

THE NEW NORMAL #3
“Moses—Self-destructing in the Desert”
Exodus 18:13-27

Moses was a man who carried many burdens on his shoulders. As he led God’s people through the desert, he had to deal with constant complaining of the people against him and God. They assaulted his character and made life miserable for him. He had to be available to settle disputes between the people and provide order in the community of about 1.5 million people. Moses was on the path to self-destruction until Jethro, his father-in-law, spoke into his life with godly counsel that turned the tide for Moses. When we are in the corona desert, we need to listen to what godly people say to us.

#1. WE MUST HAVE THE WISDOM TO RECOGNIZE OUR LIMITATIONS, vv. 13-16

- A. Moses was a multi-talented, high-powered person
- B. Moses was dedicated to his work--(a workaholic?)
- C. Moses had to judge disputes between the people (1.5 million)
- D. Moses was in an impossible position—prone to burnout
- E. Moses didn’t have good boundaries
- F. Moses had a blind spot

#2. WE MUST HAVE THE WISDOM TO RECOGNIZE WHEN GOD IS SPEAKING TO US THROUGH OTHER PEOPLE, vv. 17-18

- A. Jethro was a voice from God, vv. 17-18
- B. Jethro had a vested interest in Moses, v. 17
- C. Jethro said, “This is not good”, v. 17
- D. Jethro said, “You & the people will wear yourselves out”, v. 18
- E. Jethro said, “The work is too heavy for you”, v. 18
- F. Jethro said, “You can’t handle it alone”, v. 18

#3. WE MUST HAVE THE WISDOM TO SET PRIORITIES, vv. 19-20

- A. Jethro helped Moses set priorities, v. 19-20
- B. Moses is the people’s representative to God, 19
- C. Moses should do the teaching, v. 20
- D. Moses should show the people how to live, v. 20
- E. Moses should show them the duties they are to preform, v. 20

#4. WE MUST HAVE THE WISDOM TO KNOW WHEN TO ASK FOR HELP, vv. 21-23

- A. Select capable (gifted) men from all the people, v. 21 (1 Cor 12:7-31, Rom 12:3-8, 1 Peter 4:10)
- B. Men with spiritual maturity: who fear God, are trustworthy, & hate dishonest gain, v. 21 (1 Tim 3:1-13, 2 Tim 2:2)
- C. Appoint them as officials over 1,000s, 100s, 50s, 10s, v. 22
- D. Let them serve as judges with the simple cases, v. 22
- E. The difficult cases Moses can hear, v.22
- F. They will share the load with you, v. 22
- G. Moses will be able to stand the strain, v. 23
- H. The people will be satisfied, v. 23

#5. WE MUST HAVE THE WISDOM TO PRAY ABOUT THE ADVICE GIVEN TO US BEFORE WE IMPLEMENT IT, vv. 24-27

- A. Jethro told him to take it before God, vv. 23, 19
- B. Moses listened to Jethro, v. 24
- C. Moses chose capable men from all Israel, vv. 25-26
- D. Moses avoided a disaster, v. 27

NOTES:

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. For what reason(s) do you think Moses was blind to being overworked?
 2. Have you ever been in a situation where you were overwhelmed with your workload? What effect did it have on you? How did you cope?
 3. What was the effect of Moses' solo performance on the other people?
 4. For what reason(s) does Satan go after leaders? What are some of the strategies Satan uses to attack church leaders?
 5. What do you think Jethro's gifts were? (Exodus 2:15—3:1-2)
 6. Have you ever had a significant word from God through someone else? Explain
 7. Why is it necessary to evaluate our priorities with a person wiser than ourselves?
 8. For what reason(s) do people not ask for help?
 9. What is the point of Paul's metaphor of the church being the "body of Christ?" (Romans 12:3-8, 1 Cor 12-14, Eph 4:11-16, 1 Peter 4:10)
 10. How does that relate to this passage?
 11. Why is it important to select people with the right gifts and character for leadership?
 12. Why is it important to pray about someone's advice before implementing it?
 13. What are your takeaways from this passage?
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TODAY'S SCRIPTURE

Proverbs 27:9: Perfume and incense bring joy to the heart, and the pleasantness of one's friend springs from his earnest counsel.

Romans 12:3-8 For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. ⁴Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. ⁶We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. ⁷If it is

serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; ⁸if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

1 Peter 4:10: Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.

2 Timothy 2:2: And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.

1 Timothy 3:1-7: Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. ²Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. ⁴He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. ⁵(If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) ⁶He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. ⁷He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.