

Ki Tisa Aliyah Summary

General Overview: The portion discusses the census of the Israelites, the washbasin of the Tabernacle, the anointing oils for the priests and kings, the incense offering, and the Sabbath. The Torah then relates the story of the Golden Calf, G-d's anger at the Jewish nation, Moses successfully arguing for Divine forgiveness for the sin, the subsequent breaking of the tablets, and the giving of the second tablets.

First Aliyah: G-d commands Moses to take a census of the Jewish adult male population by collecting an atonement offering of half a silver shekel from each individual. The collected silver was melted down, and was made into sockets for the beams of the [Tabernacle](#). G-d instructs Moses to make a copper washstand for the Tabernacle. The priests would use this laver to wash their hands and feet before their service. G-d tells Moses the recipe for making holy "anointing oil." This oil, which was prepared with various aromatic herbs and fine spices, was used to anoint and sanctify the Tabernacle, its vessels, and Aaron and his sons. The remainder of the oil was put aside, and was used to anoint kings and high priests of future generations. G-d also gives Moses the formula for the incense which was offered twice-daily in the Tabernacle. The duplication of the anointing oil or incense for personal use is prohibited. G-d imbues Bezalel with wisdom, and appoints him to be the chief craftsman of the Tabernacle and its contents. G-d appoints Oholiab as his assistant. This lengthy aliyah concludes with G-d telling the Jewish people to observe the Shabbat, the eternal sign between Him and the Children of Israel.

Second Aliyah: After G-d revealed Himself to the entire nation at Mount Sinai and told them the Ten Commandments, Moses ascended the mountain where he remained for forty days. There he was to study the [Torah](#) and receive the Tablets. The Jews miscalculate when Moses is supposed to return, and when he doesn't appear on the day when they anticipate him, they grow impatient and demand of Aaron to make for them a new god. Aaron cooperates, all along intending to postpone and buy time until Moses' return, but despite his efforts, a [Golden Calf](#) emerges from the flames. The

festivities and sacrifices start early next morning. Moses pleads with an incensed G-d to forgive the Jews' sin. G-d acquiesces and relents from His plan to annihilate the Jews. Moses comes down with the Tablets, sees the idolatrous revelry, and breaks the Tablets. Moses enlists the Tribe of Levi to punish the primary offenders. Three thousand idol worshippers are executed on that day. Moses ascends Mount Sinai again, in an attempt to gain complete atonement for the sin. G-d tells Moses to lead the Jews towards the Promised Land, but insists that He won't be leading them personally; instead an angel will be dispatched to lead them. Seeing G-d's displeasure with the Jews, Moses takes his own tent and pitches it outside the Israelite encampment. This tent becomes the center of study and spirituality until the Tabernacle is inaugurated.

Third Aliyah: Moses asks G-d to reconsider the matter of the angel leading them. G-d reconsiders, and agrees to lead them Himself again. Moses then requests that G-d's presence never manifest itself on any other nation other than the Jews.

Fourth Aliyah: G-d's agrees to Moses' request that His presence only dwell amongst the Jews. Moses requests to be shown G-d's glory. G-d agrees, but informs Moses that he will only be shown G-d's "back," not G-d's "face."

Fifth Aliyah: G-d tells Moses to carve new tablets upon which G-d will engrave the Ten Commandments. Moses takes the new tablets up to Mt. Sinai, where G-d reveals His glory to Moses while proclaiming His Thirteen Attributes of Mercy.

Sixth Aliyah: G-d seals a covenant with Moses, assuring him again that His presence will only dwell with the Jews. G-d informs the Jewish people that He will drive the Canaanites from before them. He instructs them to destroy all vestiges of idolatry from the land, and to refrain from making any covenants with its current inhabitants. The Jews are then commanded not to make molten gods, to observe the three festivals, not to eat *chametz* on Passover, to sanctify male firstborn humans and cattle, and not to cook meat together with milk.

[Seventh Aliyah](#): Moses descends Mount Sinai with the second tablets, and unbeknownst to him beams of light were projecting off his face. Aaron and the people are originally afraid of him. Moses teaches the people the Torah he studied on the mountain. Moses wears a veil on his face from that time on, but removes it when speaking to G-d and when repeating G-d's words to the people.