

Exodus 18:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Moses let his father in law depart; and he went his way into his own land.

Analysis

And Moses let his father in law depart; and he went his way into his own land—Jethro's departure after giving counsel shows he came to help, not control. The verb 'let depart' (וַיְשַׁלַּח, vay'shalach, 'sent away') indicates Moses' releasing Jethro with honor. The phrase 'he went his way into his own land' shows Jethro returns to Midian—his mission complete. Numbers 10:29-32 records Moses later inviting Hobab (apparently Jethro's son or another name for Jethro) to stay as guide, suggesting warm relationship continued. Jethro's return despite witnessing impending Sinai revelation shows contentment with his role: give wisdom, then leave. This models healthy advisory relationships—counsel without controlling, help without hovering. Jethro doesn't demand permanent position or recognition; he serves and departs.

Historical Context

Jethro's departure before the Sinai covenant-making shows his role was preparatory, not participatory in Israel's covenant. His wisdom prepared Israel for what God would do, then he stepped aside.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. What does Jethro departing after counsel show about healthy advisory relationships?
2. How does Jethro returning to Midian rather than joining Israel teach about fulfilling your calling without demanding others' callings?

Interlinear Text

וַיַּעֲזַב מֹשֶׁה אֶת־קָרְבָּן וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל־אֶרְצָוֹ
depart And Moses let his father in law and he went

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his way into his own land

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Additional Cross-References

Judges 19:9 (Word): And when the man rose up to depart, he, and his concubine, and his servant, his father in law, the damsel's father, said unto him, Behold, now the day draweth toward evening, I pray you tarry all night: behold, the day groweth to an end, lodge here, that thine heart may be merry; and to morrow get you early on your way, that thou mayest go home.

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