



## WHY WAS MOSES RELUCTANT TO DELEGATE?

Jethro visits Moses in the desert and suggests that he appoint justices to share his leadership burden. Could Moses not think of this idea himself? The approaches of Moses and Jethro—and G-d's surprising decision.

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TEACHER'S MANUAL



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## A. Establishing a Judicial System.....1

Jethro visits his son-in-law Moses and identifies a problem: Moses judges the entire Jewish nation by himself. He warns that this approach will lead to Moses' collapse from exhaustion and harm the people as well. Jethro suggests establishing a hierarchical judicial system, and Moses agrees to the idea. (Source 1)

The Rebbe asks:

Did Moses not realize on his own that the current system was unsustainable? Why did he wait for Jethro's advice instead of initiating the change himself?

On the other hand, if Moses believed the system was correct, why did Jethro worry it would fail?

A similar event occurred during the Giving of the Torah. After hearing the first two commandments directly from G-d, the Jews' souls left their bodies, and they feared continuing. They asked Moses to receive the message from G-d and relay it to them. Moses was deeply disappointed that they didn't want to hear directly from G-d, but G-d approved their request. (Source 2)

Here too, the question arises:

Could Moses have misjudged the spiritual level of the Jews, believing they were capable of hearing directly from G-d?

How can it be that G-d agreed with their idea to hear via Moses, while Moses himself was opposed?

## B. Moses "Elevates" the Jewish People.....8

The explanation is that Moses' presence elevated the Jewish people to his spiritual level, enabling them to hear G-d's voice directly. Similarly, Moses believed that his direct involvement in teaching Torah and judging disputes was essential. When the people learned Torah directly from Moses, they received it as someone who heard it "face to face" from G-d, and he elevated them to engage with it in the same manner. Likewise, when Moses judged them personally, he elevated them beyond their disputes and challenges.

However, the people expressed a desire to internalize the Torah using their own faculties and abilities, rather than relying on Moses' spiritual influence. G-d agreed with their approach.

C. Preparation for the Future.....12

Jethro observed the Jewish people from a different perspective, seeing them without Moses' constant presence. He believed they were far from Moses' level and could not rise to the level he expected of them.

G-d accepted Jethro's advice because it ensured that after entering the Land of Israel, when Moses would no longer be with them, the Jews would still be able to study Torah and resolve disputes through their own effort and understanding. Therefore, G-d commanded Moses to appoint additional judges.

# Introduction

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Imagine a leader who carries every responsibility on their shoulders—judge, teacher, guide, and spiritual mentor—all alone. Such was Moses at the beginning of his leadership in the wilderness. But then Jethro, an outsider to the system, recognized the problem: “You will surely wear yourself out!” Not only would Moses collapse, but the people would suffer too. Jethro proposed a clear solution—delegation of authority.

Did Moses truly not see this issue himself? Or was he operating with a deeper perspective, one that forged a unique connection between leader and people?

Let’s dive into the depths of leadership, learning, and the relationship between teacher and student, leader and nation—and discover lessons that apply to our own lives.

## השיעור לפרשת יתרו

משיחת ט"ו בשבט תשל"ה – לקוטי שיחות חלק ט"ז, יתרו ב  
בתרגום ללשון הקודש

# A. Establishing a Judicial System

In many institutions, organizations, and companies, there is an "advisory board" whose sole purpose is to provide counsel to the company's leadership on how to proceed wisely.

This phenomenon is humorously referred to in Judaism as "advice givers" (eitzah gebbers), and the Jewish people are blessed with plenty of them—everyone is happy to offer advice. However, there's a well-known saying the Rebbe often quoted: "You don't impose advice on someone." In other words, advice should not be unsolicited. If someone seeks your opinion, then by all means, share your perspective on the matter. But to take the initiative and offer unsolicited advice to another? If you want to help someone, by all means, take action without waiting for them to ask.

This week's Torah reading tells us about Jethro. He arrives in the wilderness, Moses greets him with great honor, and he immediately begins giving advice.

## Source 1 Exodus 18:5, 13-27

Student's  
pg. 1

Now Moses' father-in-law, Jethro, and his sons and wife came to Moses, to the desert where he was encamped, to the mountain of G-d.

It came about on the next day that Moses sat down to judge the people, and the people stood before Moses from the morning until the evening.

When Moses' father-in-law saw what he was doing to the people, he said, "What is this thing that you are doing to the people? Why do you sit by yourself, while all the people stand before you from morning till evening?"

Moses said to his father-in-law, "The people come to me to seek G-d. If any of them has a case, he comes to me, and I judge between a man and his neighbor, and I make known the statutes of G-d and His teachings."

וַיָּבֹאוּ יִתְרוֹ חֹתֵן מֹשֶׁה וּבָנָיו  
וְאִשְׁתּוֹ אֶל מֹשֶׁה — אֶל  
הַמִּדְבָּר אֲשֶׁר הוּא חֹנֶה שָׁם  
הַר הָאֱלֹקִים.

וַיְהִי מִמָּחָרָת, וַיֵּשֶׁב מֹשֶׁה  
לִשְׁפֹּט אֶת הָעָם, וַיַּעֲמֵד הָעָם  
עַל מֹשֶׁה מִן הַבֹּקֶר עַד הָעָרֶב.

וַיֵּרָא חֹתֵן מֹשֶׁה אֶת כָּל אֲשֶׁר  
הוּא עֹשֶׂה לָעָם, וַיֹּאמֶר,  
"מָה הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה, אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה  
עֹשֶׂה לָעָם, מִדּוּעַ אַתָּה יוֹשֵׁב  
לְבִדָּה, וְכָל הָעָם נֹצֵב עֲלֶיךָ מִן  
בֹּקֶר עַד עָרֶב?"

וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה לְחֹתֵנוֹ, "כִּי יָבֹא  
אֵלַי הָעָם לְדָרֹשׁ אֱלֹקִים. כִּי  
יְהִי לָהֶם דָּבָר בָּא אֵלַי,  
וְשִׁפְטֵתִי בֵּין אִישׁ וּבֵין רֵעֵהוּ,  
וְהוֹדַעְתִּי אֶת חֻקֵּי הָאֱלֹקִים  
וְאֶת תּוֹרֹתָיו."

Student's  
pg. 1

Moses' father-in-law said to him, "What you are doing is not good. You will surely wear yourself out, as well as these people who are with you. The matter is too heavy for you; you cannot do it alone. Now listen to me. I will advise you, and may G-d be with you. You should represent the people before G-d, and you shall bring the matters to G-d. You shall admonish them concerning the statutes and the teachings, and you shall make known to them the way they shall go and the deeds they should do.

Student's  
pg. 2

And you should choose out of the entire nation men of substance, G-d fearers, men of truth, who hate [litigated] monetary gain, and you shall appoint for the people of Israel leaders over thousands, leaders over hundreds, leaders over fifties, and leaders over tens. They shall judge the people at all times. Any major matter they should bring to you, and they themselves should judge every minor matter, thereby making it easier for you, and they shall bear the burden together with you. If you do this thing, and G-d commands you, you will be able to survive, and all of the people will also come upon their place in peace.

ויאמר חתן משה אליו, "לא טוב הדבר אשר אתה עשה. נבל תבל – גם אתה גם העם הזה אשר עמך, כי כבד ממך הדבר לא תוכל עשהו לבדך. עתה שמע בקלי, איעצה, ויהי אלקים עמך. הנה אתה לעם מול האלקים, והבאת אתה את הדברים אל האלקים. והזהרתה אתה את החקים ואת התורות, והודעת להם את הדרך ילכו בה ואת המעשה אשר יעשון.

ואתה תחזה מכל העם: אנשי חיל, יראי אלקים, אנשי אמת, שנאי בצע, ושמתי עליהם: שרי אלפים, שרי מאות, שרי חמשים ושרי עשרות. ושפטו את העם בכל עת, והיה כל הדבר הגדל יביאו אליך, וכל הדבר הקטן ישפטו הם – והקל מעליך ונשאו אתה. אם את הדבר הזה תעשה, וצוך אלקים ויכלת עמך, וגם כל העם הזה על מקמו יבא בשלום".

Rashi

Student's  
pg. 2

**May G-d be with you:** Go, consult with G-d.

**You should choose:** With the holy spirit that is upon you.

אייעצה, ויהי אלקים עמך: בעצה; אמר לו צא המלך בגבורה.

ואתה תחזה: ברוח הקדש שעליך.

Student's  
pg. 2

Moses listened to his father-in-law, and he did all that he said. Moses chose men of substance out of all Israel and appointed them as heads of the people, leaders of thousands, leaders of hundreds, leaders of fifties, and leaders of tens. They would judge the people at all times; the difficult case they would bring to Moses, but any minor case they themselves would judge.

Moses saw his father-in-law off, and he went away to his land.

וַיִּשְׁמַע מֹשֶׁה לְקוֹל חֹתָנוֹ,  
וַיַּעַשׂ כָּל אֲשֶׁר אָמַר. וַיִּבְחַר  
מֹשֶׁה אֲנָשִׁי חֵיל מִכָּל  
יִשְׂרָאֵל, וַיִּתֵּן אֹתָם רִאשִׁים  
עַל הָעָם: שָׂרֵי אֲלָפִים, שָׂרֵי  
מֵאוֹת, שָׂרֵי חֲמִשִּׁים וְשָׂרֵי  
עֶשְׂרֵת. וַשָּׁפְטוּ אֶת הָעָם  
כָּל יוֹם, אֶת הַדָּבָר הַקָּטָן  
יְבִיאוּן אֶל מֹשֶׁה, וְכָל הַדָּבָר  
הַקָּטָן יִשְׁפוטוּ הֵם.

וַיִּשְׁלַח מֹשֶׁה אֶת חֹתָנוֹ וַיֵּלֶךְ  
לֹא אֶל אֶרְצוֹ.

*Before we move forward, there's something very important to note here. In a regular society, when someone new arrives and starts giving advice the very next day, people don't look favorably upon it. They don't even take their words seriously. "You just got here, and you're already offering opinions?"*

*But Moses didn't dismiss Jethro's words outright. He didn't say to him, "What do you understand about Judaism?" On the contrary, he listened to his words and ultimately implemented his advice.*

*As the Rebbe Rashab says, "Cherish criticism, for it will put you in your true place." Hearing criticism is healthy and beneficial.*

## >> The Rebbe

### Moses Didn't Think of It?

Student's  
pg. 3

There is a well-known question: How can it be that Moses, the faithful shepherd of the Jewish people, wasn't concerned that his conduct would lead to him and the people wearing themselves out? Why didn't Moses think of the very simple solution of appointing judges to help judge the people? How can it be that specifically Jethro, who had come for a brief visit, was the one who understood the matter and introduced the change?

ידועה התמיהה בזה: איך יתכן שמשה רבינו, הרועה הנאמן של ישראל, לא חשש בעצמו שאופן הנהגתו יביא לכך ש"נבול גו' העם גו'", ולא עלתה בדעתו העצה הכי פשוטה למנות שופטים שיסייעו "לשפוט את העם"; ודוקא יתרו כהן מדין, שהגיע למקומם למשך זמן קצר, הוא שהבין זאת והביא את הדבר לידי פועל?

1. ראה עקידה, אברבנאל, ש"ך עה"ת ועוד כאן.



A popular Yiddish saying asserts "a short-term guest sees a long way." A local, by contrast, can fail to notice even an obvious problem.

But we cannot apply this to Moses, G-d forbid. Moses was chosen by G-d from the moment he was born to be the faithful shepherd of the Jewish people. By the time of this story he had already actively served as the people's leader for a while. It can't be that he didn't see the problem until Jethro pointed it out to him.

*Moses was the shepherd of Israel. He was the one who, at the age of twenty, risked his life to save a Jew. And here, we are speaking of the time after the Exodus from Egypt, the splitting of the Red Sea, and the sin of the golden calf, when Moses says, "And if not, erase me now from Your book" – meaning that he was ready to sacrifice his life for the people of Israel. He ascended Mount Sinai three times on their behalf.*

*This means he was the greatest lover of Israel that ever lived, and yet, he was comfortable with this leadership style where everyone stands and waits for his words from morning until evening. And it is specifically Jethro, the "priest of Midian," who had this 'sensitivity' to the children of Israel? In the words of the Rebbe, this is the "greatest wonder"!*

*In general, the whole story is hard to understand. Does one need to be a great genius to come up with the idea that there is a need to delegate authority? Every small factory foreman knows that if he wishes for growth and development, he must delegate authority to others. Did Moses never hear of this idea? Did he need to wait for Jethro to introduce him to it?*

It must be that from Moses's perspective it was possible—and even necessary—for him to handle all of the people's cases, from the major issues to the minor ones. This wouldn't adversely affect Moses or the people, "you will be able to survive, and all of the people will also come upon their place in peace." This was Moses's perspective, and from his end it was correct.

ישנו מאמר העולם ועמא דבר<sup>2</sup>: "אורח הבא לרגע רואה למרחק מיל", היינו שדוקא אדם הנמצא על אתר עלול שלא להבחין אפילו בדבר הפשוט.

אבל חס ושלום לומר בנוגע למשה רבינו, אשר נבחר על ידי הקב"ה עצמו מרגע הוולדו<sup>3</sup> להיות רועה ישראל, וכבר היה הרועה הנאמן של בני ישראל בפועל למשך זמן<sup>4</sup>, שלא ידע זאת עד שבא יתרו ועוררו על כך.

ומזה גופא מובן, שבעיני משה, היה הוא לבדו יכול (ויתירה מזו - הוא לבדו היה צריך) להתעסק במשפט העם<sup>5</sup>, בין ב"דבר הגדול" ובין ב"דבר הקטן", ובכל זאת לא היה הדבר מזיק לא לו ולא לבני ישראל, אלא - "ויכלת עמוד וגם כל העם הזה על מקומו יבא בשלום".

4. להעיר משמות ב, יא: ויגדל ג' ויצא אל אחיו ג'. וראה הדיעות בשמור"ר (שם, כז, ושי"ג) בן כמה שנים היה אז.  
5. ראה פרש"י דברים (א, ט. מספרי שם. וראה דבר"ר פ"א, י"א): אפשר שלא היה משה יכול לדון את ישראל כו'.

1. ראה עקידה, אברבנאל, ש"ך עה"ת ועוד כאן.  
2. ראה ברכות מה, א. סוגיית ב"ק (צב, א ושם).  
3. ראה דחז"ל עה"פ (שמות ג, א) ומשה היה רועה - שמור"ר פ"א, יח. שם, כא"כב. כד.

Student's  
pg. 4

Now we need to explain the other side: If Moses's method of judgment was in fact sustainable, why was there room for Jethro's concern that Moses's conduct would wear him and the people out, and prove too difficult to sustain?

אלא שעל פי זה עדיין אינו מובן לאיך גיסא:  
מאחר שגם על ידי הנהגת משה הנה "ויכלת  
עמוד וגם כל העם הזה על מקומו יבוא בשלום"  
- אם כן, מנין נתחדש ונוצר מקום לחששו של  
יתרו, שהנהגת משה עלולה להביא למצב של  
"נבול תבול גו", ו"ש"כבד ממך הדבר"?

Clearly, Moses himself had already thought of Jethro's idea, yet he believed that it was appropriate for him to manage the judgment of the people himself, and that it could work. So why did Jethro think otherwise, and why was his opinion accepted in the end?

## Precedent

Student's  
pg. 4

There is already similar-enough precedent for this concept:

והנה, ענין זה הוא בדומה למה שמצינו קודם  
לכן:

At the end of their forty 40 years of wandering in the desert, Moses recounts to the people of Israel, their history and the story of the giving of the Torah. He related how after they heard the first two commandments their souls expired, and G-d revived them. They then came to him and said: "What we have heard and seen is enough for us. We believe that the Torah was given by G-d, and from now on, speak to the people of G-d, and you will convey the message to us."

## Source 2 Deuteronomy 5:18-26

Student's  
pg. 4

G-d spoke these words to your entire assembly at the mountain out of the midst of the fire, the cloud, and the opaque darkness, with a great voice, which did not cease. He inscribed them on two stone tablets and gave them to me.

When you heard the voice from the midst of the darkness, and the mountain was burning with fire, you approached me, all the heads of your tribes and your elders.

You said, "Behold, G-d, our G-d, has shown us His glory and His greatness, and we heard His voice from the midst of the fire; we saw this day that G-d speaks with man, yet [man] remains alive.

את הדברים האלה דבר ה'  
אל כל קהלכם בהר מתוך  
האש הענן והערפל – קול  
גדול ולא יסף, ויכתבם על  
שני לוחות אבנים ויתנם אלי.

ויהי, כשמעכם את הקול  
מתוך החשך וההר בער  
באש, ותקרבון אלי כל ראשי  
שבטיכם וזקניכם.

ותאמרו, 'הן הראנו ה'  
אלקינו את כבודו ואת גדלו,  
ואת קלו שמענו מתוך האש,  
היום הזה ראינו כי ידבר  
אלקים את האדם וחי.

לפני מתן תורה. ואכ"מ).

6. פרשתנו שם, יח. מכילתא ופרש"י פרשתנו שם, יג (ומשם מוכח, שכן הוא גם למ"ד יתרו קודם מתן תורה בא – ראה בארוכה רא"ם ועוד שם. אבל בבכ"ה שם (ועוד) ס"ל שהיה

Student's  
pg. 4

So now, why should we die? For this great fire will consume us; if we continue to hear the voice of G-d, our G-d, anymore, we will die.

For who is there of all flesh, who heard the voice of the living G-d speaking from the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived?

You should approach, and hear all that G-d, our G-d, will say, and you should communicate to us all that G-d, our G-d, will speak to you, and we will hear and do.

ועתה למה נמות, כי תאכלנו  
האש הגדלה הזאת, אם  
יספים אנחנו לשמע את קול  
ה' אלקינו עוד ומתנו.

כי מי כל בשר אשר שמע  
קול אלקים חיים מדבר  
מתוך האש כמנו ויחי?

קרב אתה ושמע את כל אשר  
יאמר ה' אלהינו, ואת תדבר  
אלינו את כל אשר ידבר  
ה' אלהינו אליה, ושמענו  
ועשינו."

Moses told the Jewish people that he was very disappointed with their request. We would all pay a lot to be worthy of seeing and hearing G-d speak to us. Yet here, an entire nation is granted this privilege, and they reject it! He couldn't believe his ears...

However, G-d appreciated this request and received it in a positive light:

Student's  
pg. 5

G-d consented to your words when you spoke to me, and G-d said to me, "I have heard the words that these people have said to you; everything they said was good.

If only their hearts would be like this forever, to fear Me and to keep all My commandments, so that things will be good for them and with their descendants forever!"

Go say to them, 'Return to your tents.'

As for you, stand here with Me, and I will tell you all the commandments, the statutes, and the ordinances which you will teach them, so that they may do them in the land which I give them to possess.

"וישמע ה' את קול דבריכם  
בדברכם אלי, ויאמר ה'  
אלי, 'שמעתי את קול דברי  
העם הזה אשר דברו אליה,  
היטיבו כל אשר דברו. מי  
יתן והיה לבכם זה להם  
ליראה אתי ולשמור את כל  
מצותי כל הימים, למען ייטב  
להם ולבניהם לעלם.

לך אמר להם, 'שובו לכם  
לאהליכם', ואתה פה עמד  
עמדי, ואדברה אליך את כל  
המצוה והחקים והמשפטים  
אשר תלמדם ועשו בארץ  
אשר אנכי נתן להם  
לרשתה'."

## >> The Rebbe

Student's  
pg. 5

We see that Moses assessed that the Jewish people should have asked to study Torah "from G-d's mouth," and they would be capable of receiving it this way. Nevertheless, G-d accepted the argument of the Jewish people, saying, "Everything they said was good."

כלומר: על פי אומד דעתו של משה היו בני ישראל צריכים לבקש ללמוד תורה "מפי הגבורה", שכן הדבר היה ביכלתם, ומכל מקום קיבל הקב"ה את טענת בני ישראל - "היטיבו כל אשר דברו"<sup>8</sup> [כמו במקרה שלנו, שהסכים הקב"ה<sup>9</sup> לעצת יתרו, והדבר אף נעשה לפרשה בתורה].

## What Was Moses Thinking?

Student's  
pg. 5

We have the same question about this event. Moses's assessment of the Jewish people's spiritual status and their actual status were opposite extremes. Here too we must ask, how could it be that Moses, the faithful shepherd of the Jewish people, was mistaken about the status of his flock—and to such a degree?

ואף בנידון זה קשה: הלא החילוק בין מדריגת ישראל על פי מה ששיער משה (שביכלתם ללמוד מפי הגבורה) לדרגת מצבם בפועל (שהוצרכו ללמוד מפי משה), הוא מן הקצה אל הקצה - ואם כן, איך יתכן לומר שמשה רבינו, הרועה והמפרנס של כלל ישראל, לא כיון כביכול אל נכון, באומד מצבם של צאן מרעיתו?

בגבורה". וראה פרש"י דברים (שם, ט. שם, יב. מספרי שם): לא מעצמי אני אומר לכם אלא מפי הקב"ה.

8 שם, כה.  
9 ראה פרש"י (ממכילתא) פרשתנו (שם, יט. שם, כג) "המלך

# B. Moses "Elevates" the Jewish People

## >> The Rebbe

### Hearing Directly From G-d

Student's  
pg. 6

A possible explanation:

Moses did not make a mistake in his assessment of the Jewish people, G-d forbid. Rather, when Moses evaluated the Jewish people—as they stood in his presence—they were indeed on a higher level and were capable of studying and receiving the Torah directly from G-d. As they stood in Moses's presence the people were raised to his level, and just as Moses was capable of direct study from G-d so were they.

However, the Jewish people argued that their ability to hear the commandments directly from G-d was only because Moses was artificially raising them to this level. They wished to grasp Torah in their personal understanding, using their own faculties, on their own level. G-d responded "everything they said was good," because in this way they would receive and absorb the Torah in a more internalized manner.

אחד מהביאורים שאפשר לומר בזה:

אין פירוש הדבר שמשנה רבינו טעה חס ושלום באומד מצבם של בני ישראל, אלא הכוונה בזה היא - שבשעה שמשנה רבינו מביט על בני ישראל (בשעה שהם ניצבים יחד עם משה<sup>10</sup>), הרי הם באמת במעמד ומצב נעלה יותר, באופן שיש ביכולתם באותה שעה ללמוד ולקבל תורה מפי הגבורה, כיון שמשנה מרומם אותם ומקרבם למדריגתו<sup>11</sup> (ולפיכך, כשם שלמד הוא תורה מפי הגבורה, כן פועל הוא על בני ישראל שיוכלו אף הם ללמוד מפי הגבורה).

אלא שעל כך טענו בני ישראל: מה שביכולתם ללמוד תורה מפי הגבורה, הרי אין זה אלא מפני שמשנה מרומם אותם לדרגא כזו; ועל כן מבוקשם הוא - ברצונם "לתפוס" את התורה בכלי ההשגה שלהם, בכחותיהם הפרטיים<sup>12</sup> ובמעמד ומצב שבו עומדים הם מצד עצמם. ועל זה אמר הקב"ה "היטיבו כל אשר דברו", כי באופן זה תתקבל בהם התורה ותיקלט בפנימיותם<sup>13</sup>.

12. להעיר ממחז"ל רוצה אדם בקב שלו מטי קבין של חבריו (ב"מ לח, א).  
13. להעיר ממחז"ל לעולם ילמוד אדם תורה במקום שלבו חפץ (ע"ז יט, א).

10. להעיר ממחז"ל (ברכות ח, סע"א) לעולם ידור אדם במקום רבו שכל זמן כו'.  
11. ראה בנוגע לדורו של משה - ע"ד הקבלה: עץ חיים שער הכללים פי"א. שער הפסוקים ר"פ שמות. ועוד. וראה לקוטי תורה בהעלותך לא, ד.  
12. להעיר ממחז"ל (ברכות ח, סע"א) לעולם ידור אדם במקום רבו שכל זמן כו'.

## Studying Straight From Moses

Student's  
pg. 7

Something similar happened when the time came for Moses to teach the Jewish people Torah. After Moses had received it all directly from G-d on Mt. Sinai, he maintained that the Jewish people needed to hear it all directly from him.

Since Moses had learned Torah from G-d Himself, he maintained that he was the only one who could convey G-d's word with all the power and intensity of the Divine light. Moreover, as the person who said "I stand between G-d and you to tell you G-d's word," and the Divine presence spoke from within his throat, when the Jewish people heard Torah from Moses it was as if they were hearing it from G-d.

To use Chassidic terminology: Moses was on the level of "sight"—he received the Torah from G-d in a manner referred to as "sight." Receiving something directly from the person who saw it himself is far better than receiving it from someone who had only heard it. As the sages say, "hearing can't be compared to seeing." Moreover, Moses had the effect of raising the Jewish people up, so their own reception of the Torah from Moses would itself be on his level—"seeing."

וכמו כן, כאשר הגיע הזמן שבו הוצרך משה להתחיל ללמוד תורה עם בני ישראל - לאחר שקיבל תורה מפי הגבורה בהר סיני, הוא היה סבור שעל ישראל לשמוע את כל עניני התורה באופן ישיר ממנו עצמו<sup>14</sup>.

מכיון שמשה הוא שלמד תורה "מפי הגבורה" עצמו, הרי אין ביכולת אף אחד מלבדו למסור את דבר ה' עם כל האור וכו'<sup>15</sup>; ויתירה מזו: בהיותו מי שעליו נאמר "אנכי עומד בין ה' וביניכם" גו' להגיד לכם את דבר ה'<sup>16</sup>, ובפרט ששכינה מדברת מתוך גרונו של משה<sup>17</sup> - נמצא, שכאשר שומעים בני ישראל תורה מפי משה, הרי זה כאילו הם שומעים זאת "מפי הגבורה"<sup>18</sup>.

ובלשון החסידות: דרגת משה היא "ראיה"<sup>19</sup> - הוא קיבל את התורה מפי הגבורה באופן של ראיה<sup>20</sup>. ולכן, בנוסף לכך שאינה דומה קבלת דבר ממי שראהו בעצמו לקבלת דבר ממי שרק שמע אותו (כמאמר חז"ל<sup>21</sup> "אינה דומה ראיה לשמיעה") - הנה פעולת משה על ידי זה שרומם את ישראל היא, שגם אופן הקבלה שלהם (ממשה)<sup>22</sup> יהיה בדרגת ראיה<sup>23</sup>.

14. ראה ספרי ורש"י דברים (שם, יד) - בנוגע למינוי השרי אלפים כו' - "ממי נאה ללמוד תורה ממך או מתלמידך כו' ממך שנצטערת עליה כו'". ולהעיר מ"סדר תורה" (עירובין נד, ב. פרש"י תשא לד, לב) שגם "ביד כל העם (היה עכ"פ פעם) אחד" משה עצמו.  
15. ראה עירובין שם: כיון דמשה מפי הגבורה גמר מסתייעא מילתיה.  
16. ולהעיר מפרש"י במדבר (ג, א) "נעשו אלו התולדות שלו שלמדן מה שלמד מפי הגבורה". וראה בארוכה לקוטי שיחות חכ"ג ע' 11 ואילך, ש(גם) מטעם זה, הענין ד"כל המלמד כו' ילדו" הוא בעיקר גבי משה [שלכן כותב רש"י "נעשה אלו התולדות שלו", ולא רק (כמ"ש לפנ"ו) "כאילו ילדו"] - כי ענין הלידה (מציאות חדשה) שנעשה ע"י "מלמד בן חבירו תורה" הוא מצד "פי הגבורה" שבתורה, וזה היה בעיקר גבי משה "שלמד מפי הגבורה". וראה לקוטי שיחות חס"י ע' 180.

16. ואתחנן ה, ה.  
17. להעיר מזהר ח"ג רלב, א. שם ז, א. רסה, סע"א. שמו"ר פ"ג, טו. ויק"ר פ"ב, ג. מכילתא שמות יח, יט. ועוד.  
18. ראה רמב"ם הל' חגיגה פ"ג ה"ו בסופה.  
19. ראה לקוטי תורה ואתחנן ב, ד ואילך.  
20. להעיר ממחז"ל שבעת מתן תורה היו כל ישראל רואים את (הקולות) - הנשמע (פרש"י פרשתנו כ, טו - ממכילתא שם).  
21. להעיר ממחז"ל שבעת מתן תורה היו כל ישראל רואים את (הקולות) - הנשמע (פרש"י פרשתנו כ, טו - ממכילתא שם).  
22. ראה רמב"ם הל' יסודות ספ"ח: נבואת משה רבנו כו' שראית בעיניך כו'.  
23. ראה לקוטי תורה שם (ג, ד) דבחינת ראיה דמשה היא מצד זה שדרגתו יסוד אבא - דודר המדבר שייכים ליסוד אבא (ראה מקומות שנשמנו בהערה 19).



Since the Jewish people would receive the Torah from Moses on the level of "sight," it follows that only Moses would teach the Jewish people Torah, and judge them in all their affairs. In this approach it would still be possible that "you will be able to survive, and all of the people will also come upon their place in peace."

ומסיבה זו, כיון שבני ישראל מקבלים את השפעת התורה ממשה באופן של ראייה, רק משה עצמו יכול (וצריך) ללמוד תורה עם בני ישראל, ואף לשפוט אותם בעצמו בכל עניניהם, ואזי - "ויכלת עמוד<sup>24</sup> וגם כל העם הזה על מקומו יבוא בשלום".

Jethro, coming from outside the Jewish society, observed how a long line of people stretched before the judge's door. From his perspective, he argued that, by natural means, this system wouldn't work; this isn't how a country is run. There is a need for lower judges and higher judges, etc.

What Jethro didn't understand was that Moses was not just an ordinary judge. Moses was the "rabbi" of the Jewish people, and when the people were in his presence, most of their disputes were resolved on their own. Moses had the ability to elevate them to a higher level, and then they felt embarrassed about their petty arguments and conflicts. What Jethro didn't see or understand was that every Jew has a deep spiritual and emotional connection to Moses, something that no other judge could provide.

[There was once a Jew who immigrated to Israel from Soviet Russia, and had great difficulty adjusting to life in Israel. He was a doctor but struggled to find suitable work. After several years, he decided to travel to the Rebbe in New York, but he encountered difficulties in obtaining a visa. He sought help from several Chabad activists, but not all of them were eager to assist him.

He shared that before his trip, he had planned to tell the Rebbe everything he had gone through. He intended to tell the Rebbe how one person had refused to help him, and another had made things difficult. But when he entered the Rebbe's presence, the Rebbe greeted him with a wide smile, and at that moment, the man thought to himself, "Everyone is the Rebbe's spiritual child—should I speak ill of the Rebbe's children?" He immediately "forgot" everything he had planned to say for months and said nothing about all that had transpired.

When a Jew is in the presence of the Rebbe, the Rebbe elevates him to a higher level, and at that moment, he forgets about all the petty fights and arguments. It's like a person who marries off his daughter; he becomes so happy and elevated that he's willing to forgive and forget many of the arguments and anger he had with others.]

In the same way, when a tragedy happens, G-d forbid, suddenly everyone forgets their disputes and unites. They are elevated to a higher level, and the small things no longer matter. This is the feeling a Jew experiences in synagogue on Yom Kippur. Suddenly, he feels ashamed of the argument he had with his friend, and he goes to him to make peace. At that moment, a Jew is on

לקוטי תורה ואתחנן שם, ג. ד"ה וידבר אליקים (הב') תרצ"ט בתחלתו וסופו).

24. ע"ד זה שילמד משיח תורה את כל העם כולו אף שיהיו "ריבוא רבבות אנשים וכו'" כי יהיה לימוד באופן של ראייה (לקוטי תורה צו יז, איב (וראה שם: ועד"ז ביקש משה כו. וראה

*a much higher and elevated level.*

*Therefore, Moses wanted to be the one to judge the Jewish people. Being in his presence—within his domain—meant that most of their issues would be resolved even before they had the chance to speak.*

*Similarly, when it comes to the study of Torah, when the Jews learn directly from the "rabbi"—Moses, who received the Torah directly from G-d—then their Torah study would be on a much higher level, as if seeing it directly with their own eyes.*



## C. Preparation for the Future

### >> The Rebbe

#### What Was Jethro Thinking?

Student's  
pg. 9

Jethro came from a different country, as a convert. He therefore saw the Jewish people as they were inherently—not on the level Moses was artificially raising them to. He therefore argued that judging the people couldn't be done by Moses alone.

*Jethro's words did not relate to Moses' ability, but rather to the ability of the Jewish people to hear and accept the judgments of the Torah directly from Moses.*

*Jethro argued that when people come to stand for judgment regarding their personal matters, they are at a spiritual level far removed from Moses' level. It is beyond their capacity to receive and learn the Torah's judgments at Moses' lofty level.*

*However, Moses did not fear this. He knew that even if the litigants themselves stood at a lower level, when they stood before him, he had the power to elevate and raise them to his level, so that they could learn and accept the Torah from his mouth, without the need for additional judges!*

Student's  
pg. 9

G-d agreed to Jethro's suggestion because it was also necessary to prepare the Jewish people for the era after they would enter the Land of Israel, after Moses would pass away. At that time they would no longer be able to study directly from Moses and he wouldn't be able to elevate them. The people would then need to receive the Torah—which is G-d's eternal word—through the Jewish leaders in every generation.

יתרו הגיע מארצו, היה גר וכו', ועל כן הוא ראה את ישראל בהיותם (לא במצב זה, שמשה מרומם אותם לדרגתו, אלא) במצבם מצד עצמם; ולכן טען שענין משפטם של ישראל אינו יכול להיות ע"י משה עצמו.

אך בכל זאת הסכים הקב"ה לעצת יתרו, מפני שהיה צורך להבטיח את מצבם של בני ישראל לאחר כניסתם לארץ ישראל<sup>25</sup>, כאשר "הנך שוכב גו' וקם העם הזה גו'<sup>26</sup>" - שאף שלא ילמדו תורה מפי משה ולא יתרוממו על-ידו, הנה גם באותה שעה תגיע אליהם התורה - שהיא דבר ה' בכל הזמנים - על ידי ראשי אלפי ישראל שבדור.

25. שאז מתחיל הסדר דארץ נושבת - "שש שנים תזרע שדך וגו'" (ר"פ בהר).  
26. וילך לא, טז.

## Moses's Original Plan

Student's  
pg. 9

This explains why Moses himself didn't come up with this idea. Firstly, it would be somewhat strange for Moses to change his conduct in order to safeguard circumstances that could arise after his passing. Moreover, at that time it didn't even enter Moses's mind that there could be other circumstances, because if not for the transgression that occurred later, Moses was supposed to lead the Jewish people into Israel himself. Had this happened their redemption would have been complete, without any subsequent exile, and the Jewish people would continue studying on the level of "sight."

Student's  
pg. 10

וזהו גם הטעם לכך שמשה לא סבר שעליו לעשות זאת בעצמו, שהרי בנוסף לכך שענין זה - שרועה ישראל ישנה סדר הנהגתו כדי להבטיח את המצב שלאחרי הסתלקותו - דבר חידוש הוא; הנה באותה שעה עדיין לא עלה על הדעת מצב אחר, שהרי לולא החטא שלאחרי זה משה היה צריך להכניס את בני ישראל לארץ ישראל, ואזי היתה זו גאולה שלימה שאין אחריה גלות<sup>27</sup>, אשר בה לימודם של ישראל הוא בדרגת ראיה<sup>28</sup>.

משיחת ט"ו בשבט תשל"ה  
לקוטי שיחות חלק ט"ז, יתרו ב  
בתרגום ללשון הקודש

## Key Points:

Student's  
pg. 10

- Jethro sees the people of Israel standing in a long line to be judged by Moses, and advises Moses to establish a hierarchical judicial system, lest he wear himself put.
- The question arises: Did Moses not realize that the system was unsustainable? Why did he not initiate the change himself?
- A similar story occurred during the Giving of the Torah: The people heard the first two commandments directly from G-d, and their souls left them. As a result, they asked that G-d speak to Moses, and Moses would convey the words to them. Moses was disappointed that they did not want to hear the rest directly from G-d, but G-d accepted their request positively. How could Moses himself not correctly assess the level of the people of Israel?
- **Moses' Perspective:** When Moses was personally present with the people, he elevated them to his level, and then they could listen directly to G-d's voice. Therefore, he expected them to want to hear directly from G-d.

כי אז היה בהם ענין הראיה [ומכיון שלא פעל זה, אמר (לדור שנכנסו לארץ) "ועתה ישראל שמע גי", בחינת שמיעה. וי"ל שמטעם זה אמר אז משנה תורה שהיא התלבשות התורה בבחינת השגת משה כ", כדלקמן הערה 41].

27. ראה שער התשובה לאדמו"ר האמצעי ח"ב (חינוך) בתחלתו. אור התורה ואתחנן ע' סה. ע' צג. וש"נ.

28. ראה לקוטי תורה ואתחנן שם (ובארוכה אור התורה שם מאמרי ד"ה ואתחנן), דוד שמשה רצה להכניס בני" לארץ הוא,

**Student's**  
pg. 10

*Additionally, when the time came to teach them the Torah, he wanted to do so personally, in order to elevate them to the high level of learning that he received directly from G-d – on the level of vision/sight. And when it came time to judge them, he wanted to do so personally, thus automatically elevating them above trivialities and disputes.*

**• Jethro's Perspective:** *Jethro, on the other hand, argued that when the people of Israel were not in Moses' presence, they were far from Moses' level and would not be able to rise to this higher level.*

**Student's**  
pg. 11

**• G-d's Decision:** *G-d accepted Jethro's advice because it was necessary to ensure that, even after entering the land, when Moses would no longer be there to elevate them with his presence, the people of Israel could continue to learn the Torah from the great ones of the generation on their own.*

## **Takeaway:**

**Student's**  
pg. 11

*Moses saw his role not just as a technical leadership position, but as an opportunity to elevate the people to a higher spiritual level. Each of us is a leader, whether in our family, among our friends, or within our community. We should learn from Moses and create an environment around us that lifts everyone up, encourages them to reach further, aim higher, and realize their inherent potential.*