

Exodus 17:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, after their journeys, according to the commandment of the LORD, and pitched in Rephidim: and there was no water for the people to drink.

Analysis

And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin—Israel's journey from Sin to Rephidim marks continued testing after manna provision. The phrase 'according to the commandment of the LORD' (עַל־פִּי יְהוָה, al-pi YHWH, literally 'by the mouth of the LORD') emphasizes divine direction—they move only as God speaks through the cloud/fire pillar. Yet this obedience in location doesn't translate to obedience in attitude. Rephidim (רֶפִידִים, 'rests' or 'supports') becomes the place of testing without water, showing that following God's direction doesn't eliminate trials. Paul warns believers against Israel's wilderness failures (1 Cor 10:5-11), urging us to trust God through appointed difficulties.

Historical Context

Rephidim's exact location is uncertain but likely in the southern Sinai peninsula before reaching Mount Sinai. The site becomes significant for both water from rock and the Amalek battle.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does obedience to God's direction not exempt believers from trials?
2. What does journeying 'by the mouth of the LORD' teach about following divine guidance even into difficulty?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּסְעוּ journeyed H5265	כָּל H3605	עַד ת H5712	בְּנֵי H1121	יִשְׂרָאֵל of Israel H3478
מִמִּדְבָּר from the wilderness H4057	סִין of Sin H5512	לְמַסְעֵיהֶם after their journeys H4550	עַל H5921	פִּי according to the commandment H6310
יְהוָה of the LORD H3068	וַיִּחַן and pitched H2583	בְּרֶפְדִּים in Rephidim H7508	וְאֵין H369	מִיִּם and there was no water H4325
				לְשֹׁתָם to drink H8354
הָעָם: for the people H5971				

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 16:1 (Sin): And they took their journey from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came unto the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departing out of the land of Egypt.

Exodus 19:2 (Sin): For they were departed from Rephidim, and were come to the desert of Sinai, and had pitched in the wilderness; and there Israel camped before the mount.

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