

# WITNESSING HIS MAJESTY

A Fulcrum To Eternity

Original Painting By:  
YORAM RAANAN

## YadAvNow.com Weekly Audio Series: Yisro

Rabbi Yosef Kalatsky

**Caught Between the Egyptian Army & The Sea**

CLICK TO VIEW!



**He Chose us as Worthy & So Privy to See G-d's Majesty**

CLICK TO VIEW!



**Yisro Understood "In Life there are No Guarantees"**

CLICK TO VIEW!



**Hourly Video: Yisro the Truth Seeker**

CLICK TO VIEW!



**How Could Moshe's Wife & Children Have Been Denied  
The Experience of Leaving Egypt?**

CLICK TO VIEW!



**How Yisro Processed & Rejoiced**

CLICK TO VIEW!





## The Pre-Qualification To Be Worthy

[CLICK TO VIEW!](#)



1. The Jews came to Sinai on the 1st day of the 3rd month.
2. Torah: "On THIS day" rather than "THAT" day; When studying Torah, experience it as new and vibrant.
3. Wherever this principle is alluded to was post Sinai; here it is prior to Sinai.
4. If this is so (the Torah has not yet been given), what does one experience as if it is "new"?
5. Torah: "They travelled from Refidim & came to Sinai desert."
6. Midrash: Torah juxtaposes Refidim to Sinai – At Sinai they were in a repentant state, so too when leaving Refidim.
7. Gemara: R' Chiyah chose 5 students to teach – each one, one of the Books of Moses.
8. He planted flax to make nets in order to trap deer and use their hides to make parchment.
9. R' Chiyah then recorded the written law on the parchment he made.
10. Why didn't R' Chiyah just purchase the parchment from the market?
11. When studying or teaching Torah it must be done in the purest context from its inception.
12. Even prior to the giving of the Torah on the first of the month, one had to anticipate the special moment and so experience the study of Torah.
13. One must be worthy at the location; and one must be repentant.

## Emerging Empowered From the Abyss

[CLICK TO VIEW!](#)



1. Yisro heard many things resulting in his leaving Midian to become part of the Jewish People.
2. Midrash: The greatest of all the miracles was that G-d took the Jews out of Egypt.
3. The Jews left Egypt after the tenth plague; Egypt was decimated and reduced to rubble.
4. The Jews were driven out because the Egyptians believed they were all dying.
5. This is similar to a prison's walls that are destroyed so prisoners are able to escape.
6. Gemara: Pharaoh's 3 advisors: Bilaam, Yisro & Job.
7. When the bondage was suggested by Bilaam, Yisro fled in protest.
8. Yisro understood the spiritual impurities of Egypt.
9. The Jews became pagans there, falling to the 49th level of spiritual impurity.
10. To purge and detoxify from this extreme impurity is an impossibility.
11. Gemara: Even if a devout pagan repents, G-d will cause him to die; ultimately he will return to pagan ways.
12. G-d wants him to die in a repentant state.
13. When Yisro heard the Jews were taken out of Egypt as a spiritual people to receive the Torah, he was astounded.
14. This miracle was truly greater than the others.

## A Critical Expose Yields a Sophisticated Judicial System

[CLICK TO VIEW!](#)



1. One of Yisro's seven names: "Yeser" – To Add.
2. Yisro suggested a hierarchy within the infrastructure of the judicial system.
3. Yisro observed Moshe adjudicating great numbers of claims and disputes from morning until evening.
4. Yisro had two critical points regarding this manner of adjudication.
5. It is not befitting the Jewish People for Moshe to sit & the prospective defendants stand & wait their turn.
6. The enormous physical burden will cause Moshe to wither.
7. He suggested a hierarchy of courts; only the most difficult questions will be brought to Moshe.
8. 36 days prior to Moshe's passing he recounts the events and behavior of the past 40 years.
9. He said to the Jews: "When the judicial system was put into place you embraced it wholeheartedly."
10. Would it not have been better to learn from one who studied Torah in a physically deprived state?
11. Moshe spent forty days and nights studying Torah without bread or water.
12. What Yisro saw as a belittlement of their honor was needed to elevate and expose them to an unequalled dimension of holiness.
13. G-d endorsed Yisro's plan because ultimately Moshe would have withered.



# The Power of **PRAYER**

A New Series by  
**Rabbi Yosef Kalatsky**

**Catch Up Below On the Most Recent Classes**

**The Power of Prayer - Part 13**

[CLICK TO VIEW!](#)



**The Power of Prayer - Part 14**

[CLICK TO VIEW!](#)



**The Power of Prayer - Part 15**

[CLICK TO VIEW!](#)



**The Power of Prayer - Part 16**

[CLICK TO VIEW!](#)





## Weekly Torah Commentary Series: Yisro



# WITNESSING HIS MAJESTY

A Fulcrum To Eternity

### Why Did the World Remain Silent?

*Torah:* “Yisro, the Priest of Midian, the father-in-law of Moshe, heard everything that G-d said to Moshe and to Israel...”

*Rashi citing Chazal:* “What did Yisro hear that caused him to abandon his status and glory to follow the Jewish people into the desert? The splitting of the Sea and the battle against the Amalekites.” Upon hearing about these miracles, Yisro was impressed to the degree that he understood that his status and glory in Midian had no value. Although the entire world was aware of the splitting of the Sea, as Chazal tell us that every body of water (including the water in a vessel) split at the time of the splitting of the Sea, only Yisro was compelled to join the Jewish people in the desert. Why was Yisro impacted in this manner while the rest of the world remained unaffected?

*Gemara in Tractate Sanhedrin:* Pharaoh had three advisors in his court – Yisro, Bilaam, and Eyov (Job). Initially when Bilaam had suggested enslaving the

Jewish people and instituting the bondage, Yisro fled to Midian as a sign of protest, and Eyov had remained silent. Yisro could not stand by and witness this miscarriage of justice being perpetrated against an innocent people, especially after all that Yosef had done for Egypt as its Viceroy.

*Chazal:* Because Eyov remained silent he was destined to his travails and suffering. In the merit of Yisro’s sensitivity to the Jewish people, G-d endowed him with a special level of clarity that allowed him to fully internalize the events of the splitting of the Sea and the battle against the Amalekites that followed.

*Gemara in Tractate Kiddushin:* Repentance is only possible through Divine Assistance. In order for one to be able to introspect and understand the wrong of his ways sufficiently, G-d must endow him with special clarity. Because Yisro had appreciated the miscarriage of justice, he fled Egypt. Thus, G-d gifted him with special clarity that allowed him to become part of the Jewish people.



The verse refers to *Yisro* as “the Priest of *Midian*” and “the father-in-law of *Moshe*.” As the Priest of *Midian*, *Yisro* was proficient in every pagan belief. Through his own quest for truth he ultimately rejected paganism as *Chazal* tell us, “He worshiped every deity and rejected them all.” *Yisro* had the good fortune of being exposed to *Moshe* for many years as his father-in-law. At the incident of the burning bush, *Moshe* experienced prophecy. Before returning to Egypt, *Moshe* asked for *Yisro*’s permission to leave. *Yisro* blessed him and allowed him to go forth as the Redeemer of Israel.

As a result of rejecting idolatry and being exposed to the influences of *Moshe*, his son-in-law, *Yisro* had the capacity to process and internalize the events of the splitting of the Sea and the battle against the Amalekites that followed. The world at large, being of a pagan orientation, had no relevance to decipher these awesome spiritual events. Therefore, *Yisro* upon hearing what had transpired, abandoned all that he created in his life for the ultimate, while the world remained silent.

## **The Spiritual Capacity of the Jewish People After Witnessing the Ten Plagues**

*Torah*: “In the third month from the Exodus of the Children of Israel from Egypt, on this day they arrived at the desert of Sinai (to receive the *Torah*).”

*Midrash*: “Why was the *Torah* not given to the Jewish people immediately after being redeemed from Egypt? G-d had said, ‘I will take this people out to serve G-d on this mountain...’ Meaning, when the Jewish people were redeemed they would worship G-d/receive the *Torah* immediately. *Reb Yehudah Bar Shalom* answers with an analogy. It is similar to a prince who is recovering from an illness. His father had said, ‘Let him fully recover before he resumes his regular *Torah* studies.’ After the Jewish people had left Egypt, they were blemished (spiritually). G-d had said, ‘It will take time for them to heal from their illness. Then they will receive the *Torah*.’”

*Torah*: After the splitting of the Sea and seeing the remains of the Egyptians on the seashore, “And they believed in G-d and *Moshe* his servant.” If the *Torah* attests to the fact that they had reached this level of belief after the splitting of the Sea it is inferred that prior to this moment, although they had witnessed the ten plagues and the splitting of the Sea they were not yet at this level of belief. They needed to witness and be exposed to many more miracles.

Even after witnessing the closing of the Sea and the singing of G-d’s praises, the Jewish people complained and quarreled with *Moshe* at *Marah*. They were given the Manna, which was in its essence the food of angels in order to be spiritualized in advance of Sinai. As the *Midrash* states, “The *Torah* was given to those who had partaken of the Manna.”

During the three months that followed their redemption from Egypt, the Jewish people were exposed continuously to miracles and spiritual experiences in order to purge them from the impurity that they had absorbed in Egypt. It was only after they had sufficiently overcome their spiritual impediments that they had the capacity to stand at Sinai and declare unequivocally, “*Naaseh V’Nishma* – we will do and we will listen.”

*Rambam* in *Laws of Torah Study*: One can only teach *Torah* to one who exhibits proper behavior. If one is living a life that is contrary to the ways of *Torah*, he must first be redirected to the proper path. He should be advised upon the straight path and mentored until his commitment to the way of *Torah* becomes solidified and permanent. It is only after this that you may bring him to the study hall and commence to teach him *Torah*.

*Chazal*: If one teaches *Torah* to an inappropriate student it is similar to throwing a stone at *Marculos*.

*Gemara* in Tractate *Avodah Zorah*: The pagan ritual of worshiping *Marculos* entailed placing a horizontal stone upon a vertical stone and then throwing stones at the structure. One would think that by stoning this idol, one is actually disgracing it; however, because it is its method of worship, it is considered bona fide idol worship. Thus, one would be subject to the death penalty. One may think that regardless of one’s behavior or beliefs it would be beneficial to teach this individual *Torah*; however *Chazal* teach us differently.

*Chazal* equate teaching *Torah* to an inappropriate student to the worshiping of *Marculos*, which is the antithesis of G-d’s Will. The only time one is permitted to teach *Torah* to another Jew is to first ensure that the person is on the proper path and is committed to living a life consistent with G-d’s Will.

Similarly, the Jewish people being spiritually blemished/limited from their 210-year exposure to the impurities of Egypt were not prepared to receive the *Torah* at the time



of their redemption. They needed to be brought back to the proper path by experiencing numerous miracles after leaving Egypt. Every day that the Jewish people were out of Egypt, they ascended to another level of spiritual purity. Since they had fallen to the 49th level of spiritual impurity in Egypt, (which is the lowest level before spiritual extinction), the Jewish people needed to extricate themselves from this impure state over a 49-day period. On the 50th day, they had advanced to a level of purity that made them worthy of to receive the *Torah* at Sinai.

## **Appreciating Something Within A Proper Context**

*Torah:* After *Yisro* had gone into the desert to become part of the Jewish people, *Moshe* had shared with him in detail, every aspect of what had transpired at the time of the exodus – the destruction of the Egyptian army and how the Jewish people were miraculously saved.

*Torah:* “*Yisro* rejoiced over all the good that Hashem had done for Israel, that He had rescued them from the land of Egypt...” It would seem that *Yisro*’s rejoicing over the good that G-d had provided for the Jewish people was the proper response to the understanding of what had taken place. However, *Sforno* explains that the *Torah* is communicating something that is slightly critical of *Yisro*’s response.

*Sforno:* “When *Yisro* had heard how the Egyptians were destroyed, he did not rejoice over their destruction. He did not behave as one who is zealous over the honor that is afforded to his Maker as a result of the destruction of His enemies.” Upon hearing of the destruction of the Egyptians, who defied G-d, *Yisro* should have rejoiced that this insolent and evil entity had been vanquished. However, he did not rejoice over this fact, but rather, over the good that was afforded to the Jewish people. A person who lives only for G-d’s Glory would have rejoiced over the destruction of evil rather than focusing on the beneficiary.

Every day we recite in the *Amidah* (in the blessing against the heretics): “And for the slanderers let there be no hope; and may all wickedness perish in an instant; and may all Your enemies be cut down speedily...” We supplicate G-d that His enemies should be destroyed and that evil should come to an end. One would think that since requests of the *Amidah* are of personal nature, they should focus on the destruction

of our enemies because of our own issues. Although it is true that the enemies of the Jewish people are also the enemies of G-d, our primary focus is G-d’s Glory. We pray that G-d’s enemies should be destroyed so that evil should not exist.

We say in the *Avinu Malkeinu*: “Our Father, Our King, avenge before our eyes the spilled blood of Your servants.” We are supplicating G-d that we want to witness the destruction of our enemies. It is not because the nature of the Jew is to be (G-d forbid) bloodthirsty and seeking revenge, but rather we pray that those who have victimized the Jewish people throughout history should be eliminated only because by doing so, we be witness to the glorification of G-d.

*Torah:* G-d said, “My Throne is not be complete until the Amalekites are obliterated from under the heavens.” The reason the Amalekites need to be destroyed is not because they are the enemies of the Jewish people and have persecuted them throughout history, but rather, G-d Himself says that His Throne cannot be complete without their annihilation. Their existence undermines G-d’s Glory. Therefore, they must be destroyed.

On *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur* we recite in the *Amidah* that G-d should instill fear upon all mankind. We also speak about the various classifications of devoutly righteous people who will rejoice, each one of them to his own level of piety, regarding G-d’s revelation in existence and the vanquishing evil from the world. *Yisro* focused on the periphery/beneficiary rather than the essence of the accomplishment of the exodus of the Jewish people from Egypt. Thus, he fell short of his potential.

## **Circumcision, A Confirmation of the Essence of the Jew**

King David in Psalms: “The dictates of G-d are straight (*yesharim*), they bring joy to the heart.” Because the *Torah* in its essence is straight (*yashar*), it brings joy to the heart of the Jew whose essence is *yashar* (straight).

King Solomon in Ecclesiastes: “G-d had made man straight (*adam yashar*), but he sought out many intrigues.” This is referring to the creation of *Adam*, who as the first human being, was created as a person with a straight/rational perspective. It was only because mankind sought out intrigues that they



became convoluted and warped. Had *Adam* not eaten of the Tree of Knowledge, he would have not forfeited his characteristic of “*yashar*.”

*Gemara* citing a verse from *Yechezkel*: “‘You (the Jewish people) are called *adam* (man).’ It is inferred from the verse that the nations of the world are not called *adam*.” Meaning, the Jewish people are the only ones who possess the innate characteristic of *Adam*, before the sin. The words of *Yechezkel*, the prophet infer that the nations of the world do not possess the innate characteristic of *Adam*, which was “*yashar*.”

Because the Jewish people possessed the characteristic of “*yashar*” they embraced the *Torah* at Sinai without hesitation, unlike the nations of the world who rejected it, each for their own reasons. When the nations were offered the *Torah*, each had questioned G-d by saying, “What is written in it?” Meaning, they wanted to know if the *Torah* would conform to their lifestyle and value system.

However, when the Jewish people were offered the *Torah*, they accepted it unequivocally by declaring “*Naaseh v’nishmah* – we will do and we will listen” because it touched upon their essence of “*yashar*.” When a Jew engages in *Torah* it brings joy to his heart because he has a commonality with the *Torah* itself, which is “*yashar*.” However, if the gentile were to study *Torah*, it would not affect him in this manner.

*Midrash* citing Proverbs: “‘G-d had hidden away for the *yesharim toshiya* (something of a powerful nature), it will perfect those who walk with completeness...’ *Reb Levy* said in the name of *Reb Shmuel Bar Nachman*, ‘G-d had waited 980 generations in order to give the *mitzvah* of circumcision to *Avraham*, our Patriarch.’ *Reb Yonason* said in the name of *Reb Yosi HaGlili*, ‘G-d waited 974 generations in order to give the *Torah* to the generation of the desert.’ Why did He choose to give the *Torah* to them? It is because they were *yesharim*. It is because of this that the Jewish people received the *Torah* three months after leaving Egypt.”

The Jewish people were only worthy to receive the *Torah* because they had a commonality with the *Torah* itself, which was “*yashar*.” G-d created the world to be the setting for the fulfillment of the *Torah*. *Adam*, was created as *yashar*, for the sake of embracing the *Torah*, which was *yashar*. Because he had failed, he no longer had relevance to the *Torah*. It was only after

many generations, when the generation of the desert had attained the status of “*yashar*” were they worthy of being given the *Torah*.

*Brisker Rav*: “If *Chazal* tell us that *Avraham*, our Patriarch observed the *Torah* in its entirety before it was given at Sinai, why did he not perform the *mitzvah* of circumcision before G-d commanded him to do so?” One who is not circumcised is classified as an “*aareil*”, which means he is blocked/shut down to spiritually. This is because the foreskin is considered to be a covering and an impediment to one’s spirituality. Thus, when it is removed, the Jew is able to address his spiritual potential.

*Mishna* in Tractate *Niddarim*: If a gentile was circumcised he would still retain the status of “*aareil*” because their hearts are covered/blocked. It is because the gentile innately does not possess the characteristic of “*yashar*” that he is spiritually denied access to the *Torah*. Therefore, the act of circumcision for a gentile has no value. It does not impact upon his essence. *Avraham* waited until G-d commanded him to circumcise himself because the circumcision would have had no value to him unless he advanced and developed himself to attain the characteristic of “*yashar*.”

*Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh* based on the *Zohar*: The reason G-d gave the *mitzvah* of circumcision to the Jewish people was to reinstate them to the level of *Adam* before he had sinned. *Adam* was created as a circumcised being, without a foreskin. It was only after he had eaten from the Tree of Knowledge that he developed the covering on his male organ. It was an expression of the impurity that he allowed to enter into his being. This caused him to become limited and convoluted. He had thus forfeited his characteristic of “*yashar*.” Therefore, only the Jew, by being circumcised, is able to have relevance to the *Torah*, which is “*yashar*” because his essence is “*yashar*.”

## Elucidating G-d’s Communication (from *Beshalach*)

*Torah* regarding the Manna: “*Moshe* said (to the Jewish people), ‘Eat it today, for today is the *Shabbos* for Hashem; today you shall not find it in the field. Six days shall you gather it, but the seventh day is a *Shabbos*, on it there will be none.’” *Moshe* informed the Jewish people that they were to gather in the Manna from the



fields every day except for the *Shabbos* because there would be no Manna to be found. He did not tell them that it was forbidden to gather it on the *Shabbos*, but rather, it would be a futile effort to do so.

*Torah*: “It happened on the seventh day that some of the people went out to gather, and they did not find. Hashem said to *Moshe*, ‘How long will you refuse to observe My commandments and My teachings?...’ G-d had rebuked *Moshe* and the entire Jewish people for not adhering to the commandment of not gathering the Manna on the *Shabbos*.

*Chazal*: Only two Jews, *Dasan* and *Aviram*, had violated the word of *Moshe*, but G-d rebuked the entire Jewish people and *Moshe* for what had taken place. *Dasan* and *Aviram* were *Moshe*’s nemesis from the very beginning.

*Torah*: When *Moshe* left the palace of Pharaoh to see how his brothers were faring, he came upon an Egyptian who was beating a Jew to death. *Moshe* immediately responded by killing the Egyptian and thus sparing the Jew. *Dasan* and *Aviram* witnessed what *Moshe* had done and informed on him to Pharaoh. Consequently, *Moshe* was forced to flee to *Midian*. After *Moshe* had taken the Jewish people out of Egypt, *Dasan* and *Aviram* took every opportunity to undermine *Moshe*’s authority. Nevertheless, G-d held *Moshe* and the entire Jewish people culpable for the failing of *Dasan* and *Aviram*. Why was this so?

Had *Dasan* and *Aviram* understood that if they were to transgress the Word of G-d they would face dire consequences from *Moshe* and the Jewish people, they would have not gone out. However, because *Dasan* and *Aviram* believed that *Moshe* and the Jewish people would not react to their public breach of the law, they chose to defy *Moshe*. Therefore, their transgression is a direct outgrowth of the passivity of *Moshe* and the Jewish people.

*Sforno*: Had *Moshe* initially expressed the prohibition of gathering the Manna on *Shabbos* more clearly, *Dasan* and *Aviram* would not have transgressed. *Moshe* had only said that there would be no Manna on the *Shabbos* in the fields. *Dasan* and *Aviram* did not believe *Moshe* and chose to go out into the field. Because *Moshe* should have been more succinct in his communication, G-d held him culpable.

*Mishna in Ethics of our Fathers*: “*Avtalyon* said: Sages, be careful with your words... and the Heavenly Name is consequently profaned.” When a *Torah* Sage expresses himself he should ensure that his communication is understood as he intends it to be. If his words are not correctly understood, it would cause that the law will not be implemented correctly. People will believe that their behavior is in conformance with *Torah* law when in fact it is not. This will ultimately bring about serious negative consequences, thus causing a desecration of G-d’s Name.

*Gemara*: The basis for *Tzadok* and *Baitus* to reject the Oral Law and accept only the authenticity of the Written Law was because they had misunderstood one of the teachings of their rebbe.

*Mishna in Ethics of our Fathers*: “...Be not like servants who serve their master for the sake of receiving a reward, but be like servants who serve their master not upon the condition of receiving a reward...” *Tzadok* and *Baitus* understood this to mean that when one serves G-d, he is not deserving of reward. This misunderstanding caused them to reject the tradition (Oral Law) that was communicated by the Rabbis, thus bringing about a desecration of G-d’s Name that spanned many generations. G-d’s rebuke to *Moshe* in fact established a standard of clarity for a Sage who is responsible to communicate the Word of G-d. The *Torah* Sage must be sensitive to all aspects of his expression– that there should be no misunderstanding in what is meant to be communicated.

