

Show Me Your Glory

Lessons from the Life of Moses

Lesson 9 Exodus 17–18

Day One: “What Shall I Do?”

Has God ever used you as the instrument of His purpose in a tough situation? When it becomes obvious to everyone—including *you*—that He has chosen you and met you with great success are you then tempted to think that perhaps you have “arrived” and can meet the next challenge yourself? Shouldering the mantle of God’s authority and holding forth the rod of His power would continue to test the limits of Moses’ resourcefulness and patience, reducing him to the blessed position of dependence on God alone.

Read Exodus 17, focusing your attention on verses 1–7.

1. As the children of Israel set out from the Wilderness of Sin, where did the Lord lead them? v. 1

The NASB text says that they *journeyed by stages* to Rephidim, which literally means *expanses* or *stretches*. Recollecting God’s previous provision should have caused His people to anticipate His answer for their present need but, sadly, this was not the case.

2. Instead, what did the people do to Moses? What did they do to the Lord? v. 2
3. What did they accuse Moses of doing? v. 3
 - a. What were they ready to do to Moses at that moment? v. 4

The people contended or *quarreled* with Moses to the point that he cried out to God: “*What shall I do with this people?*” We can sense both the frustration and desperation in Moses’ words. Incredibly there was not a single word of rebuke from the Lord aimed toward His people!

4. What did God instruct Moses to do next? Who accompanied him? v. 5
 - a. What did God tell Moses to take along and with what reminder?

5. How did the Lord encourage Moses? v. 6
 - a. In the sight of the elders what did Moses do?
 - b. What was the result of his obedience?

6. State the essence of the peoples' complaint that revealed their true heart attitude. v. 7
 - a. How does Psalm 78:15–17 add to your understanding of their intent?

Amazing grace from a personal, providing God! It has been truthfully stated that there are two things man has never been able to fathom: the *depth of sin* and the *grace of God!* There is no lack to them that fear Him, who call upon Him in trouble.

Look Closer . . .

There is another deeper meaning behind today's passage. In 1 Corinthians 10:4 the Apostle Paul reveals the close connection between Christians and their spiritual forefathers. Who does Paul say is the rock which provided for Israel in the wilderness?

- ❖ In verse 11 of this same passage, what point did Paul want to drive home to believers?

- ❖ Personal: Do you find yourself in *Rephidim* today? It is worthwhile to go there to gain insight into the God you follow. What lesson does He want to teach you?

Can you bring yourself to say, "*I can hardly wait to see what God will do?*" or, "*What great things are going to happen?*" Please comment.

Heartbeat . . . "*They drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.*" 1 Corinthians 10:4

Day Two:

The Power of Prayer

In order to appreciate our text today we need to recap a little history lesson. The covenant relationship between Israel and God was originally established with Abraham and passed on to his descendant Isaac and then to Jacob. God chose Jacob, passing over his brother Esau and the resulting hostility between the two brothers continued from generation to generation. Amalek was the grandson of Esau and his descendants—the Amalekites—had a deep-seated hatred for the nation of Israel thereafter.

Read Exodus 17:8–16.

The aggressive battle Amalek instigated against Israel was unprovoked, causing the Lord to announce that He would forever be at war with Amalek.

1. Not only was the battle against God's people unprovoked, who specifically was targeted? See Deuteronomy 25:17–19.
 - a. From the passage in Deuteronomy, what do you learn about Amalek?
 - b. How does verse 19 confirm God's hostility against these people?
2. Moses had to quickly adopt a strategy to fight Amalek. According to verse 9 . . .
 - a. What did Moses tell Joshua to do?
 - b. Where did Moses position himself?
 - c. What did Moses hold forth in his hand? v. 10

The *rod of God* became a weapon of war, though not in the literal but spiritual sense to remind the people of God's strength on them and His presence with them.

3. What happened whenever Moses held up his hand? v. 11
 - a. Whenever he let down his hand what was the result?

As the hours passed Moses, who was now 81 years old, became tired. A stone was placed under him so he could sit down.

- b. What did Aaron and Hur do? v. 12

4. Around sunset how did the battle end? v. 13
 - a. When it was over, what did God direct Moses to do? v. 14
 - b. Who did God single out to know the significance of this event?

In the future God would encourage Joshua—who would become the commander of the Lord’s armies—with the oral and written record of God’s deliverances in previous battles.

- c. As God’s words took hold of Joshua’s heart, he would one day pass them on to his fellow Israelites. What would he say to them in Joshua 1:8?
5. To whom did Moses ascribe this great victory—how? v. 15

The key to winning the battle is prayer—prayer—and more prayer! Moses found out that he could win the battle by praying! Have *you* discovered this great truth?

Review this week’s memory verse.

Day Three: Jethro Receives the Good News

Read Exodus 18:1–27, focusing on verses 1–12.

Good news has a way of traveling fast, even by way of ancient caravan. Moses’ father-in-law, Jethro, had heard of God’s powerful acts on behalf of His people and how He had brought Israel out of Egypt (v. 1). Earlier Moses had sent his wife, Zipporah, and his two sons, Gershom (meaning “sojourner-stranger”) and Eliezer (“God is a helper”) safely back to Midian out of Pharaoh’s reach. Now Jethro traveled with the family to Horeb to reunite with Moses (v. 6). After the initial greetings Moses caught Jethro up to date on all the exciting details.

1. What was Jethro’s initial response to all this good news? vv. 9–10
 - a. What did Jethro realize? v. 11
 - b. How did Jethro react to the news? v. 12

2. Who joined them in the celebration? v. 12

Moses' testimony of all God had done for Israel brought praise from the lips of Jethro, and also brought about a sacrifice of thanksgiving. Jethro was a priest of Midian and his people, the Midianites, were known idolaters (Numbers 25:17–18; and 31:2–3,16). Jethro, however, was most likely not a worshiper of Midian's gods. Moses did not keep his religion to himself and that had a profound impact on his relative. He shared the truth about what God had done and Jethro received that truth into his heart.

3. Personal: Is there someone you know who needs to hear the Good News of God's saving grace from your lips? Are you unsure of how to "package" the message? Just tell them about the difference Jesus Christ has made in *your* life. You have a *personal testimony* that is unique to you, no one else can tell it! Write down the name that God is ministering to your heart.

Selah . . .

Sharing the truth about God is the very best thing you can do for another person. Spend a few minutes meditating on Romans 10:13–15. Take these words to heart—someone needs to hear from you this week!

Day Four: Learning the Art of Delegating

In order for leadership to be effective it must be a shared responsibility. Usually this is a life lesson that is learned over much time. Moses was a man who spoke to God face to face (Numbers 12:6–8), and the result was the people streamed to him in unrelenting numbers to know the will of God.

Read Exodus 18:13–27.

1. Moses' father-in-law made an observation, expressing his concern to Moses. What was it? vv. 13–14
 - a. As far as Moses was concerned what, specifically, was his responsibility? vv. 15–16
 - b. What was Jethro's opinion of this method? Why? vv. 17–18

From a loving father-in-law's perspective both Moses and the people were becoming worn out as Moses attempted to deal with all of their petitions. Jethro wisely counseled Moses to look at things differently.

2. Briefly state Jethro's counsel to Moses in the following verses:
 - a. v. 19:
 - b. v. 20:
 - c. v. 21:
 - d. v. 22:
 - e. v. 23:

Jethro exhorted Moses to share the burden of responsibility with other men who were capable of leading; men who would also fear God and love the truth. Those appointed to the role could judge the smaller matters while Moses' time would focus on the greater matters.

3. Moses wisely received Jethro's counsel. Summarize his response in verses 24–27.

Selah . . .

Earlier Moses was a self-proclaimed man of slow speech; someone who asked God to get somebody else. Now he has become *intercessor—mediator—arbitrator—teacher—counselor—employer—and judge* of some two million people! Imagine the time commitment involved as each day the people came with their problems and Moses would present their list to God. Then he would wait for the divine counsel and take it back to the people. What concern he showed for them and what reverence he displayed for God's wisdom.

- ❖ Personal: Are *you* a person who has a tendency to take on too much—more than God intends for you to carry? Look around . . . who is there that could assist you in carrying some of the burden?
- ❖ Are you perhaps a person who is unwilling to pay the sacrifice to serve? Is someone else carrying the load you could be helping with? If so, God has a place and a gift for you to use in serving Him. You have a part in building up the body of Christ that only *you* can fulfill. Will you step forward?

Review this week's memory verse.

Day Five:

Praying with Purpose

Selah . . . Be still and consider how to *work out* in your daily life what God has *worked into* your heart through your study of His Word. Then pray each aspect through.

❖ **A Point Pondered:** Is there an example from the lesson or a truth from Scripture that has taken on a new meaning this week? Please note it below.

❖ **A Path Pursued:** Knowledge must be applied in order to make a difference. Name one thing can you act upon in obedience to the Holy Spirit's leading.

❖ **A Promise Possessed:** If God has spoken a particular verse or word of hope to your heart, write it down and pray it back to Him.

❖ **A Praise Proclaimed:** God loves to hear you praise Him! What aspect of God's character particularly blessed you this week? Will you praise Him today?

❖ **A Prayer Presented:** Write out the most pressing request on your heart and lift it to the Lord.

Other requests:

Notes