

Unit 5 • Session 2
Jethro Helped Moses

Bible Passage:

Exodus 18

Story Point:

Moses needed help to lead God's people.

Key Passage:

Matthew 22:37-39

Big Picture Question:

What is God like? God is holy, good, and loving.

INTRODUCE THE STORY

(10–15 minutes)

TEACH THE STORY

(25–30 minutes)

APPLY THE STORY

(25–30 minutes)

2/3/2019

1st - 2nd

Kids Tip: As kids get older, especially as they enter their preteen years, many begin to wrestle with their identity and wonder where they fit in with others. Socially, this can be a challenging time. This week you have the opportunity to life up the beauty of gospel community—how God designed it for all of us, that we are all welcome and are part because we share the same thing in common: Jesus. Celebrate the gift of community and encourage your kids to take full advantage of it.

The BIBLE Story

Jethro Helped Moses

Exodus 18

Moses and the Israelites were camping in the wilderness near the mountain of God, the same place where God had spoken to Moses through the burning bush. **Moses' father-in-law, Jethro**, lived nearby in the land of Midian. He **had heard about the Israelites' escape from Egypt. Moses' wife and sons were staying with Jethro, and they all came to the wilderness to see Moses.**

When Jethro was on his way, he sent a message to Moses. "I'm coming to see you," he said, "and your wife and sons are with me."

Moses hurried out to meet them. He greeted Jethro and invited him into his tent. **Moses told Jethro about everything God had done for the Israelites**—how God had punished the Egyptians and stopped Pharaoh, and how God provided for His people and protected them. **Jethro praised God for all the good things He had done.**

The next day, Moses sat down to judge the people. The people stood around all day and waited for Moses to listen to their case. Jethro asked Moses, "Why are you the only one judging the people? They have to stand around you all day."

Moses said, "The people want answers. Whenever they have a disagreement, I listen to their problems and tell them what God's laws are."

"This is not good," Jethro said. "This job is too big for one person."

Then **Jethro gave Moses some advice: "You can be the person who speaks to God for the Israelites. Teach the people God's laws.** Show them how to live. Tell them what God wants them to do. **But choose trustworthy men from all the people to lead smaller groups of people. They can judge the people's less important cases and bring the most important ones to you.** This way, you won't get worn out from doing everything by yourself, and the people will be happy because they don't have to stand around all day to get an answer."

So **Moses took Jethro's advice.** He chose men from all of Israel and made them leaders over the people. They judged the smaller cases and brought the big cases to Moses. **Then Jethro returned to his own land.**

Christ Connection: Moses needed others to help him lead God's people and teach them God's laws. God does not want believers to follow Jesus alone. He gives us brothers and sisters of faith who can help us love God, obey God, and tell others about Him.

Introduce the Story

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Big Picture Question: What is God like? God is holy, good, and loving.

Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. Prompt kids to share about times they needed help to complete a task. What was the task? Why did they need help with it?

Say • We often like to feel independent, as though we can do everything on our own. The truth is, no one is completely independent. We all need help from other people sometimes. Today we will learn about a time Moses faced a task too big for him to do without help. How do you think God provided Moses with help? We'll learn more soon.

Activity page (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete the "Among the Crowd" activity page. Challenge kids to find the people wearing black belts, blue head coverings, red sandals, or a purple dress.

Say • Wow! That activity page included a lot of people. Moses' job was to lead God's people and help them work through their problems. But that job was much more than one man could handle. Let's learn more!

Worship

At 10:35 lead the kids into the sanctuary for worship. You will return to the classroom for teaching before the sermon begins.

Transition to teach the story

Teach the Story

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Big Picture Question: What is God like? God is holy, good, and loving.

Big picture question (1 minute)

Leader • Remember that we have been trying to understand God more. ***What is God like? God is holy, good, and loving.*** Holy means set apart as special. And He is good; He always does what is right, and all His ways are best. God is also loving.

Giant timeline (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

Leader • We know that God rescued His people from Egypt in a miraculous way. Last week we learned that **God provided for the physical needs of His people**. While they were in the wilderness, God gave them water to drink as well as quail and manna to eat. He began teaching them to trust Him each day. This week we will learn about Moses' responsibilities as the leader of God's people and hear how he found out that he needed help too. Our story is called "Jethro Helped Moses."

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Exodus 18. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video "Jethro Helped Moses."

Leader • I said earlier that God created us to live together with other people. However, because we all have sin in our lives, living with others always leads to some kinds of conflict. The fact is, our sin makes us selfish and cruel. We want to do things our way, and sometimes we don't even care if that hurts those around us. The Israelites were no different. They were God's chosen people, but they still had struggles and disagreements.

One of Moses' responsibilities as the leader God chose for His people was to help the people settle disputes. Moses would listen to all the sides of the story and decide what should happen to bring peace between those who were upset with one another. But there were a lot of Israelites and only one Moses. Often, leading the people in that way took all day and probably left Moses and the people waiting to speak with him exhausted. When Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, saw this happening, he knew something wasn't right. He stepped in. **Moses needed help to lead God's people**. So Moses chose men who were godly and wise to help him.

When we believe in Jesus, we are given new life with God, but Christians are not supposed to go through life alone; we are to live with one another and help one another love and obey God.

Christ connection

Leader • Moses needed others to help him lead God's people and teach them God's laws. God does not want believers to follow Jesus alone. He gives us brothers and sisters of faith who can help us love God, obey God, and tell others about Him. In addition to that, people who trust in Jesus have the Holy Spirit living inside them! That means that God has given us everything we need to grow in our faith and live for Him.

Questions from kids video (3 minutes)

Show the "Unit 5, Session 2" questions from kids video. Prompt kids to think about when they need help. Guide them to discuss why it is sometimes hard to ask for help. Who has God put in their lives to help them?

Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together Matthew 22:37-39. Then sing “Love the Lord Your God.”
Leader • Jesus taught that all God’s commandments can be summed up by loving God with all we have and loving others as we love ourselves. *God is holy, loving, and good*; obeying His commands is good for us and others!

Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

Leader • God, thank You for all You do for us. We know that You are good and want good for us. Help us learn to trust You and ask for help when we need it. Amen.

Dismiss to apply the story

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.

God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.

We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)

God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.

We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus. Provide *I'm a Christian Now!* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

Apply the Story

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Big Picture Question: What is God like? God is holy, good, and loving.

Key passage activity (5 minutes)

Use your hands and feet to make a simple rhythm, such as stomp stomp clap-clap-clap. Encourage the kids to join you and repeat the rhythm until the class is able to stomp and clap along. Then, chant the key passage to the rhythm a few times. See if the kids can continue chanting it without your leadership or while the poster is covered.

Say • Our key passage was recorded by Matthew, but the words were spoken by Jesus. Jesus taught that all the Law could be obeyed just by obeying two commandments: to love God with everything you have and to love other people as yourself. We can't show that kind of extraordinary love without God's help. **Moses needed help to lead God's people**, and we need help to love God and His people! Jesus provides us with the help we need.

Discussion & Bible skills (10 minutes)

Distribute a Bible to each kid. Help them use the table of contents and large chapter numbers to find Exodus 18. Remind the kids what they have been learning about the different divisions in the Bible and why we use them.

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

Who was Jethro? (*a priest of Midian and Moses' father-in-law, Ex. 18:1*)

What problem did Jethro notice? (*Moses sat all day to judge the people, a task too heavy for him alone; Ex. 18:14-18*)

What solution did Jethro suggest? (*select trustworthy men to help judge smaller cases, Ex. 18:19-22*)

What are some things we need help with in our lives? *Guide kids to discuss the idea that walking with God was never meant to be done alone. We are to be a part of the church. We can help others love and obey God and be helped by others.*

How can we help one another obey God? *Guide kids to discuss the power of prayer and the importance of talking about the things we think and feel. Remind kids that learning from someone who has been trusting God longer than you can help you see what godliness looks like. Talk about the importance of confession in battling sin in our lives.*

What are some things you could do if you feel alone and need help with something? *Talk about how we must show humility to ask for help sometimes. Remind the kids that we all are imperfect, and needing help doesn't mean you are weak or a failure. Point out that asking for help is a sign of God's work happening in your life to make you wise and grow you.*

Say • **Moses needed help to lead God's people**. Each of us needs help to walk with God daily. God never meant for us to obey Him all on our own. That's why He sent Jesus to save us and the Holy Spirit to help us. Other Christians can help us love and obey God too!

Activity choice (10 minutes)

Option 1: Helping hands

Print the "Love Your Neighbor" printable so that each kid has a copy. Instruct kids to trace one of their hands in the empty box. Read the statement on the printable and discuss ways kids can help their neighbors, such as walking a dog, raking a yard, or baking cookies. Help kids fill in the blanks on their papers. Talk about how the best way to show love is to tell others about Jesus' love. Challenge them to speak with their parents about helping a neighbor in the coming weeks.

Say • **Moses needed help to lead God's people**. We need help to love God and love others. God sent Jesus to die on the cross to rescue us from sin. When we trust in Jesus, the Holy Spirit lives in us and helps us obey God and love other people. Living on mission means showing Jesus' love to others and telling them about the gospel so they can trust Jesus too.

Reflection and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper to each child. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

What does this story teach me about God or about the gospel?

What does this story teach me about myself?

Whom can I tell about this story?

Make sure to send the journal sheets home with kids alongside the activity page so that parents can see what their kids have been learning.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page provided with this session. Pray for your group.