

Numbers 14:33

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness.

Analysis

Israel's response was flight and fear: 'all Israel that were round about them fled at the cry of them.' They feared lest 'the earth swallow us up also,' showing immediate recognition of God's power and their own vulnerability to judgment. This terror produced temporary reverence but not lasting faith, as subsequent rebellion (v. 41) proved.

Historical Context

The fleeing Israelites' cry and fear provided momentary sobriety, but within a day they again rebelled (16:41), showing that fear-based obedience doesn't produce heart transformation. Only grace creates genuine devotion.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. Why is fear of judgment insufficient to produce lasting faith and obedience?

2. How quickly do you forget God's demonstrated power when facing new temptations?

Interlinear Text

וּ בְנֵיכֶם	יְהִי וְ	רָע יִם	בַּמִּדְבָּר:	אַרְבָּעַ יָם	שָׁנָה
And your children	H1961	shall wander	in the wilderness	forty	years
H1121		H7462	H4057	H705	H8141
וְנָשָׂא וְ	אֶת זְנוּתֶיךָ	עַד	תֵּם	פְּגִרֶיךָ	
and bear	H853	your whoredoms	H5704	be wasted	until your carcasses
H5375		H2184	H8552		H6297
			בַּמִּדְבָּר:		
			in the wilderness		
			H4057		

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 23:35 (Parallel theme): Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thou hast forgotten me, and cast me behind thy back, therefore bear thou also thy lewdness and thy whoredoms.

Numbers 32:13 (Parallel theme): And the LORD'S anger was kindled against Israel, and he made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until all the generation, that had done evil in the sight of the LORD, was consumed.

Psalms 107:40 (Parallel theme): He poureth contempt upon princes, and causeth them to wander in the wilderness, where there is no way.

Deuteronomy 2:14 (Parallel theme): And the space in which we came from Kadesh-barnea, until we were come over the brook Zered, was thirty and eight years; until all the generation of the men of war were wasted out from among the host, as the LORD sware unto them.