

# Exodus 18:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do.

## Analysis

**And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk**—Jethro outlines Moses' teaching role: 'teach' (הַזְּבָרָתָה, hizhartah, 'warn, instruct') the 'ordinances' (חֻקִּים, chuqqim) and 'laws' (תּוֹרִות, torot). The phrase 'shew them the way' (וְהִזְעִיר לָהֶם אֶת-הַדָּרֶךְ, v'hoda'ta lahem et-haderekh) uses metaphorical language—law as path. The addition 'and the work that they must do' (וְאַתָּה-מְפַצֵּחַ אֲשֶׁר יָשַׁעַן, v'et-hama'aseh asher ya'asun) emphasizes practical application. This comprehensive teaching role—doctrine and practice, principle and application—remains Moses' priority. Teaching 'the way' anticipates Jesus' self-identification: 'I am the way' (John 14:6). Moses shows the path; Christ is the path.

## Historical Context

This teaching function would be fulfilled through Torah instruction after Sinai. Moses' pedagogical role shaped Israel's identity as people defined by God's revealed law.

## Related Passages

**1 John 4:8** — God is love

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

## Study Questions

1. How does Jethro's description of law as 'the way they must walk' emphasize practical obedience over mere knowledge?
2. What does Moses showing the way versus Christ being the way teach about Old Covenant versus New?

## Interlinear Text

## Additional Cross-References

**Deuteronomy 5:1** (Parallel theme): And Moses called all Israel, and said unto them, Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them, and keep, and do them.

**Psalms 143:8** (Parallel theme): Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee.

**Deuteronomy 1:18** (Parallel theme): And I commanded you at that time all the things which ye should do.

**Psalms 32:8** (Parallel theme): I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.

**Deuteronomy 4:1** (Parallel theme): Now therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes and unto the judgments, which I teach you, for to do them, that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers giveth you.

**Deuteronomy 4:5** (Parallel theme): Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the LORD my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it.

**Exodus 18:16** (Word): When they have a matter, they come unto me; and I judge between one and another, and I do make them know the statutes of God, and his laws.

**Micah 4:2** (Word): And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

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