

# PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

## EXODUS 18:13-26



### LESSON: GOD PROVIDES JUDGES TO HELP MOSES — September 27, 2020

#### INTRODUCTION:

**Exodus 18:1-12** When Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father in law, heard of all the wonderful things God had done for Moses, and for Israel His people, and that God had brought Israel out of Egypt, Jethro, took Zipporah, Moses' wife, back to him, including her two sons named "*Gershom*"— *for he said, I have been an alien in a strange land*, and the other named "*Eliezer*"— *for the God of my father, said he, was mine help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh*. Jethro came with the sons and his wife of Moses into the wilderness, where he encamped at the Mount of God (*Horeh or Sinai*), and he said unto Moses, *I thy father in law Jethro am come unto thee, and thy wife, and her two sons with her*. And Moses went out to meet his father in law, and did obeisance (*bowed in respect*), and kissed him; and they asked each other of their welfare; and they went into the tent. Moses told his father in law all that the Lord had done unto Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake, and all the travail that had come upon them by the way, and how the Lord delivered them. Jethro rejoiced for all the goodness which the Lord had done for Israel, whom He had delivered out of the hand of the Egyptians. And he said, Blessed be the Lord who hath delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of Pharaoh, who hath delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians. Now I know that the Lord is greater than all gods: for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly he was above them. And Jethro, Moses' father in law, took a burnt offering and sacrifices for God: and Aaron came, and all the elders of Israel, to eat bread with Moses' father in law before God. We find that Jethro whose name was Reuel at first is changed in Exodus 3. They seem to have gotten along well.

#### LESSON: I. PERCEPTIVE CONCLUSION EXODUS 18:13-18

**18:13** **And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to judge the people: and the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening.** Moses was the Israelite leader; God's spokesman, and also judge between right and wrong. This went on from morning to the evening. It was like a nine to five job plus overtime; really time consuming. The people were literally lined up to give their complaints and he would hear their arguments till he didn't have time to do anything else.

**18:14** **And when Moses' father in law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What is this thing that thou doest to the people? why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even?**—Now, Moses' father in law was a Mediantite priest who had acknowledged that "*the LORD is greater than all gods*" (verse 11) and he sees what's going on with Moses and the people. So, he asks "*Why are you trying to do all this alone with people standing here all day long to get your help?*"

**18:15** **And Moses said unto his father in law, Because the people come unto me to enquire of God:**—Moses tells his father in law that the people came to him with their disputes to ask for God's decisions.

**18:16** **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.** Moses says "*When they have a matter they come to me. I am their judge deciding who is right and who is wrong and instructing them in the ways of God.*" Moses



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judges between one another to teach the people God's statutes and His laws.

**18:17 And Moses' father in law said unto him, The thing that thou doest is not good.** Now, Moses' father in law proceeds to give some sound advice, for he tells him that what he's doing is not good.

**18:18 Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that is with thee: for this thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone.** It might benefit the people for now, but it won't benefit either of them in the long run. He's going to get weary. Moses should have remembered the battle they just came out of when he had to hold up his hands against Amalek, but got weary and needed help. Jethro tells that this thing was too heavy for him and he shouldn't do it alone. He's gonna need help!

## II. SOUND ADVICE EXODUS 18:19-23

**18:19 Harken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee: Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God:**— Jethro says *"listen to my voice for I'm here to give counsel and God will be with you."* Now, that sounds very reassuring. He continues: *"It's for you to be the people's representative before God; become a teacher before God and bring their disputes; laying their cases before God."* Everything was God-ward; putting God first in the circumstance— God shall be with thee; be for the people and give the cause to God. God will be his strength because he goes to God first.

**18:20 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.** Jethro tells Moses that he will become a teacher. He will begin to teach them God's decrees and instructions, and show them the way they are to live and how they are to behave.

**18:21 Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens:**— Jethro's suggests that Moses look out from among all the people, and find men of ability (capable); men that fear God (godly); men of truth (honest); men hating covetousness (hate the sin of wanting) and place and delegate them as rulers (to judge) of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. There would have to be a lot more rulers recruited for 600,000 plus people. In other words, there would have to be sub-judges under the head rulers who would report to Moses, who always reported to God: TLB—*one judge for each 1000 people; he in turn will have ten judges under him, each in charge of a hundred; and under each of them will be two judges, each responsible for the affairs of fifty people; and each of these will have five judges beneath him, each counseling ten persons.* Just for 600,000 people he would need 600 rulers per 1000 people. And that's not counting the judges under them.

**18:22 And let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee.** Jethro tells Moses to *"let these men be responsible to serve the people with justice at all times. Anything that is too hard or complicated can be brought to Moses. But the smaller matters they can take care of themselves. That way it will be easier for Moses because it will be shared and not done alone."*

**18:23 If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace.** Jethro continues to say that if Moses is able to do this; carry this out and God gives approval; agrees, then he will be able to endure the pressures, and all the people



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will go in peace and harmony in the camp; having their cases settled.

## III. HUMBLE ACTION EXODUS 18:24-26

**18:24 So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father in law, and did all that he had said.** Moses listened and heard what Jethro, his father in law had to say, and we assume he went before God with this, and then carried out all the advice Jethro had suggested to him.

**18:25 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.** First, Moses chose capable men out of Israel, making them heads over the people; rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.

**18:26 And they judged the people at all seasons: the hard causes they brought unto Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves.** They were constantly available to administer justice. They brought the hard cases to Moses, but judged the smaller matters themselves.

## NOT APART OF THE LESSON: VERSE 27

**18:27 And Moses let his father in law depart; and he went his way into his own land.** The help was much needed and now it was time for Moses' father in law to depart. He left and went back to his own land of Midian.

## SUMMARY:

Moses sat to judge the people while the people stood were in line from the morning unto the evening to see Moses. Moses' father in law notices him with the people and asked what he was doing and why was he doing it by himself and the people are left standing so long. Moses told his father in law that it was because the people came to him to seek God. When they had a matter, they come and he would judge between one another, and let them know the statutes of God, and his laws. **17**Moses' father in law lets him know that what he's doing is not good. **18**He's going to get weary. This thing was too heavy for him and he shouldn't do it alone (**18:13-18**).

Jethro then says to listen to his voice, for he needs counsel, and God will be with him. And then he could lay their cases before God. Jethro suggests that Moses teach them the ordinances and laws, and show them the way they must walk, and the work they must do. Provide by looking out from among all the people, men of ability (capable); men that fear God (godly); men of truth (honest); men hating covetousness (hate the sin of wanting) and place them as rulers (to judge) of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. In so doing let these men be responsible to serve the people with justice at all times. Anything that is too hard or complicated can be brought to him. But the smaller matters they can take care of themselves. That way it will be easier for Moses because it will be shared and not done alone. Jethro continues to say that if Moses is able to do this; carry this out and God gives approval of it, then all the people will go in peace and harmony in the camp; having their cases settled (**18:19-23**).

Moses listened and heard what Jethro had to say, and carried out all the advice he had suggested to him. Moses chose capable men out of Israel, making them heads over the people; rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. They were constantly available to administer justice. They brought the hard cases to Moses, but judged the smaller matters themselves. The help was much needed and now it was time for Moses' father in law to depart. He left and went back to his own land of Midian (**18:24-27**).

