

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' (זִבְחִים, z'vachim, 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' (לֶאֱכֹל-לֶחֶם עִם-חֹתֵן מֹשֶׁה לִפְנֵי 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

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

וָתַקַּח	וַיָּבֹרֶךְ	חַתָּן	מֹשֶׁה	עֹלָה	וּזְבָחִים
took	And Jethro	father in law	Moses	a burnt offering	and sacrifices
H3947	H3503	H2859	H4872	H5930	H2077
לֶאֱכֹל	יִשְׂרָאֵל	זִקְנָיו	וְכָל	אָהֳרֹן	וַיָּבֹא
to eat	of Israel	and all the elders	H3605	H175	H935
H398	H3478	H2205			
בָּרֶחַק	לֶחֶם	עִם	חַתָּן	מֹשֶׁה	לִפְנֵי
	bread	H5973	father in law	Moses	before
	H3899		H2859	H4872	H6440
					God
					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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