

EXODUS 18:1-20:23
HAFTARAH ISAIAH 6:1-7:6, 9:5-6
18 SH'VAT 5786/5 FEBRUARY 2026



Composition VII
Wassily Kandinsky

TO SET THE SOUL VIBRATING

1. All the people saw (ראה) the thunder and lightning, the blare of the shofar and the mountain smoking. The people saw (ראה), they vibrated (נוע) and stood at a distance. (Exodus 20:15)
2. Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid, for God has come only in order to test/*nasot* (נסו) you.” (Exodus 20:17)

Nasot is an expression of elevation and greatness. God has come in order to exalt (נסו, to raise up; נס, flag, miracle) you. (Rashi to Ex. 20:17)

3. It is human spiritual greatness that is God’s purpose in revealing Godself, the ability to endure hardship *through the immense amplification of inner resources*. (Based on Haamek Davar, my emphasis)
4. At their source, sound and sight are united. Only in our limited, physical world, in this disjointed world, are these phenomena disconnected and detached. If we are bound to the present, if we can only perceive the universe through the viewpoint of the temporal and the material, then we will always be aware of the divide between sight and sound. The

prophetic vision at Mount Sinai, however, granted the people a unique perspective, as if they were *standing near the source of Creation*. From that vantage point, they were able to witness the underlying unity of the universe. They were able to see sounds and hear sights. God's revelation at Sinai was registered by all their senses simultaneously, as a single, undivided perception. (Rav Kook, my emphasis)

5. God spoke (*daber*) all these words (*devarim*) (Exodus 20:1)...Moses wrote down on the tablets the terms of the covenant, the ten *hadvarim* (Exodus 34:28)
6. With ten utterances (*ma'ahmarot*) was the world created... (Mishna 5:1)
7. And I heard the voice of God saying, "Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?" And I said, "Here I am (*hineni*)! Send me." (Isaiah 6:8, haftarah for Parshat Yitro)