

Discover Moses' Divine Secret to Lasting Peace

When I read the Bible, I love to look for unusual events or sayings or patterns. Many times, these little things may seem unimportant, so we don't pay much attention to them. However, I have found that whenever the Bible repeats itself, there is always a reason for the extra. The Bible contains no redundancies, so when something is repeated, it is repeated for the sake of the readers, not the writer.

One example of this is found in Exodus 18 when we are introduced to Yitro, or Jethro, Moses' father-in-law. When we read through this chapter, we see that every time that Yitro is mentioned his name is followed by the words "Moses' father-in-law." Common writing practice would only require that Yitro would be identified the first time that he is introduced to the reader, and after that, the reader would simply know that Yitro was Moses' father-in-law.

Yet when Moses wrote down the Torah, within the 27 verses of Exodus chapter 18 he mentions Yitro 13 times, and after each time the name Yitro is mentioned, it is followed by the words "Moses' father-in-law."

Because I know G-D didn't add these words to the text to fill space or add to the word count, I searched for the reason or reasons that He would repeat this information, because it did seem redundant or unnecessary to understanding the narrative.

I read and reread the chapter, looking for the reason. I think I have found at least one, and it holds a powerful key to the promise of G-D's peace in our lives.

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Let's take a look at the events and narrative found in Exodus 18. First, we are introduced to Yitro, Moses' father-in-law. Next, we find what can be described as "bring your father-in-law to work day." In the text, we find that Yitro, Moses' father-in-law, watches as Moses is sitting in his tent all day long judging all of the problems of the people of Israel.

At the end of the day, Yitro, Moses' father-in-law, chastises Moses, saying what we read in Exodus 18:17-18:

"But Moses' father-in-law said to him, 'What you're doing is no good. You will surely wear yourself out, as well as these people who are with you, because the task is too heavy for you. You cannot do it alone, by yourself" (Ex. 18:17-18, TLV).

Yitro, Moses' father-in-law, then provides a solution to the problem, as we read in Exodus 18:21-22: "But you should seek out capable men out of all the people—men who fear God, men of truth, who hate bribery. Appoint them to be rulers over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. Let them judge the people all the time. Then let every major case be brought to you, but every minor case they can judge for themselves. Make it easier for yourself, as they bear the burden with you."

This seems like a great solution to the problem of Moses wearing not only himself out, but also the millions of Israelites who would be waiting in line to have a hearing with Moses. It seems as if Yitro, Moses' father-in-law, was a very wise man. But we still don't know why the Bible repeatedly states that Yitro is Moses' father-in-law.

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I think the answer to this question is found in very next verse, Exodus 18:23: "If you do this thing as God so commands you, then you will be able to endure, and all these people

will go to their places in *shalom*."

Notice that after Yitro, Moses' father-in-law, provides counsel to Moses, he advises Moses to not listen to his advice until after he consults G-D. Yitro, Moses' father-in-law, says, "If you do this thing as G-D so commands;" the Hebrew language actually makes it a little clearer and more of a "if G-D commands," not "so G-D commands."

In other words, Yitro, Moses' father-in-law, completed his advice by telling Moses not to take or follow his advice until he asked G-D if it was good advice. To say this another way, Yitro, Moses' father-in-law, gave Moses advice, but also told Moses to ask his real Father first.

So Moses' father-in-law Yitro's best advice to Moses wasn't about getting help from men; Moses' father-in-law Yitro's best advice to Moses was that before accepting the advice of any man, even your father-in-law, first ask your heavenly Father. By repeating and reminding us that Yitro was Moses' father-in-law, Scripture reminds us that Moses had one Father who was more important.

If we follow Moses' example in going to his heavenly Father for wisdom, we will receive the promise of being able to endure, and we will go to our place in peace.

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