click on the “Ladies” tab at the top of the Home Page. Scroll down and look for Rabanit K. Sarah Cohen. Underneath the image for the Rabanit, click on the “follow” tab if you want to be notified via email or text about a shiur that has become available for viewing.

Shiur To Post Tuesday, Mar 14

**Parshat Ki Tisa**

Har Sinai & Chet Ha'egel -  
The Wonder Of Each

Log on and enjoy the live  
lectures and be inspired.

## THIS WEEK IN JEWISH HISTORY 15 ADAR

### PURIM KATAN

In regular years, the 15th of Adar is Shushan Purim, the festival that celebrates in Yerushalayim and other ancient walled cities - the salvation of the Jewish people from Haman's evil decree in the year 3405 from creation. In a leap year - which has two Adars - Shushan Purim is observed in Adar II, and the 15th of Adar I is designated as *Shushan Purim Katan*, the "Minor Shushan Purim."

There are no special observances associated with Shushan Purim Katan, other than the omission of Tachnun from the daily prayers and a prohibition against fasting or holding eulogies on this day. The Shulchan Aruch cites an opinion that one should increase in festivity and joy, but there is no obligation to do so.



Q & A

Dear Rabanit,

I work in an office that has many kinds of people. One of my co-workers is a woman whose mother married a Christian man. She considers herself both Jewish and Christian. I know that according to our tradition, Judaism is determined by the mother but I would like to know what I can answer when she asks me, why being Jewish depends on whether or not your mother was Jewish? Why doesn't the father's Jewishness count?

**RESPONSE:** Thank you so much for taking the time to write to me. The answer to your question can prevent people in the same circumstance as your co-worker from making the mistake of following two different roads. It also strengthens the fact that we need to join a shiur group, attend classes and refresh our minds when it concerns not only observance

of mitzvot, but as religious people we need to attain knowledge that will provide others with answers they are seeking.

Since the answer to this question is not a simple one, I provide you with a basic answer that you can use whenever this question arises again. For a more detailed response, you can call our office or come to my shiurim.

First of all, the inference for matrilineal descent comes from the Torah. We find that in Sefer Devarim (7: 3-4), it states: *"You shall not intermarry with them; you shall not give your daughter to his son, and you shall not take his daughter for your son, for he will cause your child to turn away from Me, and they will worship the gods of others."*

The Torah Hakedoshah's implication here is that children from such a union will be torn away from Judaism. Since the pasuk states "for *he* (a non-Jewish father) will cause your child to turn away...", this implies that a child born to a Jewish mother is Jewish (*"your child"*);

whereas if a Jewish man marries a non-Jewish woman, the child is not Jewish – and as such there is no concern that "she," the child's mother, will turn the child away from Judaism.

Although one's Jewishness is dependent on the mother, there are other genealogical factors that are important in Judaism, such as one's tribal affiliation, which is contingent on the father. Therefore, whether one is a Kohen, Levi, or Yisrael depends on the father's lineage.

The reason for this is as follows: There are two basic components to a human being: His essence and that which he projects forth, such as his talents and abilities. In Kabbalistic terminology, this second component is

Continued on page 9



## WEEKLY QUESTION

Continued

referred to as “revelations” of himself, as opposed to his essential self.

The creation of a child requires both a man and woman, but for entirely different functions. The mother provides the essence, while the father adds the potential for what the child will eventually project – the revelations of his self. This is due to the different natures of male and female souls. The male soul emanates from Hashem’s emotional qualities, such as kindness, discipline and harmony – qualities that do not define Hashem Himself, but rather are the means through which He relates to His creations. The female soul, on the other hand, originates in Hashem’s attribute of malchut, royalty.

According to the teachings of Kabbalah, malchut is rooted in the essence of G-d that transcends all divine “revelations.” The essence of a Jew is his Jewish soul, his Jewish identity. This is inherited from the mother. His tribe – a revelation or projection, the way his Judaism is practiced and actualized – is begotten from the father.

In addition, Jewishness is not in our DNA. It is in our soul. The reason it is passed down through the maternal line is not just because it is easier to identify who your mother is. It is because the soul identity is more directly shaped by the mother than the father. In other words, from a purely physical perspective, a child is more directly connected to their mother.

The father's contribution to the production of a child is instantaneous and remote. The mother, on the other hand, gives her very self to the child. The child is conceived inside the mother, develops inside

## ANSWER TO RIDDLE

A Stable



the mother, is sustained and nourished by the mother, and is born from the mother.

This is not to say that a father and child are not intimately attached. Of course they are. But as deep and essential as the bond between father and child may be, the child's actual body was never a part of his father's body. But it was a part of his mother. Every child begins as an extension of his mother's body. This is a simple fact. This does not mean the child will be closer to his mother, more similar to his mother, or follow his mother's ways. From a natural physical bond perspective - there is a more direct physical link between mother and child, because a child begins as a part of his mother.

The body and its workings are a mirror image of the workings of the soul. The physical world is a parallel of the spiritual world. And so, the direct physical link between mother and child is a reflection of a soul link between them. While the father's soul contributes to the identity of the child's soul, it is the mother's soul that actually defines it. If the mother has a Jewish soul, the child does too.

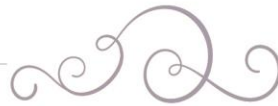
If the mother is not Jewish but the father is, his Jewish soul will not be extended to the child. There may be a spark of Jewishness there, but if it was not placed in a Jewish mother, the child will have to go through conversion for their Jewishness to be activated.

Hence, Jewishness is passed down by the mother because being Jewish is a spiritual identity, it defines our very being. And our very being we get from our mother, both in body and in soul.

## *Newsletter Dedication*

### **Sara Bat Mimon Ha'Kohen (A"H)**

Ohel Sara is named after this tzadikah (my grandmother). May the inspiration that women draw from this weekly newsletter benefit her neshamah in Gan Eden and may we all be redeemed as a result.



*Ohel Sara wishes all it's readers a Shabbat Shalom u'Mevorach!*



### **Candlelighting Time**

6:47PM  
NY TIME



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to Ohel Sara through Paypal:**

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