

Moses' Father-in-law Jethro Visits the Camp (late May 1446 BC)

Exodus 18

Jethro Brings Moses' Family

1 And Jethro, the priest of Midian, the father-in-law of Moses, heard all that God had done for Moses and for Israel, his people, that Yahweh had brought Israel out from Egypt.

2 And Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, took Zipporah the wife of Moses after her sending away,

3 and her two sons—the one whose name *was* Gershom, for he had said, “I have been an alien in a foreign land,”

4 and the one *whose* name *was* Eliezer, for “the God of my father *was* my help, and he delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh.”

5 And Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, came and his sons and his wife to Moses, to the desert where he was camping there *at* the mountain of God.

6 And he said to Moses, “I, your father-in-law Jethro, *am* coming to you and your wife and her two sons with her.”

7 And Moses went out to meet his father-in-law, and he bowed, and he kissed him, and they each asked about the other's welfare, and they came into the tent.

Jethro Believes in Yahweh

8 And Moses told his father-in-law all that Yahweh had done to Pharaoh and to Egypt on account of Israel, all the hardship that had found them on the way, and *how* Yahweh delivered them.

9 And Jethro rejoiced over all the good that Yahweh had done for Israel when he delivered them from the hand of Egypt.

10 And Jethro said, “Blessed be Yahweh, who has delivered you from the hand of Egypt and from the hand of Pharaoh—who has delivered the people from under the hand of Egypt.

11 Now I know that Yahweh is greater than all the gods, even in the matter where they the Egyptians dealt arrogantly against the Israelites.”

12 And Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, took a burnt offering and sacrifices for God, and Aaron and all the elders of Israel came to eat bread with the father-in-law of Moses before God.

Moses Judges the People

13 And the next day, Moses sat to judge the people, and the people stood before Moses from the morning until the evening.

14 And the father-in-law of Moses saw all that he was doing for the people, and he said, “What *is* this thing that you *are* doing for the people? Why *are* you sitting alone and all the people *are* standing by you from morning until evening?”

15 And Moses said to his father-in-law, “Because the people come to me to seek God.

16 When they have an issue, it comes to me, and I judge between a man and his neighbor, and I make known God's rule and his instructions.”

Jethro's Advice

17 And the father-in-law of Moses said to him, “The thing that you are doing is not good.

18 Surely you will wear out, both you and this people who *are* with you, because the thing *is too* difficult for you. You are not able to do it alone.

19 Now listen to my voice; I will advise you, and may God be with you. You be for the people before God, and you bring the issues to God.

20 And you warn them *of* the rules and the instructions, and you make known to them the way in which they must walk and the work that they must do.

21 And you will select from all the people men of ability, fearers of God, trustworthy men, haters of *dishonest* gain, and you will appoint *such men* over them *as* commanders of thousands, commanders of hundreds, commanders of fifties, and commanders of tens.

22 And let them judge the people all the time, and every major issue they will bring to you, and every minor issue they will judge themselves. And *so* lighten *it* for yourself, and they will bear *it* with you.

23 If you will do this thing and God will command you, *then* you will be able to endure, and also each of the people will go to his home in peace.”

24 And Moses listened to the voice of his father-in-law, and he did all that he had said.

25 And Moses chose men of ability from all Israel, and he appointed them *as* heads over the people, *as* commanders of thousands, commanders of hundreds, commanders of fifties, and commanders of tens.

26 And they judged the people all the time; the difficult issues they would bring to Moses, and every minor issue they would judge themselves.

27 And Moses let his father-in-law go, and he went to his land.

Arrival at Mount Sinai (1 Sivan [May/June] 1446 BC)

Exodus 19:1–2

Numbers 33:15

1 In the third month after the Israelites went out from the land of Egypt, on this day they came to the Sinai desert.
 2 They set out from Rephidim, and they came to the desert of Sinai, and they camped in the desert, and Israel camped there in front of the mountain.

15 They set out from Rephidim and camped in the desert of Sinai.

Preparations for Receiving Yahweh's Covenant (1–2 Sivan [May/June] 1446 BC)

Exodus 19:3–15

Yahweh's Opening Statement to Moses With Conditions

3 And Moses went up to God, and Yahweh called to him from the mountain, saying, "Thus you will say to the house of Jacob and you will tell the Israelites,
 4 'You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt and *how* I bore you on eagles' wings and I brought you to me.
 5 And now if you will carefully listen to my voice and keep my covenant, you will be a treasured possession for me out of all the peoples, for all the earth is mine,
 6 but you, you will *belong* to me as a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you will speak to the Israelites." [cf. [1 Pet 2:9](#)]

Israel's Acceptance of Yahweh's Conditional Statement

7 And Moses came and called the elders of the people, and he placed before them all these words that Yahweh had commanded him.
 8 And all the people together answered and said, "All that Yahweh has spoken we will do." And Moses brought back the words of the people to Yahweh.

Preparations for the Meeting Between Yahweh and Israel

9 And Yahweh said to Moses, "Look, I *am going to* come to you in a thick cloud in order that the people will hear when I speak with you and will also trust in you forever." And Moses told the words of the people to Yahweh.
 10 And Yahweh said to Moses, "Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow. They must wash their clothes,
 11 and they must be prepared for the third day, because on the third day, Yahweh will go down on Mount Sinai before the eyes of all the people.
 12 And you must set limits *for* the people all around, saying, 'Guard yourselves against going up to the mountain and touching its edge. Anyone touching the mountain will certainly be put to death. [[Heb 12:20](#)]
 13 Not a hand will touch it, because he will certainly be stoned or certainly be shot; whether an animal or a man, he will not live.' At the blowing of the ram's horn they may go up to the mountain."
 14 And Moses went down from the mountain to the people, and he consecrated the people, and they washed their clothes.
 15 And he said to the people, "Be ready for the third day. Do not go near to a woman."

Yahweh Descends on Mount Sinai (3 Sivan [May/June] 1446 BC)

Exodus 19:16–25

16 And on the third day, when it was morning, there was thunder and lightning, and a heavy cloud over the mountain and a very loud ram's horn sound, and all the people who *were* in the camp trembled.
 17 And Moses brought the people out from the camp to meet God, and they took their stand at the foot of the mountain.
 18 And Mount Sinai was all wrapped in smoke because Yahweh went down on it in the fire, and its smoke went up like the smoke of a smelting furnace, and the whole mountain trembled greatly.
 19 And the sound of the ram's horn became louder and louder, and Moses would speak, and God would answer him with a voice.
 20 And Yahweh went down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain, and Yahweh called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.
 21 And Yahweh said to Moses, "Go down, warn the people, lest they break through to Yahweh to see and many from them fall.
 22 And even the priests who come near Yahweh must consecrate themselves, lest Yahweh break out against them."
 23 And Moses said to Yahweh, "The people are not able to go up to Mount Sinai, because you yourself warned us, saying, 'Set limits *around* the mountain and consecrate it.'"
 24 And Yahweh said to him, "Go, go down, and come up, you and Aaron with you and the priests, but the people must not break through to go up to Yahweh, lest he break out against them."

25 And Moses went down to the people, and he told them.

The Ten Words (3 Sivan [May/June] 1446 BC)

Exodus 20:1–17

Deuteronomy 5:4–21

Preamble

1 And God spoke all these words,

saying,

2 “I *am* Yahweh, your God, who brought you out from the land of Egypt, from the house of slaves.

The Ten Commandments

3 “There shall be for you no other gods before me.

4 “You shall not make for yourself a divine image *with* any form that *is* in the heavens above or that *is* in the earth below or that *is* in the water below the earth.

5 You will not bow down to them, and you will not serve them, because I *am* Yahweh your God, a jealous God, punishing *the* guilt of *the* parents on the children on *the* third and on *the* fourth *generations* of those hating me,

6 and showing loyal love to thousands *of generations* of those loving me and of those keeping my commandments.

7 “You shall not misuse the name of Yahweh your God, because Yahweh will not leave unpunished *anyone* who misuses his name.

8 “Remember the day of the Sabbath, to consecrate it.

9 Six days you will work, and you will do all your work.

10 But the seventh day *is* a Sabbath for Yahweh your God; you will not do any work—you or your son or your daughter, your male slave or your female slave, or your animal, or your alien who *is* in your gates—

11 because *in* six days Yahweh made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that *is* in them, and on the seventh day he rested.

Therefore Yahweh blessed the seventh day and consecrated it. [cf. [Acts 4:24](#); [14:15](#)]

12 “Honor your father and your mother,

so that your days can be long on the land that Yahweh your God *is* giving you. [[Matt 15:4](#); [Eph 6:2](#)]

13 “You shall not murder. [[Matt 5:21](#); [James 2:11](#)]

14 “You shall not commit adultery.

15 “You shall not steal.

16 “You shall not testify against your neighbor *with* a false witness.

17 “You shall not covet the house of your neighbor;

you will not covet the wife of your neighbor

or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey

4 Face to face Yahweh spoke with you at the mountain from the midst of the fire.

5 I was standing between Yahweh and you at that time to report to you the word of Yahweh, for you were afraid because of the presence of the fire, and *so* you *did* not go up the mountain.

He said,

6 ‘I *am* Yahweh your God, who brought you out from the land of Egypt, from the house of slavery.

7 *There* shall not be for you other gods besides me.

8 ‘You shall not make for yourself a divine image of any *type* of form that *is* in the heaven above or that *is* on the earth beneath or that *is* in the water under the earth.

9 ‘You shall not bow down to them, and you shall not serve them, for I, Yahweh your God, *am* a jealous God, punishing the guilt of fathers upon *their* children and upon *the* third and upon *the* fourth generation of *those* hating me,

10 but showing loyal love to thousands *of those who* love me and of *those who* keep my commandments.

11 ‘You shall not take up the name of Yahweh your God for a worthless purpose, for Yahweh will not leave unpunished *anyone* who uses his name for a worthless purpose.

12 ‘Observe the Sabbath day to make it holy, *just* as Yahweh your God has commanded you.

13 Six days you shall work, and you shall do all *of* your work,

14 but the seventh day *is* a Sabbath unto Yahweh your God; you shall not do any work, or your son, or your daughter,

or your slave, or your slave woman, or your ox, or your donkey, or any of your domestic animals,

or your *resident* alien who *is* in your towns, so that your slave and your slave woman may rest as you *rest*.

15 And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and Yahweh your God brought you out with a strong hand and with an outstretched arm; therefore, Yahweh your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath.

16 ‘Honor your father and your mother,

as Yahweh your God commanded you,

so that it will be good for you in the land that Yahweh your God *is* giving to you.

17 ‘You shall not murder.

18 ‘And you shall not commit adultery.

19 ‘And you shall not steal.

20 ‘And you shall not falsely bear evidence against your neighbor.

21 ‘And you shall not covet the wife of your neighbor,

and you shall not crave the house of your neighbor,

his field or his slave or his slave woman or his ox and his donkey

or anything that *is* your neighbor's." [\[Rom 7:7; 13:9\]](#)

or anything that belongs to your neighbor.' [\[Matt 19:18\]](#)

Israel Asks Moses to Act as Intermediary (3 Sivan [May/June] 1446 BC)

Exodus 20:18–21

Deuteronomy 5:22a–33

18 And all the people *were* seeing the thunder and the lightning and the sound of the ram's horn and the mountain smoking, and the people saw, and they trembled, and they stood at a distance.

19 And they said to Moses,

"You speak with us, and we will listen, but let not God speak with us, lest we die." [\[Heb 12:19\]](#)

20 And Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid. God has come to test you so that his fear will be before you so that you do not sin."

21 And the people stood at a distance, and Moses approached the very thick cloud where God was.

22a "These words Yahweh spoke to your whole assembly at the mountain from the midst of the fire and the very thick cloud *with* a loud voice, and he did not add anything,

23 And then when you heard the voice from the midst of the darkness, and *as* the mountain *was* burning with fire, and all the heads of your tribes and your elders approached me,

24 you said, 'Look, Yahweh our God has shown us his glory and his greatness, and we have heard his voice from the midst of the fire; this day we have seen that God can speak with a human being, yet he remains alive.

25 And so then why shall we die, for this great fire will consume us if we continue to hear the voice of Yahweh our God *any* longer, and *so* we shall die?

26 For who *is there of* all flesh who has heard the voice of the living God speaking from the midst of the fire as we *have heard it* and remained alive?

27 *You* go near and hear everything that Yahweh our God will say; and *then* you tell us all that Yahweh our God tells you, and we will listen, and we will do *it*.'

28 "And Yahweh heard the sound of your words when you spoke to me, and Yahweh said to me, 'I have heard the sound of the words of this people that they have spoken to you; *they* are right *with respect to* all that they have spoken.

29 If only they had such a mind'; *that is*, to fear me and to keep all my commandments at all times, so that it will go well for them and for their children forever.

30 Go! Say to them, "Return to your tents."

31 But you stand here with me, and let me tell you all *of* the commandments and the rules and the regulations that you shall teach them, so that they may do *them* in the land that I *am* giving to them to take possession of it.'

32 "So you must be careful to do *just* as Yahweh your God commanded you; you shall not turn *to the right* or *to the left*.

33 In exactly the path that Yahweh your God has commanded, you must go, so that you may live and it will go well for you and you may live long in the land that you will take possession of."