

# Exodus 19:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he said unto the people, Be ready against the third day: come not at your wives.

## Analysis

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**And he said unto the people, Be ready against the third day: come not at your wives.**

Sexual abstinence prepares for divine encounter—not because sexuality is evil but because it's consuming and would distract from single-minded focus on God. The command 'come not at your wives' (אַל תִּגְשֹׁע אֶל אֲשָׁה, al tiggeshu el ishah) imposes temporary continence for consecration. Similar restrictions appear before battle (1 Samuel 21:4-5) and priestly service—times requiring undivided attention. Paul echoes this principle in 1 Corinthians 7:5 regarding prayer. The third-day emphasis recurs—preparation has a deadline. God's timing is sovereign; we must be ready when He comes. The principle extends spiritually: we prepare for Christ's return by holiness and watchfulness.

## Historical Context

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Temporary sexual abstinence for religious purposes appears in various ancient cultures, but Israel's practice is distinct—rooted in covenant preparation, not dualistic rejection of the body. The third day arrives with dramatic divine manifestation.

## Related Passages

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

## Study Questions

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1. What does temporary abstinence teach about preparing to meet with God?
2. How does the principle of consecration before divine encounter apply to Christian worship and prayer?

## Interlinear Text

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וְיֻמַּת יְמֵי	לְשָׁלֵט שְׁתַּי	בְּכָנָם יְמֵי	לְשָׁלֵט תְּיִמְמָר
And he said	unto the people	Be	against the third
H559	H5971	H1961	H7969
day			
וְאֵל תָּגַשׁ וְאֵל	אֲשֶׁר:		
come	not at your wives		
H408	H413	H802	

## Additional Cross-References

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**Exodus 19:11** (Parallel theme): And be ready against the third day: for the third day the LORD will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai.

**1 Corinthians 7:5** (Parallel theme): Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.