

Friends, this week in the Jewish community, we begin our reading and study of the biblical Book of Exodus. As the book begins, we are introduced to a new Pharaoh who did not know Joseph, the Hebrew slave whose ability to interpret dreams and to act accordingly saved Egypt from a great famine. This Pharaoh goes on to oppress and enslave the people Israel, setting in motion the events of the book.

This Biblical story reminds us of the tremendous power that leaders have: the power to create and to destroy, to bring people together or to drive them apart, to liberate or to oppress.

Eternal God, as we gather this evening at the start of a new term for our County Legislature, keep its members ever mindful of the sacred task before them. Give them the patience, the humility, the courage, and the strength to perform their duties wisely and well. Implant within them a listening heart and an open mind. Inspire them to improve our county for the benefit of all its residents. May all who call this place home find safety, opportunity, love, and freedom here.

Ken yehi ratzon: So may it be your will: Amen.