

Once a little girl asked me, "Rabbi, how come all calendars are sad?". I looked at her and I said, "I didn't know that calendars were sad". She said, "Yes, they are sad because their days are numbered". It's true that all of us eventually are going to die. The tragedy is not that we die but that some of us never live. We never make the best use out of our life. It is, though, terribly tragic when a person's life is cut off even before he has begun to live. When a young person is for no reason shot, it's a terrible thing. One of the most destructive concepts today is the idea that there is no objective morality, that we are all free to do what makes us feel good. The Ten Commandments were given on stone to teach us that it's the outside that makes the impression, that puts us on the right path, not the subjective inside forces about how we feel about something.

KI SISSA 1982
Rabbi Joseph Radinsky

In the Torah portion, Ki Sissa, we learn how the Jewish people worshipped the Golden Calf when Moshe delayed from coming down from the mountain. The people are people of little faith. They cannot wait. They are very impatient. They wanted to realize their fantasies. The Torah says "and the people saw Ki Bosheish Moshe" that Moshe delayed. Bosheish in Hebrew is the same word as shame. It was a shame that Moshe was not here. It's a shame that they could not enjoy the good things of life right now. They did not want to postpone gratifying their senses. Unfortunately, in our day and age we have similar problems. People talk all the time about things feeling good. They do not want to deny themselves anything. To them morality is determined solely by how they feel about something. They do not believe anymore in objective morality. They just believe in their subjective feelings. If something feels good it must be good. This is a tragedy.

21- K1 SISSA

MARCH 1982
Rabbi Joseph Radinsky

"Rabbi", someone asked me a little while ago, "you are always talking about relationships and the importance of relationships. Don't you believe that relationships can, also, be stifling, and that they can also hinder a person and harm him? Don't you think it is sometimes better that a person have no relationships than the types of relationships that we see around us so many times? After all, there is so much hate and ugliness in these relationships. We see so many people who just love to give it to their spouses or children or others. Wouldn't they be better off if they did not have these types of relationships?"

✓ In the Kedusha^h which we say at least twice a day, when we repeat the ^eShmone ^hEsreⁱ, we speak about G-d's holiness. Holiness really means otherness. "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts." G-d is separate. He is different. He is not like us. He is unique, and we remind ourselves at least twice a day in the Kedusha^h about the fact that G-d is ✓ holy, other from us. However, Judaism is not a religion which just stresses G-d's transcendence, his otherness. We also, in the same Kedusha^h, speak about the glory of G-d emanating from His abode and how the Lord reigns forever in our lives and in the lives of all human beings. G-d is completely other, but He is, also, completely accessible. We believe that He is in each of us. That's what our soul is, the piece of G-d that is in each of us. G-d is close to us. We can talk to Him at any time and we know that He will listen. He may not do what we want, but He will do what is ultimately good for us and for all mankind. G-d is completely unique and special, yet He has a bond with each of us, a special bond. G-d does not have a body like us nor a mind like ours, but He has a close special bond with each of us which we can feel.

We, in Judaism, have never been troubled by the problem of "if G-d is omniscient, if He knows everything, how can we have free will?". We have never been bothered by that problem, as Maimonides said, because G-d's mind is different from ours. G-d exists on a different level of being, and it is possible for Him to know everything, and for us to still have free will. G-d's mind is different from ours. This can best be explained by the fact that if we are on one side of the mountain, we cannot see the other side.

MARCH 1982
Rabbi Joseph Radinsky
PAGE TWO

However, if we are on the top of a mountain, we can see both sides. To G-d, everything is possible, even things which are not possible for us. G-d and man intersect only in that we have a common morality. G-d expects us to live by His standards which He has given us and by which He tells us He, too, ultimately abides. That, of course, is the basic Jewish belief, that the Judge of all the world does do justice, and that ultimately His justice will be seen.

Our relationship to G-d is the paradigm for all human relationships. Each human being is unique and special. In order for a human relationship to endure, that relationship must recognize the uniqueness and specialness and otherness of each of the parties. G-d has a bond with each of us even though He is unique and special, and we, too, have bonds with each other only if we, too, recognize that each of us is unique and special. The reason many relationships fail is because the parties in these relationships fail to recognize that both parties in the relationship are unique and special. One party should not be a carbon copy, a mere mirror image of the other. Each of us ^{has} ~~have~~ our own special ways and needs and each of us must be accommodated.

In the Torah portion, Ki Sisso, we have many of these ideas spelled out. The Jewish people sin with the sin of the golden calf. They fail to recognize that G-d is unique and special. They try to make Him an object of their own fantasies. They try to make G-d a projection of their own desires. G-d was to become an object. They no longer wanted a relationship with G-d. They wanted a relationship with their fantasies. Moshe prays for the people and G-d eventually forgives them. Moshe then asks that G-d reestablish His presence with the Jewish people. It is not enough just for G-d to forgive them. Moshe wants G-d's presence to be with them, too. Negative relationships are not relationships. Anonymity or the proximity of others do not constitute relationships. An act, a presence, a loving concern, a bond is required. "If Your presence does not go with me, do not bring me up from here, for how shall I know if I have found favor in ^Your eyes, I and Your people? Is it not that when You will go with us?"

MARCH 1982

Rabbi Joseph Radinsky

PAGE THREE

Also this thing that you spoke
G-d says, "All right, I will show you My glory. I will ^{do} ~~be with you~~" Then He tells Moshe to stand in the cleft of a rock while His glory will pass by. G-d's hand will shield ^{Moshe} ~~him~~ and ^{he} ~~Moshe~~ will only see G-d's back but not His face. This incident, the Rabbis explain, dramatically demonstrates that we cannot know G-d directly, that we can only know Him by what He does, by looking, so to speak, at His footprints in human history, and by recognizing Him in our soul. We know G-d by following His path, by doing good just as He does good, by being merciful just as He is merciful, by striving to cling to Him, by doing deeds of loving kindness.

This is really true of all relationships. It is impossible to know the essence of another human being. There is an impenetrable essence in each of us that no one can ever fathom. Every human being ultimately remains alone, but we can establish bonds and relationships with others by doing deeds of kindness, by sharing, by being concerned. We can only establish relationships with each other, though, if we learn to appreciate and to recognize each other's deeds, accomplishments, talents, feelings, etc. In order for a relationship to be successful, a relationship must respect the other party's uniqueness and specialness. It is easy to rip a person apart. It is easy to pick at another's faults. No one is perfect. In a marriage, it is easy to attack. It is easy to provoke your partner, but a marriage relationship, to last, must not violate certain parameters. It must never destroy the essence of an individual. If it does, that individual will be left nothing more than a cowering rag, and even the domineering, tyrannical partner will not be happy. He or she will quickly become bored with his or her rage.

It is our uniqueness which makes the world great. A symphony is composed of many different instruments. Each of these instruments must play with their own sound. If they do not, then the music will turn into cacophony. Of course, each piece in the orchestra must respect each other and play its part, but it must play it with its own sound and character. When every instrument of the orchestra plays in harmony, beautiful music ensues. When, however, instruments are broken or try to drown out other instruments,

MARCH 1982

Rabbi Joseph Radinsky

PAGE FOUR

the total music is harmed and it becomes almost nonexistent.

This, too, is true in the life of nations. The Jewish people have a special relationship to G-d. This is not an exclusive relationship. G-d has relationships with all peoples. Unfortunately, the nations of the world hate the Jews because of this relationship. Whether we Jews will admit it or not, Hitler claimed that Jews' greatest crime was that they gave the world a conscience. The nations of the world do not want us to be special and unique, to have our own song, and they always seek to destroy us. That is the story of Purim. Haman could not stand to see a people with its own laws and customs even though it was not harming anyone. He wanted to destroy them. He was even willing to pay a fortune to destroy them. This is the same today. The word, Zionist, has become a dirty word. A man who is ugly and sinister in the world, and even in certain circles of this country, is called a Zionist. In the U.N., Israel is condemned as a Zionist Nazi State. The Russians claimed that the Jews in Babi Yar were killed by the Zionists and Nazis. How ludicrous! How sad!

We believe that everyone should have a bond with everyone else and that everybody should be allowed to be special and unique. ^{These are} ~~That~~ the only true kinds of relationships there are. Other relationships are false. Moshe, when he went up to receive the second set of Ten Commandments, had to hew out the two tablets upon which the Ten Commandments were written ^{by} himself. This was different than with the first Ten Commandments when G-d had hewed out the stones. The first set of the Ten Commandments were given among thunder and lightning, the second set with silence but after Moshe received the second Ten Commandments his face glowed. He had worked hard, but he had established a relationship with G-d. The first Ten Commandments were just given to him.

In order for relationships to succeed, for a face to glow, we must recognize each other's uniqueness and also work hard to make sure that the bond between us is a bond expressed in deeds of loving, caring concern. Let us hope that the world, too, will allow the Jew to be himself and will not demand that we be just like everybody else

MARCH 1982

Rabbi Joseph Radinsky

PAGE FIVE

before they will establish bonds of friendship with us. I hope and pray that the day will come when all mankind's faces will glow from the happiness, joy, which comes from having relationships expressed in loving deeds ~~and~~ which respect every individual's and group's uniqueness.

21.
PARSHAS PORA
KI SISSA 1983
Rabbi Joseph Radinsky

In this week's Torah portion we learn about the worshipping of the golden calf. What was really so bad about worshipping the golden calf? It could not be because there was an image involved, because there was even an image in the Holy of Holies, in the Temple in the cherubim who the Rabbis say were children. There were lions and eagles on the curtains of the Tabernacle. What was so bad about the golden calf? Also, the Rabbis say that the purification rites associated with the Red Heifer, or calf, or cow, in effect purified or made up for the sin of the golden calf. It seems that it was not the golden calf that was itself wrong, but the relationship of the people to it. In the Kedusha we say, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. His glory fills the whole world." G-d is holy different from us. That's what the words mean but at the same time, G-d is close. We can speak to Him. We have a bond with Him, the bond of Mitzvahs. When we relate to G-d we have to realize that He is holy other than us. He is not the product of our fantasies. Each of us has a piece of G-d in us and when we relate to other human beings we must relate to them as unique creatures not as products of our fantasies. The trouble with the golden calf is that the people worshipped their fantasies. They were worshipping the product of their own imaginations. Unfortunately, this is true with our relationship with people, too. Many times we cannot have good relationships with people because we do not recognize that they are unique and special. We treat them as our fantasies. This is why so many marriages break up. Also, so many people are afraid of being unique and different. In our society there is a great deal of pressure to be the same. If you have special talents you should hide them. This is wrong. We should be proud that we are unique. This is also the same about being Jewish. It means being different and many people are afraid of being different, but they should not be because each of us is different and each of us should recognize the right of every person to be different and unique. We each have a relationship with each other based on kindness, the same type of bond that G-d has with us, the bond of Mitzvahs. The golden calf was an episode of the people failing to appreciate G-d's uniqueness and being in love with their fantasies. The Rabbis say that the Pura Aduma was an antidote to this because normally when a person became ritually unclean he could immerse himself

PARSHAS PORA
KI SISSA 1983
Rabbi Joseph Radinsky
PAGE TWO

in a mikvah and become clean. However, if he came into contact with human death he, himself, could not purify himself alone. True, he still had to go into a mikvah, but he also had to be sprinkled with the ashes of the Red Heifer. He could not do it himself. He needed a relationship with others. Otherwise life itself becomes overwhelming. Our fantasies end up by depressing us. They do not make life full. They, in effect, push life out. The sin of the golden calf was that the people worshipped their fantasies instead of having real relationships. That reminds me of the story of a man who tried to convince his friend to live with him. He said, "Oh, I will not feel comfortable." The man said, "No, you should feel it is your house. I want you to know it is your house." The man decided to live with him. Since he felt it was his house, the next day he sold it. This, of course, is what happens to many people. They fall in love with their fantasies and do not have any real relationship with G-d or with each other and, therefore, miss a lot in life.

26 ..
KI SISSA 1983
Rabbi Joseph Radinsky

In this week's Torah portion we learn how when the people saw that Moshe delayed coming down from the mountain they made a golden calf and worshipped it, and G-d saw this and became very angry and He told Moshe Rabbeinu "Hanichole, leave Me alone and I will destroy this people and make a new people from you". Moshe then answers, "Do not do it" and he gives three reasons why He should not destroy the Jewish people. "First, You brought them out of Egypt; second, what will the Egyptians say; and, third, remember Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob". The Rabbis learn that since G-d said, "Hanichole, leave Me alone" Moshe was able to argue with G-d. What does this mean that G-d gets angry and argues and wants us to change His mind? I thought that G-d was perfect. G-d here, of course, is just teaching us how we are supposed to behave, how we are supposed to order our relationships. G-d, by telling Moshe to leave Him alone, was actually telling him to interfere. When a spouse tells the other, "Leave me alone, I don't care what you do" you sure as heck better not do it. We have to know what people mean not just what they say. It is very important to read each other's feelings not just their words. But what kind of arguments did Moshe use against G-d? G-d knew all these arguments. Again, these were just to teach us. When Moshe said, "Remember, You took them out of Egypt" he was pointing out that they were not perfect. After all, they were just slaves. How could He expect them to act perfectly? We have to remember that we all make mistakes. In dealing with people you have to realize that people do make mistakes and you have to act accordingly. Second, when he said, "What will the Egyptians say?" he was saying, "G-d, why are You so strict on them? They are at least trying to do the right thing. The Egyptians worship idols all the time. The Egyptians do not even try." It is usually the case that we criticize harder those people who are trying. People who work for the community or are trying to raise money for the community and are working hard for good causes are always the butt of our criticism. They are at least trying. Sure, they make mistakes, but they are trying. And the third argument, "Remember the promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob". The Jewish people make mistakes but they have solid values they are working toward. They are not trying to do bad things. They are trying to achieve the ideals of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Many times they make mistakes, but they are trying. Unfortunately, in our human relationships we have a tendency

KI SISSA 1983

Rabbi Joseph Radinsky

PAGE TWO

to look at not what people really mean but at what they say. We also have a tendency to criticize heavily those people who are trying, those people who are working. This is wrong because it discourages people from working and it ends up in bitterness. We should all remember what G-d is telling us here when He let Moshe present these arguments to Him, that we are not all perfect but we should at least give credit to those people who try.

21.

KI SISSO 1984
Rabbi Joseph Radinsky

In the Torah portion, Ki Sisso, we have many different things that seem to be just thrown together. The Parsha is composed of many disparate elements. We first learn about how every individual from 20 years and up had to give half a shekel to the Temple. We then learn about how the laver was constructed between the altar and the sanctuary. We then learn about how the spices were made and the different parts of the Tabernacle, and we learn some of the rules about Shabbos, and then we learn about the sin of the golden calf. What do all these things have in common? After all, "Ain Mukdam Um Uchor B'Torah", "there is no chronological order in the Torah". The paragraphs of the Torah have been put together for a reason. They just do not follow a chronological order. It seems to me that there is an underlying theme which runs through this Torah portion and that is that nobody is independent, that each of us need each other. This, of course, flies in the face of the modern notion in the West, especially in this country, that everybody should be totally independent, that the happiest and the best man or woman is the person who is unfettered and unbound and who can do anything he wants any time he wants. Each of us should try to be a superman. In fact, the heroes of our culture act this way. The James Bond movies continue to draw millions. Even the Superman movies draw well. Each of us are taught that we should not need anybody. We should stand on our own. Many times the most dependent people try to act the most independent. The people who are most dependent try to pretend that they are not dependent at all, sort of the same way that a superiority complex comes from people who really feel inferior. We learn that the Jewish people built a golden calf because Moshe tarried on the mountain. It says, "and the people saw that Moshe delayed to come down from the mountain". The word, though, for "delayed", "Boshaish", also has another meaning. It means "to be ashamed". The people were ashamed that they were dependent upon Moshe. They did not want to depend upon anyone. They wanted to create their own gods because they were ashamed that they had to depend upon Moshe. They now pretended that they did not need anyone or anything. That's why G-d could no longer look at them as His People because they did not want a relationship with G-d. They wanted to create their own gods from

themselves. G-d, for His own reasons, has limited Himself. G-d has made part of the perfection of this world dependent upon man. G-d did not have to do that, but He has done it. G-d has said, "I need you and you need Me." We have a mutual relationship. The people did not want to have a relationship anymore. G-d is dependent upon man in this world to make His name known and to help Him perfect it. We are junior partners with G-d, but still partners. That's why, contrary to all expectations, the survivors of the Holocaust are, by and large, much more religious than other Jews. They do not blame the Holocaust on G-d. They blame it on man. Williamsburg is filled with survivors of the Holocaust as is Mea Sharim in Israel. Almost every synagogue in the United States, whether it is orthodox, conservative, or reform, has leaders which were touched by the Holocaust. G-d and man need each other. This is, of course, a paradigm for the marriage relationship. A man and a woman need each other. The Rabbis explain that Eve was not created from Adam's rib, although there is a story that says that the first thing that Eve did when Adam came home was to count his ribs, but, according to the Rabbis, originally man was split in two. The word "Selah" in Hebrew also means "side". Man and woman by themselves are not complete. They need each other to become complete. No one is doing anyone any favors when they get married, not like they used to say in the West where the man was doing a favor marrying the woman, or now as they say in women's lib, a woman is doing a man a favor by marrying him. A man and a woman both need each other. That's what I believe love is. Love is, of course, based on sexual attraction, but that's not enough. If it were there would be no brothels. Love is also based on emotional need. The man and the woman emotionally need each other. Based upon my many years of marriage counseling, I can say that men and women, by and large, do not have the same needs. A man needs to feel important. This does not mean that the wife always has to go, "Yes, sir." Sometimes the way a man feels important is by running around the woman doing everything she says. A woman, on the other hand, must be made to feel secure, emotionally, physically, spiritually, and even financially. No one does anyone any favors when they get married. They both need each other and if they do not go into a marriage feeling they need each other, then the marriage is in trouble. That's why,

too, in the beginning of the Sedra we learn about giving half a shekel not a whole shekel, how we learn about the laver. The Kohen did not wash himself. The Levites washed him. The Tabernacle, too, was to demonstrate the need that man and G-d have for each other. It is mutuality of need which makes a marriage work. I am reminded of the story of a woman who came to a lawyer and said she wanted a divorce. The lawyer asked her, "Do you have any grounds?" She said, "Yes, three-quarters of an acre." He then asked her, "Do you have a grudge?" She said, "No, but I have a lovely carport." He then asked her, "Does your husband beat you up?" She said, "No, I get up an hour before him every morning." He then said, "Why do you want a divorce?" She answered, "Because I cannot carry on an intelligent conversation with him." I hope that all young couples especially will be able to carry on an intelligent conversation, but, more important, that they will always realize that they need each other and that neither of them is doing the other a favor by marrying them.

Ki Sissa 1999

In the Torah portion Ki Tisa we learn how the Jewish people sinned by worshipping the golden calf. G-d gets very angry, as it were, and informs Moshe that he will destroy the Jewish people and start another people from Moshe. Moshe pleads with G-d not to do this, and he says "G-d, don't be angry at your people because you brought them out of Egypt." And as a second reason he said "Why give the Egyptians a reason to say that with an evil intent you brought them out to wipe them off the face of the Earth? Turn from your anger, and reconsider this evil you want to do to the people." In other words, it seems like Moshe Rabinu had finished his defense of the Jewish people. He gave G-d two reasons why he should forgive the Jewish people. After all, he knew who they were when he took them out of Egypt, and he didn't want to give the Egyptians a reason to believe he had brought the Jewish people out of Egypt to destroy them. He then pleaded with G-d to relent. It seems, though, that the pleas did not work. G-d was not relenting. Moshe, according to Rabbi Soloveitchik, had finished his arguments. All of a sudden, though, Moshe hit upon a third

argument. He had already made his summation, but reminded himself of a third argument. "Remember Abraham, Isaak, and Israel, your servants. As long as the Jewish people remember from whence they came, that their forebearers had a great message to teach, they will return to you. They are a good people. They lapse every once in a while, but they will come back. After G-d heard the final argument, he did relent, and he did reconsider. He no longer wished to destroy the Jewish people. As long as we still have as our heroes Abraham, Isaak, and Jacob, and we acknowledge that their message must be carried to the world, even though we sometimes lapse, we can come back and once again don our mantle as G-d's partners in creation. As long as we maintain our links with the past, we are an eternal people. But if we break those links, we are doomed. There is always hope for the Jewish people, if we want to attach ourselves to the past and claim the ^{mantle} ~~footsteps~~ of Abraham, Isaak, and Jacob.

I'm reminded of a story they tell of a mystic in Safat. A group of tourists came to see him, and asked what the weather would be like

tomorrow. He told them he couldn't tell. One of the tourists pleaded with him and said "But last year you told me!" The mystic looked at him and said "Yes, but last year my radio wasn't broken." We must all attach ourselves to our heritage. Our radios cannot be broken – we must have links to the past. Then when occasionally as a people we lapse, we will find a way back and continue to be G-d's partners in creation. May this be so, so that the Mashiach will come quickly in our day, Amen.

KI SISSA 1999
Rabbi Joseph Radinsky

The torah portion Ki Sissa is usually read after Purim. Purim we learn about Esther. We learn about her extraordinary sensitivity. She was one who could have escaped from the plight of her people because know one would have known that she was a Jew. But she was sensitive to the needs of her people. She was a person who was sensitive to her Uncle Mordecai. She was someone who was sensitive to the goings on in the court. Because she was sensitive, she was able to save the jewish people. Even before she knew the jewish people were in danger she displayed her sensitivity when she reported to the king how Mordecai had saved his life by reporting the plot of Bigson and Tavish. She was a remarkable woman who was beautiful inside and outside. What made her exceptionally beautiful was her empathy & was her sympathy and that of course is something that we all should cultivate. In the torah portion Ki Sissa, we learn about this. We learn how we are to cultivate our sensitivity. You know the difference between a minor operation and a major operation? A minor operation is something that happens to someone else. A major operation is something that happens to you. Unfortunately most people are only sensitive to there own pain. There not sensitive to the pain of others. They're not considerate, they're not empathizing, they're not sympathizing with other people in their plight. In the torah portion Ki Sissa we have two huge opening aliyahs. The Cohen aliyah is very long and the Levis aliyah is very long and all the other aliyahs are very short and they ask the question, " Why is it that the Cohen is so long and the Levi aliyah so long? And the answer the rabbis give is because the sin of the golden calf is detailed in the second aliyah and the tribe of Levi did not participate in the sin of the golden calf. So therefore the second Levi aliyah is reserved for them. So no one should be embarrassed. This showed an extreme

amount of sensitivity. We shouldn't bring up and throw in peoples faces, the fact that their ancestors sinned at the sin of the golden calf. And also too, we know that the Cohen sinned. Arron was the first Cohen and therefore he thought proper also the sin of the golden calf recounted to his portion. And in his portion what we start in the very beginning we learn about how all the Jewish people had to be counted from twenty to sixty, those who were serving in the army and we know that those people who were counted had to also bring a kofer. In other words, they were counted by counting the shekels that they gave and the reason for that was that this shekel was an atonement for them and the rabbis always ask the question, " Why was this shekel an atonement for them?" Why did there have to be any atonement at all? And the answer they tell us is the men had to go into the army and they had to kill somebody because that's what you do in an army, you kill people, although this was in order to save the Jewish people. Yet we Jewish people never glorify killing and they required an atonement for their souls because it showed a great deal of sensitivity. Even though they were killing enemies in an army it does something to you, it changes you, it doesn't allow you to be as sympathetic and empathetic as you should be and also the very fact that we have to kill people. Maybe our enemies were misled by their leader. We don't want to kill anybody. That's of course what Yaakov said when he met Asaf, he said I am afraid that he might kill me but, I'm more afraid that I will have to kill him. And Golda Meir later paraphrased it saying, I can forgive the Arabs for killing our children but I can't forgive the Arabs for causing us to kill their children. Because it deadens a person's soul and the most important thing is that we learn how to be sympathetic and the same thing we learn later on is also in this first section. We learn about the alter and we learn that how before the alter there was a basin, a copper basin where the people that had to walk had to wash themselves. It is

interesting to know that this basin was between the alter and the tent of meeting. It should have been before the alter but, the rabbis tell us that many times we sacrifice for things and then we have to take into accounting if we really sacrificed the right thing. Before we go in to the tent of meeting, the All Holy, we have to examine what we are doing ever once and awhile. Unless we examine what we doing once in awhile we are going to end up in a lot of trouble. Today is Parshas Purim and there's something very unique about Parshas Purim. What is Parshas Purim? It's when the Jewish people had to take a red heifer and they sacrificed it and then they burnt it. The ashes of the red heifer was combined with a few other ingredients and they were sprinkled on the person that came in contact with the dead on the third and seventh day. We all know that when a person come in contact the dead they become depressed and you have to serve G-d with joy. You have to somehow break out of this depression and this ceremony helps people to break out of their depression and we know that it is essential that a person be optimistic and filled with enthusiasm in order to serve G-d and to allow themselves it be part with G-d in perfecting this world. There was something very strange about this red heifer because although it had the capacity to make other people ritually clean, those who came in contact with the dead and everybody who had a hand in preparing this red heifer, who gathered the ashes, who bring the ashes, these people became themselves ritually unclean because they became insensitive. People usually, when they are in a certain type of situation they become insensitive. Funeral directors soon become insensitive to the suffering and greef of the people with whom they deal and they even seem to no longer seem to treat the dead bodies with the dignity that they should. They have to constantly have to fight to do it. Many times doctors who do operations as if they are on an assembly line become callus and so many times the spiritual leaders and psyciatrist and

people who hear other people's problems, they don't empathize and sympathize the way that they really should and that of course is one of the great points of Judaism that we have to maintain our ability to empathize & sympathize with people, we always have to have rachmones, have to be able to feel for people and feel with people.

Also we learn in this portion of the Kohen and the Ki Sissa. We learn how they were to mix spices that they would use to anoint the different utensils and the tabernacle appurtenances of the tabernacle. But, one of the spices was a chavonah. Chavonah is a foul smelling spice and the rabbis always ask the question why would they use this foul smelling spice? To teach us that we have to include all Jew, even those Jews that may have not lived up to all our expectations; that we have to empathize with them and sympathize with them and try to bring them back into Judaism. In fact they say that a fast day and prayers that do not include sinners, is not a fast day and no prayers. Even on Yom Kippur we go out of our way to invite the sinners in with us, to pray with us because we realize that there are problems. We do not justify what they have done if they have done some real moral offense but we hope we can change them. We want them to be a part of us. We want to sympathize with them and empathize with them and make them into decent and upright and good people. And we see also too that Betsala, that Uley who was commanded to build the tabernacle had to have chacomlayd not just skill, had to have chochom had to have chacomlayd, had to have empathy and sympathy. We all know too that when we are involved in construction projects, if you empathize and sympathize with your workers and they like you you'll meet all your schedules but, if they think that you are a terrible boss they will procrastinate and they won't work well, you'll never meet your schedule. Because you realize that you are working with people and when you work with people you have to empathize and sympathize with them.

You can't just castigate them and treat them like dirt. They're human beings with real problems and sometimes these problems are terrible problems. They have problems with health, they have problems at home with their families, they have different kinds of learning disability problems and we have to help them and be with them and we all know that many times people do not have this empathy, and they do not have this sympathy. That is one of the complaints that people have today about the medical profession. We no longer have family practitioners, and a lot of family practitioners. People treat you like siffers. We are a very fortunate congregation that we have such caring and loving and concerned doctors. And even at the end of the Torah portion we learned how Moshe came down with the second tablets and his face was glowing and he put a mask on his face because he didn't want to embarrass people and turn them away and make them seem insignificant in his presence because he was glowing so much and he seemed so much superior to them. He wasn't superior to them, he knew he was a human being too. He wanted them to feel close to him. He wanted to empathize with them and he wanted them to be able to talk to him. This is very, very important and hopefully we will all learn this lesson. That we must empathize and sympathize with people.

I am reminded of the story they tell about a man who had a heart condition and his wife opened a letter which said her husband won \$10 million in the lottery. She did not know what to do. She was afraid that if she told him, he would have a heart attack, so she decided to call his doctor. His doctor said, "Bring him to me and I will tell him about winning the lottery as I am giving him an examination, and since he is right with me, I'll be able to take care of him." She thought this was a wonderful idea, so she brought him to the doctor and the doctor examined him and said, "Mr. Goldberg, what if I should tell you that you won

\$10 million in the lottery?" The man said, "Doctor, if you should tell me I won \$10 million in the lottery, I would give you half of it," at which point the doctor had a heart attack. We all have to remember that we have to be empathetic and sympathetic. That is one of the prime commandments of our religion. Let us hope and pray that all of us will be empathetic and sympathetic so the Mashiach will come quickly in our day. Amen.

(ref 10)

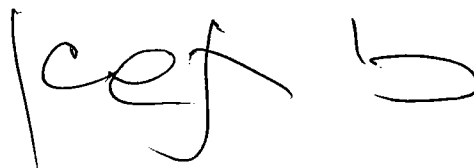
1) Why learn about person all
apparatus before do.

2) Must learn to work helicopters
but not bad if wishes of
Kobbi's or people not exactly
because needed to be merged. Get together
Does it was also good then and to achieve
Do to capture spirit of of what would give
them struggle to achieve

3) but like status of known in class
not wishes in symbol that can be
to raise golden class a is confront

4) How to learn to make subtle of what
human good but it does not only be

5) Must to have to learn about intimely
before for with complaints hidden not intimely
things of that when say could
etc



Joseph Radinsky

From: "Rabbi Nisson Shulman" <sermons@rabbis.org>
To: <members@rabbis.org>
Sent: Wednesday, February 19, 2003 12:28 PM
Subject: [RCA Members] Sermons

Rabbinical Council of America,
 305 Seventh Avenue
 New York, NY, 10001
 Tel. 212 807-7888; Fax. 212 727-8452
 e-mail rabbis@rabbis.org

From Rabbi Dr. Nisson E. Shulman
 To: Members of the RCA
 Ki Tisa, Vayakhel, Pekudey
 Adar 5763 (WORD)Re: SIVAN 5761 (WORD) Drasha Material
 February 17, 2003, 15 Adar I, 5763

Officers:

Executive Vice President Pro-Tem
 Rabbi Bertram A. Leff

Honorary President Honorary President
 Rabbi Kenneth N. Hain

President President
 Rabbi Hershel Billet

Vice Presidents
 Rabbi Kenneth Auman Vice Presidents
 Rabbi Chaim Marder
 Rabbi Joseph Radinsky
 Rabbi Solomon F. Rybak
 Rabbi Neal Turk

Honorary Vice Presidents Honorary Vice Presidents
 Rabbi Dale Polakoff
 Rabbi Jonathan Rosenblatt

Financial Secretary Financial Secretary
 Rabbi Yaacov Lerner

Treasurer Treasurer
 Rabbi Mark Dratch

Honorary Treasurer Honorary Treasurer
 Rabbi Emanuel Holzer

Recording Secretary Recording Secretary
 Rabbi Shalom Baum

Honorary Secretary Honorary Secretary
 Rabbi Myron Rakowitz

Dear Chaverim, I was delighted to hear that Rabbi Bertram Leff will assume the position of Executive Director of the RCA during this interim period in the history of our organization. I join all of you in wishing Rabbi Leff great success during this period of time that he will be leading our organization.

KI TISA: SHIUR HARAV JOSEPH B. SOLOVEITCHIK ZT"L

(Shiur date: 2/26/57 from the shiurim of the Rav ZT"L on Masechet Brachos)

The Torah tells us that Moshe prayed three separate times during the episode of the golden calf and its aftermath. The first prayer was Vayechal Moshe, the prayer that Moshe offered immediately upon being informed by Hashem that Bnay Yisrael sinned in the gravest manner, by creating an idol. The Torah records Moshe's remarkably short prayer, after which the Torah tells us that Hashem, Kivayachol, consoled Himself (Vayinachem Hashem) and Moshe descended the mountain with the Luchos. After breaking the Luchos, he again ascends the mountain on the eighteenth of Tammuz in an effort to win forgiveness for the people (Uly Achaparah Panav) and spent another forty days praying on their behalf. The Torah tells the story of the golden calf in Ki Tisa and in Eikev (Sefer Devarim). Complementary details of the story are presented in the two Parshios. For example, the Torah does not record the length of his stay in Parshas Ki Tisa, but it is mentioned in Parshas Eikev. The Torah uses different terms to describe the events in the two Parshios. For instance, the prayer of Vayechal is not mentioned in Eikev. However in Eikev Moshe states that the second prayer lasted forty days and nights through which Moshe fasted. In Eikev, Moshe says that he was fearful of the anger of Hashem. Moshe concludes the story of the second prayer with the statement that Hashem listened to Moshe again that time (Vayishma Hashem Alay Gam Bapaam Hahee). The complete story is stitched together through both Parshios.

In Parshas Eikev Moshe tells of the second prayer that he offered. This prayer appears very similar to Vayechal, yet it has certain important differences. In Eikev the word Nachalascha (Your portion) is used and the words Yad Chazakah are added. This prayer also lasted for forty days. The Torah only records the essence of the prayer, those key points that Moshe made in defense of the people, and omits the details of the prayer.

Parshas Eikev records a third prayer of forty days by Moshe that culminated with the 13 Midos (attributes) of Hashem and the receipt of the second set

of Luchos. Moshe says that Hashem listened to him and accepted that prayer as well, as Hashem did not desire to destroy Bnay Yisrael (Lo Avah Hashchisecha).

The Rav asked why Moshe had to pray so many times. If he was successful in his original prayer of Vayechal, then why was the second prayer necessary? What caused Moshe to remain fearful of the great wrath of Hashem if all was forgiven, as it appears to have been, after Vayechal? What prompted the need for the third prayer if the first two prayers were accepted?

The Rav explained that Moshe asked Hashem for three things, of which the last two requests were as difficult to attain as the first.

After the episode of the golden calf, Bnay Yisrael were in grave danger as Hashem was prepared to physically destroy Bnay Yisrael. However, the time for Moshe to ask for forgiveness for the people had not yet arrived. After all, how could Moshe ask Hashem for forgiveness if the people were still dancing around the golden calf? In the prayer of Vayechal, Moshe asks only that Hashem suspend the execution of the death sentence against the people. He invokes the memory of the Egyptians, lest they taunt that Hashem took them out of Egypt for the sole purpose of slaying them in the hills of the desert. Moshe said that they really are guilty and deserve their punishment, yet no matter how inappropriately they may have acted, the Egyptians in comparison were much worse. Moshe succeeded in suspending the Dina Kashe, the immediate dispensing of justice against the people, as it says Vayinachem Hashem Al Haraah Asher Diber Laasos Lamo, and Hashem consoled Himself regarding the punishment that He was prepared to mete out against His nation. They were given a suspended sentence, but the judgement and associated punishment were still in place.

Chazal offer different interpretations as to why Moshe shattered the Luchos. According to one opinion, Moshe willfully destroyed the Luchos in order to save the people. By destroying the Luchos he severed the obligation of the people to follow the commandments, hence retroactively they never accepted the commandment forbidding the creation of an idol image. Chazal compare this to the case of a woman who commits adultery where the betrothal was created with an attached condition (Kiddushin Al Hatenay) and the husband nullifies the Kiddushin so that retroactively his adulterous wife's sin would not be considered adultery and she would be spared the death penalty.

Another opinion as to why Moshe broke the Luchos is that Moshe reasoned that if Bnay Yisrael were incapable of keeping the first Mitzvos contained in the Luchos, what chance would they have of keeping 613 commandments? Moshe reasoned that their guilt and punishment would be mitigated if the Luchos and the writings etched upon them by Hashem, would not be a constant indictment of their behavior. Without the Luchos, there would be no Hishchayvus Shel Yisrael, no obligation to act as a Jew who has accepted and embraced the covenant of Hashem.

Chazal tell us that the people murdered Chur, the son of Miriam, and they

were prepared to murder Aaron as well, if he did not provide what they asked for. Yet this same rebellious lot meekly drank the water with the ground up dust of the golden calf, similar to the ceremony of the Sotah, without revolt or protest. What caused this sudden change in their personality? The sobering sight of Moshe shattering the Luchos combined with the reappearance of the awesome personality of Moshe, was enough to foster regret among the people. The people experienced Avaylus, mourning, for what they lost, as the Torah tells us Vlo Shasu Ish Edyo Alav, they people did not place upon themselves the special crown granted them at Sinai. The shattering of the Luchos combined with the shame at seeing their leader forced them to appreciate the scandal they caused. In short, they experienced Hirhur Teshuva, the beginning thoughts of repentance.

However, now Moshe was faced with a major problem: how to get a second set of Luchos from Hashem for Bnay Yisrael. Without Luchos, Bnay Yisrael would have been caught in a terrible paradox. By smashing the Luchos, Moshe was successful in reverting them to their original status of Bnay Neichar, gentiles, rendering the union between Hashem and the people into a Mekach Taus, a transaction entered into under misinformation. The covenant with Hashem was gone. In retrospect they had not violated the prohibition of worshiping another deity and Hashem set aside the decree of destruction, Vayinachem Hashem Al Ho'rah. Hashem, Kvayachol, told Moshe let them stay in the desert without the Luchos and the Torah, no longer a chosen nation, no longer a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. Let them remain a nomadic desert clan like the many others that populated the region at the time of the exodus and who have long since faded from history without a trace. Moshe, if you prefer, you can remain their chieftain. For if they insist on retaining the betrothal (Ayrusin) to Hashem affected by the Luchos and keeping their special status as the nation of Hashem, they open themselves up to the punishment that fits their sin of idol worship. Why should Hashem be obligated to grant them a second set of Luchos and restore their original status? For example, the head of the rabbinic court who sins is not returned to his original position, he must suffer the consequences of his actions. Among the nations of the world, a scandal blots a leader's record forever. There are no second chances.

Since this nation is no longer the chosen people, Hashem is no longer obligated to provide them with Manna. Let them survive in the wilderness like other nomadic tribes. If you will ask how the promises made to Avraham in the Bris Bayn Habesarim will be fulfilled? For that Moshe's own children will survive and over the course of hundreds of years will grow into a large nation that will receive the second set of Luchos and the Torah (Rechush Gadol) and would inherit the land promised to the patriarchs.

As far as this group of people is concerned, Hashem said that he would deal with them like He deals with all nations of the world. They will retain the 7 Noahite laws and that's it. The decree of erasing their name from underneath the heaven will be fulfilled as they fade into history without even a footnote, just like all the other nomadic clans of the era. When Hashem said Heref M'meni V'ashmidaym, let go of Me, Kvayachol, and I will

destroy them - He intended that they be destroyed either physically and immediately or historically and over time, but the end result would be the same: they would be gone and in their place Moshe's children will carry on the tradition of the patriarchs. No matter what, the Luchos were destroyed and with it the original Mattan Torah and Hashem was not interested in a second one. After all, there is no obligation for Hashem to be Machzir Grushaso, to remarry His divorcee.

Moshe was successful in getting Hashem to annul the decree of physical destruction with the prayer of Vayechal. But he could not ask for a new Krisas Bris and new Luchos [ed. note: even though Moshe had not yet descended from the mountain and the Luchos were still intact, they were considered already destroyed] while the golden calf was still being celebrated by the Jews below. He had to wait to descend the mountain and destroy the idol and punish the sinners. Moshe told the people that he must again ascend the mountain to beseech Hashem for a different kind of forgiveness: a second set of Luchos that would renew His relationship with the people.

However, there was no requirement that Hashem present the people with a replacement gift after they rejected and destroyed the original. Moshe respectfully offers, Kivayachol, an ultimatum. If Hashem will not forgive the people, He should erase Moshe's name from His Torah. Moshe did not want his children to replace the chosen nation and condemn the group that left Egypt to wander as nomads in the desert. Hashem rejected this plea by Moshe, and said that those that have sinned will be erased from the Torah. So Moshe dug in his heels and prayed for forty days and forty nights. He pleaded with Hashem: Al Tashchays Amcha, do not destroy Your people. The Rav noted that in Parshas Eikev the term Tashchays is used to denote destruction instead of the word Tashmid. Tashmid means to destroy physically. However there are other ways to destroy a person, for example by trivializing them. When the angels attacked the people they did not harm them physically, Hashmadah. Instead, they removed the spiritual crowns they earned at Kabbalas Hatorah. Moshe responded that this people is Nachlascha, the chosen portion of Hashem. Nachla denotes an eternal possession. Not only should such a people be spared physical destruction, but they should continue to play a major role in the world as befitting the chosen of Hashem.

The Rav gave as an example of Hashchasah on a personal level where criticism and Lashon Horah belittle the efforts of another to the point where the target of the criticism loses the prestige of his colleagues, his self confidence and creative will. For example, if one gives an excellent Shiur that others belittle for no reason other than their own pettiness, the result will be a loss of self confidence so that the next Shiur will indeed be of poor quality. If one loses the Simchas Hanefesh, spiritual joy of creativity, he will descend into the depths of despair and depression. The Rav said that educators must be very sensitive to this point and must strive to develop the talents of children. If they do not encourage and enhance their students they are called Mashchisim, destroyers.

History is full of issues that revolved around the Jew and Israel and the same can be said of modern times as well. The Rav noted that this special role of the Jew can be seen in modern times by the disproportionate amount of attention the world pays to Jews and Israel. No other country's territorial conquests are as heavily scrutinized and criticized as Israel's. [These comments were made in 1957 after the Suez campaign, but are uncannily appropriate to the present situation in Israel.] For example, when Rome finally conquered Jerusalem and destroyed the second Temple, Titus minted special coins to celebrate the victory. The Jewish People have always been targeted because of their status as Am Hanivchar, the chosen nation. Moshe said that a people that was once chosen by Hashem deserves special dispensation and should not be cast off.

We find that Hashem intercedes on behalf of an individual who is pursued by an aggressor. In one situation, the one protected is not the most righteous of individuals, but Hashem takes his side in order to punish the more wicked individual. This was the situation in Egypt, when Hashem punished the Egyptians Byad Chazakah U'bzroah Netuyah, with a mighty hand and an outstretched forearm, because of the terrible sins committed by the Egyptians. It was not the righteousness of the Jewish People that earned them this protection. The second case is when Hashem redeems someone because He is concerned for the well being of the oppressed. Hashem does not want the oppressed to remain exposed to the onslaught of the oppressor too long, lest he be scarred permanently by the experience.

Moshe argued that both of these reasons applied to the Jewish people. The sins of the Egyptians, who oppressed them and callously murdered Jewish children by throwing them into the Nile, were sufficient grounds for Hashem to punish them. However, Hashem also wanted to redeem the people before they descended into the fiftieth level of defilement, from which there could be no redemption. This is the meaning of Moshe's statement Asher Padisa, that You redeemed. Hashem redeemed the Jews from Egypt before they became irrevocably immersed in the spiritual and physical bondage of Egypt and while there was still time to rehabilitate them as the Jewish People. That is why Hashem brought them to Mount Sinai, so they would fulfill their destiny as the chosen nation, as Nachlas Hashem, and develop the abilities they inherited from the patriarchs.

The prayer of Vayechal, at the end of the first forty day period, focused on the comparison between Bnay Yisrael and the Egyptians. The purpose was to show that the Jew was not as wicked as the Egyptians who justly deserved to be destroyed because of their mistreatment of the Jews. Moshe argued that if Hashem postponed the punishment of the Egyptians, the Jews were much more deserving of a delay in execution. The stay of execution was granted.

The prayer of the second forty days was to emphasize that the purpose for their redemption from Egypt, to become the chosen nation, still applied. They were still Nachlas Hashem. Moshe said that not only should they not be destroyed physically, they should receive a new Hitchatnut (wedding) with Hashem, new Luchos, and they should regain their special status among the

nations of the world. Hashem accepted the second prayer as well, and ordered Moshe to carve out new Luchos at the conclusion of the second forty day period.

In Parshas Eikev the Torah tells us that Moshe prayed a third time for forty days when he went up the mountain to receive the second set of Luchos. What was the purpose of this third prayer? He had already succeeded in rescinding the punishment of physical destruction (Vayechal) and he had restored their status as the chosen nation (Asher Padisa B'gadlecha), what was left to accomplish? The last prayer was to convince, Kvayachol, Hashem to travel in the midst of Bnay Yisrael instead of sending an angel to lead the way. The Rav asked why should the fact that the people are a stiff necked lot convince, Kivayachol, Hashem to travel among them?

The Gemara (Rosh Hashonah 17b) says that the word Hashem appears twice among the 13 attributes revealed to Moshe when he received the second set of Luchos during the third forty-day period, and both represent distinct attributes of Hashem. The Gemara says that one refers to Hashem before man sins and the other refers to Hashem who is there after sin and repentance. Hashem promises to return the sinner who repents to the same status he enjoyed prior to his sin, as if the sin never happened. The second name of Hashem quoted in the verse teaches us that Hashem never forsakes man in a state of sin. Hashem is always near him, prodding him to repent.

Reb Chaim of Volozhin says that Hashem is referred to as both a father and a mother in Tanach. Why are both attributes necessary? After all, both parents love their child and it is impossible to say whose love is greater. He answered that when a father comes home from work he will take his child and play with him. As soon as the child soils his diaper, the father will hand the child to the mother and say "Here, you take him". The mother will instinctively take the child and wash him and once he is clean hand him back to the father. Reb Chaim said that if Hashem treated mankind only from the perspective of the father, He would discard us the moment we dirty ourselves with sin. It is the motherly attribute of Hashem that pushes the Jew to repent. It is the motherly attribute that expresses itself through the Hashem who dwells with them even in the midst of their defilement who is willing to cleanse the Jew from his spiritual impurity.

Hashem said that the angel would lead them. Moshe responded that they want Hashem to lead them. What was so terrible about being led by the angel of Hashem? Moshe said that while Hashem forgave the people and returned them to their status after this episode, what will happen the next time they sin? What will happen after Moshe disappears from the scene, who will stand behind the Jew and whisper in his ear "repent!" if not Hashem? Moshe asked Hashem to travel in their midst, because not only do we need Hashem with us when the Luchos are intact, but we need Hashem always in our midst because we are a stiff necked people! Such a problem will happen again and they will need You to push them to repent. The Rav explained that the reason we say Ata Nosen Yad L'Poshim, You offer a hand to those that have sinned and not Ata Mekabel Shavim, you accept those that repent, is because Hashem comes to

KI SISSA

Thank you all for coming to my bar mitzvah. Today is Parshas Parah. We learn how when we become ritually unclean we can cleanse ourselves by having the ashes of the red heifer combined with water sprinkled on us. The rabbis explain that ritual uncleanliness has to do with feeling depressed, feeling that we do not really belong, and that we cannot really accomplish things. This especially happens when we come into contact with death, but it happens all the time when people feel alienated. Alienation is one of the major problems of our day. Many people feel out of place. They feel estranged from themselves, from their past, and from any hope of the future. That's why there is so much emphasis now on "getting into oneself," on "I'm okay, you're okay." We do not know who we are or what we are, and we seem to feel that until we solve that problem, we cannot do anything. We are totally concentrating on ourselves.

This is a very selfish, self-centered view which is not only narcissistic but it also does not help. We cannot find ourselves by concentrating just on ourselves. Narcissus of old tried it and failed. Narcissus fell in love with his own reflection in a pool of water and, in attempting to embrace it, drowned. We, too, are doing the same thing. It is true that many of us are alienated.

Many of us have a very poor estimation of ourselves. However, the reason we are alienated is not because we have not gotten into ourselves, but because we have not attached ourselves to anything beyond ourselves. The paradox of life is that the more we concentrate on ourselves, the more alienated we become from ourselves, and the more we become involved with others, beyond ourselves, the more we find ourselves. We have to attach ourselves to others to find ourselves. That's why family, community, and a sense of people hood are so important in Judaism.

In the Torah portion, Ki Sissa, we have many of these ideas spelled out. The Jewish people have just been redeemed from Egypt. Their redemption was not only from Egypt but also, as the Torah says, from the sicknesses of Egypt. Egypt was not only a country but, as we see throughout the Torah, the symbol of selfish indulgence, irresponsibility, and complete self-centeredness. The Jewish people know this, and when they are faced with the hard life of responsibility in the wilderness, many times they hanker for the selfish indulgence of Egypt and want to go back there. In this Torah portion, we learn how when Moshe tarries on the mountain, the people quickly lose hope, grab their golden rings, and forge a golden calf to worship. G-d speaks to Moshe, and tells him to do down from Mount Sinai because "your people

which you brought up from the land of Egypt have become corrupt." G-d further says, "Leave Me alone so that My anger will burn against them, and I will destroy them, and I will make you a great nation." Moshe beseeches G-d and asks Him not to destroy the Jewish people giving three reasons: One, "You, Yourself, G-d, brought them out of Egypt." Two, "What will the Egyptians say?" And three, "Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, the three fathers." After G-d hears these arguments, He relents and Moses goes down the mountain to face the people. When he sees what they are doing, he throws the tablets of the Ten Commandments from his hand and breaks them. He then takes the golden calf, grinds it up, throws it into the drinking water, and has the Jewish people drink it. He then punishes the guilty.

In this episode, we have played out all the elements of alienation and its consequences. The people feel lost without Moshe. They no longer feel that anything makes any sense. They do not belong anywhere. They do not know who they are or what they are. They have to find out who they are before they can do anything else. They are willing even to sacrifice their gold, but they have to find out who they are. And they think that to do this, they have to get into themselves. If it takes drugs, revelry, abominations, so be it. They have to get into themselves. G-d sees this and says, "My anger will be

against them, and I will consume them," which, in effect, means, "I will let them destroy themselves." Moshe pleads and says, "Don't let them destroy themselves." There is an antidote for their alienation. "Remember, You took them out of Egypt." The Jewish people know deep down what are the consequences of complete inwardness and selfishness. The word "Pharuah" in Hebrew means "breaking loose" and it is the word which is used by the Torah to describe the incident of the golden calf. It is the same word as Pharaoh. Complete getting into oneself leads to Pharaohs. Moshe says the people are confused, but deep down they know that getting completely "into oneself" will end in disaster.

Moshe brings a second argument, "What will the Egyptians say?" Moshe tells G-d the Jewish people know deep down that there is a basic difference between Egyptian culture and Judaism. The difference is not just who is being narcissistic. We Jews will never contribute anything to the world by acting like everyone else (by being so-called normalized). They know, Moshe says, that they cannot be like other peoples. And finally, the third argument, "Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel." The Jewish people have a past. They will revert to it. They can revert to it, and after they have assumed responsibility for their past, they will assume responsibility for the

future, and they will break their chains of alienation.

Today, I am assuming my responsibilities as a man. I know that when I assume these responsibilities it causes me to be attached to others, it saves me from alienation. The Torah allows us to find ourselves by being involved with others. I hope and pray that I will always feel part of my family and community, and that I will always assume my responsibilities so that I will never feel alienated.

At this time, I would like to thank my parents for all the love and devotion they have showered upon me. I would also like to thank all of you for coming today to help me celebrate this wonderful occasion. May I always live a life filled with love of Torah and the desire to do mitzvahs. May the Holy One, Blessed be He, shower His blessings upon me, and may He continue to give me the strength, courage, insight, good health, and means to continue to do mitzvahs. I hope and pray that as I grow up I will always be a credit to my family and my people, and that I will only bring them joy and naches.