

## Accepting Advice

**Opener:** Have you ever had to delegate something important to someone else? What made it difficult?

**Scripture:** Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, together with Moses' sons and wife, came to him in the wilderness. <sup>6</sup>Jethro had sent word to him, "I, your father-in-law Jethro, am coming to you with your wife and her two sons." <sup>9</sup>Jethro was delighted to hear about all the good things the Lord had done for Israel in rescuing them from the Egyptians. <sup>13</sup>The next day Moses took his seat to serve as judge for the people, and they stood around him from morning till evening. <sup>14</sup>When Jethro saw all that Moses was doing, he said, "What are you doing? Why do you alone sit as judge, while all these people stand around you from morning till evening?" <sup>15</sup>Moses answered, "Because they come to me to seek God's will. <sup>16</sup>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."

<sup>17</sup>Moses' father-in-law replied, "What you are doing is not good. <sup>18</sup>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. <sup>19</sup>Listen 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. <sup>20</sup>Teach them his decrees and instructions, and show them the way they are to live and how they are to behave. <sup>21</sup>But select capable men from all the people—men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain—and appoint them as officials over 1,000s, 100s, 50s and 10s. <sup>22</sup>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. <sup>23</sup>If you do this and God so commands, you will be able to stand the strain, and all these people will go home satisfied." <sup>24</sup>Moses listened to his father-in-law and did everything he said. <sup>25</sup>He chose capable men and made them leaders, officials over 1,000s, 100s, 50s and 10s. <sup>26</sup>They served as judges for the people at all times. The difficult cases they brought to Moses, but the simple ones they decided themselves. <sup>27</sup>Jethro returned to his country. Ex. 18:5-27 (condensed)

Jesus said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup>Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup>and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always to the very end of the age." Matt. 28:18–20

### Discussion Questions

1. Moses led the Israelites out of captivity and bore the mantle of God's authority, but he took criticism and advice from Jethro seriously. How do you evaluate advice? Is it easier or harder to take advice from family? Why? Exodus 18:14-23
2. What do Jethro's requirements for selecting leaders and judges tell us about God's priorities for those in authority? How did Moses embody those characteristics as God's chosen leader? Exodus 18:21-22
3. Why do people tend to accept advice only when it's what they want to hear?
4. What's the best advice you've ever taken? What's the best advice you've failed to take?
5. How do you know when to withhold advice, even when you see that someone is headed for real trouble?
6. Other than reducing his time commitment, what were the advantages to Moses from delegating these responsibilities? Do you have obligations in your own life that you could delegate to others and reap similar benefits? Exodus 18:17-23
7. Jesus delegated great responsibility to His disciples in the Great Commission. Compare giving and receiving the commission in Matthew 28 to the tasks Moses delegated to the officials and judges in Exodus 18.

**Wrap Up:** Good leaders take good advice. That's what Moses was and that's what Moses did. He listened carefully to what Jethro said, weighed it against what He knew God wanted, and when he recognized it was from God, he acted on it without hesitation. We don't have to be leaders to do the same thing.