



## STOCK THE FRIDGE

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Exodus 18:13 – 25

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### MESSAGE NOTES

#### What is God doing in your life right now, that you are going to need later?

You may feel like you are still coming out of a season where all of life is on pause or hold, but in this season GOD has not left you stagnant, he left you fallow!

Stagnant is still or motionless, lifeless and dead. NO you have been fallow, your character and soul plowed and turned-over for a season of fruitfulness in the future!

The question I want to ask this morning is:

#### What God is cultivating now, will be what you can access later — how is God stocking your fridge?

You will survive later on what you stocked today!

I want to show you how God takes these moments of obscurity and dryness and in those places prepares you for a future that you will later understand REQUIRED that desert, that dryness, that obscurity. What God stocked at one point, was the very ingredient future you will thank God for!

Exodus 18: We will start reading in verse 13.

Moses has been led by God out of Egypt to Mt. Sinai or Horeb (meaning desolate or wasteland) where in just a few days God will give Moses the law. The governing schema by which the nation will live and be governed both to neighbor and to God.

Moses' father-in-law Jethro, NOT a HEBREW but a Midian, who goes by 3 names in the Old Testament is returning Moses' wife Zipporah, Moses sent her away after the Exodus and Jethro is bringing her and the kids back. While staying with Israel and Moses we are observing a typical daily schedule.

Verse 13 – 18

At this point in the history of the Hebrew people, a conservative estimate puts the population at over half a million men, women, and children. Imagine serving as judge/arbitrator/advisor to over half a million people.

Verse 19 – 21

Jethro assumes the role of management consultant and instructs Moses, this is how my people have set up a judicial system that won't break you! Listen, take some advice, what you are doing now isn't sustainable, you are going to wear yourself out!

Appoints judges and officials to deal with all of the lower, petty, easy to mediate stuff.

Jethro says you are killing yourself and this cannot last! In fact, what Moses will learn is that this advice is INCREDIBLY timely because in just a few verses he (Moses) will be called up the mountain for 40 days and 40 nights. IF Moses DOESN'T heed this advice, WHO will fill the vacuum for 40 days for half a million people? This was the advice Moses needed WHEN he needed it!

Verse 24 – 25

John Calvin notes, that this reveals the humility of Moses. HE was the leader of this great nation and yet when Jethro came with a better idea, Moses jumped on it!

This ISN'T the only time that Jethro plays a major role in Moses life and work.

Real quick go to the right in your Bible to the book of Numbers 10.

10:29

The book of Number is entitled Numbers because the book begins and ends with God telling Moses to take a census of the nation of Israel. Moses is about to send Joshua and Caleb into the promised land to explore what it is like. And as he is making preparations for their advancing into this new land Moses finds an advisor and expert visiting him again.

Verse 29 – 33

Moses says Jethro, COME WITH US! You know these lands, you know this desert, you know how to live in the desert. I grew up in Egypt, a city and sure I have some experience as a shepherd but YOU have lived a life in the desert, HELP ME lead these people!

Jethro would be God's chosen channel again and again to help Moses lead the nation of Israel. This relationship would be one of the most important in his entire life and prophetic calling, not to mention it as the relationship thru which he met his wife and had 2 children. AND where did this strategic and integral relationship begin for Moses?

- In the desert, on the run.
- In the wasteland, abandoned and fallow , God introduced a young Moses to a mentor and advisor that years later would change his life.

This is God, never wasting the wasteland, but building and introducing us to things that years later will be our legacy builders.

- It was in the desert that Moses would meet his wife.
- Learned to shepherd a herd so that he could shepherd a people
- It was in the desert that Abraham's servant would find a women at the well for Issac.
- It was in the desert that Jacob would meet Rachel and from them Israel would be born.
- It was in the desert that Jesus would begin His ministry.

It is in the desolate, fallow seasons of our lives that God introduces us to new people, virtues, traits, gifts, and callings that will later be our greatest gifts.

Why?

Three Reasons:

1. **WILDERNESS ALWAYS AFFORDS TIME AND SPACE** — these are the places where we reflect on who we are and who we wish to become. While we are in the battle, we are just trying to survive. The trick is to be thoughtful. The unexamined life isn't worth living so when life affords you even a brief moment, are you examining yourself?
2. **REST REPLENISHES WHEN REST ISN'T THE ULTIMATE GOAL** — We all need rest, vacations and time away but the goal is to come back recharged and ready to serve, contribute, and create again. NOT to find an endless self-indulgent world.

*We were created to serve, to contribute, to build – Eph 2:10 you are God's handiwork- created for good works!*

3. **MOST GOOD STUFF HAPPENS IN OBSCURITY** — Listen to Rachel Held Evans  
*In our culture of constant access and nonstop media nothing feels more like a curse from God than time in the wilderness. Our society tells us that if and when we get "there" — the job or position or degree we've always wanted — that's when all the important stuff will start to happen. NOT SO. All the good stuff happens in obscurity.*

# STOCK THE FRIDGE

It is in THESE seasons, where you feel like God isn't doing much or you aren't able to live a normal life that God is actually stocking the fridge and building in you the very things that will be what you need later to DO great things!

What might those things look like?

- Relationships going deeper or ending
- Character traits you never noticed before that are now highlighted — for better /worse (top 10)
- Long held dreams that did not end the way you hoped
- A passion you have discovered (often discovered thru complaining) — listen
- A mentor you need to get close too
- A blind spot you discover or someone points out that you need to deal with now so it doesn't become a big problem later!
- A frustration — are you asking "God what is this revealing in me?"
- A area you are being forced to trust God — Spirit is always pushing us to growth, but fear wants certainty

These are the places God is stocking your fridge, building into you and wanting up put something there that will later be what you need to access or draw from to give, serve or endure a trial.

I want to offer you four questions that may get to what God is doing right now, write them down and take some time this week to ask these questions of yourself.

1. What relationship am I investing in?
  - BEWARE so many people plan for the resources of retirement but not the purpose.
2. What does my family need in this season? What is my role in accommodating?
3. What am I complaining about? Is it coming from hurt or passion?
4. What ministry am I investing in?

God is building into you RIGHT NOW, he doesn't waste a thing, are you paying attention to what he is stocking in your fridge for later?

**DISCUSSION**

- What is something that sticks out to you about this week's message?
- Talk about a time in your life that you noticed God prepared you in advance for its difficulties.
- Name a few ways you see God preparing Moses for his Exodus ministry thru the details of his life.
- Describe an area of your life that you feel like God has been highlighting in these last few months.
- How are you growing right now?
- Talk about a time when you see that God prepared you for a difficulty you would encounter later.
- Brian offered four questions at the end of his message to discover what God may be doing in you right now. Share one of your answers to those questions.