

[Wednesday, November 16, 2016] Exodus Series, Exodus chapter 18 – Craig Thurman

In the last chapter the Israelites have come to *Horeb*. Horeb is a large wilderness or desert area which includes the mountain of Sinai. Both Horeb and Sinai are used interchangeably in Scripture, and can refer to the same place and the same mountain. However, Sinai most often refers to the mountain itself, the notable landmark in this area. This is the place and here is the mountain where the Lord will give to Moses and the nation of Israel His Law, also called, but not limited to, The Ten Commandments. The Israelites will be in this area for at least the next nine months.

Amalek had come to fight against the Israelites. The Amalekites were a cruel enemy, attacking at the rearward of the camp of Israel where were the feeble, faint and weary. Moses then called upon Joshua to take *select* men with him and go to the battle. In this battle, as long as Moses kept his hand outstretched with the rod of God that Israel prevailed in the conflict, but when he let down his hand, then Amalek prevailed. And so Aaron and Hur supported Moses' hands upright until the going down of the sun, and Israel defeated Amalek that day. The LORD has now sworn to remove the memory of Amalek from under heaven, but until He shall war against them from generation to generation.

Chapter 18

וַיִּשְׁמַע יֵתְרוֹ כֹּהֵן מִדְיָן חָתָן

(reading right to left)

1 ¶ When Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father in law, heard

priest, לַכֹּהֵן, prefixed preposition לְ, *to* or *for*, and the masc. sing. noun כֹּהֵן, co-hen (phonetically, ko-hane); but for a single instance in Genesis where this Hebrew word is used with reference to Melchizedek, the KJV notes in the margin *prince*. (cf. Ge.41.45, 50; 46.20; 47.22, 26; Ex. 2.16) There are some few places which require such a consideration. (cf. 2Sa.8.18, David's sons were *chief rulers* (marg. *princes*); 2Sa.20.26, And Ira also the Jairite was *a chief ruler* about David; 1Ki.4.2, And these were the princes which he had; Azariah the son of Zadok the *priest* (marg., *chief officer*); 1Chron.27.5, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, a chief *priest* (marg. *principal officer*);

Job 12.19, He leadeth *princes* away; Is.24.2, as with the people, so with *the priest* (marg. *prince*).

father-in-law, חתן, cho-then, Qal part. act. sing. masc. of חתן, chathan, used in reference to Jethro 18 times. This is an affinity that one has because of marriage.

Jethro was a figure introduced early in the book of Exodus. Both the father, Reuel/Raguel ,

Note: the Hebrew, רְעוּאֵל, R^e-[g]u-el is the same for both, Reuel and Raguel. Reuel has the silent ayin, ע, whereas ayin, ע in Raguel has the guttural [guh]. (cf. Ex.2.18, *Reuel*, רְעוּאֵל; Nu.10.29, Raguel, רְעוּאֵל.)

aka. Jethro, and the son, Hobab, are called Moses' father-in-law. (cf. Ex. 18.1, *Jethro*; Nu.10.29, *Raguel*; Jud.4.11, *Hobab*) introductory remarks to Exodus chapter 3.) Reuel is the great grandson of Abraham through Esau. (Abraham – Isaac – Esau – Reuel)

Ge 36:10 These are the names of Esau's sons; Eliphaz the son of Adah the wife of Esau, Reuel the son of Bashemath the wife of Esau.

Ge 36:17 And these are the sons of Reuel Esau's son; duke Nahath, duke Zerah, duke Shammah, duke Mizzah: these are the dukes that came of Reuel in the land of Edom; these are the sons of Bashemath Esau's wife. (Have not proved Hobab is son or son-in-law to Reuel.)

Hobab, Hebrew , חַבֵּב, verb, חָבַב, *loved*, is clearly stated to be the son of Reuel,

Nu 10:29 And Moses said unto Hobab, the son of Raguel the Midianite ...

and however it might be that he is said to be Moses' father-in-law, he is still son of Reuel.

of all that God had done for Moses, and for Israel his people, and that the LORD had brought Israel out of Egypt;

The report of the LORD went before the Israelites.

Ex.15.13 Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed: thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation.

14 The people shall hear, and be afraid: sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Palestina.

15 Then the dukes of Edom shall be amazed; the mighty men of Moab, trembling shall take hold upon them; all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away.

16 Fear and dread shall fall upon them; by the greatness of thine arm they shall be as still as a stone; till thy people pass over, O LORD, till the people pass over, which thou hast purchased.

17 Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, O LORD, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in, in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established.

Nu 14:14 And they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land: for they have heard that thou LORD art among this people, that thou LORD art seen face to face, and that thy cloud standeth over them, and that thou goest before them, by day time in a pillar of a cloud, and in a pillar of fire by night.

2 Then Jethro, Moses' father in law, took Zipporah, Moses' wife, after he had sent her back,

3 And her two sons;

Cf.Ex.4.24-26. The LORD had met Moses at the inn to kill him. By the information that is revealed in Scripture, Moses and Zipporah knew why the LORD sought to kill him. This was connected to the fact that there was a son which had not received in his flesh the mark of circumcision. And it is after Zipporah circumcises this son that Moses is released from impending death. From this we can only surmise why Moses sent his wife and

children back to Midian: Zipporah disagreed with the covenant of circumcision. All of those of Israel had kept the rite of circumcision during their Egyptian experience.

Jos 5:5 Now all the people that came out (referring to the Exodus) were circumcised ...

Such a discrepancy in Moses' house could not be overlooked by the LORD.

of which the name of the one was

* גֵּרְשֹׁם כִּי אָמַר הַיִּתִּי גֵר רִיְהֹנֶה בְּאֶרֶץ (reading left to right)
Gershom; for he said, I have been an alien in a strange land:
a stranger foreign

*Ex 2:22 And she bare him a son, and he called his name *Gershom: for he said, I have been a stranger in a strange land. *verbatim*

an alien, גֵּר, masc. sing. noun; the verb derivative, גוּר, goor; KJV, stranger (85), alien (1), sojourner (1).

strange, נִכְרִיָּה, fem. sing. adj. of נִכְרִי, nok-ri; KJV, stranger, strange, alien, foreigner.

4 *And the name of the other was Eliezer; ¹for the God of ²my father, said he,*

בְּעֶזְרִי
[was] *mine help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh:*

Eliezer, אֱלִיעֶזֶר, masc. proper names for אֱלֹהִים; God, אֱלֹהִים, is his help, עֶזֶר, [g]e-zer.

Sometimes when you see the suffixed 'ezer, עֶזֶר in a name the meaning of help is attached to it. For example, *Eliezer* was the name of Abraham's servant in Ge. 15.2. *Ebenezer ... a stone of help.* (1Sa.7.12) *Ahiezer, a*

brother of help (Nu.1.12, Crudens Concordance); *Abiezer/Jeezer*, a father of help (Nu.26.30); *Hadadezer*, Hadad is a help (2Sa.8.3; Crudens & Young's Concordances); *Hadarezer*, Hadar is a help (1Chron.18.3); *Romamtiezer*, the highest help (1Chron. 5.24, fr. **רָמַם**, exalted, lifted up).

Father's wield such an influence on their children. Moses had regard to *his father's God*; the God of Amram.

The term *my father's God* is first said by Jacob; (Ge.31.5) then by Moses. (Ex.15.2)

We do we know about Amram? He is not mentioned by name until the sixth chapter of Exodus. (cf. Ex.6.18) His father's name is Kohath, son of Levi. (Nu.26.58) Amram marries Jochebed, his father's sister. (Ex.6.20), which means that she is daughter of Levi, who is his grandfather.

In that day that was not an unusual marriage arrangement. (cf. Ge.20.12; Abram and Sarai were sister and brother by Terah, though they had different mothers.) Marriages will become regulated at the giving of the law.

To Amram were born three children: Miriam, Aaron, and Moses. And we know the length of his life: 137 years. (Ex.6.20)

mine help, **בְּעֵזְרִי**, prefixed preposition, **בְּ**, by, in, with; w/1ps. suff. *my*, to the masc. sing. noun, **עֵזֶר**; KJV, noun is always tss. with the English word *help*; the verb, **עָזַר**, is *help* (most often), *succour* (3).

and delivered me, **וַיַּצִּילֵנִי**, Hiphil (causative active) fut. of **נָצַל**, w/1ps. suff.; KJV, *rid, recover, deliver, rescue, save, escape*. Piel Preterite, 3.22, *and ye shall spoil*; Piel fut., 12.36, *And they spoiled*; Hiphil preterite, 2.19, *delivered us*; 5.23, *hast thou delivered*; 6.6, *and I will rid*; 12.27, *delivered*; 18.9, *whom he had delivered*; 18.10, *hath delivered, hath delivered*; Hiphil infin., 3.8, *to deliver them*; 5.23 *neither ... at all*; **18.8, and ... delivered them**; Hithpael, 33.6, *And ... stripped themselves*.

A custom that is seen often in Bible history is giving children names which have meanings or memories. Esau mean *red*. Esau receive this name because he was born *red*. (Ge.25.25) Jacob received his name because when he was born he took hold on his twin brother's heel. (Ge.25.26) And as Jacob's name signifies, he is a supplanter (Ge.27.36) Here are a number children whose names carried a particular meaning.

Cain, *gotten*; Seth, *appointed*; Noah, *rest*; Isaac, *laughter*; Esau, *red*; Jacob, *supplanter*; Reuben, *wrestling*; Simeon, *hearing*; Levi, *joined*; Judah, *praise*; Dan, *judging*; Naphtali, *prevailing*; Gad, *troop*; Asher, *blessed or happy*; Issacher, *hired*; Zebulon, *dwell*; Joseph, *adding*; Benjamin, *son of my joy*; Manasseh, *forgetting*; Ephraim, *fruitful*; Moses, *drawn out*; Hanna, *grace*; Peninah, *confront*; Naomi, *pleasant*, and she asked her name be changed to Mara, *bitter*; Ichabod, *the glory is departed*; Samson, *sun-like*; Samuel, *asked of God*; Solomon (also called Jedediah) *beloved of the Lord*, Jabez, *sorrowful*; Jesus, *Savior*.

So, Moses' names his sons to memorialize the fact that he is a stranger in a foreign land and the act of God being his helper.

וְאִשְׁתּוֹ וּבָנָיו

5 And Jethro, Moses' father in law, came with his sons and his wife unto Moses into the wilderness, where he encamped at the mount of God:

camped, חָנָה, cho-neh, Qal part, act. sing. masc. of חָנָה; Ex. 13.20; 14.2, 9; 15.27, 18.5, *encamp*; Ex.14.2; 17.1; 19.2, *pitch*; to pitch your tent or camp; the noun, מַחֲנֶה, ma-ch^a-neh refers to the host/camp, which *camps, pitches*, חָנָה, chanah the tent.

The mount of God is a reference to the place called Horeb. (Ex. 17.6)

Deu.4.9 Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons;

10 Specially the day that thou stoodest before the LORD thy God in **Horeb**, when the LORD said unto me, Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children.

11 And ye came near and stood under the mountain; and the mountain burned with fire unto the midst of heaven, with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness.

12 And the LORD spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice.

13 And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone.

De 29:1 These are the words of the covenant, which the LORD commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, beside the covenant which he made with them in Horeb.

1Ki 8:9 There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb, when the LORD made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt.

Mal 4:4 Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in **Horeb** for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments.

6 And he said unto Moses, I thy father in law Jethro am come unto thee, and thy wife, and her two sons with her.

7 ¶ And Moses went out to meet his father in law,

to meet, לקראת, Qal infin. w/prefixed preposition לְ, to, for, or against; root קרא, to befall, meet, happen; Qal infin. Ex.4.14 to meet thee; 27, to meet; 5.20, in the way; 7.15, against he come; 14.27, against it; 19.17, to meet with.

and they came into the tent.

They must have come into Jethro's tent.

8 And Moses told his father in law all that the LORD had done unto Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake,

and all the travail that had come upon them by the way,
trouble

travail, כָּל־הַתְּלָאָה; all, כָּל, cal; הַתְּלָאָה, hat-t^e-la-ah; הַ, definite article, *the*; fem sing. noun, תְּלָאָה; found 4 times: Ex.18.8; Nu.20.14; Lam 3.5, *travail* (used to read *travel*); Neh.9.32, *trouble*.

and how the LORD delivered them.

delivered, לְמוֹצֵץ, Hiphil (causative active) fut., 3ps. masc.of נִצַּץ; w/ 3ppl. masc. suff.; KJV, *rid, recover, deliver, rescue, save, escape*. Piel Preterite, 3.22, *and ye shall spoil*; Piel fut., 12.36, *And they spoiled*; Hiphil preterite, 2.19, *delivered us*; 5.23, *hast thou delivered*; 6.6, *and I will rid*; 12.27, *delivered*; **18.9**, *whom he had delivered*; **18.10**, **(twice)** *hath delivered, hath delivered*; Hiphil infin., 3.8, *to deliver them*; 5.23 *neither ... at all*; Hiphil fut., **18.4**, *and delivered me*; **18.8**, *and ... delivered them*; Hithpael, 33.6, *And ... stripped themselves*.

If we were in that tent, like a fly on the wall, we might have heard something like this from Moses:

'O Jethro, Pharaoh and the Egyptians thought to do us great harm. But God delivered us. We crossed through the Red Sea as if it were on dry ground. The LORD parted the waters and we went down into the midst of the sea and crossed safely over to the other side. O, Jethro, you should have seen it! But there was more trouble ahead.

There wasn't any water! And then we finally found water and it was bitter. But O, Jethro, you should have been there. The LORD shewed

me a tree, and when I cast it into the bitter water the waters became sweet, and we drank. But that wasn't all.

Then we didn't have any food. But O, Jethro, it was amazing. In the night the LORD brought us quail like you've never seen before, and in the morning we had the Bread of Heaven to feast upon. But that wasn't all. O no, that wasn't all.

We just left a place where we didn't have any water and the LORD had me gather all of the old men of Israel together, and then come to a certain Rock. The LORD told me to smite that Rock with this rod. And when I did the water came gushing out of that Rock. And we all drank of it. O Jethro, the last three months have been one thing after the 'other. But you know what? The LORD delivered us out of all of our troubles, and provided our every need. Jethro, there ain't no God like our God!

9 And Jethro rejoiced for all the goodness which the LORD had done to Israel, gladdened

And ... rejoiced, וַיִּשְׂמַח, Qal fut. 3ps. masc. of שִׂמַח; KJV, three times, Job 3.6, let it not be joined unto the days (marg. or, rejoice among); Ps.21.6, thou hast made him exceeding glad ...

whom he had delivered out of the hand of the Egyptians.

10 And Jethro said, Blessed be the LORD, who hath delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of Pharaoh, who hath delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians.

Jethro blessed God for what He had done. He didn't praise Moses.

גְּדוֹלַת־יְהוָה מִכָּל־הָאֱלֹהִים

11 Now I know that the LORD is greater than all gods:
that great is Jehovah from all the gods:

for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly he was above them.

they dealt proudly, זָדוּ, za-du, Qal pret. 3ppl. masc. of זָדַן; KJV, 10 times: in Qal and Hiphil preterite it is translated with the English word *proud*; in Hiphil fut it is translated once *sod* (Ge.25.29); three times ***presumptuously*** (Ex.21.14; Deu.1.43; 17.13); and once *presume* (Deu.18.20); especially in view of the terms *presumptuously* and *presume*, the translation in Gen.25.29, *sod* certainly gives the idea that the Egyptians were like a pot of *boiling* liquid before the LORD.

Perhaps meaning, that these Egyptians had dealt so presumptuously because of their gods, but God showed Himself over them all.

12 And Jethro, Moses' father in law,

For whatever reason, it is obvious that the term *father in law* is used often. (13 times in this chapter)

took a burnt offering and sacrifices for God:

burnt offering, עֹלָה, fem. sing. noun; KJV, *a burnt offering* or *a burnt sacrifice*.

sacrifices, וְזִבְחִים, masc. pl. absolute state of זָבַח, ze-vach; which always appears to be translated with the English word *sacrifice*.

and Aaron came, and all the elders of Israel, to eat bread with Moses' father in law before God.

Whether there was an invitation for these to come together, the Scripture does not say. But these all came to fellowship together around the things of God. No matter who it might be, if they can rejoice in and offer and sacrifice to God for the salvation that He has given to His people I think there is fellowship that can be enjoyed before the LORD together.

13 ¶ And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to judge the people: and the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening.

14 And when Moses' father in law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What is this thing that thou doest to the people? why sittest thou thyself alone,

thyself alone, לְבַדָּךָ, masc. sing. noun, (???) (בְּדָד, alone, solitary, desolate) with a 2ps masc. suffix, *thou* and the prefixed preposition לְ, *to, for, or against*;

and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even?

15 And Moses said unto his father in law, Because the people come unto me to enquire of God:

to enquire, לְדַרֵּשׁ, Qal infin., construct state, דָּרַשׁ, da-rash; KJV, *to seek, enquire, to make inquisition, to require, to search*, the 'mancer of necromancer.

The people of Israel were seeking through Moses the LORD's discernment, the LORD's mind about any particular issue.

16 When they have a matter, they come unto me; and I judge between one and another, and I do make them know the statutes of God, and his laws.

and I do make ... know, וְהוֹדַעְתִּי, Hiphil (causative active) 1ps. of יָדַע, to know; to make them *know, to declare, to teach ...*

the statutes, חֻקֵּי, pl. noun, construct state, חָק; KJV, *a portion, ordinance, statute, bounds, set time, appointed portion, decree, custom; Ex. 5.14, task; 12.24; 15.25, statute, 26; 18.16, 20; 29.28; 30.21.*

These things are yet unrevealed to the people of Israel. It seems to me that this would be the practical wisdom for daily affairs which comes of those whose desire it is to walk with the LORD. Being able to listen means being able to learn.

Pr 1:5 A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:

6 To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.

Pr 9:9 Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.

17 And Moses' father in law said unto him, The thing that thou doest is not good.

Jethro is a priest of Midian. Whether for good or bad, I cannot say of his counsel. There is nothing revealed in Scripture why Moses did anything like this. Isn't it possible that he simply did what he thought was best in order to help the people?

'There are no great men, only great challenges that ordinary men are forced by circumstances to meet.' *Admiral William F. Halsey*

18 Thou wilt surely wear away,

Surely wear away, נָבַל תִּבֹּל; נָבַל, Qal infin. absol. state of נָבַל, navel; תִּבֹּל, tib-bol, Qal fut., 2ps. masc. of נָבַל; KJV, *Is.34.4, to fall off; to wear away; 2Sa.22.46, strangers shall fade away; Job 14.18, surely the mountain falling comes to nought; Ps.1.3, his leaf also shall not wither.*

כִּי־כָבֵד מְמֹדָה

both thou, and this people that is with thee: for this thing is [too] heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone.

you can not prevail by yourself

thou art ... able, לֹא תִכְלִי; לֹא, not; תִּכְלִי, Hophal, fut. sing. fem. of יָכַל, yakol, to prevail, to be able; this verb is used 13 times in the book of Exodus (2.3; 7.21, 24; 8.18; 9.11; 10.5; 12.39; 15.23; 18.18, 23 (twice); 33.20; 40.35.

The issue of directing the people in the law of God is too much for any man, for Moses and the people. Both he and the people will *fade away, fall off* from this good work.

עֲתָה שָׁמַע בְּקוֹלִי (R-L)

19 Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel,

Now, listen to my voice

אֵינְעָצָה, Qal fut., 1ps. of יָעַץ, w/2ps. masc. suffix; KJV, to *counsel, consult, determine, purpose, devise, guide.*

and God shall be with thee: Be thou for the people to God-ward,
before God

shall be, וַיְהִי, Qal fut. of the verb הָיָה, *to be.*

-ward, מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, preposition; KJV, 1st use, *Ex.18.19, God-ward; 26.9, forefront; 28.25, before; 28.27, toward; Lev. 5.8, from; Nu.8.2, the front of; 22.5, over against; Mic.2.8, with.*

that thou mayest bring the causes unto God:

Moses, what you are doing is good, but *re-consider* how you are accomplishing this thing.

20 And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do.

the way, אֲתִיְהַדְרֶךָ, sing. noun, דֶּרֶךְ, de-rek; KJV, *way, journey, manner, -ward, toward.*

21 Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men,
perceive from all

thou shalt provide, תִּהְיוּהוּ, Qal fut. 2ps. masc. of הָיָה, the idea of perception: *to see, behold, prophesy.* (Pv.22.29; 29.20; Is.1.1; Is.30.10, et al.)

able, אֱיָל, meaning men of wealth (of personal capacity), men of activity; able, valiant, powerful, valorous; men of virtue, and mighty. (cf. v.25)

such as fear God,

These are notable characteristics when they are found in men who *fear God*. Without the LORD these attributes are for self-serving purposes. (cf. Nimrod, and others)

men of truth, hating covetousness;

hating covetousness, בָּצַע, Qal pret.; KJV, greedy of gain, given to covetousness.

and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens:

rulers, שָׂרִי, masc. pl. noun, construct state, of שָׂר, sar; KJV, captain, prince, chief, ruler, steward.

The beginning of the idea of mediation.

22 And let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge:

so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee.

make it easy on yourself

נָשָׂא, nasa, Qal preterite; raised up, lift up, carried, stirred,

make it easier, וְהִקֵּל, Hiphil (causative active) imper. sing. masc. of קָלַל; In Qal, Ge. 8.8, refers to waters being abated; 2Sa. 1.23, to being swifter than eagles, or post, or weaver's shuttle; in Hiphil imperative, to be easier; 1Ki.12.4, to make ... lighter; 2Chron. 10.4, to ease.

for thyself, מֵעֵלַי, prefixed מִן, from, of + עַל, upon, above + יָ, 2ps.
pronominal suff. your, you;

23 If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so,

What better counsel could we ask than that we be reminded that what we do must be found according to the will of God. The spirit of Jethro is the spirit of James, the Lord's brother.

Jas 4:15 For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.

then thou shalt be able to endure,
stand

they could, יָכֹלוּ, Qal preterite, 3ppl of יָכַל, yakol, to prevail, to be able; this verb is used 13 times in the book of Exodus (2.3; 7.21, 24; 8.18; 9.11; 10.5; 12.39; 15.23; 18.18, 23 (twice); 33.20; 40.35.

בְּשָׁלוֹם

and all this people shall also go to their place in peace.

24 So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father in law, and did all that he had said.

25 And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.

and chose, וַיִּבְחַר, Qal fut. 3ps. masc. בָּחַר; KJV, chose, appoint, require.

able, אָיִל, able, meaning men of wealth (of personal capacity), men of activity; able, valiant, powerful, valorous; men of virtue, and mighty. (cf. v.21)

26 And they judged the people at all seasons: the hard causes they brought unto Moses,

hard, הַקָּשָׁה, fem. adj. הַקָּשָׁה, w/הַ, the definite article; KJV, *Ge.42.7*, spake *roughly*; *Ex.1.14*, *hard* bondage; *Ex.6.9*, *cruel* bondage; *Ex. 32.9*, *stiffnecked* people; *Jud. 2.19*, *stubborn* way; *1Sa.25.1*, the man was *churlish*; *2Sa.2.17*, *very sore* battle; *1Ki.12.4*, *grievous* service; *Ez.2.4*, *impudent* (marg. *hard* of face); *Ez.3.7*, *hardhearted*.

but every small matter they judged themselves.

27 And Moses let his father in law depart; and he went his way into his own land.

While Jethro is sent back to his own place, it is his son, Hobab, that Moses will implore to join with Israel as the journey through the land. Moses would have him remain with the people because of his knowledge of the area.

Nu.10.29 ¶ And Moses said unto Hobab, the son of Raguel the Midianite, Moses' father in law, We are journeying unto the place of which the LORD said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good: for the LORD hath spoken good concerning Israel.
30 And he said unto him, I will not go; but I will depart to mine own land, and to my kindred.
31 And he said, Leave us not, I pray thee; forasmuch as thou knowest how we are to encamp in the wilderness, and thou mayest be to us instead of eyes.
32 And it shall be, if thou go with us, yea, it shall be, that what goodness the LORD shall do unto us, the same will we do unto thee.

You never know what you, your children, or your children's children might receive tomorrow for the kindness you show today. The kindness that Hobab showed to Israel in Moses' day is the very reason that king Saul cited for giving the Kenites an opportunity to be spared slaughter with the Amalekites.

1Sa 15:6 And Saul said unto the Kenites, Go, depart, get you down from among the Amalekites, lest I destroy you with them: for ye

shewed kindness to all the children of Israel, when they came up out of Egypt. So the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites.

Considering the details of Ex.19.1, and Nu.9.1 Israel will be in this area for about 9 months. They do move in this area to come to Sinai, but they appear to remain here for the receiving of the law and the building of the tabernacle.