

8/16/13

Humble And Wise Leadership

Ex. 18:1-27

The great judgments and miracles of God were short-lived in the hearts and minds of the people of God.

1. They complained to Moses before the Red Sea crossing, accusing him of wanting to kill them. Ex. 14:11-12
2. They complaint after the Red Sea crossing at the waters of Marah. bitter and God made them drinkable. Ex. 15:23
3. They complained about being hungry, so God gave them quail and manna. Ex. 16
4. They contended with Moses for water to drink, at Massah and Maribah, contention and strife and Moses struck the rock, which was Christ and gave them to drink. Ex. 17, 1Cor. 10:4

They have now arrive at the mountain of God, where Jethro visits Moses at the camp, which marked by: Ex. 18:1-27

- I. The purpose of Jethro in coming to Moses. vs. 1-6
- II. The praise of Jethro for the God of Moses. vs. 7-12
- III. The practical council of Jethro to Moses. vs. 13-27

I. The purpose of Jethro in coming to Moses. vs. 1-6

- A. The primary reason behind the visit of Jethro to Moses, was that God had delivered Israel from Egypt. vs. 1
 1. The man Jethro is given a three-fold identify, vs. 1a-c
 - a, His personal name was Jethro. vs. 1a
* The name Jethro “yutgriw” means ‘his abundance.
 - b. His religious title was, the priest of Midian. vs. 1b
 - 1) A priest was one who was a mediator between God and man.
 - 2) A priest represented the people to God and God to the people.
 - c. His relation to Moses was his father-in-law. vs. 1c
 - 1) The Hebrew word for father-in-law “chathan” can mean son-in-law or father-in-law.
 - 2) If he is Moses father-in-law, then he was also called Reuel “R@’uw’el”, which means “friend of God”. Ex. 2:18, 3:1
 - 3) Hobab was the son of Reuel the Midianite, Moses’ father-in-law.” Num. 10:29
 - 4) Jethro was a descendant of Abraham by his second wife

Keturah, through the Midianites.
Gen. 25:2, 1Chron. 1:32

2. The man Jethro responded to the victory God gave in Egypt. vs. 1d-e
 - a. He heard of all God had done for Moses and Israel His people. vs. 1d
 - 1) The ten plagues poured out through Moses in Egypt.
 - 2) The demonstration of the power of God to the people in Egypt.
 - b. He heard, “that the LORD had brought Israel out of Egypt.” vs. 1e
 - 1) Their 430 year bondage had been broken by Yahweh.
 - 2) Their freedom by Yahweh.

B. The secondary reason behind the visit of Jethro was to reunite Moses with his family. vs. 2-6

1. The circumstance of the call of Moses by God had separated them and he had sent her back. vs. 2-4
 - a. Then Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, took Zipporah, Moses’ wife, after he had sent her back. vs. 2

* The information is in chapter four.
Ex. 4:24-26

 - 1) And it came to pass on the way, at the encampment, that the LORD met him and sought to kill him.” vs. 24

* Moses had been disobedient to circumcise his son, according to God’s covenant and thought it did not matter to God. Gen. 17

- 2) “Then Zipporah took a sharp stone and cut off the foreskin of her son and cast it at Moses’ feet, and said, “Surely you are a husband of blood to me!” vs. 25

* Zipporah seems to be the reason for Moses compromise and she knew exactly the solution, expressing despite of Moses, “Surely you are a husband of blood to me!”
- 3) “So He let him go. Then she said, “You are a husband of blood!” -- because of the circumcision.” vs. 26

* Zipporah repeats her disgust over the circumcision, returning to Jethro, instead of going to Egypt with Moses.
- b. The sons of Moses also came. vs. 3-4
 - 1) Zipporah came with her two sons, of whom the name of one was Gershom (for he said, “I have been a stranger in a foreign land”). vs. 3
 - 2) “And the name of the other was Eliezer (for he said, “The God of my father was my help, and

- delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh”). vs. 4
2. The circumstances of the arrival of Moses prompted Jethro to send a message to Moses of his coming. vs. 5-6
 - a. The geographical location is Midia, not the Sinai Peninsula. vs. 5
 - 1) The collective party is grouped together, “And Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, came with his sons and his wife to Moses in the wilderness.” vs. 5a-c
 - 2) The exact site is also stated, “Where he was encamped at the mountain of God.” vs. 5d
 - a) The mountain of God is in Midia, where Moses had fled to from Egypt 40 years earlier. Ex. 2:15
 - b) Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, as he led the flock to the back of the desert, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. Ex. 3:1
 - c) This is the mountain that the Angel of the Yahweh appeared to Moses in the flame of fire, from the midst of the bush. Ex. 3:2
 - d) God told Moses, “When you have brought the people out of

- Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain.” Ex. 3:12d-e
- 3) Smith’s Bible Dictionary says, “Midian, a son of Abraham and Keturah (Gen. 25:2; I Chr. 1:32); progenitor of the Midianites, or Arabians dwelling principally in the desert north of the peninsula of Arabia. Southwards, they extended along the eastern shore of the Gulf of Eyleh (Gulf of Aqaba).” (Smith's Bible Dictionary, art.: "Midian")
 - a) In Galatians 4:25 Paul identifies the location of Sinai, in Arabia.
 - b) Peake's Commentary refers to Paul's passage stating: “Their mothers likewise represent the two dispensations. Hagar represents that given on Mt. Sinai, and, Paul notes in passing the appropriateness of the fact that Mt. Sinai is in Arabia, the land to which Hagar took her son.”
 - b. The summary statement of the message sent is recorded. vs. 6
 - 1) The message was sent before his coming. “Now he had said to Moses.” vs. 6a
 - 2) The message was sent that Moses might anticipate their arrival, “I,

your father-in-law Jethro, am coming to you with your wife and her two sons with her.” vs. 6b-c

Illustration

“Behold, how good and how **pleasant** it is For brethren to dwell together in unity!” Ps. 133:1

Application

1. How do you respond when God is doing a great work in another church?
 - a. Do you rejoice or are you envious?
 - b. Do you enquire, if it is a true work of God or do you immediately criticize and condemn it?
 - * “John said, “Master, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow with us.” But Jesus said to him, “Do not forbid him, for he who is not against us is on our side.” Lk. 9:49-50
 - c. Do you except everything to be of God, without examining it to the Scriptures?
 - * “**Test** all things; hold fast what is good.” 1Thess. 5:21
2. Do you rejoice when you hear of God delivering people from the world, a type of Egypt?
 - a. Have you become apathetic to the great value that God places on one soul?

- b. Have you become indifferent to the reality of hell and those who go there, for all eternity?
 - * “he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.” Rev. 14:10
3. Do you think God is indifferent to our compromises with our family, as we serve Him?
 - a. The importance of the man, being the spiritual head and high priest of the home is invaluable.
 - b. He is to lead by word and example.
 - c. He is to oversee his family to uphold the standard of the Bible in the home, celebrating in the victories God brings about.
 - * “For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.” Eph. 5:23

The purpose of Jethro in coming to Moses was to celebrate his triumphal return!

II. The praise of Jethro for the God of Moses. vs. 7-12

- A.** The reunion of Moses and Jethro after the exodus, was a loving one. vs. 7-8
- 1.** Their greeting was marked by respect and affection. vs. 7
 - a.** Moses welcomed them by doing obeisance, “So Moses went out to meet his father-in-law, bowed down. vs. 7a
 - b.** Moses demonstrated his appreciation, “And kissed him. vs. 7b
 - c.** Moses and Jethro expressed mutual concern, “And they asked each other about their well-being.” vs. 7c
 - d.** Moses and Jethro enjoyed their fellowship, “And they went into the tent.” vs. 7d
 - 2.** The report of God’s judgment and faithfulness was recounted to Jethro. vs. 8
 - a.** “And Moses told his father-in-law all that the LORD had done to Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel’s sake.”, without doubt, from the first meeting with the elders, to the last meeting with Pharaoh’s army, at the Red Sea, vs. 8a
 - b.** “All the hardship that had come upon them on the way, and how the LORD had delivered them.”, the bitter wasters at Marah that were made drinkable, the provisions of quail and

manna, the provisions of water from the Rock and the Lord’s destruction of Amalek, vs. 8b-c

- B.** The response of Jethro over the exodus, was a joyous one. vs. 9-11
- 1.** He acknowledged God brought about the exodus, not Moses. vs. 9
 - a.** He was elated by the good Yahweh did on Israel’s behalf, “Then Jethro rejoiced for all the good which the LORD had done for Israel.” vs. 9a
 - b.** He affirmed Yahweh delivered Israel, not Moses, “Whom He had delivered out of the hand of the Egyptians.” vs. 9b
 - 2.** He exalted God for the deliverance, not Moses. vs. 10
 - a.** He congratulated Yahweh for the survival of Moses, “And Jethro said, “Blessed be the LORD, who has delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians and out of the hand of Pharaoh,” vs. 10a-b
 - b.** He congratulated Yahweh for the survival of the people, “And who has delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians.” vs. 10c
 - 3.** He declared the uniqueness of God, not Moses. vs. 11

- a. Yahweh was the only true God, “Now I know that the LORD is greater than all the gods.” vs. 11a
- b. Yahweh was Omnipotent, “For in the very thing in which they behaved proudly, He was above them.” vs. 11b-c

C. The reaction of Jethro to the report of the exodus, was a worshipful one. vs. 12

- 1. He offered sacrificial offering to God as a priest. vs. 12a-b
 - a. The offering represented his dedication and consecration to Yahweh, “Then Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, took a burnt offering.” vs. 12a
 - b. The other offerings are not identified, “And other sacrifices to offer to God.” vs. 12a
- 2. He was acknowledged as being able to officiate the office of priest. vs. 12c-d
 - a. The representative leader of Israel affirmed their approval. vs. 12c
 - 1) The future High Priest of Israel, Aaron went to Jethro.
 - 2) The elders of Israel accompanied Aaron to be with Jethro.
 - b. The representative leaders of Israel confirmed their approval. vs. 12d

- 1) Aaron and the elder express their oneness, as they went to eat bread with Moses’ father-in-law.
- 2) Aaron, the elders of Israel and Jethro expressed their oneness with God, as they ate before God.

Illustration

The question was asked, “Why is there but one God?” A child answered: “Because God fills every place, and there’s no room for another one.” #1977

Application

- 1. The Bible is clear about the priority of our love.
 - a. First we are to love the Lord, with all our heart, mind and soul. Matt. 22:37-38
 - b. Second, we are to love our neighbor, as ourselves. Matt. 22:39
 - 1) Love for our wife or husband.
 - 2) Love for our children.
 - 3) Love for the saints.
 - 4) Love for sinners.
 - 1) “By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have **love** for one another.” Jn. 13:35
 - 2) “Beloved, let us **love** one another, for **love** is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.” 1Jn. 4:7
- 2. The Bible is clear God should get all the glory, in all that take place in our lives and the church.

- a. Yet, too often in our day, people are boasting in the men, who are great organizers.
 - b. Men, who have great marketing skills.
 - c. Men, who can raise money for a project.
 - d. Men, who move from being Pastors, to being personalities of the church.
 - e. Jesus, alone has saved and delivered us from sin and brings about His will, through the Word, prayer and the power of the Holy Spirit, through a man or a group of men.
 - d. And they will be the first to acknowledge God as the source and give all the glory to Him.
3. The outcome is that all who hear will worship Jesus.
- a. Not the Pastor or his education.
 - b. Not a big donor.
 - c. Not the method or strategy.
 - d. Nothing but the blood and work of Jesus.
 - * “Oh, **worship** the LORD in the beauty of holiness! Tremble before Him, all the earth.” Ps. 96:9

The praise of Jethro for the God of Moses was in celebration of His deliverance!

III. The practical council of Jethro to Moses. vs. 13-27

- A. The council came through Jethro’s observation of Moses judging the cases of the people. vs. 13-16
1. The customary manner of Moses to pass his judgment is described. vs. 13
 - a. The occasion took place on the next day, two days are involved. vs. 13a-b
 - b. The procedure was that Moses sat to judge the people; and the people stood before Moses. vs. 13c
 - c. The duration was from morning until evening. vs. 13c
 - * Very few in number could be heard per day!
 2. The inquiry of Jethro to Moses is declared. vs. 14
 - a. Jethro was shocked, “So when Moses’ father-in-law saw all that he did for the people, he said, “What is this thing that you are doing for the people?” vs. 14a-c
 - b. Jethro was perplexed, “Why do you alone sit, and all the people stand before you from morning until evening?” vs. 14d-e
 - 1) Moses was only one man.
 - 2) The people were 600, 000 males.
 3. The reply of Moses was expressed. vs. 15-16
 - a. The demands of the people, “And Moses said to his father-in-law,

“Because the people come to me to inquire of God.” vs. 15

* The word enquire “dabar” means anything problem that arose between the people.

- b. The need of justice for the people, “When they have a difficulty, they come to me, and I judge between one and another; and I make known the statutes of God and His laws.” vs. 16

B. The council was for being more efficient in the case judgments of the people. vs. 17-23

- 1. The observation of Jethro was stated without hesitation to Moses. vs. 17-18
 - a. Moses’ father-in-law said to him, “The thing that you do is not good.” vs. 17
 - 1) The word not good “towb” means not pleasant, agreeable or appropriate.
 - 2) The implication being, there is a better way to judge the people.
 - b. Moses’ father-in-law gave the simple reason. vs. 18
 - 1) Everyone would become exhausted and frustrated, “Both you and these people who are with you will surely wear yourselves out.” vs. 18a

2) Every case could not be heard by Moses, “For this thing is too much for you; you are not able to perform it by yourself.” vs. 18b-c

- 2. The instruction of Jethro was communicated to Moses. vs. 19-22
 - a. Jethro being used by God, “Listen now to my voice; I will give you counsel, and God will be with you.” vs. 19a-c
 - b. Jethro told Moses he was to be a mediator for the difficult matters, “Stand before God for the people, so that you may bring the difficulties to God.” vs. 19d-e
 - c. Jethro told Moses he was to educate the people, to govern themselves. vs. 20
 - 1) Moses was to teach them the statutes “chaq”, specific ordinances. vs. 20a
 - 2) Moses was to teach them the laws “towrah”, the general rules for order. vs. 20a
 - 3) Moses was to show them the way in which they must walk, conduct themselves and the work they must do, the deeds in community. vs. 20b
 - d. Jethro told Moses he was to delegate the work of judging the cases of the

people to other men, who were qualified. vs. 21a-d

- 1) Men, who were capable in strength and ability, “Moreover you shall select from all the people able men.” vs. 21a
 - 2) Men, who revered God, “Such as fear God.” vs. 21b
 - 3) Men, who were trustworthy, reliable in character, “Of truth.” vs. 21c
 - 4) Men, who despised dishonest gain, “hating covetousness.” vs. 21d
- e. Jethro told Moses that the judging of the cases of the people would be adequately attended. vs. 21e-22
- 1) Moses was to appoint these chosen men over a structural chain of command, “And place such over them to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.” vs. 21e-h
 - 2) Moses was to appoint these chosen men over the cases of the people, “And let them judge the people at all times.” vs. 22a
 - 3) Moses was to handle and hear only those very important and serious matter, “Then it will be that every great matter they shall bring to

you, but every small matter they themselves shall judge.” vs. 22b-c

- 4) Moses would be relieved of doing it all himself, “So it will be easier for you, for they will bear the burden with you.” vs. 22d-e
3. The conclusion of Jethro was that the case judgment of the people would be efficient for the task. vs. 23
 - a. Jethro commended Moses to God’s approval, “If you do this thing, and God so commands you.” vs. 23a-b
 - b. Jethro confidently assure Moses, it would result in longing satisfaction for the entire nation, “Then you will be able to endure, and all this people will also go to their place in peace.” vs. 23c-d
- C. The council was imparted to capable men to judge the majority of the cases of the people. vs. 24-27
1. Moses was teachable, “So Moses heeded the voice of his father-in-law and did all that he had said.” vs. 24
 2. Moses was not insecure, “And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people: rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.” vs. 25

3. Moses was able to see the benefit to the people, “So they judged the people at all times; the hard cases they brought to Moses, but they judged every small case themselves.” vs. 26
4. Moses bided good-bye to Jethro, “Then Moses let his father-in-law depart, and he went his way to his own land.” vs. 27

Illustration

“Lord when I am wrong, make me willing to change; when I am right, make, me easy to live with. So strengthen me that the power of my example will far exceed the authority of my rank.”
#3022

Application

1. The danger in the church is for Pastors to control everything and not delegate the ministry to others in the church.
 - a. The church will be stifled and not be able to grow.
 - b. The people will not be able to exercise their gifts of the Holy Spirit for the edification of the body, the church.
 - c. The needs of the people will not be tended to and often be unaware.
 - d. We attempt to involve and train as many people as are interested in being used.
 - 1) We have seven Pastors on staff.

- 2) There are leader under these Pastor, overseeing the various ministries.
 - 3) There are coordinators and many helpers under those leaders.
 - 4) The Pastors and leader have ongoing training in all the ministries.
 - 5) There are four ministry schools per year, for all involved in ministry.
 - 6) And I meet with the heads of ministries once a month.
 - 7) All of this to impart and delegate ministry to the saints.
 - * “Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, “It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables.” Acts 6:1-2
2. The qualification for serving are not set by the Pastors but the Scriptures.
 - a. “Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy

Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch, whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them. Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.” Acts 6:3-6

- b.** For bishops and elders, “This *is* a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; one who rules his own house well, having *his* children in submission with all reverence (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the *same* condemnation as the devil. Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.” 1Tim. 3:1-7, Tit. 1:6-9
- c.** For deacons and deaconess, “Likewise deacons must be reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy

for money, holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience. But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless. Likewise their wives must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things. Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling *their* children and their own houses well.” 1Tim. 8-12

- 4.** The evidence of overseeing and delegating ministry will be evident through the years of the ministry.
- a.** The growth in number to an extent but not always.
 - b.** The growth, development and maturity of the individual Christian coming to the church.
 - c.** The growth and development of each ministry to be more effective.
 - d.** The order, unity, love and peace that permeates the church body.

The practical council of Jethro to Moses was to celebrate their lives having come out of Egypt!

Conclusion

When Moses arrived at the mountain of God, Jethro visited him at the camp, revealing:

- I.** The purpose of Jethro in coming to Moses was to celebrate his triumphant return from Egypt!

- II.** The praise of Jethro for the God of Moses was in celebration of His delivering them from Egypt!
- III.** The practical council of Jethro to Moses was to celebrate their lives having come out of Egypt!