



TRADITIONAL CONGREGATION

12437 Ladue Rd, St Louis MO 63141

www.traditional-congregation.org

314-576-5230 traditionalcong@gmail.com

Affiliated with the Union for Traditional Judaism

Rabbi Seth D Gordon

February 13-14, 2026

כז שבט תשפ"ו

Candle Lighting 5:18 PM

Shabbat Sh'kalim שבת שקלים

Parashat Mishpatim משפטים

Exodus 21:1-24:18

Stone – p 416

Hertz – p 306

Etz Hayim – p 456

Special Maftir – Sh'kalim – Exodus

30:11-16 (שקלים)

Stone – p 484

Hertz – p 352

Etz Hayim – p 523

Haftarah – Second Kings 12:1-17

(מלכים ב יב:יז)

Stone – p 1213

Hertz – p 992

Etz Hayim – p 1277

Kiddush following services
is sponsored by the congregation

Shabbat ends 6:19 PM

TRADITIONAL CONGREGATION

Rabbi Seth D Gordon - Rabbi.Gordon@yahoo.com

Marian S. Gordon, Executive Director -

traditionalcong@gmail.com

WEEKDAY AND **SHABBAT** SERVICES

Tuesday - 6:30 PM

Shabbat - 9:30 AM

Board of Directors:

Governance Committee:

Florence Schachter, Chair

Marty Levy, Vice-Chair

Ken Bohm, Ellis Frohman, Ron Green,

Dina Rinder, Mindy Strauss

Ellis Frohman, Financial Vice President

Mark Weinstein, Ritual Vice President

Marty Levy/Mindy Strauss,

Education Co-Vice Presidents

Dina Rinder, Membership Vice President

Steven Puro, Administration Vice President

Chris Brown/Justin Zeid, Building & Grounds

Co-Vice Presidents

Ron Green, Fundraising Vice President

Barbara Levin, Treasurer

Mimi Levy, Secretary

Past Presidents:

Kenneth H. Bohm, Phil Brick

Members at Large:

Maureen Brodsky

Stanley Estrin

Bill Gold

Gary Golden

Jack Heller

Sid Levin

Ari Levy

Carol Max

Florence Schachter

We welcome new members!

If you or someone you know would like to receive

membership information,

please contact our office at 314-576-5230

or traditionalcong@gmail.com

On This Week's Parashah - Mishpatim

In last week's parsha Hashem gave the Children of Israel the Torah at Mount Sinai. This included the Ten Commandments. In this week's parsha we read more about the details of many of the laws and mitzvot.

This week mainly focuses on the laws of how the Israelites should live after they enter the Land of Israel and create a society there. These kind of mitzvot are called civil laws. Here are some examples about the kind of mitzvot we learn in Mishpatim: we have laws about slaves and when they must be freed; laws about what happens if someone damages your property or hurts you; laws of social responsibility, justice and compassion – how we must treat each other every day; and also some laws about Shabbat and the festivals.

At the end of the parsha, the Covenant of the Torah (which is like a contract between God and the Jewish People) is "signed" in a symbolic ceremony with sacrifices. The people agree to their part of the covenant with the words "We will do and we will hear". Moses then climbs to the top of Mount Sinai, to sit with God for forty days and forty nights.

The two words we read towards the end of our parsha – na'aseh ve-nishma, "We will do and we will hear" – are among the most famous words in the Torah. They are what our ancestors said when they accepted the covenant at Sinai. They are the opposite in spirit to the many other stories of the people's complaints, sins, and rebellions during the wilderness years.

Let us examine what the words na'aseh ve-nishma actually mean. Na'aseh is straightforward. It means, "We will do." It is about action, behaviour, deed. But nishma is not so clear. It could mean "We will hear." But it could also mean, "We will obey." Or it could mean "We will understand." These multiple options suggest that there is more than one way to decode the phrase na'aseh ve-nishma. The Rabbis offered these interpretations:

[1] The view of the Talmud (Shabbat 88a) and Rashi is that it means "We will do and then we will hear." This suggests that the people accepted the covenant even before they heard what was in it. They said "we will do" before they knew what it was that God wanted them to do, which showed their total faith in God.

[2] Rashbam suggests it means "We will do [what we have already been commanded until now] and we will obey [all future commands]." The Israelites' statement looked both back and forward. The people understood that they were on a spiritual as well as a physical journey and they might not know all the details of the law at once. Nishma here means not "to hear" but "to hearken, to obey, to respond faithfully in deed."

[3] "We will obediently do" (Sforno). On this view the words na'aseh and nishma are a "hendiadys", that is, a single idea expressed by two words. The Israelites were saying that they would do what God asked of them, not because they were looking to benefit but simply because they wanted to do His will. He had saved them from slavery, led and fed them through the wilderness, and they wanted to show their complete loyalty to Him as their redeemer and lawgiver.

[4] "We will do and we will understand" (Isaac Arama in Akeidat Yitzchak). The word nishma can have the sense of "understanding". According to this explanation, when the Israelites put 'doing' before 'understanding', they were giving expression to a profound philosophical truth. There are certain things we can only understand by doing. We only understand leadership by leading. We only understand music by listening. Reading books about these things is not enough. So it is with faith. We can only truly understand Judaism through living by its commands. You cannot comprehend a faith from the outside. Doing leads to understanding.

Staying with this interpretation, we may be able to hear another important idea here. If you look carefully at the book of Shemot, chapters 19 and 24, you will see that the Israelites accepted the covenant three times. But the three verses in which these acceptances took place are significantly different:

1. The people all responded together, "We will do [na'aseh] everything the Lord has said." (Shemot 19:8)
2. When Moses went and told the people all the Lord's words and laws, they responded with one voice, "Everything the Lord has said we will do [na'aseh]." (Shemot 24:3)
3. Then [Moses] took the Book of the Covenant and read it to the people. They responded, "We will do and hear [na'aseh ve-nishma] everything the Lord has said." (Shemot 24:7)

Only the third of these contains the entire phrase na'aseh ve-nishma. And only the third has no statement about the people's unanimity. Notice how the first two emphasise that the people were as one: the people "responded together" and "responded with one voice."

This suggests that when it comes to action (na'aseh) we must be united. However, there can be more than one path to understanding our faith (nishma).

***Shabbat shalom,
Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks zt"l***



A TASTE OF SOUP!

Sunday, 2/22/26

5:30-7:15 PM

All you can eat soup buffet!

Garlic bread

Meat & vegetarian options

Sweet treats

\$20/person registered by 2/12/26

\$22/person walk-ins

Free for kids under 5

\$5/additional carry-out container

Register here by 2/12/2026 or go to: <https://bit.ly/4k2RxtE>

or send payment with names attending to:



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Soup lovers, this is your day!!

PRAYER

All Israelites are siblings, responsible for one another.

If there be among you a needy person, do not harden your heart.

Shut not your hand to your needy siblings,
But surely open your hand to them.

*Blessed are they who consider the poor;
God will deliver them in days of evil.*

Speak for those who cannot speak for themselves,
For all who are threatened with destruction.

*They who shut their ears to the cry of the needy,
Shall one day cry themselves, and not be answered.*

They who give to the poor shall be blessed with abundance,
But they that hide their eyes shall themselves be in need.

*They that are gracious to the needy, honor their Maker,
But they that oppress the poor, blaspheme God.*

Let the poor rejoice in your joy; Share with them your blessings.

*Generous hearts shall be enriched, And they that
satisfy others shall be satisfied themselves.*

They who give when well, their gift is gold;
They who give only when ill, their gift is silver;
They who give only in their wills, their gift is copper.

*From You O God, comes our wealth,
And from Your own do we give You.*

Unknown

THOUGHT FOR THE MOMENT OF SILENCE

Today I bent the truth to be kind and I have no regret, for I am far surer of what is kind than I am of what is true.

Robert Brault