

Exodus 18:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

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—Moses' implementation follows Jethro's qualifications precisely. The verb 'chose' (וַיַּגְחַר, vayivchar) indicates careful selection based on the criteria in verse 21. The hierarchical structure—thousands, hundreds, fifties, tens—creates manageable ratios of oversight. For 2+ million people, this required approximately 78,600 judges (assuming 600,000 men plus families). This massive delegation distributes authority while maintaining order. The 'heads over the people' (ראשים, rashim al-ha'am) establishes clear chain of command. This organizational structure prefigures the church where elders oversee flocks (Acts 20:28, 1 Pet 5:2) and various roles distribute ministry (Rom 12:4-8).

Historical Context

This judicial system established at Rephidim became the administrative backbone for Israel's governance. When Israel later requested judges throughout their land, the structure was already established (Deut 16:18).

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does hierarchical structure (thousands to tens) balance efficiency with personal care?
2. What does distributing authority among tens of thousands of judges teach about shared leadership?

Interlinear Text

אָתָּה	מִתְּחִילָה	וְעַתָּה	רְאֵבֶן	מִשְׁנֶה	אֲנָשִׁים	מִלְּאָכָל	לְכַלְלָה	וְשַׁבָּא	לְמִלְּאָכָל	מִלְּאָכָל	וְעַתָּה	אָתָּה
chose	And Moses	men	able			H3605		out of all Israel	and made			H853
H977	H4872	H582	H2428					H3478	H5414			
them heads		over the people		and rulers			of thousands		and rulers			
H7218	H5921	H5971		H8269			H505		H8269			
of hundreds		and rulers		of fifties		and rulers		of tens				
H3967		H8269		H2572		H8269		H6235				

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 1:15 (Creation): So I took the chief of your tribes, wise men, and known, and made them heads over you, captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, and captains over fifties, and captains over tens, and officers among your tribes.

Exodus 18:21 (Parallel theme): 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:

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