



The Lord is My Strength

On The Mount

Exodus 18 - 20

- Last week we talked about how the Lord provides
- God performs big, miraculous, impressive, life-changing events
- God also just does daily support type of maintenance work
- Although we tend to focus on the “miraculous” big things, there are lots of little things that are also “miraculous”
- God loves us so much that He doesn’t just do the one and ignore the other
- God delivered Israel from Egypt, and then provided daily food and water for them
- God saves us from death, and then provides daily food and water for us
- He doesn’t always provide the same amount for each person, and that takes maturity for us to understand and appreciate that
- The things that God provides for us are both a BLESSING and a TEST
- He wants to see if you are thankful for it
- He wants to see if you are willing to share it with others who are less fortunate
- He wants to see if you are going to give some back to Him
- He wants to see if you are going to take the credit for it’s appearance yourself
- Like when He provided Manna for the Israelites, He wants to prove you, to see whether you will walk in His law, or not...
- The other thing we noticed is the AMOUNT of water that God provided...
- God doesn’t just make it so that you can “get by”, God send a huge river rushing out of the side of that rock

- Let's look at what happens to Moses next...

- His Father-in-Law comes to visit

- Exodus 18:1-5 KJV

- 1) When Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father in law, heard of all that God had done for Moses, and for Israel his people, *and* that the LORD had brought Israel out of Egypt;
- 2) Then Jethro, Moses' father in law, took Zipporah, Moses' wife, after he had sent her back,
- 3) And her two sons; of which the name of the one *was* Gershom; for he said, I have been an alien in a strange land:
- 4) And the name of the other *was* Eliezer; for the God of my father, *said he*, *was* mine help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh:
- 5) And Jethro, Moses' father in law, came with his sons and his wife unto Moses into the wilderness, where he encamped at the mount of God:

- Here we learn something we didn't know

- Moses had sent his wife and sons back to stay with the In-Laws while he was working

- I'm not necessarily sure if this is a good example to us, or not

- While it's reasonable to think that sometimes you may have to focus on the Work of the Lord so intently that you can't be a good Father or Husband, on the other hand that is an unhealthy situation to put your family in...

- Look at how Moses doesn't try to impress his Father-in-Law by boasting or bragging

- Exodus 18:8 KJV

- 8) And Moses told his father in law all that the LORD had done unto Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake, *and* all the travail that had come upon them by the way, and *how* the LORD delivered them.

- Notice the righteousness of his Father-in-Law also

- Exodus 18:9 KJV

- 9) And Jethro rejoiced for all the goodness which the LORD had done to Israel, whom he had delivered out of the hand of the Egyptians.

- Now something interesting happens, and Moses is wise enough to receive advice from others...

- Moses receives some good advice from his Father-in-Law

• Exodus 18:13-23 KJV

- 13) And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to judge the people: and the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening.
- 14) And when Moses' father in law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What *is* this thing that thou doest to the people? why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even?
- 15) And Moses said unto his father in law, Because the people come unto me to enquire of God:
- 16) When they have a matter, they come unto me; and I judge between one and another, and I do make *them* know the statutes of God, and his laws.
- 17) And Moses' father in law said unto him, The thing that thou doest *is* not good.
- 18) **Thou wilt surely wear away**, both thou, and this people that *is* with thee: for this thing *is* too heavy for thee; thou art **not able to perform it thyself alone**.
- 19) Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee: Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God:
- 20) And **thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk**, and the work that they must do.
- 21) Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place *such* over them, *to be* rulers of thousands, *and* rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens:
- 22) And let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, **that every great matter they shall bring unto thee**, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear *the burden* with thee.
- 23) If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace.

• What advice can we take from this counsel?

1. Delegation is a good thing
2. Burn-Out is to be avoided
3. Focus on the important things - Teaching the people the way they must walk - Don't get so bogged down in the daily details that you lose the big picture
4. Don't delegate everything - Still have the great matters brought to you

• Moses was wise enough to listen

• Exodus 18:24 KJV

- 24) So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father in law, and did all that he had said.

- What kind of personality is required in a great and successful leader to listen to the advice of his old, sheep-herding Father-in-Law from out in the countryside of Midian?
- A truly wise person listens to advice - regardless of the source
- A truly humble person is able to admit that the way they are doing things is not the best way, and that the suggestion of others might be better
- A humble person is also able to release some of the responsibility that they had taken upon themselves, and share that with others around them
- So, six weeks after leaving Egypt they had come to Rephidim, and the Lord had provided water from a rock
- Now, six weeks later, they have left Rephidim and officially entered into Sinai
- Exodus 19:1 KJV
 - 1) In the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they *into* the wilderness of Sinai.
- God sums up the entire message in one simple statement to Moses
- Exodus 19:5-6 KJV
 - 5) Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth *is* mine:
 - 6) And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These *are* the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.
- Look at the simplicity of the transaction...
- Exodus 19:7-8 KJV
 - 7) And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the LORD commanded him.
 - 8) And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD.
- I'm guessing Moses is feeling pretty good about now...
- Everyone is responding properly to God
- So, God decides to come appear amidst the people

- Exodus 19:9-11 KJV

- 9) And the LORD said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever. And Moses told the words of the people unto the LORD.
- 10) And the LORD said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to day and to morrow, and let them wash their clothes,
- 11) And be ready against the third day: for the third day the LORD will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai.

- But, there were certain rules...

- Exodus 19:12 KJV

- 12) And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves, *that ye go not* up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death:

- And the people were sufficiently affected by this...

- Exodus 19:16 KJV

- 16) And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; **so that all the people that was in the camp trembled.**

- We find out in Hebrews that even Moses was scared...

- Hebrews 12:18-21 KJV

- 18) For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest,
- 19) And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which *voice* they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more:
- 20) (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart:
- 21) And so terrible was the sight, *that* Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:)

- Look at the great lesson we learn about the God of the New Testament from Hebrews

- Hebrews 12:22-28 KJV

- 22) But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

- 23) To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,
- 24) And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than *that of* Abel.
- 25) See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more *shall not we escape*, if we turn away from him that *speaketh* from heaven:
- 26) Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.
- 27) And this *word*, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.
- 28) Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:

- So Moses approaches the mountain and God delivers to him the Torah

- What is the first thing that God says to Moses?

- Exodus 20:2 KJV

- 2) **I am the LORD thy God**, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

- Most people think of Verse 3 as the first commandment:

- Exodus 20:3 KJV

- 3) Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

- And Verse 4 is the second commandment:

- Exodus 20:4 KJV

- 4) Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of *any thing* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth:

- But, as you think about it, aren't they really the same thing? Don't have false gods.

- Jewish people consider verses 3-6 to be the second commandment

- So, what is the first commandment?

- Verse 2 - I am the Lord thy God

- But, it doesn't SOUND like a Commandment

- In Hebrew the word translated Commandment is better translated Declaration
- The Ten Declarations of God begin with...
- I AM THE LORD THY GOD
- I think that it's helpful to think of them in this way
- Before you can even begin to obey 2 through 10, it's best to properly understand # 1
- This establishes the authority of the Lord, and explains the basis of why you should listen to what comes next
- We see an interesting response of the people...
- Exodus 20:18-19 KJV
 - 18) And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw *it*, they removed, and stood afar off.
 - 19) And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.
- What are the people saying?
 - You be God to us...
- Again Moses doesn't take advantage of the situation to benefit him personally...
- Exodus 20:20 KJV
 - 20) And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not.