

Exodus 18:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when Moses' father in law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What is this thing that thou doest to the people? why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even?

Analysis

And when Moses' father in law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What is this thing that thou doest to the people?—Jethro's question 'What is this thing?' shows his concern at the unsustainable system. His observation 'thou sittest thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee' identifies the problem: centralized leadership without delegation. The phrase 'from morning unto even' emphasizes the exhaustion for both Moses and people. Jethro's willingness to question Moses' methods models the proper role of advisors—speaking truth to leadership. His approach is respectful (asking questions) rather than presumptuous (demanding change). The fact that God validates Jethro's advice shows that wisdom can come from outside covenant community, and leaders should welcome counsel.

Historical Context

Jethro's outsider perspective gave him clarity that those within the situation lacked. His Midianite governance experience equipped him to identify organizational problems Moses missed.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does Jethro's questioning approach model how to offer counsel to leaders respectfully?
2. What does God validating Jethro's advice teach about receiving wisdom from unexpected sources?

Interlinear Text

וַיֵּרָא חֵתָן מֹשֶׁה אֶת כָּל אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה

saw father in law And when Moses H853 H3605 H834 H1931

H7200 H2859 H4872

עָשָׂה הָאֵל וַיֹּאמֶר

all that he did thou thyself alone and all the people he said H4100

H6213 H5971 H559

הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה אֵת הָאֵל עָשָׂה

What is this thing H2088 H834 H859 all that he did

H1697 H6213

הָאֵל וְכָל לִבְדָּךְ יוֹשֵׁב אֵת הַמִּדְבָּר

thou thyself alone and all the people why sittest H4069 H859 H905 H3605

H5971 H3427

הָאֵל מִן עַל יָדְךָ בַּקֹּר

thou thyself alone and all the people stand H5921 H4480 by thee from morning

H5324 H1242

עַד עָרֵב:

unto even H5704

H6153