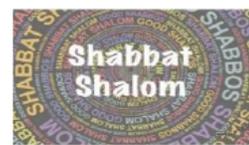


This Week at  
 Temple Israel of Long Beach  
 Experiencing the Warmth of Tradition



February 7, 2026  
 20 Shevat 5786  
 Shabbat Yitro



**PARSHAT YITRO**  
 A NATION OF LEADERS

Parshat Yitro consists of two episodes that seem to constitute a study in contrasts. The first is in chapter 18. Yitro, Moses' father-in-law and a Midianite priest, gives Moses his first lesson in leadership. In the second, the prime mover is G-d Himself who, at Mount Sinai, makes a covenant with the Israelites in an unprecedented and unrepeatable epiphany. For the first and only time in history, G-d appears to an entire people, making a covenant with them and giving them the world's most famous brief code of ethics, the Ten Commandments.

What can there be in common between the practical advice of a Midianite and the timeless words of Revelation itself? The forms and structures of governance are not specifically Jewish. They are part of *hochma*, the universal wisdom of humankind. Jews have known many forms of leadership: by prophets, elders, judges, kings, town councils, and by other structures up to and including the democratically elected Knesset. *The forms of government are not eternal truths, nor are they exclusive to Israel.* There is nothing specifically Jewish about political structures.

What is specifically Jewish is the principle of the covenant at Sinai, that Israel is the only nation whose sole ultimate king and legislator is G-d himself.

The one theme in common to Yitro and the Revelation at Sinai, is the *delegation, distribution, and democratization* of leadership. Only G-d can rule alone.

As Chaim Weizmann, the first President of Israel famously said, "I head a nation of a million presidents". The Lord may be our shepherd, but no Jew was ever a sheep. At the same time, it is what led Jews to have an impact on the world out of all proportion to their numbers. Jews constitute only the tiniest fragment – one fifth of one percent – of the population of the world, but an extraordinarily high percentage of leaders in any given field of human endeavor.

To be a Jew is to be called on to lead.

Excerpt from:  
 "Lessons In Leadership"  
 by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

Candle Lighting  
**Shabbat - 5:02 pm**  
**Kabbalat Shabbat – 5:12 pm**  
**For week of 02/07/26 - 02/13/26**



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 MORNING AND PARTICIPATE  
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 EGALITARIAN SERVICES.**

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