

Exodus 18

Chapter 18 of 40 · 27 Verses · Authorized King James Version

Jethro Visits Moses

¹ When Jethro, 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 he had sent her back,

³ And her two sons; of which the name of the one was Gershom; for he said, I have been an alien in a strange land:

⁴ And the name of the other was Eliezer; for the God of my father, said he, was mine help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh:

⁵ And Jethro, Moses' father in law, came with his sons and his wife unto Moses into the wilderness, where he encamped at the mount of God:

⁶ And he said unto Moses, I thy father in law Jethro am come unto thee, and thy wife, and her two sons with her.

⁷ And Moses went out to meet his father in law, and did obeisance, and kissed him; and they asked each other of their welfare; and they came into the tent.

⁸ And Moses told his father in law all that the LORD had done unto Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake, and all the travail that had come upon them by the way, and how the LORD delivered them.

⁹ And Jethro rejoiced for all the goodness which the LORD had done to Israel, whom he had delivered out of the hand of the Egyptians.

10 And Jethro said, Blessed be the LORD, who hath delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of Pharaoh, who hath delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians.

11 Now I know that the LORD is greater than all gods: for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly he was above them.

12 And Jethro, Moses' father in law, took a burnt offering and sacrifices for God: and Aaron came, and all the elders of Israel, to eat bread with Moses' father in law before God.

Jethro's Advice on Leadership

13 And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to judge the people: and the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening.

14 And when Moses' father in law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What is this thing that thou doest to the people? why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even?

15 And Moses said unto his father in law, Because the people come unto me to enquire of God:

16 When they have a matter, they come unto me; and I judge between one and another, and I do make them know the statutes of God, and his laws.

17 And Moses' father in law said unto him, The thing that thou doest is not good.

18 Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that is with thee: for this thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone.

19 Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee: Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God:

20 And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do.

21 Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens:

22 And let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee.

23 If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace.

24 So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father in law, and did all that he had said.

25 And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.

26 And they judged the people at all seasons: the hard causes they brought unto Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves.

27 And Moses let his father in law depart; and he went his way into his own land.

HEBREW & GREEK WORD STUDIES

God — אֱלֹהִים (Elohim)

God (plural of majesty)

The Hebrew **Elohim** (אֱלֹהִים) is a plural form denoting majesty and fullness of deity. Though grammatically plural, it takes singular verbs when referring to the one true God, suggesting the Trinity's plurality within unity.

Law — תּוֹרָה (Torah)

Law, instruction

The Hebrew **Torah** (תּוֹרָה) means law or instruction—God's revealed will for His people. The Law includes moral, civil, and ceremonial commandments, revealing God's character and humanity's need for a Savior.

Lord — יְהוָה / אֲדֹנָי (YHWH / Adonai)

The LORD / Lord

When 'LORD' appears in small capitals, it represents the Tetragrammaton **YHWH** (יְהוָה), God's personal covenant name meaning 'I AM.' When 'Lord' appears normally, it's **Adonai** (אֲדֹנָי), meaning 'my Lord,' emphasizing sovereignty.

Priest — כֹּהֵן (Kohen)

Priest

The Hebrew **kohen** (כֹּהֵן) denotes a priest—one who mediates between God and people through sacrifices and intercession. Aaron and his descendants served as Israel's priests, foreshadowing Christ the Great High Priest.

Sacrifice — זֶבַח (Zevach)

Sacrifice, offering

The Hebrew **zevach** (זֶבַח) denotes a sacrifice or offering—an animal slaughtered for worship. Old Testament sacrifices foreshadowed Christ, 'the Lamb of God' (John 1:29).

Truth — אֱמֶת (Emet)

Truth, faithfulness

The Hebrew **emet** (אֱמֶת) means truth or faithfulness—reliability and conformity to reality. God is true (emet), utterly faithful to His word and character.

Word — דָּבָר (Davar)

Word, thing, matter

The Hebrew **davar** (דָּבָר) means word, thing, or matter—God's creative and authoritative speech. 'By the word of the LORD were the heavens made' (Psalm 33:6).

CROSS REFERENCES

Exodus 18:1 **Word:** Exodus 3:1. **Parallel theme:** Exodus 2:16; Psalms 105:43. **References God:** Psalms 44:1; Zechariah 8:23; Acts 14:27. **References Lord:** Joshua 2:10; Psalms 34:2; 78:4; 106:2

Exodus 18:2 **References Moses:** Exodus 2:21

Exodus 18:3 **Parallel theme:** Exodus 2:22; 4:20; Psalms 39:12; Acts 7:29; Hebrews 11:13

Exodus 18:4 **Parallel theme:** Acts 12:11; 2 Timothy 4:17; Hebrews 13:6

Exodus 18:5 **Word:** Exodus 3:1. **References God:** Exodus 3:12

Exodus 18:7 **Parallel theme:** Genesis 14:17; 18:2; 19:1; 29:13; 2 Samuel 11:7; 1 Kings 2:19

Exodus 18:8

Parallel theme: Nehemiah 9:32; Psalms 81:7; 106:10. **References Lord:** Psalms 107:2.

References Moses: Numbers 20:14

Exodus 18:9 **Parallel theme:** Romans 12:15; 1 Corinthians 12:26

Exodus 18:10 **Blessing:** Genesis 14:20; 2 Samuel 18:28; Luke 1:68

Exodus 18:11 **References God:** Exodus 15:11; 1 Chronicles 16:25; 2 Chronicles 2:5; Psalms 95:3; 97:9; 135:5. **Parallel theme:** Nehemiah 9:10; Psalms 119:21; Daniel 4:37; Luke 1:51

Exodus 18:12 **Sacrifice:** Exodus 24:5; Genesis 31:54. **References God:** Exodus 24:11; Deuteronomy 12:7

Exodus 18:15 **References Moses:** Numbers 27:5. **Parallel theme:** Numbers 15:34

Exodus 18:16 **Parallel theme:** Exodus 24:14; 2 Samuel 15:3. **Word:** 1 Corinthians 6:1. **Judgment:** Deuteronomy 4:5; 5:1

Exodus 18:19 **Parallel theme:** Exodus 4:12; 18:24; Genesis 39:2; Numbers 27:5; Deuteronomy 5:5; Proverbs 9:9. **References God:** Exodus 3:12; 4:16; 18:15; 20:19

Exodus 18:20 **Parallel theme:** Deuteronomy 1:18; 4:1; 4:5; 5:1; Psalms 32:8; 143:8. **Word:** Exodus 18:16; Micah 4:2

Exodus 18:21 **Parallel theme:** Exodus 18:25; Acts 6:3. **References God:** Genesis 42:18; 2 Samuel 23:3. **Truth:** Ezekiel 18:8

Exodus 18:22

Parallel theme: Leviticus 24:11; Numbers 11:17; 15:33; 27:2; 36:1. **Judgment:** Exodus 18:26

Exodus 18:23 **Parallel theme:** Exodus 18:18

Exodus 18:25 **Creation:** Deuteronomy 1:15. **Parallel theme:** Exodus 18:21

Exodus 18:26 **Judgment:** Exodus 18:22

Exodus 18:27 **Word:** Judges 19:9

