Torah legend tells us that in the beginning humankind had the ability to “see from one end of the universe to the other.” This was lost as a result of eating the forbidden fruit of the Tree of Knowledge Good and Evil. Instead of having both natural sight and universal insight, we lost the greater ability of universal insight and were left practically blind, only able to see that which is directly in front of our faces, but barely anything more.

It is a terrible thing to once be able to see everything and then only be able to see almost next to nothing. Our greatest blindness however does not come from the limitation of our physical eyes, but rather from the limitations which imprison our minds enabling them only to see that which the physical eye sees. Yet, the mind is able to see far beyond the limitations imposed upon it by the physical senses. Our physical eyes can only see within the physical domain, therefore they are by nature handicapped and disabled from seeing “outside the box.”

Nature and reality are grandiose spheres of existence; yet we live in a box. We often do not recognize the true nature of existence and usually spend almost all our time trying to hammer the spherical nature of reality into the little square pegs of our limited perceptions. Round pegs will never fit properly into square holes. The greater reality will never be perceived correctly and understood by the limited physical senses with which we try to experience it.

In the beginning we were not so handicapped. Yet, we crippled ourselves and have been suffering from the crippling effects of our choices ever since. However, we were not left to just suffer and waste away in our internal blindness and mental retardation. Our Source Above did not abandon us to our fate but instead chose to intervene. In our retarded state, contact was made with us. Even with our minutely small ability to understand we were contacted; a bridge was open and communication received. We were given the opportunity to heal our collective human mental handicap and to once again learn to see beyond our eyes and to again embrace the universe “from one end to another.” This was the giving of Torah on Sinai.

At Sinai, an interdimensional vortex was opened. The Great Source Above spoke directly into our minds. Torah was received telepathically; its words were heard within the inner recesses and consciousness, ingrained upon our souls and understood at the very depth of our beings. The physical ears of the people only hear a great whining sound, a “Voice” it was called. Yet, it was a Voice that spoke without words. The Voice was heard in the physical ear, the Words of G-d were heard by the
inner ear of the soul, the same inner ear that hears and knows the sounds of the universe and the universal song of creation.

And yet again, “we blew it.” There were those who stood at Sinai that could not hear the inner Song of Sound. They could not hear the Words of the Living Active Being of Existence. Instead, they claim, all they heard was thunder. Indeed, unless one is in-tune with the “Divine Broadcast” one is incapable of hearing the “Silent Speech” (Hash-mal). Forty days after the great experience that spoke into the very hearts and souls of the connected ones, those who were disconnected arose and spoke up. Their physical words spoke into the physical ears of those who had “heard within” and generated static noise that blurred the inner vision, the place where inner sight and inner sound merge as one.

Those who could not hear were called a “mixed” multitude, for indeed, within them was a mixture of many things that corrupted their insides disabling them from being able to fine tune themselves to receive the “Divine Broadcast.”

Forty day had passed since Moshe ascended the clouded mountain and disappeared into domains unknown. He left behind him an experience the truth of which everyone knew to the depths of their souls, but still could not intellectually fathom it and make rational sense out of it. What was this profound revelation of the Active Being of Existence? What was this G-d of Israel? He/It was most unlike any other god that they had ever known or ever possibly conceived of. Sinai exposed the people to the greater reality of the universe, an experience that they could not deny, but at the same time, one they could not fully assimilate. They knew the truth but they still could come to grips with it.

Sensing this unsettlement the “mixed” multitude spoke up and offered a compromise. They could not experience this nebulous other reality and therefore they denied it completely. Indeed, they could not understand what everyone had experienced. Thus after Moshe being gone for forty days and the people being restless for some type of resolution and understanding this mixed multitude took advantage of the situation and planted seeds from the forbidden fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, Good and Evil.

The idea of the mixed multitude was not to introduce the people to a foreign god; this would never be successful. The people experienced firsthand the G-d of Israel and would never consciously or intentionally deny what they internally knew. The mixed multitude took advantage of this fact and instead of challenging the collective heart of the people to turn to a foreign god; they instead tackled the collective minds of the people and deceived them into accepting a finite image of the infinite Active Being of Existence, YHVH, the revealed G-d of Israel. Thus the Gold Calf was formed.

The purpose of the calf was not to be an idol, but rather an image representing the G-d of Israel. Here, the conscious mind chose to embrace of finite form of infinite reality. This is something that cannot be and can never be done. By doing such the people had created a finite mental construct in their collective minds and tried to squeeze the infinite formless Existence of Reality into it. This can be compared to trying to bang a spherical peg the size of the earth into a square hole the size of a 4x4 square. Needless to say it cannot fit. Yet, this is what the people tried to do.

Essentially, the mental process accompanying this postulates that reality is too grandiose for us to experience or ever know; therefore we partake of it only what we can and then we ignore the rest. Some consider this to be the right and rational way how to deal with the world, by dealing with what is right in front of us and clear to the eye and mind. Whatever is beyond the mind to comprehend should simply be ignored and dismissed. The mixed multitude could not experience the reality beyond the
limitations of the rational mind and thus denied and ignored what everyone else experienced, but yet still could not explain. It did not take much convincing to direct the people to be rational again, since they had not yet been taught how to rise above the limitations of intellectual mental rationalizations.

While away in a place which cannot possibly be described Moshe received there the instruction and teaching that would transform human consciousness and teach us how to see the world properly in its multi-dimensional reality. The Torah is the blueprints for all existence. One can gaze into it and learn again to see “from one end of the universe to the other.” This is what Moshe brought back with him from Beyond. Yet, by the time he had returned it was too late.

The mixed multitude convinced the people to be rational again, to understand what had happened to them, like they always have, within the context of normal rational thinking. By doing such the people again limited the Revelation of the Active Being and in sense imprisoned the “supernatural” within the confining limitations of the natural. By placing their collective minds into a prison of rationale and logic, they closed themselves off from that which would have emancipated them and taught them to see the world in the greater light.

Moshe saw what the people had done, and that the “tablets” could no longer be understood by a people so mentally handicapped. It is said that the tablets became so heavy that they dropped from his hands, breaking as they fell to the ground. Yet, legend tells us that the letters on the tablets hovered off the tablets and ascended back above to that place from where they came.

The people had been deceived to again eat of the forbidden fruit of the Tree of Knowledge Good and Evil and to again embrace the primacy of this physical finite reality over and above the infinite greater reality of the Active Being of Existence. Instead of embracing the Tree of Life and the Life which comes forth from it, the people instead chose again the wrong Tree and therefore were subject to the death that came forth from it.

If only we did not crave rational concrete explanations for everything. If only we opened our minds to the reality that there is an entire universe beyond and above the limitations of our human intellect. If only we had been patient and waited a little while longer. Instead of listening, we would have seen. Instead of only using a small portion of our minds, we would have been able to have used it all and to again “see from one end of the universe to the next.” Now with our handicapped minds, all we can see is what is in front of our faces; all we can see is what the physical eye enables us to see. There is no greater blindness more than this. This is blindness of the mind, the loss of psychic vision.

Forty day after Moshe ascended, he came down again and witnessed the Golden Calf “mistake of the rational mind.” He ascended on the day after G-d spoke at Sinai. That day was the sixth day of the Hebrew month Sivan. Moshe ascended on the seventh of Sivan and descended forty days later on the 17th day of Tamuz. What had happened had happened. Our opportunity to correct the original “sin” of Adam was again thwarted, this time by the servant of the serpent, the mixed multitude, who like the serpent before them used rational logic to confuse the mind and to lead the thinkers to draw wrong conclusions and thus wrong make wrong decisions.

To this day, the 17th of Tamuz is a fast day. From dawn till dusk, we do not eat or drink anything (other than if prescribed necessary by a professional medical doctor or unless exempted by a competent Torah observant Rabbi). Yet, while we fast, most do not realize the purpose of the fast.
Many embrace the surface, shallow view that fasting is somehow a sign of remorse and a way to express regret. This concept is based upon our love for food. Thus our denial of something we love is considered as if it was a sacrifice, and such sacrifice is considered to be a sign of remorse and apology. While this is true at the surface level of things; the real meaning of a fast has much greater significance.

When we fast we deny the physical body the necessary nutrients it needs to maintain the natural chemical balance that feeds the cerebral connection of the brain to the physical finite world external to us. Therefore a fast weakens the physical brain and thus enables the mind to wrench itself free even if just a little bit from this finite reality.

Those trained in the mental arts of expanding consciousness use fasting as a means to assist their ascent into the higher realms of the mind, those not limited to external sensorial reality and the mental constructs created by them.

The 17th of Tamuz was the second time we as a race lost the opportunity to achieve our great goal of becoming fully human. Adam in the Garden was the first opportunity. Not for naught then other strange and bizarre negative events also occurred on this day throughout history, making it ominous and foreboding.

Therefore, the Sages of Wisdom ordained that all Israel who stood there by the Golden Calf (and that includes us all) should fast on this day. Maybe, by denying ourselves food for a limited period of a few hours, we might enable our minds to remember a higher reality, one although forgotten yet still very much relevant and valuable. As the Torah says, “not by bread alone does a person live, but rather by what proceed from the mouth of G-d.” What proceeds from the “Divine Mouth” was the Words spoken at Sinai; those same words that spoke into the hearts and inner minds of all who stood at Sinai ready to receive it.

We fast to silence the many voices emanating from the outside world so that we can remain silent and listen for that Voice that still speaks ever so softly within us. May G-d bless us to hear the “speaking silence” and to rectify the graven images, not only the ones of the past, but also the ones we embrace today.

And you ask which graven images are those that we embrace today? Do we have what it takes to recognize them? We are still subject to the danger that the intellectual mind will rationalize away all truth and embrace falsehoods, just like it has done in the past. It serves nothing to make such identifications. So, rather than rely upon an external source to show you that which you should see for yourself, fast, be silent, and search within. Call upon G-d to show you our modern day Golden Calves. If you are honest with yourselves, you will see them with the eyes inside your mind. What then you will choose to do is up to you. As Moshe called out to the Levites, “who is on HaShem’s side, come to me.”