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[90400] BIB102: Old Testament Literature

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Exodus 18: Learning and analysis of Jethro and his actions for the application to daily life.

An analysis of the reading of Exodus 18 will be carried out to identify and understand Jethro's character, observing more specifically certain situations such as the advice he gives to Moses, and the study of the actions, both positive and negative, of Moses, as well as the effects that these actions could have had on his leadership in Israel and how Jethro has an important role in the development of history. From this analysis, we will be able to identify the multiple lessons that as Christians we can apply today to serve and honor the Lord on our path toward grace.

Exodus 18 is the account of Jethro, who was Moses' father-in-law. He visited Moses in the desert after learning about all that God had done for Moses and the Israelites. Jethro brought Moses' wife and children and stayed with him for a while. Moses told Jethro all that the Lord had done to Pharaoh and the Egyptians for Israel's sake, all the hardships that had befallen them along the way, and how he had delivered them. Jethro was pleased with all the good that the Lord had done to Israel, whom he had delivered out of the hand of the Egyptians. Jethro then offered a burnt offering and sacrifices to God. The next day Jethro saw Moses sitting to judge the people, and they stood around him all day. Recognizing that this was not good, Jethro advised Moses to select from among all the people capable, God-fearing men who abhor dishonest gain to put over them to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifty, and rulers of dozens. Jethro argued that doing so would ease the burden on Moses and make it easier for him to rule the people and that God would be with him. He told Moses "What you are doing is not good.

Both you and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone." (Exodus 18:22), Moses listened to Jethro's advice and began to select capable men and appoint them as leaders. In summary, Exodus 18 tells that Jethro visited Moses in the desert, offering burnt offerings and sacrifices to God. Jethro advises Moses to appoint capable men as leaders to help him rule the people, which Moses does.

Jethro is identified as a priest from Midian and offers burnt offerings and sacrifices to God. This suggests that he is deeply religious and has strong faith in God. He is also supportive and affectionate, showing that he cares about Moses and his family. In the same way, he recognizes that Moses' current system of judging the people is not sustainable and suggests a more efficient and effective system, which shows that Jethro is a wise and thoughtful person. He never tries to impose his will on Moses but instead offers advice and suggestions, approaching him saying "Listen now to me and I will give you some advice, and may God be with you. You must be the people's representative before God and bring their disputes to him. Teach them the decrees and laws, and show them the way to live and the duties they are to perform."(Exodus 18:17-18). He shows respect and deference to Moses, acknowledging that Moses is the leader of the Israelites. He is a God-fearing man, he is a man of strong moral convictions, and values the qualities of integrity and righteousness in others. In general, Jethro is portrayed as a religious, caring, wise, humble, and God-fearing person who values righteousness and integrity. He is a positive figure in history and a good example of how a leader can provide support and help to others.

As already mentioned above, Jethro gives Moses advice on how to rule the Israelites more effectively. He notes that Moses is sitting and judging the people all day, every day and that this is not sustainable. Recognizing that Moses carries a heavy load and that something must

change, he advises him to select capable men from among the God-fearing Israelites, men of truth, and those who abhor dishonest gain and appoint them as leaders over the people. Jethro's idea is that by doing so, Moses will lighten his load and make it easier for him to rule the people. In summary, Jethro advises Moses to delegate authority and responsibilities by appointing trustworthy leaders among the people, thus dividing the responsibilities from him and lightening his leadership loads. This advice shows Jethro's wisdom, his understanding of the importance of delegation, and his belief in the presence of God.

Without this advice, it is very likely that in the medium and long term, Moses' rule over the Israelites would get out of hand, since he had all the tasks on top of him, already mentioned, it would have been unsustainable, leaving Moses not only physically worn out and mentally, but with a weak government and questionable leadership.

Some points to keep in mind that can be applied to our Christian life are, among others, the importance of delegating, the need for balance, integrity and justice, and the presence of God always. Jethro's advice to Moses emphasizes the importance of delegating, acknowledging that one person cannot do everything alone. Moses was taking on too much responsibility and it wasn't sustainable for him in the long run. The importance of faith and belief in the presence of God in our lives is also highlighted. It instills in us to surrender to God, to trust him, and to seek his guidance in decision-making.

Bibliography:

"Exodus 18:17-22". *The Holy Bible: New International Version*. Zondervan, 2011.