

**YITRO (Jethro)**  
**Part 1**  
**EXODUS (SHEMOT 18:1 – 19:25)**

**INTRODUCTION:**

1. This portion derives its name from Moses' father-in-law.
2. There is a debate as to when this occurred: i.e. before or after Torah was given.
  - a. Admittedly, this does seem to be out of place.
  - b. We will not develop that here but are content to consider it is in order.
  - c. Or that things related in the Torah aren't necessarily in chronological order.
3. What is important is this:
  - a. Even though he was an "outsider," he provided counsel that benefited Israel greatly.
  - b. Demonstrating that "outsiders" can provide wise counsel to Israel.
4. Was appreciated years later when Saul warned his descendants to flee from among Amalek.
  - a. 1 Samuel 15:6.
5. We can learn things from the rabbis and their views but they can also learn from us.
  - a. Some of those things can be life-changing; provoking them to jealousy.
6. Jethro had been a distinguished personality in Midian; Jethro [Heb. יתרו Yitro] may be a title.
  - a. Yet, his notoriety today is as Moses' father-in-law.
  - b. As such, he was received by all of Israel as esteemed.
  - c. It would seem that, at this point, he joined himself to Israel.
7. Again, demonstrating that "outsiders" through their mutual commitment to the God of Israel are considered to be Israel.
  - a. His name went from being יתר Yeter to יתרו Yitro – the letter ו *vav* being added.
  - b. ו *vav* is a letter that means "hook" – joining two things together.
  - c. This will be followed by people such as Rahab, Ruth, Elijah and you.

**CHAPTER 18: JETHRO'S ADVICE**

**“When Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father in law, heard of all that God had done for Moses, and for Israel his people, and that the LORD had brought Israel out of Egypt; Then Jethro, Moses' father in law, took Zipporah, Moses' wife, after he had sent her back, and her two sons; of which the name of the one was Gershom; for he said, I have been an alien in a strange land: and the name of the other was Eliezer; for the God of my father, said he, was my help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh: And Jethro, Moses' father in law, came with his sons and his wife unto Moses into the wilderness, where he encamped at the mount of God:**

1. V 1: It would seem that Jethro heard about the plagues, the splitting of the sea and, perhaps, the war with Amalek.
  - a. All these reports prompted him to bring Moses' family to him at Horeb.
2. Rabbis make the distinction between Jethro and Amalek in this fashion: both heard of the events but arrived at different conclusions.
  - a. Jethro decided to join himself to Israel; Amalek decided to come against Israel.

- b. How can people hearing of the same thing have two different views so far apart?
- c. Those who acknowledge the hand of God and those who do not.
- 3. Those who refuse to acknowledge God in these events will interpret them to suit their purpose.
  - a. Amalek apparently interpreted these events as why they should go against Israel.
  - b. Response to it is varied; some see it has God calling people to repentance.
  - c. Others exploit to advance their own agenda.
- 4. Jethro saw these miraculous events as a means to reunite the family.
  - a. Apparently, Moses had sent his family back to Midian after events of Ex. 4:24-26.
  - b. This was the circumcision of his son, presumably Eliezer.
- 5. The events transpiring today, troubling and ominous as they may be, lead to restoration.
  - a. A future exodus will be identified by wondrous signs.
  - b. All that the family can be reunited.
- 6. Notice this reunification comes at the foot of the mountain where the covenant is presented.
  - a. Note that גרשם Gershom means “stranger (sojourner) there” – where? In the world.
  - b. אליעזר Eliezer is “my God helps (my helper) – delivering me from Pharaoh (world).
  - c. Hinting at those who are considered “strangers” who have been delivered?
- 8. They are brought to the mountain to be joined together and presented unto Him as one.

**“Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak tenderly to her. ‘And there I will give her vineyards and make the Valley of Achor a door of hope. And there she shall answer as in the days of her youth, as at the time when she came out of the land of Egypt. And in that day, declares the LORD, you will call me ‘My Husband,’ and no longer will you call me ‘My Baal.’ I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth, and they shall be remembered by name no more.... And I will betroth you to me forever. I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love and in mercy. I will betroth you to me in faithfulness. And you shall know the LORD....And I will sow her for myself in the land. And I will have mercy on No Mercy, and I will say to Not My People, ‘You are my people’; and he shall say, ‘You are my God.’” – Hosea 2:14-17, 19-20, 23**

- 9. V 6-9: Moses goes out to meet his father-in-law and his family, bowing before him.
  - a. Relates to him all the deeds that God performed on their behalf.
  - b. Told him also of the “travail (weariness) that had come upon them.”
  - c. The events at Marah, Massah, Meribahhh and Rephidim.
- 10. V 9: “And Jethro rejoiced for all the goodness which the LORD had done to Israel.”
  - a. Though not Israeli, he nevertheless was overjoyed at Israel’s deliverance.
  - b. V 10: He blessed the LORD for His deliverance and acknowledged His sovereignty.
- 11. V 11: “Now I know that the LORD is greater than all gods.”
  - a. Saw God had humbled the pride of the Egyptians and, at same time, delivered Israel.
  - b. Tradition has it that he forsook idolatry and followed the God of Israel.
  - c. V 12: He presented a burnt offering to God and celebrated with a festive meal.
- 12. A common theme that runs through the Exodus story and the prophecies concerning the future ingathering is, in the end, all will know that “I am the LORD.”
  - a. Here, a Midianite, acknowledges this and becomes part of the family of God.
  - b. Many will come to know that He is the LORD in the end of days.
  - c. In Elijah’s day, ravens brought him meat and bread twice a day (1 Kings 17:3-6).
  - d. Hebrew phrase for “ravens” is ערבִים *orevim* alluding to Arabs – Jethro was an “Arab.”

- e. Are there prophetic implications attached to this? Consider the prophecy of Hosea 2.
13. It will be surprising to see who does and who doesn't according to Y'shua.
- a. Speaking to some of the religious people He said:

**“Truly, I say to you, tax collectors and the prostitutes will go into the kingdom of God before you.” – Matthew 21:31**

14. The key seems to be those who know Him and those who know about Him.
- a. Matthew 7:23 – “I never knew you.”
- b. Jethro came to KNOW that He is the LORD.

**“The next day Moses sat to judge the people, and the people stood around Moses from morning till evening. When Moses' father-in-law saw all that he was doing for the people, he said, ‘What is this that you are doing for the people? Why do you sit alone, and all the people stand around you from morning till evening?’ And Moses said to his father-in-law, ‘Because the people come to me **to inquire of God**; when they have a dispute, they come to me and I decide between one person and another, and I make them know the statutes of God and his laws [Heb. תורת *torot*].’ ” – Exodus 18:13-16**

15. Times in Scripture when people came to “inquire of the LORD” e.g. Rebecca in Gen. 25.
- a. Here we see that this may have been as simple as going to one with spiritual authority.
- b. Tradition states Rebecca went to Shem to inquire of the LORD.
- c. Inferring there have been people spiritually authorized to help people with hard issues.
16. Notice that, if in chronological order, this is before giving of Torah at Sinai.
- a. Would substantiate the view that the Torah existed before Sinai – it is eternal.
- b. Abel offered more excellent sacrifice; Noah distinguished between clean and unclean.
17. V 17-18: “Moses father-in-law said, ‘The thing you do is not good. You will wear away.’”
- a. Jethro pointed out what should have been obvious – was too much for one man.
- b. Made suggestions to Moses but made it clear it must be approved by God.
- c. Suggested a system of delegated authority – lower court system that were under him.
- d. Moses was still to teach the people the laws and statutes but others could help.
18. V 21-22: Laid out requirements for those who would help Moses judge the people.
- Able men (men of accomplishment).
  - Men who fear God.
  - Men of truth.
  - Men who hate unjust gain.
19. These men should be such that they would not be tempted by those who would try to influence their judgment.
- a. They would not be lazy and apathetic by nature – men of accomplishment.
- b. They obviously had to possess knowledge of the Law.
- c. Had to be able to recognize the truth; needed discernment.
- d. If they feared God, most likely would not fear men and not be influenced by them.
- e. Wouldn't be taken in by lure of money and power; incorruptible and above suspicion.
20. If Moses followed this advice, the people would have judges over ten, fifties, hundreds and thousands, meaning everyone could make their case without one man being overwhelmed.
- a. The people could also have their grievance heard and acted upon quicker.

21. V 22: They were to judge at all seasons every small matter; large matters brought to Moses.
22. Jethro told Moses to “provide” such men; the Hebrew root is *חזק* *chazah*.
- Means “to gaze, have a vision” – to see that which is normally not visible.
  - Implying that Moses was to look beyond what was apparent on outside.
  - He would need to use prophetic insight/discernment in selecting these men.
  - Similar to what we see in Samuel’s selection of David as future king.

**“When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, ‘Surely the LORD’s anointed is before him.’ But the LORD said to Samuel, ‘Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.’” – 1 Samuel 16:6-7**

23. Those that appeared “able” were rejected in favor of the one who was able.
- A man after God’s own heart.
24. This criteria helped inspire our founders in formation of the House of Representatives.
- Though elected, “able men” were sought to fill these positions.
  - Initially US Senators not elected directly by people but by their state representatives.
  - Promoting the goal of selecting able men as defined by Jethro.
  - As is always the case, over time, these standards were abandoned, thus the chaos.
25. When people know that virtuous men rule with integrity, their problems can be coped with much better.
- Compare what happens when people feel well-connected and corrupt people rule them.
  - There is no peace but constant turmoil.
26. V 23: “If you do this and God allows it, you shall endure and the people shall go in peace.”
- Acknowledged that God must give His consent to this if it is to succeed.
  - The people will have their voice heard and not have to wait all day to get an answer.
27. V 24: “Moses hearkened unto the voice of his father-in-law and did all that he said.”
28. V 27: Moses let his father-in-law depart and he went into his own land.”
- This is spoken of again in Num. 10:29-32 where Moses pleaded with him to stay.
  - It does not say there whether he did or didn’t; it may be what is written here.

## CHAPTER 19: A KINGDOM OF PRIESTS

- The arrival at Sinai and subsequent giving of the Torah at Sinai is seen as climax of Exodus.
  - Shavuot (day linked to giving the Torah) is called *atzeret* – a conclusion to Passover.
  - The goal of Passover might even be a better choice of words.
  - Liberty without law results in lawlessness.
  - Without the resurrection, the crucifixion would not serve a purpose.
  - The resurrection is what made events of Acts possible.
- Release from Egyptian bondage at Passover made the journey to Sinai possible.
  - The Covenant given brought the tribes into allegiance with the One God.
  - The Kingdom of Heaven was truly inaugurated in the earth.
  - The giving and acceptance of the Torah is core of Israel’s purpose – to be a light.
- Receiving the Torah is Israel’s national heritage; meaning that it was suited for them.
  - They had to conform to it.
  - Giving to nations steeped in immorality would be casting pearl before swine.

4. That being said, Israel has never attained perfection; always fallen short of the goal.
  - a. But like Jacob, acknowledges the sanctity of the national heritage (birthright).

**“In the third month after the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai. And when they were departed from Rephidim, and were come to the wilderness of Sinai, they encamped in the wilderness; and there Israel encamped before the mount. And Moses went up unto God, and the LORD called unto him out of the mountain, saying, ‘Thus shall you say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: You have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I **bare you on eagles' wings**, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if you will obey my voice indeed and keep my covenant, then you shall be my **treasured possession** [Heb. סגלה *s'gulah*] from among all peoples: for all the earth is mine: and you shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation [Heb. גוי קדוש *goy kadosh*]. These are the words which you shall speak unto the children of Israel.” – Exodus 19:1-6**

3. Israel entered wilderness of Sinai (in Midian) on 1 Sivan, on that very day.
  - a. This would be 45 days (approximately) since the Passover and leaving Egypt.
  - b. This was in fulfillment of what God had told Moses at the Burning Bush (Ex. 3:12).
  - c. No definitive meaning given but BDB says Sinai means “thorny.”
4. This is of interest because of the connection between the Word and thorns.
  - a. Word is sown into good ground but some seed falls among the thorns.
  - b. Also, the Living Word was crowned with thorns, hung upon a tree upon Olivet.
5. Comparing Sinai with the Mount of Olives.
  - a. God spoke/taught from Mount Sinai; Y’shua spoke/taught on Mount of Olives.
  - b. God descended in a cloud upon Sinai; Y’shua ascended in a cloud from Mt. of Olives.
  - c. He will again descend upon Mount of Olives “in like manner.”
  - d. Perhaps after emerging from the wilderness described in Hosea 2.
6. Events at Sinai establishes pattern for what Hosea described – luring her into wilderness.
  - a. In other words, the betrothal referred to in Hosea is also taking place here.
  - b. They are assembled on a wide plain stretching out before the mountain.
  - c. God will come down upon the mountain in a thick cloud (canopy) forming *chuppah*.
7. This cloud apparently first appeared when the encamped at the mountain.
  - a. Moses was called up into the mountain on the day they encamped at foot of Sinai.
  - b. Told to speak to the “house of Jacob” – only time God refers to them as such in Torah.
8. V 4: “You have seen what I did unto the Egyptians” – they were eye-witnesses to it.
  - a. Not only at the sea but before in the land of Egypt; the plagues and the distinction set.
  - b. They did not hear reports of these things; they were not merely promised these things.
  - c. Likewise, those disciples Y’shua sent out as “witnesses” had seen these things.
9. V 4: “How I bore you on the wings of eagles” – acting as a shield between them and enemy.
  - a. An eagle will put its young upon its back as it flies, thus protecting the young.
  - b. Commentators specifically mention this being done to protect from archers.
  - c. God set His cloud between Egypt and His people to protect them from Pharaoh.
  - d. Archers are especially antagonistic toward Joseph (Gen. 49:23) – shoot at him.
10. This is followed by the statement “and brought you unto Myself” – He brought them.
  - a. This is important because it makes clear that God is the one who performs this.
  - b. They could not save themselves.

11. Establishes that salvation (relationship) comes first and by the blood of the Lamb.
  - a. They were saved from Egypt because they trusted in blood of a lamb.
  - b. Those who didn't trust in God's instruction to do so, perished.
12. After this comes the obedience (Torah) but not in order to be saved but because we are.
  - a. After they were saved from Egypt, then they were given instructions in how to live.
  - b. First the seed (Passover) then the fruit (Sinai).
13. If they hear and obey they will be "treasured possession" [alt. "peculiar treasure"].
  - a. The Hebrew word is סגלה *s'gulah* and typically means "treasure, jewel."

**"They shall be mine, says the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels [Heb. סגלה *s'gulah*]; and I will spare them, as a man spares his own son that serves him."**

**– Malachi 3:17**

14. The root סגל *sagal* means "elect, be exclusive" – considered to be rare, valuable.
  - a. Comes from idea of being "shut up" because it is so valuable.
  - b. Difference here is Israel is not locked away somewhere but in midst of nations.
  - c. Consider we are "living stones" – that is not to indicate marble or granite but jewels.
15. The foundation stones of New Jerusalem are all precious stones.
  - a. The breastplate on the priest was comprised of precious stones.
  - b. Distinguished from the granite and other stones of the Temple.
16. All stones are formed by heat and pressure; precious stones subjected to more.
  - a. Also, consider precious stones are cut in order to bring out their beauty.
  - b. Consider what happens when light catches a diamond.
  - c. The treasured status not because of the instrument but its purpose - light to the nations.
17. "For all the earth is mine" – Israel is set apart from the nations to be a light to the nations.
  - a. All the other nations are His possession too; Israel is chosen to a blessing to them.
  - b. If they're granite, they still serve a purpose; diamond valuable only if serves its purpose.
  - c. Granite serving its purpose more valuable than diamond that doesn't.
  - d. Israel not called to privilege but service; not called because great but to do great things.

**"For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession [Heb. סגלה *s'gulah*], out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the LORD set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples."**

**– Deuteronomy 7:6-7**

18. They – Israel - will be a "kingdom of priests" – the whole nation.
  - a. This was plan A.
  - b. In this chapter we see that there were priests before Golden Calf incident, i.e. Levitical.

**"And the LORD came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and the LORD called Moses up to the top of the mount; and Moses went up. And the LORD said unto Moses, 'Go down, charge the people, lest they break through unto the LORD to gaze, and many of them perish. And let the priests also, which come near to the LORD, sanctify themselves, lest the LORD break forth upon them.' And Moses said unto the LORD, 'The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai: for you charged us, saying, Set bounds about the**

**mount, and sanctify it.’ And the LORD said unto him, ‘Away, 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 unto the LORD, lest he break forth upon them.’” – Exodus 19:20-24**

19. It would seem these priests were the firstborn, consecrated to God from birth (Ex. 13:2).

**“And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto the LORD.” – Exodus 24:5**

20. Point is: the **nation** was to be a kingdom of priests; implying they were to teach others.
- They were to be a light to the nations.
  - God’s Presence among them consecrated them.
  - They were to cause His Presence resonate throughout the nations through obedience.

**“You shall be called the priests of the LORD; they shall speak of you as the ministers of our God; you shall eat the wealth of the nations, and in their glory you shall boast.”**  
– Isaiah 61:6

21. They were to be a “holy” or “set apart” nation in order to accomplish this task.
- Israel’s mandate is to be a light; that is why they were to dwell in Canaan.
  - Abram settled in Canaan in order to show them example of light in the darkness.
  - He wasn’t called from Babylon to be set apart for that sake alone; source of blessing.
22. Being set apart is the method by which Israel attains the goal.
- Can’t be a light if Israel is acting like the nations.
  - All predicated upon “if you **hear** my voice and **keep** my covenant.”
  - Must hear and do; be hearers and doers of the Word to attain this status.
  - Not based on being delivered from Egypt but on doing what you were freed to do.
23. Going back to reference being born on eagles’ wings and brought into the wilderness.
- Many looking toward the time we are to flee into the wilderness.
  - A lot of desire to know when, how, where and if now is time – no ambiguity then.
  - They knew when they were leaving Egypt.
  - Notice Revelation 12 reference to eagles’ wings.

**“But the woman was given the two wings of the great eagle so that she might fly from the serpent into the wilderness, to the place where she is to be nourished for a time, and times, and half a time.” – Revelation 12:14**

24. This obviously is intended to connect us to what happened in the Exodus from Egypt.
- Prophecies abound telling us of another such event but on a greater scale.

**“In that day the Lord will extend his hand yet a second time to recover the remnant that remains of his people ... and there will be a highway from Assyria for the remnant that remains of his people, as there was for Israel when they came up from the land of Egypt.”**  
– Isaiah 11:11, 16

**“Therefore, behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when it shall no longer be said, ‘As the LORD lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt,’ but ‘As the LORD lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the north country and out of all the countries where he had driven them.’” – Jeremiah 16:14-15**

25. The point is, the LORD will do it and there will be no doubt that He did – no guesswork.  
a. Going back to “eagles wings” - note what Isaiah says:

**“They that wait [Heb. קוה *kavah*] upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary and they shall walk, and not faint.” – Isaiah 40:31**

26. I believe this alludes to Exodus 19 and consequently, Revelation 12.  
a. The key word is “wait” קוה *kavah* – the root’s meaning is quite intricate.  
b. Translated as “wait, tarry” but from idea of something twisted or stretched.  
c. Implying the waiting is causing you to be stretched, strained, thus having to endure.  
d. Yearning, looking patiently and intently, being hopeful for something.  
e. Idea is expressed in what Paul wrote in Romans 8:

**“We know that the whole creation groans and travails in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man sees, why does he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we don’t see, then with patience we wait for it.”  
– Romans 8:22-25**

27. Which convinces me we should be content to wait on His timing for all things.  
28. קוה *kavah* also means “to collect” or “to gather” in order to act for a common purpose.  
a. Used when the seas are called to “be gathered together” (Gen. 1:9).  
b. We will be gathered to Him if we have been patiently waiting, yearning for His Voice.  
c. HE lures her “into the wilderness” (Hos. 2); those who “endure to the end” (Mt. 24).  
29. V 7: “Moses called the elders of the people and told them the words the LORD commanded.”  
a. He came from the mountain and told the elders who told the people.  
b. All the people heard what God was saying, giving them a chance to accept or reject.  
c. No “mysteries” given to a select class of people; old and young, rich and poor heard.  
30. V 8: “The people said, ‘All that the LORD has spoken, we will do.’”  
a. These words were reported back to God by Moses.  
b. The people’s response will be very important for many reasons.

## **CHAPTER 19: PREPARING FOR GOD’S APPEARING**

**“And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Behold, I am coming to you in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and may also believe you forever.’ When Moses told the words of the people to the LORD, the LORD said to Moses, ‘Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments and 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. – Exodus 19:9-11**

1. The primary purpose for God descending upon the mountain was that the people might hear.
  - a. They would hear directly and not through a messenger or intermediary.
  - b. Later they will ask Moses to petition God not to speak to them directly (Ex. 20:19).
  - c. To impress upon them the significance of their calling – witnessed plagues as well.
2. It was also intended to impress upon them the importance of believing Moses “forever.”
  - a. God always validated or verified His servants in sight of all the people.
  - b. “Forever” strongly implies that the Torah would not change – it is eternal.
  - c. The LORD does not change (Malachi 3:6); therefore His Word doesn’t change.
  - d. Thus, there would be no amendments or deletions – the Torah is eternal.
3. Y’shua made it clear this remained true in His day and underscored eternal nature of Torah.

**“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” – Matthew 5:17-19**

4. Considering heaven and earth do not pass away, no part of the Torah (what was given to Moses) has been invalidated.
5. This is incredibly important to note because Rambam taught that complete faith in what was given to Moses is one of the principles of Judaism.
  - a. Even if a prophet were to come and perform miracles establishing his credibility.
  - b. Were he to contradict or denounce Moses he would be false prophet, subject to death.
  - c. Perhaps an attempt to disqualify Y’shua from being Messiah but Y’shua didn’t do that.
  - d. Unfortunately, many of Y’shua’s followers have.
6. Notice that He came in a thick or dark cloud – that is where His Presence seems to reside.
  - a. This is validated further in Ex. 20:21; Moses drew near thick darkness where God was.
  - b. To conceal His Presence that the people be not consumed.
  - c. Tied also to the concept of God being concealed.

**He made darkness [Heb. חֹשֶׁךְ *choshekh*] His secret place; His canopy around Him was dark waters and thick clouds of the skies.” – Psalm 18:11**

7. *Choshekh* is the same Hebrew word that is found in Genesis 1:2 – “darkness.”
  - a. The Creator dwells in darkness; it is His canopy or tent.
8. V 10: “Sanctify them today and tomorrow” – they had to prepare themselves to meet God.
  - a. They had two full days to prepare before the appearance on the Third Day.
  - b. This hints at the two millennial days spoken of by Hosea and since Messiah’s day.
  - c. Hosea 6:2 – “After two days He will revive us; on the third day He will raise us up.”
  - d. 2 Peter 3:8 – “With the LORD, one day is as a thousand years...”
9. To sanctify refers to avoiding spiritual contamination (*tumah*) – as it was in the Sanctuary.
  - a. They were to abstain from having relations with their wives.

10. They were to wash their garments, an outward sign of something internal.
  - a. This reminds of events that happened later as people prepared to go up to God.
  - b. Jacob commanded all with him to change their clothes before going to Bethel.

**“And Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, ‘Put away the foreign gods that are among you, purify yourselves, and change your garments. Then let us arise and go up to Bethel; and I will make an altar there to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and has been with me in the way which I have gone.’ ” – Genesis 35:2-3**

11. Before ascending the mountain where God’s Presence resides, washing (mikveh) and changing of garments seems to be a prerequisite.
  - a. Remember why garments were worn in the first place; hearkens back to Adam’s fall.
  - b. Consider Zechariah’s vision of the High Priest.

**“Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the LORD and Satan standing at his right hand to oppose him.... Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and was standing before the Angel. Then He answered and spoke to those who stood before Him, saying, ‘Take away the filthy garments from him.’ And to him He said, ‘See, I have removed your iniquity from you, and I will clothe you with rich robes.’ And I said, ‘Let them put a clean turban on his head.’ So they put a clean turban on his head, and they put the clothes on him.” – Zechariah 3:1, 3-5**

12. Collectively, this reminds us that, in anticipation of meeting the King, as His bride we must make ourselves ready – not the other way around.

**“Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready. And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.” – Revelation 19:7-8**

13. V11: “Be ready against the third day for the third day the LORD will come down...”
  - a. Again, this is a theme that runs throughout Scripture from beginning.
  - b. Third day saw the concealed seed bring forth grass and vegetation.
  - c. Hints of the Messiah being raised on the Third Day – grain of wheat that died.
  - d. Also hints at the return of Messiah on the prophetic Third Day which Paul describes.

**“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Messiah will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.” – 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17**

14. V12: “Set bounds unto the people” – established limits to where people were allowed to go.
  - a. God’s Presence atop Sinai made the mountain to be a temporary Sanctuary.
  - b. Therefore, like the Sanctuary, at certain points people were allowed no further.
  - c. Not because God was cruel but because He was holy; nothing profane or unclean.
15. Later, the Sanctuary would serve as a reminder of the Sinai experience and its significance.
  - a. The foot of the mountain where the people were corresponded to the courtyard gate.

- b. The mountain itself corresponded to the interior of the Courtyard.
  - c. The cloud, where Moses stood, corresponded to the Holy Place.
  - d. The thick cloud corresponded to the Holy of Holies.
16. The mountain was considered holy only because and only when the Presence was there.
- a. When the shofar sounded “long” then the people were permitted on the mountain.
  - b. Because that was the signal that the Presence had left the mountain.
17. V14-15: Moses went to the people and gave them the appropriate instructions.

## **CHAPTER 19: GOD DESCENDS UPON THE MOUNTAIN**

**“Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunderings [Heb. קולת *kolot*] and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet [Heb. שופר *shofar*] was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain.” – Exodus 19:16-17**

1. Except for rain, this sounds like a thunderstorm of immense proportions, including earthquake.
  - a. The cloud was thick or “dense” or literally “heavy.”
  - b. Compare with 1 Kings 19:11-12 and Elijah’s experience at Horeb.
2. The term “thunderings” is literally “voices” suggesting more than one.
  - a. Four living creatures have voices like thunder (Rev.6:1).
  - b. There are the seven thunders that utter their voice (Rev. 10:3-4).
  - c. God’s voice is often considered to be as thunder, e.g. Rev. 14:2 and John 12.

**“Then a voice came from heaven, saying, ‘I have both glorified it and will glorify it again.’ Therefore the people who stood by and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, ‘An angel has spoken to Him.’ Y’shua answered and said, ‘This voice did not come because of Me, but for your sake.’” – John 12:28-30**

3. We also see that this spectacle is present in the heavenly throne room.

**“And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.” – Revelation 4:5**

4. Which then brings us to conclude that God’s Throne came down upon Mount Sinai.
  - a. That is the Jewish belief; His throne is called *merkavah* or “chariot.”
  - b. That is why it was concealed in a thick, dense and dark cloud.
  - c. It would be an overwhelming sight.
5. The writer of Hebrews confirms the frightening aspect of this event when he writes:

**“For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and darkness and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, so that those who heard it begged that the word should not be spoken to them anymore.” – Hebrews 12:18-19**

6. Yet, he goes on to say that, in the future, the world will experience something more than this.

**“See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven, whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, ‘Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven.’ Now this, ‘Yet once more,’ indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain.” – Hebrews 12:25-27**

7. Y’shua alludes to this when He says:

**“And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; men’s hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.” – Luke 21:25-26**

8. The shaking of Sinai – concurrent with God’s arrival on the mountain – announced by shofar.
  - a. Shofar sounded to announce the freedom of a slave on Yom Kippur; Lev. 25:9-10.
  - b. At Sinai, Israel were called to be His people, not the slaves of Pharaoh.
  - c. Shofar was used to signal or accompany important events such as a coronation.
  - d. At Sinai, God’s Kingdom was announced by sound of the shofar.
  - e. Question is, “who blew the shofar?”
9. Literally, the “voice of a shofar” is what it says.
  - a. Signifying that the shofar (ram’s horn) has a voice; e.g. voice of innocent blood.
  - b. Tradition makes this to be the left horn of the ram Abraham sacrificed at the Akedah.
  - c. Tradition further states that the right horn will be blown at coming of Messiah.
  - d. At the time of Redemption, the LORD will blow the shofar.

**Then the LORD will be seen over them, and His arrow will go forth like lightning. The Lord GOD will blow the trumpet [Heb. שופר *shofar*] and go with whirlwinds from the south. The LORD of hosts will defend them.” – Zechariah 9:14-15**

10. The New Testament corroborates the *shofar* sounding at the Redemption.

**“Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”**  
– Matthew 24:30-31

11. “Voice of the shofar” interpreted to be “word which proceeds from the mouth of the LORD.”
  - a. Deut. 8:3
  - b. So then, did God blow the shofar announcing his arrival and Israel’s redemption?
  - c. God came down upon the mountain in the morning; Israel awoke to awesome sight.
  - d. They drew near to the mountain where He was – we are to draw near to where He is.
12. The people trembled (shuddered, shook) at the sights and sounds of His coming.

**“Now, Mount Sinai was completely in smoke because the LORD descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace [Heb. חַכְבֵּשׁ *ha'kivshan*], and the whole mountain quaked greatly. And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice. 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.” – Exodus 19:18-20**

13. We are again reminded that the top of Mount Sinai became God’s Throne room on earth.
  - a. Isaiah’s vision of God’s throne describes the room being filled with smoke (Is. 6:4).
  - b. Moses was shown the pattern for the Tabernacle in the mountain.
  - c. Indicating that the original was in the mountain when God descended in fire.
14. Notice that the LORD descended and Moses ascended.
  - a. Reminding us of 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17.
  - b. His appearance was in fire, the smoke resembling that of a furnace.
15. Hebrew root for “furnace” is כַּבַּשׁ *kavash* meaning to “subdue, subject forcibly.”
  - a. Also mastering and forcibly transforming.
  - b. Used for “furnace” because in it materials disintegrate.
  - c. This concept is tied statement that “no flesh shall glory in His Presence.”
  - d. We are reminded that our God is a consuming fire (Heb 12:29).

**“His lightnings light the world; the earth sees and trembles. The mountains melt like wax at the presence of the LORD; at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.”**

**– Psalm 97:4-5**

16. V19: “The LORD answered him by voice” - loud enough to be heard over the shofar sound.
  - a. Some believe the answer is recorded in v. 21-24; not the Ten Commands.
  - b. Others believe that the response was the first two of the ten commands uttered.
  - c. “I am the LORD your God... and “No other gods.”
  - d. Remainder was related to Moses and he then gave them to Israel.
17. V21: Moses is told to remind the people not to go past the boundaries in an attempt to gaze.
  - a. Death would be the result – not as retaliation but because no flesh glories in Presence.
  - b. Like throwing an object into a burning furnace; it can’t retain its status – will dissolve.
18. V 22: “Let the priests that come near the LORD sanctify themselves, lest they die.”
  - a. These priests pre-date the Levitical order and the sons of Aaron.
  - b. These were the firstborn of Israel’s males, sanctified to the LORD: see Ex. 13:2, 24:5.
  - c. Remember ALL Israel was to be a “kingdom of priests.”
19. V 24: Only Moses and Aaron were permitted to come up the mountain.

**YITRO (Jethro)**  
**Part 2**  
**EXODUS (SHEMOT 20:1 – 20:26)**

**CHAPTER 20: COMMANDMENTS ONE AND TWO**

1. Called the Ten Commandments, the Ten Words [Heb. עשרת הדברות *esrat ha'd'vrot*].
  - a. Also called the Decalogue from *deka*, “ten,” and *logos*, “word.”
2. The Ten Commandments is fundamental to our faith and this is why God spoke to the people.
  - a. Rashi and Ramban believe that the people heard all ten of the commandments.
  - b. The first two directly from God and the remaining eight by mouth of Moses.
  - c. Consider the awesome display by which they were delivered to Israel and mankind.
  - d. Thus, Israel’s role as a kingdom of priests – to present these instructions to mankind.
3. These are considered the basic “outline” or “headings” for human behavior.
  - a. All other commands should in some way come under one of these ten.
4. They are binding on all mankind, which would include the Sabbath.
  - a. They are laws for the entire world, thus written in synagogues and churches.
  - b. Obviously, public display of these commands is under fire.
  - c. To deny existence of God removes any need for rules and man left to do his own will.
5. The natural categorization of these duties falls into two sections:
  - a. The first tablet contains man’s duties toward God – the first five commands.
  - b. The second tablet contains man’s duties toward his fellow man.
  - c. Demonstrating that all the Torah hangs upon two commands as Y’shua told us.
  - d. Love the LORD your God... and love your neighbor as yourself.
  - e. In this we see how these are indeed headings or categories.

**“And God spoke all these words, saying: ‘I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before Me. 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; 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, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.’” – Exodus 20:1-6**

6. These verses contain the two commands that, it is believed, Israel heard directly from the mouth of the Almighty.
  - a. After this they became afraid and asked Moses to convey everything else to them.
  - b. There are some beliefs that argue they heard all ten.
7. Unlike in Christianity, the first commandment in Judaism is “I am the LORD your God.”
  - a. Thus, first command is to believe in His eternal existence and His absolute authority.
  - b. Furthermore, He is not an “it” – Mother Nature, Higher Consciousness, etc.
  - c. He is personal and He emphasizes to each generation that He is “your God.”
  - d. The name YHVH combines the verb “to be” demonstrating He was, is and is to come.
  - e. Thus, to every generation He is God.

**“Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, Or ever You had formed the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.” – Psalm 90:1-2**

8. V2: “Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.”
  - a. Indicating that His interaction with Creation did not stop when He rested on 7<sup>th</sup> day.
  - b. His power and influence is not limited to nature; determines destinies of men.
  - c. Since we cannot see visibly Him we “see” Him by His actions in earthly affairs.
  - d. This unfolded on a national scale in Egypt but it also applies to the individual’s life.
9. In appreciation for my deliverance by His hand, I am to pledge to Him my eternal loyalty.
  - a. No other could deliver me from the bondage of “Egypt” (sin) thus He alone is God.
  - b. This is the essence of the first command – “I am the LORD your God.”
10. Without this personal deliverance, one could argue that the Universe was not created.
  - a. How could one who experienced release from Egypt deny His existence?
  - b. Furthermore, the manifestation at Sinai demonstrated there was only the One God!
11. This first command – including the declaration “who brought you out of the house of bondage” - will be the basis for other commands.
  - a. For instance, the first and great command – “Love the LORD your God.”
  - b. Be careful how you treat others because you were “once slaves in Egypt.”
12. To abide by this first command is to acknowledge His sovereignty and to take upon us the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven.
  - a. The Kingdom of Heaven is what we are to seek before all others (Matthew 6:33).
13. V3-6: Details the second commandment - prohibition against other gods and idols.
  - a. First of all, if the LORD is your God one should not look to other gods or idols.
  - b. Secondly, there are no other gods – “there is none beside me” (Isa. 45:6).
14. This command encompasses four different injunctions:
  - a. Forbidden to believe in idols.
  - b. Forbidden to make or possess them.
  - c. Forbidden to employ godly methods in worship of these other gods.
  - d. Forbidden to worship them in means which are unique to that idol.
15. V3: “You shall have no other gods before me” – literally “no other gods to (in) my face.”
  - a. Would be similar to parading a lover in the face of your spouse while still married.
  - b. Also likened to defying a king to his face which is an act of treason.
16. Nothing or no one is to receive worship due to Him whether angels, saintly men or women.
  - a. People should show respect to a king’s or president’s emissaries or intermediaries.
  - b. However those people do not hold the office of king or president.
  - c. Likewise, it is appropriate to respect God’s emissaries and representatives.
  - d. It is not appropriate to put them on a level where they are venerated or prayed to.
  - e. Whether heavenly bodies, angels or magnanimous personalities, not to be worshiped.
17. This commandment also alludes to prohibition against witchcraft and superstition.
  - a. Which would include things such as chance, e.g. “Lady Luck.”
18. V4: “No graven image” may apply to foreign gods and their perceived “likeness.”
  - a. But this command also forbids the worship of the one God in the wrong way.
  - b. God of Israel is not to be made to be an image that human hands can fashion.
  - c. This is exactly what happened with the golden calf incident.

19. V5: "I am a jealous God" – Heb. word is קנא *kana* means "envious to protect ownership."
  - a. This word demands exclusive rights.
  - b. Only uses word in connection to God in regard to idols and as suspicious husband.
20. Ancient gentile nations believed in the more gods the better.
  - a. If the pantheon of the people was richer, the nation would be greater at large.
  - b. In short, their gods were NOT jealous thus the people were tolerant of one another.
  - c. Were willing to co-exist with other philosophies and lifestyles, regardless of depravity.
  - d. Footnote: It is phonetically related to the word קנה *kanah* meaning "to acquire."
  - e. Root of קין *Kayin* or "Cain."
21. V5: "Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children" – is this just?
  - a. What does this mean? Compare to other Scriptures.

**"Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall children be put to death for their fathers; a person shall be put to death for his own sin." – Deuteronomy 24:16**

**"Why should the son not bear the guilt of the father? Because the son has done what is lawful and right, and has kept all My statutes and observed them, he shall surely live. The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself. But if a wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed, keeps all My statutes, and does what is lawful and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die." – Ezekiel 18:19-21**

22. What can be deduced? Innocent children are not punished by God because of guilty fathers.
  - a. There is, however, a moral interdependence between parents and children.
  - b. A father's bad example often corrupts those who come after him.
  - c. When sins are repeated over time, they are legitimized by culture as a lifestyle.
  - d. A new set of values is established to accommodate the bad behavior.
23. Another translation of this phrase is, "remembering the sins of the father unto the children."
  - a. God remembers the sins of the fathers when He is about to punish the children.
  - b. Takes into account the evil environment and influence, tempering justice with mercy.
  - c. This He does unto the third and fourth generation.
24. Either way we look at it, it seems that there are severe limits on His desire to visit the sinful.
  - a. Those that hate Him are measured in 3 and 4 generations.
  - b. His mercy extends to those that love Him unto the thousandth generation.
  - c. Which is to say His merciful attributes far outweigh His attributes of judgment.
25. Those who are shown great mercy are those that "love" Him and His commandments.
  - a. This "love" exhibits right attitude toward the Creator.
  - b. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, soul and strength (Dt. 6:5).
  - c. Y'shua said, "If you love me, keep my commandments."
  - d. Remnant of woman's seed keep commands and testimony of Y'shua (Rev. 12:17).
26. Footnote: No where does it say His mercy is extended to those who are perfect.
  - a. If they were perfect there would be no need for mercy; there is none righteous, not one.



## CHAPTER 20: COMMANDMENTS THREE THROUGH FIVE

**“You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain [Heb. לשוא *la'shav*], for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.” – Exodus 20:7**

1. The word translated “in vain” means “lacking value or content” – use flippantly.
  - a. Also would include using the Name for vain purposes – e.g. for falsehood.
  - b. To invoke God’s name in effort to convince someone of something untrue.
  - c. To use it without considering its sanctity – to make it commonplace.
2. Jewish commentary says that one is only to swear by God’s name when they are fully convinced of the truthfulness of their declaration.
  - a. Here is what Y’shua has to say on the matter.

**“Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord.’ But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God’s throne; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No.’ For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.” – Matthew 5:33-37**

3. Therefore, there should never be need for a believer to invoke the Name of God in an effort to lend credence to their statement.
  - a. The Essenes held to a similar belief; according to the Talmud they wrote:

“He who cannot be believed without swearing is already condemned. Let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay.”

4. Uttering His name should not become commonplace that it becomes empty.
  - a. It should not be used to convince others of your devotion and righteousness.
  - b. It should be “set apart” and sacred.
  - c. Familiarity breeds contempt.

**“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 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. 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.” – Exodus 20:8-11**

5. We are to “remember” that He is the Creator by observing the Shabbat – a sign between the Creator and His people.
  - a. Therefore, to reject sanctity of Shabbat is to call into question who the Creator is.
  - b. The word “remember” [Heb. זָכַר *zachor*] means more than just to “call to mind.”
6. Which suggests that this institution may have already been well-known among Israelites.
  - a. The Torah doesn’t begin at Sinai but has always been.
  - b. “Remember” also suggests that they were to keep in mind throughout the week.

- c. To prepare for Shabbat and what it entails – restraining from work.
  - d. Also, restraining from one’s own will in submission to Creator’s will.
7. The other word used in conjunction with Shabbat is “observe” found in Deuteronomy.

**“Observe [Heb. שמור *shamor*] the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you.” – Deuteronomy 5:12**

8. This root word means “to guard” – a command to refrain from any activity that would diminish the sanctity (holiness) of the day.
- a. To guard against those things that would encroach upon to make it like any other day.
  - b. For it to serve its intended purpose everyday activities must be ceased.
  - c. To allow workday activities to continue would profane the sanctity of Shabbat.
9. Scripture does not provide an exhaustive list of things prohibited on Shabbat: it mentions certain things incidentally.
- Field labor.
  - Buying and selling.
  - Traveling great distances.
  - Cooking and kindling a fire.
10. The lack of a list suggests that:
- a. In time, prohibited activities would be very different, e.g. buying online.
  - b. Every believer would need to be reliant on Spirit to teach them what to refrain from.
11. Mishna provides 39 categories of prohibitions under which are listed the activities considered to be unlawful for Shabbat.
- a. However, Y’shua didn’t necessarily agree with these man-made restrictions.

**“At that time Y’shua went through the grain fields on the Sabbath. And His disciples were hungry, and began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to Him, ‘Look, Your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath!’ But He said to them, ‘Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: how he entered the house of God and ate the showbread which was not lawful for him to eat, nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? Or have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless? Yet I say to you that in this place there is One greater than the temple. But if you had known what this means, “I DESIRE MERCY AND NOT SACRIFICE,” you would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.’ Now when He had departed from there, He went into their synagogue. And behold, there was a man who had a withered hand. And they asked Him, saying, ‘Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?’—that they might accuse Him. Then He said to them, ‘What man is there among you who has one sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift it out?’ Of how much more value then is a man than a sheep? Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.’ Then He said to the man, ‘Stretch out your hand.’ And he stretched it out, and it was restored as whole as the other. Then the Pharisees went out and plotted against Him, how they might destroy Him.” – Matthew 12:1-14**

12. The commandments of God promote life and well being – not impeding life.
- a. The commandments are only meant to impede the evil inclinations of mankind.

b. At the very heart of the Torah it says:

**“You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them: I am the LORD.” - Leviticus 18:5**

13. Also contained in this command is the instruction to work – for six days.
  - a. Working during the six days is just as important as resting on the seventh.
  - b. Devotion to God does not free one from the obligation to work.
  - c. Idleness leads to evil thoughts and deeds – i.e. “devil’s workshop.”
14. Part of modern culture’s problem is too much idle time.
  - a. Paul says that if one doesn’t work he should not eat (2 Thessalonians 3:10).
  - b. Those who don’t provide for their own household are worse than infidel (1 Tim. 5:8).
15. Still, the proper balance is to complete work in six days rest on the seventh day.
  - a. Work is never completed in six days; it simply stops on Shabbat.
  - b. Must be content to leave remaining work to be taken up after Shabbat.
  - c. Must be confident that if we are obedient the Creator will provide for us on Shabbat.
16. Footnote: First French Republic rejected the notion of one day of rest in seven and sanctioned one rest day in ten – it was a complete failure.
17. The head of the household is responsible to observe this command and see to it that all in his house, including servants and work animals, are to rest from their labor.
  - a. Hinting of the Creator’s consideration for those other than those considered master.
  - b. Furthermore, this makes each home a “universe” or “sanctuary” of its own.
  - c. Master of the house is to follow the example of his Master and ordain rest from labor.
18. In observance of Shabbat we acknowledge that the God of Israel is Creator.
  - a. He is the one who ordained that six days of labor was enough – and so He rested.
  - b. There are many who, if not made to do so, would continue to work without ceasing.
  - c. This, apparently, is not healthy or even profitable but counter-productive.
  - d. This is one of the reasons that God blessed the Sabbath.
19. By giving a double portion of manna on Friday, the Creator was providing for Sabbath.
  - a. He wasn’t giving them twice as much to eat on Friday.
  - b. He sanctified the Sabbath – set it apart – and blessed so they wouldn’t have to gather.
  - c. Our prosperity doesn’t come by our talents, intelligence and diligence.
  - d. God gives us these tools but He is, ultimately, the provider of all things.
  - e. Much more so when we walk in obedience to Him.

**“Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you.” – Exodus 20:12**

20. Rabbis point out that the first tablet (first five) contains commandments that address Man’s relationship with God.
  - a. Striking that the fifth on this tablet is command to honor parents.
  - b. Included among those that speak of reverence to God Himself.
  - c. Thus, duty to one’s parents stands likewise next to the duties toward God.
21. Our responsibility to honor our parents should not be based solely on emotion and sentiment.
  - a. It is part of our obligation toward God.
  - b. In part, this obligation is emphasized so to guarantee the succession of the first four.

- c. Inferring the parent's obligation to teach the children the responsibility to honor God.
  - d. Might suggest honoring one's parents is to honor what they teach you, i.e. doing good.
22. Scripture does not suggest we are to obey a parent's instruction that would require us to break God's commands.
- a. We are told to obey those in authority us but not when they compel us to disobey God.
  - b. The three Hebrews in Daniel 3.
  - c. So this command is not telling us to abide by unlawful instruction from our parents.
  - d. It does call upon us to respect our parents, not necessarily agree with them.
  - e. In fact, what did God compel Abram to do in Genesis 12?

**“Now the LORD had said to Abram: ‘Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing.’ – Genesis 12:1-2**

23. Could be argued that had Abram remained in Terah's house he would have been unable to fulfill God's plan for his life.
- a. Meaning that, Abram couldn't live in agreement with Terah.
  - b. However, there is nothing to suggest that Abram was to denigrate or scoff at his father.
24. Fulfilling this command can often involve great hardship – still the duty remains.
- a. Shem and Japheth placed cloak over Noah to hide his nakedness.
  - b. They did not disclose their father's shame publically or look upon it; they covered it.
  - c. That doesn't mean they approved of it.
  - d. Interesting what Leviticus says considering hardship and costs involved.

**“Every one of you shall revere his mother and his father, and keep My Sabbaths: I am the LORD your God.” – Leviticus 19:3**

25. First, this is to suggest that we respect our parents and, I believe it is inferred, what your parents have taught you – assuming that it is righteousness.
- a. This is coupled with the instruction to keep His Sabbaths.
  - b. Both of these commands acknowledges “rank” – earthly father and heavenly Father.
  - c. Acknowledges that we are to obey them even if we don't understand them.
  - d. Also hints at the hardships and costs incurred by keeping these commands.
  - e. It “costs” to respect your parents no matter what; costs to honor the Sabbath.
26. Thus we shouldn't behave in a way that would offend, embarrass or dishonor our parents.
- a. We should live our lives in a way that honors them even if they aren't living right.
27. Furthermore, this is for our benefit – that our days may be long in the land.
- a. Family is more important than schools, profession, politics and church/synagogue.
  - b. Respecting our parentage/heritage is foundation for the future.
  - c. Begins with individual household but has national implications.
28. When younger generation has contempt for past and their elders, their future will be bleak.
- a. Consider the mindset of the current younger generation – contempt for heritage.
  - b. They distrust and even hate what their fathers revered.
  - c. One thing to disagree with it but another to revile it in the public square.
29. In summary, it is entirely possible to honor our parents and not be in agreement with them.
- a. Ultimately, when we honor God and live according to His instructions.

- b. Doesn't mean that we have license to discredit or ridicule them.
  - c. As parents, they/we have responsibility to teach children God's ways.
  - d. The commandment concerning honoring parents very much connected to first four.
30. Finally, what if faced with choice of "cleaving to your wife" or "honoring your parents"?

**"Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh." – Genesis 2:24**

31. Can only say that to be able to do both is the ideal situation but I don't believe one should dishonor their spouse in order to "honor" their father and mother.

## **CHAPTER 20: SECOND TABLET**

1. First five commands have an accompanying explanation; e.g. "that your days may be long."
  - a. Last five are brief and to the point – "thou shalt not..."
  - b. These are the instructions given in how to interact with our fellowman.

**"You shall not murder." – Exodus 20:13**

2. The first one on the second tablet has relation to the first on the first tablet.
  - a. Those who believe in God would not murder someone created in His image.
  - b. God alone gives life and He alone has the authority to require it.
  - c. Whether it is murder of an adult or of an unborn child it is forbidden.
3. Murder is distinguished from killing, i.e. self-defense, defense of the nation in time of war, accidental killing, etc.
  - a. Torah protects those who kill accidentally until a court has reviewed the case.
  - b. Torah does not allow escape from justice of those who willingly kill.

**"You shall not commit adultery." – Exodus 20:14**

4. This command is parallel with the second on the first tablet – have no idols.
  - a. One who would betray their spouse can be expected to betray God.
  - b. More than physical; involves speech, conduct and association that compromises purity.
  - c. Y'shua addressed this aspect.

**"You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart." – Matthew 5:27-28**

5. Footnote: adultery is, in Judaism, considered to be relations with a married woman or man and is considered a capital offense.

**"You shall not steal." – Exodus 20:15**

6. Someone's property and belongings represents the fruit of their labor and efforts.
  - a. Thus, stealing their property is an assault on them personally.

- b. This would include theft by forgery, embezzlement, cheating and swindling.
  - c. I would suggest we might consider manipulation and emotional coercion as well.
7. There are some situations that it might be considered “legal” technically but still considered unlawful scripturally.
- a. Taking advantage of someone’s ignorance or emotional distress.

**“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.” – Exodus 20:16**

8. The previous three commands address wrongs committed against our fellow man by actual deed; this command addressed the wrongs committed by our mouth.
- a. In addition to the obvious – providing false testimony – includes other instances.
  - b. Gossip, slander, defamation and misrepresentation.
  - c. Could be about a person or a group such as a faith or race.
9. Therefore, as believers, we are obligated not to slander even our enemies.
- a. Even though they will slander us.

**“Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.” – Matthew 5:11-12**

10. In Islam it is lawful to lie to an “infidel” – not considered a brother.
- a. With us, it is not so.
  - b. The epitome of what not to be where this command is concerned is Esau.
  - c. He accuses Jacob of what he is guilty of himself – accuser of his brother.

**“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.” – Exodus 20:17**

11. To “covet” is to long for possession of something that we cannot obtain in an honest, moral and legal manner.
- a. This command speaks of the root of all evil actions –inherent evil desire of the heart.
  - b. Never content to live within the boundaries God has established.
  - c. This is the springboard for other evil deeds.
  - d. One who doesn’t covet his neighbor’s possessions less likely to bear false witness.
  - e. Less likely to rob from him or murder him or commit adultery with his wife.
12. This commandment is about self-control and discipline.
- a. Men can legislate against things such as murder and theft but can’t affect their heart.
  - b. Only God can legislate that we cleanse our thoughts and attitudes.
  - c. So that our change of heart and mind will positively affect our deeds.
  - d. Jacob described as a temperate man (Gen. 25), i.e. self-disciplined.
  - e. It doesn’t banish evil thought necessarily but calls on us to bring it into subjection.

**“For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the**

**knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Messiah.” – 2 Corinthians 10:4-5**

13. In Messiah, we have the power to master our desires and not let our desires master us.
  - a. Without self control, our lives will be chaotic and disaster will be our reward.
  - b. Rabbinical adage asks, “Who is strong? The one who controls his passions.”

**CHAPTER 20: EFFECT OF REVELATION AT SINAI**

**“Now all the people witnessed [Heb. ראים *ro'im*] the thundering [Heb. הקולת *ha'kolot*], the lightning flashes [Heb. הלפידים *ha'lapidim*], the sound [Heb. ואת קול *v'et kol*] of the trumpet [Heb. השפר *ha'shofar*], and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they trembled and stood afar off.” – Exodus 20:18**

1. That God appeared to them is to emphasize that God speaks to His people directly and not through the mystical methods employed by the magicians and necromancers of Egypt.
  - a. Thus, the thundering, lightning and other dramatic components of the Sinai experience.
  - b. This caused them to tremble in fear; something intended but so they would remember.
  - c. Literally they “reeled” – fell into a panic.
  - d. And so they would obey God in the future without this display.
2. The word translated “witnessed” literally means “saw” – they saw the thunder.
  - a. How does one see thunder? The word is literally “voices.”
  - b. Thus the tradition that they saw God’s voice speak in 70 languages as tongues of fire.
  - c. This is significant because of what we read in Acts 2.

**“When the Day of Pentecost [Shavuot] had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred the multitude came together and were confused because everyone heard them speak in his own language.” – Acts 2:1-6**

3. Events of Exodus 19-20 occurred on what would become the Feast of Shavuot – “Weeks.”
  - a. Known in Greek as *pentekostus* or “fiftieth” aka Pentecost.
4. The significance of the Sinai revelation is that God is entering into covenant with His people and they are consenting to enter into covenant with Him.
  - a. The canopy of thick cloud is the *chupah*.
  - b. He offers them His *ketubah*, the 10 Commands.
  - c. They will consent to enter into covenant with Him and say, “I do.”
5. Thus it is significant that the lighting flashes are here referred to as לפידים *lapidim* as opposed to ברקים *b'rakim* in Exodus 19:16.
  - a. Significant because *lapid* is typically rendered “torch.”
  - b. An example is found in Genesis 15.

**“And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch [Heb. לפיד אש *lapid esh*] that passed between those pieces. On the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram.”**

**– Genesis 15:17-18**

6. Notice this event is when God makes covenant with Abram and it is being reaffirmed at Sinai.
  - a. “Burning torch” is *lapid*, same word being used in Exodus 20 but rendered lightning.
7. Also “saw” the voice of the shofar – again suggesting they saw more than what we think.
  - a. The display and the fright they felt caused them to withdraw from the scene.

**“Then 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, ‘Do not fear; for God has come to test you, and that His fear may be before you, so that you may not sin.’” – Exodus 20:19-20**

8. They did not wish for God to speak to them thinking that if He didn't they would live.
  - a. Motivation was fear of dying which prompted them to agree “to do.”
  - b. This event is also referred to in Deuteronomy 5

**“So it was, when you heard the voice from the midst of the darkness, while the mountain was burning with fire that you came near to me, all the heads of your tribes and your elders. And you said: ‘Surely 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 this day that God speaks with man; yet he still lives. Now therefore, why should we die? For this great fire will consume us; if we hear the voice of the LORD our God anymore, then we shall die. 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? You go near and hear all that the LORD our God may say, and tell us all that the LORD our God says to you, and we will hear and do it.’ ”**

**- Deuteronomy 5:23-27**

9. Again, fear of dying prompted them to agree to do what God instructed thinking for Him to ease speaking would save their lives.
  - a. As soon as perceived danger passed they would forget their promise to hear and obey.
  - b. This is typical human response.
10. Furthermore, God knew then what was in their hearts.
  - a. Evidenced by the golden calf incident later and what wasn't in their hearts.

**“Then 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 are right in all that they have spoken. Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children forever! - Deuteronomy 5:28-29**

11. It could be argued that it was not fear of God that prompted their desire for Him to cease speaking but fear of dying.
  - a. God agreed with them; were He to continue speaking they would indeed die.
  - b. A principle - when God speaks (His Word penetrates our heart) our flesh must die.



- c. God's Word is not intended to appeal to flesh but challenge it to die.
  - d. We are born again in order to learn how to die (to ourselves).
12. Flesh and blood doesn't inherit the kingdom of heaven and therefore why would God speak to us in a way that would accommodate our flesh?
- a. Therefore, fear of their flesh dying is what prompts Israel to say "Stop talking to us."
  - b. Think if He stops speaking they will live (flesh).
  - c. In reality if He doesn't speak to us (if we can't hear His Word) we will die.
13. Sought to save their lives not realizing they were losing it.
- a. People who understand that, to live, we must die.
  - b. These are those who wish for God to speak into their lives.
14. It is understood that when He does, our flesh will not receive it well but we must allow His Word to do its work in us.
- a. In a manner of speaking this is what Moses tried to convey to them.
  - b. "God has come to prove you (what's in your heart) so that you won't sin."
  - c. That you will choose to abstain from the desires of the flesh and do His will.
  - d. "That His fear may be before you."
15. The fear of offending God prevents us from sinning.
- a. If that fear not instilled in us what would keep us from following our own way?
  - b. Scripture says:

**The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all those who do His commandments. - Psalm 111:10**

16. Wisdom from above cannot be attained without fear and respect of Creator - acts as the seed.
- a. However, fruition of wisdom is to "love the LORD your God with all of your heart ..."
  - b. "I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you."
17. At the beginning of the nation we see the fundamental and recurring flaw.
- a. Wrong thing is in their heart. – "oh that they had a heart to obey me."
18. V21: "And the people stood afar off" - Hebrew term is מרחק *merachok* - from a distance.
- a. Also hints at the condition of their heart.
  - b. The Creator wishes to dwell among his people that they might draw near to them.
19. Hebrew root קרב *karav* means to draw near or approach.
- a. Is the root that gives us word קרבן *korban* ("offering").
  - b. That which is emblematic of our desire to draw near to Him - a consuming fire.
  - c. That we may offer our bodies as a living sacrifice.
  - d. Again demonstrating that if we are to live we must be willing to die.
20. V21: "But Moses drew near the thick darkness where God was."
- a. Moses demonstrates what the Creator desires.
  - b. Those that would approach Him and yet recognizing what is required of them to do so.
  - c. As believers, we are given access, through Messiah, and are encouraged to draw near.

**Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Y'shua, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of**

**faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. - Hebrews 10:19-22**

21. Again we see that God was in the thick darkness.
  - a. God in “darkness” demonstrated in Psalm 18:11.

**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. You shall not make anything to be with Me - gods of silver or gods of gold you shall not make for yourselves.’ ” - Exodus 20:22-23**

22. God makes the point that Israel saw and heard for themselves and did not receive second-hand information; they are witnesses and therefore responsible.
  - a. With information (knowledge) comes the responsibility to choose.
  - b. Who will you serve and how to serve.
  - c. Had they not had this first-hand information, they would have been easily deceived.
23. He reminds them that, in service to Him, they not to “make with me” not of gold and silver.
  - a. Are not to fashion images of gold and silver as some type of representation of God.
  - b. He cannot be represented by a symbol or an icon – *ein sof*.
  - c. Something that needed to be said in consideration of the future golden calf incident.
  - d. Also repeated in Deuteronomy 4.

**“Take careful heed to yourselves, for you saw no form when the LORD spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire, lest you act corruptly and make for yourselves a carved image in the form of any figure: the likeness of male or female, the likeness of any animal that is on the earth or the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the air, the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground or the likeness of any fish that is in the water beneath the earth.” -Deuteronomy 4:15-18**

24. In short, God cannot be represented by an inanimate object even with the best of intentions.
  - a. Also, they were not to make for themselves gods of gold implying "foreign gods."
  - b. Those are improper forms of worship but here is how I am to be worshiped:

**“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. 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. Nor shall you go up by steps to My altar, that your nakedness may not be exposed on it.’**

**- Exodus 20:24-26**

25. Altar is constructed of natural components.
  - a. Earth hints at man since we come from the dust of the earth.
  - b. In turn hinting at the need for us to be a living sacrifice upon the altar.
  - c. Walls typically bronze-coated wood and hollow interior filled with earth.
  - d. Explains why it was called earthen altar but also brazen altar.
26. Stones can also be used if they are natural.
  - a. This was the altar constructed with the Temple in Jerusalem replacing the other.

- b. Being un-hewn these stones would have only the stamp of God's handiwork.
  - c. Also hinting at His people who are described as "living stones" (1 Peter 2).
27. To use a tool (literally sword or iron instrument) would corrupt the stone and thus the altar.
- a. Talmud explains it this way.

"Iron shortens life while the altar prolongs it. The sword, or weapon of war, is the symbol of strife; whereas the altar is the symbol of reconciliation between God and man and between man and his fellow."

28. Finally, given another prohibition concerning the altar; not to have steps but a ramp.
- a. This is to ensure that the priest's nakedness will not be exposed as they ascend the altar.
  - b. Hints at the reason for the altar; men could approach the Creator and be reconciled.
  - c. In the garden mankind had that access, not realizing their nakedness.
  - d. When their eyes were opened to good and evil they realized they were naked.
  - e. Their disobedience resulted in their exile from God.
29. Still, before sending them away from the garden God clothed them.
- a. God does not wish for anyone's nakedness to be exposed for multiple reasons.
  - b. God is merciful and desires to cover our shame when our heart is to return to Him.
  - c. Also, those called to repentance need to be clothed that their nakedness is covered.

**"Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' - and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked - I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent." - Revelation 3:17-19**

30. Seems that nakedness is emblematic of shame and the refusal to cover it would describe those who are shameless.
- a. Allude to God's requirement that those who approach Him must do so in humility.
  - b. Must be cognizant of their shame but desirous that He would mercifully cover it.
  - c. Nations are proud and think nothing of exposing their nakedness.
  - d. Thus act in a shameful manner yet without remorse.
31. As we conclude portion, interesting to note that this portion suggests the "recreation" of God's people with Ten Commands.
- a. The creation of His people was with ten creative utterances e.g. "Let there be light."
  - b. This recreation required ten plagues intended to destroy the bonds of slavery.
  - c. For us to be born again the bonds of sin had to be broken.
  - d. We must daily "destroy" or crucify our flesh - the old man.