

**Yitro**  
(Moses' Father-in-Law)

EXODUS 18:1 - 20:23

*Yitro advises Moses. The Israelites come to Mount Sinai and experience the Revelation.*

**THE BLESSING**

THE GREAT BLESSING THAT COMES TO US this week of the portion of *Yitro* is the blessing of Divine Revelation. When, in our wanderings, we come to Sinai, God speaks to each of us directly. The mountain of revelation appears to us on our journey when we are ready to receive the awesome truth of our connection to the Source, to each other, and to all of Creation.

In that moment of Revelation, it becomes clear:

**Obviously, God is the true reality;  
bowing down to my own illusions would be silly.**

**Of course, I cannot hurt any other living thing  
without hurting myself; we are a part of each other.**

**Of course, there is no need to steal;  
who is there to steal from, but another member  
of the larger self of which I too am a part?**

**In that moment of revelation it will become clear that the  
desire that has created such turmoil within me is based on an  
illusion of lack; connected to all of Creation,  
I am rich beyond measure.**

**And certainly, my father and mother must be honored;  
they are my own flesh and blood and they gave me  
this precious life.**

**And yes, in that moment of revelation  
the beauty and sanctity of Shabbat becomes clear;  
how else can I remember this moment of freedom that  
revelation brings if not by stopping and receiving  
the miracle of Creation anew each week?**

THERE IS NO NEED for commandments at Sinai. The moment of revelation is a moment of clarity that informs how we live. In that moment of clarity all boundaries between self and other dissolve; all of our senses confirm the fact that consciousness can expand beyond culturally set boundaries and expectations. Living according to the commandments is a natural by-product of the Divine Revelation. Having experienced Revelation, it no longer makes sense to live any other way.

At Sinai it seems that we see the sound of thunder and hear the flash of lightning. Sound and light are revealed to us as energy. A whole new way of perceiving energy is awakened in us at that moment of revelation. With this new perception, even the thickest darkness cannot obscure the truth that we have been given.

God says, "I have carried you on eagle's wings and brought you back to Me." God, as mother eagle lifts us up out of our limited perceptions and shows us a perspective of the whole. When we take that view to heart, our lives are transformed.

## THE SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE

HOW DO WE PREPARE OURSELVES for the moment of revelation? How do we find our way to Sinai? The portion begins with a visit from Yitro, who is father-in-law to Moses and also his teacher of the mysteries of the wilderness.

Yitro comes to prepare Moses for Sinai. The old master of the wilderness watches how Moses lives, how he tries to do everything himself, and yet is never alone. Yitro says, "This is crazy. You're wearing yourself down with this life of yours. You sit alone and yet people are around you all the time. You need to change the way you do things."

Yitro instructs Moses in the laws of empowerment – how to see and call forth the qualities of leadership in others, and how to share in the joy and the burden of being human. If you sit alone with the burden of Truth, it will weigh you down. And if you are serving people from morning till night, you cannot become a proper vessel for Revelation.

I OFTEN SAY, “My first practice is sanity.” Sanity for me is the condition that allows for the full functioning of my body, feelings, thought and awareness, which then allows me to be present for revelation. Sanity requires just the right balance of solitude and service, spaciousness and stimulation.

If Yitro came to you in his wisdom and observed the course of your day; if he had a chance to watch how you balanced the requirements for wholeness, what might he say to *you*?

## GUIDANCE FOR PRACTICE

### REQUIREMENTS FOR SANITY ASSESSMENT PRACTICE

MAKE A COMMITMENT TO SANITY and wholeness by taking Yitro’s advice to heart. Be honest about your personal requirements for sanity. What must you do each day in order to stay whole and alert? Sometimes we only learn about these requirements when we do not fulfill them and find ourselves out-of-balance, unable to be present for the miracle around us.

THE PRACTICE FOR THIS WEEK OF YITRO is to do an honest accounting of:

- our minimum daily requirements,
- our minimum weekly requirements,
- our minimum monthly requirements,
- and our minimum yearly requirements,

for solitude, silence, wilderness, learning, music, dance, meditation, pleasure, beauty, nourishment, intimacy, rest, retreat time—whatever it is that is required in order to feel truly whole and fully alive.

AFTER CONTEMPLATING YOUR REQUIREMENTS, write them down and share them with a Spirit Buddy. Then take out your appointment book.

WHENEVER I TEACH A WORKSHOP on spiritual practice I say that this is the holiest book there is. It’s the one you consult every day and really live

Shefa Gold

by. When you make a specific commitment to a practice, write it in that holy book. Then do it, just as you would take responsibility for fulfilling any other commitments written in that Holy Appointment Book.

BY MAKING A COMMITMENT to your own wholeness you send a clear message to God that you are available, that holiness is your priority.