

Exodus 19:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For they were departed from Rephidim, and were come to the desert of Sinai, and had pitched in the wilderness; and there Israel camped before the mount.

Analysis

For they were departed from Rephidim, and were come to the desert of Sinai, and had pitched in the wilderness; and there Israel camped before the mount.

The Hebrew 'vayichan' (and camped) shifts from plural to singular—Israel camps as ONE people before God's mountain. This grammatical shift is theologically loaded: the rabble of tribes becomes a unified nation. Rephidim, the site of water-from-the-rock and victory over Amalek through Moses' raised hands, gave way to Sinai where God Himself would descend. The phrase 'neged hahar' (before/opposite the mount) positions Israel as witnesses to divine revelation—they face the mountain where heaven will touch earth.

Historical Context

Rephidim was the site of Israel's recent victories and complaints (Exodus 17). The transition from Rephidim to Sinai moves from crisis-based encounters with God to covenant establishment. Archaeological evidence suggests massive ancient campsites in the Sinai region.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. What does Israel's shift from plural to singular grammatically signify about covenant community?
2. How do the lessons learned at Rephidim prepare Israel for what they'll encounter at Sinai?

Interlinear Text

וַיֵּסְעוּ	מִרֶפְדִּים	וַיָּבֹאוּ	בַּמִּדְבָּר	סִינַי
For they were departed	from Rephidim	and were come	in the wilderness	of Sinai
H5265	H7508	H935	H4057	H5514
וַיִּצְּבּוּ	בַּמִּדְבָּר	וַיִּצְּבּוּ	שָׁם	וַיִּשְׁכֵּן יִשְׂרָאֵל
and had pitched	in the wilderness	and had pitched	H8033	and there Israel
H2583	H4057	H2583		H3478
הַהָר:				
before the mount				
H2022				

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 17:1 (Sin): And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, after their journeys, according to the commandment of the LORD, and pitched in Rephidim: and there was no water for the people to drink.

Exodus 3:1 (Parallel theme): 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 (Parallel theme): 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.

Exodus 18:5 (Parallel theme): 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:

Exodus 17:8 (References Israel): Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim.