



***What is a Midianite doing leading Moses, Aaron, and the elders of Israel in worship?*** Pastor leads his family in today's "Hopewell @Home" passage. Exodus 18:1–12 prepares us for the second serial reading in morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these twelve verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that God leads His people's worship by appointed priests who bless God's Name, declare God's praise, show forth Christ's sacrifice, in bringing the people to fellowship with God.

**Friday, April 8, 2022 ▫ Read Exodus 18:1–12**

Questions from the Scripture text: Who hears about God's great works (v1)? What office does he hold? Who had been with him (v2–6)? What had Moses named his sons (v3–4)? Why? Where was Moses encamped (v5)? What does Jethro do before/as he comes (v6)? What does Moses do when he hears (v7)? What three things does he tell his father-in-law (v8)? How does Jethro respond (v9)? Whom does he bless (v10)? What has he had confirmed (v11a)? By what specific aspect of the deliverance (v11b)? What does Jethro now do in his office (v12a)? Who, specifically, come to participate in the blessing from it (v12b)?

After this encounter with Jethro, the children of Israel will come to Sinai, where the Sinaitic (Mosaic) Covenant will be established, including the ceremonial law and the consecration of the sons of Aaron as a priesthood.

But Jethro is priest for now (v1). As a Midianite (cf. 2:16–18, 3:1), he's a descendant of Abraham (cf. Gen 25:1–4) who believes in Yahweh. v9–11 are not a change but a joyous exultation in what has been confirmed. The burnt offering and sacrifices in v12, and the sacramental meal that they provide, are sanctioned by God. It's a bit of a mystery; like the priesthood of Melchizedek (Gen 14:18–20, Ps 110:4, Heb 7), we don't know where it came from or if/how it ended.

This made Jethro a safe place for Moses to send his wife and children while attending to the business of conflict with Pharaoh and leading Israel out of Egypt. Not so much because they were out of Pharaoh's reach, but because they were in a home where Yahweh would be worshiped, Yahweh's Word taught, and Yahweh's gospel promises believed in. Since the last time we saw Zipporah was 4:24–26, it may even have been that incident of spiritual (and physical!) danger that had prompted Moses to send them back. If so, it was all the more important to him that they be somewhere that they would hear and hold to spiritual truth.

And Jethro's priesthood anticipates Moses's and then Aaron's mediation, which will soon take place at Sinai. In fact, it is at Sinai/Horeb that Jethro meets Moses. The sacrifices and sacrificial meal in v12 end up signifying an end of the patriarchal period and that period's ways in which God met with His people and received their worship.

God had saved. God had been merciful. God was worthy of great praise! So the antediluvian period had ended, with God saving Noah with a great salvation. So the Noahic period had ended, with God calling Abraham, redeeming him from idolatry, and promising to bring the blessings of all the nations through Him. And now, the patriarchal period ends on another high note. God has saved. God is merciful. God is worthy of great praise.

How much more so, when the Sinaitic period ends not so much with the judgment of the Israelite church and nation in 70 a.d. as with the salvation of every true Israelite (and every true grafted-in "Israelite"! ) in the day that the temple curtain was torn in two from top to bottom. A change of priesthood abolished the ceremonial law in favor of the once-for-all sacrifice of the Great High Priest and His ordinances for His sacrifice's application (cf. Heb 7:12–13). Really, all of Hebrews 7:1–10:18 narrates the last change of redemptive eras, connecting the "sure and steadfast anchor of the soul" (Heb 6:19) that we have in Jesus's forever-High-Priesthood (Heb 6:20) to our own entry in Him through that veil (Heb 10:19–25).

So as we sympathize with Jethro's rejoicing in v9–11 and worshiping in v12, let us do so with a mind to rejoice all the more in our new and forever Priest, Jesus. God has saved. God has been merciful God is worthy of great praise!

What ordinances has Jesus appointed for showing forth the mercy and power of His once-for-all sacrifice? What worship has He consecrated with that sacrifice? With Him as our priest, how ought we to participate in those ordinances and worship?

*Sample prayer: Lord, we bless Your Name for Your victory over sin and death and Satan! We praise You for the perfect efficacy of Your once-for-all sacrifice! Forgive us for when we come doubtfully to Your ordinances or coldly to Your worship. Grant that Your Spirit would give us Your own great joy we ask in Your Name, AMEN!!*

**Suggested songs: ARP191 "I Love the Lord" or TPH196 "At the Lamb's High Feast We Sing"**

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**(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)**

Exodus chapter 18, our portion this morning sources, one through 12, these are the words of God and Jethro, the priest of Midian. Moses father-in-law heard of all that God had done for Moses and for Israel, his people that Yahweh had brought Israel out of Egypt. Then Jethro, Moses father-in-law took the poor on Moses's wife after he had sent her back with her two sons of whom the name of one was Gersham for.

He had said, I have been a stranger in a foreign land and the name of the other was Eliezer for the God of my father was my help and delivered me from the sort of Pharaoh and Jethro. Moses father-in-law came with his sons. And his wife, two Moses in the wilderness where he was in camp at the mountain of God.

Now he had said to Moses all your father-in-law Jethro and coming to you with your wife and her two sons with her. So Moses went out to meet his father-in-law bowed down and kissed him. And they asked each other about their well-being and they went into the tent and Moses told his father-in-law all that yahweh had done to Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake.

All the hardship that had come upon them on the way and how y'all, hey, had delivered them and Jethro rejoiced for all the good, which you always had done for Israel. Him. He had delivered out of the hand of the Egyptians and Jethro said, blessed be Yahweh who has delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians and out of the hand of Pharaoh and who has delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians.

Now I know that Yahweh is greater than all the gods for the very in the very thing in which they behave proudly. He was above them and Jethro's. Father-in-law took a burnt offering and other sacrifices to offer to go out and Aaron came with all the elders of Israel to eat bread with Moses's father-in-law.

Before God So far the reading of Gods inspired and an earthward.

There's a handoff that is taking place here and Exodus 18 in particular, but into 19 and 20 and in the rest of the book, Israel's about to come to Sinai, they will have the moral law of God summarized there in 10 words and written by the finger of God in stone and God will also give instruction for the tabernacle.

And for the priesthood and the ordination of Aaron and his sons into the priesthood that belongs to the Sinai, covenant will that all take place in and it'll start at the end of this chapter and the third month. First verse of 9 chapter 19 is and the third month after the children of Israel going out of the land of Egypt on that same day, they came to the wilderness of Sinai.

This has all been very rapid because of Israel's disobedience when they depart from Sinai. And the fact that they end up spending 40 years wandering in the wilderness, I think we tend to have the impression that this has all been long and drawn out. But it's only been three months to the day from the Exodus to coming to the Mount Sinai.

Mount Horeb. So this is a transition and one of the parts of the transition is that there is a new priesthood with new rules that govern the worship of God. This is something that happens especially of course, in Jesus's new priesthood which is what the book of Hebrews is about about how Jesus being the forever high priest.

According to the order of Melchizedek the rules for God's worship that belonged exclusively to the Sinai covenant and to the time of Aaron and his sons being priest that those rules were ended and that there was a new rule of worship in coming through the Lord Jesus Christ. That's why one of the places we see much about the Lord's day and baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the assembly of the church on the Lord's Day.

And what preaching in worship is and what singing in worship is, and what prayer is that, you have all that in the book of Hebrews because there's a change of priesthood, there's a change in church. The Sinai Church had been ended by God, especially at the tearing of the carton of the temple, top to bottom and would be even more finally.

So in the final destruction of the temple in 70 AD which would take place shortly after the book of Hebrews, but new era, new priest, Jesus, new rules of worshiping. Well, up until this time, you had God in the times of the fathers. He's the one who had started.

The sacrifice, Remember on the day that Adam and Eve fell, and the expelled them from the garden. He had killed animals in order to clothe them and then we see that Abel offered sacrifices by faith, not just that you can come and do whatever you want by faith. But that faith follows what God says and what God does And so Abel in part.

Offered sacrifices by faith, by virtue of the fact that he was offering what God had sacrificed, He was imitating. God Cain should have taken the first fruits, the best of the fruits of his crop farming and used them to buy himself, a blemish-less lamb from his brother. The, the lamb farmer, the animal farmer in order to offer a sacrifices by faith, but can of course, was coming in The flesh.

And we see this sacrificing by families unto God, by individuals and families. And to go out all the way throughout the time of Abraham, which connects us directly to Exodus 18. How is it that Jethro is a priest of Yahweh. He's not saying in verse 11, I was on the fence until now, but now that Yahweh has humiliated all the gods of Egypt, I think I'll go within.

No, he's rejoicing that the God of whom he is a priest, is the one who's just devastated? All of the demonic figments of the Egyptian imaginations. This is why, by the way it was safe for Moses during the time of engaging Pharaoh in the Exodus and all of that to send his wife and two sons back to Jethro.

In fact, it probably wasn't so much safety for them from Pharaoh and Egypt, but safety for them, from Moses and Yahweh that he had sentenced up Zipporah Gershon and Eliezer back to Jethro's house because the last time we saw the family together, was when the Lord almost killed, Moses

for having failed to circumcise, One of his children.

And since the Bible doesn't tell us anything about Zapura and the boys from then until Exodus 18, it is wisest to draw our any conclusions. That's why it's not to draw any conclusions that aren't substantiated from the text, but it's wisest to if we're going to think about it to say.

Ah he almost got executed for not honoring the covenant in his household, probably not the case that he said okay I hear by abdicate my responsibility as a father and send them back to a pagan house. No, it was precisely because he was going to be so preoccupied with his new calling to lead.

Israel out of Egypt that it was safe. In grandpa's, covenantal house. Now, Jethro has been a priest. He was a priest of Midian before when we heard his other name Ruelle, but the reason he's a priest of Yahwe is because Midian was a son of Katura. And Keturah was a wife, a lesser wife, after the death of Sarah, Abraham married.

Her Lesser we say because she was not the mother of the Covenant people from whom would come the Christ. And in fact, Genesis uses that one point, the name concubine or the title concubine for Keturah. But Midian was born to Abraham by Keturah in his old age, after Sarah had died and He would have been instructed by Abraham in Abraham's most mature faith and his old in his elderly days where he was not like Isaac.

You had drifted further and further from God as he got older, which we know now from the Bible can happen to Believers. And we heard recently about Solomon having a great time of wondering in his old age. Are you asking a question or just holding your hand in front of your face?

Okay.

So Abraham having walked with God and seeing the promises kept and clung to God by faith and excited for the fact that God would bring the Christ through Isaac. He was generous with all of his boys, but he gave the bulk to Isaac. You remember all of these things and that season of his life Midian had become his son.

Now, Midian was probably grandfather or great-grandfather at most to, Jeff to Jethro. Remember Jethro is from the generation of Moses's parents. And Jaco Bed has mom was the daughter of Levi and his dad was a grandson of Levi. Oh, I forgot Isaac and Jacob. Okay, so probably four generations or so but still this is a godly family that knows the promises of the sojourning for the 430 years.

And that more than half of that or approximately half of that had already taken place in the land of Canaan. And that that the family of promise was Isaac's family. So all of this would have been known and celebrated and delighted in by Jethro. He was a priest of God from the age of the patriarchs but the age of the patriarchs was coming to a close at Sinai in the coming chapters.

In fact it's soon as Jethro leaves and so he performs his priestly function. One last time that we know of in the Bible Jethro is a little bit like Melchizedek. He offers a sacrifice, he serves the sacrificial meal. They don't just eat bread in verse 12, Moses and Aaron and the elders of Israel.

Eat the eat bread with Jethro before God, it's a sacrificial. Sacramental meal in verse 12. And he offers that worship in response to especially the deliverance from Egypt and that God has continued to be. And that God has continued to be the the God who saved them from Egypt.

His continued to be that kind of God to the continued in that sort of relation with them since he left. So they've had hardships along the way. Moses tells him about that in verse 8. But you always had delivered them even from the hardships. We just had the end of chapter 18, the Malachites.

And so in response to a the great salvation by which God had delivered this church and be that God has continued to give them other deliverances. According to the pattern Jethro blesses, the name of Yahweh and Jethro said Jeffrey verse 9 Jethro rejoiced for all the good that yahweh had done for Israel and Jethro said, blessed be y'all way He starts their worship.

Now, I know that you always greater than all gods from the very thing in which they behave proudly. He was above them. He preaches tiny little sermon. Yeah. 10 second sermon in verse 11. It may have been longer than that. We might just have a summary, you know, you can read the main idea, line over a sermon outline of well in 10 seconds.

And if someone asks you, what did your dad preach yesterday, you might repeat that line and it takes you 10 or 11 seconds, or maybe less and you're summarizing a long sermon. The Bible tells us those things, sometimes that might actually be what's going on in verse 11. And then they have the sacrifice that looks forward to the coming of the Christ and his atonement and for them.

Whatever reminded them, of course, of the Passover that they had had just three months ago. And, and that looking forward to Christ as well. And then after the sacrifice, they eat their, but he holds the worship service, He holds a worship service, that embraces God, according to God's pattern of in, for how we should rejoice over God's once for all salvation in Jesus, which the Deliverance of that church was the way that church started The cross.

And resurrection, and Pentecost is how the Church of Jesus has has started. And also We respond to God that worship because of his many deliverances and kindnesses to us that have continued ever since that common the same love and participate in the same salvation that God accomplished in the death and resurrection ascension session of Jesus and his pouring out the Spirit at Pentecost.

And so Jethro is a reminder, to us here of what Jesus will be like in his priesthood Jethro is a priest. Lowercase B. Jesus is the priest capital P and he is always leading us and the public worship were when we gather as a family to God through him in the family.

Worship is always leading us in response announcing to us. God has saved. God is merciful. God is worthy of praise blessed. Be the name of Yahweh For this is what he has done. Not only once and for all but also in the continual deliverances and helpings throughout walk with him.

He continues to demonstrate himself to be God. Worthy of praise just as he had demonstrated himself over against the Egyptian gods as well. So, If

Jethro led, the people of Israel who were coming now, to the end of the patriarcher period, and into the Sinai, covenant and the rejoicing over God and blessing his name.

And if that was a pattern for Aaron, especially who's mentioned here in, verse 12, for his job, as a priest to lead Israel by this, new rule of worship, that was being given in rejoicing over and the the praise of God for his, for his deliverance, Then how much more doing that Jesus leads us?

According in to His priesthood and the new rules of worship that belong to his church and his age of the church. And we should rejoice over God. See the greatness of his salvation. Know that the deliverances along the way until he brings us all the way home, Our further examples and reminders of His great ones for all deliverance and find ourselves being led by him.

In fellowship with God, as as we worship God through the ordinances that God has given us in the age of the priesthood of Jesus. We're coming tomorrow when the Lord's day to worship. God has led by Christ. And we should see the praiseworthiness of our God, the greatness of our sight salvation and how he has been to us all of our lifelong the same God of the same love and the same power and the same salvation as he was at Jesus's death and Jesus's resurrection.

So that we will rejoice over him and bless his name and declare, his praise, and have fellowship with him. And all the parts of his worship. Lord help us to do. So not just tomorrow on the Lord's Day since he's given us. This portion of his words together in anticipation, but every time we are gathered to him under the priesthood of Jesus, that we would worship him that way.

Let's pray, Thank you Father, that you have given us, not Jethro or Aaron, but even your son, our Lord Jesus, to be our great, High Priest. Thank you that you have given us. Not only your preservation at the garden and your promises to Abraham and deliverance from the Exodus in Egypt.

But you have given us the death and resurrection of our Lord. Jesus Christ who has now gone into the Holy of Holies in heaven so that the deliverance is the the lasting deliverance from our sins. And the place of the worship is really glory with him as our High Priest and O Lord.

We pray that your same spirit, who gladdened saints of old and other ages of the church to rejoice over your salvation. That that seems spirit would now grant to us under the leadership of Jesus in our worship to rejoice, over your salvation, to bless your name, to declare, your praise, and your power, and to have fellowship with you.

Through the sacrifice of Christ that has a toned. Foreign consecrated the worship that he leads help us god for you. Have been so merciful to us to make us to live in the age when Jesus is priest and we have so poorly, appreciate it and followed our priest as he leads us in worship.

We need your spirit to be our companion and give to our hearts from Christ and His joy and his life and his love. Grant it. We pray in His name. Amen.