

Exodus 18

Israel's first convert



Although we tend to expect the Bible's history to be written in clear chronological order, that's only a modern-day expectation. At times the Bible writers (and its initial readers) did not seem to feel this same need so intensely. So it has been suggested that this chapter actually took place *after* the giving of the Law, recorded in chapter 20 ... and that could make a bit more sense of the scenario in the second half of chapter 18.

But, irrespective of the precise dating of the chapter, **Moses' wise father-in-law hears how God delivered his people, and becomes Israel's first convert.**

➤ Jethro learns to worship (1-12)

We do not know when or why Moses "sent away" his wife and son(s) earlier on (2-3). What do you suggest?

And what do you make of the names of his two sons (see the context of 2:22 for Gershom)? Do these names give us some insight to Moses' thoughts and feelings at those times?

Moses tells Jethro what has recently happened (8). How similar is this to proclaiming the Gospel – another, even greater, saving work of God?

And Jethro responds (9-12). What similarities do you see between his response and what we would simply call conversion?

➤ Moses learns to lead (13-27)

Is this just good common sense, or spirituality? ... and do those two need to be opposites?

Are there principles we need to learn for ourselves today?

And what does it say about the characters of the men involved, that this process of change took place so smoothly? If you or I had been involved, would we have managed so well?