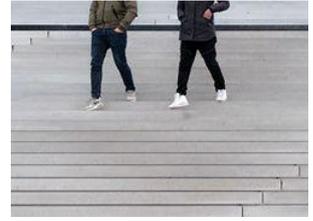




## Carstairs-Bancroft United Church

October 13, 2021

### **DAILY ENCOURAGEMENT DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC By Rev. Maria Szabone Berces**



Source: Our Daily Bread

Beloved Carstairs Bancroft United Church Members,

### **Today's Inspiration in one sentence**

**“Listen now to me and I will give you some advice, and may God be with you.”**

(Exodus 18:19)

### **Did You Know?**

- The word **“Exodus”** is derived from the Greek *Exodos*, the name given to the book by those who translated the Septuagint (the pre-Christian Greek translation of the Old Testament). “Exodus” means “exit”, “departure”. In Hebrew the book is named after its first two words: *“we’elleh shemoth”* (“*And these are the names of*”).
- Several statements in Exodus indicate that Moses wrote certain sections of the book. In addition, Joshua 8:31 refers to the command of Exodus 20:25 as having been “written in the Book of the Law of Moses”. The New Testament also claims Mosaic authorship for various passages in Exodus. These references strongly suggest that Moses was largely responsible for writing this book.
- Scholars date Exodus between 1446 and 1406 BC.
- The main theme of the book is how God reveals himself to his people and delivers them from slavery in Egypt to establish a covenant with them in the desert.

(The NIV Study Bible; Exodus)

### **Personal Insight**

This story of Moses and his father-in-law reminded me to a Hungarian children’s rhyme about the wild dove. She didn’t know how to build a nest, so one of the other birds volunteered to teach her. As that avian fellow tried to show the tricks of nest building, the dove always said: “I know. I know”. (Which in Hungarian imitative to what doves ‘say’.) After a few “I know-s”, the other bird gave up teaching the dove. This is why wild doves can’t build a proper, good-looking nest up to our era.

I suppose this poetry was intended to encourage children to listen to and follow the advice of more experienced individuals. But even if we are not children any longer, it is advantageous to heed wise advice. Moses had a good mentor in Jethro, and by listening to him Moses could avoid ‘burn out’ and catastrophic failures in his leadership.

I think we need both humility and intelligence to pay attention to good advice. I consider it God’s gift when the Almighty blesses us with foresighted people around us. It is *not* derogatory to follow Moses’ example and to change our behaviour for better practices.

Through the Scriptures the Holy One also provides us guidance. As Proverbs put it: **“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;”** (Proverbs 3:5)

We might be able to make better decisions if we actually listen to these instructions.

Grace and Peace to You All,

Rev. Maria



## The Need for Wisdom

*Moses listened to his father-in-law and did everything he said.*

Exodus 18:24

### READ Exodus 18:17–24

Growing up without a dad, Rob felt he missed out on a lot of practical wisdom that fathers often pass on to their children. Not wanting anyone to lack important life skills, Rob made a series of practical “Dad, How Do I?” videos demonstrating everything from how to put up a shelf to how to change a tire. With his kind compassion and warm style, Rob has become a YouTube sensation, amassing millions of subscribers.

Many of us long for the expertise of a parental figure to teach us valuable skills as well as help us navigate difficult situations. Moses needed some wisdom after he and the Israelites fled captivity in Egypt and were establishing themselves as a nation. Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, saw the strain that settling disputes among the people was having on Moses. So, Jethro gave Moses thoughtful advice on how to delegate responsibility in leadership (Exodus 18:17–23). Moses “listened to his father-in-law and did everything he said” (v. 24).

God knows we all need wisdom. Some may be blessed with godly parents who offer wise advice, and some aren’t. But God’s wisdom is available to all who ask (James 1:5). He’s also provided wisdom throughout the pages of Scripture, which reminds us that when we humbly and sincerely listen to the wise, we “will be counted among the wise” (Proverbs 19:20) and have wisdom to share with others. – By **Lisa M. Samra**

### REFLECT & PRAY

**Heavenly Father, help me to seek out and listen to wise counsel from the people You’ve put in my life. Amen.**

In what ways have you benefited from sage advice? Who might you come alongside?

### SCRIPTURE INSIGHT

Leading over two million Israelites through the wilderness to Mount Sinai was a task fraught with difficulties and dangers. Moses had already dealt with many crises (lack of food and water, attacks from enemies) amid the many grumbings and criticisms from his people. In Exodus 18:17–24, we read how he experienced a crisis of overwork and inefficiency. Jethro, his father-in-law, advised Moses to manage his workload by delegating some of his functions and authority. Moses was to “select capable men . . . who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain” (v. 21). The leaders were to be “wise, understanding and respected men” who “judge fairly” (Deuteronomy 1:13–16). Similar high standards and qualifications are also required for leaders of the church (Acts 6:3; 1 Timothy 3:1–13; Titus 1:6–9). – By **K. T. Sim**

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