

Lynette Niebla

Dr. David Emanuel

Old Testament Literature- BIB 102

1/31/23

### Written Assignment #1- Jethro's Advice to Moses

The early chapters of Exodus in the Bible tell the story of Moses and his experience following God's instructions to save the Israelites. As we know, Moses saved the Israelites from slavery out of Egypt, across the Red Sea, and to Mount Sinai. Exodus 18 turns to a more personal aspect of Moses' story in which he receives advice from his father-in-law Jethro.

As Jethro visits Moses, he sees how Moses is accustomed to hearing all cases of the Israelites and judges them through the laws of God. Jethro advises Moses to share the statutes and laws of God with all the people and choose the men with high moral qualifications for God to help him delegate. This system would still hold Moses at higher power to teach and focus on difficult cases for himself, but would help take a load off his plate as any other simpler disputes would be resolved by the men he selects to rule over the people. As the passage says, "Moses chose able men out of all Israel...rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rules of tens" (Exod 18:25). This created a pyramid of power amongst the Israelites and spread out the responsibility of resolving disputes at different levels of authority.

What Moses was initially doing was sitting at the highest seat and hearing all the cases of the people. His initial thought of being the only one judging the people makes sense, mainly because he was the leader and knew the laws of God the best. Unfortunately, if he continued this way, he would eventually get tired and do the opposite of helping the people, thus losing his credibility. The Israelites were seeking advice and wisdom from Moses, and his words would be less effective if he were weary or washed out of the job. The best thing to do was create a team that would help Moses lead the people.

What we can learn about Jethro's character from this chapter is that he was a wise and respected man. He obviously sought the best for Moses as he took the time to visit him and give him the advice to be a better leader. We can also see how admired Jethro is by Moses as shown in their greeting at the beginning of the chapter "Moses went out to meet his father-in-law, bowed down, and kissed him..." (Exod 18:7). Along with that, the mere fact that Moses immediately followed the advice of Jethro shows how much he respects and listens to him.

A lesson I have learned from this chapter that I can apply to my life is to be open to receiving help from others. Although God gives me the power to accomplish anything I seek to fulfill, having a little help through my journey is not bad; it is probably the most beneficial way to succeed. In the case of Moses' story, he received advice from his family and was encouraged to seek help from trustworthy men around him to make him stronger. In the case of my life, this story drives me to seek help from the people I love and trust as well. Having people around me, like family and friends, who will help and push me to become a better version of myself will benefit me in the long run. Another

lesson I found in this chapter of the book sprouts from the saying, “teamwork makes the dream work.” In the case of the story, Jethro advises Moses not to lead alone and to create a team that all work towards a common goal. As an athlete, I have seen how effective it is to carry out a goal when you have a helpful team. Working together in a team environment can lead to so many more productive achievements compared to someone who is working alone.

The entire story of Moses teaches us to trust in the words of God and have faith in Him. It must not have been easy for Moses to go through everything he did, but he did so successfully because he followed and trusted what God commanded. Chapter 18 of Exodus acknowledges that one can not do it all alone. Not only do we need God in our life, but we also need help from people who will lead us to prosperity.