

# KOL MEVASSER

## Resisting the Bullies *Thoughts for Parashat Ki Tissa*

By Rabbi Marc D. Angel

When the Israelites pressed Aaron to make them an idol of gold, the Torah informs us: "And all the people broke off the golden rings which were in their ears and brought them unto Aaron" (Shemoth 32:3). It seems that "all the people" participated in idolatrous behavior.

Yet, when it came to contributing to the building of the Mishkan, the sanctuary of God, the Torah states that donations were to be given only by those with generous hearts, "of every person whose heart was willing" (Shemoth 25:2). The donations came not from "all the people" but from a smaller group of willing donors.

Professor Yeshaya Leibowitz, in his book "Yoke of Torah," offers his interpretation as to why these events differed. Simply stated, it is much easier to get drawn into doing evil than into doing something righteous. Once the Israelites went into a frenzy to make an idol, "all the people" were swept up in the excitement; all of them contributed quickly and generously. But when it came to building the Mishkan, many were reluctant to part with their valuables. There are mental obstacles to contributing to a worthy cause. Donors need to battle with internal resistance. They need to let their generosity overcome their possessiveness.

Professor Leibowitz' observation is bolstered by the Midrash. At the time of the golden calf, the Israelites had two main leaders in the absence of Moses: Aaron and Hur. The Midrash posits that Hur resisted the idolatrous masses, and they murdered him! Seeing this, Aaron decided it was safer to go along with the crowd rather than to stand up against them. Hur, who stood for courageous righteousness, died a martyr's death. Aaron, who went along with the sinning crowd, survived and even went on to serve as High Priest.

Yet, I wonder if "all the people" who contributed their gold earrings really were ideologically convinced to engage in idolatry. I suspect that a rather small group made the decision and usurped the leadership. When no one (other than Hur) stood up against them, they became increasingly arrogant. They murdered Hur to set an example: resistance doesn't pay. They cowed the masses of Israelites, who handed in their gold earrings because they were too afraid to resist; or because they were too apathetic to fight the in-group. Their participation wasn't enthusiastic and ideologically motivated; it was more like a passive going along with the tide.

It is easier to go along with evil than to stand up defiantly against evil.

It is easier to join with bullies or to look the other way, rather than to confront them.

*(Continued on page 3)*

## KJ Schedule Parashat Ki Tisa

### Shushan Purim / Erev Shabbat

Friday, March 6th

Shaharit / Morning Prayer .. 6:30 am

**Shabbat Candle Lighting.. 5:35 pm**

Minha / Arbith ..... 5:35 pm

### Shabbat

#### Parashat Ki Tisa

Saturday, March 7th

Shaharit/Morning Prayer .... 8:30 am

Minha, Seudah, Arvit..... 5:00 pm

Motzei Shabbat / Havdala... 6:39 pm

### Weekdays

#### Sunday, March 8th

**REMEMBER DAYLIGHT SAVINGS**

Shaharit ..... 7:30 am

Talmud Torah..... 10 to 11 am

### PURIM CARNIVAL

**11 AM to 4 PM**

Monday to Friday, March 9 to 13

Shaharit / Morning Prayer .. 6:30 am

### Erev Shabbat Parah

Friday, March 13th

Shaharit / Morning Prayer .. 6:30 am

**Shabbat Candle Lighting.. 6:40 pm**

Minha / Arbith ..... 6:40 pm

## Torah & Haftara Readings

Parashat Ki Tisa 352 to 368

Haftara Kings I / Melachim Alef

369 to 372

## Shabbat Shalom U'Mevorach

*Wishing You a Shabbat that is  
Peaceful and Filled with Blessings*

# Kahal Joseph 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Purim Carnival

## Event Chair

**Jonathan S. Kelly**

## Event Committee

**Sarah Bouchoucha • Fiona Cohen • Yvette Dabby**

**Ron Einy • Dafna Ezran • Penina Solomon**

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**Thank You to Our Generous Sponsors!**

## Refuah Shlemah

Moselle Amron • Maurice Ovadia • Tilda Levy  
Abe Abraham • Sassoon Ezra • Esther Duke  
Elsa Singman • Fortunette Dallal

## In Memoriam

We remember these yahrzeit anniversaries for March 7 to 14, 2015. It is customary to light a memorial candle, donate tzedaka, & attend services the preceding Shabbat.

### 17 Adar / Sunday, March 8th

Ester Solomon *Ester bat Amnah*

### 18 Adar / Monday, March 9th

Nazay Radfar *Nazeh bat Nisan*

Naim Moshi *Naim ben Yehoshua Moshi*

### 19 Adar / Tuesday, March 10th

Charles Eric Ezekiel *Saleh ben Ezra Yehezkel*

Eliyahu Sassoon Samuel *Eliyahu ben Sasson*

### 20 Adar / Wednesday, March 11th

Yona Radfar *Yona ben Shlomo*

Victoria Simanian *Miriam Victoria bat Ester*

Edward Wyner *Itzhak ben Simha*

### 21 Adar / Thursday, March 12th

Gershoon Doustar

Itzhak Rahmin *Itzhak Rahmin Pinhas*

### 23 Adar / Shabbat, March 14th

Bernard Jonatan Amron *Bernard Yonatan ben Mishael*

Rachel Jonah

Moshe Ezra Raphael Moses *Moshe Ezra ben*

*Rafael Moshe*

Eliyahu Kattan *Eliyahu ben Salim*

*Elisha ben Nassim Nawy*

**There's Still Time to Sponsor a  
Booth at KJ's Purim Carnival**

**Full Booth—\$500 Half Booth—\$250**

**Call Sarah@310.474.0559**

*(Continued from page 1)*

A recent study has reported that severe bullying is quite common for many students. Forty-one percent of middle school and high school students in the United States report that they were bullied at least once during their current school term. About eleven percent of boys report that they are bullied once a week or more. Of the boys who report being bullied, nearly eighteen percent are hit, slapped or pushed once a week or more. (Michael E. McCullough, "Beyond Revenge," p. 35)

The easier it is for bullies to cow their victims, the easier it is for them to continue their bullying. If the victims are too weak or too afraid to resist, the bullies are emboldened to increase their arrogance and their violence.

But it's not just the inability of victims to resist: it's the inability or unwillingness of all the witnesses to come to the aid of the victims. The masses, by their passivity, allow the bullies to flourish and to create an environment of fear. Some attempt to befriend the bullies, so as to protect themselves from being bullied themselves. Others feel too weak to confront the bullies, so they look the other way. Those who stand up to the bullies run the risk of being beaten up and humiliated in the eyes of others.

It is easier to go along with the tide than to stand up in righteous opposition. It is easier to donate gold earrings for a golden calf than to incur the wrath of the bullies who are leading the idolatrous movement.

From the days of the golden calf to our own times, bullies have attempted to assert their leadership by means of violence and the

instilling of fear. They have depended on the weakness of the victims to resist. Even more, they have depended on the "silent majority" that lacks the courage to stand tall.

Bullying takes many forms in our society. Sometimes it is overtly violent. Sometimes it is the surreptitious usurpation of power by undermining all opposition. Sometimes it shows itself in tyrants and dictators; and sometimes it shows itself in power hungry individuals in all walks of life. The common denominator is that bullies prevail by crushing or intimidating opposition.

There are many people today, in all walks of life, who call on us to donate our "gold earrings" to create all sorts of "golden calves." Are we donating or are we rallying our courage and our morality so that we can resist?

## Sephardic Mini-Course

**Tuesday, March 10th, 2015**  
at 7:00 pm

**Haim Sabato:**  
Contemporary Sephardic Storyteller

Join Rabbi Bouskila for select readings from  
Haim Sabato's bestselling modern  
Sephardic novels



The Jewish Federation Bldg—Parking Available  
No Charge, but RSVP a must! To reserve call  
323-272-4574 or e-mail [info@secjerusalem.org](mailto:info@secjerusalem.org)

## Volunteer for KJ's Purim Carnival

*It's fun!*

**This Sunday • March 8th**  
**10:30 am to 1:30 pm OR 1:00 to 4:00 pm**  
**Sign in at the Volunteer Desk**



**Bonus**  
**Community**  
**Service Hours**  
*available for teens*



**An Evening  
of Cards &  
Backgammon**



*Purim Style*

*with Delicious  
Purim Treats to Eat!*

**Wednesday, March 11th**  
**at 6:00 pm**



**in KJ's Errol Levi  
Social Hall**

**Ten Dollar Entry**



## RIDES & GAMES

BEST Prizes, Prizes, PRIZES!

Hot Dogs! **FALAFEL!** Hamburgers!  
Snowcones, Candy & **MORE!**

### Kahal Joseph Congregation



# Purim Carnival

**Sunday, March 8th**

**11 am to 4 pm**



Game & Ride Wristbands—\$20/person ♦ Tickets—\$1

Wristbands are good for games and rides only.

Tickets for food and special services purchased separately.

For more information call 310.474.0559

**For the safety of our parents and children  
KJ's 10th annual Purim Carnival will be held inside the synagogue**

## Thank You

to All Who Volunteered and  
Baked for KJ's Purim Baskets

Sally Arnall	Judith Levy
Rachel Bachach	Shana Loveman
Sarah Bouchoucha	Judy Lurie
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*And we especially thank Yvette Dabby who  
organizes this mitzvah event each year*