



## **CHAYAT HASHAVUA: HEIFER**

### **CAN ANYONE TEACH US WHAT A “HEIFER” IS?**

- A heifer is a young cow that hasn’t yet given birth to a calf.
- Can anyone teach us the Hebrew word for a heifer?
- It’s *eglah* (עגלה), from the root עגל, which means “to be rounded.”
- But it also has to do with circling and setting boundaries or limits—which you should keep in mind.

### **WHO CAN TEACH US WHAT THE MOST FAMOUS CALF IN THE HISTORY OF OUR PEOPLE WAS CALLED?**

- Hint: It wasn’t alive even when it was created.
- Who can teach us who made the Golden Calf?
- Was it a good thing or a bad thing to worship the Golden Calf?
- Why was it such a bad thing for the people to worship the Golden Calf? (The people lost faith and trust in Moses—they gave up hope that he would come back down the mountain. When they worshipped the calf, they stopped doing what God wanted and began to do bad things, including murder. They had lost all their boundaries!)
- Where do you think Aaron got all that gold to make an idol? (Only the men gave their gold to make the idol.)
- Why do you think Aaron made it?

### **WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT HEIFERS?**

- They’re adorable.
- They’re fun to pet.
- They’re often playful.

### **IS THERE ANYTHING YOU DON’T LIKE ABOUT HEIFERS?**

- If you’re small a heifer might knock you down.
- They have wet noses.

### **CAN ANYONE TEACH US WHAT MOSES DID WHEN HE CAME BACK DOWN THE MOUNTAIN WITH THE TABLETS OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS AND SAW THE PEOPLE DANCING AROUND THE GOLDEN CALF?**

- He smashed the Tablets of the Commandments.

- Why do you think he might have done that?
- Then he melted down the calf and ground the metal into powder.
- Finally he mixed the powdered gold with all the water they had and made the people drink it. (Exodus 32:20)
- Why do you think he did that?

### **IT'S TIME FOR THE HEIFER QUIZ**

- How much does a calf weigh at birth? (50 to 100 pounds)
- How old does a calf have to be to give birth to a calf of her own? (About two years; they mate at 15 months and gestation takes nine months.)
- How old does a heifer have to be to give milk. (Two years! They can't give milk until they have had a calf.)

### **JEREMIAH, ONE OF THE GREAT PROPHETS, SAID THAT “EGYPT IS LIKE A BEAUTIFUL HEIFER, BUT DESTRUCTION COMES. . .” (46:20)**

- What do you think that means?
- The Zohar, one of the mystical books of Judaism, says that the time will come when the Israelites, who were slaves in Egypt, will have control over that country. (Bereshit 1:210b)
- But then the Zohar also says, “Israel is stubborn like a stubborn heifer.” (Shemot 2:237b)
- So which country is like a heifer—Egypt or Israel?



**Gather the People**

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