

Numbers 14:34

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise.

Analysis

Fire from the LORD consumed the 250 men who offered incense, the leaders who joined Korah's rebellion. This dual judgment—earth swallowing some, fire consuming others—demonstrated God's comprehensive authority over creation. That fire targeted specifically those who presumed to offer incense showed God's jealousy for proper worship and respect for His appointed priesthood.

Historical Context

These 250 were leaders ('princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown,' 16:2) who claimed all Israel was equally holy. Their destruction vindicated Aaron's exclusive priestly ministry and warned against presumptuous worship.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. What does God's specific judgment on those who presumed priestly ministry teach about approaching God?
2. How does Christ's high priesthood provide the only legitimate access to God's presence?

Interlinear Text

בְּמִסְפַּר	יּוֹם	אֲשֶׁר	תִּרְתָּם	אֶת	הָאָרֶץ	אַרְבַּעַ יָמִים	
After the number	days	H834	in which ye searched	H853	the land	even forty	
H4557	H3117		H8446		H776	H705	
יּוֹם	יּוֹם	שָׁנָה	יּוֹם	שָׁנָה	תִּשְׂאוּ	אֶת	עוֹן תִּיכֶם
days	days	for a year	days	for a year	shall ye bear	H853	your iniquities
H3117	H3117	H8141	H3117	H8141	H5375		H5771
אַרְבַּעַ יָמִים	שָׁנָה	וַיֵּדְעֶתְם	אֶת	תְּנוּאַתִּי:			
even forty	for a year	and ye shall know	H853	my breach of promise			
H705	H8141	H3045		H8569			

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 4:6 (Parallel theme): And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year.

Numbers 13:25 (Parallel theme): And they returned from searching of the land after forty days.

Daniel 9:24 (Parallel theme): Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

Hebrews 4:1 (Covenant): Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

Psalms 95:10 (Parallel theme): Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways:

2 Chronicles 36:21 (Parallel theme): To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years.

1 Samuel 2:30 (Parallel theme): Wherefore the LORD God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the LORD saith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.

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