Exodus Chapter 18 Verse 1

* This is the person that Moses had lived with while he was in the wilderness himself for 40 years…after he was forced to leave Egypt for killing the Egyptian. He is ***probably not*** a priest of a pagan god but most likely he serves and worships the true God. Moses is a decedent of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob and into the tribe of Levi while Jethro is a decedent of Abraham through Keturah who had a son name Midian.
* So he hears of what God had done through Moses (not sure ***how***, but we are about to find out ***why***)…and apparently Moses’ wife Zipporah and two of his sons were back living with Jethro…

Exodus Chapter 18 Verses 2 – 6

* Moses learned *plenty* under Pharaoh. He learned **how to be served.** He learned **how to lead from on top of the people.** He learned **how to rule with explicit and ultimate authority**…and **he learned how to kill.** Perhaps the most important years of leadership training had actually come while he was tending the flocks of Jethro as an outcast. Jethro wasn’t a dictator…he was a shepherd, a father and a priest. And what we see here is that he is a ***reconciler.***
* Moses had issue with Zipporah but instead of drawing his daughter back to himself…here Jethro is, **bringing her back to Moses**…seeking to reconcile them and the situation. This is the first piece and display of Godly character we see from Jethro but there is certainly more to come.

Exodus Chapter 18 Verses 7 – 12

* I love this picture. Moses is the leader of a nation of over 2 million people and yet ***in honor of God***, ***in honor of his wife and simply in honor of a Godly man***, **he bows himself to the ground**, sets himself lower and greets him with great respect and service. How wonderful it is to be greeted with honor and service. Not only to be greeted in that manner, but to greet as well. If you are a person that perhaps doesn’t find yourself doing that because you say the person is not honorable, then may I suggest, ***that is a pretty good reflection of you, not them.***
* It’s also a fact that ***the things God brings you through are not only for you.*** Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 1:3-5, *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ.”*
* It’s an amazingly graceful, God-honoring and Christian thing to allow God to comfort you…because the result of that is ***you become someone who abounds in comforting others.*** But, if you just are only about tightening your bootstraps and powering forward, or handling things according to your emotions and sight, not mindful of what God is doing in your life, perhaps at least part of **the why** being to grow you up, mature you, then many times even Christians become those that easily and quickly and perhaps default to ***slapping*** a brother or sister when they are in any trouble…why? Because they themselves did not receive comfort from God…when God was ready and had it the whole time…*the God of all comfort.*
* Moses shares with Jethro all that had happened. Both the hardships **and** how the Lord had delivered them…and the result is ***a share in the comfort…***

Exodus Chapter 18 Verses 13 – 14

* You see!? The DMV was a bad idea even then! HA!!

Exodus Chapter 18 Verses 15 – 16

* Some folks, for some, what we just read ***strikes a nerve.*** An *uncomfortability*…maybe even a *“whatever,”* why…because there is something innate in us, well – truly it’s the flesh – that ***does not like to receive direction or correction.*** The entire nation would come to Moses to discern the will and direction of God. He sits as their **judge.** I just want to share with you a couple of Biblical truths and ask you, ***who in your life has authority over your own thinking?*** Someone that you trust even over your *own self*…which means that they give you direction perhaps even contrary to how you think or feel…and you obey them. No one? **Hmmm…**
* Proverbs 12:15 says*, “The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but he who heed counsel is wise.”* Proverbs 28:26 says, *“He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, but whoever walks wisely will be delivered.”* Proverbs 15:31-33 says, *“The ear that hears the rebukes of life will abide among the wise. He who disdains instruction despises his own soul, but he who heeds rebuke gets understanding. The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom, and before honor is humility.”* If you receive **instruction, guidance, counsel, correction**…here is the proof. ***You obey in the midst of forsaking your own impulses, emotions and thinking.*** If you’re not seeing or doing that, then you are not heeding or walking in (and most definitely will not benefit from) the counsel you are receiving.

Exodus Chapter 18 Verses 17 – 23

* This is such ***good and wise*** counsel! Jethro sees Moses making every little decision and solving every debate and discussion…and he says, *“It’s not good.”* I completely completely entirely agree. We are, whether its *we pastors*, or *we leaders* or *we bosses* or *we just people*, **we are not to run other peoples lives!** We have enough to deal with in our own! And Jethro says here the true brilliance of a true leader…***don’t run their lives…teach them to run their own!!*** I love that!!
* And then, give them *guide posts…beacons…examples*…give them a place they can turn to *in the moment* until they learn not just the head knowledge but the **empirical knowledge!** If the thing is heavy, be there for them…but entrust their own lives to them and **before** anything else…***pray for them.*** I love that! And what’s the result…Jethro calls it…***all this people will have peace!*** That’s the goal as far as I’m concerned. Not to make little disciples of me…but that you would find peace.
* Jesus said in John 14:27, *“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you.”* **Is that your goal in the way you lead people?** It better be…to get them one on one with Jesus…to get them to peace. If not then you are not leading in a Christ-like way…because that’s how He leads…

Exodus Chapter 18 Verses 24 – 27

* Jethro wasn’t a part of the nation of Israel. He wasn’t amongst the wise men of the people, he wasn’t a father to one of the tribes…by all accounts he was an ***outsider***…and Moses learns from him. And in that humility and ***seeking of counsel*** (because if you aren’t looking for it, you’re not receiving it) in that, he becomes a better leader for his people. D.L. Moody once said, *“It is better to set a hundred men to work than to do the work of a hundred men.”* I say amen to that! While my flesh wants the glory from men of compliment and admiration, my spirit wants to see men and women free, flushed with peace and serving the Lord themselves!