

Passover 2023

Leading the Exodus Generation



This Pesach, as we mark the Exodus from Egypt, take a moment to consider some of the key workplace and leadership challenges of 2023 through the Jewish story.

We invite you to let our people's history enhance your work and that of your teams today, while deepening your Jewish roots. Wishing you a Pesach kasher v'sameach, from everyone at the JLC!


This workplace generation is the "Exodus generation" - we are the ones who got through Covid and we're (mainly, for the moment) out the other side. Take a look at the following themes which our generation contends with, as did the generation of the Exodus from Egypt.

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Leading the Exodus Generation



Like the Israelite Exodus generation, we're left incredibly vulnerable, with raw scars that need tending

This workplace generation has, and articulates, their needs, particularly mental health needs.

"The Exodus generation was accustomed to suffering under the yoke of Egyptian oppression. Their spirit was broken. How could they stand up and fight their masters...? After all they were inexperienced in the art of war..."

Ibn Ezra on Exodus 14:13

וזה הדור היוצא ממצרים למד לסבול עול מצרים ונפשו שפלה. ואיך יוכל עתה להלחם עם אדוניו... ואינם מלומדים למלחמה.

[Read the leadership theory: Leadership Traits for the Post Covid19 Workplace, Dana Brownlee](#)

With the legacy of what we've lived through, we crave "parenting" from our leadership

Our teams look to their leaders to make things alright - to contain their anxiety and meet their needs. When leaders don't meet this high bar, there can be rebellion.

The people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why did you make us leave Egypt to die in the wilderness? There is no bread and no water, and we have come to loathe this miserable food."

Numbers 21:5

וידבר העם באלקים ובמשה למה העליתנו ממצרים למות במדבר כי אין לחם ואין מים ונפשנו קצה בלחם הקלקל

[Click lead the leadership theory: The six paradoxes required of today's leadership, PWC](#)



Now we're free, we want to be recognised as the full people that we are

The past two years have given colleagues a window into one another's homes. They are not just a work force. They bring their full selves to work and want flexibility to accommodate multi-faceted lives.

"Is there anyone who has built a new house but has not dedicated it...or planted a vineyard but has never harvested it... or spoken for a woman in marriage but has not married her?... Let them go back home, lest they die in battle and another (do) it."

Deuteronomy 20:5-9

מיהאיש אשר בנה בית חדש ולא חנכו ... אשר נטע כרם ולא חללו ... אשר ארש אשה ולא לקחה ילך וישב לביתו פרימיות במלחמה ואיש אחר יקחנה:

[Read the leadership theory: Bringing your whole self to work - should you?](#)



Even while we're still a "wandering people" post-pandemic, we have creative ideas for growth. We seek collaboration and innovation to make something great happen

Right now, there is a surge in desire to deepen our interpersonal connections, to be in-person for gatherings, and to work together on new projects.

When the Egyptians saw the Israelites' flags encamped at the sea, as impressive as a royal army, the Egyptians became sorrowful, saying: Woe are we, what did we send from our land?

Shir HaShirim Rabba

וכיון שראום דגלים חונים על הים בטקסיס מלכים, התחילו המצריים
נחנקין ואומרים וי מה שלחנו מארצנו

[Read the leadership theory: Transformers: 10 leadership role models for a post-COVID world, Kate Bassett, Charles Orton-Jones and Matthew Rock](#)



The leaders of our generation also find parallels in the leaders of the original Exodus generation

The leaders of this time are expected to be Moshe, Miriam and Aaron - we are to be the perfect providers who care for the people. This task can sometimes feel like summoning manna and water in a desert.

And what of the vulnerabilities that we the leaders ourselves have? What about when we simply cannot provide - when there is a shortage of resources: money, time, energy? What costs do these Exodus generation trends have on its leaders?

Moses cried to God: Did I give birth to all these people? did I engender them, that You should say to me, 'Carry them in your bosom as a caregiver carries an infant'?.. I cannot carry all this people by myself, for it is too much for me.

Numbers 11:11-13

האנכי הריתי את כל־העם הזה אם־אנכי ולדתיהו כִּי־תאמר אלי
שאהו בחיקך כאשר ישא האמן את־הינק... לא־אוכל אנכי לבדי
לשאת את־כל־העם הזה כי כבד ממני:

[Read the leadership theory: Why vulnerability will be a key trait for leaders post-COVID-19, Merilee A. Kern](#)



How can we have the courageous conversations needed to manage expectations while supporting our teams?

And how can leaders articulate their own vulnerability and needs?

Moses said to Korah, "Hear me, sons of Levi. Is it not enough for you that the God of Israel has set you apart from the community of Israel...? Now that [God] has advanced you and all your fellow Levites with you, do you seek the priesthood too?"

Numbers 16:8-10

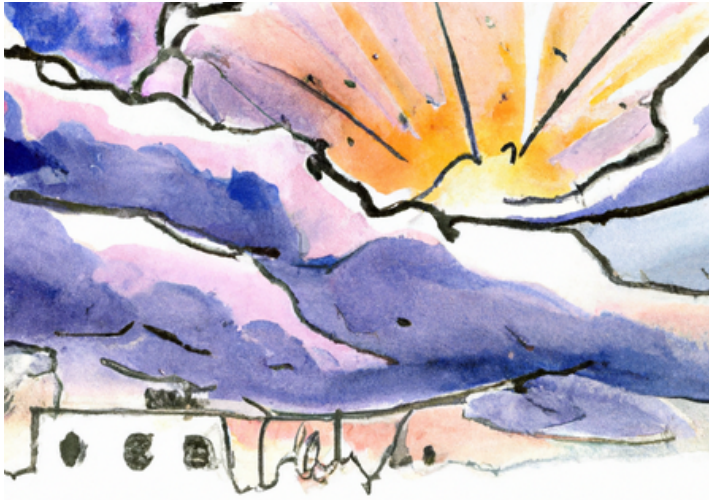
ויאמר משה אל־קרח שמעו־נא בני לוי: המעט מכם כִּי־הבדיל
אלהי ישראל אתכם מעדת ישראל... ויקרב אתך ואת־כל־אחריך
בני־לוי אתך ובקשתם גם־כהנה:

[Read the leadership theory: Brené Brown's collection of resources for giving courageous feedback](#)



What lessons can we take from the similarities that this generation has with that of the Exodus? Here are three:

1.



The good news is that history has taught us that the first generation of transition is always the hardest. It is the next wave which enters the promised land. With our own people's stories of refugeehood, and that of the many refugees in today's world, we know this to be true. We can have faith that beyond this Exodus generation, smoother times are ahead.

For you will pass over the Yarden to go in to inherit the land which the Hashem your God gives you, and you shall inherit it, and dwell in it.

Deuteronomy 11:31

כִּי אַתֶּם עֹבְרִים אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן לְבֹא לְרִשֵׁת אֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם נֹתֵן לָכֶם וְיִרְשַׁתֶּם אֹתָהּ וְיִשְׁבַּתְּמֶכָּהּ:

2.

Being an Exodus people who has known hardship shapes us in the best ways - we will always be attuned to pain and able to articulate needs better than those who have had it easy. In future times, we will be able to take care of others thanks to our own past experiences.

Love therefore the stranger: for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

Deuteronomy 10:19

וְאָהַבְתֶּם אֶת־הַגֵּר כִּי־גֵרִים הֵייתֶם בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם



3.

Our story, however chaotic it feels now, can be shaped into a future "seder" - creating new ways of finding order out of the disorder.

This is the bread of affliction that our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt. Anyone who is hungry should come and eat, anyone who is in need should come and partake... this year we are slaves, next year we will be free people.

Pesach Hagaddah

הָא לַחֲמַא עֲנִיָּא דִּי אֲכָלוּ אַבְהֵתְנָא בְּאַרְעָא דְּמִצְרַיִם. כָּל דְּכַפִּינָא יִיְתִי וְיִיכֹל, כָּל דְּצָרִיָּה יִיְתִי וְיִפְסָח... הַשְׁתָּא עַבְדִּי, לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה בְּנֵי חוֹרֵין

