Exodus Lesson 11 (2018)

**JETHRO’S COUNSEL**

Exodus 18:1-17

In-laws are the favorite butt of jokes. Rarely are they portrayed in a positive light. But God places us in extended families to give us added wisdom and to shave off our rough edges. Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, brought Moses’ wife and sons back to him. He also brought praise and worship to god. But he didn’t stop there. This study shows how he made Moses face up to a weak link in his command. Jethro could be accused of meddling, but he was God’s deliverer for Moses and Israel, just as much as Joshua and his soldiers were. (Exodus 17:8-16) Jethro forces us to examine our motives in doing Christian service.

**Open it:**

1. What is some of the best advice you have ever been given? How can overworking make a person’s life miserable?

**Explore it:**

1. Read verses 1-4. Who was Jethro? (1) What do the names of Moses’ sons recall for him and his family?
2. Read verses 5-8. What was the message that Jethro sent to Moses? (5-6) When Moses met Jethro, what did they talk about? (7-8) Of what value is it to have a friend to whom you call tell everything?
3. Read verses 9-12. How did Jethro respond to what Moses told him? (9-11) What did Jethro do in response to God’s deliverance of Israel? (12)
4. Read verses 13-18. What did Jethro observe about Moses’ daily routine and the toll this was taking on Moses and the people? (13-16) How did Jethro express his concern for Moses? (17-18)

What are the dangers of trying to do too much by yourself? In what ways do you overextend yourself or tend toward being a workaholic?

1. Read verses 19-23. What kind of advice did Jethro give Moses? What kind of people was Moses to select for leadership? (21) What types of responsibilities were Moses’ leaders supposed to have? (22) How would Jethro’s advice benefit Moses and the people of Israel? (23)
2. Read verses 24-27. What did Moses do with Jethro’s advice? Why is it hard to take advice from in-laws? How were Moses’ leaders to handle difficult cases? To where did Jethro return after being with Moses? (27)

**Apply it:**

1. If you are in a leadership position, think about planning to share the load. What will this do for you, for others and especially for younger leaders coming along?