

Paying a Visit

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[0 : 0 0] so two weeks ago we concluded chapter 17 we got two messages out of that chapter the final one had to do with Joshua's first fight as he went out and fought with Amalek and there were certain things that God told Moses to write down for a memorial in a book and to rehearse those things in Joshua's ears and I won't rehearse them in your ears again this morning but now we'll move ahead to chapter 18 I hope you're there by now in Exodus chapter 18 and where the entire chapter is dedicated to a visit from Moses' father-in-law Jethro now we've already been introduced to this man back in chapter number 2 if you can remember when Moses was running from Pharaoh and he ran out to the back side of the desert and he goes to Midian and he finds there seven daughters of the high priest of Midian that were getting kind of pushed around by some shepherds at the well where they were trying to water the flocks of their father and Moses stands up for them and long story short he ends up marrying Zipporah one of his daughters and he ends up keeping the flock of Jethro and so this man comes to visit Moses and he's known by a different name initially in chapter 2 it's R-E-U-E-L the priest of Midian and then in chapter 3 he's called Jethro and so here we know him as Jethro and what seems to me is that this chapter kind of stands alone it begins saying when Jethro the priest of Midian and it ends by him departing he shows up and he leaves and I think this chapter does not necessarily fit right at as far as chronologically things get kind of muddled here because look at chapter 19 and verse number 1 and 2 it says 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 for they were departed from Rephidim that's where they were in chapter 17 and were come to the desert of Sinai and had pitched in the wilderness and there Israel camped before the mount so they're there at Mount Sinai also called Mount Horeb and look at verse number skip back to chapter 18 and look at the end of verse number 5 it says into the wilderness where he encamped at the mount of God so it appears to me that Moses and Israel have already left Rephidim have camped there in the wilderness of Sinai at the mount or before the mount of God and it's while they're encamped there which we're introduced to in chapter 19 that this visit takes place with his father-in-law now they're camped there it appears from what I can tell 11 months and in that time

Moses goes up the mount Moses comes down back and forth back and forth several times even in chapter 19 going up and down and God and he delivers all the words that the Lord spake to Moses and he writes them in a book and he comes down with these tables of stones and this is an ongoing thing there's 40 days and 40 nights he's up there and then he comes back down then that happens again a little later but when we hit chapter 19 and they're at the mount we're parked there for quite a while all the way through to the end of Exodus through the entire book of Leviticus all that was associated with Moses and the tabernacle getting instructions from God about the priest's office and the Levites and then into Numbers a good 10 chapters into Numbers where they're getting their order of who's going to go first and all the offerings they brought before the Lord to the tabernacle so what's happening in chapter 18 could very well fit somewhere even in the book of Numbers I know it sounds like that's far off but it's not anymore because once we hit this mount they're there for quite a while and a lot takes place before they move on from the mount so that being said it makes sense to plug it in before 19 before Moses goes up before he gets the words before the 10 commandments because then it just goes straight into the judgments and statutes of God it goes straight into the tabernacle and the assembling of the tabernacle and all this information Moses got from God and where are you going to plug this story and it'll be a total just out of place if it tries to get plugged in later in the book so just for your own personal reference in Bible study one more point to make is that in verse number 16 look at the end of verse 16 of 18 18-16 Moses says I do make them know the statutes and his laws it seems that Moses already has the statutes and the

laws of God that he's going to judge between the people so I do believe that he's already come down off the mountain there is some speculation about this some people argue over it in some of the theologians but it seems to fit best in my opinion that this chapter and this visit actually takes place a little bit further in the future so let's what I'd like to do with you this morning is read the first 12 verses and as we read them just kind of outline what's taking place and you'll notice right away that it begins with a little bit of introduction and a back story in the first four verses let's read 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 then Jethro Moses' father-in-law took Zipporah Moses' wife after he had sent her back and her two sons of the which of which the name of the one was Gershom for he said I have been an alien in a strange land and the name of the other was Eliezer oh Eliezer for the God of my father said he was mine help and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh just for your understanding it appears that I want to say it was chapter 4 when Moses was heading to Egypt it says that the Lord met him by the way and was going to kill him and talking about the boy was uncircumcised and they circumcised him Zipporah said thou art a bloody husband unto me if you can remember reading that back in chapter 4 she obviously was by her language was not very pleased with Moses and what's going on and it makes sense to say that he said alright you can go back because I'm going to be coming back here in a few months anyway and he sent them back it says at the end of verse 2 after he had sent her back so his wife and children are not with him through this entire exodus situation but they're going to meet up now so that's a little back story on the boys and on that now in verse number 5 there's the arrival Jethro Moses and his father-in-law came with his sons and his wife unto Moses into the wilderness where he encamped at the mount of God and he said unto Moses I thy father-in-law Jethro and come unto thee and thy wife and her two sons with thee it's likely that this is him sending a messenger out ahead the way it's worded here that he says I am come unto thee and thy wife and her two sons with her I think he's sending a messenger out to Moses and Moses gets the message hey he's on his way he's coming and so it says in verse 7 and Moses went out to meet his father-in-law and did obeisance and kissed him and they asked each other of their welfare and they came into the tent so just some meeting and some greeting typical stuff and now the actual visit as it is they go into the tent and here's the account of the visit here in verses 8 through 11 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 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 and Jethro said blessed be the Lord who hath delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians and out of the hand of Pharaoh who hath delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians now I know that the Lord is greater than all gods for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly he was above them and so they sit and tell some stories and then finally in verse number 12 they worship and they have a meal and Moses or in Jethro

[8 : 50] Moses the father-in-law took a burnt offering and sacrifices for God and Aaron came and all the elders of Israel to eat bread with Moses' father-in-law before God now after this they go to bed because the next verse says it came to pass on the morrow and Moses goes back to work so it's a pretty straightforward visit it's a pretty standard kind of like identical to the things that we do you show up you hear something you show up you come to see you greet each other you go inside you sit and you talk and you have a meal and you just have a good time sounds like a pretty standard and normal visit I think the concept of this is very familiar to us paying a visit to a friend paying a visit to a family member and the holidays are coming up shortly and I'm sure that you'll be participating in something very much like this now the reason I'm pointing this out is because I'd like to borrow that concept of paying a visit because that's what he does he shows up and pays a visit and eventually goes home but I'd like to borrow that concept and apply it to somebody that comes to visit this church to paying a visit to Bible Baptist Church and so as I preach this morning about a visit from Jethro we're going to follow

Jethro through this passage and experience just what he experienced in his visit with the people of God and Moses and I hope that the Lord will use this to stir you and to do something about getting some people here to visit so let's pray together and ask God to help us Father I do mean that I ask you I ask and beseech that you'll help that you'll take this passage that you'll apply it and minister it and by your spirit make it make sense to each one and show us our part and the need and how

great it is but Lord help us to take this personal and to not just brush it off and say yeah that's true or yeah that makes sense but Lord please drive it home into our hearts and convict us and put it in our minds as a way of life to be inviting others and to get visits to this church and the difference that it can make in their life we want to give you the glory for whatever you do and for whatever comes of it in Jesus name and amen amen so we're going to follow Jethro through this passage would you notice from verse number one when Jethro the priest of Midian

Moses' father-in-law heard when he heard of all that God had done for Moses and for Israel his people when he heard first he heard did he not how did he hear what God had done he wasn't standing at the mount he wasn't waiting for them to show up so how did he hear he was home you know I heard somebody informed him somebody spoke words to him personally and informed him that the Lord had brought Israel out of Egypt somebody's feet carried a message to Jethro's home and gave him the news it's likely I believe it's very likely that it was Moses that sent a messenger to Jethro remember this this mount matter of fact let's look at it come back to chapter 3 it says that they're encamped at the mount of God in verse 5 that's where they're encamped at the mount of God now come back to chapter 3 and verse 1 now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law the priest of Midian and he led the flock to the backside of the desert and came to the mountain of God even to Horeb and this is where he meets the Lord this is where the bush is burning and not consumed and the Lord speaks to him and commissions him and sends him to go back to Egypt look at verse 12 the Lord makes a promise he said certainly I will be with thee and this shall be a token unto thee that I have sent thee when thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt ye shall serve God upon this mountain so Moses knows that we're coming back to Mount Horeb the Lord is going to lead us back to Mount Horeb don't know the direction don't know the timing but I know that's the place we're going to end up at some point now in that chapter or the next chapter I suppose it is his father-in-law lets him go and he goes back to it's in verse 18 where at the end of it he says go in peace and so Moses takes off back to Egypt I don't doubt for a minute that Moses conveyed to Jethro what took place at Mount Horeb I don't doubt that he said hey God met with me this is how it took place this is what he told me to do and he said I'm coming back to that mount this is in Jethro's backyard this is kind of where he lives in this region of the world far away from Egypt but not far from Mount Horeb the mountain of God so I believe that Moses informed him that one day he'd be coming back it makes sense to say that he sent his wife Zipporah and two sons back to their father or to their grandfather because saying hey in a few months we're all coming I'm coming back through here and we'll get you then that just makes sense and the timing seems or the thought there seems to fit so in that thought

I believe Jethro anticipated this day might come but it's not until he heard it's not until some messenger approached him with the news that he decided to leave his home and go to Horeb he lived in Midian again it's his backyard but he's not waiting at the mount for Moses to show up a messenger had to arrive and bring him the tidings the visit began with hearing and the same thing is going to apply with getting someone or even perhaps you yourself to visit Bible Baptist Church it begins with hearing the Bible says faith cometh by hearing hearing is the beginning of nearly everything when I arrived at church this morning there was nobody standing at the door waiting to get in not one person there was no line of people stretched out across the parking lot waiting for the preacher to arrive so they could hear from God not one so I'd like to play the role of Moses today [15 : 45] I'd like to send out some messengers after this service into the community some messengers that will go out with a message looking for Jethro's to tell them of all that God has done to tell them of the deliverance that God has wrought in your life and to invite them to come to where we camp around the mount of God every Sunday morning every Wednesday in the middle of the week but it's going to start with hearing and before they hear a messenger has got to be sent a messenger has got to go bring them the tidings and so secondly after he hears his response in verse 5 and Jethro Moses' father-in-law came with his sons and his wife unto Moses so he heard first and then he acted upon what he heard he got up he gathered some things he set off to Mount Horeb now think about it the man could have ignored it he heard all that God had done and all that has taken place but he could have said so what yeah I knew that was going to happen yeah he already told me that yeah I know all that stuff why what is so important to him he could have said I don't even care and as a matter of fact if Moses wants his wife and daughters he knows where they are he sent them back he could come and get them he could have took that position he's the priest of Midian and let that be something to realize there's a decision to make when their hearer

hears the message some people will hear and they'll never follow through they'll never make a trip they might smile they might say oh thank you oh that's nice oh that sounds good maybe I should but never show up and that's pretty common as a matter of fact it's very common some people will hear and won't come they're not stimulated enough or they're too content with the way their life is or they're too proud to consider that they need to submit themselves to something like the word of God some people just don't care some people don't believe the report that they hear they think that's a bunch of nonsense that's a bunch of religious jibber jabber and I don't need that stuff

I have a mind I believe in science either way some people just won't respond to the message or to the news or that invitation but there are Jethro's out there that will they may be few and far between it may take a little more work to find them but there are Jethro's out there that will act on the invitation some people out there are not content with the way their life is going and there are people out there that are searching for something better than what Midian has to offer them they've seen it all done it all and if they hear that something new is going on and that there's an opportunity for something better maybe there's them that are really looking for a change it's up to us to let them know that there's a people of God that gather regularly around the mount of God and there's room for them and so this man heard and then in verse 5 he came he showed up and showing up he learned some things he learned some more details now we know in verse 1 the messenger told him some true facts and Jethro believed them

I'll look at it again verse 1 when Jethro the priest of Midian Moses heard of all that God had done for Moses and for Israel his people and that the Lord had brought Israel out of Egypt all facts are true and he believes them however when he arrives at the camp when he arrives at the mount of God he now sees with his own eyes that this is different than I imagined I didn't think there'd be so many of them there's 2 million people here camped around this mount it's an entire nation a great nation this is not a small group of people you have to picture that in your eyes like he's walking up on this and saying whoa didn't see that coming remember how greatly that these Hebrews multiplied back there in chapter 1 and the Pharaoh got so concerned he tried to start killing their babies off because they just exploded into this massive people and now he sees with his eyes he just heard the report that what God had done for Israel is people but he's never seen it with his eyes and so when he comes to the camp he sees how great this nation is he witnesses

Moses like he's never seen Moses before because he's only known Moses outside of this context Moses was his helper his not slave but his son-in-law that shepherded his flocks that's what Moses was to him his son-in-law Moses was a murderous refugee that stood up against some shepherds and gained his favor and pretty good guy I could use him around here that's all Moses was to him now he sees him as a prince and a king over a great people it's a much different perspective but beyond that look at verse number 8 in verse number 8 when he gets into the tent and sits down with Moses 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 would you imagine that

[21 : 47] Jethro he hears these facts he believes them he shows up he comes but now being there and seeing it with his own eyes and now he's hearing with his own ears I'm thinking he's hearing more details than he heard from the messenger because he's sitting down with the source himself Moses inside the tent he's informed of things he hadn't heard of to date more particulars more of the raw details from the man of God that God spoke with directly that God instructed personally one on one who has a better knowledge of the situation than Moses who can speak of the events and the accounts more clearly and truthfully and credibly than the source of much of it but Moses himself you can believe that when he saw the people of God and that when Jethro sat down and heard from the man Moses these incredible details he was unaware of you can imagine that it did something it evoked a far greater response out of this man when he sat there when he saw it with his own eyes hearing the messenger was one thing that caused him to get there but when he got there and heard more details and saw it with his own eyes he had a different response and he came to the camp and in verse number 9 through 11 he rejoiced and in these verses in verse 9 notice he says and he rejoiced for all the goodness which the Lord had done to Israel in verse 10

Jethro said blessed be the Lord he's blessing the Lord God in verse 11 now I know that the Lord's greater than all gods for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly he was above them notice his reaction he's visiting and he's learning some things that he hadn't learned before he's seeing some things he hadn't seen before he's experiencing that maybe for the first time the God of the Hebrews

is the true holy almighty most high God he's greater than all gods maybe this is a realization for the first time at any rate what a great day in his life it was worth the trip to experience this I think the man got more than he expected in coming to see Moses he got to see God's people he got to hear truth more truth from the man that

God had placed in front of his people he got to understand and believe the greatness and the sovereignty and superiority of the true God of Israel now in the same light speaking of getting someone to visit our church I want the Jethro's out there to come to this place where they can experience a relationship with the true God of the Bible I want them to come in here and pay a visit but hear some things they hadn't heard before I want them to see and experience some things being around God's people that they hadn't experienced just hearing about going this is a place where they can learn and understand some things they can some things that they have heard in their life some things that they've been exposed to in their upbringing they could find out that's not true at all and the things that they were taught the way they thought this stuff doesn't hold a candle to what these people believe from the word of

God it's a living Bible there's something alive amongst these people and if they could come into contact with believers of the Lord Jesus Christ and if they could come in contact and see and recognize that their faith is real it's alive it's changed them there's joy in their hearts it's far better to walk by faith than to be in submission to some religious system that is it's telling me that I owe them and I owe them and I owe them and can never find grace or peace should they come here and find out that assurance of salvation is attainable should they find out that pleasing God is possible through Jesus Christ our Lord there's so much to learn so much for Jethro's to come and sit and learn things they didn't understand or know had never pictured in their mind but if they could get here to the mount of God and so

Jethro rejoices and blesses the Lord and he declares that he is the only true God and he does something else and in verse number 12 he worships he actively engages in worshiping the Lord through sacrifice and through offering would you look at verse 12 Jethro Moses' father-in-law took a burnt offering and sacrifices for God what a great response to what he's experienced here on this visit understand this Jethro is not trying to please Moses he's trying to please God he hears he sees he realizes this all comes down on him and he rejoices and blesses the true Lord God of Israel and then worships him and he's not trying to make Moses happy he's not trying to make Aaron and the elders look what I'm doing no he's he's coming under conviction and coming under the true God and offering a sacrifice to him it's a great response this man is giving and this man is offering he's sacrificing something of his in submission to God he felt like it was the right thing to do and it was the right thing to do and so he worships and then there's something one thing one more thing in verse number 12 look at the end of the verse it says and Aaron came and all the elders of Israel to eat bread with

[28 : 00] Moses father in law before God and so in this final thought he fellowshiped with the people of God he heard he came he learned he rejoiced and blessed the Lord he worshipped and sacrificed and then he fellowshiped with God's people what a great way to end the day by fellowshiping now this man he's a priest of Midian he's considered a great man and where he comes from he's probably revered and honored but when he comes to this camp he's nobody special I mean he gets honored by the obeisance of Moses and the you know the cultural thing father-in-law but he's just he's nobody in this economy he doesn't know the true God or worship him or sacrifice to him like they do and so here he's surrounded by great men the elders of this great nation Aaron who's going to be the high priest of this great nation and Moses the leader that God appointed and he gets to fellowship with these people before God it says in verse 12 before God he's never met these elders before but he's sitting down with them and the connection isn't that oh we're all just hungry but no the connection is God it's an offering to God this is offered to him this is sacrificed to him and that's why they sit down and partake now let me take you to a passage go to

Ephesians chapter 5 Ephesians chapter number 5 and let's read the first two verses here Ephesians chapter 5 be therefore followers of God as dear children and walk in love as Christ also hath loved us and remember what Jethro did remember what it says he did back there he offered a burnt offering and sacrifices offering and sacrifices look at this that Christ also hath loved us and given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor now in this age our offering and our sacrifice is not animals it's not bulls and goats there's no

Passover lamb that we offer before the Lord our offering has already been offered once and for all our offering is the person the Lord Jesus Christ who offered himself he sacrificed himself to God for us our fellowship therefore is not around politics it's not around sports it's not around great men it's not around hobbies or special interests our fellowship is in that offering and it's in that person of the Lord Jesus Christ we come together and fellowship in Jesus Christ if you're not in Jesus Christ your fellowship you cannot have fellowship with us John says truly our fellowship is with the father and with his son Jesus Christ but you can't have that fellowship if you're not in Christ we're brought together by a spiritual bond that's far greater than any superficial interest or belief or like and I think it's kind of neat

I think it's kind of interesting it's more than that it's a I don't know what to call it it's a God thing how an encounter with God's people can cause one to fellowship with people that they would never in their life brush shoulders with for any other reason we're an assembly right here this morning and if it weren't for the Lord Jesus Christ many of us would have no interest in the other person and that's not a shot at you that's not pushing you down or saying that you think you're better than me that's not that at all it's just the truth if we didn't have a fellowship in Jesus Christ if we weren't bought with the same blood and born of the same spirit and believe the same Bible we wouldn't be rubbing shoulders we wouldn't come close to each other we wouldn't call each other or text each other or meet each other we wouldn't have a fellowship and

Jethro wouldn't either but he came to these people and he learned of their God and he rejoiced and blessed their God and he sacrificed to their God and now he's having fellowship with their people those people received him and came to him and sat down and had a fellowship with that man that they never met before but they were worshipping the same God I think it's phenomenal how the Lord brings people together when your human nature would kick in and would overlook a certain person or even just look down and despise because of differences you just don't see eye but when you're saved by the blood of Jesus Christ and when you worship God in spirit and truth you find out it's enjoyable to worship him with other people with other people no matter who they are if they've got the same love for that Lord Jesus Christ if they've met him at Calvary if his blood has washed away their sins we have the same thing to rejoice about and finally appointed for your life is to have fellowship with believers to spend time with people that know

[34 : 17] God people that worship God that keep his ways that have sacrifice to him and that love him as far as I'm concerned they're the best people on the planet the children of God that that's my people that's who I want to be around I'll tell you something and don't take offense to when the men's group was here last Saturday I couldn't help but say it somewhere along the lines I said you guys are my people it's like you're my group I just love being around you guys that love the book love the Lord Jesus Christ you're excited and it's just there's such a bond there and I don't even know all their names but it's strong and it strengthens me to be around these brethren and the same thing's true here in this church this morning what's a blessing is that I can be here I could go on vacation somewhere and find a good solid Bible preaching church and just I could fit right in and I could go to another one and find a group of believers that love

Jesus Christ and I could fit right in and I have fellowship with them in Christ now this thing here with Jethro it began with a messenger he heard news that he may have been anticipating may have been hopeful for but at any rate he wasn't moving and he wasn't doing anything until he heard the message and he followed through with that message the message came to his home and he responded and he had a great experience and I believe today that there's Jethro all over this area I believe they're all over Silmar all over the valley all over the valley north of us and down into the LA area I think they're everywhere and they're not not everybody you run into is interested I understand that maybe not even one out of ten maybe not one out of twenty but out there are some Jethro and perhaps you even know of one personally they need to hear they need to be invited they're not going to come generally speaking they're not going to come on their own it's a whole lot easier to show up when they have somebody that invites them and ultimately

God gets the glory God gets the sacrifice and offering and praise from one Jethro but it started with a messenger taking a message to them and that's what I want us to be this morning and so I'm stopping a little early and it's on purpose so that we can get together we can gather up some materials we can go out and just try to find Jethro and invite him to the mount of God and invite him to a relationship with the true God that maybe they don't know maybe they do know but they don't know how they can learn so much more being around the people of God some people need to

understand that God ordained for a local church to assemble he did not ordain for them to sit at home and watch television or to get on their phones and watch YouTube and pretend that that is church that is never God's function for the church to be on a screen

God invites you or encourages you I invite you to get these people here to where the scriptures are open to where the songs are being sung to where a believer will testify of the grace of God in their life and of his strength and comfort and courage in their situation they need that stuff and they need to get to the church to get it and so let's go out today as the best we can and do something for Christ and partner up and invite some Jethro's to join us around the mount of God let's pray father I pray that you use these thoughts to stir and to convict our hearts to be part of something that you'll use in the lives of others not trying to build a kingdom here not trying to build a nation but want meet this morning that even just putting a hanger on a door or handing a track to somebody that you could do a work that they could come to this place to hear more and to see more and to learn more and to be able to worship you and to praise you and bless you with their own mouth as a result Lord we pray that you'll do a work that you'll receive the praise and glory that you'll encourage and strengthen us for the work and to do it in joy not of obligation but out of desire to please and serve you let this be an offering and a sacrifice that we give to you we ask this in Jesus name amen