Exodus 18 Bible Study Notes

**Read Exodus 18: 1-12**

Jethro was the father-in-law of Moses. They first met when Moses fled Egypt after killing an Egyptian who was beating a fellow Israelite. Jethro gave him his daughter Zipporah’s hand in marriage and Moses tended his father-in-law’s flocks.

**Discuss:** Does anyone have an example of how a father-in-law has been a blessing in their life? How can a son or daughter-in-law enrich their lives of fathers-in-law? How can we pray for one another in this area?

**Read Exodus 18: 9-12**

*Jethro was delighted to hear about all the good things the Lord had done for Israel in rescuing them from the hand of the Egyptians. He said, “Praise be to the Lord, who rescued you from the hand of the Egyptians. Now I know that the Lord is greater than all other gods, for he did this to those who had treated Israel arrogantly.”* (Exodus 18:9-11, NIV)

**Question:** When Jethro, a Midianite priest, hears what God has done in the lives of Moses and the Israelites he is delighted and praises God. Drawing on our own experiences, what stories could we tell friends and family about “all the good things the Lord has done”?

**Question:** Moses recognised that the Lord is greater than “all other gods”. What are the false gods in our society? How can we ensure we worship the true God? What difference would it make if we really believed God was more powerful?

**Read Exodus 18: 13-27**

Jethro feared that Moses would burn out. He was worried when he saw that Moses spent all day settling disputes among the Israelites. He told him to appoint men to serve as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. Jethro told Moses:

*[Select] capable men from all the people – men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain…* (Exodus 18:21, NIV)

For Jethro, it was important leaders were capable; feared God; were trustworthy; and hated dishonest gain. Compare this with Paul’s description of the type of leaders who should be appointed in the church in 1 Timothy 3:2-10. How do these characteristics of leadership challenge the world’s idea of what a leader looks like? When have you seen leadership at its very best? As a community, how can we nurture and encourage these attributes?

**Pray:** Pray for fathers-in-law. Thank God for them and bring any specific requests concerning them to the Lord.

**Pray** that we will have the opportunity to tell others the great things that God has done for us. Pray that we will have the right words. Pray for modern-day Jethros, people who will come to faith in God and spur us all to worship the Lord.

**Pray** that we will recognise that God is greater than any false gods, that he has the power to save us in any situation, and that he alone is worthy of fear.

**Thank** God for leaders across the church and pray that they will have wisdom and energy, and that they will be able to share their loads with capable people of good character. Pray that the church will nurture the next generation of leaders.