

2022.04.10 Evening Sermon

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Exodus 18:1–12

¹And Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law, heard of all that God had done for Moses and for Israel His people—that the LORD had brought Israel out of Egypt. ²Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, took Zipporah, Moses' wife, after he had sent her back, ³with her two sons, of whom the name of one was Gershom (for he said, "I have been a stranger in a foreign land") ⁴and the name of the other was Eliezer (for he said, "The God of my father was my help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh"); ⁵and Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, came with his sons and his wife to Moses in the wilderness, where he was encamped at the mountain of God. ⁶Now he had said to Moses, "I, your father-in-law Jethro, am coming to you with your wife and her two sons with her."

⁷So 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. ⁸And 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 come upon them on the way, and how the LORD had delivered them. ⁹Then Jethro rejoiced for all the good which the LORD had done for Israel, whom He had delivered out of the hand of the Egyptians.

¹⁰And Jethro said, "Blessed be the LORD, 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. ¹¹Now I know that the LORD is greater than all the gods; for in the very thing in which they behaved proudly, He was above them."

¹²Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, took a burnt offering and other sacrifices to offer to God. And Aaron came with all the elders of Israel to eat bread with Moses' father-in-law before God.

The Last Patriarchal Priest Leads Public Worship

Main idea: As God transitions His people from the patriarchal period to the Sinaitic period, He sends His last priest of the patriarchal period to lead the elders of Israel in public worship: praising, preaching, pointing to Christ, and providing fellowship with God.

Introduction: The shocking(?) idea of a Midianite priest.

1. Periods and Priesthoods

- Thus far: antediluvian, Noahic, Abrahamic/Patriarchal
- To come: Sinaitic/Aaronic (and temple), Heavenly (Christ our Great High Priest)
- Change of law (ceremonial regulations), cf. Heb 7:12

2. Jethro as Priest of Yahweh

- Father Abraham had many sons, v1
- Take God's word for it, not Israel's
- A safe place (from Yahweh!) for Moses's family, v2–6

3. The Public Worship

- Responding both to the great deliverance and to ongoing deliverance, v8
- Worship that originates in a joyful heart, v9
- Beginning with doxology and praise, v10
- Preaching God Himself in His salvation, v11
- Pointing to Christ and His sacrifice, v12a
- Sacrificial meal and fellowship with God, v12b

Conclusion: If there was such rejoicing and praising and preaching and "sacramental" fellowship under the priesthood of Jethro, what must ought ours be like under the priesthood of Jesus in response to His finished work?!

(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 18, verses 1 through 12. These are God's words 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 you always had brought Israel out of Egypt. Then Jethro Moses's father-in-law took Zipporah Moses's wife after he had sent her back with her two sons of whom the name of one was Gershom for.

He said I have been a stranger in a foreign land and the name of the other was Eliezer For. He said the God of my father was my help and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh and Jethro. Moses father-in-law came with his sons and his wife to 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 bow 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 you all they had delivered them Then Jethro rejoiced for all the good, which you always had done for Israel.

Whom 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 in the very thing in which they behaved proudly he was above them.

Then Jethro Moses' Father-in-law took a burn to offering and other sacrifices to offer God. An Aaron came with all the elders of Israel to eat bread with Moses father-in-law, before God as far the Reading of God's inspired and inerrant work. Knowing who Aaron is and what he's about to be? Does it not strike you as odd At the end of the passage to have Aaron led in the fellowship of eating a sacrificial meal by a Midianite named Jethro? Moses starts out. This passage camped at the mountain of God evidently, they return to the main camp of the people at Rephidim in verse 13 to the end of the chapter there.

But Moses starts out this chapter camped at the mountain of God, where the people are actually going to go after refine where they're going to receive the covenant Sinai where they're going to receive instruction for the tabernacle in the priesthood and the ceremonial law and where Aaron, and his sons are going to be ordained as priests.

So, what we have before us here, especially knowing that we're just on the cusp of. That is the transition from the patriarchal, period, or the Abrahamic period. If you want to go with a particular name, to the signing attic period, or the mosaic period, And God's dealings with his church.

And as you go from one to the next and each age, having God's own appointed way of gathering his people to himself. We have here as we do, when the Mosaic period ends, in Christ being anointed are great, high priest. We have a change of priesthood and as Hebrews 7 says, there's going to be because of a change of priesthood, a change of law, a change of ceremonial regulations.

Well, if you thought it was shocking to see the phrase priest of Midian, just imagine if you were a later Jew because things are not going to be good between the Israelites and the Midianites. And yet, here we have a Midianite priest. There has been the worship of God by sacrifice.

All the way from the garden, Scripture tells us that Abel sacrifice was offered in faith. And that doesn't just mean that he really trusted God and really loved God and wanted to give God the best. It also means that he worshiped God in the pattern that God had established.

And so when God killed two animals in order to clothe Adam and Eve, they understood that there was to be a sacrifice of blood, a substitution that would come. And yes Abel gave of the first fruits of his flock and Cain should have taken the best, the first fruits of what he had and perhaps bought a lamb a spotless lamb from his brother.

Well, it becomes more clear when NOAA gets off the boat and we end enter the the NOAAC period and he offers sacrifice that this is what God wanted for his worship. You remember that? He was to take not just two of every clean animal but how many of every clean animal?

You know, someone needs to go through and fix all of the Noah's Ark illustrations and make seven pairs of all the clean animals to show that what God wanted preserved. Most of all was the worship of God through sacrifice, that pointed to the atonement that his son would offer in order.

That man could come near to this wrath. Pouring God and have instead the mercy and salvation of God, or even by the same water. Remember Peter says the water that drowned the others And then you come into the Abrahamic period and in the transition to that period you do have Melchizedek don't you?

But one of the reasons why it doesn't, it doesn't surprise us too much that there's a midianite priest. So we get to that in a moment as that Midian was a child of Abraham by Keturah. He knew about the the promise of God, he knew about the prophecy of God, This Gersham that he would have for his grandson.

Reminds him not just of the Israelites but also of the Midianites for Abraham's descendants would be strangers in a foreign land. In a moment, there's going to be at Sinai, the ordination of Aaron and later still under the same covenant as with Moses. But when we come into the kingdom period and the establishing of the temple, there is additional regulation that gets attached to the temple worship.

David functioning not only as king but also as prophet and making provision for the temple worship. Even ahead of the tabernacle worship or beyond the tabernacle worship, But we have Christ, the great high priest. We don't have the antediluvian the before the flood or the patriarchal or the Sinaiaitic church.

We have the heavenly Church. The assembly of the firstborn, it is called or the souls of the just made. Perfect. That great assembly and glory. Where are the Holy angels? And where our priest who has passed through the heavens in his human flesh. Sits on the throne and leads the worship.

A man leading the worship of heaven because he is also God. And so as Hebrew 7 says there, there's a change of law there. So we have a transition here and Jethro as it were as leading. Perhaps one last worship service. We know that there was some overlap at least in the worship of God and the coming and understanding Christ.

As the high priest, the weak believers of Romans. 14 didn't understand that the ceremonial law had been set aside. So perhaps Jethro led some public worship after this. After all does not join up with Israel and go to Sinai. He goes home at the end of the chapter, But there is this change of law.

And Jethro models for Aaron some things about how to lead public worship. Now we know that he's a priest of Yahweh. We've already mentioned that Abraham was one of his one of his fathers, a few generations back. And it's not just Israel that comes to worship God first in Moses and then in Aaron in the elders.

But God himself says that they ate bread with Moses's father-in-law before God. So what you have in verse 11 is not some polytheistic guy, finally figuring out that all the Lord is the greatest of all the gods. Now, verse 11 is the main idea if we'll anachronist play forced to phrase upon him of a sermon that Jethro preaches.

But in verse 11, he is rejoicing that his God Yahweh has proven himself greater than other gods. And this is one of the reasons I believe that we have this five verses about him bringing Zipporah and Gershom and Eliezer back to Moses because everyone wants to know. What do you want to know?

What do you mean bring them back? When did they leave? The last time we saw them, Moses was on his way to Egypt. Had failed to put the covenant sign on one of his children, and the Lord had just about executed him for it. Now most commentators understandably. I know, Egyptians are very scary.

Some of you think. So think that he had sent his wife and sons back to Egypt. Sorry back to Jethro because Egypt was a danger. But the greatest danger that we know about so far in that particular family's life, is the danger of the Lord's discipline and the danger of Moses's failure to lead his family rightly before God.

So if your father-in-law is a priest of Yahweh and you are going to be busy leading the exodus, it is not out of the realm of possibility. In fact from the biblical data, if you have to draw conclusion and you shouldn't speculate, but you can at least see in verses two through six.

And the interaction there that he who was a safe spiritual place for Moses to send his wife and children. Now, here's all that you always has done and brings back the wife and children. Although tomorrow Lord willing will have next Lord's. The afternoon tomorrow to our text today he's going to see what Moses is doing and say ain't sure.

This is a safe spiritual place for your wife and children. I've got some recommendations for how you should conduct yourself in your calling. But more of that next week. Jethro was a priest of Yahweh. And so we have here a mini worship service, the coming of the of Aaron and the elders in verse 12 does not seem to be from Rephine but perhaps coming as an entering that verb often means just enter drawing near in order to eat bread, which doesn't just mean bread.

Bread is often for any kind of food but to eat the sacrificial meal after the sacrifice is offered. So what we have here in versus 9 through 12 is a response to, to what Moses tells his father-in-law. In verse 8, Moses tells his father-in-law about the great deliverance. That God had promised 430 years ago.

You remember to Father, Abraham and their responding to the great deliverance of the Exodus. But even since the Exodus all three months since the Exodus, I know, it feels like it's been a long time ago in in the preaching and sometimes it feels that way in the reading. But it's actually three months from the first Passover to Sinai. That's quick. Three months ago. It was 2022 already. It was January 10th. So their responding to that that once great deliverance. But also all of these other deliverances not just all that Yahweh had done to Pharaoh and Egypt and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake but also all the hardship that had come upon them on the way and how Yahweh had delivered them and don't you think for a minute that he just meant Amalekites at the end of verse 8?

Most of the problems that we've heard about along the way have been, what Israelites testing and trying the Lord, in a way, that would make them a model for how not to treat God for the rest of the Bible. And so the first thing we see about the worship that Jethro leads here as he models for Aaron at the end of Jethro's priesthood and on the cusp of beginning, Aaron's priesthood is worship that responds to the great salvation of God in fulfillment of His promises and the fact that he continues to be the same God, operating, according to the same salvation, in the day-to-day hardships, both of our sinning against God, and others sinning against us.

The second place we see that this worship originates is in a joyful, heart verse 9, then Jethro rejoiced for all the good, which you always had done for Israel. And Jethro said, and here we have something of a call to worship. But this is a summary here, he gives the praise of God.

Jethro said, blessed be you, who is 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. So it originates in a joyful heart. It begins with the praise of God. It continues with the proclaiming not just of God's salvation but of God himself in his salvation.

Now I know that Yahweh is greater than all the gods for in the very thing in which they behave proudly. He was above them. So he hears about all the different plagues and how every plague targeted a specific Egyptian. God ending, especially with the Sun, God being executed in darkness and the incarnation of RAW that the Pharaoh was supposedly to be being executed the firstborn son of Pharaoh, the presumptive next pharaoh and he says, don't you see how Yahweh has shown himself, even by the way that he saved you?

His greatness that He is the only true God. Now don't know how long Jethro took you could say, what did you preach last week and I might repeat to you the main idea which on most of you your folders I forgot to copy and paste. The new main idea in this in this morning's sermon hand out, but I might repeat to you the main idea and it would take me all of what 10 seconds, maybe 12, maybe less.

I don't remember how long the main idea was last week children, quick math, and temporal relations quiz was last week's sermon 10 to 12 seconds long. It was not and yet if I had repeated that May idea when you, if you asked me what I preached last week I wouldn't be lying.

Would I? That would be a right and accurate proper summary. Now, I suggest to you, that what we have in verse 11 and many places in the scripture where we have the content of a, a sermon referenced, it is often a summary of what was proclaimed. The book of Hebrews is probably an entire sermon.

And they say, oh well if you read it at a normal rate in Greek and none of us really know how to pronounce coin. A Greek is it takes 50 minutes to an hour. So, that was how long they preached. Well, maybe. But if the book of Hebrews is a summary, it might have been eight hours or more.

Anyway, there's originating from a joyful heart. The worship should not be perfunctory but joyful there's a begin with God's praise. It should include the proclamation of God himself in his salvation and the manner of his salvation, It should point to Christ and His sacrifice by the means that Christ has given Here.

There are forward-looking means aren't there Then Jethro. Moses's father-in-law took a burnt offering and other sacrifices to offer to God. Why did he do that? Does God. Enjoy the slaughtering of animals, does God? Like roasted meat, he created you to like roasted meat. God loves the sacrifice of His Son and he loves the holiness that is produced by the cleansing of the blood.

The the cleansing that his son's blood gives his people and those things pointed forward, But we can't point forward anymore to the sacrifice of Jesus. Can we? Why not? It already happens but has the Lord giving you something by which he put points backwards to the sacrifice of Jesus.

Is there anything that you hear when you do this you show forth or proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

There is, what is it when you eat the bread and drink the cup? That's one of the reasons why as you come to love the sacrifice of Jesus for you.

You desire to come to the table. Not only because he said to, that's a good reason not only because he feeds you there. That's a good reason, not only because he confirms his covenant to you that's a good reason but because you want to be a bread eater and cup drinker so that you can show forth and point back to the death of Jesus until he comes so that you can participate in doing that to and then and this is this happens when we eat the bread and drink the cup.

Isn't that, doesn't it? There's that sacrificial meal and fellowship with God at the end of the passage and Aaron came with all the elders of Israel to eat bread with Moses father-in-law before. God Jethro was a faithful priest and modeled for Aaron how to be a faithful priest in leading.

This new church, that was being constituted at Sinai, but Jesus is the perfectly faithful freedom. There is no joy like Jesus's joy, over God, and His salvation. And we ought to respond to that once-for-all, great salvation. And then all of those little deliverances he's been giving us along the way.

We ought to stir up our joy so that we may worship God out of it. We ought to begin with God's. Praise blessing his name for who he is and what he has done. We should come to preach or hear preached, depending upon who you are. You don't just worship God in hearing him, preached, The preacher worships God in preaching him, but you should come, especially to hear him, preached in his great salvation.

And in the proclamation of all his word, as he shows himself to be the one true and living God, that's Jesus preaches in preachers, God to us, proclaims himself to us as God. We should be eager, then to come and point back to his sacrifice, not with another sacrifice, but with a meal as he's given us and come not just to have fellowship with each other.

This was a great fellowship, wouldn't it have been between Jethro and Moses and Aaron and the elders of Israel, But their fellowship wasn't just with one another. Was it because they came to eat bread with Moses' father-in-law before God. And so we come to have not just fellowship with one another at the table.

But with God himself, the perfect priesthood of Jesus Christ. The great, I priesthood of Jesus Christ is what's being pointed forward to here in Exodus 18:1 through 12. May God the Holy Spirit grant to us to at least match, the rejoicing and praising and preaching, and sacramental fellowship of the church that had Jethro.

His priest since he has granted Dantus to be the church, that has Jesus. That's priest. Oh man. Let's pray. Lord, Jesus. Help us because we know that you do these things perfectly and you are the one who have given your spirit that we would be conformed to you. So help us as we learn more and more of what worship as and as we come to do it week by week to be led by you in it that your spirit would conform our minds and hearts to yours and we would offer that acceptable worship.

That is by faith. As you have said to do it by your life in us from your spirit. And with you yourself leading us how we praise you for the greatness of New Testament worship in your own name.

Amen.