

DAY 3

LESSON GUIDE



BIG IDEA

God makes us stronger together.

BIBLE

Jethro Visits Moses: Exodus 18

ABOUT THIS WEEK

Even top chefs need a team—no one can stir every pot alone! Today, we'll discover how Moses learned that leading alone is exhausting, but with help from others, he could do so much more. When we work together and lean on each other, we discover that **God makes us stronger together.**

WHAT? What are we talking about?

MUSIC | Flavors of Worship

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Invite kids to worship together with 2–3 songs that you and your kids love! For more music aligned with this VBS, check out [this playlist](#) we made for you!
- Welcome back to the kitchen, chefs! By now, you know that cooking takes a lot of work—and it's not just about making the food. There's chopping, washing dishes, grilling, serving, and more! Imagine trying to do *all* of that alone. Yikes!
- Kitchens run best when people work together. And today, we'll explore how God made us to be that way, too. **Stations ready, chefs?** Then let's find out *What's Cookin'!*



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ACTIVITY | Order Up!

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this activity, you'll need [cotton balls](#) (50–100), two [ladles or spatulas](#), two pairs of [oven mitts](#), two [mixing bowls](#), two [trays](#), and two [bells](#). Set up two identical stations with the supplies. Choose two Head Chefs and let each pick two Sous Chefs. Head Chefs must transfer one cotton ball at a time from the tray to the bowl using only the ladle or spatula while facing more obstacles—like wearing oven mitts, using their non-dominant hand, or being blindfolded. Add a new obstacle every 20–30 seconds. The Head Chef can ring the bell and call “Order up!” for a Sous Chef (who has no obstacles) to help for five seconds. The first team to move all their cotton balls wins!
- Cooking is easier when we work as a team, and the same is true of the work God gives us. Sometimes, we face challenges that feel too big or awkward to handle alone. But God gives us people—friends, family, and church—to support us. Even the best chefs need a good team!



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ACTIVITY | Paper Lasagna

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this activity, you'll need two stacks of 30 yellow or cream-colored construction paper (one stack per team), and deep-dish [baking pans](#). To play, form two teams. Give the first player on each team one sheet of paper. On "Go!", have them tear the sheet in half, stack the two halves together, and pass the stack to the next player. That player then tears the entire stack in half again, stacks the new pieces, and passes it on. Once it becomes impossible to tear the growing stack in half, they add the stack to the baking pan, and the next player gets a new sheet of paper. Continue until the pan is full or you run out of paper. The first team to do this wins!
 - Save the paper scraps for a mosaic project in the future or to use as filler for sensory bins.
- Lasagna is made of layers of noodle sheets, similar to the stack of papers you added to your pans. Did you notice that the sheets of paper were harder to tear as the stacks got thicker?
- We can sometimes feel like a single sheet of paper, but God allows us to find strength through the support of others. Let's learn more from today's Bible story!



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POLL | Sunny Side Up or Down

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Ask questions from the options below—you can pre-load them onto a screen for everyone to read or just read them off a printed list. Have kids indicate their answer by lying on the ground face-up for the first option ("sunny side up") or flip over for the second option.
- **Which do you think is stronger?**
 - The smell of one clove of garlic or the smell of five cloves of garlic?
 - The flavor of a mix of cinnamon, nutmeg, and cloves, or the flavor of one spoonful of cinnamon?
 - The crunch of one potato chip or the crunch of a full stack of kettle-cooked chips?
 - The flavor of lemon juice mixed with garlic and herbs, or just lemon juice?
 - One layer of phyllo dough or ten layers baked into a flaky crust?
 - The smell of a whole pan of bacon sizzling at once or one strip of bacon?
 - The taste of one chopped jalapeño pepper or an entire jar of peppers?
 - Dough made by mixing just flour and water, or mixing flour, water, yeast, and salt?
 - A butter knife or a food processor, to chop stuff?
 - A microwave heating one plate or an oven roasting a whole tray of vegetables?
 - A dishwasher cleaning a full load or scrubbing one dirty pot by hand?
- You can't bake with just eggs. You can't make pancakes with just flour. You can't make all the meals with just a single spatula. In a kitchen, many ingredients and tools come together to prepare a dish.
- In today's Bible story, we'll learn about a time when Moses needed to be reminded that he needed help to do all the things God called him to do!

SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

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SCRIPTURE | Exodus 18 (Jethro Visits Moses)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read the passage and retell the Bible story using the Scripture segments and talking points provided below. To tie in your storytelling with the theme, consider wearing a [toque](#) (chef's hat) and [apron](#) as you take on the persona of a head chef! As you are teaching, encourage kids to respond to you by saying "Yes, Chef!" or "No, Chef!"
 - You can take the theme further in your teaching by introducing a "secret ingredient" as an object lesson during the Bible story.
 - Place the secret ingredient (pack of uncooked noodles) under the [serving dome](#) on the table ahead of time and get ready for a dramatic reveal as part of the lesson like in the previous days.
- Welcome back to the kitchen, chefs! Who's ready to slice into today's Bible story?
 - In a big restaurant, lots of dishes need to be ready at the same time—cold food stays cold, hot food comes out hot! That's why everyone in the kitchen has to work together. Teamwork makes the dream work! And we'll see that in today's story about Moses.
 - **But before we begin, are you ready for today's secret ingredient? The secret ingredient is... (lift the serving dome to reveal) noodles!** We'll find out how this secret ingredient works into today's story.
- Last time, we saw how baby Moses was hidden in a basket and placed in the river to keep him safe from Pharaoh's order to get rid of all Hebrew baby boys. Pharaoh's daughter, the princess of Egypt, found him and chose to make him her son. Moses grew up in Pharaoh's palace as an Egyptian prince, but he was really a Hebrew, or an Israelite—the name given to God's people.
- Life in Egypt was unbearable for the Israelites. When Moses got older, God called him to lead the Israelites out of Egypt to a new land. After escaping from Egypt, Moses led all the people through the desert, but it was getting too hard to do everything by himself.
 - Everyone came to him with their problems, and it was wearing him out!
 - **Let's read Exodus 18:1–6 and see what happened next.**
 - Moses had been leading the Israelites, but he hadn't seen his wife and two sons for a while. When his father-in-law, Jethro, brought them back, it must have been a big moment for Moses. **How happy do you think he was to see his family again?**
 - **Let's find out what happens next in Exodus 18: 7–12.**
- So when Moses' family came to visit him, he couldn't wait to tell Jethro, his father-in-law, everything that God did to help the Israelites escape from Egypt. When we go through tough times—like Moses did—it helps to spend time with someone we can talk to.
 - Moses trusted Jethro, and Jethro was glad to listen. We're made to share life with others, to celebrate when something good happens, and to cheer each other on. God made us to support and encourage one another!
 - **Let's read Exodus 18: 13–16.**

- Moses took his job seriously. From morning to night, he listened to people's problems and tried to help them. That's a lot for one person! But his father-in-law asked why he was doing it all by himself.
 - Sometimes, we might not feel strong enough to do important things. But do we really have to be the strongest, most capable person?
 - **Let's see what Jethro suggests in Exodus 18:17–23.**
- Jethro gave Moses some really strong advice. He encouraged Moses to choose other trustworthy people to help lead and solve problems.
 - That way, Moses wouldn't wear himself out, and the people wouldn't have to wait so long for help.
 - **Now, let's find out how the story ends by reading Exodus 18:24–27.**
- Moses listened to Jethro, and everyone got stronger because they worked together. This reminds us that we don't have to do everything on our own. It's okay to ask for help and to share the load. A team is stronger than just one person trying to do it all—just like in a kitchen where everyone works together to make a delicious meal.
 - God often puts people in our lives—friends, family, leaders—to strengthen us. And sometimes, we get to be strong for someone else!
 - And that brings us to today's secret ingredient: noodles! One noodle by itself isn't very strong or satisfying, but when lots of noodles come together—whether in spaghetti, ramen, or chow mein—they create a tasty, filling meal.
 - In the same way, when Moses chose other leaders to help him, the strength didn't rest on just one person. It was shared and spread out, which made everything work smoother and stronger.
- And that's it from our kitchen today! Remember, whether you're prepping, plating, or cleaning up, God made us to need each other and want to spend time together. See you *tomato*, chefs!



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BIG IDEA | God makes us stronger together.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this activity, you'll need several kitchen serving utensils such as wooden spoons, spatulas, ladles, tongs, pasta servers, whisks, and slotted spoons, and a whiteboard or wall space. Write each word of today's Big Idea on separate small pieces of paper or pieces of tape. Tape or use a rubber band to secure each word to the handle of a different kitchen utensil. Place all the utensils upright in a kitchen utensil holder or a pitcher. Have kids pull out the utensils one by one to find a word. As words are found, read them aloud and display them on a whiteboard or wall in the order they're revealed. Once all the words have been found, challenge the group to rearrange the words to uncover the Big Idea.*
- Today's story shows us something important: God didn't make us to be strong all alone. We grow when we spend time with others. We do this by sharing life, helping each other, and working together like a team in a busy kitchen. **God makes us stronger together!**



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VIDEO | A Clip From *Ratatouille*

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** As a teaching tool, play a [short clip](#) (1:46–2:13) from [Ratatouille](#), or something similar, where Remy guides Linguini and teaches him how to do things in a kitchen.
 - View the clip beforehand to ensure it's a good fit for your context. [Read this](#) for more information on legally using copyrighted material for educational purposes.
- In the movie *Ratatouille*, Linguini tried to be a great chef, but he didn't know how to cook very well. Then came Remy—a new friend who was an amazing cook but, well... also a rat. So, you can imagine, he wasn't exactly welcome in the kitchen.
- Remy secretly guided Linguini's movements in the kitchen, showing him how to chop, stir, and create amazing meals. Linguini couldn't have done it without Remy, and Remy couldn't have cooked in the kitchen without Linguini. They needed each other!
- This reminds us that we don't have to do everything alone. God gave us friends, family, and leaders so we can help each other, encourage each other, and grow stronger together. Sometimes we're the ones who need help, and sometimes we're the ones who get to help someone else.
- **God makes us stronger together!**



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OBJECT LESSON | Stronger Together

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this object lesson, you'll need at least seven empty aluminum soda cans per demo, duct tape or masking tape (not painter's tape), a sheet of thick cardboard or a small wooden board the size of a six-pack of cans, and optional extra bundles. Prepare a bundle of 6 empty soda cans ahead of time. Stand them upright and tape them tightly together using duct tape, wrapping around the sides to keep them secure. Also set aside one single empty can. During the object lesson, start by placing the single can on the ground. Ask for a volunteer to carefully step on it—it will crush easily. Then bring out the taped bundle of 6 cans. Place the thick cardboard or board on top, and invite the same (or another) volunteer to slowly step onto the center. You'll notice the cans don't crush this time.
- Why did the single can crush, but the bundle stayed strong? It's because when the cans were joined together, they supported each other. They each took on a bit of the weight.
- We're a lot like those cans. On our own, we can feel like there's too much being asked of us. But when we stick together and support each other, we're stronger. That's the way God designed us—to be part of a community that lifts each other up.
- We don't have to face things alone. Together, we can stand strong. **God makes us stronger together!**

VIDEO | Teaching Video (Day 3)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play today's [episode](#) of *Grow TV*.

NOW WHAT? What does God want us to do about it?

REFLECTION | Menu for Change

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this reflection, you'll need large sheets of paper or poster boards, markers or crayons, brochures or magazines, glue, and scissors to make a collage. Divide kids into small groups of 3–5 and give each group a large sheet of paper and markers. Ask them to pick a real-world problem either in your community (like keeping the neighborhood clean or welcoming new students) or a bigger issue (like providing clean water or food). Have them brainstorm together and create a plan to solve the problem as a team, like planning a menu! Encourage them to draw relevant pictures or cut out pictures from magazines or brochures to add to their poster. Then, invite each group to share their plan with everyone.
- Chefs don't just make one dish—they plan a whole menu! Today, your team will plan a *Menu for Change* to help solve a real-world problem. You'll cook up ideas to make the world a better place.
 - **Starters:** Let's start by naming a problem we're *hungry* to solve.
 - **Main course:** What's our plan? How can we help solve the problem?
 - **Side dishes:** What do we need? Who needs to get involved?
 - **Dessert:** Sweet! We have a plan. What do we hope to see if our plan works?
- When we try to fix big problems all by ourselves, it can feel overwhelming. But when we work together—with friends, family, or even people we don't know—God can do amazing things through us. We don't have to be strong alone. **God makes us stronger together!**



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RESPONSE | Recipe Box

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this activity, each kid will need their "recipe box" from previous days, a copy of today's [handout](#), scissors, a glue stick, and writing utensils. Provide extra recipe boxes for kids who are new today.
 - To prepare today's "recipe card," have kids fold the paper lengthwise (hot dog style), then glue the two halves together. Then have them fold it again widthwise (hamburger style) to create a quarter-page card with the "Spend time with others" tab on top. With the paper still folded, have kids cut out the shaded area to create a tabbed edge.
 - Next, encourage kids to write or draw their responses to the prompts. You can choose to let kids take their cards home each day or collect them in their boxes to take home at the end of VBS.
- Many chefs keep their best recipes in a box. We've been building our own Recipe Boxes—not for food, but for how to grow with God. You'll write or draw what you learned and how you can live it out, and add it to your collection of spiritual recipes to take home!
- Today's recipe will help us remember that **God makes us stronger together!**
- **Ingredients.** Every recipe starts with the right ingredients. Let's get thinking about what we need to practice today's Big Idea.
 - **List some people God has put in your life to help you grow stronger.**
 - **How can spending time with others make you stronger?**

- **Steps.** Recipes also have steps to follow. This helps us plan how we'll actually live out what we learned today.
 - **Who is someone you can spend time with so you can help each other grow stronger?**
 - **Choose one way you want to spend time with that person.**
- **Stir-Ups.** Sometimes recipes get messy! We can take note of what might stir up challenges and think about how we can keep going.
 - **What are some things that can make it harder to be strong together, like when people don't listen, don't share, or put each other down?**
 - **What's one way you could turn that around to build someone up instead—like encouraging, listening, or inviting them in?**
- **Taste Test.** Chefs taste their food to see how it turned out. After you spend time with others this week, you can look back at what you tried and write notes about it.
 - **What did you notice or feel when you spent time with others?**
 - **What will you remember for next time?**
- And don't forget that this recipe isn't a serving size of one... go share God's strength with others. Now that's *What's Cookin'!*



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MEMORY VERSE | Psalm 34:8 (NIV)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Learn the memory verse together using any combination of the resources provided: [memory verse coloring page](#), [sign language motions](#), or choose from [this list](#) of our favorite memorization techniques!*
- **“Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.”**

PRAYER

- Dear God, thank you for giving us friends, family, and others who help us grow and care about us. Please help us find ways to work together. Show us how to get along, even when it's hard, because we know you make us stronger together. Amen.