

RUSSELL SANDERS

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THE LIFE OF MOSES – LESSON 28

WISE COUNSEL OF JETHRO

Only two months out of Egypt and Israel had already seen many miracles since crossing the Red Sea. This included the bitter waters of Marah made sweet, the striking of the rock of Horeb to get water, the food provision of manna and quail, and the military victory over the Amalekites.

Two months in the wilderness brought personal conflicts among these 600,000 men. (Ex.12:37.) They always took their disputes to their leader Moses to have him judge between them. It took a toll on Moses.

A visitor came to Moses. It was his father-in-law Reuel, also known as Jethro the priest of Midian. Jethro is thought to be his positional title as a priest and ruler, while Reuel was likely his personal name. Reuel meant “a friend of God” (Elohiym). (Exodus 18.)

Jethro brought Moses’ wife Zipporah and his sons Gershon and Eliezer to him. After Moses told him of everything that had happened, Jethro declared in verses Exodus 18:11-12 that he now knew Jehovah **“is greater than all gods (Elohiym).”** He then offered sacrifices and burnt offerings to God.

God had a greater purpose for Jethro than simply reuniting Moses with his family. It was to give wise counsel to Moses. Jethro advised Moses against hearing all the disputes personally from these two million men, women, and children. He said to choose from the people certain men who were honest and godly. Then teach them the laws and ordinances and the proper way to live and get along with one another, then set these men over groups of people to judge their disputes. Only the toughest or most important cases would go to Moses.

This Moses did. It was important to do this, so as to not wear him out. It also helped develop leadership internally among the people which was also important since not all the princes would meet the qualifications.

God sometimes brings messages to us from outside the believers with whom we associate with or from outside the church. We need to listen to such advice, then determine whether it is appropriate for us. Consider the written word to eliminate any issue with it and let Holy Spirit bear witness whether or not it is right for you. Sometimes good advice, or even a word from God, may come from the least expected sources.