



Ki Tissa

Although the people have heard the Ten Commandments and accepted them, they became disturbed and fearful during Moses' long absence. They needed some concrete evidence of God's existence. Thus, they built the Golden calf. It was not so much that they rebelled against G-d and violated the first commandment, they wanted a god they could see. Therefore, they made an image, through whom they could address G-d. They violated the second commandment. To avoid this happening again in Jewish religion, Judaism forbade any kind of representation of G-d.

This is a very difficult period for Moses. He feels that the people should be punished and that they do not deserve to have G-d in their midst. On the other hand, he vows that unless G-d will be in their midst, there is no point in going on. The whole purpose of going to the Promised Land is that there the people may settle down to live a life in accordance with G-d's Torah.

One of the most important facts to remember here is that Moses, himself, was not certain how forgiving G-d is until he was taught this by G-d. G-d reveals His ways to Moses and then Moses learns that all is not lost. True, the people will be punished but G-d will not forsake them.

The experience with the golden calf becomes an event which they are to remember so as not to repeat a similar transgression again when they settle in the Promised Land.

Food for Thought:

- Do we today have problems similar to those in the Golden Calf episode?
- Why did the people "need" a statue to worship?

Shabbat Candle Lighting: 6:02 p.m.