



# **SWAT PRAYER**

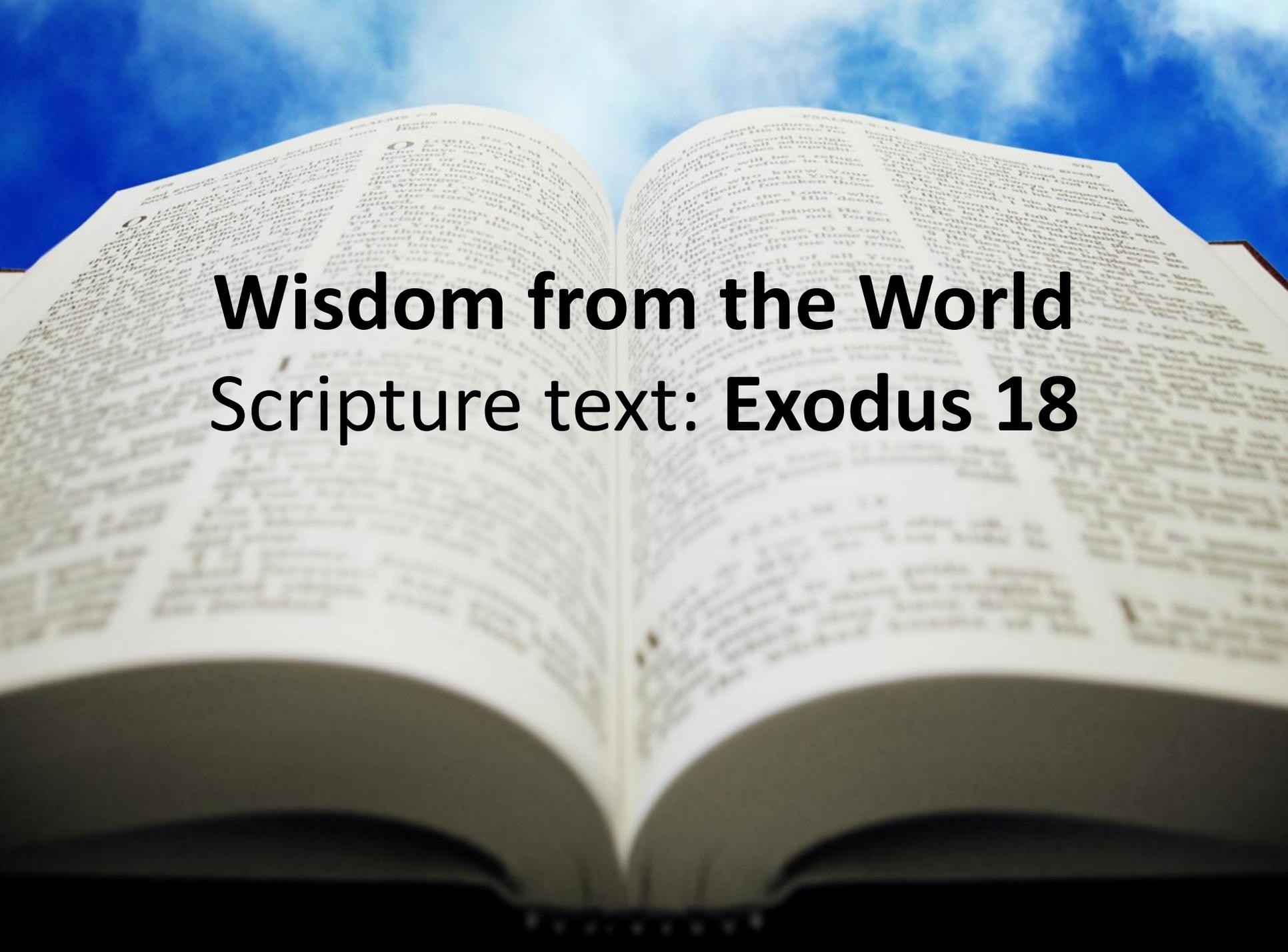
SPIRITUAL WARFARE ATTACK TEAM



**STORMING THE GATES**

Welcome to Promise Land Bible Church  
We're glad you're here!



An open book is shown from a low angle, looking up at the pages. The pages are filled with text, which is slightly out of focus. The book is set against a bright blue sky with wispy white clouds. The central text is overlaid on the book's pages.

**Wisdom from the World**  
Scripture text: **Exodus 18**

# Wisdom from the World (18)

Bible students disagree as to the interpretation of this chapter, **whether Jethro's advice to Moses was of the Lord or of the flesh.**

**What do you think?**

Some point to Num. 11 where God took of His Spirit and distributed the power among the seventy officers, suggesting that Moses already had all the power he needed to get the job done.

God had told Moses back in chapters Exodus Ch. 3–4 that He alone would supply the needed grace to do the job.

In v. 11, Jethro **called Jehovah “greater than all gods,”** but this is a far cry from a definite confession of faith in the true God.

Furthermore, in v. 27, we see Jethro refusing to stay with Israel, but going back to his own people.

**Exodus 3:9-12** And now, behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. **Come, I will send you** to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt." But Moses said to God, **"Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?"** He said, **But I will be with you,** and this shall be **the sign for you, that I have sent you:** when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain."

**Exodus 4:12-17** Now therefore go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall speak."

But he said, "Oh, my Lord, please send someone else." Then the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses and he said, "Is there not Aaron, your brother, the Levite? I know that he can speak well. Behold, he is coming out to meet you, and when he sees you, he will be glad in his heart. You shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth, and I will be with your mouth and with his mouth and will teach you both what to do. He shall speak for you to the people, and he shall be your mouth, and you shall be as God to him. And take in your hand this staff, with which you shall do the signs."

**Exodus 18:15-20** And Moses said to his father-in-law, **"Because the people come to me to inquire of God;** when they have a dispute, they come to me and I decide between one person and another, and **I make them know the statutes of God and his laws."** Moses' father-in-law said to him, "What you are doing is not good. You and the people with you will certainly wear yourselves out, **for the thing is too heavy for you. You are not able to do it alone.** Now obey my voice; I will give you advice, and God be with you! You shall represent the people before God and bring their cases to God, and you shall warn them about the statutes and the laws, and make them know the way in which they must walk and what they must do.

**John 8:25-29** So they said to him, "Who are you?" Jesus said to them, "Just what I have been telling you from the beginning. I have much to say about you and much to judge, but he who sent me is true, and I declare to the world what I have heard from him." They did not understand that he had been speaking to them about the Father. So Jesus said to them, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, and **that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me.** And he who sent me is with me. He has not left me alone, for **I always do the things that are pleasing to him.**"

**John 10:25-30** Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name bear witness about me, but you do not believe because you are not part of my flock. **My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.** My Father, who has given them to me, **is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one."**

**Certainly our God is a God of order**, and there is nothing wrong with organization. In the NT the apostles added the deacons to assist them when the burdens of ministry became too great (Acts 6). God's people can learn even from outsiders (Luke 16:8), **but we must test everything by the Word of God** (Isa. 8:20).

**Luke 16:8** The master commended the dishonest manager for his shrewdness. For **the sons of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the sons of light.**

**Isaiah 8:17-20** I will wait for the LORD, who is hiding his face from the house of Jacob, and I will hope in him. Behold, I and the children whom the LORD has given me are signs and portents in Israel from the LORD of hosts, who dwells on Mount Zion. And when they say to you, "Inquire of the mediums and the necromancers who chirp and mutter," should not a people inquire of their God? Should they inquire of the dead on behalf of the living? **To the teaching and to the testimony! If they will not speak according to this word, it is because they have no dawn.**

**Act 6:1-4** Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were **being neglected in the daily distribution**. And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

**We wonder if this “worldly wisdom” from Jethro was pleasing to God**, for Jethro himself was not sure (see v. 23). He was willing to rejoice in all that the Lord had done (vv. 9–10), but he was not willing to believe that God could help Moses with the everyday burdens of life.

**Exodus 18:22-23** And let them judge the people at all times. Every great matter they shall bring to you, but any small matter they shall decide themselves. So it will be easier for you, and they will bear the burden with you. **If you do this, God will direct you, you will be able to endure**, and all this people also will go to their place in peace."

Moses adopted Jethro's scheme, and the people agreed to it (Deut. 1:9–18), but we have no assurance that God approved the new arrangement. In fact, God's attitude in Num. 11 suggests otherwise.

**Deuteronomy 1:9 -12** "At that time I said to you, 'I am not able to bear you by myself. The LORD your God has multiplied you, and behold, you are today as numerous as the stars of heaven. May the LORD, the God of your fathers, make you a thousand times as many as you are and bless you, as he has promised you! How can I bear by myself the weight and burden of you and your strife?

**Numbers 11:16-18** Then the LORD said to Moses, "Gather for me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and officers over them, and **bring them to the tent of meeting, and let them take their stand there with you.** And I will come down and talk with you there. And **I will take some of the Spirit that is on you and put it on them, and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, so that you may not bear it yourself alone.** And say to the people, 'Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, and you shall eat meat, for you have wept in the hearing of the LORD, saying, "Who will give us meat to eat? For it was better for us in Egypt." Therefore the LORD will give you meat, and you shall eat.

**Deuteronomy 1:13-16** Choose for your tribes wise, understanding, and experienced men, and **I will appoint them as your heads.**' And you answered me, **'The thing that you have spoken is good for us to do.'** So I took the heads of your tribes, wise and experienced men, and set them as heads over you, commanders of thousands, commanders of hundreds, commanders of fifties, commanders of tens, and officers, throughout your tribes. And **I charged your judges at that time,** 'Hear the cases between your brothers, and judge righteously between a man and his brother or the alien who is with him.

**Deuteronomy 1:17-18** You shall not be partial in judgment. You shall hear the small and the great alike. **You shall not be intimidated by anyone, for the judgment is God's.** And the case that is too hard for you, you shall bring to me, and I will hear it.' And I commanded you at that time all the things that you should do.

**So is there a difference, from what is written above compared to when Jethro mentioned it?**

**Who was actually giving or granting the advice?**

Believers face open and obvious attacks of the flesh, as with Amalek (Exodus 17:8–16); but also subtle ideas of the flesh, as with Jethro. Certainly Moses could have done whatever work God called him to do, for **“God’s commandments are His enablements.”** How easy it is for us to pity ourselves, to feel that nobody else cares and that God has given us too great a burden!

Read Isa. 40:31 for God’s solution to this problem.

**Isaiah 40:31** but **they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength**; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; **they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.**

**Genesis 8:4-8** and in the **seventh month**, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. And the waters continued to abate **until the tenth month**; in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen. At the end of forty days Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made and sent forth a raven. It went to and fro until the waters were dried up from the earth. **Then he sent forth a dove** from him, to see if the waters had subsided from the face of the ground.

**Genesis 8:9-11** But **the dove found no place to set her foot**, and she returned to him to the ark, for the waters were still on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took her and brought her into the ark with him. He **waited another seven days**, and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark. And **the dove came back to him in the evening**, and behold, in her mouth was a freshly plucked olive leaf. So Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth.

**Genesis 8:12-16** Then he waited another seven days and sent forth the dove, and she did not return to him anymore. In the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried from off the earth. And **Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked, and behold, the face of the ground was dry.** In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth had dried out. Then God said to Noah, "Go out from the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons' wives with you."

**Exodus 17:9-14** So Moses said to Joshua, "**Choose for us men, and go out and fight with Amalek.** Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand." So Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought with Amalek, while Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. Whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed, and whenever he lowered his hand, Amalek prevailed. But **Moses' hands grew weary**, so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it, while Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side. **So his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. And Joshua overwhelmed Amalek and his people with the sword.**

**1 John 4:1-6** Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already. **Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.** They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world, and the world listens to them. **We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.**

**Ephesians 5:6-12** Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not become partners with them; for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. **Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.** Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.

**Ephesians 5:13-17** For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, **for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."** Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but **understand what the will of the Lord is.**