

Luke 24:13-53 (W. Noel Tomkins) 71259

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The meeting of Moses and his father-in-law, recorded in Ex. 18 is all the more interesting and of moment to the believer now, inasmuch as it was an event which took place before Israel had so foolishly placed, themselves under law; and is a fine exposition of the injunction in 1 Peter 3:8, "love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous."¹

If "The man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants, and in the sight of the people," his greatness could in no way have been diminished by the magnificent manner in which Jehovah had used him to carry the people through the Red Sea; and it was no wonder that his father-in-law, when they were journeying in the wilderness, should seek to come to him, and bring also Moses' wife and two sons, as he had heard of all that God had done for Moses, and for Israel His people. That Moses, encamped at the mount of God, greater than any prophet, "faithful in all God's house with whom Jehovah would speak mouth to mouth, apparently, and not in dark speeches"—should not remain in his tent, but go out to meet one so much inferior to him, though his father-in-law, and do obeisance too, was lovely; and that he should kiss Jethro and they ask each other of their welfare, and then come to rest in the tent, is a wilderness scene that the heart can linger over.

It is to be noted that in speaking to Jethro, Moses leaves out all mention of himself (an example that we may covet to follow); and using the name of relationship in which God stood to Israel, simply "told his father-in-law all that Jehovah had done unto Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake, and all the travail that had come upon them by the way, and how Jehovah delivered them." Blessed it is for believers now, when what their God and Father has wrought in His beloved Son, and the mercy that delivered from so great a death and does deliver, form the topic of their conversation and their praise when they meet. It is beautiful to observe that Moses' narrative caused his father-in-law to rejoice and bless Jehovah, and brought him really into the spirit of the song recorded in Ex. 15 where Moses and Israel had sung, "Who is like unto Thee, O Jehovah, among the gods? Who is like Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?" for Jethro adds, "Now I know that Jehovah is greater than all gods: for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly He was above them." This was followed by his taking a burnt offering and sacrifices for God: and the party, increased by the coming of Aaron and all the elders of Israel, did "eat bread with Moses' father-in-law before God." Beloved, it is well for us "to use hospitality one to another without grudging" (1 Peter 4:9); and to remember that, for us, God links His glory even with a social meal; "whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (Rom. 10:31).

One does not dwell on Jethro's tender solicitude for his son-in-law, but merely note that he speaks of him and all this people going to "their place in peace."

In Luke 24 we have the two distressed ones journeying to Emmaus, joined by the One of whom they had been speaking, and Who lead out their hearts to tell Him what had been the subject of their converse, whilst in faithful love He had to reprove them; nevertheless, "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures, the things concerning Himself." No wonder that reaching the place whither they went (it was only a village), they should constrain Him to stay with them, though He had made as though He would have gone further. And that He should yield was like Himself; but oh, the grace that would deign to partake of their meal! for "He took bread, and blessed, and brake, and gave to them," and (what a moment of joy, but all too short!) "their eyes were opened, and they knew Him, and He vanished out of their sight."

The good tidings they could not keep to themselves; and so, returning forthwith to Jerusalem, they communicate to the eleven and to the others there with them the glad news now confirmed by the presence of the Lord Himself, who shows them His hands and His feet; and so brings Calvary before them, and the victory He has obtained. But their joy is too much for them; their faith is not in exercise, and He will partake of a meal in order to bring Himself before them; for in response to His inquiry "Have ye here any meat?" "they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and of an honeycomb; and He took it, and did eat before them." After this, in due course, He instructs and commissions them, "Ye are witnesses of these things." Then, while at Bethany, in the act of blessing them, He is "parted from them and carried up into heaven." To adopt the words of Jethro, we may say, He went to His place; and "this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11), and shall take us there, too. Are we looking for Him, and, meanwhile, do we heed the exhortation, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares" (Heb. 13:2)?

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