

## **Jethro comes to Moses, the Type of Christ.**

Reading Exodus 4.20-28, Exodus 18.1-12

Here we have a, seemingly, simple account which could be read very lightly, and nothing much gleaned from it.

But why is it included by the Holy Spirit in Scripture? I believe it contains a great picture, a lesson for us about how to come to Christ. Let me explain:

What are the essential aspects of the Gospel message, that great message of salvation contained in the Bible?

1. Mankind has been estranged from God by a great separation, a fall because of rebellion. No longer God's people but strangers to Him. If we die, in that state, we'll hear the words of Christ *"I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."* *Matt22.23*
2. God has chosen a people to be His Church out of the nations. A people that will be called back to Him to be reconciled, to be dear to Him like His bride, His children.
3. A way has been made that this may be so, that in due time Christ would come to bring a great deliverance and save His people from bondage and slavery from sin, bringing them out of a wicked world to a promised inheritance in heaven. This great way was by the death of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary, as a great sacrifice for sin and as an offering of righteousness for all who come to God in faith. A redemption by an atoning work.
4. Those who hear of this good news of deliverance from bondage, and come to God in repentance and faith in Christ and His work, will be reconciled to Him and be part of His Church (the bride of Christ) and be adopted as children in His family.

So, in the light of this, what do we have here?

Jethro hears of a great work of deliverance, out of Egypt, by the hand of God, through Moses, and comes to him to hear more. The good news is explained to him and he receives it with joy and faith in God. He rejects false gods and accepts the One true God. And in doing so Moses' wife and children are reconciled to him in the same way.

Let's delve a little deeper.

The significance of this event is seen in the fact that it 'book ends' the great events of the children of Israel being brought out from Egypt, coming, both before, and after them. Just before the events in Egypt, of the plagues and freeing of the Israelites, Moses is separated from his wife (who was a Midianite- symbolic of an unbeliever or stranger to God) before he goes to do this great work (in which he would be a symbol or type of Christ). She rebels from him, calling him a 'man of blood' for requiring her to circumcise his child (a picture of being part of God's people, and something he had neglected. As a type he must be perfectly obedient or die). This event would be seen as a very strange and even bizarre event in the life of Moses if not understood in this wider context.

We must understand Moses as a Type of Christ. A 'Type' is a foreshadowing of something in the New Testament in the pages of the Old Testament. So a type of Christ would be a

person, or thing, that pictures Christ in the Old Testament. Moses is certainly one of these at various times in his life. The deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt is one of these times. We could find verses of parallel throughout his whole life, between him and those that speak of Christ, but let's just look at verses from the deliverance from Egypt;

- *MOSES "Let My people go" Ex9.13- CHRIST "To proclaim liberty to the captives." Isa61.1*
- *"All these...shall bow down themselves into me" Ex11.8 - "That at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow" Phil2.10*
- *"How long shall this man be a snare unto us" Ex10.7- "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence" 1 Peter 2.8*
- *"He went out from Pharaoh in great anger" Ex11.8- "He looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts" Mark3.5*
- *"About midnight...there shall be a great cry" ex11.4,6- "At midnight there was a great cry made" Matt25.6*
- *"The Lord smote all the first born... and there was not a house where there was not one dead" Ex12.29,30- "They shall look upon Me whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for Him... as one that is in bitterness for his first-born" Zech12.10*
- *"Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong easy wind." Ex14.21- "What manner of Man is this, that even the wind and the waves obey Him?" Matt8.27*

So I hope by those few verses, only about the escape from Egypt, you can see the fact that Moses is meant to be seen as a foreshadowing, a type of Christ. There are many more.

Now let's understand Moses and Aaron (Moses' elder brother, who went with him) as types of the offices of Christ- prophet, priest and king.

Moses is like Christ as a King. A king is one who leads and delivers his people, Christ delivers us from sin and Satan. Moses was also a prophet, representing God to men in word, and Christ is the Word of God. Aaron would go on to be the High Priest, a priest is someone who represents men to God. Christ is our great High Priest as He is our 'go between', our Mediator, the one who represents us to God the Father.

We must understand that the deliverance from Egypt is a picture of salvation The people coming out of Egypt is a well known picture of Salvation. Coming out of the old life of bondage to sin and Satan. The Passover lamb is like the offering and blood of Christ at His crucifixion. Crossing the Red sea is like baptism.

Therefore we can see that Jethro coming to Moses to hear of this is a picture and a true example of the conversion of the individual by faith. He comes to hear, like a man hears the good news of the Gospel message. He turns to see the work of God, and recognises the One True God and rejects the world's false gods in an act of repentance. He had been the priest of Midian but now he offers a right sacrifice, like a man gives his life to the One true God only because of the work of Christ. Then, and only then, can a man have fellowship with God, like Jethro has fellowship with Moses and Aaron.

Let's further apply this for us. Some, unlike Jethro, don't come to hear more about God than they superficially know. But you have come to hear something more of this great deliverance of God by Christ, otherwise you wouldn't be in College Class, so there is hope. Jethro only found God because he came to know more, but he had to go further. He sought to understand. He came to Moses as a man comes to church to hear the Gospel message, to understand it for themselves. He was received by Moses, and we'll be welcome to come to God, but more must happen. The message was explained and received with faith and joy. He rejected the false gods of men. Will you receive the news of the great deliverance with joy for your soul, how you might be freed from the slavery and servitude to the idols of sin and Satan?

You may say, "but I'm not in bondage, I'm not a worshipper of false gods, an idol worshipper?" Really?

What was an idol? In its simplest sense, it's something or someone you place your faith in, worship and serve, instead of the One True and living God. In short, an idol is a dead god of the world. Jethro said,

*"Now I know that the LORD is greater than all gods: for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly he was above them." Ex 18.11*

He realised something. That the true God is above all false gods of the world. Let's think upon that. What could we put our faith in instead of God?

What about Humanity itself:- People can talk, as they get older, of the struggle to restore their faith in humanity when they see the terrible things men do in the news. They think that if they hear a few nice things that people are capable of doing for each other, then that's enough to restore their faith in humanity. It would be better not to put your faith in humanity at all. Desperately clinging onto the fact that Man can do a few good deeds doesn't change the fact that Man is overwhelmingly wicked by even the lowest standards, trying to reprogram themselves and ignore God's law. Human history shows this, and the daily news bears this out. Who will you trust? Proud politicians? Celebrities? Music and entertainment stars? Fashion icons? None are worthy for you to live for, to trust in, to worship and serve, least of all to save your eternal soul. Even friends, girlfriends or family.

But what about living for men's best ideas? Better not, people are limited in time and knowledge, but God is not, His thoughts are far above those of Men. As Jethro says "he (that is God) was above them."

Are you going to trust in a Google search, in Big business, in Technology or Artificial intelligence? All limited and based on either a quest for money or upon men's best guesses. Not a good enough foundation to entrust your soul to.

What about trusting in your own efforts in education and career and talents? Well, we wouldn't downplay learning and hard work and skills, they're good for many things, and a man must make his living. Work should live for you, but you mustn't live for it. A man who lives for his job, or mind or bodily skills, puts his eternal soul in the hands of something temporary, limited, weak and liable to fail. Will your job help you when you fall gravely ill. What happens when body and mind fail? Self salvation is no salvation. Will your talents, efforts or education save you from the guilt of sin and a burdened conscience? Can you work or buy forgiveness and justification, because that is your great need? Only the work of Christ can give these things. Salvation is from God, and to find it, then to worship and serve Him, is higher and greater than these lowly things. Only the great work of Christ, His perfect

life and sacrificial death can give you righteousness and take the punishment due for your sins. Only the truth of God can give you meaning and purpose in your life and a future hope.

What about just living for pleasure, possessions and entertainment? You'll find it briefly enticing but ultimately empty. Will sport, or gaming, or goods, or music, or parties give good return for all the time and energy and thought put into them? No, they'll all mean nothing in the end. Even if you get to the highest level, or attain the best object, or you win a gold medal, or a football cup or attend the greatest entertainment event, what are you going to do on judgement day- give God your medal or cup, or give Him your rusty car, or show Him a picture of you at a party? Small, useless things. To worship and serve God is higher. To show a life lived of faith in Christ and service for Him is meaningful. That will mean something and have eternal value. But trying to live for pleasures is like trying to feed and get nourishment from only sweets. In the end it will poison you, not to mention being just selfish. Those who live for self-centred pleasures end up unhappy and hurt in the end. But feed on the teaching and principles of the word of God and you'll find real joy and satisfaction from the living word. Your joy will come from within, not from trying to find it in things and events outside. A lasting contentedness, not living for entertainments, bodily thrills and the small, short lived pleasures that come from money and possessions, to do that is setting yourself up for a fall and sadness in this life and the next.

So these are just some examples of false gods, to warn you from; man worship, achievement worship, knowledge worship, pleasure worship. Trust them not, over God. I don't know what your idols are, but compare them with God and see how small they are.

Jethro heard of the great deliverance of God by the hand of Moses

*"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."Ex18.9*

He saw how God brought them out of slavery and saved them from the destroying angel by the sacrifice of the passover lamb and the blood on the doorposts. Jethro could see that it pictured a way for men to be right with God. So he offered his own sacrifice like the passover and it was acceptable because it was offered in faith in the One true God of Israel and what He would do in Christ.

*"And Jethro, Moses' 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."*

*Ex18.12*

Jethro didn't know the specifics then, he didn't know about Calvary, but he did know about a promised Saviour and he trusted in it for salvation. No priest needed, every man can go directly to God through our Great High priest Jesus Christ of whom Aaron was a type. Then Jethro fellowships with both Moses and Aaron after giving his sacrifice to God, a burnt offering as dedicating his life to God through Christ. No doubt sin and trespass offerings to take away guilt also. And you too, if you go to God offering Christ as your sacrifice, can know forgiveness and fellowship with God in Him, reconciliation and adoption into His family. You'll be part of the church- the bride of Christ. Even children of God. Just like the reunion and reconciliation of Moses with his wife and children. Now Moses' wife sees that his actions were good and right. His children are named Gershom and Eliezer meaning stranger but helped and delivered. This is what is true of anyone who seeks and finds God. Be like Jethro and Zipporah (Moses' wife). They were Midianites, strangers, Gentiles, but came to faith in the God of the Jews who picture the true Church. Jethro rejected his false gods. We are

strangers too, but can come into the Kingdom of God by faith in Christ. Jethro heard of the great work of God's deliverance. He sought to know more. He came and was told. He saw it as greater than anything in this world and believed in it and trusted it for himself. Do this with the Gospel. You're already doing it partly as you attend College Class. You're hearing of the great deliverance. Come to the tent of God's house and hear more. Hear the very voice of God in His word and in preaching, and then receive His work with joy and take Him as your great sacrifice when you go to God in prayer.

This account, I believe, is given to us as a picture of conversion, of coming to Christ. Learn it's lessons. Can you put your faith in Christ? Or will you continue to trust, worship and serve false gods? But that's a fruitless thing to live for. See their insufficiency and powerlessness to do anything for your soul. See the work of Christ in this account, and its power and sufficiency. See yourself in Jethro, a stranger to God, someone who had looked to the false gods of other nations, but came to see how false they are and, even though men live for many things in their pride, only the One true God is needed and should be worshipped and served. Why?

Because He is the Creator and Sustainer and Judge of all things.

Because He does great works in His creation.

Because His attributes are to be praised and glorified. Attributes like His love, grace and mercy, which are the ground of His work of redemption to purchase a people for Himself.

This is what Jethro heard of, sought out, realised and found for himself, personally. Salvation is a personal thing. Men come one by one. The Lord *knew* Jethro, he's named here in Scripture. May you find what he found, and may your name be written in the Lamb's book of life. That Lamb of God, prefigured in the Passover, who takes away the sin of the world.

Don't be a stranger to God, don't think coming from a Christian family or knowing about Christ or Christianity is enough, but do the will of God:- call upon Him in faith, put all your trust in Him, turning from your idols. I'll end with a warning, the words of Christ Himself in Matthew 22. 21-23

*"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."*