
Empower the Team to Share the Load

Thrive

Exodus 18

Exodus 18:1

Now Jethro, the priest of Midian and father-in-law of Moses, heard of everything God had done for Moses and for his people Israel, and how the Lord had brought Israel out of Egypt.

Exodus 18:2

After Moses had sent away his wife Zipporah, his father-in-law Jethro received her and her two sons.

Exodus 18:3

One son was named Gershom, for
Moses said, “I have become a
foreigner in a foreign land”;

Exodus 18:4

and the other was named Eliezer,
for he said, “My father’s God was
my helper; he saved me from the
sword of Pharaoh.”

Exodus 18:5

Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, together with Moses' sons and wife, came to him in the wilderness, where he was camped near the mountain of God.

Exodus 18:6

Jethro had sent word to him,
“I, your father-in-law Jethro,
am coming to you with your
wife and her two sons.”

Exodus 18:7

So Moses went out to meet his father-in-law and bowed down and kissed him. They greeted each other and then went into the tent.

Exodus 18:8

Moses told his father-in-law about everything the Lord had done to Pharaoh and the Egyptians for Israel's sake and about all the hardships they had met along the way and how the Lord had saved them.

Exodus 18:9

Jethro was delighted to hear
about all the good things
the Lord had done for Israel
in rescuing them from the hand
of the Egyptians.

Exodus 18:10

**He said, “Praise be to the Lord,
who rescued you from the hand
of the Egyptians and of Pharaoh,
and who rescued the people from
the hand of the Egyptians.**

Exodus 18:11

Now I know that the Lord is greater than all other gods, for he did this to those who had treated Israel arrogantly.”

Exodus 18:12

Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, brought a burnt offering and other sacrifices to God, and Aaron came with all the elders of Israel to eat a meal with Moses' father-in-law in the presence of God.

Exodus 18:13

The next day Moses took his seat to serve as judge for the people, and they stood around him from morning till evening.

Exodus 18:14a

When Moses' father-in-law saw all that Moses was doing for the people, he asked, "What are you really accomplishing here?"

Exodus 18:14b

Why are you trying to do all this alone while everyone stands around you from morning till evening?”

Exodus 18:15

Moses answered him,
“Because the people come
to me to seek God’s will.

Exodus 18:16

Whenever they have a dispute, it is brought to me, and I decide between the parties and inform them of God's decrees and instructions."

Exodus 18:17

Moses' father-in-law replied,
“What you are doing is not good.

Exodus 18:18

You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone.

Exodus 18:19

Listen now to me and I will give you some advice, and may God be with you. You must be the people's representative before God and bring their disputes to him.

Exodus 18:20

Teach them his decrees and instructions, and show them the way they are to live and how they are to behave.

Exodus 18:21

But select capable men from all the people—men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain—and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens.

Exodus 18:22

Have them serve as judges for the people at all times, but have them bring every difficult case to you; the simple cases they can decide themselves. That will make your load lighter, because they will share it with you.

Exodus 18:23

If you follow this advice, and if God commands you to do so, then you will be able to endure the pressures, and all these people will go home satisfied.

Exodus 18:24

Moses listened to his father-in-law and did everything he said.

Exodus 18:25

He chose capable men from all Israel and made them leaders of the people, officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens.

Exodus 18:26

These men were always available to solve the people's common disputes. They brought the major cases to Moses, but they took care of the smaller matters themselves.

Exodus 18:27

Soon after this, Moses said good-bye to his father-in-law, who returned to his own land.

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Principle #1

The Lord desires to partner with co-laborers, not self-appointed pseudo messiahs.

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“What you are doing is not good.

Principle #2

When we take on too much and try to control all the pieces, we not only wear ourselves out, but we also wear out those who are under our leadership.

Exodus 18:18

You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone.

Principle #3

Empowering the team to share the load requires letting go of control without letting go of our accountability, passion, or commitment.

Exodus 18:19

Listen now to me and I will give you some advice, and may God be with you. You must be the people's representative before God and bring their disputes to him.

Principle #4

In order to empower the team to share the load, you should spend 80% of your time doing whatever it is that adds the most value to the team.

Exodus 18:20

Teach them his decrees and instructions, and show them the way they are to live and how they are to behave.

Principle #5

In order to empower the team to share the load, we need to partner with God to pick the right person for the right job.

Exodus 18:21

But select capable men from all the people—men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain—and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens.

Exodus 18:22

Have them serve as judges for the people at all times, but have them bring every difficult case to you; the simple cases they can decide themselves. That will make your load lighter, because they will share it with you.

Exodus 18:23

If you follow this advice, and if God commands you to do so, then you will be able to endure the pressures, and all these people will go home satisfied.

Principle #6

The Lord will often empower those we are in relationship with to share truths with us that we're incapable of seeing on our own.

Exodus 18:24

Moses listened to his father-in-law and did everything he said.

Principle #7

Empowering the team to share the load does not just bring relief to the leader, it also disciplines and satisfies the team.

Exodus 18:25

He chose capable men from all Israel and made them leaders of the people, officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens.

Exodus 18:26

These men were always available to solve the people's common disputes. They brought the major cases to Moses, but they took care of the smaller matters themselves.

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