Discovering Exodus: Finding prayer points, testimonies, reflection and journaling questions that will engage your heart with the Father.

Chapter 18:

**□ The Invitation**: Invite the Holy Spirit to show you something new as you read through the chapter. The Father desires to meet with you and share something with you today. You may find it in the reading or you may hear His Voice speaking to Your Spirit in the quiet of this moment.

**□ The Reading:** Read Exodus Chapter 18. Record any thoughts from the chapter, questions you have or verses that the Holy Spirit highlighted to you while reading.

**□ The Focus**: Today’s focus is a reflection. Write your thoughts as you meet with the Father.

Jethro, father-in-law to Moses, appears for a short time in Scripture, but he has a major impact on the future course of Israel. I am titling this chapter, *We All Need a Jethro*. Let’s explore Exodus 18.

Jethro brought Moses’ wife and sons to the Israelites’ camp in the wilderness. Moses went to meet with his father-in-law and told him everything the lord had done for the Israelites. “*Jethro was delighted to hear about all the good things the Lord had done for Israel in rescuing them from the hand of the Egyptians*,” verse 9. After their time together, scripture tells us, “*The next day Moses took his seat to serve as judge for the people, and they stood around him from morning till evening*,” verse 13. When Jethro saw all that Moses was doing for the people, he said, “*What is this you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit as judge, while all these people stand around you from morning till evening?*” verse 14. Jethro saw the inefficiency of what Moses was doing, he knew that Moses would run himself ragged if he continued at this pace and he noticed by observation that Moses had lost sight of what he was called to do. Scripture brings us into the conversation that took place between them.

Moses responded to his father-in-law’s questions. In verses 15-16, Moses answered Jethro, “*Because the people come to me to seek God’s will. Whenever they have a dispute, it is brought to me, and I decide between the parties and inform them of God’s decrees and instructions*.” What we can take from his response:

Moses believed that every request for his help made the matter his responsibility. He had a hard time refusing to help anyone that asked.

Moses seemed to assume that because the people came to him for help it was his responsibility to help them personally. He assumed that when there was a need, it was his personal obligation to meet the need.

Moses reasoned that because his task was to lead the entire nation, he must do so by dealing with one person at a time. Moses had lost vision of leading the nation at a macro level.

Moses seems to assume that no one else was able to do what he was doing. Where were the elders? Why hadn’t they given Moses some advice when they saw what he was doing.

Moses seems to lost sight of his gifts and calling. God had not called Moses to do everything. Moses was given the responsibility to lead the nation of Israel. Jethro reminds Moses of his calling. “*Teach them His decrees and instructions and show them the way they are to live and how they are to behave*,” verse 20.

What a gift to Moses that his father-in-law showed up on the scene. Jethro’s advice was excellent and it became the standard. “*Select capable men from all the people~ men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain~ and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. Have them serve as judges for the people at all times, but have them bring every difficult case to you...that will make your load lighter because they will share it with you,”* verses 21-22. We know that Moses trusted his father-in-law because we are told, “*Moses listened to his father-in-law and did everything he said*,” verse 24.

There are some points to note about Jethro from this account of Scripture.

He had an objective viewpoint. He wasn’t living in the midst of the wilderness. He had not experienced what the Israelites had experienced. He was an outsider and could see things differently than someone in the midst of it all.

Jethro had a relationship with Moses. He was his father-in-law. And Moses had fled Egypt in his younger years and spent 40 years being trained in the wilderness where he lived with Jethro, met his wife, Zipporah and had two sons. His relationship with his Jethro would have been an intimate one. Jethro wasn’t someone Moses didn’t know, throwing around advice. Jethro had Moses’ best in mind and the nation of Israel’s best in mind.

Jethro asked Moses for more information before giving counsel. He wanted to get the whole picture. Was there something he was missing? What didn’t he know? He asked Moses the questions, “What is you are doing? Why do you sit alone as judge?” Jethro didn’t want to miss anything.

**Reflection**:

Think through the following application questions. Reflect on each one as you spend time with the Lord.

How does this apply to you?

1. Find a Jethro. God gave Moses a Jethro to point out problems and offer advice or solutions. Each one of us could use someone in our lives to help us navigate difficult or challenging circumstances and to see them from a different viewpoint. When you are in the middle of something, it is hard to be objective.
2. Prioritize. Everyone has a busy life. Are there things you are doing that you need to lay aside or give to someone else?
3. What are the gifts that God has called you to steward? How can you best use them? What could that look like in your life?
4. Is there a balance in your work life (public life) and home life (private life)? Something that scripture alludes to is that Moses was unable to have quality time with his family because he was judging cases from morning till evening. That doesn’t allow for much home life.