

Sermon Handout
“The Conversion of Jethro”
Exodus 18:1-12

- I.** The narrative
 - A.** The news of God’s work in Egypt had spread v. 1
Jethro heard of it in Midian (*cf.* Josh 2:8-11)
 - B.** Zipporah, Gershom, Eliezer have been living with Jethro vv. 2-4
“after he had sent her back”
After the circumcision incident
Before Moses entered Egypt
 - C.** Jethro’s arrival vv. 5-6
“at the mountain of God”
Where Moses was commissioned
Where Moses would receive the law
Travel from Rephidim to Sinai is not described (*see* E)
“came to Moses”
“and he said to Moses”
 - D.** Moses’ behavior toward Jethro v. 7
Honors him (prefigures the 5th Commandment)
Mutual concern for well-being
Invites him into his home (*cf.* 4:18)
 - E.** Moses gives Jethro an update v. 8
Marah, Elim, quail & manna, the wadi, the Amalekites
 - F.** Jethro’s confession of faith vv. 9-11
Rejoicing in the goodness of God v. 9
Acknowledging God’s sovereignty vv. 10-11
 - G.** Jethro’s offering (atonement) v. 12
From Jethro’s own stock (personal faith)
Not offered through Aaron (who is not yet a priest)
Aaron & the elders join in the meal (meat of the sacrifice)
True communion in the Faith (common meal)

- II.** The lesson
 - A.** Conversion of the Gentiles v. 1
 - B.** Lack of sentimentality v. 7
 - C.** Moses’ witness of God’s mercy in face of man’s sin v. 8
 - D.** Jethro’s response to “knowing God” (sacrifice) v. 12a
 - E.** Genuine communion between God’s people v. 12b (*cf.* I John 1:3)
“The common participation *before God* of the sacrifice is the emblem of the communion of the worshippers in the blessings of the divine favor.” _James Murphy