

Exodus 34:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thrice in the year shall all your men children appear before the Lord GOD, the God of Israel.

Analysis

Three times annually, every male must 'appear before the Lord GOD' (הָאָדֹן יְהוָה, ha-adon YHWH). This command established corporate worship rhythm and covenant renewal. The threefold pattern structures the year around God's redemption (Passover/Unleavened Bread), provision (Weeks), and protection (Tabernacles). Appearing 'before the LORD' meant coming to the sanctuary, the designated meeting place between God and His people.

Historical Context

The three pilgrimage festivals were Passover/Unleavened Bread (spring), Pentecost/Weeks (early summer), and Tabernacles/Ingathering (fall). During temple periods, Jerusalem swelled with pilgrims; during wilderness/tabernacle era, Israel gathered at the central sanctuary.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does regular, scheduled corporate worship shape spiritual life?

2. What 'pilgrimages' or spiritual disciplines help you maintain covenant relationship with God?

Interlinear Text

שָׁלֹשׁ	פְּעָמִים	בַּשָּׁנָה	יִרְאֶה	כָּל	זָכָר וְיֶלֶד	אֶת
H7969	Thrice	in the year	appear	H3605	shall all your men children	H853
	H6471	H8141	H7200		H2138	
יְהוָה	לְפָנָיו	יִרְאֶה	אֱלֹהֵי	יִשְׂרָאֵל		
before	the Lord	GOD	the God	of Israel		
H6440	H113	H3068	H430	H3478		

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 23:14 (Parallel theme): Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year.

Exodus 23:17 (References God): Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the Lord GOD.

Deuteronomy 16:16 (References God): Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles: and they shall not appear before the LORD empty:

Genesis 32:28 (References God): And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.