

and judge for yourselves:" he then repeated, the Lord's Prayer. All stood amazed and silent until the priest exclaimed, "May God curse me if ever I again curse those who hold such a belief! nay, more; that prayer shall be made till my hour be come. I pray thee, O Nazarene, repeat that prayer, that it may be remembered and written among us in letters of gold."—*Hay's Western Barbary.*

December 7th.

JETHRO VISITS MOSES.—

EXOD. XVIII. 1—27.

1. JETHRO VISITS MOSES.

Jethro was evidently a worshipper of the true God. He was both king and priest of Midian, a district which lay round the eastern branch of the Red Sea. Though at a distance from the Israelites, and not personally interested in the wonders which the Lord had wrought on their behalf, the fame of their deliverance had reached him, by which his faith was increased and his spirit strengthened. It would appear that shortly after the circumcision of his son, Moses sent both him and his mother back to his father-in-law. It manifested no small faith on the part of Jethro to commit them to Moses in the wilderness. He must have felt confident that the Lord would watch over his people in the wilderness, and would ultimately bring them to the land of promise. Mark the names of Moses' sons. Gershom means a stranger there; and Eliezer, my God is my help. Moses carried his religion into the bosom of his family. Ver. 6 was probably a message sent by Jethro to announce his approach, in conformity with the custom of Eastern potentates.

2. MOSES' RECEPTION OF JETHRO.

Although Moses had been highly honoured of God, he was endued with the grace of humility. The manner in which he received his father-in-law, showed the love and respect of an affectionate son. On hearing from Moses all that the Lord had done for his people, Jethro rejoiced. It is remarkable that he rejoiced at the goodness of the Lord while the Israelites themselves murmured. *I know that the Lord is greater than all Gods.*—Jethro knew this before, but now he knows it more surely, and makes this public profession of the confirmation of his faith. *Than all Gods*—than all idols, and all potentates, who are sometimes called gods. Verse 12th affords a beautiful picture of primitive piety. They ate bread before God

in testimony of their mutual friendship and common faith.

3. JETHRO'S PRUDENT COUNSEL.

Moses' zeal made him forgetful of the care which was necessary for the preservation of his body. His mode of administering justice was fatiguing to himself, and tiresome to the people. Jethro's own experience as a judge would, doubtless, have qualified him to give advice in the matter. By the system which he proposed, justice would be more expeditiously done, and Moses would be relieved of an immense burden. *If God command thee so.*—Excellent though the advice of Jethro evidently was, he refers Moses to God for guidance, who is infinitely wiser than the wisest of men. His counsel was adopted, and must therefore have received the Divine sanction.

Learn—1st. *Let your religion be seen and felt at home—in private as well as in public.* True piety thus distinguishes itself from false profession; Matt. xxiii. 14.

2. *Be courteous to all.* Though Moses was greater than his father-in-law, he did obedience to him; Rom. x. 11; 1 Pet. ii 17.

3. *We should seek to strengthen each other by the relation of the great things which the Lord has done for us.* This the Psalmist did, Ps. lxxvi. 16, and this our Saviour commanded the man to do, whom he had miraculously healed; Luke viii. 39.

4. *Rejoice in the works of God.* The Christian may say 'My father does them all.' Akin to the joy of Jethro, ver. 9., will be that of the Church triumphant; Rev. 18, 20.

5. *We should rejoice in the 'prosperity of others';* Rom. xii. 15. We shall thus resemble the angels in heaven; Luke xv. 7.

6. *Be ready to take good advice.* How promptly Moses followed the good counsel of Jethro.

If we with earnest effort could succeed
To make our life one long connected prayer,
As lives of some perhaps have been and are,
If never leaving Thee, we had no need
Our wandering spirits back again to lead
Into thy presence, but continued there,
Like Angels standing on the highest stair
Of the sapphire throne, this were to pray
indeed.

But if distractions manifold prevail,
And if in this we must confess we fail,
Grant us to keep at least a prompt desire,
Continual readiness for prayer and praise,
An altar heaped and waiting to take fire
With the least spark, and leap into a blaze,

TRINCH.