

everlasting. For many times in our rush to build, we destroy, and in our desire to accomplish great things we trample upon nobility and moral righteousness. The great sage, Baba ben Buta in the Talmud warned King Herod not to destroy the old until the new has already been erected.

The world oftentimes believes that the destruction of the old is somehow a necessary prerequisite to construct the new. The Torah comes to teach us that the old Shabat already observed by the People of Israel even before the granting of the Torah to Israel at Mount Sinai will definitely outlive and outperform the shiny new Golden Calf that is now being worshipped so avidly.

Golden Calves come and go but the eternity of Shabat and Torah remain valid for all times and circumstances. This reflection is buttressed in the Torah by its repetition of the sanctity of Shabat many times in these parshiyot that mark the conclusion of the book of Shemot. Our Mishkan is built only with Shabat and never in contravention of Shabat. *Rabbi Berel Wein and torah.org.*

## Haftarah Summary Rabbi Aron Tendler

This week's Haftarah relates the famous story of Eliyahu on Mt. Carmel. Around the year 3021 - 740 b.c.e. King Achav and his wife Ezevel ruled the 10 Tribes with an iron fist advancing the worship of idols throughout the kingdom. Eliyahu, the fearless servant of G-d, challenged Achav's hold on the people by demanding a showdown on Mt. Carmel between himself and the false prophets of the Baal. The

Erev Shabbat Parashat Ki Tisa  
Kabbalat Shabbat 6.30 pm  
Candle lighting 26/02/16 7.18 pm

Shabbat Parashat Ki Tisa  
Shacharit 27/02/16 9.15 am  
Children's Service 10.00 am  
Mincha (Mizrachi) 7.03 pm  
Shabbat ends 8.13 pm

Erev Shabbat Parashat Vayakhel  
Kabbalat Shabbat 6.30 pm  
Candle lighting 5/03/16 7.10 pm

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scene is one of the more spectacular events recorded in the Navi. Eliyahu, displayed absolute trust in Hashem and challenged the false prophets of the Baal to a public refutation. In the end, just as Moshe's return proved the falsehood of the Golden Calf, so too, Eliyahu proved the falsehood of the belief in the Baal. Rabbi Aron Tendler and torah.org

# Or Chadash

קהילת אור חדש

## WEEKLY BULLETIN

**Shabbat Parashat Ki Tisa**  
18 Adar I 5776; 27 February, 2016  
**Shabbat Torah reading:** Stone Chumash  
page 484 and Haftarah page 1160.

**President** Jonathan Erlich  
**Rabbi-in-residence** Rabbi Franklin  
**Dvrei Torah** Rabbi Eisenberg

## Truth or Consequences Rabbi Marc D. Angel

A jazz pianist complained to the club owner about the piano, but the owner did nothing. Angry and frustrated, the pianist announced that he would not show up for work until the piano was repaired. A week later, he received a call from the owner that the piano was now fine. The pianist returned to work, but found that the piano was still badly out of tune. He confronted the owner: "I thought you told me the piano was now fine; but it is not fine at all." The owner replied with a surprised look. "I did have the piano fixed. Don't you see that it has been freshly painted?"

This story epitomizes a massive and ubiquitous problem that faces human beings. We are confronted with items, individuals,

and institutions that are seriously flawed. Instead of analyzing the problem and coming to a reasonable solution, there is a tendency to seek superficial cover-ups that merely serve as camouflages. We think that if we paint the piano, put make-up on an individual, or do a p.r. job for an institution, we thereby have solved the problem. But, of course, we have left the core problem in tact; it will surface soon enough in spite of the artificial cover-up job.

In this week's Torah portion, we read the truly startling story of the Israelites and the golden calf. Moses had ascended Mount Sinai and the people were awaiting his return at a certain time. In their calculation, the time had elapsed. Immediately they panicked and compelled Aaron to make a golden calf for them to worship. When Moses came down from the mountain and saw the Israelites worshipping the golden



calf, he cast the Tablets of the Law to the ground and shattered them. The Israelites suffered great punishment for their foolishness.

When Moses failed to appear at the time they expected him, how did the Israelites evaluate the situation? What options did they have? They could have waited another day or two to see if Moses would return? Or they could have appointed Aaron or Hur to become their leader in place of Moses. But instead of going to the core of the problem and finding a solution, they sought a quick fix. They wanted a golden calf, even though the idol surely could not replace Moses, nor could it provide proper leadership.

Why would anyone want a glittering calf instead of a real human leader? Why would anyone forsake G-d in order to worship idols? Sometimes people are simply perverse or misguided. Sometimes they are fearful or confused. In desperation, they may turn to a physical entity that they think is "good luck" or to which they attribute magical powers - even divinity.

What is the essence of idolatry? It is the attribution of false value to an object. Idolaters think that if they worship an idol, bow to it, bring it offerings - then it must be G-d! They convince themselves that a falsehood is actually true. If they can get others also to foster the falsehood, this gives it the appearance of being

true. The evil of idolatry is: believing in falsehood, abandoning truth. The Torah warns us not to fall into this trap. This applies not only to idols, but to everything and everyone. Demagogues and p.r. experts try to make us believe things we know to be wrong or unnecessary; a great many people succumb to these falsehoods. The Torah commands us to cling to truth, to reject lies.

In our society, there are many who foster an idolatrous worldview. They attempt to convince us that a painted piano is fixed, even if it is out of tune. They promote products or people or institutions by spinning superficial images that are false and rotten at the core. They seek to make us fall into line with the crowd, so that we suspend our own clear judgment. The Torah warns us: do not be an idolater, do not veer from truth, do not falsely evaluate things or people.

The Talmud (Hagigah 14b) tells of four great sages who entered the "pardes" i.e. the world of profound speculation. Rabbi Akiva, one of the four, warned the others: "when you reach the domain of pure marble, don't call out 'water, water'; as it is written (Psalms 101:7), one who speaks falsehoods will not be established before My eyes." Rabbi Akiva knew how easy it is to mistake clear marble for water, a metaphor for how easy it is to succumb to falsehood instead of clinging to truth.

The marble looks so much like water: but it is not water, it is cold stone. If you wish to pursue truth, you need to evaluate people and things as they really are--not as they appear to be. Golden calves do not bring redemption. Painted pianos do not produce good music if the piano is out of tune. Fakes and demagogues cannot lead us to a promised land. If we succumb to falsehood, we will surely pay the consequences. *Rabbi Marc. D. Angel and the Institute of Jewish Ideas and Ideals.*

## Shabbat Precedes the Building of the Mishkan Rabbi Berel Wein

The Torah reading of this week is naturally dominated by the description of the tragedy of the Golden Calf and its consequences. But the story of the Golden Calf in the parsha is preceded by teachings regarding the sanctity of the Shabat. The rabbis attributed the presence of this Shabat subject in the parsha as a further indication that even the construction of the Mishkan cannot take precedence over the sanctity of Shabat. But there is another insight that is available here as well. The dangers of Golden Calves, false G-ds, apparently shining and enticing ideals that only lead to eventual disaster, is something that is always present in Jewish society. In our long history as a people there is a long list of Golden Calves that have led us astray and at great cost to us.

Paganism, Hellenism, false messianism, Marxism, secularism, nationalism, humanism and unbridled hedonism, just to identify some of these Golden Calves, have

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all exacted a terrible toll from us over our history. The Shabat and its holiness and its enforced withdrawal from the mundane and impious world have always stood as the bulwark of defense against these Golden Calves.

The Shabat is our first and strongest line of defense against the sea of falseness and evil that constantly threatens to engulf us. Without Shabat we are doomed and lost. With Shabat we are strong and eternal. There are not many things in history that are that simple to discern but the saving grace of Shabat for Jewish society is one of these really no-brainers.

This is why later in the Chumash in parshat Vayakhel the admonition regarding the laws of Shabat is again repeated in conjunction with a further review of the construction of the Mishkan. The Torah wishes to emphasize that short of human life itself, no cause no matter how seemingly noble takes precedence over the sanctity of the Shabat.

For all human causes, no matter how noble, contain dross with its gold. The Shabat in its eternity and G-d-given holiness is likened to the World to Come, eternal and

Divrei Torah

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