

YITRO - EXODUS

- *Jethro* -

Dan Stolebarger - Holy Ground Explorations
Chapters 18:1 - 20:23

INTRODUCTION



PARASHAT YITRO - 'Jethro'

INTRO

ARE YOU READY? This is the climax - the birth of a Nation, a People ... Here we are witnessing the time when GOD calls Israel a kingdom of priests, He gives the nation the responsibility to serve as a light unto the world, and to guide the nations by example.

Although the giving of the Torah at Sinai was an experience shared only by the Israelites, its impact is felt by the entire world.

¹³ And so it was, on the next day, that Moses sat to judge the people; and the people stood before Moses from morning until evening. ¹⁴ So when Moses' father-in-law saw all that he did for the people, he said, "What is this thing that you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit, and all the people stand before you from morning until evening?" ¹⁵ And Moses said to his father-in-law, "Because the people come to me to inquire of God. ¹⁶ When they have a difficulty, they come to me, and I judge between one and another; and I make known the statutes of God and His laws." ¹⁷ So Moses' father-in-law said to him, **"The thing that you do is not good. ¹⁸ Both you and these people who are with you will surely wear yourselves out. For this thing is too much for you; you are not able to perform it by yourself.**

Who was Jethro ... the Midianites? Descendants of Abraham and Keturah (Gen. 25:1-6) and therefore cousins of the sons of Jacob. At first they settled east of the Jordan River but eventually they became nomadic shepherds in the Sinai Peninsula. Unfortunately the time will come where they will be avowed enemies of Israel and Joshua will be told to destroy them.

"Men called by God to lead are always in danger of attempting to encompass more than they are able." (Morgan)

²¹ Moreover you shall select from all the people able men (lit. Men of Valor), **such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness;** and place *such* over them *to be* rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. ²² And let them judge the people at all times. Then it will be *that* every great matter they shall bring to you, but every small matter they themselves shall judge. So it will be easier for you, **for they will bear the burden with you.** ²³ If you do this thing, and God so commands you, then you will be able to endure, and all this people will also go to their place in peace."

What does it mean to be God-fearing? Knowing there is a higher standard than just one's opinion.

Men of Truth - The ability to know what objective TRUTH is and the courage to SPEAK IT. Think about the age of deceit in which we live.

Hating covetousness - this translates into not being able to be bribed

We all need burden bears ... we all need someone to LEAN on! Jesus is the ULTIMATE burden bearer! Come unto ME ...

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17 Moses' father-in-law said to him, "What you are doing is not good. 18 You and the people with you will certainly wear yourselves out, for the thing is too heavy for you. You are not able to do it alone.

Sharon Stolebarger - This is wise counsel in all areas of life. God does NOT call us to "do it alone." He calls us to find like-minded, trustworthy folks who can share the burden. This is very difficult for many to do - to delegate. Instead, they cling to the responsibility unwilling to trust someone else to help. Burn out is very real and prevalent in all walks of life. I know that I need to be willing to examine what it is that I cling to that perhaps God is wanting me to turn over to someone else.

Dan Stolebarger - a close friend years ago gave me some great counsel with only three words! After reading the above passage can you guess what those three words are???? Okay, here they are **DELEGATE OR DIE!**

THE CLIMAX OF EXODUS IS NOW AT HAND!

³ And Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him from the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: ⁴ 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and **how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself.** ⁵ **Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people;** for all the earth is Mine. ⁶ And you shall be to Me a **kingdom of priests and a holy nation.**' These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel."

This was the beginning of the fulfillment of what God said in [Exodus 3:12](#): this shall be a sign to you that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain.

On Eagles wings ... This an indication of God's great love for Israel. It is said that an eagle does not carry her young in her claws like other birds; the young eagles attach themselves to the back of the mother eagle and are protected as they are carried. Any arrow from a hunter must pass through the mother eagle before it could touch the young eagle on her back.

Kingdom of ministers... Although usually translates as priests, the word in the context of this verse means that the entire nation is to be dedicated to leading the world toward and understanding and acceptance of God's mission.



7 So Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before them all these words which the Lord commanded him. 8 Then all the people answered together and said, **"All that the Lord has spoken we will do."** So Moses brought back the words of the people to the Lord. 9 And the Lord said to Moses, "Behold, I come to you in the thick cloud, **that the people may hear when I speak with you, and believe you forever."**

So Moses told the words of the people to the Lord.

Don't forget the grumbling that has already occurred and will continue :-)
Think about it ... the people HEARD the voice of God speaking to Moses!

¹⁰ Then the Lord said to Moses, "Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes. ¹¹ **And let them be ready for the third day. For on the third day the Lord will come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people.** ¹² You shall set bounds for the people all around, saying, 'Take heed to yourselves *that* you do *not* go up to the mountain or touch its base. Whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death.

The THIRD Day ... **Be ready for the third day:** The meeting with God could only come at the third day. God promised to reveal Himself on **the third day**, and they had to wait for it.

This is an amplification and sounds much like a redo of the burning bush incident. We see that there is something special about this place, the Lord's presence. "Holy Ground" - not to touch, penalty of death.

16 Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. 17 And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. **18** Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly. **19** And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, **Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice. 20** Then the Lord came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mountain. And the Lord called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.

Thunders, lighting, smoke, and a trumpet - exactly the elements which we see in Revelation when we are before the throne of God there (Rev 4:5).

The people are overwhelmed by the sensory experience of the revelation; the text describes the people *seeing* sounds of thunder and the shofar blasts.

At the sound of the trumpet, Moses led the people up to the barrier at the base of Mount Sinai, where they could see, smell, hear, and virtually taste the fire which covered the mountain - as well as feel the earth shake under their feet when **the whole mountain quaked greatly.**

Collectively, Israel heard the Lord God speak from Mount Sinai in an audible **voice.**

SINAI vs ZION

Hebrews 12:18-24 says clearly that under the New Covenant we come to a different mountain, that our salvation and relationship with God is centered at Zion, not Sinai.

- Sinai speaks of fear and terror, Zion of love and forgiveness.
- Sinai is in a dry desert, but Zion is the city of the Living God.
- Sinai, with all its fear and power is earthly; but the Mount Zion we come to is heavenly and spiritual.
- At Sinai, only Moses could come and meet God; at Zion, there is an innumerable company, a general assembly.
- Sinai had guilty men in fear, but Zion has just men made perfect.
- At Sinai, Moses is the mediator, but at Zion, Jesus the mediator.
- Sinai put forth an Old Covenant, ratified by the blood of animals; Zion has a New Covenant, ratified by the blood of God's precious Son.
- Sinai was all about barriers and exclusion; Zion is all about invitation.
- Sinai is all about Law, Zion is all about grace.

iv. Therefore, we shouldn't come to Zion as if coming to Sinai. We must put away our hesitation and get bold in coming to God. Even so, there is much for us to learn at Mount Sinai. We learn of God's holy requirements and what we have to do before we can come to Him. In a similar manner to those at Mount Sinai, there are things we must to do meet with God. **Dave Guzik - Enduring Word Commentary**

4-6 You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.'

Andrew Suedkamp - A couple things strike me with this: First, Moses reminds the people of what they have already seen the Lord do for them. He then reminds them that if they obey God and keep His covenant, they will be treasured and will be His representatives (priests) and a holy nation. We too, need to remember all that God has done for us. In the midst of great trials, we can't let our minds deceive us into thoughts that God doesn't care or doesn't intervene - we must remember! Secondly, without obedience, we can't live up to all the things He desires for us.

INTRO

Unlike other ancient treaties between a ruler and his people, the 10 commandments focus not only on the people's relationship with the ruler, but also on each individual's behavior toward every other individual.

God gave the 10 commandments in the no-man's land of a desert rather than in the Land of Israel, to signify these laws do not just belong to one people, but to all humanity.

When the Holy One, Blessed is He, presented the Torah at Sinai, not a bird chirped, not a fowl flew, not an ox lowed, not an angel ascended, not a seraph proclaimed HOLY. The sea did not roll and no creature made a sound. All the vast universe was silent and mute. It was then that the Voice went forth and proclaimed, I am HaShem, your God!

IF you think that the **10 commandments** are tough, wait until the Lord Jesus explains them to you. Any misconception that you might think about them, will be blown away when you realize what the Lord is saying. One of the several purposes of the Law is to show us God's righteousness. If it were possible for you and I to keep these laws, then Jesus Christ died in vain!

And God spoke all these words, saying:

² “*I am* the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

³ “You shall have **no other gods** before Me.

⁴ “You shall **not make for yourself a carved image**—any likeness *of anything* that is in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth; ⁵ you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, *am* a **jealous God**, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children **to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me**, ⁶ but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments. **(Children are punished only if they adopt the and carry on the sinful legacy of their parents)**

⁷ “**You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain**, for the Lord will not hold *him* guiltless who takes His name in vain.

⁸ “**Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.** ⁹ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day *is* the Sabbath of the Lord your God. *In it* you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who *is* within your gates. ¹¹ For *in* six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that *is* in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

First commandment tells you who to worship, the second one tells you how.

How does He know that we love Him? By keeping His commandments. Are we saved by keeping His commandments? No, but we demonstrate our love for Him by keeping His commandments.

Are you and I legally liable to keep the Sabbath day? Many would argue “no,” that we are not under the Law of Moses and we are free in Christ. But, if you look carefully, where was the Sabbath instituted? In Genesis! By the way, no where in Scripture does it say that Saturday is the Sabbath, it does speak of the 7th day (but you can count your week as you will).

Covet ... There is no way to enforce this commandment. This one is strictly in the heart.

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- ¹² **"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long** upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.
- ¹³ "You shall **not murder**.
- ¹⁴ "You shall **not commit adultery**.
- ¹⁵ "You shall **not steal**.
- ¹⁶ "You shall **not bear false witness** against your neighbor.
- ¹⁷ "You shall **not covet** your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that *is* your neighbor's."

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¹⁸ Now all the people witnessed the thunderings, the lightning flashes, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and **when the people saw it**, they trembled and stood afar off. ¹⁹ Then they said to Moses, **"You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die."**

²⁰ And Moses said to the people, "Do not fear; for God has come to test you, and that His fear may be before you, so that you may not sin." ²¹ So the people stood afar off, but Moses drew near the thick darkness where God was.

²² Then the Lord said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: 'You have seen that I have talked with you from heaven. ²³ You shall not make *anything to be* with Me—gods of silver or gods of gold you shall not make for yourselves. ²⁴ **An altar of earth you shall make for Me**, and you shall sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your oxen. In every place where I record My name I will come to you, and I will bless you. ²⁵ **And if you make Me an altar of stone, you shall not build it of hewn stone; for if you use your tool on it, you have profaned it.**

TEMPLE ZERO ... Before the Temple / Tabernacle.

All other religions had elaborate gold, bronze altars, while the Israelites had dirt and rocks ... Why? God wanted ALL of mankind to worship the One who made made us from the dirt. Lowest common denominator.

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""You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's."

Glen and Brandy Iverson: We often think of the other commandments which include don't murder and don't steal, but overlook these important commandments. Bear false witness means to not lie and slander another. The Pharisees did this to Jesus as His trial and crucifixion were about framing an innocent man in order to remove a threat to their authority. They did this because they coveted Jesus following and authority.

I'm sure many of us have been slandered so we know the problems this causes.

Our entire culture is based on coveting what we don't have and that should give us opportunity to pause and reflect.



https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/756399/jewish/The-613-Commandments-Mitzvot.htm