

# Every Member a Minister

Exodus 18:1 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. **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 inquire 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.

1. Word was spreading 18:1 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;
  - a. Jethro had heard of the great things God was doing
    - i. He knew that God was at work in Moses' life
    - ii. He knew that God had gotten Israel out of Egypt
  - b. Moses had lived with his wife's family for nearly 40 years
    - i. He had testified of the greatness of God

ii. Even the names of his children told his story of God's grace and working in his life **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:**

1. Gershom reminded him that he had been an alien
2. Eliezer reminded him that God had been his help and delivered him
3. The God that Moses served and worshipped was the God of his father

c. Moses showed great respect for his family-he was hospitable **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.*

d. Moses was excited to tell the family what God was doing **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.

- e. Jethro recognized that God had been at work **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.**
- f. Seeing the power of God further convinced him **11 Now I know that the Lord is greater than all gods: for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly he was above them. 1**
- g. Moses, Aaron, the elders and Jethro worshipped together **2 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.**

2. The problem **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?**

- a. Doing it all yourself is not good **18:17** And Moses' father in law said unto him, **The thing that thou doest *is* not good.**
  - i. It wears out the people of God waiting on the man of God in the sun. **18:18** 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.**

- ii. He should teach not do. 18:20 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.

3. The solution was to divide the work

- a. Show them the way to walk and work. This is not a class on theory but something that they will see practiced in the life of a man of God. We call this "Life on Life" discipleship. 18:20 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.

- i. He was to choose the right men 18:21 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:

1. They were to be able or have the ability
  2. They were to be God fearing or spiritual
  3. They were to be men of truth
  4. They were to not be covetous or rather to be givers not wanters or takers
- ii. He was to put them where they would be the most effective. He had to distinguish their ability and place them in the right place to serve. [18:21](#)

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:

- iii. He was to let them do the work. He had to learn to delegate. We all delegate everything either to others or to time. [18:22](#) 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.***

- iv. He was to be available to them for further training and help with their problems. **18:22** 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.***
- v. He showed us that a leader should never get too big to take advise from others. **18:17** And Moses' father in law said unto him, **The thing that**

## thou doest *is* not good.

4. God commands Moses to choose other men to help him.  
**Numbers 11:16** And the LORD said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee. **17** And I will come down and talk with thee there: and I will take of the spirit which *is* upon thee, and will put *it* upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear *it* not thyself alone.
  - a. Moses couldn't bear the burden of leadership alone.  
**Numbers 11:14** I am not able to bear all this people alone, because *it is* too heavy for me.
  - b. Moses was told to chose seventy men **11:16** And the LORD said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee.

1. Men who were already leaders or had demonstrated to Moses that they knew how to be responsible and lead the people. **11:16** And the LORD said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee.
2. They were chosen and not volunteers apparently
3. God took of the same spirit He had put on Moses to put on these men **11:17** And I will come down and talk with thee there: and I will take of the spirit which *is* upon thee, and will put *it* upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear *it* not thyself alone. **25** And the LORD came down in a cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the spirit that *was* upon him, and gave *it* unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass, *that*, when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease.

- c. God's man takes ownership of this principle of leadership. **Deuteronomy 1:9** And I spake unto you at that time, saying, I am not able to bear you myself alone: **10** The LORD your God hath multiplied you, and, behold, ye *are* this day as the stars of heaven for multitude. **11** (The LORD God of your fathers make you a thousand times so many more as ye *are*, and bless you, as he hath promised you!) **12** How can I myself alone bear your cumbrance, and your burden, and your strife? **13** Take you wise men, and understanding, and known among your tribes, and I will make them rulers over you. **14** And ye answered me, and said, The thing which thou hast spoken *is good for us* to do. **15** 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. **16** And I charged your judges at that time, saying, Hear *the causes* between your brethren, and judge righteously between *every man* and his brother, and the stranger *that is* with him. **17** Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; *but ye shall*

hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment *is* God's: and the cause that is too hard for you, bring *it* unto me, and I will hear it. **18** And I commanded you at that time all the things which ye should do.

- i. He recognized his own limitations **1:9** And I spake unto you at that time, saying, I am not able to bear you myself alone:
  1. He was unable to bear the cumbrance (weight) of leadership alone **1:12** How can I myself alone bear your cumbrance, and your burden, and your strife?
  2. He couldn't handle all of their burdens or really meet their needs. **1:12** How can I myself alone bear your cumbrance, and your burden, and your strife?
  3. He couldn't deal with all the strife **1:12** How can I myself alone bear your cumbrance, and your burden, and your strife?
- ii. He recognized God's blessing on the ministry and did not want to hinder it **1:10** The LORD your God hath multiplied you, and, behold, ye *are* this day as

the stars of heaven for multitude. **11** (The LORD God of your fathers make you a thousand times so many more as ye *are*, and bless you, as he hath promised you!)

- iii. He told them to choose the right people **1:13** Take you wise men, and understanding, and known among your tribes, and I will make them rulers over you.
  - 1. Wise men –men of wisdom or that understand the Word of God
  - 2. Men of understanding—much more than just knowing Bible they needed to know how to apply it
  - 3. Recognized men—the people could see their ability and knew of their leadership
- iv. The people recognized the need and wisdom of this principle **1:14** And ye answered me, and said, The thing which thou hast spoken *is good for us* to do.
  - 1. Amazingly today we have allowed ourselves to believe that the people do not understand this principle



2. Or maybe we are afraid that they do believe it and we will not be so important
- v. He placed the men in positions of leadership 1:15  
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.
    1. He had to know them and their ability
    2. He had to learn how to let them know that what he wanted was their success and not his or they would have rebelled
  - vi. He then charged, commissioned, trained them 1:16  
And I charged your judges at that time, saying, Hear *the causes* between your brethren, and judge righteously between *every* man and his brother, and the stranger *that is* with him. 17 Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; *but* ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment *is* God's: and the cause that is too hard for you, bring *it* unto me, and I will

hear it. **18** And I commanded you at that time all the things which ye should do.

1. They were to judge righteously even if the other person was a stranger
  2. They were not to show favoritism
  3. They were to hear all cases both large and small
  4. They were not to fear people
  5. He told them all that they were supposed to do
- vii. Leadership is organized in each city

**Deuteronomy 16:18** Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee, throughout thy tribes: and they shall judge the people with just judgment. **19** Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous. **20** That which is altogether just shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live, and inherit the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

1. Judges and officers in the gates of all the cities  
**16:18** Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth

thee, throughout thy tribes: and they shall judge the people with just judgment.

2. They were to judge with just judgment [16:18](#)

Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee, throughout thy tribes: and they shall judge the people with just judgment.

  - a. The judges were not to show favoritism
  - b. They were not to accept gifts or bribes
  - c. It was to all be just or right