

## Rabbi's Column - Torah Tidbit

This week we are on Parshat Yitro. There are any number of interesting items happening this week, whether it is the advice Moses received from his father-in-law and actually put into practice, or the actual synesthetic nature of the revelation at Sinai. I think that whenever we get to one of the times where we focus on the Ten Spoken Items, it makes sense to dwell on them for a bit.

God is a living example of how phone conversations should work. The person who is speaking should announce themselves before launching into their message, just as God began, "'Tis I, YHVH, your God - the One Who brought you all out of Mitzrayim." Even today, not everybody you might call has caller ID, and even if they do, they might not have named the numbers from which they received phone calls. So it is not only polite to tell the person you are calling who you are, it is Godly.

The message God gives in this conversation is fairly brief. [a Midrashic paraphrase of my own invention] "You can't imagine me, so don't try. Really, there is nothing else like me anywhere, and I will feel insulted if you limit me to your imagination's capacity. So make sure you really know what you are doing if you bring me into the picture. I know you, remember? By the way, you know that process you have been using for collecting Manna? There's a name for it, and I want you to always behave accordingly - and not just when collecting Manna. I helped your parents create you, so do me a favor and respect them for their part in the process. You'll thank me for it later. By the way, I like boundaries for almost everyone else but me. You are all my creations, after all. So, do not maliciously destroy a fellow created person, or a personal tie that I have helped institute, or a connection between one of my created beings and a thing they have created or purchased. The pain my created one's suffer will wind up on your head. If you do not feel the pain, then you are already rather blighted, which might be punishment enough. Don't think that making your friend suffer in a more vicarious way will let you avoid the karmic feedback. I follow the court cases, too. In short, try to live your own life and do not spend it being concerned by how good everyone else has it. I could share their pain with you, and I would have, but you told Moses to be your go-between, and I kind of like him too much to give him the pain some of you seem to really want."

In the same way, when we are just conversing with people, like God conversed with Moses, feel free to take a long time. When the situation is informational, then brevity is also Godly.

Purim is coming! Do you have your costume figured out yet?

I'm crowdsourcing the answer to a question here, and the answers might make a difference in some future events. In which public location other than the Synagogue would you want this Rabbi to be available for answering your questions or just chatting? You can either send a reply email to [rabbi@mtsinaicheyenne.org](mailto:rabbi@mtsinaicheyenne.org), or let one of the Board members know when you talk to them.