

First Quarter : The Patriarchs and Early Leaders of Israel

LESSON FOREWORD—From the wilderness of Sin, the Israelites came to Rephidim, where they won a great victory over the Amalekites. Joshua led, while Moses prayed for victory with Aaron and Hur upholding his hands. Moses then built an altar and called it Jehovah-nissi, which means, "The Lord my banner." Meanwhile the burden on Moses has become too great. Ch. 17.

Lesson VI.

JETHRO'S COUNSEL

February 9, 1919

THE LESSON PASSAGE—Exodus 18 : 12-26.

12 And Jeth'ro, Mo'ses' father in law, took a burnt offering and sacrifices for God : and Aa'ron came, and all the elders of Is'rael, to eat bread with Mo'ses' father in law before God.

13 And it came to pass on the morrow, that Mo'ses sat to judge the people : and the people stood by Mo'ses from the morning unto the evening.

14 And when Mo'ses' father in law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What is this thing that thou doest to the people ? why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even ?

15 And Mo'ses said unto his father in law, Because the people come unto me to enquire of God :

16 When they have a matter, they come unto me ; and I judge between one and another, and I do make them know the statutes of God, and his laws.

17 And Mo'ses' father in law said unto him, The thing that thou doest is not good.

18 Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that is with thee : for this thing is too heavy for thee ; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone.

19 Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee : Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes

GOLDEN TEXT—Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.—Galatians 6 : 2.

SENIOR AND HOME DEPARTMENT TOPIC—Cooperation in the Work of the Kingdom. **ADDITIONAL MATERIAL**.—Luke 10 : 1 ; Acts 13 : 1-3 ; Rom. 16 : 1-24 ; 1 Cor. 12 : 12-31.

THE LESSON EXPLAINED

I. SACRIFICE OFFERED.—12. *Jethro ; priest and prince of Midian and father in law of Moses. He came to the camp bringing Zipporah, Moses' wife, and his sons Gersom and Eliezer. Moses had parted in anger from Zipporah on his way to Egypt, ch. 4 : 24-26. Jethro comes to renew friendship, restore family ties and rejoice with Moses over God's mighty dealings. Took a burnt offering. The animal was laid on the altar and consumed by fire. Aaron came . . . to eat bread. The feat was an intercommunion of friends with God. Worship should be social, not solitary.*

II. COUNSEL GIVEN.—13-18. *Moses sat to judge. We see the magnitude of Moses' labors. He is administrator of justice as well as leader. Morning unto evening. No release from the burden. Moses' father in law saw. It is well to have our work looked at through fresh eyes.*

unto God :

20 And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do.

21 Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness ; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens :

22 And let them judge the people at all seasons : and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge : so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee.

23 If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace.

24 So Mo'ses hearkened to the voice of his father in law, and did all that he had said.

25 And Mo'ses chose able men out of all Is'rael, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.

26 And they judged the people at all seasons : the hard causes they brought unto Mo'ses, but every small matter they judged themselves.

GOLDEN TEXT—Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.—Galatians 6 : 2.

People come to inquire of God ; through Moses. The work was undoubtedly important. Have a matter ; a dispute. The thing is not good ; three points in Jethro's criticism. From Moses' standpoint, Moses was overworked. Justice was not being adequately administered, and the people were not properly provided for. Overworking is underworking.



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