

# Parashat Yitro

## פרשת יתרו

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5

### Seeking and Listening to Wise Counsel

השבועות הזה קוראים / This Week's Reading

תורה: Exodus 18:1-20:23

הפטרה: Isaiah 6:1-7:6, 9:5-6

הברית: Mark 7-8

החדשה

*Triennial cycle: Shemot / Exodus 18:1-27*

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In this week's reading, *Shemot / Exodus 18:1-27*, Moshe takes the responsibility of solving all the people's problems. Jethro, Moshe's father-in-law, sees how this is affecting Moshe and the people and offers wise counsel to Moshe on the matter. *Shemot / Exodus 18:17 Moses' father-in-law said to him, 'The thing that you are doing is not good. 18:18 'You will surely wear out, both yourself and these people who are with you, for the task is too heavy for you; you cannot do it alone. 18:19 'Now listen to me: I will give you counsel, and God be with you. You be the people's representative before God, and you bring the disputes to God, 18:20 then teach them the statutes and the laws, and make known to them the way in which they are to walk and the work they are to do.*

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*18:21 'Furthermore, you shall select out of all the people able men who fear God, men of truth, those who hate dishonest gain; and you shall place these over them as leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens. 18:22 'Let them judge the people at all times; and let it be that every major dispute they will bring to you, but every minor dispute they themselves will judge. So it will be easier for you, and they will bear the burden with you. 18:23 'If you do this thing and God so commands you, then you will be able to endure, and all these people also will go to their place in peace.'* (NASB) Moshe

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listened to his father-in-law and chose men from Yisrael to judge the people (*Shemot / Exodus 18:24-26*) demonstrating a humble heart and having an ear for wise counsel. The apostle Paul said to Timothy in *1 Timothy 5:17*, "direct the affairs of the ecclesia well" speaking of those who direct well are worthy of a "double honor" he was implying that the standard of recompense should be correlated with the amount of work required of the leader. In our verses for this week, we see how Moshe guided the responsibility of directing the affairs of the people selecting some to judge between disputes so that he could continue in teaching the statutes and laws to the people and everyone could go to their place in peace (*Shemot / Exodus 18:23*). These verses direct us to understand that those who serve God (which includes each one of us) must exhibit the highest quality of workmanship by managing our time efficiently so we can better serve the Lord. We must be aware that it is possible to get tied down with the things of this world and forget that we are serving the Lord and so it is important to keep Scripture such as *Colossians 3* in mind each day. *Colossians 3:23 Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, 3:24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve. (NASB)*

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First and foremost we need to seek the counsel of the Lord according to the scriptures. Having left Egypt and the Egyptian army dead, the people focused on their problems and seek the counsel of the Lord at the hand of Moshe. If there is one thing we

should model here, like the children of Yisrael, we should diligently seek the Lord, note how the people stood around all day long to talk to Moshe on the issues they had.

## שמות 18:17-26

17 וַיֹּאמֶר הַתֵּן מֹשֶׁה אֵלָיו לֵאמֹר הַדְּבַר אֲשֶׁר אָמַרְתָּ  
 18 עֲשֵׂה: נָבֵל תָּבֵל גַּם־אִתָּה גַּם־הָעַם הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר עִמָּךְ  
 19 כִּי־כִבֵּד מִמֶּךָ הַדְּבַר לֵאמֹר לֵבְךָ עֲשֵׂה לְבַדְּךָ: עֲתָה  
 שָׁמַע בְּקֻלִּי אֵינְעֻד וַיְהִי אֱלֹהִים עִמָּךְ הַיְהִי אִתָּה לְעַם  
 מִוֵּל הָאֱלֹהִים וַהֲבֵאתָ אִתָּה אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים אֱלֹהֵי־אֱלֹהִים:  
 20 וְהוֹדַרְתָּ אֹתָם אֶת־הַחֲקוּיִם וְאֶת־הַתּוֹרָה וְהוֹדַרְתָּ  
 לָהֶם אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים יִלְכוּ בָּהּ וְאֶת־הַמַּעֲשֵׂה אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשׂוּן:  
 21 וְאִתָּה תַחֲוֶה מִכָּל־הָעַם אֲנָשֵׁי־חַיִל יִרְאִי אֱלֹהִים אֲנָשֵׁי  
 אֲמֵת שֹׁנְאֵי בָצַע וְשֹׂמְטֵי עֲלֵהֶם שְׂרֵי אֲלָפִים שְׂרֵי מֵאוֹת  
 22 שְׂרֵי חֲמִשִּׁים וְשְׂרֵי עֶשְׂרֵת: וְשִׁפְטוּ אֶת־הָעַם בְּכָל־עֵת  
 וְהָיָה כָּל־הַדְּבַר הַגָּדוֹל יָבִיאוּ אֵלֶיךָ וְכָל־הַדְּבַר הַקָּטָן  
 23 יִשְׁפֹּטוּהֶם וְהִקַּל מֵעֲלֶיךָ וַנִּשְׂאוּ אִתָּךְ: אִם אֶת־הַדְּבַר  
 הַזֶּה תַעֲשֶׂה וַעֲנֶה אֱלֹהִים וַיְכַלֵּת עִמָּךְ וְגַם כָּל־הָעַם  
 24 הַזֶּה עַל־מִקְמָו יָבֹא בְשָׁלוֹם: וַיִּשְׁמַע מֹשֶׁה לְקוֹל חַתָּנוּ  
 25 וַיַּעַשׂ כֹּל אֲשֶׁר אָמַר: וַיִּבְחַר מֹשֶׁה אֲנָשֵׁי־חַיִל מִכָּל־  
 יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּתֵּן אֹתָם רֵאשִׁים עַל־הָעַם שְׂרֵי אֲלָפִים שְׂרֵי  
 26 מֵאוֹת שְׂרֵי חֲמִשִּׁים וְשְׂרֵי עֶשְׂרֵת: וְשִׁפְטוּ אֶת־הָעַם  
 בְּכָל־עֵת אֶת־הַדְּבַר הַקָּטָן יָבִיאוּ אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וְכָל־  
 27 הַדְּבַר הַקָּטָן יִשְׁפֹּטוּ הֵם: וַיִּשְׁלַח מֹשֶׁה אֶת־חַתָּנוּ וַיִּלְךְ

### Shemot / Exodus 18:17-26

18:17 Moses' father-in-law said to him, 'The thing that you are doing is not good. 18:18 'You will surely wear out, both yourself and these people who are with you, for the task is too heavy for you; you cannot do it alone. 18:19 'Now listen to me: I will give you counsel, and God be with you. You be the people's representative before God, and you bring the disputes to God, 18:20 then teach them the statutes and the laws, and make known to them the way in which they are to walk and the work they are to do. 18:21 'Furthermore, you shall select out of all the people able men who fear God, men of truth, those who hate dishonest gain; and you shall place these over them as leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens. 18:22 'Let them judge the people at all times; and let it be that every major dispute they will bring to you, but every minor dispute they themselves will judge. So it will be easier for you, and they will bear the burden with you. 18:23 'If you do this thing and God so commands you, then you will be able to endure, and all these people also will go to their place in peace.' 18:24 So Moses listened to his father-in-law and did all that he had said. 18:25 Moses chose able men out of all Israel and made them heads over the people, leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens. 18:26 They judged the people at all times; the difficult dispute they would bring to Moses, but every minor dispute they themselves would judge. (NASB)

If we are following in Yeshua's footsteps, our lives should tell the story of the ongoing transformation that God is performing in our lives. This includes the way we live, how we think, and even our finances (spending habits) and seeking God's counsel on these matters. For example, we save and spend money not just for personal necessity like food and utilities, but also to help in the furthering of God's kingdom and for those we love or feel called to help.

Moshe recognized the value and importance of the people's needs and so he would sit all day long as a judge between a man and his brother if there was a dispute. The same diligence should be taken for acquiring wisdom and knowledge as it says in *James 1:5 But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. (NASB)* Asking wisdom of God draws us closer to Him so that we can listen and then take counsel in His Word. Seeking the counsel of God is vitally important for each of us and according to the Scriptures; we are to turn to God

and His Word during the trials and challenges we endure each day. Let's look at *Tehilim / Psalms 119*.

מִהֲדַאֲהַבְתִּי תוֹרָתְךָ  
 כִּי־הַיּוֹם הִיא שִׁיחֵתִי :  
 מֵאֵיבֵי תַחֲבֹמֵי מִצִּוְתֶיךָ  
 כִּי לְעוֹלָם הֵיאֵלֵי :  
 מִכָּל־מְלַמְדֵי הַשִּׁבְלֹתַי  
 כִּי־לְעוֹדֶיךָ שִׁיחָה לִּי :  
 מִזְקֵנִים אֲתַבּוּן  
 כִּי פִקְדֹתֶיךָ נִצְרַתִּי :  
 מִכָּל־אֲרָח רַע כָּל־אֲתֵי רַגְלִי  
 לִמְעַן אֲשַׁמֵּר דְּבָרֶיךָ :  
 כִּמִּשְׁפָּטֶיךָ לֹא־סָרְתִי  
 כִּי־אֲתָה הוֹרַתָּנִי :  
 מִהֲדַנְמַלְצוֹ לַחֲכִי אִמְרֹתֶיךָ  
 מִשְׁפִּוֹדֶיךָ אֲתַבּוּן  
 עַל־כֵּן שָׁנֵאתִי וְכָל־אֲרָח שָׁקֵר :

**Tehilim / Psalms 119 97-104**

*119:97 O how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day. 119:98 Your commandments make me wiser than my enemies, For they are ever mine. 119:99 I have more insight than all my teachers, For Your testimonies are my meditation. 119:100 I understand more than the aged, Because I have observed Your precepts. 119:101 I have restrained my feet from every evil way, That I may keep Your word. 119:102 I have not turned aside from Your ordinances, For You Yourself have taught me. 119:103 How sweet are Your words to my taste! Yes, sweeter than honey to my mouth! 119:104 From Your precepts I get understanding; Therefore I hate every false way. (NASB)*

According to *Tehilim / Psalms 119:97-104*, the greatest benefit we obtain from God's Word is

His counsel on how to direct our ways according to God's will. The author of this Psalm (David) is saying that he loves God's instruction (Torah) for it makes him wiser than his enemies, wiser than his teachers, and even wiser than the aged men of the city. Because he had kept God's precepts he was able to keep his feet from evil. David on his way to becoming king realized the importance of seeking the right kind of counsel for his life. *Tehilim / Psalms 1:1* says *"How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers!" (NASB)* In fact, sefer *Mishley / Proverbs* is full of advice to seek wise counsel and its importance.

**Mishley / Proverbs 1:5**

*1:5 A wise man will hear and increase in learning, And a man of understanding will acquire wise counsel, (NASB)*

**Mishley / Proverbs 12:15**

*12:15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, But a wise man is he who listens to counsel. (NASB)*

Based upon the verses from our reading this week and the Psalms and Proverbs, it is vitally important to be right with God and to live in a way that is pleasing to Him. We need counsel and direction in our lives and we find good counsel from God in His Word. The primary purpose of the Scriptures is to counsel us on the nature of our sinful condition and our need for a Savior. Being the children of God when seeking guidance from God, the first thing we should ask ourselves is *"What does God in His Word have to say about this issue in my life?"* The Children of Yisrael would stand all day long to hear counsel of the Lord. The question for us today is *"would I stand all day long waiting to hear*

**Psalms based Prayer:**

Heavenly Father, help me to restraint my feet from every evil way so that I am able to keep your word (119:101). Help me Lord to hate and forsake every false and evil practice (119:104) in my life so that I can live a life free from the bondage of the sin that I have held onto for so long. Your words are truly sweeter than honey in my mouth, thank you for giving me your Words (119:103). I ask that your Holy Spirit be a transforming power in my life daily. In Yeshua's name I pray.

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115 *from the Lord as the children of Yisrael did in Shemot / Exodus 18?"* If you want  
to improve your relationship with the Lord and hear his wise counsel, I  
recommend the following four things, (i) commit yourself to reading the bible  
daily, (ii) get into a good congregation that faithfully teaches from God's word,  
120 (iii) develop relationships with God fearing people, and (iv) constantly ask  
yourself the question "*what does the Lord have to say about this issue in His  
Word that can help me with the issue or decision that I must make in my life?"*"

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Be Blessed in Yeshua, Christ our Messiah!

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הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:  
Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,  
"Yeshua" King Messiah forever and ever