

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

Exodus 18

Jethro Brings Moses' Family

1 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 the LORD had brought Israel out of Egypt.

2 Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, took Moses' wife Zipporah, after he had sent her away,

3 and her two sons, of whom one was named Gershom, for Moses said, "I have been a sojourner in a foreign land."

4 The other was named Eliezer, for *he said*, "The God of my father was my help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh."

5 Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, came with his sons and his wife to Moses in the wilderness where he was camped, at the mount of God.

6 He sent word to Moses, "I, your father-in-law Jethro, am coming to you with your wife and her two sons with her."

7 Then Moses went out to meet his father-in-law, and he bowed down and kissed him; and they asked each other of their welfare and went into the tent.

Jethro Believes in Yahweh

8 Moses told his father-in-law all that the LORD had done to Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake, all the hardship that had befallen them on the journey, and *how* the LORD had delivered them.

9 Jethro rejoiced over all the goodness which the LORD had done to Israel, in delivering them from the hand of the Egyptians.

10 So Jethro said, "Blessed be the LORD who delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of Pharaoh, *and* who delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians.

11 Now I know that the LORD is greater than all the gods; indeed, it was proven when they dealt proudly against the people."

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

Moses Judges the People

13 It came about the next day that Moses sat to judge the people, and the people stood about Moses from the morning until the evening.

14 Now when Moses' father-in-law saw all that he was doing for the people, he said, "What is this thing that you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit *as judge* and all the people stand about you from morning until evening?"

15 Moses said to his father-in-law, "Because the people come to me to inquire of God.

16 When they have a dispute, it comes to me, and I judge between a man and his neighbor and make known the statutes of God and His laws."

Jethro's Advice

17 Moses' father-in-law said to him, "The thing that you are doing is not good.

18 You will surely wear out, both yourself and these people who are with you, for the task is too heavy for you; you cannot do it alone.

19 Now listen to me: I will give you counsel, and God be with you. You be the people's representative before God, and you bring the disputes to God,

20 then teach them the statutes and the laws, and make known to them the way in which they are to walk and the work they are to do.

21 Furthermore, you shall select out of all the people able men who fear God, men of truth, those who hate dishonest gain; and you shall place *these* over them *as* leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens.

22 Let them judge the people at all times; and let it be that every major dispute they will bring to you, but every minor dispute they themselves will judge. So it will be easier for you, and 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 these people also will go to their place in peace."

24 So Moses listened to his father-in-law and did all that he had said.

25 Moses chose able men out of all Israel and made them heads over the people, leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens.

26 They judged the people at all times; the difficult dispute they would bring to Moses, but every minor dispute they themselves would judge.

27 Then Moses bade his father-in-law farewell, and he went his way into his own 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 sons of Israel had gone out of the

<p>land of Egypt, on that very day they came into the wilderness of Sinai. 2 When they set out from Rephidim, they came to the wilderness of Sinai and camped in the wilderness; and there Israel camped in front of the mountain.</p>	<p>15 They journeyed from Rephidim and camped in the wilderness of Sinai.</p>
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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 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 sons of Israel:

4 'You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and *how* I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you to Myself.

5 Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, 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 that you shall speak to the sons of Israel." [cf. [1 Pet 2:9](#)]

Israel's Acceptance of Yahweh's Conditional Statement

7 So Moses came and called the elders of the people, and set before them all these words which the LORD had commanded him.

8 All the people answered together and said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do!" And Moses brought back the words of the people to the LORD.

Preparations for the Meeting Between Yahweh and Israel

9 The LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I will come to you in a thick cloud, so that the people may hear when I speak with you and may also believe in you forever." Then Moses told the words of the people to the LORD.

10 The LORD also said to Moses, "Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments;

11 and let them be ready for the third day, for on the third day the LORD will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people.

12 You shall set bounds for the people all around, saying, 'Beware that you do not go up on the mountain or touch the border of it; whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death. [[Heb 12:20](#)]

13 No hand shall touch him, but he shall surely be stoned or shot through; whether beast or man, he shall not live.' When the ram's horn sounds a long blast, they shall come up to the mountain."

14 So Moses went down from the mountain to the people and consecrated the people, and they washed their garments.

15 He said to the people, "Be ready for the third day; do not go near a woman."

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

Exodus 19:16–25

16 So it came about on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunder and lightning flashes and a thick cloud upon the mountain and a very loud trumpet sound, so that all the people who *were* in the camp trembled.

17 And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain.

18 Now Mount Sinai *was* all in smoke because the LORD descended upon it in fire; and its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked violently.

19 When the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and God answered him with thunder.

20 The LORD came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain; and the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.

21 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, "Go down, warn the people, so that they do not break through to the LORD to gaze, and many of them perish.

22 Also let the priests who come near to the LORD consecrate themselves, or else the LORD will break out against them."

23 Moses said to the LORD, "The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai, for You warned us, saying, 'Set bounds about the mountain and consecrate it.'"

24 Then the LORD said to him, "Go down and come up *again*, you and Aaron with you; but do not let the priests and the people break through to come up to the LORD, or He will break forth upon them."

25 So Moses went down to the people and told them.

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

Exodus 20:1–17

Deuteronomy 5:4–21

Preamble

1 Then 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 slavery.

The Ten Commandments

3 “You shall have no other gods before Me.

4 “You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth.

5 “You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me,

6 but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

7 “You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished 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 a sabbath of the LORD your God; *in it* you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you.

11 “For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy. [cf. [Acts 4:24; 14:15](#)]

12 “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives 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 bear false witness against your neighbor.

17 “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor.” [[Rom 7:7; 13:9](#)]

4 “The LORD spoke to you face to face at the mountain from the midst of the fire,

5 while I stood between the LORD and you at that time, to declare to you the word of the LORD. For you were afraid because of the fire, and you did not go up into the mountain. He said:

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

7 ‘You shall have no other gods before Me.

8 ‘You shall not make for yourself an idol, *or* any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth.

9 ‘You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, and on the third and the fourth *generations* of those who hate Me,

10 but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

11 ‘You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.

12 ‘Observe the sabbath day to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you.

13 ‘Six days you shall labor and do all your work,

14 but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; *in it* you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter or your male servant or your female servant or your ox or your donkey or any of your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you, so that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you.

15 ‘You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out of there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God commanded you to observe the sabbath day.

16 ‘Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, that your days may be prolonged and that it may go well with you on the land which the LORD your God gives you.

17 ‘You shall not murder.

18 ‘You shall not commit adultery.

19 ‘You shall not steal.

20 ‘You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

21 ‘You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, and you shall not desire your neighbor’s house, his field or his male servant or his female servant, his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor.’ [[Matt 19:18; Mark 10:19; Luke 18:20](#)]

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

Exodus 20:18–21

18 All the people perceived the thunder and the lightning flashes and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw *it*, they trembled and stood at a distance.

19 Then they said to Moses,

“Speak to us yourself and we will listen; but let not God speak to us, or we will die.” [\[Heb 12:19\]](#)

20 Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid; for God has come in order to test you, and in order that the fear of Him may remain with you, so that you may not sin.”

21 So the people stood at a distance, while Moses approached the thick cloud where God *was*.

Deuteronomy 5:22a–33

22a “These words the LORD spoke to all your assembly at the mountain from the midst of the fire, *of* the cloud and *of* the thick gloom, with a great voice, and He added no more.

23 And when you heard the voice from the midst of the darkness, while the mountain was burning with fire, you came near to me, all the heads of your tribes and your elders.

24 You said, ‘Behold, the LORD our God has shown us His glory and His greatness, and we have heard His voice from the midst of the fire; we have seen today that God speaks with man, yet he lives.

25 Now then why should we die? For this great fire will consume us; if we hear the voice of the LORD our God any longer, then we will 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*, and lived?

27 Go near and hear all that the LORD our God says; then speak to us all that the LORD our God speaks to you, and we will hear and do *it*.’

28 “The LORD heard the voice of your words when you spoke to me, and the LORD said to me, ‘I have heard the voice of the words of this people which they have spoken to you. They have done well in all that they have spoken.

29 Oh that they had such a heart in them, that they would fear Me and keep all My commandments always, that it may be well with them and with their sons forever!

30 Go, say to them, “Return to your tents.”

31 But as for you, stand here by Me, that I may speak to you all the commandments and the statutes and the judgments which you shall teach them, that they may observe *them* in the land which I give them to possess.’

32 So you shall observe to do just as the LORD your God has commanded you; you shall not turn aside to the right or to the left.

33 You shall walk in all the way which the LORD your God has commanded you, that you may live and that it may be well with you, and that you may prolong *your* days in the land which you will possess.