



# ~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

“come just as you are”

**Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing**



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## Radio Stations

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## Bible Study Sites

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## Prayer

Lord, I ask You to forgive me for the times I have allowed strife to get into my heart. Also, please forgive me for those occasions when I have been the origin of strife and fighting. Help me grow in discernment so I can quickly recognize when the devil is trying to create division. Show me how to be a peacekeeper and a source of harmony rather than a player in the midst of others' wrong attitudes, help me to always practice love, for You said Love your neighbor as yourself, to also give wise council when needed or asked, in Jesus' name.

Amen.

## Scripture

Exodus 18: 1-27 (AMP)

1 NOW JETHRO [Reuel], the priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law, heard of all that God had done for Moses and for Israel His people, and that the Lord had brought Israel out of Egypt. 2 Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, took Zipporah, Moses' wife, after Moses had sent her back [to her father], 3 And her two sons, of whom the name of the one was Gershom [expulsion, or a stranger there], for Moses said, I have been an alien in a strange land; 4 And the name of the other was Eliezer [God is help], for the God of my father, said Moses, was my help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh. 5 And Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, came with Moses' sons and his wife to the wilderness where he was encamped at the mount of God [Horeb, or Sinai]. 6 And he said [in a message] to Moses, I, your father-in-law Jethro, am come to you and your wife and her two sons with her. 7 And Moses went out to meet his father-in-law and bowed in homage and kissed him; and each asked the other of his welfare and they came into the tent. 8 Moses told his father-in-law all the Lord had done to Pharaoh and the Egyptians for Israel's sake and all the hardships that had come upon them by the way and how the Lord delivered them. 9 Jethro rejoiced for all the goodness the Lord had done to Israel in that He had delivered them out of the hand of the Egyptians. 10 Jethro said, Blessed be the Lord, Who has delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians and out of the hand of Pharaoh, Who has delivered the people [Israel] from under the hand of the Egyptians. 11 Now I know that the Lord is greater than all gods. Yes, in the [very] thing in which they dealt proudly [He showed Himself infinitely superior to all their gods]. 12 And Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, took a burnt offering and sacrifices [to offer] to God, and Aaron came with all the elders of Israel to eat bread with Moses' father-in-law before God. 13 Next day Moses sat to judge the people, and the people stood around Moses from morning till evening. 14 When Moses' father-in-law saw all that he was doing for the people, he said, What is this that you do for the people? Why do you sit alone, and all the people stand around you from morning till evening? 15 Moses said to his father-in-law, Because the people come to me to inquire of God. 16 When they have a dispute they come to me, and I judge between a man and his neighbor, and I make them know the statutes of God and His laws. 17 Moses' father-in-law said to him, The thing that you are doing is not good. 18 You will surely wear out both yourself and this people with you, for the thing is too heavy for you; you are not able to perform it all by yourself. 19 Listen now to [me]; I will counsel you, and God will be with you. You shall represent the people before God, bringing their cases and causes to Him, 20 Teaching them the decrees and laws, showing them the way they must walk and the work they must do. 21 Moreover, you shall choose able men from all the people—God-fearing men of truth who hate unjust gain—and place them over thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens, to be their rulers. 22 And let them judge the people at all times; every great matter they shall bring to you, but every small matter they shall judge. So it will be easier for you, and they will bear the burden with you. 23 If you will do this, and God so commands you, you will be able to endure [the strain], and all these people also will go to their [tents] in peace. 24 So Moses listened to and heeded the voice of his father-in-law and did all that he had said. 25 Moses chose able men out of all Israel and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens. 26 And they judged the people at all times; the hard cases they brought to Moses, but every small matter they decided themselves. 27 Then Moses let his father-in-law depart, and he went his way into his own land.

**Exodus 18. Jethro's Advice**

Moses was inspired in a degree given to few men, yet it was through the counsel of this friendly Midianite prince, his father-in-law, that he came to a more efficient organization of the people. God uses human advice to help even the great!

(Halley's Bible Handbook; Henry Halley; 2000; Zondervan; Bible History and Commentaries; page 147)

**Jethro's Advice To Moses: V 1** The same Hebrew word for father-in-law could be translated brother-in-law, for we remember earlier the father-in-law of Moses was called Reuel. Jethro could be another name for Reuel or Jethro could be Moses' wife's brother. **V 2** Zipporah quickly circumcised their boy, but accused Moses of being a bloody man. Evidently Moses sent Zipporah and their two sons, Gershom and Eliezer, back to Zipporah's father, Jethro. But now as Moses comes back into the area of Midian, Jethro comes out and brings them back. **V 12** Jethro built an altar and sacrificed a burnt offering to God. He was a priest, but wasn't one of the children of Israel. **V 14-20** Persons of Moses' caliber and strength often become overburdened with things that don't always pertain to just leadership. It's possible to find yourself so engaged in little non essentials that you don't have time to do the essentials. Priorities are vital! **V 21** The men who were chosen revered God, hated covetousness, and loved truth. **V 27** Evidently Moses' wife and children stayed with him at this point, and his father-in-law returned home.

(Old Testament Study Guide; The Word For Today; 2005; Chuck Smith; Commentaries; page 33)

Moses was a man with many responsibilities. All day, every day, the Israelites came to him for everything. Wanting to please the people, Moses tried to meet all of their needs. When God told Moses through his father-in-law that his task was too heavy for him, the message came through loud and clear: "The thing that you are doing is not good... You are not able to perform it all by yourself" (Exodus 18:17, 18).

One of the fastest ways for a person to grow weary in ministry is to be a "people-pleaser" rather than a "God-pleaser." For many years, I did everything in my ministry except lead the worship. I taught in all the sessions, and I prayed for sometimes hundreds of people after the meetings. Between sessions I would greet people at the tape table, sign books, and do just about anything that was asked of me, because I was trying to give people everything I thought they wanted. I finally realized if I kept up that frantic pace, it would physically kill me. I quickly learned that God did not anoint my efforts to be a people-pleaser.

**People-pleasers** have a hard time setting proper boundaries in ministry. But we need to understand that setting limits is wise and is a sign of strength, not weakness. Like Moses, we need to learn that we cannot do it all. We are on the road to burnout if we try to keep everyone happy and do everything we think they want us to do all of the time. Seek to please God alone, and you will experience peace, freedom, and enjoyment you have never known.

**Life Point:** When God calls a leader, He not only anoints that person to do a certain work, but He also places and anoints people around the leader to do part of that work. That is the great truth Moses discovered when he learned to delegate some of his work to others. Because Moses heeded the wise counsel of his father-in-law (see Exodus 18:18-22), he was better able to endure the stress of his task, and at the same time others were given the opportunity to grow in leadership. (the people have to be able to use their gift God placed in them, so we must receive as well as give, we are one body with many parts, it is a blessing the gift God has placed in them, and He surrounds us with a body with many parts to enable all of us to do His will and plans, it never is just one person) God places certain people in each of our lives to help us. If we do not receive their help, we can become frustrated and overworked. Likewise, they feel unfulfilled because they are not using their gifts and are unable to develop their own sense of accomplishment. Do you feel overburdened with the enormity of your task? Are you in danger of falling apart emotionally or physically? Learn to delegate. Let as many people help you as possible. If you do, you will last a lot longer and will enjoy yourself a lot more—and others will be blessed as they find purpose in doing their part. God has created us to be interdependent on one another, not independent of each other. We need each other!

**Dealing with Overload:** Have you ever told God, "I don't know how much longer I can endure this strain"? I have learned an important truth that has helped me keep in balance and avoid anxiety in ministry: God does not have to anoint anything He does not tell me to do. It is true that Jesus is the Author and the Finisher of my faith (see Hebrews 12:2), but He does not have to finish anything He did not start! In Exodus 18:23, Moses was told that he would be able to endure the strain if he would do what God commanded him. We need to realize that God does not give us more than we can stand or endure. He will give us the ability to perform the assignments He has given us, and we will not have to drag ourselves around, half-dead with stress. Remember, Jesus said He came that we might "have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance (to the full, till it overflows)" para phrase (John 10:10). We are out of balance if we think we can do anything, no matter what it is, without God's direction and anointing. Sooner or later we must hear God say, "No, you cannot do just anything. You can do only the part that I have anointed you to do." Note also in Exodus 18:23 that Moses was told if he followed wise advice, the people would go home in peace. I believe that when God puts people around us who are anointed to help us, they will be frustrated if we do not let them use their gifts. They will have no peace because they are not able to make progress in their own lives. But if we will allow God to use them as He intended, we will be able to stand the strain and they will be happy and fulfilled. Everyone in a family needs to contribute to making the home a great place to live. If a mother wears herself out trying to do everything herself, she is in danger of feeling that the other family members are taking advantage of her. Ask for help and realize that when you allow others to help you, they may not do everything exactly the way you would do it, but you need the help more than you need perfection. Look around you. Do you need to make any adjustments in order to keep yourself in balance? If you will make those adjustments as Moses did, then you will have more joy and peace in your life, you will be releasing others to help and minister, and you will be more effective than ever in ministry and in life. The Everyday Life Bible.

**Do Whatever Is Necessary To Keep Envy and Strife Out of Your Life!**

James 3:16

The devil knows that envy and strife destroy relationships and long-term friendships. He is aware that if he can create envy and strife between you and the ones you love, he can ruin those special relationships that God intended to be a blessing in your life. Do you have any relationships in your life right now that are under this kind of demonic assault? The devil doesn't just target friendships with this type of assault. He also knows how to get in between you and your church family, a ministry you love and support, or even the organization or place of business where you work. The enemy doesn't care whom he divides—he simply wants to divide! Since envy and strife are some of the tools he uses to do this, it is crucial that you understand how to recognize envy and strife and how to stand against them! In James 3:16, the Bible says, "For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work." I want you to notice the word "envy" in this verse. It is taken from the Greek word *zelos*, and it denotes a fierce desire to promote one's own ideas and convictions to the exclusion of everyone else. This word *zelos* is where we get the word *zealot*, which describes a person who is so fixated, obsessed, and fanatical about his own cause that others perceive him as an extremist on the threshold of becoming militant. In the case of James 3:16, this word presents a picture of a believer who is so obsessed, gripped, and preoccupied with his own view of things that he can't see or hear the view of anyone else. In fact, his militant perspective has made him lopsided in his thinking. He never takes a softer line but holds out until all the other parties admit defeat and agree with his point of view.

Therefore, the word "envy" in James 3:16 could be translated this way: "For where there is a fierce desire to promote one's own ideas and convictions to the elimination of everyone else...." If this kind of attitude continues, it will naturally lead to the next step in this horrible sequence of events. This is where strife comes into the picture! Notice that James goes on to say, "For where envying and strife is...." The word "strife" is taken from the Greek word *eritheia*. It was used by the ancient Greeks to stand for a political party. This Greek word is often translated as a party spirit because of its linkage to political systems and political parties. Therefore, in order for us to understand why James used this word, we need to stop and think about the way political parties are formed and how they function. Political parties are formed by a group of people who have similar values and views. After the party is formed, the participants develop a unified agenda; once the agenda is decided on, they create a platform. From that platform, the people begin to push their agenda and ideas, fighting fiercely to see that their party's platform is accepted and eventually put in the position of ruling and calling the shots. In the same way, some Christians become so clouded by their ambition to see their own views adopted that they have no tolerance for anyone who sees things differently than they do. These people usually gravitate to other believers who hold similar views. Once these "like-minded" Christians find each other, they naturally begin to take sides, forming a kind of allegiance. Then they begin to form agendas and develop plans to see their views pushed, promoted, and accepted. As a result, people who once stood shoulder to shoulder often end up standing on different sides of a fight with their relationships ruined and filled with hurt. When envy and strife have made it this far, the next step in this sequence of events becomes inevitable. James 3:16 continues, "For where envying and strife is, there is confusion..." The word "confusion" is taken from the word *akatastasia*. It was used in New Testament times to describe civil disobedience, disorder, and anarchy in a city, state, or government. By using this word, James explicitly tells us that when situations of strife and discord are allowed to persist, an atmosphere of anarchy sets in and begins to destroy the relationships once loved and cherished. Rational thinking is replaced by raw emotions, and people end up getting hurt.

James wants to make sure we understand what this kind of conduct eventually produces if this behavior isn't stopped. He goes on to say, "For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work." The word "evil" is from the word *phaulos*, describing something that is terribly bad or exceedingly vile. We get the word "foul" from this Greek word. James is saying that where envy and strife are permitted to operate, thus producing confusion and anarchy in relationships, they ultimately yield a foul-smelling situation!

These various Greek words in James 3:16 convey this idea: "For where there is a fierce desire to promote one's own ideas and convictions to the exclusion of everyone else's, it produces divisions so great that people end up taking sides and forming differing parties with conflicting agendas. This is a terrible event, because it creates great unrest among people who should be united. Ultimately, the whole situation becomes a stinking mess!" But understand this: You can help stop this from happening by choosing to consider other people's opinions to be just as important as your own! Instead of pushing your own agenda, why not stop and listen to what others have to say? They may have something powerful to contribute, but if you can't hear them, you'll never benefit from their perspective. You don't have to yield to envy and strife! When the opportunity for strife arises, you can beat Satan at his own game by choosing to make room for the ideas, thoughts, and opinions of others. Even if you don't agree with what they say, at least you can demonstrate that you value their right to have a differing opinion. By maintaining an attitude of staying on the same side with your fellow believers, you can put the devil on the run and keep your relationships alive, healthy, and long-lasting! (Everything must always be as it is written in the Word)

Sparkling Gems from the Greek.

(AMP Bible; The Everyday Life Bible; Joyce Meyers; Scripture; Commentaries; Past Pastor Sermons; Dictionary; 2006; pgs 115-117)  
(Word 9 Bible Software; 2010; Concordance, Dictionary, Scripture, Sermons of Saints past, Devotionals; Sparkling Gems From The Greek)