

Exodus 34:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And no man shall come up with thee, neither let any man be seen throughout all the mount; neither let the flocks nor herds feed before that mount.

Analysis

The prohibition extends beyond humans to include flocks and herds—absolute solitude is required. Even throughout the mountain, nothing may approach. This underscores God's transcendent holiness and the danger of presumptuous approach to His presence. The severe restriction demonstrates that covenant renewal, like covenant-making, requires divine initiative and proper mediation.

Historical Context

Mount Sinai (also called Horeb) had been declared holy ground earlier (3:5). The entire mountain served as God's earthly throne-room during the wilderness period.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What does the prohibition of even animals near the mountain teach about God's holiness?
2. How should this affect our approach to worship and prayer today?

Interlinear Text

אֶל	אִישׁ	וְגַם	עַמֹּךָ	יָשָׁעְהָ	לֹא	אִישׁ
with thee neither	And no man	H1571	H5973	shall come up	H3808	And no man
H408	H376			H5927		H376
וְהִבָּקֵר	הִצֵּא אֵן	גַּם	הַהָר	בְּכָל	יֵרָא	
nor herds	neither let the flocks	H1571	that mount	H3605	be seen	
H1241	H6629		H2022		H7200	
הָהוּא׃	הַהָר	מִלֵּפָנֶיךָ	אֶל	יִרְעֵוּ	אֶל	
H1931	that mount	before	H413	feed	with thee neither	
	H2022	H4136		H7462	H408	

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 19:21 (Parallel theme): And the LORD said unto Moses, Go down, charge the people, lest they break through unto the LORD to gaze, and many of them perish.