

## Exodus 14-18 Podcast Notes

### Exodus 14: The Crossing of the Sea

1. The Lord commands Israel to shift course, “turn and encamp before Pi-hahiroth” – Ex. 14.14.
  - a. Pi-hahiroth – Ex. 14.2. This may be a Hebraized form of the Egyptian Pr-Hthr, “the house of the God Hathor.” Some scholars have found a connection between Hathor and Mount Sinai.<sup>1</sup>
  - b. Migdol is a Semitic word meaning “watchtower” or “fortress.”
  - c. Baal-zephon – Ex. 14.2. This is the name of the holy mountain of Baal in Ugaritic texts.
2. The Egyptians give chase – Ex. 14.5-9.
  - a. He “went out with high hand” – Ex. 14.8, (בְּיַד רְמָה) literally “with upraised hand,” a metaphor probably drawn from the depiction of Ancient Near Eastern gods who brandished weapons with upraised hands.
3. The Israelite reaction and Moses’ response – Ex. 14.10-14.
  - a. Ex. 14.12 is not contained in the repudiations of Moses in Ex. 5.21 or 6.9. This statement is nowhere found in the Hebrew Bible, but the tradition of the rebellious nature of the Israelites is preserved in Ps. 106.6-7.<sup>2</sup>
  - b. Moses’ response is to “fear not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord!” – Ex. 14.13.
4. God responds to the crisis – Ex. 14.15-20.
  - a. “Lift up thy rod!” – Ex. 14.16.
  - b. “Divide the sea!” – Ex. 14.16.
  - c. “the children of Israel shall go on dry ground” – Ex. 14.16.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Scott Roberts and John Ward make the identification of Serabit el Khadim as a possible location for Mount Sinai. They write, “Atop this mountain (Serabit el Khadim) lay the ruins of the **Temple Sanctuary of Hathor, the cow goddess of Egypt, bringer of joy and motherly love**. Sir Flinders Petrie was a British Egyptologist and pioneer of systematic methodology in archaeology and the preservation of historical artifacts. He was also the first chair of Egyptology in Great Britain, and personally excavated and catalogued many of the most important archaeological sites in Egypt. It was **his contention that Serabit el Khadim was the Holy Mountain of God mentioned throughout the biblical Exodus account. But he encountered resistance** when he suggested that Moses went there to visit the priests who lived there rather than encounter the presence of God. **So Serabit el Khadim was scratched off the list as a candidate** for the biblical Mt. Sinai by many late-19th- and early-20th-century archaeologists and historians. The long escarpment atop Serabit el Khadim, (was) where the processional route would lead to the outer gate of the Temple of Hathor seen in the distance... Though John and I bring differing views of who Moses was and when the events of the Exodus took place, **we both agree that lonely, desolate, remote mountaintop was the place where Moses climbed to visit the priests of Hathor, and ritually cleansed himself as he had done here at other times in his former life as a Prince of Egypt**. It was here on this mountaintop that he carved the small stele of the tablets of the Law and carried them back down to the waiting horde of Hebrews camped in the basin and wadis below, who had built a representation of the god who had just a week earlier delivered them from the hands of the Egyptian soldiers—**Hathor, the Egyptian god of joy, feminine love, and motherhood**. Here in this mountainous region of the Sinai desert wilderness, surrounded by copper and turquoise mines, she was also known as Patron God of Miners. See: Scott Alan Roberts and John Richard Ward, *The Exodus Reality: Unearthing the Real History of Moses, Identifying the pharaohs, and examining the exodus from Egypt*, New Page Books, 2014, 179/234, electronic version.

<sup>2</sup> Sarna, p. 72.

<sup>3</sup> וַיֵּבְאוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּתוֹךְ הַיָּם בְּיַבֵּשׁ – “And the children of Israel will go in the midst of the sea upon **dry ground**.” The noun dry ground, *yabāšā* יַבֵּשׂה, is the same Hebrew term that is used in the flood and creation stories of the

- d. “I will strengthen the hearts of the Egyptians!” – Ex. 14.17.<sup>4</sup>
  - e. The angel of God went before the camp of Israel – Ex. 14.19.
  - f. The cloud was placed between the Egyptians and Israel – Ex. 14.20.
5. The parting of the Sea – Ex. 14.21-31.
    - a. Israel went through the midst of the sea – Ex. 14.22.
    - b. The Lord overthrew the Egyptians – Ex. 14.27.
    - c. It was a night crossing – Ex. 14.24, 27. Compare to John 6.15-21. Jesus is inviting us to the “New Exodus,” or the crossing over from the world into a way of life with him.
    - d. The Lord saved Israel – Ex. 14.30.

### Exodus 15.1-22: The Song of the Sea

1. The celebration of God’s triumph over the Egyptians – Ex. 15.1-10.
2. Who is like God among the gods? – Ex. 15.11-13.
3. The surrounding nations are amazed at God’s power – Ex. 15.14-16.
4. A glorious future awaits Israel – Ex. 15.17-18.
5. The Song of Miriam the prophetess – Ex. 15.20-21.<sup>5</sup>
  - a. In the podcast, the contention is made that Miriam is the leader of the Song of the Sea. For more information regarding Miriam, see [“Miriam as Portrayed in the Hebrew Bible.”](#)

### Exodus 15.23-17.16: The Crisis in the Wilderness

1. Crisis #1: A lack of adequate drinking water – Ex. Ex. 15.22b-25a.
  - a. The waters of Marah – Ex. 15.23. Marah means “bitter.” Desert springs are frequently bitter.
  - b. The Lord showed him a tree, which made the waters sweet – Ex. 15.25.<sup>6</sup>
2. Crisis #2: A lack of food to sustain the tribes – Ex. 16.1-36.<sup>7</sup>

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Priestly author (Gen. 1.9,10; 8.14). The term used for “dry ground” that the Yahwist (J) is using in this Exodus narrative is *ḥārābā* חָרְבָה, the same word that is used in the J account of the flood narrative. See Exodus 14.12, and Genesis 7.22. See also: Friedman, *Sources*, p. 143.

<sup>4</sup> הִגְדִּי מִחֲזֶק אֶת־לֵב מִצְרַיִם – this statement: “I will strengthen the heart of the Egyptians” helps connect this sequence to P.

<sup>5</sup> A Midrash states that Miriam and the women recite the entire song. These verses affirm the custom, chronicled in Judges 11.34 and 1 Samuel 11.34, of women going forth with music and dance to hail the returning victorious hero, although in the present instance, it is God and not man who is the victor... the other women with whom she shares this designation are **Deborah, Huldah, and Noadiah**. Rabbinic tradition adds another three to this list: **Hannah, Abigail, and Esther**, for a total of **seven prophetesses active** in biblical times. Sarna, p. 82-83.

<sup>6</sup> וַיִּצְעַק אֶל־יְהוָה וַיִּזְרְהוּ יְהוָה עָץ – And he cried to Yahweh, and he (Yahweh) showed him a **tree** (‘ēš, a “tree,” or “wood,” or a “staff.”) I see a connection between the “tree” or “staff” and the word for counsel in Hebrew, ‘ēšā - עֵצָה, a word that can be seen as connected to the temple, trees, making plans, and the Divine Council. See Psalm 33.10-11. Nahum Sarna suggests that the water, which was bitter, passed through the porous wood, which filtered out enough of the impurities to make the water drinkable. [The Mekhilta](#) turns the entire incident into a metaphor. The living, life-sustaining water symbolizes the Torah; to be deprived of its spiritual sustenance for three days is life-threatening. (Hence, the Torah is read publicly each Sabbath, Monday, and Thursday.) The parable is reinforced by the Hebrew verb *va-yorehu*, “He showed him,” which comes from the same stem as Torah, and by ‘ets, “a tree log,” which is a symbol of Torah described in Proverbs 3.18 as “a tree of life to those who grasp her.” The verse succeeding this Exodus passage further enhances the homily. N. Sarna, p. 84.

<sup>7</sup> Exodus 16 is P with the exception of Exodus 16.4-5, which consist of J. Friedman, p. *Sources*, 147.

- a. The second month, 15<sup>th</sup> day – Ex. 16.1. It is now roughly six weeks since the beginning of their journey.
- b. “Would to God we had died!” – Ex. 16.3. We see similar arguments in [1 Ne. 16.34-37](#).<sup>8</sup>
- c. Jehovah’s response, “I will rain bread from heaven for you!” – Ex. 16.4-5.
- d. Quail cover the camp – Ex. 16.13.<sup>9</sup>
  - i. Orson Hyde related a similar experience for some of those who left Nauvoo during the Nauvoo War.<sup>10</sup>
- e. Manna arrives – Ex. 16.14-36.
  - i. “A small round thing” – Ex. 16.14.<sup>11</sup>
  - ii. “What is it?” – Ex. 16.15. מַן הוּא, man hu is a folk explanation for the term by which the Israelites knew and described the substance.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>8</sup> “We have wandered much in the wilderness, and we have suffered much affliction, hunger, thirst, and fatigue; and after all these sufferings we must perish in the wilderness with hunger. And thus they did murmur against my father, and also against me; and they were desirous to return again to Jerusalem. And Laman said unto Lemuel and also unto the sons of Ishmael: Behold, let us slay our father, and also our brother Nephi, who has taken it upon him to be our ruler and our teacher, who are his elder brethren” ([1 Nephi 16.35-37](#)).

<sup>9</sup> The tender meat of quail is regarded as a great delicacy. It requires no oil for cooking and is speedily prepared over a hot flame. Sarna, p. 88.

<sup>10</sup> I recollect when we were forced away from Nauvoo, at the point of the bayonet, and when we crossed the river to the Iowa side there were hundreds of our people camped along the shore, and what had they to eat, or to make themselves comfortable with, in the scorching sun and burning with fevers? Nothing. We wanted meat and other comforts, but we had not the means to procure them, and the Lord in mercy sent clouds of quails right into camp. They came into the tents, flew into the wagons, rested on the wagon wheels, ox yokes and wagon tongues, and our little children could catch them, and there was an abundant supply of meat for the time being... It was (from) the mercy and generosity of kind Providence. Orson Hyde, *Journal of Discourses*, 17:7.

<sup>11</sup> מַן הוּא – Literal trans: “A small flake-like small as a covering upon the earth.” Sarna offers the following commentary on this description: To the description “fine and flaky, as fine as frost” must be added the specification in Numbers 11.7 that the manna was like coriander seed, of the color of [bdellium](#), and it tasted like rich cream when prepared. **No natural phenomenon in the Sinai region entirely matches these details.** The closest is a **white honeylike substance excreted from the tamarisk bush and called manna to this day by the Bedouin who collect it and eat it.** This sap, rich in carbohydrates, is sucked by insects, which excrete the surplus onto the twigs. These form tiny globules that crystalize and fall to the ground. However, no naturalistic explanation can do justice to the manna tradition as it is presented in biblical literature. Here the substance possesses a numinous quality. Its bestowal is distinguished by certain wondrous features. However much one gathered, it amounted to only one omer; on Fridays the amount doubled; it did not fall on the Sabbath; any surplus beyond the allotted amount became rancid on weekdays but not on the Sabbath. What's more, although the manna collected by Bedouins in the Sinai is seasonal and of limited quantity, the biblical manna nourished the entire Israelite population throughout the forty years of the wilderness wanderings. Sarna, p. 89.

<sup>12</sup> Sarna, p. 89. In the JPS translation of Exodus 16:15, the phrase *man hu* is understood to be a question: ‘What is it?’ Many commentators affirm that the Israelites who said man instead of mah must not have been speaking typical Hebrew at that time... According to E.A. Wallis Budge in his *Egyptian Hieroglyphic Dictionary*, one of the words for the interrogative “what” in ancient Egyptian was in fact *ma*, just as in Hebrew. **Modern scholars accept that the word man derives from a foreign source**, though from ancient Semitic rather than Egyptian. S.D. Luzzatto in his commentary on Exodus explains that the word is **derived from the Syrian word mana, meaning “what.”** (Shemuel David Luzzatto, *S. D. Luzzatto's Commentary to the Pentateuch* (Jerusalem: Horev, 1993) p. 297.) Umberto Cassuto gives a similar explanation, and writes that in **ancient Canaanite languages the word for “what” is man.** (Umberto Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Exodus* (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1987) p. 135) In Ugaritic it is *mn* and in the Canaanite of the El Amarna letters it is *mannu*. The Israelites, then, were, according to N. Sarna, using an “ancient dialectic variant.”

- iii. Manna is described as coriander seed in size and white in color – Ex. 16.31. The text of Numbers 11.7-9 tells us that it was ground and made into cakes, which were baked.
  - iv. Strict rules were associated with the collection of manna – Ex. 16.16-30.<sup>13</sup>
  - v. The children of Israel did eat manna forty years – Ex. 16.35.
  - vi. At the conclusion of the journey, the manna ceases – Joshua 5.12.
  - vii. The manna invites us to consider the words of Jesus Christ, the “Bread of Life” that came from heaven – John 6.
- 3. Crisis #3: A further lack of water – Ex. 17.1-7.<sup>14</sup>
    - a. The Moving Rock in the Wilderness, as carried in Jewish tradition.<sup>15</sup>
    - b. These texts invite “midrash” or commentary. Joseph Smith gives us permission to think about these texts and find interpretations that work.
  - 4. Crisis #4: An attack from the Amalekite armies – Ex. 17.8-16.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Emphasizing obedience, Elder F. Enzio Busche stated, “Perhaps we may have permitted small bad habits or attitudes to enter into our lives; or perhaps we have even lost to some degree an understanding of the importance of keeping a covenant with exactness. If so, we are in a dangerous state. We must become aware of it. We cannot afford to ignore the situation.” *Ensign*, May 1989, 72.

<sup>14</sup> Friedman notes that the first account of the lack of water (Ex. 15.22b-25a) comes from J, and the second account of the lack of water (Ex. 17.1-7) comes from E. See Richard E. Friedman, *The Bible with Sources Revealed*, p. 146-149.

<sup>15</sup> The *Midrash* on Numbers (Midrash Numbers *Bemidbar Rabbah* 1.2) records: “How was the well constructed? It was **rock-shaped like a kind of bee-hive, and wherever they journeyed it rolled along and came with them.** When the standards [under which the tribes journeyed] halted and the tabernacle was set up, that same rock would come and settle down in the court of the Tent of Meeting and the princes would come and stand upon it and say, Rise up, O well, and it would rise.”

Other variants of this legend describe a fragment of rock fifteen feet high that followed the people and gushed out water. The Jewish legend developed because of Numbers 21.17 which tells us that when Israel came to Beer (“well”), there Moses gathered the people to receive the water, “Then Israel sang this song, ‘Spring up, O well! Sing to it!’” Jewish legend relates that water came **from the same rock** that Moses had struck in Exodus 17, because it had followed the people to Beer (Num. 21.16). The Talmud (Babylonian Talmud, *Ta’anith 9a; Shabbath 35a*. Cf. Mishnah, *Aboth*, 5.6; Midrash Numbers, 19.26) cites rabbis from the 2nd century as knowing the moving well legend, and it would seem that Paul was quite familiar with these stories as well!

Peter Enns, author of *The Bible Tells Me So*, shares an experience when he first learned of the “movable rock” narrative in the Pentateuch. Enns writes: “One day in class, my professor James Kugel was lecturing on the creative ways that Second Temple Jewish interpreters handled episodes like “water from a rock.” The curious detail in the Old Testament is that the incident happened twice: once at the *beginning* of the wilderness period (Exodus 17) and again toward the *end* of the 40-year period (Numbers 20). **This curious fact led some Jewish interpreters to conclude that the “two” rocks were actually one and the same, hence, one rock accompanied the Israelites on their 40-year journey.**” He goes on to explain how Jewish interpreters explained this tradition, and that the apostle Paul also continued this idea when he wrote “Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock **that followed them**: and that Rock was Christ.” (1 Corinthians 10:1-4, emphasis added) See: Mike Day, *The Moving Rock in the Wilderness: Exodus 17 & Numbers 20*, 12.20.2017.

<sup>16</sup> This account of the Amalekite attack is from the northern tradition of E. See: Friedman, p. 149. It is also noteworthy that Joshua, a hero of the northern tribes, is mentioned eleven times in E but never in J. This is

- a. When Moses held his hands up, Israel prevailed – Ex. 17.11.
- b. Moses' hands were "heavy" – Ex. 17.12. Aaron and Hur hold up Moses' hands to assure the victory.
- c. "The Lord will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven" – Ex. 17.15-16.<sup>17</sup>

### Exodus 18: Jethro's Advice for how to run the Law Courts<sup>18</sup>

1. Jethro arrives – Ex. 18.1-12.
  - a. Jethro, a descendant of Abraham through Keturah.<sup>19</sup>
  - b. Moses' two sons are mentioned: Gershom<sup>20</sup> and Eliezer<sup>21</sup> – Ex. 18.3-4.
  - c. Jethro came with Moses' wife – Ex. 18.5.<sup>22</sup>

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consistent with the idea that the E text is connected to the northern tribes and the kingdom of Israel and J is concerned with the southern kingdom of Judah.

<sup>17</sup> Who were the Amalekites? N. Sarna offers the following: A somewhat more expansive account of this incident is given in Deuteronomy 25.17-19, which reports that the Amalekites made a surprise rear attack on the famished and exhausted Israelites not long after the escape from Egypt. They ruthlessly cut down the stragglers—the elderly, the weak, and the infirm. Israel was forced to fight its first defensive war for survival. Who were they? **The name itself is non-Semitic; its origin is obscure.** We first encounter Amalek as the thirteenth descendant of Esau-Edom in the lists in Genesis 36. **He was born of Timna, a concubine of Esau's first-born son, Eliphaz.** She is said to have been a "Horite," which means that she belonged to the people who were indigenous to Mount Seir. The Edomites displaced them and largely wiped them out. Translating the genealogical shorthand of Genesis 36 into terms of historical reality, **we may reconstruct the following situation:** The tribe of Amalek had been a late and subordinate adherent to the twelve-tribe Edomite confederation. Forced out of its habitat, it pursued a nomadic existence in the Negeb and Sinai Peninsula. The Amalekites interpreted the sudden appearance of the Israelites in this region as a menacing encroachment upon their territory and as a threat to their control of the oases and trading routes. The Amalekites thereupon savagely attacked the Israelites. Sarna, p. 95.

<sup>18</sup> As early as the second century CE, it was recognized that this chapter is not in its proper sequence, and that these things took place after the revelation at Sinai. Jethro brings burnt offerings (v. 20), so an altar at this time must exist, only it was mentioned at Rephidim, not Sinai, and was "purely commemorative," not "functional," therefore it is concluded that Jethro must've arrived after the theophany at Sinai. See: Nahum Sarna, [The JPS Torah Commentary: Exodus](#), The Jewish Publication Society, 1991, p. p. 97.

<sup>19</sup> The Hebrew Bible calls Jethro 'the priest of Midian,' but modern revelation through Joseph Smith throws important light upon the priesthood of Jethro. According to the Doctrine and Covenants, section 84, Moses received the 'Holy Priesthood ... under the hand of his father-in-law, Jethro.' (D&C 84:6.) It is reasonable to believe that Jethro held the office of a high priest and may have presided over a branch of the church in Midian. (See JST, Ex. 18:1.)

The Midianites were descendants of Abraham, through the children of Keturah, wife of Abraham, therefore the Midianites, who were neighbors to the Israelites in Palestine, were related to the Israelites, and were Hebrews. As descendants of Abraham, they were entitled through their faithfulness to his blessings (see Abraham 2.9-11), and in the days of Moses and preceding them, in Midian the Priesthood was found. Joseph Fielding Smith, *Church History and Modern Revelation*, 4 vols. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1946-1949, 2: 103.

<sup>20</sup> gay-resh-ome' גַּרְשָׁם can mean "foreigner," or "exile."

<sup>21</sup> Eliezer אֱלִיעֶזֶר means "God is help."

<sup>22</sup> [The Jewish Women's Archive](#) has a great collection of the Jewish traditions associated with Zipporah, as well as other women in the Hebrew Bible. They offer the following:

- d. Jethro “rejoiced for all the goodness which the Lord had done to Israel” – Ex. 18.9.<sup>23</sup>
  - e. “I know that the Lord is greater than all the gods!” – Ex. 18.11.<sup>24</sup>
  - f. Jethro, Aaron, and “all the elders of Israel” ate bread before God – Ex. 18.12.<sup>25</sup>
2. The organization of the Law Courts – Ex. 18.13-27.

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As with other major Biblical figures, the venue of the first encounter between Moses and Zipporah, his future wife, was beside a well (Ex. 2:15–17). In the midrashic expansion, when the daughters of Jethro returned home, they told their father that a stranger had saved them from the shepherds, and he asked them: “Why did you leave the man? Ask him in to break bread” (Ex. 2:20). With the words “to break bread” (implying marriage), Jethro hinted that Moses might marry one of them. Upon hearing her father, Zipporah immediately ran after Moses like a bird (*ke-zippor*, i.e., with alacrity, or eagerness) (Ex. *Rabbah* 1:32). According to this midrash, Zipporah wanted to marry Moses, acted accordingly, and achieved her goal.

A second tradition has Jethro deciding upon Zipporah’s marriage to Moses after he brought Moses into his home and came to know his qualities. Jethro was one of the magicians of Egypt, and when he saw Pharaoh’s staff with its magical symbols, he desired it and took it. He planted the staff in the garden of his house, and no man could approach it. When Jethro invited Moses into his house, the latter entered the garden and saw the staff. He read the symbols on it, extended his hand, and took it. When Jethro saw what Moses had done, he exclaimed: “This one will redeem Israel from Egypt,” and therefore gave him his daughter Zipporah in marriage (*Pirkei de-Rabbi Eliezer* [ed. Higger], chap. 39).

In a third tradition, the initiative to marry Zipporah came from Moses himself. When he was with Jethro, he saw how fine were her actions. He went to Jethro and asked: “Give me your daughter Zipporah in marriage.” Jethro replied: “Do you want to do to me what your ancestor Jacob did? When Laban gave him his daughters, Jacob deceived him and fled far away. If you are asking me to give you Zipporah, swear to me that you will not take her far away from me; I will give her to you only upon this condition.” Moses immediately swore to him, as it is said: “Moses consented [*va-yoel*] to stay with the man” (Ex. 2:21), understanding the word “*va-yoel*” as a customary wording of a vow. Because of this pledge, Moses had to return to Midian after he had been sent to Egypt, as it is said (Ex. 4:18): “Moses went back to his father-in-law Jether [*yeter*],” from which the Rabbis learn that Moses went to Egypt, but returned to Midian to be released from (*le-hatir*) his vow (Ex. *Rabbah* 2:33; Mann, *Fragments from the Geniza*, fragment 12, p. 95). See: [Zipporah: Midrash and Aggadah, Jewish Women’s Archive](#), accessed 3.8.22.

“This is the last time Zipporah is mentioned... No one seems to take any notice of Zipporah or her sons after these three are mentioned in Ex. 18.6... Most historians have been men, so that men have come to have an exaggerated opinion of their own importance in history; and human mores in the past have been dominated by a church whose officers were wholly male and largely celibate... Nothing is known about Zipporah, but **the Talmud says with creative remembrance that Moses turned first of all to the women when he needed help in making the people obey the law**; for he said, ‘Adam would never have sinned, if God had only given Eve the directions instead of Adam,’ thus showing how much he had learned from Zipporah of the wisdom and tact of women.” *The Interpreter’s Bible*, ed. by G. A. Buttrick et al. New York, Abingdon Press, 1952, vol. 1, p. 693.

<sup>23</sup> Elder Neal A. Maxwell said, “Here in mortality, we already know moments when, “because of the great goodness of God,” there is a “gushing out of many tears” (3 Ne. 4:33). Our joy is brim (see Alma 26:11). Yet this is but a foretaste of the ultimate homecoming, when our cups will not only be brim, but will run over without ceasing!” *Ensign*, May 1988, 9.

<sup>24</sup> This is a classic example of monolatry: the worship of one god without the denial of the existence of other gods. See: [Monolatry in the Old Testament](#).

<sup>25</sup> This ceremonial meal may have possessed a judicial function. In the ancient Near East, treaties and pacts were often ratified by the involved parties participating in a solemn meal. This is also seen in the narrative of Abimelech and Isaac, as seen in Genesis 26.30, and between Jacob and Laban in Genesis 31.54. I see this as also being connected to the meal in Exodus 24.5,11 as well as the [D&C 27](#) and [Revelation 19.6-9](#), where it discusses “The Marriage Supper of the Lamb”: Μακάριοι οἱ εἰς τὸ δεῖπνον τοῦ γάμου τοῦ ἀρνίου κεκλημένοι = “In the state of the gods/blessed are they who are called into the marriage **supper/feast of the Lamb!**”

- a. Moses “sat to judge... from morning until evening” – Ex. 18.13.
- b. “Thou will surely wear away” – Ex. 18.18.<sup>26</sup>
- c. “Thou shalt provide... of all the people able men” – Ex. 18.21.<sup>27</sup>
- d. The Lord trained individuals in the Spirit World in “so short a time” – [D&C 138.28-29](#).  
The Lord works to build His kingdom in such a way as to train his leaders.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Elder Maxwell said, “We generally see the need for Moses to apply the delegation dimension, and we note how both we and those we serve—including family—can “wear away.” Moses was hearing every case! Worse still, however, this pattern kept him from his real duties, which were to “teach them ordinances and laws, and ... shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do” (Ex. 18:20). The original Twelve were counseled that they were not to “serve tables” (see Acts 6:1–4). **Actually, serving tables is easy. It is visible, measurable, and do-able—compared to opening up the nations of the world to missionary work or to keeping wolves out of the flock.** But if the Twelve were drawn away from their scriptural and constitutional duties, the whole Church would suffer. **Being drawn away can happen to all of us, almost without our knowing it.** Elder Neal A. Maxwell, “Wisdom and Order,” *Ensign*, June 1994, 41–42.

<sup>27</sup> In the time of Pharaoh Haremhab (1333-1306 BCE), a decree was issued in Egypt that reformed the Egyptian judiciary. He writes that he sought out “persons of integrity, good in character,” and placed them in the towns of Egypt. He gave them the following charge: “Do not enter into close relations with other people, do not accept a gift from another.” We see a parallel to Exodus 18.21 in another account as well. In the time of King Jehoshaphat (2 Chronicles 19.5-8) in 873-849 BCE, he appointed judges. These people were “in all the fortified towns of Judah, in each and every town.” They were charged to “Consider what you are doing, for you judge not on behalf of man, but on the behalf of the Lord, and He is with you when you pass judgment... act with care, for there is no injustice or favoritism or bribe taking with the Lord our God.” See: Sarna, p. 100. Joseph Smith set up a government whereby the same kind of things could happen. John Taylor relates, “Some years ago, in Nauvoo, a gentleman in my hearing, a member of the Legislature, asked Joseph Smith how it was that he was enabled to govern so many people, and to preserve such perfect order; remarking at the same time that it was impossible for them to do it anywhere else. Mr. Smith remarked that it was very easy to do that. “How?” responded the gentleman; “to us it is very difficult.” Joseph Smith replied, “**I teach them correct principles, and they govern themselves.**” John Taylor, “The Organization of the Church,” *Millennial Star*, Nov. 15, 1851, p. 339.

<sup>28</sup> There aren't many places in which a leader can use a person who is struggling for worthiness. Unfortunately, it seems that those few situations in which we could use them—to offer prayers, to make brief responses, to bear testimony—are almost invariably reserved for the active: for the stake presidency, for the high council, for the bishopric, for the patriarch, for the auxiliary leaders. Indeed, we sometimes go to great lengths to import speakers and participants—to the loss of our hungry ones. At a ward sacrament meeting I attended recently a sister had been invited to sing whose husband was not active in the Church. He was, however, at the meeting. The bishop wanted a very special program for this occasion. His first announcement was: “Brother X, my first counselor, will give the opening prayer.” His second counselor gave the closing prayer. How unfortunate, I thought. The three men in the bishopric struggle with such concern over the spiritually sick, then take the very medicine that would make those people well—activity, participation—and consume it themselves in front of the needy! Boyd K. Packer, *Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled*, 16. See also 3 Nephi 26.16, as Jesus allows the children to teach.