

## Lesson 16: Exodus 18–20, “All that the Lord Hath Spoken We Will Do”

Jethro

Exd 18:1,8-9

1 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;

8 And Moses told his father in law all that the LORD had done unto Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel’s sake, and all the travail that had come upon them by the way, and how the LORD delivered them.

9 And Jethro rejoiced for all the goodness which the LORD had done to Israel, whom he had delivered out of the hand of the Egyptians.

JST Exd 18:1 When Jethro, the high priest of Midian...

Why is it significant that Jethro is a “high priest”?

Jethro, and in turn Moses, held the Melchizedek priesthood

D&C 84:6

And the sons of Moses, according to the Holy Priesthood which he received under the hand of his father-in-law, Jethro;

Joseph Fielding Smith

“The Midianites were descendants of Abraham, through the children of Keturah, wife of Abraham, therefore the Midianites, who were neighbors to the Israelites in Palestine, were related to the Israelites, and were Hebrews. As descendants of Abraham they were entitled through their faithfulness to his blessings, and in the days of Moses and preceding them, in Midian the Priesthood was found. (Church History and Modern Revelation, 2:103)

Jethro recognizes that Moses is being overwhelmed by leading the Israelites

Exd 18:13-18

13 ¶ And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to judge the people: and the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening.

14 And when Moses’ father in law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What is this thing that thou doest to the people? why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even?

15 And Moses said unto his father in law, Because the people come unto me to inquire of God:

16 When they have a matter, they come unto me; and I judge between one and another, and I do make them know the statutes of God, and his laws.

17 And Moses’ father in law said unto him, The thing that thou doest is not good.

18 Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that is with thee: for this

thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone.

What is Jethro's concern if Moses continues to judge every issues that the people bring before him?

(Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that is with thee)

Richard L. Evans

"There is a profound wisdom in this early utterance concerning the delegation of authority and of responsibility and of work. Surely it must be evident to every thinking person that there comes a time when, no matter how able or willing a man may be, he cannot further extend himself so far as person-to-person communication and effort are concerned....

"In person-to-person appointments in this Church and out of it, there is a limit to which a man can extend himself—a truth which the father-in-law of Moses discovered and expressed many centuries ago, and which is a still more pressing truth in our day as the Church and its responsibilities grow."  
(CR, Oct. 1949)

Exd 18:19-20

19 Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee:

Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God:

20 And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do.

What does Jethro suggest Moses do?

(Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God)

First: Do the work that only the prophet can do

Neal A. Maxwell

"We generally see the need for Moses to apply the delegation dimension, and we note how both we and those we serve—including family—can 'wear away.' Moses was hearing every case! Worse still, however, this pattern kept him from his real duties, which were to 'teach them ordinances and laws, and... shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do.'

"The original Twelve were counseled that they were not to 'serve tables' (see Acts 6:1–4). Actually, serving tables is easy. It is visible, measurable, and do-able—compared to opening up the nations of the world to missionary work or to keeping wolves out of the flock. But if the Twelve were drawn away from their scriptural and constitutional duties, the whole Church would suffer. Being drawn away can happen to all of us, almost without our knowing it." ("Wisdom and Order," Ensign, June 1994)

(teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do)

Second: Teach the people to govern themselves

Dallin H. Oaks

"An early scriptural account of this need is in Father Jethro's counsel that Moses should not try to do so much. The people were waiting upon their priesthood leader from morning till night.... [Jethro] gave Moses counsel that illustrates the importance of the personal line: 'Thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do.'

"In other words, Israelites who followed Moses should be taught not to bring every question to that priesthood leader. They should understand the commandments and seek inspiration to work out most problems for themselves." (CR, Oct. 2010)

Exd 18:22-24

22 And let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee.

23 If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace.

24 So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father in law, and did all that he had said.

What does the fact that Moses is will to listen to Jethro teach us about him?

Neal A. Maxwell

"Moses was a righteous and remarkable man. Nevertheless, he needed to change his leadership style for his welfare as well as the people's. Moses succeeded because he was the most meek man upon the face of the earth. (See Num. 12:3) Blessed are the meek, for they are neither easily offended by counsel nor aggravated by admonition." (CR, Oct. 1991)

Faith Tested at Mount Sinai

At this point the Law of Moses had not yet been given. The Israelites were eligible for the fullness of the priesthood and all of God's blessing available thru the Abrahamic covenant. The lesser law would be given after Israel proved their disobedience by creating and worshiping the golden calf

Brigham Young

"[Moses] received the law of carnal commandments for Israel from the mouth of God. I believe with all my heart that if the children had been ready to receive the Gospel in all its fulness, the yoke of carnal commandments would never have been placed upon their necks. Moses was a High Priest after the order of

Melchizedek." (JD, 9:308)

J. Reuben Clark, Jr.

"The Lord tried to make a nation of priests out of Israel but Israel would not, and so the Lord had to organize as he did, giving the Priesthood to one tribe, withdrawing the Melchizedek Priesthood from their midst, and setting up the Priesthood of Aaron." (CR, April 1953)

The Lord makes it clear that He wants to give the fullness of the gospel to the Israelites

Exd 19:3-6

3 And Moses went up unto God, and the LORD called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel;

4 Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.

5 Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:

6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

What does the Lord mean when He says that He wants Israel to be a "peculiar treasure" and a "kingdom of priests"?

Lorenzo Snow

"This is what the Lord designed to effect through Israel in bringing them out from Egyptian bondage; He wished to make of them a united people, a peculiar nation, a nation of people whom God could honor and respect in order that the world might believe, and that they might receive the blessings which He wished to bestow upon them. If Israel had carried out His requirements, the world, no doubt would have been greatly benefited thereby, and the purposes of God more fully effected. The Lord... wished to extend his love and blessings through Israel to the whole human family." (JD, 23:338)

The people covenanted to be obedient to the Lord so they were able to witness and experience marvelous things at mount Sinai

Exd 19:7-11,16-17

7 ¶ And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the LORD commanded him.

8 And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD.

9 And the LORD said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever. And Moses told the words of the people unto the LORD.

10 ¶ And the LORD said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to day

and to morrow, and let them wash their clothes,  
11 And be ready against the third day: for the third day the LORD will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai.

16 ¶ And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled.

17 And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount.

What does their reaction to the marvelous things they witnessed on mount Sinai tell us about the faith of the people?

They were afraid. And we know that fear is the opposite of faith

The Israelites lacked faith and were not able to endure the great things the Lord had prepared for them

Exd 20:18-21

18 ¶ And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off.

19 And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.

20 And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not.

21 And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was.

Why did the Israelites want Moses to be their intermediary with God?

(let not God speak with us, lest we die)

Joseph Smith

"When God offers a blessing or knowledge to a man, and he refuses to receive it, he will be damned. The Israelites prayed that God would speak to Moses and not to them; in consequence of which he cursed them with a carnal law." (TPJS, pg. 322)

John Taylor

"The Israelites had the Gospel preached to them in the wilderness; but... when they heard the thunders and saw the lightning and heard the voice of God, they said unto Moses, 'Speak thou unto us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die;' we are not prepared for this glory, for this kind of manifestation which has been given unto us.

"Well, they were foolish; they departed from correct principles, they

violated the laws of God and therefore incurred his displeasure, and his Spirit was withdrawn from them, and the Gospel was taken from them and they were left under a law of carnal commandments, and the law was given them as a schoolmaster, we are told, until Christ came." (JD, 20:219)

## The Ten Commandments

After speaking to God on mount Sinai Moses came down and gave the Israelites the 10 commandments.

Keep in mind that at this time the Israelites were still eligible for all the blessing of the Covenant. This is before the Lord had to restrict them to the carnal law because of the golden calf

Exd 20:1-17

1 And God spake all these words, saying,

2 I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

3 Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

4 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:

5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;

6 And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

7 Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

8 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

9 Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:

10 But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:

11 For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

12 ¶ Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

13 Thou shalt not kill.

14 Thou shalt not commit adultery.

15 Thou shalt not steal.

16 Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

17 Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

Mark E. Petersen

“By his own finger the Lord wrote the Ten Commandments on tablets of stone. They represent the basic law of the Almighty and have formed the underlying elements of civil and religious law ever since.

“They are fundamental to our relationships with God. They are an integral part of the restored gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and are essential to our becoming perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect.” (Moses, pg. 110)

What do you think he meant by, "have formed the underlying elements of civil and religious law"?

Elder Petersen said that the 10 commandments “represent the basic law of the Almighty”

It seems that the Ten Commandments were given to the Israelites at this time to help prepare them for the higher law.

Given that, let’s read how the higher law has expended these commandments

Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

D&C 76:1-4

1 Hear, O ye heavens, and give ear, O earth, and rejoice ye inhabitants thereof, for the Lord is God, and beside him there is no Savior.

2 Great is his wisdom, marvelous are his ways, and the extent of his doings none can find out.

3 His purposes fail not, neither are there any who can stay his hand.

4 From eternity to eternity he is the same, and his years never fail.

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.

D&C 1:15-16

15 For they have strayed from mine ordinances, and have broken mine everlasting covenant;

16 They seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own god, whose image is in the likeness of the world, and whose substance is that of an idol, which waxeth old and shall perish in Babylon, even Babylon the great, which shall fall.

Brigham Young

“I would as soon see a man worshipping a little god made of brass or of wood as to see him worshipping his property.” (JD, 6:196)

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

D&C 63:60-62

60 Behold, I am aAlpha and Omega, even Jesus Christ.

61 Wherefore, let all men beware how they take my name in their lips—

62 For behold, verily I say, that many there be who are under this condemnation, who use the name of the Lord, and use it in vain, having not authority.

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

D&C 59:9-12

9 And that thou mayest more fully keep thyself unspotted from the world, thou shalt go to the house of prayer and offer up thy sacraments upon my holy day;

10 For verily this is a day appointed unto you to rest from your labors, and to pay thy devotions unto the Most High;

11 Nevertheless thy avows shall be offered up in righteousness on all days and at all times;

12 But remember that on this, the Lord's day, thou shalt offer thine oblations and thy sacraments unto the Most High, confessing thy sins unto thy brethren, and before the Lord.

Honour thy father and thy mother.

D&C 27:9

9 And also Elijah, unto whom I have committed the keys of the power of turning the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to the fathers, that the whole earth may not be smitten with a curse;

Thou shalt not kill.

Matthew 5:21-22

21 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:

22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Matthew 5:27-28

27 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:

28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

Thou shalt not bear false witness.

Matthew 5:33-37

33 Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:

34 But I say unto you, aSwear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's



throne:

35 Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King.

36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.

37 But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

Thou shalt not covet

D&C 19:25-26

25 And again, I command thee that thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife; nor seek thy neighbor's life.

26 And again, I command thee that thou shalt not covet thine own property, but impart it freely to the printing of the Book of Mormon, which contains the truth and the word of God