

# Exodus 32:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses: and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men.

## Analysis

The Levites' obedience, **וְעָשׂוּ בְנֵי-לֵוי כְּדָבָר מֹשֶׁה** (vaya'asu venei-Levi kidvar Moshe, the sons of Levi did according to Moses' word) despite personal cost demonstrates true devotion. The death toll—**כְּשַׁלַּשֶׁת אֶלְף אִישׁ** (kisheloshet alfei ish, about three thousand men)—shows judgment's severity. This number (out of ~600,000 men) suggests the execution targeted ringleaders and persistent rebels, not all who sinned. The precision 'that day' (**בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא**, bayyom hahu) indicates swift justice. Peter's Pentecost saw 3,000 saved (Acts 2:41), a redemptive inversion showing grace's triumph.

## Historical Context

This execution established the Levites' priesthood and demonstrated that covenant relationship requires covenant faithfulness. False worship merits death—a severity that reveals idolatry's ultimate horror.

## Related Passages

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

**1 John 4:8** — God is love

## Study Questions

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1. What does the severity of punishment reveal about idolatry's seriousness?
2. How does the contrast between Exodus 32 (3,000 die) and Acts 2 (3,000 saved) demonstrate grace's triumph?

## Interlinear Text

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וַיַּעֲשֵׂה כְּדָבָר מֵשֶׁה וְלֹא בְּתִי  
did And the children of Levi according to the word of Moses and there fell

מֵת בְּעַם בְּיֹם שְׁתִּים כָּלֶף אַיִשׁ אֲלָפִים  
of the people that day about three thousand men

## Additional Cross-References

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**Deuteronomy 33:9** (Word): Who said unto his father and to his mother, I have not seen him; neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor knew his own children: for they have observed thy word, and kept thy covenant.

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