

Shabbat Message

This week ushers in a change in our country as a new administration enters the oval office.

It is a new beginning in our Torah portion this week, Bo, as well. The Hebrew slaves face a moment of great transition as Moses comes to bring them out of the land of Egypt. However, our tradition makes it very clear that it is not about this moment alone that matters, it is about everything that comes after as well. As God describes the plight of the Hebrews in Egypt and their struggle to escape from Pharaoh, God's focus is not just on their present. Instead, God immediately speaks about their future. "So, when God has brought you into the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which God swore to your fathers to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey, you shall observe the following practice..." (Exodus 13:5). God continues by describing the rituals of Passover that the people will observe when living in the land of Israel. God realizes the people must focus not only on their present, but even more on the possibility of their future.

Freedom is not a moment, it is a journey. Complacency is an easy place to find ourselves, content with what we possess and incapable of understanding that we cannot take our liberty for granted. As a result, God has us reenact the escape to freedom each and every year. And in doing so, God teaches us a lesson. Freedom instills within us a responsibility: to continuously fight for what is just and right, to ensure freedom not only for our generation, but for generations to come. Complacency leads to ambivalence and ambivalence can lead to a loss of all of the ideals that our nation hold most dear. Instead, we awake each morning and must rededicate ourselves to the task of creating a nation where equality reigns for all.

Wednesday was a moment. Now, our journey begins. May we stand with generations of Jews and Americans before us, ensuring a future of democracy, freedom and justice.

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