

## Treaty Terminology in the Moses-Jethro Story (Exodus 18:1-12)

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[It is our intention in this article to offer fresh evidence which will give more credence to the suggestion that the verbal form *wyhd* is to be derived from the root *hdh* with the meaning "to rejoice". Supporting arguments for this suggestion are: a) the chain of verbs *wyšm<sup>c</sup>... wyhd... wy'mr*, which looks like a formulaic pattern upon which the whole story is based, parallels similar Akkadian formulae, which are particularly frequent in the Amarna letters and in Mesopotamian treaties; b) a comparison of the Moses-Jethro story with the story of the establishment of treaty relationships between Solomon and Hiram of Tyre (I Kings 5) shows that both stories employ similar formulae and parallel terms; c) the Moses-Jethro story seems to contain additional terms from the realm of treaty relationships, and this gives further support to the suggestion that this story has something to do with treaty-making].

The attempt to elucidate the significance of the verb *wyhd*, which occurs in the story of the meeting between Moses and Jethro in Exodus chapter 18, goes beyond the mere lexical discussion of the term and has deep implications with regard to the literary structure and message of the story.

Many translators and commentators, ancient as well as modern, have encountered difficulties in their attempts to discover the etymology of the verb *wyhh* (Ex. 18:9) and to explain its vowels and meaning. The translation of the word by the LXX has raised controversies as to what could have been the Hebrew verb facing the Greek translator. Some suggest *hrd<sup>1</sup>*, while others think it might have been *htt<sup>2</sup>*. One could think also of the verb *hdd* implied by the midrashic interpretation of the phrase, saying that Jethro became to feel sharp bitings<sup>3</sup>. The Aramaic translations (Onkelos and Neophity), on the other hand, derive the form *wyhd* from the root *hdh*, which occurs in Aramaic, as well as in Hebrew, with the meaning "to rejoice". The medieval Jewish commentators, grammarians, and lexico graphers followed the Aramaic translations, focusing their attempts upon explaining the unusual punctuation of the said verbal form<sup>4</sup>. No unanimity seems to exist among modern scholars as to the etymology and meaning of the word. Some have accepted the authority of the LXX and attempted to find out the Hebrew verb underlying the

1. See *BH<sup>3</sup> ad loc.*

2. See B. S. Childs, *Exodus, (OTL)* London 1974, p. 230.

3. For the pertinent rabbinical midrashim, see *Torah Shelemah ad verse.*

4. See *The Book of Hebrew Roots by Abu 'l-Walid Marwan Ibn Janah* (ed. A. Neubauer), Oxford 1875 (reprint 1968), p. 211; *Rabbi Davidis Kimchi Radicum Liber* (ed. H.R. Biesenthal et F. Lebrecht), Berolini 1847 (reprint 1967 in Jerusalem), p. 192.

LXX's rendering<sup>5</sup>; while others have emended the Hebrew text<sup>6</sup>. Still others have followed the Aramaic translations and the medieval Jewish commentators<sup>7</sup>.

It is our intention in this article to offer fresh evidence, which will give more credence to the suggestion that the verbal form *wyhd* is to be derived from the root *hdh* in the meaning "to rejoice". Supporting arguments for this suggestion may be found by a close stylistic and literary scrutiny of the meeting story along three main aspects:

A. The chain of verbs *wyšm' ...wyhd ...wy'mr*, which looks like a formulaic pattern upon which the whole story is based, parallels similar Akkadian formulae, which are particularly frequent in the Amarna letters and in Mesopotamian treaties.

B. A comparison of the Moses-Jethro story with the story of the establishment of treaty relationships between Solomon and Hiram of Tyre (I Kings 5) shows that both stories employ similar formulae and parallel terms, the most important among which seems to be the parallelism between *wyhd* in the Moses-Jethro story and *šmh* in the Solomon-Hiram story.

C. The Moses-Jethro story seems to contain additional terms from the realm of treaty relationships, and this gives further support to the suggestion that this story has something to do with treaty-making.

## A

Ancient Near Eastern texts, particularly letters sent by ancient rulers to each other, and the existing texts of political treaties, show that a fixed and common diplomatic terminology transpired throughout the ancient Near East. Special importance is attached to the El-Amarna letters, which describe the relationships between the Canaanite rulers and the Egyptian kings, and between the latter and the Babylonian kings. The significance of these letters lies not only in their unique terminology, which was common in the period and places where they were written, but also in the implications they carry for unspecified or implied relationships between kings as described in the Bible<sup>8</sup>. One of the formulae describing good and friendly relationships between kings, which occurs frequently in some of the El Amarna letters, is the one describing the addressed king as hearing the words of the letter and rejoicing over them. The meaning of this rejoicing over the words of the sender is an agreement to their contents and the establishment of friendly treaty relationships between the two kings.

One of the most significant examples occurs in the letter of the Mittanian king to the Egyptian king. The former expects his words to reach the Pharaoh and make him rejoice over them:

*ki atta itti abīya ṭabāta u aššum annitim altaparma aqtabakku kīma aḥīya išemēmšunuma u iḥaddu<sup>9</sup>.*

"Since you have been in treaty/good relationships with my father and because of it I have written to you and said to you that my brother hears them (my words) and rejoices over them"

5. See, e.g., Childs, *op. cit.*

6. See, e.g., Tur-Sinai's emendation *wwyd/wydh Jethro* (N.H. Tur-Sinai, *p<sup>e</sup>shuto shel Mikra*, vol. 1, Jerusalem 1967, p. 110), and also Ehrlich's suggested emendation to *wyhr* from the root *'hr* on the basis of Gen. 32: 5 (A. B. Ehrlich, *Randglossen*, Band 1, p. 331).

7. See, e.g., A. Kahana, *The Book of Exodus* (Hebrew), p. 148; U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Exodus*, Jerusalem 1959 (Hebrew) p. 148.

8. See S. E. Loewenstamm, "Miktab", *Enc. Mik.* vol. 4, p. —.

9. J. A. Knudtson, *Die El Amarna Tafeln*, Leipzig 1915, n<sup>o</sup>. 17:21-24.

And he in his turn expects the Pharaoh to send him words that he will rejoice over them:

*kīmē šulmānšu ša aḫīya ešemēmā u aḫaddu* (*ibid.* lines 49-50)

“that I may hear the greetings of my brother and rejoice”.

The same formula occurs also in letters n<sup>o</sup>. 19: 73 and 27:91-92. One should conclude then that this formula, which makes use of the two verbs *šemu* and *ḫadu*, is a fixed technical expression, denoting treaty relationships between equals<sup>10</sup>.

The components of this formula occur in the Moses-Jethro story but, unlike the Akkadian letters and treaties, the verbs in the biblical story do not appear next to each other, being separated by several verses. However, a close scrutiny of the structure of the story and its parts shows that the location of the verbs *šm<sup>c</sup>* and *ḫdh* in the story is such that indicates some relationship between them, one that finds supporting evidence in the Bible (see below) and in the external texts.

The Moses-Jethro story may be divided into three parallel units, which contain parallel linguistic and stylistic expressions (words and phrases), pointing to the close relationship between them. Each unit may formally be subdivided into three sections.

1-5	6-8	9-12
Jethro priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law, heard	He sent word to Moses	And Jethro rejoiced over all the good
all that God had done for Moses	I, your father-in- law, Jethro, am coming to you	that the lord had done
and for Israel his people	with your wife and her two sons	to Israel
how the Lord had brought Israel out from Egypt		in delivering them from the Egyptians
So Jethro, Moses' father-in-law	Moses went out to meet his father-in- law	“Blessed be the Lord,” said Jethro

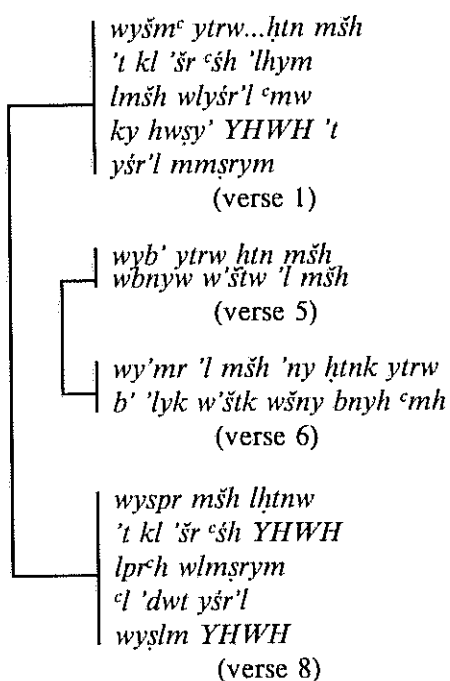
10. For a collection of the various formulae employing one of the verbs *šemu* and *ḫadu* or both of them, see H.P. Adler, *Das Akkadische des Königs Tusratta von Mitanni*, (AOAT 201), Neukirchen-Vluyn 1976, in the Glossar, s.v. On the legal-terminological meaning of the verb *ḫadu* in Akkadian sources, see Y. Muffs, *Studies in the Aramaic Legal Papyri from Elephantine*, Leiden 1969, pp. 129 ff.; cf. *idem*, “Joy and Love as Metaphorical Expressions of Willingness and Spontaneity in Cuneiform, Ancient Hebrew, and Related Literatures”, in: J. Neusner (ed.), *Christianity, Judaism and Other Greco-Roman Cults*, Studies for Morton Smith at Sixty, Leiden 1975, pp. 1-36.

took Zipporah, Moses' wife	he bowed low and kissed him	"who delivered you from the Egyptians
after she had been sent home	each asked after the other's welfare	and from Pharaoh
and her two sons...	and they went into the tent	and who delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians
Jethro, Moses' father-in-law	Moses then recounted to his father-in-law	and Jethro, Moses' father- in-law, brought
brought Moses' sons and wife	everything that the Lord had done	a burnt offering and sacrifices for God
to him in the wilderness	to Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake	and Aaron came with all the elders of Israel
where he was encamped	all the hardship that had befallen them on the way	to partake of the meal with Moses' father-in-law
at the mountain of God	and how the Lord had delivered them	before God

Certain formal and thematical features clearly mark the borders between the three units. In the first unit, the subject is Jethro, and its three parts start each with an action done by him while naming him: "And Jethro heard" (v. 1); "and Jethro took" (v. 2); "and Jethro came" (v. 5). The three parts of the second unit, on the other hand, begin by naming Moses: "And he said to Moses" (v. 6); "and Moses went out" (v. 7); "and Moses then recounted" (v. 8). The subject of the third unit is again Jethro, appearing again at the beginning of each part: "And Jethro rejoiced" (v. 9); "and Jethro said" (v. 10); "and Jethro took" (v. 12). All three units close with the name of God. The first and last units use the name *'Elohim*, while the second unit uses *YHWH*.

What is the relation between the three units? The relation between the first two units is chiasmic<sup>11</sup>. The last verse of the first unit reappears almost verbatim at the beginning of the second unit; and the opening verse of the first unit reappears in part at the end of the second unit.

11. On Chiasmus in the Bible, see A. Di Marco, "Der Chiasmus in der Bible", *Linguistica Biblica* 36 (1975) 21-97; 37 (1976) 49-68.



The relation between the first and third units is not chiasitic, but rather takes the form of a symmetrical parallelism, which is reflected in the close similarity between the three parts of each unit.

wyšm <sup>c</sup> ytrw... 't kl 'šr 'šh 'LHYM	— wyh d ytrw 'l kl h <sup>tbh</sup> 'šr 'šh YHWH
lmšh wlyšr'l 'mw	— lyšr'l
ky hwšy' 't yšr'l mmsrym	— 'šr hšylw myd mšrym
wyqh ytrw h <sup>tn</sup> mšh	— wyqh ytrw h <sup>tn</sup> mšh
wyb' ytrw h <sup>tn</sup> mšh	— wyb' 'hrn wkl zqny yšr'l l'kl lhm
'l mšh...hr h'LHYM	— 'm h <sup>tn</sup> mšh l <sup>pn</sup> y h'LHYM

The comparison of the first parts of the first two units shows that the biblical narrator repeated almost verbatim the same words and phrases, only slightly changing his style. The impression of a close relationship between the first and third units becomes stronger when one realizes that the narrator used the above-mentioned Akkadian formula (its parallel Hebrew formula will be discussed below) and broke it up between the two units, placing each of its components at the beginning of each unit. This stylistic device of breaking up a is not unique to this story and can be traced both in the prose and poetic texts of the Bible. Here are three examples:

a) Psalm 98 has two parallel parts. The first part (vv. 1-4) starts with the words šyrw lYHWH, and the second part with the words zmrw lYHWH. Thw two verbs šyr/zmr occur frequently as a pair and in parallelism in the Bible and Ugaritic literature.

b) The dedication story of Isaiah (Ch. 6) can also be divided into two parts. The first part (vv. 1-7) starts with the words w'r'h 't YHWH, and the second part (vv. 8-13) with the words w'sm<sup>c</sup> 't qwl YHWH. The pair r'h/šm<sup>c</sup> is quite common in the Bible, appearing as a fixed pair in syndetic parataxis.

c) The first part of Isaiah 51 (vv. 1-3) starts with the words šm<sup>c</sup>w 'ly, and the second part (vv. 4-6) with the words hqšybw 'ly. Again, the two verbs šm<sup>c</sup>/hqšb occur as a fixed common pair in the Bible<sup>12</sup>.

12. See in detail in Y. Avishur, *Stylistic Studies of Word-Pairs in Biblical and Ancient Semitic Literatures*, (AOAT 210) Neukirchen-Vluyn 1984, pp. 228-242.

## B

Supporting evidence for the existence of the formula *wyšm<sup>c</sup> ...wyhd*, followed by the verb *wy'mr*, as well as for the etymology of *wyhd* (Ex. 18:6) from the root *hdh* with the meaning "to rejoice", may be gleaned by a comparison of the Moses-Jethro story with the story related in I Kings 5, which describes the establishment of treaty relationships between Solomon and Hiram king of Tyre. Both stories describe the ties created between an Israelite leader, on the one hand, and a foreign leader, on the other; one is from the South-Midian while the other is from the North-Tyre. It is interesting to note that the parallelism between the two stories is not confined to matters of contents, but is attested in their stylistic formulae as well. The parallelism between the formulae of the two stories is reflected particularly in the description of Hiram's reaction to the receipt of the letter of Solomon. Here are the details:

## Ex. 18:1-12

*wyšm<sup>c</sup> ytrw...*  
*'t kl 'šr 'šh 'LHYM*  
*wyhd ytrw*  
*wy'mr ytrw*  
*brwk YHWH*  
*'šr hšyl 'tkm*  
*myd mšrym*  
*wyqh ytrw htn mšh*  
*'lh wzbhym l'LHYM...*  
*l'kl lh...lpny h'LHYM*

## I Kings 5:21, 26

*wyhy kšm<sup>c</sup> hšym*  
*'t dbry šlmh*  
*wyšmh m'd*  
*wy'mr'*  
*brwk YHWH hšym*  
*'šr ntn ldwd bn hkm*  
*'l h<sup>c</sup>m hrb hzh...*  
*wyhy šlwm bn hšym*  
*wbyn šlmh*  
*wykrw bryt šnyhm*

The main components of the two stories are identical both thematically as well as stylistically. The formula *wyšm<sup>c</sup> ...wyhd... wy'mr* of the Moses-Jethro story is identical to the formula *kšm<sup>c</sup>...wyšmh ... wy'mr* of the Solomon-Hiram story. This identity should be taken as a clear proof of the interpretation of *wyhd* in the Moses-Jethro story in the meaning of *šmh*. The formula of blessing God also occurs in both stories. It is said, in both, that after the two foreign leaders (Jethro and Hiram, respectively) had heard the words of the two Israelite leaders (Moses and Solomon, respectively), they pronounced a blessing to God who had done such great deeds for his people. The two formulae are identical in their style and language: both begin with *brwk YHWH* followed by a relative clause starting with the relative pronoun *'šr*, which gives a reason for the blessing<sup>13</sup>. The parallelism between the ends of both stories may provide support for the interpretation of the Moses-Jethro story as ending with the description of a treaty making (see below). The Solomon-Hiram story clearly ends with the remark that there was peace between the two leaders and that they had concluded a treaty between them. In the Moses-Jethro story, on the other hand, no treaty is explicitly mentioned, but a ceremony seems to be described therein, which, according to many scholars, might have been a treaty ceremony. It should also be noted that in the description of the relationship between David and Solomon and Hiram of Tyre, the narrator of the book of Kings employs two additional characteristic treaty terms: the appellation *'hy* applied to Solomon by Hiram (I Kings 9:13) parallels the Akkadian appellation *ahīya*, which occurs in written correspondence between equals. Also the verb *'hb* used by the narrator to describe David's disposition towards Hiram (I Kings 5:15) finds a clear Akkadian parallel in the phrase *ša arammušu*, which occurs in letters exchanged between equals<sup>14</sup>.

The comparison of the above two stories may, therefore, establish the validity of the interpretation of *hdh* as *šmh*, shows the existence of literary formulae which describe the close relationships between leaders of equal stature, and gives support to the view held by scholars of the existence of a treaty bond

13. For the parallelism of this formula with an Akkadian formula, see below.

14. See, for example, EA 21, a letter from Tušratta of Mitanni to King Emenhotep III of Egypt.

between Moses and Jethro, the ceremony of its conclusion probably being reflected in the story of their meeting in Ex. 18. The two stories may be compared also for the mutual light they may throw on each other.

## C

Beside the formula *wyšm<sup>c</sup> ...wyhd ... wy'mr* discussed above, the Moses-Jethro story provides further evidence to the usage by the author of more terms from the realm of relationships between kings. The story does not inform the reader how Moses had become aware of the coming of his father-in-law together with his wife and two sons. When Moses went out to meet his father-in-law, it is said: "And he bowed low and kissed him and each asked after the other's welfare and they came into the tent". It is not clear at all who bowed to whom -Moses to Jethro or the other way round; nor is it clear who kissed whom and who was the first to ask after the other's welfare; finally, it is not even clear that Moses brought Jethro into the tent, since the story is not at all explicit on this point.

The ancient versions and commentators too encountered difficulties in their treatment of our story, and they attempted to solve them in their treatment of our story, and they attempted to solve them in various ways. Thus the Samaritan version and the LXX read *hnh htnk ytrw* in accordance with Gen. 48:2, instead of *'ny htnk ytrw*<sup>15</sup>. Instead of *wyšthw*, the Samaritan version reads *wyšthww*<sup>16</sup>, thus intimating that it was Zippora and her two sons who bowed low to Moses. The same version reads instead of *wyb'w* of the Massoretic text *wyby'hw* (cf. Gen. 24:67), and the LXX reads *wyby'm*<sup>17</sup> (i.e. Jethro, Zippora, and her two sons).

It seems to me that the scrutiny of these acts, which took place upon the meeting between Moses and Jethro, will disclose the fact that the narrator has made a deliberate use of specific terminology from the realm of treaty relationships between leaders of *equal standing*, whence the above discussed ambiguity of the biblical text and the difficulties it caused to the ancient versions. And these are the elements in the story, which reflect in my view its treaty character, some of which have to do with the diplomatic relationships between the parties, while others have to do with the ceremonialism involved in the act of treaty making:

A. *A Messenger and a Letter*

The question how Moses learned about the coming of his father-in-law, Jethro, has already occupied the Rabbis: "R. Joshua says 'he informed him by means of a messenger'; R. Eliezer Hamodai says he informed him by means of a letter..."<sup>18</sup> Rashi's interpretation resembles the one of Rabbi Joshua: "And he said to Moses" - 'by means of a messenger'<sup>19</sup>. Eben Ezra does not seem to be decided for one of the views, for he comments: "And he already said to Moses before they came by means of a messenger or a letter I am your father-in-law, Jethro, and your wife, who is the most important, and her two sons who are coming with her". Abarbanel accepted both suggestions...<sup>20</sup>. On the other hand, Nahmanides (as well as Luzzato) opted for the letter, arguing: "He sent him a letter in which it (i.e. the message "I am your father-in-law, Jethro, coming to you together with your wife and her two sons with her") was written, for a

15. See *BH<sup>3</sup> ad verse*.

16. *BH<sup>3</sup> ibid.*

17. *BH<sup>3</sup> ibid.*

18. *Midrash Haggadol, Sepher Shemot* (ed. M. Margolioth), Jerusalem 1967, pp. 344-345.

19. Thus also Luzzato in his commentary to the Pentateuch (*S.D. Luzzato's Commentary to the Pentateuch*, Tel-Aviv 1965, p. 306 [first edition Padua 1871]. See also Cassuto *ad verse*: "When Jethro had reached the gate of the camp, he sent to say these things to Moses with one of the guards" (above note 7).

20. See *Miqraot Gedolot ad loc.*

messenger would not have said 'I am your father-in-law', but 'behold, your father-in-law, Jethro, is coming to you', and also it is impossible that he (i.e. Jethro) had said that to Moses personally, for he would have said 'behold I am coming to you', and he would not have mentioned his name 'I am so and so', for upon seeing him Moses would have recognized him; and this is similar to 'and Hiram said to Solomon' in a written form 'and he sent to Solomon'<sup>21</sup>. It should be noted that almost all modern commentators have failed to pay heed to this point. For our purpose it is important to stress that letters and messengers were some of the accepted ceremonial exchanges among leaders characteristic to the Amarna letters, which are chronologically close to the background of the Moses-Jethro story.

### B. *Who Bowed to Whom and Who Kissed Whom?*

As already said, the wording of verse 7 does not make it explicit who is the subject and who is the object of the acts described there. The Rabbis put the questions thus: "We do not know who bowed to whom and who kissed whom" but, using logic, they interpreted: "It was no other who bowed and kissed but Moses to Jethro". As to the question who was the first to ask after the other's welfare, they also thought Moses to have been the first<sup>22</sup>. Not only the Midrash, but all the Jewish commentators opted for the view that it was Moses who was the first to perform the said actions out of deference to Jethro and his wisdom. It seems to me that the writer of our passage has deliberately chosen to be ambiguous in this matter. Our writer, who seems to have been quite well acquainted with the pattern of relationships between leaders transpiring in his age, wanted probably to place both leaders on the same level, and that is why he refrained from spelling out explicitly who bowed to whom and who kissed whom, thus avoiding the delineation of differences in their status.

We know from the Amarna letters that a salutation with a bow was something done by a vassal to his lord, whereas the bow was not common between equals<sup>23</sup>. Also the formula of asking after each other's welfare is rooted in the accepted customs related to difference of status: the formula varies according to whether the correspondents are of equal or different status.

### C. *The Treaty Meal*

On the basis of various hints in the Bible as well as on the basis of our story, many scholars have considered the possible existence of a treaty between Jethro and Moses, and hence between the tribes of Midian and the tribes of Israel<sup>24</sup>. As a result of a close scrutiny of our story, both as regards its contents as well as its parallelism with other places in the Bible, some scholars have posited the existence of such a treaty. In discussing the meaning of the story, scholars have suggested that the description of Jethro's coming to fetch back Zippora and her two sons to Moses should not be perceived as the sole purpose of the story, since this issue occupies only vv. 1-5, and in the rest of the story Zippora and her sons disappear, leaving only Moses and Jethro on the stage. The story must therefore have a different purpose, and it is the description of the treaty making between the two leaders. Other scholars have also compared our story with other biblical stories, particularly with the stories of the meetings between Abimelech and Isaac and between Laban and Jacob, meetings which are clearly said to have been concluded with a treaty<sup>25</sup>.

21. *Ibid.*

22. See *Midrash Haggadol op. cit.*

23. See Loewenstamm (above note 8).

24. See, for example, L. Strack, *Exodus - Leviticus - Numeri*, München 1894, p. 220; P. Einisch, *Das Buch Exodus*, Bonn 1934, p. 14; and see recently for pertinent special discussions Chr. H. W. Brekelmans, "Exodus XVIII and the Origins of Yahwism in Israel", *OTS* 10 (1954) 215-224; W. F. Albright, "Jethro, Hobab and Reuel in Early Hebrew Tradition", *CBQ* 25 (1963) 1-11; C. F. Fensham, "Did a Treaty Between the Israelites and the Kenites Exist", *BASOR* 175 (1964) 51-54; A. Cody, "Exodus 18,12: Jethro Accepts a Covenant with the Israelites", *Biblica* 49 (1968) 153-166.

25. Thus, for example, Böhl argued that the story related in Exodus 18:1-12 pushes us back to the Patriarchal narratives (F. M. Th. Böhl, *Exodus* (TU), Groningen 1928, p. 139). Brekelmans followed suit and noted that our story parallels the meeting scenes between Isaac and Abimelech, Jacob and Laban, and Esau and Jacob (see *op. cit.*, p. 217).



Scholars have stressed in particular the fact that v. 12 contains issues and terminology which are characteristic to treaty making<sup>26</sup>. The story concludes with v. 12 which relates that "Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, took burnt offering and sacrifices for God", and then Aaron and all the elders of Israel ate bread with Moses' father-in-law before God. Arranging offerings and sacrifices before God by both contracting parties is one of the characteristics of a treaty making.

Our scrutiny of the story in its entirety, and not only the verse with which it concludes (v. 12), has shown that the story makes use of terminology from the realm of treaty making, and that the writer was altogether aware of his use of this terminology. In his descriptions he employed such terminology as to place Jethro and Moses on equal terms, depicting them as two equal standing leaders who are concluding a parity treaty. The existence of treaty terminology and style in our story and its parallelism with the story of Hiram and Solomon therefore confirms our hypothesis that Exodus 18:1-12 contains a story of a treaty making between Jethro and Moses<sup>27</sup>.

26. See Brekelmans, pp. 219ff.; Fensham, p. 54; and in particular Cody, *op. cit.*, pp. 153-166.

27. I would like to thank my colleague, Dr. M. Malul, for his help in the English version of this article.