

Exodus 18:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Jethro, Moses' father in law, took a burnt offering and sacrifices for God: and Aaron came, and all the elders of Israel, to eat bread with Moses' father in law before God.

Analysis

And Jethro, Moses' father in law, took a burnt offering and sacrifices for God—Jethro's worship through sacrifice demonstrates genuine conversion. The 'burnt offering' (עֹלָה, olah, completely consumed) and 'sacrifices' (זְבָחִים, z'vechim, peace offerings) show comprehensive worship combining atonement and fellowship. The phrase 'for God' (לְאֱלֹהִים, l'Elohim) indicates these are offered to YHWH, not Midianite deities. Aaron and all Israel's elders eating 'bread before God' (לְאַכְל-לְקַם עַמִּיחָנָן מֹשֶׁה לְפָנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים, le'ekhol-lechem im-choten Moshe lifnei ha'Elohim) constitutes covenant meal, incorporating Jethro into worship community. This meal prefigures Gentile inclusion at the Lord's table. Jethro's priesthood offering sacrifice shows grace—God accepts worship from non-Aaronic priest, anticipating Christ's Melchizedek priesthood (Heb 7).

Historical Context

This sacrifice and meal occurred before the formal institution of Aaronic priesthood at Sinai, showing that acceptable worship preceded legal structures. The elders' participation welcomed Jethro into covenant fellowship.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does Jethro offering sacrifice before Aaronic priesthood exists preview Christ's non-Aaronic priesthood?
2. What does the covenant meal with elders teach about incorporating outsiders into worship community?

Interlinear Text

וַיַּקְרֵב יְמִינָה	עַל הַמִּשְׁחָה	חַתָּה	יִתְרֹן	וְיַקְרֵב	וְיַקְרֵב
took	And Jethro	father in law	Moses	a burnt offering	and sacrifices
H3947	H3503	H2859	H4872	H5930	H2077
בָּעֵל פָּרָאשָׂה לְעַל	זְהִבָּה	וְיַבְאֶת אֶת־אָבָרְךָ	וְיַבְאֶת אֶת־אָבָרְךָ	וְיַבְאֶת אֶת־אָבָרְךָ	וְיַבְאֶת אֶת־אָבָרְךָ
God	came	and Aaron	H3605	and all the elders	of Israel
H430	H935	H175		H2205	H3478
לְפָנָי מִשְׁחָה	לְפָנָי מִשְׁחָה	לְפָנָי מִשְׁחָה	לְפָנָי מִשְׁחָה	לְפָנָי מִשְׁחָה	לְפָנָי מִשְׁחָה
bread	father in law	Moses	before	God	
H3899	H2859	H4872	H6440	H430	

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 31:54 (Sacrifice): Then Jacob offered sacrifice upon the mount, and called his brethren to eat bread: and they did eat bread, and tarried all night in the mount.

Deuteronomy 12:7 (References God): And there ye shall eat before the LORD your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the LORD thy God hath blessed thee.

Exodus 24:11 (References God): And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink.

Exodus 24:5 (Sacrifice): And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto the LORD.

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