



March 6-7, 2026

יח אדר תשפ"ו

Candle Lighting 5:41 PM

**Shabbat Parah**

שבת פרה

**Parashat Ki Tissa** כי תשא

Exodus 30:11- 34:35

Stone - p 484

Hertz - p 352

Etz Hayim - p 523

**Special Maftir** - Numbers 19:1-22

Stone - p 838

Hertz - p 652

Etz Hayim - p 880

**Haftarah** - Ezekiel 36:16-38

Stone - p 1216

Hertz - p 999

Etz Hayim - p 1287

**Kiddush** following services  
is sponsored by the congregation

**Shabbat** ends 6:42 PM



**TRADITIONAL CONGREGATION**

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

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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

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Co-Vice Presidents

Ron Green, Fundraising Vice President

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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 - Ki Tissa

Ki Tissa begins with the final details about the Sanctuary, including a collection of money that was to serve as a census to count the Israelite population. The parsha then tells one of the most gripping stories in Jewish history. The people, confused and panicking without the leadership of Moshe (who is up the mountain, receiving the tablets from God), make a Golden Calf and dance before it. God tells Moshe to go down. Moshe does, and in his anger he smashes the tablets. He lectures the people, then returns to the mountain to beg God to forgive them. Eventually Moshe again descends Mount Sinai, with a second set of tablets, unaware that his face is now radiating light.

It is a moment of the very highest drama. The Israelites, a mere forty days after God revealed Himself to them at Sinai, have made an idol: a Golden Calf. God threatens to destroy them: "I have seen these people," the Lord said to Moshe, "and they are a stiff-necked people. Now leave Me alone so that My anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them. Then I will make you into a great nation." (Exodus 32:9).

Moshe, demonstrating a perfect example of the character of Israel as one who "wrestles with God and man," (Exodus 32:29) confronts both Israel and God. To God, he prays for mercy for the people. Coming down the mountain and facing Israel, he smashes the tablets, the symbol of the covenant. He grinds the calf to dust, mixes it with water, and makes the Israelites drink it. He tells the Levites to punish the wrongdoers.

Then he climbs the mountain once again and tries to re-establish the shattered relationship between God and the people. God accepts Moshe's request and tells him to carve two new tablets of stone. At this point, however, Moshe makes a strange demand:

"And Moshe hurried and knelt to the ground and bowed, and he said, 'If I have found favour in your eyes, my Lord, may my Lord go among us, because [ki] it is a stiff-necked people, and forgive our wickedness and our sin, and take us as your inheritance.'" (Exodus 34:8-9)

The difficulty in the verse is obvious. The reason Moshe gives God for forgiving the Israelites is the very trait that God had previously given as a reason to abandon them: How can Moshe use the people's stubbornness as the very reason for God to continue His presence among them? What is the meaning of Moshe's "because" – "may my Lord go among us, because it is a stiff-necked people"?

The commentators offer a variety of interpretations. Rashi reads the word ki as "if" – "If they are stiff-necked, then forgive them." Ibn Ezra and Chizkuni read it as "although" or "despite the fact that" (af al pi). These are straight-forward readings, though they assign to the word ki a meaning it does not normally have. Nachmanides takes a different approach. Precisely because of the rebelliousness of Israel, this requires the close attention of a forgiving God – like a rebellious child for whom the kindest cure is the attention and concern of a loving parent.

There is, however, another far more striking interpretation that can be traced across the centuries. In the twentieth century it was voiced by Rabbi Yitzchak Nissenbaum. The fact that Rabbi Nissenbaum lived and died in the Warsaw Ghetto makes his words all the more powerful:

Almighty God, be patient with this people, because what is now their greatest flaw will one day be their most heroic quality. They are indeed a stubborn people. When they have everything to thank You for, they complain. Mere weeks after hearing Your voice they make a Golden Calf. But just as now they are stiff-necked in their disobedience, so one day they will be equally stiff-necked in their loyalty. Nations will call on them to assimilate, but they will refuse. Mightier religions will urge them to convert, but they will resist. They will suffer humiliation, persecution, even torture and death just because of the people they belong to and the faith they have, but they will stay true to the covenant their ancestors made with You. They will go to their deaths saying Ani ma'amin, "I believe." This is a people awesome in its obstinacy – and though now it is their failing, there will be times far into the future when it will be their noblest strength.

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

## **PRAYER**

Among the many appetites of Man  
there is a craving after God.

*Among the many attributes of Man  
there is a talent for worshiping God.*

Jews who wandered in deserts beneath the stars  
knew their hearts were hungry for God.

*Jews who studied in candle-lit ghetto rooms thirsted longingly after God.*

But we who are smothered with comfort sometimes  
forget to listen to God.

*Help us, O God, to recognize our need.  
To hear the yearning whisper of our hearts.*

Help us to seek the silence of the desert  
and the thoughtfulness of the house of study.

*Bless us, like our ancestors in ancient days,  
with the most precious gift: a sense of Thy presence.*

Brush us with the wind of the wings of Thy being,  
fill us with the awe of Thy holiness.

*We, too, will praise, glorify, and exalt Thy name.*

***Ruth F. Brin (adapted)***

## **THOUGHT FOR THE MOMENT OF SILENCE**

Patience is not passive. On the contrary it is active; it is concentrated strength.

***Edward G. Bulwer-Lytton***