

QUESTIONS FOR PARSHAT YITRO 5770
by Rabbi Edward Davis

I. From the Text

1. Yitro was known as a Kohan (a minister) of Midian. Throughout the narrative he has a new title. How is Yitro referred to here in our text? (18:1)
2. What was Yitro's advice to Moshe? (18:13-26)
3. Name the Ten Commandments in order. (20:2-14)
4. Why did the people think that they would die as a result of hearing the Ten Commandments?
5. What was inside the copper-coated wood Altar used in the Mishkan? (20:21)

II. From Rashi

6. Yitro felt joy over the news of what happened to Bnei Yisrael; yet he felt a certain level of uneasiness in what happened. What caused this uneasiness? (18:9)
7. What exactly did Bnei Yisrael hear from Hashem when at Sinai? (20:1)
8. How did Hashem bless and sanctify the Shabbat? (20:11)
9. What kind of theft is referred to in the Ten Commandments? (20:13)
10. Why were the Kohanim not permitted to ascend the Altar using steps? (20:23) [They had a ramp instead.]

III. From the Rabbis

11. Yitro brought an Olah sacrifice (a whole burnt offering) and Zevachim (feast offerings) to Hashem, and had a banquet meal with Aharon and the Elders (18:12). What was the occasion? (Ramban)
12. On what day of the week was the Torah given at Sinai? (Talmud Shabbat 86b-87a)
13. The Sages listed other deeds that are considered as if one committed murder. (Yet one is not liable for the death penalty in these cases.) What are they?

IV. Relationships

- a) Moshe – Aharon
- b) Moshe – Calev
- c) Moshe – Kehat
- d) Moshe – Itamar
- e) Moshe – Jared

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1. Moshe's father-in-law.
2. Yitro advised a delegation of authority in the judicial system. The people would submit their request and/or cases to lower courts, so that Moshe could deal with important and difficult matters.
3. 1. I am the Lord your God. 2. There can be no other gods. 3. Don't take God's Name in vain. 4. Shabbat. 5. Honor one's parents. 6. Do not murder. 7. Do not commit adultery. 8. Do not steal. 9. Do not bear false witness. 10. Do not desire another person's possessions.
4. Because they heard God's voice (and were too close to God).
5. Earth.
6. Yitro felt uneasy over what happened to the Egyptians.
7. The people heard all the Ten Commandments simultaneously from God, but could not comprehend them since they were uttered in a single instant. Hashem then repeated the first two commandments so that the people could understand. Moshe taught them the rest.
8. Hashem blessed the Shabbat by providing a double portion of Manna on Friday. He sanctified Shabbat by not giving Manna on Shabbat so that no-one was forced to work to gather food.
9. Kidnapping. (All offenses in the Ten Commandments are capital offenses.)
10. To prevent the rising of the pants leg, and thereby possibly showing any nakedness.
11. To celebrate Yitro's conversion to Judaism.
12. Shabbat.
13. Causing someone significant embarrassment; failing to provide food and safety for travelers; causing someone to lose his livelihood; refusing to rule when one's wisdom is needed.

Relationships:

- a) Brothers
- b) Brothers-in-law
- c) Uncle Kehat
- d) Uncle Moshe
- e) The same person