

# Torah Portion Preview for Ki Tisa

*Shabbat beginning March 10, 2023*

Ki Tisa (“when you take” a census) is a rich Torah portion. Moses collects taxes, recruits the craftsman Bazalel to furnish the Tabernacle, and ascends Sinai to get the tablets with commandments. Meanwhile, the Israelites and Aaron make and celebrate their golden calf. Returning, Moses breaks the tablets in anger, and the Levites kill 3,000 Israelites as punishment. Moses ascends again to get new tablets. The Eternal One proclaims to be “compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in kindness and faithfulness.” Moses returns with the new tablets and a radiant face.

In *The Mussar Torah Commentary*, Rabbi Mari Chernow provides an astute developmental account of anger. She writes that it begins with a breach in a relationship, which grows all too rapidly into regrettable actions. We counter these by conceiving anger as a teacher alerting us to matters in need of attention. We occasionally counter even this by a more urgent need for societal transformation. Her example of inspiring action concerns “sexual violence and inequality.” The HUC-JIR Rabbis foretold her inspiring approach to Gender and Sexuality as “Proactive: creating new ways to transform deterministic thinking and acting, including ways that change Jewish traditions to serve all members better.”

P.S. We invite all to come to synagogue in person or on Zoom on Friday night to hear a more in-depth interpretation from Rabbi Meeka (or this Sabbath's lay speaker). We also invite other views, interpretations, reflections, and even poems on each Torah portion. If you have something to contribute, please email it to [Rabbi Meeka](#), [David Dirlam](#), and [Melissa Immel](#). This and prior previews can be found at Dr. David Dirlam's website by clicking on [Changing Wisdoms Projects](#).