

Shabbat Ki Tisa Shalom



by Phyllis Chesler

What is worshipping an idol, a golden calf, really about? Is it Idolatry, pure and simple, and thus a betrayal of God—or is it about sexual licentiousness, a betrayal of womankind? Moses has been gone a day too long (or so the Hebrews, wrongly believe). Therefore, is God more offended by their impatient, child-like neediness and their consequent worship of a molten calf—or by the people sitting down, eating, drinking, and then, their getting up “vayakumu l’zahek” to engage in a sexual orgy? In what sense are these two acts one and the same?

God has made God’s views known from the very beginning. When the sons of the rulers “va-yeku lahem nashim m’kol asher baharu”—took any woman they wanted—God limited our longevity. God destroyed Sdom v’Amorah, in part, because they indulged their every sexual desire; and God saved Sarah from the sexual

predations of both Pharoah and of Avimelech. Again, God does not approve of Yishmael's "l'zaheking" with Isaac or Mrs. Potiphar's continuous sexual harassment of Yosef which, according to Rashi, took place on a "special day, a day of merriment, a day of idolatrous feasts."

Does paganism, both ancient and contemporary, mean the worship of all that glitters—gold, and other idols, combined with an utter lack of sexual restraint?

The so-called sexual revolution in the 1960s was neither revolutionary nor very good for women. On the contrary. I just endorsed a forthcoming book on this subject by the British radical feminist, Louise Perry, titled *The Case Against the Sexual Revolution*. She argues, brilliantly, that this alleged sexual revolution, touted by many progressive men and by liberal feminists, and rendered possible by birth control and access to abortion, failed women, especially young and poor women, and in a most spectacular way. For love of womankind, and out of respect for motherhood and children, Perry commits heresy, namely, she dares argue that men and women really are different, especially sexually, and that "hook up" culture is hardly liberating for biological women.

God would like her book.

A sweet Shabbos to one and all.