

COMMUNITY



2. In the Life of Israel

In our previous study we saw how God created us to live in community, and this began with the first family. We spoke about our own families, so before we begin let's think more about the family we come from.



Let's share something about our parents this time! Where did your parents come from, and what kind of work are they doing? How are your parents now?

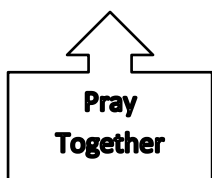
As we have discovered already, God is a community – God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, who live together in perfect unity. It was his idea to create the first community – Adam and Eve, and their children. This community grew! One community that grew from the first family was the people of Israel, numbering two and a half to three million people by the time of Moses. In order to manage such an enormous community Moses divided the people into groups with leaders.



Exodus 18:13-27

- ❶ Moses was a great leader, however it wasn't easy to lead so many people. What were some of the problems he had? See verses 14, 17-18. Can you think of any other difficulties he may have had?
- ❷ What did Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, think he should do? See verses 19-22.
- ❸ If Moses followed Jethro's advice, what difference could it make? See verses 22-23
- ❹ The pattern Jethro gave to Moses of dividing people into thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens, is used by many churches today. From your experience share the benefits of doing this in a church.
- ❺ Moses followed his father-in-law's advice. What does this show us about the kind of leader Moses was?

The groups of ten in the nation of Israel would have been family groups. We all belong to a family group and our relationship with them is important. However our family may not yet be believers, so it is good to belong to a small group, so we can study God's Word together and encourage one another in our faith.



Let's pray for our families now. Ask each person to sit in the centre and then have the group pray for that person and their family, whatever their needs are.

God had chosen and prepared Moses to lead the nation of Israel, but the demands were so great that Moses faced 'burn out'! No pastor or Christian leader can care for huge numbers of people alone. God never intended anyone to do so. Moses humbly took his father-in-law's advice and divided the people into smaller groups, placing leaders over them. The small group then becomes the community within the community! In this smaller group of people we can build relationships, share our inner thoughts and needs, and be strengthened. Make sure you belong to such a group!