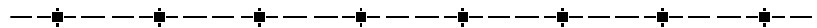


Old Testament

Mission Arlington • Mission Metroplex Curriculum • 2008

Families of the Old Testament



Created for use with young, unchurched learners
Adaptable for all ages including adults

Old Testament

A Father-in-law Helps

Moses and Jethro

Exodus 18

A Father-in-law Helps

Exodus 18:5-10

Memory Verse:

God himself sent Moses to rule the people of Israel and set them free.
(Acts 7:35 NIV)

Lesson Goals:

1. Understand that God used Jethro to help Moses.
2. Learn that Jethro praised God because of Moses.
3. Recognize that Moses was humble.
4. Learn that Moses judged Israel.

Last week we learned about Moses and Aaron. God used these two brothers to lead Israel out of Egypt. God demonstrated His power through miraculous signs which He performed through the two brothers. After 400 years of slavery, Israel was free.

Read the Bible

READ: Exodus 18:5-10 (Hold your Bible open throughout the story.)

Begin with Prayer

“God Himself sent Moses to rule the people of Israel and set them free.” (Acts 7:35 NIV) Israel was free! They left Egypt. God was leading them through the desert. Moses’ father-in-law, Jethro, heard about all the things God had done to free Israel from slavery in Egypt. Since they were in the desert, Jethro sent a message first, then he came to see Moses. Jethro brought Zipporah, Moses’ wife. Jethro also brought Moses’ two children, Gershom and Eliezer. They camped near the mountain of God. (Exodus 18:1-5)

Moses was a humble man. Moses went to meet Jethro. He bowed down and he kissed Jethro. Moses told Jethro about everything God had done. He told Jethro about God’s love for Israel. Moses told him about all God had done to Pharaoh and the Egyptians. Moses told Jethro about all the miracles that God used to save Israel. (Exodus 18:7-8)

Jethro was very happy to hear about all the good things that God had done. “He said, “I praise the Lord. He saved you and your people from the power of Pharaoh and Egypt.” (Exodus 18:9-10) Then Jethro brought an offering to God. Moses, Aaron, and the elders ate with Jethro in the sight of God. Even though Jethro came to visit, Moses continued working. The very next day he sat to judge the people. People would come and present their problems and disagreements to Moses. He judged the people from morning until evening. When Jethro saw all that Moses did, he spoke to Moses. Jethro saw some things that Moses had not seen. Jethro had an idea that Moses had probably not thought about. Moses and Jethro were probably good friends and Moses respected his father-in-law. Moses had gone to Midian when he fled Egypt. Moses had lived there for forty years until God called him. (Exodus 7:7,23) Jethro had Moses’ best interest in mind when he spoke to him. Jethro was the man who helped Moses when he arrived in Midian, he was the grandfather of Moses’ children, and father of Moses’ wife. Jethro told Moses that he was doing too much work for one man. He added that the people had to wait all day. Moses tried to explain that the people were coming to find out God’s will. When they disagreed, they would come to Moses. Moses would tell them about God’s rules and what God wanted. (Exodus 18:13-16)

Moses —Bible Facts

1. Jethro was Moses' father-in-law.
2. Jethro brought Moses' wife and children to him.
3. Jethro gave Moses good advice.
4. Jethro told Moses to seek God about the advice
5. Moses did what Jethro suggested.

Jethro told Moses, "What you are doing isn't good." (Exodus 18:17 NIV) Jethro told Moses that he would just wear himself out if he continued doing things the same way. Jethro had a suggestion for Moses. He told Moses to seek God about the advice he was giving him. Jethro told Moses to find leaders among the people. (Exodus 18:18-19) Then he said, "Teach them the rules and laws. Show them how to live and what to do." (Exodus 18:20 NIV) Jethro suggested that Moses find men that he trusted who could judge the people. Moses must make sure that these leaders respected the people. These leaders should be men who would not try to make money nor cheat the people. He told Moses to place the leaders over groups of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens. In this way Moses could share the work with others. He would not have to work so hard and the people would not have to wait so long. Jethro also suggested that the more difficult problems could be brought to Moses. (Exodus 18:21-22) Finally, Jethro said, "If this is what God wants and if you do it, then you will be able to carry the load. And all of these people will go home satisfied." (Exodus 18:23)

Remember that Moses had the best education that Egypt could offer. Moses could have held on to the power and the position that he had. But Moses did what Jethro suggested. He listened to his father-in-law's good words. Moses found men from among the people and made them leaders as Jethro had suggested. These men helped Moses judge the people when the decisions were easy to make. When something was difficult to judge, they brought it before Moses. Afterwards, Jethro went home. (Exodus 18:24-27)

God sent Jethro to help Moses. Jethro was a blessing to Moses because Moses listened to his advice and did what Jethro suggested. God sent Jesus to help us so we can do what He wants us to do.

Review questions

1. **Who was Jethro?** (Jethro was Moses' father-in-law.)
2. **Who did Jethro bring with him?** (Jethro brought Moses' wife and children to him.)
3. **What did Jethro give Moses?** (Jethro gave Moses good advice.)
4. **What did Jethro tell Moses to do about the advice he had given him?** (Jethro told Moses to seek God about the advice.)
5. **What did Moses do?** (Moses did what Jethro suggested. He found leaders from among the people to help him judge the people.)

Do you know Jesus?

God sent Jethro to help Moses. He sent Jesus to help us. When we invite Jesus to be a part of our lives and ask Him to forgive us, Jesus forgives us and comes to live with us forever. Would you like to invite Jesus to be a part of your life? Pray this prayer. Jesus please come be a part of my life. Please forgive my sins. Please help me to live for you.

Prayer Time

1. Take a moment to listen to God.
2. Thank God for sending Jesus to help us.
3. Ask God to help you be a blessing.
4. Pray for friends and family members who may need God's help.

Application

"God Himself sent Moses to rule the people of Israel and set them free." (Acts 7:35 NIV) Once the Israelites had been freed, God used Jethro to help Moses. Jethro heard about all God did for the Israelites, and Jethro praised God because of Moses. When Jethro saw Moses judging the Israelites from morning until evening, he had an idea. Jethro gave Moses some advice that would help in judging the Israelites. Moses was humble, he listened to Jethro, and then he did what Jethro suggested.

Planning for the next week:

Joshua (A Family Chooses God) — Deuteronomy 31

Preschool Lesson

Read the Bible

READ: Exodus 18:5-10 (Hold your Bible open throughout the story.)

(If you have a sandbox ask the children to place their feet in the sandbox as you tell the story. If you do not have a sandbox, bring empty baby food jars and sand. Use colored sand to fill the baby food jars. Remind the children that the desert can be very hot, very cold, and very dry.)

“God Himself sent Moses to rule the people of Israel and set them free.” (Acts 7:35 NIV) Israel was free! They left Egypt. God was leading them through the desert. Moses’ father-in-law, Jethro, heard about all the things God had done to free Israel from slavery in Egypt. Since they were in the desert, Jethro sent a message first, then he came to see Moses. Jethro brought Zipporah, Moses’ wife. Jethro also brought Moses’ two children, Gershom and Eliezer. They camped near the mountain of God. (Exodus 18:1-5) Moses must have been very excited to see his father-in-law, his wife, and his children. Have you ever been excited to see someone?, maybe when your grandparents when they come to visit?

Moses told Jethro about everything God had done. He told Jethro about God’s love for Israel. Moses told him about all God had done to Pharaoh and the Egyptians. Moses told Jethro about all the miracles that God used to save Israel. (Exodus 18:7-8) Have you ever wanted to tell someone about something good that had happened to you? Were you excited as you told your story? Jethro was very happy to hear about all the good things that God had done.

The next day Jethro saw how hard Moses worked. He would sit all day listening to the problems people had. Jethro had a suggestion for Moses. He told Moses to ask God about the advice he was giving him. Jethro told Moses to find leaders among the people to help him. (Exodus 18:9-19) Jethro said, “Teach them the rules and laws. Show them how to live and what to do.” (Exodus 18:20 NIV) Moses did just that.

Jethro was a blessing to Moses because Moses listened to his advice and did what Jethro suggested. God sent Jesus to help us so we can do what He wants us to do.

Prayer Time

1. Take a moment to listen to God.
2. Thank God for sending Jesus to help us.
3. Ask God to help you be a blessing.
4. Pray for friends and family members who may need God’s help.

Did you know? Preschoolers can be taught to organize and be helpers.

Consider this: Provide bins, shelves, or boxes so that everything will have a place. Plastic freezer bags with zippers can be used for puzzles, crayons, pencils, etc. Teach the children to return things to their place. When the children have lost interest in toys, make the toys a prize they can take home. Replace them when you are able to do so.

If you do not have a meeting room where you can leave things, a small suitcase that rolls or a backpack that rolls can serve as a place to store things.

Learning Activities

- **Memory verse activity** — Create cards with the numbers 1,000, 100, 50, and 10. Put the words to the memory verse on the back. Put the cards in order to practice the verse. Tell the children that Jethro gave Moses good advice.
- **Test your memory** — Create a matching game. Use construction paper and cardstock. Glue white cardstock to the construction paper. You will need eight different colors. (You may draw lines on the squares to create a different color.) Cut out two squares that are the same color. Make 16 squares (two of each color). Write key phrases on the white side of the square as you tell the story. Have the children retell the story using the white side of the square. Then they play a matching game. As the colors are matched, tell that portion of the story based on the key words.

Create puppets out of paper plates. Make puppets of Moses, Aaron, Jethro, Zipporah, Gershom and Eliezer. Use the puppets to tell the story. Have the children make their own puppets.

- **Taste activity** — Make a tent using a bed sheet and string. Tie the four corner to chairs. Bring dates and almonds or other dried fruits and nuts. Remind the children that not too many things grow in the desert.
- **Think about it** — Bring pictures of Mt. Sinai desert or pictures of the desert. Remind the children that Moses had lived in the desert for forty years before God delivered the Israelites. Moses knew how to survive in the desert. God had prepared him for the task to which He had called him. Tell the children that God calls us to serve Him. He will prepare you for that service. Share about your own call and how God prepared you.

Remind the children that Moses had not been a slave. He had not grown up with the Israelites. He had been gone from Egypt for 40 years. Now the Israelites had to trust him to be their leader as they wandered through the desert.

- **Touch activity** — Bring empty baby food jars and sand. Use colored sand to fill the baby food jars. Remind the children that the desert can be very hot, very cold, and very dry.

Create paper doll chains. Talk about how the Israelites, their children, and their animals traveled in the desert.

- **Run and play** — Place the children in groups of five. Four of the children will carry another child in their arms. Have them run relay races to see which team wins. Remind the children that the Israelites traveled together. They were probably divided into family groups.
- **Listen** — As they take time to listen to God, remind the children that the Israelites had to walk and live in the desert. God provided water and food for them. Remind them that God will provide for our needs as well.
- **Sing** — Sing “Pharaoh, Pharaoh,” or a song related to the story.

Memory Verse

God himself
sent Moses
to rule
the people
of Israel and set
them free.

Acts 7:35 NIV

Word Art

Trace the letters.

Moses
listened
to Jethro
and did
what he
said.

Word Puzzle

L E A D E R S E D J I W
P D B Z A C U P U H S A
Y T S W B R L D N N Y L
E L R E S A G G O L E N
Y F O V T E P S R B H I
S Y I U B I O D V K M R
D L E W C H L P H I F E
G S M D U L F E D B O H
T V A M D O G I A R L T
F B B V E Y A P W R E A
C L E W P N C L Z O S F
E S R T A K D U N L Y I

MIDIAN

EGYPT

FATHER-IN-LAW

WIFE

SONS

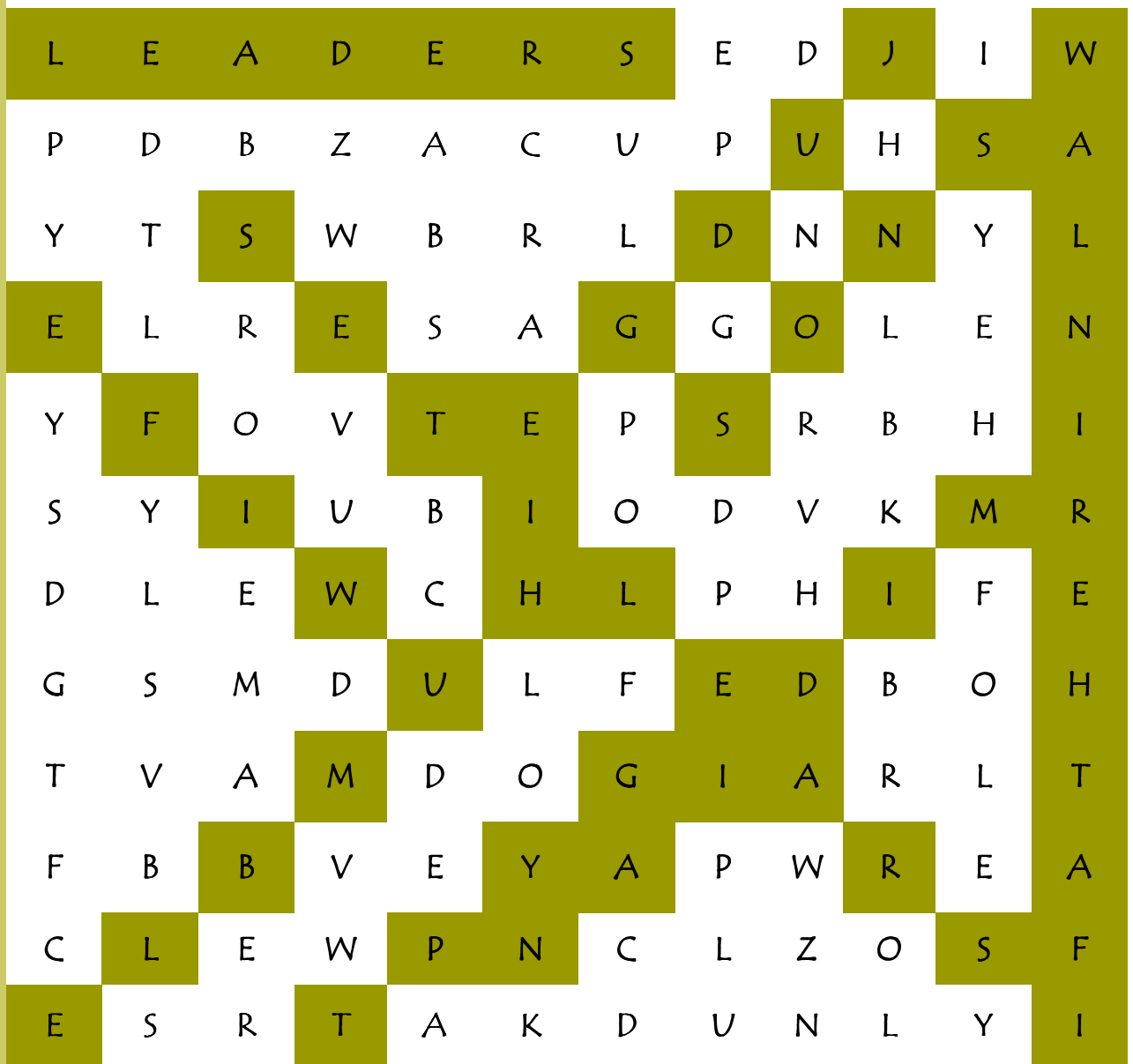
HUMBLE

LEADERS

JUDGE

ISRAELITES

Word Puzzle



MIDIAN

EGYPT

FATHER-IN-LAW

WIFE

SONS

HUMBLE

LEADERS

JUDGE

ISRAELITES

Word Puzzle for Younger Children

Y E H U M B L E N V Y S
W L S T D G H F T L A D
Y O I F R S O N S I B G
S Y U M I U E C N A W N
D L T B D C W G W I F E
S R M C R F O Y R A L P
J U D G E P V I E K B G
F B T P R C E G Y P T V
H E W S E B D L G M O D
B L M I D I A N T A W F

MIDIAN

EGYPT

JUDGE

WIFE

SONS

HUMBLE

Word Puzzle for Younger Children

Y E H U M B L E N V Y S
W L S T D G H F T L A D
Y O I F R S O N S I B G
S Y U M I U E C N A W N
D L T B D C W G W I F E
S R M C R F O Y R A L P
J U D G E P V I E K B G
F B T P R C E G Y P T V
H E W S E B D L G M O D
B L M I D I A N T A W F

MIDIAN

EGYPT

JUDGE

WIFE

SONS

HUMBLE

Anagram

1. EORJHT-

2. AOIHRPZP-

3. IIANDM-

4. EIADPSR-

5. EIACDV-

6. EEASDRL-

7. ESOMS-

8. EEIDNTLS-

Anagram

1. EORJHT-JETHRO
2. AOIHRPZP-ZIPPORAH
3. IANDM-MIDIAN
4. EIADPSR-PRAISED
5. EIACDV-ADVICE
6. EEASDRL-LEADERS
7. ESOMS-MOSES
8. EEIDNTLS-LISTENED