

# 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 (וַעֲשׂוּ בְנֵי־לֵוִי כְדִבְרֵי 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—כִּשְׁלֹשֶׁת אַלְפֵי 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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וַעֲשֵׂה	בְּנֵי	לֵוִי	כַּדְבָּר	ר	מֹשֶׁה	וַיִּפֹּל
did	And the children	of Levi	according to the word		of Moses	and there fell
H6213	H1121	H3878	H1697		H4872	H5307
מִן	הָעָם	בְּיֹמֵם	הָהוּא	ו	כִּשְׁלֹשׁ	אֲלָפֵי
H4480	of the people	that day	H1931		about three	thousand
	H5971	H3117		H7969	H505	H376
						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.