



January 9-10, 2026

כא טבת תשפ"ו

Candle Lighting 4:39 PM

Parashat Shemot שמות

Exodus 1:1-6:1

Stone – p 292

Hertz – p 206

Etz Hayim p 317

Haftarah ישעיה Isaiah

27:6 - 28:13; 29:22-23

Stone – p 1146

Hertz – p 225

Etz Hayim p 343

Kiddush following services
is sponsored by the congregation

Shabbat ends 5:40 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

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Ari Levy

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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 - Shemot

This summary is adapted from this week's main Covenant & Conversation essay by Rabbi Sacks.

Rabbi Sacks used to say - only half joking - that a proof that Moshe was the greatest of all the prophets was his initial reluctance to lead the Jewish People. Moshe questioned his own capabilities and feared rejection from his people. He admitted his lack of eloquence and implored God to choose someone else. Moshe seemed to intuitively understand the immense challenge of leading Jews, a task almost impossible in its nature.

This insight dates back to Moshe's youth. Growing up in the Egyptian palace, he was detached from his Jewish heritage. However, upon witnessing the enslavement and hard labour of his people, his sense of identity was awakened. His first act of leadership was intervening when an Egyptian was beating a Hebrew. This act of bravery was followed the next day by an attempt to resolve a conflict between two Hebrews. But instead of gratitude, Moshe faced a challenge to his authority. This encounter foreshadowed the difficulties he would face as a leader.

Moshe does indeed find leading Bnei Yisrael to be a tough task. In Devarim, he expresses his struggles handling the community's burdens alone. His frustrations reach their peak in Beha'alotecha, where he confronts God about the immense responsibility, feeling incapable and even wishing for death over his inability to bear the burden. It's hard to believe that this despair was voiced by the one who would become the most revered Jewish leader of all time.

Moshe's leadership challenges are further illuminated by the story of Korach, his chief antagonist. Korach accuses Moshe and Aharon of setting themselves above the rest of the community. Despite his ulterior motives for power, Korach's challenge highlights a critical aspect of Jewish identity - strong individualism. Jewish history is marked by this individualism. Prophets defied kings, Mordechai refused to bow to Haman, and the Maccabees resisted foreign dominations. This trait makes Jews both unconquerable and almost ungovernable. Moshe's early experiences - where his attempts to help were met with scepticism - epitomise this difficulty in leadership.

The sheer range of diverse opinions within the Jewish people showcases the individualistic nature of Jews. Historically, we have seldom agreed on anything. Rabbi Sacks says this is both a problem and a strength. It makes us difficult to lead, but also remarkably resilient.

Moshe's initial reluctance, his struggles as a leader, and the nature of Jewish individualism offer profound insights. Moshe's story, along with the ongoing debates within Jewish communities, highlights the complexities of leading a people fiercely proud of their heritage and individuality. Jews are a nation of strong individuals who rarely agree about anything. This makes them hard to lead, but impossible to conquer - the good and the bad go hand in hand. And if, as we believe, God still loves this people despite all its faults, may we do less?

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

PRAYER

I see You in the starry field,
I see You in the harvest's yield,
In every breath, in every sound
An echo of Your name is found.
The blade of grass, the simple flower,
Bear witness to Your matchless power,
In wonder-workings, or some bush aflame,
Mortals look for God and fancy Him concealed;
But in earth's common things He stands revealed,
While grass and flowers and stars spell out His name.

Abraham Ibn Ezra

THOUGHT FOR THE MOMENT OF SILENCE

The greater the artist, the greater the doubt; perfect confidence is granted to the less talented as a consolation prize.

Robert Hughes

JANUARY 17, 2026

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**SHABBAT, JANUARY 24, 2026
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