

Exodus 16:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the LORD said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws?

Analysis

And the LORD said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws?—God's question 'How long' (עַד-אָתָה, ad-anah) expresses divine grief at persistent disobedience. The plural 'ye' indicts the entire community for some members' sin—corporate responsibility. 'Refuse' (מִתְנַצֵּע, me'antem) indicates willful rejection, not ignorant mistake. This rhetorical question previews Israel's chronic rebellion that culminates in 40 years' wilderness wandering. The phrase 'my commandments and my laws' before Sinai shows God's moral order existed prior to formal law-giving. Sabbath-breaking becomes paradigmatic sin: rejecting God's rest reveals hearts that prefer works-righteousness to grace. God's grief here prefigures Christ's lament: 'how often would I have gathered you...and ye would not' (Matt 23:37).

Historical Context

This divine rebuke occurred before the formal giving of the law at Sinai, showing that Sabbath observance was expected based on creation order and immediate instruction.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. Why is refusing rest (Sabbath-breaking) paradigmatic of all sin against God's provision?
2. How does God's grief at persistent disobedience reveal His desire for our trust and rest?

Interlinear Text

מִנְחָת מִנְחָת	אָתָה	עַד	מִשְׁנֶה	אֶל	יְהִי הָאָתָר	sa
How long refuse	H3985	H575	H5704	H4872	H413	And the LORD
						said
						H559
						H3068
						H4687
						H8451

לְשֵׁם רְמִצּוֹת וְמִצְוָתִי:
ye to keep my commandments and my laws

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 78:10 (Word): They kept not the covenant of God, and refused to walk in his law;

Psalms 106:13 (Parallel theme): They soon forgat his works; they waited not for his counsel:

Ezekiel 20:13 (Parallel theme): But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness: they walked not in my statutes, and they despised my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them; and my sabbaths they greatly polluted: then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them in the wilderness, to consume them.

2 Kings 17:14 (References Lord): Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the LORD their God.

Numbers 14:11 (References Lord): And the LORD said unto Moses, How long will this people provoke me? and how long will it be ere they believe me, for all the signs which I have shewed among them?

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