



Beit Rabban Parashah Page

Jewish education, reimaged.

Parashat Yitro	פרשת יתרו
Exodus 18:1-20:23	שמות יח:א-כג

In addition to the Ten Commandments, Parashat Yitro gives us one of the very few glimpses we get into the home life of Moshe (Ex. 18:5):

Yitro, Moshe's father-in-law, came with Moshe's sons and his wife to Moshe—into the wilderness where he was encamped at the mountain of God.

וַיָּבֹא יְתָרוּ חֶתֶן מֹשֶׁה, וּבְנָיו
וְאֲשֶׁר-הָיָה חֶתֶן מֹשֶׁה: אֶל-הַמִּדְבָּר,
אֲשֶׁר-הָיָה שָׁם--כְּרֵת הָאֱלֹהִים.

While he is there, Yitro observes that Moshe is working so hard every day to teach Bnei Yisrael and help them solve their disagreements. He suggests ways that Moshe might share some of his work with others because Yitro realizes that Moshe will not be able to keep up this pace of work.

Moshe was working so hard that he couldn't see any other way, and it took someone else to notice the situation and show him how things could improve. Have you ever been working very hard to learn or do something, and someone from outside made a suggestion that made it easier? What do you think is the difference between helping someone by doing something for them and helping someone by showing them how they can do it for themselves?

Why might Yitro have brought Moshe's family to him just at the time when his work seemed most demanding? What do you think the Torah is trying to teach us about the combination of family and work? Why might we read about these events in the same parashah that we read the very important Ten Commandments?