

Exodus 18

- Israel is camped a short distance from the mountain of God
 - We're building toward the moment when Moses will reach Sinai and ascend the mountain to meet with God
 - Until that moment, we're still watching the Lord bring Israel experience after experience
 - The experiences are teaching opportunities for Israel
 - They are being introduced to their Lord in stages
 - They've seen His wonders and powers of destruction in Egypt
 - And they've seen His faithfulness to provide for His people
 - Last week we saw the Lord providing food and water
 - Manna and water pouring from a rock
- These provisions were designed to create pictures of the Lord
 - The food from Heaven was intended to draw comparisons to Jesus, the Bread of Life from Heaven
 - He sustains us spiritually, making possible eternal life
 - We studied in John 6 how Jesus compared Himself to the manna
 - The manna God delivered left Israel hungry later
 - And they eventually died despite that manna
 - So it wasn't the ultimate solution to their need
 - But it pictured a great solution, that is Christ
 - Jesus also comes from Heaven and must be taken in
 - But when we accept Him, we receive a new life that will never die
 - We also looked at the water from the Rock, but our study ended before we had time to make a connection between the water from the Rock and Jesus

- The water came from a rock that was split in two when Moses struck it with his staff
- Then water gushed forth creating a river that eventually made a lake of fresh water for Israel's encampment
- The rock itself is a picture of Christ

[1Cor. 10:1](#) For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea;

[1Cor. 10:2](#) and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

[1Cor. 10:3](#) and all ate the same spiritual food;

[1Cor. 10:4](#) and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ.

- The rock at Horeb was real, and real water poured out of it in a supernatural way
- But God determined to provide water in this unique way to create this picture of Christ for later generations
 - We should understand Jesus as the One Who gives us living water, that is a living spirit
 - And from that new spirit, living water will spill out of us

[John 7:38](#) "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of **living water**.'"

- In fact, a rock in some form is the most common symbol used to depict Christ
 - At various times Christ is described symbolically as a rock, stone, block, mountain, or cornerstone
 - These symbols often have unique features that teach us things about Jesus
 - Stones that have not be cut by human hands
 - Stones that have been tested
 - Stones that are foundations or cornerstones of a building
 - A stone or rock of offense that some stumble over
 - Furthermore, the rock was struck by the staff God gave Moses

- Moses' staff has already become a symbol of the Father's authority
 - All the major miracles the Lord performed through Moses were performed using Moses' staff
 - The message has become clear to the people of Israel that the work done through that rod is the work of God through Moses
- So as Moses struck the rock, a picture is formed of God the Father ordering that the Rock, His Son, be struck for the benefit of the people
 - By striking Christ, the Father will bring a river of life flowing to His people

[Is. 53:4](#) Surely our griefs He Himself bore,
 And our sorrows He carried;
 Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken,
 Smitten of God, and afflicted.

[Is. 53:5](#) But He was pierced through for our transgressions,
 He was crushed for our iniquities;
 The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him,
 And by His scourging we are healed.

[Is. 53:6](#) All of us like sheep have gone astray,
 Each of us has turned to his own way;
 But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all
 To fall on Him.

[Is. 53:7](#) He was oppressed and He was afflicted,
 Yet He did not open His mouth;
 Like a lamb that is led to slaughter,
 And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers,
 So He did not open His mouth.

- So Christ was struck (or afflicted) for our sake, just as the rock was struck by the rod God gave Moses
- God wanted the rock struck (as opposed to some other method) so that this picture would be available
- Finally, this moment also parallels one of the stories of John's Gospel

- In chapter 4, Jesus meets a woman at a well, and the discussion turns to the importance of water from the well

[John 4:7](#) ¶ There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink."

[John 4:8](#) For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.

[John 4:9](#) Therefore the Samaritan woman said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink since I am a Samaritan woman?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)

[John 4:10](#) Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."

[John 4:11](#) She said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep; where then do You get that living water?"

[John 4:12](#) "You are not greater than our father Jacob, are You, who gave us the well, and drank of it himself and his sons and his cattle?"

[John 4:13](#) Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again;

[John 4:14](#) but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life."

- The woman talks about the need for physical water, water that our flesh thirsts for
 - Meanwhile, Jesus talks about a different kind of water, spiritual refreshment that leads to everlasting life
- Isn't it interesting that our descriptions of Hell always include images of heat and burning
 - Where the sufferers long for a drop of water
 - And in contrast, the believer is told that faith brings eternal flowing rivers of water that bring everlasting refreshment
- Moving forward in the story, we turn back to the end of chapter 17 to find the nation still moving toward the mountain of God
 - And as they move into place, they come under attack

[Ex. 17:8](#) Then Amalek came and fought against Israel at Rephidim.

- The nation of Israel comes under attack for the first time since leaving Egypt, and really for the first time ever
 - The attacker is a man called Amalek, and he leads a tribe called the Amalekites
 - They attack at Rephidim, which is an encampment of Israel near the mountain of God
 - Amalek is the great grandson of Isaac through Esau
 - So he is essentially a distant cousin with the Israelites
 - We must assume he was threatened by the sudden appearance of 2+ million people entering into his land
- We aren't given the details of the attack in this chapter, but later the Lord reminds Moses of this event in Deut 25 and gives a consequence to the Amalekites

[Deut. 25:17](#) "Remember what Amalek did to you along the way when you came out from Egypt,

[Deut. 25:18](#) how he met you along the way and attacked among you all the stragglers at your rear when you were faint and weary; and he did not fear God.

[Deut. 25:19](#) "Therefore it shall come about when the LORD your God has given you rest from all your surrounding enemies, in the land which the LORD your God gives you as an inheritance to possess, you shall blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven; you must not forget.

- Apparently, Amalek chose to attack Israel from the rear as they were moving into the camp
 - The people of Israel were weary after a day of travel
 - And there were stragglers at the back of the assembly who were vulnerable to the attack
 - This was a cowardly way to attack Israel
- Moreover, Amalek showed no fear of God in his attack
 - We must remember that people everywhere had heard of the Lord's destruction of Egypt and His rescue of Israel

- They would have also learned of the Pharaoh's destruction at the Red Sea crossing
- Nevertheless, Amalek was still willing to attack God's people, thus showing no fear of God
- Then a battle ensues

[Ex. 17:9](#) So Moses said to Joshua, "Choose men for us and go out, fight against Amalek. Tomorrow I will station myself on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand."

[Ex. 17:10](#) Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought against Amalek; and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill.

- To lead the fight, Moses turns to a young man named Joshua
 - This is the first mention of Joshua in the Bible
 - He becomes a major Biblical character
 - One book of scripture is named for him
 - His name was not originally Joshua
 - In the genealogy of Numbers 13, we see his name given as Hoshea
 - Hoshea means savior
 - Later, Moses changes his name to Joshua
 - Joshua means the Lord is savior
 - When the Hebrew word "Joshua" is translated into Greek and then from Greek into English, it becomes Jesus
 - In other words, Jesus and Joshua are the same name, which means the Lord saves
 - Joshua will become a private servant to Moses
 - In Ex 24 we learn that Joshua has been given this role
 - He also becomes Moses' successor who leads Israel into Canaan
- It's no accident that Joshua would be mentioned in the same chapter where the rock is struck for water

- As we studied earlier in this chapter, Moses was instructed to strike a rock and water came out
 - And as we noted, the rock itself pictures Jesus
 - The striking of the rock reflects Jesus' having been "struck" (i.e., dying) on the cross for the sins of men
 - So the first part of Exo 17 taught us that just as Moses struck the rock to save Israel, so did God the Father strike His Son to save God's children from sin
- Later in Numbers 20, there will come yet another time when God will produce water from a rock in response to Israel's complaints
 - In that future incident, God will instruct Moses to speak to the rock and water will come forth
 - In his disgust and anger at Israel's grumbling, Moses impatiently strikes the rock with his rod just as he had done before in Ex 17
 - This action was not in keeping with God's instructions
 - And so the Lord becomes angry at Moses for his disobedience
- How are these events related to Joshua's appearance in the second half of Ex 17?
 - As a result of Moses' disobedience later in Number, Joshua is appointed as Israel's leader
 - Furthermore, as a result of Moses' disobedience, God disciplined Moses by denying him opportunity to enter into the Promised Land
 - Moses would die in the desert
 - In his place, Joshua was to lead Israel into the Promised Land
 - So Joshua is introduced in connection with the striking of the rock because in a later day, Joshua will supplant Moses in connection with a similar incident
 - The rock of water and Joshua become closely connected by that later incident
 - One explains the rise of the other

- You might wonder why was God so upset at Moses' disobedience?
 - When Moses struck the rock a second time, Moses was distorting the picture the Lord was intent on creating through the rock
 - Moses' actions were suggesting that the Messiah Himself would need to be struck a second time by God the Father to save Israel
 - In truth, Jesus must die only once for our sins and will never again be struck in that way
 - When the Messiah comes again, He comes in power and glory, not to be struck by a rod but to rule with a rod of iron
 - Yet Moses' disobedience potentially corrupted that picture, forcing God to discipline Moses in order to make clear that his actions were wrong
 - This fact makes possible an even more powerful understanding of Joshua's connection to the rock of water
 - Moses brings Israel the Law, and as a result Moses comes to represent the Law in scripture
 - We even call it the Law of Moses
 - The purpose of the Law according to scripture is to act as a witness against the people of Israel
 - Paul tells us that Law was not given to produce righteousness
 - The Law was given to reveal unrighteousness by showing us to be guilty of disobedience
 - Therefore, no man will be saved by works of Law, Paul tells us
 - So when the man who represents the Law is himself shown to be a lawbreaker, he forms an unintentional picture that God uses for His own purposes
 - Moses, the Law giver, is not qualified to lead Israel into the Promised Land
 - In other words, the Law brings no one into the Promised Land, which is another term for the kingdom

- Should we try to enter the kingdom by works of the Law, we will be found to be a sinner and thereby be disqualified and prevented from entering
- So Moses' failure pictures the Law's failure to bring us to righteousness and into the Kingdom
- Instead of Moses, it was Joshua who leads Israel into the Promised Land
 - Joshua, as you know, is the same name as Jesus
- Jesus is the One Who leads us into salvation and into the Kingdom
 - He is the door by which we enter the kingdom of God
 - Jesus called Himself that door

[John 10:7](#) So Jesus said to them again, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.

[John 10:8](#) "All who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them.

[John 10:9](#) "I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.

- So as Joshua led Israel into the Promised Land, so does Jesus lead us into salvation and the Kingdom
- So Moses introduces us to Joshua at this point to emphasize that Joshua will be the future leader of Israel
- Turning to the battle itself, as Joshua takes some of the people of Israel and begins to engage the Amalekites, Moses stations himself on a hill overlooking the battle
 - With him are his brother, Aaron, and Hur
 - Hur was said to be Moses' brother-in-law,, the husband of Miriam, according to Josephus
 - Israel had strength in numbers, while the Amalekites probably had the benefit of better equipment and experience in battle
 - But Israel had an even more powerful advantage
 - They had Charlatan Heston's underarms

[Ex. 17:11](#) So it came about when Moses held his hand up, that Israel prevailed, and when he let his hand down, Amalek prevailed.

[Ex. 17:12](#) But Moses' hands were heavy. Then they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it; and Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side and one on the other. Thus his hands were steady until the sun set.

[Ex. 17:13](#) So Joshua overwhelmed Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

- As Moses watches the battle, he finds that he has an ability to intercede on behalf of Israel
 - When Moses raises his hands to the Lord, the battle goes Israel's way, but when his hands drop, Amalek begins to win the battle
 - We don't know how Moses came to discover this connection
 - We assume he was naturally directed to pray on behalf of Israel, and he raised his hands when he prayed
 - At some point he grew weary and ceased praying
 - That's when he noticed that his intercession was crucial to the battle
 - Once Moses and his companions notice the connection, they immediately understand what they must do
 - They must remain in constant prayer until the battle is won
 - To achieve this physically straining endeavor, they assist Moses by holding his hands when his own arm muscles give out
- We know that the Lord didn't need Moses's hands to be raised in order to defend Israel, so why did God insist on such a contrived method?
 - Once again, God's purpose is to teach Israel and later generations concerning the Lord
 - First, remember this is the first military battle for Israel, and therefore it's the first time Israel will experience the Lord fighting for them in human combat
 - The men of Israel are the ones physically engaged in the fighting
 - But the Lord will steer the events of the battle to His desired outcome

- This is the same way Gideon defeats a huge army with only 300 men
- In fact, battles will occur frequently in Israel's wanderings and conquest of Canaan, and all the battles will be fought under Joshua's leadership
 - So this first battle will set an important precedent for the nation
 - When Israel prevails, who will they credit?
 - Joshua? Moses? The Lord? Who is responsible for the outcome?
- So to ensure the nation appreciates the Lord's grace and provision of victory, the Lord chooses to work through Moses' staff in a very visible way
 - As Moses holds his staff skyward with hands raised in full view of all the nation, Joshua prevails
 - The staff continues to serve as a symbol of God's power and authority
 - So the message to Israel is that the Lord was the One earning Joshua his victory
 - When Moses drops the staff by the lowering of his hands, the nation ceases to prevail
 - In that way the people understand that Joshua and the men are not strong enough by their own power to win the battle
 - Human ability is not the deciding factor...the Lord is their secret weapon
 - Credit goes not to the man Joshua, but to the Lord
- This scene is often thought to be one of the best picture of intercessory prayer available in scripture
 - This account never says explicitly that Moses was praying, but it seems a reasonable assumption he may have offered prayer on behalf of Joshua
 - Even if Moses never prayed himself, the entire scene remains a beautiful example of men seeking God's intercession
 - First, it reflects the true purpose of prayer

- Too often we assume that prayer is an attempt on our part to persuade God to do our bidding
 - But God's will doesn't bend to the hearts of men
 - God's heart is to bend the will of men
- The true purpose of prayer is to bring our needs before God in the hope of receiving His grace and mercy in some way
 - Perhaps we will receive exactly what we request
 - Maybe the Lord will give us a different solution or nothing at all
 - Whatever He does, it will be the best thing we could receive
 - In the meantime, we will know it came from the Lord
- In fact, our prayer life will become the means to glorify God in the same way Moses' hands glorified the Lord
 - His intercession gave opportunity for Moses and the people to see the Lord working and give Him glory for it
 - Without the intercession, the work would still happen, but would we have known to credit the Lord?
 - Perhaps we would have wasted time praising Joshua for being such a great warrior
 - Prayer is a billboard God will use to tell the world of His work on behalf of His children
 - When we spend time seeking Him, then we have opportunity to connect the dots between our desires and His goodness
 - This is why James says:

[James 4:2](#) You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask.

[James 4:3](#) You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.

- James isn't teaching that we always get what we ask

- But he is teaching that until we become proficient in seeking God for our needs, we can't mature into the person who asks for the right things in the right ways and thereby sees the fruit of God's provision
 - We could make further comparisons to the role of partners in prayer, as illustrated by Aaron and Hur
 - And to the need to pray constantly and not just sporadically
 - But the points are obvious
- So Joshua prevails

[Ex. 17:14](#) Then the LORD said to Moses, "Write this in a book as a memorial and recite it to Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven."

[Ex. 17:15](#) Moses built an altar and named it The LORD is My Banner;

[Ex. 17:16](#) and he said, "The LORD has sworn; the LORD will have war against Amalek from generation to generation."

- The Lord commands Moses to begin writing a book
 - This is the first time of five time we hear the Lord telling Moses to write something
 - It's interesting - but probably not meaningful - that Moses eventually wrote five books in the Torah
 - Nevertheless, this is the first time Moses begins to write and sets Moses on the path to record God's word
 - In this case, Moses is told to record this event with a promise from God to blot out the memory of Amalek under Heaven
 - Furthermore, the Lord will war with Amalek in the meantime
 - Joshua later encounters the Amalekites in Canaan when Israel enters the land
 - At that time, the Lord orders Joshua to exterminate this people at that time
 - Nonetheless, some live on but are eventually destroyed under Hezekiah
 - Amalek's fate is another teaching moment for Israel

- Just as God has given Israel promises of future eternal glory, peace and possession of an inheritance, He is also promising eventual end to Israel's enemies
- Notice Moses is told to repeat these words in Joshua's hearing, indicating that God wants this moment to be clearly understood by Joshua
 - Joshua and Israel are to have confidence to know that Israel's enemies will not only be defeated, but they will cease to exist one day
 - This is still true today
 - The enemies of Israel still have the upper hand, but in a future day, they will be exterminated from the earth
- Finally, a memorial is erected to the Lord's victory
 - Moses builds an altar at the base of the mountain of Horeb
 - He names it the Lord is my banner, which refers to a military victory
 - So Moses declares that the Lord is the One Who gives victory in battle
 - Mose declares what the Lord instructed
 - The Lord has sworn to battle against Amalek, and this battle will last for generations
 - In fact, it lasts for four centuries before the people are wiped out
 - For a time in Judges, the Amalekites manage to win victories over parts of Israel until Gideon defeats them again
 - Later Saul defeats the Amalekites so badly they never again have national status or strength
- After they win the battle, Israel settles in for a time at the mountain, giving opportunity for Moses' family to arrive for a visit from elsewhere in Midian

[Ex. 18:1](#) Now Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law, heard of all that God had done for Moses and for Israel His people, how the LORD had brought Israel out of Egypt.

[Ex. 18:2](#) Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, took Moses' wife Zipporah, after he had sent her away,

[Ex. 18:3](#) and her two sons, of whom one was named Gershom, for Moses said, "I have been a sojourner in a foreign land."

[Ex. 18:4](#) The other was named Eliezer, for he said, "The God of my father was my help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh."

[Ex. 18:5](#) Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, came with his sons and his wife to Moses in the wilderness where he was camped, at the mount of God.

[Ex. 18:6](#) He sent word to Moses, "I, your father-in-law Jethro, am coming to you with your wife and her two sons with her."

[Ex. 18:7](#) Then Moses went out to meet his father-in-law, and he bowed down and kissed him; and they asked each other of their welfare and went into the tent.

[Ex. 18:8](#) Moses told his father-in-law all that the LORD had done to Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake, all the hardship that had befallen them on the journey, and how the LORD had delivered them.

[Ex. 18:9](#) Jethro rejoiced over all the goodness which the LORD had done to Israel, in delivering them from the hand of the Egyptians.

[Ex. 18:10](#) So Jethro said, "Blessed be the LORD who delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of Pharaoh, and who delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians.

[Ex. 18:11](#) "Now I know that the LORD is greater than all the gods; indeed, it was proven when they dealt proudly against the people."

[Ex. 18:12](#) Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, took a burnt offering and sacrifices for God, and Aaron came with all the elders of Israel to eat a meal with Moses' father-in-law before God.

- Jethro, Moses' father-in-law heard of everything happening to Moses and the people, and so he travels to visit Moses
 - He brings Moses' wife and boys to visit Moses
 - Remember, Zipporah was sent back to Midian at the incident of the circumcision
 - She wasn't a part of the work of Moses in Egypt
 - It's worth remembering that she missed the chance to witness all of God's miraculous work

- She missed it because of her unwillingness to support Moses in obeying God's word
- We also learn the names of Moses' sons
 - The first name, Gershon, was known already
 - But now we know the second son was named Eliezer, meaning the Lord is my help
- Jethro sends word ahead of his arrival, so Moses shows Jethro respect by going out to meet him and welcomes Jethro into his tent
 - Moses then relates the entire event of the Exodus to Jethro
 - It must have been an incredible story
 - Jethro must have been wide-eyed throughout the account
 - This was better than any Hollywood movie...well, almost better than any Hollywood movie
 - Jethro responds in some important ways
 - First, he rejoices over Israel's deliverance in v.9
 - This tell us that he had a heart to bless those the Lord has blessed and to love those the Lord loves
 - Secondly, he praises the Lord and credits Him with this work in v. 10
 - This suggests to us that Jethro is now convinced in the power and faithfulness of the Hebrew God
 - Then, he makes a confession in v.11
 - He declares that God was above all other gods
 - Finally, in v.12 Jethro makes a sacrifice to the Lord and an offering of thanks
 - What do we make of Jethro's actions?
 - Some believe this proves Jethro either was a priest of the Jehovah or becomes a follower of God at this point
 - Others point out that In Num 25:17-18 Midianites were described as pagans and worshippers of many gods

- You can find support for both views in the text
 - Then Jethro makes a contribution to Moses' work

[Ex. 18:13](#) It came about the next day that Moses sat to judge the people, and the people stood about Moses from the morning until the evening.

[Ex. 18:14](#) Now when Moses' father-in-law saw all that he was doing for the people, he said, "What is this thing that you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit as judge and all the people stand about you from morning until evening?"

[Ex. 18:15](#) Moses said to his father-in-law, "Because the people come to me to inquire of God.

[Ex. 18:16](#) "When they have a dispute, it comes to me, and I judge between a man and his neighbor and make known the statutes of God and His laws."

[Ex. 18:17](#) Moses' father-in-law said to him, "The thing that you are doing is not good.

[Ex. 18:18](#) "You will surely wear out, both yourself and these people who are with you, for the task is too heavy for you; you cannot do it alone.

[Ex. 18:19](#) "Now listen to me: I will give you counsel, and God be with you. You be the people's representative before God, and you bring the disputes to God,

[Ex. 18:20](#) then teach them the statutes and the laws, and make known to them the way in which they are to walk and the work they are to do.

[Ex. 18:21](#) "Furthermore, you shall select out of all the people able men who fear God, men of truth, those who hate dishonest gain; and you shall place these over them as leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens.

[Ex. 18:22](#) "Let them judge the people at all times; and let it be that every major dispute they will bring to you, but every minor dispute they themselves will judge. So it will be easier for you, and they will bear the burden with you.

[Ex. 18:23](#) "If you do this thing and God so commands you, then you will be able to endure, and all these people also will go to their place in peace."

[Ex. 18:24](#) So Moses listened to his father-in-law and did all that he had said.

[Ex. 18:25](#) Moses chose able men out of all Israel and made them heads over the people, leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens.

[Ex. 18:26](#) They judged the people at all times; the difficult dispute they would bring to Moses, but every minor dispute they themselves would judge.

[Ex. 18:27](#) Then Moses bade his father-in-law farewell, and he went his way into his own land.

- Jethro observes as Moses take on the duties of a judge in Israel
 - It is understandable to see Moses assume this role
 - Israel consists of 2 million people but without lines of authority or government

- They are living in a commune and taking orders from Moses, who receives them from the Lord
- Inevitably, a group of 2 million people will encounter disputes, various forms of lawlessness, etc.
- Someone must judge over these matters, and Moses naturally assumes he must accomplish this work
- Furthermore, Moses was receiving instructions from God on a regular basis, and these instructions were handed down to the people by Moses
 - Since there was no email, and no megaphones, Moses was literally communicating instructions to all 2 million people
 - Evidently, he passed out instructions to one group and then another
- In v.13 we learn that Moses was forced to serve in this way from morning until evening
 - And Jethro correctly determines that this won't work for long
 - Moses is hoping he can hold out, but Moses needs a plan, and hope is not a plan
- So Jethro takes it upon himself to point out the flaws in Moses' system
 - First, he says this is not good, or beneficial
 - It is not beneficial for Moses or for the people
 - Moses has too much burden to bear and must include others in the work
 - Secondly, the work Moses chooses for himself must be the work he alone is qualified to handle, that is the work of a prophet
 - Moses is to act as God's representative, since this is the role God assigned to Moses
 - His work should focus on teaching God's statutes and laws and exhorting them to walk in these ways
 - Finally, he is to appoint trustworthy men to work alongside him at lower levels of authority in a chain of command

- These lower officials will handle most issues and only bring the most serious ones before Moses
 - Jethro assures Moses that is he will benefit from this change as well the people
 - Moses will be able to endure and sustain his work
 - The people will receive quicker, easier resolution to their disputes
- It should be clear to us all that these instructions set a wise precedent for spiritual leaders in the church today
 - First, leaders are not supposed to go it alone in ministry
 - They should work within a plurality of leadership over congregations
 - If one man tries to do it all, he repeats Moses' mistake
 - Secondly, leaders should know their spiritual gifts and calling, and then remain focused on them while resisting the temptation to do other things
 - The senior leader(s) has a primary responsibility to train up the body in the word of God and to exhort our people to live according to it
 - If leaders let other duties come between them and teaching the word, they begin to fail the Acts 6 test
 - They forsake the teaching of God's word to feed the widows
 - If our people learned the Bible and lived by it, every other issue we face as leaders would diminish if not disappear altogether
 - Thirdly, we should establish some degree of hierarchy of leadership in the church
 - Multiple levels of leadership support the efficient operation of the body
 - Remembering that levels of leadership doesn't imply a bunch of employees and staff receiving support from the congregation
- Next week we move with Israel to the mountain of Sinai