

18:1-20:26 Yitro, “Jethro”

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Yitro Hebrew paragraph divisions

18:1-27 {p} YHVH is greater than all the gods

19:1-25 {s} YHVH descended upon Mt Sinai in fire, to enact the marriage covenant with Israel

20:1 {s} And God spoke all these words, saying

20:2-6 {s} Israel shall have no gods before YHVH

20:7 {p} Israel shall not take the name of YHVH in vain

20:8-11 {s} Remember the Sabbath day to set it apart

20:12 {s} Honor your father and mother

20:13 {s} You shall not murder

20:14 {s} You shall not commit adultery

20:15 {s} You shall not steal

20:16 {s} You shall not bear false witness

20:17a {s} You shall not covet your neighbor’s house

20:17b {p} You shall not covet anything that is your neighbor’s

20:18-21 {s} The fear of God prevents us from sinning (breaking commandment)

20:22-26 {p} Explanation of ‘Have no gods before Me.’

Yitro Summary

1A) 18:1-27 YHVH IS GREATER than all the gods;

1B) 19:1-25 MOSES, THE MEDIATOR of the marriage covenant between God and Israel;

CENTRAL AXIS) 20:1-17 GOD SPOKE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS;

2B) 20:18-21 MOSES, MEDIATE between us and God lest we die;

2A) 20:22-26 Preserve **THE SANCTITY OF YHVH’S WORSHIP** and altar.

Yitro Chiastic structure

1A) 18:1-27 YHVH IS GREATER than all the gods;

1a) 18:1-6 Jethro arrives to Moses;

1a) 18:1-3a Now Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses’ father-in-law, heard of all that God had done for Moses, and for Israel His people, how YHVH had brought Israel out of Egypt. And **Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, took Zipporah, Moses’ wife**, after he had sent her away, **and her two sons**;

1b) 18:3b Of whom **the name of the one was Gershom**; for he said: I have been a stranger in a strange land;

2b) 18:4 And *the name of the other was Eliezer*: for the God of my father was my help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh;

2a) 18:5-6 And *Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, came with his sons and his wife* to Moses into the wilderness where he was encamped, at the mount of God; and he said to Moses: *I your father-in-law Jethro am coming to you, and your wife, and her two sons* with her;

1b.1) 18:7 And *Moses went out to meet his father-in-law*, and bowed down and kissed him; and they asked each other of their welfare; and they came into the tent;

1b.2) 18:8 And *Moses told his father-in-law all that YHVH had done to [judge] Pharaoh and to the Egyptians* for Israel's sake, all the travail that had come upon them by the way, and how YHVH delivered them;

1c) 18:9-10 And *Jethro rejoiced* for all the goodness which YHVH had done to Israel, in that He had delivered them out of the hand of the Egyptians. And *Jethro said: Blessed be YHVH*, who has delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of Pharaoh; who has delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians;

central axis) 18:11 Now I know that **YHVH is greater than all the gods; for in the very thing in which they behaved proudly, He was above them;**

2c) 18:12a And *Jethro*, Moses' father-in-law, **took a burnt-offering and sacrifices for God;**

2b.1) 18:12b And *Aaron came, and all the elders of Israel, to eat bread with Moses' father-in-law* before God;

2b.2) 18:13-26 *Jethro told Moses how to judge the people;*

1a) 18:13-14 *Jethro observed Moses judging alone;*

1A) 18:13 And it came to pass on the morrow, that **MOSES SAT** to judge the people; and **THE PEOPLE STOOD ABOUT MOSES FROM THE MORNING TO THE EVENING;**

CENTRAL AXIS) 18:14A AND WHEN **MOSES' FATHER-IN-LAW SAW ALL THAT HE DID FOR THE PEOPLE, HE SAID: WHAT IS THIS THING THAT YOU DO FOR THE PEOPLE?**

2A) 18:14B Why do **YOU SIT** alone, and all **THE PEOPLE STAND ABOUT YOU FROM MORNING UNTIL EVENING?**

1b) 18:15-16 And Moses said to his father-in-law: Because *the people come to me to inquire of God; when they have a matter*, it comes to me; and I judge between a man and his neighbor, and *I make them know the statutes of God, and His laws;*

1c) 18:17a And *Moses' father-in-law said* to him;

1d) 18:17b *The thing that you are doing is not good;*

central axis) 18:18a **You will surely wear away, both you, and this people that is with you;**

2d) 18:18b For *the thing is too heavy for you*; you are not able to perform it yourself alone;

2c) 18:19a *Hearken now to my voice*, I will give you counsel, and God be with you;

2b) 18:19b-20 Stand before God for the people, and *bring their cases to God*. And *you shall teach them the statutes and the laws*, and shall show them the way in which they must walk, and the work that they must do;

2a) 18:21-26 *Jethro counseled Moses to choose able men to help bear the burden of judging*;

1A.1) 18:21 Moreover **YOU SHALL SELECT OUT OF ALL THE PEOPLE ABLE MEN**, such as fear God, men of truth, hating unjust gain; and place such over them, to be **RULERS OF THOUSANDS, RULERS OF HUNDREDS, RULERS OF FIFTIES**, and **RULERS OF TENS**;

1A.2) 18:22A And let them **JUDGE THE PEOPLE AT ALL SEASONS**;

1A.3) 18:22B And it shall be, that **EVERY GREAT MATTER THEY SHALL BRING TO YOU**, but **EVERY SMALL MATTER THEY SHALL JUDGE THEMSELVES**;

1B) 18:22C So **THEY SHALL MAKE IT EASIER FOR YOU** and bear the burden with you;

CENTRAL AXIS) 18:23A **IF YOU SHALL DO THIS THING, AND GOD COMMAND YOU SO**;

2B) 18:23B Then **YOU SHALL BE ABLE TO ENDURE**, and all this people also shall go to their place in peace;

2A.1) 18:24-25 So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father-in-law, and did all that he had said. And **MOSES CHOSE ABLE MEN OUT OF ALL ISRAEL**, and made them heads over the people, **RULERS OF THOUSANDS, RULERS OF HUNDREDS, RULERS OF FIFTIES**, and **RULERS OF TENS**;

2A.2) 18:26A And they **JUDGED THE PEOPLE AT ALL SEASONS**;

2A.3) 18:26B **THE HARD CASES THEY BROUGHT TO MOSES**, but **EVERY SMALL MATTER THEY JUDGED THEMSELVES**;

2a) 18:27 And **Moses let his father-in-law depart**; and he went his way into his own land; {p}

1B) 19:1-25 **MOSES, THE MEDIATOR** of the marriage covenant between God and Israel;

1a) 19:1-7a **Covenant proposed**;

1a) 19:1-3a *Moses went up to God*;

1A) 19:1 In the third month after the children of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on the same day, **THEY CAME TO THE WILDERNESS OF SINAI**;

CENTRAL AXIS) 19:2A **AND WHEN THEY HAD DEPARTED FROM REPHIDIM**;

2A) 19:2B-3A And **HAD COME TO THE WILDERNESS OF SINAI**, they encamped in the wilderness; and there Israel encamped before the mount. And Moses went up to God;

1b) 19:3b And YHVH called to him out of the mountain, saying: *Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob*, and tell the children of Israel;

1c) 19:4 You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how *I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself*;

central axis) 19:5a *Now therefore, if you will indeed hearken to My voice and keep My covenant*;

2c) 19:5b-6a Then *you shall be My own special treasure from among all peoples*; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation;

2b) 19:6b These are the words which *you shall speak to the children of Israel*;

2a) 19:7a So *Moses came [down to]* and called for *the elders of the people*;

1b) 19:7b And set before them **all these words which YHVH commanded** him;

1c) 19:8a And all **the people answered** together, and said;

central axis) 19:8b All that YHVH has spoken we will do (i.e., The covenant was accepted);

2c) 19:8c-9a And Moses reported **the words of the people** to YHVH. And YHVH said to Moses: Lo, I come to you in the thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and may also believe you forever;

2b) 19:9b And **Moses told the words of the people** to YHVH;

2a) 19:10-25 Covenant consecrated;

1a) 19:10-15 Consecration commanded and **boundaries set**, to meet with God on the third day;

1A) 19:10-11A And YHVH said to Moses: **GO TO THE PEOPLE**, and **SANCTIFY THEM** today and tomorrow, and let them **WASH THEIR GARMENTS**, and **BE READY AGAINST THE THIRD DAY**;

1B) 19:11B For on the third day **YHVH WILL COME DOWN** in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai;

CENTRAL AXIS) 19:12-13A AND YOU SHALL SET BOUNDS FOR THE PEOPLE ROUND ABOUT, SAYING: TAKE HEED TO YOURSELVES, THAT YOU DO NOT GO UP TO THE MOUNTAIN, OR TOUCH THE BORDER OF IT; WHOEVER TOUCHES THE MOUNTAIN SHALL BE SURELY PUT TO DEATH; NO HAND SHALL TOUCH HIM, BUT HE SHALL SURELY BE STONED, OR SHOT THROUGH; WHETHER IT BE BEAST OR MAN, HE SHALL NOT LIVE;

2B) 19:13B When the ram's horn sounds long, **THEY SHALL COME UP** to the mountain;

2A) 19:14-15 And **MOSES WENT** down from the mountain **TO THE PEOPLE**, and **SANCTIFIED THE PEOPLE**; and they **WASHED THEIR GARMENTS**. And he said to the people: **BE READY AGAINST THE THIRD DAY**; do not come near a woman;

1b) 19:16a And it came to pass on the third day, when it was morning, that there were *thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud upon the mountain*;

1c) 19:16b And *the voice of a trumpet horn exceedingly loud*;

1d) 19:16c-17 And *all the people* that were in the camp *trembled*. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet God; and they stood at the foot of the mountain;

1e) 19:18a Now Mount Sinai was altogether *in smoke*;

central axis) 19:18b Because YHVH descended upon it in fire;

- 2e) 19:18c** And *its smoke ascended* as the smoke of a furnace;
- 2d) 19:18b** And *the whole mountain quaked* greatly;
- 2c) 19:19a** And when *the voice of the trumpet horn waxed louder and louder*;
- 2b) 19:19b-20a** Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice. And **YHVH came down upon Mount Sinai**, to the top of the mountain;
- 2a) 19:20b-25** Warning to maintain the **boundaries set** around the holy mountain;
- 1A) 19:20B** And YHVH called Moses to the top of the mountain; and **MOSES WENT UP**;
- 1B) 19:21-22** And **YHVH SAID TO MOSES: GO DOWN**, charge **THE PEOPLE**, lest they **BREAK THROUGH TO** gaze upon **YHVH**, and many of them perish. And **LET THE PRIESTS** also, that come near to YHVH, sanctify themselves, **LEST YHVH BREAK FORTH UPON THEM**;
- CENTRAL AXIS) 19:23** **AND MOSES SAID TO YHVH: THE PEOPLE CANNOT COME UP TO MOUNT SINAI; FOR YOU CHARGED US, SAYING: ‘SET BOUNDS ABOUT THE MOUNTAIN, AND SANCTIFY IT;’**
- 2B) 19:24** And **YHVH SAID TO HIM: GO, GET DOWN**, and you shall come up, you, and Aaron with you; but **LET NOT THE PRIESTS** and **THE PEOPLE BREAK THROUGH TO** come up to **YHVH**, **LEST HE BREAK FORTH UPON THEM**;
- 2A) 19:25** So **MOSES WENT DOWN** to the people, and told them; **{s}**

CENTRAL AXIS) 20:1-17 GOD SPOKE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS;

- 1a) 20:1-6 1st & 2nd: Keep the sanctity of the worship of YHVH;**
- 1a.1) 20:1-2** And God spoke all these words, saying: **{s} I am YHVH your God**, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage;
- 1a.2) 20:3** *You shall have no other gods before Me;*
- 1b) 20:4a** *You shall not make a graven image for yourselves, nor any manner of likeness;*
- central axis) 20:4b** *Of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth;*
- 2b) 20:5a** *You shall not bow down to them, nor serve them;*
- 2a.1) 20:5b** For **I YHVH your God am**;
- 2a.2) 20:5c-6** **A jealous God**, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me; and showing mercy to the thousandth generation of them that love Me and keep My commandments; **{s}**
- 1b) 20:7** You shall not take the name of YHVH your God in vain; for YHVH will not hold him guiltless that takes His name in vain; **{p}** (i.e., **3rd: Keep the sanctity of YHVH’s name**);
- 1c) 20:8-11 4th: Keep the sanctity of YHVH’s Sabbath;**
- 1a) 20:8** **Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy;**
- 1b.1) 20:9** **Six days you shall labor**, and do all your work;
- 1b.2) 20:10** But **the seventh day is a Sabbath** to YHVH your God;

central axis) 20:10b In it you shall not do any manner of 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;

2b.1) 20:11a For in six days YHVH made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them;

2b.2) 20:11b And rested on the seventh day;

2a) 20:11c Therefore YHVH blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it. {s}

1d) 20:12 Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long on the land which YHVH your God gives you; **{s}** (i.e., **5th: Keep the sanctity of YHVH's authority**);

central axis) 20:13 You shall not murder; **{s}** (i.e., **6th: Keep the sanctity of life**);

2d) 20:14 You shall not commit adultery; **{s}** (i.e., **7th: Keep the sanctity of marital intimacy**);

2c) 20:15 You shall not steal; **{s}** (i.e., **8th: Keep the sanctity of private property**);

2b) 20:16 You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. **{s}** (i.e., **9th: Keep the sanctity of truth**);

2a) 20:17 **10th: Keep the sanctity of the heart's affections;**

1a) 20:17 You shall not covet your neighbour's *house*; **{s}**

central axis) 20:17b *You shall not covet your neighbor's wife;*

2a) 20:17c Nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's; (i.e., his *household*); **{p}**

2B) 20:18-21 **MOSES, MEDIATE** between us and God lest we die;

1a) 20:18a And all the people perceived **the thunderings**, and **the lightnings**, and **the voice of the trumpet horn**, and **the mountain smoking**;

1b) 20:18b And when **the people** saw it, they trembled, and **stood afar off**;

1c) 20:19-20a And they said to Moses: You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die; And Moses said to the people: **Fear not**;

central axis) 20:20b **For God is come to prove you**;

2c) 20:20c And that **His fear may be before you**, that you sin not;

2b) 20:21a And **the people stood afar off**;

2a) 20:21b But Moses drew near to **the thick darkness** where God was; **{s}**

2A) 20:22-26 Preserve **THE SANCTITY OF YHVH'S WORSHIP** and altar;

1a) 20:22 And YHVH said to Moses: Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: You yourselves have seen that **I have talked with you from heaven**;

- 1b) 20:23** You shall not make anything with Me —gods of silver, or gods of gold, **you shall not make** for yourselves;
- 1c) 20:24a** An altar of earth you shall make for Me, and shall sacrifice on it your burnt offerings, and your peace offerings, your sheep, and your oxen;
central axis) 20:24b In every place where I cause My name to be mentioned, I will come to you and bless you;
- 2c) 20:25a** And if you make Me an altar of stone, you shall not build it of hewn stones;
- 2b) 20:25b** For if you lift up your tool on it, you have profaned it;
- 2a) 20:26** Neither shall you go up by steps to My altar, that your nakedness may not be uncovered on it. {p}