

In Exodus, Moses has been raised by Pharaoh's daughter
Moses knows he's a Hebrew, he kills an Egyptian who's beating a Hebrew
Pharaoh finds out, so Moses runs away to Midian in the desert

i. Exodus 2.15-21; 3.1: We know Moses. What do we know about Jethro?

- a Priest: *Reuel* is also called *Jethro* and *Hobab* (Numbers 10.29-32)
 - 1 Hertz: Father could also be a title used for Grandfather
 - a) Jethro, "His Excellence:" a Title, like Chief or Priest
 - b) Reuel could have been the Father, and Jethro the son
 - c) Reuel and Jethro could be the same person, common in *aNE*¹
 - 2 I believe Reuel, Jethro, and Hobab are all the same person
 - 3 All 3 names: he's always called the Priest of Midian
- b Worshipper: Jethro is a worshipper, whether of many gods, or the 1 true God
 - 1 Jethro is the Priest of Midian, of the Midianites
 - 2 The Midianites are descendants of the person Midian
 - 3 Midian is one of the sons of Abraham by Keturah (Genesis 25.1-2)
 - 4 It's quite possible they have maintained a knowledge of God
- c Generous man: Jethro is a generous man, he invests in Moses
 - 1 He invites Moses, a desert stranger into his home to dine
 - 2 He eventually gives Moses his daughter as a wife
 - 3 Jethro gives Moses a job as a shepherd in Midian

Why is Jethro investing so much in Moses? What does Jethro see in Moses?

ii. Exodus 3.2-4; 4.18: We know this story, burning bush, call of Moses

- a However, who does Moses turn to right away to talk to? Jethro
- b This is more than a courtesy, Moses is seeking Jethro's counsel
- c Moses sets out to face the greatest empire in the world at that time
- d Jethro has invested in Moses, some scholars think for up to 40 years
 - 1 Moses is taking Jethro's daughter and grandkids to Egypt
 - 2 Jethro listens and gives Moses his blessing of Peace

What does Jethro see in Moses? What does Jethro foresee in Moses?

iii. Exodus 18.1, 7-8, J.H. Hertz: "This chapter is one of the few passages in Exodus that are reminiscent of Patriarchal scenes in Genesis."²

- a This is after the Hebrews are delivered from Egypt, after the Red Sea
- b Like a Patriarch, Jethro visits Moses and there's a family reunion (verses 2-7)

¹ J.H. Hertz, ed., *The Pentateuch and Haftorahs*, 2nd ed. (London: Soncino Press, 1960), 212.

² Ibid., 288.

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c Moses tells Jethro about everything the Lord has done (verse 8)

iv. Exodus 18.9-12: Jethro doesn't rejoice because Egypt falls

a Jethro rejoices because of how good God is to Israel³

b If there is any doubt about Jethro's religion before, there is no doubt now

c He offers a sacred sacrifice, and has a sacred meal with Moses and the elders

v. Exodus 18.17-21: Jethro's Insight

Exodus 18.21, Torah: "You shall also seek out from among the people capable men who fear God, trustworthy men who spurn ill-gotten gain. Set these over them as chiefs of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens"

a I chose my Bible version and the Torah because of the language

1 This is prophetic language, showing us something about Jethro

2 "You should also look for" (NRSV) "you shall also seek out" (Torah)

b Hertz: "The Heb. is an unusual word for 'look out', select, appoint. It is used of prophetic vision; 'select by the prophet insight which God has given thee'."⁴

c *Blue Letter Bible*, KJV: "Moreover thou shalt provide" [look for], *chazah*, *Qal*: subject causes action, *Imperfect*: "you shall begin to provide" [you begin to look for]

d *Strong's Concordance*: primitive root, to gaze at, mentally to perceive, contemplate (with pleasure); specifically, to have a vision of: - behold, look, prophesy, provide, see.

e Hebrew Bible usage of the term: to see, perceive, look, behold, prophesy, provide, to see as a seer in an ecstatic state. It's used 51 times in the Hebrew Bible, mostly as Divine sight, Divine insight, a vision of the Almighty, etc.

f *Gesenius*': "This word is especially appropriated to speaking of those things which are presented to the minds of prophets, whether in visions properly so called, or in oracular revelations."⁵ It's used of revelations and those who speak as oracles.

g It's as if Jethro is telling Moses, I looked into your life and saw something. I invested in you when you had nothing on the backside of the desert in Midian. I saw what you were as a Prince of Egypt, but I also saw what you would become, the Deliverer of Israel.

h Now look and see a people who has come out of bondage, polytheism, decadence, and decay where they didn't even know God. Jethro was saying to Moses,

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., 290.

⁵ Samuel Prideaux Tregelles, trans., *Gesenius' Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures* (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI, 1990), 268.

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no matter where they've been, see where they're going, see their future. It was those 70 that eventually became the ones that the Spirit descended upon in Numbers.

vi. Jethro's Insight Confirmed

a **Exodus 18.22**: "In other words, God was saying to Moses, 'What makes you think this is your burden or that you have to bear it in your own strength? The Spirit of God is big enough and fully sufficient to carry the load and meet the need.'"⁶

b **Exodus 18.23**: "If you do this, and God so commands you"

1 Jethro's Insight is to be confirmed by God

2 Every prophet knows his words are to be confirmed by God

3 This speaks of Jethro's true humility

c Moses follows Jethro's Wisdom (Ex 18.24-26)

d Jethro returns home (Ex 18.27)

Invitation:

1 Maybe you're like Moses and you need someone like Jethro to mentor you, to look into your life, to provide insight

2 Maybe you're like Moses later in life and you need someone like Jethro to point out that it's time for you to mentor others, to look into their lives, to provide insight

3 The story leaves us with the question, what are you going to do with the insight that God gives to you?

⁶ Stanley M. Horton, *What the Bible Says About the Holy Spirit* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House), 27.