

Exodus 12:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service?

Analysis

The anticipated question 'What mean ye by this service?' recognizes that rituals provoke curiosity, especially from children. The question creates a teaching moment where liturgy becomes catechesis. God designs ceremonies to be pedagogical—actions that demand explanation, ensuring the story is told. This principle underlies all Christian sacraments, which are enacted proclamations inviting inquiry.

Historical Context

Jewish practice developed this into formal questions during the Passover seder. The youngest child traditionally asks the 'Four Questions,' prompting the retelling of the exodus story.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How do your spiritual practices create opportunities to explain the gospel to your children or others?

2. What visible actions in your life would cause someone to ask, 'Why do you do this?'

Interlinear Text

בְּנֵיכֶם יְאֹמַר וְאַלְיכֶם
And it shall come to pass when your children
H1121 H1961 H3588 shall say H413 H559

לְכָמָן: מַעֲשֵׂךְ הַזֶּה אַתָּה
unto you What mean ye by this service
H2063 H4100 H5656

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 32:7 (Parallel theme): Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee.

Psalms 145:4 (Parallel theme): One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts.

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