

GREAT FOR SHARING  
AT THE SHABBOS TABLE!

# בְּשִׁיטְיָחָא



אור ישראל

Self Inspired

PARSHAS  
KI SISA

BY RABBI NETANEL NAAMAT  
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## SERENITY IN STORMY SEAS

**P**arshas Ki Sisa contains perhaps the most regrettable event in *Klal Yisrael's* history — the sin of the Golden Calf. After studying the entire Torah with Hashem Himself for forty days, *Moshe Rabbeinu* was informed that his beloved nation turned away from Hashem and was serving idols. This, after Hashem took the Jewish people out of slavery, after the incredible miracles at the *Yam Suf*, after sustaining the *Bnei Yisrael* in the desert. For such a terrible betrayal, the only possible retribution was that of total annihilation. Thus, Hashem demanded Moshe leave His presence and He would destroy the Jewish people.

*Moshe Rabbeinu* responded with prayer, to which Hashem responded favorably. After Moshe descended and saw what had occurred, he shattered the *Luchos* he held in his hands.<sup>1</sup>

The *Medrash*<sup>2</sup> raises the obvious question — why did Moshe wait until seeing the actual sin before destroying the *Luchos*, did he not trust Hashem's word? The *Medrash* explains that although Moshe certainly knew that the Jewish people had sinned, he waited in order to teach the nation a valuable lesson — that one must verify negative information before trusting another's testimony.

There is so much to be learned in this short story, but perhaps the most striking is the impressive capabilities of a simple human being. After such devastating news, the knowledge that the Supreme Being has decided to terminate every one of *Moshe Rabbeinu's* friends, relatives and acquaintances, what was Moshe's response? With poise, composure and confidence, *Moshe Rabbeinu* decided to make this a teachable moment.

Of course, it was necessary to beg for the lives of *Klal Yisrael*. But in this moment of turmoil and upheaval, where the very future of the Jewish nation was on the line, Moshe was also thinking of how to teach proper conduct. The fact that a human being can have such serenity at a time of such stress and upheaval is breathtaking.

We, too, are human beings! And we too have the ability to keep calm in stormy situations. Though we may be faced with stress and upheaval, we have the capacity to overcome.

<sup>1</sup> *Shemos* 32:1-32:19

<sup>2</sup> *Shemos Rabbah* 46:1

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### Mind the Gap - Taking the Next Step

We have all faced the challenge. It may be anger, sorrow, frustration, or the myriad of other feelings that may overwhelm and confuse us.

What strategy can one employ against the onslaught of life, especially when events may occur too fast to prepare?

Every situation is different, and therefore the response to every situation will necessarily vary. However, one particular useful tool is the trait of *bitachon*, trust in Hashem.<sup>1</sup>

If one spends the time and effort on a daily basis to strengthen one's trust in Hashem, this tool will be finely honed when one is faced with a difficult challenge.

One who trusts in Hashem is not thrown by the stormy winds of adversity. The knowledge that our Father is there, He cares for us, and is guiding us, is enough to quell any rising tempest in our hearts.

<sup>1</sup> *Madreigos Ha'Adam, Darchei HaBitachon*, Chap. 1

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**May Hashem allot our portion  
amongst those who fulfill the mitzvah  
of following in the middos of Hashem. -  
Sefer Minchas Chinuch, Mitzvah 611**

# THE KEY TO KEEPING CALM

The *bris* was over, and the guests were slowly filing out of the *shul*. With smiles on their faces and wishes of *Mazel Tov*, the young couple, Tzvi and Hindy Zuckerman\* bid goodbye to all those who had come.

A few minutes after the last guest had left, Mrs. Pearson, Hindy Zuckerman's mother, came running in, panic written all over her face.

"What's wrong?"

"I can't find my keys! I thought I put them in my purse, but... Oh, no! I must have given them to Tzipora when she needed to get something from the car."

"And where is Tzipora now?" asked Tzvi, wondering where he had last seen his sister-in-law.

"She's on the train to Brooklyn," Mrs. Pearson almost wailed, despair in her voice.

Tzvi set to thinking — it was Friday morning, and his mother-in-law needed to get from Queens to Brooklyn before Shabbos. There was plenty of time, and there were certainly people traveling in that direction, so it was simply a matter of finding the right person.

"I have an idea. I'm sure there are people going to Brooklyn today, I can ask around and we can get you a ride. On Sunday we'll find a way for you to come back, and you can bring a key from home."

"What? Um..." Mrs. Pearson responded, distracted. "Can you say that again?"

Tzvi smiled a little as he repeated himself, albeit slower than the first time.

Mrs. Pearson blinked a few times. "Oh, Tzvi, that's not a problem. Leah offered to give me a ride, she's still here."

Now Tzvi was nonplussed. "So, what's the problem?"

"Today is an 'Alternate Side Parking' day! If I'm still parked where I am in the next twenty minutes, I'm going to get a ticket!"

"Oh! That's the issue? How much is a ticket?"

"Um... I think it's thirty-five dollars."

Tzvi nodded. "Thirty-five dollars? That's not too terrible, is it?"

Mrs. Pearson thought for a moment. "You know, I didn't even think of that. I guess it's not. Thank you for calming me down!"

Tzvi smiled, and went back to cleaning up, and thanking the *mohel*. Suddenly, his mother-in-law burst in again, this time wearing a huge smile. "You'll never believe what happened," she said, "I found my keys. They were in my purse the entire time, Tzipora had given them back to me, and I forgot I put them there. I couldn't find them when I was so harried, but I looked once more after we spoke. I just moved the car. Thank you!"

*\*Based on a true story, names have been changed.*

## DID YOU KNOW?

- It was the natural humility of Hillel that allowed him to be calm even when confronted by one who made it his mission to anger Hillel.<sup>1</sup>
- Knowing that everything Hashem does is for the best is a calming influence in the face of dire circumstances.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ben Yehoyada* on *Shabbos* 31a, *s.v.* קְדָאֵי הוּא הִלֵּל

<sup>2</sup> *Berachos* 10a

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