

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



August 8, 2026
25 Av 5786
Shabbat Re'eh
Birchat Hachodesh



PARSHAT RE'EH
Defining Reality

One of the gifts of great leaders, and one from which each of us can learn, is that they *frame reality for the group*. They define its state. They specify its aims. They articulate its choices. They tell us where we are and where we are going. That is one of their most magisterial roles, and no one did it more powerfully than Moses at the beginning of Parashat Re'eh.

"See, I am setting before you today the blessing and the curse – the blessing if you obey the commands of the Lord your God that I am giving you today; the curse if you disobey the commands of the Lord your God and turn from the way that I command you today by following other gods, which you have not known". (Deut. 11:26-28)

What Moses is doing here is *defining reality* for the next generation and for all generations. He is doing so as a preface to what is about to follow in the next chapters, namely a systematic restatement of Jewish law covering all aspects of life for the new nation in its land.

Moses knows that people often think and act in short-term ways, preferring today's pleasure to tomorrow's happiness, personal advantage over the good of society as a whole. Throughout Deuteronomy he insists time and again that the road to long term flourishing – the "good", the "blessing", life itself – consists in making one simple choice: accept God as your sovereign, do his will, and blessings will follow. If not, sooner or later you will be conquered and dispersed and you will suffer more than you can imagine. Moses defines reality for the Israelites of his time and all time.

Strong families and communities have a clear sense of what their ideals are, and they are not blown off course by the winds of change. Moses monumentally framed the choice: between good and bad, life and death, the blessing and the curse, following God on the one hand and choosing the values of neighboring civilizations on the other.

Who are we? Where are we? What are we trying to achieve and what kind of people do we aspire to be? These are questions leaders help the group ask and answer, and when a group does it together it is blessed with exceptional resilience and strength.

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

Candle Lighting

Shabbat - 7:46 pm

Kabbalat Shabbat – 7:56 pm

For week of 08/08/26 - 08/14/26



We thank the following donors for their generous contributions to Temple Israel this past week.

Eleanor T. Sobel

Malky Asarch

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Danielle & Dr. Joshua Hourizadeh



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