

Exodus 18:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Jethro, Moses' father in law, came with his sons and his wife unto Moses into the wilderness, where he encamped at the mount of God:

Analysis

And Jethro, Moses' father in law, came with his sons and his wife unto Moses into the wilderness, where he encamped at the mount of God— Jethro's pilgrimage to 'the mount of God' (הַר הָאֱלֹהִים, har ha'elohim, Sinai/Horeb) demonstrates that he seeks not merely family reunion but divine encounter. The 'mount of God' designation before the law-giving shows this mountain's sacred character predates Sinai covenant—it's where God appeared to Moses in burning bush (Ex 3:1). Jethro's coming 'into the wilderness' requires faith—he leaves settled Midian for desert pilgrimage. This prefigures Gentiles who will come from nations to worship at Zion (Isa 2:2-3). The family reunion at Sinai, where law will be given, shows grace (family) before law (Sinai).

Historical Context

Sinai/Horeb was already known as 'the mount of God' from Moses' burning bush encounter (Exodus 3:1). Jethro's arrival there positions him to witness the law-giving and glory manifestation.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. What does Jethro leaving settled life for wilderness pilgrimage teach about seeking God?
2. How does family reunion at Sinai before law-giving show grace preceding commandment?

Interlinear Text

וַיָּבֹא	וַיְתֵר	חַתָּן	מֹשֶׁה	וּבָנָיו	וְאִשְׁתּוֹ	אֵל
came	And Jethro	father in law	Moses	with his sons	and his wife	H413
H935	H3503	H2859	H4872	H1121	H802	
מֹשֶׁה	אֵל	הַמִּדְבָּר	אֲשֶׁר	הָוָא	חָנָה	שָׁם
Moses	H413	into the wilderness	H834	H1931	where he encamped	H8033
H4872		H4057			H2583	
הָרֹ	הָאֱלֹהִים:					
at the mount	of God					
H2022	H430					

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 3:1 (Word): Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb.

Exodus 3:12 (References God): And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.