



Sermon Notes from 25 August

The Turning Point (*Exodus 18:1-27*)

by Pastor GL Wong

The book of Exodus is all about God and what He has done for His chosen people. Moses is reunited with his family. In light of the first 40 chapters of Exodus, this passage (Ex 18) serves as a turning point for Israel. God meant for Israel to be a catalyst for Him to be revealed to the nations. God has also incredibly aligned Agape's faith journey with that of God's people in Exodus.

2 Parts

1) 5 Learning Points from Israel's Past

#1 God is faithful in the way He leads us - There is heavy repetition of what God had already done for His people (v1,8,9,10). The repetition of God's deliverance emphasizes His faithfulness towards His people. As God's people, we need to hear again and again everything that God has done for us before we can be properly motivated to do anything for Him. Faith will only arise in your heart if you regularly pause to recount God's faithfulness to you. Ultimately, God plans to bring His people to a place where they belong. No longer will they be sojourners in a foreign land. We too are sojourners here on earth (1 Pe 2:11). For God's people, the promised land in the Old Testament is meant to point to something even better: eternal life in a heavenly city (Heb 11:16).

#2 God's plan of salvation includes bringing about the conversion of those in our lives - Jethro (a Midian priest who worships a multitude of gods), after hearing all about God and Moses' personal testimony, was touched (v11). Jethro expressed exclusively his newfound faith in this one and only God through worship and burnt offerings (v12). For the first time in Exodus, we see a foreigner being saved through conversion.

#3 God's will is discerned most clearly by the humble version of ourselves - Jethro (a new convert) gives Moses (God's chosen leader) advice (v19), and in beautiful humility, he listens and

discerns it to be from the Lord (v24). He recognised that God also reveals His will through the wisdom of others. Pride will always cloud your spiritual vision, but humility will allow you to discern God's will for you most clearly (Jas 4:6). Discern in humble faith (Pr 15:22)!

#4 God's work requires the entire community to step up by faith - It was no longer just Moses but also able men who needed to exercise active faith (v25). God called upon more people to step out by faith, and they did so obediently. He was calling out to the entire nation of Israel to arise in faith. God's desire is not just a handful of faithful people at work; He wants a whole church stepping up to serve Him. There is no serving, speaking or doing of anything apart from God (1 Pe 4:10-11). When you step out in faith, you are depending on God. As you put this faith into action, God is glorified.

#5 God's people are blessed so that they may be a blessing - God's people are blessed. They are called to be a holy people; making known their holy God. God will make Himself known among the nations not just by saving His people, but also by His saved people. Their obedience to Him is meant to be a beacon to the world. Their blessedness is meant to lead them to becoming a blessing.

2) The Dream for Agape's Future

The dream is for Agape to be a growing church that plants churches.

What We Need to Realise This Dream

1. Preparation - God has prepared us and will continue preparing us to trust Him for a church plant.

2. Incubation - To generate the right conditions and culture for church-planting, the two congregations will combine back into one.

3. Reorientation - The rechanneling and reorganizing of our resources is needed to create new pathways for growth.

4. Revitalisation - A revitalised understanding of our vision is needed for Agape to be a blessing to our city.