Parents give lots of thought to what name to give to their new baby. Do you know why your name was chosen? You may be called after someone in your family, such as one of your grandparents. You may have been given a name with a meaning that your parents liked. For example, the popular boys' name John, means 'God is merciful', while the girls' name Margaret, means 'pearl'.

Many Bible names have meanings that fit the person's life, or a message connected to the time they lived in. Some names were given by God even before the baby was born, such as Abraham and Sarah's son Isaac and Zacharias and Elizabeth's son John.

In this book you will read about some well-known Bible characters, and others you may never have heard of.

A book about names could not leave out the most wonderful names of all: what the names given to the Lord Jesus mean, especially to those who trust in Him.

JEAN STAPLETON

13 DISTINGUISHED
Exodus 3:1
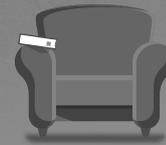
The name Jethro probably means 'excellence', or 'distinguished'. We read about Jethro in the book of Exodus, and find that he had some excellent qualities.

Moses had left Egypt when he was forty years old and had settled in the land of Midian. There he married Zipporah, one of Jethro's daughters. Moses became a shepherd to Jethro's flocks and it was while he was looking after the flock, that God spoke to him. Moses saw a bush that appeared to be on fire, but was not being burnt away. As he went to take a closer look, God called him by name, and told him that he must return to Egypt and speak to the Pharaoh. God knew all about the suffering of the Israelites in Egypt and He told Moses that he would bring them out of Egypt. Moses told God why he could not carry out such a task. God told Moses why he should.

Moses did return to Egypt, taking his wife and his two sons with him. We read about the ten plagues that God sent, before Pharaoh finally said that the Israelites must go (Exodus chapters 7–12). Zipporah went with her two sons, back to Jethro's home but they returned to Moses, with Jethro in Exodus chapter 18. When Moses

told Jethro all that God had done to help the Israelites since they left Egypt, Jethro was glad. Although he came from Midian where idols were worshipped, he now knew that the God of Israel was the truly great God.

It was at this time that we see Jethro giving excellent advice to his son-in-law. Jethro observed how Moses spent the whole day, hearing from the people about their difficulties. Moses explained God's law to the people and also settled any disputes that arose between them. Jethro realised that Moses would become exhausted. He advised Moses to select able men to judge the people in small matters. They would still bring the larger cases to Moses and Moses would still teach the people how to apply God's law to their situations. Moses followed this good advice.

BIBLE SEARCH:

Exodus 3:1-12; Exodus 18.

1. What three things did Moses tell Jethro? (Exodus 18:8).

2. What did Jethro observe? (Exodus 18:13-14).

3. What was Jethro's advice? (Exodus 18:19-22).

4. What had Jethro learned? (Exodus 18:11).